

Salute our six super sleuths!

HALF a dozen Year 10 girls got caught up in a Famous Five type scenario, turning detective after witnessing a crime while on their weekday wander into Exeter.

Having witnessed a break-in while strolling through the St Leonards area last Wednesday, they re-encountered the robber and ended up going to the main police station to give their account of the story.

Belinda Hibberd and Maxine Tucker take up the story on behalf of the group.

Says Belinda, "What started out as a perfectly normal afternoon turned into something quite spooky."

And Maxine told Out of Court in more detail what befell her, Belinda, Abby Steer,

Amber Fitzgerald, Stephanie Sansom and Henrietta Irons throughout the dramatic afternoon.

"We had missed the bus," she said, "and so we decided to walk in.

"As we arrived in St Leonards we

heard a smash, and coming round the corner we caught sight of a weird man and a woman. He was pulling his hand out of a broken car window. He had seen us and was legging it towards Spicer Road, where he met up with the woman."

"We decided that we had better call the police immediately, and they said to stay by the car, which we did.

"After about ten minutes the police arrived and asked us to explain what had gone on. We described the man; what

he was wearing and where he had been heading: a white hat, cream jumper, jeans and white trainers. The police told us not to worry and to carry on, so off we went again."

That was exciting enough, but believe it

or not the girls spotted the fellow again as soon as they arrived in the centre of the city.

Says Belinda, "Then we saw him again. In Nationwide. Quick, we thought, ring the police again. At this point we were quite worried, tense and a bit scared! A



Ten Tors verdict ... see back page

policewoman arrived to help with the investigation. She told us not to follow him, and said that they had got him on CCTV. But we couldn't resist.

"We decided that the police were right. We should leave it to them, so we set off towards Burger King. After 30 minutes or so of shopping, we received a phone call from the police asking for three girls to go along to the station to give statements."

When they arrived there, PC Ellis told the trio that the man had been caught and that he had not requested a solicitor, thereby admitting to his crime.

All in a day's work for the Magdalen Six!

Upper G Warlocks

In Upper G we have been studying Macbeth, which is being performed in the Rougemont Gardens, Exeter, later this summer. We have recently been concentrating on writing our own witches' spells. In one lesson, the class combined to create this. We hope you like it:

Guts of duck on block of stone.

Flower stalk and chicken's bone;

Dolphin's head from South Sea tide.

Sawn and diced with bison's hide;

Python's poison sucked at noon,

All dished up in silver spoon;

Beak of hawk and brain of ghost,

Seagull's leg with sand from coast.

Double, double, toil and trouble;

Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Key points for making a spell are

*Each line has seven stresses

*End words have to rhyme

*You have to think of weird ideas

*Stresses have to alternate, long and short.

It's not easy - believe us!

Success for expression



Magdalen Court pupils were highly commended for their GCSE Expressive arts work last week.

Among the star performers were a quartet from Year Nine, who took their inspiration from such famous slapstick comedians as Laurel and Hardy, Rowan Atkinson's creation Mr Bean and the great Charlie Chaplin.

Guided by Mrs Wrightson, the four worked out a scene involving a theft from an Italian museum. Three of them case the area and end up attempting to make off with 'the statue' a guard, who just happens to have dropped off to sleep.

Said Rob Greenaway: "We felt that the thing really came alive during the last week or so of rehearsals, and by the time the examiner arrived we were really keen to show off our work." His verdict - some of the best work he has seen. And, as chief examiner, he was dealing out rare praise.

Well done Alistair, Fabio, Simon and Rob. Talking of things dramatic, parts have been allocated for the forthcoming production of Alice The Musical. The songs - no fewer than 15 of them - are becoming familiar, writes Lilla Llewellyn.

"We are looking forward to practising the songs and rehearsing so that by the time July comes our performance will be enjoyed by all.

"So, as they say, don't be late for a very important date!"

Editor: Mr M.Beckett

Hard cheese, City

There was only one big game at Wembley at the weekend – and we know now that those gallant Grecians went down 2-1 to a team from somewhere up North.

