

# UP Dyce Academy DATE

Issue No 47

September 1995.

## VE AND VJ DAY ART COMPETITION



Dyce Academy pupils were among those invited to take part in a poster competition run by Aberdeen City Council.

The entrants had to design a poster to celebrate VE and VJ Day. Several classes took part, with some pupils' enthusiasm spilling over into lunchtimes.

We had several entries selected for the VE and VJ Day exhibition in the Art Gallery, and are delighted by the successes of Kelly who came second winning £50, and Claire who was third won £25.

On Wednesday 16 August, both pupils and their families attended a Civic Reception in the Art Gallery. The girls were each presented with their cheques, a commemorative medallion, winners' certificates, official VE and VJ Day Celebration Programme and several other goodies by the Lord Provost.

Our congratulations to Kelly and Claire for doing so well, and Nick Collins, Ben Smith, Keith Brownlee, Sarah Spalding, Tracy Green, Andrew Ingram, Erica Little and Kim Wilkie for having their work selected for exhibition.

**FIONA MICHIE**

## CARETAKERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE



In June 1994 Dyce Academy had the task of organising the 8th International Caretakers of the Environment Conference. However, this year the 9th conference was held in Russia. A party of senior students and teachers from the school attended this event.

The article below by Sara Smith gives an account of this unique experience.

PS S5/6 students should watch out for details about next year's conference in The Netherlands. It will be advertised in school soon!

"On 10 June, two teachers - Mr Jowett and Mr Presly, and three students - Julie Marr, Carol Innes and Sara Smith - set off on a journey to Russia. The purpose of the trip was to attend the 9th Caretakers of the Environment Conference.

The journey there was a long one, from Aberdeen to Denmark to Helsinki where we stayed the night in a Youth Hostel. The following day we flew to Ivalo and then had a 10-hour bus journey to Russia. The bus journey through the Arctic was not without its problems. The bus stuck and it was

a matter of everyone having to get out and push. We then had four border controls to go through. This took about 2-3 hours; however, we eventually reached our destination, Minkino, a small settlement approximately 12 Km outside the Arctic City of Murmansk.

For the week-long conference we were to be housed in a newly-built school, which provided excellent accommodation. The conference was very well organised and the 200+ participants were divided into 10 groups. Each group went on field trips to local destinations including a local museum, a power station and the tundra - the only place where there was snow at this time of year.

There were also activities for all the groups - an international night where each country had a chance to provide the entertainment, discos, and of course a chance to look at projects from other countries.

Before going to Russia we had to prepare a project on our Arctic environment -the Cairngorms. This was to be displayed with other countries' projects in Russia.

During the conference each group had the task of putting together a project by the end of the week to show what they had learnt. These projects were then shown to all the groups. Each group had a different method of presentation, ranging from posters to plays. However, there were several

main ideas which came across, one of which was the 3R principle - Recycle, Reuse and Reduce.

The week was both educational and fun. We all enjoyed ourselves, learnt about new developments in different countries, met people from around the globe and had an enjoyable week due to the hospitality of our Russian friends."

SARA SMITH

## PARENTS' MEETING

About 25 parents came to school on the evening of Thursday 14 September to discuss the formation of a school board and express their views on the homework issue.

There seemed to be a reasonable level of interest in the formation of a school board. If a sufficient number of parents put their names forward, elections will be held in October.

We had a very full and interesting discussion on homework. In general, the parents present felt that homework was desirable and were willing to

support a school policy which expected all pupils to undertake some homework but not necessarily in all subject areas. One of the key issues emerging was that the school should try to set up a system which keeps parents informed of any homework set and whether it is completed satisfactorily or not.

These and the other views expressed on the homework issue will be taken into account as we put together a school policy over the next few weeks.

