



Easter Newsletter

Madras College Newsletter

March 2006

CC4G Computer Club for Girls



L to R Sophie Jarrett, Emily Clift, Iona Nelson, Rosalind Alexander

An initiative to make girls more enthusiastic about IT has taken off to such an extent that it is now seen as a model for the Scottish Executive's curriculum reforms.

Mr Latona is currently seconded as the Development Officer for the Computer Club for Girls in Fife and has been assisting all secondary schools in Fife to get their clubs established with Madras College being one of them. One S2 club and two S1 clubs currently meet each week after school. Club activities range from interactive simulations to project challenges such as celebrity interviews and making their own videos and DVDs.

Four members of the S2 club, Eilidh Dickson, Charlotte Harrison, Jessica Kennedy and Iona Nelson, were invited along to the Out of Schools Learning Launch which took place in Glasgow at the beginning of March. The girls performed two sketches which highlighted some of the activities they had been involved with.

The Scottish Parliament was the venue for the official launch of CC4G in Scotland on Wednesday 22nd March. Again four pupils, Rosalind Alexander, Emily Clift, Sophie Jarrett and Iona Nelson, were invited along. The girls performed a song and dance routine which was met with rapturous applause from the 75 delegates who were in attendance, which included Peter Peacock, Minister for Education and Young People and Ken Greer, Head of Education for Fife Council.

Feedback from staff, pupils and parents in the Fife schools has been overwhelmingly positive and the initiative is continually going from strength to strength.

SCHOOL MEALS

- Fife Council have informed us that as from Monday 3rd April 2006, the charge to pupils for a standard school meal will be **£1.45**.
- Any overall increases on snacks are displayed in the cafeteria.

Rector's Note

This is always a good time of year. Even after the coldest March in years the pagan inside us all can celebrate the return of light and the promise of warmer weather to come. If anything the relief and hope seem stronger this year, possibly something to do with the long winter of reviewing and inspection that we have just undergone. The HMI report is now in draft form and should be issued to you next term. We will also be sharing with you in due course the plan of action that will be drawn up between the Education department and the school.

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PTA

Parent Teacher Association



Our next event will be a fun night of pampering and indulgence for the 'girls'. If you have not seen a flyer with information then quiz those pupils, raid those schoolbags! Come along and join us on 21st April for a 'Girls' Night In'. Tickets are only £3 and include a taster session at one of the many therapies on offer. We are selling out fast, so get yours soon to avoid disappointment.

VACANCY

There is a vacancy on the committee for a parent member. If you are interested in becoming involved please contact the office in South Street.

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One aspect of Madras that we have tried to portray positively to the visiting teams has been our interpretation of the old educational goal of 'a healthy mind in a healthy body' or *mens sana in corpore sano* in its classical form. Reports thus far seem to confirm a degree of success in this aim. The 'healthy mind' is very much at the forefront with the usual annual focus at this time of year on completion of coursework, final preparations for examinations, selection of courses for next session, and sending off applications for work or further study. March is the busiest time for pupil and teacher alike. Yet the number and range of activities balancing the pupil experience is still impressive. You have a flavour of this in some of the features and articles in this newsletter. The sell-out talent contest on 16th March, appreciated by all, the splendid Spring Concert last week, various plays by class groups, the Bell Baxter Centenary Music Competition this Thursday (at BB, 7.00 pm), inter-house events, S2 soup-making final, cup and league games in all the main team sports with some excellent extended runs in Fife and national competition. Success for the hockey team at the Waid Sevens. Narrow defeat for the U16 football team in a Scottish quarter-final.

On several recent days the numbers of pupils involved in various events, lectures, competitions, activities and outings has exceeded 400. March 22nd was an example. At 3.45 pm there were 95 seniors attending two team practices - in the snow. Several then went on to participate in or attend the Spring Concert (240 performers in total), or take part in an English department theatre trip. On the same evening a small group represented Madras in the Scottish Parliament at a national event to mark the Computing Clubs for Girls initiative. What this illustrates is the range, the scale and the inclusive nature of the extra-curricular programme. The reviewers and inspectors have commented favourably on this positive feature of our school. It contributes in a major way to the personal and social development of pupils, thus reinforcing the mainstream curriculum, staff-pupil relationships, and the school ethos. It is worth remembering, also, that the entire extra-curricular programme is run by voluntary and unpaid input by staff,

assisted in some aspects by other adult and pupil helpers.

