

THE F.P. ASSOCIATION OVER THE LAST YEAR

October 2008

Dear Fellow F.P.,

I am in this letter hoping to provide a flavour of the Association's activities over the past year. I would also ask for your news and news of F.P.s in what we hope will become an annual newsletter.

I will start with the Remembrance Ceremony in the School in November. This has become an annual event and a number of F.P.s attend. Wreaths were laid by the School Captains, representing the School, and Bill Fawns on behalf of the Association. The School Wind Band led us in singing two hymns and the Head Teacher, Jim Thewliss, recited the words "They shall grow not old...". A pupil from each class was present as well as F.P.s and Staff. The ceremony is held in the front hall of the School beside the War Memorials.

The School Christmas Service was held in Logie-St. John's Parish Church one December evening. This is always a most uplifting occasion when those who attend are treated to wonderful and varied display of the musical talent of the School as well as joining in the familiar Christmas songs and carols. I would encourage more F.P.s to come along to this occasion.

The Burn Supper was, as ever, held in the Invercarse on the Monday before Burns Night itself. Around 135 F.P.s and guests sat down to a splendid repast provided by the hotel and then enjoyed the usual speeches and entertainment. The Immortal Memory was proposed by Jim Robertson, a retired Law Lecturer from Dundee University and what a good job he made of it! Two F.P.s, Ian Duncan and his daughter Jacqui proposed and replied the Toast to the Lasses and they too entertained us wonderfully well. Gordon Laird, our past President, was, as always, most witty in his Toast to the School. Dave Wright sang for us and also acted as auctioneer when the original artwork reproduced on the front of the programme was offered for sale. The winner was George Thomson, at his last Burns Supper as Secretary, and the price of £50.00 was donated to George's nominated charity – the Macmillan Nurses. The evening ended with a rousing rendition of The Harris Holiday Song.

At the A.G.M. George duly retired from his position as Secretary. A presentation was made to George at our June lunch to thank him for all the work he had done over the previous years. Isobel Colligan, as you know, has succeeded George. I personally am very grateful to Isobel for all she has done over the last few months. We also lost from the Council, Mabel Cruickshank and Helen Kippen. Warm tributes were paid to them for all their efforts on the Association's behalf. Mabel and George were duly elected Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Association, this position already being held by Helen. This leaves the Council somewhat short of members though we have welcomed Anne Simmers and David Wallace by co-option to our membership

Our lunches on the first Monday of December, March, June and September continue to be very happy affairs. They are held in the Invercarse Hotel and there is always

good food and good fellowship. We would invite all interested F.P.s., their wives, husbands, partners and guests to join us. Details are available from Isobel.

Along with Isobel and Ian Colligan, I represented the Association at the School Prizegiving at the end of the session. It is always a fine occasion. It is good to see so many talented pupils being rewarded and to hear of the many and varied doings of pupils and Staff. For the interest of F.P.s the following prizes are noted – Junior House Championship (S.1 and S.2) – **FORRES**; McEwan Watson Trophy (Sport) – **KINLOCH**, P.T.A. Shield for Champion House - **FORRES**

Over this summer we lost two stalwart members of the Association in Moira Anderson (née Conacher), one of our Honorary Vice-Presidents and in Betty Nicoll (née Anderson). Moira, a music teacher by profession organised the musical side of the Burns' Supper for many years. Betty, a former School Vice-Captain, was a very well known and loved teacher at Rockwell High School for all her career and was also International President of the Girls' Brigade. Our sincere condolences are offered to the members of both of these families. We extend the same sympathy to all those F.P.s who have suffered a bereavement this year.

We broke new ground at our September lunch when we welcomed Jim Thewliss, Head Teacher of the Academy, and four of the newly elected School Captains and Vice-Captains. We had with us Girls' Captain, Aisha Schofield and Vice-Captains, Rachel Orchiston, Thomas Cartwright and Neil McWilliam. Unfortunately, Scott Findlay, the Boys' Captain and Jill Campbell, Vice-Captain were not able to be with us. At our lunch we had six former Captains, spanning the years. They were Nancy Keay, Alison Macmillan (née Forbes), George Thomson, Mary Train (née Laskie), Bill Gardiner and Dorothy Campbell (née Waddell).

Harris Academy opened in Park Place on 31st August, 1885. The School is, therefore, moving towards its 125th Anniversary. It is felt that there would be some interest in F.P.s recording their memories of the schooldays and writing them down. They could be sent to "School Memories", Harris Academy, Perth Road, Dundee. They can be in any form and may be named or anonymous, though we would ask that a date for the memory be included so that we can collect them in time groups. They can even be e-mailed to [**HarrisFPs@aol.com**](mailto:HarrisFPs@aol.com). It would also be good if we could have mementoes of your schooldays at Harris, photographs (with names on where possible), badges, certificates, magazines, newspaper cuttings etc. For example, there have been different styles of House badges and House officials' badges that would add to the School collection. It might even be possible to solve some mysteries - Can any of the pre-Second World War pupils give us more details of the Houses they had then – Earn, Garry, Isla and Tay? Can anyone supply a photograph of the 1956-57 House officials – the only one not traced for the years 1950-1966? Even a note of any of the House Officials for that year would be welcome. In the equivalent photograph for 1957-58 the Cawdor girls are Edwina Tasker and Sybille Walter, but who can tell us which one was the Captain?

I look forward to hearing news from F.P.s of the Harris Academy. I thank the members of Council and of the Association for their continued support over the last year.

Yours sincerely,

John Baxter.