

UP *you* *academy* DATE

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CHILDREN IN NEED APPEAL.



Approximately £380 was collected for the children in need appeal, whilst £390 has been raised in the Oxfam Fast, with more money still to collect at the time of going to press.

Congratulations to all those concerned.



FORTHCOMING EVENT

CAREERS EVENING - 14 FEBRUARY - DYCE ACADEMY

A Careers Evening for parents and pupils (S2 - S6) from Dyce and Bankhead Academies will be held on Tuesday 14 February. This year the event will be held at **Dyce Academy**.

This will be a valuable opportunity to find out about career prospects and about further and

higher education possibilities. A large number of employers, colleges, universities and training organisations are expected to participate in the evening.

Make a note in your diary now! Further details will be distributed in the New Year.

STUDY LEAVE

Some of you may be aware of the difficulties which have arisen in relation to study leave because of a recent decision by the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED).

For many years now, it has been the custom in all Grampian secondary schools to provide senior pupils with study leave during SEB exams and SEB 'estimate' exams, for a number of reasons. During the examination period it is not possible to run normal classes as some pupils would always be missing from any particular class to sit an exam. Also, teachers are needed to supervise the examinations so classes would have to be amalgamated. If pupils are kept in school, they would undertake no new work - they would simply be given the opportunity to study for their examinations. Most pupils find it easier to study for examinations at home rather than having to move from class to class within the school.

As the school, with the approval of Grampian Regional Council, is giving pupils permission to be out of school during the examination period, pupils

not doing exams have not been marked absent from school.

The SOED has recently issued an instruction that pupils not in school during estimate examinations must be marked as absent and that this absence should be counted as unauthorised, ie truancy. This makes little sense as the absence is authorised by the school and would seem to stem from a dislike of study leave by the SOED. They hope that by forcing us to count study leave as truancy, they will force us to abandon study leave. It is clear that Inspectors and civil servants know very little about running schools!

The great majority of schools in Grampian Region have decided not to succumb to this pressure. Study leave is going ahead in almost all schools as usual. This will mean that 'truancy' figures will be inflated in Grampian in December and January when estimate examinations take place. It is the view of most secondary head teachers that we should make decisions which lead to quality education and smoothly run schools rather than to keep statistics looking good. This decision by the SOED will make the statistics even less valid than they are now!

M TAYLOR

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

This year, the Music Department has decided to stage a repeat performance of a Christmas oratorio they performed a few years ago - 'The Holy Boy'.

The Holy Boy is the narration of the Christmas story set to music. It charts the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, the birth of Christ and the ensuing wrath of Herod the King.

The music is in a simple folk style and is written for choir and orchestra.

The proceeds of this concert will help boost the funds for the group's forthcoming Canada Trip in July 1996.

The performance will take place on **Tuesday 20 December at 7.30 pm in the school**. Tickets are priced £2.50 for adults and £1.50 for OAPs and children - this includes the traditional cup of tea and Christmas mincemeat pie. The group's Christmas raffle will be drawn at the end of the concert.

Tickets can be obtained from the Music Department at Dyce Academy.

JUNE SMITH

MODERN LANGUAGES AND THE WORLD OF WORK

In November, the Short Course Spanish class of eight third year pupils, spent an afternoon at the Marriott Hotel. Kathleen Findlay, the Personnel Manager, gave us an extremely interesting guided tour round the hotel. We had a chance to see parts of the hotel that guests never see such as the room behind the reception where several office staff, accountants, operation managers and sales managers make sure that everything runs as smoothly as possible. Big computer systems, as well as 36 telephone lines, facilitate communications. The Marriott Hotel is one of 14 in the UK, in a worldwide organisation of 650 hotels.

The company was founded in 1927 by the American, Bill Marriott -we saw his portrait upstairs. We had a look round two of the 154 rooms; all have a double bed, tea tray, telephone, bathroom and television. We were lucky as we got to see the luxurious Bridal Suite as well as a normal room. There are conference rooms that accommodate up to 350 people. The hotel shop is currently being converted into a business centre where guests can use computers, fax machines and telephones. The hotel has 96 full-time staff and 40 temporary employees.

We went to see the three different bars and restaurants the hotel offers. We were very impressed with the brand new brasserie-bistro and the mouthwatering menus where we spotted a few French words.

