



# THE JAMES GILLESPIE'S HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

September 2015



## Headteacher's Message

Welcome to the first edition of the Newsletter after the summer break. I hope you had a wonderful summer and enjoyed time relaxing with friends and family over the summer.

The pupils are back, enthusiastic and refreshed and we look forward to working with them and parents and carers towards ensuring that each and

every one aims high and that they do the best that they can. Pupils and staff who are travelling between both the Darroch and Lauderdale campuses have benefitted from the mild and dry weather and, as we enter the final phase of the rebuild programme, we are all looking forward to being on one campus from August 2016.

The new S1 have settled in well. They have quickly made themselves at home and become familiar with their new environs. It is clear they are enjoying making new friends, and exploring new experiences.

I am delighted with this year's SQA results. I'd like to congratulate everyone on their achievements and thank everyone associated with our school for their help in making Gillespie's such a vibrant and positive place to learn. Throughout the session our newsletters and website will share with you the many and varied achievements of our pupils.

It was great to meet so many of our new S1 parents at our social evening on Thursday 3 September and to have such a large turnout at our first Parent Council meeting on Tuesday 15 September.

I take this opportunity to thank the many JGHS families who hosted members of the South African choir who took part in this summer's 'Township Voices' performances at the Edinburgh International Festival. Without your help in accommodating and supporting all those involved in the trip, the enriching and life-changing experiences gained by all who took part would not have been possible.

Throughout the coming session we will continue to raise money for a variety of worthwhile causes. These will include school based projects and charities at both home and abroad. As has been the tradition over many years, our S6 will lead on fundraising efforts for our link South African schools. BENE – our pupil led charities committee – have also begun fundraising efforts in earnest. In the last week we managed to raise almost £900 to help those directly affected by the troubles in Syria. A St Andrew's Day event, run by senior pupils, as well as several events throughout the year, will be organised by our Parents' events group and JGHS Trust. In addition, there will be fundraisers sprinkled throughout the year as organised by pupil led committees in response to issues that matter to them. Please continue to support as generously as you have in the past.

I look forward with enthusiasm to working with you all in the coming session.

**Donald j MacDonald**  
**Headteacher**

### In this issue:

Music News	2
Art News	5
Library, Water of Leith Trip & Drama Production	6
Staff News	7
Maths Clubs, French Cinema & Dress Code Survey	8
Spanish Exchange	9
Pupil Voice & Duke of Edinburgh	10
New Building Report	11

# MUSIC DEPARTMENT

## Music Exams Success

Congratulations to all pupils who passed their Associated Board Exams and Traditional Music Graded Exams, many with Distinction and Merit:

Finlay Lawson	Angus Beattie
Cameron MacDonald	James Beeston
Jenny MacDonald	Corin Beveridge
Nualla MacGregor	Holly Bruce
Iris MacLeod	Eilidh Clarkson
Callum McCabe	Charlie Cuthbert
Laura Penman	Nathan Ezra-Jackson
Martha Cunniffe	Laura Johnson
Cliona McCabe	Anna Lauckner
Sine MacGregor	Iona Mackinlay-Vich
Sim MacDonald	Megan Newby
Holly MacLeod	Macha Nic An Bheatha
Cara McLuskey	Alan O'Neill
	Jody Stewart
	David Sydserff
	Lucy Sydserff

## Scotland's Harp – a Celebration

Congratulations to the following JGHS pupils who performed at The Clarsach Society's event: "Scotland's Harp—a Celebration" during the summer holidays:

Sheena MacGregor  
Cara McLuskey  
Ceitidh McLuskey  
Tuesday Rose McDonough  
Lili McShea  
Bronwen Stahl

## Selmas Conference

Many thanks to the following clarsach players who performed for delegates at this conference on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September:

S1: Lily McShea, Katrina Cameron, Eilidh Lamb and Bronwyn Stahl

S3: Ceitidh McLuskey, Sheena McGregor and Martha Cunniffe

S4: Tuesday-Rose McDonough

S5: Corrie Lawson, Holly MacLeod, Cara McLuskey

## Samba Workshop

On Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September, Bruntsfield House shook to a Samba rhythm as a group of musicians from Edinburgh based youth samba band Pulse of the Place visited to lead a samba drumming workshop. The workshop, which was attended by some of Mr Rankin's percussion students as well as an S3 music class, proved to be a lot of fun, as this selection of students' comments shows:

*"Playing as part of a big group, but all pretty much playing different rhythms, was quite different but really fun!"*

*"I enjoyed it, it was a new thing I'd never done before"*

*"It was fun and very loud!"*

Many thanks to Miss Shields for organising the workshop.



