

Ур Дусе те Academy

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Очень приятно.

On Wednesday 23 October the school played host to three visitors from Russia. The three, Natasha , Olga a and Alexander are teachers in a language lycee in Chelyabinsk, in Central Russia, and are on a month-long visit to Scotland.

They met various members of staff, and visited a number of classes to talk to pupils. The English of Natasha and Olga was very good, though Alexander (the Headmaster) was less certain. All three were complimentary about the school (and envious of its facilities), and commented very favourably on the welcome they had received from both staff and pupils here, and from Scots people generally.

Some interesting facts about life in Russia emerged during conversation. The conditions of service of teaching staff in Russia are quite different from those here; their 1500 pupil school operates in two shifts which last from 8.00 am until 2.00 pm, and 2.00 pm until 8.00 pm. Teachers are paid according to the number of classes they teach in school, and it can happen that a class teacher with lots of classes can earn more than the head teacher.

There are some food shortages too - if you want milk, you must be up at 4.00 am to queue for what is available. But despite some of the problems, our visitors seemed generally happy about the way things were moving at home, although much is still uncertain as yet. They will take many pleasant memories, and lots of ideas, back to Russia with them.



Our Russian Visitors

ДО СВИДАННЯ

CHANGES :

ART AND DESIGN

Last October a major art exhibition was held at the Bridge of Don Conference Centre. It celebrated the work of both secondary and primary pupils within Grampian Region; in all, some five thousand exhibits of all manner of size, shape, style and theme were on display. It highlighted the many changes currently taking place within Art education, with new approaches to design work along with the more traditional drawing and painting and arts and crafts skills. Video and computers have been introduced for both design and expressive work in class but paper, pens and paint and clay are still our most essential materials.

The changes that new technology brings are part linked to curriculum developments, with the O Grade giving way to the new Standard grade course, and the Traditional Higher now revised. Traditional drawing and design skills and ability in handling different media are still required to provide excellent practical work. Now also introduced to all levels of secondary pupils is critical work, or put simply - Art & Design appreciation. In this area pupils are exposed to images and information about artists and designers, a study of whose work can be useful to them in their own projects.

This study has always been a part of Higher Art. Now it includes evaluative skills, where pupils learn to discuss and appraise works of art, and in design everything from chairs to architecture, posters to pedal bins.

Within the department there also have been changes. There's now a photographic darkroom where there once was a store. Rows of boxes, box files, books, loose-leaf files, and baskets of pencils and pens are installed to assist in the many activities



going on daily. A computer and printer recently installed will allow for many design and data storage options to be tried and implemented.

Changes in the Art & Design staff have also occurred over the past year. Sandy May, who taught in the Academy since it opened in 1980, retired to enjoy the delights of painting, hill-walking and Scottish country dancing. Just a month ago Ishbel Murray departed to the 'sunny shores' of Northern Italy to face a new challenge - that of teaching Italians to speak English. The question is, will they soon be 'Parliamento-Outer Hebrides'?

Her replacement is someone who has worked in school before - Fiona Michie. Her specialist skills in ceramics should produce some exciting new ideas on the 'clay front'. Looks like we could all be even 'pottier' than ever!

The department's long serving technician Judy Palmer, left just a year ago to undertake a teacher training course. After a couple of temporary appointments comes the latest Art technician, Sandra Hutcheon whose enthusiasm and enterprise has already proved to be a great asset within the department.

So, as we all head towards the end of the millenium, and all that may bring, we feel ready and able to face the many other changes that certainly will happen in time

