



# Dingwall Academy

## News

**Welcome!** This month's newsletter is packed with achievement—we are so proud of our pupils and those who support them!



**Please note:** With the weather turning colder it is important that all parents are familiar with the winter weather arrangements. They have been emailed to all parents and are also available via the school website. Parents of pupils who travel on D&E coaches are reminded that D&E have a Facebook page which is kept up to date with all routes and any changes.

### Slot Car Racing Champ!



**We have a British Champion in our midst!** Congratulations to **Murray Wallace 4B1** who was recently crowned the British Slot Car Racing Champion.

Murray and his Dad Richard travelled to Blackpool over 9th and 10th November to compete in the 20th Finals of the British Slotracing

League. The racing took place on a six-lane, forty metre per lap track. Saturday was for practice and a four man team warm up race. The team took second place in this but first in class, earning their first trophy. Sunday morning was individual racing. Murray made the top final, finishing fifth, but winning the class for standard motors. On Sunday afternoon, the premier two man team race took place. Murray and his Dad went into this leading the series. They won the race against some top competition, winning the trophy. This success won them the series overall, bringing the trophy total to four. This is the first time a Scottish team has brought the trophy to Scotland. Murray is a member of Highland Slot Car Club. If you are interested in this fast and exciting sport then speak with Murray.

## NOVEMBER



## 2013 EDITION

### Contents

- Computing Science News
- Success! Success!
- Parliament Trips
- RHS Award
- Mountain Bike Update
- Back in the Day: 1950s
- ... and more!

### Dates for your diary:

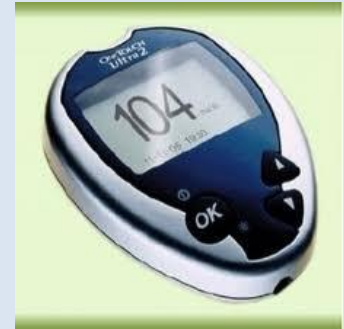
**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**  
S5/6 Contact Evening  
5.00 – 7.30

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December**  
S3/4 Information Evening  
7:00-8:00

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December**  
Christmas Concert  
5.00 – 7.30

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December**  
School closes for Winter Break

# News from Computing Science



## Lifescan Visit

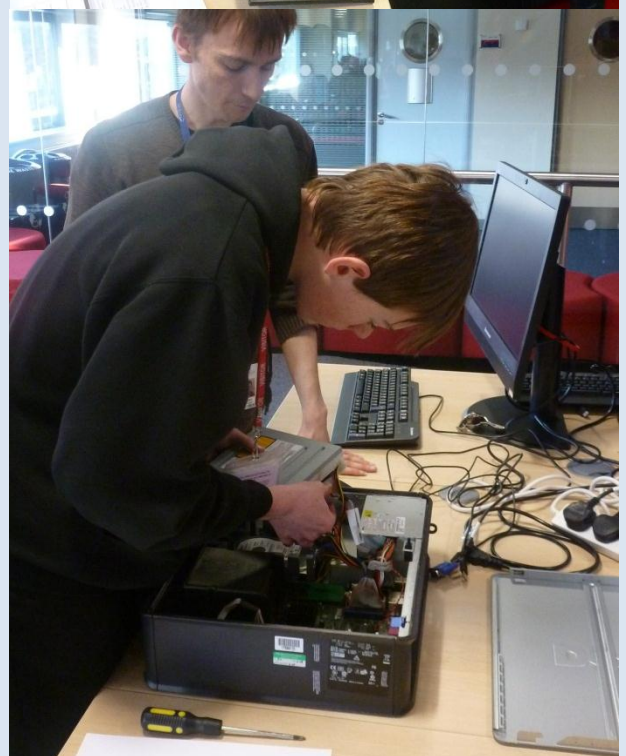
On Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> of November, two S4 Computing Science classes went to Lifescan in Inverness. This is a huge building - 4 football pitches long. Lifescan make strips used in diabetic testing equipment.

