



Christmas Newsletter

Madras College Newsletter

December 2004

Rector's Note

The year ends with the usual tumble of events and activities. The restful and restoring festive season to which we look forward is preceded by just about the busiest period of the school year. An important time for assessments in most years, including the new first year, the time of prelims and then work experience for fourth year, unit assessments in S5 and S6, study skill seminar for S5, college and university applications for those planning to leave at the end of session. Add to this the round of parties, concerts and assemblies without which the rhythm of the school year would not seem right.

Little time in all of this for reflecting on the year past. And yet this is surely something we should do, to give credit where it is due and to make clear our intentions for the year to come. The packed pages of this newsletter try to map out some of the notable features of school life recently, both individual and collective. It is difficult not to be proud of what has been achieved by so many, difficult not to share in the success. At the same time each of us, pupil, teacher or parent, is challenged to say: "Did I do something to help all that? Could I have

done it even better? Could I have given more credit to those who were doing their level best? Can I use my particular talents and interests to even greater effect next year? Can I become more of a team player in the way I work?"

It would be a surprise if every one of us could not answer "Yes" to these five questions. On that unifying note let me thank all parents for their support during 2004 and wish you a very happy, reflective Christmas and an all-action New Year!

Contact Numbers for Parents and First Aid

• Contact Numbers

For various reasons it is very important for the school to have accurate contact numbers for all pupils at all times. Immediate contact with parents may be necessary for reasons of health, welfare, discipline or any other issue concerned with the school's duty of care to pupils.

We therefore request that all parents review the contact arrangements that have already been made with the school. The fundamental question is whether there is always someone available to be contacted during school hours. To ensure that this is the case a form will be

sent home to all families early next term, so that any changes and additions can be notified to the school and entered on our databases. We then rely on their accuracy, and so as changes occur to numbers for standard phones or mobile phones please keep the school informed in the usual way.

• First Aid

Please also note that because the school does not have a first-aid service available at all times we will sometimes need to contact parents urgently to decide what action should be taken.

Remembrance Day

Madras College was represented at the Remembrance Sunday events in St Andrews on November 14th where S6 pupils Morven Leenhouts and John Galloway joined the community in laying memorial wreaths at the cenotaph in North Street. In all, six S6 pupils attended the church service at Holy Trinity and marched through the streets to commemorate the many former pupils who gave their lives in the field of battle.

Nony Wins Silver Medal



Nony Mordi pictured with her silver medal that she won as part of the medley relay team at the Commonwealth Youth Games, Bendigo, Australia. After coming 4th in her main event, the triple jump, with a leap of 12.27 m just short of her personal best, coming 2nd in the relay was even more of a personal triumph.

Footsie Beats Footie

City stockbrokers may soon send headhunters to Madras College after the St Andrews school team, Calum Allison, Sarah Baillie, Jade Milne, Laura Renwick and Philip Woolins (all S3), won the Stock Market Challenge, held in Dundee.

They beat 24 other schools from the east coast area by turning a £35,000 initial stake into a £153,000 winning portfolio in a frantic two-hour session on a mock stock market floor in Dundee University's Bonar Hall.

Runners-up were Mackie Academy, Stonehaven, third Carnoustie High. The challenge may hopefully become an annual event – and make playing the Footsie as popular in schools as playing football."

DSE Notebook

- **Trip to Glentilt** (school Bothy) on Thursday, 7th October: Three staff and eight pupils attended. All staff and pupils had a great time.
- **East Neuk Outdoor Centre:** Pupils have attended sessions on Wednesday afternoons. Activities have included cycling and archery. Pupils may have the opportunity to continue this in the spring.
- **Tollcross Swimming Gala, Wednesday 17th November:** Three pupils, Daniel Beech, John Robertson and Gary Scott represented Madras College. Gary gained a silver medal in the 25 m freestyle final and Daniel won a bronze medal in another 25 m freestyle final. Congratulations to all 3 pupils!
- **Horseriding:** Mrs Smith and Mrs Ellwood have been taking four pupils to DABS of Collessie over the past term. All pupils are now riding independently! Well done, keep up the good effort!
- **RAF Fun Day at Leuchars:** A group of 10 pupils went with Mr Redpath, Mrs Weston and Mr Caiger. A good day was had by all and each pupil went home with a bag of goodies!
- **Byre Theatre:** On Tuesday and Wednesday (14th and 15th December) two groups enjoyed *'Beauty and The Beast'* at the Byre Theatre.
- **Farewell:** We say goodbye to Mr Gibbins as he is taking a year out to pursue further studies. We thank him for all that he has done in the department and hope he has a refreshing and restful break!

