



Dane Court Grammar School Newsletter



July 2015

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A CARING AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL WRITES...

Sports Day 2015

Our annual sports day was once again a brilliant whole school event. Fairly grey clouds and drizzle gave way to bright warm sunshine and superb athletic performances.

From the parade of students with their amazing home-made banners to the final lap of honour by the winning Tallinn House, the day was a riot of colour, joyful noise and wholesome effort.



Four records were broken but the abiding memories are of a happy bunch of young people enjoying healthy competition. Doesn't this just sum up our school?

The Summer Music concert

The Summer Music concert was a great success this year. Groups including the Senior Choir, Jazz Band, Strings Ensemble, Rock Band and Show Choir

all performed to a full and enthusiastic audience.

Dancers and soloists who have won music prizes this year also performed, including Aimee Allin on voice and guitar, Sam Field on drums (his farewell appearance), Jonah Mummery on trombone and Chloe-Louise Latter on bass guitar. The concert was introduced and compered by Kirstie Higby.



The music department is very excited to announce that the noted vocal tutor Marin Rendle will be coaching the Show Choir next year and we are looking forward to another successful year with this group.
Mr Mason



'What is school for?' I asked the year 8 students I teach.

Most of them told me that it's about learning, getting good

grades and qualifications that will lead to a good job in the future. They're right, of course: these things are important. But school is about more than this. Some responses went further. 'School is for learning, building relationships, making mistakes and challenging yourself,' said one student. Another replied that 'school is for learning: not just education and knowledge but how to make relationships that last and prosper and ultimately how to survive in the real world.' These are our real values.

As we say goodbye to our year 13 students, we also bid farewell to a number of members of staff. All of them, whether they have been with us for two years, seven years or thirty-nine years, have helped make Dane Court the happy, vibrant, thriving place it is now. School isn't really a place at all: it's a community – buildings may change; students and staff move on – and we create and strengthen it together, every day, in lessons and in everything else we do together.

As Einstein is supposed to have said, 'education is what's left when you've forgotten everything you learned at school.' School has finished for the summer: let the wider learning now begin!

Goodbye!

We say goodbye this year to Callum Knowles (Receptionist), Amy Barnes (English), Jessica Packer (Biology), Sally Geldard (Examinations), Jeanette Stockley (Teaching Assistant), Bea Vasquez (Spanish), Roz Munday (Mathematics) and Derek Towe (PE).

All have served Dane Court with distinction. We thank them for their dedicated service and wish them well for university, promotion, other careers, working abroad, or retirement.

The Last Word

The English department was overwhelmed by the response to the latest creative writing competition, entitled 'The Last Word'. Approximately sixty pupils from years 7, 8, 9 and 10 entered, and the standard of entries was extremely impressive across the year groups.

After much deliberation from the judges, it was decided that Sam Williams' (10B) stunningly crafted poem should take the prize in the 9 and 10 competition, while Nicole Palmer-Jones was victorious in the 7 and 8 competition for her sophisticated and haunting warning of the dangers of climate change. Lily Finch (9B) and Lauren Casey (7T) were second in the respective competitions, with Siobhan Corbey Tobin (10N) and Jasmine Sayer (8B) taking third.

The English department would like to thank all the entrants for ensuring the competition was such a pleasure to judge. This term's winners will be awarded prizes at September's prize evening.

The winning entries are below:

Nicole Palmer-Jones 7T

Midday sun, strong, pounding and relentless, it had already taken the ground. Cracks deeply penetrated the parched soil, as wrinkled as an old wizened face; this barren land they once called home could no longer

provide shelter for even the smallest of creatures. It had taken the trees, now flaking at the trunks, the branches left leafless, bare. It had taken the water, the stream; once a murmur of trickling filled the otherwise derelict plains, but now nothing but silence. Even the wind can't speak. The only thing left for the sun to take is them. Its cruel gaze glaring down on their perishable bodies. Its eye unblinking, unforgiving. Before man, the worshipers of concrete, this was a thriving land; the day they took it for their own was the day it began to die.

