

# UP D D Yce DATE Academy

Issue No. 2

January 1989

## FROM DYCE TO TANNADICE!

**14**-year-old Roy McBain (above), a third year pupil at Dyce Academy, has recently taken a step towards realising his goal of becoming a professional footballer. Last month Dundee United signed him up on a two year S-form. As a result, he hopes to spend part of his Easter holiday down at Tannadice Park receiving expert tuition in the company of the other schoolboy signings. He is certainly looking forward to this - even if he is an Aberdeen supporter!

Roy, who stays at Belmuir Gardens, Dyce, plays in midfield for both the school U-14s and Dyce Boys' Club U-14s. He is also a member of the successful Academy 5-a-side team which has qualified Regional winners for the U-14 Scottish finals in Bellahouston.

Roy appreciates that to make his ambition come true he needs to be dedicated. Raymond Littlejohn, Principal Teacher of P.E. and coach to the U-14 team, comments: 'Roy is extremely skilful with both feet. His tactical awareness and vision is of a very high standard. He seems to have limitless stamina.'

All the best, then, Roy, from all at Dyce Academy - maybe, one day, we'll switch on 'Sportscene' and see you wearing the familiar tangerine and black colours playing against the Dons, and hear Archie's incisive comments on your play!

# COMMENT

'You can't always believe what you read in the newspapers'. How true this statement is. The desire of many newspaper reporters to sensationalise or trivialise the news frequently leads to a distortion of the truth. We do not intend to indulge in this kind of journalism in UPDATE but the local press coverage received by our first edition fell into this category - see 'Postbag'. A genuine - perhaps naive? - willingness on our part to co-operate with the local police in warning parents of the problems of under-age drinking was interpreted as a serious under-age drinking problem in Dyce.

We try hard in school to encourage pupils to respect the truth and see the need for evidence before sounding off about anything. Unfortunately, the example set by adults, and journalists in particular, steers our youngsters a different way.

## INSPECTORS NOT CALLING

The inspection which was announced in the last edition of UPDATE has been called off. Apparently, the Inspectorate are experiencing serious staffing problems at present and found themselves unable to make enough inspectors available to Dyce Academy in February to carry out a full inspection. No new date for an inspection has been fixed.

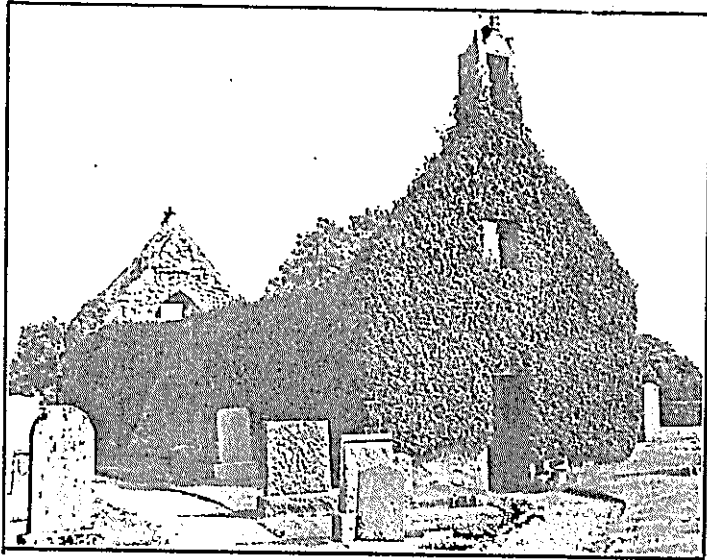
In our first edition of UPDATE we briefly highlighted some of the subject developments, educational initiatives and extra-curricular activities going on in Dyce. We promised to look at some of these in more detail. In this issue, then, Val Moir (Principal Teacher of History) tells us about her involvement with the Northern College of Education in the production of two videos which will be of interest and use, not only to Dyce pupils, but to the Dyce community as a whole.

