



PRESS CUTTINGS 2009 - 2010



Solihull School



Solihull School

2009 - 2010

Solihull School embarked on its 450th anniversary year with a bumper series of activities, events and presentations.

A commemorative bronze medallion was presented to all pupils and teachers, a St George's Day mass was held at St Alphege Church, and a new £3 million music school was opened by a world famous pianist. Pupils past and present could also reminisce at an exhibition about the history of the school in Solihull Central Library and at a special 450th Open Day.

School to mark its 450th year

SOLIHULL School has unveiled plans to celebrate its 450th anniversary.

A billboard, announcing the landmark, has been erected in Solihull town centre and a number of events are planned between now and the end of the year.

Former teacher John Loynton will be publishing an updated history of the independent school - which counts comedian Stewart Lee and Top Gear's Richard Hammond among its former pupils.

An exhibition - following the school's history - will also go on display in Solihull Library.

Philip Griffiths, headteacher, said: "Having served the local community for 450 years, Solihull School prides itself on its rich heritage and tradition as well as on being forward-thinking, which has enabled our boys and girls to achieve their potential in a caring and supportive environment.

"Even throughout the recession the school has continued to prosper and I believe it will continue to do so."

Built in 1560, the school began life in a building near St Alphege Church - long since gone. Towards the end of the 16th century, it moved to a new premises - later known as Malvern House.

Finally, in 1882, it relocated to its current site on nearby Warwick Road and it has been there ever since.

Changes in recent years have seen the end of Saturday and board in school and the launch of full co-education in 2005.



■ Front row - Max Penney, seven, Ria Pandey, eight, William Thompson, seven, Anna Mitchell, eight (back row) Olivia O'Malley and Michael Hawkes - both 17

The Observer, Thursday April 15, 2010

www.solihullobserver.co.uk

Pupils' memento of 450 years



SOLIHULL School's 1,000 pupils forged an historic bond with their school when they each received a medallion to celebrate its 450th anniversary.

The identical bronze mementos, which were struck in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and bear the school motto 'Perseverantia', were presented to all the boys and girls by headmaster Phillip Griffiths.

The presentation was one of a

series of events that are taking place this year to commemorate this milestone in the history of the school, which was founded in 1560.

The events will include a St George's Day service that will take place simultaneously in the school chapel and St Alphege Church, and a concert in Birmingham's Symphony Hall this autumn featuring current and former musicians from the school.

Other activities to look forward to this summer are an exhibition at

Solihull Library and the publication of a new history of the school.

Headmaster Phillip Griffiths said: "The medallion should provide a source of pride to all those pupils who are lucky enough to be part of our history in our major anniversary year."

Solihull School pupils Andrew Hooper (left) and Georgia Lovett receive their 450th anniversary medallions from Headmaster Phillip Griffiths. (s)

School celebrates 450th anniversary

SOLIHULL School celebrated its 450th anniversary with a celebratory mass on St George's Day.

Two services were held in St Alphege church and the school chapel with 500 pupils attending each. The St Alphege service was conducted by the Bishop of Aston.

Councillor Norman Davies, Mayor of Solihull, attended alongside the school's headteacher and head of the board of governors.

Sixth formers and middle school years walked from the school to St Alphege, while junior and lower school remained in the chapel on the school's grounds.

The school's foundations began in 1560 in a small room alongside St Alphege church, today the school's crest stands on the Mayor's pew donated by the school in 1954, as a symbol of its heritage.

Headmaster, Phillip Griffiths, who is



■ Pictured: Mayor of Solihull, Norman Davies, headmaster Phillip Griffiths, Bishop of Aston, Father Tim Pilkington, chair of governors Graham Hughes, Mayoress, Brenda Davies.

in his final year at the school said: "I am delighted to celebrate the school's 450th anniversary in St Alphege Church where the school originates and also to have welcomed the Mayor to the service, symbolising our strong links with the borough."

This is one of several events to commemorate the school's history. A grand open day, in July, and a concert at Symphony Hall in October will continue the year-long celebration. Each pupil has received a commemorative medal made specially at the Jewellery Quarter.

Solihull School Trumpeting 450 Years Of Excellence

With a full complement of pupils, record number of applicants, and a brand new music school, Solihull School has advanced into its 450th year in style.

The £3 million addition to its Warwick Road campus has crowned the anniversary celebrations for the independent co-educational school, whose alumni range from local entrepreneurs to award-winning musicians, scientists and TV celebrities.

The David Turnbull Music School, named after a former head of music, offers some of the most advanced learning, practicing and performing facilities in the region.

Phillip Griffiths, Solihull School Headmaster, said: "Applications to read music have increased by a third since the launch of the music school, which is the latest of a number of new facilities designed to maximise opportunities for our pupils."

The investment has come not from fees but the school's endowment

fund, which has also paid for new teaching, performing arts and sports facilities opened over the past ten years and pays for its assisted places and scholarships.

"As a true reflection of a changing society, it has made our boys and girls better prepared for the world of business and for life in general."

The entire school recently celebrated the milestone at a special St George's Day service held simultaneously at St Alphege Church in Solihull and the school's chapel, which in turn is marking its 50th anniversary.

The chapel was also the venue last week for a special 450th anniversary organ recital by former pupil Iain Simcock, a world leading organist and current Music Director of the Academie Vocale de Paris in France.

Other events will include an exhibition in Solihull Library from May 17 to July 2 and the publication of a new history of the school by former teacher John Loynton.

your SCHOOLS

Send your pictures and stories to my.pictures@birminghammail.net

Medals to mark school's 450th birthday

By Gregg Evans

SOLIHULL School is celebrating its 450th anniversary in style.

With a full complement of pupils, record number of applicants and a brand new music school, the independent school has entered its milestone year on a high note.

Last week, 1,000 pupils forged an historic bond with the leading school when they each received a medallion to celebrate its fascinating feat.

The identical bronze mementos, which were struck in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and bear the school motto 'Perseverantia', were presented to every pupil by headmaster Phillip Griffiths.

