

Accent



on Ashcombe

THE ASHCOMBE SCHOOL • DORKING

Number Fourteen • April 2004

Awards Evening

We were delighted that the BBC's Economics Editor, Evan Davies, a former Head Boy at The Ashcombe and star of the stage in several productions, agreed to be our guest of honour at the Awards Evening. He took real pleasure in handing out prizes to the students.

After the presentations he spoke with nostalgic fondness of his days

here. He recalled the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to the school by helicopter and remembered being part of a number of students who made what was then the world's longest daisy chain.

On a more serious note he spoke about the risks that one ought to take in life in order to succeed and that learning to cope with failure was an important part in the education process.



Above:

Evan Davies, speaking of his time at The Ashcombe

Left:

From left to right: Martin Jones, Chair of Governors, James Halford, Head Boy, Evan Davies, BBC Economics Editor (principal guest), Heather Gould, Head Girl and Arthur Webster, Headteacher

Below left:

Miss Goswell giving the Vote of Thanks

Below:

Philip Gray, who attained 9 A grades being awarded the HSBC Cup by Sarah Black, Manager, Dorking HSBC*



6th Form Party



A sixth former's account:

What can only be described as truly horrific to the untrained eye, the most scary sixth formers descended upon The Ashcombe and they were not even dressed up. The Common Room was transformed into a spectacular hovel for such ghastly creatures, who then proceeded to eat all that lay in their path. Being one of the first socials the lower and upper sixth have attended together, they soon conceded that they had plenty in common. You would not believe the sense of desperation an apple-bobbing session could induce. Peer pressure prevailed, with the submergence of many heads in water, followed by a distinct frenzy in a bowl of flour.



Tanzania

The fourth biennial exchange will resume after the cancellation of the proposed visit last summer. We are hoping to be able to get a British Council grant towards the exchange. MUFTI days are again at the heart of the fund-raising and we are working with the local Community to sell African goods sent by our partner school.



China

The sixth annual visit is again being prepared for next summer. There will again be some financial support for this trip from the British Council and fourteen students will be going.



This year we are offering the trip to our Year 11 pupils who have studied

Chinese for two years during curriculum time.

We have also been successful with a bid for a British Council grant to support a curriculum link between The Ashcombe and our link school, Chang Zheng School in Shanghai. This is based on an English Literature Year 10 programme which fits into the GCSE programme. A group of English teachers, senior staff and a governor will represent the Ashcombe at the Shanghai school's annual Spoken English Language festival this month.

We are also hopeful that electronic links can be developed shortly with pupils here learning Chinese and their counterparts in our Chinese link school.

First Day Absence Call

From March this year, pupils in years 7-10 will be in this scheme. Parents are requested to call one of the dedicated confidential telephone numbers (01306 887661 or 01306 889473) to inform the school by 9am of their child's absence.

The scheme has shown that there is a marked improvement in punctuality. Communication between home and school enables us to work together to ensure attendance remains good and early signs of disaffection, should it arise, are monitored and supported promptly before problems become entrenched. Of the very few identified cases of truancy swift and positive action has been taken.

Dorking Schools' Pupil Support Partnership

Since the launch last January much progress has been made.

Five specialist groups work with the partnership to provide support for pupils with specific needs. They include: Educational Psychology, Education Welfare, Behaviour and Pupil support, Ethnic Language Minority Achievement and Learning and Literacy.

The partnership also links with Physical and Sensory support and the Travellers' Service.

English Department

Pizza Express has once again sponsored the English Honours Association Scheme.

Every term around 25 students are taken out to lunch as a reward for outstanding effort and attainment.

Year 6 Primary School Visit to see 'Calamity Jane'

Following an invitation to all local primary schools we were pleased to welcome pupils from Brockham, Redlands, St Martin's and St Joseph's to see the Dress Rehearsal of 'Calamity Jane.'

