

School News

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION AT THE DEAN CLOUGH GALLERIES

Photography A-level students in the sixth form were joined by members of last year's upper sixth when exhibiting their work in January. Every student from these three cohorts was represented, a total of 60 students in all. They were joined by governors, staff and parents to celebrate the opening at a private view held on 7th January in the Foyer Gallery.

It was a rough night, with sufficient snow to keep the school closed. All the more reason, then, to thank all who turned-up in atrocious conditions. Over 140 arrived at the event, meaning that virtually all invitees were in attendance.

The exhibition was entitled *Standing On The Shoulders Of Giants*, a reference to the importance of critical studies on our A level Photography course. Each photograph was exhibited alongside a work by an established photographer who had been pivotal in the development of the student's photography.

Certificates were presented to those students in last year's upper sixth form who had had their work either shortlisted or included in the Royal Academy of Arts Summer Online Exhibition. NHGS photography students accounted for ten percent of those shortlisted and of those in the final exhibition. Given that there was a UK-wide entry of over 1000 students this was a remarkable achievement.

Thanks go to everyone who made the event such a success both in the preparation, installation and, of course, on the night. Roll on the next show...



DLA

The North Halifax
Grammar School



NHGS News

NEWSLETTER 6
FEBRUARY 2010

Page 1

Photography Exhibition

Page 2

Happy Puzzle Company
Refurbishment of Science Lab
Parent Prom Tickets
Vouchers for Schools

Page 3

NHGS Parent Prom Auction
World Book Day
Blow up a Christmas Decoration

Page 4

Government & Politics Trip
Sixth Form Gifted and Talented

Page 5

Specialist Science School Work
UK Intermediate Mathematical
Challenge 2010

Page 6

Monthly Prize Draw
Zell am See

Page 8

Leadership at NHGS

Page 10

Debating Society

Page 11

Manchester Union Debating
Competition

Page 12

PA Change of Officers
Oxford Union Competition
Public Speaking Competition
English Speaking Union

Page 13

Congratulations to Patrick!
NHGS Year 9 Cricket
French Night

Page 14

Calderdale School Transport
PA Meetings
PA All Weather Pitch Logo
Report it!

Page 15

Early School Closure

Happy Puzzle Company

On Tuesday 26th January we had a visit from the Happy Puzzle Company. We didn't know what to expect really. Challenges, puzzles or maybe teamwork. Thankfully we got all three. We went in to the classroom where we were split into teams of six. Then we were given a brief instruction and told to get going with the puzzles. We got the chance to do puzzles where you had to make a road map without leaving any dead ends (there were over **300** different ways to do this). We had to build a castle exactly the same as one on a diagram. We had to make a big hexagon with lots of different coloured semi-hexagons (you were not allowed to put any two colours together or next to each other). We had to stack 24 penguins on top of a floating ice-berg! We managed to complete 7 challenges altogether in our team in just under an hour. The Happy Puzzle Company encouraged team work and group cooperation and most importantly not to give up on something even though we thought it was impossible. We were not allowed to give up on a challenge until we had completed it. Invariably we would become stuck and think the task was impossible but when we put our mind to it we managed to solve it. The Happy Puzzle Company really helped us to work as a team and we would definitely like to do something similar again. Mathematics can be so much fun!

Emily Munz 8(5)

Refurbishment of Science Lab 2 (SL2)

The Wolfson Foundation is a charity that was established in 1955. It currently allocates approximately £1.5 million each year, funding schools that have achieved a level of excellence or can demonstrate progressive improvement in their results.

Grants are made for science and technology, particularly providing suitable spaces for laboratories and helping towards the purchase of IT equipment.

This year we have successfully applied for a grant of £30,000 which will contribute to the refurbishment of SL2 into a physics and electronics laboratory. This is the last Lab in urgent need of refurbishment and will create an

excellent learning environment, including a networked set of lap top computers and urgently needed storage facilities for 6th form electronics projects.

We are very grateful to the Foundation for its continuing support following the sponsorship of our Science College application with a networked lap-top trolley in 2003 which has had excellent use.

RFH

Parent Prom

Tickets Now on Sale

The Parents' Association is pleased to announce full details of the forthcoming **Parent Prom** which promises to be even better than last year's event.

Where: Bradford Bulls Stadium, Odsal
When: 20 March 2010
Time: 7p.m. to 1a.m.
Dress Code: Black Tie (Optional)

Tickets cost £25 per person and include a three course meal followed by music designed to get everyone on the dance floor! Tables seat eight, nine or ten so why not get a group of friends and book your table together?

Don't forget everyone is welcome – staff, parents, friends and family.

See the booking form in this issue for more information or to order your tickets.

Vouchers for Schools

Yes it is that time again. Tesco will be issuing vouchers from Monday 1st March. Please collect these and encourage your son/daughter to bring them into school and put them in the boxes at reception or in the LRC. Thank you for your support.

SR

NHGS PARENT PROM AUCTION

Raising Funds for the All Weather Pitch

We will be having a fabulous Auction at this year's Prom and have some amazing 'Lots' on offer.