We went so we could find out more about networking and spent the day doing five activities:

- Setting up a network with the help of the Lifescan staff
- Listened to a presentation on application development
- Took part in quiz on networking
- Built a computer
- Looked at the Server room

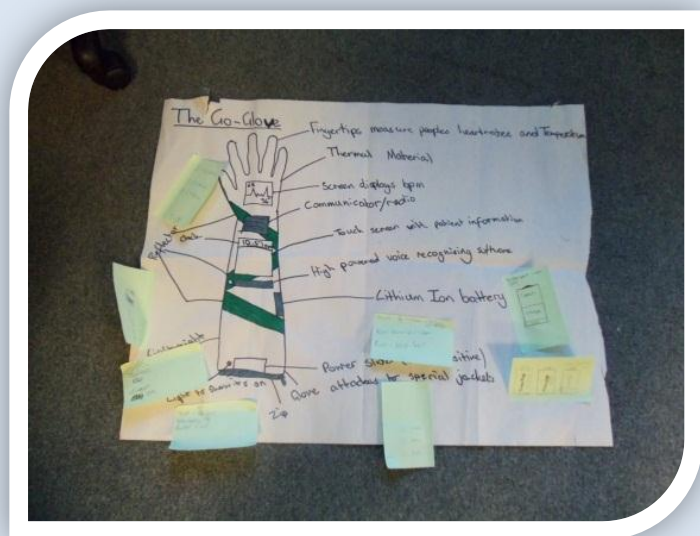
All the activities were fun as well as learning a lot. Overall we enjoyed the trip very much. When we were walking to and back from the server room we saw how the machines worked and how the products of Lifescan were being made.

By Mike and Paul





# S3 Computing Science



Our project from October until Christmas is called Emerging Technology. It is about using devices in emergency situations. Our task is to create our own user interface to display patient information. So far we have looked at battery life, made animations and made computer programs to process information and make decisions. Some groups are designing tablets, watches, glasses and others are designing gloves. Dr Mort and Anne Schneider from Aberdeen University have come in to talk to us about what they do and how that links in with our project.

By Anna and Laura S3

## Remembrance Day 2013

Leading up to November 11<sup>th</sup> Senior Pupils sold poppies to pupils and staff. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this. The Social Subjects department organised and delivered a Remembrance Day Assembly to S3 pupils. Senior Pupils helped with the presentations and the assembly was very well received by an extremely attentive S3 audience. On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November the whole school fell silent to observe the 2 minutes silence at 11am.



## Bjorn the Polar Bear



A number of senior pupils helped with the visit of Bjorn the Polar Bear to Dingwall. This was a council organised event and signalled the start of the winter celebrations in the town. The organisers were extremely grateful to all pupils who gave their time to help make the event such a success.

*"I learned how to relax and think more positively."*



*"It was really good and I learned a lot about the brain and the mind. The part where we did the visualisation was worthwhile and interesting."*

tree of knowledge

*"I learned a lot of new things about the brain and how we function. I learned to be positive and not be afraid to express my feelings. I think that it was a great experience and it has made me a lot more confident."*

All S4 pupils recently took part in a seminar with the Tree of Knowledge Company. Pupils looked at exam preparation and were shown how a positive approach can make a significant difference. Pupils were also given advice on strategies to use to help stay calm and focused in the lead up to exams.

Parents of S4 pupils were also given the opportunity to come along in the evening to learn more about what the pupils had been doing. Feedback from the pupils involved was extremely positive.

# Halloween Disco



Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October saw all sorts of interesting outfits arrive at the Academy for the Senior Halloween Disco. The evening was organised by the Seniors themselves and all who attended are to be commended for their excellent behaviour and standard of fancy dress. Thanks also to all staff who helped supervise on the night.



# Whole School Notes & News

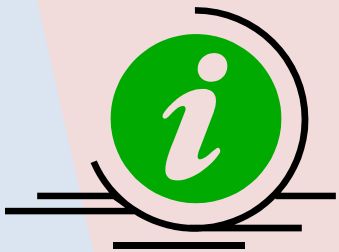
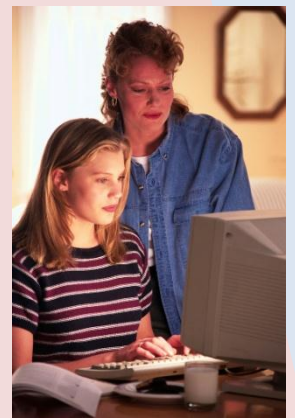


## Staffing

Welcome to Mr E Smart who joins the Science Department as a teacher of Physics. Welcome also to Mrs S MacKenzie who has started work as a Pupil Support Assistant. We are delighted to welcome them both to Dingwall Academy. We have also said goodbye to Mrs Gilchrist, Pupil Support Assistant, and wish her all the best in her new post.

## S3/4 Parent Information Evening

An information session to look at the new National Qualifications will be held for parents of pupils in S3 and S4 on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December in the school hall 7 – 8pm. The session will outline the new National Qualifications and the assessment requirements of the new National Courses. The evening will also look at the options available to pupils in S4, S5 and S6 and will also provide some advice to parents on supporting pupils with their studying.