Having thoroughly enjoyed the performance they were given a lightening tour around the school by Year 7 pupils, treated to the delights of eating in the school canteen and then had a private audience with the main members of the cast. They asked some wonderful questions even though many revolved around who was romantically linked with whom in real life and were the kissing scenes real too!! (See reports and photographs, page 6)

Year 7

September saw the arrival of 270 New Year 7 pupils. With most of them having attended the induction days in July, and with extra tours and activities for them at the beginning of term, they all seemed to very quickly find their way around the site.

Just before half term a number of the pupils were involved in a big fundraising event for the charity LEpra. In an assembly we had a speaker from the charity who told us all about this disease and how easy it was to treat.

In October 100 year 7s (and some Year 8s) gave up their lunchtime to do a sponsored 'work-out'. We raised £962 that lunchtime, enough to transform the lives of 46 people. Thanks to all who supported this event.

Sport at The Ashcombe



Gymnastics, Dance and Trampolining Evening



The annual Gymnastics, Dance and Trampolining Evening was held in February in the Ranmore Hall. For the first time this year there was also an afternoon performance where a shortened programme was shown to 200 local primary school pupils.



Throughout the Autumn Term, a range of extra-curricular clubs covering the aesthetic sports were open for all pupils of all age groups and abilities. As well as learning new skills pupils worked towards choreographing routines and sequences to perform to an audience of family and friends.



The evening started with all 70 pupils performing a human pyramid and then Gym club performing a large floor sequence. Other displays were solo, duet and group sequences ranging from the floor to one piece of apparatus to combined pieces. Group sequences included a trampette display and a vaulting display.



In trampolining, solo, doubles and synchronised routines were featured.



Dance is always popular with the girls but this year it was great to see boys participating with a 'Stomp' inspired dance. Some of the dances performed were part of pupils' GCSE work.



Sport at The Ashcombe

Games Day September 2003

Once again another fantastic Games Day was held at The Ashcombe School in September 2003. The weather was perfect with the sun shining on all activities. Over 1000 pupils from Years 7-10 took ranging from Girls' Football, Boys' Football, Basketball, Badminton, Netball, Rugby, Hockey and Volleyball.

It was great to see so many pupils and staff involved in helping to run the events. The Heads of House gave assemblies informing each House group of past performances and tutors organised the teams. PE staff and Sixth Form students officiated each sport with tutors available to support.

It was a fabulous day seeing so many pupils getting involved in sport and it is hoped that one day they may look back and think this is where they started their participation.



Sport News

Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh Football

Pupils in this scheme are organising tournaments for the Year 7 and 8 as part of their award. This is proving to be very popular, with over 30 pupils taking part.



Football

Well done to David Suchy on reaching the trials for the County U16 Football squad.

Netball

Thanks to Gill Gardner for coming in every week and holding practices and fixtures for the Year 7 netball team. Well done to Louise Wyatt for making the County U14 Development squad for netball.

Swimming

The Bazuka Schools Division XI (Surrey & Kent) Trials were held at the new pool in Dorking in September and Ashcombe fielded ten swimmers covering the whole age range.

Representing the school were: Charlotte Mann (Y7), Lucy Vincent, Holly Hider and Jasmine Drury-Rudrum (Y8), Chris Day and Jenny Martin (Y9), Hayley Wearn and Stephen Thomas (Y11), Joe Carter (Y12) and Jon Martin (Y13).

CSLA

The Community Sports Leaders Award scheme has 21 students this year and many are assisting with sporting ventures in the local community.

Trophies

We are grateful to Mole Valley District Council who have provided a grant to cover the cost of 9 trophies for the tournaments we are running.

Relay Championships

The Surrey Secondary Schools' Relay Championships were held as usual at Trinity School in Croydon. The Ashcombe Intermediate and Junior teams performed well against strong opposition, with up to twenty teams in some events.