All the items have been donated free of charge and all proceeds will go towards funding the All Weather Pitch. So all of you coming along to the Prom get your bidding arm ready - and for anyone not able to get a table (still plenty of places left but remember we sold out last year so do book soon!) you can view the lots via the PA website www.nhgs.co.uk/pa and make your bids directly to me Angela.Cowton@virgin.net so, even if you can't come you can still make a bid and potentially win a great prize! Some of the lots are listed below and full details are on the website.

- Lot 1 - 1 week Penthouse apartment in Malta
- Lot 2 - A Dinner Party for 10 people
- Lot 3 - A Family Portrait Session
- Lot 4 - 20 McDonalds Meal Vouchers
- Lot 5 - A Curry Buffet for 20 people
- Lot 6 - Joiner for the Day
- Lot 7 - Bradford Bulls VIP day
- Lot 8 - 1 week Apartment in Portugal
- Lot 9 - Wood Turning day
- Lot 10 - Dean Clough Dining and Theatre visit
- Lot 11 - Cosmetic Tooth Whitening

World Book Day

This is on Thursday 4th March. Students in the Lower school will receive a £1 voucher to put against the purchase of a book. Staff will wear badges with details of books and authors which Year 7 students will record and then match them up. Various other activities celebrating World Book Day will be organised during this week.

SR

Blow up a Christmas Decoration!

The Chemistry Department held a competition before Christmas to identify and destroy horrible Christmas decorations! A good number of tacky decorations were brought in to school, rather too many by Mr Jervis who seems to have a collection! They were displayed in ACL and the worst was chosen. The proud(?) donor of this decoration was Year 9 student, Euan and his prize was to facilitate its destruction in an appropriate chemical manner.



A fuse of black powder, an ancient explosive, led to a mixture of sugar with the oxidising agent potassium chlorate. The results were, as expected, spectacular! Suffice it to say, this decoration will not be desecrating anyone's Christmas tree next year.





GDT

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS TRIP

On Friday the Politics AS and A2 groups took a trip down into Halifax to visit the Town Hall. We started our visit in the Council Chamber where we were given a talk by a lady from the Electoral services department about the process of elections in Calderdale and how all the different procedures work. She talked over everything from the cost of elections to what processes are in place to prevent fraud and how it is detected, although not very common, apparently it has happened in recent years in Calderdale!

After the very nice lady from the council giving out the obligatory freebies of pens and key rings that are expected of any visit, we were then given a talk about the Council Chamber by the Mayor of Calderdale's attendant. The room was originally built to be the Halifax courthouse and was on the ground floor, but moved upstairs when it began its life as the Council Chamber. In the basement of the Town Hall there are still cells which were intended for the convicted to spend the night in before being transferred to a prison.

We then had the original Halifax coat of arms explained to us and the town's historic

relationship with John the Baptist, a man who's face seems to be everywhere in the building. It has always been said that his head was buried in Halifax and the name Halifax comes from the Old English words for *holy* and *face*. She also then explained what the coat of arms for Calderdale now consists of since the councils were amalgamated in the 1970s, essentially the same except John the Baptist has been removed from the centre and a sheep has replaced him. Certainly a dent in his posthumous prestige! The tour ended in the main hall itself which is again a very ornate and architecturally interesting room. The whole building was designed by the same man as the House's of Parliament in Westminster, Charles Barry, and does have almost a look of a Mini-House of Commons.

One nameless student did remark on the way out that they had never been further than McDonald's on that road and had never even seen the Town Hall before so this certainly was worthwhile to get a closer look (or first time sight) of the building that is at the hub of our local government, and one that certainly is worth passing by a Big Mac for.

Mark Holmes L6(4)

Sixth Form Gifted and Talented

Oxbridge Successes

We have had a successful year this year for Oxbridge applications. Six of our students have received offers from Oxford or Cambridge. They are: Eddie Anderton, Biochemistry, Oriel, Oxford, John Finnerty, Medicine, Selwyn, Cambridge, Konrad Hepworth, Experimental Psychology, Corpus Christi, Oxford, Lizzie Hollwey, Natural Sciences, Girton, Cambridge, Bethany Megson, Classics, Pembroke, Cambridge, Kathy Ryland, History, Exeter, Oxford. They have all worked extremely hard to achieve these offers and we wish them well for their examinations.

Lower Sixth Oxbridge Speaker

On Wednesday 24th March the Schools' Liaison Officer from Selwyn College, Cambridge, came to give a presentation to the Lower Sixth students who have shown an interest in applying to Oxford or Cambridge. He spoke about life at the university and the application process and answered questions. It was a very informative session and we hope to make this an annual event for future Upper School students.

Oxford Law Open Days

We have had two successful applicants to visit Oxford University Law Department on the Law Open Days. Mark Holmes and Bridget McHugh will be going to learn about the university and about Law in general.

