



Madras College

Summer Newsletter

June 1992

Another newsletter and no shortage of material to fill it. Each newsletter is begun with the intention of being as brief as possible, but it would be a sad situation if that ever happened, as it would mean a school without involvement and participation - a bad performance indicator, to use the current official jargon. It is far better to have the problem of not knowing what or how much to set down, not just for immediate information, but to form what is almost the only written record of the school's activities and achievements. Collating the information is a considerable task, but also a very great pleasure, because it shows the school and its pupils at their best in so many ways.

Staff

Contrary to the pattern of recent years, only one member of staff is leaving this summer. Mr. Alan Barclay will take up the post of Principal Teacher of Modern Studies at Morgan Academy in August. During his fifteen years at Madras, his contribution both in the quality of his teaching and in many other aspects of school life has been quite outstanding and he will be very difficult indeed to replace. We are lucky to have held him for so long and we wish him every happiness and success in his new post.

The position of Religious Education within the school has long been a cause for concern. Many parents will be pleased to hear that a specialist teacher of RE is among the new appointments for next session.

However, there is also bad news. A rationalisation of the instrumental service is taking place. This will mean that Madras pupils will have to share woodwind instruction with Waid Academy and brass instruction with Bell Baxter. While the existing provision is undoubtedly generous, there is a very real fear that any reduction is bound to be detrimental to school music.

Howie

Radical changes to the upper stages of Scottish secondary education are envisaged in the recent report of the government committee which was set up to review the

present examination structure of Highers and Sixth Year Studies. The chairman of the committee, Professor John Howie, has kindly agreed to talk to staff and parents about the proposals at the first P.T.A. meeting of the session which will be held in the Kilrymont Road Building at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 29th September.

The school will also be even more directly involved with the Howie Committee's report, since the Rector is chairing the regional working party, which is preparing Fife Education Department's response to the report, for submission to the Scottish Office Education Department. Part of this process will be a study of the staffing and timetabling implications of introducing SCOTCERT and SCOTBAC.

Art

Fresh as Paint, an exhibition by 9 sixth year art pupils in the Crawford Centre, impressed all who saw it by the range and quality of the work displayed and attracted much favourable comment. The department's visit to the galleries of Paris in the first week of the holidays faced cancellation because of the failure of yet another travel company. Fortunately, however, other arrangements have been made and 30 pupils and 4 staff are eagerly looking forward to a very special experience.

Drama

The junior drama group, playing to packed houses in the Quad Theatre, put on two short plays, *The Godmother* and *A Memory of Lizzie*. It was delightful to see so many pupils taking part in these lively performances and so obviously enjoying themselves. Other notable activities included a lunchtime performance of the *Wolf Boy* by the S4 Scotvec Theatre Arts Course; a Dance Week in association with the Byre Theatre in which 26 S2 pupils participated; a visit to the Byre Theatre's community play, *The Devil's Reel*, by large groups of S2 and S3 pupils and a 100% pass rate for the second year running in the S3 Improvised Drama Short course. Work has begun on converting an old technical room into a new drama studio and this much needed improvement in accommodation should encourage the further development of drama in the school.

Music

At the time of writing the Wind Band is in Norway on the second pan of the exchange with Langenes and, according to the most recent report, combining a demanding schedule with a marvellous time. The departure of the Wind Band meant an earlier date for the Summer Concert when a large audience enjoyed an attractive and varied programme. The Junior Choir once again travelled to Stirling for the finals of the Saltire Society's Scots song competition, but mechanical difficulties with one of their buses almost prevented them from getting there. The inevitable consequence of the upsetting experience and late arrival was that they did themselves less than justice. Hopefully, they will be back again next year and in better form than ever. Instrumental players gained excellent results in the Associated Board examinations. Forty-one pupils were awarded passes, ten of them with merit and thirteen with distinction.

Maths Contests

This year's round of Mathematical contests produced some exceptional results. In the Secondary Mathematics Project Competition, which is divided into three categories according to age, Madras College pupils were prize winners at each level, receiving four out of eight awards and one honourable mention. In the annual Mathematical Challenge for schools in Fife, Tayside and Central Regions, Madras results were equally impressive. The school featured in all three sections of the competition, gaining five prizes and four highly commended certificates. Eighty-seven of our pupils took part in the contest and out of the top fifty scoring contestants in each of the three categories, one-fifth were from Madras. This is even more remarkable than the number of prizes and all who took part deserve our warmest congratulations on a magnificent effort.

Sport

In the final 7 aside tournament of the season at Waid Academy, Madras recorded a double victory by gaining both the hockey and the rugby trophy. S1 rugby players had an enjoyable day at Jedburgh where, after a match against the local Grammar School, they were spectators at the senior sevens.

