



Junior skiers in Zell Am See, Austria at half term

We have been thinking a lot about political issues recently. A famous economist once said that “politics consists in choosing between the disastrous and the unpalatable”. We have seen plenty of this dilemma in the pronouncements of politicians in the last year or so. An unkind description of politicians, probably from a journalist, is that they are “animals who can sit of the fence yet still keep both ears to the ground”! We are seeing a certain amount of this in the early pre-electoral skirmishes. Our Sixth Formers had the chance to grill a panel of four MPs at the recent Political Forum held in the theatre at King’s, and opened up also to pupils from other schools. It was a robust occasion in that the questions were suitably probing and tough and the party positions, and the tensions between them, became very clear. The experience was a very valuable one for all our students, and I suspect that it was also instructive for the MPs concerned (to whom, by the way, we are very grateful indeed for giving up their time and submitting themselves to this ordeal).

In the week in which I am writing, we are holding an election on European Education at King’s. You will see some of the background to this on the back page of this Bulletin. Twenty of our Lower Sixth Formers have been engaged on an EU funded project this year in collaboration with students of the same age from France and Germany. It will be very interesting to see which way our pupils vote when choosing between either a nationalist view of education or (the other extreme) a common core of educational content in all EU schools, or some middle way. These are the positions of the three parties, and they have caught the mood of Westminster already in being thoroughly rude about each other’s manifestos! The results of the elections in the three schools will be taken by the students and some of our teachers to the European Parliament in Strasbourg in June – a very exciting and fulfilling end to a good project.

Meantime, we are well into our first year of teaching Politics at A Level and have no doubt that this is a subject that will grow in numbers over the years to come.

An event that looks likely to be taking place in the week of the General Election is the King’s School fête. I don’t think we will be looking for an MP to open it! They will all be far too busy trying to retain or capture a seat in the House. The King’s School Parents’ Committee is, I can assure you, an entirely non-political group and all the more effective for that. They will be seeking your support in any way that you feel able to offer it nearer the time. The main thing that we wish for is your presence on the day with plenty of money to spend! The quality of the House stalls in particular (but of a number of others too) depends almost entirely on the contribution of King’s families. Please let us have as much as you can in the way of books, CDs, DVDs, games, toys, sports and outdoor equipment, art and craft items, bottles and (on the day) cakes. It is important that everything should be of good quality! Weather permitting, it will be a very good day, as ever.

I am very grateful to all those who supported the Humphrey and Renshaw evening in the theatre recently. It was both very entertaining and very profitable. Remember that the big project for the Parents’ Committee at the moment is a creation of a covered walk-way outside the dining hall to make queuing for lunch an experience that is less at the mercy of the elements.

Tim Keyes

A pick of recent events and achievements...

The first **Open Week** at **King's Hawford** was a great success with a good number of visitors enjoying their tour of the school and some registering their interest in a place as a result.

Despite challenges posed by the weather, **cross-country** has again proved to be a very popular activity at Hawford. Children from Year 4 have been performing particularly well with the boys' team winning and the girls' team coming third in the U9 competition at Hallfield. Preparations are now well underway for our own Inter-School Event later in March and for the Inter-House competition, postponed due to freezing weather conditions in January!

The **LAMDA Showcase**, which involved children from Years 3 to 6 was rescheduled due to the snow. It was well worth the wait, however, and parents thoroughly enjoyed a most entertaining performance of poetry and recitals.

Our **U10 Netball team** were runners up, in a very strong competition, at the Bromsgrove Tournament, where they competed against 13 other schools. Girls from Years 5 and 6 are now training hard in preparation for the IAPS tournament.

At **King's St. Alban's** the **U9 Netball** squad has continued its promising start to the season and remain unbeaten while the U11A team is practising hard in preparation for the regional finals of the IAPS national tournament. Recently, the **cross-country** team braved awful conditions to perform creditably at the St. Richard's competition whilst over 40 children enjoyed warmer conditions as they took part in an exciting **swimming gala** against Solihull School – the noise inside the King's pool was deafening with 80 competitors and their supporters in full cry!