But the celebrations will not stop there because the presentation was just one of a series of events that are taking place this year to commemorate the opening of the school in 1560.



Forging ahead: Pupils Andrew Hooper and Georgia Lovett receive their 450th anniversary medallions from Solihull School headmaster Philip Griffiths.

The school is planning a St George's Day service and a concert in Birmingham's Symphony Hall this autumn featuring current and former musicians from the school. The chapel will also be the venue



Note worthy: Pupils in Solihull School's new £3 million music school.

on April 28 for a special 450th anniversary organ recital by former pupil Iain Simcock, a world-leading organist and current music director of the Académie Vocale de Paris in France.

Other events will include an exhibition in Solihull Library from May 17 to July 2 and the publication of a new history of the school by former teacher John Loyntas.

A £3 million music centre has crowned the anniversary celebrations for the school, whose alumni range from local entrepreneurs to award-winning musicians, sportsmen and TV celebrities.

The addition, named after David Turnbull, a former head of music, offers some of the most advanced learning, practicing and perform-

ing facilities in the region. Headmaster Mr Griffiths said: "Applications to read music have increased by a third since the launch of the music school, which is the latest of a number of new developments designed to maximise opportunities for our pupils."

"It is heartening to have a full complement of 1,000 pupils in such circumstances in our 450th year."

"Among them are girls who have now worked their way up through all age groups from seven to 18 since we went fully co-educational five years ago."

"The medallion should provide a source of pride to all those pupils who are lucky enough to be part of our history in our major anniversary year."

Birmingham Mail
March 23rd 2010



Horsing around Head puts up with ancient equine tradition



Picture: Dave Warren

HEADMASTER Phillip Griffiths happily put up with the horse-play when his head boy chose a four-footed approach to celebrating his career.

Frank Phillips trotted back in time to exercise an ancient right at 450-year-old Solihull School for the head boy to graze his horse while in lessons on the headmaster's lawn.

A new name on the school's roster for a day, "Bracken" was introduced not only to the headmaster but to all 1,000 boys and girls in his new surroundings.

Phillip Griffiths enjoyed the celebratory surprise in his final term as headmaster following an illustrious 38-year teaching career spent entirely at Solihull School, which he joined in 1972

as a history assistant.

Phillip said: "There is always a place for tradition at Solihull School as we celebrate our 450th anniversary but other ancient privileges of the school's head boy, which include being the only pupil allowed to smoke a pipe, will remain locked in our history."

Birmingham Press
June 25th 2010

Headmaster Phillip Griffiths retired after an illustrious 38-year teaching career spent entirely at Solihull School.

With interests in all aspects of school life, he held many posts including Housemaster, Warden of the Sixth Form Centre, Third Master Second Master and eventually Headmaster in 2005.

Brush with fame Head is put in the picture as he retires



● Phillip Griffiths, Headmaster of Solihull School, inspects his new portrait in the company of his wife Belinda and the artist Jane Allison.

A SOLIHULL headmaster who has served the same school for his entire 38-year teaching career has been commemorated on canvas by a distinguished artist.

Phillip Griffiths, who is retiring from Solihull School this summer, has had his portrait painted by Jane Allison, who has exhibited with the Royal Society of Portrait Painters and counts the Duchess of Cornwall and the Archbishop of York among other recent subjects.

According to tradition, the oil painting will hang alongside other portraits of past headmasters at the independent co-educational school which is celebrating its 450th anniversary this year.

Jane Allison, who studied at the Slade School of Fine Art and has works in the Queen's private collection, completed the painting in five sittings.

She said: "As an historical object that will hopefully be around for centuries, the portrait called for a narrative element with certain objects included to hint at the subject's interests and achievements."

With a Masters degree from Birmingham University Phillip Griffiths joined Solihull School in 1972 as an assistant teacher on the A-level history course.

He worked his way up to housemaster and then Warden of the Sixth Form Centre. After that he became Third Master, then Second Master, and in 2005 he took over as headmaster.

With interests in all aspects of school life, he was responsible for handling the move from O-Levels to GCSEs and the introduction of extended project qualifications for the most able Sixth Formers.

Having played First XV rugby as an undergraduate at Liverpool University, Phillip coached the sport to all ages from Under 13s to Second XV.

As officer-in-charge of the army section during his 24 years in the Combined Cadet Force, he organised the CCF centenary celebrations in 1998.

He was also Master of Terriers, an adventure-based programme, and warden of the school's mountain cottage in Wales.

Both his son Simon, now a lawyer, and his daughter Hannah, now a doctor, were educated at Solihull School, the latter returning last year to get married in the school chapel.

Birmingham Press
July 16th 2010

A life time of teaching

As Solihull School celebrates its 450th year, headteacher Phillip Griffiths looks back on his 38 years of service to the school.

When Phillip Griffiths joined Solihull School in 1972, it was all-boys, pupils were addressed by their surnames, masters wore gowns and Victorian wooden school desks were still in use. Today, the 1,000-pupil school is fully mixed, there are no boarders and the manual duplicator that covered teachers in purple ink has long been consigned to the technology history books.

Phillip took the job as history assistant at Solihull with the intention of staying two or three years. Thirty-eight years later he is retiring from the school. "I applied to Solihull School because my wife Belinda was working in the area. I had the idea that I would stay for two to three years and then move on somewhere else to become a head of department," he says. "I never left because I found the school very pleasant, the pupils agreeable and intelligent, and each time I discussed leaving the head would offer me a new role."

School life has changed considerably since 1972. "It was a very conservative school then, so much so that my first class list showed only surnames and initials. My first step was to find out everyone's first name and address them by it – and now you will find that all pupils from seven to 18 are addressed by the staff in that way."

"I believe this has helped to make the school more civilised, although discipline remains important and the



“A thousand girls have now passed through the school. Co-education has made the school more relaxed and friendly”

common courtesies of pupils standing up when a teacher enters a room and addressing them as 'sir' or 'ma'am' has continued."

