

HARRIS ACADEMY FORMER PUPILS' ASSOCIATION



MINUTES of ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 18 April 2016 at 7pm

Harris Academy, Lawton Road, Dundee

Present:

President: Dorothy Drummond (in the Chair).

Vice President: John Baxter

Association Secretary: David J Wallace.

Treasurer: Freida Soutar.

Webmaster: David J Wallace.

Head Teacher: Barry Millar:

Council Members: Sylvia Alexander; John Baxter; David Bertie; Ian C Colligan; Isobel Colligan; Anne Duff; David Gauld; Fiona Smart.

Ordinary Members: Fay Burke; Margaret Fraser; Margaret Mill; Marion Milne; Michael Mulford; Sandra Mulford; Janice Oram; Joyce Wood; Joan Yeaman; William Yeaman.

Present Pupil Representatives: Callum Ellis; Dana Leslie; Michael Richardson; Jessica Trickett.

1. Welcome

The President, Dorothy Drummond, welcomed everyone present, especially Barry Millar, the Head Teacher, and the Pupil Representatives.

2. Apologies

Betty Bowman; Maggie Bradley; Robert & Christine Darroch; Anna Doxford; George Flett; Grace Henderson; Steve Kerr; Anne Millar; George McWalter; Doreen Strachan; Mary Train; Margaret Westley.

3. Minutes of Annual General Meeting on 20 April 2015 & Matters Arising

3.1. Approval of Minutes

Proposed by John Baxter Seconded by Janice Oram. Motion unanimously carried.

3.2. Matters Arising

None

4. Reports

4.1. President: See Schedule 1 attached.

4.2. Association Secretary; see Schedule 2 attached.

4.3. Treasurer: See Schedule 3 (Accounts) attached.

Reference was made to the Accounts which were produced. There is still a healthy bank balance. The Association Secretary explained that his expenses, which covered 2 years, seemed high but were due to the amount of printing and postages for non-email Members.

4.4. Webmaster: See Schedule 4 attached.

John Baxter asked that the Webmaster's son, Andrew J Wallace, be thanked for his considerable assistance in web site operations.

4.5. Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is a Former Pupil, having attended School from 1987 to 1993, and was in Kinloch House. He was followed by his sister, who became a Vice Captain, and his son has just entered the School as a former pupil of Menzieshill High School. It was a genuine honour and privilege for him to become Head Teacher of Harris Academy, and he had declared at various meetings and events that this Head Teacher post is the only one for which he would have applied.

He began his career as a Teacher of PE at Menzieshill High School, moving to Principal Teacher of Guidance, then Acting Depute Head Teacher. He then became a Quality Improvement Officer at the Rockwell Campus when it housed the Education Development Service and worked throughout the city. Next he was Depute Rector at Madras College before entering his last post as Head Teacher at Perth Grammar School, where he was very happy.

He had fond memories of his time at Harris Academy and always remembered the blend of support and challenges provided to pupils there, and the role models he admired, especially in the PE Department. That experience was the basis for his approach to his teaching posts, especially as Head Teacher of Harris Academy. The closure of Menzieshill High School was a matter which formed a large part of his work at that time of the present Meeting and he made it clear to his colleagues at Harris Academy and to his new colleagues from Menzieshill High School that this was Harris Academy and would continue to be so, although like any good school it should evolve and move with the times and incorporate such better practices as emerge from the experiences of the staff from both schools. But there would be no change to the identity of what is Harris Academy. Those changes which are required because of what is happening in education and society would happen because it is best for Harris Academy.

The strong welcoming environment and sense of community which exist in Harris Academy and which he personally experienced on his appointment will be a very important factor in assisting with the integration of pupils from Menzieshill High School. The same consideration applies to their parents and he has held transition events with a view to allaying any concerns about the move. The respective Parent Councils have been holding their meetings in Harris Academy on the same evening so that they can come together to discuss matters relating to the new school after they have dealt with matters relating solely to either of the present schools. The demographic nature of Harris Academy will change but he is clear that Harris Academy will be in a position to support all pupils regardless of background or ability.

The Senior Management Team is in place and the Deputies will be Angela White, Gordon Laidlaw, (both already in position at Harris Academy), Leona Chacko, who will join from Menzieshill High School, and Michael Stewart, who has recently been appointed. All Principal Teachers of subjects presently in post at Harris Academy remain the same for the next year, none having moved on. The Principal Teachers of Guidance presently at Harris Academy will continue along with the two present Principal Teachers of Guidance at Menzieshill High School to make a complement of eight. The Principal Teacher of Learning at Harris Academy, Gerry Quinn, will retire at the end of the current Session, and the Principal Teacher of Learning at Menzieshill High School will become Principal Teacher of Learning at Harris Academy. All non-promoted staff at Menzieshill High School become Harris Academy staff and four non-teaching posts will join from Menzieshill High School. Two teaching posts are vacant and applicants are about to be interviewed, so the school will be fully staffed by August.