M TAYLOR

## CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to the following past pupils of Dyce who have graduated from the University of Aberdeen in recent months :

|                 |   |     |                |   |       |
|-----------------|---|-----|----------------|---|-------|
| Stephen Barclay | - | MA  | Steven Milne   | - | BSc   |
| Morven Cheyne   | - | BSc | Naomi Penman   | - | BSc   |
| Samantha Gibb   | - | MA  | Colin Shaw     | - | B.Eng |
| Murray McKay    | - | BSc | Heather Watson | - | MA    |

and to Judith Murison who gained a degree in **Politics** from the University of York.

More news of graduations will follow as information reaches us from the universities.

## ENDING / BEGINNING

As you will know, Mrs Lily Scott (Principal Teacher, Guidance) retired on 1 September. Here she sets down her thoughts on her time at Dyce Academy.

1 September 1995 - I left school - for the second time. First time was in July 1960. Then it was off to Aberdeen University leaving Turriff Academy behind. Now it's off to uni again (amongst other things) leaving Dyce Academy behind.

What of the intervening period? Learning continued with my family, at teacher training college, Inverurie Academy, Aberdeen Maternity Hospital Labour Ward, Bankhead Academy, Dyce Academy, Westlake Boys' High, Auckland, New Zealand, and then back to Dyce Academy.

Present at the birth of the new school - helping pupils make the transition from a Bankhead bursting at the seams with a roll of 1500. Around 300 decided to move and we shared in the heady excitement of new ideas, team building and the establishment of a philosophy in practice. Now

uncertain waters lie ahead as local government re-organises.

What else did I do? Sailing, school shows (staff and pupil), school trips to Crathes, Finzean, Cullen, Berlin, Holland; social activities including 'Charlies', curling, Edinburgh Festival, hill-walking, ski-ing - been there and had a go at them all. One outstanding event - a year out on exchange to an all boys' school in New Zealand. A year out - to re-assess, re-charge, grow and change - a prescription to be thoroughly recommended for me and all.

What now? A time for me to take some control of my time - some voluntary work, some leisure activities, some learning, some earning. Don't know the order yet.

Am I ending or am I beginning?

One last word - THANKS - to all of you - pupils (past and present), parents, colleagues - your good wishes are most sincerely appreciated - indeed treasured.

LILY SCOTT

## PAULA DANZIGER

Karen (2C) recently won the opportunity to meet American Paula Danziger, a famous children's author and reviewer of books on television's "Live and Kicking". Larger than life, with her outrageous clothes and garish glasses, Paula Danziger talked enthusiastically to a small group of prize-winners about her childhood and her rather unusual talent of being able to write backwards. (Which, of course, she demonstrated).

Not only was Karen (and our school librarian) treated to a buffet supper, but Karen was also presented with five personally signed books written by Paula Danziger. Anyone wanting to find out more about Danziger's writing - including "Can You Sue your Parents for Malpractice", "It's an Aardvark Eat Turtle World", "This Place has no Atmosphere", "The Pistachio Prescription", "Remember Me in Harold Square" - should consult the expert, Karen.



## MUSIC GROUPS FUNDING EVENTS

Here are some forthcoming events organised by the Dyce Academy Music Groups to raise money for the Canada Tour 1996 :

### **HALLOWEEN DANCE**

It may not be the sequel to "Halloween" but it does hold more promise for live fun. A dance for the whole family will be held on Saturday 28 October 1995 at the Airport Club, 7.00 pm - 1.00 am. Before the disco gets underway at 8.30 pm, there will be a short concert, from 7.00 - 7.30. Fancy dress is optional for adults, but compulsory for children.

### **CONCERTS**

By popular demand, "The Holy Boy" will be performed on Monday 27 November 1995 at the Church Hall, Dyce, in aid of Cancer Research. Tickets will be £2.50.

The ever popular school show will be held from 11 to 14 December 1995 inclusive, and will last approximately forty-five minutes. Popular Christmas music will be played for the first half hour. Food will be available at a small charge.