Val Moir (P.T. History)

## HISTORY VIDEO

In Spring 1988, I was approached by the Grampian Regional Support Group for Standard Grade History, of which I am a member, to produce a video on "How to Investigate Local History". There were several reasons for the choice of Dyce Academy for this venture.

Firstly, unlike many schools whose S3 and S4 pupils have experienced only examination targeted history work, Dyce Academy has a tradition of working in the local area for its General Studies Local History course. Pupils of all abilities have taken part in fieldwork in and around Dyce, have interviewed local residents about Dyce's past, have studied historical documents related to the area, and have compiled booklets on the histories of Dyce, Newmachar and Fintray. Now, for the first time, all pupils in Grampian Region who study Standard Grade History must complete a personal Historical Investigation which will count as 25% of the final assessment. And it is very likely that many of these investigations will be locally based. Hopefully, while we are not claiming to be expert in any way, Dyce's experience in this field will be useful, if shared through the video, in other schools.



Secondly, Dyce on the surface appears to a very modern suburb with very little to interest the historian, and yet, under the surface, there are many interesting developments and sites just waiting to be explored. Many people for instance, probably have no idea of the existence of Dyce's Bronze Age Stone Circle, or its early Christian Symbol stones, or the Watch House and war graves in its cemetery, or the remains of the Aberdeenshire Canal which once flowed near where Dyce Academy now stands.

I was to work with College of Education television and by May had drafted out a rough script/storyboard for the programme. It became more and more obvious that we really required two videos to fulfil two different purposes. One video would show the actual 'mechanics' of local history research - the planning, the fieldwork, the classroom work, the use of documents, maps and photographs, the research in the library, and so on. The second video would stand on its own as a kind of panorama of Dyce's history from early times to the present day. This could be used in the classroom as an introduction to local history or the Standard Grade Investigation of Dyce topics. It would also be helpful for teachers who unlike myself are unfamiliar with the Dyce area outwith the walls of the Academy.

I decided to ask for the participation of pupils whom I knew well through teaching them History. I also knew them to be familiar with history fieldwork methods. This would help them feel more relaxed in front of the camera. We had to work with a small group who could be easily transported in cars and the final group of budding film stars turned out to be Eric Digweed, Mary Small, Lindsay McKay, Julie Nicol, Karen McKessack, Nicola Spalding, and Amber Stewart, all from last session's S4.

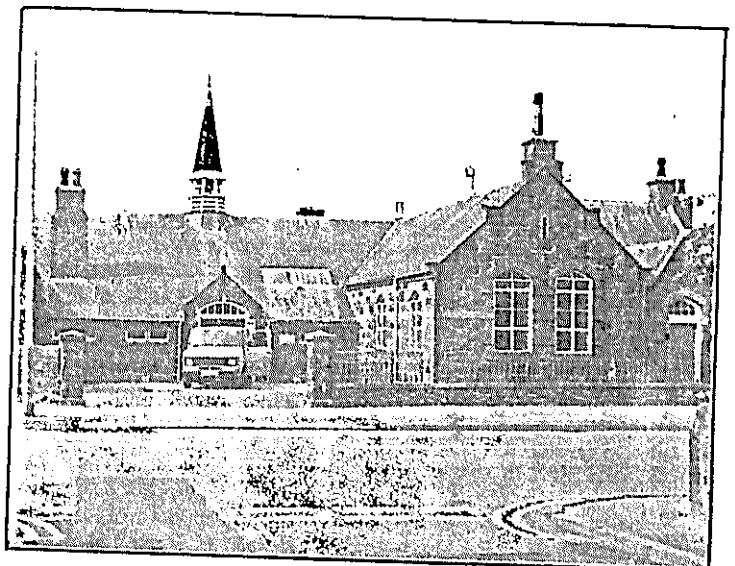
We also 'press-ganged' the help of two local residents of many years standing to show the importance of oral history and eye-witness evidence. Mrs. Florence Gordon and Mr. James Souter both grew up in Dyce in the 1920s and 1930s and have lived here most of their lives. Mary Small, Karen

McKessack and Lindsay McKay worked closely with them and both were a vital source of information on Dyce's past, thanks to their clear memories and willingness to be interviewed on camera.

