

# Newsletter

February 2002

6 February 2002

Dear Friends

Having an active Former Pupils Association is a source of strength and encouragement to the school. It was a great pleasure to meet so many people at the Burns Supper who were so proud to have attended the school and spoke in such glowing terms of their own "Harris Experience". It is quite salutary to realise the level of expectations placed on the school by those for whose memories of having been a pupil are so fondly cherished. It would be easy for us to claim "the situation is different" or "society has changed" or use any other of a number of clichés as excuses when the media refer to some golden era of education when "things" were much better than they are now.

Those of you who know me also know that I adopt a bullish approach to such notions and those of you who have had the pleasure of mixing with young people such as the group who provided the entertainment at the Burns Supper understand my justification in doing so.

Growing up today cannot be an easy experience for young people – the opportunities available to them are countless but so also are the distractions and challenges. Another of the claims which is often made is that there are no longer characters in the teaching profession and that teachers are not as good as they used to be. Again I would refute this as ill informed nonsense. The interaction between teacher and pupils has changed markedly and for the better. Respect is gained through professionalism and humanity and learning is the major beneficiary of this.

Please be assured that the hard earned reputation of your school is being cherished by the current teachers and pupils. We believe in the quality of the 'Harris Experience' as much as any of you have ever done. Today's pupils who take advantage of what the school has to offer, prosper in every aspect of school life. Academically our results are amongst the best in Scotland. Harris pupils excel in music and the visual arts, sport, Duke of Edinburgh Awards and service within the community.

I can assure you that you can be as proud of this generation of Harris pupils as of any of the previous ones.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Thewliss

Head Teacher