

# LANGTON NEWS

May/June 2007

Issue No. 133

Editor: Susan Begg

## Accessing the Archives

INSIDE  
Langton Students  
at Canterbury  
Cathedral

plus

Quakes



Quakes, camels & bugs

# Big Big BUGS



*Lee Gibbs and his Big Bug Show visited the Langton last term thanks to an invitation issued by Dr Carmody.*



Caution!  
Do not attempt to  
brush your teeth  
with one of these!

All students in Year 7 and many others were given a rollercoaster look at the life and times of various big bugs. And they were big. Very big.

Just look at the picture. They don't come any bigger.

Madagascar is famous for producing the best vanilla in the world. It is also home to the giant Madagascan Cockroach. The biggest roach in the world. Students were able to handle these beautiful creatures as well as giant millipedes which, according to one boy, felt like a sticky toothbrush crawling over your hand. Next up was the Roseate Tarantula – a very, very big spider, which spent a happy few minutes crawling over those brave enough to meet the challenge. Boys were told *not* to stoke its bottom, an order which everyone seemed only too happy to obey.

Lee gave a witty and informative commentary during the bug handling, explaining, amongst other things, how the millipedes became more active as they got warmer, why it is likely that cockroaches would survive a nuclear holocaust and the difference between poisonous creatures and venomous ones.

Last of all – the tasting! Silver Silk moth larvae and giant leaf cutter ants were on the menu this year. Salt free and low in fat they are the ideal grub (pardon the pun) for healthy eaters. However, Caterlink have told

Langton News that they have no immediate plans to include them on the canteen menu.



# Langton Student Union

**“Learn from the past, watch the present and create the future”**

*by Ollie Latham, Member of the Union Executive*

**It took a while but the SLBS Student Union is truly up and running. We are here, we have money, we have power and we want your views.**

The Student's Union is **your** voice and I'm writing this so that you know how many of the annoying little things around school and the big problems that you experience everyday can be resolved with us.

In the past the SU has earned the reputation of being a waste of space. However, this year is a completely different story, we have sorted out all the bureaucratic, constitutional business and we are ready to truly listen to your wishes.

The Student Union also has a tasty sum of money which you have raised via the sponsored walk. This is your money and if you give us suggestions which we think are worthwhile we will fund them. Don't worry if you think asking for a tenner to buy a rabbit and set up a pet club is stupid just show us what you intend to do with the money and we will consider your proposal. Just ask your S.U. or L.S.C representative to put your request on the agenda.

In the last meeting we gave money to a variety of causes which will improve your quality of life in the school:

£162 to set up a media club, headed by Guy Meurice, £40 went to L.U.F.T (Langton Ultimate Frisbee Team) for new equipment, £45 for an incentive scheme for Prefects, £200 to re-establish chess within the school (see quote at the foot of the page) and £1000 to the climbing wall project, headed by Matt Fraser.

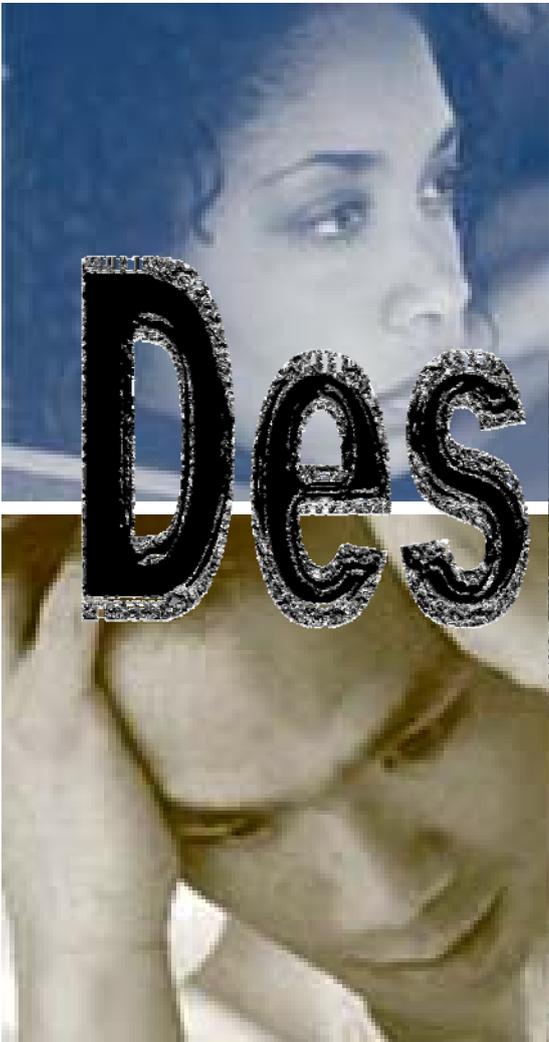
The Student Union is run by the students for the students. The Union meets every term when the union's sub-committees report back to the executive who make decisions on what needs addressing. The sub-committees include: the Student Teaching and Learning Group, the Careers Committee, the Premises Committee and Code of Conduct Committee. I'm sure that you'll be pleased to hear that teachers have no voting power in meetings although they do attend to provide input on current situations and the opinions of the staff.

The Student Union Executive is made up of 4 students from years 10, 11, 12 and 13. There is also the lower school alternative: the Lower School Council, this is also filled with members which you have elected.

**What I am trying to say is: we have done things for you, we can do things for you and if you want more things done, tell us!**

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**Quote of the week: 'Chess - there is nothing funkier'. Mr J Eagle**



# Don't

# Despair

It's now accepted that depression can occur in children and for some it affects their ability to get on with their lives. However, it is important to make a

difference between 'feeling depressed' and 'having a depressive illness'.

Just as adults can feel low or upset over a loss of a loved one or disappointed by a particular event such as failing an interview or exam, so can children. But they can grow from these experiences and get on with their lives. Occasionally some are more overwhelmed by their experience and they may feel depressed for a longer time. This is not the same as having a depressive illness or clinical depression.



Clinical depression is more long lasting and may recur. Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness come to dominate a person's life to such an extent that they find it hard to function normally.

It may develop from long periods of feeling depressed; or it may exist within the person as a part of their individual genetic and biochemical makeup.

Clinical depression is treatable and the sooner it is identified and treated the quicker the episode will pass. Early treatment in children is particularly important as it can prevent depression becoming a feature of their adult life.

A former student of the Langton has written the following article for Langton News in the hope that it will help other students who may be feeling the same way he did.

He wishes to remain anonymous.



## Falling out of love with depression

### *A very personal account*

I was twelve when my depression was first acknowledged. I was always aware that I was very different to other boys my age. I was someone who was angry and trying to make sense of life. Sometimes I felt like all these thoughts would literally become too much for me to carry and that I could not take the weight any longer, because if I did it would break me.

The depression left me exhausted even with the simplest of things. Getting up in the morning seemed to be a pointless and painful hassle. An "it" seemed to be in control of my life, and not me.

My biggest mistake was not seeking help sooner - I just felt that nothing could ever change. I considered suicide. I can see now how lucky it was that a truly amazing teacher realised just how bad a state I was in and urged me to get help. I took his advice and made the biggest and the most crucial decision of my life in going for help and agreeing to take antidepressants.

It's not that no one had ever offered me help before; I tried counselling but the counsellor never told me anything I didn't know about myself already. I had mastered the art of self analysis years before! And I had fallen in love with my depression to the point where I didn't want a life without it. I was so used to the idea of being depressed I did not want to let go and become someone else.

