

# UPTON VOICE

Upton-by-Chester High School Newsletter

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**Upton-by-Chester  
High School**

St James Avenue  
Upton  
Chester  
CH2 1NN

**Phone:**  
01244 981240

**Fax:**  
01244 981248

**E-mail:**

[uptonbychesterhighadmin@che-shirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:uptonbychesterhighadmin@che-shirewestandchester.gov.uk)

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## Forthcoming Events

- ◆ Year 7 Conway residential  
25<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>  
November  
[2 groups]
- ◆ Year 9 Options  
Information  
Evening  
28<sup>th</sup> November

## ICELAND



*Upton Voice is grateful to Sixth Form student Rebecca Liggett for her report of this wonderful experience.*

Armed with our woolly hats and gloves the group boarded the plane to the geographical haven of Iceland. We soon made it to the Blue Lagoon where we all relaxed before the busy adventure-filled weekend began, with silica mud masks pasted on our faces (some more than others!)

Starting the day was a visit to one of the five geothermal power stations in Iceland, which supplies the country with 99% of renewable energy. Once we moved away from the smell of the sulphur we headed towards the glacier. We were equipped with an ice axe and crampons to enable us to walk on to glacier itself, a particular highlight of mine. The guides allowed us to explore the ice caves which were a piercing crystalline blue in contrast to the volcanic ash settled upon the ice. We then hit the road to the Eyjafjallajokull Visitor Centre where we saw the impact of the 2010 eruption that dominated the news not only on a global scale but on a personal level of a family who owned a farm under the volcano itself. Our guide Thordis immersed us in the

Headteacher: Mrs P.E. Dixon

Icelandic folklore of trolls living under mountains and elves creating havoc for the people.

Refreshed after a good night's sleep we set off at 8am to visit the basalt beach and columns and walk behind the waterfall Seljalandsfoss. We then had a surprise unveiled to us: an opportunity to taste bread which had been placed in the ground to cook for 18 hours and eggs which had been boiled in a hot spring with many of us asking for more! Another personal highlight was one of the most photographed waterfalls in the world, Gullfoss. This was a huge two-tiered waterfall. Nearby were also the geysers which erupted hot water 20 to 40 metres into the air every 4 to 8 minutes, and the anticipation waiting for the geyser to erupt made our arms ache in the attempt to catch it on camera!

To end our trip we visited Thingvellir National Park which harbours the plate boundary between the Eurasian and North American plate. The sun was low in the sky which enhanced the already beautiful landscape and topped off a trip that will definitely be the highlight in my time at school. With a 4.30 am start in the morning we reluctantly headed to the hotel. The Iceland visit was amazing - thanks so much to the Geography staff for organizing it.



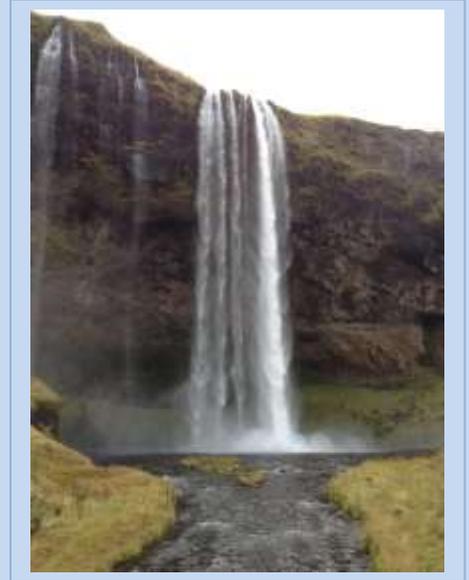
### Highest Form attendance October 2013

1<sup>st</sup>=  
7Y2YU Miss Humphreys's Form  
99%

1<sup>st</sup>=  
10X3ME Mr Biard's Form  
99%

3<sup>rd</sup>  
9Y1WO Mrs Morrow's Form  
98.6%

### Iceland gallery....



The Geography Department's blog of the Iceland visit can be accessed through the link on the homepage of the school website

### Football...

Upton High School teams have been progressing well in the various cup competitions that have been entered. In the last two weeks, the Sixth Form beat Tarporley 6-0; the Year 11 team beat Clitheroe Royal Grammar School 8-1, leaving manager Mr McFadden purring with appreciation. Year 10 went to Alsager and won 5-0. Year 8 played tough opposition from Rainhill and won 5-3, coming back from 3-1 down in the very late stages of the game.