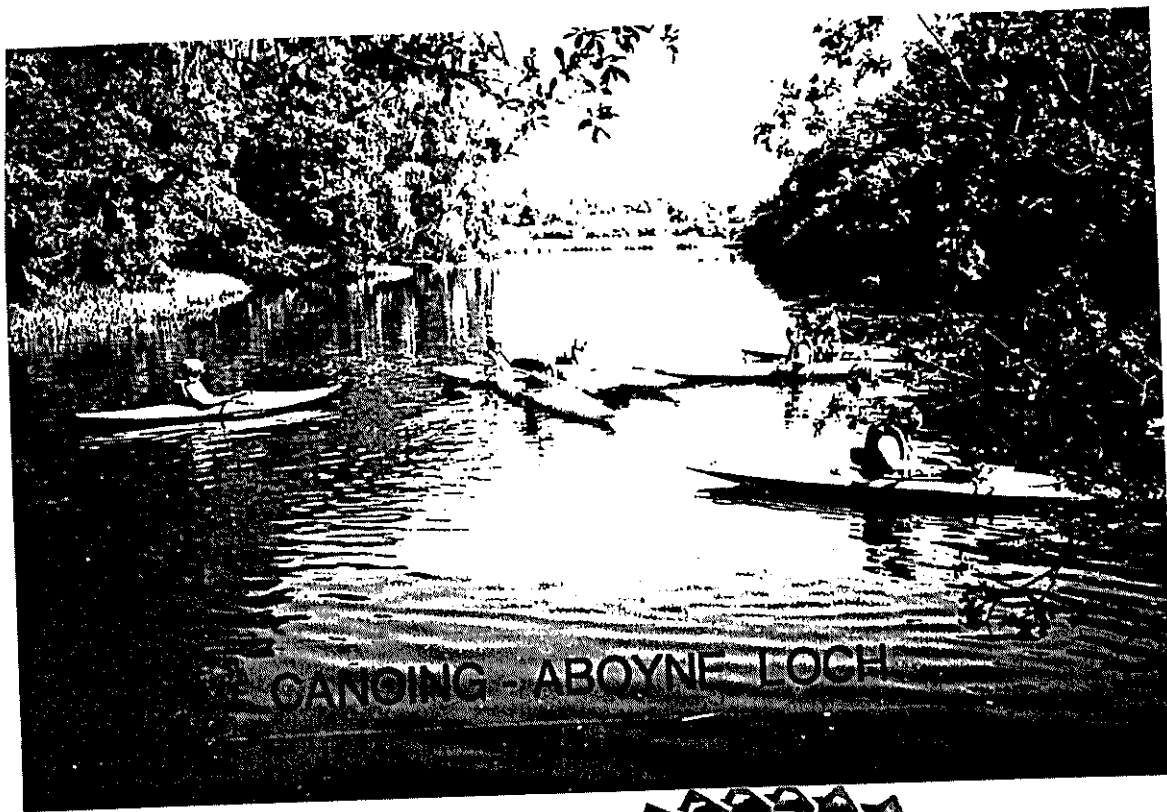
### **CAROL SINGING**

If you would like to hear some of your favourite Carols, come along to Asda at Dyce from 18 to 21 December 1995 inclusive, to hear the Dyce Academy Choir. Bag packing will take place on the same evenings. Do volunteer, so that as much money as possible can be collected.

### **BURNS SUPPER**

For Burns' devotees a supper evening is being planned. The date has not been decided yet but likely to be Saturday 27 January 1996. A further announcement will be made when the date and place have been agreed.

