



*Madras College*

# *Spring Newsletter*

**March 1993**

A memorable term in many ways, not least because of the bad weather which began it and the high absence rate amongst staff and pupils with which it is ending. Because clerical staff have no special immunity from absence and, in fact, have had more than their share, and because of other pressures on time, such as meetings about preparations for devolved management, the result is a more tabloid style of newsletter.

Congratulations to Mrs Marlyn Brown on well deserved promotion, which ensured that the post of Principal Teacher of Modern Studies was filled without the delays so often associated with such appointments. Welcome back to Mrs Maureen Kyle, who resumes her duties as Principal Teacher of Home Economics. Thanks to Mrs Sheila Blair for her highly efficient management of the Home Economics Department during Mrs Kyle's absence. Good wishes for recovery to Miss Jack and Mrs Kirk and on the non-teaching side to Mrs McIntyre and Mr John Smith. Good wishes for the future to Mr James Leighton, audio-visual technician, on taking up a new appointment, and to Mr Ian Welsh, assistant janitor, on his retirement. Both are leaving after more than twenty years service to the school.

Although fortunately infrequent, the severe weather at the beginning of term calls for comment. Emergency closing is not a simple process. Even though the decision to close is taken at an early stage, there is inevitably a gap between the decision and the actual departure of pupils, since buses are not immediately available and it usually takes some time for them to arrive. Pupils from outlying areas have always been advised to have arrangements to enable them stay with friends who live locally. The need for that advice was apparent this year as never before, when two buses could not reach their destinations and pupils were brought back to the school. Staff on duty that afternoon are immensely grateful to parents who took stranded children in or enabled them to reach home safely by coming with tractors and other vehicles capable of coping with the conditions.

The school is, as always, concerned about the buses. Particular issues which are being pursued with the Region at the moment are: the implementation of a no-smoking policy because of the increasingly evident danger from passive smoking; a change in the procedure for checking passes to eliminate situations where pupils who have forgotten their pass are forced to pay their fare or, worse still, not allowed to board the bus; improved time-keeping because a number of buses are regularly late in arriving. On this point, please note that next term buses bringing pupils to school from Tayside will be running five minutes earlier to overcome possible delays caused by the construction of the new roundabout at the entrance to St. Andrews.

The school's sporting facilities have been greatly enhanced by the provision of an all-weather surface and floodlighting for the tennis courts at Kilrymont Road. This development, which is the result of a joint project by Fife Region and The Royal and Ancient Golf Club, has allowed the school and the community to benefit from the use of Station Park by the R & A during the last Open Golf Championship. Preparations are in hand for the official opening ceremony on 22nd April.

Hockey, rugby and football can all look back on a successful season with only the highlights being mentioned here. The Hockey 1st XI narrowly lost the final of the Midlands District Championship, but won the Fife Schools Indoor Tournament. The Rugby 1st XV enjoyed a memorable training session with Dick Best, the England coach, and have just returned from an end of season tour to Oban. Craig Trewartha enjoys the unusual distinction of being awarded the FP Rugby Club's Colombo Cup for the Rugby Club Person of the Year. Two Football teams, Under 16 and Under 18, represented the school in the finals of the Fife Five a Side Tournament. The under 14 team reached the last 16 of the B & Q cup, the quarter final of the Fife Schools Cup and have just played their way into the final of the Scottish Schools Cup. The under 13 team also reached the quarter final of the Fife Schools Cup and the under 18 team, who are at the same stage, await the outcome of the replay. Cross Country results were excellent. In the Fife Championships the school won 9 individual medals, all four team awards in the boys' events and third place in the under 15 girl's section. This achievement was backed up by 3 bronze awards in the National Championships. In many cases, results have been achieved against the odds, since the high absence rate of the last few weeks has inevitably taken its toll.

The changes in Prelim Exam arrangements reduced musical participation in the Fife Festival./....

However, the Junior Choir retained the Saltire Society award and their near monopoly of this event. The Junior Strings, taking part in the contest for the first time, gained commendations for their skill, their behaviour and their appearance. Mr Higgins, their instructor, is appealing for any old or unwanted violins and would be most grateful for any contributions. David Martin and Will Poole have won through to the final of the Bell Baxter Centenary Music competition. The Easter Concert overcame the prevailing tide of absence with an impressive display of musical talent.

The appearance of a Madras College team in the national semi-final of the Business Studies *Beat the Boss* competition has become a regular event and that tradition was maintained by this year's team.

There was a well deserved success for Chris Crowe whose painting of the South Street Building gained him a certificate of merit in the Royal Bank/ Royal Scottish Academy painting project and attracted much favourable comment when reproduced as the school's official Christmas card.

Because of exams and the weather, the Burns Supper had to be delayed until 15th February, but this in no way detracted from the success of the event. Thanks are due to the St Andrews Bums Club, to Dr Christopher MacLauchlan, who proposed the *Immortal Memory*, and to Mr Lindsay for his usual humorous poem.

Few schools could equal the achievement of our debating teams and their results are a tribute to the nerve, the eloquence and the dedication of those who take part. Two junior teams reached the semifinal stages of the TSB Courier Debate. In the national final in Lower Parliament Hall, St Andrews, the school was well represented by Harold Raitt and Eleanor Winton who deserve special credit as the youngest of the six teams in this very demanding competition, conducted under the full glare of the TV cameras. The senior team, Imogen Ashcroft Vivienne Fraser and Anna Scott reached the National Final of the ESU/BP Public Speaking Competition. Undaunted by the ornate splendour of the Merchants' Hall in Edinburgh, they gave an impressive performance, but were ultimately squeezed into third place. However, the team's merit was properly recognized in the Inter School Debate for the Waid Academy Centenary Trophy which Madras retained. Congratulations on individual awards to Imogen Ashcroft, Vivienne Fraser, Anna Scott and Will Poole.

Results of the UK Schools Mathematical Challenge have recently arrived and once again demonstrate the school's excellence in this activity. Nationally, over 100,000 candidates from 1,550 schools took part. Out of 90 entrants from Madras there were 14 gold, 25 silver and 23 bronze awards. Richard Alexander in S2 was best in school and along with Saul Williams and Jamie Comer, both S3, he qualifies for the British Junior Maths Olympiad.

One special date to note—Friday, 7th May when PTA are holding a social evening for parents, former pupils and friends of the school to celebrate the 160th anniversary of the founding of Madras College and 25 years of Kilrymont Road.

And finally an enjoyable Easter break to one and all.

### *Some dates for your diary*

<b>School starts</b>	Tuesday 13th April, 1993	<b>S3 Parents' Night</b>	Wednesday 28th April, 1993
<b>May Day</b>	Monday 3rd May, 1993	<b>S3 Exams</b>	begin Tuesday 4th May and end on Friday 21st May, 1993
<b>June Holiday</b>	Monday 7th June, 1993	<b>S1 Parents' Night</b>	Tuesday 18th May, 1993
<b>SCE Exams</b>	begin Thursday 6th May and end on Wednesday 9th June, 1993	<b>Summer Concert</b>	Monday 21st June, 1993
<b>SCE Study Leave</b>	begins Thursday 6th May and ends on Wednesday 2nd June, 1993 (both dates inclusive)	<b>Awards Ceremony</b>	Friday 2nd July, 1993