Preparations are well underway for the whole school production and exhibition that represents the culmination of this year's **Creative ConneXions** creative arts project: Oceans. Recently, the children in Year 6 have worked on parts of the score for the production with professional composer Andrew Kristy and have enjoyed dance workshops with the dancer Dave MacKenna from Being Frank Physical Theatre Company.

Year 5 enjoyed **Think Tank** in Birmingham – particularly the planetarium; Year 3 investigated rock pools at the **Birmingham Sea Life Centre** and Year 4 visited **Bishop's Wood** before Half-Term and became Saxons for the day. Activities included shelter building and spinning wool.

At the **Senior School** in late January the Fourth Forms (Yrs 7 & 8) and Lower Remove (Yr 9) German pupils watched a **German play**, *Man Spricht Deutsch*, which proved a very funny and entertaining piece of drama.

As part of the **Holocaust Memorial Day**, a group of Lower Sixth Historians attended a talk at Wolverhampton University by Martin Stern, a child survivor of the Nazi death camps. His account of his 'arrest' in Holland, aged 5, and his time at Terezin Concentration Camp was a powerful and moving story. Remarkably Dr Stern, a retired GP from Leicestershire, described his feelings towards the perpetrators of the Final Solution as ones of sorrow rather than of hatred. He emphasized how little the world has learned from the actions of the Nazis and how most of those people carrying out the appalling atrocities he witnessed were ordinary citizens.

Also in January, members of the Cathedral Foundation, including King's and Queen's Scholars, choristers and members of the girls' choir, attended a special Evensong in which the **Foundation Roll Call** was read out, followed by a dinner in the Chapter House, hosted by the Cathedral.

Upper Sixth **Classical Civilisation** students went to London for a day of lectures on Virgil's Aeneid, hosted by the Francis Holland School. The lectures, given by university lecturers, provided interesting and useful angles of study on the epic poem; there was also time at the end of the day for a whistle stop tour of the British Museum and University College London.

Boys were the focus for the first **Young Performers' Concert** of the term. A delightful concert was warmly supported by friends and family of the players.

On the last weekend of January, Mrs Diana Gotts, an expert debating coach, came to give an intensive workshop to a group of debaters, who

Photographs - clockwise from top-left:

- Year 4 (KSA) trip to Bishop's Wood
- KSA pupils took part in the St. Richard's cross-country competition, despite awful weather conditions
- Children at King's Hawford raising money for Haiti through cake sales; making a donation to have a photograph taken with the replica football trophies was a great fund raiser
- KSA's U9 Netball team
- Pancake Races at the senior school, in aid of the Haiti appeal.



were mostly Sixth Formers but included an UR (Yr 10) and two keen U4 (Yr 8). Mrs Gotts took the group through the **British Parliamentary Debating** format, explaining the role of each speaker, then four full debates were held on topical motions such as 'This House would legalise assisted suicide' and 'This House would lower the voting age to 16.' Pupils' debating skills improved dramatically over the weekend and great fun was had by all.

In February, three teams of Sixth Formers entered the Birmingham Regional Round of the **Oxford Union Schools' Debating Competition**, held at Solihull School. Each team debated twice, the first motion being 'This House would legalise guns' and the second 'This House would impose 100% inheritance tax'. The standard of debating was very high. One of our teams (Anthony Harding and Sam Greenwood) did very well indeed to be put through and will now take part in Finals Day along with 88 other schools in March at the Oxford Union.

Fifth Form **Drama** students had a highly enjoyable trip to London taking in performances of *The Woman in Black* and *Blood Brothers*, did a workshop with a member of the *Blood Brothers* cast at the Pineapple Studios in Covent Garden and had a tour of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

Just before half-term a group of Sixth Form Drama students, parents and teachers went to the historic Theatre Royal in Bristol to see Bristol Old Vic Theatre School's superb production of *The Country Wife*, William Wycherley's bawdy restoration comedy presented by final year acting students.

More than 50 parents and friends enjoyed an evening of wine and cheese tasting in the impressive venue of the St Alban's Pre-Prep to raise funds for the **Himalayan Club**. Nick Baxter of the Worcester Wine Company entertained those attending with a 'Call My Bluff' style wine tasting and Colin Anstey provided some scrummy cheese and bread to mop up the wines! Over £500 was raised for the trek in the summer.

