

# SPOTLIGHT



Issue 5  
Summer Term 2010

Parents' Information Newsletter

## Sports College Charity Event

As a Sports College we are always working with our community and our pupils did us proud yet again on Saturday 15 May.

A team of Year 7 pupils completed the half-marathon in aid of Cancer Research UK. We were supporting Christina Phillips, who has bone cancer and went through the pain of being pushed around a marathon by the Newquay Road Runners.

Darrian, Josh, Kieran, Kyle, Danielle and Libby completed 13 miles in a relay team at Par Track.

The gruelling attempt was kept light-hearted by the appearance of 'Eric the Dog' completing his share of the race. We managed to complete the distance in a very respectable 1 hour 39 minutes 40 seconds and raised a total of £152 for Cancer Research UK.

Mrs L Booth



Mrs Booth and 'Eric the Dog'!



Year 7 Darrian  
Winning 1<sup>st</sup> prize for  
the most money  
raised.

### MFL Department Year 7 Own Learning

The MFL department has decided to extend the deadline for completion of Own Learning. The work has now got to be handed in on Tuesday 8 June 2010. As usual, do not hesitate to talk to your teacher if you don't know what to do.

Miss G Obet

### Jack YEAR 7 STUDENT OF THE WEEK



All-round positive contribution  
to the school.

### Roseanne YEAR 8 STUDENT OF THE WEEK



Kind, helpful and hardworking with a  
large number of VIVO rewards!

# Spotlight on Humanities Department

## Evacuation during the Second World War

In March, Yr 10 History pupils who are studying the Home Front for their controlled tests had the exciting opportunity to interview Mrs Richardson.

As a 10 year old, Mrs Richardson was evacuated from South Shields to the Lake District where she would remain until 1943. She was originally going to go to Canada, but a Red Cross ship bound for that area with children on board was sunk.

Mrs Richardson had a very pleasant time with her new 'foster' family and has kept in contact with the family. She was separated from her brother and sister who were chosen to live with

other families. The process of being chosen was described as a 'cattle market'.

Whilst at her new home, Mrs Richardson received plenty of cards and letters from relations. There was plenty to do with evacuees taking part in concerts and parties, such as singing and tap dancing.

On returning home, there was a massive air raid when a bomb fell through their house, luckily no-one was injured. She remembers quite vividly, still until this day the sound of the siren which I can imagine for many survivors is an eerie reminder of the war.

We thank Mrs Richardson greatly for her contribution to pupils' learning about Evacuation.

## Iron Cross winner enthralled Poltair History pupils

One time Corporal in the feared SS, Werner Volkner enthralled Yr 10 History pupils preparing their GCSE coursework recently.



The son of a decorated war veteran was born in Berlin in 1924 and as a teenager was a proud member of the Hitler Youth. By the age of 18 Werner was conscripted to the Waffen-SS (Combat SS).

Taking his place in the revered Death's Head division Werner was trained to use a machine gun mounted on a tank, in a Panzer division and was soon on his way to the Eastern Front. There he had to endure temperatures as low as  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

As the Nazi army moved in on Moscow he played his part in two of the most brutal battles ever: the struggle for Kharkov and the epic tank battle at Kursk. With over 1,500 tanks in head to head combat, the battle rapidly degenerated into an immense number of confused and bitter small-unit actions, often at close quarters. After three days of close combat fighting Werner was honoured with a medal. Within a few days he shot down 5 Russian planes and so won another one.

Outnumbered and outmanoeuvred, gradually the Germans came off worse and never recovered their initial momentum. In Volkner's words "We did not retreat. We straightened the front."

By July 1944 Volkner's tank had straightened the front back near Grodnow in Poland when he went over a landmine. He was blown clear and, although injured, he still went to the assistance of his driver whose uniform was on fire.

Attempting to cover him in sand to dampen the flames, they were then strafed by Russian planes and foxholes had to be hurriedly dug to ensure safety. For his quick action he was awarded an Iron Cross.

After a spell in hospital he soon returned to the fray, this time in the Balkans only to be taken prisoner by the Americans.

After being held as a prisoner of war until Christmas 1948, within a year he had decided to show his commitment to Britain - and help his application for citizenship - by signing up with the Westminster Dragoons.

So why did he really re-enlist, this time with the British? Candidly he replied, "If I am completely honest, I wanted to have another go at the Russians."