Hello to Madras from Madras (Chennai)

The unexpected is always something you can be sure of at Madras.

Out of the blue, the school received an email from a Dr Raman in Chennai who, browsing the web, chanced upon our site and was intrigued by what he saw and indeed was impressed by the various aspects of it. After some thoughts on Dr Bell's school in Madras itself and the modern Madras, he wondered what the possibility would be of some of our pupils and staff visiting Chennai. What an invitation . . . worth exploring?

St Andrews Community Safety Panel

Eoghain Johnson, Jak Lau (S6), Laura Anderson and Shirras Moir (S5) comprise the Youth Group of the Local Community Safety Panel. From the last meeting they are looking into personal safety issues to be presented to The Whole School Council. A Community Safety Panel logo competition is also being arranged. This is the beginning of an initiative involving Madras and the CSP. More information will appear in later additions. . . .

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Congratulations to last year's award participants. So far, 20 will shortly receive their bronze level, 7 will shortly receive their silver level and already 4 golds have been sent off for checking, pending an award.

Due to the unexpected departure of 2 members of our organising staff, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award group would be **very** interested in hearing from any parent, guardian or member of staff who would be willing to help out with expeditions etc. Please contact Fiona Paterson at the school for further information (01334 412500).

Japanese Exchange

Konichiwa! It was not until the door of trustee, David Robertson, opened that the reality of the exchange hit us. Two weeks in the company of a Japanese student! The 4 students from Ohtawara, Japan, shared many exciting and enjoyable experiences. We showed them as much of Scotland as possible in the two weeks we had.

We toured the West Coast and the Highlands. We took the students up Ben Nevis in a cable car and spent the night in beautiful Ratagan. On the second day we went over the bridge to Skye and took the ferry back, spending most of the day on one of Scotland's finest beaches. The Japanese were delighted they had the opportunity to see the bridge that was featured in the Harry Potter films! The third day was spent travelling on Loch Ness to Urquhart Castle. The remainder of the trip was spent visiting a whisky distillery (the first taste of a dram for the Japanese!) Much of the time was passed in St Andrews, visiting the castle, cathedral and of course a tour of Madras College! We also spent one day in Edinburgh, viewing the castle and naturally the shops! By chance, we met one of Scotland's greatest legends, William Wallace on the Royal Mile. We watched the Fringe Festival and toured the Edinburgh vaults – spooky! At times the language barrier was difficult, but overall it was a wonderful experience and we are all looking forward to visiting Japan next year. Sayanara!

School Canteen in South Street

School dinners have always had a bad press! I love the food provided in the canteen and want people to get rid of the lumpy bumpy custard or mushy peas stereotype associated with school dinners. At break time a varied choice is available to you, including bacon rolls, toast, fruit or healthy yoghurt drinks. The lunch menu is similarly varied, with a different soup each day, the choice of two hot meals or salad bar alternative, which is always a great choice! With the food being both tasty and inexpensive, I'd give the school canteen top marks!

(S6 canteen regular)

Staff Notes

Temporary posts occasioned by the delay to confirmation of our staffing plan within the new structure were as follows.

Mr Beck remained Acting Principal Teacher and Mrs Wright Acting PT1 of Business Education, Miss Watkins became Acting PT of Classics and RE, Mr Murray Acting PT of Art and Design, then in October Mr Kay took over as Acting PT and Mr Duncan as Acting PT1 of Design and Technology. At the very end of term, on the retirement of Mr Jessop, Miss Orem became Acting PT of Modern Languages.

Other staff changes this term:

Miss Ashley (Modern Studies) was transferred to Bell Baxter High School in October. Mr McKenzie (PE) was seconded to a temporary promotion at Balwearie High School in August. Mrs Dobie returned from her career break after the October holiday. Mrs Docherty joined the office staff in November.