Filming took place during the last week of June 1988, and fortunately the weather was reasonably kind to us. We also found it an interesting process, but I think the pupils agreed that being film stars involved a lot of waiting around while Gary (the cameraman) and Mark (the sound recordist) battled with lighting problems, shadows, and the constant intrusion of aircraft noise. They decided that it wouldn't be a glamour life after all! Some of them found it rather hazardous too - tripping over walls, nearly sliding into the Don, walking along the railway line (fortunately the 'extinct' Bchan one) and being devoured by stinging nettles. The film crew at one point found itself besieged by a herd of cows who were making their own historical investigation of the Bronze Age remains at Standing Stones Farm. Although I had been previously involved in video-making on a very small scale, I still learned a lot from the filming of our Dyce video, including the intricacies of using a radio microphone which recorded even one's unguarded private comments!

Filming was virtually completed in four days but that was only the start. A long editing process has been taking place and we are now in the final stages. The original video on "How to Investigate Local History" is to be used at Standard Grade In-Service meetings throughout Grampian Region from February onwards. Its spin-off, which traces Dyce's history from the Bronze Age, through the coming of Christianity to its growth as a railway community and then a modern airport suburb, should be completed by Easter. It may be of interest to local organisations or local residents. Further information may be obtained from myself at the Academy.

Val Moir



# MOCK INTERVIEWS

**F**or the past few years, Dyce Academy has organised a mock job application and interview exercise for Fourth Year pupils during February/March. Up until now, this has mainly been targeted at those who expect to leave school in summer. So valuable is the experience, however, that this year it is being extended to all fourth year pupils.

The project is designed to give young people the experience of applying for a job and being interviewed in as real a situation as possible. To achieve this, a range of local employers and further education centres have agreed to participate by providing advertisements for jobs or vacancies. These are real jobs or vacancies, though they are not actually on offer.

The whole process of applying and being interviewed takes place in February and March, and thereafter the 'employers' provide feedback on the interview, so that pupils have a chance to find out where they performed well and where they performed badly, before they experience a real interview for a real job or course.

With the expansion of the project, more contacts willing to carry out mock interviews are needed this year than ever before. We would be very pleased to hear from parents or others in the community who feel that they or their company/organisation would welcome the opportunity to provide mock interview experience. If you are interested or would like more information, contact Mike Taylor or Jim Cameron at the Academy.

## ADVERTISERS WELCOME

**T**he production of this newspaper obviously costs money! Whilst we think it is sensible to spend money to keep in touch with our community, we would be quite happy to achieve this objective at no cost.

We would, therefore, be interested to hear from any local businesses who may be interested in paying for an advertisement to be placed in UPDATE - rates negotiable!

Any potential advertisers should get in touch with M. Taylor at school - Tel. No. 725118

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**R**ecently the government has announced that they are to pursue a policy of ensuring that all young people have at least two weeks of work experience in an industrial or commercial environment before leaving school.

If this comes about, it will represent a considerable challenge to Dyce Academy to find suitable placements for about two hundred young people each year.

**W**e would obviously be very grateful if you could help in this matter. We have no doubts about the value of this experience both for young people and industry, and look forward to hearing from you.

