



Easter Newsletter

Madras College Newsletter

March 1999

Rector's Message

The contents of this newsletter attempt to convey some of the richness and variety of school life in the term ending. From these accounts we all derive measures of pride, satisfaction or renewed enthusiasm. It is good to reflect constructively, and no-one is going to stop us enjoying the process. In this introduction, however, my intention is to probe below the surface, glance behind the scenes, to find some of the foundations on which the achievements of the school are built. While the views expressed are personal, I believe that they would be shared by the staff as a whole.

First and foremost is the daily routine of courses and classwork, well organised and enthusiastically tackled. We might call this the 'grind', the solid essential basis of everything else in school, in which parents, pupils and staff share clear and realistic expectations. In this sensible, repeating challenge, everyone involved should play a part, look the part and be a part. It works, but only if the teaching and support structures and mechanisms are strong, thorough and trusted.

Next is a clear plan for individual, department and school, which makes us think out and agree our goals, aims and, why not, our targets. While we resent external targets being shoved down our throats we set our own ones willingly. A central feature is that pupils are encouraged to make their own plans from an early stage and thus to take increasing responsibility for their own learning as they move through the school. Again, this works, but only when there is massive professional input by the staff in translating the daily routine into series upon series of outcomes or objectives (what we aim for pupils to be able to do).

Then there are our values to consider, what we live for, how we share time and space with others. The interactions, relationships and tone which are woven through each and every teaching period give life and meaning to the subjects we study and the daily tasks set and

completed. For this to happen all the time in the ideal way is not possible. We live in the real world. For it to happen at all, or much of the time, even, is another immense professional challenge.

Because it is so complex and difficult to get the values, the plan and the routine to come together in a coordinated way the fourth element just has to be magic. Worthy targets and subtle performance indicators (how you judge your success) are useful tools in the school workplace but without the flair, inspiration, vision, intuition, wonder or excitement which cross the classroom or crackle the air from time to time, the whole process lacks coherence and zest. Someone once said that genius was 95% perspiration and 5% inspiration. The proportions are probably about the same even for a teacher having a particularly good or magical week.

The constant feature in each of these 4 foundations of success is the professional input of the staff of this school. We have to remind ourselves of this at a time when morale is not as good as it should be because of incessant criticisms of schools from outside. When we read of the various achievements and notable aspects of this term and as we look forward to a busy summer term let us remember that no-one from outside the school's community can write a prescription for our success, it has to come from within. A good way of summing up this view was recently made by Bruce Douglas, a Headteacher in Lincolnshire who stated: *"Professionalism is a quality control system. It is the quality control system you use in a complex people-working industry"*.

So to all partners in the people-working industry of Madras College, may I thank you for your continued support and wish you a very happy Easter.

Burns Supper

The annual Burns Supper was held on 29th January and attracted well over a hundred pupils, parents and guests. The contribution made by singers, musicians and recitation prize-winners was, as ever, outstanding. They were presented with their prizes by the St Andrews Burns Club, whose continuing sponsorship of the competition is gratefully acknowledged.

After the meal, the Rev Dr Bill Henney proposed the toast to the Immortal Memory and in a thought-provoking address gave an eloquent description of the qualities in the poet's personality which deserve to be remembered. Another highlight of the evening was the verbal duel between Jenny Shanks and Graeme Broom (both S6), who proposed the Toasts to the Laddies and the Lassies respectively. The Pipe Band and the Fiddle Group, as well as the soloists, contributed a varied musical programme. Mr Lindsay closed the proceedings with a rendition of his latest poem, "Millennial Madras", which took a less-than-serious look into a future in which the school succumbs to crass commercialism. A silver quaich was presented to Morven Chisholm for her six year association with the event and the competitions, in which she has never failed to gain distinction.

The Burns Suppers began in Madras in the 1980s and were initially quite small events. Some seventeen years later, plans are already underway for the Supper in 2000, which promises to be the largest yet.

