

# Newsletter



## Charity Champions

Throughout the school year, many events have focussed on supporting a wide range of charities.

Many activities have been run in support of St Andrew's Hospice and this year, the S6 elective has arranged a record number of successful events to raise money for this important charity. The infamous leg-waxing event took place at the end of November, and brave staff and pupils sacrificed their body hair for a good cause. A special thanks to Mr Stevenson and Mr Hendry for getting their legs waxed. A pupil shouting 'Mr Stevenson, this is for all the homework you have given me!' was certainly a highlight. In December, over 80 people participated in the annual *On Yer Bike* event. The participants booked a 30-minute slot for cycling. There was a great atmosphere with music in the background for motivational reasons! Overall, all of the events were a huge success and the elective group has managed to raise over £2000 for St Andrew's Hospice. A huge thank you to everyone who helped organise these events. International charities have also benefitted from pupils' hard work. Over the month of October, the S3 Citizenship elective participated in the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal to help impoverished people in countries such as Albania and Bulgaria. The elective group successfully filled 36 boxes with materials to help those in need, including families with young children and the elderly. A big thank you to everyone who participated! Community fundraising has also continued in the last few months including assisting local families in the run-up to Christmas and many events supporting the 'Hope for Amanda Appeal'. Amanda's family and Strathaven Academy are very grateful for the community's show of kindness.

Winter Edition  
February 2018

### SCHOOL DIARY

12-13 Feb	Holiday
14 Feb	Inset Day
20 Feb	S2 Choices Evening
21 Feb	S6 Burns Supper
27 Feb	S2 Consultation Evening
2 Mar	S3 Stem Day
5 Mar	Rotary Concert
20 Mar	Rotary Speechmaking
21 Mar	Creative & Aesthetic Showcase
28 Mar	Prom
30 Mar	Holiday
-13 Apr	
16-23 Apr	S3 Exams
27 Apr	S6 Leavers' Assembly
30 Apr	SQA Exams Start
2 May	S1 Camp Meeting
7 May	Holiday
8 May	Inset Day
9 May	New Timetable Starts
	P7 Information Evening



## Christmas Concert

On the 13th of December, the Street was filled with family and friends ready to enjoy an evening of music and fun! The Christmas Concert involved talented acts from the school's Glee Club, the Battle of the Bands finalists Invisible Hill and the Advanced Higher Music group. The concert was a resounding success. Teas, coffees and cakes (kindly supplied by the PTA) were served at the interval. A massive congratulations to all those who performed - it was an amazing showcase of talent of all ages. (See photos on page 3)

# Head Teacher's Message



MR BOYD,  
HEAD TEACHER

Welcome to the winter edition of our superb newsletter. This newsletter illustrates the breadth of activities and range of opportunities available to our young people. In November, we were awarded a sportscotland Gold School Sport Award. This award was given in recognition of our achievements in putting sport at the heart of our school's planning, practice and ethos. December is an extremely busy time for our school and the Christmas concert continues to be one of the highlights of our school year. This year's concert was another night to remember - we even 'arranged' for it to snow

during the evening! These are only two of the many successes highlighted in this newsletter. In January, four new permanent members of staff joined our school community. They have all hit the ground running and have increased our teaching capacity in Science, Maths and Technical. I have now visited all teachers in the school and have been impressed by the high quality of learning and teaching that I have observed and staff's commitment to continuous improvement. To inform our improvement journey, we have been seeking people's views through the use of pupil, parent and staff questionnaires. We are currently in the process of following these up through pupil, parent and staff focus groups. Information from these activities and other evidence will help to inform our school improvement priorities as we continue to deliver a high quality education for all of our young people.



# Battle of the Bands

South Lanarkshire Schools are holding a Battle of the Bands Competition on Thursday 15th February, in the Hamilton Town House. For tickets call the box office on 01698 452299. Our band,

called *Invisible Hill*, consists of Euan B (Guitar, Bass Guitar and Vocals), Gregor H (Bass Guitar, Guitar and Vocals), and Daniel N (Drums and Vocals). Come along and support Strathaven Academy at the event.