**ANDREW TRYBALSKI**



CANOEING - ABOYNE LOCH



OLYMPIA



ALTON TOWERS



All-done-in

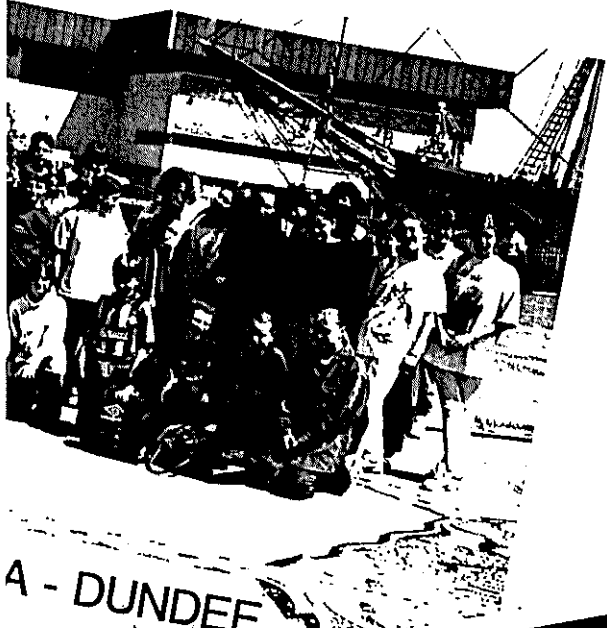
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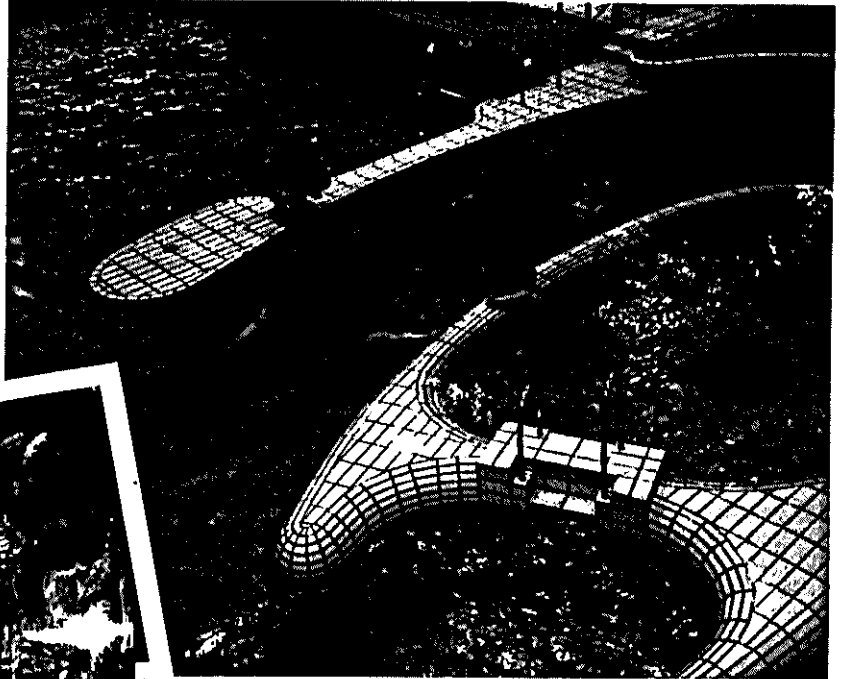
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# ACTIVITIES DAY OUTINGS

JUNE 1995



A - DUNDEE



QUEENSFERRY

P-SEA WORLD



MOUNTAIN BIKING - BALLATER

## SOME THOUGHTS AT THE START OF THE NEW SCHOOL SESSION

Dyce Academy is entering its sixteenth year with just over 500 pupils, the same as we started with in 1980. Dyce's teenage 'bulge' has passed through the school. Whilst we did cope with the 1000 pupils we had a few years ago, it is easier and probably more pleasant for both staff and pupils to work in a school of 500. It is less crowded, easier to get to know each other and, in general, easier to develop a sort of 'family atmosphere'.

We were again pleased with the examination results of our senior pupils. Also, the pupils who left school over the summer have been very successful in gaining jobs or places at college or university. Overall, Dyce pupils are doing very well.

It is difficult to recognise the British education system which is much criticised at the moment by politicians and much of the press.

