



THE
GLASGOW ACADEMY

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newslines

Les Mis – a triumph!



Ben Wykes waves the revolutionary flag as Douglas Sleight looks on.

Inset, l to r Thenardier (Mark Cunningham) and his wife (Anna Smrckova) enjoy the limelight! Andrew Scade as the merciless Javert accuses the heroic Valjean (Hamish Wyllie). A tender moment between Marius (Scott Gilmour) and Cosette (Nina Morrison).

After almost three hours of wonderful entertainment, the cast of *Les Misérables* received a richly-deserved standing ovation from a packed Cargill Hall on each of the final two nights.

And well might the audience applaud: the standard of singing and acting of all the principals was astonishing, the 16-piece orchestra was excellent and every member of the chorus played their supporting role superbly.

Produced by Jonathan Hawkins of the music department, *Les Misérables* is undoubtedly one of the most technically-demanding musicals attempted by Glasgow Academy pupils in recent years. A joint venture between the Music and Drama departments, the production was a major undertaking that simply could not have happened without the help or co-operation of every department in the school as well as some very talented parents.

Congratulations to everyone who was involved in a magnificent production.

Exam and Oxbridge successes

We are delighted that the 2009 national examination results brought our best-ever S5 AB grade rate (81%), our equal-best-ever S5 pass rate (94%) and our highest-ever percentage of As at S6 Higher (35%). Congratulations to all our candidates who worked hard to gain pleasing grades.

Well done, too, to all those who secured Oxbridge offers. They are: Lucy Aitchison (French/Spanish, Cambridge), Phillip Clarke (Engineering, Cambridge), Oscar Lee (History, Oxford), Alfie Lloyd (Medicine, Cambridge), Zara Reid (History, Cambridge) and Sam Reilly (English, Oxford).

Peter Brodie

It's 'deja vu all over again' as Academy chemists and mathematicians both reach UK finals...

UKMT Senior Team Mathematical Challenge finalists – again!

For the second year running a Glasgow Academy team has reached the finals of a prestigious maths competition after being triumphant over other west of Scotland schools in their heat at the beginning of November. We wish Alice Ahn, Phillip Clarke, Alfie Lloyd and Jason Long every success as they travel to London for the finals of the UKMT Senior Team Mathematical Challenge on 3 February.

In other news, we congratulate Alice and Jason who have both qualified for the British Maths Olympiad 2. Only 200 pupils from the whole of the UK are eligible to sit this paper.

Moreover Alice had to cut short her trip home to Korea recently as she received an unexpected invitation to an all-expenses-paid Maths study school in Hungary from 27 December to 4 January.

Clearly our mathematicians are going from strength to strength!



Making even the hard sums look easy: Phillip Clarke, Alfie Lloyd, Alice Ahn and Jason Long are off to the UK finals in February.



(l to r) Nico Genasi, William Watt, Samantha Davidson and Connel Allison have qualified for the UK finals

Royal Society of Chemistry Inter-Schools Quiz finalists – again!

In a hotly-contested final round of the Royal Society of Chemistry Inter-Schools Quiz at the University of Strathclyde, The Academy's team of William Watt (S4), Samantha Davidson (S3) and Connel Allison (S2) emerged victorious.

Of the ten schools that entered the West of Scotland competition on Thursday 26 November, four got through to the final round. The final result was Bishopbriggs High School (32pts), Douglas Academy (37pts), High School of Glasgow (43pts) and Glasgow Academy (45pts).

The Glasgow Academy team – joined by Nico Genasi (S3) – will go to the UK finals in London in March. We wish them every success.



Have you heard the gossip?

As is traditional, the final of the House Debating Competition was held on the last day of the Autumn term. This year, however, a new Debating trophy was unveiled. After a closely-contested debate on the motion 'This House would gossip' the VW Hadcroft House Debating Trophy was presented to Zara Reid and Oscar Lee (right of picture) by none other than Mr Hadcroft himself.



Great dance – everyone was there!

You'd be forgiven if you thought aliens had landed in Colebrooke Street at the end of October – but it was just the S5/6 Hallowe'en Dance!

Batman, Robin, Captain Incredible, a Smurf, Bob the Builder, the Blues Brothers ... everyone who is anyone was there! A good time was had by all and £500 was raised for charity.



Ahoy there!