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If you have any achievements to report, please send an email to [newsletter@strathaven.s-lanark.sch.uk](mailto:newsletter@strathaven.s-lanark.sch.uk) providing the name and class of your son(s)/daughter(s) with their achievement/success and a photograph if possible.

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(FROM PAGE 1) PHOTOS BY MORVEN L (S6)



# Camera Obscura Trip

On the 10th of November, the two Higher Photography classes embarked on a trip to Camera Obscura in Edinburgh. After getting off the bus, we immediately posed for a group photo and then took some obligatory tourist photos of the castle. We then checked in to Camera Obscura, which is a four-floor building of illusions, and contains a vortex spinner, mirror maze, shadow photographs and many more optical tricks. For us, the best part was definitely the vortex spinner or the actual camera obscura itself as it was very clever and unique. We had a quick lunch, and then explored the Royal Mile, taking photos along the way. Overall, this trip was great fun and worthwhile for Higher Photography, as it gave us lots of ideas for photoshoots and allowed us to photograph a different city outside of Glasgow.



# School Competition Looking for Entries

Strathaven Academy is holding a brand new photography competition open to all year groups. The theme is 'A Different Perspective' and all participants are asked to submit a standard postcard-sized print (6x4 inches) to the Art and Design department staff by the 28th of February. We will pick the twelve photos that we think best fit the brief, and enlist the public to judge them at the Creative and Aesthetic Showcase in March. A winner will be announced on the night of the event. The shortlist of twelve will also be put forward for the local Rotary Photography Competition. We hope that you support this competition and we look forward to seeing your outstanding photographs. Good luck!



WINNING SHOT (ABOVE) RETURN FROM THE HILL, LAIRIG LEACHACH AND (BELOW) AT THE CEREMONY WITH RAY MEARS

# Photographer of the Year Prize

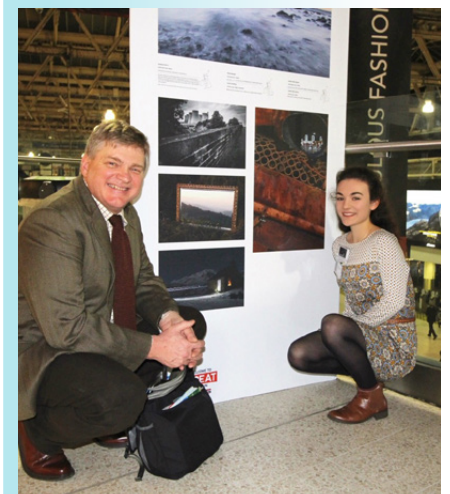
S6 pupil Hannah J recently participated in the Take a View - Landscape Photographer of the Year competition, winning in two out of the four categories in the youth section. She attended the prestigious award ceremony in the heart of London and now has her work on display across the country. We congratulate her on this great success!

# Former Pupil Continues Career in Photography



SELF-PORTRAIT, VAN GOGH BY BETH IN S5 AS PART OF HER NPGA COURSEWORK

Photography has opened doors for many people at our school. One of these is former pupil Beth G. She has always had a love of photography and this grew when she was part of the first S3 photography elective, which she thought was a great opportunity for people like her to learn about the technical and practical side of photography. She said that some of her best shots were taken whilst she was studying at Strathaven Academy and she will always remember the laughs along the way. Her passion for the subject grew further after the elective: she went on to do the NPGA in S5, Higher Photography in S6 and has now completed her HNC at college. Beth is currently working towards her HND. We wish Beth success in her future.



## Holocaust Memorial Day Presentation

On 26th January, S1 pupils participated in an assembly in honour of Holocaust Memorial Day. The pupils engaged in a presentation led by Mr Stevenson about this year's Holocaust Memorial Day. This year's theme was "words" and the importance of words and remembering. The pupils listened keenly as they heard about the events of the Holocaust and how, without words, we would not be able to understand the experiences and feelings of those involved - not just the victims and survivors, but also the perpetrators and those who actively campaigned against what was going on. The assembly concluded with the pupils being issued with a card, in which they wrote down as many words as they could find to describe their thoughts on these historical events. This was to allow the pupils to reflect on the importance of words to describe the Holocaust.