Back at Magdalen Court, 13 hours after getting back in the 50-seater coach Alistair Bibby said, “The new stadium is fantastic. Huge. The atmosphere was brilliant.

“There were 28,000 fans from Devon, just to see Exeter City! On the M5 there was a convoy of red and white colours two miles long.

“True, the food at the stadium was very expensive – in fact, it was £5 just for a cheeseburger, but the whole day was wonderful.

“When we go back next year, I’ll take my own packed lunch!”

Nervous - or what!



I sat in the Computer Room, my heart racing. I was taking short, sharp breaths and shaking. In my whole life, I have never been quite as nervous. I was minutes away from the moment that I had been preparing for over several months.

The clock duly clicked round to 9.58. I had to go and receive the pink and the orange cards. Scanning them back in the IT Room, I discovered that there was nothing which puzzled me. Ten minutes later it was time for me to perform. I went into the Music

Room. Where there is usually a large blue drum kit there was a desk. Behind it sat Mr Beckett. In front of him a tape recorder and microphone. There were papers all around, and large black-and-white posters, all official, around the walls and on the back of the door. It began. I started to answer the questions from the cards. This was simple enough, except that I ordered a bedroom containing one bed for ten people. Oops, I carried on, now talking about my chosen topic,

‘House and Home’. It all went surprisingly well, and really rather swiftly. In fact I was starting to enjoy myself as I was able to show off what I had learnt in lessons. My second topic, which turned out to be Social Activities, threw up no real horrors. I was happy with what I’d uttered.

It was not as scary as I thought it would be. The dentist’s is an altogether more terrifying experience. So anybody who is thinking about taking the subject in future, don’t be alarmed. It’s something to be cherished and anticipated with confidence, the French Oral exam.

Drama Queens

The GCSE Drama group are performing in their assessed performance on Monday the 21st of May, writes Will Power. Abby, Amber, Maxine and Steph will be performing the simultaneously hilarious and heart breaking “A Dog’s Life” by Pam Valentine, whilst Maddie and Amy will be performing the final scene and nail biting climax of “Proof of the Poison”. All six budding actors have displayed great talent over the past two terms, and I’m sure you’ll join me in wishing them all the best in the climax

of their own Drama GCSE, as well as thanking the volunteers who have agreed to help with the performances. And of course, best of luck to Laura who is to perform the exceedingly demanding part of Deborah in Harold Pinter's "A Kind of Alaska" for her AS level Drama. With any luck, I'll be able to persuade them all to perform for an audience of parents and peers, but don't get your hopes up!



Holly Joint

One day ...



Latest arrivals!!!

Introducing... Babs, Tabatha, Cleo and Mid-night. My cat Coco has just had four kittens, writes *Laura Bickerton*. She had them at three o'clock in the morning. My Mum, who is a photographer, helped with the birth. She may



not be a very experienced 'moggy mid-wife', but she certainly takes a good snap! Two of the kittens have already found a good home, with Mrs Wrightson and her daughter, Georgia, (pictured, left, with Laura)

November 5th. Indeed, the town recently featured in a TV program 'The World's Craziest Events'. Another notable future of Ottery is it's beautiful church, which apparently is smaller version of Exeter Cathedral.

Fancy a break in Italy?

If you're searching for a holiday destination and running out of ideas as time runs short, you could do worse than jet off to Italy, write Fabio and Rob.

Italy's attractions are its fine food, its great weather and its friendly people. You can fly over from a variety of airports, including Exeter, Bristol and Gatwick. We would recommend the north of the country, because that part contains

some wonderful historic monuments. The food there is modestly priced and so are the hotels. if you do choose to go to Italy, then we're sure you'll have an



Design: Mr C.Zestran

enjoyable family holiday.

One day ...

Year 11 student Holly Joint stands just a few dozen text messages away from qualifying for the final stages of a national beauty competition. She is awaiting news from the organisers of the Miss Teen Queen Competition, and she could be the winner of a fabulous trip to the West Indies.

It's all been a bit of a blur for the 16-year-old who is trying to keep her mind firmly fixed on those imminent GCSE exams.