All kinds of weird and wonderful hats appeared on **Pancake Day**, in response to the *Hats for Haiti Appeal*, and most pancakes were in shreds by the end of the race itself. Hats, cakes and pancake sales meant that the total amount raised was over £1,000.

A total of 23 cadets, four officers and WO2 Grinnell from the CCF enjoyed some excellent days **training at Upton Warren**, taking part in climbing, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, archery, tunneling, a high ropes and low ropes course during February Half Term. A group of the senior cadets focused on the BCU Two star award, and completed the necessary time in the open canoes and kayaks.

Half term saw more than 40 **Himalayan Club** trekkers attend a week's worth of walking and team bonding at the Old Chapel in Wales. The snow kept the trekkers' minds off their ever-growing blisters and sore backs and all came back smiling and ready for their summer adventure.

This year's **Junior Ski Trip** went to Zell Am See, Austria. The skiing was excellent and the resort had a lot of variety to test all abilities. The quality of the instruction was exactly what we would have expected and the hotel had its own sports hall, cinema and bowling alley which helped provide good entertainment in the evenings.

Also during half term, nine of our Lower Sixth Form students spent a few days in Magdeburg, Germany, participating in a **Comenius Conference**. The project they have been working on, in three international political parties, focuses on educational elements in European schools which it might be beneficial to implement across all schools in the EU. Elections will be held in each school with any key issues emerging from the election taken to the European Parliament in Strasbourg in June. *See over for a report on the project by 'Amber Party' leader Sam Greenwood.*

The KSW Boat Club travelled down to Wycliffe Sculling Centre to take part in this year's Big Head. Our crews managed some good performances, culminating in two gold medal wins: one for the girls' first eight and the other going to the girls' J15 coxed quad. Two crews came away with second places: the women's J18 coxed 4 and the boys' Intermediate 3 coxless quad. The boys' first eight finished fourth out of nine boats managing to beat RGSW's first eight, by a comfortable margin.

Congratulations to...

- **King's Hawford pupils** who held a Haiti Day just before half term, coming to school in home clothes and holding cake sales during break times. Parents were invited for cakes and tea in the afternoon and a raffle and auction, led by Giles Drew from McCartney's, proved extremely popular. The final total raised was just over £3000, which was a magnificent result.
- All those at **King's St. Alban's** on their successful completion of the 11+ King's senior school entrance examinations and, in particular, to **Coral Bradford, George Blinman-Wilson, Sophie Doughty, Harry Guy** and **Joshua Irvine** who won academic scholarships; to **Matthew Kelley** who won a music scholarship; to **Charlie Bijl** who won a Music Award and to **Ruth Furber** who won both an academic scholarship and music award.
- Kings' Hawford pupils **Angus Guthrie** and **Rachel McLeod** who both gained 11+ scholarships at King's and to **Genevieve Phillips** who achieved a music scholarship while **Harry Annable** was given a music award. Well done also to **George Queen** who won an art scholarship to The Downs MCPS.
- **Samuel Allen** (King's Hawford), who raised £400 in a charity swim in support of Help for Heroes.
- **Harry Nuttall** (Fifth Form / Yr11) who has had an excellent season with the 1st XV as well as representing Worcestershire and the North Midlands in both Midlands U16 Rugby matches at the divisional festival where he was joint pack leader. After these games he was selected to attend a four day England training camp. He is also part of the Worcester Warriors Academy and is due to play against Northampton in March.



- The pupils who were awarded a total of 24 Gold, 47 Silver and 60 Bronze certificates in the **Intermediate Maths Challenge** in February. **Alex Morgan** (Fifth Form) achieved the highest score in the school and an invitation to take part in the Olympiad; **Peter Shepherd** gained the highest score in the Upper Remove (Yr 10) and **Jack Evans** in the Lower Remove (Yr 9). Altogether 14 pupils have been selected to take part in the next rounds. Well done to all of those involved!
- The **U14, U16 and U19 Netball teams**, who were represented at the recent West Midlands Netball Tournament. The U14 team was named West Midlands Champions, the U19 Runners Up West Midlands and both earned a place in the National Finals at Rodean, while the U16s came third in their section and missed out by a few goals to obtain a place in the semi finals.
- **Chappel House** which won the first round of the Inter-House Hockey before half term. The semi final rounds and the final will take place in March.
- The **U13 Mini Hockey squad** which qualified for the county finals of this national competition which is to be held later on this term.