## Snow Ball Dance Success for Seniors

On Thursday, the 7th of December, S6 pupils and teachers enjoyed a night of festive fun, games and dancing, all thanks to the fabulous members of the Events Team elective, who organised the entire event. Pupils arrived in their party wear to find the school hall transformed into a veritable winter wonderland, and enjoyed games such as Festive Four Corners and Juice Pong for house points. However, the highlight of the night was most definitely the ceilidh dancing, after which everyone had to allow themselves a ten-minute break from sheer exhaustion! Naturally, the night came to an unforgettable end with renditions of 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'Loch Lomond', and all the sixth years agree that it was a resounding success!

## Auschwitz Trip

We were chosen for a once in a lifetime experience: travelling to Poland to see Auschwitz I and Auschwitz - Birkenau, where at least one million people were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators. However, the exact number of people who lost their lives in the Holocaust and the mass genocide of other groups in society (such as disabled people, Roma gypsies, Slavic people, Jehovah's Witnesses and homosexuals) is unknown. Auschwitz I was originally a work camp for prisoners, and many believed that they would earn their freedom by working. This was not the case. As a

By Rebecca A & Rebecca H (S6)

large proportion of the camp was destroyed when the SS liberated it, the camp has been turned into a memorial museum. There were many disturbing exhibitions. We saw the mass of hair which had been cut off men, women and children on entering the camp - this was perhaps the most horrific exhibit. The main message that we took away from this experience is this: everyone is human - the perpetrators were human, the victims of the Holocaust and mass genocide were human, and we are human. Therefore, these horrific events could happen again if we don't treat each other equally.

## Book Week Celebrates Scots

As part of Book Week Scotland (the national celebration of books and reading), Strathaven Academy was visited by Scots Language expert and former teacher Matthew Fitt. As well as writing his own work, Matthew is well-known for translating

popular children's books by Roald Dahl, David Walliams and J K Rowling into Scots - he recently had his book 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' published! Matthew spoke to a group of S2 English and S4 Scottish Studies pupils and also Ewan McD from S6, and he got them to think about what Scots words they used in their everyday language and how they could use it in the future as part of their written work.



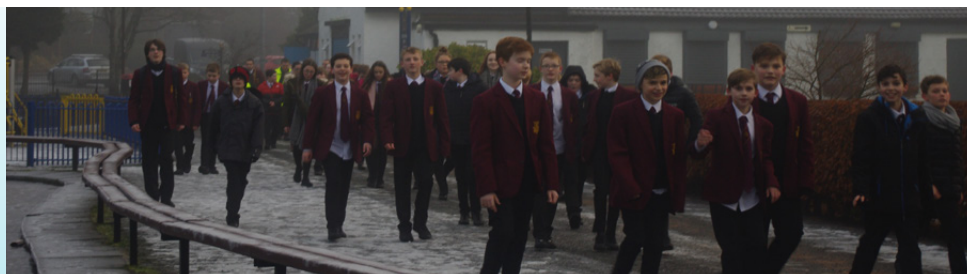
## A Magical Experience for S2 Pupils

After its success and enjoyment for the past two years, a group of S2 students returned to the Warner Brother Studios in London to experience the 'Making of Harry Potter' tour. This tour allowed the students to experience the reality of the film

industry; seeing original concept art, designing and producing sets and model-making. Before returning home, the group got a chance to do a bit of siteseeing in the city of London. Thank you to all the pupils for their behaviour and engagement throughout the trip.