Dairsie, Atholl and Kelvinbridge Kindergarten pupils all got together recently to welcome Pirate Jim. For the occasion, everyone dressed as pirates. Pirate Jim was very funny – as you can see from our picture.



Three wise men?

In December the P1 classes at Kelvinbridge put on two performances of 'Hump the Camel', their version of the Christmas story, which they performed enthusiastically to audiences of family and friends. For this photograph, Joseph seems to have joined forces with a wise man and a star to welcome the baby.



First ascent – Greenland, 2009

This year, twelve new recruits to the great Academy tradition of Arctic exploration found themselves in an even more remote part of Greenland than their predecessors as Head of Outdoor Activities, Neal Gwynne, and his team set off on another great adventure to climb peaks never before attempted.

One of them – Sam Reilly – reflects the feelings the group experienced as they conquered one of the mountains that no-one had previously climbed:

Friday 10 July

...Today, at 9.30am, the group stood upon a never-before-climbed peak for the second time, having conquered a mountain standing at 1774m, and the giddy high we experienced on Monday was in no way diminished by repetition. The same ethereal sense of weightlessness swept over us, as we surveyed the unbelievable panorama below. To the west, the Greenland ice-cap stretched several hundred miles; straight ahead the glaciers and peaks of Gâseland, our home, and directly below the great stone canyon dropped straight down to the floor. We could not help feeling like kings and queens, overseeing our great kingdom of rock and ice. It was with a just sense of satisfaction that we turned for home, and we were soon on the other side of the knife-edge ridge, breathing a huge sigh of relief. It was then a fairly straightforward climb down loose rocks towards the camp, although I'm sure our knees would disagree. Barring the odd shout of 'below' as dislodged rocks hurtled down the slope, the descent passed fairly uneventfully and before we knew it we were back at the bivvy site.

We now lie gloriously situated on the hillside, in bright sunshine and with a sense of tired achievement and anticipating the week to come.

Sam Reilly, S6



Natasha and Caroline hard at work taking the vital statistics of trees on Barloch Moor

Seeing the wood for the trees...

It's so handy going to school on the edge of a wood! As part of their topic on Woodlands, Atholl's P4 pupils went 'next door' onto Barloch Moor with a ranger from Mugdock Country Park. He talked about different trees and then the pupils split into groups to calculate the heights of different trees and discover how old they were. To round off a perfect afternoon, the boys and girls took some bark rubbings and sketched different trees and leaves.



Advanced Higher Geographers braving the cold to streamline their river investigation skills as part of a residential field studies trip to Kindrogan in October.



Rowing's Growing!

As a result of our continuing investment in new 'ergo' rowing machines, around 50 pupils now regularly participate in rowing at The Academy. As well as developing their skills in the gym, they also row outdoors on the Clyde at Glasgow Schools Boathouse and at the National Rowing Academy in Strathclyde Country Park.

At Inverness in October our star rower Emily Colley won the Scottish trial and two further events and is now the top-ranked junior woman in Scotland. She is a British silver medallist.

In 2010 Emily's aim will be GB selection and some of our boys will be hoping to be selected for Scotland.



There are lots of Christmas traditions in the Prep School at Glasgow Academy, including the end-of-term services held in local churches. Dairsie's service is held at Newlands South Church, Atholl's at Cairns Church, Milngavie and the service for Kelvinbridge is held at Kelvin Stevenson Memorial Church. We are very grateful to the ministers and congregations of these churches for welcoming us to their beautiful buildings. Our picture shows Atholl's Christmas Nativity – The Little Fir Tree – at Cairns Church.



Papa Panov – with a difference...

The Prep School Christmas Show this year was a special version of the story of Papa Panov. While the traditional story was familiar to many members of the audience in the packed Cargill Hall, the songs which accompanied it were entirely new. They were the work of Mr Alastair McColl, of the Music department, who wrote both the words and the music to some six songs, one for each year that performed in the show. 'We loved singing our song. It was the best!' said a P6 pupil – a sentiment no doubt echoed by pupils in each of the years that took part!



Lauren lifts the debating trophy

Glasgow Academy debaters seem to rise to the challenge of speaking in the Scottish Parliament. After our win in the Donald Dewar Memorial Trophy in its debating chamber earlier this year, Lauren Hudson of S5 was judged to be the best speaker in the St Andrew's Debate held at the Scottish Parliament on 30 November.