When we come to consider the future of the school in the context of possible building programmes, new curriculum developments and ways of organising the school day, it will be essential to hold on to the best of what we currently do, and make it as widely accessible to all pupils as possible.

Much to be positive about, therefore. Much to do in response to issues being raised by the review and inspection. Much need of joint thought and action by all the players in 'Team Madras'.

Thank you all from the staff for your support to the school, its aims and activities. Best wishes for Easter and the term ahead.

A Very Scottish Week (13th – 17th February)

- Pupils from S4 to S6 showed the American exchange students how to have a great time Scottish style when they hosted a raucous traditional Ceilidh. It was a delightful event which saw our pupils also attempting some traditional American dancing.
- Not to be outdone in the patriotic stakes pupils from S1 to S3 competed in the Annual Burns Song Class Competitions. The winning singers were given invitations to a presentation of certificates on 16th February.
- Due to its success at last month's Burns Supper the drama performance of Tam O'Shanter has been immortalised in a DVD. People who have purchased the DVD are in for a great treat.

Staffing Update

By recent standards we have had a quiet time on the staffing front. In January Mr Latona (Business and Computing department) was seconded to work on a national project to encourage the formation of Computing Clubs for Girls. Mr G Waterston was appointed temporarily to help with covering his classes. Mr Smallwood took over the temporary vacancy in Modern Studies during Mrs McNeill's continuing secondment. At the end of the month Dr R Waterston's period as Acting Depute Rector (for Mr Urquhart's Continental Day secondment) came to and end, and Mrs Eccher's covering role in Maths also ended.

In February Mrs Fildes took up an 18-month secondment to Largoward Primary, with Mrs Cameron taking over her Phoenix Operator role in Kilrymont Road. Other changes in the office staff include the temporary appointment of Mrs Brombley and Mrs Gallacher, while Mrs Nicol has been appointed permanent part-time.

We have been very well supported by a number of long-term supply teachers this session. One in particular has been Mrs Fitzpatrick who has given two days per week all session in the English department to support Miss Halliday's work at Dundee University.

Lastly, at the end of term Madge Denwette (Music) retires. She has suffered ill health throughout the session, has attempted to return to work, but has ultimately decided to retire. We thank her for her contribution to Madras since taking up her post in 1993 and wish her fulfilment and improved health in retirement.

Curling Capers



Inspired by the Winter Olympics, pupils in the Department of Special Education anticipate enjoying a great day out at Perth Ice Rink where they will be introduced to the skills involved in curling. Pupils were invited on this trip in recognition of their consistent efforts in displaying a positive attitude towards learning and towards others.

Learning to Learn

Through Study Support funding, there have been opportunities for S1, S3, S4 and S5 to engage with outside presenters in activities designed to promote sound study habits.

Two companies – *The Learning Game* and *The Learning Performance* – provided different programmes for different age groups but all had a similar aim which was to encourage self-esteem, motivation and engagement in learning.

Basically, the message to all was: YES, YOU CAN! And what's more: HERE'S HOW! – Peg Words; Image Chains; Mnemonics; Association Mapping; Organising Information; Planning Essays; Summarising and Editing.

The range of tasks and shared activities undertaken in the sessions had a real bonus for all involved – *success and therefore increased confidence!* Hopefully, pupils' achievements will be raised at the forthcoming diet of examinations!

This session, an additional feature of these study days was to offer the experience to parents. Parents could learn what their children had learned – direct from the presenter! The PTA evening saw 80 adults memorise a shopping list by using the LOCI strategy – the image of milk flowing from the staffroom urn and pineapples growing along the curtains is one which will remain with those of us who frequent that particular room daily!

Positive audience reaction grew by the minute, too! Timid offerings giving way to enthusiastic participation!

A month on, one parent reported that she could still remember the list and had used the technique to great effect in trying to learn her child's homework!

It is hoped that these initiatives will be available next session and that *learning to learn* will remain an enjoyable feature of study.

Poets in the School

Ten S1 classes were treated to poetry lessons from University Post-Graduate Students who, as poets themselves, came into classes to inspire the pupils to write for the StAnza Poetry Competition. It was great fun, especially the 'seaweed' props; the pupils produced some stunning verses. StAnza winners were Alice Rhodes (S1) and Claire Sharp (S2) who read out their poems at StAnza's main children's event in the Poetry Festival.

