

# LANGTON NEWS



July 2008

Issue No. 139

Editor: Susan Begg

## Here Comes Summer!



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If you would like to contribute to the next edition of Langton News, please email your article and/or photographs to

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We are especially interested in hearing about your favourite music, computer games, hobbies, movies, etc. Don't worry about layout - just write about things that interest you that you think would interest others.

Parents are also welcome to contribute if they wish.

# From the Head, Dr Matthew Baxter

I am sure that, like me, every one connected with the Langton felt his or her heart swell with pride on receiving the news that Becky Parker, our Head of Physics, was awarded an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours. Dr Parker (she also received a Doctorate from the University of Kent last week) was awarded the honour because of her contribution to science education.

During the past three years she, Dr Poole and Mr Connolly have developed the most successful school physics department in the country. The Langton now has more students studying A level physics than any other school and last year one in every two hundred students taking up physics in a British university was a Langton student. Given the chronic and serious shortage of physics graduates in Britain it is not surprising that such an award was made.

Of course, Dr Parker has also led the development of the Langton Star Centre, concentrating on astronomy, cosmology, particle and theoretical physics and, because of her work, some of our students have been involved in genuinely world class initiatives, whether it is in monitoring and tracking asteroids, investigating plasma bursts in space or measuring and analysing cosmic ray showers. Many more Star Centre projects are planned for the future and Dr Parker and I have discussed how we can extend these to include students in Key Stages Three and Four. We will be making announce-

ments about these new projects early in the next school year.

I am pleased to announce that the work on restoring the swimming pool is comfortably ahead of schedule and I expect that swimming will again be on the PE curriculum in September. There will also be new developments in the PE department in September; we have added to the staff in the department and will be increasing the access to sport for all boys in years 7 to 11 by two hours each week. We have made slight changes to the timings of lunch and afternoon registration which will mean that for two days each week boys will be able to take part in one of six additional supervised sporting activities for one hour during their lunchtime. I should stress that these activities are entirely voluntary, but they do mean that each boy will be able to involve himself in two more hours of supervised sport each week.

We also expect to establish a Langton swimming team next term and have appointed a coach. At the moment we plan to run the swimming club after school on Mondays and Wednesdays and we are considering having early morning training on some days too. Students in year 11 and above will also be able to train to take a nationally recognised qualification as a swimming pool lifeguard. There is a little more work to do before we finalise these plans and Mr Watson will let students know of arrangements for extra sporting activities early next term.

There will also be a few changes to our curriculum next term. For some time we have been concerned that the curriculum does not fully challenge all our students; in some cases the available examination syllabuses do not fully inspire and there is much which would be useful for our students to learn, without simply pushing them through more and more examination courses. In many subjects we have been able to free up curriculum time to allow students to spend time going outside and beyond the formal curriculum and published syllabuses. The recently established History of Ideas course with Year 10 students provides a good example of the kind of learning we are trying to encourage; students followed an introductory module on the Renaissance and will go on to study the Enlightenment, the development of modern scientific theory, political theory and modern psychology. Whilst there are no formal examinations in these subjects, the course will help students encounter ideas which underpin contemporary thinking and which will provide a very useful foundation for the development of their thinking as they move through the school and university.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Langton students, and their parents, a restful and enjoyable summer break. The next academic year is going to be an exciting one.



# Oliver Writes a Winner



*Oliver Brady and Alistair McKeever pose with Simon Scarrow holding their prizes*

Langton novelist Simon Scarrow was back at the school in May in the wake of his great success topping the Sunday Telegraph bestseller list with his most recent novel *Centurion*. He reached number two in the Sunday Times bestseller lists but was pipped to the top position by one Jeffrey Archer.

The purpose of his visit on this occasion was to judge the quality of the work of Langton writers and, in particular, those who had submitted entries for the inaugural Scarrow Prize for fiction competition.

The task awaiting entrants was to initially track down Mrs Walters – a daunting enough task for most – and to determine with her, by a roll of dice, what historical period to set ones writing in and what was to be the central focus. The first prize was to be fifty fresh pounds from the big man himself.

Entries were enthusiastically received and there was one clear winner. Entry was open to the whole school and every year group was represented from Year 7 to Year 13. Slight surprise then, but huge congratulations, that the first winner of the prize came from Year 7, Oliver Brady, whose dual narrator piece won high praise from Simon Scarrow himself. *"If Oliver can write at this standard at this age, there is nothing to stop him making a living with a pen in later life"* he told the Key Stage 3 assembly.

Runners up were Costas Economou (Yr 12) and Year 10 Alistair McKeever who also received cash prizes from Simon. We are looking forward to next year's competition already.

## ***SIMON SAYS...***

*I've finished the third Revolution novel and the editor is delighted with the results, so that is a huge relief. Meanwhile, all sorts of odd foreign sales have come through (Serbia, Romania, Chile and Argentina) as well as signing a deal for a range of 28mm figurines of Macro, Cato and co. (How weird is that?). Meanwhile, the film guy is edging further down the track to getting the Roman series onto the box, but there's a long way to go there. I have started the next Roman book, and also a young adult project which I may continue if I get the time. Oh, and I have been working hard on a local road safety campaign. So - keeping busy. Hope to see you all again very soon.*

*Have you ever wondered what life was like at the Langton in the 'good old days'? Mrs Jayne was curious and so she interviewed Mr Kenneth Pinnock, who is about to celebrate his 90th birthday*

## 'In My Day...'

I joined the Langton in May 1928, just over 80 years ago. It was just after my 9<sup>th</sup> birthday. I thought that I had gone straight into heaven because it was just wonderful. We didn't have any exacting lessons and every day we got onto the buses and were transported to the playing fields – where the school is now – and it seemed absolute bliss to be sitting under the trees with the smell of grass in my nostrils and the sun shining. Going to school seemed to be a kind of play. I was in a form called The Juniors and we had a special Headmaster who was a sort of Mr Chips type. He was Mr J W Davis but everyone called him 'Dover'. He was a kind, grandfatherly figure who used to reward boys who did well in school with what he called a 'bun penny'. Maybe he called it that because it was a coin with Queen Victoria's head on the reverse side, with her hair in a bun, or maybe it was because you could buy a bun in the school tuck shop. The buns were delivered daily by a baker who was always covered in flour and who carried his tray of buns on his head!

Things changed after my first two years at the school. We went into Form 1 with a new headmaster, Mr Winfield, and the real school work began.

The 11+ (Kent Test) exam already existed and the boys that had passed it were called 'the Scholarship boys'. I was desperate to learn French. We had an old teacher, who claimed to be a pacifist but who kept order in the classroom with a draconian severity! His idea was to put up a chart of all the different sounds in French and drill us on how to pronounce them. I put up with the boredom and after a

while we got into the sway of learning a real language. We had our lessons in a sort of a mobile classroom, an old army hut, which was very cold in the winter. So cold that the ink in the ink-wells would sometimes freeze solid. This caused some problems as we were forbidden to use a pencil – only pen and ink! In the main school there were huge open fires which the caretaker had to lay every day. In the mobiles there were big cast iron stoves. They gave off tremendous heat – so long as you were close to them – any further away than 3 feet and you felt none of the warmth.

Although most grammar schools at the time modelled themselves on public schools, our Headmaster had different ideas. He wanted to make the school a place in which even those from the humblest background could prosper. One of the other pupils lived in Northgate which was, at the time, a very run down part of Canterbury. He often came to school with holes in his clothes. The Headmaster appointed him manager of the tuck shop, a job he did extremely well. He had grown up in a tough environment and he knew what the realities of business were. He used to say 'nobody gives anyone a free lunch!'. He realised that he would never get on in life unless he buckled down to study. This was a boy who always had an eye on how to make a profit. His uncle had been a scrap dealer and from he learnt the art of making money out of bits and pieces. During the war he ran an air transport facility and afterwards he bought a lot of outdated bombers to demolish for spare parts. Just at that moment the Berlin air lift began and instead of scraping his planes he decided to use them to fly supplies to Berlin. This was the foundation of his fortune. ! His name was Freddie Laker, the founder of Laker Airways and of cut-price air travel, and a hero of Richard Branson.



