



The
PHS

NEWSLETTER

JULY
2016



RHOD GILBERT'S

WORK EXPERIENCE

By Rachel Lindsey, Seren James, Cai Hughes and
Finley Murphy (Roving Reporters)

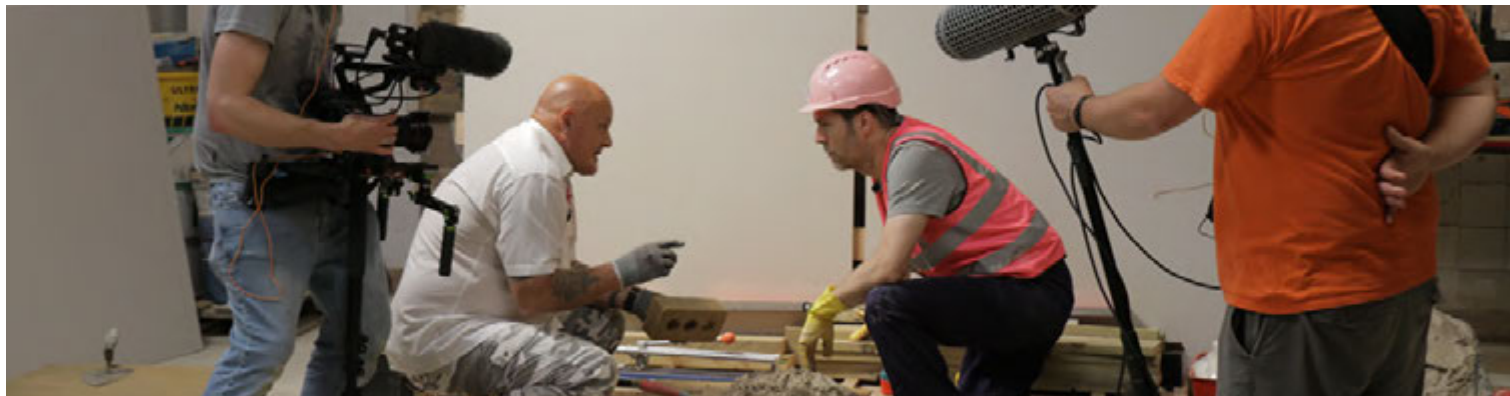
Rhod Gilbert came to Pontypridd High School to film for his sixth season of the BAFTA award winning show, 'Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience'.

The latest episode of Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience was filmed at Pontypridd High on Wednesday 13th July. Rhod will be an apprentice at RedRow homes in this episode and needed to come to our school to master the art of bricklaying, tiling and carpentry under the watchful eye of Mr Steve Jones our Head of Construction.

Rhod admits that he is terrible at DIY and thankfully we had the talented Aimee Monk, Shannon Roberts, Sasha Cimorelli, Kailum Johnson, Jordan Williams and Keetan Dee to show him the ropes! With continual banter throughout the day, Rhod gave our pupils a lot to smile about and he was also able to take a lot from us too. He claims that "there was nothing like this when I was in school. You have a building department and all I made in school was a scotch egg."

He was also extremely impressed by the Chinese buffet that our pupils from the catering team made for lunch and said the food was "amazing, especially the mango cheesecake." He said he couldn't believe we had such a lovely room to cater for students and guests. *(Continue on page 2)*

CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT



Four of our Roving Reporters had the opportunity to interview Rhod and he said of his previous work experience that "teaching primary school children was good fun...but you can't beat flying a fast jet too !" Rhod says it is important for him to go on work experience because if it ever goes wrong for him in comedy, he has a backup plan.

When asked for life advice from the pupils, Rhod burst out laughing and asked if the pupils had seen his shows. He then went on to say it was important to try a lot of jobs out in life. If you aren't happy with one, try something else and try and do what you love.

As a result of visiting our school Rhod said he is now equipped with the skills to hang a new shelf in his house, fix the damp in his bathroom and hang all the pictures he has been collecting for many years.

