



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of Wallington County Grammar School,

I invited our Local Advisory Board of school governors into school in late February to speak to students, observe lessons, contribute to our School Development Plan and generally test the temperature of learning in this outstanding organisation. As part of this I asked them to test how well students could articulate our new core values – commitment, compassion, courage and creativity – and the extent to which they felt they were living up to them. As expected, our students excelled and spoke eloquently of how these values encouraged them to be outward looking, always putting others before themselves, striving to achieve success but supporting others along the way as they do so. I fully expected this response because I have had the privilege of watching our core values in action over the course of the Spring Term. Let me give you an insight into the wonderful life of a Headmaster in one of the country's top schools and how students work every day to fulfil our motto, *Per Ardua ad Summa*.

Commitment

There can be no better example of this quality than Miss Ball and the six wonderful boys who accompanied us to the presentation of the 2019 Evening Standard School Achievement Award at their offices in Kensington. We agreed it was a surreal experience to be rubbing shoulders with the likes of George Osborne, former Chancellor of the Exchequer and now the paper's editor, and Damian Hinds, Secretary of State for Education. Their gushing praise for the hours and hours of toil that went into every mark achieved by those six students, that enabled them to perform in the very top few candidates nationally, was both heartfelt and justified. More moving still, was seeing the students from Kensington Aldridge Academy collect the award for Outstanding Achievement in Exceptional Circumstances having succeeded in attaining a superb set of GCSE results despite being at the very foot of Grenfell Tower and losing many of their colleagues, team mates and friends. Circumstances like this remind us of what commitment truly is.

Courage

Courage has not been in short supply so far this year as can be seen by the incredible sporting achievements of some of our students. Ahmed Baig of Bridges house has won the title of U17 European World Champion in karate whilst Sajjan Selvakumar of Mandeville is second in Europe and second in the World U13 category of the same sport. Also in martial arts, Kilian Seifert Leitch won two first places in the National Judo Championships in Poland. In table tennis, Sai Gandapalli (Radcliffe), Ojasvii Borah (Radcliffe), Jacob Archer (Radcliffe), Chidumebi Egbeana (Bridges) all came second in the English National U13 Tournament whilst Luke Shaw is 10th in the country in his category for butterfly stroke. One does not have to be an elite sportsman to appreciate what it will have taken for these young men reach the standard that they have – how many times they have failed and got back up, how many times they have come up against an opponent more experienced than themselves but risen to the challenge. I and the rest of the school community take our hats off to them, they deserve our respect.

Creativity

House Music was a virtuoso display of the creativity and talent present in WCGS and was, without question, the best event of its kind in my thirteen years at the school. Jad Daas' guitar playing for Ruskin house was simply dazzling whilst Kavi Maraj played the bass, drums, violin and lead guitar across a wonderfully varied set by Woodcote. Ronak Boman of Carew won best performer with an incredible display of loop recording, layering up his electric violin, guitar and piano to create a soaring original composition. Radcliffe won the day however, with a selection of well-rehearsed, innovative and highly musical performances, making them the embodiment of everything the school aims to achieve in the creative sphere. I am confident that, within the next two years we will see the full return of Music A Level and the introduction of Drama A Level. It is also our aim to bring back an A Level in Design Technology in the near future which will make the most of our new block scheduled to be finished in late April. These investments will put creativity back at the heart of the school and help students become truly well-rounded individuals ready for study at the best universities in the world.

Compassion

Interviews for the Student Leadership Team are always an opportunity to appreciate the deep levels of care that our senior students have for those younger than themselves. It was wonderful to hear how so many of our Lower Sixth have given back to the school by running clubs and societies, supporting students as anti-bullying ambassadors, supporting our culture and ethos as Y11 prefects or running practices for their house. For the first time ever we have decided to appoint two School Captains – Caitlin Rajan as Head Girl and Tom O'Sullivan as Head Boy. These two students have worked tirelessly in their time at secondary school to make life better for those around them and I am confident that they will continue to act with complete selflessness for the betterment of students at WCGS.