When I first went to the Langton there was no school uniform and it was easy to distinguish the boys who came from the poorer families just by the way they dressed. The Headmaster decided to introduce a uniform - a grey flannel suit with the Langton crest embroidered on the breast pocket of the jacket. The Headmaster's idea was that the trousers could still be worn after the boy had left school so the expense could be justified. He had been a teacher in the East End of London and often came up with ideas which helped the less-well off boys blend in with the rest of us.

We were all skinny and malnutrition was a common in those days. To help tackle the problem the Government introduced free milk in all schools - 1/3 of a pint, everyday, for everyone. You could have it either hot or cold. It made a lot of difference.

The Headmaster was very keen that public property was public property and should always be respected. He would come down very heavily indeed on anyone who damaged or lost things. I got caned for leaving a book in a porch on one occasion!

*Langton News hopes to feature more of Mr Pinnock's reminiscences in future editions.*

# Sports Day Roundup by Mr R Green

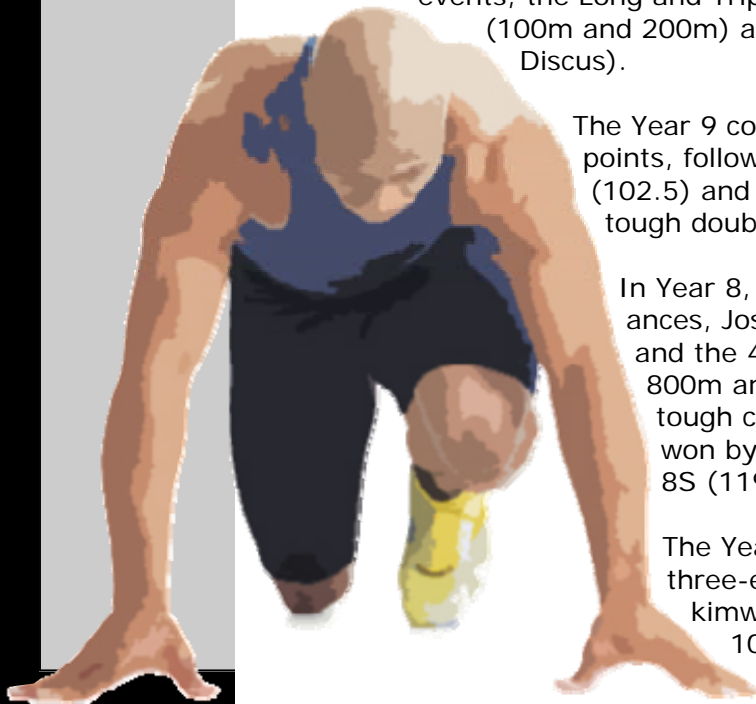
Despite the weather experts forecasting "heavy showers" for Sports Day, not a single drop fell on the Langton sports field. In fact it was quite sunny and fairly breezy, the wind moving menacing looking clouds quickly over us. The stiff breeze was in an ideal position to assist the sprinters.

One sprinter that benefited was Zac Meenan of 8G who won both the 100m and 200m. In the shorter sprint he equaled the record of 12.4 seconds, and set a new mark in the 200m at 25.4 seconds, knocking 0.4 off the old record. Later in the day in an 'open' 100m race he clocked 12.0. The winner was Mr Melford in 10.5 seconds. The Olympic qualifying time is 10.2. Rumour has it that Mr Melford was nursing a sore hamstring and did not get into top gear!

Another sprint record to go was that of the Year 7 relay where 7L took 0.4 seconds off the old mark to set a new record of 58.0.

Only one field event record was broken. This was achieved by Connor Jeffery of 10L setting a new distance of 37.22m in the Javelin. The old record of 36.88m was set in 1983.

In the Year 10 team competition, 10L won comfortably with 146 points ahead of 10G (106), 10S (102) and 10B (88). Gabriel Mansfield won two events, the Long and Triple Jump, as did Chris Chancellor (100m and 200m) and Michael Phillips (Shot and Discus).



The Year 9 competition was won by 9B with 122.5 points, followed very closely by 9G (120.5), 9L (102.5) and 9S (100.5). Charlie Trill achieved a tough double winning both the 200m and 400m.

In Year 8, apart from Zac Meenan's performances, Josh Lindsay won both the Triple Jump and the 400m, with Ben Rogers achieving the 800m and 1500m double – another really tough combination. The team event was won by 8L with 146 points, clearly ahead of 8S (119), 8B (98) and 8G (80).

The Year 7 competition produced the only three-event winner of the day in Jamal Sekimwany. He was successful in the 100m, Shot and Long Jump. Reece Hung won both the 200m and 800m, with Jack North winning the 400m and 1500m. Clear team winners were 7S with 140 points. The competition for second place was very close with 7L scoring 104 and 7G 103. Not far behind was 7B with 97.

On the whole there were many more very good performances and some close finishes seen with teams involving lots of competitors. Well done to all of you! Also well done to all the staff and Year 12 students who officiated at all the events. You made a really good team. Thanks to all.

# Cricket Roundup

by Mr R Green



The 1<sup>st</sup> XI had a fairly sound if disjointed season. Early season bad weather, with the same problem in July led to the cancellation of three matches. The Kent League programme came to nothing as far too many matches were not played. The exam period also caused disruption to the season. Having said all of that, the matches that were played showed that the 1<sup>st</sup> XI were quite a good side. Two good wins came against Duke of York's and Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School, with two draws against Harvey and the Forty Club. Of the two losses the best game of the season was against a very strong Old Langtonian side. Set 200 to win the school soon found itself struggling having lost early wickets. Captain George Leadbetter (86) and Michael Eeles (39) rebuilt the innings with a partnership of 117 to make victory a possibility. Both departed 40 runs short of the total, but the tail wagged and fell 10 runs short with an over to play – a great finish.

One of the 1<sup>st</sup> XI who deserves credit is J J Amos who seemed to pass 50 every time he went to the crease. Sadly he did not manage that against the Old Langtonians.

In the Kent Cups the Under 12s reached the final only to lose to Eltham College, and the Under 15's had a very close match against Judd School in the semi-final. Judd went on to beat Sevenoaks School in the final.

In the District Cups the Under 12, 13 and 15 finals were all played against Kent College. All three matches finished with the same result – a comfortable win for the Langton.

The Under 14's played Herne Bay in their final. Herne Bay batted first and looked set to post a big total, but in the end Langton cruised to a 9 wicket win. The Under 14's also played in the District 6-a-side tournament, reaching the final but losing to a very good King's School side.

Overall this has been a highly successful season. None of the junior sides lost more than two matches all season. A total of 36 matches were won, most against recognised cricket playing schools. Despite the poor early season weather only five matches were cancelled, two when the opposition failed to raise a team.

Hopefully this success at junior level will be carried through to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XIs in seasons to come.