Year 7 also played difficult opponents from Liverpool and were unfortunate to lose by a goal in a high scoring affair. One of the players reports on the Year 7 game: 'Upton started the match the better side with two goals from Zachary Brookman. However, De le Salle fought back well and soon levelled the game at 2-2

In the Second half Upton's Zachary Brookman completed his hat-trick to make it 3-2, a lead that wasn't to last for long as De Le Salle once more evened the score at 3-3. After a tense period of play Matthew Osborne scored a sublime goal when Jack Sconce's shot was parried. After another hard-fought part of the game, the Liverpool team scored two more to earn them a win in a good game.'

*Good luck to our teams in the next rounds of their competitions.*

## Textiles study visits

Last month the Sixth Form Textiles classes went on a trip to Manchester for the Hobby Craft Creative Stitches event. This was so that we could get a better idea of different types of textiles and possibly do some workshops. We all went in little groups and mine firstly went to a knitting class, where we helped with a world record attempt to make the longest knitted chain. The ones who already knew how to knit could get on with it at ease, and anyone else got help from some experts. After this we then signed up for a water marbling class, where you would use inks and make a pattern in the water with them. After this you would place some fabric over the pattern and transfer your design. We got to keep these and they are being put in our folder as samples. Throughout the day we looked at many other different techniques and spoke to many experts in their craft about why they do it and different ways of doing it. This gave us a real insight

*The work below is all knitted! Pictured below this are the A Level group on a visit to the V&A. The visit report was Christina Swain- thank you.*



the North West. Altogether the trip was extremely helpful for our work and gave us an insight into many different textiles and fabrics.



### All Sewn Up!

The Textiles Technology results for summer 2013 were fabulous! Led by Miss A Thompson the students achieved some of the best results in the county. Of the 18 students 5 achieved an A\* and in some cases in both the written exam and their coursework task. The rest of the class achieved A,B, and Cs and one E; some students boosted their target grade by at least two grades. The overall pass rate A\*-C was 94.4%. Sew well done girls!

## History speakers: Arab-Israeli conflict

Year 11 History students who are studying the Arab Israeli conflict were lucky enough to attend a talk given by Ruth Camay and Sami Hussain. The talk covered the background to the conflict as well as the current issues such as borders, refugees and violence.

Both Ruth and Sami have lived in Israel at different times in their lives and gave different perspectives on the conflict from an Arab and Israeli point of view. Two brave souls also asked questions to develop their understanding even more. The talk will be a source that the students can use to prepare for their controlled assessment. We hope to invite an outside speaker again next year to provide a different viewpoint on this complex but fascinating issue.

### International Photo Competition Theme—Blue



[See links on school website for details](#)

## Battlefields visit

A large group of Year 9 students has recently returned from a thought-provoking visit to the World War 1 battlefields of Belgium and France. This was a particularly interesting time to visit as we were able to see the huge amount of care and attention being given to the cemeteries in preparation for the centenary of the outbreak of the war in 2014.

Day One consisted of an early start and a long journey to our base near Ypres in Belgium. On day 2 we began our visits to several important sites in Belgium with our brilliant guide Tom, who talked engagingly and gave us the benefit of knowledge that had been acquired over many years. He was able to tell the personal stories of some of the men whose graves we visited. Every one of the stories of the individual soldiers was poignant and affecting.

Visits were made to Tyne Cot, the largest British war cemetery anywhere with over 11,000 graves. The brutal battle of Passchendaele was fought nearby in 1917.

We also visited some preserved trenches at Sanctuary Wood, complete with smelly mud. The day finished with the moving 'Last Post' ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres where five students laid a wreath of remembrance.

Jessica P wrote in her diary that night: "Today I loved going to the Essex Farm cemetery. I found it overwhelming and very moving. I have the greatest of respect for these people even though none of them is known to me. I looked for the loneliest grave and paid my respects. My understanding of the trenches has grown. I have learnt that life was hard and that many people were tougher than us. My respect for the soldiers has grown so much- it was all so moving."

Day 2 saw us travelling to Northern France and the battlefields of the Somme, where on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916 the British army had its most colossal loss of life on any single day, with 20,000 deaths and another 40,000 casualties, many of whom died of their wounds.

We visited many sites and were continually affected by the heart-rending stories being told.

