

Fife Education Authority

# MADRAS COLLEGE, ST. ANDREWS

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**D.D. GALLOWAY, Rector.**

**J.L. HODGE, Depute Rector.**



Dear Parent,

Newsletter, October 1985

School resumed on Monday 19th August after what must be one of the most dreadful summers on record. Although unlucky with the weather, we were lucky enough once again to begin the session fully staffed. It was also encouraging to find that the final stages of the alterations to the building had been completed during the summer holidays and departments which had been allocated new rooms were at last able to move into them. Mr Paterson, Assistant Rector (Administration), was the member of the school staff mainly responsible for liaison with the architects and the Regional Works Department. It is a tribute to his care, efficiency and meticulous attention to detail that the whole programme was carried through with so few problems.

The redistribution of pupils between buildings, of which the structural changes were merely the outward sign, was an even greater change and it is pleasing to record that this also has taken place without any obvious difficulty whatever apprehension may originally have been felt by pupils, staff and parents.

I may say that since coming to Madras College I have been impressed by the generally smart appearance of the pupils and I would like to express my appreciation of the tremendous effort made by parents to provide school uniform, especially in these difficult times. In this connection it is perhaps worth noting that for those pupils who prefer something less formal than a blazer, the newly introduced school sweater has been an immediate success.

The action still being taken by the teaching associations over pay and conditions of service makes this a shorter newsletter than usual and a difficult and unhappy time in the life of the school. Any hopes that the summer holidays would bring a solution have been dashed and, at the time of writing, there appears to be little prospect of any improvement in the situation. School work proceeds as normally as possible in the circumstances, but the most obvious effect of the dispute has been on extra-curricular activities which have more or less disappeared. Saturday morning games, in which some 250 pupils regularly took part, are virtually non-existent. The usual programme of P.T.A. meetings has had to be put in abeyance and the loss of contact between home and school is a matter for particular regret. The traditional Christmas Carol Concert, of which many parents will have happy memories, and the end of term parties, so much enjoyed by staff and pupils, have also had to be abandoned. I am sure that I am speaking for all members of staff, whatever their view of the present situation, when I say that I greatly regret the disappearance of these activities from the school calendar and I look forward to the time when they resume their usual place in school life.

However, in an attempt to show that not all is gloom, three items of news perhaps deserve a place in this record. Those who know the history of the school will perhaps remember that Dr Bell, the founder, was at one time chaplain to the regiments in Madras in India. It was therefore interesting to receive an invitation from Madras Christian College to send a representative to their 150th anniversary celebrations. Unfortunately, it was not thought likely that the Education Authority would look kindly on granting leave of absence or travelling expenses for such a purpose. However, a message of good wishes was sent and it is hoped that some kind of contact can be maintained with the other Madras College.

The school decided to become involved in the Schools for Africa appeal which provided a practical means of helping Ethiopian famine victims. The appeal attracted generous support from pupils and parents and thanks to the efforts of Mrs Mobeck and her helpers in the Home Economics department.

some 24 sacks of food were loaded on a minibus to be taken to Leuchars on the first stage of their journey to Africa.

Sixth year and some fifth year pupils have recently been taking part in a conference organised by the Industrial Society. The conference is conducted by a team of managers and trade unionists and the pupils have spent two days studying and discussing with them the problems of industry. The aim is not careers recruitment but to encourage among senior pupils an awareness of the place of industry in our society. This was felt to be a particularly important part of present day life not covered elsewhere in the formal part of the syllabus. This is the first time the school has been involved in an event of this kind and all the indications are that it has proved valuable and successful.

Although I must count as a newcomer myself, it is my pleasant duty to welcome to the staff Miss Jack (Principal Teacher, Guidance), Mrs Nicol (Principal Teacher, Learning Support), Mr Urquhart (Principal Teacher, Guidance), Miss Batchelor (Assistant Principal Teacher, Guidance), Mrs Easingwood (Assistant Principal Teacher, English), Mr Watt (Art), Miss Dunsire (Mathematics), Mr Baldwin (Biology), Mr Welsh (Physics), Mr English (Physical Education) and Mrs McCarron (Auxiliary, Special Education). I would also extend a warm welcome to our two foreign assistants Mile Adhumeau from France and Fraulein Ungerbock from Austria. In addition, I would like to thank Mrs McManus (Music), and Mrs Oswald and Mrs Wallace (Physical Education) for the supply help they are at present giving and also acknowledge the valuable assistance which has been given in a part-time capacity by Mrs Wardlaw (Home Economics) and Mrs Muir (Music). Miss Latto (Geography) has been appointed to an Assistant Principal Teacher, Guidance post in the school and I would congratulate her on her well-deserved promotion, and at the same time thank Mr Wemyss (Acting Principal Teacher, Guidance), Mrs Baughan (Acting Assistant Principal Teacher, Guidance) and Mrs Brown (Acting Assistant Principal Teacher, Guidance) for doing so much good work in these roles.

The nine weeks since I took up my appointment as Rector have been a rewarding and enjoyable experience and I would gratefully acknowledge the warmth of the welcome I have received. It takes a long time to get to know a school thoroughly, especially one as large as Madras College, and although I have done my best in the time available to meet as many staff and pupils as possible, I am very conscious that there are still many gaps to be filled. I have also welcomed the many contacts I have already had with parents and I would take this opportunity to say that I am always willing to meet parents and give them any help I can.

Mr Hodge has suggested, I suspect somewhat mischievously, that I should include something about my philosophy of running a school. In the present circumstances that might best be summed up by saying that it is merely to try to keep the ship on an even keel, but to some extent that statement is always true, since the everyday business of ensuring that a school is fully staffed, adequately resourced and running smoothly is essential to the creation of the right climate for learning. However, I have always believed that a school is much more than a mere place where knowledge is acquired. It is the rich variety of its activities and interests, the sense of pride in its history and achievements and the recognition by staff, parents and pupils that everyone has a part to play in its success that makes a school into a community and gives it a life, character and spirit of its own. Madras College already possesses these distinctive qualities. It will be my aim to encourage and develop them to their fullest extent.

Finally, I hope that the weather will be rather kinder than it was during the summer holiday and that everyone will benefit from a pleasant and relaxing autumn break.

Yours sincerely,



Rector.

<u>Christmas Holiday:</u>	School Finishes:	Friday 20th December 1985
	School Starts:	Monday 6th January 1986
<u>Easter Holiday:</u>	School Finishes:	Thursday 28th March 1986
	School Starts:	Monday 14th April 1986
<u>Summer Holiday:</u>	School Finishes:	Friday 4th July 1986