## PROJECT BUSINESS

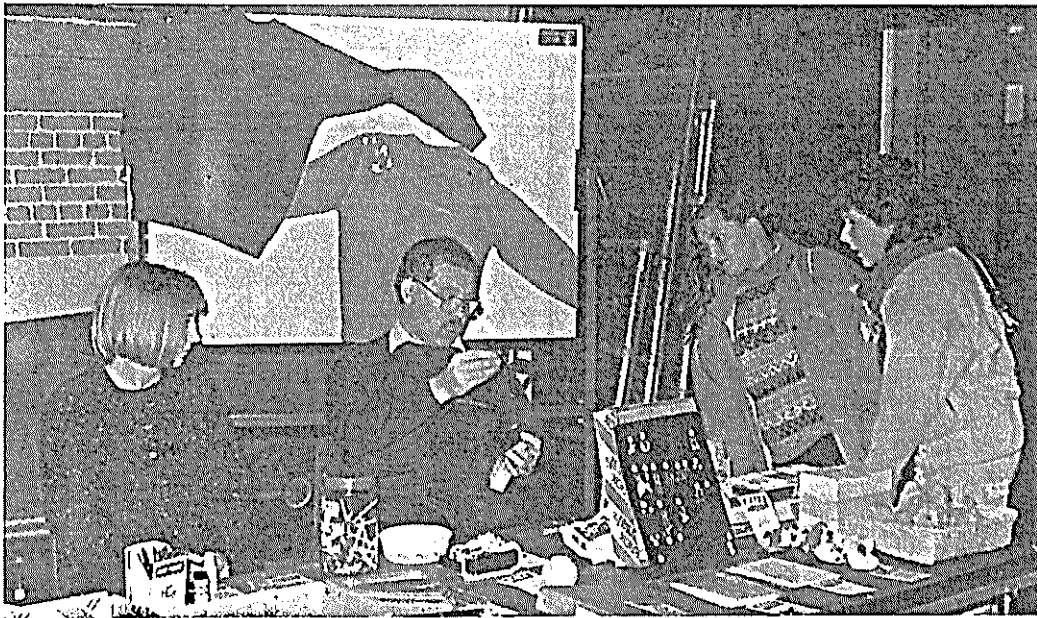
Dyce Academy has always been interested in developing industrial links and has taken a number of initiatives in this area.

The school has been invited to be the Scottish representative in a pilot scheme involving seven U.K. schools called Project Business. The project is intended to introduce young people at school to business economics by using local businessmen in the classroom, taking the lead but supported by teaching staff.

About 90 third year pupils, who are currently following the EASI course in General Studies, will be involved in the project for one period per week for ten weeks. The school staff involved are Pat Millar from Business Studies, Rhona Smith and Lily Scott from Guidance, Marza Robertson from Home Economics and Val Moir from Social Subjects. The business representatives come from Rigblast, Shell, Wiggins Teape and Marks and Spencers.

We are interested in the project for a number of reasons but particularly for the opportunity it offers for pupils to hear about national economics and business from businessmen, and for businessmen to get to know the school and some pupils so that they may better understand modern education.

We hope Project Business will go well. Read the next edition of UPDATE to find how the project is going.



## SCHOOL SHOP

Like most schools today, in order to provide many of the 'extras' for our pupils, and what some of us believe to be 'essentials', we do a bit of fund-raising now and again. As an ongoing project the Drama department operate a school shop. As well as raising funds, it actually provides the 'contributor' with something - a T-shirt, a badge, a pen, or whatever. The shop sells a wide range of stationery and novelty items as well as sweatshirts and posters. We're always on the lookout for suggestions from pupils, parents and staff as to what they'd like to see on sale. In the past we've even sold some items made by pupils, such as earrings and clay ornaments. Unfortunately, it

seems difficult to persuade some pupils to spend money at the shop, even on items which they require and which cost much more elsewhere. We're always trying to get across to them that the profits are used for their benefit - we think some of them are convinced it's all for the 'mannie Young's holiday fund'! It must be said that many of the staff are really excellent financial supporters of this venture. So if you don't use the School Shop at present - give us a try. We're in the Drama Studio every Tuesday lunchtime from 12.30 and we're in the staffroom about once a month - usually on a Thursday.

'Shoppiekeeper'

## ACTORS IN DYCE

Those of you who have recently been in touch with the school will possibly have noticed that a fairly large number of Dyce Academy staff are presently cast in acting roles. This has happened because of staff absence, due mostly to secondment to undertake development work, and unfilled vacancies.

