



# SDC - The Week

5 November 2009

## Duke of Edinburgh's Award – Gold Expeditions



The downturn in weather forecasts at the beginning of the half-term break did not deter any of the 20 Year 12s as they embarked on their training expedition to the Black Mountains in south Wales. The group arrived at the bunkhouse in pouring rain, and the first challenge was getting the equipment inside without getting soaked.

Tent and stove training was followed by dinner (self cooked), charades and route planning for the following day.

The next morning began overcast, but soon brightened, and the groups and accompanying teachers set out to the trek around the Mynydd Troed and Mynydd Llangorse. The focus was on route choice and navigation, and all groups chose to tackle the toughest hill first, getting to the 609m summit of Troed early in the day. The rest of the route explored the ridges and summit of the Mynydd Llangorse, with typical routes covering around 10 miles and 1000m of ascent.

The next day, the bunkhouse was tidied and groups set off on the first leg of the 'mini expedition'. Early showers soon died out, and pleasant walking conditions developed as the route took groups up to one of the high ridges of the Black Mountains. Despite persistent hill fog, two of the groups opted for the high route, over the summit of Pen Alt-mawr. All groups made it safely to the campsite before dark. The rain set in late and was mainly over by the next morning.

The last leg headed for the finish at Crickhowell, and the long drive back to London.

Meanwhile, seven Year 13s completed the Qualifying Expedition, adding to the 28 who did so in the summer. Congratulations to all who made it through the worst the British weather could throw at them.

## Year 6 Girls' Football Tournament

Beth Henderson (6F) reports: "On the 16 October, all Year 6 girls played their first football tournament at Blackheath Prep. The schools that participated were Blackheath Prep, Sydenham High and Alleyn's.

We were very excited and although we played really well, we came 4th. We had an excellent time and it was a great experience!"



## SDCFS 2nd Hand Uniform

In the 2009/10 academic year we are looking to expand our sale of 2nd hand uniform and are planning to make this service available to parents and pupils on a weekly basis in the near future.

To do this, we need a few more volunteers to help us sort, sell and occasionally wash uniform that's donated, for a couple of hours each month.

In the meantime we welcome all donations of good quality uniform (except footwear, socks and bags) for all age groups, especially SDC branded school wear. We also welcome donations of wire hangers (dry cleaning variety) and trouser / skirt hangers.

Donations may be left in Reception between 8.20am and 5.30pm on any week day.

If you are interested in helping with this project or wish to know what stock is available, please contact Louisa Simmons by email, [simmons.family@btopenworld.com](mailto:simmons.family@btopenworld.com)

Please also see the latest SDCFS newsletter on the website.

### Modern Languages Society talk by Mr Nick Mair

Laura Smith (13J) reports: "On Tuesday, Mr Nick Mair gave a talk to the Modern Languages Society about how learning a language will positively affect our futures. Not only will having a second language under our belts give us better career options, but it can almost certainly improve our earning potential. This point is being shown by University College London, who are not accepting students who did not take a language at GCSE, a trend that many top universities will probably follow in the future.

Nick Mair also talked about research and statistics about language, for example, that girls tend to be better at languages



than boys. The amygdala and the hippocampus (parts of the brain) apparently make a great difference! The many fascinating facts and figures about

the brain, along with some small tests we did to prove the points made, were both interesting and entertaining.

Thank you so much to Mr Mair for providing such wonderful food for thought."

### Michaelmas Concert

A date for your diaries - this year's Michaelmas Concert will take place on Tuesday 17 November at 7pm, in the Great Hall.

### Parents' Forum - Thursday 26 November

Pupils in Years 3-11 have been given letters this week detailing the Parents' Forum to be held on Thursday 26 November starting at 7pm. The speaker, Josephine Hart from Hope UK, will cover a range of adolescent issues. Replies for this event should reach Mrs Scard in the Junior School or Mr Newman in the Senior School.

### National Cross Country Relays at Mansfield



Andrew Booth (11H) reports on the National Cross Country Relays, which he ran at: "The first English Cross Country Relays took place in 1985 with just three events; Under 17 Men, Junior Men and Senior Men. The event was first staged in Crystal Palace Park and then again in the same location two years later in 1987, before it moved permanently to Berry Hill Park, Mansfield in 1989.

On the 31 October, the Blackheath and Bromley Harriers travelled up to Mansfield to compete in the National Cross Country Relays. Altogether there were over 100 clubs competing to be the National cross country champions. Within my age group, the under 17's, we came 18th and 30th out of the hundred or so that were there. Each leg of the competition was 3K long and for each 'A' and 'B' team had three runners - once one had finished another person from the club started. I was the third leg runner for the 'B' team. Our overall time for the three legs was 31 minutes and 16 seconds giving us a place of 30th. The fastest overall time was set by Shaftesbury Barnet Harriers 'A', with a time of 27 minutes and 17 seconds. My own personal time was 11 minutes and 16 seconds. From this cross country relay there were many solid performances and it was nice to be able to run with some of the best in the country, giving me an idea of how I need to improve to get as good as them!"

### Shoebox appeal

Pupils in the Senior School have been picking up leaflets about the Christmas shoebox appeal. We have just under two weeks before the collection is made from the College. Parents are asked to double-check that the contents of each box matches the requirements according to the leaflets. Pupils must bring their shoebox to the teachers' office by the Main Door, for the attention of Mr Newman.



### Pupil Information Contact Sheet - Reminder

Please remember that these need to be returned to the College Office by Monday 9 November.

Please see the website and email version of the newsletter for reports on the Rugby Tour to Lake Garda and History Trip to Berlin, and the winners of the Photography Club competition.

For more news go to [www.stdunstans.org.uk](http://www.stdunstans.org.uk)