



Written for  
students by  
students

# The Journal

Issue 12 Mar 2015

## Editor's Note

Sut mae!

With the Easter holidays fast approaching, take every opportunity you can to relax (and eat far too many Easter eggs) before revision for the summer exams really begins. This term has been packed full of exciting events, including the ski trip to Vermont, Miss Bidder's trip to see the Large Hadron Collider and of course, the highly anticipated Eisteddfod.

This edition of *The Journal* also marks the departure of our Year 13 students, who are stepping back and leaving the newspaper in the capable hands of the Year 12s. But, your input in *The Journal* would still be greatly appreciated. If you're interested in writing for us, feel free to pop in to our meetings in H2 on a Monday and Wednesday lunchtime or email us at [bryntirion.newspaper@gmail.com](mailto:bryntirion.newspaper@gmail.com). Everyone is welcome; we hope to hear from you soon!

Niall

### Contributors

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## Eisteddfod 2015



Excitement echoed around the school on 27th February as Bryntirion Comprehensive held its annual Eisteddfod. After weeks of preparation, pupils were invited to spend a day in the sports hall, performing for one another on the stage, showcasing all the talent that the school has to offer in true Welsh tradition.

On the day, the sports hall was alive with excitement and colours as pupils took to the stage in competitions that have become traditional to the Bryntirion Eisteddfod over the years. Our talented musicians performed their instrument of choice, be it piano, strings or woodwind. Others formed groups and took part in the Bands competition, which is always a favourite among the pupils. Others tried their hand in the disco dancing competition where they aimed to impress and entertain the audience with their tremendous talents. To round the day off, the house choirs took to the stage with the traditional recitation of 'i bob i'n sy fyddlon.'

Congratulations to all the pupils who took part, and a special congratulations to the winning house, Hywel!



# Eisteddfod 2015



## The Wonders of the Universe

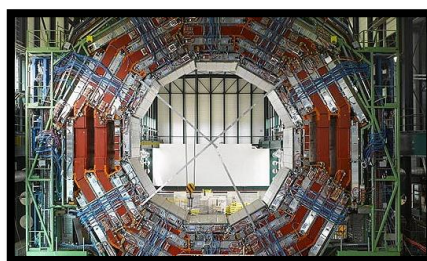


I have just come back from an amazing visit to CERN, where I have been rubbing shoulders with the world's top Physicists. One of these top scientists was Lyn Evans, who was born just up the road from us in Aberdare. He was in charge of the project at CERN three years ago. He explained to me that Physicists at CERN explore matter using machines called particle accelerators. These accelerate beams of particles and smash them into each other to create high energy conditions similar to those in the first instants of the birth of our universe.

CERN has the most powerful machine ever built: the Large Hadron Collider. It is 27km in circumference. In this gigantic tube the particles are accelerated up to nearly the speed of light. By studying collisions at these speeds scientists are making progress in understanding the mysteries of how our Universe is made.

On July the 4<sup>th</sup> in 2012 the HIGGS BOSON particle was detected and Lyn Evans explained that through studying the properties of this unique particle scientists will have a better understanding of the origin of mass.

For me this visit was one of the most exciting opportunities of my teaching career. Seeing scientists from all over the world all working side by side for a common purpose was awe inspiring, especially as the leader in charge of it all was a Welsh man.





# Hitting the Slopes States-side



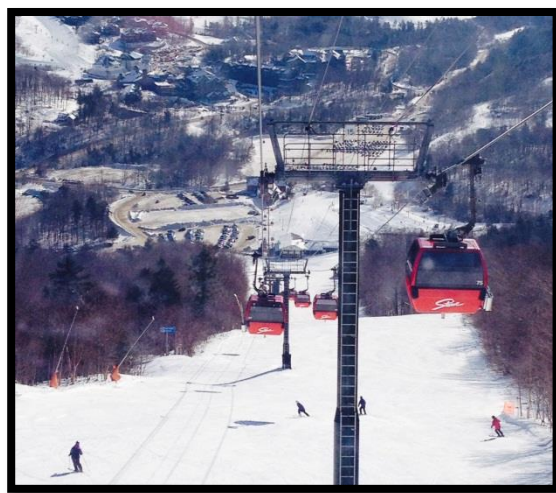
*Senior students and staff recently touched back down in Britain after a successful ski trip to Vermont, America. Rhys Ash, our editor-in-chief, describes his experience.*

After a flight which felt like a lifetime, we finally touched down in Boston, welcomed with a blanket of snow. The snow multiplied as we slowly crept up the mountain. This boded well for the week. We were treated to an intoxicating mixture of mountain clad views and fresh mountain air which made for a magical experience.

