

HIGH SCHOOL OF DUNDEE NEWSLETTER



December 2009

Dear Parents and Friends of the High School,

I am writing this on the day after the wonderful 770 Anniversary Christmas Concert in the Caird Hall. It was an entirely fitting way to celebrate this particular anniversary and round off a remarkable term. Thank you to all who supported us in such numbers. It was particularly special that Margaret Scott Brown had written a beautifully crafted and executed composition especially for this occasion. This term has of course seen some other remarkable events and achievements.

The Party on the Pillars commemorated the 175th Birthday of the Main Building (or Pillars) in some style. The building is an iconic symbol of Dundee – but it is only as important as the people who use it. It was therefore wonderful to be able to give the pupils the chance to celebrate their own considerable talents in a superbly organised and yet informal setting. The various acts of the Party on the Pillars, compèred expertly by Mr MacKinnon, contained many highlights, and were crowned by the unforgettable fireworks display from the roof! The old lady of Euclid Crescent had not seen anything like it!

The pupils never cease to surprise us with their inventiveness and creativity – but also their immense decency. There have been some remarkable achievements outlined in this Newsletter, such as the remarkable Meritorious Conduct Awards from Tayside

Police (see below). Young people today get so much bad press. But they all have greatness lurking within, in a way that is released often at the most unexpected moments.

It is also a pleasure to be able on occasion to highlight the achievements of the wider High School community. Some of you may have already seen that Lord Narinda Patel, former High School parent, and current Foundation Fellow (and a lot of other things besides!) was appointed as a Knight of the Order of the Thistle on St Andrew's Day this week. The Order of the Thistle is the highest honour that can be bestowed by the Queen in Scotland and is second only in rank to the Order of the Garter in UK terms. There are only ever 16 Knights of the Thistle at any one time. It is due recognition of a man who is outstanding in his field and yet combines this with modesty and great generosity of spirit. He joins High School Former Pupil Douglas Cullen (now Lord Cullen of Whitekirk) who was elevated to the Order of the Thistle in 2007. Recent achievements by other FPs are also mentioned in this Newsletter (see below).

On that note I wish you all a wonderful time over the Christmas and New Year period and look forward to seeing you early in 2010.

Dr John D Halliday
Rector

Admissions Deadline

To all Parents considering entry for an additional child in August 2010.

Assessment for entry to L2-F1 will take place on 29 January 2010.

Applications should be received by 28 January 2010, although earlier application is strongly 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 as soon as possible.

If you require any further information, or an application form, please contact Miss Hannah Hamilton in the Admissions Office.

Pupil Achievements

The Age of Chivalry is not Dead

The following email arrived addressed to the Rector in early November:

“Hi, I would like to pass on my thanks to the boy who offered me the only vacated seat on the number 73 bus last night, despite him being the nearest person to it. It's not often that you get such a polite gesture from youngsters, he is a credit to Dundee High School. I'm not old or infirm, but my 'heels were killing me' and I was very grateful to sit down. The gesture was noticed by a number of people on the bus too.
Yours, Name provided “

Three High School Pupils win Tayside Police Awards for Meritorious Conduct

At the Awards Ceremony in Dundee on 2 December 2009 no fewer than three F5 boys from the High School were given Awards for Meritorious Conduct by Tayside Police, given in recognition of meritorious conduct which came to public attention in two separate incidents last session. The citations deserve to be quoted in full.

The first citation reads as follows: "On Monday 13 October 2008 *David Bruce* awoke to find that a man and a woman had broken into his home in Dundee. David challenged them on the landing outside his bedroom and he grabbed the woman's handbag strap to prevent her from running off. The man then produced a pair of scissors, held them at David's neck, and threatened to hurt him, before the couple ran from the house, stealing items as they went.

David telephoned the police and gave a detailed statement to the officers who attended. He identified the woman from a selection of photographs he was shown and the culprits were later arrested. David remained calm and courageous throughout a terrifying situation and his attention to detail enabled the matter to be brought to a successful conclusion."