The episode featuring our school will be airing on BBC One in March 2017 ■

Image: Rhod Gilbert and the Construction team



THE HAY FESTIVAL

By Mr j Astley

To mark the opening of this year's Hay Festival, 40 pupils from Pontypridd High were invited to spend the day at the international literary event in Hay on Wye.

All pupils attended two talks given by authors or experts in their fields. The sessions included a modern twist on 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' by the Royal Shakespeare Company, a guide to climbing Mount Everest and a Code Breaking session based on techniques used in the world war. During the Code Breaking presentation Nathaniel Partington, a year 8 pupil, was invited on to the stage to use the Enigma Machine; this was the actual model used by Benedict Cumberbatch in the film 'The Imitation Game'!

Following the talks, pupils visited the various attractions on offer, including the ice-cream stand and local book shops. Many pupils also used this free time as a chance to have their newly purchased books signed. Both staff and pupils enjoyed an excellent day filled with fun and exciting learning experiences. ■



Image: Nathaniel using the Enigma machine



COMPUTER SCIENCE

TECHNOCAMPS DIGITAL

By Mrs S. Weeks (Computer Science Teacher)

This event took place at the Celtic Manor Resort near Newport where pupils from across Wales were invited to attend a day of hands-on, engaging workshops to help inspire pupils about the digital future of Wales.

Ten Year 8 pupils from PHS experienced various computer science workshops and exhibits covering a range of topics from computational thinking, robotics, BBC micro:bits, introduction to Python programming and much more.

The event showcased hi-tech companies exhibiting the best Wales has to offer and gave the pupils an invaluable insight into new digital technologies. This included 360 Cameras,



Image: PHS pupils programming robots

virtual 3D simulations and Universities offering career advice into digital technology.

The pupils had fun joining in with the various workshops and taking part in the activities organised by Technocamps, in conjunction with University of South Wales. The day was also invaluable in giving everyone a taste of the future and ideas about potential careers. ■



TRANSITION PROJECT



By Mrs L Dober and Mrs C Marvelley

Year 5 pupils from our cluster Primary schools have all taken part in a thematic project based around the Euro 2016 football tournament. Throughout the project pupils have been given opportunities to develop their numeracy, literacy and digital competency skills as well as have a lot of fun getting to know some of the teachers from Pontypridd High School.

The project began with a launch day at Pontypridd High School before May half term. The scene was set with Mr Bracey delivering the aim of the project through a video link. Year 5 pupils were transformed into a press pack team who were off to France to report on the progress of the Wales team throughout the tournament. Pupils spent the launch day planning their trip to France. During the numeracy session they had to manage a budget and use bus, plane and train timetables. The literacy session concentrated on analysis of travel brochures.

The project continued after May half term with teachers from PHS visiting the primary schools to teach the year 5 pupils once a week. Mrs Finney and Miss Thomas visited Coedylan, Cefn and Maesycod whilst Mrs Dober and Mrs Marvelley visited Craig yr Hesg, Trerobart, Cilfynydd and Trehopcyn.



Over the following weeks pupils analysed team data for the Wales and Slovakia teams, wrote motivational speeches for Chris Coleman, calculated the money UEFA made from ticket sales and wrote pre match commentary for their own highlights show. The final session saw year pupils become football managers tasked with buying their own football team. They then had to script their own post-match and pre-match interviews with a player of their choice.

To complete the project pupils visited PHS for a final day where they recorded their pre-match commentary in front of a green screen and went on location to the sports field to record their motivational speeches. Pupils also took part in a 5 a side football tournament on their own.

Parents/carers were invited to PHS on 13th July to view the premiere of the film that showcases the whole project. All staff involved have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the year 5 pupils and look forward to working with them in the autumn.

Special thanks must go to Mr Bracey for all the work he has put into creating the final films. The pupils were amazing and we think the films show the range of skills they have.

