



Harris Academy F. P. Association

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Dear Fellow Harris FPs,

Once again, we have reached that time of year when I write to you in an effort to keep you up to date with the affairs of the FP Association. It has been, I believe, a reasonably good year for the Association. However, numbers at lunches and our Burns Supper have been falling slightly. This trend I would like to see reversed and I would appeal to all members to join us for what are essentially happy occasions. I would ask you to consider that events are sponsored by the Association, but are not exclusive. You are warmly invited to bring along friends, whether or not they are Harris FPs.

First of all I should like to offer a welcome to our new members. The following have joined the Association over the past year: Betty Bowman (Ledger) and Gina Campbell (Pirie).

I have to intimate the death, during the past year, of a number of our members: Angus Balharry, Dorothy Bell, Ella Garland(Maxwell), Betty Kwasnik(Mitchell) and Alma Murray(Mitchell). It is also sad to record the death of Daniel Cruickshank, who was a regular attendee at Harris functions during his marriage to Mabel (Kidd), one of our former Presidents, and who was a great friend of many Harris FPs. We offer our condolences to those who have been thus bereaved. There may well be other FPs who have died. If I have missed any, I offer my deepest regrets.

The Remembrance Ceremony was held as always in November. Miss Margaret Fraser, first lady President of the Association laid the wreath on behalf of the FPs at what is always a moving, yet heart-warming occasion. Fewer FPs than usual have attended over the last year or two. I do hope that more of you will be able to attend this year. In 2012, the wreath for the FPs will be laid by Alison MacMillan (Forbes) and Winnie Nicoll (Donald). This will of course be the last ceremony in the present school building and it seems particularly fitting that the two ladies laying the wreath were in all probability at the 1931 ceremony - the first in what was then the new building.

Our Burns Supper was held as always in the Invercarse Hotel on 23rd January. I am sure that the 2012 Supper will go down as one of the most memorable in the history of the Association. We had first class speakers in John Craig, Mary Crichton, Bill Maddox and Philip Yeaman and excellent music from Isobel Anderson and Frances Sturrock. We look forward to a slightly different evening on 21st January 2013, again in the Invercarse Hotel. Details will accompany this letter.

Lunches took place in December 2011 and March and June 2012. In September 2012 our Social Secretary Joan Yeaman, with her assistant, Rosemary Matheson-Dear, arranged a Supper at the Invercarse. We hoped that this might attract some of our younger members who cannot join us at lunchtime. Although our usual lunch numbers held up, we did not succeed in attracting the younger members. Lunches will continue on the first Monday of December, March, June and September. If any FP who does not receive notice of these occasions would like to be added to the list, please get in touch with Joan Yeaman, the Social Secretary of the Association.

At our AGM in April there was little change in the composition of Council. All the previous officials continued in office. Of the Council members, Helen Dalzell(Beattie) felt obliged to resign owing to health problems. We were sorry to lose Helen and thank her for her service. We were delighted to welcome to Council, Sylvia Alexander (Reid) and we look forward to enjoying Sylvia's company at Council meetings.

At the end of the School year, the Annual Prizegiving took place in the School Hall. Rosemary Matheson-Dear, Dorothy Drummond and myself from the FP Association attended and it was a great pleasure to see so many pupils to receive awards in the classroom, in the sports sphere and for a vast array of skills and effort. FPs at School from the 1950s on may be glad to hear of the destination of the House Trophies. **KINLOCH** won the trophy for the best House in First and Second Year and also the PTA Shield for the best overall House. The McEwan-Watson Trophy for the best House at sport was won by **CAWDOR**.

We continue to appeal for memories of the School and mementoes of your schooldays. We now have a large stock of Magazines, but there are still a few gaps if anyone can help. Photographs are most welcome. Please get in touch with me if you can help. I was fortunate to be able to purchase a bound volume of the first three Harris Magazines from 1912 and 1913. They are in remarkable condition for their age and provide a good picture of school life at that time.

We are coming to the end of an era in that the building which has been Harris Academy for the past eighty-one years will largely disappear after this year and a new wonderful building to house a 21st Century Harris Academy will rise from the dust. Some features of the present building will be incorporated into the new and the School will go on. For all of us, the building can evoke memories of a life of past days and yet, the building of Harris Academy was not the School. The School was the pupils and the spirit of comradeship that these same pupils have upheld over the years. I would ask each and every one of you to pass on the school friends the news of the FP Association and urge them to join our number so that the FP Association will truly be a strong component of what we know to be a great School.

Rosemary Matheson-Dear has designed a lovely new tea towel. This is intended to stimulate memories of the various buildings that have played a part in the School's history and also to help FPs recall their time at the School. This will be a must for all Harris FPs. More details of it and how to purchase it accompany this letter. I hope that you will all want to have one for yourselves and one for each of your Harris friends. I hope that I have given you a flavour of the activities of the Association's life over the past year. Like all FPs I am getting older so, if my memory has brought about any omissions, I apologise most sincerely.

With best wishes,
Yours sincerely,

John.