At the end of last year, Holly went along to the Clothes Show in Birmingham with her friend Sophie Mattacott. And it's just gone on from there.

Holly explains, "While we were at the Show there were stalls for various universities specialising in the world of fashion, and while we were there we got to see Simon Webb and the latest fashion garments.

"it was unreal," says Sophie. "Holly got spotted by a variety of model scouts, including Abercrombie and Fitch, Select a Model and Storm. And

then we got stopped at a stall called Miss Teen Queen UK, which had a number of girls crowding around it.

"One of the P.A. girls approached, and asked Holly to sign up for the competition. She gave her basic details and had her picture taken and put up with a variety of compliments. We left the Clothes Show exhausted but, as you can imagine, excited."

Nothing happened, and the girls settled

back into their normal routine.

Then the phone rang.

Says Holly, "I was told that I'd made into the next round and asked if I would come up to London for a photoshoot. Of course I didn't need to be asked twice."

On May 1, Miss Joint was standing in a studio, posing for her photo, and now, if enough people text HOLLY JOINT to 84205 (Texts cost 60p plus

stand-
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standard
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charge,

dentally) she could well beat 4500 other hopefuls to the glamorous top prize.

Teacher Review

by Brad, Joe and Ed

We will be reviewing ONE teacher every edition, getting comments from the class and other teachers.

Today, its the turn of Mr Todd.

Pros

- *Most of the time, fair and good
- *Always likes a good joke
- *Always has a smile on his face
- *Runs a good, well-organised Book Club

Cons

When he shouts, you realise where the earthquake has come from

*Wouldn't know a good joke if it stared him in the face

*having a mid-life crisis

*Still expecting military standards

Ten Tors

from back page

This year, as early as Saturday morning, our 35-mile group and all those going down the west side of Dartmoor had to cross the Tavy. This is a big river, in a beautiful steep gorge, but not usually a problem at 'Sandy Ford' or many other places along the river. Their crossing on Sunday on the East Dart on the other hand, at the waterfall is a challenge at low water levels. Still, more of that later.

Saturday 12th May 2007 proved different. The teams could find only one place to cross this river and were queuing up for over half an hour to take their turn and wade waist deep across.

Our training takes in water crossings; releasing a rucksack waist belt, holding the bag over only one shoulder, and most important, looking at the consequences of things going wrong. I'm an advanced White Water paddler and hold a string of coaching and water rescue qualifications that go way beyond the remit of any mountaineering qualification. I would have loved to be out on the Upper Dart that weekend. Pure ecstasy. But not where I would want to take anyone except highly experienced white water paddlers, and we have a few old pupils, who have passed under my wing and who can now outstrip me in such conditions. Indeed, they do so fairly regularly.

Back to our band. In training I stress on every river crossing -and there are lots on every walk - that walkers must think where they will end up if things go wrong. If they lose their footing, are they going to be swept into a strainer (this is where water passes under or through rocks or trees)? The pressure of water on a tiny brook can be such that the casualty will be pinned under by the pressure of the water, and it will be impossible to release them by their team or teacher (and in some cases even a vehicle) or they may be swept down a steep, fast-moving boulder-ridden stretch of river. So, look for another crossing point. The training stresses the need to find a place where if things go wrong, all that happens is they find themselves in a deep slow moving pool. Wet, embarrassed, but not fighting for their lives. With their team mates falling about laughing at them.

For 2007 this was just the start of a wet weekend. On the central moor, the rain did not ease on Saturday, so the rivers continued to rise. Appropriately trained youngsters fought through the conditions, making painfully slow progress. By the time my 55's had reached the stepping stones across the West Dart at Dunabridge Farm, in the late afternoon, the river was a good foot above the stepping stones. They still made the crossing, without incident. Hairy! but then stayed to help two further 45-mile teams across.

In doing so, Alex, one of our team, fell in. The water was chest deep, but slow-moving enough for him to swim out and then to show the second team how to

cross. Tim ran over the stepping stones a second time and, slipping spectacularly on the last stone, found himself also chest deep in water.