The final day saw us visit the town of Poperinge in Flanders, a sleepy Belgian community now but a town of over 250,000 military personnel at the height of the war. We visited the cells where soldiers spent their last night before being shot at dawn, often for what we would now consider to be post-traumatic stress disorder.

It is certain that all of the students and staff that went on this trip gained something from it: new

respect, new knowledge, new experience, new friends. The thing that is unknowable is just what the fallen soldiers of World War 1 would have thought about a group of youngsters from Chester visiting their graves almost 100 years after they were laid to rest. They might be surprised that a modern generation has made the effort to come and discover their fate. However, I think it is likely that they would be immensely touched by the respectful way that these young people of Upton-by-Chester acknowledged the sacrifice that the soldiers had made for their country.

On the face of it these two groups of young people had very little in common. Soldiers from the age of empire lived in times where people were expected to know their place in society and to act accordingly, whereas we live in a time where independent thought is encouraged in a society of great technological advances.

However, the young people of both eras shared the same hopes and dreams for the future. In our case, we get to live and dream on, and however tiring the journey home was, we were glad to be able to make it.

'We will remember them'

*Everyone who went on this visit is grateful Miss Main and Mr Mulhall, who worked incredibly hard to organize the visit. Their planning and attention to detail was superb.*



*Above: Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel- Tom tells the story of the terrible tragedy.*

Further details of the study visit can be found at <http://uhsbattlefields.blogspot.co.uk/> This blog has created a great deal of interest with over 1500 visits from around the world.[It has some great insights from students.] Please take a look at it.

## Sixth Form at Menai

Early on a Monday morning, two coaches full of enthusiastic teachers and sixth formers set off on their way to the Conway Centre, Anglesey. Arriving at nine, the two day trip started with a splash as students were immediately engaged in a choice of raft building, kayaking, canoeing or a high ropes course.

I chose to do raft building and was swiftly, with helmet in hand, led down to the Menai straits to start the activity. We were divided into teams and given the task of building a raft using rope, wooden poles and air filled barrels to complete a competitive course around the dock. It was timed of course, so we had to plan quickly and split up, learning the different knots and techniques that could be the difference between us keeping dry or falling in. After much debate about design we finished and took to the water, trying to balance our group of six evenly across the raft. Once the other two teams were in the water and we had all practised our paddling skills, the race began. We powered toward the first buoy where we scooped up a plastic ring then headed to the next buoy, which required us to make a 180 degree turn. Avoiding sinking so far, we paddled back so that a team member could run off the raft and put the plastic ring at the top of a ramp. After this, each team had to carry their raft out of the water and take it apart to secure the victory. Unfortunately, my team were not the winners, but we relished the race and stood together for our team photograph. Somehow, none of us had managed to fall in, so the Menai staff gave us the chance to jump into the water, which, despite it being September, was warm enough to enjoy a swim.

After lunch, we embarked on a team building challenge across the entire Conway Centre site. Each task was given a score which we would gain if completed correctly. The tasks ranged from being blindfolded and overcoming obstacles along a trail, to transporting a rolling ball across pieces of guttering to reach a goal. My favourite part of these tasks were the ones set in the forest. These involved challenging climbing courses and rope swings between platforms. After the exciting afternoon, we were all ready for our hot dinner. Once we had unpacked and had some free time, everyone met in the dining room.

That evening, we re-assembled our teams ready for the next task: to create a male and female outfit for a catwalk show out of newspaper. This allowed the more creative people to step forward and fashion the finest, most ludicrous outfits they could make in the time limit set.



Thanks to Miss Brown for organising the Menai trip and to all the staff who participated



Models posed while the whole team got stuck in with sellotape, scissors and newspaper. Concepts were devised and the outfits slowly came together for each team, with frequent visits from the teachers to keep the garments appropriate for school viewing.

After the creation phase was over, the models struggled to move back stage ready for their moment of fame whilst the rest of sixth form took their seats, eager to see their own, and other teams' outfits.

With Mr O'Donnell as acting presenter, the catwalk show began and a skilfully selected soundtrack was the backdrop as each team's models had a chance to saunter across the stage and be scored by the judges. Memorable moments were Andreas Dobson as the 'Angel of Torture' and Matt Oxley and Danielle Willden's on stage engagement as Poseidon and a mermaid. Following the fashion show was Mr Casstles' quiz, in which teams competed across different rounds to win.