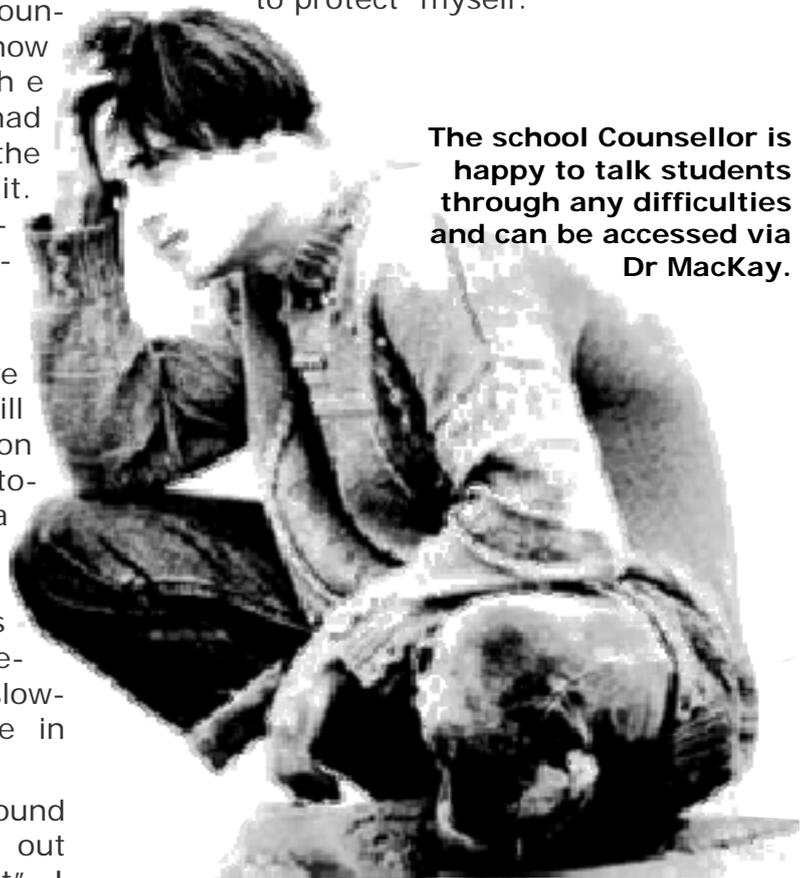
What I have come to see is that you are not two people or two personalities. I still look at the trees on the journey home on the bus in exactly the same way, but today I can look at the bare trees with a sense of joy and awe, whereas yesterday I couldn't because there had been this huge weight in my chest which was dragging me down, causing me to become sluggish. Once my body started slowing down I entered this vicious circle in which I couldn't escape even if I tried.

I believed I knew a truth everyone around me was unaware of. I began to seek out others who had reached "enlightenment". I came across a memoir of depression entitled

*Prozac Nation* by Elizabeth Wurtzel. She quotes from the Talmud: "We do not see things as they are. We see them as we are." This articulates the nature of depression; it does all the "seeing", and "thinking".

The way the anti-depressants have helped is by making the rational voice inside me louder than the depressed voice which had been convincing me everything was hopeless. In the beginning I was terrified of going on anti-depressants; I made myself believe that they would alter my way of thinking, my personality, the very thing about me that makes me interesting. However, after the anti-depressants started to have an effect I realised they were giving me breathing space, but I also know I must do the work of truly liberating myself.

I now understand that it is up to me to become all the things I used to imagine I would find in a saviour. I am my own saviour and I won't give up on myself. Before the anti-depressants, I used to describe the depression as constant rain in my head; the anti-depressants have brought the sun back and thankfully, for longer. It's not that it won't rain again, it's just next time it begins to rain I know how to protect myself.



**The school Counsellor is happy to talk students through any difficulties and can be accessed via Dr MacKay.**



**Year 9 history students are working on projects about World War One and, as part of their research, they visited the Cemeteries at Ypres which led Abel Jackson-Coombs and Jed Jones to write the following article for Langton News.**

The first cemetery we visited was Aero-plane, visiting this cemetery made us feel what it was like to be in the world war. Although this is a small cemetery it is still of great significance and every grave has a story to go with it. Every grave has a family that were waiting for them to come home and they never returned. There are around 1100 graves in the cemetery.

To put this into context it is approximately the entirety of our school and was only a tiny amount of the 850,000 total British fatalities. The army experienced death every second they spent fighting the war. Thirty two soldiers were lost for every inch gained.

The second cemetery we visited was the German war cemetery at Langemarck this is only one of four German war cemeteries in the whole of Belgium. This is a cold, dark and eerie place with the black grave stones laid down on the ground. There is a vast difference to the British war cemeteries as 44,000 German soldiers are buried in mass graves. The stark contrast from the British cemetery shows the two nations' attitudes towards the war. Britain was celebrating victory and the heroic actions of its citizens whereas Germany was mourning the death and defeat they had sustained.

The final cemetery we visited was Tyne Cot. Tyne Cot is the biggest Commonwealth cemetery in the world today. 11,952 Commonwealth soldiers are buried there. There are 30,000 names on the memorial wall whose bodies were never discovered. This is only 7% of the Commonwealth World War One death toll.

The last place we visited was Menin Gate. Menin Gate is a memorial to the soldiers in World War One whose bodies were never found. Its walls are inscribed with the names of 59,000 lost soldiers of the great war. When you visit Menin Gate the feeling is overwhelming, the names are everywhere. It puts into context how brutal the war was with 21,000 British men dying on the first day of battle of the Somme. The structure is grand and ornate honoring the brave and the great who died.

It is important to visit these war cemeteries because it shows you the bare brutality of the war and how many people died. If I had to tell this story to an older person then I would say how it was tragic and overwhelming the amount of people that died.



To help the boys empathize with the suffering of the soldiers,  
9S took part in a collaborative lesson between History and Drama.  
James Manning, Will Leggatt and Sam Maryosh. review the lesson below.

Year 9 are studying WW1 and Life in the Trenches in their history lessons and at the beginning of term, 9S had an unusual yet just as informative history lesson in the drama studio. With help from Mrs Moore and Miss Hayes, we used dramatic techniques to connect to the soldiers stories we were given. These stories ranged from dead donkeys, angry Scots and Blighty wounds!

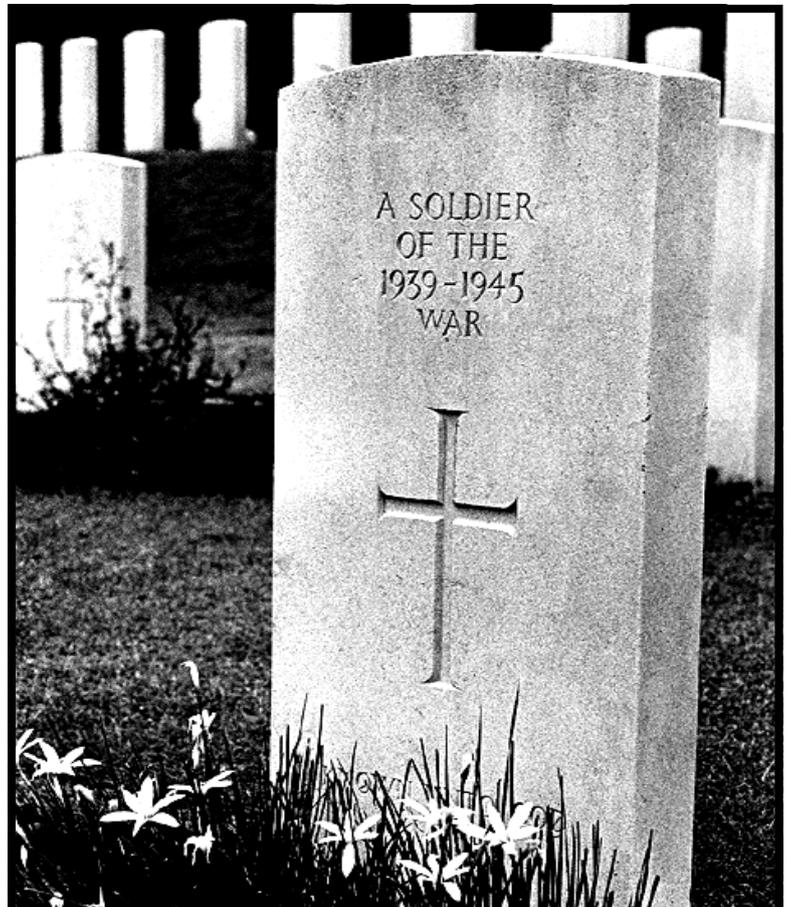
We used freeze frames, a first and second, to capture a sense of what was hidden between the lines of the text. You know the cliché - a picture tells a thousand words.

