



World Challenge 2010

The four teams who set out for Ecuador and Peru in late August have returned safe and sound, with lots of stories and an enthusiasm for travelling. I would like to thank Ms. Pearson, Miss Swadkin, Mr Rosenthal and Mr Pullen for their hard work, dedication and most importantly for giving up 5 weeks of their holiday to support the students in their travels. Below are some words from the students and please see the notice board outside the main office for photos of their trip.

Please look out for notices regarding the launch of World Challenge 2012 to India and the Himalayas in the next few weeks! Miss A Fairbairn.



Ecuador Team 1

It is not every day you get to explore the Jungle, climb to over 4000m, watch whales jump from the Ocean and learn about a completely different way of life, this is why our expedition to Ecuador really did live up to the 'experience of a lifetime' we had all hoped for. With our 20 person team, we headed off for a month in Ecuador where we landed in Quito (the capital) and were greeted with a 3-course dinner for just \$2.75! After a short stay here, we took motorised canoes deep into the Rainforest where we lived without electricity or running water and tried very traditional food dishes before spending a day white-water-rafting.

This was just the beginning of our challenge as we were yet to complete an 8 hour walk around a large extinct Volcano with a huge crater lake, through a giant canyon and a day later we climbed a mountain higher than Mont-Blanc in Europe at 4712m. With this behind us, and after an eventful day horse riding, we headed to the Pacific Coast for a project which involved working in the local community within a school. We decorated their classrooms, made a garden and plastered walls, all this was very rewarding and the children were very grateful. Before

our adventure came to an end, we spent some rest time in the area with a day watching whales on the 'Isla de la Plata', also known as the 'Poor-mans' Galapagos. The team mingled together very well and had an amazing time that we will never forget. Coming back home to reality has been difficult, but the opportunity to have a hot shower was very welcome. We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who supported us and the teachers and leaders involved with the expedition.

Ecuador Team 2

So we're back at school, a world away from the thrill and excitement of a month spent in Ecuador; from the heat of the jungle, digging trenches and playing games with the children, to the freezing mornings in the Andes Mountains (waking up with ice on our tents!).

The highlight of our stay had to be reaching the summit of Rumiñahui, an amazing achievement for even experienced climbers (like Josh!). The ascent included a daring trek up a scree slope and rock climbing the last few metres to the top. Other highlights included white-water rafting (involving hi-jacking people from other boats and a dramatic capsize for one boat) and waking people up in the



most unusual of circumstances (sluurpp!).

Another major aspect to our trip was the food that we ate. There was a list in one of our travel guides that included Ecuadorian specialities and we vowed to try as many as we could during the month. The dish that we highlighted was fried guinea-pig! We were lucky enough to get the opportunity in a couple of restaurants in Quito – the eyes staring at us whilst we ate, and the brain was still there! In the jungle, many of the team also tried termites (minty!), and lemon ants (surprisingly, lemony!).

To finish, anybody who gets an opportunity in 2012 to go with world challenge, grab it with both hands. A completely life-changing experience.

Written by Ross Campbell (13IWM) and Didier Nuttall (13RPP) of World Challenge Bexley Team 2.

Ecuador Team 3

We just want to say a massive congratulations to everyone who took part in world challenge 2010, whether they went to Ecuador or to Peru.

Our group – Team 3 - went to Ecuador and it was the best 4 weeks of our lives! We did a range of things, from trekking up the largest active volcano in the world, Cotopaxi, to white water rafting through a river running through the Amazon. We also travelled through numerous places, trekking through jungles, zip-wiring over the canopy of a rain cloud forest and bearing the full force of Otavalo market on a Saturday where serious haggling skills were used to buy ponchos. However it wasn't all fun and games. We did a project for a local community (San Clemente); we built a massive wall made out of large rocks, to support a road on a hill that collapses when it rains. It was extremely tough and it was a big job but it was all worth it when you could see how much it meant to the community, and how much they appreciated it. But we didn't just get



an experience of a lifetime; We also became friends with people who we barely knew before this trip.

If you get a chance to go in 2012 I suggest you take it, and don't get put off by the amount of money you have to raise, because this is an experience that you'll never forget and it's worth it!

Nishin Mistry Year 13 & Kirstie McLaren Year 12

Peru Team 4

This summer a group of 16 willing young students embarked on an epic adventure and with the help of expedition experts World Challenge and the ever-enthusiastic Mr Pullen and Miss Fairbairn we had the privilege of exploring Southern Peru. During the month we painted a school in a remote village of Lake Titicaca, where the local community thanked us with garlands of flowers, bonfires, dancing and dressing up in their traditional dress. We also completed the Lares trek in the sacred valley surrounding the Inca city of Cusco. This trek took us up to 4600m, under the face of Mount Colque Cruz and we also experienced altitude sickness (Miss Fairbairn being the first

to succumb but the first to recover!), but our faithful guide



Jose encouraged us through. In terms of sights, the red beach at Paracas, where it never rains, was interesting, but the best had to be Macchu Picchu which was breath-taking, especially as we arrived at 5am to see the sunrise, and a small group got to climb Wayna Picchu to get a birds-eye view of the site.

