



Taking Stock

STOCKPORT GRAMMAR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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LES MISÉRABLES

This December's production of *Les Misérables* brought together a cast and crew of more than eighty pupils from across different year groups. The audience at each of the six sell-out performances enjoyed a magical performance complete with 2 ½ hours of music, a 21-piece orchestra, a complete set designed and constructed in-house, a circular revolving stage and elaborate sound and lighting. Rapturous applause made all the hard work worthwhile as the performers recreated Victor Hugo's epic tale of injustice, heroism and love. All the principals gave outstanding performances, and Head Boy Chris Ambrose shone in the role of the hero Jean Valjean. Two Second Year pupils, Simon Hardy (Gavroche) and Cara Bills (Little Cosette), made their lead debuts.

The West End production of *Les Misérables* is the world's longest running musical, and the school's adaptation retained all the magic of the original show including famous songs such as *At the End of the Day*, as well as the poignant *Castle on a Cloud* and the rousing *One Day More*. Following the success of last year's *Fiddler on the Roof*, SGS had a lot to live up to, but it was unanimously agreed that the cast and crew succeeded in this, the school's greatest theatrical challenge in recent memory.



OLYMPIC SILVER MEDALLIST VISITS JUNIOR SCHOOL

Pupils in the Junior School had a special visitor to their morning assembly when Olympic swimmer and Silver medallist Keri-Anne Payne called in. Wearing her Olympic medal Keri-Anne gave an inspirational talk to pupils about how she got to the Olympics in Beijing.



Keri-Anne, who trains with Stockport Metro Swimming Club, talked to pupils about the commitment and hard work needed to succeed in her Open Water event. Keri-Anne has been swimming since the age of four and trains for over 25 hours a week. She told pupils that no matter what they are doing, whether it is sport or homework, they need to put in 100% and be dedicated to what they do. Her advice was, "Enjoy it, work hard and have fun".

At the end of assembly Keri-Anne was presented with flowers as a thank you before helping to present the Good Work Awards. She then spent time with pupils from the school's swimming team, four of whom also train with Stockport Metro Swimming Club.

Keri-Anne is the second Olympic medal winner to visit the school this year. Her visit follows on from that of Sharron Davies, who was at SGS for Speech Day in July, where she presented the year's achievement awards.

TRIUMPH AT MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEBATING COMPETITION



Pupils recently attended the Modern Foreign Languages Debating Competition, held at Cheadle

Hulme School. The French team of Caroline Tanner and Steven Townend won their competition convincingly, beating Manchester High School for Girls, Bolton Boys', St Bede's and Bolton Girls' in the final. The German team of James Toole and Gemma Darwin were also very successful, winning two out of three of their debates. Well done all!



THE PETER BOARDMAN CLIMBING WALL

The official dedication of the Peter Boardman Climbing Wall took place this term. Peter was a former pupil at SGS and a world-renowned climber. When he climbed Mount Everest in 1975 he was the youngest person to have reached the summit. Peter went missing in 1982, once again climbing Mount Everest. The dedication of the climbing wall was carried out by Pat Littlejohn OBE, Director of the International School of Mountaineering. Peter's widow Hilary Rhodes and Peter's brother John Boardman also attended the evening and spoke at the dedication. After the speeches Pat Littlejohn (pictured left) carried out an inaugural climb of the wall, followed shortly after by climbers from the school's Climbing Club.

NATIVITY STARS

In the run-up to the Christmas break the Junior School performed two magical Nativity Plays. The first, *Whoops-a-daisy Angel* was performed by children in the Nursery and Reception. The second was by Year 1 and 2 pupils and was called *The Magical Christmas Box*. Both were well attended by parents, relatives and School Governors - none of whom could have failed to have been impressed with the performances.



BATTLEFIELDS TRIP 2008

During autumn half term two coaches filled with 78 Third Year pupils and eight members of staff headed off on the annual Battlefields Trip. For the first part of their trip pupils spent time in Northern France, visiting the area of the Somme Battlefields, where they laid a wreath at the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme in memory of Old Stopfordians. Pupils also visited Le Grande Mine, the Newfoundland Memorial, and the Albert Museum, an underground museum which traces life in the trenches during the war.



