

December 2006

Issue 2

NEWBATTLE NEWS



REFLECTIONS ON A SUCCESSFUL YEAR



The end of the year is always a time for reflection and when looking back over the past session there is a great deal to savour.

Achievement across the school was recognised at a very successful award ceremony. Gold Merit certificates were presented in recognition of excellence to a record 116 pupils. Awards were also made in subject prizes; sport; community; services to the school and a range of general awards.

The school's musical talents were again very much to the fore. The session started with a superb community X Factor competition as part of the Mayfield and Easthouses 50th anniversary celebrations. A highly successful Christmas concert played to a packed audience. Our school choir performed along with the Newtongrange Silver Band at Christmas to a

capacity audience at the Queen's Hall.

In the Dalkeith Rotary Young Musician of the Year competition Janelle Reid won the soloist event, going on to sing at the national semi finals with Kim Gray winning the instrumental section. First year pupil, Callum Edmond won the, 'East of Scotland Under Twelve Solo Cornet' competition. Of particular note was the achievement of the school choir who recorded the theme tune, 'Choices' for a national health event and went on to perform the song to 16,000 primary pupils over two days at the Ingliston Exhibition Centre. In the summer a highly acclaimed Rock 'n' Roll evening rounded off a memorable musical session.

The growth of extra curricular sport continued with more and more of our pupils participating in a wide range of activities offered. Badminton, hockey, cricket, golf, judo, bowls, rugby, football, snow boarding, swimming, dance, keep fit, self-defence, volleyball and basketball all featured during the session.

Of particular note was Bilal Azhars's continued selection for the Scottish Schools U18 cricket squad

and Stephen Tiffney's Scottish Championship boxing win in his age and weight.

The opening of our synthetic turf pitch was a great benefit both for P.E. lessons and extra-curricular clubs.

Our football teams continued to flourish with the U16 side winning the Lothian Schools Under 16 league for the second year in a row – only the second time a school has ever retained this title. The Under15 side won the East & Midlothian Under 15 shield.

The school again participated in a wide range of residential educational visits with over two hundred P7/S1 pupils attending school camp at Dounans and thirty participating in the S2 University Week at Pollock Halls in Edinburgh.

As part of the Outdoor Education programme, staff and pupils made use of the facilities at Lagganlia and Lowport. Further afield, nearly 200 pupils participated in a range of cultural and sporting educational visits including Holland, two visits to France, Spain and Denmark. Our German exchange continued to

flourish with the school sending our senior rock group to Kreis – Heinsberg as part of the Midlothian delegation. These trips all add an important dimension to the work of the school.

One hundred first and second year pupils took part in the prestigious ‘Maths Challenge’ with Owen Gillespie and Dale Wyllie winning the coveted gold award.

In recent years the work of our Art and Technical Departments has been given much praise and recognition. We were again the lead school in a Midlothian Art weekend residential to Benmore and subsequent exhibition. The work of this group and those of others are exhibited throughout the school. Our craft and design students again produced much high quality work, on view both in school and at the Scottish Mining Museum in the ‘Midlothian IKEA Craft and Design competition’.

The ‘Friends of Newbattle’ continued to reach out to our community and mounted a ‘Parent Zone’ workshop to support learning. Following on the success of recent years our ‘Feasting With Music’

corporate evening involved the Newtongrange Silver Band performing with our senior students, raising a substantial sum of money to assist the work of the school. Our active School Board continued to support the school in a variety of matters including key appointments of staff. Discussions included the arrangements for implementing the new Parent Forums, which are due to replace School Boards in 2007-08.

Our Young Enterprise Company – SIGGS gained national recognition winning, ‘the Best Overall Company to use quality as an intrinsic part of their



business philosophies and operations’ beating 300 schools across Scotland. They also won ‘Lothian’s best Company Overall’ and had the Runner –up award for Sales Director as well as the ‘Best Idea and Set Up’ at the Lothian Young Enterprise Christmas Market.’ The company’s product, a CD-

Rom containing traditional and modern Scottish recipes sold well having received assistance from the Melville Castle Hotel, the British Heart Foundation and the Edinburgh and Lothian’s tourist board.

Helping others less fortunate than ourselves continues to be a high priority for us. A Christmas, ‘X-Factor’ production raised a substantial sum for Children In Need. Also benefiting from fundraising efforts were; Guide Dogs For the Blind, Breast Cancer Campaign, World AIDS Day, The Phoenix Club and the Earl Haig Fund as well as continuing to support the education of children in India through sponsorship of the Goodwill Children’s Village.