The new building is now under City Council control, although some risk assessment work is still to be done, and an agreed plan is in place whereby senior pupils of both schools will commence their Higher Studies together in the new building in June (when the timetable changes). There will be an induction evening the previous week and parents will eventually be invited with their children during that week. June will be the month for visits from relevant bodies and organisations.

The Head Teacher had noted the perceived problems with IT after perusal of the Minutes for the previous year and had mixed reports to offer. The quotation for moving interactive whiteboards from the Rockwell Campus and Menzieshill High School was considerable and the Government funding did not cover purchase of new equipment, only transfer, but it was successfully argued that the sum concerned should be applied to purchase new materials so new state of the art interactive devices will be installed in Perth Road and only a few whiteboards will move from Rockwell Campus. All computers will be transferred from both schools. There will be no new equipment of that nature purchased but under a City Council scheme a fifth of the computers will be new. The Head Teacher reiterated his support of the Association and will be prepared to host meetings, support administration, and attend any meetings or functions when invited. He expressed special thanks to Angela White for providing strong support during a smooth handover and Jim Thewliss for two reasons, firstly for taking the time to meet on his appointment and provide information about the school, and secondly for leaving behind him a successful and strong school fit for purpose.

The Head Teacher then answered questions from Members.

In particular he stated that the new building was designed to hold 1250 pupils but as a result of the closure of Menzieshill High School five extra classrooms had to be added during construction and a roll of 1320 is expected. That number will eventually work its way down as a result of roll capping at 220 per year group.

The question of Uniform was also addressed. The colours, blazer, and tie will remain the same, although by law the wearing of it cannot be enforced. However, Prefects are expected to wear, *inter alia*, blazers. PE uniform may change because it is very expensive.

One Member was reassured that the new Harris was built in a completely different way from the PPP schools in Edinburgh and by a different contractor, but after the Edinburgh incidents the building had been inspected by Dundee City Council and found to be satisfactory.

4.6. 100 Club

Ian C Colligan addressed the meeting and reminded it that Council had agreed the proposal to set up this Small Lottery. The relevant application for its registration had been submitted to the City Council Licensing Department and both the Scheme and the person(s) responsible had been vetted and approved and the Scheme was now registered. It would now need marketed of new to ensure the necessary 40 stakes or tickets (not persons) to make it viable. (In fact, that number had been achieved). It was hoped that it would be launched on 1 June. The Scheme would be "manned" by himself and John Baxter, who had volunteered, but he thought that it would be appropriate to invite the inclusion in principle of the Treasurer as well. The Treasurer agreed. The bank account was now being set up. Entry to the Scheme would be for a minimum of one year and draws would take place at quarterly lunches or meetings.

4.7. FP Artefact in new School

The President stated that a very positive meeting had taken place in the Rockwell Campus in March, attended by, *inter alios*, the Principal Teacher of Art, a Member of the Technical Department, and pupils. Rosemary Matheson-Dear had produced a further design of a three dimensional nature which was intended to be hung from the ceiling (as opposed to being affixed to the previously reinforced wall at the entrance) but the Head Teacher, having made enquiries, reported this was not feasible and the Artefact would have to be placed on the wall. The President hoped that the members of staff could alter the design sufficiently to permit it to be fixed to the wall. John Baxter enquired about costs and it was confirmed that the Association had previously set an allowance of £1,500 - £2,000 but the member from the Technical Department thought it could cost less, especially if alternative materials were to be used, e.g. Perspex instead of glass.

5. Membership & Events Fees

- 5.1. Ordinary Life Membership
Unanimously agreed to remain at present rate of £20. Consideration was given to reducing the fee to £10.00 or £5.00 or NIL for School Leavers. Michael Robertson pointed out that School Leavers do not necessarily know about the Association and joining. (This problem has already been ventilated). The Head Teacher suggested the Association place a notice in the School Year Book. The Association Secretary thought that the Constitution might have to be altered to facilitate altered fees. The proposal that School Leavers will be charged £10.00 (instead of £20.00) for entry was remitted to Council for a decision and action.
- 5.2. Associate Life Membership
Unanimously agreed to remain at present rate of £20
- 5.3. Lunches
The Treasurer was of the view that £16.00 could remain in force unless Invercarse Hotel increase their charge. In view of the resulting doubt John Baxter proposed that the price for the June lunch should remain at £16.00 and the cost of subsequent lunches be dealt with later. This was agreed.
- 5.4. Burns Evening or Alternative Event
Carried to AOCB

