

The Hillcestrian



2009-2010

Headmaster's Editorial

Whilst compiling the following pages it has been extremely difficult to decide what to mention and what to leave out. The amount of activity within the School astounds me, particularly when one considers that this activity is accomplished by 303 pupils and just over 40 staff. Looking back through the archives for this year's anniversaries I discovered a copy of the School magazine from 1993 titled "The Hillcestrian". It seems appropriate to resurrect the title for this year's 'review'.

Our archives not only provide a window to the past but also poignant reminder that although 'times change', some things remain the same. I have found familiar references to plays, concerts, sporting achievement, trips both foreign and local. There are also comments from "Headmasters past" that mirror my feelings exactly. A newspaper cutting from 1959 reports the comments of a Hillcrest Headmaster on the 'erosion of Independence' by Government. Jump forward fifty years and consider the current government inspection scheme which we experienced first hand in February. Once again, we are pressured into compliance with regulations, the goals of which do not reflect the ethos which the community of Hillcrest cherishes. A system which visits for forty-eight hours cannot possibly measure accurately a community which functions not through sound-bites but something more real and tangible than any paperwork could possibly reflect. Despite this I was delighted that our pastoral care and extra-curricular activities were rightly judged "outstanding".

Furthermore, it is interesting to note comment from Mr. Blackburn, now a Governor of the School, in the 1993 edition of the Hillcestrian. He addresses the introduction of School league tables, notes the injustice of measuring pupils on raw GCSE grades and mourns the loss of the understanding that every grade is an achievement, and often, for the individual, an exceptional one. Seventeen years later statistics still rule the media's verdict on school performance. At least we now have the experience to use data to help improve and celebrate a pupil's individual accomplishments.

Of course, this academic year will stand out for me, containing as it did, my appointment as Headmaster. For other members of the School community it will stand out for other reasons, all of them individual ones. I was asked by a prospective parent recently what a Hillcrest education looks like. My answer was to say that this year there were 303 different "educations" at the School. As a small institution we can truly focus on the individual. I hope that this publication includes the individual highlights for all. For those readers who feel theirs is missing, I would share a thought that struck me this year: the printed word, an internet 'blog', a photograph can not replace the feeling or the experience gained by being part of one of those 'stand out moments'. We are lucky to have so many.

Jack Williams





Celebrating our History



A double anniversary for Hillcrest in 2010 has been celebrated in a number of ways. There are undoubtedly many untold stories in our main school building which celebrates its centenary. Stockport High School for Girls first occupied the Cale Green site from 1910 followed by Davenport High School. This event was marked in Cale Green Park in April with a fun run, balloon race and a number of other attractions.

Hillcrest took possession of the site in October 1983 with the School moving during the half term holiday from Bramhall. A number of the pictures on the left show scenes from Hillcrest's 70 year history including Drama, Music, Art and a School Trip all of which remain strengths to this day. A 1940's Dinner Dance will be held in October 2010 to celebrate the School's birthday.

Former pupils Peter Griffiths and Suzannah Diaczuk joined current pupils Georgia Batson-Gallagher and Isaac Martin to launch the anniversary year (above) looking over some of the School's archive material. The photograph on the page opposite is that of first Headmaster G. Roy Leah with the 'Pioneers' - the first Hillcrest class to go through the School and take their 'O' Levels.

Pre-Preparatory and Preparatory pupils were given a personal view of Hillcrest's past at their Prizegiving in June by Guest Speaker Ian Hamilton, former pupil and governor of the School who first joined Hillcrest in 1950.



Autumn Term



At the beginning of term we welcomed three new members of staff, Mrs. Holgate (Year 2), Miss West (Sciences) and Miss Gough (Spanish and French).



We also welcomed our new Kindergarten class into the new building. The new Reception class settled in quickly not even needing a teacher to organise their daily game of "Duck, duck, goose".



Year 8 visited our adopted animals at Chester Zoo whilst learning about 'Adaptations'.

The pupils spent the morning with zoo staff looking at real animals in the classroom before touring the zoo.

They took the opportunity to put their studies into action whether it be looking at the hard protective shell of a tortoise or the sleek swimming action of a penguin.



For the second year running a Hillcrest artist won 1st place in the ISA North Competition. This year Jessica Cousins' Venetian Mask triumphed in the 3D category



Years 5 and 6 visited North Wales for a Residential Outward Bound Course sometimes trying to stay dry, sometimes not!

The residential course included raft building, river walking and climbing along with the opportunity to build friendships in a variety of different activities.



Prep School visits this year also included Stockport Air Raid Shelters, Styal Mill and an exciting day den building in Lyme Park.





Years 7,8 and 9 joined staff and local residents in the Big Tidy Up, finding discarded objects large and small to dispose of. A year had passed since the last tidy-up and the amount of rubbish astounded many of the pupils.



In November World Freedom Day, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, was celebrated by a balloon launch.

The West Midlands Theatre Group treated years 2-6 to a tale of ancient sorcery in "Wizard William" whilst various trips to visit professional productions were enjoyed by many pupils.



Building for the Future



After a number of years of working with planners and local residents, the new building finally opened at the beginning of the year.

Olympic Swimmer Michael Rock officially opened the building in October with many parents, friends, staff and governors were able to tour the facility with Prep pupils. The Brass Ensemble performed the specially commissioned 'Ad Lucem' and former Headmaster and Governor David Blackburn cut the cake as he watched his vision come to fruition.