Where we need to see much greater levels of compassion however is online. Too many times this term, students have written, posted or shared content online that is not befitting a member of this fine community. Too many times have sanctions had to be used to deter students from misrepresenting themselves and the school in such an open forum as the internet. I therefore urge parents to take a very active interest in what their sons and daughters do online and support them to make decisions that will aid, not hinder, their future professional aspirations. If students are nervous about showing their parents what they are writing and sharing, they should not, in my view, be sharing it.

We are saying goodbye to two members of staff this term - Mrs Mills who has led our Geography Department whilst Mrs Evans has been on maternity leave, and Mrs Marvin who has been working with us for one day a week in Computer Science. They have both made tremendous contributions to the school in their time here and I thank them for all they have done.

I hope you have a restful Easter and I look forward to writing to you in the summer when all the examinations are done and dusted and we will be able to reflect on what has so far, been a wonderful year.

Yours faithfully,

Jamie Bean

PTFA Update by Katherine Herrick, Chair WCCGS PTFA

This term has been very busy for the PTFA and a huge thank you goes to all the many volunteers who have helped out at numerous events.

The highlight has been our annual quiz which was once again hosted by two WCCGS teachers, Mr Weston and Dr Young. As ever it was a lighthearted and fun event which was enjoyed by all. Thanks are due to our very entertaining quizmasters, to everyone who came along and helped make it such a lovely evening and in particular to our sixth formers who assisted on the night to help make it all run so smoothly.

Our second hand uniform sales at parents evenings have gone from strength to strength and are now so incredibly popular we are really struggling to get enough stock!

If you have any uniform or WCCGS sports kit in good condition that your son has grown out of please could you donate it by handing it into the school office in a bag clearly labelled 'PTFA uniform'

All donations are very welcome but we would be particularly grateful for donations of sports kit which is always in high demand.

As well as running events, this term we have been able to approve funding for new school computers and have had the pleasure of seeing the new cricket scoreboard, which was paid for by the PTFA and Cricket Club, take its place on the side of the sports hall. In addition it is very exciting to see the now rapid progress which is being made on the new DT and Music block. We contributed £150,000 to the cost of the new building and we can't wait for the day that students get to use it.

11+ Familiarisation Tests

Work for the 2019 test is now well underway. So far this year we have already sold over 80% of our places and are pleased to say that it looks like the take up of the PTFA funded places for children in receipt of Free School Meals or Pupil Premium will be at least as high as last year. The tests will be held in May, June and early July and we would welcome volunteers to help out on the day so if you could spare time to get involved for an afternoon or morning session please email Kate at helpers@wccgsptfa.org Volunteering is not only hugely worthwhile in terms of what we can contribute to the School, but it is also a great way to get to know other parents.

Our Events and Meetings

Apart from the familiarisation tests, next term almost all of our efforts will be dedicated towards hosting the school induction BBQ which plays such an important part of welcoming new year 7 students into WCCGS. The BBQ will be on the 15th June so if you would like to volunteer to help out, or would like to donate cakes, raffle prizes or second hand uniform please do get in touch at bbq@wccgsptfa.org

All parents and guardians of children at the WCCGS are automatically members of our PTFA and we are always very happy to see new faces at our meetings, which are usually held on the first Tuesday of the month at the School. If you can't make it to meetings (and not all of us can) but would still like to contribute to our activities in some capacity please just drop us a line at info@wccgsptfa.org

If you would like more details about the PTFA or to find dates for our meetings you can visit us online at <http://www.wccgs-sutton.co.uk/PTFA1>



Stratford – 2019 by Dylan Salih, Year 11

Once again, the English Department have truly outdone themselves in an attempt to run an educational yet wholly enjoyable trip to Stratford-upon-Avon. The Warwickshire town, famed for its most notable resident – William Shakespeare, provided a unique insight into the life and work of The Bard himself. This experience was educationally invaluable ahead of our ever-approaching GCSE exams, with every part of it proving that learning and having fun are **not** mutually exclusive.