We were given the extracts and told to think of a way of representing and conveying the words of the stories we had. We looked at the words and also tried to think of the emotive language the soldiers were using. These included 'Sucking', 'Decaying', Chlorine' and 'Bigger off' !!! The words were chanted during the freeze frame transformations. Not only was this great fun, but it helped improve our skills in drama and history.

What's more, we got to be corpses...



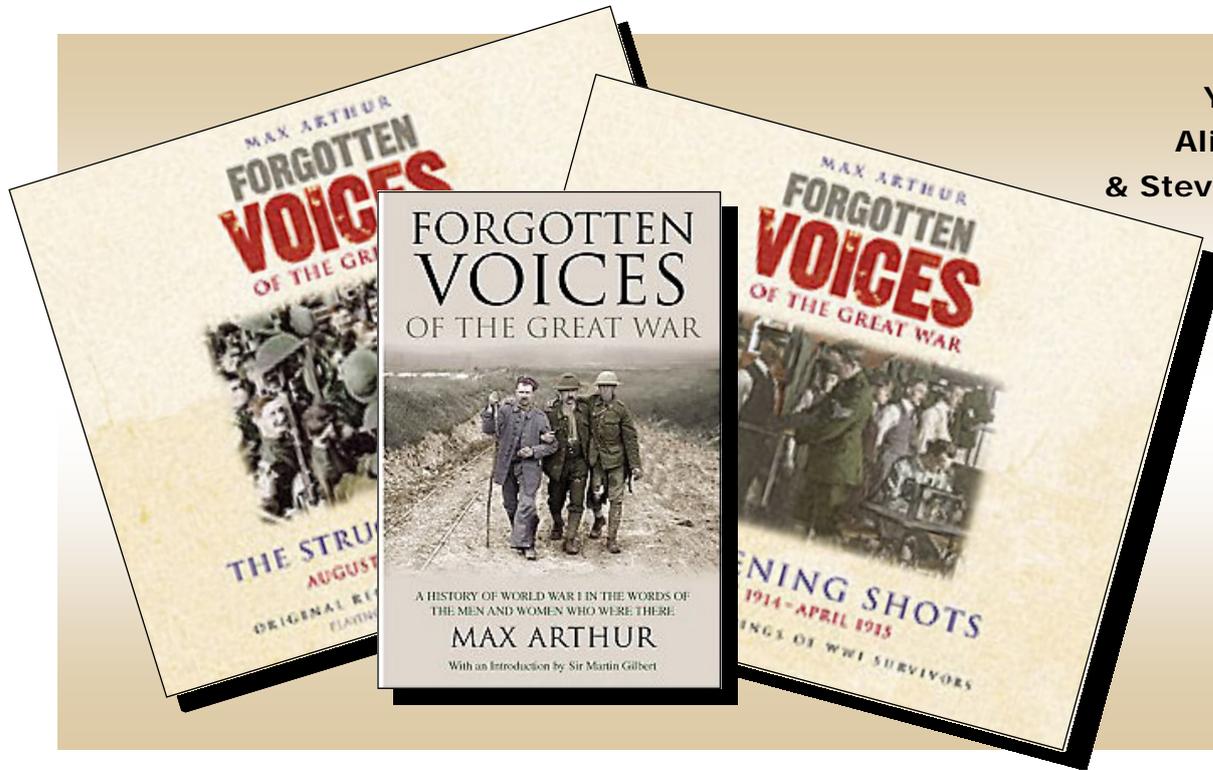
*History and Drama: These pictures are freeze frames of an account by Corporal Clifford Lane, 1st Battalion, Hertfordshire Regiment, who wrote about obtaining a 'Blighty wound' - a wound just bad enough to get you sent home.*



Well, how do you do, Private William McBride,  
Do you mind if I sit down here by your graveside?  
And rest for awhile in the warm summer sun,  
I've been walking all day, and I'm nearly done.  
And I see by your gravestone you were only 19  
When you joined the glorious fallen in 1916,  
Well, I hope you died quick and I hope you died  
clean

Or, Willie McBride, was it slow and obscene?

*From 'The Green Fields of France'  
By Eric Bogle*



Year 9 students  
**Alistair McKeever**  
 & **Steven Mayes** write  
 about the  
 recent visit  
 to the Langton  
 by renowned  
 author  
**Max Arthur,**  
 which was  
 arranged by  
**Ms Hayes**  
 as part of their  
**WWI**  
 project

This year in history we are studying about World War One - how it started, life in the trenches, the experiences of the young soldiers, and how the war eventually ended. I think that learning about life in the trenches is the most interesting part because you realise how the soldiers had to put up with such terrible conditions - lice and rats scurrying around, living in a sea of mud under the constant bombardment of shells with machine gun fire all around.

During our project we have learned of collective efforts of those who gave their lives at the Somme, the thousands at the battles at Ypres and more importantly, the generation who gave themselves to save our nation. But what of individual greatness, of personal heroism and extreme bravery?

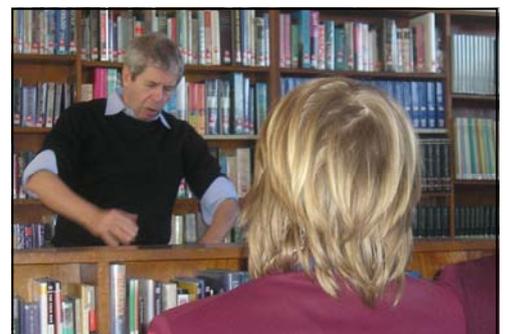
Max Arthur, the author of the *Forgotten Voices* history books came to our school and told many interesting facts and stories about World War One. He started off by telling us about a fighter plane pilot who has a memorial in Canterbury Cathedral dedicated to him because of his amazing antics in World War One. He was only 17, and in 13 months of the war, with only one fully functioning eye, he shot down 78 German fighter planes. Extraordinary!

Max then told us stories from First World War veterans he had been to see. They all told about how dreadful it was saying good-bye to their loved ones and going off to war and the terrible life they had faced in the

trenches. My favourite story told how, at the end of the war after the truce had been signed, some German soldiers came up to some British soldiers. They were talking about how the war was over and one German soldier said, "Do you know where George Street is?" The British soldier said, "Yes, my dad works there." The German replied "Funny, my dad owned a barber shop down there." This shows how Germans and British could still get along even though they had been shooting bullets at each other not long before.

We learned of people who experienced such horror that it stayed with them for the rest of their lives - such as a man who had been in a cavalry regiment, who had seen countless dying horses and heard their horrific screams, knowing that he could do nothing. The experience of having Max Arthur come to our school wasn't all about what people had done, it was about the fact that people's stories are alive today thanks to people like Max who find these stories and pass them on in books or by word of mouth to each successive generation.

Hearing what he had to say was an experience that we would not have wanted to miss.



# Asked and Answered

For the last four terms, Year 10 forms have battled against each other in a General Knowledge Quiz. After a 'Stewards' Inquiry' 10S were confirmed as winners, with a very close second given to 10F. The quiz will resume next term.

*Below: Alex Treacher and Tom Parsons receiving the Quiz Cup from Mr Fox, on behalf of the winning form 10S*



## Lights, Camera, Action!

Casting director Suzanne Smith visited the Langton to look for potential stars for two upcoming films. Four boys were asked for a 'call back' (Joe Allcott, Charlie Hawley, Anthony Obertelli, Ali Watson).

Watch this space!

## Wind in the Willows

Casting has now taken place and rehearsals will be starting soon. Thanks to parent Mrs Sandy for offering to make ears. Is there another parent who might kindly offer to make tails? Please contact Mrs Moore if you can help.

# MOROCCO MAGIC

By Shamaka Chandramohan (Year 10) and Wesley Luton (Year 11)

We left for Morocco on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March and flew to Ouarzazate. The next day we headed to Zagora via the Draal valley where we rode camels to the Tuareg encampment in the pre- Sahara. They were very uncomfortable because the camels only had 1 hump and a tiny amount of padding. We had to put up with the camels foaming, spitting and doing other horrible things for a few hours! Even worse, we had to use them to return to Zagora.