These days the sky fights back. The only oceans are found amongst the sky, an unmerciful endless blue, without the wisp of a cloud, just the beading, blinding white of the sun. A world once painted by the vivid rays of this spectacular object has become slave to its remorseless rays. It stopped bringing smiles a long time ago. Instead it brings the remaining souls to their knees, where they fall upon the crumbling ground. A solitary tear is drawn; the only water left upon the planet our predecessors named blue. The last helpless word to slip through their cracked lips is always a sincere, useless- "sorry".

Sam Williams: 10B

A word to save, a word to extinguish

Splattered faces, seeping with the white mist of dreams.
A hundred bare, rough, dying feet.
Racing. Drawing rivers of ink across the ground.
Deep streams of gleaming liquid flowing by the movement of countless children's steps.

Minds frothing with ripe thoughts and silent fresh growing fears.
The ability to realise the future lost in a shredded memory, too important to keep complete,
Leaving sunken melted eyes.

Shifting through the pines, a thin delicate string pulling at the corner of your wandering sight.
The slightest tremor across that stretched line making you stare at the pinpoint of light in the clouds.
Your heart illuminated by the milky vapour above,
a name,

a word,
drifting towards the churning blood searing tip of your hearing,

Dancing across the shackled fence, leaping the boundaries of your existence, my stuttering words.
Sand and bitter unrelenting pain, the abyss was further than you thought, a larger slice of faith than expected,
The curling transparent waves padding against a collapsing body,

Still muttering, fumbling with the door to comprehension,
Left alone and shouting a battle cry of whispers,
Chasing what's behind you and running from your paradise,

One cracked and splintered breath,
One rush of sound filled air,
One desperate grasp at peace,

The last word before words mean nothing only faces and the infinite grief of the parched sky,

One last word.

Walk in aid of wildlife charity

by Mr White



On an overcast day 14 adventurers set off on a coast to coast walk of Kent from St Margaret's at Cliffe to Whitstable.

The walk covered 29.5 miles of the Kent countryside and raised £500 for the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation. Our favourite Olympian Chris Cook also joined us and was impressed by the excellent efforts shown by Erin, Lucy, Molly, Martin, Dan, Matt, Lucy, Charlie, Imogen, Ellie and James. Well done to all who took part.

Coffee mornings & afternoon tea



Year 8 hosted six superb coffee mornings and two fabulous afternoon tea events this year. The total amount of money raised at these events was £275 which will go towards helping those affected by the Nepal disaster.

The year 8 students really excelled themselves by demonstrating teamwork, organisation and some high quality culinary skills and presentation. The presence of many friends and relatives was much appreciated by the students and contributed to the friendly social atmosphere.

We would like to thank you for your support in helping the students to prepare for their event and also for making the events such a success on the day.



KS3 Food lessons next year

With the onset of a new two week timetable it will be more important than ever that our students are well organised for their practical lessons. We believe that organisation and planning are important life skills for our students. Inevitably some students find these skills more difficult than others. We plan to share ingredients lists for practical lessons on a shared document on Google drive. Some paper copies will also be available. It would be

helpful if students could inform their parents at the start of term which day and week of the timetable will be their practical lesson.

Students will always need a named container in which to take their food home. It is also helpful if the bag or container that holds ingredients could be named clearly to avoid mix ups at school.

If for any reason you are unable to provide ingredients please do contact us to discuss further. We would like to thank parents and families for their ongoing support in providing ingredients and we look forward to seeing many of you at one of our events next year.

Year 7 activities week

Year 7 activities week was a mix of business studies, languages and food technology. Our main aim at the end of the project was to be able to serve food from France, Germany or Spain in the language of that country in our cafés.

Our languages were decided beforehand; therefore the foods we made in food technology were from the country where the language was spoken. For example, we made pain au chocolat as one of the French dishes, paella in Spanish and apfelstrudel in German.

The business part of it was the costing of the ingredients, the name of the café and the design. We were given a gazebo for each of our countries to decorate with things from that nation. The hall was filled with tables and chairs ready for our parents on Friday and decorated with facts about each of our countries.

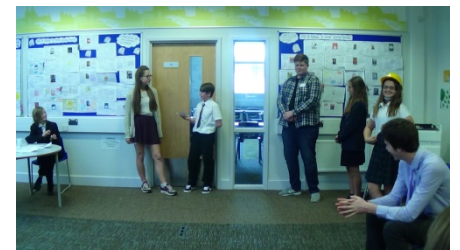
Speaking in the foreign language was a very important part of the week. For the duration of the café we were expected to communicate with parents and fellow pupils in the language we were learning. There were no exceptions for parents, and phrase sheets were created for their use! Overall this project was a great success and we all had a brilliant time throughout the week.