Unsung Heroes

Just occasionally one hears of unprompted acts of quiet charity and neighbourliness which restore one's faith in humanity. For example, a blind member of the public wrote in to say how much he appreciated the young people who volunteered to read to him one hour each week, helping him with mail, newspapers and societies as well as reading for pleasure.

AROUND THE DEPARTMENTS

Crafty Cooks Club

The club has been very successful again this session, with 40 pupils from S1-3 staying after school on Mondays to take part. They have enjoyed developing their cooking, baking and craft skills. The programme included a very interesting demonstration given by a former pupil who is now a chef at Gleneagles.

The club will restart next September, for all those interested in joining to further their skills.

6th Year German Study Day

For the first time, the Goethe-Institut Sixth Year German Day was held outside Glasgow, when Madras College hosted the event in January. Thirty participants from schools over Scotland took part, as well as our own S6 German pupils.

Drama Department

Performances by Standard Grade and Higher pupils are in the process of taking place, where as part of their course work they perform to invited audiences. Theatre trips this term have included Othello at Dundee Rep and Perfect Days.

CSYS Modern Studies

Over the course of the session, the Sixth Year class has enjoyed visits from several outside speakers, including a former judge, a Reporter to the Children's Panel and Steven Paterson from the Procurator Fiscal's office. The group subsequently went to see Mr Paterson in action as Clerk to the Cupar District Court, spending a very interesting morning watching a trial and various other cases.

TESCO Tokens

The Learning Support Department are collecting these again on behalf of Madras pupils. The collection is growing well, but please keep them coming!

Staff Notes

While on nothing like the scale of the previous term, there have nevertheless been several staffing changes this term. Details are given of permanent and long-term temporary posts in the approximate order in which they occurred.

- Miss Brown joined the PE Department in January to cover from Mrs Dobie's maternity leave.
- Mr Chapman joined the janitorial team at Kilrymont Road.
- Mr Graves was appointed to the permanent janitorial vacancy.
- Mrs Craib replaced Mrs Will as Woodwind Instructor.
- Miss Mackinnon joined the Department of Special Education as part-time temporary teacher.
- In March, Mr Bell came from Alloa Academy to join the Music Department as Assistant Principal Teacher.
- Mrs Welsh (PT Guidance and Design and Technology Department) returned from maternity leave in the last week of term. Mrs Rough who had been acting PT Guidance for S2 will return to her Assistant PT post in S5 Guidance while Mrs Faichney who has been acting APT in S5 will return to her full-time duties in the Learning Support Service.
- Miss Lowing will join the English Department in April while Miss Dickie, who has been filling the temporary vacancy, leaves at the end of term.
- Dr Rutherford, APT Science and a member of the Biology Department leaves after almost 6 years at Madras to take up her new post as Principal Teacher of Biology at Harris Academy. We thank her for her contribution to the school and wish her well for the future.
- The permanent post in the Geography Department and the Assistant Librarian post are still in the process of being filled.

Lastly, in a term when it has become increasingly difficult to find teachers to cover for temporary absences, we are very grateful indeed to our regular 'supply' colleagues who have been their helpful best on many occasions recently.



Understanding Industry Conference

A two-day conference - a 'first' for Madras College - on the theme of understanding industry took place in the school for 24 Higher Management and Information Studies pupils. The aim of the conference, sponsored by the Bank of Scotland, was to bring alive to pupils the world of industry through a series of talks and workshops.

The contributors who spoke to the pupils were from the Bank of Scotland, Exxon Chemicals, Olefins Inc, Fife College, Fife Council and Stagecoach Holdings plc.

The conference was deemed to be a great success from all concerned; examples of comments from pupils were "it has given me a better and more positive understanding of industry" or "it has helped me decide that I definitely want a career in this area".

Many thanks must be expressed to all who took part - speakers, staff and pupils - and we hope that it is the first of many such conferences to take place in the school.

