

# High altitude and high adventure



While the vast majority of Worth's staff and students were looking forward to returning home at the beginning of the long summer break, 24 boys, two teachers and a monk started the long plane journey to Chile in South America.

First stop was just an hour from Santiago and the days there were spent walking, swimming in mineral-rich pools and horse riding. The next destination was San Benito, one of the Benedictine schools from where students commonly come to Worth for a one year placement. Worth students were pleased to see some familiar faces and the tourists were greeted with great warmth and enthusiasm.

From San Benito the group headed north for San Pedro where four days were spent acclimatising to the higher altitude. Long walks were undertaken and some members of the group suffered with the lack of oxygen at that level. However, as Religious Studies teacher Ms Rebecca Paterson remarked, "Everyone carried on and few complaints were made."

The journey over the border to Bolivia necessitated travelling for many hours at a time in 4x4 vehicles but it seems that the arduous journey was well worth it. The group witnessed first hand amazing natural wonders including the salt flats and red lagoons. Those who wished to attempt the peak of

volcano Lincancabur rose at 3am to face a six-hour uphill struggle and a three hour descent. Eleven boys were successful in reaching the very top and were spurred on by the encouragement of those unable to reach the peak.

As William Watkins, Year 13, said "I managed to push my limits further than ever before. The highlights of the trip for me were to see wildlife which I'd never, ever expected to see up close – the condors and the puma – and even though I didn't climb the volcano, I felt happy by what I'd done over the past few days and had that sense of achievement."

Ms Paterson added, "It was a fantastic expedition and all concerned thoroughly enjoyed the challenges. The Worth boys were certainly great ambassadors for the school and there was a positive atmosphere the whole time."



Top: On the salt flats in Bolivia Above: Worth staff and students at Benedictine school Colegio San Benito, Chile Below: The 4x4 teams after crossing the border into Bolivia



## News in brief



### Worth hosts under 13s cricket tournament

Worth hosted its fourth annual inter-school cricket tournament in May, involving teams of players aged 11 to 13 from Handcross, Cranmore, New Hall, Lindfield Primary and Oriel schools.

The final turned out to be a replay of last year in which Handcross played Cranmore. Cranmore managed to beat their rivals and became tournament champions for the second year running.

Worth lost narrowly to Handcross in the last over of the semi finals.

Raj Chaudhuri, professional cricket coach at Worth, said, "It was a great day and an opportunity for young cricketers to play 20/20 cricket in a very exciting atmosphere."

Several awards were presented at the end of the day; Worth Year 7 student Chris Wyles was presented with the Best Batsman trophy.

### Campus café culture

Worth students can now enjoy café culture just a stone's throw from their classrooms, with the opening of the campus café at the beginning of the Autumn Term.

The café, situated in the foyer of the Performing Arts Centre, opened on 8th September and customers can enjoy hot and cold drinks and snacks at morning break and in the evenings from 8-9 pm, Monday to Friday.

A 'cashless' system has been introduced involving the use of payment cards issued to all students at the beginning of term. These can be 'charged up' with money via the

Finance Office, avoiding the need to carry cash in school.

The café has proved a great success, with students taking the opportunity to sit at the tables provided for a well-earned break and to meet friends.



### Worth goes equestrian

The Autumn Term has brought with it many changes, including the long-awaited inclusion of horse riding in the activities programme. The Worth stables are now open on Wednesday afternoons for students of all ages to come and learn to ride. Hats and horses are provided (riders are expected to dress appropriately) and all levels of ability are catered for. Under the calm and authoritative guidance of

the stable manager, boys and girls are taught in the sand school attached to the stables, learning to trot, canter and eventually gallop. For the more experienced riders, instruction is given in various aspects of dressage and the finer points of riding.

"I've been going since the start of term and it's been great. The instructor is wonderful and I've been able to build on my experience of riding in the past to become a more able horseman," remarked Hugo Sunnocks, Year 13.

The riding tuition complements Worth's polo activity which began in the summer term. Sussex Polo Club is situated close to Worth, at Rowfant, and a number of those students more experienced in horsemanship have been receiving expert guidance in this exciting and skilful game.



Left: Worth students practising their polo skills

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achievements, they have been great ambassadors for the school and the IB Diploma programme's values. Undoubtedly, the skills they have learned and the values instilled in them will mean that they will go on to be globally minded and successful members of society. We are very proud of them."

