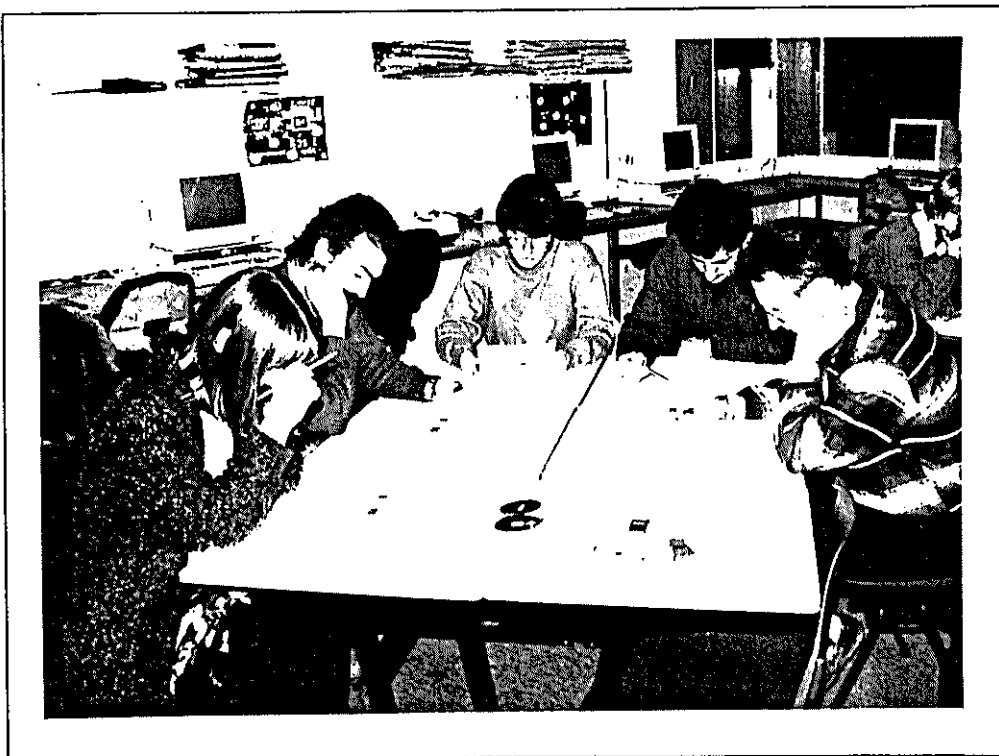


UpDyce Academy Ate

Issue No 44

March 1995

BACK TO SCHOOL EVENING



On the evening of Wednesday 8 February, twenty-four parents were brave enough to come 'Back to School' for the evening. Each parent attended two classes - for about an hour - from the six which were running :

Chemistry, Computing, English, Maths, Modern Languages and Social Subjects.

The classes were run as school lessons in which parents were the pupils.

All the parents who took part found the experience both enjoyable and interesting. It is, however, a pity that so few parents were sufficiently interested to take part in the evening.

M TAYLOR

FOLKY, ROCKY, POPPY

Quite regularly we feature in the columns of Update academic successes of former pupils who have gone on to further education establishments. Recently, some of us have been thinking that perhaps it would be interesting to feature success in other fields, success that might be considered by some as less conventional but that others of us consider just as worthy of mention. So, hopefully, this will be the first in a series of such articles. If you know of any former pupil who has gone on to be successful in any field other than academic achievement, then let the editorial Update team know.

Duncan was a pupil at Dyce Academy between 1986 and 1992. When he left school he took up a job as an auxiliary at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary for a year before embarking (in April 1993) on a course leading to a Diploma of Higher Education in Nursing. Duncan is due to graduate in April 1996 and for the past few months has been specialising in psychiatric nursing.