The following day we all woke up to a delicious cooked breakfast and embarked on completing the activities other teams had done the previous day. On the second day I took part in the three teacher-led workshops. The first, with Mr Mullhall, encouraged us to develop our communication skills. Each group was challenged to construct a model structure based upon a design provided by Mr Mullhall, however people who had seen the original design were not allowed to touch the building blocks used to create the model.

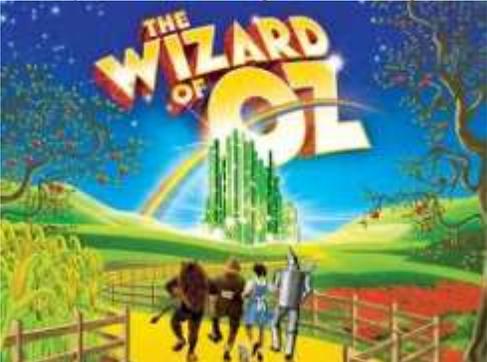
The second part of this workshop was a murder mystery case, in which we were all given two clues and as a team had to decide the time, place, weapon and murderer within the case presented to us. This encouraged discussion as we all had to input the clues we had read, and after much debating as a team, got the majority of answers right. The next workshop was with Mr Docherty and Miss Main, which was a hunt around the site for a list of random things. This was harder than it first appeared as on the list were not only items but a range of concepts and emotions such as 'happiness', but after exploration we generated some clever ideas that secured us another tick on the list. The final workshop was with Mrs Quinn where we discovered some strange but true facts about the teachers and students in the Sixth Form.

Joining back together for our final lunch at Conway, we were all surprised how quickly time had passed. The final memory was taking the whole year photo on the field outside the Conway centre: reminiscent of all the sixth formers before us that had experienced this fantastic trip, and the future sixth formers to come. We had bonded as a year group and had a great time, returning to school with new friends and abundant experiences.

*Report kindly submitted by Emma Bloomfield Year 12*



**Now booking...**  
**Upton-by-Chester High School presents**



At the Brindley Theatre, Runcorn 24-27<sup>th</sup> Feb  
 [click picture for link to box office]

# Sky News visits Upton High

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November was no ordinary Friday as our school had two extraordinary visitors.

Sky News broadcast from the school throughout the day, beginning with a live interview with Mrs Dixon at 7.10am, quite a start to the day! Sky News wanted opinions on the much-flagged changes to GCSE that will affect current Year 8 students.

Headteacher Mrs Dixon told Sky News: "Without the coursework you are going to be relying totally on exams, and after two years, students are going to be tested on the knowledge they can retain, so it's not actually, I don't think, going to be an improvement. I think it's a bit of a retrograde step."

"If it's simply on the day - how you perform in that one or two hour exam - I don't think that's fair, and I don't think it's going to test all the wonderful skills that we teach in schools that could be tested in different ways."

Sky interviewed 12 students during the day and Miss Seery and Mrs Smale also gave their opinions on the changes. Pictured right you will see Sky's Mike McCarthy with Year 8 students Mark Graham, Phoebe Scott and James Dewhurst.



**Mark:** '...I prefer tests to course work....although I think there will be a bigger pressure if you're doing it as one exam rather than as coursework.'

**Phoebe:** 'I prefer coursework to tests so that we have chance to get it right and practise throughout the year.'

**James:** 'I think it will show who performs well under pressure and who doesn't.... I would prefer to do it as one big test because you've got no build up and after that you're free.'

The staff and students who took part did superbly- to be able to perform successfully on live TV is a real achievement.

Mike McCarthy ran into our other visitor at one stage but declined an interview with Warrington Wolves' mascot Wolfie who was in school to promote a new rugby scheme.

*Wolfie is pictured here with Year 7 students.*



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## Go Orange for Orangutans Day.....

Mendes Hall ran a range of activities throughout the month of October in line with our Hall's ethos as Chico Mendes had a passion for conservation. Chico Mendes was a Brazilian rubber tapper, one of a social underclass who were traditionally denied an education and paid very low wages. He educated himself and became a union leader, campaigning for the rights of his fellow workers but also campaigning to protect the rainforest from destruction.

