



Christmas Newsletter

Madras College Newsletter

December 1998

Rector's Message

Christmas approaches, with its annual contrast between excited preparations for the welcome Midwinter festival and quieter yet powerful expressions of goodwill and hope.

Who cares about the future?

By May of next year, some senior pupils will already have come of age, some by passing a driving test, others by donating blood, yet others by voting in the elections for the new Scottish Parliament. What will be their priorities? Will they expect action on issues such as peace, poverty, injustice, ethical trading or the environment? What insight can be gleaned from the activities of the term now ending?

That we need the break, have deserved it, will enjoy it, there is no doubt. A very full term of endeavour and achievement, thanks to the industry and inspiration of staff, pupils and parents, is illustrated in this newsletter.

Yet along with all this splendid success, are there also signs of goodwill and hope?

If we judge by the number of charity events, preplanned or spontaneous, or by the huge scale of volunteers - by the hundred, and from all years - for all manner of community events or service to others, the answer is obvious. Second Years gave a great example in their Amnesty International involvement. Visitors to school from home and abroad, guest speakers to classes or societies, judges at competitions, work experience hosts, and Her Majesty's Inspectors have all commented most favourably on the positive human qualities, the consideration and essential decency of practically all of our pupils. A moving collective demonstration of our capacity for doing the right thing, with goodwill but without compulsion, was given at 11am on Armistice Day when the whole school in both buildings spontaneously fell quiet. Such consideration, such goodwill, give hope.

Why then, if as a school we seem to care so much about important matters, do we sometimes appear careless, even slovenly, in more ordinary ones? Litter, for example. For a generation with an impressive awareness of the global imperatives of conservation, our pupils show shameful indifference to their immediate surroundings. There is no excuse for the tawdry carpet of discarded gum in the playground and street, nor for the trashy trail of paper and plastic marking routes from shops and vans. Within the school and without, yet another new initiative is required in the New Year to tackle the level of littering of their own premises by pupils.

Does this unthinking messiness tarnish our other fine achievements? Are we good neighbours to have? Whose responsibility is it if we are not?

Could we do better, all of us, not because we have to but because we choose to, want to? Will those new citizens vote in and for a truly caring society? Can they show their elders that downward trends can be reversed, setting high expectations in issues great and small? And can they carry through high idealism to the mundane, the things which determine the day to day quality of our lives?

This, then, is a message of congratulation to our pupils which carries also a serious challenge to the power of peer pressure, seeking collective resolution for 1999.

But before then, do have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Reminder: School re-opens Wednesday 6th January 1999.

School Board

The School Board take this opportunity to thank all parents for bringing issues before the Board and to wish you a very Happy Christmas and all the best for 1999. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday 28th January 1999 at 7 pm in Kilrymont Road.

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Miss Kinnear

All else this term has been put in perspective by the untimely death of Miss Kinnear, Depute Principal Teacher of Music since 1975. While the seriousness of her illness had been known for over a year, all the indications were that she had finally conquered it through her resolution, her hugely positive view of life and the expert medical care she received. Staff, pupils and parents alike have been profoundly affected by this personal tragedy of the loss of a colleague, a friend, an inspiration, a guide. So lively, so energetic was she, that it has been quite exceptionally difficult for us to accept that she has passed from our midst.

We are grateful to the many people who have helped us to grieve, to come to terms with the loss, and to give thanks for her wonderful life, her influence for good, her special contribution to this school. Simply, we have all been privileged to know Elizabeth Kinnear.

Particularly at this time of the year we think of Miss Kinnear's mother and brother, who have been in regular contact with us, giving and receiving support and discussing a fitting annual prize or award in her memory.



Debating Competitions

The annual Inter-House Debating Competition, sponsored and judged by the Rotary Club of St Andrews, took place on 15th October. Blackfriars were the overall winners after a very high standard of performance had meant an entertaining evening for all. The individual winners were: Chair, Alistair Brandie; 1st Proposer, Graeme Broom; 1st Opposer, Lisa McFadzean; 2nd Proposer, Hazel Pearson; 2nd Opposer, Valentina Keys.

On 12th November, Graeme Broom and Luke Taylor (S6) were victorious among teams from 36 schools competing for the Edinburgh University/Bank of Scotland Schools' Debating Trophy. Their debating strength had been recognised earlier in the term when Luke won a place on the Scottish Schools' Debating team; Graeme is first reserve. Luke will

therefore be representing Scotland at the World Debating Championships held in London in June.

