

MEETING OF MADRAS COLLEGE ARCHIVE SUPPORT GROUP

Thursday 27th October, 2011 at 3.45pm in Room K1

1. Present: Ann Bridges (AB), David Cleland (DC), Kevin Donnelly (KD), David Galloway (DG), Liz Higgins (EH), Lindsay Hodge (LH), Frances Humphries (FH), Magnus Latona (ML), Colin Mackay (CMa), Catherine Macrae (CMc), Donald Macgregor (DM), Lindsay Matheson (LM), Elaine Methven (EM), Christine Noble (CN), Arlen Pardoe (AP), Cameron Shepherd (CS), Edmund Robertson (ER). Apologies received from Jim Bennett, Max Chase, John Gilbert, Karis Macdonald, Anne Morris.
2. Ann Bridges, former English, Drama and Guidance teacher at Madras was welcomed. She described some of her particular interests from which our group might benefit, the many plays and concerts which she had produced over several decades, the displays mounted for special occasions, and the Glen Tilt cottage. She also brought and handed over a collection of videos concerning these aspects and much other material including programmes, posters and photos for many productions.
3. Magnus Latona of the Computing, Business and Technology department was welcomed as a guest who would be assisting our discussion on electronic retention of current school items.
4. We paused to reflect together on the life of Dr Ian Gilroy, rector of the school from 1975 to 1985 and a member of the archive group from its inception in 2008, who died last month. One of his most recent contributions had been to support the petition from a group of former St Andrews alumni to the current Principal that she should reconsider the withdrawal of the university from the joint project with Fife Council to provide a new Madras College that would be a worthy successor to the present school. He was remembered with affection and deep respect by those who had worked alongside him. In retirement Dr Gilroy had given long and distinguished service to the University Court for which he had been awarded an honorary LLD.
5. The note of the meeting of 25th August was accepted as correct.
6. Discussion about the retention of items produced electronically in school was led by AP, ML, EH and ER. This produced a number of ideas and suggestions of how to proceed. ML described how, using the school's website, he had grouped considerable material on topics such as News and Events, Press and Success, and Sports Results, describing this in effect as a portrait of the school's extra-curricular life. The complexity of the technical side of how to retain material led to the decision to ask the Website Group to undertake some trials and report its findings and recommendations to the meeting after next (March 22nd 2012). KD will consider whether he would like to become involved in this work. AP alerted colleagues to some of the issues that he had encountered with the regional archives in the application of the 100-year rule in relation to sensitive material. We have to avoid putting ourselves into a position where some of our resources might be rendered inaccessible.

7. The very considerable and growing usage of the Madras College archive website was outlined by AP and illustrated by several informative charts (attached - please delete if you have already received these). ER also illustrated the global interest we are engendering by the thousands of individual "hits" on his Madras College mathematical productions posted on the internet separately.

8. The Oral History Project was described by CMc, also a member of the present Journalism elective class. She and CS, a member of last session's class, described the mixture of closed and open questions that were proving most effective. The issue of transcribing the interviews was raised by AP and will be communicated to Miss Birmingham the class teacher. Discussion followed and some offers of assistance to the project were made, for example by DC who offered to bring through to St Andrews from Cupar a former pupil Andy Philp who in the 1930s had written a school magazine article imagining what the future might hold! FH also considered that the FP Girls' Club might be interested in a future social event involving past and present pupils in which a number of interviews could take place simultaneously. CMc will speak with Miss Birmingham about the advance list of future interviewees needed. Several group members are expected to be involved in the next batch of interviews.

9. There was some discussion of the forthcoming annual report, which being the first we have attempted would cover the period from 2008 to to 2011. Some amendments were suggested and some additional sections were proposed for inclusion. The report will be collated by LM in such a way that any repetitions will be minimised, that there will be consistency in naming the personnel involved, and that the names of present members of the group will be listed. The content will commence with a synopsis then contain the following sections: cataloguing, trophies, website, requests, scrapbooks, the Burgh School, oral history, Glen Tilt, acknowledgements of archive accessions, and membership.

10. CS and CMc are ready to assist with the Responses task. LM will alert JG to this.

11. CMA will consider following certain interesting strands such as charitable giving and liaise with AB about the possible creation of a Social sub-group.

12. LM thanked members for their contributions to a lively and wide-ranging meeting.

LM

27th October 2011

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If anyone happened to pick up the lists of contacts or group membership (circulated for amendments) please contact LM or relate the notes jotted on the sheets to him by email.