

Fife Education Authority

# MADRAS COLLEGE, ST. ANDREWS

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*D.D. GALLOWAY, Rector.*

*J.L. HODGE, Depute Rector.*



Dear Parent,

## NEWSLETTER - CHRISTMAS 1989

The long gap in communication since the last newsletter was issued in June is a sign not of inactivity but of the increasing work-load which all schools now seem to face. Even with a midterm break in October, it is always a long haul from summer to Christmas and this year it has been more arduous than ever. Most subjects have now moved over to the new Standard Grade courses. While this is a source of satisfaction in many ways, the changes in teaching methods which these courses require are very demanding of staff time and effort. Certainly the staff will find the Christmas holiday more than welcome and even though it may be for their own different reasons, it is a sentiment which I am sure pupils will share.

The school roll at the start of session was 1,513. Although it has now dropped below the 1,500 mark, as previously made decisions to return altered in the first few weeks, the total is still over the predicted figure. 256 pupils entered SI; 127 returned to S6; S4 which numbers 333 is by far the largest year. Certificate results produced few surprises. With 76.2% gaining A-C passes at Higher Grade and 70.1% gaining Bands 1-3 at O Grade, the high standards of previous years were well maintained. Results in Standard Grade and in the Certificate of Sixth Year Studies were equally satisfactory.

### Staff

Although they are now well established, we take this opportunity to welcome the new members of staff who joined us at the beginning of the session. Mrs Hannah (Home Economics), Mrs Macfie (English), Mrs Thomson (Geography), Mr Wito (Modern Languages) and Mr Higgins (Instrumental instruction - violin). Mrs Summers, whose work with the Boys' Choir had made a notable contribution to school music, left unexpectedly to take up a post in the primary sector. We have been fortunate to obtain a worthy successor in Mrs Nisbet.

Mr Keegans returned from a year's secondment as a National Development Officer to resume his duties as Principal Teacher Modern Studies. Mrs Anderson has returned to Home Economics from a year's exchange in Philadelphia. An exchange of modern linguists has taken Miss Orem to Furstenfeldbruck in West Germany for the term and given us Frau Kinzinger who has proved to be an excellent replacement. The foreign assistants this year are Mme Edwige and Heir Mohr. Miss Bennett has done much good work as Acting Assistant Principal Teacher of Science. Mrs Bletcher is to be congratulated on her appointment as Teacher in Charge of the Support Centre. This is a new facility being developed in schools throughout Fife to help pupils whose social and emotional problems cause behavioural difficulties. She will be assisted by Mrs Broom whom we are delighted to welcome to the permanent staff.

On the non-teaching side, Mrs. Denise McConnachie, the catering supervisor at Kilrymont Road, has retired because of ill-health. She has earned the gratitude of staff and pupils over many years for the high standard of school meals she has provided.

Another retiral also deserves special mention. As Chaplain first of the Burgh School and then of Madras College, Kilrymont, the Rev. John Paterson has had an association with secondary education in St. Andrews which goes back over 30 years. His long service was recognised when Imogen Ashcroft, S3 Head Girl, presented him with a token of the school's appreciation at

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morning assembly. We thank him for his warm and friendly interest in staff and pupils and wish him a long and happy retirement.

Although the flu has only recently been declared an epidemic, it seems to have been raging amongst teaching staff almost since August. Seldom have we ever had to call upon so many supply staff so early in the session and as usual we gratefully acknowledge the help they have given.

### **Successes**

Although successes are not coming as thick and fast as they did last session, teams and individuals continue to give the school a modest share. We congratulate:

Eve Poole on gaining an English Speaking Union scholarship to study in the United States for the second half of the session. These awards are open to the whole UK. Most go to independent schools. Few girls gain places. Eve is the second Madras pupil in three years to receive an ESU scholarship.

Andrew Priest on qualifying for the British Mathematics Olympiad.

Kandy Mitchell on her selection for the U/18 Scottish Schoolgirls' Hockey Pool and Fiona Cameron on reaching the final trials for the U/16 team.

Gillian Charnock on playing in the British U/16 team against Sweden and on her Scottish Lawn Tennis Association ranking as No. 1 girl at U/14. Dorian Coxon - No. 2 boy at U/16; Bruce McIver - No. 3 boy at U/14; Eilidh Smith - No. 4 girl at U/14 who also figure on the Scottish LTA list. Laura Pearce on composing a strathspey which received a highly commended award in Fife Region's annual Scots Music competition.