We made a link with Chester Zoo back in the summer term and decided to support the 'Go Orange for Orangutans'. Ms Storey, our Home Economics teacher, has run a palm oil session where two students from each form went to learn more about how this is connected to the orangutans. In addition, each form within our hall has been collecting spare change in a bottle. Recently we had Michelle Dunn visit us from the zoo who gave a presentation to Mendes Hall based on the orangutans and the 'go orange' initiative which really gave the students an understanding of the reason why this is so important. We then ran a non-school uniform day and with the contribution from students along with the collection of spare change, we raised over £1300 which was recently presented to our chosen charity at Chester Zoo.

### Comments from students:

'Since starting our fund-raising project to help protect the Orangutans we attended a training session on Palm Oil. We were most surprised to discover that 50% of products in shops include palm oil. We had not realised how much rainforest is being slashed and burned each day and the Orangutans' habitat is being destroyed. We were then able to create a PowerPoint and deliver this to the rest of our form so that we could encourage people to think about buying sustainable palm oil products and pull together to raise money as a form.'

#### *Year 8 Student*

'I have loved this fund raising activity as I had known nothing about Palm Oil since we were visited by Chester Zoo and they spoke at one of our assemblies. I like the idea that I am helping endangered animals who are threatened by extinction and our school is contributing to a global initiative to help our planet.'

#### *Year 8 Student*

***Thanks again to everyone who contributed.***



## Family Fun Day

*Upton Voice* was delighted to hear from Emma Kinnear of the Lower Sixth who informed us about plans for an exciting project that she is involved in. Emma is a member of NCS, a community group for young people. Emma's account follows...

Christmas could be a little brighter for patients at Alder Hey Children's Hospital this year as a group of Chester sixth-formers plan to raise money to buy them seasonal gifts. The group of 13 teenagers from around the city are hosting a Christmas Crafts and Family Fun Day to collect enough funds to present seriously and terminally ill youngsters with shoeboxes full of Christmas cheer.

The event on Saturday November 30, run by volunteers from the National Citizen Service, will include Santa's Grotto, Snowflake Making, Mince Pies, Food and Drink, Gingerbread decorating, Face Painting and Bracelet Making, Beat the Goalie, Just Dance and Karaoke, as well as a jumble sale and raffle with prizes for adults too. NCS is the national scheme which aims to give 16 and 17 year olds the opportunity to develop the

Read the *Chester Chronicle's* excellent article on iPad learning in Year 7...

<http://www.chesterchronicle.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/tablets-wisdom-lead-e-revolution-classroom-6232048>

skills they need to progress in work and life, at the same time as taking part in a community action project.

The teenagers plan and organize all elements of the event themselves, and have collected a range of exciting raffle prizes to tempt every member of the family in the run up to Christmas, including beautiful jewellery, toiletries, small electrical goods and a variety of other exciting gifts donated by local businesses.

The event is open to all ages and will run from 10.30am to 4.30pm at City Road Church, Chester, CH1 3AE. For further details email [NCS.group.6@gmail.com](mailto:NCS.group.6@gmail.com), phone 07582586813 or Facebook [https://www.facebook.com/events/1409162422648896/1411873712377767/?ref=notif&notif\\_t=plan\\_mall\\_activity](https://www.facebook.com/events/1409162422648896/1411873712377767/?ref=notif&notif_t=plan_mall_activity).

# Saturday 30th November

A Christmas Themed Family Fun Day is being run by an NCS Group on the 30th November, to raise money for Alder Hey Hospital in Liverpool...

Search NCS Christmas Fun Day on Facebook to join our Facebook Event

**If you and your family fancy a day of the festive spirit on the last day before the count down to Christmas, join us to support those in need in the hall underneath the Church on City Road, Chester.**

There will be a visit from Santa, crafts for children, and a raffle. Other activities include Just Dance, karaoke and beat the goalie. There will also be food and drink (including mince pies!), from which all of the profit will go to the hospital.

Starts at 10.30am and ends at 4.30pm  
For just £1 per activity, your children can do fun crafts and win prizes whilst giving to charity at the same time!

City Road Church,  
Chester,  
CH1 3AE.



For more information about the day, contact us on:  
[NCS.Group.6@gmail.com](mailto:NCS.Group.6@gmail.com)  
or 07582586813



Even if your Christmas Family Fun Day doesn't appeal to you, there are other ways you could brighten someone's day on the 25th December 2013. We are collecting gifts for those at Alder Hey hospital to show our support. If you have any donations, whether it be money to buy things for the children at Alder Hey or actual gifts we could give them in a shoe box, you would be helping to show those who are suffering that we care.