The two-day stay in Stratford saw students of Years 10 and 11 throwing themselves into the Jacobean world within which Shakespeare lived – giving them new insights into the culture which influenced Shakespeare’s work. And, perhaps, there is no better way to do this than to see inside the very house Shakespeare lived in. The tour of Shakespeare’s house was incredibly eye-opening and, as the first thing we did on the trip, heralded the start of an amazing and educational stay in Stratford. After departing Shakespeare’s house, we received a behind-the-scenes tour of the Royal Shakespeare Company’s two theatres: the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and the Swan Theatre. This tour gave us an intrinsic knowledge into the art of acting and stagecraft – ultimately providing us a new appreciation for Shakespeare’s plays (such as *Macbeth*, the play we study for GCSE). These two activities were amazing; however, we would soon find out they were merely tasters for what was to come. Such as our journey into the Forest of Arden...

That same evening, we attended an exceptional performance of Shakespeare’s famed comedy, *As You Like It*. Whilst watching, we were transported into the Forest of Arden (where most of the play’s events take place), watching gleefully as the humorous story unfolded. Not only was the performance magical, but its value to GCSE students, like me, cannot be understated.

The following day proved to be just as entertaining and educational as the first, with us embarking on both a workshop run by the Royal Shakespeare Company on the Shakespearean text which we study for GCSE and a historical walking tour of Stratford. Both provided vital preparation for our GCSE exams.

Overall, the trip was nothing short of magical. It is very rare that a trip can incorporate both fun and learning without compromising one or the other, but this trip was able to do it flawlessly. To any students thinking about attending the Stratford trip in the coming years (whether a fan of Shakespeare or not), I would thoroughly recommend it.

Jack Petchey Awards

The Jack Petchey Sutton Achievement Awards Ceremony took place on Monday 25th March at Epsom Playhouse. This was an evening of celebration and our 2018 award winners were presented with an award by Sutton Chief Superintendent Dave Stringer. It is a great achievement to receive the award, so huge congratulations go to,

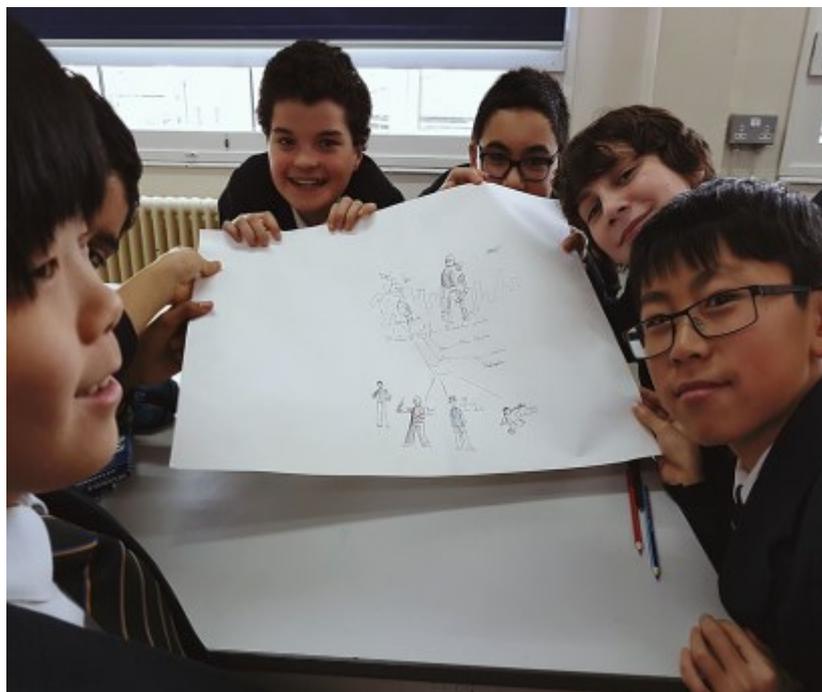
Ben French, Ramit Bag, Pavan Bhamidipati, Tahir Ali, Victor Lobato Garcia, Ryan Mendes, Dylan Shah, Qabir Alli and Louis Goodman.