## The Daily Mile is an Outstanding Success

During the week beginning Monday, 18th December, every S1 pupil in the school participated in The Daily Mile for the first time in the school's history. Every S1 pupil, with volunteer staff and S6 pupils, gave up their first period every day (except Friday as that was the last day of term) to walk one mile around the park. The Leadership in Sport class was behind this event and it was run by Jack M with help from Kyle J, Ann F and Lewis M. Overall, this was a great initiative and we hope it becomes an annual event.



(ABOVE AND RIGHT) PUPILS STRIDE IT OUT, ABLY LED BY MRS MARTIS AND MRS ROBSON



## S5/6 Quiz Fun

On Thursday, 21st December, all S5/6 students participated in the annual school quiz. This year, the usual categories caused the students some difficulty. The categories ranged from the usual sport and music round to more unusual ones like languages and anagrams of Scottish football teams. The event was enjoyed by all. The winning team was Hannah and her Sisters, a group of S6s who thoroughly deserved their victory! They only dropped 12 points throughout and deserved their prize of a box of chocolates. Overall, the quiz was a great success.



(LEFT) ARTWORK CREATED BY KIRA R (S2) FOR THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT POSTER AND SCHOOL GREETINGS CARD

A particular festive highlight was the S1 trip to the King's Theatre to see 'Sleeping Beauty'. Alongside all the shouts of "oh no it isn't!" and "he's behind you!", perhaps the most enjoyable part of the performance for the year group was when Miss McCulloch was put on the spot during the audience participation scene – much to the hilarity of her students! Additionally, before the holidays, the S6 captains delivered Christmas hampers to elderly and vulnerable people in our community. The hampers contained donations from school pupils, and included simple foods such as pasta and tinned vegetables, as well as treats like chocolate, biscuits and jam. The school community was extremely generous and there was such an enormous quantity of donations that the captains were able to deliver 27 full hampers. All recipients of hampers were absolutely delighted with their gifts, and would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who donated to the hamper appeal.



## Young Writers Award

A number of pupils submitted work to the competition this year. Work was submitted in October and the ceremony took place on the 13th of November in the East Kilbride Arts Centre. All participants received certificates of commendation. Nicola B of S5 was runner-up in the senior competition and won £50 of vouchers for the East Kilbride shopping centre.



## PE Party Best One Yet?

The annual 'PE Party' Party was held on Thursday, 21st December in the games hall and gym. Over 60 S1 and S2 pupils had a great time at what was described as 'the most successful party yet.' They took part in social dancing and played games including 'pin the star on the tree', Giant Jenga and Twister. There was also table tennis and curling. There was a Wii, as well as a prize for best dancer! It was a great day for all and we can't wait for next year's event!

## Blood Donation

On the 8th of November, the Scottish Blood Transfusion Service came to Strathaven Academy to give pupils and staff the opportunity to donate blood and potentially save a life in doing so. Participation in the event was very high and the school was able to give dozens of donations – some from regular or lapsed donors, but many from new donors too. A massive thank you to all who donated blood or helped organise the event.

## Eco Committee

The school's Eco Committee has recently been formed, and consists of pupils ranging from S1 to S6, several teachers and janitorial staff. The committee aims to achieve a Green Flag Award for Strathaven Academy by working on the three key areas of litter, recycling and biodiversity over the next few years. The group will direct the action of the S3 Eco-Schools elective, which will carry out the various activities and tasks required to earn our award. Currently on the agenda for the Eco Committee is creating an Eco Code for the school and decorating the committee noticeboard in the Street.



# Spotlight on Mental Health

## Message from the Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors

We are the Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors, a new group of ambassadors that aims to give support and promote positive mental health amongst pupils. With the help of Mrs Martis and the guidance teachers over the course of this school year, we hope to raise awareness of mental health issues in young people and provide support to our peers if they are struggling with exam stress, bullying or an overwhelming workload. We're here to help, and remember, 'positive thinking can achieve the impossible!'

## Dynamic Earth Visit

Before the holiday, our S2 pupils went to Dynamic Earth to learn about how the Earth developed into what it is now. From the volcanic beginning of continents to the frozen wastelands that rose during the Ice

Age - we saw it all! We also explored different biomes found all over the Earth, such as the jungle and tundra, and we learned about how animals have adapted to their environment and thrived because of it.