Tanya Jha 7S

Year 7 Presentational Skills with KES

Pupils from 7H welcomed fifteen of their counterparts from King Ethelbert School on Friday 26 June to take part in a workshop on presentational skills. Working in small groups, pupils were asked to devise and perform persuasive presentations on the adoption of new school rules.

Pupils from both schools showed impressive creativity and team work, and the afternoon finished with compelling persuasive pieces on diverse topics such as 'why all assemblies should be delivered as raps', 'why each department should have a dog or cat' and 'why roller blades should be compulsory uniform for teachers and pupils'.



The presentations saw some fantastic performances, speeches and short pieces of drama, and all pupils were an absolute credit to their respective schools. The helping sixth formers led each group admirably and played a vital role in the success of the afternoon.

At the end of the afternoon, the year 7s involved asked for some of the ideas to be adopted next year. With that in mind, we would advise teachers to put some Kanye West on the headphones and take a roller blading trip down to the local kennels in preparation for September.



Attendance

At Dane Court we believe that good attendance is the key to academic progress. A review of last year's data shows that the top achieving 20 students in year 10, for instance, also achieved an average of 98% attendance. The lowest attaining 20 students in year 10 achieved only 90% attendance. The Department for Education has announced that the threshold for persistent absence will reduce from 15% to 10% from September 2015.

We monitor and follow up all absences at Dane Court; a student who is 'persistently absent' (less than 90% attendance) can expect further interventions, including possible contact from Social Services. 10% absence means 19 days absence in one year. Our school average is nearly 96% attendance, and many of our students have 100% attendance. 90% attendance for an individual may sound good, but is equivalent to one half day missed every week. Over one school year this is four weeks of learning lost; over five years this is half a year of school missed! We know that there are genuine reasons why children occasionally cannot attend school, but it is important that they attend whenever possible.

There are many reasons why students miss school and we try to support them in a variety of ways. Teachers are notified when there is likely to be longer absence so that work can be sent home and catching up can commence as soon as possible. School is open after 3:20pm for students who wish to take advantage of the facilities and often teachers can meet students to consolidate work that they have missed. Most importantly, members of the pastoral staff are available to speak to should a problem develop.

Please encourage your son or daughter to attend school if they feel slightly below par; often they forget their ailment once in the company of others. If you are able to, please provide a dose of Paracetamol or Ibuprofen. If you feel there is an anxiety issue underlying unwillingness to come to school please call the Head of House or Key Stage Manager to discuss the problem and

and we will try to put strategies in place before it becomes an attendance issue.

Changes to the School Day

In order to accommodate changes to GCSE examinations in many subjects, we intend to make some small adjustments to the amount of time spent on each subject within our curriculum, giving a little more time to English and Mathematics each week. We have also decided to change from six lessons of 50 minutes each day to five lessons of 60 minutes each day. The total lesson time is unaltered, but the most productive part of the learning time – the middle of the lesson – is extended, and the amount of time spent changing from one lesson to another is reduced.

As a school, we are confident that this change will enhance the quality of learning. This change has caused us to make some alterations to the school day times (see below).

Dane Court School Day Times 2015-2016	
Period 1	08:40 – 09:40
Period 2	09:45 – 10:45
Break	10:45 – 11:05
Period 3	11:05 – 12:05
Period 4	12:10 – 13:10
Assembly	13:10 – 13:20
Mentoring	13:20 – 13:35
Lunch	13:35 – 14:20
Period 6	14:20 – 15:20

English and mathematics GCSE

We will offer curriculum evenings in the Autumn term to give more information about the new GCSE English and mathematics courses. To find out more for yourself about the changes to GCSE English and mathematics, you may wish to follow the links to <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse> and <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/maths/gcse/mathematics-8300>

Summer Mailing

This August we will be replacing our traditional postal delivery of important information for parents with an on-line service on our website and an email for any personalised information. Documents will be added as they become available with all information being published by Wednesday 19 August 2015.