‘Maymada’ by Mrs Bryan

On January 15, WCCGS had the pleasure of hosting a visit from Nigel Twumasi, graphic novelist and founder of Maymada, a manga-inspired publishing house.

Nigel enthralled boys from Year 7 and Year 8 in an assembly, relaying his journey from Oxford where he gained a first class degree in engineering to his decision to then switch to a completely different career path: the world of Manga comics and anime.

Nigel followed up with two workshops, encouraging students to tap into their creative side by drawing their own superheroes and plotting story lines. Boys took up the challenge with gusto and came up with some weird, wacky, but ultimately original ideas that would not be out of place in a superhero universe.





RAG Week
by Ianna Alberto, Captain of Girls.

RAG week 2019 was undoubtedly another success for WCGS. Bringing the school together to support Crisis, a charity dedicated to ending homelessness, the student leadership team (SLT) put together a fun-filled week of events.

Monday started with the traditional international food festival, celebrating the different cultures within the school, along with a never-done-before "Are you smarter than a 12-year-old?" quiz, where we found out that many are not. Year 7's teamed up with their house captains to defend their house, ending in a victory for Carew.

Tuesday followed with an equally exciting rugby team vs netball team match. Some would say the netball team had an advantage seeing as it was a netball match, but it would seem the girls' technique and skill was no match for the boys' height and strength. Although a tough loss to take for the girls, both teams put up a good fight with huge support from the rest of the school.

The BBQ and fair was well-run by the sixth formers, all working hard to incorporate the whole school. Old school uniform day was another success, seeing sixth formers dig out the blazer they wore in year 7 or their "ugly skirts" as some of the girls' said. It was almost a celebration of the schools everyone had come from, only to later join the WCGS family.

Singstaff brought another wave of excitement over the school as teachers dressed up as some of their favourite singers. "Sia" made a surprise appearance and Mr Bean and Mr Jones put together an entertaining duet, it was a show not to be missed.

Friday started with a dodgeball rematch. Facing a defeat during Movember, the SLT were more determined than ever, however the teachers were playing at their best too. The match started off with the SLT winning the first two games with the help of the house captains, but the staff made an incredible comeback, winning the next three games and becoming the overall champions yet again.

The week came to an end with House Music in the evening. Each house worked hard for months, putting together a completely student-run performance. The extraordinary amount of rehearsals paid off as each house battled on the stage, performing their hearts out, but ultimately leading to a well-deserved victory for Radcliffe. See Page 11 for further details of House Music.

A huge well done to everyone for their efforts in house music and many thanks from the SLT for your help and support throughout our last RAG week.

Old cricket equipment / kit required

In July 2020 WCGS are going on a cricket tour of Sri Lanka. Part of this tour is combining with a sports charity called Charity Pranav. This charity provides sports equipment (particularly cricket) to less fortunate children in Sri Lanka so they can participate in cricket and not be excluded because they cannot afford to play.

If any students have any old cricket equipment or kit that they no longer need could they **please bring it in and hand it to Mr Legg in the Sports Hall.**

It will then be forwarded through our travel company to Sri Lanka.



Coffee afternoon for parents/carers

The SEN department is hosting a coffee afternoon for parents/carers on **Friday 26th April from 1.45 to 3.00pm.**

The Autism Service from Cognus Ltd will be available to discuss autism-specific topics and there will also be the opportunity to discuss strategies on how to provide support for learners with dyslexia as well as hints and tips on supporting your child through the exam season.

All parents/carers are welcome to attend, please register your interest prior to attending on the following email afarshori.319@wcfgs.foliotrust.uk.