Southern Schools Biathlon

Mrs Carter and Miss Taylor drove a party of Ashcombe pupils to Newbury for the Southern Schools Biathlon. Organised by the MPAGB (Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain), this event aims to promote multi-sport for all and all are encouraged in a supportive but competitive atmosphere to complete separate swim and run events which are timed and awarded points. Alice Wearn, Rosie Holden and Amelia Maugouber made up the Y7 girls' team. The boys' team comprised Alex Spooner, Will King and Will Chappell. Jamie Wilson, Naomi Pickett and Daisy Maugouber competed in the Y8 event, with Daisy coming a brilliant 11th out of 36 girls. Becky Gardner, Abi Wood and Angharad Wynter were in the Y9 competition and Paul Lopez was pleased with his improved performance in the Y10 event. The Sixth Form boys' team consisted of Jon Armstrong, Rob Wright and Joe Carter who came twelfth, ninth and third respectively and qualified for the Nationals in February as the third-placed team.

Primary School Links

The primary school athletics event was held here in January involving pupils from local schools.

The Year 7 social event in Bradley Canteen was a great success and tutors were on hand to supervise 160 pupils expend energy dancing until 9-30pm.

Year 8

Many pupils have been eager to attend the Year 8 Cyber Club, giving them a change to use computers during lunchbreak.

The Spectrum

One hundred Year 8 pupils and their tutors participated in a social trip to Spectrum Centre in Guildford.

The pupils had a wonderful evening of bowling and swimming and the tutors enjoyed having the opportunity to spend some time outside school with their tutees.

Year 11

The Year 11 weekend visit to Alton Towers in September was very popular and much appreciated by the 90 pupils who went with 6 members of staff.

Year 11 Food and Nutrition

Following a two hour practical pupils completed their major pieces of coursework (30% of final grade), which resulted in an outstanding display of dishes, ranging from Mexican, Italian, Chinese, Jamaican and Canadian foods, decorated cakes for birthdays and Halloween and dishes to promote healthy eating.



Language Lessons for Primary School Pupils and Parents

The Spring Term has now become the traditional starting point for after-school language learning for local pupils and mums and dads. This year, a programme of lessons, each lasting 6 Wednesdays from 3.45 - 4.30pm, see one of our multi-media suites used for French, Spanish and German lessons.



Romania Shoebox Appeal

Parents are again thanked for sending gifts to school to support the charity which has now been in operation for ten years.



Geography Field Visits

London

The Upper Sixth spent a day in London last July (Year 12) studying how we manage cities before starting their A2 module in September.

London is one of the three so called 'World Cities' whose economic importance is only matched by Tokyo and New York. We contrasted the revival of Brick Lane and The Docklands with other central locations and walked through the ghettos of a modern city.



Slapton Field Centre October 03

Coursework in A2 Geography is based on fieldwork. Last year many of our students gained maximum marks on this module and the examiner commented on the quality of students' reports.

As part of this process we took 23 students to Slapton Field centre in South Devon to study coastal processes and management, plant succession on a shingle ridge and the central area of Exeter. The week was very hard work with long days and new experiences. However, the weather was warm and sunny and everybody had fun whilst learning.

Book Week

The school celebrated Book Week in October with five murder mysteries to solve in the Study Centre [one each day], word puzzles, and poems on Poetry Day.

Poems were put up around the school. We had 134 entries for the Murder Mysteries, with entries from each year. Everyone seemed to enjoy it, with the highlight being "dead" bodies on the floor!



French Exchange

Thirteen pupils from our partner school in Gouvieux came to The Ashcombe in January as part of our Exchange programme. A few quotes from their scraphooks and diaries show what a good time they all had. Teachers have corrected the mistakes!

- ...then we went to a primary school and we taught them the alphabet in French.
- I'm very happy to have met a new penfriend and her family who were very nice with me.
- The bus was there and when I saw it I didn't want to go back home! I was sad! I said goodbye.
- My favourite moment was when we visited the Royal Pavilion. It's very interesting, impressive and beautiful.
- For my breakfast this morning, I ate cereals. Yesterday I ate an egg. It was very strange.
- We were very lucky because we could see the "Changing of the Guard".

- We walked next to Big Ben and we saw the Houses of Parliament. They were beautiful.
- After lunch we went to an "Assembly". We don't have that in France; it was very interesting.
- In the evening I ate fish and chips. It was delicious.
- Canterbury Cathedral is very nice and old. Its history is interesting.
- England is very good. I'm very happy because I think I understand more English now.
- We had a good time with our new friends in Pizza Express on Saturday.
- I loved this trip. It was fantastic because our correspondents were very nice, cool, funny... and it was very rewarding for the French.