The second part of their trip was to Ypres in Belgium where pupils laid a wreath at Tyne Cot, the largest Commonwealth cemetery. They also visited the German Cemetery, Langemarck, as well as visiting Hill 60, In Flanders Field Museum and Essex Farm Cemetery. During the trip all pupils had wooden crosses with poppies on. They wrote messages on these and laid them wherever they felt appropriate. One pupil, Max Murphy, found the grave of a relative and laid his poppy there.

In their free time pupils visited a local chocolate shop to indulge in famous Belgian chocolate. On their last night they enjoyed an evening meal together before going to the Last Post Ceremony at Menin Gate, where every night since 1928 the Last Post has been played.



REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

As the country marked 90 years since the signing of the Armistice to end World War I, pupils joined staff, Governors and over 80 Old Stopfordians for a special Remembrance Day Service. Following a speech from Headmaster Mr Chicken, Fifth Year pupil Colin Greaves played the Last Post to mark the beginning of the two-minute silence. After the service, Old Stopfordians who left the School between 1930 and 1955 stayed for lunch. Christopher Willcock (OS 1948) spoke about his recent work to produce a more accurate World War II Roll of Honour for SGS.

SPORTING STARS

Hockey- The Hockey season is well under way and, despite a very challenging set of opening fixtures, the early signs are positive. Phoebe Broome has been selected to represent the North of England at U16 level, whilst Charlotte Bailey and Sophie Skelton are already in the North U15 squad. At the Greater Manchester Lancashire Schools' trials Kate Radford, Jennifer Brown and Rosie Oldham were selected at U18 level, Lara Acott at U17 level and Charlotte Bailey, Phoebe Broome, Lily Harrison, Katie McCay, Emma Lingard, Verity Lukes-Mooney and Emma Woodhead at U16 or U15 level.

Netball - The Netball season has also had a very promising start for a selection of players on the U16 squad. Amie Napper and Sara Baker have been selected to play for the U16 Cheshire Academy Squad and Amy Butterworth and Rebecca Delahunty have been selected for the U16 Cheshire Satellite Squad. The U13 A team recently played in the Stockport Schools' Tournament, beating Cheadle Hulme School 8-7 in the final.

All the girls went through difficult trials to prove their ability. We wish them a very successful season.



ANN COFFEY MP MEETS WITH PUPILS



In preparation for the first-ever meeting of the School Council, Stockport MP Ann Coffey visited SGS to meet with Second Year pupils and to talk about how she became the MP for Stockport, what being an MP involves and why it is important to learn about politics in school. Ann also met with Sixth Form pupils who are due to visit Parliament in January.

NEW SCHOOL COUNCIL



The newly-formed School Council recently had the honour of holding its first meeting at Stockport Town Hall. Following on from the elections last term in which over 77% of

pupils voted, the Council is made up of ten Year Representatives. The First Year Representatives are Fergus Williams and Jessica McNeill. The Second Year Representatives are Max Hadfield and Alex Cosgriff. The Third Year Representatives are Thomas Hosfield and Martha Watson, whilst the Representatives for the Fourth and Fifth Year are Ronil Rawal, Angharad Smith, Lauren Young and Charlie Bradbury. In addition, the Council also consists of twelve Senior Prefects who will act as Liaison Officers and advise the Year Representatives. At their first meeting members of the Council were joined by teachers Mr Ehegartner and Miss Withington, the Proctor Mr Ashcroft, and the Bursar Mr Watson, who oversaw the proceedings and explained the importance of the Council in the future of the school.

SALE SHARKS PUT PUPILS THROUGH THEIR PACES

SGS have been lucky enough to have had two visits from Sale Sharks this term. First, former player and now community coach Steve Hanley visited. Steve spent all day at school putting First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Years through their paces, before holding a question and answer session with Sixth Formers about healthy living, followed by an intensive training session. Then, during the half-term holidays, Sale Sharks returned to run a special holiday rugby camp. The camp included three days of expert coaching, a day's coaching and tour at Sale Sharks' training ground alongside the players, and a ticket to see a match.