Technology has also changed schooling. "The teaching process was very 'hands-on' and almost unrecognisable from today's world of interactive computer boards and overhead projectors. I remember

having to use a manual duplicator to print off worksheets for classes – and getting covered up to the elbow in purple dye," he says.

After schooldays in Coventry, Phillip studied history at Liverpool University, where he played for the First XV rugby team. A masters degree at Birmingham University, then teacher training in Norwich, followed. On joining Solihull School he taught A-level history, working his way up as housemaster and then Warden of the Sixth Form Centre. After that he became Third Master, then Second Master, and in 2005 he took over as headmaster.

Over the years he has been involved in many of the changes such as the move from O'Levels to GCSEs and more recently, the introduction of extended project qualifications for the most able Sixth Formers.

"The Open University Young Applicants in Schools (YASS) scheme stretches our best A-level students by enabling them to study a range of undergraduate modules under their own steam," he says. "It helps to differentiate them from other pupils when it comes to applying to traditional universities."

Saturday school ended in 1976 and the last boarders left ten years later. Since then the Warwick Road site, which the school has occupied since 1882, has been improved with new teaching blocks, sports centres and theatre buildings. The latest to open this year has been the £3 million David Turnbull Music School, named after a former head of music.



Phillip Griffiths with radio DJ and former pupil Simon Mayo in 2008.



At a CCF Camp 1992



CCF Centenary 1998.

Phillip says his proudest achievement has been the move from an all-boys school to one with boys and girls in equal measure. The process began in 1973 with the first intake of girls in the Sixth Form and was finally completed this year with girls moving up to all levels after the Junior School went co-educational in 2005.

"A thousand girls have now passed

through the school. Co-education has made the school more relaxed and friendly while maintaining competitiveness in the classroom and our excellent academic results. As a true reflection of a changing society, it has also made our boys and girls better prepared for outside life."

Phillip's two children were educated at the school. Hannah, now a doctor, joined in the Sixth Form

and returned last year to get married in the school chapel.

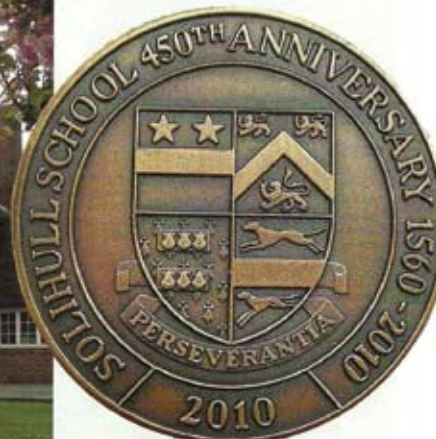
"My son Simon is now a successful lawyer but was none too excited to be told that he would have to face an academic year being taught by me," said Phillip. "He even put in an official protest because he thought it was unfair on him – but was told by his head of department that he would have to put up with it!" ▶



Phil Griffiths - medalion



Kent Library, Solihull School



Outside the classroom Phillip has coached rugby to all ages from Under 13s to Second XV. As officer-in-charge of the army section during his 24 years in the Combined Cadet Force, he organised the CCF centenary celebrations in 1998. Philip has also been Master of Terriers, an organisation that prepares pupils for the CCF, and was warden of the school's mountain cottage in Wales.

"The cottage was sometimes the farthest that a pupil would travel on a school trip when I first joined the school. Now rugby tours to Australia, geography visits to Iceland, and

science trips to America have become commonplace."

Phillip has also been proud of Solihull School's commitment to both the local community and the wider world. "Whether it's painting fences in the local park in association with Solihull Council or raising money for earthquake relief in Chile, with which we have a school exchange programme, our responsibilities have grown from the links we have developed."

So has he achieved everything he set out to achieve? Yes . . . almost, is the answer.

"I've had loads of fun, from

abseiling out of a helicopter to watching the school in a rugby final at Twickenham, but I've regretted never learning a musical instrument. The opening of our new music school has helped inspire me to learn to play the piano and fortunately my daughter has just bought one. I'm hoping that after I retire she will find the time to teach her Dad." ■

Solihull Central Library is to host an exhibition celebrating Solihull School's 450th anniversary until 2nd July. A new history of the school is to be published by former teacher John Loynton this summer.

Region's schools achieve impressive results in this year's exams

Class of 2010 enjoy their moment of celebration

Magnificent Seven record breakers



SEVEN students who each clinched four A* star grades have led Solihull School to a 100 per cent A-level pass rate for the fifth year running.

A record-breaking 85 per cent of passes were achieved at grades A*/A and B with 60 per cent of all A-level exams being awarded

A* or A grades.

Celebrating 28 A-levels passes at A* level between them are (seated left) David Elliot, (seated right) Michael Goodwin, and (standing left to right) Roisin Noonan, Abigail McIntosh, James Adie, Daniel Hurst and Charlotte Alliso.

by Anthony Kelly

SECONDARY schools in Birmingham are sitting proud after achieving another record set of GCSE results, it was revealed this week.

The proportion of city youngsters passing five or more grade A* to C exams now stands at 78 per cent - a rise of more than five per cent on last year's best ever 72.7 per cent.

Nationally, 69 per cent of pupils achieved a C grade or above in their GCSEs, a rise of just two percentage points from last year's 67.1 per cent. Even more impressively in Birmingham, the city's secondary schools have achieved an overall improvement of 37 per cent of students obtaining at least five good GCSEs since the year 2000, when only 41 per cent of students achieved the benchmark figure.

And when the vital subjects of English and maths are added, Birmingham's 15 and 16-year-olds have excelled further, with figures showing a 7.3 percentage points rise over the last 12 months to 55 per cent.

The local authority also now has no secondary school below the Government floor target of 50 per cent of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs including English and maths.

Last year there were nine such National Challenge schools, under which the Government can intervene and force a merger or even

closure.

Cousin Les Lawrence, Birmingham's Cabinet member for children, young people and families, said: "It is fantastic to see we appear on course for another record set of GCSE results."

"We have built a reputation for educational attainment in Birmingham and are immensely proud of our schools and all those involved in this success story."