Indeed much to savour but the Challenge always remains, and it is one which we shall accept with relish, to build on the successes of the past and continue to stride forward. That is our target for 2007, and I am sure that we will do our utmost to ensure that this target is realised.

Colin B Taylor,
Headteacher



A YEAR OF PROGRESS



As we approach the Christmas season and a full year of School of Ambition status, it gives me great pleasure to report that the initiative continues to gather pace. A number of changes have been made since the Summer break which have added to the ongoing improvements seen in recent years.

If you have visited the school itself since the summer you will have noticed our new school signs proudly displaying our School of Ambition status. The design is intended to capture the welcoming and inclusive principles of the school and to remind us that we are actually the sum of many parts. The teachers, ancillary staff, the council, the parental and business stakeholders and most importantly our pupils combine together to form a strong learning community. Every one of those elements needs to contribute fully for our school to become ever more successful.

Within the school building itself two large plasma screens have been installed in public areas. These are used to celebrate pupils' successes by showing photographs of them working and enjoying themselves around school. The screens are also used to inform pupils of the healthy menu options available in the Bite Site as well as arrangements related to our sports clubs. We have also installed six large display boards to show off what pupils have achieved in all their subjects around the school.

You will see from other parts of this newsletter that we are planning a major exhibition of pupils' work and success during this academic session. Our aspiration is to have *every* pupil represented in the '1000 by 1000' exhibition, which emphasises our belief that every individual has something worthwhile to contribute to



society. You will also read that our senior pupils are gaining valuable experience as leaders when working with S2 pupils in our 'Peak Performance' groups. Teenagers often get a bad press, but seeing them organising and supporting younger pupils is proof that they can clearly be responsible citizens when given the opportunity.

Being involved in the education of children is a privilege and gives teachers an opportunity to give something back to society. Giving every youngster the chance to be successful in their own way is the best present I can think of.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

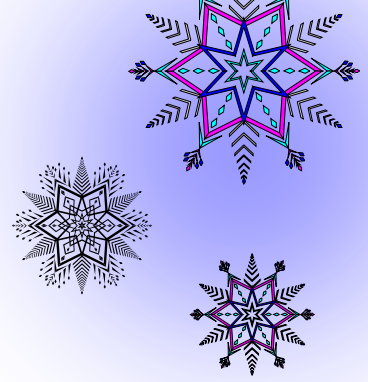
John Wilson
Depute Headteacher



STAR PUPILS SUCCESS

Seven pupils, Tammi Hubbard, Adele McBroom, Zoe McNeish, Adam Broadbent, Cameron Miller, Stephen Wylie and Rebecca Rodger have been studying at Jewel & Esk Valley College on the Winter Leavers Courses for 2006-2007. These courses are in Hairdressing, Hospitality and Construction. The college reports that the attendance has been fantastic and that all of our pupils have completed their courses, achieving success in City & Guilds and Trade Tests.

Zoe McNeish has been outstanding. She has been awarded the sole scholarship which is competed for by all the Winter Leavers from Midlothian Schools.



1000 X 1000 EXHIBITION

Within Newbattle's School of Ambition initiative, a major exhibition of pupil's Artwork is being planned for 31st May 2007 entitled the 1000 x 1000 exhibition.

The aim of the exhibition is to allow every pupil at Newbattle to put on show an item of their work, or displaying a photograph showing them performing a task at work or in a concert setting. The work will feature Expressive Arts but will also incorporate all departments in the school.

A planning committee with additional helpers and supporters is in place and a system of recording pupils' contributions will ensure no one is left out of this fantastic opportunity.

An official opening will launch the event and the work will remain on show for some time thereafter.



Danielle Robinson in S5 has work currently showing in the Benmore Touring exhibition which came to Newbattle on 1st December. Danielle's work shown above was used as part of the publicity for the show.

FAST TRACK TO SUCCESS!

This term saw the launch of Newbattle's first 'Fast Track to Success' group. This innovative programme is designed to accommodate 60 primary seven pupils from our associated primary schools.

The programme has been constructed in order to provide a smoother transition for primary school pupils to integrate into the High School, whilst at the same time promoting and facilitating academic excellence.

Essentially, pupils have been invited to attend lessons in English, Mathematics and Science at Newbattle CHS. Teachers from both the primary and secondary sectors have been involved in delivering the programme.

Pupils and parents alike have responded very positively to the aims, objectives and proposed course of the programme. As the first six-week phase draws to a close, the pupils are eagerly awaiting to participate in the next stage of the syllabus.