## S5/6 Contact Evening

There will be a contact evening for S5/6 parents on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Appointment slips have been issued to pupils this week.

## S1 Parent Session

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November S1 parents were welcomed to the school for appointments with Principal Teachers of Pupil Support and to attend an information session entitled 'Don't you have any homework tonight?' The session looked at how parents could support pupils with their studying and highlighted the shift from 'set' homework in Primary to pupils taking responsibility for their own study and revision in Secondary. The event was well attended and feedback was very positive overall.



## Christmas Concert



The annual Christmas Concert is a highlight of the festive season. This year's concert takes place on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December. Parents will be advised when tickets go on sale.



## Hairdressing Competitions

A number of our pupils attend a Hairdressing Course at Inverness College one day each week. Last week they were involved in a competition to produce a Fairy Tale themed hairstyle, with the winners being put forward to the School/Link category in the North East Scotland Hair & Beauty Festival being held in Aberdeen Beach Ballroom.

They spent most of the morning furiously practicing and the hairstyles produced were excellent, creative and imaginative. Dingwall Academy pupils did extremely well, dominating the Intermediate 1 group.

### Intermediate 1 Group

Anna Hubbard 1<sup>st</sup> place  
Abbiegail Mutter 2<sup>nd</sup> place  
Jemma Rollo – 3<sup>rd</sup> place  
Lauren Foster – 4<sup>th</sup> place

Good luck to all the girls in Aberdeen!



## Swimming Gala

Congratulations to those pupils who recently took part in the Highland Schools Swimming Gala in Inverness. The following pupils achieved podium finishes – **Adrian Moody 4N1** 2<sup>nd</sup> 100m Freestyle and 3<sup>rd</sup> in 200m Individual Medley. **Dean Brannen 2T2** 2<sup>nd</sup> 100m Backstroke and 3<sup>rd</sup> in 200m Individual Medley.

David has recently competed in the Scottish Junior Gala in Glasgow – he had a very successful day coming away with one gold, one silver and one bronze. Way to go!

## DEASBAD BT ALBA

### BT Scotland National Schools Debate

Congratulations to **Joanna Macdonald** and **Eleanor Wilson**, both S5, who participated in the prestigious annual debating competition for Gaelic speakers at the beginning of November. They were drawn against a strong team from Oban High School in the first round and succeeded in getting through to the second round where they won against a team from Lochaber High School. Their topic in the first round was “It should be illegal not to use your vote in elections” and in the second, “Today’s heroes aren’t what they used to be.”

Both girls were excellent ambassadors for their school and its Gaelic Department. Fantastic work!



## S1/2 Boys Rugby Tastes More Success

After their success at the Ross-Sutherland 7's tournament in June, the S1/2 rugby team had another chance to pit their skills against other schools from Ross-Shire at a 10 aside tournament held in Invergordon on Wed 30<sup>th</sup> Oct.

With a strong team travelling there was high hopes for some good performances, particularly after the commitment and great attitude that the boys had been displaying at training in recent weeks. The boys came up against five other schools and showed great determination and skill to win all five games. They had very comfortable wins over Tain Royal Academy, Invergordon Academy and Golspie High school with Alness Academy and Plockton High School proving slightly tougher opponents. There was no shortage of individual skill and physical ability on display, however; the boys also began to gel as a team as the tournament progressed. The team scored over 20 tries scored in total and were led exceptionally well by their captain **Jacob Henry**. A special mention also goes out to **Finlay Rollo, Angus Davren, Dean Brannen** and **Lewis Wolstenhulme** who made fine debuts for the Dingwall Academy at rugby. Other team members were **Owen Fraser, Finlay Graham, Callum Galloway, Calum Munro, James Maclean** and **Kyle Hollyoake**.

Well done to all boys involved the tournament. Next up is a tournament on **December 4<sup>th</sup> at Highland Rugby Club**. This will allow the boys to compete against Inverness schools which will be a great test of their abilities and team work. Practice continues to take place for S1 and S2 boys on a Wednesday after school until 5pm. *Any new players are most welcome to attend.*

## World Challenge Photograph Competition

At the end of World Challenge's 2013 Expedition, pupils from all over the country were invited to send in photographs from their expeditions with the winner receiving £150.