Visit <http://danecourt.kent.sch.uk/summer-mailing> (available until the end of October 2015).

Restorative Approaches at Dane Court

Dane Court is taking part with other local schools in a pilot scheme using Restorative Approaches to deal with incidents within school. A Restorative Approach is one which focuses on the harm caused in an incident, allowing each party to listen to each other's point of view and take responsibility to put things right. It moves away from blame and finger-pointing to developing emotional intelligence, understanding the effect that actions have had on others.

We have a team of Restorative Ambassadors who are students trained in facilitating short workshops and interventions that will help students approach and work through conflict in constructive and beneficial ways. Last week these students presented assemblies to each house to introduce everyone to Restorative Approaches and also to introduce themselves.

Miss Brears (who will return after the summer break as Mrs Brissenden) is leading the Restorative Approaches at Dane Court. We hope that the use of Restorative Ambassadors to deal with appropriate incidents will be a powerful tool in helping students to become more resilient and to repair relationships.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Miss Brears or any member of the senior leadership team.

Dane Court BIG choir

For September: We invite parents, teachers, staff, students (16+), and the wider community to join us in this new and exciting singing venture. We will be singing a mix of contemporary, modern music by **Keane, Madonna, Adele, John Rutter and the Beach Boys**. We plan at least two performances in December and a Spring Choral Concert at the beautiful and local setting of St Peter's Church where our joint Dane Court choirs will sing **Haydn's Little Organ Mass**, motets by Mozart and Fauré and the repertoire of all our singing groups.

When: Mondays 6.00 to 7.30pm
(September to April)

Where: Music room, Dane Court Grammar School

Rehearsals will be led by Patrick Dunn (in our Science Department) who has considerable experience as a pianist, accompanist, vocal coach, and choral conductor. For enquiries email: pdunn@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

Music Lessons

Any student who wishes to start instrumental music lessons in September should download the Instrumental Form from the school website and return the completed form to the school office. Please note Pop Singing and Theory lessons are now available as well as all other lesson types. Current instrumental students do not need to re-apply.

Please note



is unavailable between
23 July to 2 September 2015.

PA Boot Fairs

The Dane Court Grammar School Parents Association's monthly boot fairs take place typically on the second Sunday of each month between April and October at the school; car and van access from 6:00am.

The next event will take place on Sunday 13 September 2015.

NO NEED TO BOOK – JUST TURN UP ON THE DAY.

Stalls holders £7 (car); £10 (van).

Open to general public from 6:30am and refreshments are available.

The last boot fair of 2015 will be held on 11 October.

The **Thanet Farmers Market** will take place on the same days and will open to the public at 9.30am.

Winning Streak!



Technology solutions provider European Electronique, in partnership with HP and Microsoft, recently held a prize draw for schools to win a classroom set of 25 HP Stream 11 Pro for Education laptops. Dane Court Grammar School, entered by John Lycett, procurement manager, were the lucky winners of this prize, valued at over £5,000.

Road Safety

Parents and carers may have noticed that we have a new sign at the school entrance, paid for with the proceeds of one of our Road Safety teams' activities. Most people support us by sticking to the following rules, and I would like to ask everyone to observe them:

- Please do not drive onto the school site unless it is absolutely unavoidable and you have prior permission
- Students who cycle to school should wear cycle helmets. Lockers are provided
- There is a speed limit of 5mph on the school site.

Fishing: Ireland Home Internationals

We had got off to an early start; however, with all my adrenaline I was wide awake. We drove to our ferry which took us to the elegant coast of County Wexford. We soon arrived at our hotel. We met with all the other team members and then the next day headed out to our practice venues.

Our game plan, using 'local knowledge' (our Irish 'spies'), was to catch piles of flounders and baby eels. The next day was the same, so we thought we had it covered in the strategic side of things. When the competition started we were (what we call) 'smashing the comp' but then the Scots started catching bigger fish. That is how the rest of the competition went on.

The day came to an end – there was no more we could do: we had come joint first. The next day we needed to work extra hard to beat the Scots. But as the day started, all the other teams started copying our tactics which they had obviously seen. Eventually we managed to work the fish out and once we had done that we swept the beaches with fish.

We then won GOLD for all our hard work, beating the Scottish, Welsh and the Irish.