IB Co-ordinator, Mr Simon Smith, said: "We are delighted for these students who have been a pleasure to teach throughout their time at Worth. They have shown an intellectual curiosity and an international mindedness that will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives. These excellent results mean this year's Diploma graduates will accept places at some of the best universities around the world. The IB is regarded by many university admissions tutors as providing the best possible preparation for undergraduate success."

Worth is one of only two schools in West Sussex to teach the IB after introducing the Diploma in September 2002. It is now firmly established, with around a third of the sixth form choosing the IB over A Levels.

### Record breaking GCSE results

Worth's Year 11 students achieved outstanding results in this year's GCSE examinations too. Over 95% of candidates achieved A\* - C grades at GCSE and 24 students gained 9 or more A\* - A grades.

Thomas Fletcher was amongst the top ten in the country who achieved the highest overall marks in Physics, out of over 8,500 candidates, according to awarding body Edexcel.

A record-breaking 416 A\* and A grades were awarded meaning that 56 per cent of grades awarded were A\* and A grades.

Mrs Anne Lynch, Director of Studies, commented, "These are excellent results and we are delighted for our GCSE students. Their splendid performance is a testimony to their hard work and that of their teachers and forms a sound foundation for their IB and A Level studies in the Sixth Form."

### Worth School website

For the latest Worth School news and events, please visit [www.worthschool.co.uk](http://www.worthschool.co.uk)

## Dates for the diary

- **14 November**  
WHISPS Consortium Concert, Abbey Church, 7:30 pm
- **30 November**  
Christmas music from Handel's *Messiah* performed by the Abbey Schola and Abbey Singers in aid of Outreach Peru, Abbey Church, 7:30 pm
- **7 December**  
Carols by Candlelight, Abbey Church, 8:00 pm
- **7 February 2009**  
Open Morning, 9:45 am



# A new chapter begins at Worth

History was made in September when Worth welcomed girls into the Sixth Form for the first time since the senior school first opened its doors in 1959.

When the Autumn Term started, 32 Year 12 girls joined the boys in the Sixth Form to become the first cohort to enjoy co-education at Worth. From 2010 girls will join the school in other year groups.

The school has invested in a new girls' boarding and day house, along with extra facilities and staff. The new girls' House, St Mary's, was formally opened on Sunday 7th September when Fr Stephen Ortiger, former Abbot of Worth Abbey and now a chaplain at the school, blessed the building, its staff and residents.

Head Master Mr Gino Carminati, said: "This is an historic moment in time as Worth begins a new chapter in its evolution and transformation to co-education. This process of change will enable the school to offer even broader opportunities to experience life and learning, whilst sustaining its commitment to excellence in all things. As a community we will continue to flourish and be guided by the traditions of our faith and by the wisdom of St Benedict. It is

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### insight



Year 12 students at the blessing of St Mary's House

## Examinations success

Worth School students are once again celebrating excellent results in this year's International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma, A Level and GCSE examinations.

Overall 72% of IB and A Level results were at grades A – B. A number of A Level students gained three or more A grades, including Ki Yuk Lee who gained 5 A grades and will read Economics at the London School of Economics (LSE).

The A Level results complemented the impressive IB results achieved in July, when 24 Worth students gained an average score of 34.7 points, well above the global average of 30 points, and equating to four A grades at A Level. Fourteen of Worth's Sixth Formers obtained the Bilingual Diploma.

The highest scoring student at Worth, Fridolin Steinbeis, achieved 44 points, placing him among the top Diploma graduates globally. Another high achiever is Nathan Gower, who gained 39 points and will read Classics at Christ's College, Cambridge.

Head Master, Mr Gino Carminati, said: "As well as the students' high academic

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Students who achieved 9 or more A\* or A grades at GCSE in 2008 (not pictured are: Christian Killoughery, Joseph Rivers, Matthew Stagnetto and Richard Warren)

interview



**Caroline Brown** joined Worth in September as Housemistress of the new girls' boarding and day house, St Mary's. After a busy first half of term, Insight spoke to Mrs Brown about coming to Worth and the advent of co-education at the school.

**Where were you before you came to Worth?**

I was at St Leonards-Mayfield School, in East Sussex. I was a Housemistress there and also the Old Girls' coordinator.