Invigilators Wanted

There is currently a short-fall of invigilation staff for the SQA examination diet in Madras College this summer. If any reader would be interested in this employment on selected dates within the period 29th April - 4th June 1999, please contact Mr D Halliday, the Assistant Rector with responsibility for SQA organisation, via the South Street School Office.

A Great Year in Debating and Public Speaking

A school debating career spanning six years from an auspicious start in S1, came to a climax when Luke Taylor represented Scotland at the ESU World Debating Championships in London on 6th February 1999. In a final contested between teams from England and Scotland, Scotland emerged victors for only the second time in the history of the competition. Our congratulations and admiration go to Luke, on this world-class success.



A World Champion!

Luke Taylor (S6) who was part of the winning Scottish team of 5 debaters. Apart from beaten finalists, England, the other strong competition came from teams from Peru, Pakistan, Australia and the Ukraine. In all, 31 countries were represented.

At the Dundee University Debating Union One-Day School Challenge on 17th February, 30 teams from Fife, Dundee, Perth and Angus competed. Two Madras teams reached the final: Shona

Morrison and Kai Hopkins (S4) and the eventual winners, Alistair Brandie and Graeme Broom (S6).

For the first time, Madras were invited to take part in the Durham Union National Schools' Competition. Although not placed in the final, Luke Taylor and Graeme Broom found the day an interesting and rewarding experience. This pair of veteran debaters also reached the Scottish final of the ESU Observer/Prudential Schools Debate, which took place in Glasgow on 16th March: one of four teams from all over Scotland. Proposing the motion 'This House can justify the Assassination of Dictators', they were eventually placed second overall. This was the third year in succession that the school had reached the final of this competition.

In the Scottish final of the ESU Schools' Public Speaking Competition, the Madras team: Lisa McFadzean (Chairperson) Kai Hopkins (Speaker) and Shona Morrison (Questioner) were placed second to the High School of Glasgow in a closely fought competition. In the final, Kai argued passionately that apathy is not the hallmark of today's youth.

The Waid Centenary Debating Competition between Madras, Waid and Bell Baxter took place at Bell Baxter this

year, when the host team emerged justified over-all winners and took the trophy. Individual prize winners from Madras were Kate Swingler and Nyssa Duncan (S6) and Hazel Pearson (S5).

In the Courier/Royal Bank of Scotland Debating Competition, the third year team of David Stephens and Julia Higgins reached the semi-finals, while Stuart Ball and Thomas Foster (S2) took part very creditably in the final.

So all in all, this has been another hectic and very successful debating season, as team after team progressed through round after round of competition. The pressure on contestants has been heavy and, if anything, even heavier on their staff coaches, who give so much time to preparation, support and accompanying teams to fixtures. Sincere thanks go once again to Mrs Fraser and Mrs Baughan with the seniors and Mrs Lamb and Mrs Macfarlane with junior teams. The Junior Debating Club has now been taken over by Miss A Williamson and an active and able group of S3 boys, whose efforts are also appreciatively noted.

Books, Books, Books!

Madras is busily collecting Walkers crisps and participating newspaper tokens as part of the Free Books for Schools scheme. This continues until July, so please keep on sending in the tokens.

The School Book Club (Cover 2 Cover/Red House Books) is now offering a reliable service. Pupils are given the opportunity, via their English teachers, to select several times a term from leaflets offering an attractive range of teen fiction, now with a new CD-ROM section too. Their purchases also enable us to boost classroom libraries with free books offered as commission.

As part of a recent government boost to school libraries, there will be extra modern fiction, especially Scottish books, in place for Higher Still, especially at Intermediate 2 level.

World Book Day will soon be on us: 23rd April. More news of this soon!

It is also probable that at future Parents' Evenings, local educational publishers, Leckie and Leckie, will wish to repeat their successful 'display and sales desk' as at the S5/6 meeting in November.