The second incident involved *Henry Rymer* and *Finlay Redford*, and their citations are as follows: "On Saturday 5 July 2008, Henry Rymer and (Finlay Redford) were at Broughty Ferry beach when they saw a boy get into difficulty whilst out in an inflatable dinghy on the River Tay off Broughty Ferry Castle. A stiff breeze caused his boat to drift away and he was unable to get himself back to the shore. The boy jumped out of the boat and into the water but could not swim to the beach due to the strong tide.

Realising there was no time to lose, Henry and (Finlay) swam out to the boy, grabbed him and brought him safely to the shore before the lifeboat arrived. Henry (and Finlay) reacted quickly in an emergency situation and a potential tragedy was averted as a result of (their) courageous actions."

As all three certificates state: These matters bring honour upon the individual and benefit the general public at large due to the high values displayed by the recipient in actions taken on behalf of society.

At the ceremony all three boys showed admirable modesty. David said, "To be honest I was happier that we got the man and woman. They had broken into other houses the same day." Meanwhile Henry said, "We didn't really think about it. Someone just shouted that someone was in the water so we just went in. I'm pleased with what we've done but what we did is nothing in comparison to other stories here tonight."

Finlay added, "I had actually been wanting to swim in the water that day but all our mates were saying not to. It wasn't particularly rough that day so I got my swim in the end!"

In total 20 awards were made relating to 10 incidents. Three of these went to these three HSD pupils. Remarkable - our humble congratulations go to all three.

Air Cadets

Congratulations to Lucas Paas (5AY1) who is a Corporal in the RAF Leuchars Air Cadets and has been awarded a place on the Cadet 150 Expedition to Lesotho in the summer of 2010, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Cadets.

One of only 20 cadets chosen from across the UK for this, he had to attend a selection camp in Somerset in July. In Lesotho he will be trekking the Drakensberg Mountains, riding the lake from the Katse Dam and camping in local villages.

The expedition's patron is Prince Harry and Lucas will be working to helping his charity Sentebale which works with orphans and vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS in Lesotho.

CCF and Pipes and Drums

The Remembrance Service was once again a very moving whole school event. The CCF and the Pipes and Drums led the whole school, with Pipe Major Ben Flack playing a fine rendition of *Flowers o' the Forest*.

Head Cadets this year are Andrew Kilgour (Guard) and Lindsay Docherty (Banner), Drum Major is Hannah Henderson F5. Pipe Major is Ben Flack F5. Our thanks as always to SSI Willie Nichol, Drill Co-ordinator, Jim Mills, Drum Tutor, and Anne Spalding, Pipe Tutor who prepared the contingent and band so well.

Pipes and Drums star on new CD

Last term a selection of musicians from the Pipe Band were invited to take part in a recording of music played on the Caird Hall organ by eminent organist Stuart Gordon. The resultant CD was launched on 27 October with a concert by Stuart Gordon in the presence of the Lord Provost, and featuring the pipes and drums in a stirring arrangement of *Highland Cathedral*.

Well done to those involved: Charles Arthur, Ben Flack, Jack Hamilton, Angus Milne, Cameron Pringle, and Hannah Robb,

There was a civic reception for them in City Chambers prior to the concert, but it was followed by a short concert in the Caird Hall at 7.15pm. They were also joined by former pupils Alistair Daw and Ruaridh Ogilvie.

High IQ Competition

This was a General knowledge competition for F1 and F2 organised by our Librarian, Ms Catherine Owens. The five finalists were Jack Cannon (2AY2), Nathan Bircham (1AI2), Calum Hedigan (2WA1), and Chloe Collins (2WA1), and the winner, Calum Bennett (2AY2).

Around 60 pupils were in Trinity to watch the final, with Mr Wilson as the quiz master.