Former student Rory Russell, who took part in Dingwall's Borneo and Malaysia Expedition, was one of 12 Finalists who made it into the 2014 World Challenge Calendar. With over 500 entries from schools across the UK, this is a huge achievement for Rory.

Current Expeditioners for the 2015 Southern Tanzania expedition will be selling the calendars in the school. Prices and details to follow very soon.





# ***RHS Success***

This month, we were proud to receive notification of reaching level 3 of the RHS Gardening for Schools benchmark scheme. This is recognition of the garden being used by more classes and groups for a variety of activities. The “Growing and Diversifying” level also acknowledges good practises on the school site, like composting, using mulches, capturing rainwater and creating “bug hotels” and bird tables to encourage wildlife. Well done to everyone who has helped with gardening – keep up the good work!



Gardening ID classes compost canteen waste



Many pupils help maintain displays at the main entrance



Planting a native hedge in the new fruit garden



DiGGers! club members pot up seedlings





# To Parliament...

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, Mrs Cormack and Mrs Merrell attended a Scottish parliamentary reception to discuss the importance of educating Scotland's young people about cancer. Both gave speeches to assembled MSP's and guests of The Teenage Cancer Trust to highlight the value of educating young people about cancer and to endorse the Teenage Cancer Trust's education programme .

At Dingwall Academy, we have worked closely with The Teenage Cancer Trust for the last few years through participation in their educational activities and also as a big fundraising school. In fact, we have raised more money for them than any other school in the UK. That figure stands close to fourteen thousand pounds. Many of these fund raising events are now coordinated by pupils themselves where they demonstrate time and time again their enthusiasm and determination to support young people diagnosed with cancer.

The Chief executive of the Teenage Cancer Trust described the school as providing, 'an amazing example of what can be achieved for the benefit of all young people through implementing a coordinated programme about cancer'.



## And pupils, too...

*On arrival in Edinburgh we went to the National Museum of Scotland, which held a variety of very interesting exhibitions ranging from dinosaurs to technology and science. Afterwards we checked in at the youth hostel and were then given some time to go sightseeing. Later we all met at the Playhouse to watch Disney's Lion King which was beautifully choreographed and heart-moving. There is simply nothing else like it. The next day we were given another opportunity to explore the city before we set off for Parliament. There, we were introduced to some MSPs who answered our questions about the 2014 referendum. Later we witnessed a debate about the difference between a court and tribunal before finally setting off home. Overall the trip was very exciting. Edinburgh is a rich and vibrant city with a lot to offer and the visit to Parliament was very informative.*

**Daniel and Rory**

# English and Literacy



*Tea, anyone?*

*Mr Green's S2 class is working with the topic 'Tea' for their next unit. We are eagerly anticipating the arrival of some samples from companies big and small. We do have one request: do you have any old/interesting/surplus teaware we could have? This could be anything from an interesting teapot to an old teacup. If you do, it would be gratefully received. Please simply drop items in to the school office, and watch this space for updates on our journey into the world of tea!*

**Are you creative?** Do you want to see your work published? Have you got something to say? If so, we want YOU. We are currently looking for enthusiastic reporters, editors, photographers and web and graphic designers to help create a new 21<sup>st</sup> century school magazine. If this sounds like you, come along to **Room 209 Wednesday lunchtimes.**

**moniack mhor**  
scotland's creative writing centre

## Writing with the Greats

Dingwall Academy's Higher and Advanced Higher English students were recently given the opportunity to attend a Highland Youth fair, successfully run by Scotland's creative writing centre *Moniack Mhor*. Millburn Academy hosted the event, and on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November accommodated over 200 aspiring young writers from around the Highlands. *Moniack Mhor* have been running creative writing courses since 1993, taught by a selection of the UK's most talented authors and journalists.

The day was split into hubs and workshops, and students gained an insight into professional writing. We were given advice on drawing inspiration from the cover art of old books and historical artefacts, discovered more about the realm of careers within this field, told about the steps to self-publishing, taught how to edit effectively, and given tips on entering competitions.

The day was concluded with a performance from the hilarious novelist and screenplay writer, Alan Bissett. He half-read-half-acted an amusing chapter from his book *Boyracers* – the story of a 16 year old boy living in Falkirk – and not one person could withstand laughing.

Overall, the day was hugely beneficial. I think that anyone considering entering into further education and seeking a career in the sphere of writing had their eyes opened, and to have had the opportunity to speak closely with such brilliant writers was an honour.