Tony Howell, who retired as strategic director for children, young people and families in January, said it was with a "mixture of pride and sadness" that he watched pupils in Birmingham collect their GCSE results for the last time.

But he added: "It has been a great pleasure to see so many of our young children do so well and I am proud to have played my part in the on-going educational success of this city."

Among the Birmingham schools achieving record GCSE results was Walswood Heath Technology College in Stockport.

The city's first "vertical learning" school involves pupils being taught based on the stage of their learning rather than their age, with 262 pupils aged 15 sitting at least one GCSE, and a similar number of 14-year-olds sitting at least one equivalent exam.

Walswood Heath said the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grade passes including English and

maths soared from last year's

33 per cent to 51 per cent.

Head teacher Beverley Mabey said: "This is a fantastic result. We have changed the curriculum so it is much more focused on where pupils are with their learning."

Hollyhead School in Handsworth achieved record GCSEs, with 59 per cent of pupils achieving five or more A*-Cs including English and maths - up from last year's 48 per cent.

Head teacher Martin Hayles said: "This has come as a real boost."

"We would all like a new school, but this just shows that buildings don't make a school."

"These results are pretty phenomenal for a genuine inner city school where more than half of our kids are entitled to free school meals."

Plumtree School in Sutton Coldfield saw 90 per cent of pupils gain at least five good GCSEs - a ten percentage point improvement on last year.

With English and maths included, the pass rate rose seven percentage points to 68.4 per cent.

Head teacher Tracey Campbell said: "We are delighted with these results as, yet again, our students have beaten previous records."

King Edward's Camp Hill Girls in Kings Heath saw 23 pupils achieve ten or more A* grades.

The School achieved a record-breaking A-level pass rate of 85 per cent at grades A*/A and B with 60 per cent of all A level exam papers awarded A* or A grades.

Seven students gained 28 A* grades between them in the fifth successive year that the School has recorded a 100 per cent A-level pass rate.

Birmingham Press
September 17th 2010

Excellent record is maintained

SEVEN students who each clinched four A* star grades have led Solihull School to a 100 per cent A-level pass rate for the fifth year running.

A record-breaking 85 per cent of passes were achieved at grades A*/A and B with 60 per cent of all A-Level exams being awarded A* or A grades.

The seven that gained a total of 28 A* grades between them will be taking up places at their first choice universities as follows:

James Adie (Physics - Imperial College, London), Charlotte Alliso (Veterinary Medicine - St John's College, Cambridge), David Elliot (Engineering - Queen's College, Cambridge), Michael Goodwin (Veterinary Medicine - Clare College, Cambridge), Daniel Hurst (Chemical Engineering - Jesus College, Cambridge), Abigail McIntosh (Geography - Durham) and Roisin Noonan (History - University College, London).

Headmaster Phillip Griffiths said: "I am delighted that our 450th anniversary year has been crowned with yet another record-breaking set of results."

"The splendid achievement of 85 per cent of grades at A*/A and B is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of our pupils and staff."



Celebrating 28 A-levels passes at A* level between them are (seated left) David Elliot, (seated right) Michael Goodwin, and (standing left to right) Roisin Noonan, Abigail McIntosh, James Adie, Daniel Hurst and Charlotte Alliso.

Solihull Observer
August 16th 2010

Solihull School's 450th anniversary year hit the high notes with the official opening of the David Turnbull Music School. World-leading pianist Peter Donohoe unveiled the £3 million professional-standard facility that has reinforced the School's arts and performance quarter.

A series of recitals by internationally renowned organists continued with one by former Solihull pupil Iain Simcock playing the instrument he trained on before its £220,000 restoration.

The Observer, Thursday August 12, 2010 www.solihullobserver.co.uk PAGE 15



Pianist opens music centre

WORLD renowned pianist Peter Donohoe dropped in on Solihull School to unveil a new £3 million state-of-the-art music centre.

The classical musician was joined by Head of Music Stephen Perrins, Headmaster Phillip Griffiths, Chair of Governors Graham Hughes and David Turnbull's widow, Diana to officially launch the new performance arts quarter in the David Turnbull Music School as part of the school's 450th anniversary celebrations.

Peter, who received a CBE for his services to classical music in the 2010 New Year Honours List, said: "This is a fantastic building that almost makes me want to start back at school all over again."

"Not only is it superbly equipped but its feel, shape and ambience are musically just right."

The two-storey 1,500-square metre music school has replaced an outdated smaller facility that had become difficult for teaching and now boasts a built-in studio with the latest digital recording facilities, a percussion and rock room, acoustically and physically separated practice and teaching rooms and several academic and recital spaces.

The centre already includes a modern theatre and concert space in the Bushell Hall.

Headmaster Phillip Griffiths said: "We are delighted that such a world-renowned musician should honour us by officially opening our new music school."

"This major investment, funded by the school's Endowment, demonstrates our commitment to offering successive generations of pupils the highest quality learning experience and provides a fitting tribute to our 450th anniversary."

Stephen Perrins, Head of Music, Graham Hughes, chairman of Governors, Diana Turnbull, Phillip Griffiths, headmaster, and world renowned pianist Peter Donohoe CBE (s)

Solihull Observer
August 12th 2010

Organist to celebrate school's 450 years

ONE OF the world's most acclaimed organists will be returning to his musical roots to help Solihull School celebrate its 450th anniversary.

Iain Simcock, a renowned soloist, recording artist and choral leader who was a pupil at the independent co-educational school from 1976 to 1983, is to give a free organ recital in its chapel on Wednesday, April 28 at 7.30pm.

He will be playing music dating from when the school was founded in 1560 to the present day on the instrument on which he trained following its £220,000 restoration.

The works will include The Queen's Alman by William Byrd, based on a dance that became popular in the English courts in the 1560s, three pieces from JS Bach's 'Clavieruebung', Jean-Philippe

Rameau's 'Air des Sauvages' from Les Indes Galantes, and Cesar Franck's Pastorale Opus 19.