We are so happy to be home but had an amazing experience and would thoroughly recommend this life-changing experience to anybody!

Bethan Austin, Sam Davies and Alex Mann

World Challenge 2012 to India and the Himalayas

Please find below the information regarding meetings for students and parents, where India 2012 will be launched and information regarding price and registration of interest will be given.

- ❖ Launch assembly for Year 10 students: Wednesday 22nd September
- ❖ Launch assembly for Year 11 students: Thursday 23rd September
- ❖ Parent and Student information evening: Monday 4th October 2010 in Hall at 6.30pm
- ❖ Acclimatisation meeting for students (where registration of interest is shown by the handing in of application forms and a deposit): Wednesday 13th October 2010 at 3.20pm (location to be confirmed).

If there are any Year 12 students who are interested in going to India, please speak to Miss Fairbairn.

If there are any queries regarding the above please contact Miss Fairbairn via email: Fairbairn_a@bexleygs.co.uk

Forthcoming Events

Tuesday 21st September ~ Year 7 Parents' Evening
Friday 24th September ~ INSET Day
Monday 27th September ~ School Photographs for Years 7, 9 & 12
Wednesday 29th September ~ Year 13 Parents' Evening

Notices

Comic Book Club ~ Year 7 and 8 students are invited to join the Comic Book Club, which runs every Monday week B from 3.05-4pm in J18. Members can read, swap and share their favourite comics, and the more artistic amongst you can even design and draw your own comics! Please contact Miss Edmundson in the English department if you would like any more information, or just turn up on the day!

Year 7 Football Trials ~ Thanks to the large number of pupils who attended the Year 7 boys' football trials on Thursday 9th September. Over half of the boys in the year group attended, showing impressive ability. Mr Pullen hopes to have fixtures for A, B and C teams over the course of the season. All boys are welcome to attend training each Thursday. Mr Rosenthal

Coffee Morning ~ The annual Macmillan cancer coffee morning will take place on Friday 1st October. Over the last 7 years we have raised a large amount of money for the Macmillan cancer fund. If you would like to contribute cakes or biscuits for this worthwhile cause, they will be gratefully received.

Please leave any contributions at school reception, or direct them to Mrs Vials in the science office.

Mrs Vials

PE Department "Wall of fame" ~ Have you represented the district, borough or county in the last year? If you have, the PE department would love to induct you into our inaugural "Wall of Fame". We would like to display some action photographs of our top performers playing their sports to celebrate success and to inspire other students. Please come and see Mr Lines or Miss Leffen in the PE department, and bring a photo if you've got one. Mr Lines

Theatre Trips ~ Two theatre trips being offered by the English Department that are vital to those studying English at A-level and IB.

For AS Literature students ~ *Faustus* at the Young Vic on Monday 11th October, meet at 7.15 at the theatre for a 7.45 start. Ticket price: £13.00.

For A2 Lit and Year 13 IB students ~ *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the Oxford Playhouse on Saturday 20th November. Leave London Victoria at 11am, coach to Oxford for a 2.30 pm start, return to Victoria for 7pm. Ticket cost (including transport) £28.00.

For both trips please get a letter from the English department. Miss Fairbairn

Parent Courses ~ There will be a letter coming home, via ParentMail, regarding courses we will be holding for parents after school. A paper copy is available from Reception. If you are interested please complete the form and return it to school by Friday 24th September.

Canteen ~ Parents please ensure that pupils canteen accounts have enough funds in them to allow them to purchase their lunch. We can no longer let pupils have credit if they do not have any money in their accounts. They can easily keep a check on their balance and parents can also look on the Parent Pay website. It is ultimately the parents' responsibility to make sure that their children can purchase food in the canteen.

We have been lenient and allowed some pupils to have food when their accounts have been empty but more and more of them are relying on this too much.

Many thanks for your co-operation. Finance Office

School photos ~ Monday 27th September for Years 7, 9 & 12. Order forms will be sent home on Monday 20th September and must be brought back to school on 27th September and handed directly to the photographer.

Academic Council interview with Mr Crawford, Director of Studies, Year 7

Interviewers: So what is the purpose of the Year 7 tutor meeting which is coming up?

Mr Crawford: Well the most important reason for the meeting is so that the Year 7 parents are able to meet their child's form tutor and hopefully begin to build a relationship with them. The parents can also inform the tutors of any struggles or issues that their children are having or vice versa.

Interviewers: Is there anything else?

Mr Crawford: It gives the opportunity for the school to inform parents about how the Year 7 Diploma, which their children are taking, works.

Interviewers: And finally is there any advice that you would give to the new Year 7s?

Mr Crawford: You have to get as involved as possible. When I was in Year 7, I joined in with rugby, cricket, badminton and athletics teams. I even played the violin in the school orchestra!! This helped me to make friends and generally feel more a part of my schools community.

Interviewers: Thanks very much.

