

The relatively mild weather that we have enjoyed almost throughout the term has been a mixed blessing. It has made life easier for the travellers and has enabled the teams to keep nearly all of their fixtures, albeit at the cost of a larger-than-usual travel bill. On the debit side, if there is any truth in folk-lore, the mild winter brought with it more ailments than usual. Pupil absences were heavy, while those among staff reached 13% at the start of the term, with consequent disruption of teaching and a heavy load on staff covering for absent colleagues. After long illnesses we have welcomed back Mr Pearson (Physics), Mrs Reilly (Remedial) and Mrs Bridges (English); and we wish a speedy recovery to Mr Campbell (Biology), Mr Reilly (Physics) and Mr McDonald (Business Studies). I am most grateful for the willingness of Fife Region to bring supply teachers in if they can be found; and we are all indebted to the following for the help they have given: Mrs Anderstrem and Mrs Spaulding (English), Mrs Geddes (French), Mrs Oswald (P.E.), Mrs Thomson (Business Studies) and Mrs Wyatt (Science). In the Music Department, Mr A. McGeoch, formerly Principal Teacher of Music in the Phoenix School, Darley, Shropshire, took up duties as successor to Mr Fea. Mrs Herd of the technician staff has been appointed maingrade technician in the school. I am delighted to report that Mrs Oliver has given birth to a fine baby girl.

Shortly before the end of term, we said goodbye reluctantly to Mrs Stothard who left on maternity leave after three hard-working and creative years as Assistant Principal Teacher in the Home Economics Department. At the end of term, the head of that department, Miss J. Scott, retires after nearly 24 years as a principal teacher, first in the Burgh School and subsequently in Madras College. Her term of office has seen the department guided firmly but sympathetically through the many changes in curriculum and organisation that have taken place in that time. Her administration has always been impeccable; and her staff and her pupils have had her constant support. We all wish her a happy retirement. Lastly, I send Mr Thompson our best wishes for his happy retirement from working on the school grounds.

This term has seen staff of the English, Mathematics and Science Departments heavily involved in developing courses at Foundation level for pilot groups in S4 in the case of English and for S3 in the other two subjects as part of the Munn & Dunning development programme. This programme will be extended over the next few years to include other subjects and the General and Credit levels as well as Foundation. In Technical Education a new course for SI is in operation and will be extended to S2, while for S3 & 4, Craft and Design will be offered in future alongside Woodwork and Metal work, ultimately superseding them. The Computer Committee is working on a pilot course on computer appreciation for pupils at the level of S2, possibly next session.

On no fewer than eight evenings during the session staff have played host to parents at year-group evenings. The Parent-Teachers' Association has had a very varied session with a discussion at Tayport Primary School, a talk on Computer Education, an evening on school visits abroad, a theatre evening at the Byre and the second of Dr Thompson's lectures on the history of the school. My only regret is that more parents do not support these meetings.

The 150th Anniversary Committee is now well advanced in its planning of a programme starting on Wednesday, 14th September, and culminating in a dinner in the Town Hall on Saturday 17th followed by a special service in Holy Trinity Parish Church on Sunday, 18th September at 3 p.m. The full programme will shortly be published. Anyone wishing a copy should send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Secretary, 150th Anniversary Committee, Madras College, South Street, St Andrews.

On the extra-curricular side there is much to report. Our footballers have had a busy season, with the seniors winning their way through to the regional finals of the five-a-side competition only to lose narrowly to St Columba's High School. The under-13s are, at the time of writing, getting ready to play Kirkland High School in the semi-final of the East Fife Cup. In rugby, while the 1st Year and the 3rd Year teams have had mixed results, the 2nd Year team has continued its run of success. The 1st XV, after a lean period since Christmas, have produced some good wins lately, while

the 2nd XV have had an excellent season, with few defeats. With the onset of the 7-a-sides, everyone is hoping for a repeat of last year's success. Of the girls' hockey teams, the greater promise has been shown by the 1st Year teams, which have; been going from strength to strength. The senior girls are preparing for their trip to Holland at Easter to represent Scottish Schoolgirls in an international tournament. We wish them a successful trip. The boys' hockey teams, both junior and senior, are to be congratulated on high levels of skill and enthusiasm that they have reached this season. Volleyball is now well established, with the 2nd Year team well placed in the league.

In the Fife Schools' Cross Country Championships, the school teams came 2nd in the boys' under-15 section, 2nd in the boys' under-17's and 1st in the girls' over-15's. In the individual events, Phillipa Caiger came 2nd in the under-13's, and Wendy Allison 3rd in the over-15's. In the Scottish Schools' Cross-Country Championships at Irvine, notable performances were achieved by Wendy Allison, Nicola Faed, Dawn Allison, Rachel Kennedy, Colin Paterson and William Kay. The Badminton Club has had an excellent season highlighted by the performances of Roderick and Karen Christie who were chosen for the Fife Schools' team which defeated Perth Schools. Roderick was chosen for Fife in the Scottish Schools' Team Championship, while Karen played for Fife at Meadowbank in the Scottish Schools' Individual Championships. Carol Davidson and Roderick Christie were runners-up in their age groups, while Colin Paterson and Lindsay Dingwall were runners-up in the under-14 mixed doubles. There has been no match play for the golfers, but the beginners are coming along well under the tuition of Laurie Auchterlonie. On Sunday, 27th March, a party of 17 pupils and 3 staff leave for a skiing holiday in Austria.

Among the other clubs, chess continues to thrive. The girls' team (Alison Coull, Gill Hunter, Katie Masterson and Elaine Moffat) retained the Scottish Girls' Championship for the third year running. The Agriculture Club is busy with projects for the Royal Highland show in June. The Computer Clubs are operating to capacity in both buildings, and the newer 'Dungeons & Dragons' Clubs are similarly well supported. With one senior and two junior groups, the Debating Society is flourishing. The Current Affairs Club and the Scripture Union have similarly continued to attract good attendances. A Video Club has started with audiences of about 50. In January, the Drama Club entertained us with a splendid production of "The Recruiting Officer" and later in the month the school Burns Supper was ably revived by Mr Lochhead after a long lapse.

At the Fife Schools' Dance Festival a 2nd Year girls group acquitted themselves very well, while in the Fife Schools' Music Festival the school received high praise for its music-making, both choral and orchestral. In the Concerto class, the following individual placings were gained: 1 - Rosemary Mair; 2 - David McCallum; 3 - Roger Henderson; 5 - Susan Dingle; 9 - Penelope Brumfitt. By the time this is in print I hope that these skills will have entertained the audience at the Spring Concert on 23rd March.

I wish all parents, staff and pupils a happy Easter break.

*J.D. Gilroy.*

Rector.

#### Forthcoming Events and Holidays

<u>Easter Holiday</u>	Monday 28th March to Friday 8th April
<u>May Holiday</u>	Monday 2nd May
<u>SII Parents' Evenings</u>	Tuesday 3rd and Wednesday 4th May
<u>June Holiday</u>	Monday 6th June
<u>Drama Club Production</u>	16th - 18th June
<u>School Musical</u>	22nd - 24th June
<u>Summer Holiday</u>	Monday 4th July to Wednesday 17th August