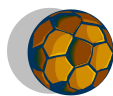
As a skier of twelve years myself I must say that the skiing in Stowe was one of the best if not *the* best I've experienced. Wide, empty, tree lined slopes are not something you find in places in France or Austria. It was truly a breath of fresh air being able to ski a slope without a random French person shouting at you for your inadequacy at skiing.

New York was an experience that'll live with me forever, simply down to the size of the buildings. As a young adult who doesn't often go to massive cities New York was truly mesmerising. From the odd peacefulness of Central Park to the ostentatious Time Square everyone on the trip loved every second of it.

The Stowe/New York trip of 2015 will stay in my memory for a long time to come.



## Sports Roundup



- Hannah Jenkins of year 9 has represented Wales in Ireland last weekend at the international cross country championships. Well done Hannah!
- Zoe Wilson represented Wales at the Celtic Cup in Ireland last weekend. Zoe came third in her category. Congratulations!
- As part of the school's endeavour to encourage girls into sport, students from the girls' network group attended a participation conference. Ffion Luke of year 11 delivered a very successful workshop at the event. As part of this drive, there have also been aqua activities on a Tuesday after school which have been a real success.
- Girls' rugby goes from strength to strength. They have been given the opportunity to play both tag and contact rugby this term and have had enormous success in recent regional tournaments.
- Year 10 and senior boys' rugby teams both finished second in a recent Urdd rugby festival.
- A new futsal club has been established by Mr. Bekker, which has already seen high membership.

Congratulations to all that have participated in sporting events this term!

# BOTAWA Project Update



Our very own Mrs Bowser represented the school in a trip to Botswana and Tanzania in aid of the Botawa project. We got to sit down with Mrs Bowser to talk about her experiences on the trip.

## **How well have our partners recovered since the fire?**

At the time we were told that the repairs would be finished within two weeks, but that unfortunately doesn't seem possible. For the time-being, they have made two class rooms into make-shift bedrooms. However they don't have any mosquito nets. Despite this, it was clear that the children liked it there, and they clearly enjoyed themselves.

## **What did you and the other teachers do to help the children?**

One thing we did was talk to the girls who were staying there, and for that they were very grateful. They felt a little bit vulnerable, because they wanted a fence to be put around the compound. They were grateful for the supplies and money we have donated.

## **What was the highlight of the trip?**

The moment that stood out was when I took photographs of the children. They had never seen themselves in a photograph and at first didn't recognise themselves. When they did they were very excited .

## **What is their next step in recovery?**

Books are going to be sent to the school very soon. Other supplies and donations will also be prioritised – such as mosquito nets. The project has had a very large impact there, but we as people also benefit from the work we do for them. It was an amazing experience.

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# Eco-Warriors Plant for the Future



One of the first targets of the newly unified Eco-Committee and BOTAWA group is to work through the steps to achieve Green Flag Eco-Schools status. There are a number of issues which have to be addressed, including Energy efficiency targets, developing international links and making better use of the school grounds.

With extensive land available, there are plenty of opportunities to develop new uses to enhance both educational experiences and the overall appearance of the whole school environment.

It has been designated as a potential new woodland. With backing from various organisations trees started to arrive in early March for planting. The first 45 to be placed included Wild Cherry, a Beech Circle for Mr Curtis (a few years to wait though!) and some Mountain Ash (Rowan) trees.

During the rest of this year we are expecting to receive a further 480 saplings. Within a few years the woodland should be self-sustaining and should start to alter the nature of the heavy clay soils with cause drainage problems in that part of the school.

The long term plan is to develop an area of indigenous woodland offering shelter, solace and bio-diversity for use in all subjects from Science and Geography to English and Maths.