Mrs A Farshori - SEN Support Officer



Auschwitz Trip

As part of the Lessons from Auschwitz project run by the Holocaust Educational Trust, on Wednesday 6th February we embarked on a one-day trip to Poland. During the trip we visited three significant sites: the town of Oświęcim, a pre-war Jewish town, Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II also known as Auschwitz-Birkenau, both labour and extermination camps. This visit had a huge physiological impact on us and is impossible to explain adequately in words. Therefore, below are some images from our visit that hopefully give you an insight into what we witnessed and felt during our trip.



This statue was made up of the ashes found in fields surrounding Auschwitz where the Nazi's killed their victims



When we visited Auschwitz 1 there were many displays of things that they took from victims, for example the prosthetic legs in the picture were taken from them. This really hit home for me, because it showed that the Nazis had so little respect that they would take anything from people.

The most impactful thing that I witnessed on the trip were the brushes. We often think of the people who were killed in the holocaust as simply statistics, rather than people but these brushes show that they just led normal lives.



This is where they kept the prisoners who worked on the camp. Previously they were army barracks, which made this part of the trip seem more prison like and more like a ghost-town.

This is the gas chamber for the prisoners and it was previously underground, I thought it would be more emotional here than it was.





Auschwitz Trip



The toilet block is pictured here and it highlights how the Nazis wished to humiliate the Jews as they had less than an hour for all of the prisoners to go toilet and had to do this in front of everyone.

At the end of the event we left candles to remember those who were killed.

We hope that these pictures have given you a small insight into the impactful trip that we went on and although no one will ever be able to understand what the victims of the Holocaust went through, we believe it is important to remember what occurred.

In order for us to continue to share our story beyond this newsletter we recently completed a Hutchins talk called "Is Auschwitz too horrifying a place to be a tourist attraction," where we shared our journey of the trip and then discussed with members of the school if it should remain open.

By Jade McFarlane and Gabriel Lane L6CA



Year 8 Options Challenge Day 2019

Year 8 Options Challenge Day arrived at WCGS and I was excited and eager to learn about GCSE subjects and where they could take me.

There are so many jobs and options available that I do not know what to choose! Some jobs require specific qualifications i.e. if you want to be a doctor you must study the sciences. However, a vast majority of jobs, i.e. banking, consultancy, marketing or sales etc. do not require specific qualifications, just transferable skills such as oral and written communication, an analytical mind and social skills.

For our GCSE options, compulsory subjects include: English (Language and Literature), Maths, Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) and Religious Studies. Additional subjects studied but not examined include: Wellbeing, Games and Physical Education. Optional subjects I could choose include: Art, Classics, Computer Science, DT, Drama, Economics, French, Geography, History, Food Prep, Latin, Music, PE & Spanish.

We had a 'Meet the Employers' session whereby 6 employees, including some parents, came into WCGS to talk about their careers, their jobs and what qualifications they have. The most memorable for me was the 'Cyber Security Consultant.' His job sounded exciting, especially the part when he said he entered the Cyber security world 20 years ago after training to be a chef and changing his mind. He works to identify cyber weaknesses and help central government, healthcare, police and councils to implement changes to their IT systems to make them less susceptible. All the speakers gave us an incredible insight into their education, what they loved about their jobs and passed on advice including, "Remember to keep your options open" and "Pick a subject you enjoy."

I thoroughly enjoyed the "Options Challenge Day" and even though I still do not know what job I want in the future, I had a great insight into what is possible if I choose subjects I enjoy and see where this will lead me!

By Edward Cheung 8CA

I loved the employer day purely to see how many different occupations there are! Out of all the occupations, I really enjoyed learning about research within biology. This is due to my interest towards medicine and has further motivated me to seriously consider this. This influenced my choices for GCSE, I chose drama because I enjoy it and it could also help me with soft skills including communicating and dealing with people.

By Zaim Abbas Rizvi



RSC Analyst Challenge!