Free tickets for the Iain Simcock recital at Solihull School Chapel in Warwick Road, Solihull are available by calling the school on 0121 705 0958 or by sending an email request to admin@solsch.org.uk



School of rock



The new music building at Solihull school offers its students professional-standard facilities. From wall panels that can adjust a room's acoustics, to the 'rock and percussion' rooms for budding student bands, the building has changed the school, says **Jayne Howarth**.

When Birmingham architects Malcolm Payne Group were tasked with designing a £3 million music centre at a West Midlands school, the brief was clear: it had to be the best in the region.

Solihull School, a co-educational independent school, is renowned for the music provision it delivers its 1000 pupils. The school wanted to consolidate its reputation for excellence with a showcase building with interior features that matched the promise of the exterior.

And Malcolm Payne, who founded the architects' practice, was keen to incorporate as many professional-standard music facilities as he could within the 'David Turnbull Music School' (named after a former head of music at the school).

"This is not just a school with a long and proud tradition. It has a very strong music department and that was our prime focus," he said.

"Although the independent education sector is an important part of our portfolio, this was the first dedicated music school we designed."

The music school, which opened in September, was completed in two years from initial instruction to hand-over. It provides a high-quality learning environment specifically designed to attract young musicians and prepare them for a musical career.

The scale and the materials of the building were chosen to reinforce the character of the campus, but the stand-alone building itself is bright, modern and airy and designed to maximise daylight in teaching areas.

Payne said he was keen to design a centre with a strong sense of identity. It is arranged on the axis of the existing theatre at the school, the radiating form echoing its curved façade to complete the performing arts quarter.

Case Studies

www.teachingtimes.com

And the linear plan form means that, should the school decide to expand the teaching areas and recital space, it can do so easily along the axis of the atrium.

Facilities

But it is the facilities within the dedicated centre that are most striking and show the school's commitment to music education and performing arts excellence.

The building comprises zoned teaching and practice and performance spaces arranged around a double-height atrium. It uses under-floor heating and thermostatically-controlled roof lights to prevent heat build-up.

This central circulation space functions as an 'internal street' - and provides reception, exhibition and social spaces.

"We wanted it to foster a vibrant, creative atmosphere. We believe we have achieved that very well," explained Malcolm.

"It is purposely paved to form a continuation of the surrounding paths. The most satisfying aspect of the occupied premises for me is the atmosphere that has been created in the 'street' running through the building.

"As we intended, the space has become a lively meeting place for music scholars across the range of ages and disciplines. It has the feeling of a small arts centre, with displays of paintings from the art department and theatre posters from the drama department."

The layout comprises a series of rectangular and non-rectangular spaces that are designed to enhance acoustic performance. An absorption panel system allows the acoustic properties of each space to be quickly 'tuned' to provide optimum conditions for every instrument.



Volume 42 Number 10 October 2013 143

Case Studies

www.teachingtimes.com

Each space is acoustically insulated. The dedicated pupil rock band practice rooms and percussion spaces are physically separated from adjoining areas. The school's rockers are encouraged to explore their creativity just like the classical students – but, presumably to the relief of parents, not at home in the garage!

Because of the school's need for high-quality production, the design also incorporates a recording studio, which links to the atrium and other main spaces to allow performances to be networked.

And would-be composers have access to a fully-equipped ICT suite.

Stephen Perrins, head of music, said the new centre was built not a minute too soon.

"The governors decided that our pupils' enthusiasm for music had vastly outgrown its accommodation. There were not enough rooms for pupils to practise or for staff to teach in," he explained.

"The facilities for rehearsing the various orchestras/bands and choirs were insufficient and also had to serve as classrooms.

"It's wonderful to have three purpose-built classrooms, used just for that purpose.

"We have two rehearsal rooms, which means we can operate two different music groups simultaneously in light, spacious conditions.

"We are completely thrilled with this new facility – as are the pupils and parents. Rightly so – it has transformed how we deliver music throughout the school.



"It is stunning, spacious and light. We feel incredibly lucky to have these facilities."

"The school's facilities for music teaching and performance have been greatly expanded, increasing opportunities for pupils across the musical spectrum," said Payne.

Jayne Howarth is a freelance journalist who has written for several architecture publications.



44 | 21st Century Schools

A record seven drama productions (not including those by Theatre Studies students) were staged at all levels for the third successive year.

Highlights included the Junior School's performance of the popular musical Ye Ha! and a spectacular revival of South Pacific involving more than 100 pupils and directed, in her first musical, by Head of Drama Jean Wilde.



South Pacific comes to Solihull
Solihull theatregoers had a taste of the South Pacific when Solihull School performed the hit Rodgers and Hammerstein masterpiece, including (left to right) Jessica (Nellie Forbush) and John (Emile de Becque), and (foreground) Lucie (Liat) and Philippe (Lt Joseph Cable).

Totally Society
Spring 2010



■ Mark Lawrence, William Jervis, Maeve Grogan; (kneeling) Abigail Humphreys and Thomas Mitchell

A Wild West winner

SOLIHULL Junior School pupils took to the stage for their annual drama production with all guns blazing.

Sporting cowboy hats and Red Indian headdresses, a cast of 45 recreated the adventure of the Wild West in the popular musical Ye-Ha!

The boys and girls from the Junior School Drama Club stepped into the shoes of a mix of comical characters including reluctant hero Willbur Hubbard, played by Thomas Mitchell, and the Calamity Jane-like Billie-Jo

Brisket, played by Abigail Humphreys.

Mark Lawrence took the role of Dr Cornelius Spooner, Maeve Grogan played Ma Annie Hubbard and William Jervis acted the part of Big Chief Walking Weasel.

Janet Humphreys, Head of Junior School English & Drama and the show director, said: "Everyone had a great time and the cast were thrilled by the support. Thanks go to those parents and staff who helped with the costumes, scenery and props."

Solihull News
July 23rd 2010



● Cameron Hemp and Harriet Toogood come face to face with Thorgil the Viking

By Thor! My kingdom for a Norse

HISTORY came dramatically to life for Solihull Junior School pupils studying the Viking era.

