

NEWSLETTER MARCH. 1977

A busy term is almost over and as usual school will finish at 3.00 p.m. on Friday, 1st April after the usual closing assemblies. Mercifully this term has been relatively free from cases of serious illness among staff, but the usual incidence of winter ailments has meant a heavy enough term for staff and I am sure they and the pupils will welcome the coming holidays.

For those pupils who are candidates for the forthcoming C.S.E. and S.C.E. examinations, the holiday may not be as complete a break as they might like. The first examination is Ordinary Grade Arithmetic and this takes place on Tuesday, 26th April. From then on until about Monday, 30th May, more than 530 pupils will be sitting examinations. The complex arrangements for all this are carefully controlled by Miss Cantley. I am sure that all candidates would wish me to thank on their behalf all staff for the constant help and guidance they give.

The leaving date for pupils whose 16th birthday falls on or before 30th September, 1977 is 31st May, 1977- I would wish all pupils leaving then every success in their future activities. I hope they have enjoyed school and found it a worthwhile stage of their lives.

After some twenty years of service to the school, Mr Magnus Dawson, Principal Teacher of Art, retired in February. I should like to thank him for all the work and guidance that he has given to generation after generation of pupils. In his typically quiet and self-effacing way, he has done a great deal to nurture an appreciation of art in the school. Although his official retirement took place in February, he has nobly agreed to continue teaching until his successor, Mr A. Cuthbert, Principal Teacher of Art in Dalkeith High School, takes over after the Easter holidays.

I am happy to say that Mrs Reid, and Mrs McCance will join the Art and the English Departments respectively after Easter. We welcome to school also Mr Farmer in the Mathematics Department. During this term we have had splendid help from teachers doing relief work, and in this connection I should like to thank Mrs Cockburn, Mrs Findlay, Mrs Duncan, Mrs McFarlane, Mr Warman, Mr Bridges, Mrs Logan and Mrs Hodge. Their help has been invaluable. Mrs Anderson and Mrs Steven left us last term to start a family and I am delighted to report that each now has a lovely daughter.

School is about sound learning, and the learning is all the sounder when extra-curricular activities thrive - and this they do in an almost bewildering fashion.

On the sports side, hockey - especially girls' hockey - has been flourishing. The Second Year Girls' under-14 team are winners of the Fife Outdoor Tournament as were the Girls<sup>1</sup> under-16 team. The Third Year Girls' hockey A Team, which has been undefeated for three seasons, were winners of both the Outdoor Midlands Tournament and the Indoor Midlands Tournament. The Senior Team reached the semifinals in the Fife Outdoor Tournament, Midlands Outdoor Tournament, Bell Baxter F.P.'s seven-a-side tournament, Fife Indoor Tournament, Perth seven-a-side tournament and the Midlands Indoor Tournament. Margaret Blatchford and Jackie Lewthwaite were selected for the Midlands District team and are travelling to Newcastle during the Easter holidays to play in a tournament between English and Scottish Districts. The Senior Boys' hockey team were runners up to Kirkcaldy High School in the Indoor five-a-side series for the Balwearie Cup. Alistair Robertson was selected for the Midlands District Hockey Pool.

In rugby, Craig Douglas was selected for the Midlands District Senior Team and Glyn Evans for the Junior Team. Both boys were invited by Midlands School-boys' selectors in the Midlands seven-a-side tournament.

Two of our football teams - the under XV \*s and the under XIV's reached the semi-finals for the Fife Cup. In the Fife Regional cross-country championships the school achieved very creditable placings both for teams and individuals while Ursula McKane was first in the Scottish Championships.

Among the club activities, one of the most recently formed clubs - Archaeology has already got to the stage of organising a four-day visit to sites in Sutherland. The canoeists become increasingly adventurous with visits planned to the Dee and the Earn. What can we say about the Chess Club save that it continues to be highly competitive? Both badminton and table tennis have reached the stage of inter-school fixtures while golf teams will compete in the Fife Schools Golf Championships and the Aer Lingus Competition. Out in the bay the sailors show endurance and skill while indoors the rifle club distinguishes itself with A. Grierson, J. Ward and K. Bowman doing particularly well.

After a long lapse, a Debating Club has been revived under the direction of Dr Richardson and has got off to a vigorous start. The Music Department has been busy maintaining the usual standard of its fine Lunch Time Concerts, taking part in the St Andrews Festival and finally putting on a delightful Spring Concert last week.

The Drama Club continues to achieve very high standards of performance from its players and in January we were all captivated by the Club's presentation of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in the Byre Theatre. The school is greatly indebted to Robert Bridges for his contribution to this event. It is good to see the appearance of a junior section under the guidance of Mr Husk and Mrs Bridges.

If this section on the activities of the school clubs and societies has been a lengthy one, it will perhaps underline the tremendous amount of work done by staff to provide those additions to the curriculum which can make such a difference to the kind of education that a school can offer.

The times ahead look far from encouraging: staffing is tight, money is short and these things are bound to have an effect on our activities but I am sure that with help and support from parents there will be a minimum cut-back in our work.

I wish all a happy holiday and draw your attention to the coming school events:-

Summer Term Minstrel Show - Kilrymont Road building of school on 16th, 17th and 18th June.

#### Holidays

Easter - School ends on Friday, 1st April at 3.00 p.m. and begins on Monday, 18th April.

Jubilee Holidays - The school will be closed on Monday, 6th and 7th June for the Silver Jubilee.

Summer - School ends on Friday, 1st July and resumes for pupils on Monday, 22nd August.

*Jan L. Selway.*