**Why did you decide to come to Worth?**

My father and my brother both came to school here. When I heard about the job I thought it sounded like an exciting challenge. Another reason is that I've always loved the idea of working in a school that's attached to a monastery. I very much looked forward to working somewhere where the monks are a core part of the school. I was brought up a Catholic, my family are all Catholic and we all went to Catholic schools. I wanted to be involved in a Catholic school where it was evident that religion was in all parts of school life and not just on Sundays. This is what I expected of Worth, and this is what Worth is. It comes through in the people I meet here, staff and boys – and now the girls.

**How do you feel the move to co-education is going?**

From my point of view, absolutely fantastically. It's working well; the house is running smoothly, the girls seem to be happy and enjoying it and, as far as I can tell, integrating well. Within two or three days of lessons starting, immediately the integration and the mixing happened. I've had phone calls from parents, all enthusiastic, all excited that the girls have been phoning home and saying how much they're enjoying it.

**How is your role in the school developing?**

I will start more teaching from January. This term has been allocated solely to the girls' House, routines and systems. I am teaching Italian to Year 9 and I'm running an Italian society which, at this early stage, all the Year 7s and 8s seem to want to get involved with.

**Do you think Worth may change with the arrival of co-education?**

Well, boys here have a certain...I don't know if 'gentleness' is the right word. Compared to boys from other schools, Worth boys don't have much arrogance. That gentleness is a very real and positive characteristic and when I came for interview I was impressed by the respect, the politeness, the manners and that gentleness. I'm hoping that any changes that do happen will be more in the pupils coming into the school than the other way around, and that the wonderful atmosphere here will rub off on the girls so they will emerge from Worth with that same gentleness.

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wonderful to see how quickly the girls have settled into school life and how welcoming the boys have been. This is just the start of what I am sure will be a shining and brilliant future."



Chaplain Fr Stephen Ortiger blessing St Mary's House

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- Charles Bridge (y13) ■ George Calvert (y13) ■ Benedict Cardozo (y13)
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insight

the students' viewpoint

Some weeks into the Autumn Term, the senior students themselves discussed the advent of co-education at Worth. The girls commented on the factors that drew them to the school in the first place: its atmosphere and the sense of community they felt, even when visiting. On more practical matters, they named issues as varied as the new café, the Sixth Form dress code and the support they received when selecting their academic studies as outstanding features of Worth. The successful design and high quality interior of St Mary's House was also highlighted. The girls agreed on how 'normal' it felt coming to Worth, "as if they had been here from the beginning, and how pleasant the boys were".

The Year 12 boys, obviously also new to life in the Sixth Form, seem to have received the change with equanimity, with one commenting that he felt the bigger change by far was in the wearing of suits at school. Although initially worried that their peers attitudes would change with girls attending Worth, they have found themselves reassured by the lack of difference in the school atmosphere. One commented that with the increasing trend towards co-education in schools like Worth, they have a real responsibility to "make sure it works".



## Tutankhamun, trenches and theme parks: ACE Week 2008

ACE Week (Activity Curriculum Enhancement) took place in the last week of the summer term and year groups celebrated all things international, looking to the wider world beyond the UK.

**Year 7** visited the Tutankhamun Exhibition at the O2, enjoyed a day of African mask making and theatre and watched a dramatic representation of The Life of Christ at Wintershall. Later in the week they participated in a day of Chinese music and culture and were involved in an International Music Competition, during which they sang in Japanese.

**Year 8** had an amazing week in Aurillac on their French exchange taking part in, among other activities, kayaking, exploring caves and visiting Rocamadour. Students from Worth have been staying with families from the Collège la Jordanne for 16 years and the exchange has proved invaluable in increasing their command of the French language. Thoroughly impressed by the trip, Year 8s Nathaniel Smith and Patrick Grady described it as "a good experience" and commented that "this exchange has given me a greater understanding of the French way of life and language."

**Year 9** spent the majority of the week touring the battlefields of the First World War in France and Belgium – an experience students and staff alike found both moving and thought-provoking. This involved visits to various cemeteries for the French, German, English and Canadian fallen, the vast crater left by the mine at Lochnagar and the chapel near Ypres. "I think the most striking thing about the trip was the sense of loss we felt while there and the great blow humanity took from this war," said Year 9 student Alexander Burke-Tsaoussis.

