



# Madras College Newsletter

*Easter 1990*

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## *Introducing this issue*

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Modern technology makes it possible to present the newsletter in a new and more attractive format which we hope will add to its reader appeal. Of course, it may be that a newsletter is less necessary than it was, since the regular appearance of the Madras College diary in the local press now keeps everyone in touch with school events more or less as they happen. However, even with the diary, there is still more than enough material for inclusion in the newsletter.

A member of staff said to me the other day that this had been a heavy term. Another told me that according to a recent report teachers' reactions towards the end of a school term were similar to those experienced by soldiers suffering from battle fatigue. Certainly, few outside the profession appreciate the demands teaching makes, more so than ever at this time of constant change in education. Being on the receiving end of the teaching is not necessarily any easier and for pupils, especially the seniors, the final weeks of preparation for certificate exams inevitably create strains and tensions. The term has had its pressures, but it has also had its highlights.

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## *Events—some of the highlights*

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The Quad Theatre company's production of *As You Like It* was widely acclaimed. The fifth year pupils who take Theatre Arts as part of their course and some fortunate sixth years spent a week working at the Byre Theatre under professional direction. The Burns Supper, held in the Assembly Hall for the first time, seemed to gain in quality and enjoyment from its impressive setting. The musical contribution, as always, was excellent. The speeches were of a high

standard, especially Brian Logan's toast *To the Lasses*, which was well matched by Katrina Stirton's able reply. We thank the Burns Club of St Andrews for their interest and for their prizes which this year were awarded to Karina Mackinnon (Senior) and Catriona Chisholm (Junior) for singing; and to Beth Marshall (Senior) and Lucy Robertson (Junior) for recitation. We are also grateful to the St Andrews Speakers Club for hosting the annual public speaking competition. Brian Logan was the winner of a closely fought contest with Kenneth Cobb as runner-up. S3 pupils on the PE Studies course spent a week at the Ardroy Outdoor Centre. Other S3 pupils have been involved in Heart Start training as part of the Social Education programme. The Aware work experience scheme continues and a second group of S3 pupils has gone out to spend three days with local firms and businesses. The favourable reports from employers about the good manners, the smart appearance and the helpful attitude of our pupils are very gratifying. The scheme is likely to extend into S4 next year. Although the interruption to teaching is viewed with some reluctance by staff and parents, this has to be weighed against the positive advantages of improved motivation and a better understanding of the application of classroom theory to actual practice in a real work situation. The No Smoking campaign involved the school in various ways, but culminated in an aerial photograph of all 800 Kilrymont pupils positioned in the playground to form the sign 'Smoking Kills'. We are indebted to GB Papers for their contribution to the success of this display.

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## *Helping the community*

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Although there has been no major charitable event this year, donations from the proceeds of the Christmas Concert went to organisations

concerned with UN famine relief, cystic fibrosis, multiple sclerosis and asthma. The choirs' carol singing activities raised £260, a recent mini-enterprise coffee morning in Tayport brought in £104. Both buildings have held successful discos in aid of charity and pupils have helped with several flag days in the town. The environment has not been forgotten. Pupils from the Business Studies department collected a grand total of 3156 cans for recycling in aid of the Blue Peter Baby Life Appeal. Pupils from the Department of Special Education have been very active in collecting glass for the bottle bank. While all this is very worthwhile, it is a pity that we do not seem to be winning the battle against litter especially in the streets near Kilrymont Road. It would be helpful to have further support from parents in encouraging a more positive attitude to litter from the younger pupils in particular. Two other links with the local community deserve a mention. The members of the St Andrews Preservation Trust were entertained by the Early Music Group. Their performance in period costume from the gallery of the Trust's Museum was much appreciated. A small Korean fir has been planted on the South Street lawn by representatives of several local organisations to mark the start of a tree planting scheme to commemorate the 370th anniversary of St Andrews as a Royal Burgh. If the tree manages to survive the attempts of vandals to destroy it, it will be a handsome addition to the lawn.