Music

770 Anniversary Christmas Concert

Our Memories Will Sing

This is the title of a new composition by our very own member of the Music Department Margaret Scott Brown, which received its world premiere at the *770 Anniversary Christmas Concert* on 9 December in the Caird Hall. Written for a two part chorus (Soprano and Alto) and piano, it takes the words from a poem by John Greenleaf Whittier (the author of the words to the hymn *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*) entitled "At School Close". This poem was quoted by Jessie A Norrie, a former Dux of the High School in her memoir of 1924, *Memories of the Old High School*, in which she reminisced about her teachers at the High School of the 1880s. It is wonderful that Mrs Scott Brown should honour the school with an original composition. It was performed by the F1/2 Choir.

There is a precedent for this of course, in that the School song *Schola Clara* was set to music by the Head of Music in the 1880s, David Ferrier, to a Latin text penned by the Rector of the day, George Merry.

The concert comprised a very varied programme involving instrumentalists and singers from the Junior and Senior Schools and culminated with a rousing performance of Vivaldi's Gloria, with beautifully ethereally sung solos from Gillian Craig, Kirsty Mitchell and Claire Dobson.

Lunchtime Concert in St Paul's Cathedral

On Saturday 21 November a number of HSD musicians entertained members of the public at a lunchtime concert. The wide-ranging programme consisted of solo items performed to great acclaim by Joanna Waller (F4 Viola), Laura Lee (F4 Piano), Leeann Chen (F3 Piano), Nicol Foggie (F6 Piano), Lewis Foggie (F6 Piano and Alto Saxophone), Samir Eljamel (F6 Cello) and Kirsty Kilpatrick (F6 Flute).

Thanks to all including the music staff who supported and made it all possible.

String Ensemble

Led by Ms Gill Simpson, the Ensemble performed on 23 November at the Mary Slessor Centre in aid of the Alzheimer's Society. They also starred in the CLIC Sargent Christmas Concert in the Caird Hall on 10 December, performing a movement from Bach's Double Violin Concerto with Anna Burns and Caroline Li, and an arrangement of the Schindler's List theme, with Joanna Waller on viola.

Video Games Live

Lewis Davie, guitarist in school band Vacant, attended Video Games Live at the Caird Hall on 15 November – it featured music from video games performed by the RSNO and Dundee University choir along with video game footage projected onto giant screens. The show tours the world and is very popular. Two FPs were in the choir – Amy and Jennifer Watson, but prior to the show, audience members could take part in a Guitar Hero competition. Lewis won and as a result ended up on stage in the second half playing a guitar hero song while the RSNO played along too. His challenge was to reach 125,000 points on Expert which he managed to do. It is not often that one of our pupils plays a solo with the RSNO in the Caird Hall, although perhaps this wasn't quite what Mrs Melville normally has in mind!

Enterprising Maths

Louise Pattullo F3, Harry Carstairs F3, Duncan Strachan F4 and King Hang Chan F4 qualified for the National final of Enterprising Mathematics held Glasgow University on Thursday 5th November and finished 8th out of 58 teams. Well done.

WOSPEG Physics challenge

The results of this competition on 7 October saw a victory for the High School team:

High School of Dundee	1 st
Bannerman High School	2 nd
Hutchesons'	3 rd

Charities Christmas Fair

A huge thank you to all those involved in helping with this big event – and it is growing. It was a great success and would not have run without the various people who gave their time and energy so willingly. Special mention should go towards all current and retired staff who gave their time, the charities committee, the janitors, Brodie's Coffee Shop.

Special mention should be made of the High Helpers as their efforts were fantastic, from face painting, handing out fliers in the street, serving cups of tea & coffee to stall holders, looking after stalls, selling raffle tickets, charity bags and generally helping wherever needed! This year's total raised was £1345 with £427 on the raffle going towards the Anthony Nolan Trust.