The 7-8 year olds were visited by Thorgil, a Viking dressed in Old Norse clothes all the way from his conical hat and cape to his tunic and trousers.

Thorgil told them about his arduous journey from Denmark, his family's daily chores and the workings of the community court of law known as 'The Thing'.

The friendly Viking also showed off his fortune-telling skills with magical runes and recounted the exciting saga of

Thor's hammer.

The visit was part of a drama workshop by the Freshwater Theatre Company which included the chance for the Year 3 boys and girls to act out being Viking characters.

Nicola Atkins, History Co-ordinator at Solihull Junior School, said: "The children had great fun taking part in the drama activities as they brought the Viking age to life."

"The workshop was one of a number of means that we use to excite and inspire pupils about history at Solihull Junior School."

Cadet back in the classroom



Poignant return: Richard Miller.

By Tony Collins

A FORMER pupil of Solihull School who is now training to be an army officer is to make a poignant return to his old classroom to honour past pupils who died for their country.

Richard Miller, aged 26, who is an officer cadet at the renowned Sandhurst Academy in Surrey, will lay a wreath on behalf of the armed forces at the school's Remembrance Day service this Wednesday.

The soldier, who left Solihull School in 2001 after completing his A-levels, will perform the wreath-laying ceremony in front of the school's own war memorial. All 1,000 pupils of the co-

educational independent day school, aged seven to 18, will be in attendance.

Richard, who was a member of the RAF cadets at Solihull School, will finish his training at Sandhurst next month before joining the Royal Signals as Second Lieutenant.

His father, David, former commanding officer of the Combined Cadet Force at Solihull School, said the family was honoured and proud that Richard was invited to lead the wreath laying.

Mr Miller said: "He was delighted to be asked and is very much looking forward to returning to Solihull School for the service."

All 1,000 pupils attended the annual Remembrance Day service at school, with former pupil and Sandhurst officer cadet Richard Miller laying a wreath in honour of past pupils who had died for their country.

Birmingham Mail
November 5th 2009



QUEEN LEADS TRIBUTE



HOMAGE

England team members past and present stop to pay their respects



Lesson... Queen Victoria and Lucy



RESPECT

Crowds at Trafalgar Square after a public Remembrance Day concert



LEARNING

Pupils take part in an Remembrance service at Solihull School, W Midlands



PRAYERS

Former Nick Drake observes the 2-min silence in Pocklington, Essex

Our silent thanks to the fallen

LAST WWI VETS REMEMBERED

HERO ROBBED OF 10 MEDALS

A WWII hero robbed of his medals was a leading British soldier. Captain Tom had been killed in the last days of the war, but his medals were not awarded until 1991. He was the only British soldier to be awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions in the Battle of Normandy. He was also awarded the Distinguished Service Order, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Distinguished Flying Medal. He was also awarded the George Cross for his actions in the Battle of Normandy. He was also awarded the George Cross for his actions in the Battle of Normandy.

THE nation fell silent yesterday in recognition of the final passing of the World War One generation.

The Queen marked the historic occasion at a special Remembrance Day service in London's Westminster Abbey. The service, which was broadcast on television, was the last of its kind. The Queen, who was 86, was the only member of the royal family to attend. She was accompanied by Prince William and Prince Harry. The service was held at 11 o'clock, the traditional time for the two-minute silence. The Queen, who was 86, was the only member of the royal family to attend. She was accompanied by Prince William and Prince Harry. The service was held at 11 o'clock, the traditional time for the two-minute silence.

By DUNCAN LAING, BBC News. The Queen gave a reading. The service began with two minutes silence to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. The Queen, who was 86, was the only member of the royal family to attend. She was accompanied by Prince William and Prince Harry. The service was held at 11 o'clock, the traditional time for the two-minute silence. The Queen, who was 86, was the only member of the royal family to attend. She was accompanied by Prince William and Prince Harry. The service was held at 11 o'clock, the traditional time for the two-minute silence.

historical significance. Now the last of his comrades in arms has gone to his eternal rest, we are left with only the memory of his sacrifice. He was a hero, a man of courage and conviction. He was a man who gave his life for his country. He was a man who was remembered. He was a man who was remembered. He was a man who was remembered.



Devoted... Royal Marine Tim

The Sun
November 12th 2009

An unceasing commitment to helping others resulted in pupils raising more than £30,000 for a range of local and international charities.

Among the landmarks was the success of the Junior School in raising the £7,650 needed from a five-year Sightsavers campaign to pay for its 450th operation for children with cataracts.



Youngsters William Dagloch, Isabelle Blake and Fraser Blackhurst, all in year 3, are aiming to save the sight of people in the Third World

No card rule boost

YOUNGSTERS at Solihull School won't be sending Christmas cards to one another this year – but it's all in a good cause.

The pupils and staff at the Junior School are raising money for Sightsavers Christmas Wishes Appeal and are hoping to generate enough cash to help save the sight of their 450th child – to mark the independent school's 450th anniversary.

It is the fifth year that the 170 pupils have supported the charity, which helps to combat blindness in developing countries and provides eye care and treatment.

To date, Solihull School pupils have

raised more than £7,000 for the charity, which has helped to pay for cataract operations for 417 children.

Deputy Headteacher Mark Penney said: "For me, the incentive of supporting this wonderful charity is that, for a relatively meagre sum, the life of a child and its family can change dramatically for the better."

"With Solihull School reaching a very special 450th milestone, we are hoping to mark the occasion with a special significance of our own: saving the sight of our 450th child."

The school is also supporting The Rotary Club of St Alphege, Solihull's appeal to raise money for Polioplus, which aims to eradicate polio.

A milestone in sight for pupils

SOLIHULL Junior School pupils have reached a major milestone by saving the sight of their 450th child and launching their support for a second children's charity.

The 7-11 year olds donated £606 to Sightsavers in their school's 450th anniversary year as part of a five-year campaign. It has brought to £7,650 the amount they have raised for the charity - enough to pay for 450 operations for children with cataracts.

The boys and girls also presented a cheque for £1,150 to the Rotary Club of St Alphege, which is raising funds for Rotary International's 'End Polio Now' campaign.