At the start of session Mr Barclay, who had been PT of Art and Design since 1996, took up a new promoted post in Braeview Academy in Dundee. During his eight years at Madras Mr Barclay had become highly respected and popular with colleagues, pupils and parents alike. Few could match, yet all admired, his understated and modest style. Amongst his contributions to the wider life of the school were those in various working groups and in helping with football teams plus his wonderful Barcelona art trips. He remains in touch with many pupils and colleagues, and we all thank him and wish him well in his new post. In October Mr Marshall left to take up a new PT Curriculum post in Glenwood High School. During his eight years he had developed a number of new courses in the department particularly those on the technological end of the spectrum. He contributed to several working groups, most recently one on continuing professional development. We thank him and wish him well in his new post.

Mr Jessop, MBE, retired last week from his post of Principal Teacher of Modern Languages. "CJ", as he was affectionately known to many, had come to Madras in 1994 as PT of French, then took over the new united department of Modern Languages in 1999. A late entrant to teaching after a distinguished career with the British Council, Mr Jessop soon developed his particular style as teacher, colleague and head of department. He will be remembered as a passionate European, relentless advocate of modern languages and charismatic leader of many foreign trips and exchanges. Despite his express wish that he should be "allowed to go quietly" colleagues and pupils have seen him off in style. To honour his last day the flag of Europe (awarded to one of his pupils a year or two ago for a memorable contribution to the Youth Parliament in Strasbourg), flew on the South Street flagpole. All staff and pupils unite in thanking him for his unique contribution during his ten years in Madras.

Concerts

Organised by Mr R Bell, there was a very well received concert in Auchtertool Old Kirk near Cardenden in late November. While the weather outside was dreich and atmospheric, inside the welcome was warm and the performances of Madras College soloists on piano, violin, cornet, clarinet, guitar and voice were delightful. Not to be outdone, Mr Bell and Mr McGeoch gave solo renditions on organ and voice too. A similar group will soon perform for Fife Society for the Blind at their Christmas

Party and performances have also been planned by Ruth Craib, Woodwind Instructor, at a local nursing home and at Morrisons (formerly Safeway).

At the time of writing, the Christmas Concert (all proceeds going to local charities) is all but sold out and preparations are in full swing for this and the closing musical assemblies. Rockband competitions are underway, Burns competitions and Fife Festival are just around the corner.

Stargazers 2004

Those who saw it will never forget it!

Imagine the scene – nearly 500 people (parents and pupils) rocking in the aisles at Kilrymont Road to the sounds of 15 examples of the musical and dancing talent in the school.

This was the first event in the Parent Teacher Association programme designed to raise funds for Kilrymont Road lockers and what a success it was!

First to sixth year pupils held the audience spellbound for nearly 2 hours with songs such as "Stand by Me", "House of the Rising Sun" and a riveting dance routine by S3 girls.

The event raised over £1,300 between ticket sales and raffle. Thanks to everyone who contributed. I am sure we all agree that it was great value for money.

School Magazine

The School Magazine is up and running for the Sixth Year. The magazine, run by English teacher, Mr Hynes, and Sixth Year pupil Christiana Spens, is an attempt at giving sixth year their chance to write on diverse issues which concern them. The first publication is out soon!

Charity Fundraising

After the success of the PTA's "Stargazers" which raised £1,300 towards the Kilrymont Locker Fund, the Madras College Charities Programme continued with "Pound for Pudsy Please", a non-uniform day in Kilrymont Road on Friday November 19th to raise money for "Children in Need." Last year we raised £1,000 and this year the total was over £1,100.

In addition, Madras supported Myasthenia Gravis Association with a workout for sixth years in the quad led by Miss L Simpson of the PE Department. This benefited MGA and the Children in Need Appeal.

Upper Arlington Exchange

A very tired party of 13 pupils returned mid October holidays having spent a phenomenal 10 days in Columbus, Ohio, staying with pupils of Upper Arlington High School. From Pumpkin picking to jet skiing, school shows to Cedar Point Theme Park, they did it all! Plans are already being made for the American pupils' return trip in February with fund raising, bag packing, carol singing, mince pie selling etc taking place around Christmas time.