UNIQ Oxford Summer Schools

An exciting new free summer school programme will begin this year at the University of Oxford and has been advertised in school. It is open to all UK state school students. As part of the UNIQ Summer Schools experience, participants will live in a college for the duration of their stay. In 2010 the UNIQ Summer School will be providing a choice of 20 exciting courses over a broad range of interests. The courses are spread across a 3 week period starting from the 4th July 2010 and include the following subjects: Classics, Biology, Biochemistry, French, Computer Science, Biomedical Sciences, Geography, History of Art, Chemistry, German, Law, English Literature, Materials, History, Maths, Medicine, Music, Spanish, Theology, and Physics.

Some Lower Sixth students have already applied and if anyone else is interested they will need to get their applications in by the 12th March. They can do this online at http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses/working_with_schools_and_colleges/uniq_applications.html.

NKW

Specialist Science School Work

The school's Specialist Science Status means that we have an expectation that we will work with outside agencies to deliver high quality training and support to other science teachers and schools in our area. Since 2008, we have worked in partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry and the Science Learning Centre of Sheffield Hallam University to host and deliver a course called Chemistry for Non-Chemists. This

provides opportunities for science teachers who are not chemistry specialists to develop their skills in both practical and theoretical chemistry so that they are able to teach students up to GCSE level.

This is a 4 day course, two days in the first term, one in the following term, and one more in the term after that, which aims to build confidence in delivering some of the more 'scary' practical demonstrations we all remember as young students. We are approaching the end of the second time we have hosted the course, with day 4 on March 17th.

As hosts we provide laboratory facilities, catering and most of all expert technical support. Marilyn Bowers has been the Chemistry technician in school now for over 10 years, and without the support she provides, as well as the other technical support in science, we would not be able to provide high quality learning experiences for our students, let alone provide the necessary level of support required to host such prestigious events for the Royal Society of Chemistry.

GDT

UK Intermediate Mathematical Challenge 2010

In February, Year 10 students from Maths sets 1 and 2 took part in the UKMT Intermediate challenge.

Special Congratulations to Khalid Kazi who won the Best in School award and has qualified for the next round of follow up competitions, a great performance. Abigail Elliott was close behind him and has also qualified for one of the follow up rounds. James Nevison, Will Laycock Smith, Christy Ellis, Daniel Lever and Matthew Stephens also performed incredibly well in achieving the coveted Gold certificate.

A further 16 students achieved Silver and 18 more Bronze.

Well done to all Year 10 who participated and good luck to Khalid and Abigail in the next rounds.

HJA

Monthly Prize Draw

Prize Draws as follows £150, £75 and £25 as usual and the special draws all win £100

JANUARY Prize Draw

1st	177	Mrs Rita Kohl	Brighthouse
2nd	60	Mrs M Sharpe	Hipperholme
3rd	69	Mrs Mary Clarke	Oxenhope

Special Prize Draw

1st	126	Elizabeth & RP Coulson	Wheatley
2nd	2	Mr P Lister	Wellhead
3rd	191	Mrs Belinda Roberts	Halifax
4th	148	Mrs Joanne Parker	Elland
5th	32	Mr K G Marshall	Walsden
6th	122	Ms Elaine Jackson	Todmorden
7th	95	Margaret R&PJ. Whiteley	Friendly
8th	136	R & J Hardy	Outlane



Zell am See

After 18 months in the planning we were finally ready to set off for Austria at 1pm on the 12th February. Expectations were high for both the experience itself and of the conduct and enthusiasm of the students, on neither aspect were we disappointed. The resort was excellent and we were looked after well. Students enjoyed two mountains on which to perfect their technique and a range of après ski activities.



I would like to thank the students for their high standards of behaviour and their infectious positivity. They were outstanding ambassadors for the school and a pleasure to take away. I would also like to thank the Staff Ski Team for their support up to and during the trip as these visits would not be possible otherwise.

GJW

The best holiday in the world! We arrived at the hotel 27 hours after leaving school and had eaten a lot of rubbish. Despite the tiredness everyone was excited to arrive. We made full use of the hotel's facilities; table-tennis, football and having a sing-a-long with Mr Bastow in the Common Room.

The first day of skiing was a bit chaotic with everyone getting into groups, but nevertheless, the sun was shining and the skiing was great. That night, after a group basketball tournament, we tasted the first version of the soup we were to eat every night. We then ventured to a club where Mr Walker enjoyed showing us some moves before we all returned to bed.

The next day we returned to the glacier and enjoyed another beautiful day on the slopes. After a fun match of football we had pancake soup and enjoyed Miss Paxman's epic quiz, in which the teachers reigned (unfairly).

The following day saw us venture to Zell am See where we spent the morning queuing and the afternoon fighting through the crowded slopes where Sven caused havoc. After a game of handball we ventured out to the raucous Zell am See that was enjoying a banana-filled pancake day.

The fourth day was missed by Mr Walker who had to stay with an injured Mina and a sick Alex, while after a hot day on the slopes we all enjoyed pizza, ice-cream and Austrian bowling at the hotel. We returned to Kaprun the next day, in wings and a sumo suit where vision was impaired and Steph and Tom were injured. The evening saw a basketball match, where the girls and Mr Langhorn ruled supreme, followed by a trip to Zell am See and a return journey with the story of three jellyfish



The final day saw a dance-off on skis between two groups, while Full Throttle enjoyed charging on Mr Bastow and watching Jo fall. After a sad departure from our guides, tea at three o'clock, and high fives from Jack, we embarked on the long journey home, which was far too quick in bringing us back to school.