We are featuring his success in a different field, however. He has recently, along with two other nurses, released his first CD. Titled 'Cliches and Vodka' it features nine tracks, many of them written by Duncan. Described by Duncan himself (perhaps a little tongue in cheek) as Folky, Rocky, Poppy, the songs are an interesting and entertaining mixture of styles which clearly do link folk and popular music successfully. You can certainly hear on Duncan's compositions the influence of one of his musical idols - Richard Thompson.

Duncan has always been interested in music and he thanks our own Head of Music, June Smith, for her encouragement while he was at school and for allowing him and others to spend time in the Music Department 'experimenting'. While still at Dyce he was part of a group known as 'Cochlea' who did gigs supporting The Lorelei, The Dawntreaders and The Skuobhie Dubh Orchestra among others.

As a student, doing a placement in Shetland, Duncan was in the hospital residences one night when he heard music he liked coming from along the corridor. On investigating the sound of whistles, flutes and guitars, he came across Andy Brewer and Iain Morrison. The three lads then got together and started making music. One thing led to another and so the band 'Beggarmen' came into being.

Subsequent visits to Shetland resulted in gigs in pubs, in boating clubs, at weddings and in particular at the Ferry Inn in Lerwick.

The CD was recorded at Revelation Studios in King Street, Aberdeen, and Duncan says that without the help of Alan Benzie, who produced and engineered the album, it just wouldn't have happened. Duncan reckons that Alan's advice on how to progress in the business will prove invaluable.

Sadly, there's probably not much future for 'Beggarmen' as it stands because of the geographical problem of two of the band being in Shetland and the other one here in Aberdeen. As Duncan points out - none of them are too keen, yet, just to throw in careers and try to make a go of it professionally.

Duncan himself however does not dismiss the possibility of becoming a professional performer at some time in the future - in fact it's still an ambition. He plays the guitar, drums, trumpet, piano, keyboards, mandolin and bass guitar - and he sings - so he's certainly versatile.

Duncan's other love is drama and theatre. Always an active student in the Drama Department while at school (he even composed some music for the Drama Department which is still used in movement-based work) he was also a member of Aberdeen Children's Theatre and Haddo Youth Theatre. He also took part both in the Scottish Youth Theatre and the National Youth Theatre. He is currently a member of the Phoenix Theatre