Photo by Mhairi W (S5)

## Modern Languages P7 Visits

Mr Norrie, Mrs Harris and Ms Baran recently delivered Spanish 'taster' workshops on ordering tapas and drinks to Primary 7 pupils at Sandford Primary and Kirkland Park Primary. They were accompanied by our S6 Language Ambassadors, who talked about their Modern Languages experience at Strathaven Academy. They also

## Remembrance Day

Events to mark Remembrance Day took place in Strathaven on Saturday the 11th and Sunday the 12th of November. On Saturday, a short service, attended by members of the school's captains team, was held in the Common Green. On Sunday, a Remembrance Day parade made its way from the Townhead Street car park to the town's war memorial. This event had an amazing turnout from many local groups, including the Scouts, Guides, Boys' Brigade and Army Cadets. Four members of the school's captains team also walked in the parade to represent Strathaven Academy. The parade was followed by a short service and wreath-laying event at the war memorial.

worked with pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills during a café/snack bar role-play session. Pupils also learned a little bit about Spanish culture and the geography of Spain. Pupils receive one period of Spanish in S1 and S2, and it is hoped that the 'taster' sessions will help to familiarise pupils with basic phrases and pronunciation. We are hoping to visit all local primaries before the summer holidays.

# Excellence in Sport

## Active Girls Day

On Friday, 6th October, 60 first and third years took part in Strathaven Academy's Active Girls Day. The purpose of this event was to get girls to participate in sports. It was a very successful event with activities ranging from dance with Samantha Baird to fitness. To top the event off, the girls got free vouchers for Strathaven Sport Centre - another way to persuade more girls to participate in sport.

## Judo Medal Win

Oliver W (S4) won a bronze medal at the Scottish Judo Championships. Oliver has been a member of the Hibari Khan Judo Club for several years and has won a range of medals over the last seven years. His commitment to judo is commendable and this is another great achievement.

## Football Trip

On the weekend of 25th – 26th November, a selection of S1, S2, S3 and S5 pupils travelled south of the border to watch teams play in the best league in the world. They watched Manchester United playing newcomers Brighton and Hove Albion. The match ended in a 1-0 victory for United. They also watched Huddersfield Town AFC playing powerhouses Manchester City, and Raheem Sterling saved City from embarrassment to win 2-1! They also had a tour of the legendary Etihad Stadium, went 10-pin bowling and stayed in a hotel owned by Bolton Wanderers. This trip was thoroughly enjoyed by all pupils.

## Girls Football

The S1-S3 girls' football team did our school proud on the 25th of November by winning three games and drawing one out of a possible seven games. They drew 2-2 with Carluke High School but won a 4-2 thriller with John Ogilvie High School, a tense 3-2 victory against Trinity High School and a thumping 7-0 match with Stonelaw High School. Eight girls took part in these league matches and a shout-out has to go to the two coaches (Zoe C and Emily M) who led the team to these impressive results. They were unlucky with their three defeats but there are surely many more victories to come!



## School Sport Award Success

Strathaven Academy has been recognised for amazing sporting talent. To add to the list of achievements, we have recently won the Sports Gold Award. It is an official award from Sports Scotland that is given to schools that have high participation in PE, extra-curricular activities and that promote sporting opportunities. Mrs Wellcoat, who entered Strathaven for the award on behalf of the P.E department, commented: "It's an honour to

be awarded the sportscotland Gold School Sport Award. Our pupils work incredibly hard and we're delighted to see their achievements recognised. We believe that physical education, physical activity and sport are important factors in the lives of our young people." Strathaven Academy thoroughly deserves this award and it is guaranteed this will not be the last time we are recognised for our unique sporting ability.



## Sports Acro Display

On the last Wednesday before Christmas, the school hosted a Sports Acro competition. There were about six groups competing and an S4 group won. It was a very successful event, with lots of groups receiving high scores. The judges gave out lots of 10s!