By Salmana Bashir, Riyaad Ali and James Bacon.

Pictured: Riyaad Ali, Salmana Bashir & James Bacon accompanied by Ms Cha & Ms Khan.

WINNERS OF RSC ANALYST!

This year Wallington County Grammar School entered the Royal Society of Chemistry's Analyst challenge. Three Year 12's entered: Riyaad Ali, Salmana Irfan Bashir and James Bacon.

After over three hours of practical's the team emerged as the winners of the regional competition, beating Sutton Grammar into third place and London Academy of Excellence into second place. The WCGS team have been invited to the national competition which will be taking place at the University of Manchester in June.

The duration of this challenge was 4 hours, in which each team was given 2 experiments to carry out. Experiment 1 was finding the iron content in vitamin tablets. In this experiment we used colorimetry to make a calibration curve of standard solutions. The thing that was quite time consuming was using the pH monitors, as the solutions had to be at a specific pH level for it to work efficiently. The key tip to this challenge was to be really accurate when measuring out each organic compound, always looking out for the meniscus when reading off the measurements. Even though we had a time limit, we took our time and went through the experiment method sheet methodologically. This really paid off at the end, as this way we didn't misinterpret a step.

As a team we would always check up on one another, this challenge enabled the three of us to work together in a team. Skills that were required on top of chemistry, was accuracy, time management, communication and many more.

This proves how chemistry is a subject that not only lets you envision the life around you differently, but it enables you to gain those valuable skills needed in your day to day life. We are very lucky to be given such an awesome opportunity to take part in this challenge. We are all excited to take part in the finals, being the first batch to enter this competition and win it too!

A huge thanks to Miss Cha for organising all of it.

The competition was an excellent opportunity to be able to use a lab capable of modern research using new and professional equipment, exciting to any chemist. Using new techniques such as UV absorbance it was perfect for experiencing a higher quality and level of chemistry than available to most students. Obviously the highlight of the competition was the success that we had which demonstrates the quality of teaching and students at WCGS and the effort put in by Miss Cha in organizing it for us. With this attitude and our enjoyment for difficult challenges within chemistry I hope to have success in the finals in June.

By James Bacon



Building My Brand: Selling Myself at Interview

Twenty-seven sixth form students took part this month, in an IGD* Employability Workshop facilitated by Future First where students gained insight into the varied job roles available in the food and grocery industry alongside interview technique and a mini mock interview. Students were supported by the facilitator and a Food Logistics Manager from Marks and Spencer as well as a Business Development Executive from Mondelez International.

Participating students were given a copy of 'Your guide to building skills to succeed at work' which includes information about the skills you will need at work, writing CVs and covering letters alongside common interview questions. There are some additional copies in the careers library in PS2 or please ask Mrs Lenaghan for a copy.

*Institute of Grocery Distribution



Spring News from the Art Department – Ms Musselbrook

Gallery Visits

Year 9, 10 and 11 artists have all visited London Galleries this term. In January Year 9 and 10 visited Tate Modern to gain artist inspiration for their coursework projects and early February saw Year 11 travel to the Saatchi Gallery to view the exhibition 'Black Mirror'.

The exhibition was themed around satirical responses to the current political climate and presented pupils with some challenging artwork and - hopefully – ideas for their final exam project.



Curwen Print Study Centre Workshop

On Wednesday 23rd January Year 11 and 12 artists travelled to Cambridge to take part in a Print Taster Day at the Curwen Print Study Centre. Pupils benefitted from expert tuition from professional printmakers in the art of linocuts and dry point etching. The Curwen Print Studio is well known for its output, including assisting artists such as Pablo Picasso and Barbara Hepworth in reproducing their artwork. All pupils produced interesting and accomplished work and they were complimented on their excellent focus.

My thanks to Ms Dimond for making the trip possible by driving us to Cambridge in the school minibus.