6. Election of Office Bearers

- 6.1. President
Dorothy Drummond: re-elected by unanimous vote.
- 6.2. Vice-President
John Baxter: re-elected by unanimous vote.
- 6.3. Association Secretary
David J Wallace confirmed his resignation from the post.
No-one was prepared to stand despite warnings from John Baxter, as also the President, that the Association would not be able to function without a Secretary.
Ultimately, following Item 6.7, Sandra Mulford offered to take the post.
Proposed by John Baxter; Seconded by Dorothy Drummond. Motion carried unanimously.
- 6.4. Social Secretary
The President intimated that Sandra Mulford had offered to take the post.
Proposed by Isobel Colligan; Seconded by David Bertie. Motion carried unanimously.
- 6.5. Treasurer
Freida Soutar was re-elected by unanimous vote.
- 6.6. Webmaster
David J Wallace was re-elected by unanimous vote.
- 6.7. Members of Council
The President intimated the resignation of Anne Simmers from Council and recorded appreciation of all her efforts. The other present Members of Council, namely:-
Sylvia Alexander;
David Bertie;
Ian C Colligan;
Isobel B Colligan:
David Gauld;
Fiona Smart
were prepared to continue in office and were re-elected by unanimous vote.
Anne Duff, who had been a co-opted Member, was proposed for full Membership by Marion Milne and seconded by John Baxter. Motion carried unanimously.

Shelly Findlater (PT Music) remains as Co-opted Member by unanimous agreement.
The President thanked the retiring Association Secretary for his efforts.

7. AOCB

7.1. Lunches

The Lunches are held quarterly in March, June, September, and December. The President wondered whether it was thought that the June lunch should be abandoned. A Wine and Cheese Event with tours of the School could be considered. It was agreed to retain the June Lunch.

The Head Teacher confirmed that a Wine and Cheese could be held on an evening in June, but he would have to check with the City Council for the availability of the Let. It was left to the Head Teacher to fix a date.

Michael Mulford enquired whether the Membership could be increased by subsidising lunches for certain people. The Treasurer was unhappy about this because the cost of the Artefact has to be met and subsidies are already being operated at the likes of the Burns Supper. Many Members agreed and the proposal was not taken further.

7.2. Burns Supper

Suggestions were made that the Burns Supper be given a miss for a year. One alternative suggestion was that McGonagall Evening be held instead. Consideration was also given to whether the event should be held on a Monday or a Friday. Invercarse is more expensive on a Friday. Possible bad weather is also a problem and deferral to February or March could be effected. It was agreed that some form of evening be held and details be left to Council to make a decision.

8. Conclusion

The President thanked everyone for their attendance, especially the Present Pupils, who had also been attending meetings about the Artefact, and she assured them that their views and input were very much appreciated.

John Baxter proposed the Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

Schedule 1

President`s Report - 18th April, 2016

Despite experiencing difficulty in attracting new members again this year the Association has given current members the opportunity to meet and chat to each other at our quarterly lunches. These have been enjoyable occasions for those attending.

In June Jim Thewliss, the retiring Head Teacher, attended and was presented with a Gordon Laird print of the School and a certificate giving him membership of the Association.

September saw Angela White, acting Head Teacher, tell us something about herself and her aspirations for the future of the School.

At our December lunch we were entertained by present pupils who gave us a very enjoyable musical interlude at the end of our meal.

Once again St Peter`s and Paul`s Church was the venue for the School Prize – Giving. Space was limited but some members of the Association were present. This ceremony gave an opportunity to learn about the many different activities – both academic and otherwise in which the pupils had participated and in which they had excelled.

In November a short Armistice Service was held at Lawton Road. Several members of the Association attended and, as ever, this was a moving experience. Mary Train graciously agreed to lay the wreath on behalf of the Association.

In December pupils and staff were joined by parents, friends and Former Pupils at their annual Carol Concert in Dundee West Church. This was a most enjoyable evening and, again, the pupils displayed considerable skills in a wide variety of different types of music. A more informal singing of carols was held in the School on the last morning of term.

Having no Social Secretary, some members of Council volunteered to arrange a Burns` Supper. My thanks go to John, Freida and David W. and especially to Freida and David who bore the brunt of the planning and preparation. Despite the presence of a team from Channel 4 (who were making a programme about haggis) the attendees had an enjoyable meal and were entertained well by speakers and musical items.