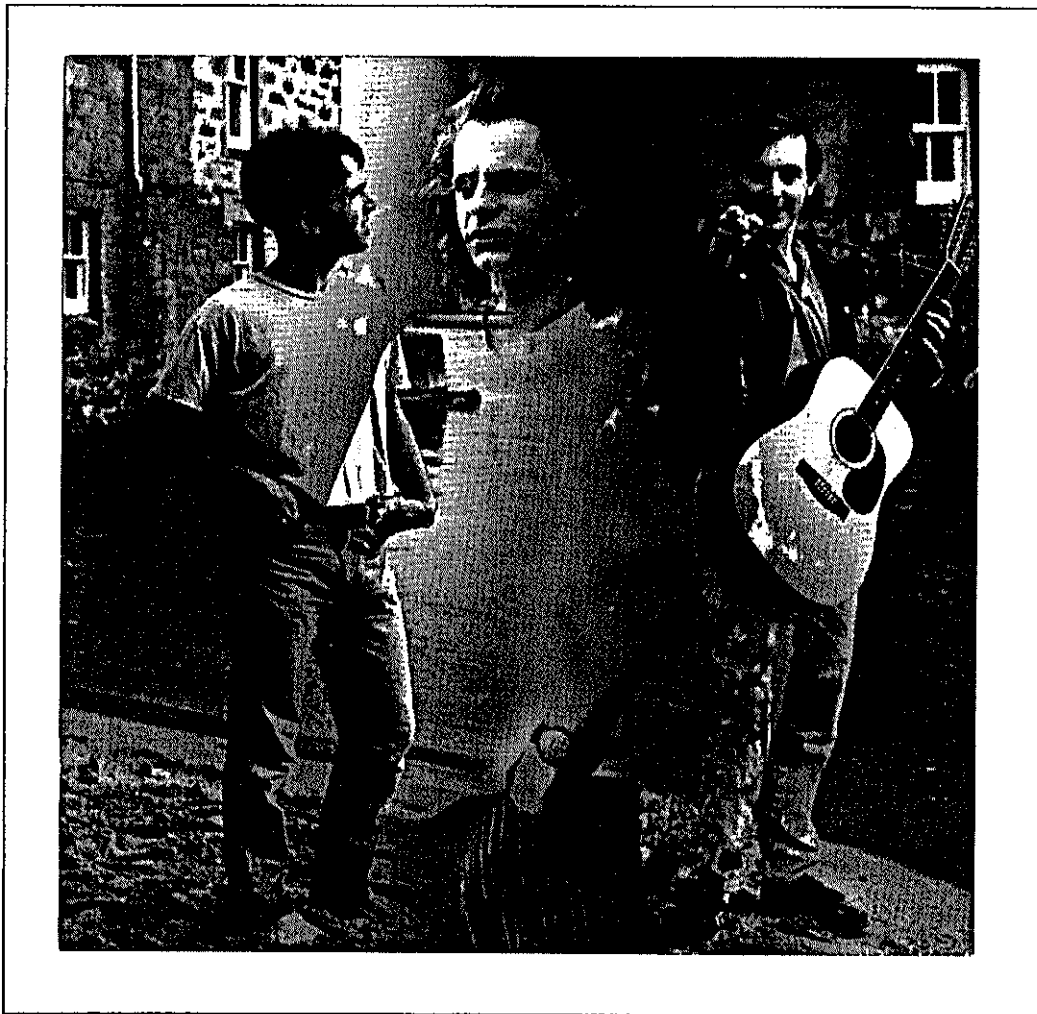
Group, helps out at Children's Theatre and is heavily involved with the Longacre Players with whom he's directing a version of "Whose Life Is It Anyway?" which will be seen in June.

We congratulate Duncan on his success, we wish him well with his studies and we sincerely hope he

is able to fulfil his ambition of becoming a professional performer.

(Duncan's CD - 'Cliches and Vodka' - is now available, price £5, from the school shop).

LAURENCE YOUNG



BADMINTON

Some Dyce Academy pupils have recently been very successful in badminton tournaments.

In the Ellon & District Badminton League Junior Event (Under 16) Lindsay and Keith won the mixed doubles, while Lindsay was also runner-up in the girls singles and doubles.

Keith also won the boys singles and was runner-up in the boys doubles.

Rob won the boys doubles with a partner from Kemnay.

In the Ellon & District League (Adult Section) Handicapped Event Lindsay and Keith won the mixed doubles.

In the South Grampian Secondary Schools Tournament Rob won the Under 15 singles and was runner-up in the doubles and mixed doubles.

Rob will now represent Dyce Academy in these events at the Scottish Schools Secondary Championships in Edinburgh on 18 and 19 March. Best of luck, Rob!



QUIZ SHOW

At the end of February we fielded a team in the NorthSound / Hydro-Electric Inter-Schools Quiz. Sadly our team of Joan and Alison Edwards (S6), Kris Duthie (S3) and Linda Small (S1) were knocked out by a team from Ellon Academy who were on top form.

Our team put on a brave show and they are to be congratulated on that but their hopes of winning cash for their chosen local good cause - The Dyce

and District Community Car Scheme - were dashed in the first round at Bankhead Academy where the competition took place. Hosted by DJ Gary Stein you will be able to hear the quiz soon on NorthSound Radio.

Our team claim they were told by Gary Stein that there would be a 'bag of NorthSound goodies' for each of them as a consolation prize but at the time of going to press these had not materialised.

HUNDREDS FLOCK TO SCHOOL ON VALENTINES DAY!