UK Schools Intermediate Maths Challenge 1999

On Thursday 4th February, 67 Madras pupils from S3/4 and 4 from S2 gathered together to sit this tough but entertaining one hour multiple choice mathematical challenge. Simultaneously, another 120,000 students in secondary schools all over the UK were struggling through the same batch of 25 questions.

Awards are made nationally on the basis of the top 6% gaining Gold, the next 12% Silver and the next 18% gaining Bronze. The school's results were excellent, with a total of 12 Gold, 15 Silver and 17 Bronze awards.

Gold awards were won by Su Liu, Timothy Whitmore, Jerome Dille, Brett Stickland, Jack Edwards-Fox and Suzanne Bateman (S4), David Stephens, Emily Watts, Toby Gilbertson, Joseph Humfrey and Allan Williamson (S3) and Karen McMullan (S2). In addition, Su Liu and David Stephens did sufficiently well to qualify for the prestigious International Invitational Maths Challenge to be held on 23rd April. Success also came to two of the younger contestants, Karen McMullan and David Taylor, who qualified for the 1999 European Kangaroo on 19th March.

Congratulations to all who took part for their enthusiasm and great effort.

We have been delighted this year to learn that Lee Strachan (S6) was awarded the RM Adam Memorial Prize for achieving the best marks in Higher Mathematics of any Fife Candidate in 1998. The Head of Education came to Madras last month to present Lee with this award and a cash prize.

MADRAS FP

GIRLS' CLUB

At the AGM the following members were elected:

Honorary President	Mr L Matheson
President	Mrs Ishbel Whyte
Vice President	Mrs Isabel Tague
Secretary	Mrs Ann Brown
Treasurer	Miss Betty Hay

Committee Members: I Hughes
A McGeoch
I Dawson
H Mackay
D Swyzcz

Dates for the following events were arranged:

6th June
Doig Putting Competition

4th November
Annual Lunch

It is hoped to have a Strawberry Tea in August to involve FPs who may be visiting St Andrews at that time.

Musical Notes

The Fife Festival saw the highest number of individual entries ever from the school, with all of the following winning trophies: Gordon McLachlan, Open Clarinet; Shona Morrison: Advanced Saxophone; Ben Pippard, Pre-open Clarinet; Edward Lucas, Open Double Base; Jonathan Hine, Pre-open Bassoon; Hannah Craib, Pre-open Viola; Morven Chisholm, Solo Song; Jennifer Lau, Female Vocal Advanced; and the Senior Strings.

Other engagements have included S6 involvement with the Holy Trinity Guild Burns Supper on 29th January and Dundee University Music Society's lunchtime concert on 26th February. Twelve fourth year pupils provided a varied programme of musical entertainment in St Leonards Church on 22nd February. In the competition to write a new song for Scotland, organised by the Glasgow Herald, three Madras pupils' entries were commended as amongst the best from secondary schools and the school was awarded a cheque for £100.

Sports Up-date

• Rugby

For the 1st XV this has been a busy and successful season: 14 of the 18 games played to date have been won and even defeats have been close encounters. The squad have performed well in tournaments, with deserved success in the Waid Academy Centenary 7s, when captain and scrum half Ross Methven, in lifting the trophy, was also named Player of the Tournament. This season Ross has played for Fife, Midlands Schools and Caledonian Reds Under-18 teams and been included in the Scotland Under-18 Youth Squad. John Heywood, Stuart Nicol, Daniel Riach and Mike Steven also played for Fife Under-18 team.

The 2nd XV, though willing and able, have been unfortunate in fixtures either against strong opposition or cancelled at the eleventh hour. The key feature of this season, however, has been the contribution made by all squad members, who have trained hard to develop both their individual skills and collective abilities. They have operated as a cohesive and formidable unit capable of playing a very entertaining brand of rugby.

