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fortunas





Open Day 2023

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Dollar Academy

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Fortunas 52
Many thanks to everyone who contributed articles or images to *Fortunas* 51; the deadline for submission of articles for the Christmas issue is **Thursday 12 October**.

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The opinions expressed in this magazine belong to the individual writers and not to Dollar Academy.

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From the Rector

Time flies when you are having fun. In one sense, I simply cannot believe that we find ourselves accelerating towards the end of Session 2022–23. On the other hand, when I reviewed the proofs for edition 51 of *Fortunas*, I was struck by the sheer magnitude of what the Dollar Academy community have achieved this year, across multiple fronts. It was particularly pleasing to note successes in new areas too, such as our boys’ football team appearing in a national final for the first time. I think all readers will get a feel for the fun that we have at the school alongside all the hard work and perseverance that leads to such an impressive array of achievements both within and outwith the classroom.

Earlier this session, we wished Mrs Barbour all the best for her next adventure. From the moment I met her, I understood that she was immensely talented and a special part of the Dollar ethos. Crucially, her love of working with young people was at the very core of her practice. Adored by pupils, parents, and colleagues alike, I knew that the younger members of the Academy were in capable and caring hands. And then I found out that she was a fellow sailor... even better! Well, fair winds and following seas, Mrs Barbour—I hope to see you on the water this summer and, on behalf of the Academy, thank you for your dedicated service.

Leading a school is a great privilege, throughout both the highs and the lows. There are, of course, countless moments of joy in an organisation that finds its foundations in learning and a capacity for growth and good, but these are punctuated by sad or upsetting events—the type of which a wholly human organisation can never escape. The tragic loss of Mrs Gill McFadyean was felt acutely by all who knew her, and it is right that colleagues and Former Pupils pay tribute to her memory in this publication. I miss her presence, her style and her commitment to the Dollar cause.

Given the diversity of goings-on at Dollar, editing *Fortunas* can never be a straightforward task, and, as such, we are all again indebted to Mrs Heather Moore and her team for handling things so professionally.

I hope everyone connected to the school enjoys the summer. Thank you all for your ongoing support of the Academy.

Ian Munro



GILL McFADYEAN 8 March 1969 – 28 October 2022 Prep and Junior School Teacher Houseparent of McNabb and Tait 2000 - 2022

How to say all we should about Gill McFadyean? Her personal vitality, the breadth of her professional impact and her importance to Dollar deserve chapters, which *Fortunas* cannot give. So—this tribute will have to be much-in-little, as she herself so memorably was. Simple things, then: she was—simply—unforgettable, a person of such vibrancy and style, intensely alive, fizzing with energy and feeling and ideas. She loved a joke, a drink, a story, a rant, an intrigue, a dance. She was committed. She took action. She galvanised things: tug o’ war teams were charged with grit and might; song-and-dance routines got pace and edge; election nights were passionate with debate—and winning was oxygen to the fire of her great enthusiasms. She loved a big night and a crowded dance floor—and she suited them.

But on the smaller stage, no one was overlooked: tears would be dried, perplexity comforted, algebra sorted and the bleeding stanchied. The inept were repurposed. The slugabeds routed out, dispatched. Meanwhile, schedules happened, laundry appeared and the troops were deployed.

Taxis and tickets would materialise. There would be karaoke. And what the clock said did not matter—24/7 meant just that to her. She would be the first to say, ‘Yes, we can...’ and ‘What if we...?’ and (how blessedly) ‘Leave it with me...’ There was always a solution to be found, with her inventive mind on it, her sleeves rolled up and her shoulder to whatever awkward wheel needed turning.

I worked thus with her and Neil for 20 years, initially when she was Houseparent of McNabb (and then jointly of Tait) followed by her appointment with Neil as Senior Houseparent running the day-to-day operation of Dollar’s boarding. She was pivotal, spearheading, for example, the scheme for the Social Services certification and CPD training for the whole boarding staff, an immense and ongoing task. And this was only part of her coordination of the Houses, which saw her become the go-to person for every ‘How...?’ question. That she did this while running busy classes in the Prep School (and the wardrobe for school musicals) is only one of the many feats of juggling she managed in her career.

Some years ago, I wrote another short essay on Gill for the Boarding Schools Association, nominating her for their annual UK-wide staff award. She didn’t win, but she should have—I believed then, as now, that the McFadyean team was the most important factor in the success of Dollar’s sector-leading boarding provision, and she herself a practitioner of national significance. She could have done so much more, wherein lies one part of the tragedy. We cannot begin to estimate the wider, deeper loss for Neil, Fred and Abi—but, as a community, we know and mourn the Gill-shaped space at the heart of Dollar, even as we celebrate a life lived so largely.

Geoff Daniel (Former Deputy Rector)

Whilst whoever crossed paths with Mrs McFadyean unquestionably has fond memories, the two of us (and, assuredly, all McNabb & Tait boys) hold her in a particularly special light. Looking back at our most treasured times at Dollar Academy, we realised that very few of these stories begin or end without a feature from Mrs McFadyean. This will be true for every boarder lucky enough to call her their Houseparent, and this is rooted in the love she showed every single one of us who lived in McNabb & Tait.

These memories come in all shapes and sizes—from her razor-sharp wit in House meetings to her recounting of infamous boarding house stories at ‘Tuesday

Tea Club’. We both fondly recall the tug-o-war missions, including all the training, as well as the talent show victories, the Sunday trips and Sports Weekend antics. On a more personal note, I (Gus) recall my final hug on my final day in McNabb & Tait. It was by no means our last hug, but it was by far the most special, as she told me how proud she was of my two years in the House. For me (Harry), it was the night I came back from a school event and was invited to sit with her, Mr McFadyean and a friend or two of theirs, to join in putting the world to rights.

The big memories immediately jumped out at us, but as we discussed and reflected on this remarkable woman, we both quickly realised that it was the little touches that we both remembered so fondly. The arm round the shoulder, the motivational pep talk, being told straight to suck it up when required. She knew exactly what was needed, and when, and this has most certainly left a lasting impression.

And to Neil, Fred and Abi, in reading this we hope that we have been able to reaffirm something that you three undoubtedly already know. These memories and recollections of Mrs McFadyean are held so dearly by the two of us, and they have massively impacted the two of us as individuals. Your wife, your mum was truly one of a kind, and she will be sorely missed for a long time to come.

Harry and Gus Warr (FP 2016 and 2018)

Going through life, you meet many people—interacting daily with individuals from all kinds of backgrounds and differing circumstances. However, it is rare that any of these individuals leave a lasting impression upon you. It truly takes something special to leave an imprint on a person’s life that creates a lasting memory, and one that will be held close to their heart for all time. To me, Mrs McFadyean was one such person.

The fact that even today, almost ten years after having taken my last steps within the boarding house and the Academy as a whole, I still refer to her as ‘Mrs’ speaks volumes not just about the immeasurable respect I had for her, but about how important she was in helping to nurture me into the man I am today.

When I arrived at Dollar, it was a place I had never heard of (let alone imagined I would be gifted the opportunity to attend). My initial trepidations soon subsided, however, thanks to the simple welcome I received from the warm, loving and caring personality

of Mrs McFadyean when I entered McNabb & Tait. She immediately accepted me into the small ‘bubble’ that being a boarding school pupil creates. This made me feel that—rather than leaving my parents and my home for some isolated, rural educational institution—I had come to a second home.

No matter how much we all like to deny it, every boy relies on his mother—from the moment they set foot into the world until the very day that we have our reunion, in whatever form that may be. Without question, Mrs McFadyean took up that mantle and acted like a mother—not just to me, but to all the boys of McNabb & Tait. She helped guide me as I slowly began to find my feet in the world and she gave me the confidence to believe that, no matter what anyone said, I was the only one who could chart my course.

It is hard to express in words how much I am going to miss Mrs McFadyean. I know that without her, I would never have become the person I am proud to call myself today. My only regret is that future residents of McNabb & Tait will not have the chance to understand just how amazing an individual she was. But I know that her impact upon my life—and the lives of all the boys lucky enough to have known her before, during and after my time at the school—will never be forgotten.

Gavin Pierpoint (FP 2014)

REMEMBERING GILL

‘What’s the chat, friends?’ One of Gill’s many catchphrases, that we still remember and miss today. Our friend, ever busy, bustling up and down the Prep School corridor, a flash of stripy top going by, Moleskine notebook and pen in hand, always prepared and thinking about what was coming next— even if it was to take place months in the future. It is safe to say that Gill was the heart and soul of our team—always there, always willing to help, offering advice and support, always with a funny anecdote or story to make you smile. She was respected by young and old alike. Anyone who walked by her classroom or worked with Gill (not least, as she called them, her team) could feel the cheerful buzz of happy children, focused and engaged in their learning. There was nothing she would not do to ensure that every child in her class reached their full potential. A budding artist, her wall displays were second to none and the envy of all her colleagues. She would give everything and anything a try, usually with great success. There was just one exception: technology, which she never quite saw eye to eye with... although, over time, they developed a working relationship, of sorts.

As a friend, she loved nothing more than to share a cuppa (or, when she could, a gin) and catch up on all the news, usually as she busied herself multi-tasking: dealing with ‘her boys’ in the boarding house or pottering around in her garden. Even in her last few months, she still enjoyed hearing the gossip, and nothing pleased her more than a visit when she could discuss the merits (or not) of the latest initiatives and curricular developments on the horizon. And who could forget her involvement in our infamous bingo game—during the occasional staff meeting—where the unspoken task was to try to include as many famous song lyrics as possible. Sorry, Julia, that long-kept secret’s out now! Or the unforgettable crocheted bikini, gifted during our Summer Secret Santa, affectionately known as Bikini Bonanza. An item much loved and worn each year by one lucky recipient, much to the amusement of the rest of the gang. Or, finally, her own take on the Pink Ladies where ‘us Preppie staff’ went full ‘Greased Lightning’ during the Prep 5 Easter Extravaganza. Gill was Dollar through and through.

No one could argue that Gill was a fighter. With her positive attitude, drive and determination, she faced everything that was thrown at her with great dignity, hope and humour. She is greatly missed but will forever hold a strong and secure place in the hearts of all who knew her. With her infectious laugh and that twinkle in her eye, she will forever be our Chatty Chum.

Nicola Letford and Lynette Pollock



FIDA: THE FUTURES INSTITUTE AT DOLLAR ACADEMY

The past six months have seen some exciting developments for the Futures Institute at Dollar Academy (FIDA), which continues to grow in scale and impact, helping ensure Dollar's place at the forefront of education in Scotland. Open to pupils from the Academy and from schools across Scotland, FIDA offers projects, design challenges and competitions rooted in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. These projects are co-created with experts from industry and universities and involve designing solutions to real-world problems—giving pupils opportunities to learn and work in ways that prepare them for the world beyond school.

FIDA has been widely recognised as a beacon project in terms of both educational innovation and partnership working. This has evolved into an important opportunity for Dollar Academy to influence the national conversation about educational reform in Scotland. It is now beyond doubt that the current system, which relies almost exclusively on SQA examinations to measure pupil attainment, is going to change. The picture emerging from the Hayward Review of options for the future points to the likelihood of a new Scottish Leaving Certificate that will include more than traditional single-subject exams. Schools will be required to offer interdisciplinary, project-based learning that enables pupils to demonstrate skills as well as knowledge and delivers 'learning in context'. This, in turn, will mean new ways of measuring attainment and new qualifications.

FIDA is now working with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) to build our existing offer into a qualification at the same level as a Higher. The new FIDA Sustainability Diploma will be university-accredited, and recognised by employers, colleges and universities. To develop it, we have brought together a steering group that includes representation from Education Scotland, Clackmannanshire Council and the senior leadership of four schools from Clackmannanshire, Stirling and Dundee. We have a unique opportunity to help shape the future of education in Scotland and to pilot a FIDA qualification that has national resonance.

In the meantime, we continue to add new projects and challenges to our online FIDA platform, and to offer new opportunities for learners to undertake FIDA projects in person.



A Tartan for Clackmannanshire

The Provost of Clackmannanshire called upon FIDA as a partner in running a competition for secondary school pupils to design the county's first official tartan. In response, we worked with expert designers and weavers and local historians to produce high-quality learning resources that were freely accessible to teachers and pupils across Clackmannanshire. Pupils from Alva, Lornhill and Dollar Academies took up the challenge, some entering independently through our FIDA online platform, others as part of a class project led by teachers in their schools using the FIDA resources. A presentation ceremony was held in the Captain's Room to recognise the efforts of participating pupils from across the county. The winning entrant was 16-year-old Ronan, who is now working with local designer Claire Hunter and kiltmaker Lesley Thornton, to develop his design and see it submitted for registration by the Scottish Tartans Authority.

Wallace High Apprenticeship Collaboration

One of our current online projects, *My Community, My Food*, has been adapted and incorporated into an innovative apprenticeship programme run by Wallace High School in Stirling, in partnership with local employers. Pupils use our FIDA resources to learn about the global issue of sustainable



food production and guide their independent research into sustainably produced local produce, before creating an original recipe primarily made from these foods. Dollar teacher and MasterChef finalist Jilly McCord led three sessions with the pupils, culminating in the preparation and presentation of their original dishes. The pupils were delighted to have Jilly help them 'chef it up'!

Future Projects

After the summer holidays, FIDA will launch a diverse range of new projects that have been developed through new partnerships with Barratt Construction, Clackmannanshire Council and a number of local and national wildlife conservation organisations. These projects will not only see pupils from Dollar Academy and our neighbouring schools working with leading professionals in their respective fields, they will also offer significant—and potentially transformative—work experience opportunities. More about these projects will be shared in future editions of *Fortunas*.

Futures Institute building project

At the time of writing, a planning application has been submitted to Clackmannanshire Council for a new Futures



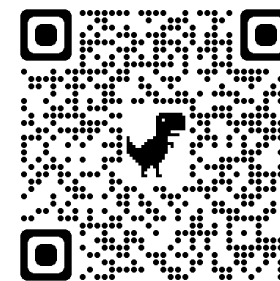
Institute building, designed to support the new ways of working and learning that our projects require. The building is ambitious, setting a new benchmark for Scotland in terms of educational innovation, sustainable architecture and community outreach.

We are extremely fortunate that the Futures Institute has been designed by globally renowned architect and Dollar FP Andrew Whalley OBE. Currently Chairman of Grimshaw, Andrew is the architect behind many innovative and award-winning projects such as the Eden Project in Cornwall, Waterloo International Terminal in London, and the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center in New York. You can see Andrew talk about his design concept and ambitions for the building on our dedicated web pages: <https://www.dollaracademy.org.uk/hub/>

The Futures Institute will provide essential new spaces that will provide enhanced educational experiences to Dollar Academy pupils of all ages. Its innovative classrooms, laboratories and design facilities integrated under one roof will enable creative and collaborative working that breaks down subject boundaries. The Institute will also welcome groups of young people from across Scotland to participate in FIDA projects, ensuring that Dollar Academy fulfils its potential as a 21st-century educational charity.

We would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to help support the development of the Futures Institute by contributing to our fundraising efforts or to our growing programme of educational initiatives. A contact form can be found via the web address above and a member of the team will be in touch with all respondents.

Jacqueline Smith, FIDA Project Consultant





THE ALPACAS RETURN

The alpacas (Robert, Paul and Odin) arrived on Friday 21 April (on loan from the Alpaca Trekking Centre) and settled easily into their new enclosure. They have formed a huge part of Dollar's guidance and wellbeing initiatives—for pupils in exam years, as well as many others. Miss Cooper and her P3C class visited the alpacas within hours of their arrival at school. Their creativity was well and truly sparked, and they had a great time imagining all the fun and wild things alpacas might do.

We know that many local community groups also benefited from being around the alpacas in the summer of 2022, and, at the time of writing this in April, we hope to build upon that offering this summer. In 2022, pupils from Seamab School came along and built special memories, and we had the Primary 7 pupils at Strathdevon take part in alpaca trekking. The Dollar Scouts visited to learn more about the welfare of the animals and loved every second of their time with them. Our friends from Ukraine also developed new vocabulary and gained in confidence from the conversations that took place around handling the alpacas.

Most importantly, pupils throughout the school enjoy the opportunity to learn more about caring for and respecting animals. We have had advice from the SSPCA that has helped us to ensure the best interests of the animals are met and several staff have attended an Introduction to Alpaca Keeping course. We wish to thank everyone in the school community for their continued support in this initiative. Keeping alpacas is a huge undertaking and requires teamwork from the ground staff, pupils, teachers and support staff. We hope you have made time to visit these amazing, curious animals.

Jenny Burbury





MAUREEN BARBOUR

I suspect Maureen Barbour may be the one and only Dollar Academy teacher to arrive at her new posting (some nine years ago) by boat. Of course, this is not entirely true—or possible, given our land-locked location—but she did sail up the west coast of the United Kingdom from Devon to Portavadie to join us in August of 2014.

Maureen brought with her vast experience with infants, and she very quickly set about a gently transformative evolution in this part of the Prep School, centred on learning through play and learning outdoors—aptly titled ‘Learning Wild’. She was certainly never happier than when wrapped up against the cold, wellies on, leading the children in learning walks, building nests or tying knots. She was instrumental in opening our doors to pre-school children through the innovative ‘Come and Play’ sessions, now a regular feature in our calendar year. These have been instrumental in helping young children make that step from nursery to ‘Proper School’.

Maureen’s interests and influence, however, moved swiftly beyond what was initially most familiar to her. Upon arrival, she

sought to observe, learn about, research and understand our children’s development (in the academic sense, but also, importantly, in the social and emotional senses) as they moved through the Prep and Junior Schools. She believes in the power of communication and the importance of building relationships: teacher/pupil, teacher/parent and teacher/teacher. Through talking and listening, researching and explaining, she sought to develop and improve all aspects of the primary curriculum. This was most notable in the skills-based development of the Science curriculum from Prep 1 upwards; in installing a culture of disciplinary literacy across the curriculum; in the introduction of taster sessions in French, German and Spanish, designed to be oral and fun introductions to the languages; in embedding the discipline of writing moderation across all year groups; in reviewing and refreshing spelling and reading schemes; in championing Engineering and Design; and in creating new schemes of outdoor learning for all year groups.

But it was in making time for all those little conversations, the ones that just check everything is all right, with pupils and teachers alike, that Maureen’s innate kindness and humanity shone most brightly. As well as being rigorous with regular pupil wellbeing reviews, and having a friendly word for everyone, she always made time for those pupils (and teachers) who just needed a wee word of encouragement or a listening ear every now and then. The number of older pupils who dropped in to say goodbye during her last few weeks suggests that those words of encouragement were never forgotten.

First to arrive in the morning and last to leave at night, Maureen had time for us all. She skilfully mentored probationers and newly qualified teachers as well as guiding more experienced staff as they progressed

through to management. And I could not have wished for a kinder or more able colleague and friend. I treasure the many lighter moments we shared at the end of every busy day.

We all wish her well as she returns to her true passion: sailing. This time, she will simply be able to enjoy the peace, views, wildlife and camaraderie of life on the open waves, rather than sitting on deck researching the latest initiatives in education or masterminding, with military precision, another Sports Day or garden party.

Alison Morrison

Sebastian V. (Form VI)

FROM THE PUPILS

Mrs Barbour was a very kind, loving person. When we were Preps, she treated all of us with extreme respect. I don’t think I ever saw her get angry at anyone. Even if you did do something wrong, she would stay calm and keep *you* from getting upset, and she would comfort you if you were. She could always put a smile on your face, even if you were just passing her in the corridor. For once I can’t say, ‘But...’ because there is nothing negative to say about her. All I wish is that she had never left.

Arjun B. (Form II)

As we bid farewell to our beloved Mrs Barbour, we cannot help but feel a sense of loss, for she has been an integral part of our school community for many years. She was a kind, warm-hearted leader who always put the needs and happiness of her pupils first. Her unwavering dedication to their success and wellbeing was an inspiration to us all. Throughout her time at Dollar, she radiated a culture of kindness, inclusivity and respect.

Her genuine concern for every person’s wellbeing was evident in everything she did, from her warm and approachable demeanour to her tireless efforts to provide the best possible education for every pupil. Although she did catch me getting into trouble a few times in my Prep School years, I have the utmost fondness for her. On behalf of the entire school community, we wish Mrs Barbour all the best in her future endeavours. We will miss her dearly, but we know the impact she has had on our school community will be felt for years to come.

Mrs Barbour is one of the kindest teachers I have ever known, and she has helped me in so many ways during my time at Dollar Academy. She also loves a funny joke! And on any dull day, Mrs Barbour can be guaranteed to brighten things up with her smile. She is colourful, cheerful and smart. I will always remember her for being helpful whenever and wherever possible. Showing respect to everyone and knowing exactly what is right or wrong ensured that her pupils always felt relaxed around her. Her love of bunting was well known too, and we all enjoyed making a huge rope of bunting to wish her well in her retirement. I am sad that she has left, but I hope she enjoys her retirement and that she drops back into Dollar to see us soon.