## **Music Department Extra-curricular Groups**

### **Christmas Concert**

Rehearsals have now started for the Christmas Concert which once again takes place in the Usher Hall, Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 at 7.00pm. Tickets will be on sale from 19th October, through the Usher Hall Box Office (Tel . 0131 228 1155) and website ([www.usherhall.co.uk](http://www.usherhall.co.uk))

### **Instrumental Groups**

Pupils who learn an instrument in school must join one of the following instrumental groups as part of their commitment and contract to learning:

<i>Senior Wind Band</i>	<i>Mondays after school</i>	<i>B3 (Bruntsfield House)</i>
<i>Junior Wind Band</i>	<i>Mondays lunchtime</i>	<i>B3</i>
<i>Clarsach Group</i>	<i>Tuesdays lunchtime</i>	<i>B13</i>
<i>Senior String Orchestra</i>	<i>Tuesdays after school</i>	<i>B1</i>
<i>Junior String Orchestra</i>	<i>Tuesdays after school</i>	<i>2.01 (Malala building)</i>
<i>Senior Guitar Ensemble</i>	<i>Thursdays after school</i>	<i>B1</i>
<i>Junior Guitar Ensemble</i>	<i>Fridays after school</i>	<i>B1</i>
<i>Chanter Group/Pipe Band</i>	<i>Thursdays after school</i>	<i>2.01</i>
<i>Percussion Ensemble</i>	<i>Wednesdays lunchtime</i>	<i>B16</i>

We encourage pupils who learn an instrument outside school to join any of the groups listed above – please attend the appropriate rehearsal or see Mrs O’Brien in the music department.

### **Choirs**

JGHS has a great tradition of choirs, and all pupils are encouraged to join the many choirs we offer. No audition is necessary for any of the choirs, just an enjoyment of singing!

<i>Senior Choir (S4 – S6)</i>	<i>Wednesdays after school</i>	<i>B1</i>
<i>S2/3 Choir</i>	<i>Tuesdays lunchtime</i>	<i>B1</i>
<i>S1 Choir</i>	<i>Tuesdays lunchtime</i>	<i>2.01</i>
<i>Chamber Choir</i>	<i>Thursdays after school</i>	<i>B3</i>

## Rock Night 2015

This year's gig takes place at the Electric Circus (on Market Street beside Edinburgh Dungeon) on Tuesday 6th October from 7.00 - 9.00pm.

This is the first social event for all S1 to S6 pupils and everyone is invited to come along and hear some great music.

It will feature artists and bands from S3 to S6, and also a staff band.

Special appearance by Appear Invisible.

Tickets are only £5 and available from the door at the gig - doors open at 6.45pm.

R. Dearsley

D. O'Brien



## ART DEPARTMENT



**S2 The Lifecycle of Stuff: Schools Art Project-** The Art Department at James Gillespie's has been successful in their application to be part of a group of schools working in partnership with Creative Carbon Scotland and lead artist Kathy Beckett who has a background in textiles and design with a strong grounding in themes of sustainability and circular economy. More information to follow.

**S3 Art & Design Trip to Modern One** to see Masterpieces: 20<sup>th</sup> Century European and Scottish Art—new date for trip **27<sup>th</sup> October 2015**. This is part of an ongoing partnership with the National Galleries where a group of students will become involved in a Digital Art Project following the initial gallery visit and will be working alongside digital designers SNOOK to re-imagine this exhibition in digital ways that can then be shared as a resource for others visiting the gallery.

**S5/6 A Level Art Trip to Leith School of Art Open Day on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September:** A visit to inspire our emerging artists to consider their future career pathways in Art and Design and consider a Foundation Course initially. This visit is always an exciting introduction to sketchbooks and folio development towards a portfolio for Art School admission.

Art Department

# STUDENT LIBRARY ASSISTANTS

Several students from various year groups started working in the Library, Malala Building, at the start of the new term. Already they have made a huge difference to the smooth running of the library during the very busy lunchtime period, as well as developing new skills themselves.

The student library assistants will be involved in creating a display linked to National Poetry Day which takes place on Thursday 8th October.

Also in the Library, Careers Drop –In Sessions have resumed. The Careers Adviser is available on the second Thursday of every month at lunchtime. No appointment is needed and students of all ages are welcome.



E. Forrest

## HIGHER ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE TRIP

The Higher Environmental Science class visited the Water of Leith Centre with Mrs Harvey-Jamieson and Mr Stewart. It was a fascinating introduction to environmental management issues in Edinburgh. We began with a presentation on the Water of Leith and the Union Canal before heading out for fieldwork. We took samples of invertebrates in the river, and uncovered some fish too. We also investigated sources of pollution and the invasive species found on the banks.



C. Stewart

## SENIOR DRAMA PRODUCTION

Work has begun on the Senior Production and the details are as follows:

*Blithe Spirit* by Noël Coward

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2015

At Darroch Campus in the Drama Studio, G20.

