



October Holidays

School closes at 2pm on Friday 5th October and re-opens for pupils at 8.50 on **Wednesday**

24th October. Secondary school staff have in-service on Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd October. Parents should note that primary school pupils return on Tuesday 23rd October.

UCAS Parent Information Night

Wednesday 26th September 7pm School Hall

This information session is for parents of pupils applying for university this session. The session will look at the application process and funding arrangements.

S1 Contact Evening

Monday 1st October 5.00 – 7.30pm

Pupils are required to arrange individual appointments with teachers. Appointment slips have been issued to pupils.

Chance to Chat

S1 parents are being given the opportunity to come into school at the end of the day for an informal chat and then have a tour of the school with their child. Tulloch and Wyvis have already hosted their events and the Brahan 'Chance to Chat' will take place on Monday 24th September. Fairburn and Novar dates will be confirmed soon.

DADS Drama Performance

The drama society will be performing 'The History of the World (Abridged)' on the 4th of October at 7.30pm in the school multi-purpose hall. Tickets cost £3 and are available from Mr Lyall in room 123 and the school office.

School Website

We are aware that some parents have experienced difficulties trying to access the school website. The host site has now been changed and the new website will be available soon. The website address remains unchanged.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Alasdair Mackenzie 1F1. Following auditions Alasdair has been chosen to play the part of the piano player in the Highland Tour of the Boy and the Bunnet.

Congratulations to Annie Fraser 5F. Annie was assisting at the recent Highland Disability Sports Day in Inverness and many people involved in the event commented on her willingness to participate and help others.

Michael MacLennan 5N and David Kerr 6N both attended the Scottish Age Band Judo Championships in Meadowbank Stadium, Edinburgh on Saturday 15th September 2012. They both fought in Age Band "D" category (under 19 years) and Michael came home with a silver medal in U81kg category and David won Gold in U73kg category. Well done boys!

Enterprising Maths Competition

Well done to Kirstin Dilley, Ruth Foster, Jill Tolmie and Eilidh Seaton who represented the school in the Enterprising Maths Competition in Millburn Academy on the 7th September. The pupils placed in the top three and have now progressed to the final in Glasgow on the 15th November. The competition combined mathematical, communication and teamwork skills and the girls worked fantastically well as a team throughout the 5 rounds. Excellent work girls!

Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions

Silver Practice Expedition:-

Five senior pupils had their Practice expedition in Letterewe Estate over the weekend of 14th to 16th September. The weather forecast was not too promising, with high winds and rain expected. As this group has already attained the Bronze Award, navigation skills were very quickly re-found, and the team set off through Poolewe Village and onto the rocky and twisty path to Loch Kernsary. The initial site for camping was found and dismissed as being too boggy. A ten minute search found a level sheltered site- the only downside was cow pats!

The first walk on Friday afternoon, after setting up the tents was to Bad Bog- some deer were spotted along with a couple of lost walkers.

Saturday was 'the big day'- in groups of two, the pupils navigated towards Fionn Loch using the established network of paths. Some team games were played- getting to know one another and the selection of their Team name (Bandit). The group managed to get to the end of the stalkers path, weather and time meant that the summit of Beinn Airigh Charr was not possible. (*Parents, these pupils can take you there!*), a long tramp back to camp-site, evening meal and a good night's sleep were hoped for and achieved. Deer were heard roaring, bats were spotted flitting and woodpeckers observed making alarm calls.

On Sunday the navigation challenge was increased and the group spent the morning micro navigating in the area behind our camping spot. Some contour lines were easier to spot than others; they soon learned what outcrops looked like on the ground. Lovely views were had, in between the heavy showers of rain.

In the early afternoon, the group made their way back to the campsite, saying their hello's to the Keeper's dogs and horses; another quick bite to eat and then check the route cards to find a different way back to the mini bus. More heavy showers came as they walked alongside the River Ewe, which was in full spate.

All were glad to have had the use of school equipment, tents, stoves, poles, gaiters & over trousers.

A quick bite was had at An Mara.....and a safe journey back to Dingwall, where parents collected them after a full 3 days walking in Letterewe Estate.

This group hopes to take their Assessed Expedition next year.

This group is currently managed by a small team of school staff and the Active School's Coordinator. WE are always looking for more adults to support the Expedition section of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Do you think you could help? If so, please contact: Cbale543@highlandschools.org.uk

Strathconon:-

On the weekend of 1st & 2nd September, two groups of S3 pupils took their Assessed Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expedition in the Strathconon area. The weather had forecasted high winds with heavy showers- it was very accurate!

After meeting with the Duke of Edinburgh Assessor, heavy packs were loaded onto backs and both groups set off, past the keeper's house at Inverchoran- both teams remarked on the energy of the bouncing dogs, safely penned in! The stream was safely crossed and the path then slowly rose up towards the double bealach. Views were limited due to being in the rain clouds!