The cast list is as follows:

David Pyle - Acting Depute Rector

David is likely to fill this post until May or June as interviews for the vacancy created by Stewart Philp's departure will not be held until the end of February.

Jim Cameron - Acting Assistant Head teacher

Jim is filling the vacancy created by David Pyle's temporary promotion.

Mave Lindsay - Acting Principal Teacher (Chemistry)

Mave is filling the vacancy created by Jim Cameron's temporary promotion.

Arjory Macdearmid - Acting Principal teacher (Learning Support)

Hellen Matthews, Principal Teacher (Learning Support) has been on secondment to the Curriculum Development Unit in Aberdeen for some time and is due to return to Dyce Academy later in 1989.

Rhona Smith - Acting Principal Teacher (Guidance)

A vacancy was created in Guidance when Colin Gallacher left to take up a post at Ellon Academy. As we shall require fewer Guidance teachers next session - due to our falling roll - this post has been filled temporarily until the summer.

Christine Blackhall - Acting Principal Teacher (Home Economics)

Yvonne Dewhurst, Principal Teacher (Home Economics), has been seconded to the Curriculum Development Unit for this term.

Judy Palmer - Acting Senior Technician

Mary Howie, our Senior Technician, is on extended sick leave.

Sue Muncer, Principal Teacher (Religious Education), has been appointed Acting RE Adviser for Grampian Region until August - her post has not yet been filled.

# SWITZERLAND TRIP SUMMER 89

Preparations for the trip are well under way. Five staff and forty-three pupils are to venture into William Tell country, leaving Dyce Academy on 29th June and returning 7th July. Ian McLean (Maths) goes round the school singing "The hills are alive..." while Raymond Littlejohn (P.E.) has looked out his crossbow and has ordered a box of Granny Smiths from Asda. Laurence Young is rumoured to be practising his 'look, no hands' technique for the corkscrew in the Amusement Park, while Christine Blackhall (H.E.) is busy perfecting her impersonation of Heidi and Yvonne Dewhurst (H.E.) believes she's getting in some good altitude training by climbing Bennachie every other weekend.. just wait until she sees some real mountains. What about the forty-three pupils?

Well, they're all saving hard!!

This year, for the first time ever, a few of our pupils have applied to the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain for a place on one of their summer schools. Duncan Taylor (S3) and Jane Duncan (S6) are auditioning for a place on the acting course while David Moore (S3) is hoping to gain a place on the technical course. If any of them are successful, it will mean spending part of their summer holidays in London, working with one of the country's most prestigious theatrical training organisations. We wish them luck.

## SPORTS NEWS

### SWIMMING NEWS

At the South Grampian Schools Time Trials held on Friday 18th November at Dyce Academy pool, several of our pupils were successful in qualifying for the National Schools Championships which are to be held in the Royal Commonwealth Pool in Edinburgh on Saturday 11th February '89.

In the 50m. breaststroke for girls (12 and under), Claire McKenzie of our First Year earned a place as qualifier in the Championships, as did three of our senior girls in the 17-19 age group. In the 200m. Individual Medley Jackie Buchan goes through to Edinburgh as the fastest qualifier from her race, and will be joined by Fiona Reekie, who finished fourth in the same race. In the 100m. Front Crawl, Ailsa Campbell also earned a trip to Edinburgh by finishing fourth in her race.

Besides the individual successes, our Girls' Relay Team, 17-19 age group, qualified for the Edinburgh event by finishing second in the same Time Trials. The team: Jennifer Mowat, Ailsa Campbell, Jackie Buchan and Fiona Reekie. We wish the girls all the best.

### ATHLETICS

On February 11th, at Balgownie Playing Fields, the Academy hopes to enter several of our young athletes in a variety of races in the Grampian Secondary Schools Cross Country Meeting (sponsored by the Clydesdale Bank).

There will be an event for each year group and we are confident that some of our middle-distance runners will do well, if only to keep the runners in the Academy's teaching staff worrying about the day when the pupils will be old enough to race against them!