It was an amazing trip.

Thanks to Mr Walker.

Emma Frazer U6(9) & Natalie Noble U6(3)



Leadership at NHGS

Sustainability is a key theme in our provision at NHGS. However it does not just relate to our role as a Specialist Science School. We are also keen to develop sustainability across all the activities of the school. In some ground breaking research published in 2005 DDI and MORI published a report called 'Leading Edge' in which they undertook in-depth interviews with 105 business leaders all of whom were leading the top companies in the UK at the time. It found that, *'Among the 105 business leaders interviewed by MORI, 70% had been school prefects; 50% had captained their sports teams; 30% had been heads or deputy heads of school and a similar number had been leaders of youth groups outside school such as the Scouts or Brownies. Over all, nearly 90% of leaders had taken on at least two leadership roles at school, and just over 40% had held more than three'*. We are aware of the importance of creating leadership roles at NHGS because like swimming leading cannot be learnt by reading about it. We have just appointed the Senior Prefects and Head Prefect for 2009-10 and in the first week after half-term they introduced themselves to the school in special assemblies. We have invited them to introduce themselves to parents and the wider school community in the short articles that follow.

Mark Holmes

Head Prefect

Hi my name is Mark Holmes and I am this year's Head Prefect. I am currently studying Geography, Politics, History and Psychology as AS Levels. After 6th form I would like to go on to university but I don't have a specific course I've set my heart on yet, or even a particular subject!

In and out of school I am currently involved in a variety of different activities such as the debating society, working towards my Gold Duke of Edinburgh award and helping coach the boys' hockey team. Earlier in the year I was involved in the Comenius project in school where I took part in a visit to our Estonian partner schools.

Outside of school I am a keen hockey player and play for Halifax Men's 2nd XI. I also get involved in volunteering as and when I have some spare time doing all sorts from recruiting young volunteers, tree planting for a charity to helping organise a battle of the bands

competition for young local bands. One thing that over the last 18 months I have been heavily involved in is the UK Youth Parliament. I was elected as Calderdale's representative in October 2008 and stood down in February 2010, this has thrown up some excellent opportunities such as meeting top level politicians, writing for national publications, appearing on regional TV and on local radio and getting a chance to really put the voice of young people, particularly from Calderdale, on the map.

As Head Prefect this year, I hope to encourage a progression in the prefect system at NHGS. Look at how it can evolve and how it can be improved and developed in certain areas. We have a brilliant group of Senior Prefects who are buzzing with ideas about how this can be done. This combined with the enthusiasm that we have from the rest of the Prefect team, and the support from staff, I certainly believe we can really achieve something lasting and worthwhile this year.

Ella Dixon

Senior Prefect

I'm Ella and this year I have been chosen as one of the six Senior Prefects. I am currently studying English Language, R.E, Psychology and History. I am planning to go to university to study English Language, with a hope to eventually becoming a secondary school teacher. In my spare time I am an assistant at a dance company for ages 3+, including people with special educational needs, and I volunteer at my local primary school. I also have a regular babysitting and waitressing job. I am working towards my Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award and my V Impact Volunteering Award. In 2008, I travelled to Mongolia with the Yorkshire Schools Exploring Society and I am planning to return in 2011 as a leader of a group. As a Senior Prefect, I would like to work on building bonds between different years within the school and give the prefects, and Senior Prefects, a very active role within school life. After 5 years at North Halifax, I want to help ensure that everyone else is getting as much out of their school life as I have.

Bethany Pattinson

Senior Prefect

My name is Beth Pattinson and I recently joined North Halifax Sixth Form in September 2009. The welcoming atmosphere at NHGS helped me

“settle in” immediately and I have made many new friends. I am currently studying English Language, History, Music and French and in the future after my A levels I hope to study Music or English Language.

Music is a big part in my life. I play the piano, alto saxophone and clarinet. I have joined the Concert Band and Saxophone Group at school. Out of school, I play with Calderdale Music Service with the Jazz Orchestra and Wind Band. For the past year I have volunteered at the Calderdale Junior Wind Band on a Saturday morning as part of my Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award after completing the Bronze and Silver levels.

In summer 2008, I went to Australia with the Calderdale Music Service after many fundraising events! These included, bag packing, BBQs and selling CDs. I spent three weeks touring around Western Australia staying with a host family in Perth for a week and then camps for the rest of the time. As a member of the group I took part in music festivals, a bush tucker trial and kayaking to name a few.

I know I have been very lucky and recently I visited Paris with my French AS level group and the photography department. I like to find out about other cultures, people, lifestyles and fashion!

I have an outgoing personality and love to learn new things. One of my most memorable experiences was when I went sailing in summer 2007 around Scotland. I spent a week on a 72 foot ketch sailing boat, experiencing unforgettable highs and lows including terrible sea sickness!