• Cross Country Running

In the Fife Schools' Championships, the school again did exceptionally well. Winners of their respective championships were the S1 Boys, the Under-15 Girls and the Under-17 Boys; the Over-15 Girls and Over-17 Boys took second places. Individual winners were Graeme Noble, S1 Boys and Andrew Lemoncello, Under-17 Boys. Ben Sturrock was 2nd in the Over-17 Boys, Thomas Greene 2nd in the Under-17 Boys, with Andrew Murphy (S3) and Rory Scott (S1) taking third places.

Progressing to the Scottish Schools' Championships at Irvine, the Boys' Under 17 team won the trophy for their event. Individual results of the team were: Andrew Lemoncello, 4th, Thomas Greene, 6th, Andrew Murphy, 19th and Andrew Shanks, 30th. Ben Sturrock was

5th in the Over-17 event and has been selected for the Scottish Schools team to compete in Wales, while Andrew Lemoncello and Thomas Greene will represent Scottish Schools in Donegal, Ireland.

• Badminton

A successful season has just ended. The S1-3 Club has been well-supported by enthusiastic players of all standards.

The Senior School Champions are Michael Armitt (S5) and Laura Steen (S6), with Euan Forbes as Junior Boys' Champion. The Junior Girls' Championship will be decided by a match still to take place between Sienna Fernie and Rachael Carr.

Twelve players represented the school creditably at the Fife Schools' Championships, where Laura Steen won a silver medal.

• Athletics

Craig McLaren (S4) achieved 3rd place in the Long Jump when he represented Scottish Schools in Birmingham and he also won the Silver medal at the Scottish Schools' Indoor Athletic Championships.

• Hockey

The Senior Girls' Hockey Team has enjoyed a full fixture calendar and reasonable success during this '99 season. They won over half their outdoor games and were runners up in the Waid 7s. Thanks to all the girls for their continued support and congratulations to Linsey Thomson who is representing Scotland U18s in the Home Counties and European Championships this Easter.

• Yachting

Alasdair Young (S4) goes from strength to strength, having recently been chosen to join the British team. His local and national sponsors also assist him in travel to training sessions and various competitions and events.

Report by HM Inspectors of Schools

Parents should find enclosed with this newsletter, their copies of a report on 5 subject departments. While the report refers principally to the subjects themselves (Business Education, Classics, Contemporary Social Subjects, English and Modern Studies) there are some observations about key strengths and points for action (pp 8-9) which are of general interest to us all. Certainly we have found most gratifying the positive comments about teaching, about the culture of learning and about the extensive range of extra-curricular activities. The points for action will be addressed in consultation and cooperation with Fife Council.

Parent Teacher Association

The Madras College Parent Teacher Association held its AGM on 12th March, at the conclusion of another year of fund-raising and meetings organised to support the work of the school on behalf of all pupils. Retiring committee members and office bearers were thanked and the commitment of all in terms of time and effort was acknowledged.

Some events have proved very successful and been well-supported; for others, despite much effort having gone into presenting a valuable evening, have attracted minimal audiences. Dr Sinclair, as the in-coming Chairperson, led discussion about the level of support from the parent body as a whole for the activities and work of the PTA. While the committee are happy to organise events, they would welcome suggestions from all parents about the sort of activities they would support. Communications can be sent to the PTA via Madras College or direct to Dr Sinclair using e-mail, address dws1@st-and.ac.uk.

The 50/50 Club, which all parents are invited to join, raised the very substantial sum of £900 over the last year. From this and other funds raised by the PTA, money to enrich pupils' experience both in class and in extra-curricular activities is donated. The PTA, for instance, finance the purchase of Dates ties, those most coveted of pupil awards for outstanding achievements. Over the last year, donations have also been made for a wide variety of purposes: the purchase of additional sewing machines for the Home Economics department; at the time of the Book Fair so that books requested by pupils in a survey could be purchased for the School Library; to support the design and purchase of a special Madras Tartan, which will be made up into kilts for the school's Pipe Band; a large

contribution towards the replacement school signs and also towards mobile phones for use on school trips.