This exchange has been running for 6 years and next summer sees the first marriage between a Scot and an American who met on the exchange!

Diary Team

Subscriptions to the St Andrews Citizen will be all too familiar with the regular updates on 'in-school' news given to the community thanks to the Madras College Diary Committee. The team this session have created some interesting articles and 'wee snippets' ranging from in-depth reports of debating challenges to exclusive interviews with Madras' sporting heroes – and all points in between. We hope to continue this work well into the new year and thank you for your support.

Courting with Justice

"On Tuesday 30th November, Mrs Brown's Advanced Higher Modern Studies class, accompanied by Mrs McNeill, visited Dundee Sheriff Court to get a taste of law and order in action. The trip enabled us to experience a working court and we were given the opportunity to interview Sheriff Dunbar and Margo Addison-Scott, a Procurator Fiscal, which gave us a greater insight into the justice system. This 'hands on' experience reinforced the classroom teachings and provided us with a primary source for our dissertations. Some of us are now even motivated to join the profession!"

Drama

• Stratford-upon-Avon

Another excellent trip to Stratford. This jaunt seems firmly established. Thirty pupils from S5 and S6 accompanied by Mrs Esler, Mr Darge and Mr Dewar saw the Mexican play "*House of Desires*" (in translation of course) and a swashbuckling "*Hamlet*". The pupils had terrific fun and behaved impeccably. A worthwhile educational and fun trip.

• Byre's Artistic Director Visits

Higher and Advanced Higher Drama pupils are very fortunate this academic year to have the Artistic Director of the Byre, Steve Wrentmore, come in on a weekly basis to lend his experience to the work they do in the acting, directing and design elements of the course. These weekly after-school hour-long sessions are proving popular and add another dimension to studying Drama.

AWARE

Immediately after the exams, for a 2-week period, fourth year went into the community to work placements stretching from Glenrothes, Cupar, St Andrews and Dundee. Each pupil spent 5 days in the placement, learning about the world of work. It's an exciting time which focuses pupils' attention on what could lie ahead. One personal experience is outlined below.

"My experience of this opportunity has been a positive one. Being given the chance to interact with adults in a working environment and adjusting to new routines, rules and responsibilities has boosted my confidence and much of the year feels the same."

National Poetry Day

National Poetry Day, 28th October 2004, saw pupils from S1 to S6, and a few staff, scribbling lines of poetry. The theme this year was '*food and poems*' covered such topics as vegetable rights, the journey from fish to fish bone and recipes for disaster etc. The tasty products are now adorning the corridor walls in both buildings.

Pipe Band News

Nothing is nicer than a crisp-looking pipe band marching across springy turf playing glorious national airs. Unfortunately, all too often the weather has access to the events diary and broods, waiting for the moment. Due to a clever switch to double summer time, the pipe band narrowly escaped a complete washout at the Bow Butts Bandstand on the Scores in late August, as the rain came on just as their hour-long set was finishing before an appreciative and dry crowd. Phew!

In early September, conditions were perfect for beating the Retreat on the lawns of the University as the band completed a two-conference contract. Even on St Andrews night, when the massed bands of St Andrews provided a memorable Beating of the Retreat in Church Square, the conditions could not have been better. Also as a prelude to St Andrews Week, Piping Programme staff organised the now annual Junior Piping Competition funded by Fife Council. This autumn has seen increased interest in both piping and drumming and a developing sense of maturity and commitment with a commensurate rise in individual playing standards. Classes are very full due to this and to the low turnover of older players. However, running costs have risen by 10% at a stroke and additional funds are needed. Some of this will come from bag-packing but there are now even stronger reasons for having a longer-term financial security.

Debating

Bryan Davies and David Birrell (both S3) debated on the topic of "*Raising The Retirement Age*", successfully reached the second round of the Courier Junior Debating Competition. James Rottger and Callum Paterson (both S2) debated well in another round of the same competition, but unluckily did not reach round 2.

Claire Field, Lindsay Forbes and David Watson (all S4) are through to the 2nd round of the ESU Public Speaking Competition. More news next term.

As You Like It

In September, a highly successful production of Shakespeare's "As You Like It" was presented in the Madras College Quad Theatre, under the direction of Mrs P Esler. Performances took place on four consecutive nights between 21st and 14th September.