The swimming pool and leisure facilities can be used by club members as well as by the hotel guests. The staff are also allowed to use the facilities at special times, and have free meals in the canteen in the basement. The hotel seems somewhat less glamorous in the basement where we saw the maintenance quarter and the noisy laundrette. Unfortunately we did not get a chance to see the wine cellar - it was

locked! But the kitchen was exciting and we were amazed how highly organised and pre-planned everything was. Quality control is very important in the Marriott Hotel and outside the staff canteen there is a wall full of guest questionnaires and letters, mostly positive feedback from guests. The new restaurants are part of the hotel's constant effort to upgrade its standard.

After the tour we sat down and fired our questions at Kathleen Findlay. Mainly business people come to stay in the hotel, and many companies get corporate rates, not paying the full £110 per room. Famous people such as Wet, Wet, Wet, East 17 and Rangers football team have stayed there on occasion.

The hotel is very international; as many as 15 languages are spoken and several employees are not British citizens. At the reception desk or in the bar and restaurant service modern languages are a definite advantage. And, as an employee of the Marriott Hotel you can get a transfer and work in a Marriott Hotel abroad for a while. You have to be 16 for a full-time job and training lasts 13 weeks. The hotel takes on school leavers and students with qualifications and degrees. The personnel managers look out for people with a smile who are polite and willing to help. Social skills are more important than specialist knowledge which you can learn once you have got a job. Appearance is important and everybody wears a smart uniform and people with tattoos have no chance of being employed. Other essential qualities are flexibility, confidence and the willingness to learn.

We enjoyed our visit very much and some pupils are going to think about work experience in a hotel - one of the employees at the Marriott is a former pupil who was there on work experience a few years ago.

SIBYLLA McLEOD

DECISION TIME

You may have read in past issues of Update news of one of our S6 students, Fiona Leggat. Fiona is now recognised as one of Scotland's finest young musicians, a player of the viola who has been a member of the National Youth Orchestra for the past four years. She now leads her section in the orchestra, only one of her triumphs.

For four years now Fiona has travelled to Glasgow every Saturday morning, to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama where she is one of the top junior students. Fiona has won the viola scholarship each year since she was accepted four years ago at the age of fourteen.

As her days at Dyce Academy come to an end, Fiona must now contemplate her future. Keen to join the

music profession as a performer, she has been debating with herself which college she should attend. Fiona has already been accepted by RSAMD, winning the coveted Stevenson Scholarship, and she has still two auditions to attend in London, one at the Royal Academy of Music and one at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Success as a performer would seem to be assured for Fiona.

Fiona will be performing at the Music hall on Saturday 10 December, when she will be playing Telemann's Concert in G with Aberdeen Junior Orchestra. There will also be a series of lunchtime recitals in the Music Department of the Academy on dates in the New Year, to be published nearer the time.

PANTO PERFORMER

Yet again, at this time of year, panto fever has hit Vicky Moir (1E). This is her fifth season in panto; the last four at His Majesty's Theatre in Aberdeen and this year in the Capitol.

Vicky has been a pupil at the Aberdeen Academy of Dance for nearly eight years, studying ballet, jazz and tap. But on top of all this, every weekend since the end of October, she has been rehearsing for 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs'.

Christmas for Vicky means performing every second night for four weeks. She has to be backstage an hour before the performance begins to put on her make-up and so on, then gets little chance to relax in

the wings during the performance as she makes half-a-dozen appearances on stage. Nor can she go home early as she likes to wait for the 'walk-down' when the audience is given the opportunity to show their appreciation of all the performers.

Naturally Vicky loves the thrill of the stage and talks enthusiastically about regularly meeting such stars as Andy Gray. However, she has no long term plans to tread the boards, but rather to qualify as a dancing teacher.

Those of you who are going to see 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' in the Capitol this Christmas should look out for Vicky -one of the babes!

MATHS IN ACTION

Four second year pupils from Dyce Academy have been spending their Saturday mornings in Satrosphere and they don't even have to pay to get in. What's more, there are refreshments as well!

What's it all about? - They are representing Dyce academy in the Royal Institution Mathematics Masterclass Year 1994-95. The lucky pupils this year are Rhea Hussey (2B), Erica Little (2B), Sarah Spalding (2B) and Steven Walker (2D).