Sutton Youth Art Exhibition 2019

Every year, each Art department from the Sutton borough is invited to display work in the Europa Gallery in Sutton Library. For many pupils this is the first time they have been able to enjoy the experience of seeing their work against the plain white walls of a gallery space.

The exhibition opened on Thursday 14th March and was incredibly well attended by local dignitaries and artists and the friends and families of the exhibitors. WCGS exhibited a range of work from Art Club mosaics to digital work by Harry Sanders in Year 10 and a range of oil portraits by Mezino Whiskey (U6CA).

Huge thanks to Mrs Donald for her work in curating our exhibition boards and inspiring a new cohort from Art Club in making their own mosaics.



Epsom Hospital Work Experience

Five of our Lower Sixth form students spent one week at Epsom Hospital in March. They were able to spend time talking to both patients and various doctors (including some recent medical school graduates) and were exposed to other professionals working in the hospital alongside the doctors. Our students were able to undertake some practical tasks including analysing x-rays and taking ECG's alongside seeing the less exciting parts such as dealing with paperwork. Student feedback reveals our students gained a sense of the skills required to become a doctor and the different roles they might follow in the future. The work experience coordinator reported that our students were polite, friendly, willing to learn, and a credit to our school so well done to all of them.

Our prospective medical students in the sixth form are keen to seek medical work experience, if that is something you can offer please get in touch with Mrs Lenaghan at: llenaghan.319@wcfgs.foliotrust.uk



**The Battlefields Trip to Belgium and France By Jade McFarlane & Gabriel Lane
(History Society Presidents)**



On Friday 8th March, twenty students, accompanied by Mr Robertson and Miss Ball, embarked on a two-day trip visiting the battlefields of the First World War and experiencing the cost such a conflict had on those involved. Whilst some of us had been in year 8 to visit similar sites, as sixth formers we all found the trip much more rewarding as our emotional intelligence as well as our understanding of the period allowed us to engage more fully with what we saw. Not only was the trip a chance to experience the emotional side of the Great War and attempt to comprehend the number of lives it affected but also to improve our knowledge for the A-level course unit, 'British Experience of Warfare' and for our coursework which explores the causes of the First World War.

Firstly, we visited the Newfoundland Park, Beaumont Hamel. This is a memorial to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment from the province in modern day Canada which had provided one battalion of 800 men to serve with the British and Commonwealth Armies. Here we received a tour from a Canadian guide, recounting the chaos and death on the first day of the Battle of the Somme on the 1st July 1916 helping us to gain an insight into the horrific violence in the First World War.



Secondly, we visited the Grand Thiepval Memorial where we attempted to understand the destructive scale of the Great War. The memorial holds the names of 72,338 British and South African soldiers, who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave, the majority of whom died during the Somme offensive of 1916. It is the largest Commonwealth memorial to the missing in the world and was very impactful on us especially many of us were able to find our names engraved in the stone.

We then turned our attention to the Lochnagar Crater, a site created by a large mine placed beneath the German front lines on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, it was one of 19 mines that were placed beneath the German lines from the British section of the Somme front, to assist the infantry advance at the start of the battle. The 60,000 lbs, around 27 tons, of high explosive created the massive crater 70ft deep and 330 ft wide that we see today, flinging debris over a mile into the air.





The Battlefields Trip to Belgium and France

After a short journey we reached Ypres and attended a Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate. It was an emotional and impactful experience listening to the Last Post surrounded by the thousands of names, allowing us to reflect on the sites we had visited and try to comprehend the scale of the conflict.



After a night's sleep in The Menin Gate hostel, first thing on Saturday we paid a visit to the two, very starkly different cemeteries, Langemark and Tyne Cot. Langemark honours the sacrifice of German troops on the western front and Tyne Cot is the largest Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in the world and the resting place of more than 11,900 servicemen of the British Empire from the First World War. The difference between the polished, white stone and grandness of Tyne Cot compared to the bleak, black plaques of Langemark, illustrates the contrast between how the victors and defeated remember the dead. We then visited Passchendaele and In Flanders Fields Museum. The former offered an in depth look at the Battle of Passchendaele as well as the conditions and those who participated in the First World War. The latter, instead, focused on the individual stories of the war and of the great losses suffered by all involved.