**Year 10** took part in a Day of Reflection and then enjoyed a Business Conference which divided them into teams and set them the task of devising a white-knuckle ride for an International Theme Park. As well as presenting their ideas, they had to build a working model of the ride, which certainly tested their Design Technology and creative skills. The winning team, Juggernaut, made an excellent presentation and won a shield. At the end of the week the students were enthralled by visiting speaker Neil Laughton, a Worth old boy who gave a fascinating lecture about his adventures, including climbing Everest.

**Year 12** IB students travelled to Rome as part of their Theory of Knowledge (ToK) studies, visiting well-known sites including the Roman Forum and the Colosseum. The ToK



aspect of the IB requires students to critically appreciate different cultures and to assess how this might influence your outlook on the world.

**Year 12** AS students attended a two day International Business Conference which comprised seminars, including one by Abbot Christopher on ethical business, and set them the task of developing and presenting a product to a panel of judges in the 'Dragon's Den'. Some interesting business plans were presented including a 'Silver Service' version of the Yellow Pages for the over sixties. The winning group, Faith Cruises, won the shield and the £250 prize money offered by sponsors Toyota.

The week also included a visit to the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons – not for the squeamish, as the Crystal Gallery offered over 4,000 specimens in glass jars and a history of the development of surgery from rudimentary beginnings to modern keyhole procedures. Advice sessions on UCAS procedures and an excellent Careers Fair ended Year 12's ACE week adventures. The whole school reunited for Mass in the Abbey Church before the summer break beckoned.



## Music results hit the high note!

Thirty-three Worth students took part in musical examinations in June 2008. The results reflect the excellent standard of musical tuition at the school, with no fewer than eight distinctions, 13 merits and 12 passes. Year 9 student Ashley Beauchamp's performances were exceptional in that he was awarded high Distinctions in both Grade 8 flute and Grade 4 organ. James Matthews, Year 13, achieved a Distinction in his Grade 8 singing as well as in his violin Diploma. James Kemp (Year 7), Benedict Derbyshire (Year 8), Alex Fletcher (Year 9) and Marco Boodramsingh (Year 10), also achieved distinctions.

Left: James Matthews (centre) performing at Speech Day in May



Ready to go: Dom Leo Maidlow Davis, Head Master of Downside, with the first walking group of senior Worth students, Downside's Dom James Hood, Worth's Fr Peter Williams and Deputy Head Master Dr James Whitehead

## Worth – Downside pilgrimage walk: 75 years and 150 miles in the making

A group of senior students, staff, monks and parishioners from Worth set off on a 150 mile walk on Sunday 21st September, from Downside in Somerset, beginning a year of events celebrating Worth Abbey's 75th anniversary.

The walkers followed, as much as possible, the same route that the founding monks from Downside took in 1933. Fr Peter Williams led the pilgrims in groups of between 12 to 15 walkers, each group completing one third of the walk. Fr Peter and Worthians Matthew Doggett and John Rollo-Walker completed the entire six-day trip.

Each evening the pilgrims received hospitality and supper from Worth and Downside old boys. After a night's sleep in a town hall and after the morning's progress the groups enjoyed picnic lunch and a daily reading from the Rule of St Benedict. This was followed by 20 minutes of silent walking and time for reflection.

Dr James Whitehead, Deputy Head Master, took part in the first stage of the pilgrimage walk. "It has been an uplifting experience, being part of a journey that is also a spiritual pilgrimage, a landmark occasion in the history of Worth in its 75th year. The walk, led by Worth School and its monastic community, and supported by Downside, is a good example of modern pastoral co-operation and spiritual leadership in two famous Benedictine communities, who are looking to the future with confidence."

The initial walkers were joined by other members of the Worth community as the week progressed and a large number of people participated in the final leg of the journey, from Pease Pottage to Worth School. Over 30 Worth students took part during the week.

Jack Featherby, Year 13, a member of the first walking group, said that it was a "revealing and fulfilling experience".

The walk culminated in a service at Worth Abbey Church, in the presence of the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor and numerous church and civic leaders. The monks celebrate Vespers (evening prayer) every day and this Solemn Vespers service on 28th September took place 75 years, to the day, since monks first prayed together at Worth.

A number of events are planned to celebrate this anniversary, including Mass in Westminster Cathedral on 21st March next year. Details of forthcoming Worth 75 events can be found at [www.worthschool.co.uk/75](http://www.worthschool.co.uk/75)