**Other Sporting News:** This has been an outstanding athletics season with the following successes:  
District Intermediate Team Champions, District Junior Team Champions  
District Intermediate Relay Champions, District Junior Relay Champions  
District Yr 7 Team Champions & Festival Winners, Dover College Junior Invitation Winners

*Also every local schools' athletics match contested this year was won by the Langton!*

***Hearty Congratulations to all our young sportsmen.***

# Keeping On Trying

*Mr Michael Melford talks about his flourishing Ruby career*

I first played rugby when I joined King's School, Rochester in year 9. I was disappointed when I realised that football was not an available option for sport as up until then I had been a relatively successful footballer, having represented Southampton. In the first term there were a number of other choices for games such as rowing, swimming and cross-country, but in the end I decided to give rugby a go. Initially I didn't enjoy the experience as I struggled to learn all of the rules in such a quick time but then as I understood the game I gradually began to enjoy it. It may be hard to believe, but actually I was one of the biggest in my year at that age so I was put in the centres and I thoroughly enjoyed this.

As I began to develop during year 9 I took a lot more interest in watching professional rugby on the television, especially the England internationals. Previously when I was young footballer I never had a boyhood dream, for example to play football at Wembley, but by the end of my first year playing rugby at King's I had two. The first was to represent England at any level and the other was to play at Twickenham. I know that some of the current years 8's here at SLBS played at Twickenham last year, which is a fantastic achievement at such a young age, so well done to you boys!

During my time at King's I came very close to achieving one of my dreams, when I had the chance of going for England trials U16 level. It was a huge disappointment to me when I was injured for this, and later, at U18 level, I failed to get selected for the trials.

After those disappointments I considered giving up on achieving either of my goals.

It was also difficult seeing a lot of my team mates go on to be scouted by premiership club Academies, with me being overlooked.

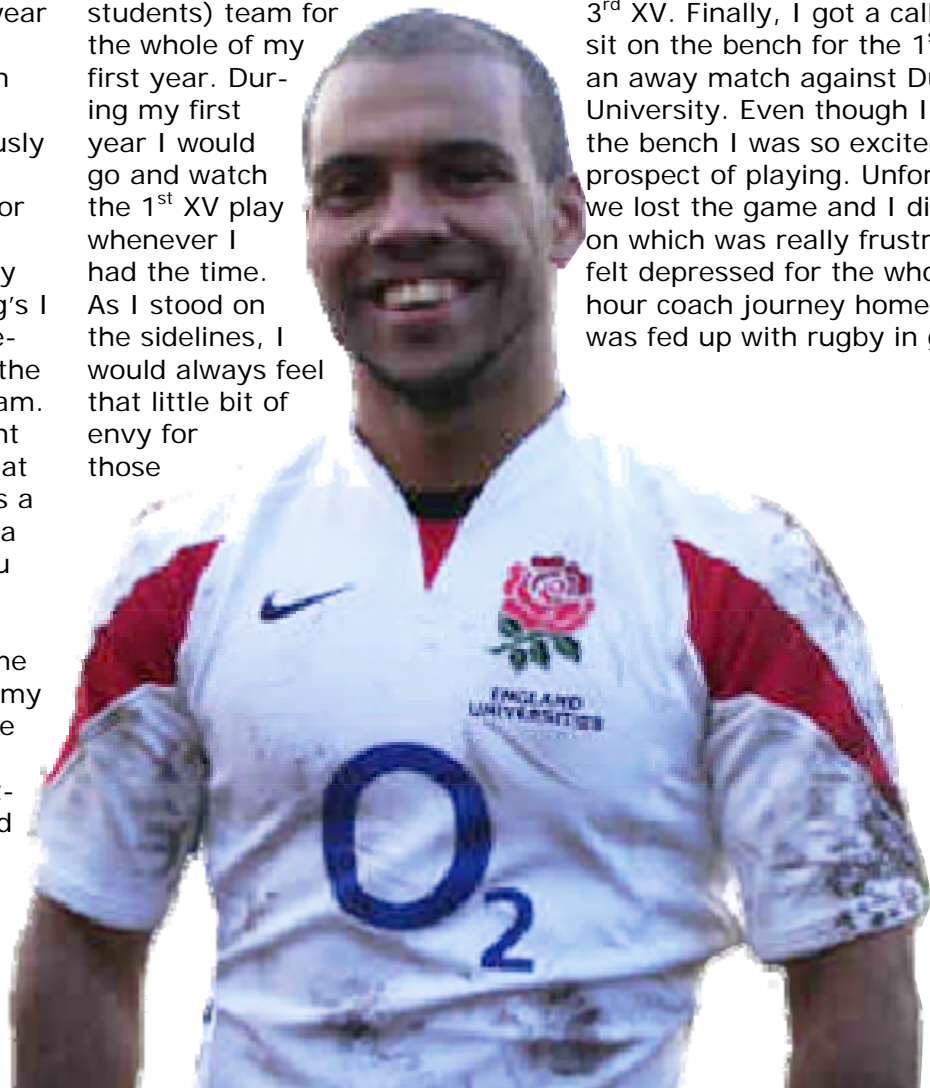
Being a sports mad teenager I had my heart set on going to Loughborough University as I had heard so much about how they are one of the best sporting universities in the country. I studied hard and was accepted in to the University to read Computing and Management.

As expected there was a huge turn out for the University Rugby trials which was, at first, very daunting but the nerves soon went as I got stuck in. I managed to get through the trials and played for the 'freshers' (first year students) team for the whole of my first year. During my first year I would go and watch the 1<sup>st</sup> XV play whenever I had the time. As I stood on the sidelines, I would always feel that little bit of envy for those

with the 1<sup>st</sup> XV shirt on but at the same time I felt happy enough just to be a part of the rugby club.

During my first year there were quite a few first year students who were promoted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> XV team or even the 1<sup>st</sup> XV for certain games. It sometimes felt like a kick in the teeth for me as I felt was being overlooked. It was times like this I felt like throwing in the towel and just enjoying University life. In the back on my mind, however, I still desperately wanted to achieve my two goals and I kept going, putting in the effort with the hope that I would be rewarded.

The second year of Loughborough involved playing for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> XV. Finally, I got a call up to sit on the bench for the 1<sup>st</sup> XV for an away match against Durham University. Even though I was on the bench I was so excited at the prospect of playing. Unfortunately we lost the game and I didn't get on which was really frustrating. I felt depressed for the whole 4 hour coach journey home and was fed up with rugby in general!





As the 15 a-side season finished so the 7 a-side format began. Every year we always entered a team into the Middlesex Sevens qualifiers with the aim to getting through to the main tournament which is held at Twickenham in August every year.

The final qualifiers were held at NEC Harlequins ground (The Stoop), which is a stones throw from Twickenham. That year we had two sides in the final qualifiers and I was part of the B side. Disappointment struck again as my team didn't make it, whereas the A side won the qualifiers and went on to play at Twickenham.

My third year of my degree involved having a work placement. I chose to come back to work in Kent, which meant finding a club for the season. I joined Canterbury RFC and gained a great deal of experience from players and coaches. I felt my game developed and matured, men's rugby being a lot more physical than student rugby. In that year, while I was away from university, Loughborough 1<sup>st</sup> XV won the British Universities trophy at Twickenham and the 7's team again played in the Middlesex sevens. To say I was very disappointed that I didn't have the opportunity would be an understatement, but I was happy for my friends who did play.

I went back to Loughborough for my final year full of confidence and felt that I had a lot to prove. There was a new coach brought in and changes were made with team selection and team ethos. After a few pre-season games and more mini trials I worked my way into the 1<sup>st</sup> XV starting line up. As player selection was based on your previous performance the pressure was always on but then players would value their place in the side more.

My consistent performances for the 1<sup>st</sup> XV earned me a trial for England Students. I got through the preliminary two day trial and

made it through to the final trial. After another two day trial I was selected for the England Universities squad and went on to play against Wales and Scottish Universities. Putting on the England shirt for the first time was my proudest rugby moment to date. It was such a great feeling and luckily enough we got to keep the match strip after each game. Just as I thought that this year could not have got any better we won a closely fought semi-final to make it to the British Universities (BUSA) final at Twickenham to play against Bath. This was one of the best days out of my life and I made sure that I enjoyed every second. It certainly helped that we went on to win too! What more could I want to top off an amazing year?