These museums greatly enhanced our factual knowledge of the fighting, benefiting us in both a moral and academic sense.

Finally, we paid a visit to Talbot house, where the soldiers relaxed away from the front line, to help our understanding of the day to day lives of the soldiers and how places like that boosted morale. A visit to the Poperinge Cells and Shooting post, reaffirming the brutality of the war afflicted by firing squads and the strict discipline required by the army, concluded our trip.

We hope that this article has given you a small insight into our trip to both France and Belgium, as we believe it is important to continue to remember those who lost their lives in World War One. The mass amount of graves that we visited were difficult to comprehend, but was very impactful as it highlighted how many men were involved in the war.

80 YEARS AGO – THE SCHOOL PREPARES FOR WAR

In general the life of the school has not been very much interfered with. Not for us have been the tragedy and comedy of evacuation. Apart from the departure of Mr Lee, who left early to take up a commission in the R.A.F., the staff remains intact. Lessons, examinations and games have so far run their normal course, and we have reason to be proud of the fact as well as grateful for it. True we have chanted our verbs and written our lessons in gumboots and overcoats; we have carried our gas masks and filed out to our air-raid shelters for practice; we have been through the severest winter we can remember and even worked for a day or two without heat in the school; we have, finally, had to be thankful for much shorter holidays than we have grown to think ourselves entitled to. But all these are but trifles compared with what many schools have had to suffer, and have been accepted in a spirit of cheerful adventure. None the less it is these impressions of the queer, changeful atmosphere of the first winter of the war that remain in the mind, and others of this grim and eventful summer, rather than details of matches won or lost.

The full routine of school life was not restored after the summer holidays until November. Gradually, as trenches were completed, more and more forms returned to school – the fifth and the sixth forms were at work almost from the beginning; and in the meantime those not provided for went for walks (sometimes in snowstorms) or played rigger and collected work to do at home.

It was an odd and unsettled period, during which we were expecting the blitzkrieg at any moment, but it offered an opportunity for one useful job. The staff occupied itself in re-cataloguing the library, upon a new system which has already proved itself in practice.

The summer term was very crowded. It was difficult to finish the programme of house cricket matches and the boxing competition did not take place. There was no prize-giving this year and no parents' evening; nor had the Dramatic Society given its usual production. In addition, the activities of the school were very much restricted. A Savings Group formed under the secretaryship of Mr Dawe already had 60 members and £40 had been collected. The School had been able to play a small part in the war effort in other ways. The Scouts had been very active in the collection of waste paper and scrap, and collections of books were made for sending to men on active service. The school had also taken upon itself to look after its own Old Boys serving in the forces. During the summer a group of boys from senior forms had spent its Saturdays lumbering in Banstead Woods. As a result, the senior playground took on the appearance of Canadian lumbering camp with useful looking logs. It had been hoped that we could help farmers who needed labour but this was abandoned when our inexperienced help was not called for.

This is an extract from 'Wallington County Grammar School – The First Fifty Years'
Copies of the book can be ordered from the author at
bnicholls74@hotmail.co.uk



House Music

House Music was an amazing event again this year and the effort and talent was outstanding. Each house had a great variety of different types of performances, and covered a wide range of musical styles.

Radcliffe's performance was well-organised, had a range of year groups, and the performances/compositions were all very impressive.

I'd also like to say well done to all the other houses as you all stepped up your performances and expectations this year, all the judges were super impressed with the quality. We also gave a prize to the best performer this year, Ronak Boman, for his looping extravaganza! We would also like to mention Kavi Maraj for his leadership and effort in the performances.



Mrs Spendlove and Dr Meek would like to thank the House Captains for co-ordinating their house and all the students who took part in this year's House Music.