On the evening of 14 February the school building was packed with people. The event was not a Valentines Day dance but a different kind of opportunity to meet and get to know people! It was of course the annual Dyce and Bankhead Academies Careers Evening. This now regular part of the school calendar attracted over 600 pupils and parents and provided an excellent opportunity for both to find out about career possibilities.

Fifty-five employers, colleges, universities and training organisations were represented on the evening. They provided advice, answered questions and gave general information on a very wide range of career and further/higher education opportunities. This term is a decision-making period for many pupils, particularly those in S2 and S4/S5 who have to choose which courses to do next session or indeed whether or not to stay on at school in some cases. The Careers Evening was therefore of particular benefit to pupils in these year groups.

Career and educational opportunities are always changing, which is the reason why the two schools organise this event each year. It provides the chance to get easy and direct access to up-to-date information. We are lucky that so many organisations take the time to attend our Careers Evening and in so doing give pupils the chance to have their questions answered.

The 1995 Careers Evening once again proved to be a success. Large numbers attended and made it worthwhile for the many organisations that participated. Indeed we have had a lot of complimentary feedback about our pupils from the representatives who attended.

For example :

- Many commented on the carefully thought out and relevant questions which pupils asked.
- Pupils were frequently described as being polite and friendly.
- Another common comment was that pupils did not show the sex stereotyping which is so common. For example, it wasn't only girls that were interested in being airline cabin crew or only boys that were interested in engineering.
- Pupils were generally described as having good and clear ideas about their career options.

All of this helped to make the Careers Evening a success since as most people came along with a definite purpose the time was productively used. There is no doubt that many pupils and their parents now have a better idea of how their future will develop.

The process of deciding what career to follow is however not easy. Inevitably there will be the changes of mind, new ideas, impossible hopes, effects of exam results, etc, etc. It may take some time to come to a decision about what target to aim for. The Careers Evening was not the only opportunity to find out about the possibilities. Careers advice is always available in school from the Careers Adviser, Guidance staff and from the well-stocked careers section in the school library.

THEATRE VOUCHERS

In the September 1994 edition of 'Update' we told you about the Grampian Region Theatre Voucher Scheme which allows pupils to get a discount on theatre tickets at His Majesty's Theatre if they are going on their own or with parents. Here is a note of forthcoming shows included in the voucher scheme with a note of the discount available. Vouchers available from Mr Young, Drama Department.

<u>Week commencing</u>	<u>Show</u>	<u>Voucher Value</u>
3 April	Peter Pan	£1
10 April	Swan Lake	£2
1 May	Three Steps to Heaven	£2
15 May	Noises Off	£2
22 May	Return to the Forbidden Planet	£2
29 May	Scottish Opera	£4
12 June	Carmen Jones	£2
26 June	Crown of Destiny	50 pence
3 July	Bedfellows	£1

CATS



Our Principal Teacher of Drama, Laurence Young, writes about an unusual and exciting teacher placement he took part in at the start of term.

Since it started its run last year, many of you will have attended a performance of 'Cats' at His Majesty's Theatre in Aberdeen. I'm sure many of you were enthralled and entertained by the magnificent feast of dancing and singing that was on offer. The staging was often surprising and always spectacular. Many who saw the show agreed that this was an example of theatre at its best.

I, however, was lucky enough to get more involved than just being a passive member of the audience. Twenty-four Grampian teachers (mostly Drama and Music, although Art, PE and Learning

Support Departments were represented as well as a Head Teacher who is heavily involved in school productions) were given the opportunity to participate in a four-day placement organised by 'Grampian Education Business Partnership'. The course was delivered by Massie Associates in conjunction with the Cameron Mackintosh Production Company.

The placement, for me, was a success on a number of levels. It gave me the chance to work creatively with a group of colleagues 'at my own level' (as I, as a drama teacher, expect children to do in class) using a range of stimuli in an investigative and imaginative way. I acquired new skills in the area of 'movement-based activities', I was able to extend my knowledge of professional theatre and I came away from the course with a number of ideas to develop for and with my pupils.