The English department was also delighted to welcome StAnza Poet-in-Residence, Valerie Gillies, into Intermediate 2 and Higher English classes. One of the sessions saw Valerie read some of her poems with pupils themselves demonstrating their poetical skills, motivated by her readings. The finished articles will be sent to her as mementoes of her visit.

Action Aid Coffee Morning

On Friday 10th March, members of the Madras College Business Enterprise hosted an extremely successful Action Aid Coffee Morning as part of St Andrews' Fair Trade Fortnight. This event raised £132 that will go towards promoting Fair Trade for tea and coffee farmers in developing countries. Many thanks to pupils, staff and parents who shared a cup of Fair Trade coffee with us.

Madras College Business Enterprise run a young co-operative project dealing in Traidcraft goods and aim to raise awareness of Fair Trade within the school. This term, the Fair Trade tuck shop, organised and managed by the pupils at morning interval in the Kilrymont Road building, has also been a huge success. The good news is that they intend to run this tuck shop again next term. Pupils from S1-3 who would like to help run this tuck shop should hand in their names to Room 100.

DEBATING

Junior Inter-House Debate

There were three debates. The best performers were:

Proposer	1st	Johnathan Elmer (S3)
	2nd	Lewis Atherton (S3)
Opposer	1st	Alice Stewart (S1)
	2nd	Rachel Hogg (S1)
Chair		Callum Paterson (S3)

The overall house winners were Castle.

ESU Debate

In the semi-final, Noreen Masud (S5) and Rosie Paterson (S6) with the motion of 'This House Would Increase the Use of Referendum' performed very well but lost out in a very tight decision.

Cinema Visit

Fifth Year pupils from the English department visited the local cinema to see 'Goodbye and Good Luck' to tie in with studying 'The Crucible' in school.

Feeder Primary Programme

This session the P7-S1 Transition Programme has been substantially developed.

In addition to Guidance staff visiting primaries from Monday 15th to Tuesday 23rd May and P7 pupils coming to Kilrymont Road for their secondary experience from Friday 9th to Thursday 15th June, all P7 pupils will be involved in a Madras/Active Schools initiative where many outdoor activities will take place at the school from Tuesday 23rd to Thursday 25th May. Also the Madras Cluster Group of P7 and S1 pupils have been preparing in their schools for an Enterprise Showcase to be held at Kilrymont Road on Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd June. Again, enterprise activities will be on offer for the pupils. This will also be presented at a Regional showcase late in June. Busy times!

The P7 Parents' Evening will take place on Thursday 15th June.

Drama Shorts



• Standard Grade Performances

On the night of Friday 17th March, Mrs Esler's two S4 classes were performing their plays in South Street. Production for these plays had taken many weeks and months, having created a half-hour play from a tiny stimulus. Each class had gone through a long, and sometimes tedious process of creating a play that was performed to perfection. Around 20 pupils were performing in each play. All of the characters had to be unique and memorable, and of course the Standard Grade pupils pulled it off exquisitely in front of over 70 people crammed into the studio!

Congratulations and well done to both classes, and especially to Mrs Esler, who dedicated so much time and effort into both plays!

• Theatre Trips

Advanced Higher and Higher Drama pupils have been on two recent visits. The first was to the Byre Theatre to see Queen Margaret University Drama students performing 'Fear of Flat 3' a devised piece of work. They also visited the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh to see John Clifford's translation of Goethe's 'Faust Part One'.

• Liar

Rehearsals are well under way for the Quad Theatre Production of 'Liar' by Gregory Burke. This forms part of the Shell Connections Scheme in which 300 youth theatres/schools participate in each year. The show is in the Lawrence Levy Studio at the Byre Theatre on Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th March followed by the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh on Tuesday 13th June. Playwright Gregory Burke and a director from the National Theatre, London will be attending the Thursday performance.

• Crucible Project

This cross-curricular project is currently being enjoyed by 25 S3 pupils every Friday afternoon when they benefit from the expertise of National Theatre of Scotland staff. Activities include dance, drama, art, music and written work. The scheme culminates in a production of 'The Crucible' at the Byre Theatre in May.