Roderick Burnett on playing in the Midlands District Rugby XV. Mandy Strachan and Kandy Mitchell on their places in the Midland's Indoor Hockey squad.

Miss Robertson, Principal Teacher of History, on her selection as one of the British umpires for the Hockey World Cup in Australia.

The Times' Tournament of the Mind Team on being honoured with an official reception given by the Convenor of Fife Region, Mr. Robert Gough.

The Golf Team on winning the Fife Senior Boys' Team Championship.

The teams who gained places in the Fife Schools' Road Relay Championships (U/15 Boys - 3rd place; Over/15 Boys - 3rd place and Over/15 Girls - 4th place).

An department pupils, Andrew Henderson, Annabel Robb, David Martin and Margaret Christie who all won prizes in the St Andrews Horticultural Association's Painting Competition.

The Staff Football team on defeating Waid Academy Staff to win the first annual match for the Community Council Shield.

### **Activities**

Debating has figured prominently in the term's activities. In the Inter-House Debate only four points separated the winners, Blackfriars (465), from Priory (464) and Castle (461).

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We are indebted to the Rotary Club of St. Andrews for judging this closely fought contest. Teams have competed in the first rounds of three national contests - the Junior TSB/Glasgow University Debate, the Bank of Scotland/Edinburgh University Debate and the United Nations Speechmaking Contest. Craig Buchanan and Brian Logan qualified for the second round of the Bank of Scotland contest which takes place in January.

As always, our musicians have been extremely busy. The Senior Choir relived their Norwegian experience with a slide and video presentation for parents and a concert in St Andrews Episcopal Church where the guest organist was John Walker, who had been the choir's main contact in Norway. The senior choir also took part in a British Youth Choir's singing day in Edinburgh and was one of three choirs specially chosen to demonstrate their skills in the concert at the end of the day. In October the Junior Choir were hosts to a youth choir from Orleans. This resulted in many new friendships and much valuable singing experience for our pupils who are already looking forward to their return visit to Orleans in June. At Remembrance Day services in St Andrews and at Moonzie, near Cupar, Madras College players sounded the trumpet calls. Three girl pipers played the School Representatives into Holy Trinity Church for the St Andrews Day service. The Wind Band, which has been taking a well-earned rest, has made a welcome return. However, it is proving increasingly difficult to use the school minibus to transport players home after rehearsals and some parental help with transport, especially for pupils from outlying parts of the catchment area, would be much appreciated. Singers and players alike have been much in demand over the festive season and it has been difficult to fulfil all the requests which have been made. Quite apart from our own concert, which is being given on two nights, senior and junior choirs are both involved in carol singing in aid of charity. The brass band is to play at the Old Folks' Treat and another group will provide music at the dedication of the Christmas tree at Holy Trinity. The Junior Drama Group has also helped to foster links with the community by giving a performance of Scrooge for the old folk. The Seniors, the Quad Theatre Group, are putting on As You Like It at the Byre Theatre from 17th - 20th January. Tickets for the Friday night performance on 19th January include the cost of the PTA Dessert Party after the show and are being offered at the bargain price of £4. Book now to avoid disappointment later!

Until the arrival of the Arctic weather with which the term seems to be ending, Rugby, Hockey and Football have enjoyed a regular series of Saturday morning fixtures. Each week the school has had an average of 13 teams in the field. Teams cannot be built without regular practices after school hours. The school's success in maintaining its present level of extra-curricular sporting activities is a tribute to the enthusiasm of the pupils and the willingness of staff to give so much of their time and energy. Details of results will be given in the next newsletter. In any case, the Madras College Diary, which the St. Andrews Citizen has kindly agreed to make a regular feature, is providing this and other information about the school, and is also giving some of our S3 pupils with an interest in journalism, an opportunity to write for the press.

A number of the term's events rate a special mention. The outstanding success of the Careers Convention was the result of much hard work by the Rotary Club of St. Andrews and the Fife Careers Service. Another careers event was the What Next for Women conference in Glenrothes which was attended by all S2 girls. S3 pupils have been taking part in the Aware programme which allows pupils to spend three days in a real work situation. While it has been excellent in giving pupils direct experience of the world of industry and commerce it has created some quite serious difficulties for the continuity of the teaching. The Challenge of Industry Conference for S6 pupils was the found in the series and easily one of the best. The school is very grateful to the industrialists who very generously gave up their time to act as group leaders. In the October holiday the History Department took a party of S4 pupils to the Battlefields of the First World War. Their visit, which was a moving experience for many of those taking part, was subsequently featured in the Sunday Post. Some senior pupils from the Business Studies department have been saving cans for the Blue Peter Appeal which locally will benefit Ninewells Hospital. So far they have collected 2,000 cans and are to be commended for this impressive effort. Many pupils have enjoyed the theatre visits which have been organised by the English Department throughout the term. The Christmas parties for the three junior years, which have already taken place, were well