Things did get even better when I returned to Twickenham to represent England Universities against the Combined services, thus achieving both boyhood dreams in one. The fact that we lost didn't bother me as I felt so privileged to have the opportunity.

In the end my dedication and hard work had paid off and I can look to those achievements with immense pride. And I would say this to you: give yourself goals and make yourself believe that they can happen, whether in sport or in general. If you don't succeed at the first attempt keep trying; all you need is hard work, determination and the belief that you will achieve it.

A high profile example of this is current London Irish Winger Topsy Ojo who I played with for Kent Schools and London and South-east schools at U18. He, like a lot of disappointed boys, didn't make to the main England U18s side. However, a few years on from that disappointment he now plays regularly in the Guinness Premiership and earned a place on the England summer Tour to New Zealand, earning his first cap and scoring two tries on his debut. Never give up!!

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**“In the end my dedication and hard work had paid off”**

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# We are the

The Langton Young Consumer Team has won the coveted Trading Standards Institute (TSI) Young Consumers of the Year 2008 competition, sponsored by the Office of Fair Trading, taking home the College of Fellows trophy, medals and £1,000 for the school!

The team led by captain Joe Mooney, 17 also included Dan Keim, 16, Geoff Baldwin and Ben Abrahams, both aged 17. They clinched the title at the TSI's Annual Conference in Bournemouth, on Wednesday 25th June beating schools from Edinburgh,

Wakefield and Manchester in the grand final. A truly exciting edge of the seat finish had Kent supporters cheering wildly when the final score was announced. Hundreds of schools across the country entered the competition and the Langton won their place in the finals after competing against teams from Kent and the South East to be named Britain's best informed young consumers.

The unique competition organised by TSI, gives competitors aged 14-18 the chance to show their awareness of the world around them, by competing in a knockout

quiz testing them on consumer issues including: consumer rights and responsibilities, money and finance, food and health, safety and the environment and Europe.

"It has been an amazing experience and the team's victory is testament to the hard work they have put into learning information and also their interest in the subject matter, as well as their keenness to enter a competition like this." said Mr Butler. "I am enormously proud of the students who impressed everyone they came into contact with."



# Champions!

## **Mr. Butler pays tribute to Ben Abrams, Dan Keim, Geoff Baldwin and Joe Mooney and their unbelievable National Championship victory in the Young Consumer of the Year competition.**

To clear one thing up before we begin, the Young Consumer of the Year is not an eating competition (although I think the Langton would be pretty good at that too!). Rather it is a quiz based competition relying on an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of all things a modern citizen and consumer of this country should know, but almost certainly doesn't. It is run by the Trading Standards Institute and sponsored by the Office of Fair Trading, two organisations of substantial authority, giving the competition significant prestige. The national finals are held during the annual Trading Standards Institute conference meaning a large audience. The whole thing is recorded, and, a la University Challenge when you buzz, the camera zooms in on you and your face appears large on the giant screen behind you. This is not a competition for the faint-hearted!

### **So to the day itself...**

As we strode out of the Bournemouth International Centre, large trophy in hand, just minutes after the last of our many photo calls, it began to dawn on us just how exciting our last gasp victory had been. With the beach just to our left and holidaymakers all around we took stock of the magnitude of our comeback, twelve points

down with a round to go, a controversial finish and then the announcement that we were champions. For much of the final we had been clinging on to the coattails of the likely winners Boroughmuir High School from Edinburgh, marshalled by their already infamous 'top gun' Archie. That was until the 'epic' last round where a comeback of Turkish proportions occurred. It would be easy to say that the Boroughmuir team froze as the finish line beckoned, but that would do a massive disservice to both teams who went hell for leather for victory.

As I stood on the beach edge with the guys, slightly dazzled by the bright sun that we hadn't seen those past eight hours we had been inside the bowels of the colossal BIC, I came to realise how the boys had pulled it off. Yes they were highly intelligent, hardworking and resourceful individuals, but so to were the other 44 students in the final. Yes, they worked incredibly well as a team, supporting each other in a way that any top sports team would be proud. But, ultimately what set them apart was their ability to stay calm under intense pressure and produce their very best when they needed it most. The best single word I have to describe this characteristic, borrowed from American sports, is 'clutch'. In this sense the word is used as an adjective and it means 'Tending to be successful in tense or critical situations'. Our team more than demonstrated that this applied to them in the final and in doing so victory was theirs.

What was great after the final buzzer was the reaction of the audience. A large group of Kent Trading Standards staff, never before having had a Kent winner, were naturally ecstatic and they made considerable noise. But equally others came up to offer congratulations and on a number of occasions they made observations about the boy's modesty and maturity throughout the Finals. I believe that had the victory not come our way, Ben, Geoff, Dan and Joe would have reacted in exactly the same way. It is to these attributes together with their 'clutch' answers that I am most proud. If you see them around school congratulate them, they will respond modestly. But this is what I have come to expect from four Individuals, who for me, sum up what I believe it means to be a true Langtonian! Well done guys.

The team have asked me to thank the following, in no particular order; Sandra and Helen at Kent Trading Standards, Gwen, Gordon Ramsey (the non swearing one), Axel Foley, Hall and Oats and the guys from the Financial Ombudsman Service.

Articles from the team will appear in the next addition of Langton News



### **About Black History Month**

Black History Season is a season of events and activities that encompass the anniversary of Black History Month, which has been celebrated across since October 1987.

### **What is Black History Month?**

Black History Month has its origins in the United States, where February has been recognised as Black History Month since 1926. It was thought that such a month was necessary in an effort to celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of African Americans in keeping alive their heritage, traditions and histories. In Britain, Black History Month was first celebrated in October 1987 as part of African Jubilee Year. It has since grown to celebrate the contributions and culture of Britain's African and Caribbean communities to Britain's economical and cultural histories.

### **What form do events take and where are they held?**

Events take place the length and breadth of the country 21 years on. There is a richness and diversity of programmers who plan imaginative and thought provoking events, storytelling, walks, theatrical productions, comedy and the first Black History Month Ball, all having history as an integral part of the productions.

### **If it derives from the U.S. when was it set up there, why and when?**

Carter G Woodson initiated the Negro History Week in 1926, which then became Black History Month. Carter Woodson chose February because of the birthday of two influential figures he considered had impacted on the conditions of the "Negro". Abraham Lincoln, American president, and Frederick Douglas.

***Black History Month has been celebrated across the UK every October for over 30 years, each year growing from strength to strength. Black History Month is a time when we highlight and celebrate the achievements of the black community and uncover hidden history about our communities.***

### **What date does BHM start and when does it end? And why October?**

1st - 31st October

October is very significant within the African Cultural calendar - the period of the Autumn equinox in Africa - is consecrated as the harvest period, the period of plenty, the period of the Yam festivals. Apart from that, October is a period of tolerance and reconciliation in African; it is a period of the coming together of the various bodies that entailed the African societies. Black History is therefore a reconnection with learning from the past and using traditions to help shape a positive future.

October is also more or less the beginning of the school year, young people have had a long summer break, their minds are refreshed, and they are not saddled so much with homework or examinations. That was why October was chosen.

### **Who celebrates it? Can anyone participate, or is just for black people?**

Black History month is open to participation by everyone and is ideally developed, delivered and managed as an educational and historical awareness experience by Black people of African Heritage experience and should be shared by everyone as world history.