HARVEST CELEBRATIONS

Children in the Junior School celebrated Harvest Festival with a seasonal assembly at which Year 2 pupils performed a special Harvest song. Later on in the day Year 4 pupils took the food that all the children had contributed to local sheltered accommodation and the Wellspring Kitchen.



BOOK CRAZY

National Book Week saw Junior School pupils taking part in a whole host of different activities. At the beginning of the week a small group of pupils were lucky enough to be invited to a local bookshop to meet the award-winning author of *The Gruffalo*, Julia Donaldson. Throughout the week children in Reception and Years 1 and 2 were invited to bring in up to three books that they would like to donate and exchange, and at the end of the week all the Infant children dressed up as a character from their favourite book. Not to be left out, Nursery children held a 'Pyjama Day' where all children and staff came to Nursery in their pyjamas.

Each child also brought in their favourite teddy bear and favourite book, and took part in a teddy bears' picnic.



MOCK TRIAL FINALISTS

SGS produced a record-breaking performance in the 2008 Sir Rhys Davies Mock Trial Competition, scoring the most points and reaching the final for the first time. Fiona Turner and Caroline Tanner were the barristers in the first case, defending Will Archer who played a Spanish student accused of unlawful wounding. Their performances secured a comprehensive victory over Manchester Grammar School. In the next trial, Sophie Spence and Charlotte Lennon performed very well, assisted by Kitty Piper as a confident born-again Christian and Lauren Deutsch as a landlord accused of blackmail, edging out William Hulme School by a point. Fiona and Caroline then defeated Alderley Edge School for Girls in the last case and reached the final. The team had an enjoyable day and deserve great credit for their achievements.



SGS EXHIBIT AT THE PORTICO GALLERY

SGS pupils were amongst pupils from ten other North West schools and colleges selected to show their work at the Assembly School's Art Exhibition. The exhibition was held at the Portico Gallery in Manchester and displayed work by Camilla Churchill-Davies, Helen Dunston, Amaleed Elturkie, Sian Ladley, Katie Logue, Jenny McLoughlin, Adam Paigge, Becky Spokes, Rosamund Woodroffe and Sofia Zarod. Camilla Churchill-Davies also won the Experian Prize, one of only four prizes to be won, for her work *The Tennis Player*.



FIRST YEARS COOK UP A TREAT

To help encourage healthy eating, the government has published a new, free *Real Meals* cookbook for all eleven year olds in England. The books have been launched in school and the English department, Food Technology and the Library have been teaming up with pupils to create SGS's own collection of recipes. Pupils took their recipes along to Food Technology where they swapped them for the *Real Meals* cookbooks, and got to taste some of the recipes which staff in Food Technology had prepared.



PUPILS VISIT COUNTRY'S TOP ART GALLERIES

Lower and Upper Sixth Form Art pupils travelled to London to visit some of the country's most important art galleries. The first stop on their journey was Tate Britain where pupils viewed a collection which is as diverse as it is eclectic. In the afternoon pupils were able to sketch and make notes at the Miró, Calder, Giacometti and Braque exhibition at the Royal Academy. A small number of pupils also managed to visit collections at the National Gallery and the V & A. The day proved to be very successful for gathering information for the development of their coursework.

RUGBY SQUADS BUILD ON THEIR STRONG START



All teams have had an excellent start to the season, especially the U12 team who, as we go to press, remain unbeaten. All teams are still in the Cheshire Cup Competitions and the 1st XV (round 3) & U15 (round 4) remain in the Daily Mail Vase Competition. We have a very high number of County representatives – 14 in total – in the Cheshire, East Cheshire or Development squads. Our U13, U16 and U18 teams will be taking part in the National School Sevens Competition at Rosslyn Park in March, and our Senior Squad will be travelling to Portugal in April to take part in the Portugal Youth Festival 2009.

CHILDREN IN NEED

This term pupils have been busy raising money for Children In Need. Children in the Junior School held a non-uniform day, whilst in the Senior School collection buckets were rattled at lunch and break times. Nursery children painted Pudsey Bear masks and wore their own clothes.