On the Wednesday and Thursday we were based at the Rainbow Dance Studio in Aberdeen. Thanks to the enthusiasm and hard work of our two tutors, Val and Nicky, we were able to work on 'directed routines' for a number of musical shows. This provided us with the opportunity to see how the interpretation of particular musical numbers might be realised, either within the context of a whole show or just as a movement-based lesson with a

group of students. There was certainly opportunity here to come away with ideas for both S1/S2 and for Standard Grade groups. We also had the opportunity to look at the development of dialogue, choral/verse speaking and Cats-related movement work. To work as a pupil again - instead of a teacher - was both exciting and refreshing.

Friday and Saturday found us in His Majesty's Theatre. On Friday morning we were treated to an extensive, entertaining and informative talk by Company Manager, Peter Evelyn, on the subject of 'Cats' in particular and professional theatre in general. We were also able to see a make-up demonstration by one of the cast and had the opportunity to quiz her on life as a performer. I recorded much of what we were told and am at present transcribing the tapes in order that I can pass on this information to my pupils and other interested folk. On Friday afternoon we were permitted to sit in the auditorium and watch a 'cover rehearsal'. Throughout the run of the show those performers who are also understudying one of the principal roles, must rehearse their parts, as quite often they are called upon, sometimes at very short notice, to take one of these leading roles. As a director of productions myself this was most definitely a learning experience.

On Saturday morning my tape recorder was out again as Peter Evelyn escorted us on a tour - on the stage, under the stage, above the stage - in fact, into every nook and cranny of the theatre that had something to do with the production. Once again this was fascinating and educational. The four days were then topped off that afternoon by the opportunity to sit in the stalls and watch the matinee performance. Although I had seen 'Cats' twice in Glasgow last year, watching it on that Saturday afternoon, having spent the previous day-and-a-half in the theatre, was a whole new and extremely enjoyable experience.

I certainly came away after the four days refreshed and excited by what I had been doing. I am much better informed - now my pupils will be too.



R.E.H.I.S. CERTIFICATE SUCCESS

The Food Safety Act requires all employees working in commercial catering outlets to be trained in basic food hygiene and to hold the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Hygiene Certificate.

The course, which covers aspects of bacteriology in food storage, handling, preparation, cooking and serving is intended to minimise the possibility of contaminated food being sold to consumers.

Recently eighteen S5/6 students have successfully achieved the required standard as part of their SCOTVEC Cookery course. As well as answering written examination questions, each student had to demonstrate the appropriate hygiene standards in practical activities. This nationally recognised additional qualification is now held by the following students :

Fiona Booth
Tracey carson
Claire Doohan
Denise Douglas
Peter Grieve
Nicola Hanton
Sonia Henderson
Nicola Horne
Jillian Keilloh (Bankhead)
Alison Keith

Michael King
Vhari Menzies
Lesley Park
Steven Paterson
Teresa Ross
Louisa Walker (Bankhead)
Susan Watt (Bankhead)
Lee Whittle

MUSIC GROUPS FUNDING ACTIVITIES

Since their inaugural meeting on 1 October 1994, the music groups funding committee has enthusiastically set about organising various activities to raise the money needed to visit Canada in 1996.

A car boot sale brought in a healthy £100, despite being held on what turned out to be a very cold and windy Saturday morning in early December. Thank you, committed vendors and persistent shoppers.

Also in early December, two concerts at Aberdeen railway station successfully raised over £200. In the freezing station, the chink of donated coins helped to keep spirits up.

A well-organised Christmas raffle held after the Holy Boy concert on 20 December collected £850, delighting everyone, but especially the ever-helpful Paul Gibson, Pamela Shand and Bill Gibson, who splendidly arranged this successful event.