We are told that,

- standards of achievement are low. As mentioned above, standards of achievement at Dyce are very high.
- there is a shortage of qualified teachers. All our pupils are taught by teachers fully qualified to teach their subject, except for the occasional day or two when a teacher is off sick.
- class sizes are too large. The size of all our first and second year classes and most of the classes in the rest of the school is less than twenty pupils.
- buildings are in a bad state of repair. Our building is very well maintained as anyone who visits the school can see.
- there is a shortage of essential teaching equipment and materials. Whilst we could

make use of more computers, etc., in general the school is very well equipped.

It may be that this criticism does apply to a number of schools in other parts of the country, perhaps particularly in England. Certainly, in Dyce Academy and in Aberdeen the quality of educational provision and delivery is very high.

As you will know, the structure of local government will be changing in 1996. Whilst this will affect the way the education system is administered, it will probably make very little difference to schools. Our 'bosses' will change or have different titles, but what goes on in school and in classrooms will remain the same. After local government reorganisation, Dyce Academy pupils will come from Aberdeen City and the County of Aberdeen. This will no doubt lead to some disputes over who pays for what at local government level but again will not affect the running of the school. Our catchment area will not be changed by local government reorganisation and pupils living in the country part of our catchment area will still be entitled to transport to and from school. We have been used to having to relate to an Aberdeen office and a Gordon office - who have often had different views of things - over the years. These dealings may become more complicated when the offices are in different education authorities but, no doubt, we will find a way of coping.

Elsewhere in 'Update' you will find a report on a parents' meeting held in the school recently. A particular target for the year is to try to get parents more involved in discussions about what is going on in school. In general, the school's relationships with parents are good and we keep in touch through parents' evenings, Update and occasional meetings on specific topics. I do, however, feel that we could be doing more than this. I hope that by this time next year, I will be able to report how we have managed to do this.

M TAYLOR



## RHINELAND EXPRESS

Fifty-six pupils and six teachers set off at 06.45 on the morning of 29 June. Their destination was the town of Boppard, deep in the heart of Germany. The first minor inconvenience involved being bussed to Stirling by link coaches as our coach for the continent had developed a small technical hitch that was repaired as we made our way down from Aberdeen. Whilst the luggage was transferred at Stirling Services, full breakfasts were taken on board to provide extra energy for the long trip ahead. It was noted that Miss Johnston had a particular liking for sausages, bacon, fried eggs, baked beans and hash browns.

Two comfort stops and several musical and video interludes later, we were on board the MV NORSEA bound for Rotterdam. By the time that the disco started, the effects of the five course dinner were beginning to wear off. One famished young lad had five sweets and claimed to be suffering from mal de mer later that evening. I wonder why!? A restful night was had by all, save Mr Bruce who is reported to have been on duty patrolling the decks into the wee small hours.

An early start the next day from Rotterdam meant we enjoyed our packed lunch in brilliant sunshine in Valkenburg prior to trying out the bob sleigh! By late afternoon we arrived at our hotel - The Bergschlosschen. The majority of our party was quite happy to stay in the hotel that night - a chance to relax and unwind. A small group of stalwarts, led by Mr Brady, ventured into the town to seek out the bright lights of Boppard. A full account of the German night club scene is expected in this column in the near future!

On Saturday 1 July we took a short drive down the River Rhine to Rudesheim. A whistle-stop tour round this busy tourist resort preceded our journey back north to Koblenz. After a brief encounter with several large departmental stores we visited a local swimming pool complex. Given the extremely high temperatures, this proved to be most welcome. Memorable incident of the day so far - Kenny, the driver, drove us around a roundabout the wrong way! Just as well that our coach was too big for the local traffic to argue with. Kenny won't forget this incident in a hurry -

he won the highly coveted 'Wally of the Day' competition for his daring deed.

After dinner we drove to the small town of Bingen. At 10.00 pm a flotilla of small boats bedecked in colourful lights made their way slowly upriver. A spectacular fireworks display, set off in turn, from all the castles on the surrounding hillsides was most impressive.