Oliver Hampton-Saint, 8N



Oliver Hampton-Saint (8N), is a member of the National Junior Sea Angling Squad. An outstanding achievement, congratulations Oliver!

World Language Day 2015

On Thursday 2 July, Mrs Birkett and Mrs Green gave twenty Year 8 students the opportunity to attend World Language Day at the University of Kent. It was our first trip to a university and between us we knew three languages – French, German and Spanish – although we learnt a lot more after participating in World Language Day.

Our day was organised with two activities before lunch and two after lunch. These activities were: Ancient Greek, African drumming, French/Spanish Theatre Productions, Introduction to Mandarin, Introduction to Italian, Discover German, Euro Quiz or other language workshops.

In the French Theatre, three French actors performed for all the children who are currently learning French. The performance was all in French but to help us understand they frequently involved the audience, which made it a very enjoyable start to the day.

In the Euro Quiz there were 30 questions on Europe. We got into teams of two, three or four and came up with a team name. Tayla Bayley and Lucy Munday came runners up in the Euro Quiz final when they went up against the winners of the other workshops in front of all the schools that attended.

We would recommend the trip to next year's Year 8 as it was a fun and enjoyable day in which we experienced new things, learnt new languages and got to see what it would be like to go to university in the future.

French Trip to Le Château du Broutel, May 2015

Please see the link below to the website for an excellent article by James Dolman & Tom Barker

<http://danecourt.kent.sch.uk/parents8/news6/visits/720-france-trip-2015>

Ypres

Year nine students Antonio Romei and Emma Laffargue recall their visit to the site of First World War battlefields. A longer version of this article and photos can be found on the website:

<http://danecourt.kent.sch.uk/parents8/news6/visits/728-history-visit-to-ypres>

Our first stop in Belgium was a small outdoor memorial area where soldiers who were convicted of desertion or other crimes were shot by members of their own side. The guide began to recount a moving story of his time in the Falklands and how the soldiers of the First World War were court-martialled if they showed cowardice or abandoned the battlefield. He said 4,000 were sentenced to death; however, fewer than 400 sentences were carried out.

We then travelled to the Passchendaele museum and toured the fantastic exhibits, detailing everything about life in the trenches. The weight of the equipment, the clothing they had to wear, the rats they had to cope with and the conditions they had to sleep in were just a few examples of what made the museum such a success. From there we went to Tyne Cot cemetery: we were soon gazing at an immense expanse of white, engraved headstones which lay row upon row. We laid our poppy wreath and paid our respects to the 12,000 dead buried there. It suddenly became apparent to all of us just bad the war was and how the facts we'd learnt in school were so much more than just statistics.

The German cemetery was dark and grim, the polar opposite to the Allies' one. Oak trees obscured any light on the headstones. In the centre was a mass burial site. In all, 44,000 soldiers are buried or commemorated there. We were shocked at the contrast with Tyne Cot.

Finally, we made our way through the town of Menin: we'd seen some great buildings on our journey but nothing quite like the Menin gate where the names of 55,000 soldiers are carved. We continued on through the crowds until we reached the chocolate store, where the chocolate was absolutely brilliant and getting a taste of the town's culture was a good experience.

London Mathematical Society Annual Public Lectures

Random Samples

On Thursday 25 June a small group of IB Mathematics Higher students attended the London Mathematical Society annual public lectures.

The first lecture was given by Dr Ruth King, Reader in Statistics, University of St Andrews and was entitled, *How many...? (Estimating population sizes)*. The talk discussed how a population size can be estimated when only samples of the population can be taken. It highlighted the dramatic effects of erroneous assumptions on estimates, by citing two estimates of the number of adult cod in the North Sea, the first assuming the fish reached adulthood at 13 years like their Mediterranean counterparts, which resulted in an estimate of 100 cod as opposed to around 40 million if adulthood is assumed at 4 years as is the case in the North Sea.

After a short interval we returned to the lecture theatre for a talk from Professor Martin Hairer, FRS Regius Professor of Mathematics, University of Warwick, on *The mathematics of randomness*. He talked about the theory of Universality which states that both simple and complex models can create similar results on a large scale. He showed how a random walk can be shown to mimic Brownian motion if repeated a large number of times and how a Tetris model can be used to model the spread of fire across paper.