It is with pleasure that I can announce new members:-Ronald Cairncross .and Barry Millar. Barry is the new Head Teacher of the School and it is good to have a Former Pupil” at the helm”. We wish Barry every success in his new post – it will, no doubt, be challenging but, hopefully, also rewarding. We look forward to seeing them at future events.

On a more sombre note I regret to intimate the deaths of several members.

Agnes Halley- a frequent attendee at lunches and other events, Maureen Brehm who was not a Former Pupil but who taught in Harris ,Douglas Dundas who died aged 94, Eoin Bennet – a former Vice Captain of the School, House Captain of Kinloch and an accomplished sportsman.(It was, however, in music that he chose to follow a successful career), Dr Ruth Page went on to become the first woman Principal of New College, Edinburgh, Mabel Adam – the last of the Esplin sisters and in January this year both Sandy Johnston and William Laskie died. William had been very ill and was the

brother of Mary Train- a regular attendee at lunches and other events. Recently we have also lost Hugh Fraser. He was, I believe, a former School Captain and also played tennis for the F.P.s. They will all be sadly missed and to the families of all of them we offer our profound condolences.

Plans for the artefact for the new building are still being discussed so it is hoped that a final decision about it can be reached soon.

The building is looking good from the outside and it will be quite exciting when the first pupils gain entry to start a brand new episode in their learning experience.

I wish to thank all the office bearers and Council members for all their help and support throughout the year. In particular I'd like to express my gratitude to David Wallace, our Secretary, whose meticulous attention to detail and knowledge about procedures has helped keep me on the right track.

Schedule 2

Association Secretary's Report, incorporating Social Secretarial Matters

HARRIS ACADEMY FORMER PUPILS' ASSOCIATION



Report by the Association Secretary to the Annual General Meeting

Monday 18 April 2016 at 7pm

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1. Existing Membership at this date

The registered Membership is 354 but this cannot be guaranteed to be correct. There are cases where Members are suspected to have died but we have not been informed. Others have gone missing through unannounced change of address.

Of these 354 Members, 181 receive information by email, but 96 receive it by post. The remaining 77 are either abroad without a valid email address, or do not wish communications, or are "missing".

128 Members are registered to obtain information about Lunches. 91 Members receive this information by email. 36 Members receive it by post. Attendances at Lunches are now in the region of 40 – 50 and it is clear there are cases of continuous non-attendance despite intimations being made. I have tried to address this but very few Members have asked me to cease intimations about Lunches.

Postal deliveries are a constant drain on finances. I would point out that updated information is always available on the web site. It is appreciated that not everyone has an internet connection, but perhaps those so disadvantaged could rely on information from friends who are online.

1.2. "Missing" Members

**** = returned without Royal Mail sticker**

GA = Gone Away

NK = Not Known

Prior to October 2014

GA Miss M Maddrick 6 Holly Street Jarrow County Durham NE32 5HZ

NK Robert Martin 47A Albert Street Tayport Fife DD6 9AT

** Heather Murray 18 Inchyra Place Dundee DD3 9QX **

NK Malcolm D Starling 16 Roundhouse Drive Parry Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE18 0DJ

NK Mrs Margot Baird Flat 307 Carlyle Court 173 Comely Bank Road Edinburgh EH4 5DE

GA Mrs Dorothy Pomfret 16 Manogarth, Ricall, York YO19 6QX

October 2014

GA Donald Jack 70 St Magdalene's Linlithgow West Lothian EH49 6AQ

March 2015

GA Mrs Mary A Boyd Three Gables 37 Adelaide Place Dundee DD3 6LE

September 2015

GA Mrs D Barnett 12 East Hadden Road Dundee DD4 7LD

GA Ms Emma Burns 2a Seafeld Close Dundee DD1 4DZ

GA Ms Elizabeth Anne Johnston 2 Norwood Newport-on-Tay DD6 8DW

March 2016

GA Allan Findlay 34 Ancrum Road Dundee DD2 2HZ

GA Mrs Joyce McNeill 67 Craigiebarn Road Dundee DD4 7GB

If anyone knows anything about these Members, please contact the Association Secretary. When postal intimations are returned, correspondence ceases pending further information.