Bethany M. (Junior 1)

Goodbye to Mrs Barbour

(Words by the Prep School pupils, to be sung to the tune of ‘Away in a Manger’)

Goodbye to Mrs Barbour, so caring and kind.
As you start a special journey, leaving Dollar behind.
We’ll miss your happy laughter and your broad beaming smile,
But we have lots of mem’ries, that will last us a while.

Your love of outdoor learning, as we walk through the trees,
And your jokes which keep us laughing, and your tales of the sea.
We’ll miss your love of singing and the fact you’re so cool,
But we know we have been lucky that you’ve been at our school.

You’re always dressed so smartly; your handwriting’s so neat.
And your eyes are so twinkly when you give us a treat.
We’ll miss you, Mrs Barbour, and we wanted to say:
One gigantic, special thank you. Please come visit someday!

Yes, we thank you, Mrs Barbour; please come visit someday.

SHEILA DUNSIRE

It is with great regret that I have to write this farewell to Sheila ‘Numbers’ Dunsire (or, ‘S’) who, for the past seven years, has been the Assistant Bursar at Dollar Academy and an absolute dynamo at the very heart of the Dollar Academy machine. Her work ethic is beyond belief; she works at pace, unrelentingly, and with great accuracy. She is also utterly, unflinchingly, reliable. Her spreadsheets are Meisterwerks of their kind, in which all conceivable variables are capable of being introduced, excluded, or manipulated, according to circumstance, and her mental arithmetic runs at lightning speed. Marion and I believe her memory to be genuinely photographic, such is her seemingly infallible recall for numbers, names, dates and events. I also think she knows absolutely everybody. And I mean *everybody*, including their spouse’s name, children’s names and year groups, where they live, where they went on holiday and what book they happen to be reading. It’s all rather remarkable. In a similar vein, as we all know, the detailed mechanics that allow an organisation of this size to function with any degree of coordination are complex, but Sheila has had as strong an understanding of how it all fits together as anyone I’ve known in my time here. It’s like some osmotic force is at work. Finance underpins just about everything that we do, at one level or another, whether it be perceived or not, and the school can have had no better custodian of its financial interests than her.

She is always ready to help or take on a difficult task, and completely embodies the school’s unofficial motto of ‘work hard, be kind, get



involved’; her patience and dedication to ‘getting it right’ are legendary. Within the bigger picture that her finance responsibilities require her to understand, her attention to even the smallest detail is laser sharp, and she has the enviable mental capacity and dexterity to handle multiple complex tasks simultaneously. No errant digit escapes the vigilant eye of ‘Numbers’ Dunsire. She takes with her a wealth of knowledge and experience, and if you still see her around the campus from time to time, it’s because I keep asking her to come back to make the most of her formidable memory and expertise.

Outside of school, Sheila is committed to her family, and she leaves us, in part, to ensure that she has more time to spend with her parents. And, let’s face it, she’s had enough of working with me. She is an avid member of a local book group and clearly has intentions of doing more travelling with her husband, Greg, himself an FP, and she will have more time to see her daughter, Kirsty, now working in London and Fraser, at university in Aberdeen.

I will miss our humorous exchanges (whoever would believe that finance could be so much fun?) –we have laughed ourselves to tears (and worse) over some of the absurdities

of life that have ‘crossed our desks’. I regret no longer feeling permitted to sound a mock trumpet fanfare, by way of prelude to a morning greeting, as I climb the stairs to the office. (Graeme just doesn’t seem to respond to it in the same way—must be his humourless McNabb House upbringing). As I write this, I can hear her in the next office, explaining some ridiculously complex pro-rata holiday calculation, assuming someone working term-time only, on a 0.76 FTE, based on a 97-hour working week, but with specified contractual days off related to the lunar calendar and all predicated on a functional working year of 13.9 days, equally spread across the three terms. This, oddly, is interspersed with gales of laughter. How does that work? What could possibly be so funny? But it is. Perhaps it comes naturally when you knew you wanted to be an accountant from the age of 5½...

Professional to her very fingertips, and great fun to be with, I will miss her. Enormously. There she goes, next door—she’s giggling again...

Justin Wilkes (Bursar)



JAN HARBER

Jan was delighted to join Dollar Academy as the new Assistant Head of Prep School just after the Easter break. Educated at The Mary Erskine School in Edinburgh, she read History and Politics at York University before completing an MPhil in History at Liverpool University. Prior to training to be a teacher in 2007, she worked for Lothian and Borders Police as a project manager, having trained as a PRINCE2 practitioner and spent time travelling in Asia and Australia. She completed her PGDE at Aberdeen University, and then went on to do her probation year at Andover School in Brechin in 2008.

Jan joins us from Cargilfield Prep School in Edinburgh where she has worked for thirteen years in the Pre-Prep Department. Prior to Cargilfield, she taught in primary 5 and 6 and as a Science specialist teacher in nursery to primary 7 at Robert Gordon’s College in Aberdeen. She spent ten years at Cargilfield gaining experience teaching in primary 1-3, where she also held the position of Head of Transition which included managing the transitions from nursery into primary 1 and primary 3 in to 4. During this time, she gained a wealth of experience in a diverse range of curricular leader roles including Numeracy, ICT and

Literacy and she was heavily involved in the STEM and Science provision, including extra-curricular science clubs and curricular STEM days. Jan enjoyed teaching a wide range of extra-curricular activities including hockey, athletics, yoga, coding and woodwork during her time at Cargilfield. In recent years, she was appointed Head of Nursery where she led a team of eight early years practitioners and oversaw the increase of numbers in the nursery cohort and delivered the expansion of the nursery building in 2023. She also introduced the beach kindergarten and extended the nature kindergarten provision within the Pre-Prep. Jan was also heavily involved in the development of a Curricular Leader Management Group at Cargilfield, leading on improvement planning, HIGIOS and the National Improvement Framework which continue to be key areas of interest for her.

Jan is married to David and they have two young boys: Archie (age nine) and Freddie (age seven). She enjoys spending much of her time outside of work with them. She lived and worked in Australia between April 2003 and May 2004, and she has spent time travelling in New Zealand, the USA and Europe. A keen sportswoman

with a particular interest in hockey and athletics, she ran the Great North Run in 2004 and the London Marathon in 2011. More recently, Jan has taken up wild swimming, an activity she undertakes most weekend with friends. If not in a wild river or lake, she can be found walking her dog, Ruby, on the Dundas Estate near where she lives.

GRAEME
MORRISON

Graeme was delighted to return to Dollar Academy as the school's Head of Finance in December 2022. Born in Hong Kong, he attended the school as a boarder in McNabb House from 1993–2001, where he was Deputy Head Boy and captain of the 1st XV.

Graeme's route into the accountancy profession was far from conventional. After finishing at Dollar, he studied Physiology and Sports Science at the University of Glasgow for a short while before realising his childhood dream of becoming a professional rugby player, signing with Glasgow Warriors in the 2003/04 season. Graeme spent the next ten years with the team, representing them on 175 occasions—making him, at one point, the most capped Glasgow Warrior in the club's history. In his first season as a full-time professional rugby player, he also had the tremendous honour of being selected to tour Australia with the senior men's Scotland squad, where he gained his first full international cap. He went on to represent Scotland on 35 occasions, including at the Rugby World Cup in



New Zealand 2011, and he has many fantastic memories from his rugby career, including lifting the Calcutta Cup in 2008 and beating Ireland in front of 80,000 fans at Croke Park in Dublin.

After a series of injuries, Graeme was forced into retirement from the sport in 2013, at which time he swapped his rugby boots for a calculator, embarking on his journey to become a chartered accountant. Graeme spent four years training with the Royal Bank of Scotland, achieving his qualification in 2017, before joining Johnston Carmichael, where he specialised in corporate finance.

The opportunity to return to Dollar, where it all began, was a welcome one. Graeme's Houseparents during his time in McNabb House were John and Joan Foster, and Graeme attributes much of his success in life to John's influence—and not just on the pitch. John was Head of Rugby at Dollar, and he was a mentor to Graeme throughout his school years and beyond. Returning to Dollar gives Graeme the chance to have a positive

impact on a community that has always been dear to his heart.

Graeme's father, Kenneth Morrison, was Head Boy at the school in 1968, and Graeme's siblings all attended Dollar Academy. He and his wife, Sarah, are very much looking forward to moving into the village, and they are delighted that their children—daughter, Ellie (7), and two sons, Brodie (5) and Beauden (3)—will be the next generation of the Morrison family to experience a wonderful life at Dollar Academy.



ARGYLL

As it falls to me to update you on how this boarding year is treating Argyll, it is first and foremost imperative that I inform you of the fact that we are no longer just one of the three Houses. No... we are now the glorious victors of this year's House Turn, breaking McNabb and Tait's ten-year spell of pure good luck. After months of vigorous training, enforced by Cameron K. (Form VI) and Valerie A. (Form VI), we delivered a 'Broadway-worthy' (Mr Burbury's words, not mine) take on Nativity's *Sparkle and Shine*, with original Argyll lyrics and show-stopping choreography, courtesy of our professionals: Kamila S. (Form V) and Lex F. (Form VI). We even lifted our youngest, 'little' Amelia M. (Junior 2), into the air as we sparkled (and shone) our way to glory.

This past holiday season was also lit up by the Edinburgh Christmas markets where our brave souls—Sol C. (Form III) and Lila G. (Form IV)—even dared to go on the rides (while everyone else enjoyed the overpriced hot chocolate and crepes). I cannot omit to mention our annual pantomime night (we delivered the best jokes) and, of course, the many

Christmas dances that took place, literally, on our doorstep. All of this certainly got us into the holiday mood.

The holidays and prelim season also brought successes across a range of pursuits. Natalie Y. (Form IV) achieved fourth place in an international debate competition, arguing for Team Scotland. And Emma W. (Form V) put in an outstanding performance for the Scottish female cricket team at the World Championships. Likewise brilliant at her sport is Lucia O. (Form III), who outplayed all of us on our Top Golf trip, impressing us with her dynamic swing. Jane B. (Form VI) deserves a prize for ‘most consistent attendance at the gym’, while Hannah R. (Form V) and Stasy C. (Form VI) could join any Formula 1 team. They outdid us all—in speed and brutality—on the go-kart track. Our trip to the cinema—led by groupie Melisa G. (Form V)—left many in tears; *Puss in Boots* proved just a bit too emotional.

And even when we just stay in, it's easy to prevent the House from becoming *too* studious and quiet. Countless movie and karaoke nights keep things noisy and busy between revision hours. We have

representatives from so many nations around the globe, and we love cooking for one another, sharing our respective cultures. We celebrated Thanksgiving in November, prepared by 'big' Amelia L. (Form VI) and Lila. This was followed by Kamila's Vietnamese Night for which she enlisted numerous helpers over the course of several hours. Sherry L. (Form V), Alicia V. (Form V), Melisa, Amelia and your author (to name but a few) all helped Kami to prepare over 100 delicious spring rolls. The Spanish celebration of Las Fallas, which involved not only dinner but a balloon-popping 'fireworks' display, was fun too—all prepared and led by Alicia and Sol. In between all these special events, we spend countless evenings chatting around the kitchen counter and huddling in one another's rooms, forming friendships that will last far beyond our time at Dollar. Kate F. and Una L. (both Form IV) are one example of such a priceless friendship. Bonds have also been formed with the girls in the other Houses, too. The cross-House friendships of Anastasia I. and Sadie S. (both Form V), and Stasy and Sofi V. (Form VI) have helped to unite Argyll and Heyworth in lovely ways. Another

combined highlight for all the boarding houses was the second silent disco. That was a magical affair: listening to everyone’s favourite songs as the snow fell outside. The next weekend looked rather different: our annual Supernova Kelpies run and Army Assault course in the (very!) muddy wilderness revealed who was made of the tough stuff. At the time of writing, we are all looking forward to a scary escape room outing. (Study leave and SQA exams are, of course, on all our minds as I write, too).

We cannot wait for the summer term: our amazing girls and the wonderful House ladies have helped to made this year one of laughter, action and success of all kinds. Writing before the Easter break, I know that we are all looking forward to the experience of our final months together.

Valerie A. (Form VI, Head of House)



...AND WHERE IS HOME FOR YOU?

Hello, dobrý den, xin chào, с а й н уу, my name is Kamila Strnadová. and I joined Dollar Academy at the beginning of this school year. I hope it is safe to say that I have integrated seamlessly into the course of life here at Dollar. Perhaps you are wondering why I opened this article with such a series of strange languages. I must admit, it is quite an arbitrary mixture indeed. English, Czech, Vietnamese and Mongolian, respectively. I am the common denominator. My Mongolian mom and Vietnamese dad gave me my

black hair and almond-shaped eyes, yet my mother tongue is Czech. And, as I write, I am sitting on my wee bed in none of those places, but instead in Scotland.

Though I am not any part British, I have developed a soft spot (perhaps even a whole soft dent) in my heart for Scotland. I have always gravitated toward the English language. Back when I was little, and my favourite method of transport was skipping, I loved Thursdays. On Thursdays, I attended an English after-school club. Months and months of persistent attendance only led to a flawless chant of ‘The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round’, and I knew then that I was not going to hone my English skills any further at my favourite club. Luckily, there was a bilingual English school nearby, and my choice of secondary school was made. I was scarcely five when I made this decision. I passed the entrance exams and began the thrilling Form I at my ‘dream school’. My English quickly blossomed, thanks to the teachers who had bottomless patience. Four years later and there I was again: on a plateau with no clear path forward. I yearned for a new challenge, a taller mountain to conquer—a foreign one, to be precise. I wanted to study abroad. My parents were blissfully proud. After all, I certainly did take after them. They had both moved from Vietnam and Mongolia in their early 20s. A single suitcase contained all of their hopes and ambitions to one day give their future children (my little brother and me) lavishly prosperous lives. My journey to Scotland involved a whole abundance of suitcases, but I was as eager to submerge myself in a new culture as my parents had been two decades before. Growing up in Central Europe, where diversity was neither the standard nor the aim, sometimes meant we had to face a handful of irksome obstacles resulting from the fact that we looked different in that place. I let opportunities drift away like feathers. I longed so grievously to belong; I longed for a home.

On holiday, as a child, I would



spend springtimes in Mongolia, where my mom showed me how to ride a camel in the desert (a wholesome pastime). And I spent summers in tropical Vietnam, where my dad taught me how to ride a motorbike (a less wholesome activity; therefore, unbeknownst to my mother!). I did not feel like I was just visiting either of these countries; I belonged there. But I was still homesick for my friends in the Czech Republic, and I thought I might belong with them too. Slowly I learned, and finally I saw, that wherever I went, I had people around me who loved me. And, more importantly, I loved them back. Perhaps this is what defines *my* home. Obstacles were inescapable. My thinking and opinions were often very different from my Vietnamese classmates, and my Czech accent was too strong in my Mongolian pronunciation. So I gave up. I gave up trying to pick just one: one language, one country, one background. Mine is an arbitrary mixture indeed, but I can’t neglect any part of it.

Kamila S. (Form V)



HEYWORTH HOUSE

Heyworth has been a lively place over recent months, and our days have flown by. Looking back, the Christmas period—always fun—seems like a long time ago. Then, in no time, there were post-Christmas prelims to revise for and things suddenly began to feel more serious. Now, as I write, our studies consume so many of our hours, but we still carve out time for relaxation, for blowing off steam.

Fortunately, at no time of the year, is there ever a shortage of House outings. Over Christmas, the festive spirit united all the boarding houses and we enjoyed so many outings and activities, including the traditional pantomime: this year’s *Beauty and the Beast* was a huge hit. And, of course, there was the House Turn, an unmissable Christmastime event. Each House prepares a short act, which is performed on stage during the Boarders’ Ceilidh. Although Heyworth returned home without the prize this year, it was a fantastic bonding experience. The Boarders’ Dinner and Ceilidh is always a wonderful opportunity for boarders and staff to interact on a more casual basis, and we

all enjoyed a lovely meal prepared by our very own Dining Hall chefs before taking part in the ceilidh afterward. The Heyworth House Christmas party was a more relaxed and cosy affair, complete with Secret Santa and festive music.

We are always grateful to the boarding staff for organising so many trips and events (our outing to Murrayfield was voted the House favourite). But one of the most magical evenings was going to see the Christmas Concert in Perth. The school orchestra and various choirs performed beautifully. The boarders are heavily represented across the range of instrumental and choral groups, and they had been practising diligently for weeks before the concert, so we were delighted to be there to support and celebrate all their hard work.

But yes, we have also been working incredibly hard, especially with the SQA exam diet now looming on our collective, metaphorical horizon. All signs are that this year will provide a bumper crop of stellar exam results, and our Form VI boarders have been building up a collection

of university acceptance letters. Excitement, for those of us in Form VI, is building about the lives we are about to embark upon out there in the real world. This is balanced, however, by a growing, sometimes melancholy, sense that our days here at Dollar Academy are numbered.

With final exams approaching rapidly, we only look up rarely—too nervous to take our eye off the SQA ball for long. But, as we write, our thoughts do sometimes turn to the summer term, to the delights of the sunny, happy days that lie ahead: the musical, DofE, the Sponsored Walk and the simpler pleasures of hearing tennis balls being thwacked, the feeling of soft, sun-warmed grass under our fingertips. There is the new garden furniture to be tested! And there will be more trips, into Stirling or Glasgow, St Andrews or Edinburgh. There will be time off to celebrate the hard work that has been done this year, and the achievements that, doubtless, will follow.

Emelia A. (Form VI, Head of House) and
Ashley Y. (Form VI, Deputy Head of House)



McNABB & TAIT

McNabb & Tait life is back in full swing, and we in the House were overjoyed to say goodbye to isolation and masks. This year represented a real return to normality in many ways, and we have enjoyed many different social gatherings and sporting events, just as we used to in the old days.

The Christmas season was once again a very busy and active time for boarders. The boys all scrubbed up well for their year group dances and we were delighted to welcome the return of our iconic Boarders' Ceilidh. Both events saw the boarders well represented in the middle of the dance floor, thanks to Mr Baird's late night ceilidh practices! Another special event was our ever-so-extravagant House Turns, which tested our performance skills and delivered some cheerful Christmas singing and dancing. Devastatingly, Argyll House was deemed victorious this year, but I

have no doubt that the boys will come back stronger next year and retrieve the crown. The Christmas party was another vibrant event with lots of music and games and even the arrival of a very special Santa (whom we all thought looked just a little bit like Mr Baird), but he came bearing presents for all the boys in the House so no one questioned it!

Form IV kicked off their prelim diet just before Christmas, and then, upon their return to the House in the new year, it was time for Forms V and VI to knuckle down to the serious business of prelim revision. Fortunately, the exam period didn't last long. Once it was behind us, we could join the rest of the House on some of the well-planned trips. An inaugural trip to the new Top Golf venue in Glasgow was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. There were varying levels of skill on display with Mr McEwan

taking the #1 spot (thanks to Hunter's absence!). We also had a couple of trips to Murrayfield, including one to watch Scotland vs Ireland in what was arguably one of the best matches in the Six Nations tournament this year.

Another new event for the boys this year was the Supernova Run, a fun run that takes place around the base of The Kelpies at night. All the boys dressed up in bright clothing, covered themselves in fluorescent face paint and participated in the 5K run. The winner for the boys on the night was Hal S. (Form III), who completed the race in a very impressive 21 minutes. We loved cheering Mr Baird on (from the TV sidelines) as he completed the London Marathon in a time of 3 hours and 15 minutes. He made his House very proud, having raised a substantial amount for MacMillan Cancer Support too.

As is normal in any boarding

house, we have had to say some goodbyes. Although Robyn (Miss Maxtone) was only with the House for a short time, she made a big impact—whether she was organising table tennis and pool tournaments or getting the boys involved in bingo nights. The boys were also sad to hear that our beloved Miss Wood is leaving Dollar at the end of this session. She has been an integral part of the House for several years, and she has always been very supportive, encouraging us to work and assisting us with daunting tasks (like writing UCAS personal statements). Miss Wood has also been the life and soul of our Thursday nights, along with her partner-in-crime, Miss Holloway. They are always eager to get involved with any events or social activity (such as teaching us how to sing for our House Turn because, if you didn't already know, Miss Wood was in Chamber Choir).

The atmosphere (outside of study hours!) is as loud as ever following the installation of a PS4. This has brought a new energy to the House and encouraged more engagement in the Common Room. We love battling it out on FIFA, and our 'winner stays on' policy can lead to some serious and stressful games. I can recall one particularly intense match in which I teamed up with Mr Baird to beat Petar N. and Marin A. (both Form VI). But for us, nothing quite compares to the real thing, and we can often be found on the Astro on a Saturday afternoon or in the Games Hall on a Wednesday night with Mr Brown and Mr Oliver. The games are always competitive... even if Mr Brown thinks it's fair to stick a foot in whilst claiming he's only a 'spectator'.

At the time of writing, the summer term approaches and the

boys are getting some hard work done as exams loom. This can, of course, be a difficult term, as we focus on our exams—but it is also the most enjoyable term, as we can begin to take advantage of the longer days and warmer weather. And, once the exams are successfully behind us, we can begin to look forward to some of the great end-of-term events, all of which culminate in Sports Weekend. Last year we retained our Tug o'War winners' title, and we certainly hope to duplicate that feat again this year. We also have our annual go-karting trip to look forward to—always a highlight! It remains to be seen if any of the boys will be able to outdrive Georgy A.-S. (Form IV), currently the undisputed champion. For some of us, Sports Weekend 2023 will mark the end of our time in Dollar. This is, of course, bittersweet. We are excited about the future, but we will always look back upon our time in McNabb & Tait with fond memories.