MATHS SUCCESS PLACES PUPILS IN THE TOP TEN

Congratulations to Martin Kent and Roger Lightwood who have the privilege of being amongst the top ten GCSE students in the country. Martin and Roger both sat the IGCSE Mathematics exam this summer and when Edexcel issued the results they showed that, out of 19,213 candidates, Martin and Roger had both achieved some of the highest overall marks.



In addition to their success in Mathematics, both Martin and Roger are also taking Philosophy as an additional AS exam and outside of the classroom both boys are involved in extra-curricular activities. Roger plays the trumpet in the Brass Ensemble and has recently played in the Orchestra for *Les Misérables*. Martin took the role of Marius in *Les Misérables*, and both boys are part of the Chamber Choir.

CHAMBER CHOIR SING LIVE ON BBC RADIO 4



Chamber Choir members are to be congratulated for their outstanding singing on BBC Radio 4's Daily Service programme. They rehearsed with professionalism and banished their nerves magnificently whilst performing Bach's *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, *The Lord's My Shepherd* and *Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer* with polish and meticulous attention to detail. Within half an hour of the end of the broadcast, the Producer of BBC Religion and Ethics had e-mailed Director of Music, Michael Dow, congratulating the choir on their excellent singing and inviting them back. One listener contacted the Producer to say: "I thought the school choir on the programme were fantastic. I have never heard such beautiful singing by a school choir before." Look out for details of the next broadcast in the New Year.

HELPING PUPILS TO PLAN THEIR NEXT MOVE

At this year's Careers Convention pupils got the chance to meet and chat to over 50 exhibitors. Companies exhibiting included: Royal Bank of Scotland, Deans Court Chambers, Stockport NHS Trust, Nine Lives Media and the Taylor Young Partnership. In addition to this many Higher Education establishments attended, including: University of Manchester, University of Sheffield, and The University of Leeds.

At SGS career planning is taken seriously. As well as the biennial Careers Convention, work experience is also offered to all Fifth Year pupils. The school has over 400 companies on its database and some pupils even complete their placements abroad.



U11 FOOTBALL TEAM WIN AT MANCHESTER CITY

The Under 11 A football team remain unbeaten as we go to press. They recently won the IAPS North Area 7-a-side football tournament, which was held at Manchester City's youth training facilities. The ten teams involved in the competition were from as far afield as North Wales. Two groups of five were formed, with all teams playing each other in their group and the top two progressing to the semi-finals. After winning all four group games SGJS defeated The Ryleys 2-0 in the semi-final before going on to beat Arnold School 1-0 in a closely contested final.

BURSARIES

SGS offers a number of bursaries and music scholarships at 11+ and 16+. The Bursary Fund enables pupils from a wide range of backgrounds to benefit from the academic education and wider preparation for life that the school offers. In the words of one of the school's former bursary holders: "Being part of Stockport Grammar School has provided me with good friends, fantastic memories, the best education and more importantly a promising future".

INTERVIEW WITH EOIN COLFER

Brother and sister Charlie and Gabby Smith attended the Cheltenham Literary Festival where they met up with best-selling children's author, Eoin Colfer.

Charlie was invited to interview Eoin about his books, the most famous of

which are the *Artemis Fowl* novels, a series which stars a teenage criminal mastermind who takes charge of rebuilding his family fortune following the disappearance of his father. Eoin isn't the first author to be interviewed by Charlie. He has previously questioned Anthony Horowitz (the *Alex Rider* novels, *The Power of Five*) and David Gilman (*The Devil's Breath*, *Ice Claw*) and has now been invited by Puffin Books to be a Deputy Editor for their Book Club.



CLASSICS TRIP TO LONDON

Thirty-eight Lower and Upper Sixth Classicists together with Mr Thorley, Mr Bird and Mrs Othen visited London. Pupils started the day at the British Museum seeing the sculptures from the Parthenon and considering the impact of the *Statuephilia* exhibition where modern sculptures, including one of Kate Moss made from solid gold, are juxtaposed with ancient works. After lunch pupils went to the National Theatre to see *Oedipus* starring Ralph Fiennes in the title role, providing pupils with the opportunity to compare a professional performance to the one staged at SGS last year. On the way back to Euston, a small detour was made to the National Gallery to see relatively modern interpretations of Classical stories including Turner's *Odysseus deriding Polyphemus* and Titian's *Diana and Actaeon*.