I am an enthusiastic person and love to work as a team to get things done. Over the next year I hope to be a role model and friendly face. I will listen to student voices and try to include ideas from everyone.

Sophie Beverley

Senior Prefect

My name is Sophie and I am currently studying Chemistry, Maths, Physics and Biology at AS level with the intention of studying medicine at university. Other than my academic studies my main interests lie in music and performance. I play flute and I am a member of the school

orchestra and during my time at the school I have been on two music tours. I enjoy singing and have passed my grade 5 exam as well as singing in the mixed voice choir and with a vocal harmony group ‘Octave’. I have danced from a very young age and regularly enter competitions and exams in many styles including ballet, tap and modern. I have recently taken on the role of choreographer in a First Bow production. This year I have joined the school debating society as well as becoming operations director for a Young Enterprise Company, two entirely new experiences which I am enjoying very much. I am delighted to have been selected as a senior prefect and I am looking forward to the challenges in the coming year!

Miles Brown

Senior Prefect

Hi, I’m Miles. For my AS levels I’m studying Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Spanish and English Language. I also study GCSE Italian after school each Wednesday. When I leave school after my A Levels, I would like to go to University to study either Medicine or Dentistry. My main interest is sport, which is why I play football for a team called Wilsden Juniors and hockey for Halifax Hockey Club. I am part of Young Enterprise Company called Empire and have completed my V50 Award for volunteering and I am also doing my Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. As a Senior Prefect I would like to change how Prefects are perceived, not only with this year’s Prefects, but with Prefects in the years to come. I think that this Senior Prefect team will lay the foundations for a new form of Prefect.

Bethany Broadbent

Senior Prefect

My name is Bethany and I have been at the school since Year 7, and chose to stay on at sixth form. I am currently studying Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths and French. I would like to study Biochemistry at university, with the hope of having a career in scientific research. I play the flute and have passed my Grade 5, and I am working towards my Grade 5 Music Theory. I play in the school Concert Band and Flute group and am a member of a band called Crescendo. I also enjoy singing and sing in the Mixed Voice Choir, and I also sing in Halifax Young Singers outside of school. I am a science

mentor to Year 7 students, and I am involved in a First bow production. I am also the Managing Director of a Young Enterprise company. Outside of school I am a part-time childminder for two little girls and I have a weekend job at a café. I also help to run the Under 7's group at my local church.

Debating Society

The winter months have proved busy months for our debaters. Students have entered four national competitions, a workshop and we have continued to meet every Thursday lunchtime in SF2 and hone our debating and public-speaking skills.

The first round of the English Speaking Union Schools Mace competition was held on the 14th December. Rhiannon Barrow and Vanessa White faced the challenge of addressing a room full of people from a range of schools on the motion: "This House Believes That Dictators Should Be Assassinated." They were complimented by the judge for the quality of their research and the structure of their arguments, but unfortunately didn't make it through to the second round.

On the 10th December Miss Ashwood and I accompanied twelve students to a workshop run by the Oxford Union explaining more clearly the rules of British parliamentary style debating and giving students the option to take part in a range of short debates. John Finnerty won the initial "balloon" debate where he took on the role of Hippocrates and argued that his life was worth saving more than Michael Jackson's or Margaret Thatcher's. Following this, Thomas Watson from the Oxford Union explained to us the roles of different positions round the debating table, how to use points of information to advantage and the importance of not trying to "squirrel" a debate.

This information came in handy in January when John Finnerty, Rose Wyatt, Sophie Beverley and Callum Macrae came with us to the Leeds Grammar School to take part in the Oxford Competition where our teams were set to debate the motion: "This house believes that prostitution should be legalised". Unfortunately the snow (which had caused the event to be postponed once already in January) was falling heavily and so the second round of the event was cancelled. Although neither team proceeded through to the next round, they

received helpful feedback from the judges and John Finnerty's account of this event is below.

Also in January the first round of the English Speaking Union Public Speaking Competition took place and I accompanied Callum Macrae, Thomas Platt, David Greenwood and Sana Ilyas to Bradford Girls Grammar. David spoke eloquently against the notion that "Preserving the past is inhibiting the future". Callum chaired a speaker from Bradford Girls' Grammar who spoke on the value of eccentricity and Thomas asked some pertinent questions on this topic. The students were runners up to Bradford Girls Grammar, beating some stiff competition from Crossleys and Batley Grammar, and they received certificates and prizes.

It is not often that teachers have to get up earlier at weekends than they do in the week, or students perhaps for that matter, but that is the position Miss Ashwood and I found ourselves in when we accompanied Sophie Beverley, Callum Macrae and John Mount to the Manchester Union Schools Competition on the 6th February. Sophie and Callum were competing against an array of schools from private schools such as St Paul's, St Francis Xavier or Bradford Grammar to big comprehensives in Manchester such as Parrs Wood. Everyone was gathered in to the large lecture theatre where the motion and positions in the debate were announced only 15 minutes before the debates. The motions were: This House would ban all faith schools; This House would allow people to sell their organs in a regulated market; This House regrets the UK's involvement in America's wars and This House would make all team sports in the UK have to be gender-balanced.