Arkwright Scholarship Scheme

Andrew Evans (S4) from the Design and Technology Department has been accepted for interview for the Arkwright Scholarship Scheme. Three S5/6 pupils – Grace Carradice, Alec Aitchison and Charles Oliver were awarded the scholarship last year and continue their scholarship with the scheme. The scheme is designed to encourage

students to pursue a career in engineering and to raise the profile of engineering within schools and in the local community. All three qualified for interview by completing a two-hour examination where they had to design a solution to an engineering problem. At present there are three Arkwright Scholars.



BURNS SUPPER

On Thursday 26th January our school celebrated the annual Burns Supper in Kilrymont Road Hall. It was a spectacular sight to see with Irn Bru on the tables along with our favourite biscuit, shortbread. The evening was jam-packed with events including the magnificent Madras College Pipe Band that played 'Scotland The Brave' along with the brilliant fanfare from the drummers. Also some fantastically recited Burns poetry from pupils of all age groups, as well as a drama performance of Tam O'Shanter and highland dancing performed by pupils who held the audience spellbound.

Well done to Katherine Skene (S1), Fiona Duncan, Douglas Latto, Ruairidh Tarvet (S2), Kyle Pryke, James Rottger (S3), Nicola Rayner (S5) for winning their various prizes in the Burns Poetry and Song. But, most of all, congratulations to Derek Dishington (S4) for the best overall boys' singing and Laura Gillett (S3) for the best overall girls' singing. It was a fantastic evening and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of staff and pupils for making the evening such a memorable one.

UK Intermediate Maths Challenge

This year's UK Intermediate Maths Challenge took place in February. 120 Madras pupils were amongst 195,000 students from throughout the UK who took part. For one hour the participants worked through 25 challenging maths problems. Again, Madras pupils were very successful with 12 Gold, 14 Silver

and 34 Bronze certificates being gained and 5 students going through to further rounds: 4 went on to the European Pink Kangaroo and one on to the Intermediate Maths Olympiad. A very big thanks and well done to all who took part. Look out for news of the Junior Maths Challenge coming up in April.

Space Club

Nine members (and ex-members) of the Space Club spent an interesting evening at Mills Observatory; they visited the Planetarium and the Observing Dome as well as hearing a lecture on The Universe. The Observatory staff congratulated pupils on their enthusiasm, knowledge and excellent manners. Well done, guys!



(Lizete Druka, S6)

MCX FACTOR

On 16th March the school hosted its very own MCX Factor (Madras College X Factor) to raise money for the school's Charity Campaign. The show was presented by Drama teachers Mr Dewar and Mr Cowieson *whose American accents left a lot to be desired!* The MCX Factor consisted of acts from S1 to S6 and boasted a vast variety of performances such as solos, duets, band efforts and dancing. While the votes were counted and verified former pupils Andrew Kinnear and Suzanne Shaw entertained the eagerly awaiting crowd. Joint runners up were Derek Dishington (S4) on piano singing a variety of pop classics and Rory MacLeod and Euan Campbell (S3) performing Hallelujah. However the landslide winner was Amy Rayner (S3) on guitar who sang Shakira's *Underneath Your Clothes*. The evening raised over £700.



Some of the dancers

Band Night

The Band Night on Friday 3rd March at Kilrymont Road allowed the school's budding young rock stars one last chance to rehearse for the school's upcoming MCX Factor contest. Bands including King VI (who won 'Battle of the Bands' this year), State of Mind, Air Traffic and 3TR (*3 times round*) who are all made up of Madras pupils from S4 to S6. They performed a collection of covers and songs of their own creation to a huge crowd of peers. This was another brilliant event for the school's Charity Committee, managing to raise over £300.



Charlie Wild on drums

A Talent for Fundraising

Sixth Year pupils are pooling their talents in order to raise money for gap years spent doing charity work abroad.

- Dylan Read and Andrew Baxter enlisted the talents of the next generation of rock start and organised a Band Night at the Rio in Newport to help fund their Link Exchange.
- To raise money for Link Exchange, Lorna Gray (S6) decided to do something a bit different and created an all-singing, all-dancing cabaret. Directed by Drama teacher Mrs Esler the cabaret followed the fortunes of the cabaret workers through one action-packed evening show. The performance hosted an array of talents with dances of all genres, songs to fit every mood and a variety of musical performances. Involved were pupils from S3 to S6 and the talented Drama teachers Mr Dewar and Mr Cowieson performed a charismatic duet; the Rector, Mr Matheson, sang a touching rendition of *La Donne es Mobile*. The show performed to audiences of 50+ each night it was running and raised over £700.