*For more information and details about events in your area go to [www.blackhistorymonth.co.uk](http://www.blackhistorymonth.co.uk) or [www.black-history-month.co.uk](http://www.black-history-month.co.uk)*

# Video Conferencing Project by Mrs M Poole



During this academic year twenty –six students in Year 10 have been taking part in a video conferencing project with Cambridge University. This was a statistical research project esigned to investigate the spread of disease amongst children. The students visited our rural partner primary schools at Stowting, Bodsham and Stelling Minnis to collect their live data from pupils. They carried out some statistical data analysis to try to interpret the mixing patterns amongst the pupils to decide how this could affect the spread of disease. Five video conferences took place with the research team as a means of delivering the statistical theory required to analyse the data and two video conferences took place at the Langton for the primary school pupils. The results of this data collection are being used by the statistical research team at Cambridge University as part of a wider project. The video conferencing project is going to be used as a model for other schools wishing to engage in this style of research in the classroom.

The highlight of the project was a visit to the Centre for Mathematical Sciences at Cambridge University where the year 10 students delivered a very

confident presentation to the Cambridge research team and Professor John Barrow, Director of the Millenium Mathematics Project.

The students involved in the presentation were Will Matcham, Alex Williamson, Steven Mayes, Chris Wickington and Alistair McKeever. We also took advantage of a tour of the Institute of Astronomy and the physics museum at the nearby Cavendish Laboratory.

Well done to all students involved and especially those who worked so hard on the presentation.

*To see more information visit the Cambridge University website at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/dp/2008070406>*



## LANGTON NEWS ONLINE

Don't forget, you can get a **full colour** edition of this, and past, editions of Langton News by going to

**[www.thelangton.org.uk](http://www.thelangton.org.uk)**

and clicking on the link on the left hand side of the home page.

## Acting Up

*Congratulations to  
Luke Ryan & Joe Allcott  
both of whom have been  
offered places with the  
National Youth Theatre.*

*A full report will be  
included in the next  
edition of Langton News.*

## CLEAR YOUR LOCKER OUT BY WEDNESDAY!

Any items left in the metal lockers over the holiday period will be removed and either donated to charity or thrown away.

## YOU HAVE BEEN



Miss Burr and the Art department would like to



thank Able Glass of Faversham for providing us with a large quantity of mirrors.



We have put these to good use in our lessons.



If any other parents have access to any other resources that could be used in a creative way, we would love to have them. Anything considered.



Please give the school a ring, ext number 770

# Year 7 Trip to Temple of Hindu Worship By Elliot Fox 7G

On Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 7G and 7B went on a trip to the "BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir". It was a fantastically interesting trip and I highly recommend a visit if you want to experience and understand how the Hindu culture worships.

The coach was passing through a normal housing estate when suddenly, as we turned the corner; a magnificent, pure white Hindu temple appeared as if from nowhere.

Making the setting even more stunning was the new Wembley stadium which was adjacent to the temple. When we finally parked and got out of the coach we walked towards the big learning centre where we had to take our shoes off. All around and inside the learning centre there were beautiful carvings of the different Hindu Gods. Yet, this was only a glimpse of what the carving would be like later on.

We were then led through to a big room where a very nice guide explained what we would be doing throughout that day. At the end of his speech he led us into the famous marble temple which is made from, obviously, marble (which was brought in from Italy)

but also limestone (which was brought from Bulgaria). When I first entered the marble temple I felt apprehensive and I had the belief that the place and religion was special as there was an impressive and humbling atmosphere. We then climbed up some marble stairs to the main dome where the Hindus pray. The carving was even more stunning here; it was amazing how much precision had been put into this spectacular piece of work.

There are golden statues around the dome which are dressed every day with different clothes. The method of praying is quite elaborate. I watched one man at prayer. He prayed first by laying down, then stood on one leg, and finally sat down and prayed like Christians do. There was clearly a lot of concentration and commitment. Hinduism involves praying (*puja*) every day because they believe that it is not enough to believe in God but that you must strive to find God. Although many Hindus pray at home it is also popular to visit a public temple.

The room smelled of incense, perfume and roses and the combination was relaxing and

soothing. Then the priests, in their orange robes, started waving some candles and some calm music started playing. Then all the women started clapping (you could tell that it was only the women that were clapping because the two genders are separated in the Temple).

After the prayers we made our way back to the coach where we ate our lunch (this took about half an hour). After lunch we walked back into the temple. We were already excited about what we would be doing next. We had another little talk with our guide before going into the exhibition. I found this very interesting as it had all the facts about the temple and general facts about the Hindus. This included the origins of the religion, the fact that there are over 900 million Hindus in the world and information about the key beliefs (karma, reincarnation, the caste system and the various Gods).

We came out of the exhibition and went into the big learning room again where we asked questions about the Hindus (the best questions got a prize!). Then it was time to go home. This was a fantastic and insightful experience and I will always remember it!



## The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Gold Practice Expedition

# The Mourne Mountains

by Peter Hatfield



### Day One:

The expedition started in high spirits at 6.00 am sharp on the 2nd of July as the first ever angton DoE Gold group set out for their practice expedition in Northern Ireland with all-round sports Mr Shaw and Mr Williams. Although we were eager to get into some serious mountain-eering, the team first had a good opportunity to get to know each other – there was a 15-hour coach journey to our destination in the Mourne Mountains, involving a “shortcut” through Scotland. We did manage however to develop some sort of addiction to a “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire” machine in a service station, winning back almost a pound compared to around £5 spent (it was the taking part that mattered). We arrived at our base camp for the next week, “Tollymore Mountain Centre” and fell into our beds at around 9.30 pm.

### Day Two:

The groups’ first day in the mountains was not untypical – soaking wet storms! The team split into two teams, Peter Hatfield, Jerome Condry, Tom Purvis, Azieez Omotoshu, Chiron Velho and Peter Malone in the boys team (AKA Super Army Soldiers, SAS) and Rachael O’Leery, Amy Taheri, Sarah Hill and Charlotte Moore in the girls team. Although we managed to have some practice navigating, storms forced the boys’ team to retreat under a storm shelter, little knowing that they had left themselves open to a surprise attack from the girls! After a bit more larking around in a river crossing, we made our way back to the centre for some rock climbing and one of Toms well-loved “Elvis-leg” performances. After a delicious home made lasagne from the lovely Irish staff at the centre we retired to rest for the coming day,

### Day Three:

Sarah’s birthday! This day really tested our expedition knowledge – we were challenged with some tricky “micro-navigation” exercises – locating a miniscule point on a map in the real world using only a compass and various “tricks of the trade” that Mr Williams let us on to. When we returned to base we went over the finer details of first aid (meeting humorous characters like “Dr. ABC” and “Uncle Touchy”) and route planning before setting out again on a night hike, where we could of course practice micro-navigation in a challenging environment with minimal visibility.

### Day Four:

We used the morning to pack for our proper practice expedition (up till now had been practice for the practice) and had an expedition to the local Tesco, where some quite questionable purchases (enough said) were made. All ready, we set off! Both the boys team and



the girls team set off on their respective routes and both made good progress, making their way towards where they had previously decided to camp. The only hindrance had been certain team members stopping to update their facebook accounts via mobile – it seemed there really is no escape from the site. The weather was so bad that we had to be pulled in to the centre for this night, which allowed everyone the chance for a shower and to clean up a bit.

### Day Six:

The real challenge of the week – six peaks to be climbed, including “Slieve Donard”, the largest peak in Northern Ireland, or “the bad boy” as it quickly became known as we struggled up the mountain. Although physically hard going, it was one of the most rewarding since the view from the top was spectacular and there was a real sense of achievement. At the end of the day the rain set in and we were forced to retreat early into the tents, Jerome in fact wrapping his whole body in tin foil as well as a sleeping bag to warm up.

One boy was reported as saying “I was so cold I almost died”. Another said “this is going straight on my Facebook profile”.