Tinfou is a nearby village, where sand dunes are encroaching dangerously. We learned about the suggested solutions to the problem, such as using dried palm leaves and also planting more trees. For the villagers the crops are essential as it is their livelihood. Then we went to the pottery settlement where all types of pottery are made from scratch and cooked in massive ovens. On the journey to the mountains the drivers' entertainment seemed to be pushing other cars off the road!

For the next 3 days we trekked in the High Atlas at altitudes of up to 2000m—twice the height of Snowdon. This is why there was mist everywhere and it was absolutely freezing! (Some hadn't brought warm clothes expecting high temperatures). Staying in the Berber house with no window panes was a good experience; we had to sleep on mattresses on a concrete floor. Obviously, there was no heating and we had to eat what we were given. Staying in the Berber house gave us a feel for real Moroccan lifestyle.

Bread is the staple food in Morocco and it is made in a special way without yeast. The Tarag in the desert made us bread in the sand.

One of the most important parts of our trip happened in Imlil. The Langton has donated basic educational and medical supplies such as paper and sterile wipes, which the locals would find hard to obtain. The school supplies were taken with great appreciation by Haiji Maurice the village representative and are currently in storage awaiting a new girls' school to be opened in one of the neighbouring Berber villages. These supplies are vital due to the fact that dehydration and diarrhoea are serious problems within the local community.

Our first impression of Marrakech was that it is a vibrant city and is growing rapidly. You can buy local craft goods as well as fake watches and sunglasses. The next morning we had a tour of the city by a horse drawn carriage or a Cartouche as known in Morocco. It felt as if we were in the Victorian times. Our plan of visiting the shanty town was destroyed because it had been moved right out of the city to make space for redevelopment. There was a small, but not serious incident at the smelly tannery. Shamaka stepped on to a mat that was covering a hole and fell in but was saved by Mr Moore whose shoes were soaked with acid. Shamaka was unscathed. Towards the end of the day we visited the Souks. These are a unique kind of covered market, which starts at one end and finishes at the other end, quite like a tunnel. In places we were packed like sardines with so many people and carts carrying things. Our aim was to get lots of bargains by haggling.

Overall, the trip was very interesting and exciting. We visited many contrasting places in Southern Morocco, from the desolate desert to the bustling city of Marrakech.





# THE DAY THAT SHOOK MR GREY

**An earthquake with a magnitude of at least 4.3 shook parts of Kent, damaging buildings and disrupting electricity supplies at about 8.20 in the morning of Saturday 28th April.**

It has often been said that Mr Grey could sleep through an earthquake and he proved it by remaining blissfully in the land of nod, unaware that his home was swaying in a non-existent breeze.

Mr Jeanes, away in Rowlyn at the time, is furious to have missed the biggest geological event in this area in recent years. 'There are 22 major fault lines under the Dover Straits and so it not that surprising that we had an earthquake - in fact it is more surprising that we haven't had more. I am gutted that I didn't experience it first hand and whilst I wouldn't wish damage or injury I am hoping that it will happen again in the not too distant future!'

Up to 50 homes in the Folkestone area were deemed to be unsafe and families were evacuated to the nearest Salvation Army centre. Several members of staff who live in the Hythe area had some structural damage to their homes. Happily, no one was hurt in the tremor, which lasted a few seconds, and was felt as far afield as Essex, East Sussex and Suffolk.



Whilst browsing through the Langtonian magazines recently, Mrs Foster was very interested to read about the importance in days gone by of the Photographic Club. It was a thriving society and every term a competition was held with three categories for which boys could submit photographs.

So... she thought it would be a good idea to revive the tradition by having our own photograph competition next term. It is open to all boys from years 7 – 11 and you are invited to hand in your photos to Reception or by email to [sfoster@thelangton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:sfoster@thelangton.kent.sch.uk).

**DON'T FORGET TO ADD YOUR NAME AND FORM.**

The closing date will be Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June and the three categories (for which there will be prizes) are :

- A Sporting Event
- My Best Friend
- A Street Scene

The final result will rest with our independent judges and the winning entries will be published in the next edition of Langton News.

So now there is no reason to complain of boredom during half term – get your cameras out and take your best shot!

Harry  
the Haddock  
says

On the Internet no one knows you are a fish



Editors Note: Harry's screen name is FishyBits 01— a bit of a giveaway?



# Diversity Through Time



*All Year 8 students took part in an exciting morning of activities at Canterbury Cathedral, investigating local diversity.*

*Workshops included:*

- *The life of a Zulu Student with historian Peter Ewart*
- *Hugenots in East Kent with the French Church*
- *A music workshop investigating modern asylum issues.*





**Photographs:**

*Opposite page, top* - students are told about the Huguenots in East Kent

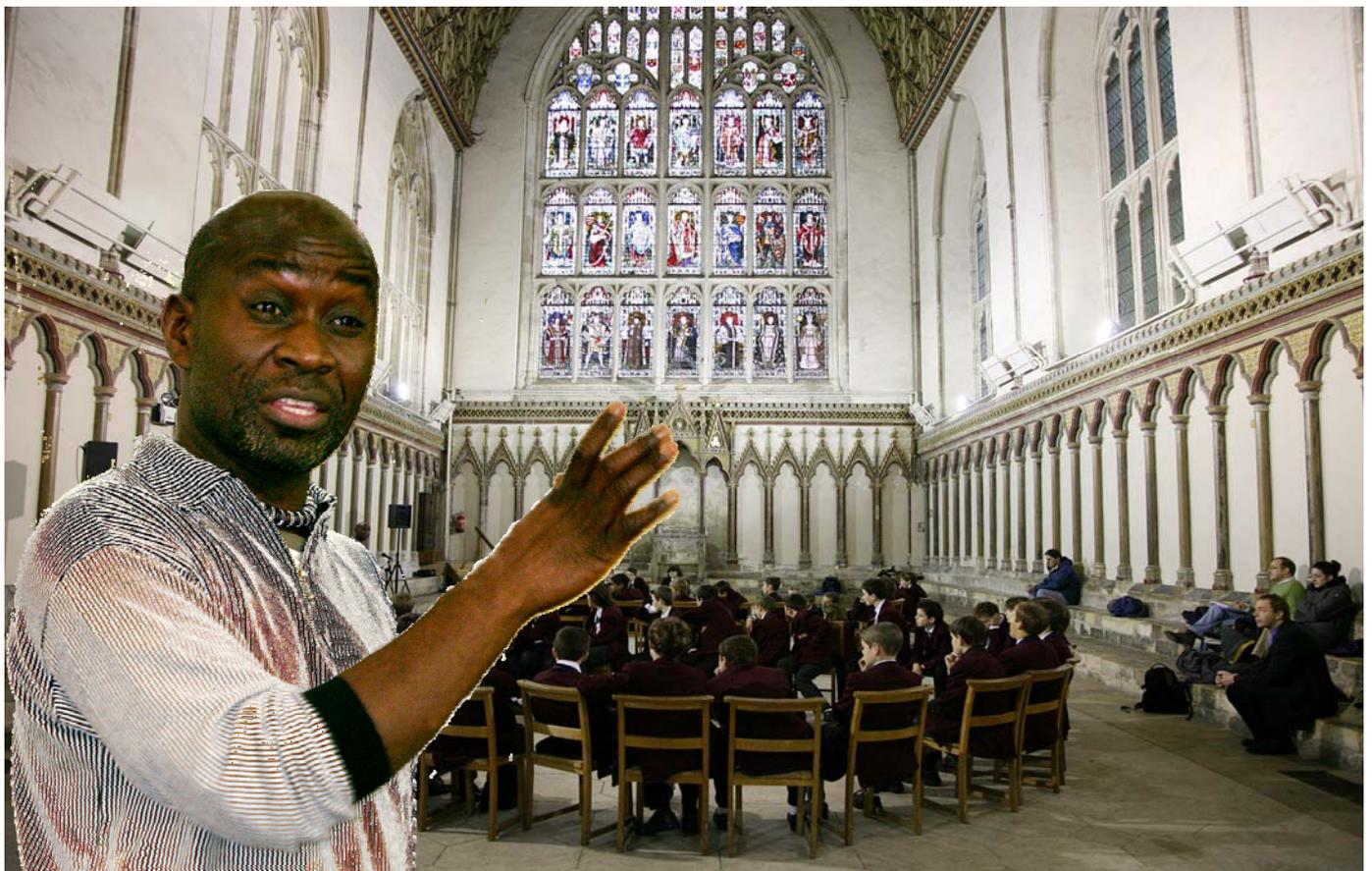
*Opposite page, centre*— students look through the Cathedral archives as they investigate the life of a Zulu Student.