Both donations resulted from pupils sending a single card rather than multiple cards to their class and teachers at Christmas.

Mark Penney, deputy head of Solihull Junior School, said: "We are delighted to be able to celebrate our 450th anniversary by restoring the sight of our 450th child and to launch our support for another special global charity this year. With the cost of an oral polio vaccine costing just 50p, our pupils want to help the Rotary organisation in its efforts to help consign a condition that condemns children to lifelong paralysis to the history



Scarlett O'Malley (left), deputy head girl of Solihull Junior School, and Abigail Humphreys, head girl, present the cheque to Les Hardy of Sightsavers.

Solihull Junior School has already raised £2,400 for Save the Children to help refugees in Sri Lanka, as well as £1,200 for the Edward's Trust, which supports families at Birmingham Children's Hospital, since the start of the academic year.

It has also contributed £3,439 to Solihull School's Charity Week collection of £8,821, which has been split between West Midlands Air Ambulance, Diabetes UK, The Children's Trust and Macmillan Cancer Support, and donated 148 gift boxes to help relief efforts in Haiti.

Solihull School's Senior and Junior Schools raised £2,460 between them for Haiti following a sponsored non-uniform day, bringing to more than £30,000 the amount that the school has raised for charities since September 2009.

Solihull News
March 19th 2010

Solihull News
December 4th 2009



Ooh la la - students show off their skills

FRENCH-speaking sixth formers from Solihull School have proven their debating and language skills after taking part in a Europe-wide event.

A total of 13 A level students, all of whom are studying French, spent a week in the Flemish area of Alden Biesen, Belgium, with students from Spain and Belgium, as part of the European Classes event, which is run four times a year.

As well as learning about language and culture, visiting Maastricht, Aachen and Brussels and taking part in sports events, they also had to present a 30-minute lecture in French on an aspect of European law they would like to see changed.

They proposed that a French law, which allows unmarried couples to register as cohabiting in order to receive legal protection should they separate or one partner die and to protect children either born within the relationship or adopted, should be extended across the EU.

Libby Campbell, who teaches French and Spanish and organised the trip, said: "Our students had to prepare weeks in advance to create their presentation in French, and then have the confidence to get up on stage and deliver it to a room full of relative strangers.



■ The sixth formers from Solihull School at the European Classes event in Alden Biesen.

"In the discussion groups, they were out of their comfort zone and many had to overcome their misgivings and simply have a go, not worrying about making mistakes, in order to have their opinion heard.

"They soon realised that everyone was in the same boat, French not being anyone's mother tongue, and coped extremely well. I was very proud of them."

Philip Griffiths, headmaster at the independent school on Warwick Road, said: "They set themselves a significant challenge and rose to it magnificently."

Pupils enjoyed a wide range of experiences and challenges in the Sixth-Form Enrichment Programme.

A-level students tested their French language skills in a debating session with other European students at Alder Biesen in Belgium. Closer to home, the School voted their own hustings at the time of the General Election an unqualified success.

A growing number of Sixth-Formers also extended their academic experience by undertaking enrichment modules for the Open University's first-year undergraduate programme.

Solihull News
November 13th 2009

Pupils join in the democratic process

AS THE General Election descended into farce, one Solihull school's mock election was voted a winner after pupils got into the swing-ometer of the TV debates and their own election hustings.

In a week which has seen the election fall from being the closest run in a generation, to a national farce of coalition talks in just a few days, Solihull School have put the country to shame by debating the issues of the day with democracy.

Ten candidates from the sixth form at the independent co-ed debated with each other in two assemblies after issuing their own manifestos, giving speeches and holding rallies throughout the school.

Phillip Griffiths, head, said probing questions were put to each of the candidates on everything from the economy and immigration to defence spending and the national debt.

"They put in a lot of effort and time to their campaigns and had researched the issues extremely well.

"They were able to give serious answers to some excellent questions put to them by the audience."

Hustings - Myerocroft Halliwell-Ewen, Alex Darlington, Harriett Halsey, Ross Fisher, Michael Davis, James Adie, Russell Neal, Asfandiyer Quershi and Adam Smith.



Solihull Observer
May 13th 2010

Boost A-level pupils pit their wits against Open University

Birmingham Press
June 11th 2010



SIX SOLIHULL School pupils have boosted their chances of winning the university places of their choice after testing themselves with undergraduate-level studies.

They are the first sixth-formers from the school to complete the Open University's Young

Applicants in Schools Scheme.

The pupils undertook the enrichment modules from the Open University's first-year undergraduate programme in their own time alongside their A-level course.

Abigail McIntosh and Sarah Adcock studied Volcanoes,

Earthquakes and Tsunami, while Sarah McCabe chose the module Understanding Human Nutrition.

The pupils pictured, from left to right, are Abigail McIntosh, Sarah McCabe, David Elliott, Sarah Adcock, Peter Bailey and Andrew Turner

Top author visits school

Solihull Observer
January 7th 2010

CREATIVE young-sters at Solihull School showed off their literary skills when author Adam Guillain dropped by to lead a writing workshop.

The writer, whose

works include Ghoul School and Our Neighbour's A Vampire, spent a day at the school as part of a Big Writing project.

Mr Guillain led a variety

of sessions at the Warwick Road school for Year 5 pupils as well as children from 11 other schools across the borough.

Lindsay Brough, Head of Solihull Junior School, said: "Adam was inspirational and all the children produced some magnificent work after taking part in a number of activities."

"The day was certainly packed with fun things to do."

Big Writing was pioneered by educationalist Ros Wilson and focuses on four main aspects of the writing process: vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation.

It aims to improve children's writing through self assessment, sharing of work, teacher modelling and class discussion.



Author Adam Guillain passes on some writing tips to the Solihull School youngsters. (s)



IT'S ALL Yours

8 PAGES OF NEWS YOU MAKE

Young
Chris's
record
knock

**your
SCHOOLS**

By Gregg Evans

SOLIHULL School's First XI cricket captain has rewritten the record books after scoring a double century in the school's highest-ever run score.