### Day Five:

After an early morning’s breakfast of bacon and cheese we began a challenging day for all – many peaks climbed by everyone. Huge disappointments all round when “Butter Mountain” turned out not to have leprechauns giving out warm butter on the top. Once again the Irish weather presented a problem and everyone became wet and cold. An unmarked bog became a particular problem as well as the deceiving “false peaks”.

### Day Seven

After completing our final climb in the Mourne’s at around midday we arrived back at the base camp having completed 20 peaks in four days – both satisfied and exhausted. After essentially putting all our clothes and equipment into the washing machines and reviewing the weather charts we went into the nearby town of Newcastle (in N. Ireland) where we found a picture of Rachael at Glastonbury in a magazine! To finish off our time at Tollymore

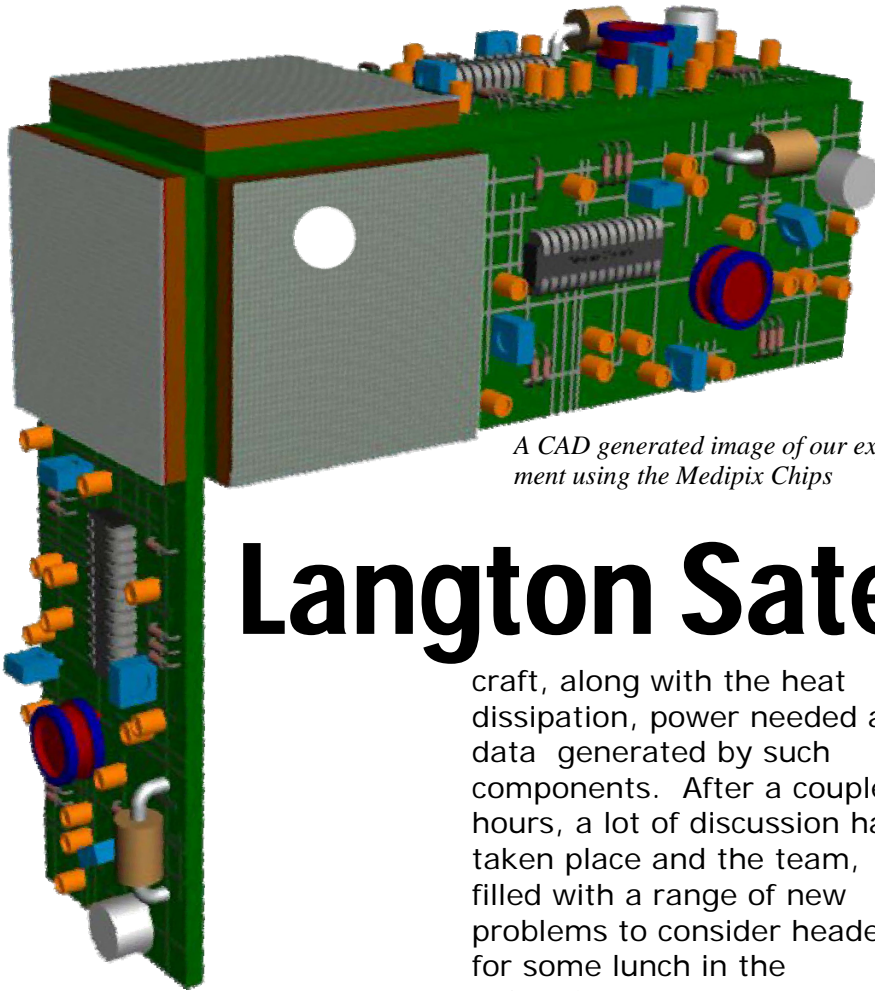
we enjoyed an ice cream and, in my case, two kebabs in quick succession to say goodbye to Northern Ireland

### Day Eight

Up at 4.15am in order to catch the ferry back to Scotland. Many people were almost sick in the car journey – the TomTom was misbehaving and guiding the minibus in the wrong direction. Morale was getting low – fortunately Mr Shaw pulled out the “SSS Megamix” (Sir Simon Shaw) to get everyone back in a good mood. This gem of a playlist included such classics as “Ra Ra Rasputin”, “Walk Like an Egyptian” and, of course, “Tie me Kangaroo Down Sport”. We continued in better spirits and after several hours of Charlotte’s amusing car games we arrived back at the school at 10.15 pm.

Overall it was a really great trip – we learnt a lot about hiking and had loads of fun. What looked like the mightiest mountains at the start of the week looked tiny by the end! We really made good friends with each other and the staff were fantastic. We just can’t wait till we set off for the real expedition!





*A CAD generated image of our experiment using the Medipix Chips*

# Langton Satellite Team UPDATE

craft, along with the heat dissipation, power needed and data generated by such components. After a couple of hours, a lot of discussion had taken place and the team, filled with a range of new problems to consider headed for some lunch in the cafeteria.

After lunch we were shown around the company, visiting labs, engineers, the control room and finally the clean rooms. Dressed in antistatic powder blue coats, clown size overshoes and the most attractive hair nets (Luckily nobody had a beard so didn't need a beard cover!) we entered the clean rooms where the satellites are constructed. This room is a maze of electronic components. There were 2 satellites under construction and we were shown how the satellite comes together from the components, which are mounted on PCB's, placed in trays and then all the parts assembled into a complete small satellite. The day was a success, and on the way home Mrs P, newly awarded her MBE ended up on the phone to a guy from the KM Gazette (She had pulled over by this time). With us lot

in the back it was an amusing interview, with the guy taking a particular interest in the Red Vauxhall Zafira we were travelling in.

The next Satellite team expedition was to CERN, the Europeans particle physics lab. Dragging ourselves out of bed before 5 O'clock was a challenge, but nothing as to what awaited us when we got there. Flying Easyjet we travelled to Geneva, the capital of Switzerland and took a cab to CERN, where we grabbed a bite for lunch out of the CERN cafeteria. After lunch we headed to the important part of the day: our meeting with Professor Larry Pinsky of the University of Houston and Michael Campbell, head of the Medipix team. We spent 3 hours discussing cosmic rays, the use of the chip, and practically everything and anything to do with our experiment. Prof Pinsky talked us through what he was doing with Dosymmetry and how in his work for NASA he was using the chips to generate data onboard spaceships.

On Monday 16th June the Langton Satellite team headed off to Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd, part of the University of Surrey. In traditional fashion we arrived dead on time for our meeting with their experts. Sitting in their boardroom on swivel chairs we were given free hyper cool pens that fold out. Then it was down to the proper business: How ridiculous was our plan? It turned out that it wasn't that stupid! After all the hype and nerves that Mrs P had generated on the journey up, it was a positive response from the Dr Stuart Eves who is the guy heading up the competition.

Next, we were introduced to Glen Carey, who is very knowledgeable in the area of cosmic rays, and David Clarke, an engineer who knows about the electronics needed on space



Next we discussed possible solutions for our experiment, and how best to use the chips, as well as what data we will receive and how it may be used. From this we determined the data rates of transfer, the rate of data generated by the chips and also, which of the 4 chips they have developed would be the most suitable for our Cosmic Ray Detector. Finally, we headed back home after a long day, all exhausted and sweating (it had been a heat wave in Geneva).

### On the Road

Back on the road this time heading to Milton Keynes to meet JZ (John Zarnecki) at the Open University. This trip allowed us to discuss and get backing from the OU about testing our experiment, and the range of models we would need to make if we won to test various features of the experiment. We also got to touch rock from Mars as well as different types of comets and meteorites which had hit the Earth!

### On the Radio

On the news recently there was an item about the decline in Physics at secondary schools stating that 1 in 4 schools don't have a specialist Physics teacher anymore. So, Mrs P knowing every person on the planet was invited to the BBC to do a bit on PM (BBC Radio 4) on this issue.