This was a lively and spirited production, with a large pupil cast and cameo roles from Mr R Dewar and Mr O Darge. As with the very best of school productions, the enjoyment of the actors and the enthusiastic response of the audience combined to make a memorable evening. All who had the pleasure of attending went away with a vivid and coherent experience of Shakespeare's comedy.

The stage movement of all the actors was outstanding, from the graceful confidence of Rosalind and Celia, to Touchstone on his bicycle and Jacques illustrating his "Seven Ages of Man" soliloquy with conviction. Such impact is only achieved by the director's vision and Mrs Esler choreographed scenes where most ingenious use was made of the very limited space. The numerous participants interwove, achieving complex pieces of stage business, at ease with themselves and with their audience.

In a performance so notable for its balance and full involvement of all actors, whether their parts were large or small, to single out individuals for praise is inevitably unfair to those who do not receive mention. However, an exception must be made for the superb musical duo of Amiens' Children, for their unaccompanied rendering of this play's well-known songs.

Our appreciation of the performance should also acknowledge the sheer hard work needed for such success. The unremitting demands of course and assessment work cannot be suspended for either staff or pupils while rehearsals are ongoing: uncountable hours of overtime underpinned this production. The other factor which was evident is the effectiveness of work of the whole of the Drama department with pupils from S1 onwards, which teaches them the skills on which to build a production of this calibre.

Those who missed "As You Like It" in September can look forward to catching the production when it is revived for a short run in the Byre Theatre in the spring. Those who enjoyed it while crammed into the Quad Theatre, will surely relish seeing it again in a spacious setting!

Scottish Space School

Sarah Leenhouts (S5) has been selected to travel to Houston, Texas in September 2005 to take part in the Scottish Space School visit to NASA Mission Control Centre. She will spend 10 days taking part in simulated missions etc.

Elliot Husband-Powton (S5) will attend the Scottish Space School summer school for a week in June 2005. This takes place in Glasgow and Argyll.

This is the second year in a row 2 Madras pupils have gained places on these 2 prestigious events. The pupils had to attend a briefing day, complete assignments over the summer holidays and compete at a team activity day to win their places.

Inter-House Debate

Blackfriars won this time in a debate of an extremely high standard. The topics were: "Smoking should be banned in public places", "This house would rather live than learn" and "This house believes the end is nigh".



In November, 14 Higher and Advanced Higher RMPS pupils, accompanied by Mrs Matheson and Mrs Wilson, visited Samye Ling Buddhist Monastery in Dumfriesshire. The visit included a guided tour of the temple, some teaching on Buddhist principles and meditation techniques, and a question and answer session all led by Gendun, a monk at Samye Ling.

Singing Programme

This has been a most ambitious autumn for the Singing Programme, now in its fourth year. When you aim high there are always attendant risks. However, judging by the quality of singer meeting regularly to learn singing skills coupled with the incredibly high level of personal commitment from pupils and the warmth of support from parents, this gamble appeared increasingly worth the candle as the weeks raced on. The appearance of Madras College Singers (the performing name of the Singing Programme) in the Younger Hall last Saturday evening at the invitation of St Andrews Chorus and accompanied by the Heisenberg Ensemble will long be remembered. As the semi-chorus (of angels, would you believe?) – an essential part of Mendelssohn's famous oratorio 'Elijah' - our young singers wowed the near-capacity audience. Ruth Wells who sang the part of the boy in one section of the piece deserves a special mention as her pure, clear voice soared through the air. This event, a collaboration between school and St Andrews Chorus, serves to underline and strengthen the community ties of Madras College.

Senior Mathematical Challenge

This year's UK Mathematical Trust Senior Mathematical Challenge took place on Tuesday, 9th November, with more than 69,000 students from over 1,700 schools and colleges throughout the UK taking part.

Madras entered 90 students from S5/S6 who, for 90 minutes, worked their way through 25 graded problems – ranging from "easy" to "extreme".

The results again this year were excellent, with 8 Gold, 11 Silver and 15 Bronze certificates being awarded to our students – with 4 winning through to the British Mathematical Olympiad, Round 1.