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AN ORKNEY SAGA

SOCIAL SUBJECTS FIELD TRIP 1991

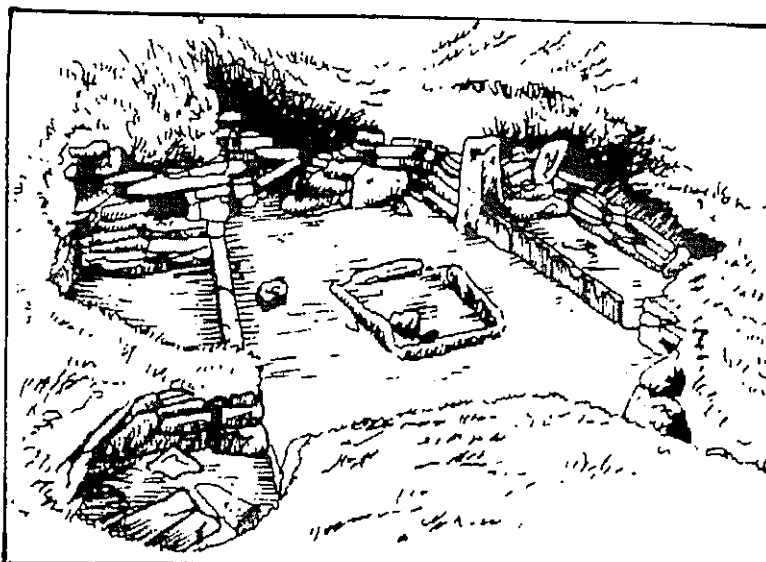
On Saturday 12 October, 29 pupils and staff of Dyce and Bridge of Don Academies sailed quietly out of Aberdeen Harbour on the M V St Sunniva. Few of us had visited Orkney before and none could foretell what lay ahead.

The outward journey was fine - the sea was subdued though the pupils were a bit restless. However, the return was rather different, though more of that later, in case you are having your tea while reading this!

It was emphasised that the excursion was a field trip and that work would have to be done, and so, over the next five days, some tremendous log diaries were written with all sorts of mementos of our visit.

Orkney is a group of islands, about 70 in total, steeped in a history going back about 5000 years. We imagined ourselves travelling through time visiting Stone Age settlements such as Skara Brae, through Bronze and Iron Age Stone Circles and burial chambers, on to Viking staging posts on this important stop on the 10th Century North Atlantic Highway to the 20th Century war graves of both wars and the Churchill barriers built to protect the Royal Navy from U-boats. Our visits were made even more fascinating by our Orcadian hosts and tour guides, whose love of their islands' heritage was obvious in their witty and yet greatly informative talks.

The geography of the islands is also of great interest. One rather egocentric local suggested (tongue in cheek) that the most southerly Orkney Island was Scotland. But the landscape is so different. The geology has led to the formation of magnificent sandstone cliffs on Hoy and the West Mainland. The harsh climate prohibits the growth of trees except in the most sheltered of places. The people live mainly in small scattered rural settlements, though the two main towns - Kirkwall and Stromness - provide all essential services. Personally, I preferred Stromness, a smaller more compact town whose main street is so narrow that driving along it (and I speak from experience) involves forcing pedestrians into shops to let cars past. Maybe that is why the shops do so well.

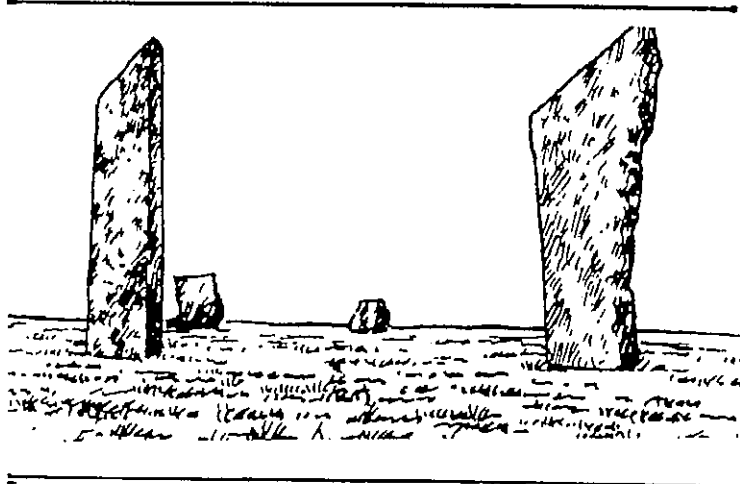


Agriculture is different too; there is more land given to cattle and sheep grazing and indigenous breeds seem to survive in greater numbers, eg Aberdeen Angus. Sufficient barley is grown to malt into Scotland's most famous drink and we had time to spend an evening visiting the world famous Highland Park Distillery. Another evening tour took us round the highly successful Orkney Jewellery factory which employs around 100 locals and is an example of how remoteness is no barrier to success. These evening visits, combined with a sail around the Flotta oil terminal, reminded us of the current healthy state of the Orkney economy, although some of the remoter islands still find it difficult to counter depopulation. Rackwick in Hoy is such a place - only a handful of permanent residents remain and a sort of ghost village lies waiting for the next wave of incomers. After all, the heritage of Orkney has been shaped by incomers superimposing their way of life on what was already there.