Well done everyone! ■

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

SORRENTO - ITALY

By Miss K Pritchard (Geography teacher)

On Monday 11th July a group of thirty year 10 pupils and six year 12 pupils travelled to Italy. The group stayed in a hotel which had panoramic views of the Bay of Sorrento and this was our base for five days. Our intention was to embark on a geographical adventure in southern Italy !

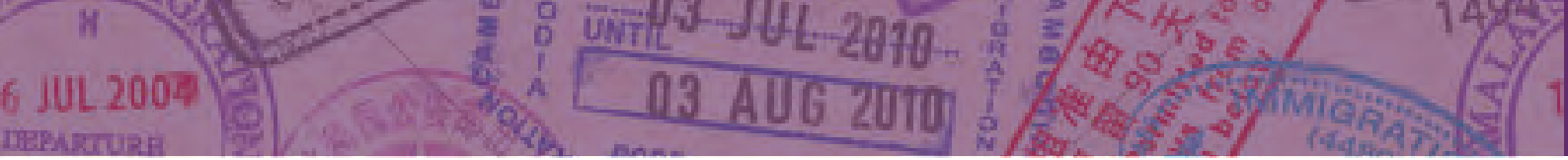
The first day consisted of a historical tour of Pompeii where life in this rich and prosperous city was dramatically interrupted in 79 A.D when Mt Vesuvius erupted. It is one of the most famous archaeological sites in Italy and we had the opportunity to observe the asphyxiated remains. The excavations in Pompeii are visited by millions of tourists every year and it provided a good insight into life here two thousand years ago. From Pompeii we travelled to Mt. Vesuvius which is 17,000 years old and one of the most famous active volcanoes in the world. In spite of its last eruption in 1944 (which killed 26 people), 700,000 people still live close to the volcano. All the pupils did very well to hike

to the top in the sweltering heat and we were rewarded with the most spectacular of views.

The next day we travelled on a short boat trip to the island of Capri which lies within the Gulf of Naples and is famed for its lemon groves, natural beauty and expensive boutique shops. This offered pupils a great opportunity to observe the geography of the Amalfi Coast from a different perspective. The highlight of this day included a cable car ride to the highest point on the island, and a visit to the Blue Grotto which is a sea cave off the coast. As sunlight shone through the seawater it creates a blue reflection that illuminates the cavern and provides a beautiful environment.

We also had the opportunity to take a drive along the Amalfi coast. This is a 50-kilometer stretch of coastline along the southern edge of Italy. The coastal road winds past pastel-coloured fishing villages, terraced vineyards and lemon groves. We stopped for lunch in the picturesque village of Ravello - pizzas all round ! The





The final day consisted of one last geographical stop off at Solfatara, 'the smoking crater'. This is a shallow volcanic crater which still emits jets of steam with sulphurous fumes.

The visit was an extremely memorable one which included history, geography, culture, Italian food and of course the Italian language. The pupils were absolutely fantastic and I was incredibly proud of the way in which they embraced the Italian lifestyle and culture. They were great company and a credit to themselves and our school.

We look forward to the next trip ! ■



Image: Street in Pompeii



Image: (above) Capri (below) Sorrento



WELSH DEPARTMENT



CAFFI CYMRAEG

By Miss G Jones (Welsh teacher)

This year has been a successful year for the Explore project in the Welsh department. Year 7 pupils have thoroughly enjoyed the projects each half term and the Caffi Cymraeg has had great feedback. They have had the opportunity to research different aspects of Welsh culture and deliver their knowledge to other pupils and staff in their Caffi Cymraeg.

The first half term was a focus on Welsh Folk dancing where our pupils demonstrated a routine of Welsh folk dancing to our guests. The second half term fitted perfectly to a Christmas theme. Therefore, the challenge was to research and present information about the Mari Llwyd. Some pupils even made amazing masks of horses' heads for the Caffi.

masks of horses' heads for the Caffi. In January we studied the famous Welsh story and the meaning behind Santes Dwynwen day, where our creative pupils recreated the story through a puppet show! From there we prepared for St David's day in March.