Tom W. (Form VI, Head of House)



PREP NATIVITY

It is no mean feat to start off the Prep School's Christmas celebrations. It is a busy, but truly magical time of the year. Our Prep 1, 2 and 3 pupils kickstarted our festivities with two dazzling performances of the nativity *Lights, Camel, Action* on the 2 December 2022. It was the first to be held in the Auditorium, with a full parent audience, for some years.

Having received their parts before the October break, the rehearsals and performances represented a culmination of their hard work; for Prep 3, it was their last Christmas in an infant class in the Prep School. The children put everything into this production, learning their songs and memorising dances, taking on a huge volume of work with never a complaint. They produced a performance that they (and their teachers) were immensely proud of.

For the Prep 1 pupils, it was their first Nativity performance. They embodied the school ethos of 'Get involved', singing out beautifully and 'getting their boogie on' for their starring role in 'Camel Funk'. The equally magnificent Prep 2s played mischievous sheep and graceful angels in 'Shepherd's Hey', some so confident that they were even moved to wiggle their tails at the audience at the end. The pupils' focus and hard work signalled what their involvement in this event meant to them.

It would be remiss to write about the Nativity and not mention the exceptional Music Department staff. They dedicate so much of their time and effort to making this show successful. Mrs Timney and Mrs Duff represent the driving force behind the production: teaching the songs



and harmonies in fun, lively ways, and offering countless encouraging and supportive words of guidance. Without them, these performances would not have happened. and we want to thank them on behalf of the whole Prep School.

Our thanks also go to the team who built the stage and set for our performances, and to the fantastic team of infant teachers in the Prep School. Putting on a show of this kind and calibre is a team effort, and there could not have been a more dedicated or supportive team. Our Nativity simply sparkled.

Lights, Camel, Action may be a distant memory, as I write this in the spring, but the delight and joy remain. I still often catch myself humming 'Disco Star', and I still see the children hand jiving in their spare time.

Kate Cooper



PREP 1 CELEBRATE WORLD BOOK DAY

Thursday 2 March was World Book Day, and the Prep School celebrated by exploring some of Julia Donaldson's famous stories. We began the day with pupils showing off their fantastic costumes during Assembly, before reading some of Donaldson's works. Pupils listened carefully for robbers, just like the ladybird; they created their own versions of Tabby McTat; they designed paper dolls and planned for a scarecrow's wedding. They even breathed fire with Zog! 'This has been my best day ever,' concluded one pupil at the end of a very busy, story-filled day.

Alexandra Eddie



P2: OUR SCHOOL

Primary 2 pupils enjoyed learning about Dollar Academy in the second term. As part of the topic, they explored the campus and learned about the many different buildings' architecture and history. They enjoyed visiting the Bicentenary Exhibition in the Playfair Building and were fascinated by the architectural plans there.

They were also lucky enough to have visits from several Former Pupils who shared their own school experiences. Some even had their own school uniforms for pupils to try on; there were many fascinating photos to see and tales to hear. A visit from our school archivist, Janet Carolan, gave pupils a chance to try on school caps and even pretend to be given the belt! Pupils were particularly interested in school punishments in the 'olden days'! They waited in the Rector's corridor, just as Former Pupils, waiting for punishment, would have done. Thankfully, rather than waiting to be put in the 'naughty seat', they were about to put the current Rector in the hot seat! They loved having the chance ask him all about his life at the school. They spent a wonderful afternoon talking to the Rector, asking him questions. And they were delighted to be able to teach him some of the facts about the school that they had learned during their topic.

Katie O'Hanlon and Lorna Barlow



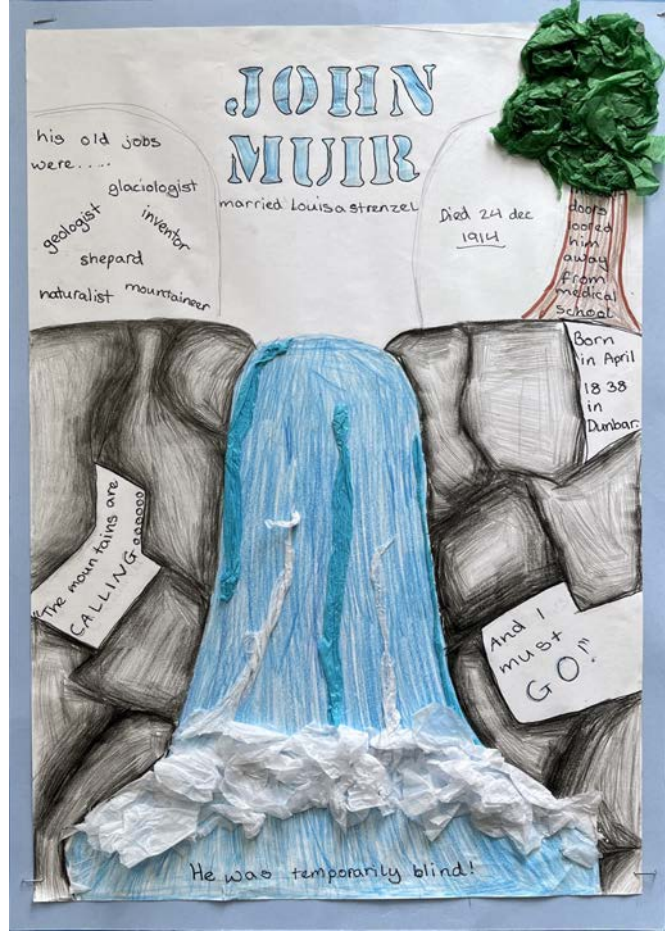
*The Day Prep 3 Became Pirates:
Outdoor Pirate Games: Obstacle Courses, Map
Reading and Treasure Hunts
Finding Buried Pirate Booty
Singing Sea Shanties and Dancing a Sailors' Jig
An arrrrr-mazing Day*



When Cleopatra and Tutankhamun Ruled Ancient Egypt

17 March was 'Walk Like an Egyptian' Day for Prep 4. There were glittering gold headdresses, sparkling jewels and colourful costumes. As part of our Ancient Egypt topic we used Egyptian numbers, made Egyptian flatbread and went on a scavenger hunt.





JUNIOR 1 JOHN MUIR AWARD

This year the Junior 1 cohort are embarking on their John Muir Award through outdoor learning sessions led by Mr Sedman. The John Muir Award requires pupils to 'Discover, Explore, Conserve and Share' their knowledge and learning about the outdoors. All classes have worked collaboratively with the Dollar Community Development Trust and the National Trust for Scotland. They enjoyed planting trees and learning about grounds maintenance. They have also taken part in lots of fun outdoor learning activities at Mill Green: plant and tree identification, map skills work, habitat building, planting and bushcraft. They have also conducted some research on the life of John Muir and made beautiful posters to display their learning. They are looking forward to more adventures in the great outdoors next term.

Sophie Renton





JUNIOR SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIR 2023

As I sat down to draft this article, it was not lost on me that the people best placed to tell the Junior School Science Fair story of 2023 were those who lived it. I will preface the voices of our pupils only to say that it was obvious from the start that they had worked diligently, over several weeks, to produce work of a genuinely high quality. This fact was more than confirmed by our visiting panel of judges.

Mike McComiskie

Words from our winner:

When the time came to think of an idea for my Science Fair project, I decided to make it about Lego because that meant the project would be fun! The question I investigated was 'Do different sizes of Lego wheels affect the speed of a Lego car?' I guessed that the bigger the wheel, the faster the speed of the car. What I actually found was that the tread makes a big difference: the bigger, smoother wheels were the fastest of those I tested.

When I did my Flipgrid video, I felt a little nervous. I didn't want to do it because I don't like watching myself on camera, but it had to be done. In the end it was fine, as I knew I could take multiple attempts to get it right. When I got to the Assembly Hall and began setting up, I was excited, and I loved looking around at everyone's projects. I was nervous because everyone had done such a great job, but I could only give it my best shot. When the judges came around, they were really friendly and interested in what I'd been doing. I actually enjoyed talking to them about my project.

I was surprised to win because there were so many great projects, but I was extremely happy and overwhelmed, and I was buzzing to tell my parents. Congratulations to Lucy and to everyone who won a Distinction Award. I started my project early and did a little bit at a time, and I would recommend both of these approaches to next year's participants. And I enjoyed it (having got to play with Lego for schoolwork!).

Forbes B. (J2L)

And from our runner-up:

I chose to make 'Slimitiser' for the Junior School Science Fair. Slimitiser is a hand sanitiser and slime mixed together. My motivation for doing this was to entice pupils to clean their hands in a fun and germ-busting way. I made ten tests with the same ingredients each time, adding 5mls of Borax to every test (the independent variable). The results showed that 40mls of Borax made the most effective Slimitiser, as this concoction picked up the most beads (used to mimic germs).

I have learned so much about how to conduct an experiment, how to analyse results and how to understand the process of undertaking a science experiment. I have loved taking part in this year's Science Fair, seeing everyone's projects and sharing my project on the day with my friends, teachers and the judges.

Lucy M. (J2E)

Distinction Awards:

- Abbie M. (J2L):** Perfect Popping Pearls
- Stanley B. (J2L):** Hand versus Paw
- Marley M. (J2D):** The Sound of Silence
- Ben C. B. (J2D):** Time to Burn
- Rosie T. (J2S):** Eye Dilation and Contraction
- Cameron D. (J2S):** Biodegradable Bags



JUNIOR 2 RESIDENTIAL TRIP TO LOCH INSH

After years without a full residential week away, the Junior 2 cohort embarked on a new adventure to the Outdoor Centre at Loch Insh. The five-day stay was packed full of exciting activities from archery to bush craft, from canoeing to hillwalking. The weather was mixed, but a fresh dump of snow and light winds allowed the whole cohort to embark on a full day of skiing and snowboarding at Cairngorm Mountain. The beginners among us (pupils and staff) came away with new skills, even if this involved taking a few bumps and falls along the way. The fresh air and great outdoors provided the perfect backdrop for pupils to build new friendships, solidify old bonds and challenge themselves to work collaboratively, whilst building their resilience and independence. As the pupils look forward to the third term, their last in the Junior School, they can reflect back upon and be proud of what they achieved at Loch Insh.

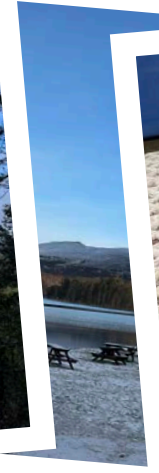
Sophie Renton

We went to Loch Insh to gain independence, to see how it feels to be away from home for a while. I did so many exciting things on this wild trip, but my favourite thing was canoeing. I also enjoyed skiing because I haven't been skiing in seven years. It was extremely fun to re-learn and enjoy it. During bushcraft, I learned how to light a fire with just a bit of metal, some Vaseline and some cotton wool! I had an amazing time.

Reuben P.



June 2023



June 2023
Fortunas 51



PSE SPRING UPDATE

Some of the most interesting and memorable lessons that reach Dollar pupils from the Personal and Social Education Department are provided by charities and other volunteers. Charities and foundations produce many of our curriculum materials: the DSM Foundation, the NSPCC, Dimensions and Winston's Wish, to name just a few of our current resource providers. This term we have been particularly enriched by volunteers and representatives from these charities coming to Dollar to deliver lessons in person.

Rape Crisis and Women's Aid deliver powerful and important PSE lessons—about gender stereotypes and controlling relationships, respectively—to Forms I, II and III classes. PSE lessons are also supported by former school nurse Jean Dunnet and her colleague, Hazel, who contribute a vital lesson on First Aid to PSE classes. Teacher and humanist Kendal Delaney delivers an 'Introduction to Humanism', and her lesson is wonderfully complemented by faith leaders from different religions who share their beliefs and practices. Further up the school, the Samaritans visit us as part of Mrs Mackie's Mental Health rotation. Senior pupils have also benefited from year group presentations delivered by the testicular cancer charity Cahonas, the DSM

Foundation and Road Safety Scotland. The summer term featured a visit from the RNLI to deliver important water safety messages. We are extremely grateful to the highly skilled presenters who voluntarily give up their time to educate our pupils.

A recent charity fair event is what led me, here, to write specifically about the incredible input of charities and volunteers to our PSE programme. Attended by 18 local charities and put on for the benefit of our Form I pupils (who are embarking on the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative), the charity fair was an incredible event. Dollar pupils and teachers alike were struck by the energy, passion and generosity of the charity representatives who came to speak with us in March. There are so many inspirational charities in our local area—Food Train, Home-Start and The Gate (to name but a few). You need never look far to find people doing extraordinary work in our local communities every day. These charities and their volunteers provide fantastic role models for our young people, and we are very fortunate indeed to have them in our midst.

Katya Cunningham



MODERN LANGUAGES CAROUSEL

A number of Dollar traditions are returning after a Covid-enforced hiatus. One such event is our language carousel, where external linguists come into school and put our Advanced Higher candidates through their paces. This is timed to take place one day before the pupils face the real thing in front of an SQA-appointed Visiting Assessor.

We are grateful to the 18 or so friends of Dollar who came to the school in early March for the French and the German events. The pupils were most appreciative, and it was gratifying to hear, in turn, so many of the 'Carousellers' sing the praises of our pupils' linguistic skills. A particular thank you must go to FP Dr Richard Olbrich for recruiting so many new 'Carousellers' from his regular German Stammtisch group. *Danke Richard, danke alle—und bis nächstes Jahr!*

Andrew Fynn



AUTHOR VISITS

This session, Dollar Academy welcomed three highly acclaimed authors to the school. In October, the internationally renowned author Bali Rai gave fascinating talks to Forms I, II and III, covering a range of topics from his early life to politics to writing the new *Doctor Who* book. Bali also ran an Advanced Higher workshop in the Library, providing the Form VI pupils with inspiration for their own creative writing.

‘Bali Rai flipped our conventional way of approaching storytelling on its head, pushing us, instead, to focus on the emotional journeys our prospective readers might undertake. The challenges he posed to my usual process of fiction writing has certainly benefited me, as I went on to develop my portfolio in many new ways for Advanced Higher English,’ said Innes M. (Form VI).

A few weeks later, the award-winning young adult author Simon James Green regaled Form I, II and III pupils with stories about his time at school. He told us about how he uses awkward moments as inspiration for his books, and he was very eloquent about the importance of being proud of who you are. The pupils loved his hilarious yet heartfelt talks. Simon also joined the QI Club for lunch in the Library. The whole experience was immensely valuable and opened up our minds to new ways of thinking about the process of writing and about identity itself.

Our final visit was from the up-and-coming author, Alexandra Sheppard. She spoke to Junior 2 and to Forms I, II and III about her books, even offering a sneak preview of her new book, *Friendship Never Ends*. She also said interesting things about how one becomes a writer; she began at the age of five! Her talks gave us all great insight into the life of an author and offered valuable writing tips too.



Mrs Letford's J2 class said...

‘Alexandra didn’t just talk about herself. She included us and made it fun at the same time.’

‘She told us all the good and bad points about being an author, but she made it sound fun—something that many of us would like to try.’

‘She made us feel like writers, and she also made us feel that we could become published writers just like her. She made us believe in ourselves.’

The pupils thoroughly enjoyed Bali, Simon and Alexandra’s visits and their books are now among the most borrowed in the Library, highlighting the power of in-person author visits. We look forward to welcoming more authors to Dollar Academy soon.

WORLD BOOK DAY BOOK FAIR

On 2 March, a book fair was held in the Library to celebrate World Book Day. Pupils and staff donated hundreds of titles, and it was wonderful to see so many happy pupils leaving the Library with armfuls of books. Thank you to everyone who supported the event by donating books, making donations to the Scottish Book Trust and attending the event.

Both articles by Kathryn Rambaut





THE BURNS SUPPER

Our annual Form VI Burns Supper saw a return to its traditional place on the calendar this year, and we gathered in the Dining Hall on 31 January for a night of fine fare, fine company and fine performances. The lifting of Covid restrictions allowed us to plan our 2023 Burns Supper according to the traditional format, and the response was, predictably, one of wild enthusiasm. The Burns Committee put in several months of hard work and planning, which allowed our year group to enjoy one of the most successful Burns Suppers to date.

Those present on the night were treated to some superb speeches about Burns' life and works. The 'Immortal Memory' toast, given by Valerie A., provided us with a wonderful interpretation of Burns' contemporary influences in the world that he grew up in.

The atmosphere on the night was fantastic. Governors, staff and representatives of the Dollar Burns Society all enjoyed the opportunity to meet and socialise with the members of our Sixth Form. What made the night particularly special was its significance in marking the journey of our year group through the school. The 'Toast to the Lassies' and 'Reply' (delivered, respectively, by Wilfie T. and Cameron K.) provided a lighthearted summary of the significant experiences of our peers throughout our time at Dollar. The addition of performances from many of our year's talented musicians also added to the evening's success.

A mention must also go to Mrs Cunningham (English Teacher and Head of PSE) for flawlessly officiating the evening. The speeches and recitations were delivered with flair and energy, making it very difficult for us to decide upon the winner of the Robert Ferguson Quaich, which is always given to the best speech of the night. In the end, the quaich was shared (for the first time) between Valerie A. (for her 'Immortal Memory' speech) and Jack B. for his 'Address to the School'.

All in all, it was very evidence how successful a night it was and how much everyone enjoyed the experience. A special mention must be given to those on the Burns Committee for their collective efforts and hard work, put in over a number of weeks, as these ensured the evening's success.

As we in Form VI prepare to move on to the next stage in our lives, it is certain that this night will live long in the store of memories from our time at Dollar.

Jamie A. (Form VI)



GHAR (HOME)

The sounds of cars in traffic. Motorbikes passing by as the dirt lifts up from behind, off the ground. People asking for spare change move from car window to car window. Others hand out bright and colourful flowers, all bunched together, in exchange for enough money for a meal. Driving to my Gran's house, I glance out the window at all the houses lined up, all looking exactly the same. Finally, we arrive at her house.

Settling down, I explore the flat roof of the house where I see a few *char pais* laid out. I can make out a towel against a brick wall. I lift it up and see a miniature room filled with old pots and pans and cutlery I have never seen before.

Moments later, I pick up a sound that's coming from over the roof. I look across and see two girls, around 15, calling my name and asking if I can come over. After asking my mum for permission, I (reluctantly) go over. Before I can knock twice, the same girl opens the door and invites me in. We talk for a while before I return to my Gran's house.

After dinner, we are treated to some ice cream—a thin slice, cut from a block of mango ice cream, shared between everyone. It isn't a lot, but it is more than enough.

I have a second aunt called Hiba who is one year older than me, and she lives at my Gran's house. Since she is only one year older than me, I always refer to her as my cousin, but sometimes she introduces me to her friends by calling me her sister. One morning, Hiba asks if I would like to go to the corner shop with her and I accept. We walk down the road, passing the playground. The corner shop is a little stall on the other side of the park. It has drinks, crisps and different halal sweets. Something I love about Pakistan is that I don't need to check the back of the pack of sweets to check for gelatin because everything is halal. We both grab a handful of gum: individually wrapped in glossy purple plastic, it has Urdu words written all over it. A boy (who looks around eight) grabs a few packets of crisps and hands the lady working behind the stall five rupees. The lady laughs hysterically and, in Punjabi, asks, 'What does he think he is doing with only five rupees in my shop?' Hiba and I laugh nervously as we hand over our gum and money.

Then the lady turns to me and asks, in Punjabi, what my name is and where I am from. Hiba replies for me. Taking a deep breath, the lady asks me, in English, 'Hello, Shanzay, how are you?'

I reply proudly: 'Teek hai.' ('I'm good.')

And the lady compliments my Punjabi, saying 'Tiri Punjabi bahut achai ha.' ('Your Punjabi is very good.')

As the sun sets, we walk home together, sharing the pieces of bubblegum between us. That event re-plays in my mind all day because whenever I speak Punjabi around my family in Pakistan, I am usually teased for having a 'strong Scottish accent'. But whenever I'm in Scotland, people notice that I have a 'Pakistani accent'.

Leaving Pakistan is really hard, because I am leaving family and also friends that I have made there. Everything about it makes me want to stay. I wasn't born in Pakistan, nor do I live in Pakistan, yet my childhood memories are, and have always been, from there. Pakistan may be just a place I go to on holiday, but to me it always feels as though I have come back to my house, to my *ghar*.

Shanzay H. (Form III)



EXPLORING HOME:
‘MY HEART’S IN THE
HIGHLANDS’

Imagine the barren sides of Aonach Mor. Imagine being suspended in a floating metal and Perspex box, the low rumbling of engines passing through the cable. You are alone. Imagine looking down at the track beneath you (but aeons of skill level above you). A thick *haar* blows inland, simultaneously clouding your vision and your mind, completely separating you from the rest of the world.