It is hard to believe that we were able to do so much in four days, but the achievement seems to be due to early mornings - breakfast at 7.00 on average and a well-planned itinerary planned by our resident adopted Orcadian and Rector whose daily plans were "Taylor-made" (sorry!) for our needs.

There are so many other people to thank for making the field trip a success: the staff and pupils who mixed so well (usually!); the Youth Hostel wardens who put up with our noisy mealtimes; the residents of Orkney who provided us with so much information; lastly, the Captain of the St Ola Ferry who somehow managed to take us across the stormy waters of the Pentland Firth late on Thursday afternoon. Few of us realised how difficult the crossing could be and I wonder how many will do it again. I hope they will, because what lies on the other side of the Pentland Firth is a collection of beautiful islands with lovely people.

TOM FERGUSON



EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Once again this year there were two Edinburgh Festival Trips - one for staff and one for senior pupils. More or less the same bunch of seasoned festival-goers constituted the staff party. Their very first show - La La La performing a modern dance show entitled 'Human Steps' - provoked strong reactions ranging from 'brilliant' to 'absolute rubbish' while a few remained uncommitted (ie confused).

The highlight for the staff was undoubtedly 'Circus Oz' - the Australian touring company which has not appeared in this country for a number of years. The pupils, as ever, were good-natured and uncomplaining (with one exception and he became a kind of cult hero). It's hard to say what the pupils enjoyed most (the sweeties on the bus down?) but many seemed to find the French Theatre Co, Phillipe Gentry, both interesting and entertaining.

I'm pleased to say this trip seems to find an enthusiastic audience each year - I hope this continues to be the case in the future.

M HARDIE

sent birthday cards to the King of Morocco, asking that he might use the occasion of his birthday to grant amnesty to prisoners of conscience in his country.

We have also attempted some fund-raising through the school leavers' ball which raised £200 for Amnesty International. This will allow us to purchase goods which we hope to sell in school, donating the profits to the work of Amnesty International.

At the end of October the pupils prepared and led three school assemblies where they used posters, music, reports and testimonies of prisoners of conscience to put across the work of Amnesty International. These were well received by pupils and have drawn new interest in the group.

Our pupils have so many material benefits and freedoms it would be easy for them to continue their comfortable lives and to walk away from anything which might be disturbing. As a member of staff associated with the group, I am proud and privileged to work alongside them and I admire their courage and willingness to speak out against things they believe to be wrong and their readiness to add their efforts to the never-ending campaign for justice.

I MASSON

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



In November last year, a school Amnesty International group was formed at the request of several pupils after a visit to the school of a guest speaker from Guatemala, who spoke of human rights violations.

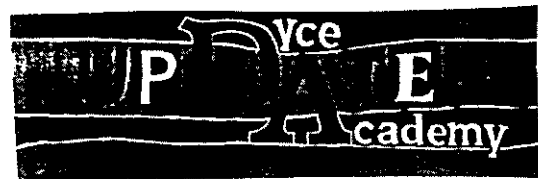
Amnesty International is a worldwide non-political organisation campaigning for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the release of men, women and children detained because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used or advocated violence. These people are termed prisoners of conscience. Amnesty International also works for fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners and works on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial. It opposes the death penalty and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of all prisoners.

Much of Amnesty International's work is in letter-writing campaigns to government or military officials asking them to release, or honour the human rights of, prisoners of conscience. The school group has taken part in some such campaigns: for example, we

CONGRATULATIONS...

..... go to Fiona McVey, who recently graduated B.Sc.(Maths).

UPDATE TITLE LAYOUT



You may have noticed a change to the front page of Update in our last issue.