Comenius 2009-10

Sam Greenwood (Upper Sixth) is leader of the 'Amber Party' as part of this year's Comenius Project. He writes about his experience so far.

I've always been interested in the state of the world around us. How each country works with, or against one another as members of the "global community". However, one of the most bizarre situations in international relations has to be Britain's hesitant membership of the EU. We have never had the easiest relationship with our continental cousins and our leader's policies have swung wildly from eager co-operation to awkward isolationism. With Britain playing such a complex role on the European stage I was drawn to the opportunity presented by the Comenius Project.

So what is the Comenius Project? In short, it's a European Union scheme to encourage understanding between the different European states. For those involved it is far more than a simple education. It's a chance to work with people from different backgrounds, different cultures, speaking different languages working together to broaden their horizons, an exceptional opportunity. Of course, this was little consolation for the group of us huddled in the bus bay at midnight in the middle of a freezing October because the Germans had missed their flight.

The first conference, held at King's in October, was to consider each country's education system and begin the formation of the three political parties: Red (those against European integration), Green (those for total European integration) and Amber (those in favour of partial European integration). There was a great deal of heated debate over which of the three school systems was better and the three political parties finally began to take shape. With the parties formed, the French and German students returned to their respective schools. However the work was far from finished; preparations were already underway for the Magdeburg conference in four months' time.

By the time that we found ourselves back in the bus bay (in the middle of a freezing February this time) the parties had already selected their leaders, formed rudimentary manifestoes and produced leaflets to promote their cause as well as already having had many impassioned disputes. There were already strong ties between many of the group going to Magdeburg



Party leaders: Matt Watts (Green), Sam Greenwood (Amber) and Alex Hiron (Red)

and our European counterparts, formed during the first conference. As a result, the conference was a great success with each party working well with their foreign partners and launching their unified manifestoes in a Question Time style presentation.

The conference marked the start of an intense election campaign. With only a ten minute slot in college hall to gain votes and a brief leadership debate before the fourth forms, campaigning was vital for success. The school-wide election, taking place on March 5th, gives every pupil the chance to express their point of view and choose, not only between the three parties, but also where they stand on Europe. The results of this election will then be presented to the European Parliament in June.

On the behalf of all the students on the project I would like to thank everyone who helped to arrange such a fantastic event. The Project has been a unique and enjoyable opportunity to explore the little-known world of European politics, experience other cultures and, perhaps most importantly, learn that we are not so different from one-another. No matter who takes the most votes on March 5th, we will all have learnt something.

King's School Parents' Committee

King's School Fête: Monday May 3rd 2010

Stalls for Hire

Would you like to have a stall at the King's Fête on May Bank Holiday Monday? It's a great place to do business - we expect around 15,000 visitors on the day. In the past there have been stalls selling handmade jewellery, garden plants, outdoor clothing, local produce and dried flowers, to name but a few. A small stall costs just £50, a large stall £150. For more details please contact **Julie Grant** by e-mail: parents@ksw.org.uk

Would you like to help?

If you are interested in helping with the Fête, on the day or before, please get in touch. There's a lot to do, so the more the merrier! Please e-mail parents@ksw.org.uk and let Julie know when you can help and what you might be able to do, from making sandwiches and serving teas to putting up stalls and helping tidy up at the end. We'd love to hear from you.

King's Hawford Parents' Association

A hot date for your diary! The **King's Hawford Summer Ball** will be held on Saturday 26th June. Dancing to music from the Smooth Criminals and our very own top DJ Mr Bethel. It should, as always, be a great night so do come and join us if you're free.

Ticket information: fiona@shropshire-spice.co.uk



Glass Jars!

The Art Department is in desperate need of glass jars.
Please bring any empty glass jars (clean!) and leave them in the entrance of the Art School.
Thank you.