The clouds had descended and the rain continued to empty out of the heavens as our little heroes changed into dry clothes to continue their expedition. Their valiant efforts to help these other teams had severely knocked their schedule; they were fighting to stay in the event & get into Okehampton Army camp by 5pm on Sunday (one minute past 5pm and they would not have succeeded in the challenge). On a typical Ten Tors event, about half the 55m teams & 25% of the 35m teams won't complete the challenge. This was no typical event.

All the teams across the moor were making desperately slow progress. By 6 o'clock one third of all teams had dropped out and the weather forecast was far worse weather for next day. They were expecting two inches of rain on Sunday morning. The rivers were going to get monstrous and they would make those the teams crossed on Saturday look like babies.

With this in mind, the organisers decided to stop all teams at a manned Tor to camp for the night at 6pm. Usually only the 35's have to stop at a manned Tor. The 45's & 55's can camp anywhere out there. They sent out the DRG (Dartmoor Rescue Group) to 'Sweep Up', find the 45's & 55's who were wild camping out on the moor to move camp to a manned Tor, so that they knew where everyone was and could make a decision about the event. Due to

low visibility - less than 10m - DRG could not find any of the teams, and reported several rivers impassable for them. This was not too much of a deal. The 45's & 55's were supposed to be out doing their own thing with regard to camping, and should be able to look after themselves until they reported to their first Tor in the morning.

The organisers then had to make a call in terms of the event. Sunday was forecast with worsening conditions; they had hold of most groups at their respective campsites. If they decided to let the children continue on Sunday, they would have the groups spread all over the moor again, and due to low cloud cover they did not expect to have use of the four helicopters. So, thankfully, virtually all the Team Managers supported the decision. The event was stopped at 6:00am on Sunday, the time when the children were due to start walking.

I was really pleased; Sunday would have seen our 35m team crossing the East Dart, just above a waterfall. This at low water levels is dicey. You slip and you're over the waterfall and yet here is normally the best place to cross. It's already a big river at 'Sandy Hole Pass', so with these conditions, it needed to be avoided. Yes, a sound decision by the army; an exciting



Wet? You bet!

Writes John Jenner,



Let's look forward to the next 47 years of Ten Tors and recognise the achievement of all those children who have taken part.

That includes this year's batch, who - just because the event finished 11 hours - early faced no less a challenge.

Many people will think that the decision to curtail the annual event was clouded by the tragic death of Charlotte Shaw. Certainly, all those taking part, and those who have been involved in the event in the 46 years preceding this one, will have a huge outpouring of support for her family.

But I'm also relieved that no negative press has emerged or suggested the event should be cancelled or scaled down. Unfortunately, accidents will happen, and we must put this in context. This is the first - and hopefully last - tragedy in the event's history. As I told the children in school, three children die each day on the roads travelling to and from their school.

Make no mistake, Ten Tors, 2007, 'The Wet One' was a fantastic one. The event is about challenging youngsters, putting down the gauntlet, for something you know is too difficult for all to succeed in. If all could cross the finish line, there would be far less prestige and pride in achieving the challenge. It's also about them as a team of six, supporting each other, and being responsible for their own actions.

What some may not be aware of is that teams plan their own routes across the moor.

There are 28 routes which encompass 19 tors, and their route will take them to 10 of them. How a team gets between the Tors is up to them. There are many, many options, which means that teams can cross rivers at almost any point. They also get lost and make decisions to change routes, due to weather conditions, team fitness, etc.

People not involved in the event often think you can place a rescue team at a crossing point and that the risk is controlled. Visibility dropped to less than 10m last weekend, (not uncommon) so you can be standing on the riverbank while 15 metres away a team may be crossing without you knowing.

Although it finished early, 2007 still challenged the pupils fantastically, taking them way beyond their comfort zone and tested the extent of their training. I've never taken children across rivers waist deep, and this includes the weekend of the terrible tragedy. Normally a way of crossing a river can be found, without getting your feet wet. It may take 10 or even 30 minutes to find a place to cross, but it can be done.

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