Getting to the BBC wasn't the easiest thing we've ever done. TomTom went mad and it didn't help that the whole street was BBC buildings! Afterwards, a nice lady from the BBC took us round the BBC and even allowed us in the Blue Peter Garden!

proposal against other schools, and show how our experiment will connect loads of school kids across the UK, inspiring them to do Physics like we do. We displayed a poster which enable people to easily understand our design and to follow our vision. Yet again we met someone rather famous, a guy called Buzz Aldrin (some of you may have heard of him) before being presented with a couple of books by Ian Pearson and then socialising and 'selling' the experiment to all the guests. In the afternoon we were allowed to enjoy the airshow, and were deafened by a loads of the latest fighter planes in the world as well as picking up lots of freebies!

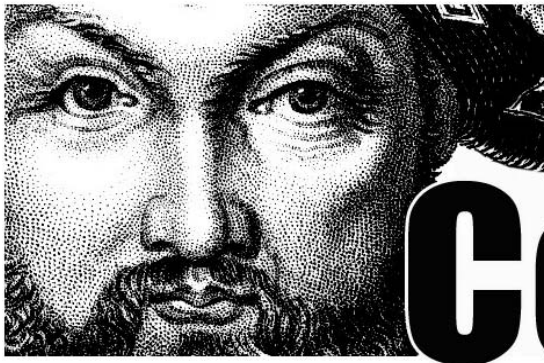


### On the Ground

The Star Centre's latest jaunt was to Farnborough Air show to present our proposal for our experiment to Ian Pearson MP, Minister for Science and a number of other distinguished guests. This was a brilliant chance for us to show off our

The next step for the team is to put together the final proposal for the judging by September 12th, and the results are announced at the International Astronomical Congress in Glasgow on October 3rd

**Watch this Space!**



# Hampton Court Visit

Report by Thomas Gooderham & Jonathan Head

On Thursday 10th of July 2008, 8S and 8L visited Hampton Court Palace.

Both classes have studied hard throughout the year covering many different aspects of times of the Tudors and we were looking forward to going.

We arrived at school at 7:15 (too early for most of us) and set off! After two hours of sitting on a coach, we arrived and were ready to stretch our legs around the gardens of Hampton Court.

At 10:30 we listened to a talk about Henry VIII and took great interest about how Henry had lead his life to look powerful. We then took a walk around the

Great Hall, state departments and the haunted gallery (many of us were watching out for the ghost of Jane Seymour).

We then had lunch in the grounds and played fifty two bunker. Then we took part in another talk about sport in the Tudor times. This was quite interesting as we learnt about the links between games we play today and games that were played in the past. We also got to try on replicas of armour and play games that they would played, for example throwing a ball at a chicken. There were a few minutes to look around in the gift shop, but most of it was a rip off, so most people didn't buy any thing!

Afterwards we went to the kitchens and looked at the food rich people would indulge in and saw the massive fireplaces where they spit roasted the meat. We went to see the chapel where many monumental events have taken place through history, for example the christening of Edward VI (the boy king) and the marriage of Henry VIII to Katherine Parr.

We got home around 6:15 and we had, had a fantastic time, incorporating learning with fun.

Thank you to all the staff who accompanied us and to Mr Fox and Mrs Shepherd for arranging the trip.

## Bookmark

The Student Librarians have been working very hard this term, helping out at break and lunch-times. They have also processed over 200 books. The Library is now recruiting Librarians for next year. If any Year 10 or 11 students are still interested, they should see Mrs Jones before the end of term.

New books this term include: -

### Fiction

**Sebastian Faulks** Devil May Care  
**Garth Nix** Superior Saturday  
**Matt Whyman** Inside the Cage  
**Derek Landy** Skulduggery Pleasant: Playing with Fire  
**James Patterson** Maximum Ride: The Final Warning  
**Darren Shan** Death's Shadow  
**Dominc Barker** Blart III  
**Eoin Colfer** Airman  
**Joe Craig** Jimmy Coates: Survival  
**Simon Scarrow** Centurion

### Non -fiction

Cinematic History of Gangsters and Detectives  
 The Supernatural  
 Shipwrecks  
 Mysterious Monsters  
 Alien World  
 Snakes  
 Incredible Reptiles  
 Spiders And Other Invertebrates  
 The Diversity of Life  
 The Real Deal: Tobacco  
 The Solar System and Beyond

And Next Term - Look out for Cherub: The General by Robert Muchamore!



# Hear! Hear!

## Youth Parliament 2008

2008 saw success once again for the sixth form Youth Parliament team. The debate group was awarded the runners-up prize and Richard Ball was voted Best Speaker. Both these were national awards, the team having successfully passed through the regional stage. As in previous years, the entry for the competition, which is run by the Citizenship Foundation, was put together entirely by the students themselves.

At the Awards Day in Westminster, the students were given a tour of the Commons and Lords Chambers, treated to a riverside reception and given the chance to receive their awards from famous politicians.

Present at the ceremony were such well-known figures as Jack Straw and Nick Clegg. For the first time ever, the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, also attended, and there was a lively exchange between Richard Ball and the Speaker of the House. Following the reception, the students took a free 'flight' on the London Eye and saw the Houses of Parliament from a completely different angle.

The students invited for the day (not all of whom could attend because of prior commitments) were Tom Dobin, Richard Ball, Tom Moran, Ben Abrams, Lisa Parker, Steffan Chandler, Suzi Hewitt, Adam Sandey, Felicity Lindsay, Tiffany Murphy, Alex Baines, Ryan Broadbridge, Sarah Coleman and Sarah Hill. They were accompanied by Mr Eagle and Mr Mattingly, both on their first YP Awards trip.

A fine winning tradition for the Langton has been continued once again.



# Going Downhill Fast!



The Kent School's Championships at Bromley dry ski slope is the largest entry schools ski race in the country and this year some 190 skiers entered the event. Among them, and flying the flag for Team Langton, were brothers Jamie (Yr 11) and Harry Williams (Yr 9) and brothers Ben (Yr 11) and Cameron Stratton (Yr 8). All four are members of the Folkestone Dry Ski Centre Club where they meet regularly for practice sessions.



On the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> June they travelled up to Bromley to join the other competitors in what was to turn out to be a long and successful day. First up is the Open Practice – the first chance the skiers get to 'warm up' on the slopes before the course officials get busy erecting the course. Once the gates used in the slalom have been put up everyone gets a chance to inspect the course by slowly making their way down the slope. 'This is when we get to work out our strategy' explained Jamie 'we have to know when and where to make the best turns as well as keeping an eye out for any pitfalls on the course'.

Then it was time to hit the slopes. Each competitor was able to take 3 runs which sounds a lot until you realise that the fastest

skiers can make it through the course in mere 12 seconds! Blink and you would have missed them. 'If you straddle a gate then you are instantly disqualified and you have to cross the finishing line with at least 3 pieces of equipment' said Jamie 'so you can't afford to drop a ski pole or, even worse, loose a ski'. Happily all four Langton boys crossed the line in award winning time with all poles and skis present and correct. They came 3<sup>rd</sup> in their category and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the competition overall. A truly tremendous achievement.

The Williams family had another cause for celebration as Jamie's sister, Beth, was part of the winning team in the final event of the day - the Dual Slalom.

This country is not known for providing ideal conditions for skiers and even the Scottish Ski resorts are struggling to survive in the face of global warming but Jamie and Harry get a chance to ski on snow at least once a year. "We go over to France for Christmas every year and it is great to get out on real snow. The dry slopes are okay for practising on but nothing beats the real thing!"