Although we didn't make it into the final, we stayed to watch and were absolutely mesmerised by the final. The topic was: This house would, as Israel, abolish conscription but restrict the right to vote to those who served in the armed forces. A truly challenging topic and not one I personally would find entertaining. I was wrong. As soon as the first speaker took to the floor, we realised that successful debating could be as enjoyable to watch as a performance or show. All the teams were extremely competent debaters but the winners in the end were St Paul's. Although we had to drive back later than expected (the schedule had over-run and we didn't get back to Halifax until nearly 10pm) and we had to contend with thick fog on the M62, we were really pleased that we had stayed to watch that final as it had

taught us as much as all the feedback from the judges.

I would personally like to thank Miss Ashwood for her support at these events and both Miss Ashwood and Mr MacKay for their continuing support of the debating society. I would also like to congratulate all those students who have taken part in these events. It isn't easy standing up and arguing your corner for a full five minutes, especially if you don't particularly agree with what you have to argue. However, as the lawyer who addressed us at the Manchester Competition pointed out, it is an incredibly useful skill to develop. Debating helps you to articulate your ideas and helps you to develop confidence when expressing them in front of other people. She felt very strongly that debating contributed not only to her career progression but also to her own personal development.

What next? The national competitions are over for this year. However, we continue to meet on Thursday lunchtimes in SF2. Next week we are debating whether democracy is a valid political system. I am also in the process of arranging some friendly debates with other local schools. If any students are interested in debating, now would be a good time to join and develop your debating skills.

Who would it suit? Anyone. It is ideal for a whole array of people: those who like a good argument, who have an interest in current affairs, who want to take part in something different as an extra-curricular activity, who want to meet people from other year groups, who want to develop their confidence at public speaking, who are interested in thinking critically around issues, who have a career in mind where communication is essential, who want to push themselves and take on a new challenge. If any of the above apply to you and you are interested in taking part, see Miss Kent, Miss Ashwood or Mr MacKay. If I haven't persuaded you that debating is a worthwhile activity, perhaps the accounts of the events by the students below will help you to make up your mind...

ALK

Manchester Union Debating Competition

Bright and early on a Saturday morning, the NHGS debating team convened at the Roscoe Building of Manchester University for their first serious debating competition. After a brief

introduction the proceedings soon got underway and the first round began.

As somewhat inexperienced debaters, the NHGS team were slightly overwhelmed by stiff competition, and unfortunately, the team were assigned last place after the first debate, in which they proposed the motion 'People should be allowed to sell their organs on a government controlled market'. The second round yielded no better results for the NHGS team, who unfortunately received last place again for their performance in the second debate of the day, where they opposed the motion, 'All faith schools should be banned'.

However, after a light lunch and some time to reflect on the day so far, the NHGS team came into round three with confidence and determination. After this round, in which the team opposed the motion 'This house regrets the UK's involvement in the USA's wars', it was clear that the team had learned from their mistakes in the previous rounds and were awarded first place. The fourth round also went much better for the NHGS team, who achieved a comfortable second place for proposing the motion 'All UK domestic sports teams should be gender balanced'. Unfortunately, these successes were not enough to make up for the morning's results and the NHGS team were spectators in the final debate. Despite this, the day proved very useful to the team, who have taken a lot away from the competition, and will build on these experiences to hopefully achieve more successes in the future.

Callum Macrae 11(4)

Parents' Association Change of Officers

Chair	Sue Kneller
Vice Chairman	Jan Wilson
Treasurer	John Rowley
Secretary	Angela Cowton
Prize Draw Treasurer	Linda Saunders

Oxford Union Competition – February 3rd 2010

In Oxford Union style debate, there are two teams of two speakers in proposition and two teams of two speakers in opposition to the motion. Our motion was 'This house proposes the legalisation of prostitution'. We received this

approximately a quarter of an hour before show time and the rules stated we had only our partner to confer with along with the aid of any printed materials (not that we had anything remotely useful to hand) and any electronic devices were strictly prohibited. Googling 'pros and cons of prostitution' on ones iphone was out of the question.

Rose and I were assigned to second proposition which made our job a little harder than the first two teams to battle it out, as we couldn't use any of the extremely valid points made by the first proposition, our job being to attack the argument from a different angle.

All things considered, with it being our first competitive debate and of a slightly unfamiliar format, I thought we did a fairly good job and definitely held our own! I can say with certainty that we both thoroughly enjoyed it and I would strongly recommend debating to anyone who would like to learn how to argue 'properly'.

John Finnerty U6(9)

Public Speaking Competition

On 28th January, the NHGS public speaking team, including Thomas Platt, Callumn McRae and myself, took part in the English Speaking Union Public Speaking Competition at Bradford Girls' Grammar School. The team was also accompanied by Miss Kent, team mentor and chauffeur for the evening, and Sana Ilyas, potential future public speaker.

We were met at Bradford Girls' by a team from Crossley Heath School and, of course, the host school. The prospect of competing against a host of teams from such prestigious schools daunted some members of our team (namely myself) more than others, although the friendly approach to the proceedings along with the school's "biscuity" goodness helped us all compose ourselves for the event.