On Sunday 2 July we drove to the Hassloch Theme Park near the German grand prix circuit at Hockenheim. We partook of the delights of the corkscrew, the log flume, the pirate ship, the wild water rapids and many more gut-wrenching experiences before heading back to Boppard. Just as we arrived back in Boppard, the heavens opened and we were caught in the heaviest rainstorm ever experienced by any member of staff - another memorable moment on an action packed trip.

After dinner we took an evening cruise on the River Rhine, following which we hurried back to our hotel to avoid the next shower of rain. PS - Any pupil who wishes to take part in a future school trip, remember to bring a waterproof jacket!

On Monday 3 July we drove north to Cologne. On the way we passed a Grampian coach on the autobahn. Imagine our further surprise when we recognised George Stewart, former Dyce Academy Geography Teacher, at the front of this coach with his group from Mintlaw Academy. Who said it is a small world?

After a two-hour shopping spree in the centre of Cologne, all but one pupil returned to our rendezvous on time. Thankfully the missing pupil was eventually found after about 1 hour 20 minutes. This poor individual was separated from her friends, became flustered and walked off in the wrong direction. I don't know who was more relieved when she turned up! Rumour has it that both Mr McLean and Mrs Cockburn were quite emotional when the wanderer returned! A brief visit to Phantasialand Theme Park near Cologne was enjoyed by all but it was noted that most

pupils felt the Hassloch Theme Park had more to offer.

After dinner it was time to think about making preparations for our homeward journey. Once we had packed our bags, we made our way into the town of Boppard for the last time. One anonymous member of our party managed, despite language difficulties, to become very good friends with a young German boy. A fast worker!

On the morning of Tuesday 4 July, our luggage was loaded back on the coach and we set off. Once again the weather was glorious as we headed north through Germany and into Belgium heading for the town of Bruges. Two hours later we were on the road once more heading for the French port of Calais and our evening meal at the Flunch Restaurant. After some last minute shopping in

the Hypermarket we check in at the Stena-Sealink terminal and set sail for Dover around 10.00 pm.

Once back in the UK we settled down for what proved to be a long journey - only stopping when absolutely necessary to change driver. At Abington Services we bade farewell to Miss McCaskie who had arranged to be dropped off close to her home town.

There are many memorable moments to recall from this tour - the romantic friendships that were struck up, the winners of the 'Wally of the Day' competition, the disco exhibition laid on by several members of the party and many amusing anecdotes too numerous to mention.

At 11.00 am we arrived back at school, exhausted and elated, all agreed that this had been a fantastic experience!

## **SPORTS NEWS**

### **Specialised Coaching**

Stuart Mathieson (S4) and Douglas Cumming (S4) have been selected to attend the Scottish Schools Under-17 Squad Coaching Day at the Fife Institute of Sport, Glenrothes, in September. This is a high honour indeed as usually only the top three or four in the country in each event are invited to this specialised coaching day.

### **Scottish Schools Athletic Championships - June 1995**

The highlight from Dyce Academy's point of view was Stuart Mathieson becoming Scottish Schools 400 Metre Champion in the Under-15 age group. Not only was his time of 53.1 seconds good

enough to win but it also equalled the championship record.

He also competed in the long jump but understandably was below his best after his exertions in the 400 metres.

Douglas Cumming ran in the 800 metres in the same age group and finished a creditable fifth in 2 minutes 19.3 seconds. He also finished sixth in the Triple Jump.

In the Under-17 age category, Mark McDonald ran in the 3000 metres and finished 15th out of 24 runners in a time of 10 minutes 22 seconds, but it is worth noting that this is Mark's first season at Under-17 and nearly all the runners who beat him are a year older than he is. Nevertheless a good performance. Well done lads!

**RAYMOND LITTLEJOHN**

## WORD FOR WINDOWS - A CHANCE FOR ADULTS



As you may be aware, the Business Studies Department now has a suite of networked RM PCs. There is an opportunity for adults to enrol for daytime classes using Word for Windows, following Scotvec Module courses.

A beginner's class for those with no keyboard or typing experience is planned for Tuesday afternoon and Thursday morning. A limited number of places for beginners also exists in a pupil class which runs during Tuesday morning and Friday afternoon.

