

Notices

- Term starts on 3rd January 2012 at 9am be on time and go to your tutor rooms for registration
- Half term is between 13th—17th February

Abbey College Cambridge Newsletter

Issue 2

December 2011



A message from our Principal

Welcome to the end of term newsletter! It has been a busy term and we have seen many developments of which we can be proud. For example, I am particularly pleased to see the expansion of our facilities brought by the addition of Norman House.

We have also seen the introduction of school assemblies - a great step forward. Thanks to all the members of the Pastoral Team for their support in this area and for continuing to develop the tutoring work.

We saw more student trips this term, including the Biology field trip, Economics workshop and a science conference.

Our School Maths team won the Regional Heat of the UK Team Maths Challenge. The team scored full marks and beat the 24 other schools in the competition. Our students also excelled themselves in the Senior Mathematic Challenge with a record 32 Gold, 14 Silver and 13 Bronze awards.

Finally, I am delighted to see

that we have hit the school lesson attendance target this term of 95% attendance.

Thank you to everyone for continuing to make Abbey an exciting place to work and study. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Julian Davies



Biology Field Trip to Malham Tam Field

By Sabina Sadigova Upper Six student

Our Abbey College Cambridge Biology class was very fortunate to have visited Malham Tarn Field Centre. Being so close to nature and learning in this environment gave us a better insight into our current work and broadened our horizons. Our days were packed with lessons which were very interesting and took place outside more than in the classrooms. Doing a lot of practical work also helped us understand some practical aspects of ecology which we had met before but only in theory, such as sampling techniques. Carrying them out in the field was more fun but it also helped us see real concerns of each sampling method which ecologists face. It proved to be very good prac-



The Group at Malham Tam Field

tise since we were to carry out our practical assessment during that week. Besides studies, Malham stunned us with its extraordinary beauty and history.

Learning how the environment changed over time was interesting but also it was another good example of one of the aspects of our Biology course – succession. People at the centre were extremely kind and friendly. We all enjoyed our rooms and especially the common room where we spent time in between the lessons watching television or playing chess.

We are very grateful for the opportunity we were given and would like to thank the centre for its amazing staff, great conditions for study and for very good memories that will stay with us for a very long time.



Senior Team Maths Challenge

On Thursday 17th November four Abbey students won the regional final of the Senior Team Maths Challenge at the Centre for Mathematical Sciences in Cambridge, getting full -marks!

The students had to complete three rounds. In the first round, the group round, they had 10 questions to answer in 40 minutes. The crossnumber was next with two students having the across clues and the other two the down clues and needing to work quickly and accurately to finish in the time. And then finally they had a series of mini-

relays, again working in pairs, with each question requiring the answer from the previous question.

The team consisted of two A2 students: Nhat Minh PHAN and Yaxue SHEN and two AS students: Duy Hieu NGUYEN and Yijie YANG.

The team has now been invited to take part in the National Final on February 1st at the Camden Centre in London.

Helen Gascoyne-Cecil Tutor of Mathematics

Meet Our Wardens

In the next few Newsletters, we will be introducing you to our Wardens and telling you a little bit about them so that you know who is helping your son or daughter settle in to their new lives in Cambridge.

Robyn Breckons has been caring for the students in Purbeck House since September 2008. She has been key in implementing systems to ensure the students are safe and well.

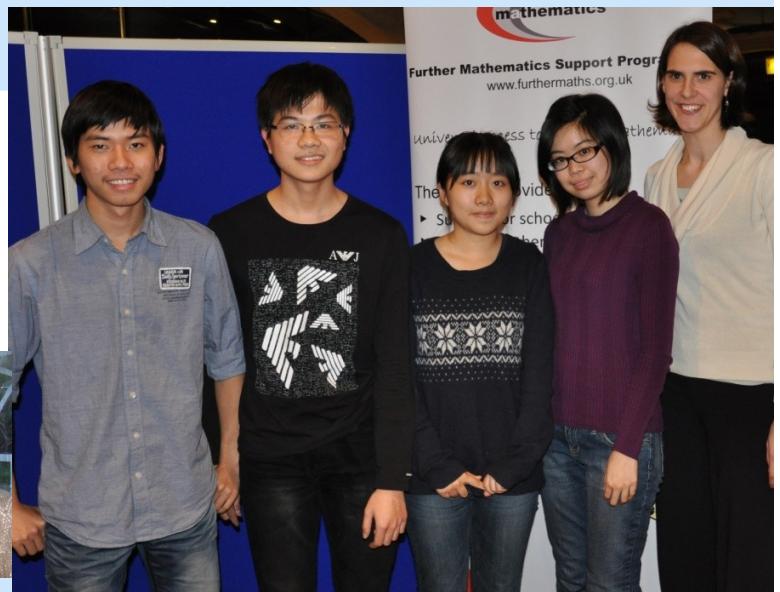
Robyn's previous work experience was as Administrator for Abbey College; the role gave **Robyn** valuable knowledge and understanding of our student's backgrounds and has helped her in her duties as a Warden.

Robyn is now a Primary School Teacher specialising in Foreign Languages.

Laura Mitchell Accommodation Officer



Robyn Breckons



The Winning Team! With Helen Gascoyne-Cecil

News from the Boarding House

The students have trips out every Sunday, they have been to the British Museum in London and The London aquarium.

Full Time English student David said "We enjoyed having free time to explore Oxford Street, it was really fun because we saw lots of different shops. We ate many kinds of sushi and Korean Food."

As well as trips to the Fireworks display on Midsummer common and the Circus, the boarders take regular trips to the cinema and Tony won the recent pool tournament.

GCSE student Nodir said "What I like about Milton Road is that we get our rooms where we can make ourselves comfy and have some leisure time..."