Jamie is about to start his AS studies at the Langton in September and has already decided that his choice of university will depend on what skiing facilities are on offer. "I am passionate about my sport and if anyone reading this is interested in getting started then I would be happy to give whatever help and advice I can. People think it is an elitist sport but that is not the case. Anyone can have a go and it is easy to hire equipment if you don't have your own. The Club in Folkestone is always looking for new members and I can guarantee that if you come along you will have a great time."

## Did you Know?

There are 77 real snow and artificial ski slopes in Great Britain.

The majority of ski slopes in Great Britain are dry ones which use a matting material devised in the 1960s made up of small brushes called Dendix. They are becoming less popular because of the indoor real-snow zones but are still handy when it comes to learning the basics and brushing up on your ski skills before a holiday. Dry slopes are great value for money and they are easily accessible in most places around the UK.

# DR P MBE!

At a time when university science departments are closing and numbers of students taking up the hard sciences are in sharp decline, our own Becky Parker been included in the Queen's birthday honours list from inspiring record numbers of students to take A Level physics. Becky Parker, Head of Physics at the Langton has two reasons to be cheerful this month. She has had her work recognised by an honorary doctorate by the University of Kent as well as her MBE from the Queen.

The awards are for outstanding contributions to science and education and for encouraging record numbers of students to take up physics. The Langton has established itself as one of the country's premier science schools since taking science specialist status in 2003 and Dr Baxter, recognises Mrs Parker's role in that. "Becky is the reason why so many students, especially girls, join our Sixth Form to study the sciences. The atmosphere in her classroom is electric and the opportunities she provides for our students go way beyond those enjoyed by many undergraduates." The school will have over 150 students studying for Physics A Level from September, more than any other school in the country.

Mrs Parker studied at the University of Sussex and then the University of Chicago and was senior lecturer at the University of Kent before coming to the Langton. No stranger to honours, she was recognized as Physics Teacher of the Year in 1999 by the Institute of Physics. Of her honours she said, "I feel extremely honoured to be given these awards. What is so exciting

at the school is the fact that we are not just teaching physics, but involving students in original research. We work closely with the plasma group at Imperial College and our students are contributing original ideas to solving problems with plasma ejections from stars."

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**The school will have over 150 students studying for Physics A Level from September, more than any other school in the country.**



**"What is so exciting at the school is the fact that we are not just teaching physics, but involving students in original research."**

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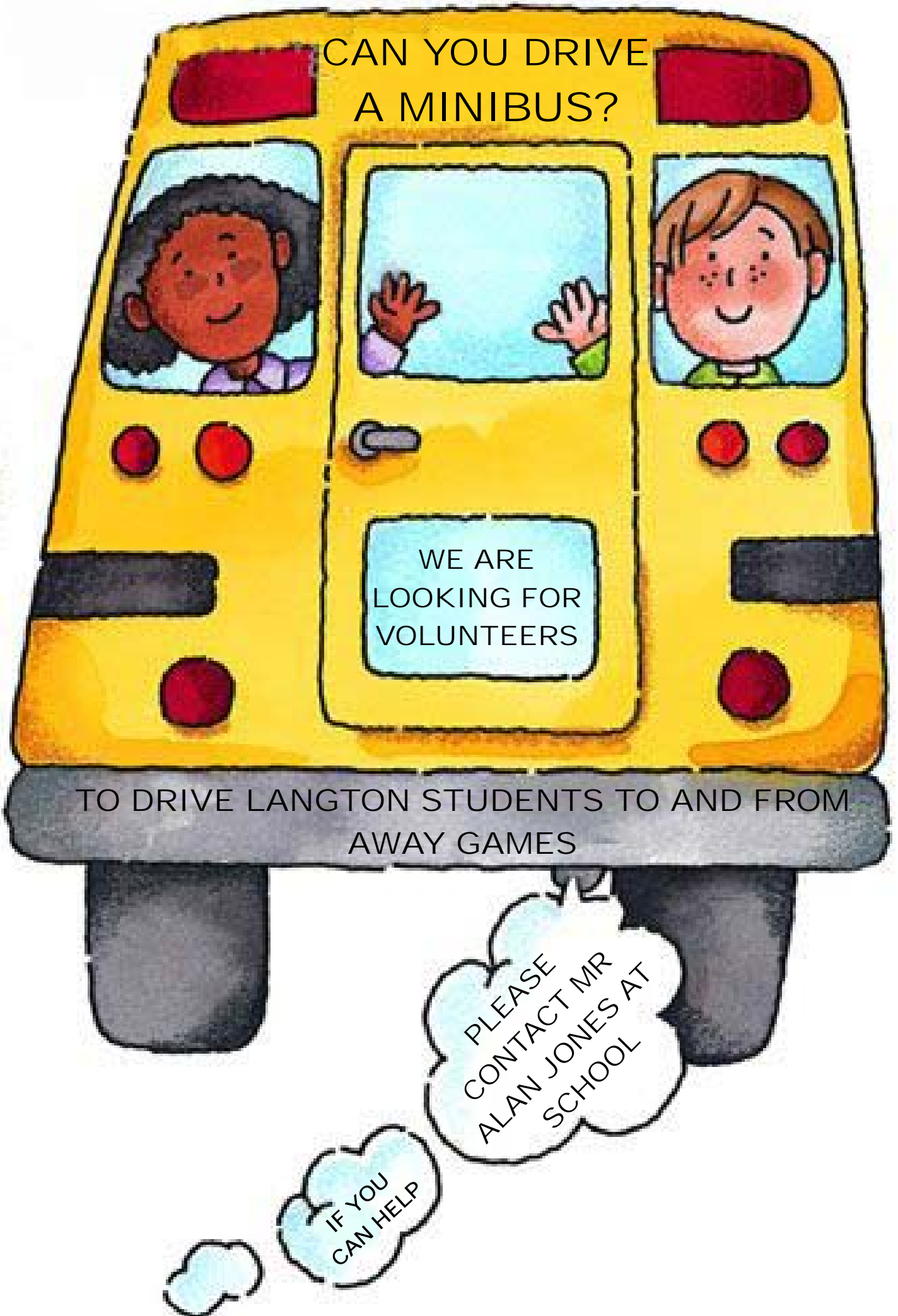
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Langton students are also collaborating with the European particle physics laboratory, CERN, and are leading participants in the Faulkes Telescope Project and a number of senior students have made important original astronomical discoveries. The Langton had control of the Faulkes Near Earth Objects Project monitoring the progress of asteroids and meteorites and Dave Bowdley of the Faulkes Institute was appointed Visiting Astronomer and Faulkes Teaching Fellow at the school.

Recent speakers at the school have included Nobel Laureate, Professor Tony Leggett, Professor Steve Rose of Imperial College, London, and Professor Brian Foster, Head of Particle Physics at Oxford University. Dr Patrick Caines of Oxford University gave the inaugural delivery of his paper on "A Geometric Model of Relativity" at the school on 19th June.

In 2005 the Langton Star Centre was born and is now awaiting physical accommodation on the school site. "The vision of the Langton Star Centre, to empower students to extend their learning way beyond any formal syllabus, is at the heart of the school. It is intended that the Star Centre will develop into one of the country's leading centres of student research into particle and plasma physics and astronomy. Dr Baxter, has created an inspiring atmosphere that nurtures innovation and creativity." said Mrs Parker.

Becky Parker is the second member of the Boys' School staff to be honoured by the Queen. Ray Jarvis was awarded and MBE for services to education in 2003.



CAN YOU DRIVE  
A MINIBUS?

WE ARE  
LOOKING FOR  
VOLUNTEERS

TO DRIVE LANGTON STUDENTS TO AND FROM  
AWAY GAMES

IF YOU  
CAN HELP

PLEASE  
CONTACT MR  
ALAN JONES AT  
SCHOOL