Bag-packing at Asda may not sound glamorous or very inspiring but proved a real money-maker before Christmas and on 28 January. Although gaining sore backs, the intrepid packers and backers also gained over £500.

The sponsored long note held on 23 January not only earned £191 so far but also ensured that everyone learned how to play an 'A'. Well done!

Thanks to all those who helped to make the 'Bring-and-Buy' sale a success on 18 February, especially Mrs Johnstone, Mrs Littlejohn, Mrs Rayner, Mrs Scaife and Mrs Wilson for organising the event which raised £260.

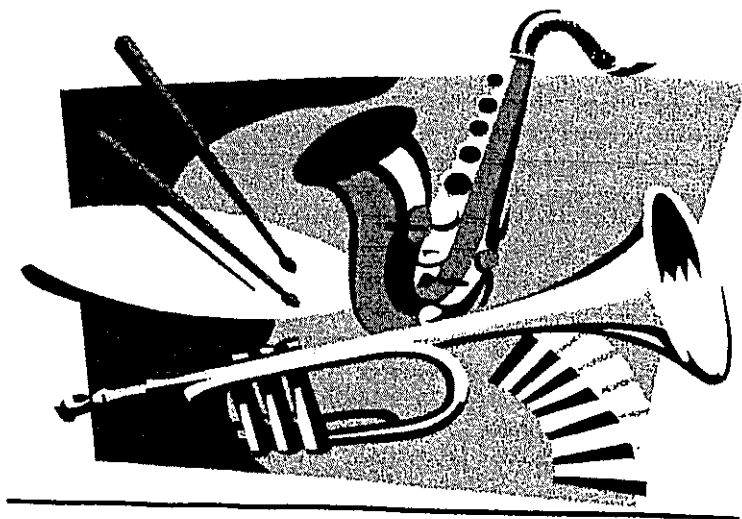
News of the music groups quest has spread well outside the academy, prompting AOC International and Honeywell to pledge £450 between them, 'a much appreciated boost to the fund. Caps off to the committee's prompters.

Who would have thought that the wee sweetie shop could even compete with all the above fundraising activities? But, with a truly dedicated effort and some painful self-denial, Pamela Shand and Paul Gibson have so far collected £50.

After only three months of determined work, the total raised so far is over £2100, and rising.

Just £3 will buy a ticket for the Concert and Supper Dance being held on 1 April at the Airport Club. Also, bring along all unwanted items to the next car boot sale - coming soon.

ANDREW TRYBALSKA



THANKS FOR THE MEMORY



Elsewhere in this edition of Update you will read about Principal Teacher of Drama Laurence Young's experience of a four-day placement with 'Cats' while the show was here in Aberdeen. Dyce Academy pupils also had the opportunity for a clearer insight into this popular musical. As well as the opportunity to see the show, many of our pupils were able to meet with actress Helen [redacted] who played Grizabella (the 'Memory' cat). Laurence Young tells us a bit about it.

"On Wednesday 1 February, Helen and three other cast members met with our party in the stalls bar at His Majesty's Theatre after the matinee performance. It was a superb opportunity for our pupils to get a close up look at the costumes, wigs and make-up of the performers. So popular is the show (it has been running in London for 13 years and its national tour continues round the country) that a whole costume and wig industry has grown up around the show. It is hard to believe at first that there are people employed simply to produce 'Cats' costumes and wigs but once you hear about

and see for yourself the time and effort that goes into producing them, it's less of a surprise.

Meeting cast members straight after a performance is a wonderful opportunity for pupils to ask questions about a show - questions that can best be answered by theatre professionals - and our pupils took that opportunity.

The following day Helen [redacted] spent the afternoon at Dyce Academy. She came out for lunch and this gave members of the Drama Department and other interested staff the chance to have a talk about life in professional theatre.