Matinee Performance 2pm

Evening Performance 7pm

Tickets will be on sale from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December from the cast and crew at both the Lauderdale and Darroch campus.

M. Hardie

# Staff News

New arrivals, staff changes, promotions and farewells....

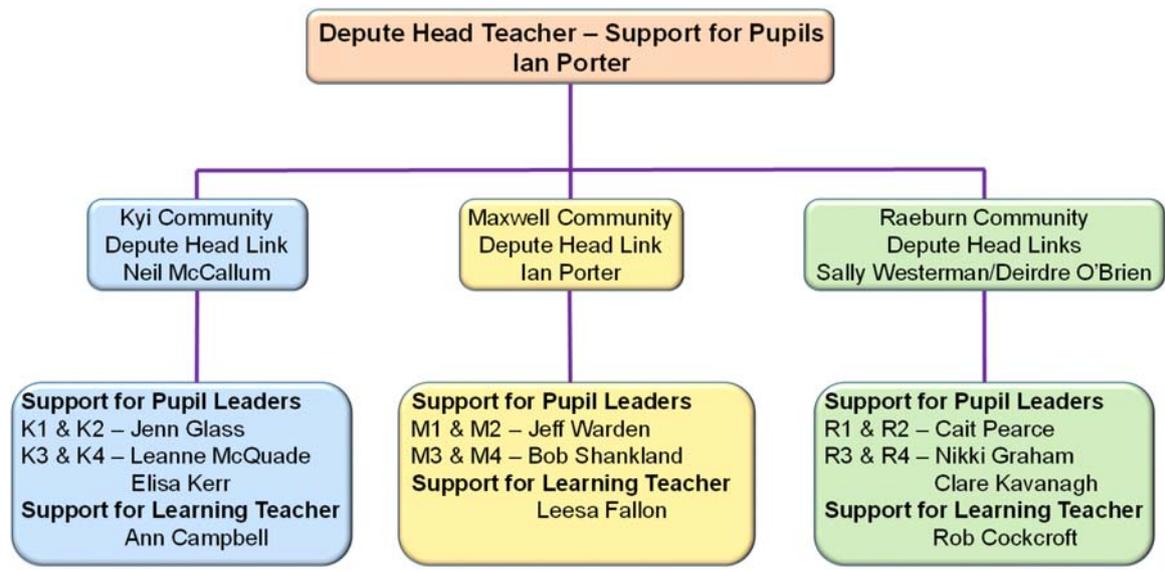
**New arrivals this year for**  
 Michael Alexander  
 Emma Allan-Brown  
 Sara Brown  
 Steve Corson  
 Nicki Falconer  
 Malcolm Hardie  
 Colin Hay  
 Elaine Oram  
 Hollie Pica  
 Bob Shankland  
 Kirsty Wallace  
 Maggie Willis

**Missing you already**  
 Kyra Atkinson  
 Craig Bell  
 Julie Brayford  
 Jean Gordon  
 Morag Hansen  
 Hazel Kinnear  
 Sharon Law  
 Phil Martin  
 Anne McAleavy  
 Rebecca McKenzie  
 Rachel Millar  
 Amanda Murphy  
 Keith Waiton  
 Nicole Wilson

**New arrivals, promotions & changes**  
 Toby Beaven (Probationer – Chemistry)  
 Alison Coleman (Probationer – Biology)  
 Colin Jack (Modern Studies)  
 Ashleigh Kennedy (CL History)  
 Jennifer Millard (Probationer – Mandarin)  
 Fiona Oatman (Pupil Support Assistant)  
 Deirdre O'Brien (DHT)  
 Laura Oudney (Probationer – Biology)  
 Ian Porter (DHT)  
 Clair Robinson (Clerical Assistant)  
 Lisa Shields (Music)  
 Paul Smith (Physics)  
 Rosie Steer (Probationer – English)  
 Laura Summers (School Support Assistant)

**Congratulations!**

Due to some of these staffing changes, please note the following:



# MATHS SUPPORT CLUBS



Maths support clubs are now up and running for every level from S1 up to Higher. These clubs are run by our S6 Mathematicians who are keen to share their enthusiasm and understanding with others.

All pupils are encouraged to attend to get extra support but those with National unit resits are particularly encouraged to pop along if you cannot make the teacher led revision classes. It runs every Wednesday after school in room 2.05 in Malala (all levels) and Thursday after school in G8 at Darroch (s4-6 only). Please come along!

B. Lewis

# FRENCH CINEMA CLUB



The Modern Languages Department is proud to announce that the French Cinema Club will soon be returning to James Gillespie's in a brand new venue: the Forum! Films will be shown every Wednesday lunchtime and posters will soon be appearing around the school with the date of the first screening!

N. Ponte

# DRESS CODE SURVEY

Since May 2015 we have been surveying staff, parents and pupils with regard to the dress code here at JGHS.