## HUMANITIES MAKING THE HEADLINES

History, Geography and RE are unique subjects. However, it is not until you start to reflect on the news that you realise just how relevant they are each and everyday. This week Mr Lake went through a newspaper to prove just that point...

### Gulf of Mexico oil spill: dead dolphins found washed up on US ...

US wildlife officials are investigating whether the deaths of six dolphins on the Gulf Coast are related to the massive oil spill.

*This is a tragic situation deteriorating by the hour but to really understand it we need to see it from a geographical context be it economic or environmental.*

### Disquiet over Census

In Delhi a row has erupted over the Indian government's decision to include caste in its national census – the world's largest – for the first time since 1931 when it was still under British rule.

*In RE we study the Hindu caste system and such news reminds us just how contentious the issue is. Of course, Historians know that Britain has played a major role in the history of India.*

### Iceland volcano ash cloud: airline passengers face further misery ...

Passengers face another day of delays and cancellations amid the fallout from the British Airways strike and a continuing backlog from the Icelandic volcanic ash cloud.

*The story of Iceland's erupting Eyjafjallajökull volcano is on everyone's lips but to really understand it we need to grasp plate tectonics a key feature of the Year 8 Geography Syllabus.*

### Human Rights Act: protecting terrorists

Mr Justice Mitting declared that Abid Naseer, a Pakistani student arrested in anti-terrorist raids last year, still poses a threat to national security, but could not be deported back to Pakistan because of fears that he might be mistreated by that country's security services.

*Much more than the study of world religions, RE investigates Human Rights and debates issues of the day.*

### Warning Greek economic crisis could spread

There are fears that Britain could follow Greece into a financial crisis after a global finance chief warned of economic "contagion".

*The geographers give us the global view of this crisis whilst the historians put it into context.*

## Statistic of the Week

Britons spend an average of 49 hours a year talking about the weather – six months in a lifetime.

*You don't need to be a Geographer to discuss the weather but it helps!*

### TOP TEN



**Mr Lake**

- 1) What exactly do you do at Poltair? I am** Head of Humanities.
- 2) What is your favourite meal?** Mum's Sunday roast (especially pork).
- 3) If you were not a Teacher what would you be? I would like to be a journalist for a national newspaper.**
- 4) Who are your heroes?** Ernest Shackleton, Tom Crean and Lester Piggott.
- 5) Who is your favourite singer/band?** Steely Dan have been my favourite band for years. When I work I often have John Klemmer (a jazz saxophonist) playing in the background. I've only just discovered "Sergio Mendes & Brasil 66" so I have a lot of catching up to do!
- 6) What is your favourite book?** Until last year I would have said "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre" by B. Traven but last year I discovered Irène Némirovsky's "Suite Française". The story behind the book makes for fascinating reading too.
- 7) Name one thing that perhaps people don't know about you? I am the 'unofficial' School Historian and update the Centenary pages on the website. My friends sometimes refer to me as "The Keeper of the Archive".**
- 8) What do you enjoy most about Poltair?** The view. I went to a secondary school in Plymouth and could see and hear The Sound. St Austell Bay is the next best thing.
- 9) What do you treasure most? As far as tangible things are concerned my signed copy of "How Extreme is Our Planet?".**
- 10) What one thing would you change in the world? Narrow-mindedness.**

## What a load of rubbish!

That wouldn't be how we'd describe the work of 7 set 4 of late; but the students have been investigating the amount of litter produced by students at Poltair.

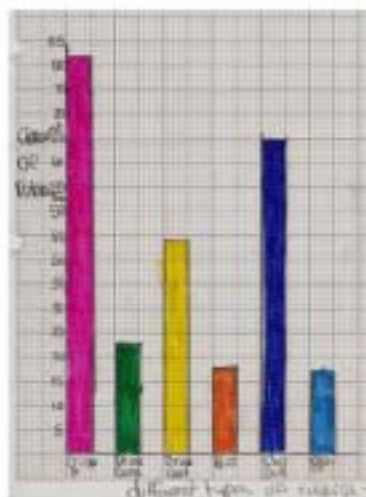


Poltair is one of three schools in Cornwall taking part in a national DCSF pilot called, "Literacy Plus". The pilot aims to support pupils who failed to achieve the national average level in English at Key Stage 2. Rather than having normal Geography and History lessons, students in 7 set 4 have been focusing on topics such as "Thrills and Spells" aimed at developing spelling strategies and "Hero or Zero?" where students investigated whether Robin Hood existed. In the current topic, students are investigating the impact humans have on global warming. In the past couple of weeks, we have conducted a litter count around the school site, presented our data and have begun to analyse the results. The students are aiming to develop their ability to construct sentences and paragraphs and this is helped by looking at real life issues.