TERM ENDS	FRIDAY	22	DEC	2006
ALL RESUME	MONDAY	8	JAN	2007
ALL BREAK	FRIDAY	9	FEB	2007
STAFF RESUME	WEDNESDAY	14	FEB	2007
PUPILS RESUME	THURSDAY	15	FEB	2007
TERM ENDS	FRIDAY	30	MAR	2007

NEWBATTLE LEADS THE WAY



The deadline for all schools to become officially recognised as Health Promoting Schools is December 2007. By that date all schools in the country must have initiatives promoting the well-being of both pupils and staff embedded in their curriculum and established in their school calendar. As a School of Ambition, Newbattle has already started living up to its new title by becoming the first Midlothian Secondary School to be accredited with the first of the three stages involved in becoming a "Health Promoting School"

Led by Home Economics Head of Department, Helen Hannan, the School's Group for Health Promotion put in a massive amount of work to come up with new initiatives to raise awareness of health issues. All the evidence of the work done by the school then had to be collated to prove that we really are a school that cares about the mental and physical health of our pupils and staff.

There is an endless list of achievements undertaken by the school which include completely ripping out and rebuilding the Home Economics Department, changing the environment of the playground by adding colourful seating areas and decorative murals, holding relaxation classes for staff, organising activities such as the Healthy Hearts fundraising day, having an all weather pitch installed for outdoor games, adding speciality equipment to enable physically impaired pupils to use the swimming pool and working with Primary schools to promote healthy eating to our prospective First Years.

The Health Promotion Group includes staff from eight different subjects all putting their heads together to find new and exciting ways to include health education around the school.

Even though Newbattle is well ahead of the deadline set we have already started

planning how to improve all aspects of health over the next two years in order to meet the criteria for stage two of the programme. Working relationships with the Ozone which provides counselling and other health support for pupils have never been stronger and plans to develop our breakfast club provision, thus improving the pupils' concentration and subsequently attainment are already beginning to hatch.

Eat well to do well, just watch us succeed!



MAGIC TIME FOR PRIMARY PUPILS AS BOB BOWS OUT

Primary pupils from Newbattle cluster primary schools were entertained by Magic Bob for the last time on Monday 11th December. Magic Bob, known to thousands of children all over Scotland is retiring at the end of this year. Bob has been a regular visitor to Newbattle Community High School for many years and most of our children have been entertained by him.

This special occasion was marked with a presentation from the school with all of our associated Primary Headteachers in attendance.

We wish Bob all the best in his future endeavours and he will certainly be missed at Newbattle Community High School.



X-FACTOR NEWBATTLE STYLE 2006

What is fast becoming an annual feature of the Newbattle calendar saw a huge number of pupils audition for the coveted final slots and the judges Mrs Allan, Mr Humphrey, Miss Wilkie and Mr Watkin had a very difficult job choosing the finalists.

Eventually, and after considerable heart-searching and debate, they narrowed it down to a final eleven, with no fewer than five of those coming from the extremely talented S1 and S2.

The final event, staged in front of a capacity audience, was brilliantly organised by Paul Wilson and his team and an added touch this year was that each of the finalists had a video showing their audition and giving their thoughts on the show. The large crowd were enthralled by each of the finalists who seemed to suffer no nerves and performed to a breathtaking standard.

A winner had to be found and the audience bestowed the accolade of Newbattle X Factor Champion 2006 on Ann Marie Hall. Ann-Marie who is in First Year wowed the audience with "Closest thing to Crazy". A very mature performance from one of the youngest finalists.



X Factor winner

There were no losers on the night though as everyone taking part had a great time and undoubtedly gained from the experience of the occasion.

An added bonus was the £400 raised for Children in Need.



Paul Wilson - organiser entertains the crowd

Seasons Greetings

WEAR IT PINK DAY

Newbattle pupils took part in the National "Wear it Pink Day" earlier in the term in aid of the Breast Cancer campaign. Pupils were asked to support the charity by donating to be allowed to wear a pink item instead of the normal school dress code. A fantastic sum of £510 was raised! Well done to all concerned



Head girl, Lois Nelson & Kelly McGarry present a cheque to Mrs A Hall



Compere James Sutherland with the full X Factor cast



SKYE'S THE LIMIT FOR NEWBATTLE LEADERS

Thirteen students and 3 staff left Newbattle Community High School early on Sunday the 3rd of September 2006 heading for Staffin on Skye.

The aim of the journey was to attend a week long course at the Columba 1400 International Leadership Centre. The motto of the centre is "Our task is not to put the greatness back into humanity but to elicit it, for the greatness is there already" (John Buchan)

The intensive 6 day course involved long hours of work for

all involved – a standard day ran from 8am – 10pm.