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### *The return of the HMI*

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Educationally, however, the most significant event of the term was a return visit by three senior members of the Schools Inspectorate to check what progress had been made in carrying out the recommendations in their Report on the 1988 inspection of the school. They made some suggestions about setting targets for subject departments and the development of technology as a subject for all pupils. They praised the Social Education programme, the new report sheets and assessment system, the development of the Support Centre and the involvement of pupils in committees. They seemed well satisfied with all that had been achieved.

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### *Successes—an impressive showing*

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Although competing is about taking part rather than winning, it is always pleasant to record the school's successes and we are once again fortunate that so many have come our way in the course of the term.

Vicki Cobb, Peter Hamilton, Peter Lord and Brian Smith took part in the Young Business People of the Year competition. They qualified for the national semi-finals in Wolverhampton, one of only two Scottish schools to do so, and narrowly missed a place in the final. However, their eighth position in the table of national results was a creditable performance.

In the Fife Schools Badminton Championships Kevin Ross won the under 16 boys doubles and mixed doubles and was runner-up in the under 15 boys singles. Dorian Coxon won the under 16 boys singles and boys doubles. Aline Hill won the under 16 mixed doubles and was runner-up in the under 16 girls singles. Along with Katy Hill, they are to represent Fife in the Scottish Schools Championships.

In the Fife Schools Cross Country Championships the school did well. The team events produced one first (under 15 boys) and two second places (under 17 boys and under 19 boys). There were also individual second places for Ian Wallace (under 13 boys), Ruth Wilson (over 15 girls) and Brian Thomson (under 19 boys). Our runners also achieved good results in the much tougher competition of the Scottish Schools Cross Country Championships at Irvine.

In the Fife Schools Swimming Gala the school scored several successes: Iain Whittaker took first place in the under 14 breast stroke and second place in the under 14 freestyle. Morag Ekanger gained silver medals for the under 16 front crawl and butterfly. Libby Heathcote took the silver for the under 16 back crawl and the team of Clea Waterston, Pauline McLean, Morag Ekanger and Vicki Robertson won the gold for the under 16 freestyle relay.

The Senior Girls Hockey team have won the Dunfermline High School and the Waid Academy 7-a-side tournaments. The Under 13 Football team have

reached the final of the Fife Schools Cup.

The Debating team beat off strong opposition from Waid Academy and Bell Baxter to retain the Rotary Club inter-school trophy for a second year with the motion that *We should be Europeans first and British second*. The team of Peter Hamilton, Craig Buchanan, Brian Logan, Kenneth Cobb, Tim Jupp and Nancy Burn completed a famous victory by gaining five out of six awards for best individual performances. The Rotary Club of St Andrews entertained the team to lunch and we take this opportunity to thank the Club for its interest and support.

The Rotary Club has also made Leadership Awards to Mary Roemmele and Roderick Burnett who will receive a course of leadership training at summer camp.

Ian Story, David Martin and Paul Phillips have qualified for the second round of the Junior Maths Olympiad. They were among the top 750 pupils out of 40,000 in the first round.

Kandy Mitchell has not only gained a place in the Scottish School girls under 18 Hockey team to play the Home Counties and Europe but she is to captain the team. She deserves special congratulations on this considerable distinction.

Frans Green has obtained an English Speaking Union Scholarship to the United States. This is the second of these awards to be gained by a Madras College pupil this session.

To prove that success is not entirely confined to pupils, Mr Andrew Lindsay, Principal Teacher of English, is to be congratulated on being awarded the Sloan Prize by St Andrews University for a short story in Scots.

At the Fife Festival of Music the senior orchestra gained a well deserved second place, but the outstanding performances belonged to the choirs. The junior choir won both their events and gained the Saltire Society Award for the fourth successive year. The senior choir came first in their class, well ahead of their nearest rivals. The Perth Festival presented them with a new challenge and they returned from a fine first performance there as proud possessors of

the Gray Trophy. In the Bell Baxter Centenary Young Musician Competition, Madras was strongly represented by Sally Mitchell (violin), Jennifer Martin (piano) and Fiona Morton (voice) who gained three out of the six places in the final. The final itself proved to be a stern test to which all three girls responded well. The trophy went to Bell Baxter, but Sally Mitchell was runner-up and Fiona Morton was specially commended.