Chris Williamson, aged 16, scored 263 as the school amassed 408 runs for the loss of only five wickets against Nottingham High School, who were then bowled out for 401 just eight runs short of their winning target with three balls remaining.

The match aggregate of 809 runs is believed to be the highest ever recorded for a senior 50-over-a-side inter-school match in the history of English cricket.

Chris, who has played for the First XI for the past four seasons, hit a staggering 12 sixes and 29 fours to achieve the highest score by an individual at the school which is currently celebrating its 450th anniversary.

David Hemp, the former Glamorgan captain and Warwickshire batsman and now the school's full-time cricket coach, said: "Chris thrilled the school with his outstanding batting in a record-breaking match that will be long remembered."



Bat man: Chris Williamson, from Solihull School, has re-written the record books after scoring 263 in a single game.

Solihull School made history on the playing field when it helped to amass the highest aggregate score in a 50-over match between schools in English cricket history.

Captain Chris Williamson scored 263 in a Solihull Score of 408 for 5 to beat Nottingham High School who were bowled out for 401.

Cricketers throughout the School were supported by their coach former Warwickshire batsman and Glamorgan captain David Hemp who started training in October.

Thirteen-year-old tennis player Alannah Griffin began the year with the Warwickshire title under her belt and finished it as national champion.

Birmingham Mail
July 6th 2010

Keen to get started

CRICKETERS from Solihull School have set a new record in the run up to the forthcoming season by starting pre-season training earlier than ever before.

The keen youngsters from the co-educational independent school began training last October - three months earlier than they have ever done before.

Players at all levels from the u12s to first XI have been inspired by their full-time cricket coach David Hemp.

The former Warwickshire batsman, who captained Glamorgan two years ago and is the current captain of Bermuda and a regular player for Knowle & Dorridge, has been holding weekly training sessions for all age groups.

Cricket

"The interest has been very encouraging given that many of the pupils have been wrapped up in either hockey or rugby or in some cases both," said Hemp.

"While we naturally want to win as many games as possible, the extra training should help to put ourselves in winning positions more often than not and to make ourselves hard to beat."

Solihull School will be entering all county and national school cricket competitions as usual and adding a new local fixture against Bromsgrove School.



Solihull School's cricketers have been getting plenty of pre-season training with the help of their coach David Hemp. Picture by Dave Warren.



Alannah nets top tennis place

A 13-year-old girl from Solihull School has smashed her way to a top ten national tennis ranking - despite playing mostly at an older age level.

Alannah Griffin, who competes with the school's Under 16s, is now officially Britain's number nine player in the Under-14 age group.

The ranking has resulted in a Lawn Tennis Association invitation to train regularly as both an individual and a national squad member at the

National Tennis Centre in London.

Last year the teenager won the U14 Warwickshire title for the second year and clinched the U16 title in the same year. She also recently represented the county at U18 level for the first time in the 12 Counties event.

"We don't know where Alannah gets her skills from as she doesn't come from a tennis background," said her mother Wendy.

"It makes us all the more delighted

with her success. Her coach is now targeting Junior Wimbledon for when she is 16."

Coached by Gary Naughton at Solihull Arden Tennis Club, Alannah also attends training sessions in America with Nick Bollettieri, who has worked with Andre Agassi and Maria Sharapova.

Alannah, who took up tennis at six, joined Solihull School two years ago from St Alphege Infant and Junior Schools.

Solihull News
March 19th 2010

Fencers targeting success

THREE fencers from Solihull School are targeting national success after hitting the mark in regional qualifying competitions.

Théo Wasserburg, 17, has qualified for the national finals of the British Youth Championships - to be held at Sheffield from May 1-3 - after winning the West Midlands Under-18 Foil championship. Coached by top British fencer Rhys Mellis, Theo also won the Jubilee Foil Competition in Hereford and was runner-up in the Under-17 Leno Paul Junior Series in Scotland.

Tom Sheppard, 14, is also heading for the finals after clinching the gold medal in the Under-14 Epee Cup at Packwood Haugh in Shropshire.

Matthew Tyler, 14, who is trained like Tom by the school's fencing coach Ralph Aldis, came tenth in the West Midlands British Under-14 Epee championship.

Steve Thompson, head of fencing at Solihull School, said: "We are delighted with our fencers' success and wish them all the best in the national finals."



■ Celebrating their fencing success are (l-r) Thomas Sheppard, Théo Wasserburg and Matthew Tyler.

Solihull News
April 9th 2010

Smashing Young centurions notch up record scores



SOLIHULL School has set a new record on the cricket field with no less than four pupils notching up a century in inter-school matches before the end of April.

The feat is believed to be a first for the school which introduced its earliest-ever start to pre-season training last October.

Anthony Szarmach smashed his way to 156 runs for Solihull School's Under-13A team against Wolverhampton Grammar School, while James Trueman finished 107 not out in a Second XI fixture against King's School, Worcester.

The Under-15A side had centurions in Joe Halbert

and Oliver Hayley who scored 103 not out and 129 against Princethorpe College and Tudor Grange School respectively. Oliver also plays for Warwickshire Under 14s.

Pictured: Centurions from left to right, Christopher Szarmach, Oliver Hayley, Joseph Halbert, James Trueman.

Birmingham Press
May 21st 2010

Big hitters Rounders girls run rings around the rest of them



SOLIHULL School's rounders players are claiming to be the biggest hitters in town after reaching the half-way point of the season undefeated at all levels.

In a first for the school since it went co-educational in 2005, the Under 12, 13, 14,

15 and senior teams have all won their inter-school fixtures as they enter the Solihull Borough Tournament stage of the season.

The Under 12s, 13s and 14s notched up a staggering 104.5 points between them against St Martin's School

and Bablake School.

● Pictured are: captains, (back left to right) Amy Middleton, Ellie Davis, Olivia O'Malley, Emma Noone, Victoria Beech, Sally Farrant, kneeling from left, Laura Dalglish, Amy Lewis, Harriett Woolley, Poppy Eales.