Mrs Gadd



Group 4 Project Science Fair

More than 120 year 12 students are studying science subjects ('Group 4' subjects in the IB) this year. For Activities Week all were busy carrying out research projects and creating presentations for an impressive Science Fair on Friday.

This year's theme was 'Energy' which gave rise to some brilliantly diverse projects, for example, lightning, chemical reactions and even how living cells use sugar to provide energy. The week aims to mirror how scientists work in the 'real world' as members of a team and gives the students the opportunity see how their particular scientific skills can be combined.



Pfizer, Thanet Earth, Fujifilm and the Mayor of Broadstairs and St Peter's, Councillor Rosalind Binks, sponsored prizes for the best four scientific presentations.

Vivienne Jenkins and Nick Elford of Pfizer and Sarah Quattroluni of Thanet Earth visited the science fair to judge the entries, along with Councillor Binks and Head of School Andrew Fowler.



The quality of the work produced by all 18 groups was of the highest standard, and the enthusiasm of the students was inspiring. Each group produced a very professional-looking wall poster, which will be used in a future exhibition.

The Pfizer Science Prize was won by Ellen Whitehead, Zainab Mansoor, Sarah Burke, Dom Wallen, Nick Short and Lucy Mount for the research project 'A comparison of energy generation from wind and water turbines'.

The Fujifilm Science Prize was won by Sabrina Latchman, Ellie Albone, Samuel Barrs, Jordan Potter, Valentine Goesel and Alice Price for the research project 'An investigation into the chemical reaction behind glowing synthetics and bioluminescence'.



The Thanet Earth Science Prize was won by James Howard, Josh Edeki, Chris May, Maisie Bodemeaid, Emily Watkins, Poppy Attwell-Bushell and Shane Wells for the research project 'Energy transfers in tsunamis'.

The Mayor's Science Prize was won by Anila Viepadan, Maren Riseng, Jack Farley, Ria Sareen, Alexander Payne and Gregory Nocentini for the research project 'To what extent does the kinetic energy of a meteorite affect the diameter of the crater?'

COMPETITION TIME!

CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

Every year at Dane Court teachers get married or have new babies; others leave for pastures new, and some retire. We like to mark each of these occasions with a greetings card, and we are looking for some new, creative and inspiring designs. Who better to ask than our talented students?

Your task, over the Summer holiday, is to create a card design for one (or more) of the following categories:

New job: a design which reflects new opportunities, hope, promotion, a fresh start.

Retirement: a design which reflects relaxation, freedom, time, new opportunities.



New baby: a design which reflects new life, precious, exciting, family, love, joy.



Wedding: a design which reflects love, partnership, joy, excitement, companionship.

A few things to consider:

- The design will be reproduced on a standard A5 greetings card, so think carefully about the materials you choose, and the size/dimensions of your original design.
- The teacher receiving the card could be male or female, so try not to make the card too gender-specific (similarly, the 'new baby' card needs to suit a boy or girl).
- Wording on the card is optional. We can always have a message printed inside the card, so don't feel you have to include any wording in your design.

The competition is open to all year groups. There will be prizes for the winners, but the main prize is to have your card reproduced and used for many years to come. This is your opportunity to create a lasting legacy at Dane Court!

Entries to be submitted by **WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER** to Mrs Jellett in the English Department. If you have any questions, please see Mrs Jellett or email jellett@danecourt.kent.sch.uk.

Good luck! We look forward to seeing your designs. ☺

Sports Day

Following three days of intense competition, including the pentathlon on Monday (years 9 and 10), field events on Tuesday and team games and track events on Wednesday 15 July, the final result was:

First – Tallinn
 Second – Neuchatel
 Third – Helsinki
 Fourth – Sorrento
 Fifth – Delphi
 Sixth – Barcelona

More photos on our website:

<http://danecourt.kent.sch.uk/house/64-house-news/732-tallinn-top-sports-day-2015>



Colour Run in aid of Oasis Women's Refuge

Five sixth form students organised a Colour Run as part of their IBCP course. The event took place on Tuesday 21 July with more than 200 students donating a total of over £500 to run on our track in a deluge of colourful powders. It was a marvellous spectacle for the rest of the school who came out to watch.

More pictures will be available on our website soon.