TEASER

Where were these photographs taken in Kilrymont Road and South Street?

Picture 1



Picture 2



(Answer in Summer Newsletter - June 2006)

SPORT SNIPPETS

BADMINTON

Madras returned with 6 trophies on the week of 6th February. They performed magnificently at the Fife Championships also managing several Silver medals. The trophies went to:

Boys – Singles

U16 David Birrell (S4)

U19 Sandy Lamond (S6)

Boys – Doubles

U16 David Birrell, Bruce Lamond (S4)

U19 Sandy Lamond, Rob Tyler (S6)

Girls – Doubles

U19 Lindsay Forbes (S5),

Hannah Moffat (S4)

Mixed Doubles

U16 David Birrell, Hannah Moffat (S4)

The Silver medallists were Ross Lamond (S1), Steven Birrell and Alasdair Hill (S5).

This is an amazing result for Madras and following these results the school has been asked to represent Fife Schools in the Senior Quaich for Scottish Schools.

CROSS COUNTRY

• Fife Schools' Championships

Congratulations to the school's senior boys and senior girls on winning their respective trophies. Philip Salter secured 3rd for the senior boys while Scott Ronaldson came 5th, Frankie Scott took 7th and James Willis managed 17th. The senior girls did equally well with Claire Jarvis achieving 3rd, Anne Lloyd-Evans right behind her in 4th, Ruth Elliott 8th and Katrina Reid managing 16th. Well done to the senior teams!

S2/3 competitor Fiona Bracegirdle did very well in winning a Silver medal in the U15 girls group. Congratulations also to Fiona Duncan who came 10th, while Emma Hodge came 12th and Fiona Callaghan just behind her in 13th.

• Scottish Schools

Fiona Bracegirdle was 5th and selected for the U15 International in England. Philip Salter came 10th in the O17 age group.

FOOTIE FACTS

Jamie Mackie (S3) has been selected for the SFA U15 technical training days. Jamie, as captain, with James Drummond (S4) are members of the Fife Schools' U15 football side who defeated Glasgow schools 5-3 (*aet*) in the National Trophy semi-final.

In the quarter-final of the Scottish Shield, the U16s lost 3-2 in Glasgow against Knightswood Secondary.

Fife Cup semi-finals (*both at home*):

U15s v Buckhaven

U16s v Beath

HOCKEY

The senior girls won the Waid Sevens. S2 girls won the Fife Schools' Tournament and the U16 team have won through to the semi-final of the Midlands Cup.

Ski Club

After an exceedingly poor start to the season the Ski Club has managed two very successful trips to Glenshee. All pupils who had expressed interest and were available in March were able to go. The skiing was on snow (an unusual phenomenon for Scotland where heather skiing is part of the experience) and the sun was even seen on both occasions!

The Ski Club wishes all those families going skiing over Easter an excellent holiday.

Tesco Sports Vouchers Update

Thank you to everyone who collected Tesco Sports Vouchers for the school. A massive total of 16,695 vouchers were collected. We have managed to order the following: 1 set of badminton posts, 12 personal pulse metres, 1 junior running and jumping kit, 3 squeazy whistles, 2 sets of playground marker cones, 2 sets of foam frisbees, 2 sets of green bibs, 2 sets of red bibs, 1 bumper pack of shuttlecocks and 1 vinyl rounders ball. The power of the voucher!



INFORMATION

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

(all dates inclusive)

Mon 3rd to Mon 17th April 2006

Mon 1st May 2006

Mon 5th June 2006

Mon 10th to Fri 18th August 2006

INSERVICE

Tues 2nd May 2006

STUDY LEAVE

(S4/5/6)

Wed 3rd May to Thurs 1st June 2006

EXAMS

S3

Mon 8th to Mon 22nd May 2006

SQA

Tues 3rd May to Fri 11th June 2006

South Street, St. Andrews, KY16 9EJ

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Non Uniform Day raised £1,500 and counting . . .