Our tennis players have excelled. Both boys and girls teams are Midlands District Champions. In the quarter finals against the north, the boys lost to Kingussie High School, but the girls won their tie against Cults Academy to gain a place in the national final at Craiglockhart for the second year in succession. There they made up for last year's disappointment by winning the final two

matches, defeating Glasgow High School (6-2) and St. George's School (7-2). They are now national champions - a title last held by Madras in 1984. Congratulations to the team on an outstanding achievement and on the enthusiasm and commitment that took them to that stage.

In a cliff hanger of a match, which went to extra time, Madras under 13 team eventually defeated a plucky Glenrothes High School side to win the Fife Schools Football Trophy for the first time since 1983. This set the seal on one of school football's most successful seasons.

The school also achieved one of its best performances in the Fife Schools Athletic Championships. Our competitors gained 8 firsts, 6 seconds, 4 thirds and 5 places for relay teams.

The S1 Boys and Girls relay teams have won the inter-school competition for the Bell Baxter Centenary Shield.

For the first time in a number of years the annual sports were interrupted by rain. However, in spite of this, events finished almost on schedule and the weather conditions did nothing to diminish the success of the event or dampen the enthusiasm of competitors and spectators. Mr. and Mrs. Hodge were especially welcome as guests of honour. Adam Scott's family have marked his particular contribution to school life by giving the school a cup for the senior boys' high jump and we take this opportunity to thank them for their generosity.

Awards

There are three other new awards this year. The F.P. Girls' Club has given an award and medal in memory of Miss Margaret P. Brown who taught English at Madras from 1919 to 1957. This award is to be for the Higher English Review of Personal Reading. The Bank of Scotland has given an award for Modern Studies which this year goes for the best performance in the one year Higher 'crash' course, while an award for service to the school has been made by the P.T.A. We gratefully acknowledge these gifts which greatly enrich the opportunities available to our pupils.

Other Items

A summer newsletter would be incomplete without mentioning the Classics Department's visit to Hadrian's Wall in which 50 pupils and 7 staff took part. In the Tayside Latin Speaking competition the school was as

successful as ever, winning the Senior and Intermediate quiches and coming second in the Junior Latin play and the Projects competition.

The S6 Ball maintained its reputation as the most enjoyable and elegant event in the school's social calendar.

Three S6 pupils, Claire Dumbleton, Tim Jupp and Alan Kemp gained Certificates of Commendation in the British Physics Olympiad.

Catriona Reid (S5) has been selected to represent Fife at the International Science fortnight in London.

Nancy Duncan and Alistair Dick were placed 9th and 12th equal respectively in the Aberdeen University Bursary Competition.

James Bunch (S6) ranks as the Fife Schools Golf team's leading player. Neil Steven (S3) won the Fife Junior Boys Stroke-play Championship and Madras was second in the team event.

Richard Murray and Kevin McColm are Junior Midlands Tennis Champions.

Fourteen members of the Chess Club took part in a sponsored simultaneous chess match against the Scottish champion and succeeded in raising £220 in aid of the Scottish team. Jamie Morgan, Alan Cundill and Chris Irwin were members of the Tayside and N.E. Fife chess team which came 2nd in an inter-regional competition at Paisley.

S3 Geography pupils made their annual visit to the Pitlochry area for their field study. The 3 Day Activity programme once again provided the whole of S3 with a wide range of different opportunities and experiences outside the normal curriculum.

Twenty six representatives from S2 register classes have been taking part in a consultative committee which has discussed such important issues as course choice procedures, use of the locker area, litter control and bullying. Discussion at regular lunchtime meetings has been constructive. Action has been taken on several of the ideas put forward by the pupils whose willingness to support and learn about the running of the school has been praiseworthy.

Castle won the junior inter-house debating competition for the Craig Buchanan Trophy.

A *No Uniform Day* for S1, S2 and S3 pupils raised £396 in aid of the school's Romanian appeal. The school's *Readathon* appeal, organised by pupils from S1 and S5, raised a splendid total of £978. The final event in the P.T.A. programme for the year was a *Race Night* which raised £1100 for school funds.

Madras defeated Bell Baxter in the final of the N.E. Fife District Council Sports Quiz to retain the Luvian Trophy for the third year in succession.

We are grateful to the Rotary Clubs of St. Andrews and N.E. Fife for Leadership Awards to David Nicol, Clare Davidson and Martin Lomax.

Department of Special Education

Though few in number, Department of Special Education pupils have played a prominent part in school activities. Just before Easter the whole class spent a week at Centre Parcs, Nottingham, an experience which they shared with their fellow pupils from Bell Baxter. More recently, four members of the class took part in a regional trip to the Kielder Outdoor Centre in Northumbria. Thanks to the generosity of the St. Andrews Rotary Club the class also enjoyed an outing to Edinburgh Zoo. Eight medals were gained in the regional sports for pupils with Special Needs. This total included two gold awards, one for Stuart Hobbs in the 60 metres and the other for Caroline Duncan in the shot putt. The class also formed a hand-chime group which contributed an enjoyable item to the school's Summer Concert.