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### *Staffing—a changing scene*

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A few words of comment on the staffing situation may be of interest. The number of teachers on the staff of a secondary school is calculated on a formula based on the number of pupils on the roll. The amount of money available dictates the number of teachers the Region can afford. Schools are given a quota and expected to stick rigidly to it. This method does not produce the class sizes which are necessarily the best for effective teaching or for allowing sufficient attention to be given to individual pupils. Most teachers would like to see a formula which is not purely number related but takes account of subject content and teaching methods. However, economic pressures, which go far beyond Fife, have so far prevented much progress towards a new and improved method of calculating the number of teachers each school requires. Even though the position is not as good as we would like it to be, Madras is comparatively well staffed and likely to remain so. Nevertheless, we are on the verge of a number of fairly major staff changes and those mentioned here are only the first of many.

A quite unexpected change has occurred with Mr Paterson's very recent appointment as data analyst at Regional headquarters. He came to Madras in 1972 as Principal Teacher of Mathematics and many pupils owe their good results and their lasting interest in the subject to his skilled teaching. As Assistant Rector since 1980 he has been a key figure in the management of the school — the architect of its timetables, the organiser of its daily routine, the writer of countless UCCA reports and a source of wise advice for both staff and pupils. He takes up his new duties immediately after Easter and we are still trying to adjust to the suddenness of his departure. We congratulate him on his promotion to

an influential post in the education service and wish him well in the corridors of power. We also congratulate Miss Shirley Bennett whose acting appointment as Assistant Principal Teacher of Science was made permanent at the beginning of term. Three members of staff are retiring at Easter. Mrs Thirkell has given 16 years of service to the English Department as Assistant Principal Teacher. Her quiet efficiency and grasp of detail have done much to keep the wheels of departmental administration turning smoothly. Mr Johnston who also has 16 years service leaves the Technical Department and Mr Watt, a comparative newcomer, since he came a mere five years ago, goes from the Art Department. We thank them all for the valuable work they have done and wish them health and happiness in the years ahead.

Staff absence has taken its usual toll, although in-service training plays as large a part as illness in keeping staff out of school. Mrs Alma Smith makes a welcome return to the Art Department after a long spell on the sick list. Mrs Macgregor and Mr Miller have both had unexpectedly prolonged absences. We send them our good wishes for continued progress towards recovery. The demand for supply teachers has never been greater. As the available pool, if that is the word, has more than once been drained, any new recruits who wish to plunge into the unenviable task of supply teaching will be warmly welcomed. Once more our grateful thanks go to all those who have helped to hold the line.

There is one piece of news about staffing which will be generally welcomed. The school's need for a fully qualified Librarian has at long last been recognised and an appointment will shortly be made.

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### *Parent Teacher Association*

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The traditional dessert party in the Byre Theatre after the Quad Theatre's production of *As You Like It* was successfully revived. A panel of experts answered parents' questions at Guardbridge Primary School and although the wintry weather may have reduced the size of the audience, this was a lively and interesting meeting. The work of the PE De-

partment formed the subject of another meeting. Parents were given an excellent account of various new developments in the teaching of the subject. They were then invited to put this knowledge to the test by taking part in some practical work in the gym. The Association's AGM was delighted to learn that the £9,000 by 90 Appeal had succeeded in reaching its target. The Library benefits by about £2,000 worth of new books and the considerable contribution which Miss Rust has made to this part of the appeal through her bookstall at Parents' Nights is gratefully acknowledged. The committee has decided that a fairly substantial sum is to be spent on video-editing equipment, a resource which many departments are finding increasingly valuable. The rest will go to several other projects including portable staging for the choir, lockers for one of the pupils' cloakrooms in South Street and some lighting equipment for drama. It is appropriate to take this opportunity to thank parents for their generosity and the PTA committee for much hard work. Mrs Donaldson retires as secretary and Mrs Clark as treasurer. They both deserve a special word of thanks for the cheerful efficiency with which they have carried out the time-consuming duties of these posts. The Association is looking for increased support and many new members. It is frequently said that parents want to know more about schools. The PTA provides that opportunity and much effort goes into devising an attractive and interesting programme to which staff and pupils are always willing to contribute. Given the size of the school, the level of support for PTA meetings is disappointing. Perhaps it would not be too much to ask if next session just a few more parents could find the time to come.