There will also be a class available for those already in possession of appropriate keyboarding/typing skills, during Monday morning and Thursday afternoon.

Anyone interested in these courses, which will start on 28 September, can obtain further information by contacting the Community Education Office (725118 Ext 242) or the Business Studies Department (725118 Ext 251).

## ENVIRONMENTAL ARTS COMPETITION

Hard on the heels of the VE and VJ Day poster competition, our pupils were invited to take part in the 'Clean and Green Schools Environmental Arts Challenge' run by Aberdeen City Council. This provided an excellent opportunity for pupils to express how they feel about the environment, focusing on an environmental problem or the way to solve one.

Congratulations go to Sarah the Secondary Schools S1/S2 winner, and Andrew runner-up.

All entrants will receive a Clean and Green goodie bag and have their work exhibited at Peacock Printmakers. The winners will also receive Gift

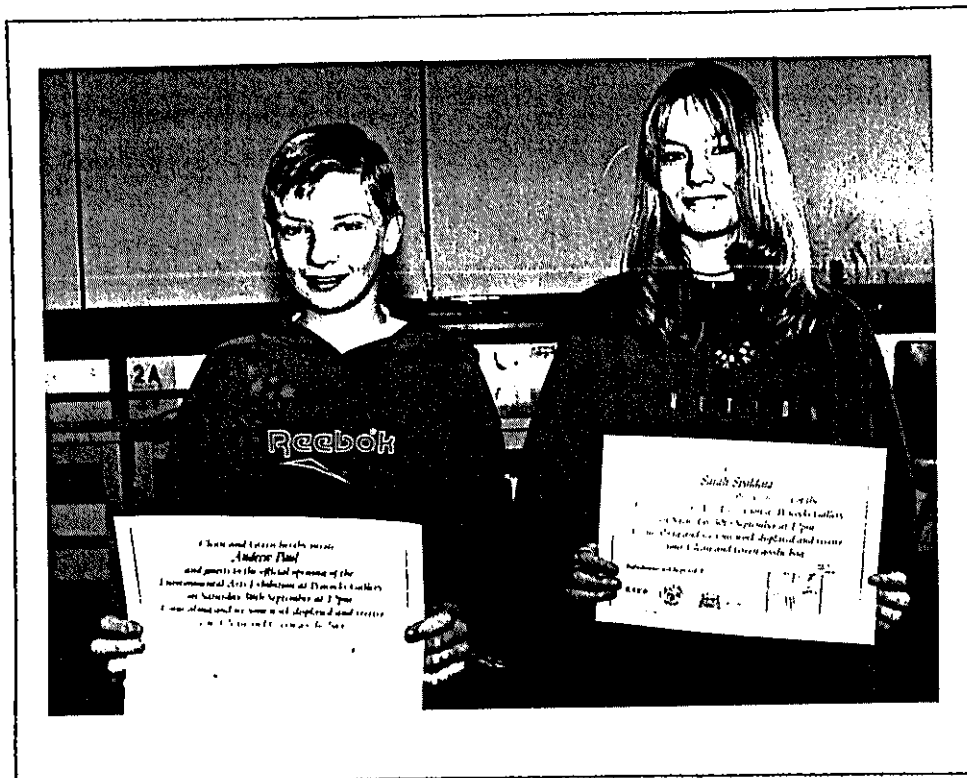
Vouchers for themselves and the school as well as seeing their work included in a 1996 calendar.

The participants have been invited to attend the presentation ceremony and opening of the exhibition that runs from Saturday 30 September until Wednesday 11 October at Peacock Gallery, 21 Castle Street, Aberdeen.

The exhibition is open to the public so it would be nice for as many of you as possible to go along and view your colleagues' creative efforts to see how well they have done.

Well done to all pupils who submitted work for both competitions.

**FIONA MICHIE**



## LUCKY NUMBER

The prize for this edition's lucky number is **£10**.

Your lucky number is: