



Harris Academy F. P. Association

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Dear Fellow Harris FPs,

I am happy to report on what I believe has been a relatively good year for the Association. It certainly lacked the great occasions of one year ago, but, in many ways, it was good to be back to “auld cla’es an porridge”.

First of all, however, let us welcome some new members. They are as follows: Pamela Cranswick (Moyes), Aileen Johnston (Black), Evelyn Milne (Milne), Aileen Smith, Alastair Stewart and Winifred Weddell.

We hope that they feel welcome and that we see them at our events as they happen.

We offer congratulations to two FPs, Mike Jeffries and Rena Smith (Ratray), both of whom were honoured by Her Majesty the Queen. Mike appeared in the New Year Honours List and Rena, a former Dundee Citizen of the Year, was included in the Birthday Honours. This means that Harris FPs have figured in the last three Honours Lists.

Regrettably we have a number of deaths to report. These included John Allardyce, a former President of the Association, Alastair Brown, Joyce Cumming (Kerr), Marion Duff (Coupar), Blair Grubb, Ian Gilroy, Robert Hendry, H. Wilson Lorimer, Jimmy Merry, Jean Sandeman, Nancy Sopala and Stanley Tott. Ian Gilroy was School Captain in 1939-40 and Wilson Lorimer held the same office in 1952-53. To their families we offer our condolences. There may well be others. If I have missed any, I offer my deepest regrets.

The Remembrance Ceremony was held as always in November. Professor Ian C Colligan, O.B.E., laid the wreath on behalf of the Association at what is always a moving and effective occasion. Fewer FPs than usual attended the occasion. I do hope that more of you will be able to attend this year. The date of the ceremony is **Monday 14th November**, gathering in the main foyer of the School at 10.30. Members who wish can come on to the Invercarse Hotel at 12 noon when we will be able to have lunch to round off the day.

That was the last time we met until the Burns Supper in January. The horrible weather, which brought 2010 to a close, forced us to cancel our December lunch – the first time we have had to resort to that. When we did meet for the Burns Supper, however, we were treated to an excellent evening of entertainment. Andrew Johnstone, the previous Rector, gave an excellent Immortal Memory and David Wright and Anne Markham maintained that high standard in their Toast to the Lasses and reply. Dorothy Hunter (Milne) sang most pleasantly and with excellent fare provided by the Invercarse Hotel we had a great evening. It is nearly time to procure tickets for 2012’s Burns Supper – book early to ensure you have a seat!

Lunches went ahead in March and September and good numbers joined us in the Invercarse for these. Our June lunch was held at the end of May in the West Park Centre. West Park had been keen to entertain us after our disappointment in September 2010 and we were shown what they could do when all went well. At this lunch in May six ladies from the Class of 1949 had their own table to allow them to celebrate a special birthday of 2010. They seemed to have a wonderful time.

Our AGM took place in April and it was agreed to change the duties of Secretary, as they were now far too heavy for one person. Isobel Colligan agreed to stay as Association Secretary and looks after membership, agendas and minutes. Joan Yeaman, with the assistance of Rosemary Matheson-Dear, took over as Social Secretary. Joan and her team will be responsible for arranging lunches and the Burns Supper. Joan has said that she will fill this post for two years and Isobel will carry on for one year only. We welcomed three new members of Council: Fay Burke (Macpherson), Janice Oram (Malcolm) and Freida Soutar (Doig). We look forward to working with them. As you can all see, we do still need people to undertake jobs and we will need them soon! **PLEASE HELP!**

The beginning of July saw the Annual Prizegiving in the School and Rosemary Matheson-Dear, Dorothy Drummond and myself from the FP Association were present to see a large number of talented pupils to receive prizes for an immense array of different skills. Mention must be made of a musical item, a composition by one of the leaving pupils, Mark McNamee, entitled, *The Last Meeting*. It certainly an amazing work for a young man and represented the last day of School most poignantly.. That day was also the last day in School for Depute Rector, Denis Speedie who spent more than 36 years on the Harris Staff. We wish Denis well in his retirement. Denis was the Guest of Honour at the Prizegiving and asked for an extra-special rendering of the Harris Holiday Song. The school responded and it was wonderful to feel the Hall ringing with familiar tune and words. **KINLOCH** again won all three House trophies – it is becoming a habit. (Sour grapes - I was not in Kinloch!)

The Archive Department of the University of Dundee has agreed to the Harris FP Association depositing its archives with them. This will mean that all our material will be catalogued and kept safe for the future. However, it would be excellent if we could build up an even more detailed archive than we have at present. I would like to see a complete run of School Magazines, for example. At the moment we have some, but there are many gaps. Photographs tell the story of the School as well (especially if the people on them are named). We can easily arrange for scans of such photographs as you have and then return the original to you to keep. I would also make a plea for an original House Badge for CAWDOR. The original badge was the one with the curlicues above and below the initial. We had all for the display, but the Cawdor one had to be returned to its owner. If you have any of the above or any material relating to the School at all, please get in touch with me and I can arrange for collection. Any item will be welcomed. Especially good would be memories of your days at Harris. When we get together we find plenty to chat about. How about putting some of your memories into print?

On 24th September, I attended as a guest of my wife, a celebratory lunch held by the Morgan Academy FP Association. MAFPA was celebrating the tenth anniversary of its re-formation after the disastrous fire. I offered the President, an old friend, the good wishes of the Council and Membership of the Harris FP Association. This was very well received by the company assembled in the Hall of Morgan Academy and reciprocal good wishes were passed on to the Harris FP Association. I now pass them on to you all. We had a wonderful day and I must admit that I felt most welcome and met a number of people I knew and many I did not know.

If I have missed any detail at all, I apologise most sincerely. I wish all members a very Happy Christmas and offer every good wish for 2012, which is, I believe the 100th Anniversary of the first Harris Magazine.

Yours sincerely,
John.