The 50/50 Club is not just an effective way of giving to school funds: every month participating members are entered for a prize draw. Winners over the last six months have been:

November 1998

£25 Mrs Wood, Cupar
£25 Mrs Roberts, St Andrews

December 1998

£25 Mrs Sibbett, St Andrews
£25 Mr Mackay, St Andrews

Christmas 1998

£100 Mrs Kyle, Madras College

Christmas 1998 cont

£50 Mr Ramsay, Newport

January 1999

£25 Mrs Wilson, Gauldry
£25 Mrs Bannister, Newport

February 1999

£25 Mr Brittain, Kilrenny
£25 Mrs Billies, Newport

March 1999

£25 Ms Nicol, St Andrews
£25 Mrs Spittal, Newport

Perhaps, given this much encouragement, you would like to join them in this undemanding way of supporting Madras College?

STOP PRESS! A Date for Your Diary

Family Fun Day
Saturday 12th June 1999
10 am - 3 pm

Kilrymont Road Building

The PTA has just given us details of this major fun and fund-raising event.

Amusements or Events will include:

Cake & Candy

Face Painting

Beat the Goalle

Primary School Football/Netball
Tournaments

Treasure Hunt

Raffle

Plate Smashing

Pipe Band

Bottle Stall

Bring & Buy



Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award group were delighted to welcome Heather 'the weather' Reid of the Met Office and BBC Television to present awards at an evening ceremony on Tuesday 16th March.

Pupils in S5 and S6 were presented with 2 Bronze and 25 Silver Awards - the greatest number presented at this level since the Award restarted in school 5 years ago. Parents and pupils enjoyed the informal occasion, many of them taking the opportunity of chatting with Heather about career opportunities with the Met Office.

There are now over 30 fifth and sixth year pupils who are working towards their Gold Awards and hope to be presented with them at Holyrood Palace in summer 2000.

Afternoon Entertainment

Around 30 S5 pupils have been involved in organising an afternoon entertainment for Senior Citizens in St Andrews. The varied programme of song, dance and instrumental music was followed by afternoon tea. This took place on Thursday 18th March in Kilrymont Hall. Around 50 guests attended and thoroughly enjoyed the show.

STOP PRESS

School Meals

Fife Council have informed us that as from Monday 5th April 1999, the charge to pupils for a standard school meal will be £1.10.

Dates for your Diary

HOLIDAYS

Easter

Monday 29th March 1999
to Friday 9th April 1999

May Day

Monday 3rd May 1999

June (Single Day)

Monday 7th June 1999

Summer

Monday 5th July 1999
to Friday 20th August 1999
(Pupils return Tuesday 24th
August 1999)

October (Single Day)

Monday 4th October 1999

Autumn

Monday 18th October 1999
to Friday 22nd October 1999

Christmas

Wednesday 22nd December 1999
to Tuesday 4th January 2000

S3

3-DAY ACTIVITIES

Wednesday 26th May 1999
to Friday 28th May 1999

IN-SERVICE DAYS

Friday 7th May 1999
Tuesday 11th May 1999
Monday 23rd August 1999
Thursday 18th November 1999
Friday 19th November 1999

EXAMS

S3

Monday 26th April 1999
to Tuesday 18th May 1999

SQA

Thursday 29th April 1999
to Friday 4th June 1999

SQA Study Leave

Friday 30th April 1999
to Wednesday 2nd June 1999

Red Nose Day 1999

Friday 12th March was a red-letter 'nose' day for fundraising on behalf of Comic Relief and other Charities. Interact and other groups and classes in school helped to organise the various events. These included a football marathon, Band Night and a lunchtime concert performed by teaching staff.

The sums raised are excellent as the following totals show:

Band Night	£372.70
Lunchtime Concert, Non Uniform Ticket Sales, Bucket Collection	£1,169.36
Football Marathon (money still rolling in should total)	£500.00
Grand Total	£2,042.06

A big thank you to everyone who contributed.