Charities

The Christmas Fair is one part of our charitable fund-raising this term. In total at time of writing the wonderful sum of **£9,132** has been raised, not including the large sums collected at the 770 Anniversary Concert. This includes a total of £550 for the MacMillan Nurses this year, £657 for Poppy Scotland and £400 for Help for Heroes, to name but three of the 26 different charities we have supported since August.

Thanks also go to all those who have donated gifts to the "Bring a Smile for Christmas" Campaign run by the Kean's Children's Fund.

Debating

This has been a customarily busy term for our teams, with a degree of consolidation necessary after the outstanding successes last year. At Aberdeen University all 4 teams gave a good impression of themselves. Six of the eight speakers are in F4 and these girls are all promising debaters.

St Columba's West Coast Worlds invitational tournament in September was the first opportunity to speak together for April Shepherd and Joanna Tinson F4, who, a week later, finished a creditable 15th out of 52 teams at the *Northern Juniors* tournament at Royal Grammar School Newcastle.

Four teams were able to practise at the *Dundee University* tournament at the end of October, following which April and Joanna finished 6th out of 32 teams at a much tougher tournament at *Glasgow University Union*, losing out only to much older and more experienced teams.

At the St Andrews University tournament, April and Joanna won through to the final, an achievement which they repeated three days later in the *Cambridge Union East of Scotland* qualifier held at the High School.

But to cheer us all up as the end of term approaches, at the widely publicised St Andrew's Day Debate in the Scottish Parliament, which this year took the form of school pupils from throughout Scotland being randomly paired with student debaters from all of the universities.

Rachael McLellan F6 and her partner John McKee of Glasgow topped the tab and won the final on the motion *THBT Scotland's people have a brighter future because of the Scottish Parliament*, bringing home a rather nice silver Quaich.

Futurechef

Jamie Clark (2Li1) was competing in the local final of Futurechef at Perth College in November. The standard was very high and although Jamie did really well he didn't get through to the next round. He was very fortunate in being mentored by a chef, Craig Leggett from "The Bothy" Perth. Our sincere thanks to him.

Photography Club

This group has been increasingly active over the past year, led by Mr Smith, and have been showing off some outstanding photographs in Trinity.

They recently organised a competition for all photographers in school, including members of staff.

The winner was Philip Thomson, with Rosie Gray 2nd and Gregor Sim 3rd, all in F6. Mr Rose was the best staff photographer.

Sports News

Basketball

On 9 November the F2 boys played basketball v Carnoustie HS and although they lost, this was the first basketball fixture for many years.

Equestrian Sports

Ruth Batchelor and Catriona Wallace, riding for Angus Pony Club, won the Scottish 2009 Horse of the Year Show Mounted Games.

Football (Girls)

Two teams went to Glenalmond College to take part in the 'North Region' section of the Independent Schools' 7-a-side football tournament. It was a good night as our both teams defeated Glenalmond 4:0 and 2:0 respectively. The A team also defeated the B team. They will now go on to meet schools from the other regions at Hamilton Palace Sports Ground in March 2010. A fine effort. Both our teams played very well and the girls were delighted with their results.

Hockey (Girls)

International Squad call-up

Congratulations to Lindsey Docherty on her call-up to the U18 Scotland squad. In the Midlands U15 Hockey Tournament we drew 2 matches including against the tournament winners, Strathallan, but did not quite make the semi-finals. The senior girls were 2nd in the Midlands Senior Indoor Tournament – Strathallan were again the winners.

Hockey (Boys)

The two teams (U16 and U15) have battled gamely this term under the tutelage of Mr Nichol, gaining some very sound results, sometimes against other schools' 1st XIs.

Netball

In the Scottish Cup the F3 team lost very narrowly to Madras 18:20

Rugby

The 1st XV have been involved in the Scottish Schools' Cup. Seeded as one of the top 16 teams they defeated Carrick Academy away in the 4th round but then lost to Marr College in the last 16. Meanwhile the promising U15 XV played below their best in their 3rd round Cup match against Stewart's-Melville, losing 12-29. They therefore moved in the Plate, where they have now defeated Aberdeenshire South and Bell Baxter very easily to move into the quarter finals.