We went out at the end of term to France and our pupils had a super time too.

Mrs J. Clarke



The group



Painting on porcelain



Tea!

The Arts Centre

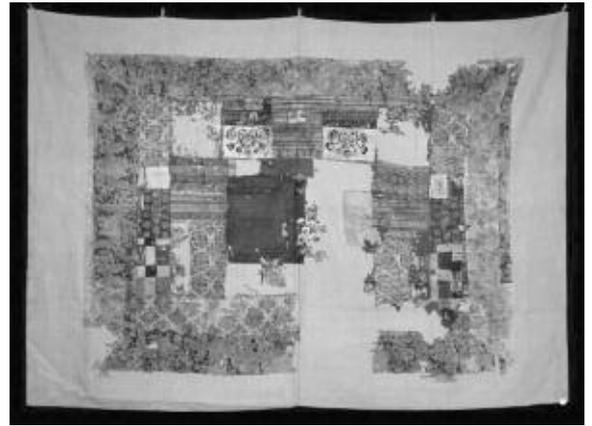
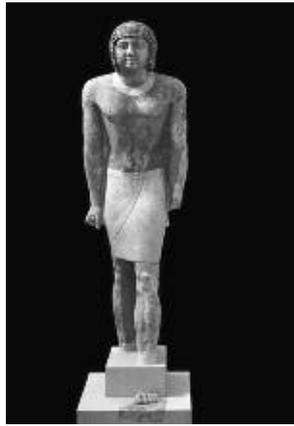
We know that our plan has great potential in terms of enhancing the curriculum and the wider life of the school through the extra-curricular programmes. We have some serious fund-raising to accomplish in order that the new Centre can be equipped in a manner that will realise its full potential. The fund-raising campaign commenced during the "Calamity Jane" production and the receipt of one very large generous donation has encouraged us. We sent letters home by post to all families in the week before Christmas and at Easter including details of the Centre and the fund-raising campaign. We have also spoken to all the pupils stressing the importance of their role in helping us to raise the resources for the new Centre.

Art

British Museum Trip

Art teachers Miss Beaumont and Mr Woollett, together with Ms Rasmussen, took 50 Year 10 students to the British Museum as part of their GCSE course.

They were researching for a project which focussed on cultural identities and decoration. The visit included study of Egyptian, Greek, Indian, Tibetan and Assyrian artefacts. The students made drawings and studies of sculptural heads, funeral goods, statues and Buddhist thangkas (devotional paintings on silk). This work has been used back at school to great effect and will feature in final GCSE coursework.



www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk

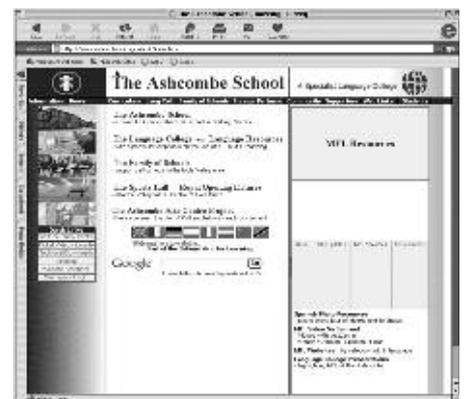
The school website has a high profile these days.

Tracking software enables us to monitor visits to the website and it shows that last term, for instance, there was an average of at least 450 visits per week (excluding use by students from within the school).

Allowing for some weekend visits, averaged across the school day, this works out at approximately one visit every six minutes. It would appear that the greater part of these are

from people making use of the MFL resources (including the video material). 15% of site visitors are from outside the UK.

Sometimes education professionals visiting the site ask for assistance in emulating our efforts. Often these are from within the UK but, last term for example, David Seume, the webmaster, was able to help people in schools/colleges in France, Washington, Pennsylvania, Shanghai and Guatemala.





Duke of Edinburgh

This was a busy year for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award at The Ashcombe. There were nine expeditions and pupils also participated in a wide range of other activities for the service, skill and physical recreation sections of the award.