This gondola trip will be the least of your worries, on this misty day on this ancient mountainside. Now imagine you are at the trailhead. It seems the start hut is built not from wooden planks, but from the nerves and anxieties of every racer who has launched before you. Your nerves linger there.

You are about to join the thousands of riders who have begun the descent on this gruelling track, and you hope that you will not join the thousands of riders who never finish. White-knuckle your grips because this World Cup track now controls you. Your vision tunnels. You gather speed; beyond the carefully placed boulders, everything is a blur of green. Hear the clicking of your cassette and the skidding of gravel beneath your tyres. Breathe. Feel the deep muscles within you tense when your wheel gets snagged. Breathe. Taste the mixture of dust and saliva collecting in your mouth. Don’t forget to breathe. Know that if you allow your eyes to wander—to the beauty of the Scottish Highlands, to the glen’s monarch at the summit of the craggy cliffs, to the less fortunate rider ahead who has fallen

victim to the dry-stone-dyke-like rock gardens—you will join them...You finish.

The clouds clear as Mr X. asks me the next line of working to the mathematical hieroglyphs sprawling over the whiteboard. I could swear that board was clear only moments ago! It’s a drizzly Wednesday morning in central Scotland. It appears that, while my body is in the classroom, my mind is riding my bike. Why is it that I can’t get enough? Is it the freedom mountain biking brings, taking you wherever your legs will allow? Is it how every single ride is different and brings its own challenges each time? Is it the long-term progression? Seeing yourself improve by a fraction of a second on the World Cup track? I don’t know. All I know is, I love it. I want to return as soon as I can.

Back to imagining. The still, glassy look of Loch Ness... Imagine floating on a metal and glass raft, the low rumbling of the engines passing through the hull. Despite the stories of a great monster emerging from the unimaginable depths of the loch, you are at peace. You see Urquhart Castle, a sleeping dragon of ruined rubble. You imagine its history. You picture the soldiers mounted on the ramparts, flags drifting in the cold October breeze. To your left, the sheer edges of Allt na Criche, the trees clinging to its edge, the deer racing along the water’s edge. Ahead of you, the track to the legendary Fort Augustus locks.

You don’t get anywhere fast on a boat. It’ll take you a couple hours to get through those locks, but you don’t

care. You want every second to last forever. The canals are a different world in themselves: a corridor of oak and yew trees channelling you toward an exploration of new places. The deer are closer now. You hold eye contact with one for a few precious seconds, and you feel as though you might be making a connection. It promptly poops and leaves. You swerve to steer clear of the oncoming boat.

Later, you decide to go on a nighttime walk. This reveals yet another brand-new world. So dark and so quiet. No streetlights, no engines whirring, no mechanical roar from the glassworks in the distance, no sign of human interference. Just the song of nature, as it should be. It all feels untouched, like the feeling of walking on virgin snow. You lie down on the ground and stare up at the stars. It’s incredible, the clarity, away from the light pollution. You see the arc of the Milky Way. Is that the Great Bear? The Belt of Orion? After a long stargazing session, you head back to the boat to sleep.

Mr X. is clearly frustrated with me now; he is raising his voice. As much as I like Mr X., I don’t really care for his subject. To be perfectly honest, I don’t really care about school at all. It frustrates me that I am confined to the school regime. As Burns wrote, ‘My heart’s in the Highlands, my heart is not here.’ But I’m not sure exactly why. Is it the feeling that I am exploring never-seen-before land? Is it being close to great beasts that I otherwise only see in documentaries? Is it the views—the contrast between gentle rolling hills and craggy mountainsides? I really don’t know, but it’s my home.

Cameron M. (Form V)



CYCLIC SLOPES

Night falls.
Snowflakes choose where to rest.
I gaze at the slopes below:
maps, drawn
by those who came before.
Leaning forward, I begin to move
faster, faster.
The snowflakes land harder:
small pebbles.
The pain awakens
an exhilaration—exhilaration turns to fear.
Fear—to mistakes,
following a trail
not suited to me.
My legs ache. My skin burns.
To stray from this trail
to heavy powder
comes with
consequences.
The trail, its speed,
thrusts me to its end.
But I long to do it over again—
My way. My trail—
I lack a sense of accomplishment.

Night falls
further into darkness.
Again and again, I try
to carve my own route
to no avail.
The slopes, shrouded in darkness
insurmountable.
My eyesight unable to overcome
the void.
My legs grow weaker and weaker
and the snow heavy crystals
—oculi —
pierce my flesh, ripping my hope
to the bone.

Night falls.
Tenebrous.
This endless loop
of darkness,
a microcosm of this globe,
where trails rest,
that propels itself
through the endless void.
I yield to these
predetermined pistes,
I give up on my aspirations
and choose my resting place.
Now, I watch
sparkly-eyed youth
carve into the darkness below.
Rewinding the clocks,
unable to escape.
Night falls again.

Duncan W. (Form VI)

ALWAYS ON MY MIND

‘Unable are the loved to die, for love is immortality.’
–Emily Dickinson

Love must surely be the world’s greatest comfort. In times of trouble or grief, many turn to things they love to survive the tough times, whether that is their relationships with others or reminiscences of loving memories. So when the world turned somewhat darker and hope was diminishing, I ventured out to the local park—a walk I had done countless times—and found solace in something simple, yet deeply meaningful: the park bench. This park bench is shielded by huge trees; it looks out to the grass where families play and lovers stroll. On the bench is a dedication on a plaque: ‘For Bob and Jean’ followed by dates and an inscription: ‘Always on my mind’. Strangely compelled, I sat on the bench that so many people unknowingly walk past every day and thought about how impactful those two people must have been to have a bench dedicated to them. From that moment on, I vowed to myself that I would not let Bob and Jean’s memory be ignored.

From the first time I sat on the bench, I knew from the inscription below their names (‘Always on my mind’) that Bob and Jean’s life was guided, always, by their mutual love for one another. The Elvis Presley tune with the same name ran through my mind, and the melody led me to imagine what this song might have meant to them. As I drifted off, I could see Bob and Jean standing in the town hall, dancing to the Presley song, surrounded by their friends as they celebrated their ruby wedding anniversary. The song began and Bob was transported back, remembering how Jean looked on their wedding day as they laughed and danced to the same song. It was as if her wedding dress was woven with daisy petals and sewn together by icicles; Jean recalled Grace Kelly in her elegance and grace. As the chorus played, Jean reflected on their marriage and how Bob would often leave notes for her, reminding her that she was always on his mind when he was at work. Jean would find these notes and smile; Bob always knew the importance of small gestures. When the song ended, they longed for just another verse, holding each other’s stare, noticing the lines that now crowded both their faces. But wrinkles and lines were only proof of the fulfilling life they had shared. Without having to acknowledge it, both of them knew they were as much in love now as they had been forty years before.

On the first day of summer, I set out on a walk with no set destination and somehow ended up at the bench. Sunshine lit up the bench and I heard the sound of birds calling as I watched young children abandon their schoolbags to play in the stream. It was the start of the holidays. My mind automatically went to Bob and Jean and I wondered whether they had children. Basking in the sun’s warmth, I ‘saw’ them again. Bob had a passion to educate. He could find a seed of greatness in every child and he diligently cared for it until it grew (much as he did when gardening). This helped so many of his students to lead successful lives. He set the foundation for young minds: people who would become doctors or pilots but, ultimately, thoughtful individuals who showed compassion. It was Bob’s career that helped soften the dismay that came when they were told they could not have children of their own. The news only pushed Bob to become a better teacher, as he realised he could provide comfort for so many children and offer a place for them to seek refuge from the ever-present difficulties in life. He taught literacy and mathematics, but he also pushed children to explore all their capabilities. Jean would often come into the school and play the piano for the children, and the love between Bob and Jean was evident even to those primary school pupils. One day, when Jean was playing as his class sang along, Bob sat in his classroom and began to feel angry that he would never have children of his own. Jean was so obviously meant to be a mother, he thought, and now Bob would never see that happen. He worried about who would take care of Jean if, one day, Bob could not. But when he heard Jean and the class erupt into laughter, he realised his worries were foolish. He and Jean had had such a lasting impact, she cared like a mother to so many people, that he knew (when the time came) that this community would give back to them. And he knew he would care for Jean, and love her, until the very end.

Once, while the heavens poured and the sun was hidden by clouds, I visited Bob and Jean’s bench once more. There, on the familiar bench, I heard the distant echo of church bells through the heavy sound of falling rain. The sound lulled me back to Bob and Jean, to the story I had invented for them. Jean would attend church every Sunday, playing the organ hymns with passion as

though they were her own version of sign language. And while the distressing times she faced would threaten her close relations with God, her realisation of the importance of believing in something would keep it intact. It did not matter to her whether a higher being existed; it was the devotion and hope that came with religion that fuelled her lifelong dedication. Bob, however, would dedicate his Sunday mornings to the garden. His comfort was not found through a deity, but in diligent attention to nature. Later in life, Jean pleaded, every Saturday evening, for Bob to attend the morning service, but Bob remained firm. He was happy that Jean had something to believe in, but he found no solace in God. But on the Sunday morning that Bob woke up after saying goodbye to Jean for the last time, he found himself collapsed against a pew in a desperate attempt to feel close to Jean once more. To learn how she forfeited the human desire for proof and let herself become immersed in God. God provided a comfort to Jean, and Jean provided a comfort for Bob. An agnostic discovering hope not within belief, but within a believer.

I realise I will never know the intricate, true details of Bob and Jean's life; my imagination just invented one of an infinite number of possible realities. But that doesn't matter. To me, the bench is a resting place, but also a symbol of permanence. Bob and Jean are no longer here, but the bench has allowed me to learn from their legacy and presence on Earth. It reminds me that love is perpetual. Even if the person we love disappears, that energy survives. It demonstrates the fragility of life, and the robustness of love. To dedicate a bench to someone allows strangers to immerse themselves in what you experienced, as if you are giving them a ticket to become part of the painting of that moment. It signifies how we all search for the same comforting feelings and want others to know the love we experience. It is through such memorials that we can make the impermanent permanent. So, although Bob and Jean are now gone, I will continue my vow to remember them, and the message their bench offers me. Simple, powerful and true. So even in their silence, as long as that bench stands underneath the trees, Bob and Jean's love speaks clearly to me.

Emma Manson (Form V)

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC

A thin plastic stick rises into the air. Everything lifts. The stick falls. A sound. The first notes of a symphony. Many people, an orchestra, working as one, producing something magical, producing music. Perhaps, as a cellist and a dancer, as a member of our school's orchestra, choir, and the school musical, I am a little biased, but I think music is extremely powerful. To some extent, every life is changed and enhanced by music—even if it goes unnoticed. And music is not given due credit for its impact and strength, for the kindness it engenders.

At the end of a frantic, stressful, never-ending day, a catchy song comes on the radio; a beloved tune comes through your headphones; a calming track fills the bus ride home. The frustrations and complaints of your day are gone, and for a while you can swap your emotions for someone else's. You can be absorbed into another world. This simple, passive act of listening heightens blood flow to the parts of the brain that control our feelings, releasing dopamine, bringing smiles to our faces. Just a couple of opening notes from a well-known tune cause this neurotransmitter to fire. Music can be a means to escape. Plato was certainly right when he said, 'Without music, life would be an error.'

None of this is new. For hundreds of centuries, we have been treating ourselves to music. Sixty thousand years ago, the Neanderthals crafted flutes—even before they invented farming. Before cave paintings and visual art, we turned our hands to music. Our predecessors were utterly dedicated to music, putting it before many more practical jobs. They could see its value. Music is a natural, essential, innate part of human life, and we have been relying on it to bring meaning, expression and fun to our lives for next to forever.

Music makes special occasions special. Imagine the joyless silence of a party with no music; candles on a cake with no smiling chorus of 'Happy Birthday'; decorating a tree with no festive song in the background. The moments of greatest fun, relaxation and good spirits all come with their own instantly recognisable tunes; they build anticipation beforehand and amplify the excitement of the occasions themselves. While not everyone is ready to hear 'Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer' being hummed in early November, it's safe to say that music has become an essential, lovable, ageless aspect of our best celebrations.

Music also becomes connected with specific moments in time, places, feelings and people. Like a family photograph album, it reminds us of our past. The same tune can mean something entirely different to different people, transporting them into their own history. 'Moves like Jagger' will always make me think of my best friend from

P2, just as 'Live While We're Young' is eternally linked to my cousins' decking. This can be used medically, to help people with memory loss. Alzheimer's patients who can't easily hold conversations are able to chat and sing when they hear songs from their childhood. People who struggle with simple, everyday movements can dance to their favourite tunes. Those in the middle stages of this illness, whose basal ganglia still functions correctly, can even manage to play instruments and create their own music, despite having forgotten important, basic facts. The memory of stroke survivors can be improved by listening to music. In fact, musicians stand alongside general practitioners, anaesthetists and oncologists in terms of supporting our good health. This shows music's power to reach people in ways that are different from the way in which we use words, in ways that help us to build bridges into the past.

As well as helping the elderly, music can assist the young. When we hear music, our brains have to work to piece together different notes and sounds to form the full tune. This process is not so different to reading, and listening to a lot of music can help children learn to read more quickly. Research has also shown that music improves the function of our brain cells. Additionally, learning about music increases children's capacity to remember new words. More widely, learning instruments gives young people something to be proud of, making them feel better about themselves. It gifts empathy and the ability to keep trying, to not give up, when something is difficult. These attributes and skills are invaluable in life. The Big Noise programme uses music to bring about social change in parts of Scotland by teaching school pupils to play in a symphony orchestra. This has helped 2,800 kids to improve their concentration, their communication skills and their social skills. An hour spent studying music in school is not only one of the most fun, exciting hours of the week, it is also an extremely beneficial hour—an hour that will serve children well in years to come. Sadly, not everyone sees it in this light. The government is considering cutting the already minimal music funding in schools by as much as 60%, stealing this precious experience from children who need it most, for this is a move which will have the greatest impact upon less affluent families.

Music's impact stretches far beyond education and health, bringing people together in a way nothing else can. The people you play and sing alongside of every day very often become your closest friends. For those farther from the stage, music is still an incredibly unifying experience; you share the atmosphere of excitement at a concert with your friends, family and the hundreds of others who sought out tickets to hear the same performers as you. The feeling of being in a stadium full of people who share similar tastes and interests, all singing along to the same tunes, is

exceptionally uplifting and exhilarating. Music is a great unifying force at sports matches, too, as fans are bound together by the rousing, morale-boosting choruses of 'You'll Never Walk Alone' or 'Sweet Caroline'. Tracks like these are often played for their ability to heighten ecstatic feelings in the crowd, and it has even been suggested that players perform better with encouragement from music.

Perhaps most impressive of all, is the impact music has on us when we do not even realise we are hearing it. Film and television rely heavily on music. The music that hides in the background connects to specific characters and themes or warns us about what is going to happen next. It is crafted to manipulate our feelings, and it does an excellent job. It is the soundtrack that pauses your popcorn halfway to your mouth as the shark fin approaches in the water; that makes you wink away a tear when you see the theatre swallowed by flames; that makes you grin as the horses gallop up the hill. Some film music even becomes as iconic as the movies themselves: 'Hedwig's Theme', 'Let It Go' and 'My Heart Will Go On', to name but a few. So, having square eyes is really just a less obvious symptom of a love of music! For the extremely unfortunate—those who have impaired hearing—subtitles attempt, in vain, to make up for what is lost when a film is parted from its music. Elaborately descriptive captions try to make up for what is lost ('dreamy, ethereal melody' and 'grand orchestral fanfare'), but these ultimately fail to convey what the music itself does. Music is fundamental, integral, to the experience of watching a film or television.

And the music doesn't stop for the ad breaks either. Some of the most powerful advertising works because of the jingle in the background. The tune gets stuck in your mind, going round and round. Jet2 drove their employees mad with their repetition of Jess Glynne's 'Hold My Hand'. But as a passenger, just hearing the song (a few years later) still conjures up a longing for to just take off and head away somewhere new, somewhere sunny. The song has become linked with excitement—and with Jet2—although I couldn't tell you what the images and words of the advert were. The Jet2 executives who profited owe their wealth, in large part, to music.

Our lives are saturated with music—from our favourite songs on the radio to the cheery call of an ice cream van. We would not be complete without it. In many ways, our lives depend on its ability to lift us up when we are down. Whether you play saxophone, samba drums or sing in the shower; whether Bach, Beyoncé or the Beatles are most up your street, we all ought to say 'Thank You for the Music'.

Jenny B. (Form V)



THE LENS CREATED BY ART

Art, to put it simply, explains the unexplainable. A single brushstroke can open windows onto new perspectives, new wonders, new meanings. Art provokes new ideas and enables wider vision, and art effortlessly communicates in a way that words cannot. Connections can be made, evoked by a collaboration of paint splatters. This is a gift. Art creates purpose, as we can explore ourselves and our surroundings through unimagined viewpoints. Paintings, sculptures, sketches, prints, pictorial representations. These are just a few of the ways in which a person can create art. But the question that I beg must be considered is this: what makes art so important to our society? What is the meaning of art? Why do we do it? Behind every piece of art is, of course, an artist: a unique individual, a voice, a story.

Professor Semir Zeki, a neurobiologist at University College

London, describes the experience, common to many of us, of gazing at a masterpiece in awe. As we get drawn in, our hearts and minds are inspired. It is as though a lens is passed from the artist's eyes to our own as we explore their vision. Professor Zeki also discusses the scientific benefits art has on our brains. Observing art delivers high levels of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that aids in controlling the brain's reward and pleasure centres. We find ourselves immersed in the artwork: jaw dropped, head tilted, eyes incredulous. In gazing, we learn about the artist, about the many lives they have lived. The wonderful thing about art is that there is never just one interpretation; it lends itself to varied perspectives and emotional responses. Art magically gives life meaning, helping to explain the world around us. It is horrifying to think about a place where art does not exist.

Art breaks boundaries and contributes to growth of the economy. It only takes one artist, daring enough to take a step beyond the ordinary, to change things. Artists challenge what is 'socially acceptable', being brave enough to seek freedom from the limitations by which the rest of us feel constrained. A prime example of this is *Les Femmes d'Alger* (1907) by Pablo Picasso, a groundbreaking masterpiece that demolished that age's artistic rules and boundaries. Picasso created a deliberately shocking



piece of art. Art dares to challenge old perceptions and ways of thinking in order to provoke new ideas.

Art also gives people the capability and freedom to express themselves. To take art away from an artist would be tantamount to disabling them, stripping them of their right to communicate their true selves. When times are tough, art provides a means of escape, a therapy for both mind and soul. Art is more than a combination of brushstrokes, a variety of paint combinations. We'd be naive to think art is just a pretty picture. Instead, art creates an experience that allows others to find peace of mind and connect to something on a deep level. Art hits differently to words in great literature because words spell out meaning in a more definite and precise way. Pictorial representations open themselves up to many avenues of interpretation.

It is a tragic misconception, in education, that art is unnecessary. The curriculum is re-shaped to give the more 'important' subjects priority. If you are good at sciences and maths, you are considered 'smart', and this typecasting often discourages creative

young minds. This thinking invalidates the notion that other types of intelligence exist. Creative people feel limited and dissuaded from pursuing careers in the creative industries.

People don't stop to think about how boring and dull the world would be without art. A world that seeks to erase the human instinct to express oneself would be a world without imagination, colour, meaning and life. A simple graffiti sketch on the side of a bland, pebble-dashed building can inspire or fill someone with hope, with enlightenment. Companies rely on publishers and graphic designers to promote their products. Businesses depend upon art (in all its forms) to thrive, to capture the attention of their target audience. Our instinct to be creative, to be imaginative, is perhaps what separates us from other species. Our ability to express complex thoughts, responses and emotions in ways that others can understand and be moved by is incredible and invaluable—both for the artists and the observers.

Art also helps us to travel back in time, to retrace history. Rick Rubin, an American record producer and founder of American Recordings, once said, 'Art isn't in the tools or equipment you choose to use. It's in the way you see the world.' He speaks absolute truth. Art is about the story being told, and it is a part of human nature. It is vitally necessary that we continue to create art and not be



afraid of breaking boundaries, for that is how we will continue to evolve. There is a story behind every painting, a sharing of the lens between the artist and the individual receiving the art. And the story behind the art is where the true beauty lies.

Article and artwork by Grace E. (Form V)



CHRISTMAS ART AND DESIGN EXHIBITION 2023

At the end of the first term, the Art Department held its annual Christmas Art and Design Exhibition in the marquee. As per usual, the standards were exceptional. Featuring work from the whole school—from Prep 1 animals through to Junior School photography to Advanced Higher folio work—the talent and hard work represented by the artwork displayed was almost overwhelming. As the exhibition was being put together, the anticipation from those helping (and those watching) was tangible. And the reactions that came from the over 400 parents and friends who visited the exhibition (including senior citizens, governors, teachers and record numbers of school pupils) filled everyone exhibiting with a great sense of pride—not least the sixth-form pupils. All of the pupils’ hard work was finally paying off as they watched the responses their artwork elicited, clear for all to see, on the faces of those walking around the marquee. For many, it was their first chance to exhibit and see how their work would be received by a wider audience.