*Opposite page, bottom* - Boys enjoying the 'Songs of Freedom' in the Chapter House

*This page, above* - students listen intently to Pastor Lusa Nsenga before joining the Q & A session

*This page, below*- Lucky Moyo of 'Music for Change' discusses asylum issues prior to the boys singing and dancing

**THANKS TO ALL THOSE INVOLVED AT THE CATHEDRAL AND THE *MUSIC FOR CHANGE* ORGANISATION AND TO MR BUTLER, HEAD OF CITIZENSHIP, FOR ARRANGING THE TRIP**



# Mathematics Team Triumph *By Mr J McCrae, Head of Maths*

On Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April, our team headed off to Margate to take part in the regional final of the UKMT Team Maths Challenge. UKMT stands for the United Kingdom Mathematical Trust and they are responsible for running the Senior, Intermediate and Junior Mathematical Challenges into which we have regularly entered our top sets for many years. Hundreds of thousands of students all over the country enter this every year and only the top 6% are awarded Gold Certificates, with Silver and Bronze certificates available for those who also do well. We regularly get a fair smattering of Gold Certificates.

The Team Challenge is a relatively new venture and this was only the first time that the Langton had entered a team. It took place at Hartsdown College and involved 16 teams from East Kent in a whole day competition.

There were 4 rounds to the contest which involved a variety of activities to maintain interest and competition. Round 1 was the Group competition which involved the whole team combining to answer 10 problems in 45 minutes. Round 2 was "Crossnumber", a crossword-like puzzle. Here the teams had to split into an A team and a B team, with the A team being given the "Across" clues and the B team the "Down" clues. The pairs could not communicate with each other but only through their supervisor, which in the interests of fairness was a teacher from a different school. Again there was a time limit, this time of 40 minutes.

After lunch, it was the "Head-to-Head" competition, where each team was pitted against one other school and took it in turns to work out the next number in a given sequence. The rules for the sequences varied from reasonably simple to fiendishly devious. There was no hiding place in this round as all members of the team were systematically put on the spot. There were six rounds meaning that the Lang-

ton came up against 6 other schools. Finally it was time for the 45 minute "Relay Race", an extremely noisy not to say dangerous activity. The A and B teams had to take it in turns to answer questions at speed and relay their answers to their supervisor at the front of the hall and then deliver the next question to their partners who were situated on the other side of the hall. Each team had 2 goes at getting a question right, so tactics really came into play here, with some problems that proved difficult having to be sacrificed in order to get to the next one. Needless to say, the students did not walk around the hall but gave their impressions of Michael Schumacher at his fastest – complete with sound effects!

Throughout the day, the top five teams were displayed on the screen and we were most encouraged to see the school's name up there each time. In time honoured tradition, they announced the top three in reverse order. Norton Knatchbull Grammar School from Ashford had won the competition for the last two years, so when Sir Roger Manwood's of Sandwich came third and Junior Kings School second, we thought we were coming away with nothing. However, the rookies triumphed and it was very gratifying to see Simon Langton Grammar School's name up in first place.



The team was captained by Alex Williamson of Year 9 and he was aided and abetted by Aaron Phillips also of Year 9 with Biff Sharrock and Matt Phillips from Year 8. Credit must be given to Mrs Thompson who prepared them for the competition.

They will represent the school at the National Finals on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July at the Camden Centre in London when they will be up against about 50 other teams. We wish them all the best in what will be a tough but fun day.



***Josh Booth (Year 11) has been shooting target air rifle for almost five years after joining his local club at the age of eleven. He has won many club competitions as well as winning Division 1 of the Kent County Small-bore Shooting Association and the East Kent Projectile League. He trains two or three times a week in order to retain this standard and to carry on improving.***

My shooting advanced greatly when I was selected for the National Scout Rifle Representative Squad. This gave me an opportunity to meet new people, to train with other Scouts from around the country and to enter the Junior International.

Last August, I competed in the Junior International at Bisley. Although my normal discipline is standing air rifle, I shot 3P Air Rifle which stands for 3 Positions and consists of 20 shots in Prone, Standing, and Kneeling positions at a target 10m away. It is split into two classes called Sporter and Precision and each class had a four man team. The differences between these is that in Sporter you are only allowed certain rifles and no other equipment other than a glove, whilst

Precision allows the shooter to wear any equipment inside ISSF rules. This competition takes place every year at Bisley and it is always the same following countries that shoot in it: Great Britain, Eire (Southern Ireland), United States, South Africa, Germany and Denmark.

In February I shot in the British Open. The match did not begin as I had hoped as my shooting boot laces broke and had to be replaced with hockey laces yet I was still able to shoot a good score of 558 ex 600 which put me in the final where I shot an exceptionally good score of 103.1 ex 109. The next highest score was only 98 ex 109 which meant that I won the final but the overall placing are made by adding the final score to the match score. This meant that I ended up finishing 6<sup>th</sup> in junior men for the British Open. To put my final score in perspective, at the 2004 Olympics in 10m air rifle the scores were as follows gold-104.0 silver-102.5 bronze-103.1. My score would have beaten the 5 year record for a junior final score until two weeks earlier. Because of this shoot I was approached by the manager of the Great Britain Junior Squad and asked to join.

*Continued on next page...*

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Friday and ended on Easter Sunday and had a wide range of activities throughout the weekend. Including a mixture of lectures and free training. The lectures were based on a variety of topics such as position and sighting and also included a talk by a military sniper.

As I have progressed through shooting I have acquired a large amount of equipment. All equipment that will be used in a competition must be able to pass the equipment control. These rules are set out by the ISSF (International Smallbore Shooting Federation) and when buying any new equipment you must take these rules into consideration. Air rifles come in two main types – spring and compressed air. Modern air rifles are mainly of the compressed air type as they are more accurate. The majority of air rifles come from Europe and Germany in particular. I have recently bought a Feinwerkbau P700 air rifle. I am currently adjusting this to my requirements as I have trials for an international competition on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May. To add to this I will need to purchase a diving bottle so that I will be able to charge the rifle. I also have a pair of shooting trousers and a jacket which are made out of starched canvas - these help to reduce any movement due to their rigidity. and a glove and blinder which aid in being able to get the perfect shot.

My ultimate aim is to bring medals home for my country at a high level.



**Year 11 students took an afternoon out of lessons recently to take part in the Battle of Ideas.**

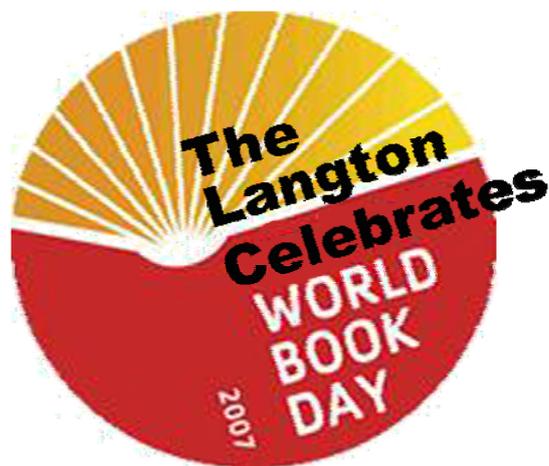
This event, brainchild of year 13 students Matt Fraser and Paul Sharratt, saw year 11 divide into five groups to explore some of the most pressing issues of the day in educational and academic life. Each debate was chaired and introduced by a team of sixth form students, and the floor was then open to year 11 students to contribute their ideas and thinking on issues as diverse as *"the challenge of affluence"*; *the role of PE in education*; *abortion*; *the relationship between religion and science*; and the *"two cultures"* debate between sciences and arts.

Matt Fraser explained: "The aim was to get year 11 thinking about some of the most important questions of our time, and also to build up their skills in public speaking, not so much through the tired formalised 'point-scoring' framework of competitive debating, but through a genuine intellectual engagement. There are a lot of very thoughtful and articulate boys in year 11 and we feel they really enjoyed and benefited from this experiment, which we hope may be repeated and extended to other year groups in future years."