The leaders had altered our destination, making it a longer day. Everyone was glad to eventually reach our camping area. The Duke of Edinburgh Assessor came to meet us at our camp site. A longer walk on Saturday meant that it would be slightly shorter on Sunday.

We were very glad to have been able to use the shelter (of the ruins) at CoireFeol to cook at. The ground was quite lumpy- so sorry if we bent too many tent pegs. Despite the high winds, all the tents stayed up through the night. Some of us slept better than others.

After our breakfast we 'policed' each other's camping spots- to ensure that we Left No Trace. We had another staggered departure- we did not find the path on the map....thankfully the Leaders were sitting on the horizon to guide us up. A large herd of deer was spotted. The rain had disappeared and we really appreciated just how beautiful the Highland landscape is.

After our lunch break, we found again, the path was quite tricky to follow. We remembered our planning session, 'keep the forest on the right', and so we confidently managed to make our way back to Inverchoran, greeting the dogs as we again passed them, still in their kennels.

Our last leg was to walk on the minor road back to our meeting point where we had a Team de-brief with the Duke of Edinburgh's Assessors.....we have all passed this part, with only the presentation to complete and deliver.

Parents came and collected us- everyone pleased with their efforts and that of their team. School kit would need to be cleaned & dried before returning to the school stores.

The Duke of Edinburgh's group are supported by a small team of staff- if you would like to support the Expedition section, please contact: Cbale543@highlandschools.org.uk

Auschwitz Visit

As two 6th year pupils studying history we were lucky enough to be given the incredible opportunity to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland, one of the largest death camps from WW2. The visit was organised by the LFA project and we travelled with other pupils from secondary schools across Scotland. To give us an insight to what travesties people endured under the Nazi regime. We listened to Eva Clarke's survivor testimony beforehand. It was an eye-opener to just how devastating the situation is as her whole family was almost wiped out.

The experience of visiting Auschwitz-Birkenau itself was something that we both shall never forget, as we were able to see the sight of genocide for ourselves. We were able to see the mass amount of shoes, suitcases, spectacles and even hair snatched away from innocent people before their death. There is no way that someone could visualise or personalise the 1.1 million lives taken at Auschwitz-Birkenau but what we can do is learn from past disasters and forever remember those who suffered to prevent the growth of anti-Semitism.

By Christina Mackillop and Megan Cooke

Thing Project

Last week, Dingwall History Society hosted a 2 day event based on the Dingwall Viking Thing site. A group of S1 pupils were able to visit the excavation site at the Cromarty car park in Dingwall. Beth and Rachel Oivant were then invited to speak at the conference the following day. Rachel and Beth describe the experience:-

On Wednesday 12th September two classes were lucky enough to be taken to the Viking excavation site in Cromarty car park. We were in one of those classes. It was an exciting time for us all to learn about Dingwall's past and to see a real excavation site. We learnt about Victorian pottery, decomposition of different items and how an excavation is carried out. We actually got to hold a few items they'd found. They believed they had found a moat and were hoping people had thrown out a lot of items in there.

On Thursday Rachel and I had the chance to go to a conference about the Vikings and the excavation. We had written a speech and would have to read it out. When we got there, there were a lot of people listening to a man talking about how Dingwall might or might not have been a Viking village. After this Mrs Cormack went up and talked. Just after she finished we had to go up and do our speech. It was a little frightening talking in front of so many people but it was worth it in the end. Rachel and I learnt a lot from our two days and really enjoyed them.

By Rachel & Beth Olivant

Girls Shinty

A group of Dingwall Academy shinty players here proudly model their new strips for the first time. "I am impressed with the girls' initiative", stated their coach, Gaelic teacher, Iain MacIlleChiar, "as they have gone out and raised the money for their strips by their own efforts." Half the money was raised by Donna Mackenzie and Adelle Gray applying to the Ross and Cromarty YouthBank and the rest by Donna Mackenzie and Kiera Brennan collecting discarded water bottles following Inverness marathons. Club stalwart Donna Mackenzie added "We are very grateful to the Ross and Cromarty YouthBank for giving us £200 towards the cost of the kit and are sure the smart strips will encourage other girls in school to join the team." Girls' school shinty is a relatively new development but is becoming increasingly popular. "I was approached by some of the girls six years ago when I came to Dingwall first" continued Iain MacIlleChiar "and asked to start up a team. Several of them have now gone on to play for their respective university teams while Donna plays for her nearest local ladies' team, Strathglass."



PARIS SEPTEMBER 2012

A group of 36 pupils in S2 and S3 accompanied by 5 members of staff, embarked on a Languages Department trip to Paris between the 7th and 12th of September.

The group travelled to Hull with Spa Coaches and crossed to Zeebrugge on an overnight ferry. Arriving in Paris in the early afternoon afforded the opportunity for a little retail therapy in the Créteil-Soleil shopping centre in the South-East before booking into our hotel in Meaux on the outskirts of the city and dining in a local restaurant.