I am a sixth-year pupil, and I am going to art school next year. I can testify that the unique opportunity and space afforded to us by the Christmas Exhibition helped, in a significant sense, each and every one of us (and not least the Advanced Higher pupils) to develop our art. It opened our eyes to new ways forward for our own future projects. It also inspired many younger pupils to continue to find and develop their passion for art—setting up for an unmissable exhibition in 2024.

Lois T. (Form VI)



Freya L. (Form VI)



Alicia V. S. (Form V)



Emmie T. (Form VI)

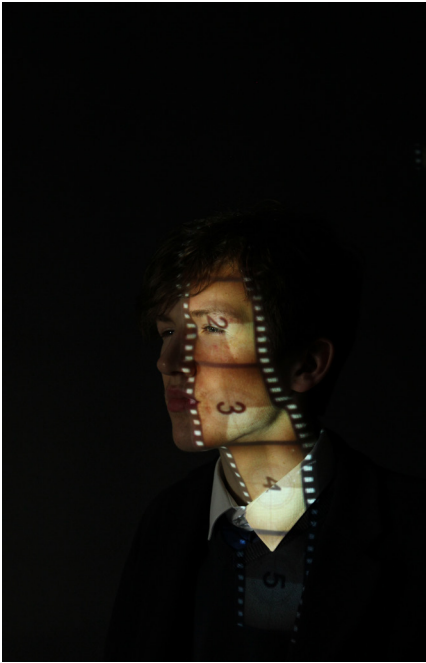




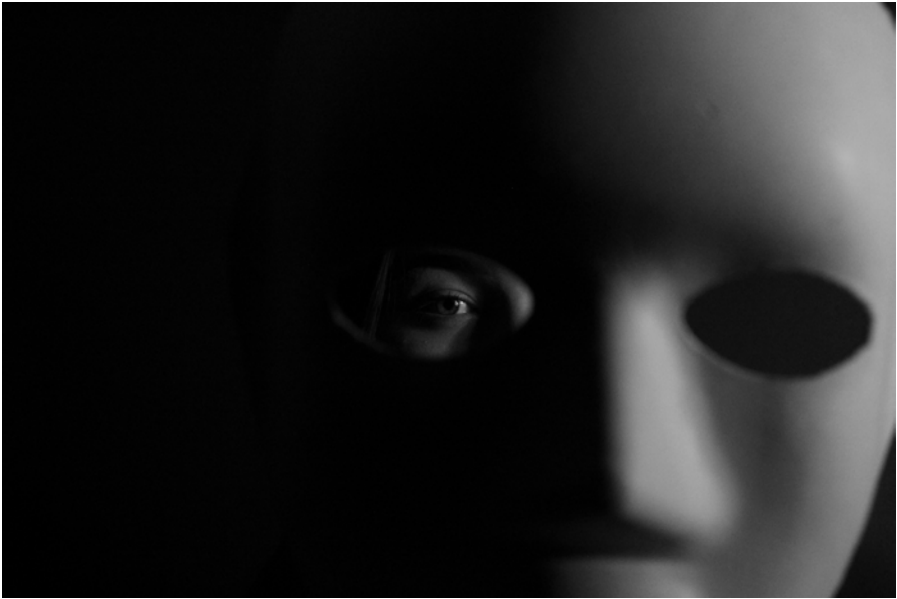
Aoiffe P. (Form VI)



Rowan M. (Form V)



Roderick H. (Form V)



Mya S. (Form V)



Charlie W. (Form VI)



Lois T. (Form VI)



Ollie W. (Form IV)



Kathryn N. (Form IV)



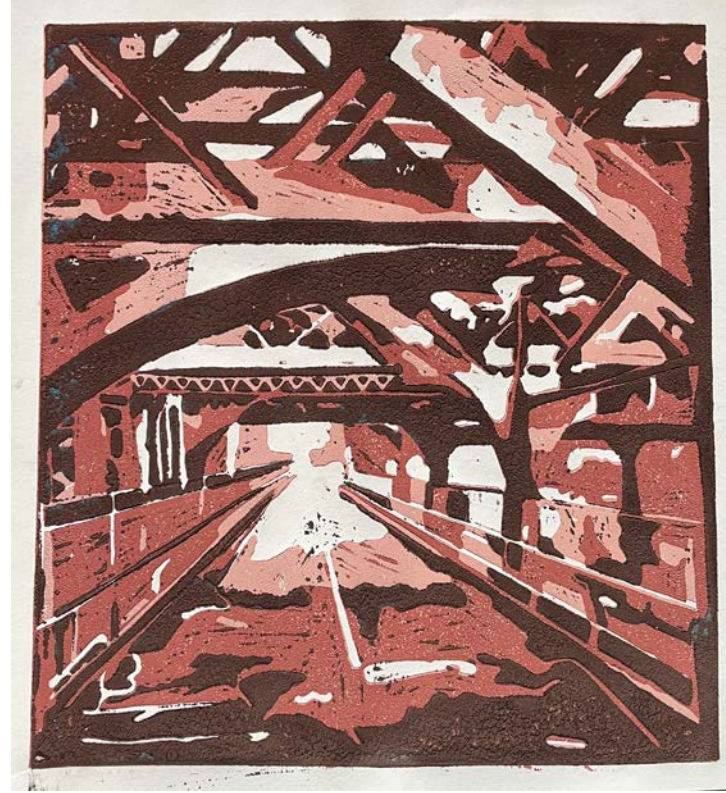
Esther L. (Form IV)



Findlay T. (Form V)



Anna M. S. (Form VI)



Cara P. (Form VI)



Jamie S. (Form V)



Chloe V. (Form V)



Darcey C. (Form VI)



Anastasija I. (Form V)



THE FORM VI PLAY: Too Fast

Our production of this play almost never happened. We had a play lined up back in September, a modern re-telling of the ancient Greek classic *Lysistrata*, due to be performed at the end of November. Everyone was so excited; there hadn't been a Dollar Academy Form VI play in four years, thanks to Covid and its impact upon the arts (everywhere). But *Lysistrata* was just never meant to be; the length of the script and the tricky themes made it particularly challenging, and, by the end of October, it seemed that the return of the Form VI Play would have to wait another year.

It was the indefatigable Mr Russell (Head of Drama) who suggested that we start again with a new text—reminding us that, clichéd or not, the show *must* go on. And so the task fell to the sixth-year Drama class to find a new play, rehearse it, learn it and perform it—all within a timescale of four weeks. Our deadline was 30 November: an almost insurmountable challenge.

Finding a suitable play was the first hurdle. We knew that it needed it to be short, feature a small cast and have elements of humour and drama. We eventually found the synopsis of *Too Fast*, a play written by Scottish playwright Douglas Maxwell. The dark humour of a group of children using their schoolmate's death as a sob story for *Britain's Got Talent* hooked us instantly.

Rehearsals were intense, fast-paced, exciting. The play's title seemed apt. We met during free periods and after school to kickstart our production, and the days and hours

seemed to melt away from us. We were immensely grateful for the group of (very talented and very brave) extra actors from the Form VI year group who joined us and contributed so much.

A week before the performance, Querida M., Siobhan M. and I (who shared directing responsibility) were uncertain. Lines were still shaky, and we still hadn't chosen that all-important song for the ending. This song selection caused us a great deal of perplexity and uncertainty, as it featured so centrally in the plot. We needed something uplifting, funeral-appropriate and also likely to be a teenage girl's favourite song. There was much debate. Eventually we agreed upon The Beatles' 'Here Comes the Sun', which we would go on to sing at the end of the play. (We would deal with that truly nerve-wracking prospect when the moment came...)

Somehow, despite all our fears and trepidation, the first Form VI play in four years came together brilliantly and exactly on time. We put on two electric performances over two November nights in front of our family and friends. In retrospect, we loved it. Of course, we can look back and laugh at our clumsiness in some of the plot interpretations and smile at how underprepared we felt, but the intimate atmosphere of the packed Drama Studio and the laughs we earned from the audience over the two performance nights made it all deeply worthwhile. The play was so well received, and we devoured every bit of praise we were offered. We had earned it. At last, we reflected, we had been able to bring live theatre, with an audience, back to Dollar Academy.

Eve M. (Form VI)





PREP 5's SHOW IN A WEEK *MADAGASCAR—A MUSICAL ADVENTURE JR*

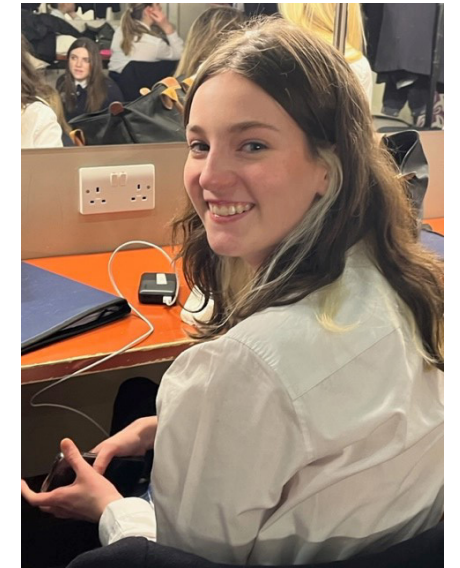
Forty-eight pupils. One show. One week.

Both Prep 5 classes enjoyed a week brimful of song and adventure when they headed to the Auditorium to learn the scripts, the choreography and the music for *Madagascar* in just five days. As always, our children rose to the challenge and put on a fabulous show on the Friday afternoon; the performance showcased the unbelievable talents of all our Prep 5 pupils. The show ended with an audience singalong of 'I Like to Move It'. Even the teachers and Mrs Morrison joined in!

Lynette Pollock

THE JUNIOR ONE CANTATA 2023

Junior 1 pupils loved performing a humorous and toe-tapping retelling of *Cinderella* (from Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes*) to a packed and appreciative audience of family and friends. Cinderella was played by Susannah M. The Ugly Siblings were Ben B., Jesca H.-S. and Eleanor D. The Prince was Lee S. and the Magic Fairy was played by Ailie G.



COLLABORATING WITH COLLABRO

Anyone heard of the 2014 winners of Britain's Got Talent? We definitely had! So when Collabro invited us to be the backing choir for their Edinburgh Usher Hall show (part of their farewell tour), we said 'Yes!' Never mind that it was the night before our own extravaganza Christmas Concert in Perth... we decided to think of it as a warm-up gig.

So, on Sunday 11 December, the Music Department took a choir of 40 senior pupils to Edinburgh for this exciting event. We performed two of their songs: the signature 'Lighthouse' and the popular 'A Thousand Years'. The Dollar choir were privileged to gain backstage insights into how shows such as these are organised; they watched the liaisons with the group's manager beforehand and got to work with the sound and lighting team during the rehearsal. They also managed to fit in a cheeky teatime Nando's before starting promptly at 7.30pm. Many friends and family had travelled to the Usher Hall to watch us, and we were so grateful for their support. Congratulations to everyone involved.

The Music Department



Dollar Academy
Christmas Concert
12th December 2022



CHRISTMAS CONCERT 2022

Hopefully you were lucky enough to be at our most recent 2022 Christmas Concert in Perth Concert Hall. It didn't really feel as though a year had passed since our 2021 festive celebrations, but this Christmas there was no need for masks, social distancing or last-minute streaming. In our post-Covid world, we were live—allowed to perform together on stage. We celebrated with joy and gratitude... and with some great music. Before a completely full house, our pupils were performance-ready for a Dollar Christmas, 2022 style.

Perth Concert Hall staff were as supportive as ever, helping with the logistics of our rehearsal schedule and evening concert. An 8am start gave us time to set the concert platform and gather chairs and stands for our 50-plus orchestra members (from Forms III to VI). Over 300 chairs were manoeuvred on and off the stage to accommodate our various choral items and rehearsal walk-ons and walk-offs. Our working party of Form VI prefects practised lifting and stacking chairs into and out of the wings, timing themselves to ensure our pre-recorded videos of pupil jokes and Christmas cheer were long enough to allow for smooth transitions between acts. All the while DAJO (Dollar Academy Jazz Orchestra) were setting up in the foyer, under the watchful eye of Mr Neil Blezard, for their post-concert performance. The gobos were positioned to emblazon the walls with our school badge and the microphones were put in place for our solo singers. Then our convoy of coaches began to arrive: eight buses full of performers from Prep 4 to Form VI, all very excited about what lay ahead.

We wanted to feature the talents of each individual choir and ensemble,

but we were also determined to allow our massed musicians the chance to perform, all together, in a combined work, for our finale. December 2019 had been our last opportunity and we had missed it. This year, we decided to celebrate the 150th anniversary of English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) by performing his *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*, a beautiful medley of traditional carols arranged for solo voice, choir and orchestra. It seemed fitting, therefore, to begin our evening with another of his works: the more well-known *Fantasia on Greensleeves* played by the Senior Orchestra.

After the luscious sound of the opening orchestral work led by Rebecca W. (Form VI), the Prep Choir took to the stage, performing two upbeat festive songs in perfect two-part harmony: 'Blizzard on the Way' and 'The Reindeer Rock'. It was hard to believe these were the youngest and most inexperienced of our musicians, given the stage presence and 'swagger' of this performance. Choreographed and delivered with precision and accuracy, this group set the bar high.

Next up were the Junior Choir, with beautiful performances of Bob Chilcott's 'The Child' and Andy Beck's



‘Carry the Light’. This sensitive singing displayed secure three-part harmony across the choir of 75, demonstrating excellent dynamic control and perfect diction. Darcy K. (Junior 1) sang the opening solo: poised and prepared, she gave a lovely performance of the first verse. Mr Christie’s violin accompaniment added another layer of beauty to this controlled performance.

Form I and II entered the stage next, bringing energy and vibrancy with their renditions of ‘Joy to the World’ and George Michael’s classic ‘Last Christmas’. Still buzzing after the summer success of *Matilda the Musical*, the pupils’ singing here did not disappoint. Their focused sound and obvious enjoyment were evident to the audience who showed their appreciation vociferously.

Chamber Choir sang two contrasting pieces when it was their turn on stage. They opened with a powerful performance of Jonathan Wilcox’s ‘Nowell, Nowell’, navigating their way through this tongue-twisting and rhythmically demanding arrangement of the carol. But it was their second piece, ‘Pulchra Est’ by Ola Gjeilo, which left the audience in no doubt as to why these singers are in Chamber Choir. Also known



as ‘Northern Lights’, this piece offers haunting melodies and harmonies and an overwhelming sense of calm, allowing the audience a moment of reflection and contemplation.

Our Mixed Voice Choir (nearly 100 Form III to Form VI pupils) brought the first half of the concert to a close. Their first piece, an arrangement of ‘God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen’ was a cheeky, fun-filled two minutes of jazz-influenced harmonies, 5/4 time signature and scat. This contrasted beautifully with their second work, the well-known choral classic ‘Adiemus’ by Welsh composer Karl Jenkins. Accompanied by a small string and percussion ensemble and flautist Erin M. (Form IV), the choir performed with passion and focus, showing confidence and attitude as well as excellent breath control.

After a short break (and a record-breaking 270-chair layout), the choirs entered for the second half of the concert. There were sing-along carols and a joint number from the Prep and Junior Choirs, ‘Christmas on the Beach at Waikiki’. Then, with the Senior Orchestra and choirs in position, it was time for the central work, *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. The Orchestra, led by Freya F. (Form VI), had been rehearsing the challenging parts for weeks, and each choir had learned different sections which were finally put together on concert day. The solo baritone role was split between three senior boys, Duncan K. (Form V), Charlie W. and Finlay M. (both Form VI). Each brought confidence and style to their individual parts and led the massed choirs into the four sections, respectively, with flair and ease. The final solo line, ‘And we wish you a happy, a happy new year’ was sung by Prep 5 pupil Laurie S. Her sweet voice led the massed choirs to their final a capella ‘Christmas Blessing’, the perfect way to end a wonderful evening of music making.

Louise Timney



YOUNG MUSICIAN COMPETITION 2023

The Dollar Academy Young Musician of the Year final took place on Wednesday 1 February 2023 after four months of auditions and very competitive heats. The competition is open to any Dollar pupil in the senior school and nearly 70 pupils entered for the singing and instrumental classes. They performed a range of music and styles across the three levels: Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced.

Penelope Cousland (a vocal tutor at the Royal Conservatoire in Glasgow and freelance opera singer) and Bernie Docherty (former BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra co-leader and professional violinist) were invited to adjudicate.

After listening to the 17 pupils, the adjudication took place. The judges gave very useful tips for future performances and constructive comments about the evening’s event. All finalists received a medal and the winners each received a trophy.

This year’s finalists at Advanced level (Singing) were Laura K. (Form VI), Duncan K. (Form V) and Charlie W. (Form VI). At Advanced level (Instrumentalist) the finalists were: Isabella P. (piano, Form VI), Patrick M. (clarinet, Form V) and Christopher J. (bassoon, Form III). At Intermediate

level (Singing) the finalists were: Katy W. (Form IV), Olivia M. (Form V) and James M. (Form IV). At Intermediate level (Instrumentalist), the finalists were Will C. (flute, Form I), Jessica C. (trombone, Form I) and Charlotte S. (saxophone, Form I). At Foundation level (Singing), the finalists were Jessica C., Eva G. (Form V) and Charlie C. (Form II) and at Foundation level (Instrumentalist) the finalists were Maisie C., Zoe K. (both Form II) and Annabelle K. (Form I), all flautists.

This year’s winners in the Singing category were Laura K. (Advanced); Olivia M. (Intermediate) and Jessica C. (Foundation). In the Instrumentalist category, the winners were Isabella P. (Advanced), Will C. (Intermediate) and Maisie C. (Foundation). The finalists were subsequently invited to perform as part of the school’s March Concert Series, and the adjudicators chose Isabella P. from the list of winners to represent Dollar Academy in the Scottish Independent Schools Young Musician final in April 2023. Results of that competition were not yet available at the time of writing. A huge congratulations to all the pupils who took part.

Louise Timney

CHARITIES COMMITTEE

Back in June 2022, when some in our year group chose to apply for 'Charities', as it's known, I don't think anyone realised just how great a choice they had made or how great an impact the Charities Committee would have upon their final year at Dollar. We started back in October with the Form I Disco; that first event of the year was a great success, raising £530 for Heart and Stroke Scotland. After that, it seemed as though one successful event followed another. There is not enough space here to mention all the fundraisers undertaken over the past year, but one thing that can be said is that we were very successful. We raised just over £6,000 for various charities, ranging from those supporting Turkey and Syria to The Joshua Nolan Foundation and Children in Need, to name just a few.

This year we had the chance to invite the elderly residents of Dollar to our Macmillan Coffee Morning for the first time since 2019. I can say, on behalf of all members of the Charities Committee, that we loved giving back

to the community during the festive period, and I'm sure it was also a highlight for our guests.

Another notable post-Covid return to our traditional fundraising calendar was the Teacher Pie Day. We were all surprised—not merely by the generosity and courage of the teachers who put their faces on the line—but also by the incredible generosity of our pupils. They contributed more than £600; this was donated to a charity supporting the mental health of teachers, a very worthy cause.

At the time of writing, we are currently planning the Sponsored Walk for the final Tuesday of the summer term. Every year we choose two international, two national and two local charities to support with the hugely generous donations received from the school community's sponsorship efforts. After much debate, we settled upon our final six choices: The Uphill Trust, Rainforest Alliance, My Name's Doddie Foundation, Women's Aid, Strathcarron Hospice and The Gate's Alloa Foodbank. We

are all looking forward to getting out on the hills for what, I'm sure, will be a very enjoyable day for everyone involved.

Finally, I would like to thank Ms Sanchez Roman, Mrs Livingstone and Mrs Kelly for their continued support and guidance throughout the year; they always bring exciting new ideas to our weekly meetings. I'd also like to thank all the members of the Charities Committee for their enthusiastic contributions and involvements in a very successful year, and I wish next year's Charities Committee all the very best.

*Jamie S. (Form VI,
Charities Committee Coordinator)*





FUNDRAISING CONCERT

On Tuesday 21 February I hosted a musical theatre performance night to raise money for the Pseudomyxoma Survivor charity. Pseudomyxoma peritonei, also known as PMP, is a rare type of appendix cancer. The charity provides support for those affected by PMP, appendix cancers and rare peritoneal malignancies. They're here to provide emotional support and practical advice through an online community that's proven to make a real difference. They are a patient- and caregiver-run organisation, offering advice on managing symptoms and all aspects of living with this rare disease.

A wide range of performances featured that evening, beginning with 'You Can't Stop the Beat' from *Hairspray*. The audience joined in on the dance moves at the chorus, and it really set the bar high for the rest of the night. 'You Can't Stop the Beat' was followed by numbers from *The Greatest Showman*, *SIX the Musical*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables*, *My Fair Lady* and *Jekyll and Hyde* (the musical). The first half of the performance was



rounded off by the fabulous 'Any Dream Will Do' from *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Our Joseph was Duncan K. (Form VI), who gave a truly phenomenal performance in his rainbow coat.

After a busy interval (with plenty of cakes and other treats to go round), we were back into our performances. We started off with an audience singalong of 'Summer Nights' from *Grease*. Sandy and Danny were portrayed perfectly by Laura K. (Form VI) and George M. (Form V), giving everyone a sneak peek at this session's summer musical. This was followed by numbers from *Beauty and the Beast*, *Dear Evan Hansen* (this was a particularly emotional number and there were a few teary eyes in the audience), *Wicked* and *Into the Woods*.