It shall be on 3rd February that 120 S3/S4 pupils take the Intermediate Challenge and on 26th April that 180 S1/S2 pupils take the Junior Challenge. Watch this space!

Peer Tutoring

The sixth year “Peer Tutoring” programme is well under way, with a record-high number of volunteers. This is a project through which sixth-year students are able to help those in other years throughout the school. There is a broad range of areas in which they can offer their help for a period or two per week: helping in the classroom, paired-reading, homework help, advice on bullying, or simply friendship among other activities. Pupils attended a training day at the Guardbridge Paper Mill at the beginning of term, and many have now had their services called upon, of whom Tara Chaloner is one. Speaking to the Diary, she said that the initial talk given at the sixth-year induction on the project was very appealing as it appeared to be a very worthwhile thing to do. “I liked the idea of paired-reading as it seemed to be a chance to make a big change to someone’s life – to teach them to read.” Though Tara was not asked to do paired-reading, she is equally pleased to have been asked to help in one of the first-year English classes. “I’m a bit like an extension of the teacher as Mrs Easingwood briefs me on what she needs help with before the lesson. I enjoy it because they are very cute and I’ve been through the same thing as them before. Thus, the peer-tutoring looks as if it should be a great success again this year.”

Great Valley High Exchange

Maread Comanskey, Rebekka Sickler and Josh Frees have just about finished their packing to return home to the US during the Christmas holidays. They’ve really enjoyed their time in Scotland staying with the families of Meredith Palmer, Lesley Aitken and Duncan Kinnear. The above named Scottish pupils will travel to Malvern near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania early in January where they will study for a second semester at Great Valley. The three S6 pupils managed to wade their way through the immense beurocracy of the constantly changing US visa system and after a visit to London eventually secured their visas!

English Department Raise Four Goats!

This year instead of giving each other a Christmas Card, members of the school’s English Department decided to donate money to Oxfam’s “Unwrapped” project to secure livestock and agricultural tools for poverty stricken countries - £24 buys a goat, for example, and at the moment the department has managed to raise money for over 4 goats.

Enterprising Maths Competition

The mathematics team included Alasdair Downes, Sara Eljamel (S4) and Francesca Jagger and Philip Woolins (S5). This Fife Regional team was highly successful, attaining first prize. On the 11th November, the Scottish final took place at Jordanhill campus, at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. In total 66 teams took part, with the Madras team coming in at second place. What a tremendous achievement!

Eye on the Future

A coach of S5 and S6 pupils ‘careered’ into Glenrothes recently as pupils visited the Careers Scotland convention held at the Rothes Halls. The event gave guidance and inspiration to all the budding doctors, lawyers, army officers and artists amongst us, offering advice from UK universities and recruitment services. The event was also open to parents in the evening and all involved felt the event was both informative and very successful. The free pens were nice too!

Othello

On November 10th two bus loads of pupils, six staff, one spouse and two parents went to the Lyceum in Edinburgh to see ‘Othello’. The production was much enjoyed by all. The highlight for some was meeting the actor who played Iago (a friend of Mr Darge) in the vestibule after the play.

Lost Property Recycled

The quantities of property abandoned by pupils in Kilrymont Road is astonishing – jackets, school fleeces, sweatshirts, sports clothing, bags and trainers are left in numbers around the classrooms, in the locker areas and the PE changing room.

A new initiative has therefore been introduced this term in the Kilrymont Road building to encourage pupils to reclaim their property. The Janitorial staff have taken considerable time to lay all the “lost” items out in the Kilrymont Hall at lunch time on a series of well-publicised days. This effort has resulted in a very low rate of collection.

Clothing remaining unclaimed has therefore been disposed of where it will be needed. After washing, a proportion of it has been sent to two different locations in Africa, although the cost of transportation has limited the quantity. The rest has been given to local charities.

While there are obvious benefits to Charity Organisations, we would still like pupils to take more care of their belongings.

Can we again ask parents anxious that their children should not lose valuable possessions to help by ensuring all items brought to school are clearly marked with the pupils’ names?

Ski Club

A successful start to the year with 3 trips to Hillend for 2 classes (one beginner, one intermediate). A total of 40 pupils went along over the 3 sessions.