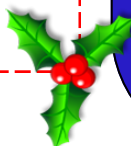
Although study takes a lot of time too, the school staff and the house wardens try hard to make us feel at home".

The British Museum and Alphonse, Jack and Tony by the River Thames in London.



APEL accommodation news

At the end of this term our students will be celebrating with a Christmas themed meal in their accommodations; the chefs will be decorating the kitchens and serving a traditional roast turkey Christmas dinner.



A day at the Babraham Institute

By Neda Bolouri Lower Six

On 17th November a group of A-level Biology students attended the Stem Cell Conference at the Babraham Institute. We had the chance to see some of the scientists who are doing research on stem cells in different parts of the body and discuss some questions about ethics. We learnt about how scientists are trying to use stem cells for cell replacement and about the idea of having artificial stem cells, which can be grown and transformed into specialized cell types with characteristics consistent with cells of various tissues.

The seminar started with lectures from different scientists and at the end of each lecture we had an opportunity to ask questions. In the

afternoon the students were asked to discuss the ethics. The questions were “Should stem cell research be restricted to non embryonic stem cells” and “Who should be involved in society”. Hence we not only got a chance to start thinking about stem cells but also got an opportunity to talk to other students from other colleges.

The Stem Cell Conference was a great opportunity and made us think about how we can see things from a different perspective and open our minds to think critically about ethical issues. In my opinion, attending this conference could also affect how we could continue our careers.



ABC Volunteers join local Primary School

In the Abbey College ABC Programme, B is for Belonging – to the College and to the local community. Some students have volunteered for tasks within the College such as arranging the Christmas Assembly and Party, or helping to manage the Library and Café at Norman House. We are also developing volunteering opportunities in the local community. Seven of our students passed through a tough application process to go once per week to St Alban's Roman Catholic Primary School, just down the road, as classroom helpers. They are helping in several ways – mentoring pupils gifted in Maths, helping develop Drama, Music and Sport and sharing insights into their own cultures with the pupils, who are aged 4-11. Some other students have been teaching Arabic at the local Mosque to help young people learn to read and memorise the Qur'an. We hope to build up a connection with local lunch clubs and other organisations which would welcome the help of Abbey volunteers.

Tony Pinchin Head of Upper 6



Season's Greetings!

Karen Lonsdale, Vice Principal Pastoral

Cambridge is an amazing place to be during the festive season, and we have many things to celebrate at Abbey. Students have just taken their Mock Exams, and their reports are on their way to parents. Please join us in congratulating the diligence of our students in their studies, and encourage them to strive for excellence.

Being part of the Abbey community is a privilege, and the dedication we see from our students is heartwarming. Many students choose to participate in the clubs and activities we offer. And all students experienced a special taster day at the end of Mock Week, where they participated in a

range of wonderful activities such as debate, chess, drama, jazz, art, pronunciation skills: many new opportunities never before experienced!

We are also enthused by the 30 strong Here4U students who are guided by Sarah Fox, our friendly student liaison receptionist, who are undertaking special training to help new students settle into Cambridge and College life. This is sure to be a wonderful success, thanks to the talents and commitment of our amazing student body.

Finally, we are delighted to announce that Abbey Cambridge is now on Facebook and

Twitter! Follow us day-by-day and find out more about life at Abbey. This is your chance to follow our academic and community activities firsthand.

Click to open the [Facebook Page](#)

Wishing you a peaceful festive period.



Karen



Chess Club News



Jamie Mitchell Head of Computing

17th International Chess Tournament

Nguyen Quang Son successfully defended his title by defeating Pham Dang Khoa in the final. Congratulations also to Pham Nhat Minh and Nguyen Duy Hieu for reaching the semi-finals, and to Le Hoang Phuong Nhung (Janie) for beating Son in the group stages.

Son joins former students Dinh Do, Ngo Nguyen Tu Duc & Sanzhar Baisakalov on two titles, still one short of all-time record holder Song Ge (James) with three.

Staff v Students Match 3

The staff won their first ever match with a convincing 7.5-3.5 win, bringing the overall score to one win each and one draw.

The next match will be in the Spring term, with the date to be announced nearer the time. Here are all the results so far:

Match 1: Staff 3.5-4.5 Students

Match 2: Staff 5-5 Students

Match 3: Staff 7.5-3.5 Students

18th International Chess Tournament

The group stages were played on 1st December, and the quarter-final line-up is...

Match 1: Nguyen Quang Son (Vietnam) vs Gong Xiangxiang (China)

Match 2: Pham Dang Khoa (Vietnam) vs Wang Tao (China)

Match 3: Zhang Xu (China) vs Pham Nhat Minh (Vietnam)

Match 4: Nguyen Viet Anh (Vietnam) vs Do Quang Binh (Vietnam)

Semi-finals:

Winner match 1 vs Winner match 2

Winner match 3 vs Winner match 4

The tournament will be concluded in the final chess club of the year on Thursday 8th December. Good luck all!



Above: The Tournament in full flow. Below: A trip to remember



A2 economics trip

Twenty-four A2 Economics students braved an early-morning start last Tuesday when they headed down to London for a Revision Conference led by examiners, and run by Tutor2U. 7.30 am isn't normally when they roll up to Abbey College for their start of day, but by late afternoon they were in no doubt it was a great outing and well worth the early start. The tutors were dynamic and full of terrific advice on exam preparation, getting the students themselves to work at questions alongside them through the day. Even the cosy, comfy cinema seats at the Vue location couldn't lull them to sleep! To quote Roxy, one of our Oxbridge candidates, on her return, "The lecturers at Tutor2U are really good...we are looking forward to attending more conferences like this!"

Susan Schilperoot Economics Teacher