For our finale number, Laura K., Morag P. and I (all Form VI) did our very own Donna and the Dynamos performance of 'Super Trouper' from *Mamma Mia*. It was the end of the night, so the singing was definitely not quite up to scratch (I won't even mention the dancing), but it gave us so many laughs and was so much fun. We closed the show with almost tangible energy and joy exuding from the audience and from everyone on stage.

February is Rare Disease Month, so it was just amazing to be able to raise awareness of such a rare form of cancer during this time. I'm sure that we really have made a difference to some very special people's lives. Overall, we raised over £3,300 for the Psuedomyxoma Survivor charity. I simply cannot express my thanks fully enough to the staff and pupils who helped create such an amazing night.

Rebecca C. (Form VI)





POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SOCIETY

Christopher Hitchens wrote, in *Letters to a Young Contrarian*, that 'The essence of the independent mind lies not in what it thinks, but in how it thinks.' Every Monday lunchtime, members of the Politics and International Relations Society convene to practise developing such essence. I am continually impressed by their curiosity about the world, their nuanced argumentation, their emotional and academic intelligence.

The group has become adept at identifying interconnected events using systems thinking and are comfortable connecting US-Sino relations, NATO enlargement, global economic crashes and international terrorism. They use their historical knowledge and understanding of the world, alongside their lived experience, to identify probable causes and consequences of current affairs.

Our guest-speaking programme features speakers from a wide range of disciplines and ideologies. BBC broadcasting heavyweights, Martin Geissler and Gordon Smart kickstarted the speaking events. Martin Geissler is an award-winning broadcast journalist who has worked as an international reporter for Sky News and ITN, and he currently works as a news anchor on the early morning BBC Radio Scotland show, *Good Morning Scotland*. Gordon Smart is a former deputy editor of *The Sun*, editor of *The Scottish*

Sun, and reporter for the *News of the World*.

Geissler and Smart are the ideal duo. They spoke to pupils from Forms I to VI about the media's influence on political developments and constitutional change. Our pupils' questions were bold and provocative, and our speakers praised their confident, insightful questions. They stayed an hour longer than planned to discuss issues ranging from ethical and impartiality considerations when reporting the news to the power of language used on the front pages and in political speeches. More than charismatic and skilful raconteurs, they are working journalists who talk about their experiences with wit and integrity.

We also welcomed Ruth Croman, managing partner of Macnabs Solicitors, and David McKie, a senior partner from Levy & McRae. They spoke about law as a career path and about their extensive experience in high-profile legal cases. Mrs Croman is the only solicitor in Tayside accredited as a specialist in both family law and child law by the Law Society of Scotland and she chairs the Family Law Arbitration Group for Scotland. She spoke about several cases she has led, including one in the Supreme Court, where she was involved in an appeal under the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction. David McKie spoke about his experience in high-profile litigation practice. He has been involved in some of the most significant cases in Scotland in the last 25 years and has vast experience in almost all forms of litigation. In recent years, he led the legal teams for Alex Salmond in his successful judicial review against the Scottish

Government and he represented the former First Minister as a key contributor to the Parliamentary Inquiry. Head of Media Law at the University of Glasgow for ten years, he has advised on nearly all of the major media stories in Scotland over the last quarter century. He has authored books and legal articles and is a regular commentator on legal issues in the media.

We also welcomed Wing Commander Stuart Grady, Senior Air Planner for NATO, to talk about geopolitics. He explored the collective security and deterrent role NATO plays in maintaining the global balance of power; NATO's actions in tackling international terrorism; the current conflict in Ukraine; and the potential risk of nuclear warfare.

And, in the days after Nicola Sturgeon announced her decision to step down as Scotland's First Minister, we heard from Mr Keith Brown, MSP, Depute Leader of the SNP and Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans. He discussed issues surrounding justice, democracy and Scottish independence. He was impressed by our pupils' rigorous scrutiny of the SNP's record on social justice and policing, and he offered an analysis of the current Scottish political landscape. He even spoke about the future leadership of the SNP (at the time, undecided).

All of the above has helped pupils to think more critically about significant geopolitical events, prepare for university interviews and become more responsible and aware global citizens. The Society resumes in August, and new members are always welcome.

Hannah Young



COULD YOU REDUCE YOUR TRAVEL-TO-SCHOOL CARBON FOOTPRINT?

Have you signed up for the HomeRun app yet? It was launched in August, and there are 197 parents and 20 staff currently signed up; car sharing accounts for around 33% of the car journeys to school. This is amazing. Not only is this helping to reduce CO₂ emissions, but these changes will reduce the costs of travelling to school. Most low-occupancy car use is for journeys of between one and four miles, so if you think you could offer car sharing opportunities, either for journeys to and from school or for Saturday sports fixtures, please do sign up for the app.

In October we had our new bike hangar installed between the Dewar and Younger Buildings. Match-funded by Cycling Scotland, the hangar provides secure, sheltered storage for bikes; it can be used by pupils and staff. There are already a few members of the school community taking advantage of this new facility.

The Sustainable Travel Group also organised for the school to take part in the Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel challenge in March. This is the largest walking-, wheeling-, cycling- and scooting-to-school challenge in the United Kingdom. In spite of the inclement weather we experienced during the challenge, a large number of pupils actively travelled part or all of their journey to school, helping to improve air quality and reduce their CO₂ emissions and taking positive action towards climate change.

Please contact the school for more information about the HomeRun app or if you would like to use the bike storage.

Members of the Sustainable Travel Group

SUSTAINABILITY CLUB

With a congested timetable and such an array of co-curricular opportunities at the school, it has been exciting to see so many pupils throw themselves so energetically into a range of conservation projects this academic session. Recognising the global imperative to prioritise environmental sustainability—and thus preserve the Earth's natural resources, well-being and beauty—the Sustainability Club epitomises the school values of 'work hard, be kind and get involved.' Our pupils continue to generate a greater awareness of the immeasurable global challenge we currently face.

Acknowledging that stakeholder engagement is critical to success—as is the development of pupils who will become influential adults, capable of driving environmental action across many spheres—it has been great to see the Prep School sustainability lessons continue to evolve this year. Further disclosure to younger pupils will help them become individuals who actively work toward sustainable living. It really has been encouraging to see pupils approach activities with so much enthusiasm and enjoyment, and they are certainly becoming more environmentally conscious. I would like to extend a special mention to Sophie H. and Anya W. (both Form VI), as they have put together an exciting lesson series.

The group also continues to engage with third parties in a mission to improve the local environment, whilst supporting the positive transition to Net Zero. In September, pupils tackled the ever-growing problem of marine pollution, by volunteering for a beach clean event at Blackness. Our thanks go to the Marine Conservation Society who led and organised the event. Our group also braved the subarctic November conditions to continue the excellent afforestation work in the vicinity of Dollar Golf Club, planting over 500 trees over two days. We are grateful to the Dollar Community Development Trust and the Woodland Trust, who made the tree planting possible, and we look forward to growing this partnership as we continue to regenerate local woodland ecosystems.

It is also with great pleasure that I can report the school's participation in the inaugural Fuel Change Live event, hosted at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh. At this event, climate action and the ambitions of business converge. Laura M. (Form VI), and Sophie H. represented the school (working alongside pupils from across the country) to tackle some of the country's toughest climate challenges. Their eye-catching social media video promoting sustainable water usage was pipped at the post, as their group were runners-up out of a field of over 100 pupils. Whilst the competition element was secondary, the pupils are to be commended for generating greater awareness about an increasingly serious environmental problem.

Graham Oliver



Access school travel information, and connect with families living near you to share travel arrangements, all in one place.

- ✓ More convenient travel choices
- ✓ More time and money back for parents
- ✓ A greener school for all



THE SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRAVEL APP



HomeRun App helps parents plan easier, greener journeys for the school run ...and helps schools with effective travel planning



WINTER STORM 2023

At the start of second term, Miss Augaitis and I set off with some of our Juvenile Band members, bound for Kansas and the annual Winter Storm gathering for pipers and drummers. This three-day event saw our pupils perform in solo events, take part in piping and drumming workshops and share the stage with some of the world's finest performers—playing to a packed audience besides.

We were very fortunate to establish a connection with the incredible World War I museum in the city. We had seen an online appeal from the museum, looking for a set of bagpipes that would have been played during the Great War. We managed to source a set that had belonged to the grandfather of Douglas Dye (FP 1969). I made a small presentation to the Director of Exhibitions and her staff about what knowledge (though this was limited) we had of the instrument, and the group made the formal presentation of this set of pipes to the museum. My great thanks go to Douglas and his family for this kind and generous donation; it made this part of our trip very special. I hope that, in the years to come, Dollar pupils may visit this museum and see the pipes on display. Following the presentation, we were treated to a detailed tour of the museum.

The Winter Storm syllabus began with solo contests for the amateur grades. All of our pupils played in these, delivering some fine performances. Duncan W. (Form VI)

finished 3rd in the Grade One Solo Piping while Oliver B. (Form III) placed 2nd. George I. (Form IV) placed 5th in the Grade One Solo Snare. The big win of the day belonged to Anna I. (Form II), who won the Amateur Tenor Drumming Championship.

Both staff members also competed in the Gold Medal events. These events gave our pupils the opportunity to take in the high standard of competition on show and see their teachers under pressure too!

The final day and night were probably the highlight of the trip. During the day, our pupils attended workshops delivered by some of the most sought-after instructors and performers on the planet. After this, we were given an amazing opportunity to perform in the concert and play two sets to the crowd. These were very well received. To top it all off, we performed one last time in the finale piece, alongside so many piping and drumming legends. That evening provided memories that will last a very long time indeed.

Winter Storm 2023 did not disappoint. We met some great people, ate lots of great food and shared our music. Miss Augaitis and I are extremely proud of the positive impact that our pupils made during this trip.

Matt Wilson





CCF UPDATE

Infantry

Last September a team of ten of our best cadets competed, for the first time since the pandemic, in the Scottish Military Skills Competition. Despite being uncertain about what was to come, we knew it required extensive preparation. So each Friday evening we gathered to push our fitness, teamwork and problem solving to the max. At the competition, we were judged on fieldcraft missions, stealth, shooting and observational skills (and practically everything else we had learnt since our recruit years). Each cadet was pushed to their physical and mental limits, but we all kept going and felt hugely motivated when applying our knowledge to realistic scenarios. By Sunday evening, we were exhausted. Our bodies had been tested further than ever before and, despite narrowly missing out on the win, we were all grateful for the experience. Each cadet had the chance to prove

their abilities and we all returned with enhanced skills. All of this has helped us to develop our teaching of the younger cadets.

And then there was Drill Cadre. Over a very intense weekend in Dunkeld, our Form IV and V cadets were thoroughly assessed on their overall abilities. This prestigious competition aims to build stronger senior cadets by highlighting talents and diminishing weaknesses. The cadets took part in planning exercises, room inspections, drill assessments, physical training and interviews, and they held a formal dinner for guests of honour. Throughout, everyone had opportunities to showcase leadership and teamwork skills, thus becoming more self-sufficient and driven. After this challenging, tiring, but successful weekend, we celebrated with an award ceremony. The winner of the 'Jim Mac' Trophy for Best Junior NCO was Cpl

Frederick R. (Form IV), and the overall winner of Drill Cadre 2023 was Sgt Inaya S. (Form V).

It is only possible to sustain Infantry's busy schedule with the support of our staff, most notably Major Mark Scott, and every senior cadet puts in a lot of hard work to keep the cogs turning. This year has certainly seen its fair share of challenges, but there can be no doubt that we have kept up a strong and positive attitude throughout. Of this, I am very proud.

RSM Cecily D (Form VI)

Recruits

When the recruits joined the CCF for the first time in August, they brought excitement, energy and a lot of questions. We started with the recruit training days, where the recruits learnt some basic skills and got to know their dedicated instructors. After the

instructor training day, the instructors had the knowledge they needed and quickly built friendships with their recruits.

Now, when the recruits arrive, they are always eager for their lessons, and they constantly surprise my fellow instructors and me with their knowledge and their questions. In early November we provided the recruits with their night exercise, running late into the evening after CCF. The recruits took part in many different activities including shooting, rifle safety, camouflage and, most excitingly, a top-secret mission. But

it was unanimous: the top-secret mission was the favourite. Instructors got involved in role-playing, and the recruits had to be very sneaky to outsmart Lt Florence. As the Fridays grew colder, some lessons moved inside, but thanks to the instructors' commitment and planning, the lessons stayed engaging, and the recruits continued to learn. More recently, the last of the recruit first aid courses concluded, and everyone who attended achieved their first aid badge. The courses took place in Dunkeld over three days; being there for the first time is always exciting for the recruits.

We also held our annual drill/dance competition, where both the recruits and their instructors' creativity are put to the test. This year it was MacLean section that rose to victory. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to the summer term when the recruits will begin their tours of the different sections before choosing their section for next year. There will be Final Nail, the overnight recruit exercise that puts into practice all the information they have learned this year. For me, this year has truly been more than I could ever have imagined, and my job has been made infinitely easier thanks to the amazing work of my instructors and, of course, the helping hand of Lt Florence. I only hope the recruits have found it half as enjoyable as I have.

CSM Megan L. (Form VI)

Advanced Infantry

This year Advanced has been very busy preparing for their Advanced Infantry final assessment. This has involved a lot of revision on top of Friday core training. The cadets took this challenge in their stride, and, after all the hard work, many came out with commendable results. This final push in their Infantry training was supported by our committed and experienced instructors and DS, who have been immensely helpful in running this section. We can claim some impressive accomplishments, including having multiple cadets selected to train with the Military Skills team, which only selects the most promising and capable cadets. Many also competed in the annual Drill Cadre competition, each performing to a high standard and gaining impressive results. Overall Advanced Infantry have been training hard in preparation for next year, where they eagerly await their chance to become DS of their own section. Given the strong effort each cadet has put in this year, and the progress made, I am confident they will succeed within the CCF in the years to come.

CSM Charles G.

Basic Infantry

The Basic Infantry section has also been very busy this session. There



all about. Many of our Basic cadets worked hard to complete their MOI (Method of Instruction) or CFIT (Cadet Forces Instructional Technique) cadres during the November and February camps. Thus, they have started to learn how to become instructors, which includes learning how to put together interesting lessons. There have been many promotions throughout the year, reflecting the time and effort put in by each individual. Within Basic Infantry, the focus has been on perfecting some of the skills learnt in recruit year (such as section attacks), and it has been great to see everyone building upon what they have learned, gaining confidence over time. A special mention must also go to all the Basic Instructors and DS, who have worked incredibly hard to make sure lessons are well presented and also enjoyable. They have been a huge help in making this year run smoothly.

CSM Rebecca W. (Form VI)



Navy



This year, Navy has been very busy. In August we began with a repeat trip on the RN yacht Scorchier, as last year's trip was cut short by the loss of a propellor. There were other incidents

last year, too: collisions with piers, lost car keys, dodgy tows and tangled ropes. This second trip ended with far more success. There was paddleboarding, firmly attached propellers and some

excellent sailing in ideal weather. In addition, a team entered the National Regatta and performed extremely well, returning home with a 3rd place overall. Our Fridays were equally eventful. Our promotions have been healthy, and we have had lots of fun. We had 'Spoons' tournaments, whole-section Capture-the-Flag games, a first aid week and evening canoe trips. As Head of Section, I am hugely proud of what we have achieved this year. Our Form V pupils have taught fantastically well, and our Form VI team have been brilliantly organised every week. Without them, Navy could not function. Our younger pupils have been enthusiastic and ready to learn. I will miss this Navy section in June, but I know that in the hands of our current Form V pupils, Navy will continue to flourish.

W01 Arwen K. (Form VI)

RAF

From the (slightly mundane) aircraft recognition lessons to the exciting command tasks and flight simulator experiences, the RAF cadets have pushed themselves hard this year, working to apply their knowledge and skills. Gale force winds and snow cancelled many trips, but we were all pleased when flying and gliding trips were given the green light to go ahead in the spring term. Many younger cadets reached new heights during their first flights in light aircraft. We added new drones to the section too, generating huge excitement (the old indoor drones had endured a few too many crash landings). Drone racing, airborne selfies and reconnaissance hide-and-seek are a lot of fun, and the summer term will have brought more drone-related expeditions. The annual overnight exercise was a success, too.

Complete with fieldcraft and a *Top Gun* screening the cadets grew more confident in the field as they pushed themselves beyond what they were used to. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to the summer term when the RAF section will compete in this year's India Shield competition. We hope to improve upon last year's second place (then, an unexpected but welcome achievement). The summer holidays also bring about the ever-important RAF summer camp, always a highlight of the year. This year's camp will be held at RNAS Inskip.

Sgt Emily T. (Form V)

REME

REME section certainly offers cadets a very practical learning experience. With the help of Mr Stewart, REME cadets have spent this session working on cars and other mechanical projects. We have developed our hands-on abilities and picked up other technical skills too. We have worked on a three-wheeled Metro, a 2006 Ford Fiesta, a Land Rover with a few problems and Mr Stewart's pride and joy, the Steyr Puch Haflinger. Each vehicle comes with its own challenge to solve.

The year began with the rebuild of the REME hut (where the Land Rover lives). Then we shifted to mechanics. The cadets were split into three groups, and each was tasked with getting its assigned vehicle started and running well. This was imperative, because once the cars were running, we were able to diagnose and repair any other problems more quickly. The main challenge we had with the Land Rover was that it wasn't pumping fuel to the engine. We traced the lines from the fuel tank all the way to the engine and found the hidden problem: the fuel pump wasn't pumping fuel to the

carburetors. This was an easy fix: we ordered another pump and soon had it running. Next came the mammoth task of taking the engine out and stripping it down for a major overhaul. As I write, the engine is out, and the cadets are in the process of stripping it down. Another challenge was the Metro's engine block. We realised the oil was miscoloured, and it turned out to be emulsified. The cadets working on the Metro broke down the oil with an engine flush and then did a full oil change. The Metro's engine is now being taken apart to find out where the water had come from. Overall, REME section has gathered an immense amount of learning and hands-on experience this year, taking on larger, more detailed jobs than ever before.

SSgt Alex Khan (Form VI)



HIT OR MISS

I was in position, my rifle aimed down Century Range. I reached into my ammo box and slowly lifted out my final bullet. It felt cold in my shaking fingers. I slotted it into the chamber and closed the bolt while nuzzling my head down to the sights. Six hundred yards down the range I could see the heat mirage tossing and turning with the wind. My index finger lay on the trigger. I tried to stop my nerves from jolting my finger. I opened the bolt. My nose was combed by the scent of gun powder. I hurried my attention to the scope. I stared. My eyes ached from straining, from not blinking even once. I saw the tip of the target on the horizon. I saw red, but I awaited confirmation of this sight from my register keeper.

‘V-bull. All out.’

In that moment, I was happy. Now, I know that we are told from an early age not to use ‘happy’ in our

writing because of its vague, babyish connotations, but I feel it best describes my emotions after this shot, and also the emotions I have felt most strongly throughout my journey in shooting.

I have always been someone who likes to stay within my ‘comfort zone’, so I never thought that the cadets would be my cup of tea. The CCF was a whole new (and not particularly appealing) world: the murky green uniform, the mud, the (so-called) food, the suffering—the pointless suffering. But, fortunately for me, my parents had already decided that I would go to Recruit Camp, and I had no say in the matter. So there I was: lying on a top bunk in a 20-person dorm, scratching the midge bites I had received within seconds of arrival. We had been told we would have to wake up ‘early’ to fit in a full day of activities. Little did I know that my version of ‘early’ was not the cadets’ version.

5am. I opened my eyes to the beaming ceiling lights just above my head, to thumps and shouts in the corridor. For a moment, I lay with my eyes closed, thinking about my usual Saturday mornings. But I was woken again by reality as someone stomped along the upstairs corridor, cascading a hundred cobwebs onto my face. And this did not turn out to be the biggest shock of the day. Not even close. Later that day, I (age 12) was presented with a rifle. A real rifle. With real ammunition. And then I was told to enter the range and shoot it. I felt like a bull receiving an invitation to the opening of a brand-new china shop; it just made no sense. I laughed, believing there was no way they were going to let a clueless recruit like me lie down and shoot within mere hours of joining the CCF. I was proven wildly incorrect. But, unusually, I didn’t feel scared or nervous. I no longer wanted



to be back at home in my safe space. Instead, I felt excited because I was getting the chance to do something that no one else I knew had ever done.

Lying down on the firing point for the first time was a tad unnerving. All the rules and safety precautions that had been demonstrated outside of the range were dancing around my mind. Though I had been told it was a ‘no danger’ range (as long as you kept your rifle pointing down), every move felt perilous. I snatched the trigger as if it were one of my Nerf guns; a Russian violet and mustard-coloured sight-shaped wound was punched into my eye. I quickly learned that *these* rifles are *not* like my toys. Despite the discomfort, I also quickly learned that I felt happy while shooting. I loved the complexity and skill of it. I loved that it wasn’t as straightforward as lying down and firing off a shot. I loved the feeling of knowing you have positioned yourself just right and released the shot at the perfect time. I loved knowing that your shot will be going right through the bull’s eye. I loved shooting.