The ever optimistic Ski Club ‘knows’ there will be lots of snow next term and hopes to see many opportunities to experience the fantastic potential of skiing in Scotland.

Prolific Prizewinner!

Congratulations to Sarah Gillespie (S4) for her highly commended poster design for SALT's (Scottish Association of Language Teachers) competition in conjunction with the Art Department. Sarah has received commendations before including 1st Prize for SALT and runner-up for The Royal Bank of Scotland Art Award.

Music

When Mr Alan McGeoch, Principal Teacher of Music, took a day off in Glasgow last June he went 'shopping' on behalf of the school and its pupils. Two significant meetings resulted in formalising relationships between the school and other educational and musical organisations and we have now seen the first fruits of this. Early in the month, over 20 senior pupils attended a lunchtime concert given by senior pupils of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama Junior Section in the Younger Hall. This was a chance for our pupils, most of whom have been cutting their performing teeth on class mini-concerts (instituted by Mr R Bell, Principal Teacher, Music, last session) to witness similar performing on a slightly larger 'stage'. Then, in the afternoon, around 70 pupils were treated to a wind workshop led by Ruth Morley of the RSAMD and a dozen of our players rehearsed alongside the Academy musicians. As a result of encouragement by Music Staff and the development of their own motivation, we now have two senior pupils (it is believed, the only two from the whole of Fife) attending the RSAMD Juniors on Saturdays and benefiting from the opportunities there. This pathway is now declared well and truly open and for others with high aspirations to follow too. I hope to be able to report on the outcome of the other meeting in a forthcoming edition of the newsletter. For the moment it is under wraps.

Incidentally . . .

Music Department pupils from S2, S3 and S6, under the guidance of Mr Bell, have contributed to and enhanced the recent school production of 'As You Like It' with singing and incidental harp playing.

PUPIL PERSPECTIVES

• **Fife Wide Pupil Council in Cupar**

Six representatives, from each year of Madras College, attended a Fife Wide Council Conference in Cupar on Monday, 6th November. The topic of discussion was "How good is the structure of your school?" We were asked to bring along ideas about our feelings of the school. We all broke up into 12 groups. I was in a group with fourth to sixth years from Madras, Bell Baxter, Waid Academy and Buckhaven High School. The group discussed with each other, their ideas and feelings and what we would like to see change. We went to 2 different workshops. The first was about the school architecture and what we thought would fit in with the school's environment. A few people thought that bringing rounder shapes, softer colours and water features would help pupils and teachers feel comfortable and relaxed!!

After a short break we started our second workshop which was about the social factors of the school. Many people discussed the value of common rooms and that each year should have one. We also spoke of having music playing into the corridors between periods to help move people faster. I came up with the idea of having music played into the Quad at South Street. This would lead to the improvement of public areas.

We all gathered once again for the last time and summarised the day's events. It was very successful and extremely interesting to hear the views of people from other schools as they were much different from ours.

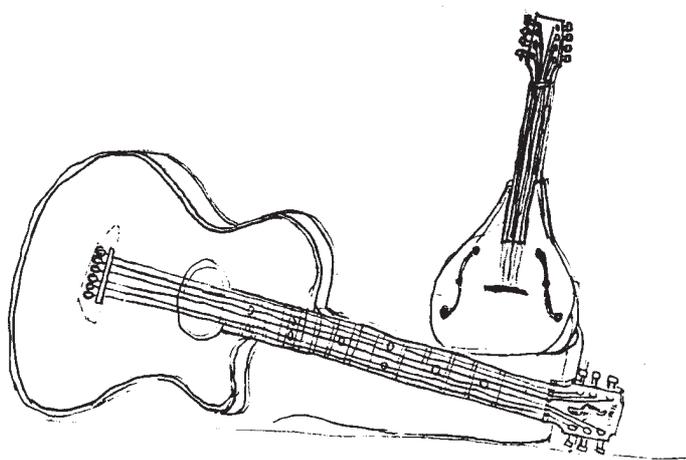
(Jenna Hunter 4H3)

• **Public Areas Committee**

An intrepid group of S4 and S6 pupils have been touring both buildings working out ways of jazzing up the main public areas. Next term they are ready to put their plans into action. These are secret just now and the Easter newsletter will reveal all!