The course focused on 6 core values - awareness, focus, creativity, integrity, perseverance and service. Each day was spent on one of the core values. The course, rather than being an 'outward bound' type of experience, was more of an 'inward bound' journey.

The students studied, discussed and reflected on what was important to them in their own lives. Various activities throughout the week were aimed at improving pupils self esteem,

teamwork and leadership skills. At the end of a very challenging week the students, although missing their families – 'didn't want to come home' such was the impact of the course.

The challenge ahead now is to put our new leaders to work in our school. Our 'Young Leaders' are already hatching plans for the future with the launch of a series of interhouse competitions, re-vamping the Student Council and finding ways of releasing the leadership potential of every pupil and member of staff at Newbattle.



The Columba team receive certificates at their graduation ceremony.

N.C.H.S. BIGGEST ENTERPRISE CHALLENGE

On Monday 13 November, S3 pupils battled it out with tens of thousands of other young people from further education colleges, universities, and workplaces as part of the nation's biggest ever live and simultaneous enterprise challenge.

Revealed online across the nation at 9.00am, the 2006 Make Your Mark Challenge was a one-day enterprise competition that was specifically designed to kick-start imaginations and unleash creativity, as young people personally experienced what it takes to turn an idea into reality.

Students had just one day to complete the Make Your Mark Challenge before teams from each homeroom were selected to present their ideas back to 175 fellow students and teachers. An overall winning team was selected and their idea, the 'Lazy Chair 5000' forwarded to the

organisers of the challenge, to see if they agreed that it 'Cut the Mustard'.

Mr Colin Taylor, Headteacher, commented, *"The Make Your Mark Challenge is a great opportunity for our school to recognise and develop students' enterprise skills from an early age. It's a great start to Enterprise Week 2006."*

Newbattle High was thrilled and proud when the team were notified that they were through to the Scottish final. The team finalists, David Wilson, Callum Bertrum, Billy Livingstone, Ross Waters and Ryan McQueenie prepared themselves to battle against the best 'teams' in Scotland

The Scottish final took place on Friday 24 November at Edinburgh Zoo, where 20 schools presented their ideas to a panel of judges. Although the

team didn't win, their presentation of the 'Lazy Chair 5000' was well received by the audience and the judges for its creativity and the boys a credit to the school.

BT ROADSHOW COMES TO NEWBATTLE COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

Enterprise Week came to an exciting close with a visit from CraggRats Theatre Group. The Roadshow formed part of a BT prize received by the school, for promoting excellence in communication. All of S5 and S6 were treated to an entertaining play with some important messages about communication. The play concentrated on essential skills required when looking for a job and going for an interview. This was followed by group workshops to reinforce and develop these messages.



The Newbattle team making their presentation at the Scottish final.

NEWBATTLE ACADEMIES OF SPORT MAKE GREAT STRIDES



Newcastle Football Academy goes to Hearts

On November 2nd the entire Football Academy of the Peak Performance group of S2 & S5 went to Heart of Midlothian training grounds at Riccarton. Fifty four students & staff who have been working together since the project was launched in June last year headed off down the bypass to the state of the art facilities. The students were given a short talk on footballers' diets by Tom Ritchie who is the Diet and Fitness coach for the First Team in the indoor astro turf hall. Then the students were coached by Alan White, head of community sport at Hearts, and an ex Newcastle student as well!

The coaching consisted of warm up, basic skills of dribbling and passing then into small games with each team playing against each other all in the same hall as the Hearts Team train! Looking



fantastic in their Football Academy kit, the students worked hard and although no first team players could come to meet them the students had a great trip.

Mr Taylor, who was with the group was delighted and proud of the hard work, excellent behaviour and superb turnout of the Newcastle students.

Basketball on the Move

The Basketball Academy has also had a solid start with forty five S2/S5 students working hard to establish squads and training routines to make a first rate team to work together to develop the sport. Under the expert basketball coach, Mr Gillespie



(trained in the USA) senior students have developed into trainee coaches to the S2 students, determined to make their squad of S2 the best!

Ms Hamilton who also works with Mr Gillespie has been responsible with Mr Baxter for organising the huge amounts of kit needed for all the squads. A big well done to both teachers for this. Both the Football and Basketball Academies look fantastic.

Dance Alive and Kicking

The Dance Academy is working on presenting a Dance Festival in December, when Ms Whyte and Ms Ross along with their 20 S2/5 girls will join together with schools from all over Midlothian to develop their skills through a series of workshops and performances.

