

HIGH SCHOOL OF DUNDEE

NEWSLETTER



October 2009

Dear Parents and Friends of the High School,

As the first half of term draws to a busy close I am pleased to report on six very productive weeks. We welcomed many new pupils into the school this term.

Numbers in the Senior School have increased and whilst the Junior School is marginally down L1 is full, and L2 and 3 are very close to capacity. Similarly in the Senior School Forms 1-3 also have only a small number of places left. Amongst the newcomers were also three new teachers in the Senior School, namely Mr Daryl Meechan (English), Mr Joseph Rainey (Computing) and Mr Edmund Faulkes (Classics). In addition two new staff joined the Junior School – Mrs Susan Gallagher (L5) and Miss Kirsten Reith (L2).

We wish all new pupils and staff a happy and fulfilled time with us.

There have been two major events this term which have caught the eye. First was our new Form 1 Residential at Comrie Croft. This involved the whole of the F1 spending two nights at an outdoor centre at Comrie. The purpose was threefold: first to ensure that our new pupils were quickly integrated into the High School family, secondly to develop independence and self-reliance, and finally to begin to develop the qualities of leadership, initiative, teamwork, articulacy and responsibility that we will be seeking to develop further in each pupil over the next few years. The Residential was a great success and will be repeated in years to come.

The second major event was of course the visit by HRH The Princess Royal. The sudden downpours that soaked the school community before her arrival did not seem to dampen spirits and Princess Anne enjoyed her visit so much she stayed nearly twice as long as planned, speaking to every pupil manning the various stands in Trinity. The plaque she unveiled will soon be displayed in the entrance foyer.

The Princess Royal's visit commemorated the 150th anniversary of the granting of the Royal Charter to the High School in 1859. There will be other events throughout this term to mark the various anniversaries that have come together this session. After the Parents' Association dinner-dance on 3 October we will be looking forward to a less formal Party on the Pillars on 30 October. Details of this are contained in a separate letter and on the website. As the nights now begin to draw in I wish you all an enjoyable autumn break.

Dr John D Halliday
Rector

SQA Results

Congratulations to all the pupils and their teachers on another very pleasing set of SQA results this summer. At F5 Higher, 92% of papers were passed. Of these 52% were at Grade A, and the % of As and Bs placed the High School 6th in the country. 19% of the F5 pupils obtained 5 A grades, a remarkable achievement.

F5 pupils passed an average of 3.8 Highers per pupil. Meanwhile last year's Form 6 achieved a the 7th best pass-rate in the Scotland at Advanced Higher.

The results for Form 4 were at least as impressive. Standard Grade and Intermediate results demonstrated a combined pass-rate of 98%, with 74% passed at the top grade. This was quite remarkable as this was not only well above last year's figure (66%) but also well above the average percentage of top grades at other independent schools.

It is my firm belief that academic success is closely linked to enthusiasm and excitement associated with all aspects of learning. This is engendered by the skilled teaching staff but is complemented by the opportunities presented by the broader curriculum.

Admissions

Parents considering entry for an additional child in August 2010 should note that assessment for entry to L2-F1 will take place on **Friday 29 January 2010**. Applications should be received by **Thursday 28 January 2010**, although earlier application is advised. Assessments for entry to L1 will commence in the first week of the Spring Term and applications for this year group should therefore be submitted by **Tuesday 22 December 2009**. If you require any further information, or an application form, please contact Miss Hannah Hamilton in the Admissions Office.

News and Achievements

Nuffield Science Bursary

Alexandra Montgomery (F6) spent the summer holidays working in labs in the University of Dundee working on her Nuffield Bursary research project.

Supervised by Dr Paul Campbell she was looking into the "Growth and Characterisation of Porous Polymer Thin Films".

As Alex says, "This project aimed to develop an understanding for the application of polymer films in medicine and their initial characterisation in terms of the formation variables, as well as a post formation quantification of intrinsic topography." A most impressive research project.

The Holocaust Educational Trust: Auschwitz Visit

Sophie Craik and Katy Rodger in F6 have been selected for this fascinating opportunity to visit Auschwitz and learn lessons from one of the most awful episodes in human history. After the Orientation seminar in Edinburgh they leave for Poland on Wed 7 October, accompanied by Mrs Quigley.

Community and Charity Work Interact Cyclathon

Dr Phil Taylor and Val Vannet led a group of 22 HSD pupils who participated in this annual event.