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supported and greatly enjoyed. In the meantime the seniors, whose festivities are yet to come, have been engaged in the serious business of receiving the results of preliminary examinations and sometimes, if they are lucky, in attending the various Christmas lectures which university departments and learned societies like to provide at this time of the year.

### PTA

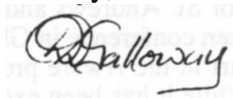
The PTA has had three very successful meetings. The first of these heard Mr. More, the Director of Education, talk on the subject of School Boards. Madras on the Move gave pupils the opportunity to describe their experiences on last summer's expeditions abroad. More recently Investigating Mathematics gave parents a fascinating insight into the new approaches to the teaching of the subject. Fund-raising activities included a car-boot sale and a coffee morning and it is gratifying to report that the Association is well on the way to achieving its target of £9,000 by 90. Their next event is the Dessert Party which, as mentioned earlier, will be in the Byre Theatre on Friday, 19th January.

### School Board

Parental involvement in the affairs of the school has been given a new dimension with the election of a School Board. Out of 24 schools in the area only four had contested elections. In our case 15 parents stood for seven places. The successful candidates were: Mrs Easingwood, Dr McGill, Mr Mitchell, Dr Nicol, Dr Read, Mr Swankie and Dr Tait. The teaching staff elected Mr Barclay, Mrs Fraser and Mr Halliday as their three representatives. Three co-opted members have still to be appointed. The interim chairman is Mr Swankie. The Board has already held two meetings which have been mainly concerned with procedural matters. Once the Board is fully established, its meetings for the most part are open and anyone who is interested may attend. Dates of meetings will be given in the newsletter. They will also appear on the notice boards of both buildings and on the Community Use notice board in Kilrymont Road. Agendas will normally be available from the school and Community Use Office about a week before meetings are due to take place. Ways of making this information available outwith St Andrews are being explored. Any written communications for the Board should be addressed to the **Clerk to the School Board, Madras College, Kilrymont Road.**

This is the last newsletter of 1989 and so the last of the decade. The nineteen-eighties have seen profound changes in education. As I hope will be clear from this account of the school's affairs during the first half of the session, Madras College has adapted well to change while successfully maintaining its traditional standards and values. Thanks to the efforts of staff, parents and pupils it can enter the nineties with pride and confidence. I would gratefully acknowledge the support the school receives and extend to you all my very best wishes for a happy Christmas and good New Year.

Yours sincerely,



RECTOR

*Useful dates are listed on a separate sheet which you may wish to detach and keep for future reference.*

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### USEFUL DATES

#### **Christmas Holidays**

School Closes Friday, 22nd December 1989 (12.30 p.m.)  
School Starts Monday, 8th January 1990

#### **Easter Holidays**

School Closes Friday, 30th March 1990  
School Starts Monday, 16th April 1990

#### **Mid-Term Holidays**

Monday, 12th and Tuesday, 13th February 1990

#### **In-Service Day**

Tuesday, 27th February 1990

#### **Parents' Nights**

|      |   |
|------|---|
| S5/6 | Wednesday, 24th January 1990  |
| S4   | Monday, 5th February 1990   |
| S2   | Thursday, 22nd February 1990 (Half Year Group)<br>Wednesday, 28th February 1990 (Half Year Group) |
| S1   | Monday, 19th March 1990   |
| S3   | Thursday, 26th April 1990   |

#### **Examinations**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| S3  | Monday, 22nd January to Tuesday, 6th February 1990<br>Monday, 30th April to Tuesday, 15th May |
| SCE | Monday, 23rd April to Tuesday, 29th May 1990  |

#### **PTA Meetings**

|                                     |                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Byre Theatre Dessert Party          | Friday, 19th January 1990    |
| Question Time - Guardbridge Primary | Thursday, 15th February 1990 |
| Physical Education Today            | Tuesday, 6th March 1990      |
| AGM                                 | Thursday, 15th March 1990    |

#### **School Board Meeting**

Thursday, 8th February 1990, 7.30 p.m.  
Kilrymont Road Library