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### *School Board*

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The membership of the Board has been completed by the co-option of Mr Brian Prunty, Mrs Anna Spackman and Mrs Reta Russell and we welcome them to its deliberations. Mr Ian Swankie has been appointed Chairman and Mrs Claire Easingwood is Vice Chairman. Mr Alan Barclay has been asked to act as Press Officer and regular reports of meetings will now be sent to the local papers. The local Library Service has also kindly agreed to disseminate information about the Board. Although procedural matters have continued to occupy the Board, it has begun to tackle other issues. It has considered school policies on discipline and assessment. It has approved the Rector's recommendations for

spending by subject departments and it is in the process of setting up a Sub-committee on Community Use of the school. The next meeting of the Board will be on Thursday, 10th May in the Resources Room of the Kilrymont Road Building.

### *.and finally*

The much needed holiday is almost at hand. Two school groups are going abroad. Forty skiers set out on Friday for the Austrian slopes. They will be followed by a group of enthusiastic Geographers who will be making an in-depth field study of the Rhineland. To the staff and pupils taking part and to everyone else who is looking forward to holidays at this time we extend our good wishes for an enjoyable and relaxing break

### *Some dates for your diary*

#### *Easter Holidays*

School Closes - Friday, 30th March, 1990  
School Starts - Monday, 16th April, 1990

*May Day Holiday* - Monday, 7th May, 1990  
*In-Service Day* - Wednesday, 23rd May, 1990  
*June Holiday* - Monday, 4th June, 1990

#### *Summer Holidays*

School Closes - Friday, 29th June, 1990  
School Starts - Tuesday, 21st August, 1990

*SCE Examinations* - Monday, 23rd April, 1990  
- Tuesday, 29th May, 1990

*SCE Study Leave* - Wednesday, 25th April, 1990  
- Thursday, 22nd May, 1990

*S3 Parents Night* - Thursday, 26th April, 1990

*S3 Examinations* - Monday, 30th April, 1990  
- Tuesday, 15th May, 1990

*Summer Concert* - Monday, 18th June, 1990

## *Team Results— Session 1989—90*

### *Inter-School Games*

	Football				For	Against
	P	W	L	D		
1st XI	14	3	9	2	20	40
under 16	2	0	2	1	2	14
under 15	12	4	4	4	36	35
under 14	11	8	3	-	48	35
under 13	19	15	22	1	26	40

	Rugby				For	Against
	P	W	L	D		
1st XV	15	9	6	-	381	151
3rd Yr XV	16	8	8	-	266	252
2nd Yr XV	15	6	9	-	194	238
1st Yr XV	13	10	3	-	282	140

	Girls' Hockey			
	P	W	L	D
1st XI	20	9	9	2
3rd Year XI	18	3	14	2
2nd Year XI	21	11	5	5
1st Year XI	17	3	10	4

### *House Matches*

	Blackfriars	Castle	Priory
<b>1st Year</b>			
Netball	12	12	3
Hockey	9	15	3
Rugby	15	3	9
Football	9	3	15
<b>2nd Year</b>			
Netball	9	3	15
Hockey	9	9	9
Rugby	9	15	3
Football	15	9	3
<b>3rd Year</b>			
Netball	3	15	9
Hockey	0	15	9
Rugby	6	6	15
Football	15	3	9
<b>Seniors</b>			
Netball	30	18	6
Hockey (G)	30	6	18
Hockey (B)	6	24	18
Rugby	24	6	24
Football	18	18	18
<b>Totals</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>186</b>

## ERRATA

Please amend the following on the Summer Newsletter

Useful dates for your diary

Autumn term: Wednesday , 22nd August - Friday October 12th 1990

In-Service Days for teachers - Day 1 Tuesday, 21st August, 1990