Here's what the pupils have to say about it :

29 October - Ringing and Shuffling

On 29 October we got a talk from Professor Robson on ringing and shuffling. This consisted of a group of us going up and ringing bells. We had to shuffle in about each other to form different patterns and tunes. We later got onto the position of these shuffles on clocks and then onto different circuits such as the Hamilton. These showed our results. I found this week particularly enjoyable as the Professor was a visitor from Leeds who was just up for this class. He reminded me of Michael Barrymore as he was always cracking jokes and managed to make the class great fun. These classes are a great opportunity to meet others and make a few new friends.

Sarah Spalding 2B

12 November - Routes, Circuits and Trees - Dr John Sheehan

On 12 November we were trying to find routes through drawn circuits. You were only to go

through each line once. There was also a knights' tour. It was quite interesting as you don't do that sort of thing at school. It's quite difficult but you eventually get the hang of it. The breaks are good fun and you make new friends. I quite enjoyed this one as it was quite mind-boggling but was good when you found the answer.

Erica Little 2B

26 November - Taking Samples : From Pebbles to Embarrassing Questions - Ian Jolliffe

After a talk we had to take samples from pebbles to find the average weight by choosing random pebbles and then using your own judgement. Later all the results were put onto the computer and we found that more people were correct with the random choice than using their own judgement.

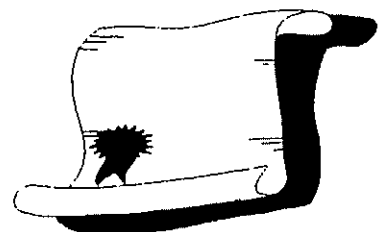
Rhea Hussey (2B)

Sounds like an interesting way to spend Saturday morning and there are still four sessions to look forward to including a session on Cryptography : Codes and Ciphers and Road Accidents and Mathematics.

The Maths Department would like to thank Sarah, Erica, Steve and Rhea for giving up their free time to represent the school in this way. Well done!

CONGRATULATIONS !

.... to Judith Mackie, a former pupil, who graduated BDS (Clinical Dentistry) at Dundee University in June 1994.



A TESTING TIME AHEAD!

At this time of year when our thoughts naturally turn to the Christmas holidays and the welcome respite this offers, perhaps we should spare a thought for our senior pupils who will soon have to tackle their estimate examinations. These exams run from Monday 9 January until Tuesday 24 January.

The results of the estimate exams are used to provide the Scottish Exam Board with an estimate of a pupil's likely performance in the final exams in April or May of next year. Most pupils tend to improve on their attainment in the estimate exams but one or two may make a "mess" of the final exam or even miss the exam altogether through illness. In such a situation, the estimate exams provide evidence that the SEB scrutinises before deciding which grades are awarded.

The SEB uses an elaborate checking procedure to ensure that consistent standards are employed in

the marking of exam papers. The marker of each paper is responsible for adding up the marks awarded. A second clerical check is carried out when the exam papers are returned to the SEB offices and the work of each marker is also checked to guarantee that a uniform marking standard is applied. Finally the SEB compares final marks with the estimated grades supplied by the school. All borderline marks are scrutinised again before final grades are awarded. After the results are published the school may also appeal against the award made to any candidate who we feel should have achieved more. At this stage the estimate exam papers are sent the SEB together with any other relevant evidence for scrutiny.

We wish all pupils the best of luck in the estimate exams. Sound preparation is most important. Permission has been granted for all senior pupils to take a holiday on Christmas day and New Year's day. Make good use of the rest of your time!

ORCHESTRATION OF CANADIAN TOUR

As recently reported in the Aberdeen Journals, Dyce Academy Choir and Community Orchestra have now begun their campaign to help fund their forthcoming tour of Toronto, Canada, scheduled for July 1996.

The Canadian Tour will 'kick off' on 1 July 1996 (Canada Day) with a further 6-7 concert dates to both educational centres and the general public.

Pupils and parents alike have taken on board the responsibility to help raise a target in excess of

£20,000 to help offset the expected high costs - this through a series of activities including sponsored concerts, dinner dances and car boot sales, etc.

It is hoped to raise the bulk of the funds required to finance this Cultural 1996 Tour through the generosity and goodwill of the companies based in and around the Dyce community; also grants from local authorities and the Arts Councils will be requested.

LUCKY NUMBER

The prize last month was claimed by the 'owner' of Update No 104 - the parents of Grant Watson (4A).

Merry Christmas to all our readers

