

## 1985 Air Cadet climbing high

1985 Air Cadet Amy Seymour recently completed her gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition with three weeks in Tanzania. Part of a group of 15, Amy spent half the expedition climbing the tallest and second tallest mountains in Tanzania, Mt Kilimanjaro and Mt Meru. Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa, with Meru rated 5<sup>th</sup>. Carrying full kit, the group ascended and descended Meru in only 3 days, with Kilimanjaro taking longer at 6 days including descent. Altogether the group climbed over 10,000m vertically. Amy was unlucky to develop altitude sickness, a serious affliction which kills 10+ climbers a year, and, along with others from the group, had to stop slightly short of the Kilimanjaro summit. But she is incredibly proud of having reached Barafu Camp, at a height of 4600m, and is planning to return to Tanzania in the future to climb Mt Kilimajaro again! Tanzania is world renowned for its national parks – it is home to the Ngorongoro Crater, the Arusha National Park (Little Serengeti), and, most famously, the Serengeti National Park. The group was lucky enough to visit all three at one point or another during her stay. Amy and the group also spent a week at a local orphanage, where they helped the children with their English, arranged a sports day and did some drama. Amy is pictured with 2 of the 3 children she was responsible for during her stay, even going to a local football game with them!

Amy hopes to complete her Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award next week with a week at surf school in Cornwall. She is very proud of her achievement, which has included voluntary lifeguarding at the Keech Cottage Childrens Hospice, singing lessons and participation in the Bedford Festival as well as passing Grade 7 Musical Theatre, claypigeon shooting and a week on board an ex merchant navy screwship. Amy enjoyed lifeguarding for people with special needs so much that she has decided she wants to become a doctor. Amy says she would recommend the challenge of the award to anyone, that it opens up new experiences and skills, provides opportunities to put something back in the community as well as providing a great sense of pride and achievement.