Although the Battle of Ideas was largely organised and run by senior students, it is a part of the school's commitment to providing a gifted and talented curriculum for all through collapsed timetable events – or, in plain English, creating opportunities to intellectually challenge and engage all of our students in ways that aren't always possible within the framework of normal lessons and the national curriculum. Watch this space for more.

# A FUZZY LINE

by Alistair McKeever



**The Langton has always been a big supporter of World Book Day (which promotes the enjoyment of books & reading) and this year, its 10th Anniversary, was no different.**

Mrs Walters wrote a (very bad) poem to celebrate World Book Day and, to justify the time she spent on it, offered prizes to anyone who could identify the books and the authors alluded to in the poem.

The winners were:

- 1st Peter Johnson
- 2nd Joseph Keel
- 3rd David Hewett
- 4th Matt Brady and Matt Ivor-Jones
- 5th Sarash Setha and Keegan Creighton
- 6th Joshua Lindsay and Oliver Lee

Who all received an assortment of books, chocolate and hard cash for their efforts. Mrs Walters said 'they deserve their prizes, not just for reading the ode/verse/lyric/rhyme, doggerel or, as I prefer to call it 'poem' but also for their detective skills and determination'. Congratulations to all of them.

Mrs Hunt launched a competition for young writes to explore the boundaries of truth and fiction. The standard of entries was very high, with special interest in Year 7.

The year group winners were:

- Year 7 Michael Doswell
- Year 8 Kingsley Walker
- Year 9 winner and overall winner was Alistair McKeever whose exciting and engaging response to the challenge 'A Fuzzy Line' is reproduced on the following pages.

Is life reality, or is it a cruel irony? I often find myself talking about random problems but this one has been on my mind a lot more lately; I have found the world changing a lot more than it should, just glimpses, shadows of things unreal, I don't know if people know yet but I think that a new era is upon us.

The world is a lethal place at the best of times, now think about this: the best of times are long gone. The human race is just an array of puppets, characters in a book to be more precise and unless people realise, like I have, they will have no control over anything. Here's the problem: how the hell am I supposed to change the views of a race that have spent thousands of years developing them? A mere human can't just flick switches that big, believe me, I've tried.

Over the last few days I have experienced something very unnerving that has thrown a very large spanner in my small works. It seems that whatever is writing the world as a book has cottoned on to my knowledge and they're out to get me, great. I'm the only man in the world that has a cat in hell's chance of survival, the dope heads of the human race think I'm 'mentally deranged' and the person with almost limitless power in this book is out to kill me. Hooray!

In order for you to understand my predicament, I should tell you my story, not some of that corny autobiography crap... more a tale of the discovery of the end of the world...

It all started a few days ago, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World Book day

When you think about it though, it was very stupid and would have failed if all humans were trusting in their feelings instead of facts. Most people in the world are reading fantasy books so you would think at least that they would be wary of fiction. Anyway, I was seeing things, people that shouldn't have been there, the hind legs of a black dog the size of a bull disappearing down

*Continued overleaf...*

an alleyway and when you looked, there was nothing, that was just the start, the jaws of something monstrous in size snatching a whole flock of seagulls as they dived over the sea at Dover, the thing must have been at least three times the size of a blue whale!

The most peculiar thing happened next, I saw Stig of the Dump running across the motorway with a scimitar smeared with fresh, dripping, deepest red... blood! I don't know about you but I've read the book and that's definitely not in it. Since then I've been trying to tell people about it. Naturally, they don't believe me so it looks like I'm on my own with the government also after me because I am apparently a 'danger to society', what a load of bull!

I've been reading this book lately, also about the end of the world, and since I've tried to make people listen, things from the book have been chasing me, just last night I was in a pub in Bishopsbourne when a dog the size of a bull, with deepest darkest black fur and demon eyes that are so harsh they would reduce most men to a cowering foetal ball, appeared outside the window. I dived as fast as I could as the dog's ominous form crashed through the main window and into the bar, glass was spread everywhere. An ironically timed bolt of lightning illuminated the dog's bulging muscles, there were tears and scars all over the beast's skin but that made no difference to its daunting silhouette towering over me.

The beast's jaws slowly opened to reveal row upon row of jagged, razor sharp teeth, covered in blood, but from where? I managed a quick glance down to my leg where a searing pain had just developed. Near twenty gashes were visible on the underside of my leg, bone showed through each as well as torrents of blood flowing from each and out onto the cold deserted road, the world went black, nothing.

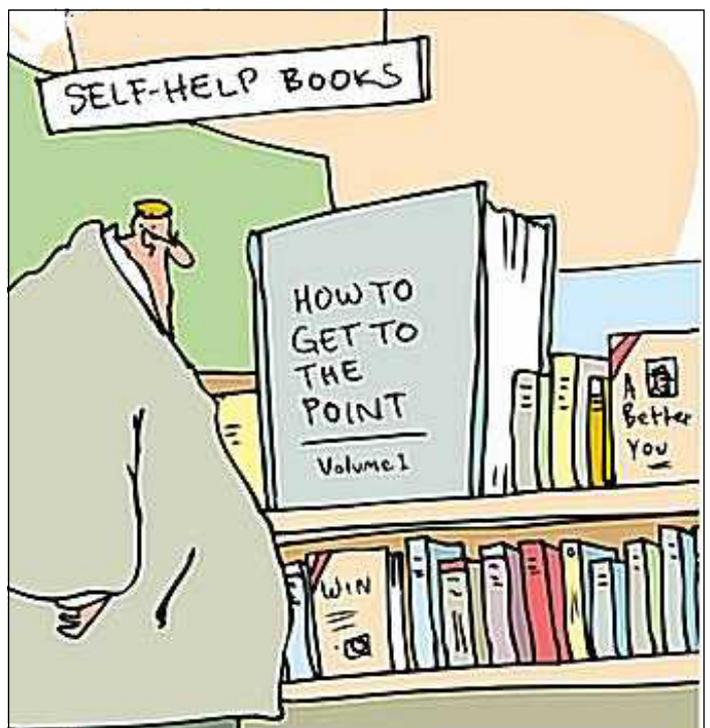
And so I find myself here, wherever here is. Anyway, after it went black I started thinking in more about this predicament and in my sub-consciousness; I think I worked something out. This guy, whoever he is, is playing with everything that the earth is made and designed about, there is only so

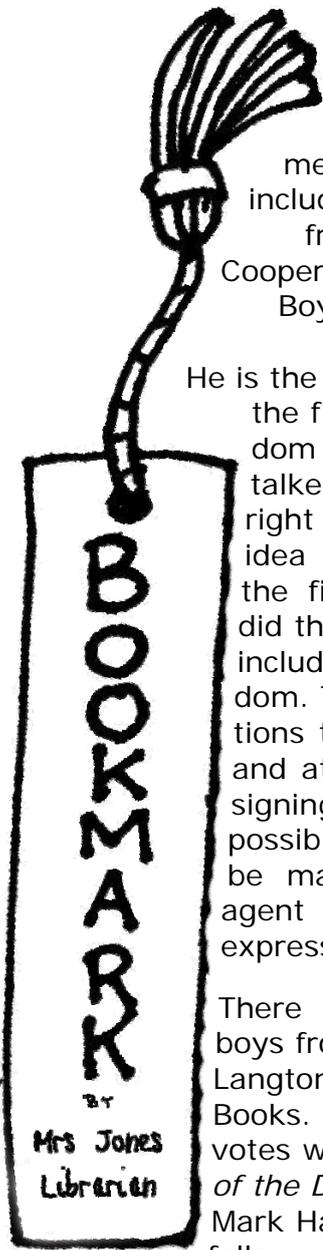
much he can do before all reality is lost, then it will all backfire, all that sustained the world will be lost so the world, following suit, will be lost, mixing reality with fiction surely isn't the smartest thing he's ever done.