This summer term we have researched and presented information on famous Welsh people and in addition the pupils have been researching and presenting information on famous Welsh landmarks.

Diolch yn fawr to all the pupils who have participated in the Caffi Cymraeg. Also, a special diolch yn fawr to all our enthusiastic guests who have popped in to the Caffi this year. ■



SPORTING STARS

By Mr T. Longden (P.E. Teacher)

ATHLETICS - On Tuesday 26th April 17 pupils from year 10 and one pupil from year 11 competed in the County Athletics Championships held in Brecon. The athletes competed through all four seasons, with the weather changing from sunshine, to high winds and then to snow. All pupils tried their best and wore the Pontypridd High athletics vest with pride.

Some stand out performers were Roisin Moses who made the girls U16 100M final and Elis Pryse who made the boys U16 400M final but unfortunately had to pull out because of injury. Callum Abbruzzese finished 4th in the boys U16 1500M and Adam Lindsey finished 6th in the boys U16 800M.

The star of the day was Gracie Wheeler who won the U16 girls 1500M. Gracie led the race from the start and finished in a time of 5 minutes 15 seconds. A great performance by a young athlete who is dedicated to her sport, training on a regular basis with Cardiff Athletics and regularly competing for Wales.

Well done to all pupils who took part and in addition some pupils gained scores towards their GCSE and experience in competing in a competitive county championship event. ■

RUGBY - This year six boys from Pontypridd High were selected for the Pontypridd Schools District rugby squad; Kieran Gough, Jake Morgan, Coby Wiosna, Morgan Davies, Ioan Evans and Rhys Howells. This is a great achievement as the squad is selected from all seven schools in the Pontyp-ridd area.

The team made it to the semi-finals of the Dewar Shield playing Cardiff Schools District at Caerphilly RFC. The boys played extremely well and at half time the score was poised for an entertaining second half with Cardiff leading 15 – 13. Pontypridd threw everything at Cardiff and unloaded their bench, but in the end it wasn't enough and Cardiff went on to score 4 tries, eventually winning 27 – 13. Cardiff then went on to beat Llanelli in the final.

Well done to the six pupils involved in the squad. Their commitment to Rugby whilst managing their school work has made them role models for younger pupils to look up to. ■

FOOTBALL - This competition started back in the cold, dark nights of January. This year the boys did extremely well playing a lovely style of football with a great team spirit. Having beaten teams like Llanharri and Tonypany, we reached the final of the cup where we played local rivals Hawthorn. Arrangements for this were difficult with all the GCSE exams to prepare for.

Throughout the week there had been a buzz around the school with the Wales team in France giving the whole team inspiration. Lucas Welch was captain and early in the game Jordan Young quickly latched onto a through ball, which he dispatched into the back of the net. This was followed quickly by a Ioan Evans long distance strike and at half time Pontyp-ridd were 2 – 0 up. Hawthorn started the second half quickly and soon brought the score back to 2 – 2. All the momentum was with Hawthorn who quickly lead 4 – 2.

PHS showed their fighting spirit and after Ioan Evans's free kick was saved by the goal keeper, Jordan Young "the fox in the box" picked up the rebound and got one back. We just needed one more goal to take the game to extra time but despite a few chances we could not get the all important equaliser. After the game the Hawthorn teacher commented on the attitude and commitment that our boys showed and how they are a credit to our school. This was the last fixture for this year, however we will be back stronger next year looking to go one better. ■

ATHLETICS - On Tuesday 7th June, 19 pupils from Year 8 and 9 competed in the Junior County Athletics Championships held in Brecon.

The competition was very strong with many club athletes competing from over 40 schools. The star of the day was Brandon Gwilym who ran a fantastic 800M heat in a time of 2 minutes 22 seconds, good enough to finish second overall in the county.