• **Whole School Council**

The Madras College Whole School Council is a pupil-run group that meet on a monthly basis to discuss and act on issues raised by pupils, brought to the council by the year group representatives. The aims of the council are to act as the active link between senior staff and pupils ensuring a good flow of information, as ideas are passed from staff to year group reps, to year group councils and then to their year group as a whole. The second aim is to make sure that a good relationship exists between the junior and senior buildings by organising whole school events such as last year's successful whole school quiz "Fizz". The Council also has external links that benefit the pupils' well being, for example there will be meetings with the Community Safety Panel to discuss pupils' personal safety.



Drawing by Scott McKinstry (S2)

Sporting Roundup

• Fife Schools' Road Relay (Kirkcaldy)

Fastest Individual Laps: Fiona Bracegirdle (S2) U15 girls (Gold); Andrew Evans (S3) U15 boys (Gold).

• Football

The U15 side are now in the semi-finals of the Fife Cup and also play Buckhaven High School in the fourth round of the Scottish.

The U18, U16 and U14 teams have all reached the quarter-final stage of the Fife Cup.

Scott Henderson (S6) has, for the second season, been selected for the U18 national schools side. The team will play Northern Ireland (Away), Republic of Ireland (Banff), England (Dunfermline) and in the Easter holidays travel to Canada.

Regional Selection

Scott Henderson, Scott Grant, Andrew Montgomery (all S6) and Andrew Reid (S5) are in the Fife Schools' U18 squad who currently sit at the top of their Scottish Cup Section after 3 matches.

Lee Tulleth (S4), Sam Morris, Mark Whatley and Ross Grant (all S3) have been selected for the Fife Schools' U15 squad . . .

. . . and to round off an excellent term two teams from Ipswich Grammar in Queensland, Australia visited Madras last week, led onto the field by piper - Ian Sutherland (S3). Two excellent matches were played with Madras the stronger in both games.

• Hockey

Congratulations to the Senior and S3 girls' hockey teams who won their respective Fife Schools' Tournaments. The Senior team also won the School Centenary Tournament.

Congratulations to both Lindsay Forbes (S4) and Freya Marks (S5) who played for Midlands U-16 squads and we wish Lindsay good luck as she has been given a trial for the Scottish U-16 squad.

Regular fixtures have been played by an increasing number of teams with 2nd XIs playing at most age groups. Results have also been excellent.

• Rugby

On Sunday November 7th, the S1 and S2 Rugby Team travelled to Crieff to compete in the Midlands Midi Tournament. Playing against mainly club sides the two teams equitted themselves well on a glorious day for rugby. The S2 pupils won two and lost two group matches whilst the S1 squad won all their group matches and a semi-final against near rivals Howe. In the final they again met Stirling County but after taking the lead they succumbed to a very determined side. The S1 team have qualified for the Scottish finals to be held at Murrayfield next term.

• Inter-House Cross Country Championships

Individual champions - S1 girls: Fiona Duncan (Priory), S1 boys: Iain Ronaldson (Castle), S2 girls: Fiona Bracegirdle (Blackfriars), S2 boys: Jamie Mackie (Priory), S3 girls: Rebecca Brouse (Castle), Senior girls: Susan Nicoll (S5) (Castle), Senior boys: Philip Salter (S4) (Castle).



We wish you all a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year.

INFORMATION

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

(all dates inclusive)

Wednesday 22nd December 2004
to Tuesday 4th January 2005

Thursday 10th February 2005
and Friday 11th February 2005

Friday 25th March 2005
to Friday 8th April 2005

Monday 2nd May 2005

Monday 6th June 2005

Monday 4th July 2005
to Friday 19th August 2005

INSERVICE DAYS

Wednesday 23rd February 2005

Tuesday 14th June 2005

Fife Council Severe Weather Closure Information

All parents should have received the Winter Centre leaflet in November outlining revised arrangements about closures in severe weather.

Information may be obtained from four sources:

- www.fifedirect.org.uk/wintercentre
- ITV Teletext page 373
- Fife Council Winter Line 0870 126 1266
- Kingdom FM Radio (95.2 and 96.1)
Radio Forth (97.3)
Radio Tay (102.8 and 96.4)

Contact Us

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