Leaders in Sport

Working with all the Academy groups the Junior Sports Leaders section is a body of 14 S5 students led by Mr Wilson who

are training to become sports coaches to help their careers. Every week they are learning how to organise warm ups and skills training and soon will be taking some of the coaching for the Football and Basketball Academies. They are also off skiing to Hillend to see how this sport is coached.

The Sports Academies have started a very exciting initiative at Newcastle High, with lots of new learning opportunities and pioneering development of the PE curriculum.



Reminder all Xmas Leavers

Now that you have left Newcastle Community High School to go onto Further Education or Employment could I remind you to complete a Leavers Form at School? If you have any books that you have not yet returned please bring them into Reception. We hope you have a great Christmas and wish you lots of luck for the future.

The School Office Team



NEWBATTLE FLY THE FLAG AT DANA CUP



Newbattle Football sides have enjoyed considerable success in recent seasons and have shown their qualities by competing for the last two summers in the DANA CUP International tournament in Denmark. The Dana Cup, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2006, is the second biggest Youth tournament in Europe and



attracted 915 teams from 47 different countries to the town of Hjørring in Northern Jutland, one of the most popular tourist destinations in Scandinavia.

The town itself sees its population of 25,000 double for the tournament week and the teams are billeted in school classrooms across the town. Tars, a small village on the outskirts of Hjørring was our home for the week with regular shuttle transportation to and from the event centre

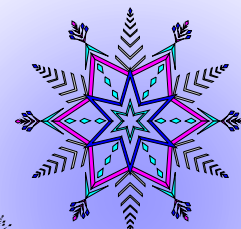
and the 83 well appointed pitches. The school had training facilities which we could use and those were complete with nets and all we could have wished for - always a source of amazement to British visitors that these can be left out and remain in perfect condition. In fact the whole area is spotless and the sense of fun and enjoyment pervades the entire town. Showgrounds and a disco tent which holds over 5000 youngsters are well used every night but the feeling of total safety and well-being is always maintained a testament to the atmosphere which makes this whole experience so worthwhile.

The Opening ceremony on the Monday evening sees all teams parade through the town to the Stadium behind their national flag led by marching bands through streets lined with the spectators. As the only Scottish representative in the event this year we had the stage to ourselves when Scotland were introduced on the big screen. The team resplendent in their new tracksuits received their applause before settling down to enjoy the concert provided by chart topping group Infernal.

The main event of course was the competition and our team responded magnificently to qualify from the group stages and only lose out on penalties in the last 16 to FC Staad in Switzerland. This is a fantastic achievement for what was the only school side in the tournament, competing in the main against towns' sides, teams representing whole areas, professional clubs, and even the Cameroon national team who were the eventual winners in our age group. FC Staad who hail from the ultra rich ski resort of Gstaad had a list of blue chip sponsors which any side would have been proud of including Credit Suisse, Swisstel, and many more - a share of their budget would keep all of our school teams going for a decade!



Although the schedule is hectic and with temperatures reaching 35°C which saw some of the roads melting - not normal for Northern Denmark - the use of the swimming pools was most welcome. We also found



time to fit in Go-Karting, Golf, Bowling and a visit to the main theme and water park, Farup Sommerland.

It was a tired but happy group which flew back to Edinburgh after eight days away, a group who undoubtedly benefited not only in sporting but also in social terms from the experience of being together and mixing with the various nationalities whom we came across. The players were great ambassadors for the school and their country.

This year we will be returning to Dana Cup for a third time with our Under 15 team and while we cannot guarantee the weather will be as good we can be sure the overall experience will be memorable.



Infernal entertain the crowd

NEWBATTLE FOOTBALL TEAMS NET RAF SPONSORSHIP

Newbattle's Football teams were delighted to net a sponsorship package with four figures from RAF Careers whom provided two sets of strips, footballs, kit bags, waterbottles and tactics boards.

An RAF spokesperson said, "Newbattle's record over recent years is the result of skill, determination, commitment and above all team work. These are qualities which will bring success in every walk of life and are of vital importance in a service such as ours. We are delighted to be associated with Newbattle Community High School football sides and wish them every success in the future."



Glen Marshall, Liam Hall, Ryan Law & Darren Flynn model our new kit.

EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE

If you are returning to school after the Christmas Holidays and you are over 16 you could apply for Education Maintenance Allowance. This allowance could give you between £10 and £30 every week you have full attendance (other conditions may apply). Please come into the School Office and pick up an application form.

The School Office Team





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