There are a record number of students from Years 10, 11 and 12 participating in the different awards for this school year:

Bronze	Silver	Gold
90	29	11

11 Lower Sixth students successfully completed their Gold Assessed Expedition last summer in the Lake District. Both groups had planned ambitious routes, one group bagging many peaks, including Helvellyn. They were blessed with incredible weather, although on the third day the heat did get too much and they were wishing for rain: all very unusual for a Duke of Edinburgh expedition!

The summer also saw a number of successful Bronze expeditions around the Surrey Hills and the Ashdown Forest.

In October, the new cohort of keen Lower Sixth students went up to Cadar Idris in southern Snowdonia for their Gold practice expedition. Again, they had beautiful weather and were really enthused and inspired by the stunning scenery and emptiness of the area. They also learnt a wide range of useful navigation skills which should stand them in good stead for their expedition to Dartmoor in July where they will be assessed.

Over the winter, training sessions for the hordes of new Bronze Award pupils are continuing, so they are fully prepared to go out in 2004 for their first expeditions.

In January 2004, the school hosted the Mole Valley Duke of Edinburgh's Award presentation ceremony, with over 60 of our pupils gaining awards.

As in previous years, none of the expeditions would have been possible to run without the help of Mrs Ager and Mr Butlin. A number of other staff have also given up their time to help on the Bronze expeditions which has been greatly appreciated by the pupils, and I hope that this will continue.

If you want more information about The Ashcombe School Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme then do visit its website (it is part of the school site). It contains accounts of expeditions, photos and a calendar of events.



Bronze: Breakfast with Emily Halford, Laura Earls, Holly Gowers and Sarah Boreham



Bronze: The finish for Jonny Moreton, Adam Faullkner, Adam Nixon, Peter Harnett, Nick Smith & Richard Pike



Bronze: The first checkpoint for Jenny Fletcher, Ruth Hogg, Rosie Blunt & Sian Jones



Bronze: The end for Charlie Coe, Chris Pike, Andy Brint, Jon Langford, Matt Lawton & Tom Stenton



Bronze: School at last for Chloe Keedy, Ellen Ward, Emily May, Sarah Thompson and Lucy Buck



Gold: Jen Coates, Matt Kedgeley, Freya Berry, Paul Williams, Will Larque, Grace Davison & Alice Jones



Gold: Fiona Tucker, Claire Butlin, Janine Hart and Jess Barker

'Calamity Jane'

The annual production was a new one for The Ashcombe School repertoire: a comedy western developed from the 1953 film. With a cast of 164 and over 30 pupils working backstage and in the orchestra, it was a triumph with acting and music at the highest level.

Jessica Rudd led the cast as Calamity, giving a totally professional performance. She was ably supported by extremely talented principals in Tom Stenton as Bill Hickock, Alex Brown as Danny Gilmartin, Rosie Apps as Katie Brown, Matthew Lawton as Henry Miller, Simon Fellingham as Francis Fryer and Amy Nicholls as Susan. Indeed, it had been difficult casting the play this year as so many very talented pupils auditioned, and this was reflected in the good chorus work and slickness of the production as a whole.

Head Girl, Heather Gould, must be congratulated for the high standard of choreography displayed by two separate dance groups. All were rehearsed entirely by her. Another pupil who was outstanding in her contribution was Lindsay Jamieson, vocal understudy and responsible for some of the costuming and many of the props and stage furnishings. Indeed, it is a feature of the productions that so many pupils take direct responsibility backstage, for costume, lighting, sound and stage management, and all are to be congratulated for the high standard of their contributions.

'Calamity Jane' was fun to do and fun to watch and a memory to treasure for all involved.



School Council

It all started by a class vote. I put my name forward and it was me who got the winning vote! It was quite worrying at first because I had to make a speech about why I thought I'd be a good representative for the Council.

Andrew Weston, Ben Scott and I won the vote for Year 8. The whole of the Council had its first meeting on Thursday 29th January. The meeting dealt with the role of the executive council: Chairman - Matthew Cheeseman, Vice Chair Guy Simmonds, a treasurer and five secretaries. I won the next vote to become one of the secretaries. I am the only lower school pupil on the executive council. In the first executive meeting, we wrote out the Agenda: what we want to bring up at the next Council meeting.