After that camp, I joined the rifle team and began learning more about these fascinating firearms. The team and I prepped for our first Bisley trip. Thanks to Covid, this didn’t happen until summer 2022, three years after I had begun shooting. But the build-up made it all the more exciting when the time finally came. After three years of disrupted training, I arrived at Bisley. The accommodation was like that of Recruit Camp three years ago,



but now I didn’t care. I unpacked and got on with it. I was with some of my best friends doing the sport I loved. I could not wait to explore.

The National Shooting Centre at Bisley is like a whole other world—a miniature village organised around the sport. In the village centre, the shops sell rifles, jackets, merchandise and any other piece of shooting-related equipment one might need. And I couldn’t wait to see the ranges, over ten times the size of any I had seen before. We walked down to Century. This range stretches as far as the eye can see; the red, orange and black firing point pegs casting pointed shadows on the grass as the sun set over the trees. I could not believe I had the luck to call this place home for the next fortnight.

Within the next week or so, I competed in several dozen competitions under a scorching summer sun. They all led up to one. One competition attracts hundreds of shooters from all over the world: HM The Queen’s Prize. This event fell on the final couple of days of the Imperial Competition, and I was chewing my nails in terrified anticipation. I set the alarm for three hours before my firing time to allow for efficient preparation and, hopefully, less room for mistakes. It worked. I arrived with all the right equipment, a thoroughly cleaned rifle and calmer nerves. And so, when I lay down and got into position, I felt happy.

After shooting three distances, I reached my final shot.



Little did I know how much this V-bull would come to mean. Later, we waited for hours to hear about the cut-off for The Queen’s Prize, Stage 2. A thousand competitors would be cut to just one hundred—but it had been my best performance to date, so my coach and I were hopeful. The Range Officer appeared, pinning up the list of qualifiers before racing away from the eager crowd, hungry for a glimpse. I heard a scream from a teammate, announcing that I was in. I looked for my name through wobbling vision and realised it was true. I was one of the ten cadets to make it through to the next round: an achievement that I will forever be proud of.

Fast forward to the end of last year; I sat with my coach, beaming. I had made the British Cadet Rifle Team. I was overwhelmed by emotion, remembering that first time lying on the firing point compared to where I was now. Pushing myself beyond what felt comfortable, for a single weekend in 2019, profoundly changed my life. Since then, I have continued to try new things whenever I can; you never know what opportunities might unfold our of any moment. Shooting is still my happy place, and I can’t wait to tour Canada with the team later this year.

Rachel W. (Form V)

GEOGRAPHY TRIP TO ICELAND

Overseas trips have long been a significant part of studying Geography at Dollar Academy. Previous trips include the southwestern USA, Morocco and Japan. Iceland has always been an attractive proposition, and a visit planned for 2021 had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. It was with great anticipation, therefore, that 74 pupils and 8 staff departed from Glasgow Airport on Sunday 5 February for a four-night tour of the land of fire and ice. Some of the more memorable experiences are described below.

One of the most amazing times was trekking across the **Sólheimajökull Glacier** wearing crampons and carrying ice axes, enjoying views down on to the iceberg-covered meltwater lake. We felt like Arctic explorers and the opportunity to experience a real glacier, such an integral part of the Higher Geography course, brought to life the theory learned in class. Observing how much this glacier has retreated over the last 40 years also brought home the very real impacts of our changing climate.

Another memorable experience was seeing three of Iceland's stunning waterfalls shrouded in snow and ice, providing some perfect photo opportunities. Although stunning, the photos we took could not do justice to the raw power of the water cascading over such huge drops. The experience of standing up close to the 60-metre vertical curtain of water at **Skógafoss** will remain in our memories for years to come.

Pingvellir National Park provided the unique experience of walking down from the North American plate into a rift valley, part of the mid-Atlantic ridge system. We could see the start of the Eurasian Plate in the distance, and the vertical



cliff walls marking the edge of the plates rose dramatically above us.

The geothermal landscape provided spectacular geysers, which were dutifully caught on camera as the eruptions occur every six to ten minutes. We even managed to bathe in the hot waters during a relaxing visit to the **Secret Lagoon**, a place that contrasts sharply with the snowy landscape all around.

One of the final visits of the trip was to the **Hellisheiði geothermal power plant**. We had a fascinating tour of the facilities that provide hot water and electricity to Reykjavik. The significance of the processes established here (for capturing carbon dioxide and turning it into rock for storage) was not lost on our young geographers: this is a possible means of helping to mitigate future climate change.

These school trips are not just about the excursions and visits. Learning to socialise and to cope away from your normal family unit is incredibly important, even more so since these opportunities have been so limited by the pandemic. Evening activities included karaoke, model building and balloon races, and these have an equally vivid place in our memories.

With amber weather warnings prophesying blizzards and thunder snow, we did experience the full force of the Icelandic winter—very impressive when staying in cabins in the middle of nowhere. The aurora borealis did not show themselves, but the fact that they were visible in Scotland just a few weeks later may have reduced this disappointment for some. With some illness, very little sleep and a lot of amazing photographs, we returned to Scotland to process what had been an incredible experience with a remarkable group of staff and pupils.

Alastair McConnell



HIGHER POLITICS AND ADVANCED HIGHER MODERN STUDIES TRIP TO LONDON

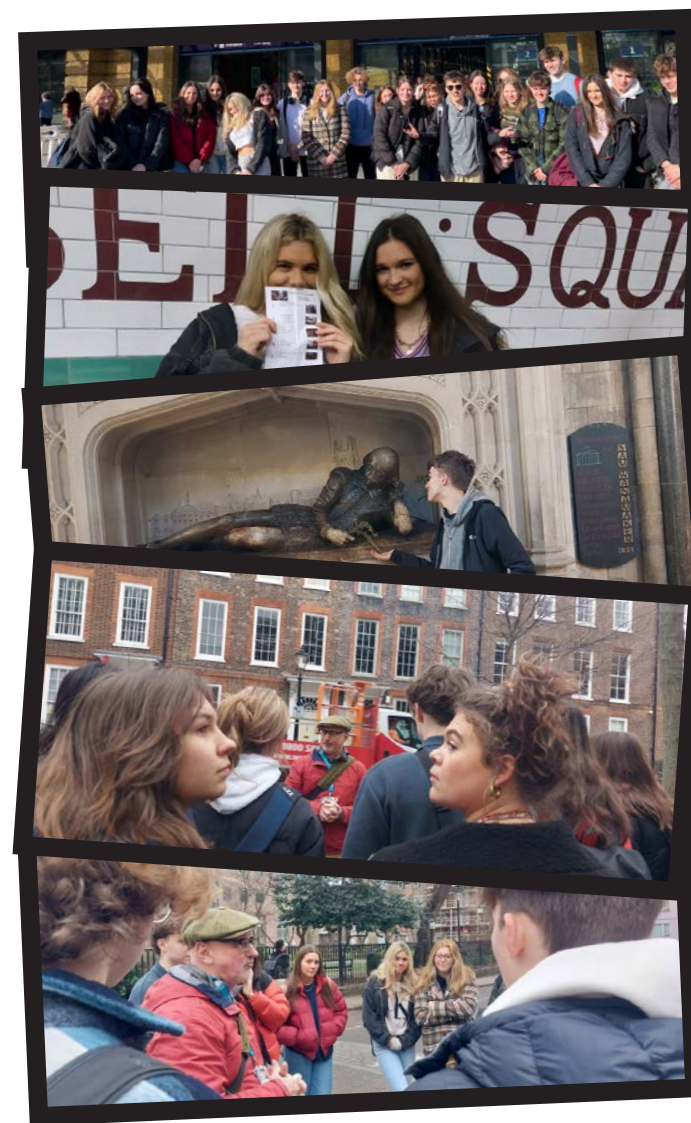
It was a brief, but jam-packed trip at the end of January. Our first stop was the headquarters of *The Spectator*, a weekly publication with two centuries' worth of critical and analytical reporting on politics, culture and society. It was an invaluable opportunity to speak with current editor, Fraser Nelson (FP 1991), about the effect of populism, social media and immigration on politics. He also offered great insight into what a career of journalism could look like. Next, a guided walking tour took us past Whitehall, the Houses of Parliament, Downing Street, the Churchill War Rooms. Lunch was anything from Vietnamese to Italian food at the Mercato Metropolitano.

After some intense security procedures, we found ourselves in Westminster Hall in the Palace of Westminster, a place of astounding historical and architectural significance. This has been the site of dramatic legal trials and coronation banquets over the 900 years of its existence. We loved the breathtaking stained-glass mural that changes with the tides. Turning into St Stephen's Hall, we learned about the importance of the suffragette movement in achieving the right to vote and providing a space for women in politics today.

Next, we saw the House of Commons: perhaps the most important political space in the country. It felt surprisingly small, but had a movie-set quality with microphones hanging from every part of the ceiling. We were taken aback by the House of Lords, with its ornate golden decorations and splendour, and learned that many historical traditions and conventions are retained to this day. Sightings of Matt Hancock and Jacob Rees-Mogg caused either joy or deep dismay among us.

We also enjoyed having conversations with John Nicolson, MP for Ochil and South Perthshire, about changes in the political landscape, the effects of social media, transgender prisoners and the possibility of an independent Scotland. Finally, a welcome rest and sustenance came in the form of the Spitalfields Market, an incredible melting pot and fusion of east and west.

Shylah S. (Form VI)



ADVANCED HIGHER ENGLISH TRIP TO LONDON

On a different trip to London early this spring, our Advanced Higher English pupils walked in the footsteps of William Shakespeare and members of the Bloomsbury Group. They learned about those passionate, prolific and tragic lives from a very knowledgeable tour guide. His (sometimes strange) anecdotes surrounding the creative lives of those writers certainly inspired our pupils to push their own writing beyond conventional boundaries. The highlight of the trip was going to Shakespeare's Globe to watch Sean Holmes' production of the bard's late tragicomedy *The Winter's Tale*. Our pupils been studying the play all year, but the imposing pillars and starry sky above were even more awe-inspiring than they could have imagined. Comparing this live production to the one they had been watching in class was exciting and thought provoking. It was noted that their knowledge of the play was probably more intricate than that of any other member in the audience...which might explain their rather critical view of Holmes' production.

Play Review

The Winter's Tale follows King Leontes' journey towards redemption and forgiveness after he accuses his wife of adultery, a tragic mistake that kills his son and his wife. Holmes' production certainly featured modern spins and inventions. But—amongst the chaos of flying dishes, napkins over heads and iPads—it struggled to hook its audience emotionally. The production moved between the indoor Sam Wanamaker Playhouse and the open-air theatre, and the original music offered both visual and aural reflections of the juxtaposed genres of the play. The dark, candlelit dining room of tragic Sicilia and its jarring strings contrasted with the raucous, music-rich folk festival in comic Bohemia, the two settings connected only by the shared motif of the long table. Yet, neither the extreme tragedy, with its tyrannical rage and brutality, nor the life-affirming comedy managed to grab us. The deaths and the oracle were brushed over and drowned out by sing-and-dance-alongs. Leontes' speeches lacked the rigour and passion we'd hoped for—perhaps because they were delivered by a near-naked, frantically shivering Leontes with a bowed head instead of a furious, deluded King challenging the gods. Some may applaud the jealousy-induced infantilisation of Leontes, but this meant that his speeches lost all power and impact—which, to us, was inexcusable. We had all been writing essays about the ruin and devastation suffered by Hermione, but her overly agitated delivery (and failure to change Bea Segura's costume even once) meant that her character's arc felt misrepresented. Carrying the production (alongside the clown and Autolycus), was Nadine Higgin whose performance embodied the dignity and brutal honesty of truth-teller and moral arbiter, Paulina. The famous statue scene of the denouement revived our faith in the production with its shadowy, dramatic staging, but had Hermione faced the audience, it would have moved us more deeply. Ultimately, the production's flaws made for a more lively, indignant debate than a perfect production would have done. It prompted us to challenge our own perceptions of the play and its most famous moments, to re-evaluate our opinions on Shakespeare's intentions. Leontes' state of mind and degree of moral growth throughout made for a particularly contested area of discussion. Tired but inspired, we returned home after two days with some outlandish stories about our favourite writers, inspiration for our creative writing and new ideas for our Shakespeare essays.

Valerie A. (Form VI)





FORM III ART AND DESIGN TRIP TO LONDON

This was the first time since 2019 that the Art Department had been on an overnight trip, and it was the first for our Form III pupils. Our purpose was to see the creative industries in action, and the main focus was Warner Bros. 'The Making of Harry Potter' studio tour, representing almost every possible career you could embark upon with a degree in Art and Design. Some of the artwork from our competition winners can be seen here: Leigh A. (below left) and Bella S (top left).

Milo MacDermot

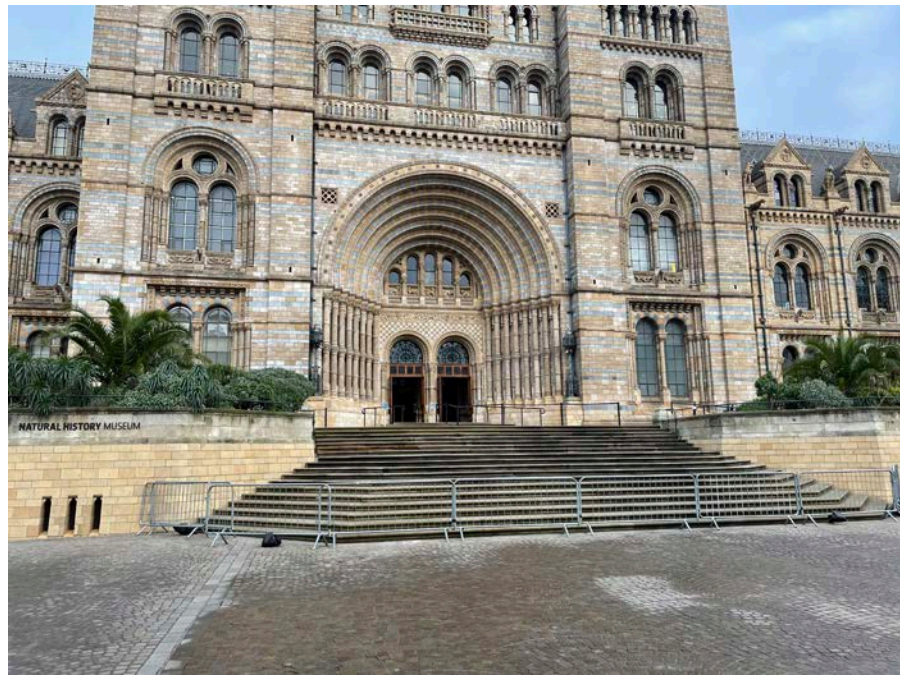
I was immediately captivated by the busy liveliness of London. From the moment we exited the train, we were amazed by the bright lights, the varied architecture. That night, we watched the musical *Six*, with its bright lights and catchy music, before going out to absorb the buzz of London by night, visiting sites like the Trafalgar Square fountains.

On Day Two, we headed for the Warner Bros. Harry Potter studios, which taught us about the many aspects of production for this famous movie franchise. In a lesson on set design, we were given the task of making a 3D paper house. We also saw many set and prop designs, as well as many fashion pieces used in the films. We saw amazing sculptures and animatronics, from spiders to wailing mandrakes. Of course, there was time for butterbeer and ice cream.

Day Three began with a visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum. We saw modern, abstract designs alongside Greek statues, and we especially enjoyed the Korean exhibition. There were items from K-Pop music videos, bright neon lights and traditional posters, painted with precision and skill. There were items from the film *Parasite* and fashion pieces used in *Squid Games*. Later, at Harrods, we were astonished by a giant sculpture of Yayoi Kusama, a Japanese artist known for her contemporary work. Returning to our hotel, we admired the Royal Albert Hall, and the Albert Memorial, both large architectural pieces, full of detail and amazing architectural features.

The London Art trip was unforgettable, offering us the chance to see some amazing art and design work up close. And London itself is a great eye-opener for anyone interested in working in the creative industries.

Cara C. (Form III)



MANDARIN TRIP TO LONDON

In February, Forms V and VI pupils studying Mandarin visited London for three days. Their brisk stay was packed with exotic, uplifting language and cultural activities. I hope the phrases and images here help to convey some of the highlights.

Cecilia Wei

We experienced the wonders of the British Library, including the Chinese and British exhibition. This let us study text remnants of British-Chinese citizens from World Wars I and II.

A meal in Chinatown let us try authentic noodles, bubble tea and 木耳 (black ear mushrooms). These were surprisingly delicious! We sat at circular tables which, we learned, signify unity.

We visited the SOAS University of London and were treated to a seminar about the use of formal and informal Chinese from Dr Song Lianyi. We also attended a business Chinese language class. This was followed by some shopping in Oxford Street.

At the British Museum, we marvelled at the Jade Exhibition, admiring the Chinese jade statues and masks on display. Jade has long been a material of incredibly high value in China, prized for its magical properties. We also loved the beautiful 'water and ink' paintings, draped from floor to ceiling in the style of imperial China.

The Coco bubble tea shop was a lovely way to end our trip.

*Molly K., Imogen I.
and Shayna A. (all Form V)*



CLÈRES 2023

The Modern Languages Department was delighted to resume its programme of foreign trips at the end of last term. In spring, a group of Form I and II pupils spent a week in Normandy, living with French families and visiting Paris, Bayeux, the D-Day landing beaches, Rouen and Disneyland. They all gained confidence in their ability to communicate in French and learned more about the culture and history of France while acting as wonderful ambassadors, both for the school and for Scotland.

Jacqui Young



TOLEDO 2023

Forms I and II Spanish pupils took part in a springtime exchange trip to Toledo, the first since Covid, giving us all a chance to experience the Spanish way of life. Staying in our hosts' homes was a great way to see how Spanish families live. We ate typical Spanish food, such as paella and Spanish omelette, and we drank Cola-Cao, a milk drink with chocolate. We visited our partners' school and took part in their lessons, and visited Toledo. The former capital of Spain, the city has a rich history shaped by Arab, Jewish and Christian legacies. We saw the Tránsito Synagogue and the San Román Church. We also visited Madrid and saw the Queen Sofia Museum. We all made new friends and are looking forward to their return in June for the other half of our exchange.

Harry M. (Form II)



MUSIC AND GOLF TRIP TO NEW YORK AND BOSTON

When Neil Blezard and I began to discuss the possibility of a joint Music and Golf Tour to the USA we had no idea that we would have to complete so many forms, make so many contingency plans, modify so many information packs as we muddled our way through Covid restrictions and subsequent updates. But we did it. In October 2022, we took 42 senior pupils across the Atlantic for 9 memorable days full of sightseeing, golf, concerts, eating out and lots of fun and laughter.

There are too many highlights to mention, but we hope that the photos suggest the sheer variety of activities undertaken. A fantastic group of pupils and staff made this tour unforgettable for all the right reasons.

Louise Timney

A brief list of all the things we saw and did...

- NY Mets Game: Final Game of the Season
- Kissena Golf Course
- Madison Square Gardens and Grand Central Station
- Tour of the Empire State Building
- Hard Rock Café
- Beetlejuice the Musical at the Marquis Theatre
- Times Square and Broadway
- Central Park and Fifth Avenue
- Soho and Chinatown's Canal Street
- Rockefeller Centre and Greenwich Village
- St Patrick's Cathedral
- New World Trade Centre and 9/11 Memorial Park
- The Wall Street Bull
- St Paul's Chapel at Trinity Church
- Bagpipe and Fiddle Performance at the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island
- Macy's Department Store and Tick Tock Diner
- Boston's Freedom Trail
- Cruise of Boston Harbor
- South Shore Golf Club
- Faneuil Hall Market, Boston
- Parkman Bandstand Performance in Boston Common
- Fessenden School and Innovation Centre
- Boston Symphony Hall





HOCKEY 2022/23

The **Junior 1B** team has been very successful this year. We have won many games and had lots of fun while working well together. Every time we played we tried to ‘work hard, be kind and get involved.’ Our strong teams played against many different schools and we always tried our best, which often led to wins. We all try hard to be at practice as much as possible. Our first games were a little tough, but we got used to the challenges as the weeks passed. We won games and lost games, but our biggest win was 12–0! This season the Bs haven’t played any tournaments, but we are definitely ready for one! We loved our away games (since we get to be with our friends on the bus), but we love home games even more because we get to sleep in! The B team all want to thank the one and only Miss Emily Dearden: she makes hockey so exciting!

Zoe G. (Junior 1)

This season the **Junior 2B** squad have worked very hard, claiming lots of wins in our Saturday morning fixtures. We have also drawn a few times; the only games we lost were in the tournaments. The George Watson’s College and Dollar Junior tournaments gave us great experience, though we were playing A teams. Over the course of the season, we improved as a team and as individuals, too. Our skills improved, and we got to know each other better. Our communication improved the most, and we now use the length and width of the pitch to our advantage. We have enjoyed being able to play with goalies in Junior 2, finding that having a goalie can help a lot! The B team has been fun and a great experiencee cannot wait for next season.