All 22 members of the HSD team completed the full 26 miles.

Many other pupils from the school also did it with their families.

Macmillan Cancer Relief

Once again the Charities Committee led by Chemistry teacher Gayle Spinks and the High Helpers organised the school's participation in the annual coffee morning, raising £550 for this very worthwhile charity. Pupils and staff all took part.

Enterprise

Matthew Wood 5WA2 has recently been selected to attend the British Schools' Expedition Society expedition to Ladakh in the Indian Himalayas for five weeks next summer.

Debating

The new season started recently weekend with three teams participating in the first big tournament of the season at Newcastle University. They were all new to this level but performed very creditably, finishing 15th, 26th and 30th respectively out of 52 teams.

Prior to that Rachael McLellan finished 13th individual at the St Columba's tournament. Seven above her were internationalists.

April Shepherd came 38th and Joanna Tinson 47th.

Highland Cathedral CD Launch

On 27 October there will be the CD launch of a recording of an arrangement of Highland Cathedral by several of our pipers, along with Gordon Stewart, organist at the Caird Hall. The launch will be filmed by STV and the Lord Provost has kindly invited the performers to a civic reception at the City Chambers in the evening.

Those involved are: Charles Arthur, Ben Flack, Jack Hamilton, Angus Milne, Cameron Pringle and Hannah Robb, together with FPs Alastair Daw and Ruairidh Ogilvie.

Sport

Team Captains 2009-2010

Congratulations to the following on their appointment as team captains:

Rugby

1st XV Ruairidh Voigt
U16 Niall Moorjani

Girls' Hockey

1st XI Jaimie McGregor
2nd XI Co-captains.....
Melanie Matthew and Louise Soutar

Boys' Hockey

U16 Fraser Docherty
U15 J Gibbons

Netball

Senior Ruth Batchelor

Rugby

The 1st XV has had a tough start to the season with a narrow victory over St Aloysius, a narrow defeat to RGC and defeats at the hands of Dollar, the Edinburgh Academy and Strathallan. However, they have been seeded as one of the top 16 schools for the Schools' Cup competition and so have a bye until the 4th round in November. The U16 side has worked hard to make an impact so far, but their time will come.

Teams in F1-3 have fared much better, with the F2A and F3 A teams winning every game to date.

Charities Christmas Fair

SATURDAY 14TH NOVEMBER

TRINITY HALL

10.00 - 2.00

RAFFLES, STALLS, GIFTS



All proceeds to Charity

Scottish Schools' U15 Cup

The U15 team won their 1st round match comfortably against McLaren HS from Stirling 55:3.

The game was stopped on the 50 pt rule 15 mins into 2nd half.

They played even better to defeat Bell Baxter on 23 September and now face a very tough Stewart's-Melville in round three. Well played so far!

Hockey

The 1st XI has enjoyed a winning start to the season, defeating St Margaret's and winning the Madras tournament.

They were undefeated in the 4 group games and then defeated Strathallan 1:0 in the final. The girls played very well – a positive start for the season. Since then they were narrowly defeated in the Midlands outdoor tournament but returned to winning ways defeating St Leonard's 6:0 and Morrison's 3:0.

Meanwhile the boys teams have been gaining a bit of momentum, culminating in a draw and victory against Stewart's-Melville last Saturday.

Athletics

Congratulations to Callum Edwards (F4) who once again been selected to represent Scottish Schools in the Indoor Pentathlon International on 5 December.

Extreme Sports

Pupils have been involved in a number of testing challenges recently. Nathan Wight (F3AY2) won 3rd place for Junior Boys in the open water swim from the Tay Rail Bridge to the Tay Road Bridge on the 10th August. His time was 29mins 55secs. In the Midland District Open Water Stannergate Championship at Broughty Ferry (2.5 miles) on the 25th August he gained first place with a time of 36mins 10secs.

Meanwhile, the Lomond Triathlon Challenge involves a kayak, a cycle and a run and is organised annually by Lomond School. Howell Craske came 2nd individual boy and the girls' team of Claire Dobson and Maddy Adamson also came 2nd.

Congratulations to our competitors in the Scottish Schools Triathlon Championships held in Stirling in June. A George came 2nd in the U9 Boys (50m swim, 1000m cycle, 600m run).