Table Tennis

In October Alasdair Rennet (F1) was 2nd in the Scottish National U13 Table Tennis competition and is also ranked No 2 in Scotland. Two weeks later he finished 6th in the U15 Championships.

Skiing – Scottish Schools Champions

On 4 October Fraser Buchan (F1) led the High School to victory in the Scottish Schools Dry-Ski Slope Championships at Hillend, Edinburgh. Fraser won the individual Gold Medal in the Minors (Boys) Race and led the rest of the team of Christopher Guest (F1) and Scott Buchan (L6) to the team Gold.

The Minor Girls team of Katie Guest (F1), Hannah Douglas and Sarah Emslie-Smith (both F2) finished just outside the medals in 4th place, as did the Senior Girls (Charlie Guest, Katie Guest and Sarah Douglas). The Senior Boys were plucky competitors though they did not feature at the top of the table (Fraser Milne, Ross McDonald and Callum Leese). Overall Team Captain was Charlie Guest.

Scotland Call-ups

Congratulations also to Charlie, Katie and Kirsty Guest who have all been selected for the Scotland team for the World Schools Ski Championships in Italy from 1-6 March 2010 in Italy. Katie and Kirsty will go in the 5 strong Category 1 Girls, whilst Charlie goes in the Category 2 Girls.

Swimming

There have been several tournaments recently in which several swimmers performed very well. Congratulations to the following:

Midland District Nancy Riach Swimming Championships (22/10/09)

15 and Under

Claire Dobson: 2nd 100m freestyle
Alex Sharpe: 5th 100m freestyle

Tayside Schools Swimming Championships (10/11/09)

15/16

Alex Sharpe: 1st 200m backcrawl

Claire Dobson: 1st 200m freestyle
1st 100m freestyle

Callum Rennet: 2nd 200m freestyle
2nd 100m freestyle

Tayside Schools Swimming Championships (12/11/09)

13/14

Relay:

2nd (Jamie Mather, Alasdair Rennet, Adam Powrie, Euan Rose (F1))

Alasdair Rennet: 1st 200m backcrawl
2nd 100m backcrawl

Adam Powrie: 3rd 200m freestyle
Jamie Mather: 2nd 200m breaststroke

Dundee Schools Swimming Gala

On 10 November a number of our swimmers competed in the Dundee Schools Swimming Gala.

U16

Alex Sharpe: 1st (2.31.30) U16 200m Backstroke
Callum Rennet: 2nd (2.26.54) 200m Freestyle
2nd (1.06.07) 100 Freestyle
Claire Dobson: 1st (2.13.61) 200m Freestyle
1st (1.01.48) 100m Freestyle

Staff News

Mrs Sarah Fletcher (Head of Physics) has just become a member of the Dark Sky Scotland team organised by the Royal Observatory. It involves going to remote places in Scotland to observe the sky at night and stimulate interest in local communities and schools (weekends and holidays in case SMT)! If anyone is interested in the project go to: www.darksksyScotland.org.uk/whatwedo/planning.

At a lunchtime concert in the University Chaplaincy Centre on 13 November our piano teacher, *Stephen Armstrong* gave a solo piano recital, playing pieces by Albeniz, Mompou and Granados.

As the reviewer in the Courier said, referring to the final piece, "Like the works that had preceded it, this was played with assurance and skill by an extremely competent musician".

Ms Donna Macdonald left the Maths department on the 9th of December to go on maternity leave. We look forward to hearing good news in the New Year. She has been replaced for the remainder of this session by Mr Ron Oliver, who is a well-known face in the High School, having covered for us effectively on previous occasions. He was also seen and heard at the Caird Hall concert performing on the organ!

Mr George McIntosh is also leaving the Physics department this Christmas. He was covering the departure of Ms Boath until a replacement could be found.