At the full Council meeting we had votes on what we thought were important issues that were to be discussed concerning the school.



The things that we talked about were:

- **School grounds:** football goals, basketball nets, astro turf
- **Recycling:** recycling bins
- **Sixth form issues:** parking, bigger Common Room
- **Canteen:** lowering prices and healthier food

I hope the School Council will discuss uniform too!

I have enjoyed being on the Council because I can finally put my ideas across as well as those of other students, and perhaps do something about them.

By Jasmine Drury-Rudrum 8XY



Useful Information

School Term and Holiday Dates 2004-2005

Term	Starts	Ends
Autumn 2004 First day for pupils 2nd September	02/09/2004	22/10/2004
	Half Term	
	01/11/2004	17/12/2004
Christmas		
Spring 2005	04/01/2005	11/02/2005
	Half Term	
	21/02/2005	24/03/2005
	Easter & May Bank Holiday (2nd May 2005)	
Summer 2005	11/04/05	27/05/05
	Half Term & Spring Bank Holiday	
	06/06/05	22/07/05
	Summer Holidays	

Surrey University

We have been asked by the Department of Adult and Community Education at the University of Surrey to bring to your attention courses for adults for general interest and for those who wish to study for a degree. There are many wonderful learning opportunities and if you would like more information, please telephone: 01483 686172 or email: ace@surrey.ac.uk. Should there be sufficient interest amongst Ashcombe parents, courses could be based here at the school.

Educational Maintenance Allowances

The EMA (Educational Maintenance Allowance) is a new government scheme which will provide financial support for students entering the 6th form at school or college in September 2004. Entitlement to the EMA will depend on an assessment of household income. Anyone in Year 11 who is intending to enter the sixth form, either at school or college, with a household income of less than £30,000 should apply for an EMA. The weekly allowance will be between £10 and £30. EMA payments are dependent on full attendance and bonuses are paid where the student shows satisfactory progress against learning objectives in their EMA contract. Details will be given to pupils during the Summer Term.

Parents' Rights to Know

In January 2005 all schools will be required to comply with Freedom of Information legislation. During the Autumn Term parents will be informed of information available for scrutiny and how this can be accessed.

Currently parents have the right to be informed about or consulted over the following aspects of school activities:

- i) pupil progress (reports and NCT results)
- ii) parents' rights with regards to R.S. lessons, collective worship and sex education
- iii) the outcome of governors' monitoring of the school's racial equality policy
- iv) the school's policies on Special Educational Needs and Disability and the outcome of the evaluation of success (including improvements in general accessibility for the disabled).

In addition the school produces an annual prospectus and a governors' report to parents, both of which are available on request. Next term I shall write explaining current arrangements in such areas and inviting your comments. We will be arranging a session in the Autumn Term to explain these and other school policies in more detail so that, through discussion, some of these sensitive issues can be explored together. We do hope this will be a well-attended session.

The Ashcombe Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

**70's Evening with live music
Saturday evening 22nd May**

**What better way to spend an evening after
spending hours watching the Cup Final?**

To support the fund-raising for the Arts Centre, the PTA will be holding a 70's night for parents and friends. Please put this date in your social calendar. There will be a letter with details about the event sent via pupil post during the last week of April.

Farewell

Many of you will know Pat Knapper, our Educational Welfare Officer and her husband Peter, Vicar of St Mary Magdalene, South Holmwood, who also served as a governor of The Ashcombe from 2000 to 2003. They are leaving the area to retire to France. We wish them both well in their retirement and "bonne chance" for their life in the Loire Valley.

China Trip for Parents and Friends of the School – Easter 2005

Envious of your son's and daughter's opportunities to travel? Why not come to a meeting on Wednesday 12th May in the Study Centre at 7pm and find out more about

a trip to Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou and Xian, home of the Terracotta Warriors, and a chance to see parts of Chinese life ordinary tourists never see!