And also those at the Scottish Youth Triathlon Championships in early August. Rory Johnston (L6) finished 2nd in 9/10 Boys, Alasdair Rennet (F1) 3rd in the 11/12 Boys (and was therefore selected for the Scotland team in Home Internationals in September) and Callum Rennet (F3) finished 5th in the 13/14 Boys. Well done Alasdair on his international call-up.

Skiing:

Scottish Schools Champions!

In the Scottish Schools' Dry Slope Slalom Championships at Hillend on 4 October Fraser Buchan (F1) finished as champion in the Minors, with his brother Scott in 2nd place. They also claimed the 1st team medal along with Christopher Guest.

In the Senior Girls, Charlie Guest finished 3rd individual with the team in 4th place and thereby qualifying for the UK Championships in Wales.

The Senior Boys also competed but with less success. Congratulations to all.

Golf

A High School team of Ailsa Summers, Andrew Clarkson and Tom Ogilvie took part in the Stuart Gordon Charity Golf Day in aid of Cystic Fibrosis on 29 September. Stuart Gordon was an FP who succumbed to cystic fibrosis after leaving school. The HSD team finished 6th. Ailsa Summers received a special prize from HSFP Andy Nicol for winning the 'Nearest the Pin' competition. The event raised over £8000 for the charity.

Cricket – International Honours

Congratulations again to Deputy Head Boy Aman Bailwal who gained several more U17 caps for Scotland over the summer holiday.

HIGH SCHOOL OF DUNDEE

NEW WEBSITE NOW ONLINE!!

www.highschoolofdundee.co.uk



LOST PROPERTY

The PA would like to remind parents to continue to help in reducing the ever growing quantity of lost property in the school. Please ensure that all clothing is properly labelled which will ensure that items are returned to pupils without delay.

Regular updates, news and information are available on the PA website.

Staff News

Catherine Kirkpatrick is leaving us on 3 October from the Learning Skills department to take up a post at Kilgraston. Interviews have already taken place and her successor will be announced in due course. We wish Catherine well in her new post.

Vikki Bunce played for Scotland in the European Championships in Amsterdam in August. Unfortunately the team did not have much success but it is good to see our staff representing their country at the highest level.

Twin Set! I am sure you will join me in congratulating our Head Janitor Kevin Gilmour and his wife on their recent adoption of Casey (2) and Jemma (1). All are well! We wish them health and happiness.

Congratulations are also extended to Donna Macdonald in the Maths Dept, who is expecting a baby and will leave in mid December on maternity leave. She plans to return in August 2010 and cover is already being organised.

FP News

Lord Cullen of Whitekirk was installed as Chancellor of the University of Abertay on Appointed Lord Justice General and Lord President of the Court of Session in 2001, installed on 4 September. Knight of the Thistle. He chaired the enquiries into Piper Alpha and Ladbroke Grove Rail disaster, to name some of his many achievements as one of the leading lawyers in the UK.

Neil Forsyth's second book *Delete this at your Peril* was recently selected by Irvine Welsh as one of the 50 funniest books of all time. His first book, *Other People's Money* was about Scottish credit card fraudster Elliot Castro. He has just published his debut work of fiction *Let them come through*, a tale of a fraudulent medium who exploits his customers. Aged 31, he now lives in New York.

Meanwhile on the rugby pitch Richie Vernon was selected for coach Andy Robinson's full Scotland training squad over the summer, along with Alasdair Dickinson.

Congratulations also to Struan Cessford (2009) who was selected for the Scotland U17 Rugby squad to go on a training fortnight in Spain over the summer.

Some will remember Frazer Gowans FP who died suddenly in July whilst playing football in Manchester. He was only 44. He was a pupil at the High School before leaving for Abertay and then Birmingham University, working in software developer completing an MBA in 2007. He was very fit and active, completing a marathon and also regularly cycling and playing badminton and volleyball. Our deepest sympathy is extended to his family and friends.

As some of you will already have seen in The Courier, we have had sad news of the death of Margaret Ross, Past President (1995-96) of the Old Girls' Club and for many years a volunteer with the Thrift Shop, both serving in the shop and processing the payments to parents. Margaret had been ill for some time, but remained bright and positive to the end. Happily, she was able to see her son Matthew (also an FP who left in 2004) graduate from University this summer.

HIGH SCHOOL OF DUNDEE

Presents

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

In celebration of 770 years of Excellence in Education
Wednesday 9th December 2009
Caird Hall

Further details available soon!!