In addition to having different History and Geography lessons, 7 set 4 are being encouraged to apply their learning in other subject areas too, in particular Science, RE, French, English, Music and Maths.

The project is being led by Diane Braithwaite, Poltair School's Literacy Co-ordinator and Claire White, a Geography Advanced Skills teacher. Claire says, "Early signs suggest that the Literacy Plus students have made good progress and many are now working at the national average in English indicating that the pilot has been a success for our students. Most encouraging, has been the level of engagement and enthusiasm the students show in lessons. The children are always very keen to tell me where else in the school they have applied their learning".

**Jack Baird's Bar Graph  
Depicting how much rubbish was  
collected.**



Later in this topic we will investigate the ways in which people travel to school and will try to persuade others to make small changes to their lifestyles in order to take greater care of the environment. If your child is involved in the project and you would like to find out more, please contact Mrs Braithwaite by email at [dbraithwaite@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:dbraithwaite@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk) or Miss White at [cwhite@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:cwhite@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk).

### Do you have an opinion?

I expect so and in RE it's absolutely essential to have one! As well as needing a certain amount of knowledge and understanding, pupils are challenged on contentious issues of the day. Of course, the acknowledgement of someone else's viewpoint is also vital so why not consider dropping these questions into your dinner-time conversation?

- *Does the existence of evil and suffering in the world prove that God does not exist?*
- *Should euthanasia be legal in this country?*
- *Do you agree with abortion?*
- *Do you think divorce is better than an unhappy marriage?*
- *Do you think it is important to take part in elections?*
- *Is following your conscience more important than following the rules of a religion?*
- *Do you think global warming is a big problem?*
- *Do you think everyone should carry an organ donor card?*
- *Do you think it is important to recycle?*
- *Should religious people fight in wars?*
- *Do you think wars are always bad?*
- *Do you agree with capital punishment?*

Mrs Golding would welcome any feedback by email: [fgolding@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:fgolding@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk)

# PRIZE QUIZ

## Disasters of the last hundred years

History and Geography teachers this term have joined forces to produce a new and exciting module of work for Year 8 based on disasters of the last 100 years. After much debate and discussion the staff have devised a short list of 8 disasters which they will introduce to Year 8 classes. Pupils must then decide which they think is the most disastrous and present their case to the rest of the year group. Try our little quiz based on the disasters.

### **Moderate**

1. Which shipping line owned SS Titanic? .....
2. Who painted "Guernica"? .....
3. Who ordered the dropping of the Atomic bomb on Hiroshima? .....
4. In which ocean was the Boxing Day tsunami? .....
5. Which city was bombed in the night of "shock and awe"? .....
6. Other than the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center which other strategic building was targeted during the 9/11 attacks by terrorists? .....
7. Who was president of the United States of America at the time of the Wall Street Crash? .....
8. In which country is Darfur? .....

### **Challenging (if in doubt consult a Year 8)**

9. Which shipyard built SS Titanic? .....
10. Other than the German Luftwaffe, which air force was involved in Operation Rügen? .....
11. What was the name of the B-29 Superfortress bomber that dropped "Little Boy"? .....
12. Off the west coast of which Indonesian Island was the epicentre of the Boxing Day tsunami? .....
13. Where was Saddam Hussein captured? .....
14. Who is Zacarias Moussaoui? .....
15. How is Tuesday 29 October 1929 more commonly known? .....
16. What is the Janjaweed? .....

Send or email your answers to Mr Lake: [tlake@poltair.comwall.sch.uk](mailto:tlake@poltair.comwall.sch.uk)

All those submitting correct answers by **28th May** will be entered into a prize draw.

Do you disagree with our shortlist of disasters? We would be interested to hear your views so by all means email Mr Lake at the above address to enter into the debate. He will review the module in a later edition of Spotlight.