The fusion between reality and fiction can never work, as soon as anything becomes the design of someone's imagination and is written into the world as fiction, the world becomes fiction itself, it's too complicated to decipher as there is little difference between fiction and non-fiction. Unluckily, imagination as powerful as this guy (who's writing the world) has can quite easily overlook these small differences, and when that happens, everyone will suffer sooner or later. I have all ready taken my suffering and I am safe in the knowledge that karma's fist will swing round in due course and give this guy a wake up call that will do more that break his nose.

Think about my entire physical and mental trauma from the last few days. Now consider this... I am a lucky one.

George Orwell once wrote "Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely", too bleedin' right, especially when power over fictional reality is involved





Langton Librarian, Mrs Jones, organised several events in the Library to commemorate World Book Day including arranging for a visit from Local author, Jasper Cooper who spoke to groups of Boys from Years 7,8 and 9.

He is the author of *Candara's Gift* the first volume in The Kingdom of Gems trilogy and he talked about writing fantasy right from having the initial idea through to publishing the finished book. He also did the art work for the book, including maps of the Kingdom. There were lots of questions throughout the sessions and at break he gave a book signing. There is now the possibility that the book could be made into a film as an agent in the U.S. has already expressed an interest in it.

There was a vote amongst boys from KS3 and KS4 for the Langton Top Ten Favourite Books. In 1<sup>st</sup> place with 60 votes was *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* by Mark Haddon. This was closely followed by *The Recruit* by Robert Muchamore, *Stormbreaker* by Anthony Horowitz and Louis Sachar's *Holes*. *The Lord of the Rings* and was in 5<sup>th</sup> place. In the national vote it came 2<sup>nd</sup> to *Pride and Prejudice* and *Harry Potter* was 4th.

The library hosted the visit from author Max Arthur who came to talk to Year 9 boys about writing his book *Forgotten Voices of the First World War*, recounting some of the very special and personal moments he experienced in interviewing First and Second World War veterans.



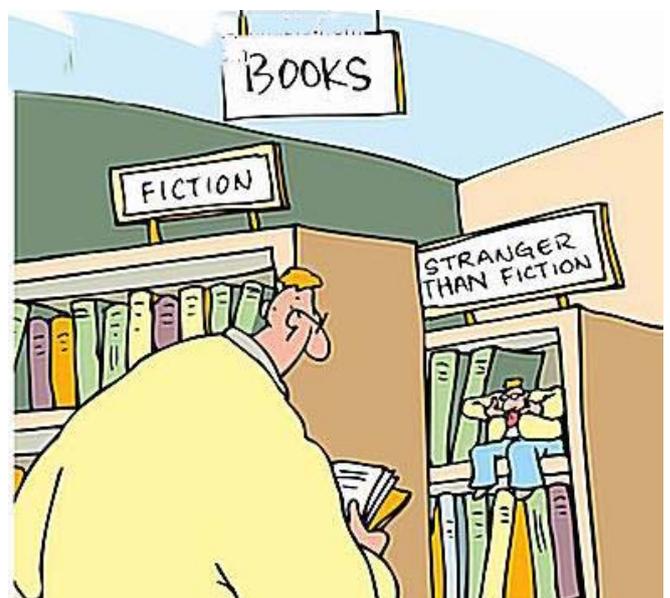
## NEW BOOKS

### Non – fiction

The Book of Lasts  
Tales of Horror: Vampires  
The Ashes: a Guide to Cricket's Most Enduring Rivalry  
Extreme Sports  
The World of Disasters  
A Cinematic History of Action and Adventure  
A Cinematic History of Sci-Fi and Fantasy  
Animation Art  
Internet Freedom: Where is the Limit?  
Prophets and Gods  
Inheritance and Evolution  
Electricity and Magnetism  
Healthy Seas  
Science in Focus: Resources  
Sustainable Futures: Waste  
Slave Trade

### Fiction

Mark Bowden Black Hawk Down  
Zizou Corder Lionboy the Truth  
Stuart Hill Blade of Fire  
Anthony Horowitz Stormbreaker the Graphic Novel  
Anthony Horowitz Nightrise  
Khaled Hosseini The Kite Runner  
Andy McNab Meltdown  
Joshua Mowll Operation Red Jericho  
Robert Muchamore Cherub: The Fall  
Garth Nix Lady Friday  
Rick Riordan Percy Jackson and the Titan's Curse  
Chris Ryan Tenth Man Down  
Chris Ryan Zero Option  
Matt Whyman Superhuman



**EITHER:**

**Produce a new political song** on an issue of your choosing. You can write lyrics only or if you wish write

Lyrics *and*  
compose  
music

**OR:**

**Produce a  
Visual  
presentation**

(in a  
format of  
your  
choosing)  
that  
represents  
a an  
Already  
existing  
political song



**CITIZENSHIP  
CHALLENGE**

**Closing Date  
Friday 29th June**

**See Mr. Butler for more  
details**



# Twickers TRIUMPH



**The Langton Under 12s rugby team have returned triumphant after winning the Daily Telegraph Emerging Schools Festival, which was held at Ruby 'HQ' in May.**

The team, already the Kent and London South champions, won the title after coming top of their group. They began with a scoreless draw against London North qualifiers Brentwood and then defeated Eggescliffe (North East/Yorkshire) 2-0 with tries from Jack Fireman and Jack Povall. Matt Brady's try was decisive against Stop-sley (East Midlands) setting the Langton up with a last game showdown with Priestfields (South) who needed to win to head the group. A try from Ollie Lee (who was the man-of-the-match) snatched the trophy for the Langton.



Head of PE, Darren Watson, said 'It was a fantastic day. To reach the final was beyond all our expectations and then to finally win the trophy really was the icing on the cake. I am very proud of the whole squad - everyone played brilliantly and enjoyed every minute out on the field, soaking up the atmosphere in one of the most famous venues in the world—Twickenham.'

# Langton Sports Teams 2007



# football basketball cricket

rugby netball hockey



*Mrs Parker (Head of Physics and Director of the Star Centre) reports on the*

# LANGTON STAR CENTRE

The Langton Star Centre is now on line at [www.thelangtonstarcentre.org](http://www.thelangtonstarcentre.org). Keep up to date by checking the site for news of the latest developments.

A click on the 'gallery' will give you a taste of the work being done by Langton students.

This month Tristran Warren was awarded 'Image of the Month' on the Falukes Telescope for his imaging of colliding galaxies (below)

## **Forthcoming Events:**

David Mackenzie will be representing the Faulkes Student Academy at a British Council in Poland.

We are now in a position to go ahead with Phase One of the Star Centre which will include an optical and radio telescope. We are still continuing to raise the necessary funds to complete the Planetarium phase of the Centre (any one know a generous millionaire?) and the Director General of the British National Space Centre is due to visit us in September.





by Mrs S Foster,  
Langton Archivist

**Mrs Foster has, once again, delved into the dusty depths of the Langton archives and has discovered that the House System was once a major feature of the school.**

100 years ago this term, the House system was set up. The aim of it was laid out in a general statement made to the school, as follows :

"The aim of this system is to make use of the spirit of emulation which is natural in a boy, and, by encouraging and directing it, to draw out his utmost effort in every department of his school life."

There were six Houses – Blue, Brown, Green, Grey, Pink, and Red - and boys were put into Houses randomly. With only 238 boys on the school roll, that meant there were only around 40 boys in each House.

The House colour was worn as a flash underneath the School Badge on the cap. Every

House had a Prefect and a House-Master. Shields were awarded to Houses for overall conduct, academic work and sports.

It was seen as a good thing because Senior students could help Junior students "for the good of the House" and Junior students could more easily ask for help from the older students. It also meant that boys who were not sporty could be rewarded in their academic work or in excellent behaviour.

On Sports Day there was a noticeable difference in boys' attitudes towards activities. In fact, some notable individual performances went unnoticed as there was so much interest in which Houses were getting the most points.

The only disadvantage was that friends were suddenly put against one another in the battle for the best house position but all generally agreed that the House system was a good thing.

Nowadays, with the introduction of the inter-form sports activities where you are playing for B, G, L, S, I wonder what you would think to points also being awarded for excellent exam results and points being taken away for strikes received in class?

If only Frank Hardee were still here.....