At the time of closure (6th September 2015) the survey had gathered over 1800 detailed and interesting responses. Many thanks to those of you who took the time to contribute and share your thoughts, opinions and suggestions.

Mr Macdonald and his senior team will now take the time between our September weekend and October holidays to read and analyse the data to help form a decision on the way forward for the dress code for JGHS pupils.

The final decision on dress code will be shared with all parties in October 2015 and any changes will come in to effect in August 2016.

*For your information please find below a link to the numerical results of our survey (as shown on our school website front page).*

<http://jamesgillespies.co.uk/dress-code-survey-data/>

E Grant

# TENERIFE

## INTERCAMBIO 2016

This year marks the fourth Spanish Exchange with the prestigious Colegio Luther King in Tenerife. So far the Program has been a huge success with over 90% of participants gaining a grade A at National 5 and the vast majority of these going on to study Spanish at Higher. We are also now collaborating with the Biology and Food Technology departments to make the exchange an even more enriching educational experience. Apart from playing a key part in our young people achieving academic goals, the exchange offers students a unique social experience and the chance to develop lasting friendships.

### Dates:

Hosting: Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Away: Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May – Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Coming soon!



# PUPIL VOICE 2015—2016

The leaders of the senior school were selected out of 50 applicants at the end of S5 who were rigorously interviewed by Last year's leaders and were also given a day's Training by the departing group. They in turn have been gathering a wider pupil voice throughout the school. Five of the group meet with junior Reps and 5 with senior reps on a rotational basis once a fortnight. Already their agenda has been dynamic and their enthusiasm amazing. They have held assemblies to introduce themselves and explain the function of the pupil voice and raise much needed funds for the Syrian refugee crisis encouraging a collection of £800 for this cause. Future plans include a Senior School social to raise funds; Pizza lunches, Friday Dress up Day. They have consulted on the use of Bells and their frequency, the draft Home study policy and have become involved in The Eco Group and introduced a complaints/solution box.

Members of the group attended the Wild at Heart entrepreneurial conference and some of the group also hope to join STV Fountainbridge show slot for pupil Leaders in the school as well as attending Parent Council meetings. They have a strong sense of citizenship and responsibility and are fantastic role models for the younger school and it is wonderful to see them growing as leaders. It is a delight to meet with them for an hour each week and share their journey. See them on the Pupil voice face book <https://www.facebook.com/pupilvoicejghs>

Sally Westerman  
(Depute Head Teacher)



*(Captiva Mills and Fergus Cunningham - chairperson  
Rachel Chowings and Charlie Stanford - Education  
and extracurricular  
Molly Paechter and Erin Cline -Communications  
and Marketing*

## GOLD DUKE OF EDINBURGH EXPEDITION

The Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition, four days of walking..... the words fill some with dread. The idea of walking 75 kilometres makes some run for the hills – ironically. However, this year's group loved nothing more than to be stuck in the hills for five days, with only what they carried in on their backs with them and the midgies for company. The groups were all walking between Kinloch Hourn and Loch Affric area walking over both tracks, footpaths and blagging it up wild trackless hillsides. Every night the groups camped in the wilderness with only one night glamping it up in a conventional campsite. There were heroes to be found amongst the group every day as some organised collection of fuel for fires, others carried rucksacks while exhausted friends recovered, food and stories were shared and many sang their way across Scotland.

This expedition, their Gold assessed, was the culmination of three years of work; Bronze and Silver expeditions, orienteering exercises, tent pitching practice, training hikes, a lot of which were done in the rain. Still, this didn't put the large group of sixth years off as they made their way into the hills one last time together and completed their final hike in style on the 14<sup>th</sup> September.

They are already planning the reunion.

Lorna Hinton (participating student) and A. Campbell

## THE MALALA BUILDING AND PHASE 2 OF OUR NEW BUILD

The Malala building continues to be enjoyed by ALL who use it, with the collaboration spaces being extremely well used as both educational and social areas.



It also continues to impress ALL who visit including our p.7 parents and pupils who had tours of the building on Thursday 24 at the Open Evening. Some of the young prospective pupils were reluctant to leave!

Bruntsfield House Refurbishment is now complete and if you have a wee look at the gable opposite reception, you will see that we are now back to the original for the building with a sash and case window and balcony. The room inside is now an incredibly light and welcoming space for pupils.



### Phase 2: The Sports and Performing Arts Building – UPDATE

Both buildings are progressing well with all steelwork now in place and floors being poured. They are currently on schedule to be completed by mid-July 2016.



### Sponsor a Brick or a Bench

Both campaigns have started well and name plaques will be seen soon of those who have supported us so far. Sponsor forms can be found on our website for anyone wishing to be part of this appreciation of our new buildings.

J. Croll

Depute Head Teacher