The unusual format of the competition saw school pupils paired with student debaters to encourage pupils to continue honing their debating skills at university. In what turned out to be her last official engagement, the then Education Secretary Fiona Hyslop commented: 'I was very impressed at the standard of debating, particularly from the school pupils.'

Chemistry Club

After winning the Secondary School Young Engineers and Science Clubs Showcase in June, Dr Sowden and her Chemistry Club group were delighted to receive an invitation from the Scottish Council for Development and Industry to attend the Science and the Parliament 2009 event at Our Dynamic Earth on 11 November. S2 girls Florence Brooke, Ellen Devine, Lydia Harrison and Alex Morton were fantastic ambassadors for the school. They mingled with guests and manned the SCDI stand enthusiastically during the reception, talking animatedly to MSPs and other delegates about Chemistry Club throughout the evening.

Mouse-mats to the rescue!

Surfing the net can be dangerous for the unwary. Now it's a little safer thanks to the winning designs in the S1 Mouse-mat Competition. As part of their PSE curriculum, S1 pupils were encouraged to 'Think before you click' and the best designs in the subsequent competition incorporate thought-provoking messages with memorable images. We are grateful to Big Red Creative who sponsored the competition – as a result of their generosity, every pupil in S1 will be able to choose a winning design to take home and keep.

Pictured with their prize-winning designs are (l to r) Andrew Sinclair, Jamie McDonald, Kirsten MacKinnon (First Prize) and Alexandra Mennie. (Not in photograph, Nicola Pell.)



Model Pupils...

Over 100 Academy pupils from P1 to S6 had the chance to become models for the evening when the PTA put on a fashion show recently. The Cargill Hall, too, was transformed and a huge audience turned out to support the event at which just under £3000 was raised for a number of charities, including the Scottish Society for Autism and Help the Aged.

Congratulations to the PTA on putting together a highly-professional event and thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of the evening.



NYC/DC is AI

Thirty-one pupils and five members of staff travelled to New York and Washington DC during the October break. During our six-day trip we visited Central Park, Grand Central Station, the Financial District, Ground Zero, the Rockefeller Centre, the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Madame Tussauds, the Holocaust Museum, The Supreme Court, The White House, The Capitol Building, The Lincoln Memorial, The Washington Monument, Arlington Cemetery, the Newseum, the Museum of the American Indian and The World War II Memorial. We also saw The Lion King on Broadway, walked through two movie sets, enjoyed dinner and entertainment over two evenings in the ESPN Zone and Ellen's Stardust Diner, saw a movie yet to be released in the UK and were also lucky enough to see President Barack Obama!

Danish exchange

In September, seven S6 pupils took part in the annual exchange with Herlufsholm Skole, in Denmark. During the week we were there, half of us participated in the Danish education system, with the others doing the International Baccalaureate programme. A few of us had to give a presentation to a class of 10 year olds on Scottish life and culture. You would be surprised at how world famous our humble deep-fried Mars bar has become! On their return visit, apart from cultural trips the Danes' to-do list included sampling the national drink... Irn-Bru. 'Weird, but nice' was the general consensus.

Douglas Wright, S6



24-Hour Sports Marathon, 2009

For the 24 hours beginning on Friday 18 December at 4 pm, some intrepid members of the fifth and sixth form – yet again – attempted to keep two teams playing a variety of sports in order to raise money for three 'home' charities: Autism Scotland, Help the Aged and Youth against Cancer. They received essential help from S2, S3 and S4 teams on Friday evening and, crucially, on Saturday from 8 am. Without these younger volunteers, the 24-hour target could not have been met. They succeeded and, despite extreme exhaustion, several of the Sixth Years stayed in the sports hall for the whole 24 hours!

Organised by Elliot Proudfoot and Fraser Stark, with assistance from Mrs Macdonald, this year's 24-Hour Sports had 95 pupils taking part with 13 staff sharing the supervision. Well done to all of them!

Save the Date – Saturday 12 June, 2010

The Cargill Ball

The Cargill Ball on 12 June will celebrate more than 50 years of the Cargill Hall's serving The Academy. Dinner will be served by Kensington's Catering and music will be provided by Atlantic Avenue. Proceeds from the evening will be donated to Glasgow Academy Bursary funds, Erskine Hospital and Combat Support.

Tickets (£60) on sale from February.

Parents, former pupils and friends of The Academy are all very welcome.

For more information and advance bookings, please contact:
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