The Public Speaking Competition provided a very entertaining evening, with the eventual winner being Lisa McFadzean (S4) with Alistair Brandie (S6) as runner up.

Library News

For the fourth year running, the Library in the Kilrymont Road Building ran a very successful Book Fair during October. All pupils in S1-S3 were given the opportunity to browse amongst a wide range of publications, not only to purchase books, but also to make recommendations for the library. Through their purchases, over £400 worth of free books were acquired for the school: all the pupils' suggestions were purchased. Mrs E Higgins, Librarian, wishes to acknowledge the support of the English Department in this event, without whose help it would not have been possible. She is also grateful for the "tireless enthusiasm" of the able S3 Library Helpers.

Staff Notes

The scale of staff changes this term exceeds any in recent memory. Details of permanent and long-term temporary posts are given in the approximate order in which they occurred.

- At the start of term Mr Maskell took up the new Computing Studies post, Mrs Buckler's English post became permanent and Miss Williamson filled the Modern Studies vacancy left by Miss Presly last session. Mr Moore arrived on exchange from Canada to replace Mr Latona in Computing. Mr Moore also assists in Technical.
- Mrs Esler was appointed full-time with Mr Robb taking up the part-time Drama post.
- In September, Mrs Harper left to take up a new post in Clackmannanshire, with Mr I Matheson being appointed to the Maths vacancy on a temporary basis. Miss Thomson will take up the Maths permanent post in January.
- Miss Johnstone was appointed to the part-time Business Education vacancy in September.
- Mrs Austin was appointed in October to the Word Processor Operator post vacated by Mrs Wilson when she became Senior Clerical Assistant.
- Mr Wingfield was appointed Depute Head Janitor now that Mr Findlay has become Head Janitor.
- Mrs Tough was appointed to the new Teaching Auxiliary post and Mrs Carlin as temporary Teaching Auxiliary.
- Miss Munro was appointed as Assistant Principal Teacher of Social Subjects to replace Mrs Girdwood.
- Miss Dickie joined the English Department as temporary replacement for Mrs Presly who was absent long-term but who has since retired through ill-health. We thank Mrs Presly for her years of conscientious service to Madras, despite the additional daily stress of her illness. We all wish Doreen Presly happiness and fulfilment in her retirement.

- Mrs McGowan became full-time in the Support Centre.
- In November, Mrs Will (Woodwind Instructor) left to take up a post in Angus.
- Miss Macrosson has been appointed as Assistant Principal Teacher Guidance, occasioned by Mrs Welsh's promotion to Principal Teacher, and takes up the post in January. Meantime, Mrs Welsh's maternity cover as Principal Teacher will be carried out by Mrs Rough, while Mrs Faichney will continue in her acting Assistant Principal Teacher role. The Guidance team will also be affected by Miss Jack's return in January from her exchange year in Australia, with Mr Young ending his stint as acting Assistant Principal Teacher and Miss Russell as temporary acting Assistant Principal Teacher.
- Into December, Mr Hamilton was appointed acting Assistant Principal Teacher of Social Subjects to cover Mrs Ingledew's maternity leave. He starts with us in January.
- Mrs Jones has been appointed in Art and Design to cover Mrs Dunlop's maternity leave. She also starts in January.
- Mrs Barclay has been appointed as Clerical Assistant, Mrs Austin's previous post.
- Ms Duncan has left us for the next three months to take an acting Assistant Principal Teacher of Home Economics post at Queen Anne High School.
- We wish Miss Robinson, Home Economics, a safe return to Australia and trust that she has enjoyed her year's exchange in Madras.

Finally, it is pleasing to report that we are at last able to advertise for an Assistant Librarian.

I. J. Matheson



Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Philip Reid, a member of last year's Sixth year, has completed his Gold Award, the first pupil to reach this high achievement since Duke of Edinburgh groups were reconstituted in 1994. He will be presented with his award at Holyrood Palace next summer, hopefully joined by several other members of the group who could beat the March deadline for completion. Mrs Towns is in regular contact with them, monitoring their progress.

Of this year's group, 14 Sixth Years are finishing their Silver Awards and the

majority have started expedition training for Gold. They are hoping to undertake the expedition by canoe and are receiving training from Peter Crane at Lochore Meadows Outdoor Centre and from Crispin Heath at the East Neuk Outdoor Centre, Anstruther. A further group of Fifth Year pupils are working towards Silver and hoping to start on Gold next term.

Mrs Towns wished to acknowledge her appreciation of Miss J Robertson in helping with the navigation work for expedition training.