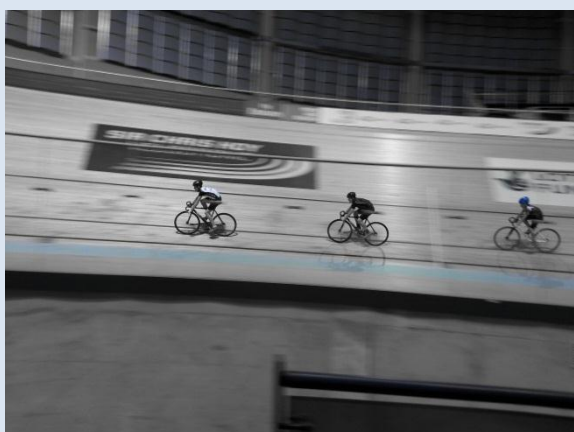
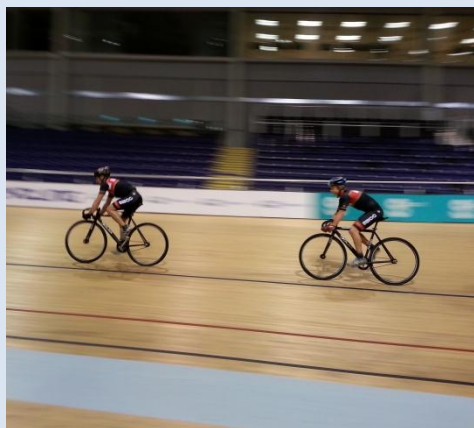
By Poppy Watson, S6





# Mountain Biking Update

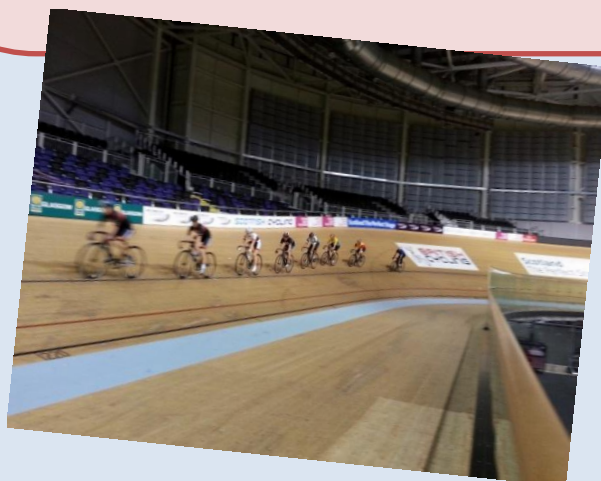
The mountain bike club braved the winter weather for a ride at Golspie on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November. Despite freezing temperatures everyone came fully prepared and enjoyed the ride, some riding the wildcat trails for the first time.



**Sam Lawton's** trip to the Olympic Mountain Bike venue (Hadley Farm) was a great success. He was part of an 8 rider team representing the North of Scotland at the Inter-regional event which they won, beating teams from South of Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Well done Sam!

School riders have also recently been racing in the North of Scotland Cycling Association (NOSCA) Dirt Crit Series. Wins for **Sam Lawton**, **Fin Graham** and **Finn Crockett** throughout the series contributed to a series win for Sam and a 2<sup>nd</sup> overall for Fin. Well done boys.

Finally a number of pupils (**Callum Williams**, **Ryan Urquart**, **Sam Lawton**, **Fin Graham**, **Finn Crockett**, **Tam Munro-White** and **Rory Graham**) travelled to Glasgow with our link club BWCC for some track time on the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome earlier this month. For some, it was their first visit whilst others were building on previous experience, however, all worked hard and were at the top of the banking in no time.





# *Back in the day...*

## 1950s



Top: S1 Class, 1954

Right: Middle Fencing Team, 1954

Bottom: Gaelic choir 1958



Welcome to our newest feature page, where we invite you take a trip down memory lane... are you, or anyone you know, in these pictures?

Have a picture you'd like to share?

Let us know!



# In the next issue of the *News...*

- Movember
- Sports Report
- Pupil Achievements
- New 'Back in the Day' photos
- And much more!

Something missing?  
Correction? Is there a feature  
you'd like to see? Get in touch!

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Many thanks to English section  
4.3 for their help in proofreading  
and editing our newsletters.



## Dingwall Academy

*A school with a sense of community—a school, where by  
taking collective responsibility, pupils and staff have the  
opportunity to achieve extraordinary things.*

Headteacher: Mrs K. Cormack

**RESPECT**

**RESPONSIBILITY**

**HONESTY**

**DETERMINATION**