Speaking on the subject of whether preserving the past is inhibiting the future, I was introduced and questioned by two students from the host school, whilst Callumn and Thomas respectively chaired and questioned a speaker from Bradford Girls'. The evening also saw speeches on the value of eccentricity and the extent of global US consumerism, the latter speech of which attracted the most discussion and dissection from the audience.

As the team's speaker, the opportunity to prepare for the event largely beforehand gave me reassurance on the day, although the prospect of interrogation by an opposing team's questioner still managed to pressure me. In contrast, Callumn and Thomas's roles as chair and questioner gave little opportunity for prior preparation, with their ability to think on their feet proving key to success on the day.

The event put all on the team through a rollercoaster of moods, ranging from mindless panic (mainly on the part of myself) to pride at achieving second place in what was the first of such competitions for all on the team. Everyone on the team agreed that, despite the terrifying idea of the speaking at such a respected event, the competition was a great experience and hope that this will only encourage potential future NHGS public speakers.

David Greenwood 11(3)

English Speaking Union Schools' Mace Competition – December 14th 2009

'Should dictators be assassinated?' That was the topic Rhiannon Barrow and myself were faced with when representing NHGS at the English Union Schools' Mace. With our combined knowledge and in-depth research, we thought we would prove to be a daunting opposition. However, on arrival at Calder High, several teams of confident and well-prepared students were seated, ready to challenge us. As if the prospect of talking for seven minutes straight – individually, wasn't scary enough, an audience of teachers and students surrounded us. However, we successfully managed to build up the courage to address our audience.

In a way, being involved in the last debate was helpful as we could use techniques and tactics that we had already seen being put to use, although this meant that the pressure kept mounting as the standard of the debates we watched were all equally impressive. Overall, a very good experience which we both thoroughly enjoyed!

Nessa White L6(3)

Unlike previous debating competitions, Nessa White and I entered on our own. The subject was 'This house would assassinate dictators'

and we were the opposition. We had prepared a lot of good points to argue but nothing could prepare us for the anxiety we felt in the actual competition. It was a different debate to last time in that, this time, we had to stand up individually in front of a room full of people and the proposition and propose our argument in seven minutes. We were so nervous but we managed to get our points across and present a good case against the assassination of dictators. We were competing against five other schools and in the end, Greenhead College won but one of the judges advised us as to where we could improve for any future debates.

We both thought this extra-curricular activity was a great opportunity and one which we learnt a lot from.

Rhiannon Barrow L6(2)

Congratulations to Patrick McCallion

Patrick McCallion 11(4) is a member of the Halifax Light Opera Junior Society section and on Saturday February 20th was awarded the Ian Mitchell Memorial Prize. This is awarded each year to a member of the society who has shown commitment and dedication and generally been helpful and made other members of the cast/society feel welcome. It is voted for by fellow members of the society and so often means an awful lot to those who do win it.

This follows a very successful week appearing in Anything Goes at the Halifax Playhouse alongside Kate Machon 9(4), Roisin McCallion 9(5), Phillippa Freeman 7(1) and Kelsey Smith L6(8).

RAP

NHGS Year 9 Cricket

This year has been a huge success for our Year 9 indoor cricket team, winning the Calderdale Schools' Trophy for their age group. The competition involves teams from all over Calderdale split into two groups, with each team consisting of eight players. Our team qualified through the round robin stage, with victories over Calder High, Todmorden and Halifax High.

After we qualified as group winners, we went on to play Brighouse High in the final at Halifax High. We batted first and posted a total of 113 for 6 wickets from 16 overs. With scores from Patrick Wild (30), Tom Hammond (22), Matthew

Smith (16), Jake Finch (15) and Ben Clarke (10 not out). The victory was secured when we bowled Brighouse High out for only 50, with wickets from Adam Lewis (2), Patrick Wild (2), Jake Finch (1) and Matthew Smith (1) with also a run out.

The following eleven students all played in this year's competition:

Matthew Smith (Capt. Year 8)
Jake Finch (Year 8)
Patrick Wild (Year 9)
Alex Lea (Year 8)
Tom Hammond (Year 8)
Adam Lewis (Year 9)
Nat Skirrow (Year 8)
Ben Clarke (Year 8)
Hadley Greenwood-Brown (Year 9)
Joe Hollis (Year 8)
Jacob Stapley (Year 8)

Matthew Smith 8(4)

French night

Further to the January newsletter where parents were advised of a change of date for the French night. Unfortunately the new date of 24th April has had to be **revised**. Please watch this space for further details.

Calderdale School Transport Policy Consultation

Calderdale Council have asked us to publicise their consultation on a possible change to the School Transport Policy. The area concerned may not directly impact on many, if any, parents but you might well want to express a view.

Details are as follows:

HAVE YOUR SAY NOW!

Following new legislation Calderdale Council made changes to the home to school transport policy which came into effect September 2008. For a number of families in Calderdale this means that they no longer qualified for transport assistance to their nearest Calderdale School as

there was a nearer school outside the Calderdale boundary.