1.3. New Members of the Association

We welcome three new Members, namely:-

Ronald Cairncross, Upper Largo: (School 1949-55)

Barry D Millar, the new Head Teacher, Birkhill: (School 1987-93: Kinloch)

Eleanor M Williams, Shepperton (School 1958-1963: Kinloch)

1.4. **Former Members of the Association**

Agnes Halley (Ogilvie), latterly Perth on 22 August 2015 (School 1937-1949)
Douglas B Dundas, latterly Arbroath, on 15 September 2015 (School 1926-1938)
Mrs Mabel Adam (Esplin), Lochwinnoch, at Paisley on 23 December 2015 (School 19928-1940)
William P Laskie, Invergowrie, at Dundee on 11 January 2016 (School 1931-1943) (Mary Train's brother)
Alexander Johnston, Monifieth, at Arbroath on 21 January 2016 (School 1936-1942)

1.5. **Former Members of School Staff**

Andrew Anderson Beck, former Modern Languages Teacher, in Geneva, 14 April 2015
Maureen Brehm, former History Teacher, 23 August 2015
David Eoin Bennet, former Music Teacher, at Perth 30 September 2015
Alison Anderson (Jewell), former Modern Languages Teacher, at Bielside 5 April 2016

1.6. **Intimations**

Will Members please remember to advise the Association Secretary, about any sort of event affecting any Member, particularly serious infirmity or death, so that appropriate action may be taken.

2. **PAST EVENTS**

Since the post of Social Secretary became vacant at the last AGM I have conducted most of the administration required in that post, and this report includes some information relative to it.

2.1. Lunches:-

2.1.1. 1 June, 2015 (when a framed print of Gordon Laird's painting of the 1931 School was presented to the retiring Head Teacher, Jim Thewliss, and he was accorded Honorary Membership of the Association). 48 Members present.

2.1.2. 7 September 2015. 44 Members present.

2.1.3. 7 December 2015. 45 Members present.

2.1.4. 7 March 2016. 39 Members present.

There is a clear declining trend at Lunches.

2.2. School Prizegiving Ceremony (June 2015)

2.3. Armistice Ceremony & informal Lunch thereafter in Invercarse Hotel. (11 November 2015). Several Former Pupils attended, but, again, in declining numbers. Mary Train (Laskie) laid the wreath on behalf of the Former Pupils.

2.4. School Carol Concerts (22 & 23 December 2015). Several Members attended the Concert Service in Dundee West End Church. The Association Secretary was the only Member present at the School Concert the next day.

2.5. Burns Supper (25 January 2016). Attended by 80 persons of whom 10 were guests. A surplus of £73.74 was obtained.

3. **NEW HARRIS ACADEMY**

The Head Teacher will address the meeting on the latest position, but for the record the construction of the new School is now complete and it will open to all Pupils in August 2016. Although former Pupils of Menzieshill High School (which is being closed at the end of Session 2015-2016) are being absorbed into the Harris Academy community, the Head Teacher has stated that nothing will change in respect of Harris Academy traditions, namely, Uniform, Colours, and Houses.

4. **FP WEBSITE**

The FP website at www.harrisfps.co.uk steadily attracts visitors and, in my view, is a valuable and useful *aide memoire*, especially for upcoming events. A separate Report is submitted by the Webmaster.

5. **FUTURE EVENTS**

5.1. Lunches

Invercarse Hotel - These still have to be arranged

5.2. School Armistice Ceremony

Arrangements will be intimated later

5.3. School Carol Concerts

Arrangements will be intimated later.

5.4. Burns Evening or Alternative Event

Arrangements will be intimated later.

That concludes my Report. I am not continuing in the post of Association Secretary and wish to express my sincere thanks to Jim Thewliss and now Barry Millar, past and present Head Teachers respectively, and their Administration Staff, for their considerable assistance and support in the execution of my duties.

Webmaster's Report

HARRIS ACADEMY FORMER PUPILS' ASSOCIATION



Report by the Webmaster to the Annual General Meeting

Monday 18 April 2016 at 7pm

There has been a steady increase in the number of visitors from an average of 140 a month in July 15 to over 200 a month in March 16. People spend an average of 3 minutes on the website. Most people tend to visit the site and have a look around, rather than decide it's not for them and go away somewhere else.

Over half of the visitors to the site come via a search engine (e.g. Google) in searches including the terms:

harris academy dundee

harris academy dundee former pupils

harris academy fp

A number of visits come from people clicking a link on the School's main website. The relevant page on the School site was enhanced recently to be more prominent and now has a link to the Membership joining page on the FP site. A very small number of visitors come via social media, so perhaps there is an opportunity for increasing awareness of the site to be explored.

The most popular pages on the website (in order) are:

"Notable Former Pupils" (which needs upgrading and updating)

"Where Are You" (which is pretty well underused, although this may change with the decision to close down Friends Reunited, which had a fair Harris presence)

"Harris History" (which is actually a link to the relevant pages on the School site).