# FOOTBALL FOCUS

Of the football teams representing Dyce Academy in League and Cup matches this season, FOOTBALL FOCUS this month features our valiant Under-13 team, a team that real journalists could describe as being much feared by their opponents in the Region.

Under the sagacious coaching of Raymond Littlejohn, Dyce Academy's answer to Jock Wallace, the under-13s have earned an enviable reputation, particularly for their lethal finishing and robust, no-nonsense defending. The statistics speak loudly:

| OPPOSITION | FIXTURE                  | SCORE |
|------------|--------------------------|-------|
| Bankhead   | League                   | 4-0   |
| St. Machar | League                   | 4-4   |
| Cults      | League                   | 4-0   |
| Northfield | Scottish Cup (1st Rd.)   | 1-0   |
| Oldmachar  | League                   | 2-1   |
| Northfield | League                   | 0-1   |
| Banff      | Regional Cup (1st Round) | 13-0  |
| Bankhead   | Scottish Cup (2nd Rd.)   | 5-1   |
| Westhill   | Regional Cup (2nd Round) | 6-3   |

With only four months of the season gone the Scorers' Table looks like this:

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Brian Jolly 12    | Gary Cruickshank 2 |
| Michael Stewart 9 | Paul Matthews 1    |
| James Caird 7     | Steven Cockbill 1  |
| Derek Reid 6      | Austen Anderson 1  |
| Brian Dawson 5    |                    |

Along with their League fixtures the boys will be playing their 3rd Round Cup matches in the next few weeks. We wish them all the best. (Parents and friends are always welcome as supporters - a good game is guaranteed!)

Next Month : the Under-14 Team.



# POSTBAG

Dear Editor,

I was very pleased to receive the first issue of UPDATE and to learn how praiseworthy developments and activities are taking place at Dyce Academy.

I was therefore amazed when I saw 'Press and Journal' and 'Evening Express' articles about UPDATE, highlighting its one negative item about alcohol abuse by young people in the Dyce area and ignoring its nine other pages of positive, encouraging features.

Readers of the local press who have not had the opportunity to see a copy of UPDATE must have formed a very false impression of our area and the aims of your paper. Is your editorial committee aware of this biased reporting by Aberdeen Journals?

I look forward to receiving your next issue.

Indignant Parent  
(Name and address supplied)

## UPDATE REPLIES . . . .

We were quite indignant at the press coverage given to our first edition. The following letter was sent to the Editor of the 'P&J':

Dear Sir,

Schools are encouraged by your reporters to keep in touch with them so that matters of interest can be reported in the press.

Last week we launched our school newspaper and sent a copy to you. We were rather disappointed to discover that the only issue of interest to you in the newspaper was the one negative article - a request from the local police to parents to keep their children on the right side of the law in relation to taking alcohol. You invented a drink problem in Dyce which is no worse than the drink problem throughout the country.

It is always upsetting to see such poor quality journalism in action - it seems that the lead set by 'The Sun', etc. has to be followed; it is particularly upsetting when we are genuinely trying to co-operate with you to help you report positive, interesting events which are taking place in the community.

If you really do want co-operation from the local community, I suggest you show more discrimination in your reporting.

## DIARY DATES

|                   |   |  |
|-------------------|---|--|
| FEB 10th and 13th | : | Occasional holidays                                  |
| FEB 14th          | : | In-service day (no pupils)                           |
| FEB 21st          | : | Netball matches (jun. and sen. v. Hazlehead at Dyce) |
| FEB 27th-MAR 4th  | : | Ski-ing trip to France - combined trip with B'head   |
| MAR 24th          | : | Good Friday hol.                                     |
| MAR 27th          | : | S2 Parents' Evening                                  |
| MAR 31st          | : | Term ends  |

## POSTBAG

Do you have any comments or queries on articles in this issue of UPDATE? Are there any other topics you would like to see covered? Would you like a chance to air your views? If so, please write to:  
The Editor,  
UPDATE,  
Dyce Academy,  
Riverview Drive,  
Aberdeen AB2 0NF.