

Apart from the sharp reminder in the last few days that winter has not left us yet, the relatively mild winter has made for easier travelling conditions than last year. However, in spite of the open winter (or perhaps because of it) illness has hit the school heavily particularly among staff. With staff absences running at one stage at over 11%, it was only because of the quite exceptional efforts of the rest of the teaching staff (not always too fit themselves) and the help of supply teachers that we were able to avoid sending some classes home so that the remainder could be taught. I am grateful to Mrs Lohar and Mrs Wyatt (Biology), Mrs McCallum (Chemistry) and Mrs Spence (English) who have come in to help the departments most severely hit, and to Mrs Douglas who has filled the gap caused by a continuing vacancy in R.E. by teaching Mathematics. I am glad to say that Mrs Irving and Mrs Taylor have made good recoveries from spells in hospital, and that Mrs Braid should soon be back with us. In the meantime Mrs Robertson has been a most welcome substitute in the P.E. department. I am sure that all join in wishing Mr Chisholm, Mr Watson and Dr Soulsby a speedy return to health.

At Easter, Madras College loses its longest-serving member of staff when Tom Croll, Principal Teacher of Physical Education, retires after over forty years' service to Fife. Bell-Baxter, Waid and Madras have all benefited from his steady, quiet influence, his enthusiasm for his profession and for sport, and his interest in the younger generation. I am sure that I speak for countless former pupils as well as for present pupils and staff in wishing him a happy retirement. Best wishes go to Mrs Ramsden who has retired after many years service as piano tutor. At Easter, too, we shall be losing Miss Cessford, Deputy Principal Teacher of Home Economics, who goes to Waid Academy as Principal Teacher of that subject - a well-deserved promotion.

Although news of F.P.'s is hard to glean, it was good to hear that Stephen Cuthbert, who is reading Mathematics at Trinity College Cambridge, has been elected a senior scholar and has gained an Easely Scholarship. Richard Herriot has graduated with the degree of B.Med.Biol. from Aberdeen University; Christopher Zochowski has graduated with a B.A. Hons. in Business Studies from Dundee College of Technology, and Mary Picken has graduated with a B.A. degree in Business Studies from Dundee College of Technology.

For many of us, January and February seemed endless, but life was brightened this year by the antics of Class VI in their fund-raising effort. For a whole week, and with a minimum of disruption, slaves were auctioned, custard pies thrown, fancy-dress football and five-a-side tournaments played; the hall reverberated to our resident groups in concert at lunch-times and the tuck-shop did brisk business with home-produced wares. It was all great fun, and school funds have increased by £400 as a result. This was a prelude to the main fund-raising fortnight in June, with a fete to follow in September. These efforts will, I hope, put the School Fund in a healthy enough state to face what looks like being a bleak economic spell, and I hope we shall have the support of parents in these ventures.

The Drama club can always be counted on for the excellence of their January production at the Byre Theatre, but this year's presentation of "Hay Fever" was outstanding in direction, acting and the visual delights of set and costumes. Congratulations to Mrs Bridges, to her colleagues and to the pupils who gave us such a splendid evening. By the time this letter is distributed we shall have enjoyed another

Spring Concert by the Music Department, and we look forward to the summer production of Benjamin Britten's "Noye's Fludde". In June the Drama club will also present an attraction as yet unnamed.

In the space available, it is difficult to give adequate coverage to the activities of the extra-curricular clubs and societies, and selection, at the risk of slighting by omission, is all that one can do. The Film, Debating and Current Affairs Clubs are well supported, while badminton, table tennis, chess and darts attract good numbers. The offer of golf tuition under Tom Melville has been well supported, but there are still places available and I would like to think that in St Andrews we can draw in even more pupils. The Crafts Club members are busy making soft toys for the September fete. Congratulations to Helen Scott on being selected to compete in the European Girls' Championship in Yugoslavia; to Denise Burns on winning two gold medals and a silver trophy at the Arbroath Music Festival; and to David McCallum who won his class in the Brass Section at the Festival.

Team games have all gone well this term, with few cancellations except in the case of boys' hockey which was hit badly by ground conditions and opponents' teams calling off. The Rugby teams have had some good wins, especially the 1st Year who won the Perth Schools' 8-a-side tournament. David Rickman and Andrew Hardman have represented Midlands Under-16 XV in all matches. The Football teams, after a slow start, showed up well, especially in the cup matches. Girls' Hockey teams have maintained their high standard. Elaine Makein and Dorothy McGregor were again in the Midlands Schoolgirls' and Under-20's teams. In Cross-country, the Under 15 and Under 17 Boys' teams were third in the Fife Schools championships.

Congratulations to Elaine Makein and Dorothy McGregor on being chosen for the Scottish Schoolgirls' Hockey Squad 1st XI, to Roderick Christie on being selected to play for Fife Schools Badminton team against Perth schools, and to Claire Braidwood on being chosen to swim for Fife in an Inter-Regional swimming gala at the Commonwealth pool Edinburgh.

With the approach of the S.C.E. examinations, candidates are, or should be, thoroughly involved in preparation. I wish them every success. As in previous years, certain concessions will be made regarding attendance during the peak period of the S.C.E. examinations when formal class teaching is not possible because of the number of pupils taking examinations. After the Easter holidays pupils will be given a letter to parents detailing the arrangements, but at this stage I would stress that these arrangements must be strictly adhered to and that no exceptions will be made. I ask for the support of parents in this matter.

I wish all staff and pupils a well-earned and refreshing Easter holiday.

L. D. Selway

Rector.

Forthcoming Events and Holidays

Easter Holidays	:	Monday 31st March to Friday 11th April
May Holiday	:	Monday 5th May
June Holiday	:	Monday 2nd June
School Musical	:	Thursday 26th and Friday 27th June
Quad Theatre Plays	:	9 - 24th June in St Andrews and on tour.
Summer Holidays	:	Thursday 3rd July to Wednesday 20th August 1980.