Period three saw fifty S3-S6 pupils (most of them following a certificate drama course) turning up at the drama studio for an entertaining and educational talk by Helen about professional theatre in general and 'Cats' in particular - but only after she led us in an interesting physical and vocal warm up similar to ones she does before a performance.

Her talk took us from her school days, through drama college and into her first professional engagements. Appearances in 'Jesus Christ Superstar', 'Blood Brothers' and 'Chess' set her off on her career in musical theatre. This was followed by parts in 'Les Miserables' and 'Aspects of Love'. Some of you may remember her from her performance as Eliza Doolittle in 'My Fair Lady' when the touring production, starring Edward Fox, visited Aberdeen. She has also done some straight theatre and television work and is about to undertake a major role in the European revival of the musical 'Tommy' which is opening soon in Frankfurt, Germany.

Helen talked extensively about life as a professional performer and was able to answer lots of questions on this topic as well as questions about 'Cats'. It is seldom that pupils studying drama have such an opportunity for an extended chat with a professional performer and I believe most of our pupils enjoyed the experience - at least one S5 pupil, interested in a theatrical career, left saying she had been inspired.

Period four and we were down to 24 pupils and 2 staff and Helen put on her other hat - that of drama teacher - and led an exciting improvisation workshop with us. She picked the subject of 'status' and how that can alter the interactions between people and it was a lively and interesting way to end the day. Certainly Mrs Fennell and I enjoyed the opportunity to work with our pupils, as pupils ourselves and I think that it's fair to say

that both staff and pupils were refreshed by the experience.

We are very grateful to Helen for giving up her afternoon, especially as she had a performance that evening, a performance that, if any of you saw I'm you'll agree, was a performance worth seeing - particularly her rendition of the song 'Memory'. It will certainly remain in my memory as a theatrical highlight."



COURT REPORT (BASKETBALL) - MARCH 1995

In recent weeks, our teams have put in outstanding performances to produce a string of excellent victories. The Under 16s continued to improve with an excellent 32-29 victory over Aberdeen Grammar School. This made up for an earlier disappointment - a narrow defeat at Portlethen against whom our games are always close. In the home match versus Aberdeen Grammar, the quality of basketball in the minutes before half-time was the best played by a Dyce team all season. Top scorers for the U-16s who have now completed all their fixtures are Stuart McCulloch, David Orr and 'Rookie of the Year', Scott McGregor.

Our Under 18s gained the victory they have been waiting for with a convincing 56-44 win over Oldmachar. This was a workmanlike performance based on careful handling, crisp passing and, in the second half at least, accurate shooting. The team are now confident of winning their final match up at Banff. The team have found it difficult due to a small player pool but if everyone plays to full effect and does not commit unnecessary fouls, they can be as effective as teams with bigger pools.

While the above results have been in competition, we have recently played a couple of very useful 'friendlies'. The first was a girls' match away to our friends from the American School where it was great to see some of our girls assert themselves and score some excellent baskets. Our mixture of experience and enthusiasm worked well with good scores from 'seasoned' Suzanne Clark and the 'rookie', Elaine Marr.

Finally, in the superb new St Machar games hall, we were able to put on a new team - which forms the basis of our Under 16 team next season. This meant merging the older players from our present Under 14 team with the younger players of our Under 16 team. Against an older yet more inexperienced team - all fourth years - our mix of S2, S3 and S4 blended to achieve a very good 40-37 victory. Once they got over the intimidation of bigger opponents they began to believe in themselves and their ability and built up deserved victory.

Finally, best wishes to Steven Walker, S2, who missed out on this victory because of a bad arm break. Keep practising with the other arm, Steven!

TOM FERGUSON

LUCKY NUMBER

Last month's Lucky Number prize was not claimed.

The prize this month will, therefore, be **£20**. The winner will also receive a complimentary copy of the **Beggarman CD, "Cliche's and Vodka"**, referred to in the article 'Folky, Rocky, Poppy'.

This edition's lucky number is _____