Madras in the Community

Over 40 pupils in Fifth and Sixth Year are involved on a weekly basis helping in various areas of the community: charity shops, residential homes, primary schools and working with the disabled.

Special Education Department

The pupils from the Department of Special Education are helping to assemble and install a new kitchen in Room 102 and to recondition units for Room 100, which will greatly enhance the environs of the Department. Both kitchens should be ready for use by the start of the new term.

Heather Spence, a former pupil now at Elmwood College, provided an excellent Christmas party when the younger members of the Department were joined by the pupils from the DSE at Langlands Primary School. Everyone had great fun and would like to give their special thanks to Heather.

Amnesty Group



The Madras College Amnesty International Group wrote and performed a play on video as their entry to the Amnesty Competition to promote the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Amongst over 2000 entries, their entry achieved 2nd place in Scotland, an outstanding achievement. The pupils each won a backpack and a package of books, which they presented to the school library. The team members, all from S2, were: Brian Onounga, James Wemyss, Kayleigh Wilkinson, Claire Brooksbank, Dorothy Winn, Jessamy Marsden, Gillian Turnbull, Victoria Kinnell, Vanessa Crome, Stuart Ball, Lucy Macrae and Elizabeth Thompson.

Musical Notes

The annual Burns Song Competition was held in Kilrymont Hall on 25th November. The singers provided an enjoyable evening's entertainment, enhanced by supporting acts from clarinets, fiddles, clarsachs and recorders. The school Pipe Band performed a selection of Scottish music while the adjudication was taking place. The winners were; Junior Girls, first equal Rowan MacKinnon-Pryde and Louise Botham; Junior Boys, Henry Trotter; Senior Girls, Jenny Lau; Senior Boys, Adam Greig.

The Pipe Band joined forces with St Andrews City Pipe Band to play "Beating the Retreat" in Church Square on St Andrews Night. With a combined total of 53 pipers and drummers the sound was spectacular. Twenty-four pupils from the Higher music class plus some S4 pupils entertained the Towns Womens Guild in the Town Hall on the afternoon of 7th December. The SYS class took part in the Midwinter Music evening for Friends of the Byre Theatre in a local hostelry on 10th December. Twenty-five singers ranging from S1-S6 are providing the gallery choir for Cupar Choral Society's performance of St Nicholas.

COMPETITIVE COOKERY

Two teams from Madras reached the finals of the Fife Schools' Cookery Competition: a notable achievement, since they were the youngest teams entered. On the day, Henry Trotter and Christopher Lucan (S1) and Jennifer Lucan (S4) gained an award for the best 'Starter' and received a set of kitchen tools and a mini Kenwood chopper for the Home Economics department. The other team of Sarah Eccles and Lynsey Vallance (S2) were runners up. All competitors are to be congratulated for their fine performances against stiff opposition.

Welcome Host

Thirty-two pupils have entered the Welcome Host training, a new venture set up in partnerships by Fife Enterprise and the Scottish Tourist Board. Madras College pupils will attend training days hosted by Rusacks Hotel and the St Andrews Golf Hotel.

Lectures, Performances and Visits

Drama

Higher Grade Drama pupils have performed two Investigative Productions to an invited audience as part of their course. Working on the Drama evaluation aspect of their course, Standard Grade pupils attended a performance of "Les Miserables" in Edinburgh. Other theatre visits have included Othello and the Mill Lavies at Dundee Rep and The Crucible in Edinburgh.

Physics

Sixth Year pupils attended the St Andrews Physics Department Open Day in November and had an excellent experience, attending lectures and visiting Laboratories, taking part in "hands on" experiments. They have also benefited from various other lectures for senior pupils at the University.

INTERACT GROUP

The Interact Group has had a busy and successful session to date.

In October, Erica Ellison took charge of the groups's participation in "The World's Biggest Coffee Morning" and raised £300 for Macmillan Cancer Relief. Twelve shoe boxes were packed with gifts and dispatched for Romanian orphans. The Halloween Fancy Dress Disco, organised by Louise Rolfe with members of the group, was a great success and raised £700 for charity. The group helped the St Andrews Rotary Club and the Arthritis Association sell raffle tickets at the Dunhill Golf Championships.

The St Andrews Rotary student exchange with British Columbia, Canada began: Vicki Sharpus-Jones (S6) departed and her partner, Chris Chatten arrived at Madras, each to experience nine weeks stay in the other's educational system. Luke Taylor spoke to the St Andrews Rotary about his experiences at Camp Ryla in July 1998, when he gained his Leadership Certificate.