Festive Cheer

Festivals are busy times for any community but the Christmas period seems to start earlier and contain more activities every year and 2009 was no exception.



The Preparatory School play this year was "Baboushka" starring Rebecca Moore.



The Pre-Preparatory Nativity "Shine, Star, Shine" told the story of a reluctant star (Eva Mills) and her part in the Christmas Story alongside the Kindergarten Angels and the "Shepherds with excellent comic timing" amongst others.



The Christmas Fair raised over £900 for playground equipment and included food, drink, a grotto, decorations and musical accompaniment.



Pre-Prep pupils joined the Cale Green residents in the Park to sing carols.

Over 70 shoe boxes were collected for "Operation Christmas Child"



The Brass Ensemble not only played at the Carol Service but also at St. George's Tree Festival where two Hillcrest trees were on show.

Spring Term

We returned after the Winter Break to unprecedented snowfalls but this did not prevent Mr. Buckingham from introducing Year 6 to a new Art medium!



Year 10 pupils supported the “When you Wish upon a Star” charity by performing in their 24 hour Musicathon.



Year 7 performed an innovative evening of “Punch and Judy” with sets and puppets by Mr. Buckingham and Miss Hammond. Mr. Hillary was ambitious in asking for a ‘mobile’ audience over three different locations but the show was a triumph for all. The future of performing Arts is safe!



The Natural Disaster in Haiti sparked worldwide charitable efforts to support the relief effort. “Hats for Haiti” and “Hands for Haiti” raised over £500.



Senior School Science Week was a fantastic success: Inter-House competitions in Bridge Building, crystal and sunflower growing were very popular but the highlights were the visit of “The Wild Roadshow” and Year 9s trip to “The Big Bang Exhibition”.



Prep and Pre-Prep pupils were delighted at the visit of Blue Watch and having the opportunity to see around the fire engine and use the high pressure hoses.

As Easter approached, Pre-Preps Easter *Eggstravaganza* included egg hunts, rabbit and chick modelling and egg painting. Parents and Staff both helped to make the event a success.



Summer Term

Year 11 pupils rounded off their time in School with their Young Enterprise group winning two awards in the Stockport area including Ben Cookson as “YE Student of the year”.

And after examinations week Year 7s learnt some new skills at Langdale in the Lake District



There were a number of drama productions in the Summer Term from both ‘ends’ of the School. Pre-Prep pupils performed their African dances and songs whilst Year 11 Performing Arts pupils performed the final work for their GCSE—”Little White Lies” giving many of them a chance to show their talents in music, drama and dance. Year 10s also put on their talent show “Heroes and Villains”.



Prep and Pre-Prep Prizegiving was attended by many parents and friends of the School including Mr Ian Hamilton, former Governor and pupil of the School who awarded the prizes.



The Summer Concert demonstrated the variety of musical talent across the School including a wide range of musical genres from opera to rock with some light jazz thrown in.

The Year 11 Prom at the Alma Lodge Hotel was, once again, a wonderful event with fabulous dresses and limousines taking centre stage.





Sport



As usual a year of successes on the Sporting field both within School and at Representative level. Hannah Oultram and Jessica Griffiths were ISA National Finalists in Cross Country and Ella-Maria Danson made the North team in Athletics and there were a number of team victories against other schools. A number of new sports were introduced. Skiing was not only a leisure pursuit as some pupils used it for their GCSE PE coursework. A team from Hillcrest competed against other schools in a Lacrosse competition. Non competitive sport came in the form of a number of charity events including two fun runs and a swim for Sport Relief. Sale Sharks Rugby coaches joined us to help Year 7 with their skills. Sports Day at the end of the year included pupils at all age groups from Kindergarten to Year 11 pupils who returned after their examinations to compete for their houses and to help out at the Friends' Barbecue which raised £500. Individual success for Maisie Cole as she was selected for Lancashire Girls' cricket.



Ciao Italia



Alpine Resort Courmayeur was the venue for the Ski Trip in April with over 50 pupils and staff taking to the Italian slopes.



Hola España



Not even Volcanic Ash clouds could prevent the Spanish Exchange visiting our partner School in Zaragoza and experiencing the delights of the ancient city.



AFRICA DAY



A term's focus on Africa in a number of Senior School departments culminated in an extremely enjoyable day in December. Pupils and staff learnt about Kenyan culture, North African deserts, life in Malawi as well as learning how to dance like a Zulu tribesman and carry twenty kilograms of water on their heads. An assembly during the day demonstrated the pupils' work including reciting poetry whilst limbo dancing and displaying African masks and waistcoats made in Art and Textiles.



Farewell

The end of the academic year is always a sad time. As we say farewell to our Year 11s we are sure that they will go on to great things and we hope that their time at Hillcrest will be looked back on with enjoyment and pride.



There are number of long serving members of staff retiring this year. We wish all the best to Mrs. Cookson, Mrs. Headon, Mrs. Ramsden. We are also saying goodbye to Mrs. Holgate, who leaves us to relocate to Kent and Miss Butterworth , who moves to the Emirates International School, Dubai as Dean of Students. The School also said farewell to David Eversley as Headmaster and we wish him the best for the future.