Members are now considering whether to use discretion in order to provide transport assistance for those families who are attending their nearest Calderdale secondary school who meet the distance criteria set out in the home to school transport policy even though there is a nearer out of authority school.

It is important, therefore, that we get your views and comments before a decision is taken to amend the policy in order that it can be published in time for pupils transferring in 2011.

A questionnaire is available for completion at the following website:

www.calderdale.gov.uk/council/consultations/engage/getinvolved.jsp

Alternatively, contact the Access Team on 01422 392749 for a copy.

**All comments must be received by
17 March 2010.**

Forthcoming PA Meetings

Meetings run from 7.30pm to 9.30pm prompt.

3 March 2010

14 April 2010

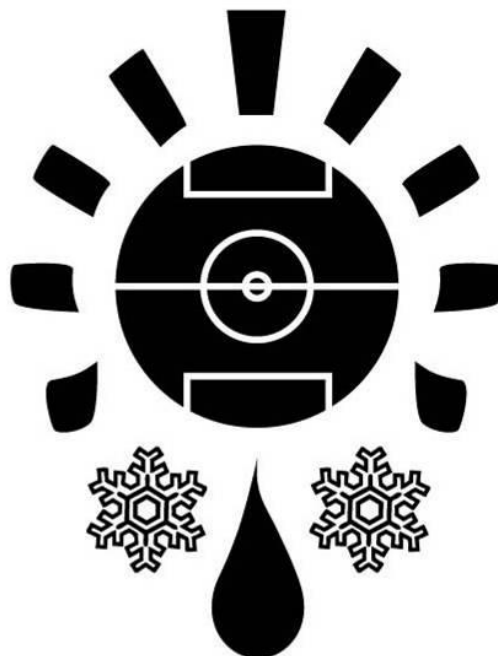
5 May 2010

Everyone welcome!

PA All Weather Pitch Logo

Many thanks to students in Year 10 Graphics GCSE who designed possible logos for the campaign to raise funds for the All Weather Pitch.

Well done to Isabelle Mooney 10(5) who designed the winning logo.



“report it”

This is a new facility available to all students, staff and parents through the school website. It has been set up to allow any member of the school community to report anything which they feel is making either themselves or someone else less happy, less healthy or less safe than they should be. Typically, it might be used to report incidents of bullying or issues to do with welfare which might be difficult to talk about face to face or over the phone.

If you click on the button to make a report, you will be invited to enter your name, but if you prefer to remain anonymous then that is okay. You will be asked to write about the incident/issue in as much detail as you want and to click on “submit”. If what you want to report is very serious, the “report it” page will carry a link to CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection), a police organisation who can respond to criminal actions or the threat of harm.

When a report is made, it will be picked up by a member of the school’s “report it” team. It will then be passed on to the member(s) of staff most suited to deal with the exact nature of the matter reported. The intention is not to bypass or replace existing reporting procedures but to ensure that there are as many ways as possible to ensure that people are able to get the help that they need.

EARLY SCHOOL CLOSURE

Thursday 25th March

On Thursday 25th March the school is holding its annual Prize Day event which commences at 3.30pm. In order to be ready for the event, the school will close at 2.00pm on this day and it has been arranged for school buses to collect students at this earlier time.

The North Halifax Grammar School Parents' Association

Parent Prom

Saturday 20th March 2010

The Legends Suite, Coral Stand, Odsal Stadium, Bradford BD6 1BS

7.00pm for 7.30pm till 1am

Parents, friends and staff are all welcome.

I would like:-tickets at £25 each
I would like a table forguests @ £25 per guest
(Tables can be booked for 8, 9 or 10 people if you so wish).

I enclose £..... cash / cheque **OR** paid £.....on Parent Pay
(please make cheques payable to NHGS Parents' Association)

Names of those attending (to help with seating plan) or **table name** (ie Linda's table).

.....
.....

Special requests (*please tick*)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Singles table | <input type="checkbox"/> Year 7 parents' table | <input type="checkbox"/> Year 8 parents' table |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Year 9 parents' table | <input type="checkbox"/> Year 10 parents' table | <input type="checkbox"/> Year 11 parents' table |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sixth Form parents' table | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Name and address:.....
.....
.....

Telephone..... **E-mail address**.....

Name of student (if applicable)..... **Form**.....

**Please return to the Finance Office, NHGS for the attention of Mrs Simpson NHGS,
Moorbottom Road, Illingworth, Halifax, HX2 9SU or email to angela.cowton@virgin.net
Bookings will be acknowledged so please chase up if nothing is heard within a week.**

Menu - to be chosen in advance - please indicate choices below (or leave till later)

To Start

- Cream of Mushroom Soup
- Smoked Haddock Pate

To Follow

- Roast Spring Chicken Supreme Served with Yorkshire Pudding
 - Braised Beef in Ale with Herb Dumplings
 - Mediterranean Vegetable Risotto (V)
- Served with selection of fresh vegetables and baby new potatoes*

To Finish

- Sticky Toffee Pudding with an English Custard Sauce
- Chocolate and Hazelnut Meringue