SERENADE CONCERT

Old Stops, together with current pupils and parents, gathered in the Hallam Hall to welcome former pupil and internationally-respected recorder player John Turner (OS 1961). John was at SGS to perform a Serenade Concert with fellow musicians, soprano Lesley-Jane Rogers and pianist Stephen Bettaney (OS 1964), in aid of the May Turner Scholarship Fund. The May Turner Scholarship Fund was set up by John as a tribute to his late mother who had a passion for teaching music to young people. The fund is dedicated to providing music scholarships for talented young musicians to further both their musical and academic talents at SGS. Pictured left to right are Chairman of Governors Richard Rimmington, Flora Natalie Willson (OS 2004), Stephen Bettaney, Lesley-Jane Rogers, John Turner and Headmaster Andrew Chicken.



CLASSICS DEPARTMENT PRESENTS *HIPPOLYTUS*

This February the Classics Department will be presenting *Hippolytus* by Euripides, a Greek tragedy about sorrow caused by love and anger. All actors in the play are from the Lower Sixth and there will also be four danced pieces.

Tickets are £5 for adults and £3 for pupils. The play takes place in the Hallam Hall on Wednesday 11th, Thursday 12th and Friday 13th February at 7.30pm.

If you would like tickets please send details of the date of the performance you would like to see, along with a cheque made payable to Stockport Grammar School to Alastair Thorley, Classics Department, Stockport Grammar School, Buxton Road, Stockport, SK2 7AF. Please also include your contact details.

FIRST YEAR TRIP TO CASTLETON

This year's trip to Castleton was, as always, a great success. The trip helps pupils to get to know each other and their teachers outside the classroom and has become a regular part of the warm welcome we extend to all our new pupils.

Just a few weeks into their first term pupils set off on a three day adventure with girls and boys from their own class, together with pupils from two or three other forms. The daytime programme included navigation, team building exercises and GPS training and compass work, whilst the evenings were just as fun-filled with circus skills, palm reading, crafts and Subbuteo on offer. Although it was the first time away from home for some, all pupils had a great time, returning with new friends and a new confidence that has transferred itself to the classroom.



PRINCE EDWARD PRESENTS PUPILS WITH GOLD AWARDS

Four former pupils received a special invitation to St. James's Palace where they were presented with their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards by the Earl of Wessex, Prince Edward. Louise Bowler, Kathryn Horrocks, Richard Wilson and Matthew Wood completed all three stages of the Award: Bronze, Silver and Gold whilst pupils at SGS. All four are now continuing their studies at university. As part of the Gold Level Award pupils complete a Residential Section. This involves staying away from home for five days and four nights in an unfamiliar environment. One of the four, Kathryn Horrocks, spent a week working in a village in Uganda. SGS is a Duke of Edinburgh Independent Operating Authority and is the most successful independent school offering the Award in the North West.

FROM SGS TO QUEENSLAND

Last Christmas the school's 1st XI cricket team went on tour to Australia. It was an amazing experience and one that I enjoyed so much that I decided to take a gap year playing cricket. After completing Upper Sixth last summer I moved out to the Sunshine Coast in Queensland where we were based last Christmas. With the help of Mr Makinson I was set up with his old club Maroochydore and a place to live with one of the other players at the club, along with another "Pom", Luis Reece. So far the cricket has gone well and the team has won the first three games of the season and is near the top of the league. It is a completely different challenge playing matches over two days on hard, bouncy wickets and in the humid heat, but one that I am really enjoying. Away from the cricket much time has been spent relaxing on the beaches or around the pool. Our landlord has been trying to teach Luis and me how to surf, although we've a long way to go! We've climbed the local mountain Mount Coolum and are planning to go to Steve Irwin's Australia Zoo soon, but there is still a lot left to do before we leave. Hopefully the experience should help me for the next season at home and for next year when I head to Loughborough University. **For more Old Stopfordian news keep an eye on the Old Stopfordian section of our website www.stockportgrammar.co.uk**

A report by Alex Hope, OS 2008



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