Mr Stuart Hill, currently teacher of Physics at Morrison's Academy, will be joining the staff in January. Meanwhile Mr McIntosh will resume his roll as our Chief Invigilator for the SQA.

Former Pupil News

Former Pupil appointed as HM Chief Inspector of Education for Scotland

Dr Bill Maxwell has just been appointed as successor to Graham Donaldson in February 2010. Having left the High School in 1975 Dr Maxwell worked in Dumfries and Galloway and then Aberdeen before joining the HMIE in 1994. He then moved to roles in the European Union and the Scottish Government before being appointed to his current role as Chief inspector of schools in Wales. He said "I am delighted to be returning to Scotland to take up this exciting and challenging role. ... One of the major challenges is that for many years too many of Scotland's earners have failed to thrive. I am committed to working with partners to raise overall standards whilst also ensuring that all Scotland's learners achieve positive outcomes."

Born in 1957, Bill was educated at the High School of Dundee. He subsequently gained degrees from Oxford, Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities.

He also qualified as a teacher, and is a Chartered Educational Psychologist. Bill joined the Inspectorate from the post of Principal Educational Psychologist in Grampian Regional Council in 1994, having previously worked in Aberdeen and in Dumfries and Galloway. Bill is married with two teenage daughters. He is a keen mountaineer, having climbed extensively in Scotland and the Alps and completed a round of the Scottish "Munros".

FP Appointed CO of Black Watch

The new CO of the Black Watch is Lt Col Edward Fenton who takes up his new post in April next year. Lt Col Fenton was born in Arbroath, raised in

the Angus countryside near Carnoustie and educated at the High School of Dundee before reading Human Geography at the University of Aberdeen.

He is passionate about field sports, deer stalking, and hunting wild boar in particular and still enjoys the odd trot out onto the rugby field. Married to Max they have one son Willie, aged 3 and two ageing but game Jack Russells.

Lieutenant Colonel Fenton was commissioned into the Royal Highland Fusiliers in April 1992, serving initially in Cambridge, Belize, New Zealand and Fiji as a platoon commander before moving with the Regiment to Fallingbostal, Germany in 1994.

From there he served in Bosnia, West Belfast, and undertook Armoured Infantry exercises in Germany, Poland, and Canada. Currently working as the Deputy Project Manager of the Future Rapid Effect Vehicle project in Defence Equipment and Support, Bristol,

Lt Col Fenton assumes command of The Black Watch in April 2010.

Rugby – another High School internationalist

Congratulations to Richie Vernon on his elevation to Andy Robinson's full Scotland squad for the Autumn tests. He was selected as a replacement for all three matches and came on for all three, including the final twenty minutes of the epic victory over Australia.

Richie is the latest in a long series of High School FPs who have represented Scotland. Alasdair Dickinson would almost certainly have been involved as well had he not been injured a couple of months ago.

It's quite an achievement to have two FPs playing at the very top level.

Daniel Wolf FP

I am very sorry to record the passing of Daniel Wolf (1995), who died recently. His widow has kindly written the following obituary:

"I am writing to inform the school of the death of my husband, an alumnus of the High School, Daniel Wolf. Daniel died on September 24th 2009 following a year long battle with a rare cancer, chondrosarcoma. Daniel and I met in 1999 while working towards our PhDs at the University of Cambridge. He had just graduated with an MBiochem from Wadham College, Oxford and obtained his PhD in 2003. We moved to New York in 2003 where Daniel initiated postdoctoral research into viral silencing at Columbia University, and were married in 2005.

Daniel's scientific career was highly successful, he had published in several prestigious journals and had been offered faculty positions at UCL, the University of Cambridge and the University of Edinburgh, as well as grant funding from the MRC and Wellcome Trust. ...A memorial service was held in New York earlier this month and a UK service was held at Wadham College, Oxford on 8th November."



**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR
FROM ALL AT THE
HIGH SCHOOL
OF DUNDEE**