

HARRIS ACADEMY FP ASSOCIATION - NEWS UPDATE

March 2010.

Dear Old Harrisians,

In one early edition of the school Magazine this term is used, presumably for FPs, so I thought that I would start like this, just for a change.

We begin by welcoming the following new members to the Association: Audrey Lewis, David Salariya, James Smith, Frances Sturrock, Moira Veal (Anderson), Margaret Westley (Alexander) and Annabelle Yamauchi (Dickson). We apologise to Elizabeth O'Brien for not including her maiden name last time. For those of us who were at school in the earlier half of the 1960s, she is remembered as Liz Ogilvie.

We note the deaths of Alistair Brown, a former member of Council, Robert Hendry and Marion Duff, all FPs; of Jean Sandeman and Anne Wallace, both former teachers at the School; and of Muriel Lewthwaite, who, although not an FP, was a regular attender at our lunches, along with her husband, George, who is an FP. We regret these losses and offer our condolences to the families concerned.

The Remembrance Ceremony held in School on 11th November was, as always, very moving and effective. Fewer FPs than usual attended, which was a pity. We thank Mildred Mottashaw (Esplin) for laying the wreath on behalf of the association. Members are reminded that they are invited to this ceremony each year.

The School Carol Concert was held in Logie-St. John's Cross Church just before the Christmas break and, as always, demonstrated just how strong the musical side of the School continues to be.

Our lunches in December and March were well attended and, as always, much enjoyed by various groups of people from the same era who were able to exchange news of friends and memories of their schooldays.

The Burns Supper was a great success and everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed it. Sheena Wellington (Johnstone) provided a first class Immortal Memory and we were all captivated by her words and music. We found it easy to recognise why she was the first lady to propose the Immortal Memory at the Greenock Burns Club (the Mother Club) Supper in its long and distinguished history. Jonathan Matheson-Dear and Sheila Spalding gave us humorous and thought-provoking speeches in the Toast to the Lasses and reply. Four in a Bar (three of whom are FPs) provided two great musical interludes. Jimmy Lockhart addressed the Haggis with great aplomb and Gordon Laird, as always, was first class in giving the vote of thanks. Our piper was Rory Allardyce, a second year boy at the Academy and we hope that he will continue to pipe for us in the years ahead. We enjoyed a great meal at the Invercarse Hotel and all in all it was a great evening.

Perhaps the main news of this time is the refurbishment of the School that will take place, it is hoped, in the not too distant future. Jim Thewliss, the Rector, is keeping us up to date with developments and we will pass them on as soon as any firm plans are known.

We have discovered that the FP Association first came into being in February 1910, so we are one hundred years old as a body. I believe that there are gaps when the Association was not active, but it is still an anniversary of which we may be proud. This means that our celebration day on 4th September of this year will be for three anniversaries: the 125th Anniversary of the opening of the Harris Academy in Park Place [31st August 1885], the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the FP Association [5th February 1910] and the 60th Anniversary of the beginning of the Houses – **Birnam, Cawdor, Forres and Kinloch** [early in session 1950-51].

Plans for that day are coming on apace and you will receive details in this mailing. I would like to stress that this is not just a day for members of the Association, but for every boy or girl who received any part of their education at the Harris, their spouses, partners and friends, as well as all those who were or are teachers at the School. If you are in touch with fellow FPs, please pass on details of the celebration to them. They too may apply for tickets for the lunch or, if they wish, may come along to the school in the morning and have a tour of the building, a cup of tea or coffee and a look at the display of memorabilia and a good blether with former classmates. Anyone who organises a class reunion, please pass on details to those with whom you are in touch. **We would ask all of you to help make this a sell out and a real Harris celebration!**

Although we have a few memories and photographs for a display on 4th September we could do with more. **PLEASE ASSIST IN THIS WAY.** Any brief memory of your schooldays, any badge, certificate or any item of memorabilia at all will be welcome. **PLEASE LEND IT TO US FOR THE DAY.** We believe that we have four House badges of the original design, but more would be welcome (just so we can be certain). House Captain's badges would also be gratefully received, as would Vice-Captain's or Secretary's or House Leader's badges which were certainly used in the sixties.

A Reunion for the Class of 1990 is being held on Saturday evening, 26th June 2010 in the West Park Centre. It is being organised by David Rennie, Julia Harron (Andersen) and Rachel Murphy (Wood). Anyone interested in attending may contact them at 1990reunion@hotmail.com

I look forward to meeting many of you (and your school friends) on Saturday 4th September.

With best wishes,
John Baxter,
President.