Young Enterprise

All eighteen entrants for the National Young Enterprise Examinations were successful. Catriona Dalrymple was awarded a credit pass. Catherine Christie received one of the two distinctions which came to Fife and was second top achiever in the Region. In view of the company's highly successful operation, disappointment that official recognition had eluded our group was made harder to bear by the fact that the Tayside and Fife award for the best company performance went to our nearest neighbours at St. Leonards.

Exchanges

The 36th Exchange has just returned from a fortnight in Kiel where they enjoyed the traditional warm hospitality and even warmer weather. It is hoped to introduce an extension to the exchange to allow a few pupils each year to take part in work experience placements in the other country.

The first year of the new exchange scheme with Great Valley High School in Philadelphia, U.S.A. has proved to be highly successful. Two of our sixth year pupils, Avril Jackson and Clea Waterston, enrolled at Great Valley from January to June and had a memorable experience which enriched them both academically and socially. Meanwhile, we hosted Christine Banks from Great Valley, who also thoroughly enjoyed her time here. Great Valley High School is sufficiently like Madras to make a longer-term exchange of this kind feasible, but sufficiently different for it to be a real opportunity for learning in depth about another culture and educational system. Arrangements are well in hand for continuing the exchange next session.

Visitors

As always, the school is a focus for visitors from overseas. This term's list includes Professor Popa from Cluj in Romania, Madame Nepivodova from Czechoslovakia and Kazuo Senbo, Mayor of Otawara City, the Japanese town with which the school is associated in a pupil exchange through the good offices of the New St. Andrews Japan Trust. The Mayor and his colleagues were delighted by the opportunity to meet staff and pupils in the course of an unscheduled, but comprehensive tour of both buildings. Another visitor, on holiday with his family from Canada, was former pupil Dr. J.S. Scott who has the distinction of being the school's only Scottish rugby cap. As 'Hamish Scott' he played for Scotland against France in 1950.

Two Buildings—One School

The split-site presents many problems and one of these is the way in which differences between the two buildings are perceived by pupils and perhaps also to some extent by staff and parents. The point is illustrated by the story of the S3 pupil who told his guidance teacher that he was not buying a new sweater for next session because there was no school uniform at South Street. Equally, senior pupils sometimes seem to forget that Kilrymont is also Madras College. It is hoped to make some effort to address this problem next session by encouraging closer links between the buildings. In fact the idea of promoting a stronger whole school ethos was one of the topics discussed at the recent induction session for the new S6.

Archive

The school has in its possession a large collection of books, photographs, magazines and other documents relating to the history of the school from its foundation to the present day. This material has been catalogued to

form an archive of almost 700 items. A small selection is on display as a *Madras Then and Now* exhibition in the foyer at Kilrymont Road. Any unwanted mementos of the school which parents or former pupils might wish to contribute will be gratefully received.

Car Parking

Some parents have begun to use the car park at the front of the Kilrymont Road building as a collection point for children at lunchtime and at 3.30 p.m. While this is understandable, it does create difficulties for the school. The space is limited and at times insufficient to meet the needs of staff who have to travel between buildings to teach. Because there are always cars moving in and out, safety is also a major concern and it is school policy to discourage pupils from entering the area of the car park. It would be helpful if parents who are collecting children from school by car could arrange some other meeting point.

S.C.E. Results

In the unfortunate event of an examination result being less good than expected, parents are reminded that it is not necessary to make a special request for an appeal to be lodged. This will be done automatically by the school, provided there is evidence from prelim examinations and other school work to show that the result is out of line with previous performance.

End of Session

A number of parents of pupils who are leaving have written or spoken in very complimentary terms about the school and the quality of the education it is providing. It is very encouraging to staff to know that their efforts are valued and we take this opportunity to thank all those who have expressed their appreciation. There will be the usual end of session assemblies for all year groups, but at the main Awards Ceremony for S5/ S6 pupils, our principal guests will be Mr. Magnus More, the retiring Director of Education, and Mrs. More. Mrs. More is a former pupil of the school. Mr. More was a student teacher here. Over the years they have both taken a great interest in the school and have regularly attended school concerts. It is particularly appropriate that they should be with us for one of their last official functions.

And now our thanks to staff, parents and pupils for all they have done to help and support the school during the session and our best wishes for seven blissful and unclouded weeks of summer holiday.

Some Dates for your Diary

School resumes for pupils on Monday, 24th August, 1992

There is a single day holiday on Monday, 5th October, 1992

The October holiday runs from Monday, 19th October to Friday, 23rd October, 1992

In-Service Day for Teachers Friday, 21st August, 1992

Parent Teacher Association Tuesday, 29th September at 7.30 p.m. in the Kilrymont Road Building
Talk by Professor John Howie

A fuller list of dates will be issued separately early next session