Our original title always caused problems with the photocopier - it was too dark. Our new lighter version has not gone down too well; it has been suggested it is too 'broken up'. Help! Would any reader with a flair for design please turn their mind to this problem and offer some suggestions to the editor. Try to avoid using much black as the photocopier does not like it!

upDyce te
Academy

YOUNG ENTERPRISE



Our Young Enterprise company this year has chosen to call itself PROGEN. Mark Buchan, Greg Dempster, Martin Ingram, Mark Taylor and Mark Tough form the board, and after a slow start, some momentum is being developed, with the help of Advisers drawn from Aberdeen Airport Ltd. Share capital has been raised and plans for the company product are being finalised. For more information, watch this space!

BASKETBALL

In the recently-formed Basketball League, Dyce have had mixed fortunes in their matches so far. Our first match was against Portlethen Academy, and we were beaten virtually on the final whistle 40-38. On Saturday 12 October we trekked out to the wilds of Inverurie to play Garioch Globe Trotters. Dyce played very well, and won 30-16. Two weeks later, we returned to Inverurie to play Garioch B C and again were narrowly beaten 46-43, after a very entertaining and high-speed contest.

Friday 1 November saw Dyce facing their hardest match so far against Ellon Academy and it certainly lived up to expectations. Dyce eventually won 31-29 but there were a lot of very weary players after 40 minutes. Thanks to Mrs Urquhart for giving up her time to referee.

Many thanks to the parents who came along to support the team, and act as taxi services - it is very much appreciated and spectators are welcome at all our home games.

A McINTOSH

HOME-GROWN ENTERTAINMENT!

It was while still basking in the afterglow of Christmas Show 1990 that June Smith (Head of Music) conceived the idea of a musical written by Dyce Academy pupils. With the school's reputation for its interest in things environmental, the choice of theme was obvious. Two S5 students - Pamela Shand and Paul Gibson - took up the challenge and by June had produced the first of the many songs they were to write for the show. Rehearsals commenced and by September were in full swing. With script meetings on Friday afternoons and evenings spent musically burning the proverbial oil it was all work and not much play for the dedicated two. Paul and Pamela are both very talented musically and this soon became apparent from the work they produced. With Fiona Fennell of the Drama Department and Ruth Teehan of English to help iron out scripting and staging problems, and June Smith and Anne McIntosh to advise musically, the two very quickly attracted lots of helpful 'constructive' criticism.

The story follows the adventures of a typical North-Eastern schoolgirl who decides that she is one with a mission - to save the planet from environmental destruction. Despite many setbacks and adventures along the way she manages to achieve her goal.

The show - 'The Call of Nature' - will run for four performances from 16 - 19 December at Dyce Academy and we hope the hard work our two fifth-years have put in will be reflected in the audience numbers.



DRIVING SCHOOL



Proprietor: Ian McLean
tel: 0224 723112

QUIZ

DOWNIE-STEPHEN QUIZ PARTNERSHIP A WINNER !

Congratulations to Fiona Downie and Scott Stephen, both 3D, who provided the prize-winning entry in our Summer Quiz. Well done, Fiona and Scott - your School Shop gift vouchers await you in the office - collect them anytime!

And now for those of you who'd like another go, this month's quiz, courtesy of Dyce Academy's very own GALACTIC ADVERTISING AGENCY. Yes! Those S3 Media Studies folk have not been idle, but have been putting their brains and that trolley-full of felt pens to good use to bring you THE ORIGINAL 'NAME THE TEACHER' QUIZ. Entries on the tear-off slip below. Post entries in the box on the door of S15. First entry drawn wins a bag of Milky Ways - what else! (Galactic geddit ???). Result in next issue of Update.

Tear-off

.....

NAME THE TEACHER

1. This teacher can be found on a rose _____
2. This teacher is a herb _____
3. This teacher makes clothes _____
4. This teacher is not old _____
5. This teacher is a Scottish Football Stadium _____
6. This teacher was a very famous pop singer _____
7. This teacher is the opposite of small _____
8. This teacher is another name for a wood _____
9. This teacher is good with sheep _____

Name of Pupil _____ Class _____