The trip had to include a visit to the Eiffel Tower of course, which requires the scaling of 700 steps to reach the second floor! The view was spectacular as was the weather for the entire duration of our stay. A tour of the key monuments followed, including the Champs-Élysées, the Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame Cathedral, amongst others. Finally, we spent the afternoon in Montmartre where we visited the Basilica of the Sacré-Coeur and the Place du Tertre where artists gather to sketch and sell their wares. One of the key attractions for the youngsters, as usual, was to have a cartoon caricature of themselves drawn which always causes endless amusement.

No visit to Paris with 13 and 14 year olds would be complete without a trip to Eurodisney and the day there was a great success helped by the magnificent weather.

We left Paris on the Tuesday morning and made our way north to Zeebrugge for the return sailing. We were able to spend a lovely afternoon in Bruges in Belgium where we took in a canal boat trip and explored the many shops to stock up on Belgian chocolates and spend the last of the Euros.

All in all, the trip was a great success, due in no small part to the lovely group of pupils involved. Owing to such large demand, the second trip to Paris departs with another group during the first week of the October holidays and if it is half as good as this one, there can be no complaints!

2012 Annual Sponsored Walk Teams up With Heart Start Charity

This year's annual Sponsored Walk is set to take place on **Friday the 5th of October**. The walk aims to raise money for the school fund which finances the many extra-curricular activities the school offers, with the specific target to raise the money necessary to replace one of the school mini buses.

However, we will also be contributing a proportion of all money raised to the Lucky2BHere 'Heart Start' charity.

This is a highland charity that was established to raise funds to buy defibrillators and other lifesaving equipment for local organisations as well as funding the training for local people to use it safely.

Lucky2BHere is now a registered Charity with an elected Committee and Trustees that are involved on a voluntary basis with many other people offering their time and support.

Recently twelve pupils from the senior sports leaders' class took part in a two week course in emergency life support. This is the first group of pupil on the mainland to go through this training meaning our sports leaders are now qualified to administer resuscitation and use a defibrillator. All pupils involved displayed an excellent attitude throughout and were complimented on their mature approach to the course. The school was also presented with its very own defibrillator that will be mounted in an emergency case in the reception area of the school. More information on this charity can be found at www.lucky2bhere.org.

The walk itself will leave the school in classes from approximately 9.10am onwards. The route takes in Knockbain, Lochussie, Brahan, Seaforth and Maryburgh before returning to Dingwall, and is approximately 11 miles in length. This is a challenging walk over varied terrain and will give pupils a great opportunity to appreciate how spectacular our local surroundings are. Pupils will check off at several points on the route and again when they return back to the school at the end of the walk. Classes will be accompanied by staff with the route being marshalled by senior pupils at regular points. After the walk pupils will be free to go home but the school buses will leave at the usual time.

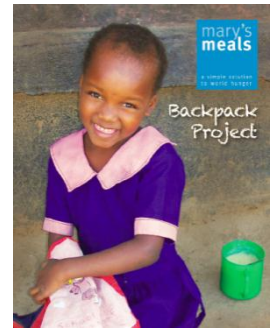
Please be aware that pupils will be asking the local community for sponsorship therefore any money received will be much appreciated and will go a long way to keeping Dingwall Academy pupils healthy and active.

Members of the public are also asked to appreciate that very large numbers of school pupils will be

walking through Dingwall and the surrounding areas throughout the day and to keep the safety of all pupils and staff in mind.

Mary's Meals Backpack Project

S1 pupils are currently fundraising for this worthwhile cause. Donation bottles are available in the foyer. Please take one and fill it with odd change and return to Mrs C Robertson in room 211. Other items we are collecting are: backpacks, spoons, soap, toothbrushes, tennis balls, towels, flip flops, t-shirts, shorts, erasers, rulers, crayons, sharpeners, pencil cases, pencils, pens, exercise books. Any donations will be gratefully received in the bucket in the foyer.



Start the Wheels Rolling

The Highlands of Scotland have some of the best mountain biking in the world, it is a cyclist paradise. Dingwall Academy is surrounded by some fantastic mountain bike trails. A new club has been formed in the school to allow students to access these brilliant locations; learn the skills of the mountain biker and if you are already an experienced rider, to get the chance to ride somewhere different with new and like-minded people.

So far the club has had a skills day where we could assess everyone's skills and have a bit of fun on the bikes. We also met up with the local Ben Wyvis mountain bike club and had a ride at Contin Woods. In the future we hope to be able to achieve one ride a week, either in the surrounding area or somewhere further afield. If we are unable to ride due to the weather, we will hold bike maintenance sessions so members will not only be able to ride their bikes but be able to fix them when they break!

Our main aim at the moment is to get out and ride as much as possible. The club is a riding club with the intention being to have fun; you don't need to have any mountain biking experience to join and if you are up for it, we look forward to riding with you soon!

Keep an eye out for information of the next meeting on the daily announcements, or contact Ryan or Mr Graham in Room 8.

Ryan Fearne S6