In November, 12 members of the group, together with Mr J Bennett and Mrs C Easingwood spent a weekend at the school's bothy in Glen Tilt, enjoying walking, talking and good fellowship.

December has also proved an active fund-raising time: tickets were sold for the Kilrymont Rotary Club Trolley Dash and an S4 initiative collected relief supplies for victims of Hurricane Mitch. Helen Watts led an initiative in both buildings which raised £410 for Scotland's only Aids Care Hospice, the Waverley Care Trust. Graeme Broom is the leading participant in a major and exciting project to bid for funding to rebuild a school destroyed in the Bangladesh floods: more news of this as the project progresses.

Thanks go to the range of guest speakers who have enriched the group's meetings over the term: Joe Rosiejack, who spoke on "Interact in District 1010"; Peter Davidson, on "How Rotary Affected Me"; and Mark Teague, "Water Projects in St Andrews", included a site visit to the East Sands treatment plant.



Mathematics Competitions

Results of two of the annual Maths competitions were just arriving as the Summer Newsletter went to press. Madras College were the victors in the Fife Junior Maths Challenge. The four S1 pupils who made up the team, Elaine Goode, Jamie Milne, David Taylor and Dorothy Winn travelled to Auchmuty High School to take part in this entertaining but very testing competition. Thanks go to Mr D Cursiter, Fife Maths Adviser and to the staff of Auchmuty for the staging of this stimulating event.

The Mathématiques Sans Frontières Contest is a truly international event, where tens of thousands of students from all European countries are entered. On the day, teams are allowed 90 minutes to present their draft solutions to as many of a batch of ten or more tough problems as possible. The twist in this particular competition is that the final question is set and must be answered in a foreign language. Thus a successful team must contain not only first rate mathematicians, but also first rate linguists! The two Madras teams, in the S4 and S5 Scottish Groups, both performed very well and both achieved second place, winning prizes totalling £400 for the Maths Department.

Sports Update

Football

For the third successive season, the senior footballers have won the Fife Fives at Fife Institute in Glenrothes. The team won their semi-final against Beath High School 3-0 and went on to beat Queen Anne High School 4-2 in the final.

The U13 and Third Year 5-a-sides also performed well this term reaching the latter stages of their respective tournaments.

Calum Hardie and Andrew Murphy from S4 were selected to attend the the SSFA School of Excellence six-week coaching course.

Rugby

The following pupils have represented Fife in development teams at inter-district tournaments and matches: Jamie Bentley, Andrew Farmer, Jonathan Anderson, Andrew Milne, Andrew McLaren, Ralph Tricker, Scott Finlay and Jamie Watson (Under 15); Robert Dewey, David Shepherd, Alan Rigg and Calum McQueen (Under 16).

Road Relay Running

For the seventh year in succession, the Madras Over 15 Boys Team won their cup in the Fife Schools Road Relay Championship at Kirkcaldy. Individual winners with the fastest laps in their age-groups were as follows: Andrew Lemoncello, Gold (Over 15 Boys); Alison Bell, Silver (Under 15 Girls); Alison Rowe, Bronze (Under 15 Girls); Graeme Noble, Bronze (S1 Boys).

Swimming

The school achieved some notable successes at Fife Schools Swimming

"A" Championships. Outstanding, were Helene Oliver's results against quality opposition in the 12/13 Girls events: 1st place in Breaststroke and 2nd in Butterfly. In the same age group, both Girls and Boys teams achieved third place in the Relay. Other strong individual performances came from Rachel Hood (S5), Lisa Sturrock (S4) and Ashan Jayasekera (S3). Both Sixth Year relay teams were finalists.

Hockey

A successful term: the Senior Girls Hockey team won the Madras Anniversary Tournament in September, while the Third Year Team won the Fife Schools Tournament. Individual congratulations go to Alison Bell on being selected for the Midlands Under 15 Squad and Lindsay Thompson, Lianne Lumsden and Laura Walker, at Midlands Under 18 level. Lindsay Thompson has achieved the honour of being selected for the Scottish Under 18 Squad, where we wish her success.

Golf

In the school Stroke Play competitions, the Senior Girls champion is Kathryn McCartney (S6), the Junior Girls and Boys Sienna Fernie (S2) and Joe Neilson (S2).

Tennis

Given the young average age of the team, the Senior Girls Tennis team did exceptionally well to reach the third round of the Scottish Cup, defeating Montrose Academy and Perth High School. They were Jo Baird (S6), Rachel Hood (S5), Siri MacDonald (S4), Alison Bell (S3) and Erin Gourlay (S2).