A special mention to the team captain Molly Jones who was asked to support pupils and remind them of their event times and record all results. Her attitude was so positive and her organisational skills were outstanding. She was invaluable throughout the day and was so trustworthy and supportive of everyone.

Well done to all pupils who took part. You were a credit to the school. ■

SIXTH FORM

PROM NIGHT

By Mrs A Crozier (Head of Sixth Form)

Students from Year 13 recently celebrated the completion of their studies with an end of year prom at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Cardiff.

A large number of pupils and staff attended the prom which involved a 3 course dinner, photo booth and lots of singing and dancing! Everyone had a wonderful time and both pupils and staff looked very glamorous in their beautiful dresses and smart suits. As usual the students were a credit to themselves and our School. The speeches were full of stories that will ensure everyone has fond memories of their time over the last 7 years.

We are very proud of them all and as we say goodbye we wish them every success for the future. We would also like to thank Teigan Jones and Lewis Hooper for organising the prom. Their efforts, enthusiasm and efficiency are very much appreciated. ■



I am delighted to announce the appointments of Ben Gooding as our new Head Boy and Olivia Davies as Head Girl. They will be responsible for leading a senior student team and be supported by Dylan Wert, Deputy Head Boy and Clara Bird, Deputy Head Girl. The letters of application and interviews were of the highest order and I am confident that all four students will be successful in their new roles, making a positive contribution to our school and the wider community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our previous Head Boy and Head Girl, Lewis Hooper and Lowri Wilkshire, for all their efforts and contributions during the last year. Whilst fulfilling their roles and responsibilities, they continued to work hard with their A level studies and are looking forward to going to university. Lewis is hoping to study History and Politics at Exeter or Cardiff and Lowri is going to study English at Exeter or Glasgow.

MATHS DEPARTMENT

MATHEMAGIC SHOW



Image: Pupils having fun with maths challenges



Image: Fun with the beach ball



Image: Pupils enjoying the trip to Techniquest

By Mrs C Finney (Maths teacher)

On Wednesday 15th June, a group of Year 7 and 8 pupils attended a mathematics enrichment trip to Techniquest in Cardiff Bay.

As well as being able to explore the wonderful exhibits and learn some fascinating mathematics facts, pupils also watched a "Mathemagic" exhibition. Here the pupils learned about mathematics through magic and how mathematics can be used in everyday life to help them solve problems and confuse their friends!

The pupils also took part in a variety of other activities which involved solving problems using their mathematical knowledge. We all had a fantastic day and came back to school having learned many new things. ■



Image: Mrs Finney with Major Tim Peakes! (Honest!)

TRIPS & VISITS

LLANGRANNOG

By Miss G Jones (Welsh teacher)

A fantastic group of pupils from Years 7 and 8 embarked on a weekend residential in May 2016 to the Urdd camp in Llangrannog. We left the school at lunchtime and endured a lengthy bus ride to our destination. As we arrived the pupils were eager to dive straight into the activities.

Friday night gave us some splash time at the swimming pool along with a rather creepy bat hunt. Some of our Year 7 girls weren't impressed by this!

Eventually we all enjoyed a restful night and Saturday morning the pupils had just about enough energy to participate in a jam packed activity day. We started with trampolining and then moved on to horse-riding, high ropes and the climbing wall. There was also the chance

to go quad biking and have a few games of football. All of this in some fantastic weather.

Mrs Jones was very keen on tiring the pupils out by going on a long trek to Llangrannog beach. The walk was definitely worth it, as we arrived to the beach just in time for a beautiful sunset...and a delicious ice-cream!

Before embarking on the journey home on Sunday we had enough time to hit the ski slopes and the go karts. Even Mrs Thomas and Mrs Jones put on their helmets and raced around the go karting track!

A big thank you to the pupils who attended and represented the school amazingly all weekend and also a special thank you to Mrs Jones who organised a great trip. Diolch. ■