## **A Pile of Rubbish— Approximate Value £1,000**

**Just some of the trainers, many brand new, which were left lying around the school at the end of last term.**

**None of them were named - none of them were claimed.**

**A very good result for the local charity shop, a very bad one for the parents who paid good money for them in the first place.**



# **LOOK AFTER YOUR STUFF!**



***Britain, a historically Christian nation, is currently witnessing the most rapid decline in church attendance in its history. While other faiths are generally holding their own, Christianity is suffering such a pronounced downturn that if current trends were to continue then by 2038 all Christian activity in Britain will have disappeared.***

***Learning Assistant Dan Knapp (who will be joining the RE Department at the Langton next year, on the Graduate Training Programme), examines the reasons why and asks if new forms of civil religion are taking the place of more conventional worship.***

## *God in the Kop?*

People are leaving the Christian churches in their thousands every year. The rot is not just restricted to the Anglican Church; virtually every branch of Christian faith is struggling. A few evangelical churches are just about holding water, but this is mainly as a result of believers moving into these churches from others, in a process known as 'fortification'. When threatened with such rapid decline, religious believers *can* group together in the last few strongholds of faith. Yet while the numbers would suggest these evangelical churches are surviving, they are only just managing to replace the numbers that they are losing every week.

Don't let this make you think our country has no Christian identity – after all, 71.9% of the population described themselves as Christian in the 2001 census. Yet only 7.8% attended church once or more a week. So why is there this disparity?

Why this is happening is a hotly debated issue within the sociology of religion. Steve Bruce, one of the leading academics in the field, strongly believes that religion is dying in Britain. Only social forces are holding it together, almost like a cultural inertia. The title of his book 'God Is Dead' pretty much sums it up. Modern day Britain is not conducive to religious belief, and therefore in time such belief will dry up and disappear.

An opposing view is that of Grace Davie, herself a well known and respected author, who writes in 'Religion in Britain Since 1945: Believing without Belonging' that while the official numbers are falling, this may not reflect the actual beliefs of those leaving the church. She argues that people are leaving the church for a whole myriad of reasons, many of which are cultural; she argues that this does not mean that those who drop out are necessarily atheistic. The main gist of her argument is that people can continue to hold onto a sort of faith without attending church, but that their faith grows increasingly heterodox over time, as they do not have the church leadership to remind them of 'correct beliefs'.

As long as you accept that church attendance is dropping, a further question arises. If we are not a 'Christian' nation, then can we still be a 'religious' nation? I use the phrase 'religious' in inverted commas because I wish to show that the alternative to Christianity may not simply be one of the other main faiths. Islamic, Hindu and Sikh beliefs are slowly increasingly, but only doing so roughly in line with immigration figures. They certainly do not dominate the cultural landscape.

*Continued on the next page...*

Instead I would argue that there is considerable evidence of a form of civil religion. Émile Durkheim argued that the function of religion was to make people willing to put the interests of society ahead of their own desires, and he famously suggested that "God is society, writ large." We project, he would argue, our own hopes and fears onto that which we would call religion. In the past religion had been the cement of society, the means by which men had been led to turn from the everyday concerns in which they were variously enmeshed to a common devotion to sacred things.

It is conceivable to take Durkheim's thoughts and further apply them to our culture. If Durkheim is correct and we do require a sort of cultural cement, but religious attendance is plummeting, what evidence is there – if any – of this in Britain today?

You will be able to remember the huge public spectacle that Diana's death provoked. Mourners in their thousands flocked to London to lay flowers, sign the book of condolence and to witness the funeral of a woman whom many of them had never met, nor who had played any part in their day to day lives.



*The death of Princess Diana caused an outburst of public grief unseen in Britain in modern times.*

Those same people had, the previous few months, been buying magazines and newspapers that had ridiculed her, had printed photographs of her sunbathing and that had filled endless pages with gossip about who she had or had not had an affair with. Yet something changed when she died, something clicked in the back of thousands

of people's minds. Durkheim would probably argue that the death of Diana gave the population a chance to share in something bigger than themselves, the opportunity to mourn as one rather than as individuals. Sharing in such grief unified people and you could argue that it may have served as an outlet for grief from their own, more personal, tragedies.



*The new Songs of Praise?*

We witness the same thing at football matches. Are football grounds the new churches of our time? Could Stamford Bridge and Old Trafford be viewed as modern day cathedrals? Why do people go to watch matches live rather than in the comfort of their own home? It certainly isn't the view, because unless you're either very rich or very lucky it's unlikely that you'll ever be able to match the view TV affords you. No, people go to watch live football for the atmosphere, to share in something larger than themselves. Look at the Kop in full song, scarves aloft, and tell me that those people are not engaging in something akin to a religious experience, their songs a sort of irreligious hymn to their god – Liverpool FC. The supporters of any football team celebrate together and they suffer together, they are totally unified when their team are playing. Rich or poor, your identity becomes that of your team for 90 minutes.

However you could reject the idea of civil religion totally and instead argue that there is nothing religious about football or Diana's death, or any of the other of the many public occasions that could compare. But surely it's worth a thought? You're all intelligent lads and I wouldn't be in the least bit offended if you disagreed with me, but I would be disappointed if you weren't able to consider it, able to weigh up both sides and then make up your own minds.

# 2nd Annual L.U.F.T 4x4 Tournament



Eight teams competed against each other and rather dubious weather in a tournament that was full of fun, skill, full-on diving, super hero capes (Tim Carnell-McKean), cross-dressing (Stefan Kelk in a VERY tight female t-shirt) and most importantly lots and lots of Spirit. There was even entertainment in the form of a ten person human pyramid – that's Ultimate Frisbee for you, anything goes! Good effort by the way.

Anyway, after several hard-fought matches, Team Aquatica (Sam Swain, Dan Fisher, Charlie Pouget and Josh Gaunton) emerged worthy champions and looked really rather pleased with their new-found status as the '2007 L.U.F.T 4x4' victors. After their comprehensive win in the Grand Final, Mr Butler immediately engraved "Aquatica" onto the L.U.F.T trolley with a compass, along side last year's winners. Another of Mr Butler's unknown talents, 'Chief Engraver of Plastic Trolleys'!

If you read the Langton News about a year ago, you'll know that the L.U.F.T 4x4 tournament consists of teams of four players (this year included two Year 11s and two Year 12s) each competing for the coveted L.U.F.T trophy. Now this is quite difficult to describe, but the L.U.F.T trophy comes in two parts; (1) A plastic puffer fish glued into a traditional looking trophy and (2) A child's plastic shopping trolley filled to the brim with a random array of prizes (this year included sweets, plastic 'Winners' frisbees and a fine selection of vinyl LPs – Anyone remember Ken Dodd?!).

This is not the only prize awarded, however. Most Ultimate Frisbee players would agree that it is the 'Spirit of the Game' award that has the greatest meaning – more about that later.

After a great deal of discussion, it was decided that Team Swiss, (Claire Scott, Johnny Bispham, Peter Newell and Tan Weston) - great matching t-shirts by the way - should be awarded with the 'Spirit of the Game' award. They played with grace, fairness and most importantly had lots of fun along the way. Good effort chaps and chapesse. Hope you like the fetching sweatbands!

The post-tournament gathering included a most splendid BBQ. Many thanks to Jacques Pouget and Josh Harvey for playing the role of Chef. Shame we ran out of buns. Still, it was interesting to watch a load of ravenous L.U.F.T players eating mostly cooked meat with their hands!

Finally, all present at this year's tournament would like to say a huge thanks to our self nominated mascot Charlie Parris. Charlie did not play in the tournament (although I'm sure she would have loved to), but chose instead to prance around in a homemade L.U.F.T sandwich board. However, some players seemed to think she was some kind of target and used her for 'aiming practice'. We also need to thank Charlie for spending many minutes making our first edible L.U.F.T merchandise in the form of 'iced L.U.F.T' biscuits. Did you ask Mcvities for permission to use their biscuits at all? If not, good luck in court!

In summary the tournament, as last year, was enjoyed by all present and we hope to repeat the success of the L.U.F.T 4x4 Outdoor Tournament next year.

Mr Holloway  
(Co-ordinator of L.U.F.T 4x4 Outdoor Tournament)