Madeline J. and Lucy M. (both Junior 2)

Ever since Christmas, the **Junior 2A** team has improved. We have had

losses, but we have also had many wins. We have developed many new skills and tactics such as communication, teamwork and stretching the pitch to its limits. Hockey training has had a massive impact on our gameplay, thanks to Miss Emily Thain and Miss Robyn Maxtone, and our team really came together, focusing our energy during games. The team has also become more passionate about hockey and, therefore, more committed. This makes a massive difference in our play. As individuals, we all have specific points we are trying to improve upon, and we are always encouraged. We are so sad that the season has come to an end, but we have learned lessons and developed our positive mindsets, and these will carry us on into Form 1 hockey.

Marley M. and Libby P. (both Junior 2)

This season’s hockey has seen all 51 players on our **Form I** team improve.

Many new pupils to the school has meant many new players joining our teams, supported by those players who have lots of experience. For most of the year, we had four teams playing matches on Saturdays. The improvement in using space and passing accuracy helped us to gain a number of wins and draws, though we suffered the occasional loss too!

Individually, we grew in confidence through playing hockey and we also gained trust in our teammates. The highlight for many players was our Form 1 hockey tour to London. We gained experience against a county team and a very strong high school. These matches motivated us to train harder and develop our game for next season. The train journey, the shopping, the tour of London and the opportunity to make new friends all helped to make our first hockey tour a huge success.

Several of our players were rewarded for their hard work by gaining selection for trials at Midland U14 level. To date, Maya M., Imogen M., Abbey S., Kayla B., Anna H. and Rosalie P. have been invited back to the next round of trials. Good luck to them. This year has resulted in a very successful and enjoyable season of hockey, and we hope it continues into next session. We would like to thank all the coaches for their hard work and for making our year in Form 1 so much fun. A special mention must also go to Mr Volland for his organisation of the training sessions and team selection each week.

Anna H. and Ava C. (both Form I)

Form 2B and 2C teams had a great season. We played many games together, as a mixed team, and there have been multiple wins with a few losses sprinkled in. The **2B team**, on their own, have had a good season. With perseverance and brilliant coaching (from Mrs Gillian Robb and Mrs Louise Cruickshank), we managed to achieve five wins against The Glasgow Academy, Hutchesons’ Grammar School, The Mary Erskine

School, St George’s School and Kingston Grammar School. We felt very accomplished to have won against such strong schools. Over the course of the season, we lost just five matches (twice to George Watson’s College, and to St George’s School, The Glasgow Academy and Kelvinside Academy). We also drew twice. Throughout, we developed our skills, our team spirit and our ‘never give up’ attitude.

The **2C team** also had a good season. Though we played fewer matches as a single team, we often played as a mixed team with the Bs, which helped us to develop. We can field three full teams, which is amazing. This season the 2C team won five games and lost just three, playing a total of eight matches in our separate squad. We won challenging matches against The Mary Erskine School, 2-0; The Glasgow Academy, 1-0; and Morrison’s Academy, 2-0 and the High School of Dundee, 2-1. Our amazing coaches guided us through to these wins. It has been a fun season, sometimes challenging, and it has given us fantastic opportunities to meet new people and play alongside those with different strengths. It has helped us work towards our potential and aspire to our best.

Ellie R. (Form II)

This year’s hockey season got off to a rough start for the **Form 2As**, as we weren’t used to playing with each other. But as the year wore on, we improved a lot. Early on, the scores weren’t what we wanted them to be, but we worked hard together and things improved. We went from losing most of the time to narrowing the scores and even drawing against schools who had beaten us earlier in the season. A big contributor to our team was our goalie, Mhora, who kept things together when we were under a lot of pressure in defence. Playing against some of our biggest competitors has been a challenge, but even when things were tough, we worked at 100% until the final whistle. Training at least twice a week has helped everyone improve individually and this

has helped us progress as a team. A big highlight of the year was hosting the Form 2 hockey tournament; we had a great time playing with each other. In early March, all the Form 2 hockey players went on the London hockey tour: a great experience. We played against schools and clubs that we don’t normally encounter. Recently, many players in our team have attended Midlands trials—a great experience. Hopefully those players will progress to full team selection. Overall, this year has been a fun hockey year, building great team spirit and a never-give-up attitude.

Zoe K. and Mhora B. (both Form II)

Sport is at the heart of the Dollar community, and it is an honour being a part of the school’s Hockey Club. The **3B team** do not see themselves as individual players; we are one big family. We have played many teams and, in each game, our playing methods change but one thing certainly does not: our enthusiasm off the pitch. No matter what the weather is, where we are, we are always singing. When scores are low, school spirits are high. We went almost unbeaten this season, losing just two challenging matches away in London—but even these helped us become a stronger team. We were lucky to visit London on the spring hockey tour. And each of these opportunities is made possible by our coaches, Miss Holloway and Mr McLeod. Miss Maxtone, who travelled with the team to London, has also shown us how to develop as hockey players, and as individuals. We have enjoyed a great year together. As I write, we are looking ahead to the summer term, and I know the team will miss the joy of early Saturday mornings! Hockey is just one of the many great opportunities Dollar has offered me and others, and we are all grateful for the experience.

Anna M.-J. (Form III)

I have been playing with most members of the **Form 3A** team for five years now, and we have made some incredible

memories together. We have bonded over our many victories, such as winning the Midland tournament and the Midland Cup or when we reached the semi-final of the Junior Scottish Schools Cup. But most improvements have emerged from our losses. These were few, but they were valuable as learning experiences. We have grown individually, too, guided by Mr Callum McLeod’s coaching. The whole squad worked very hard, getting better and better as we grew closer over the course of the year. I am going to miss playing as a squad, and I think many of us will remember this season as having been the best season of our at the school.

Tabitha P. (Form III)

The **4th XI** had a successful hockey season. Although we haven’t always won, we have stayed strong as a team. During Saturday early-morning training sessions and weekend games, the jokes, the smiles and the teamwork have been consistent. There have been some challenging moments (staying on our feet on wet, muddy grass at St George’s or playing against other schools’ 3rd XIs), but we have stuck together, showing strong team spirit. The Form IV players have really improved, particularly Katie W. and Ella H.; they have shown great commitment. The Form V girls—Daisy A., Mia F., Mya S. and Holly A.—have brought their impressive attacking skills. Vice-captains Aoiffe P. and Cameron K. (both Form VI) have always been willing to play in goal. It has been a fantastic season, and I wish the team all the best for next year.

Megan M. (Form VI)

It was a pleasure to be chosen captain of the **3rd XI** this season, and I couldn’t wait to take on the role alongside vice-captains, Freya F. and Laura M. (both Form VI). Playing with such dedicated, competitive, friendly individuals made the season a hugely memorable one. From our first match of the season to our last, we have all grown closer together, becoming a stronger, more

successful team as a result. New friendships were made across the year groups, and we were always learning something new from one another: a new trick or a lesson to be carried into our future hockey careers.

We kicked off the start of the season with four consecutive wins, including a 5–0 win against Strathallan School and a 4–0 win against the very strong Hutchesons’ Grammar School. This gave us confidence heading into the next set of games but, unfortunately, more practice was needed to beat our rivals, George Watson’s College and The Mary Erskine School. Thanks to our amazing and hard-working coach, Mrs Verity Smith, our team remained dedicated and optimistic. Our motivation and commitment paid off, as we went on to win against the St George’s School 2nd XI and against George Heriot’s School.

This team consists of many Form VI girls who have been devoted to the sport since their earliest days at Dollar—people like Sophie H., Cara P., Livia E., Erin D., Charlotte M. and Anna M. S. In the second half of the season, Anna’s skill and dedication was so notable that she was promoted to the 2nd XI, becoming a valued member of their team. The most noteworthy players of the season have been Ruby K. and Mara C. (both Form IV). They work exceedingly well together, pushing through the opposition’s defence and making leads that result in goals. They made their debut for the 2nd XI in their match against Marr College, and I know they will continue to thrive in the years to come. Our team are very grateful for Aoiffe P. and Cameron K. (both Form VI), who are always willing to step up and play in goals. Their exceptional goalie skills always amazed us, and many games could not have played without them. It is evident how committed and passionate the younger girls of this team are—about hockey and about teamwork. I know that they will have a very successful next season. I wish all the girls the very best for the future.

Olivia K. (Form VI)

This season’s **2nd XI** can look back upon some great achievements. There were ups and downs, of course, but we all came together to form a strong team. We didn’t always win, but when we did it was well deserved. Even when we didn’t win, we still had some fantastic games; I will always remember one particular match against Kelvinside Academy. The team worked so hard for each other and created some good opportunities. Unfortunately, Kelvinside came out victorious, but we played well and left the pitch smiling.

Some of our best games of the season came in the St George’s School 2nd XI tournament. We played exceptionally well, staying unbeaten in our pool. In the semi-finals, we lost narrowly to George Heriot’s School on running penalties, but we put in strong team performances (some of them on grass) at that tournament. We also played well in a game against George Watson’s College, winning 2–1: our first victory against them this season. Overall, it was a season to remember.

Bryony S. (Form VI)

The 2022/23 season has been incredible in terms of success, enjoyment and a sense of fulfilment. A capable and intuitive group of girls, this year’s **1st XI** team had gelled even before the season began, and this contributed massively to our success as a team. The hockey tour to Cardiff introduced us to playing together, engaged us in team-building exercises and gave us a chance to get to know one another.

When the season commenced, expectations were high. Our hard work quickly led to us securing silverware from the Midland District tournament and the Scottish Boarding School tournament, both of which happened in the same week (back in first term). These successes were not dismissed, but our biggest focus at the time was advancing through the stages of the Scottish Cup. Faced with a very difficult first match against Jordanhill (to whom we had lost the year before), we won on penalties and proceeded to the quarter-finals. Comfortably

winning 5–1 against The High School of Glasgow, we faced our toughest match against The Edinburgh Academy in the semi-finals in February. Unfortunately, our journey towards securing the Cup ended there with a 2–0 loss. That was a physically and mentally tough game, and it felt as though our hard work had led to nothing. We had been so desperate to advance to the final. Despite the weight of this disappointment, we had to move on and forget about it. We couldn’t let the upset prevent us performing our best for the rest of the season. With support from friends and family, we never lost our motivation to play.

Able to re-focus on our play, the games in the second term proved to be some of our best hockey performances, and we enjoyed playing together as the end of the season approached. Playing in the Watson’s and Heriots’ 7s tournament in Edinburgh, in the last week of the second term, was an enjoyable end to the season. Playing on grass (instead of artificial turf), and with a reduced team, these tournaments reminded us of how fun, yet also physically demanding, 7-a-side matches are. Our final match of the season against The High School of Dundee took place at Glenalmond College. We were, of course, desperate to win—not least because it was the final of the Midland Cup. As had happened in the Scottish Cup, we progressed steadily through the draw and reached the finals. And that match we won, 2–0, against Dundee, thereby adding another piece of silverware to our collection. This emotional, yet successful, final match was a perfect conclusion to our season, and the Form VI members of the team will greatly miss playing alongside such an incredible group of girls.

Miss Lynsey Allan has supported us through both our successes and our losses, and we could not have asked for a better coach to take us through the 2022/2023 season. Always demanding hard work and dedication, Miss Allan possesses a spirit and energy that is greatly appreciated by the whole team. She

is not just a coach, but a friend to all the girls. Stevie has also provided incredible support and coaching to the girls in the strength and conditioning gym, in addition to setting some very brutal, but very necessary, running sessions after our training. The team also appreciate the time and care taken by Mrs Catherine Munro, who has delivered our lunchtime yoga sessions after intense weekend matches, encouraging us to look after our bodies and our minds.

This season was unforgettable, particularly for those of us in our final year. We will all miss the company and team spirit of the 1st XI enormously. We wish next season’s team the best of luck in all their hockey endeavours, and we want to thank the coaches for their unconditional and tireless support of the 2022/2023 cohort.

Freya L. (Form VI, Captain of 1st XI)



HOCKEY SELECTION

Dollar Academy pupils have been selected for the Midland U14 District squads. Over 80 players attended the girls’ and boys’ selection trials in March, so to have been selected is a great achievement. Congratulations to the following girls:

Maya M. (Form 1)
Anna H. (Form 1)
Mia F. (Form 2)
Ellen F. (Form 2)
Mhora B. (Form 2)
Emily W. (Form 2)
Toby C. (Junior 2) has been selected for the boys’ squad which is excellent.

At the time of writing, the players are looking forward to the Scottish Hockey Inter-District U14 tournaments on Saturday 21 May (girls) and Sunday 22 May (boys) at Peffermill Hockey Centre in Edinburgh.

Lynsey Allan



2nd XI



3rd XI



4th XI



Form 3A



Form 3B



Form 2A



Form 2B and C



Form 1A



Form 1B



Form 1C



Junior 2A



Junior 2B



Junior 2C



Junior 1A



Junior 1B and C

HOCKEY TOURNAMENTS AT DOLLAR ACADEMY

March was a busy month as we welcomed teams from all over Scotland to play in our annual tournaments. First up was the Form II event. George Watson's College won that event, followed by The Glasgow Academy and The Mary Erskine School; Dollar Academy came in fourth place.

On the 20 March, 20 teams took part in our Junior Tournament, and a great day was had by all. Congratulations to our Junior 1A squad who were the overall winners, followed by George Watson's College and The Mary Erskine School in second and third place. The Primary 7 matches were won by The Mary Erskine School, with St George's School for Girls and The Glasgow Academy coming in second and third place. Dollar's A team came in eighth and its B team came tenth.

A huge thank you to the grounds staff, the catering department and all the Dollar Academy hockey staff for their work with both these events.

Lynsey Allan



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FORM 2 HOCKEY TOUR 2023

The Form 2 Dollar 2023 Hockey Tour was full of adventure. On Friday 3 March, after an early morning wakeup call, the Form 2A, B and C players all boarded the train to London. The almost five-hour train ride flew by, as we were all so excited to get there and play our first matches. Sadly, the opposing A team were late to the match, so our A team did not get to play that first game. Instead, we went to where the B and C teams were playing to support them. At the second venue, we played against Essex with the Bs and Cs. We gave it our all but, after a long day of travelling, the outcome was not what we had hoped for. We watched and supported the other teams playing before heading to the clubhouse for dinner.

After a good night's sleep, we were excited about the Day 2 matches against Kingston Grammar School. The As lost a contested match, 2–1. The Bs, however, won 4–0 against Kingston, and the Cs won 3–0. After an eventful day of hockey, we enjoyed some free time with our friends to wind down. Though some of us had lost our matches, we were all

in good spirits because we had this amazing opportunity to be in London, playing schools and clubs we never normally play against.

After a bus tour of the sights the next day, it was time to go home. We were sad to leave London, but ready to see our families again. Everyone agreed that the trip was a good bonding experience, and we came home with so many good memories.

Author?

MY JOURNEY TO THE SCOTLAND U18

It has been a crazy 12 years since I picked up my first mini hockey stick. The pink and white stripes on it matched my socks and t-shirt! Little did I know that Sunday Junior Hockey at Craigclowan School would represent the start of an amazing sports adventure. Indeed, several of the current Dollar 1st X1 played together in our 2v2 and 4v4 matches in the U6 and U8 competitions. Those experiences helped us to gel as a team, both on and off the pitch, as we grew older.

My earliest competitive memory was playing in the youth festivals around Midland district. One of my parents would take a carload full of U10s to play several games in Dundee or Perth. Although winners were never announced, we always worked out who had won the most matches, who was worthy of the unofficial gold medal spot.

Those fun friendlies taught me that losses are just a natural part of being an athlete. I learned resilience and developed my understanding and enjoyment of what is inherent to sport: every loss is just another opportunity to learn, to move forward. I have always had an optimistic outlook, though it's true that every time I step on the pitch, I want to win.

Since joining Dollar Academy and Mrs McFadyean's Prep 4 class in August 2014, I have loved hockey. Miss Allan has led the Dollar hockey programme since those early days. In Form 1 at Dollar, one match against Cargilfield School is still etched in my memory. We lost, 3–0, in our first meeting of the season, but we took our revenge at the end of the season, winning 2–1 on home turf. Our Dollar 1st XI will continue to put pressure on our main rivals, and we seek to be stronger every time we step on the pitch.

Like many players, I am motivated by the desire to do better. The Dollar 1st XI taught me to be patient and persevere when working on skills:



nothing comes easy, as they say. It is the on-pitch sessions, when we work as a team, that we demand the most from ourselves and from each other. Sport has taught me to accept both praise and criticism. Everyone loves to win, to score goals, to lift trophies. But to win, we have to bounce back from the losses, stay focused on our goals, on the bigger picture. It's no secret that a place in the Scottish Schools Cup final in 2024 is a clear goal for us next year. By remaining coachable, taking in the advice and support from Miss Allan and her dedicated team, we have every chance of reaching this goal.

Away from school, there is an exciting summer of hockey ahead. It has taken me 12 years to gain selection to the Scottish U18 squad, and I am so excited to be there. At the time of writing, we have internationals lined up over Easter weekend against Spain, the Netherlands and England, and we are anticipating a busy build-up to the European Championships in Germany.

Highers are a priority right now, so slotting in training is tough. Watching Miss Robertson and former pupil Eve Pearson (FP 2020), in the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham motivated me to be optimistic and self-disciplined in pursuit of being the very best person I can be, on and off the pitch.

It's difficult to think of long-term goals. My sport may well take me to university in the States or perhaps keep me closer to home. What I do know is that I will strive to enjoy each day as it comes, take every opportunity that comes my way, keep my friends and family close and aim high in whatever path I take.

Riley T. (Form V)

FROM THE FORM VI LEAVERS



When I joined Dollar in Junior 1, I had no intention of joining Hockey Club. In fact, I was halfway through Junior 2 before I even considered it. But that year, I became an integral member of the Junior 2C team. After discovering outfield was not for me, I retreated all the way back to the goal. It is fair to say that I was not a natural, tending to run away from the ball. But, with help from my goalie coach, Cath, I built up the confidence I needed to reach the 1st XI in Form 3. From that point on, the 1st XI has been like a second family to me. The support of Miss Allan and Cath, both on and off the pitch, has helped me to grow as a player and a person. I met people who became my best friends, and I learned important lessons that will stay with me for the rest of my life: not least, perseverance. Hockey has shaped me into the person I am today. Of course, I loved the feeling of winning a match, but what I loved best about hockey at Dollar was the feeling that I belonged somewhere.

Siobhan M. (Form VI)



I remember having my first-ever hockey lesson on my first day at Dollar in P4. I never thought I would enjoy it and, to be honest, I wasn't very good. But then came Junior 1, and I joined the A team. Through hockey I have made some of my best friends. The different Dollar coaches have all taught me different things and helped me to become a better player. In Form 3, we had our first Scottish Cup experience: short and sweet! When I was selected for the 1st XI in Form 4, I was surprised, but I soon discovered it was less daunting than I had feared. Since then, we have made it to two Scottish Cup semi-finals and accomplished much more besides—both on and off the pitch. Hockey has let me connect with girls in the years above and below me, people I would otherwise never have had the chance to meet. I have been so lucky to be part of hockey at Dollar, and I will really miss the team next year.

Megan L. (Form VI)



When I first joined Dollar in Junior 1, I was thrilled to be one of the few new girls picked for the A team. Despite the team changing and growing over the years, the friends I made through hockey have remained my closest. Thanks to hockey, I have been able to play for Midlands U14, and I have attended hockey tours in Junior 2 and Form 1 to Newcastle and Manchester, respectively. And, though our senior hockey tour to South Africa was cancelled by Covid, we still managed to go to Wales. In fourth year, I was disappointed not to have made it into the 1st XI, though my time in the 2nd XI was just as rewarding. I worked hard to prove myself and secured my place on the 1st team in fifth year. Despite joining the team later than the girls in my year, I never felt out of place. The 2022/23 season has been a whirlwind with plenty of highs (our tour to Wales, winning tournaments, bonding with the team) and some lows (including not quite making it into the final of the Scottish Cup). I am gutted that it is over. I will miss playing with this fantastic group of girls, and I wish everyone all the best for next season.

Amelie F. (Form VI)



I joined Dollar in Prep 1, and I have enjoyed playing hockey from the moment I began school. Hockey has been a huge part of my life for ten years. It has given me confidence and social skills and, most importantly, a great group of friends. Miss Allan has coached me throughout my time at Dollar, and she been a great influence and source of support. She has thrown countless opportunities my way, including putting me forward for Midlands U14, which eventually led to me playing for Scotland. She has pushed me and been a great motivator. The 2022/23 season has been, by far, the most exciting one for our team, and I hope, for those players coming up, that next year will be better still. I will be forever grateful that I had a chance to be part of the Dollar hockey community.

Abi M. (Form VI)



REPORT FROM THE 1st XI CAPTAIN

When I first began playing hockey in the Prep School, I had no idea how much of an influence the sport would have upon my life, both in and outside of school. I was introduced to the sport as an eight-year-old, and I soon became enthralled with the training, and with playing alongside my friends. The appeal of the sport, for me, has never diminished—from those earliest experiences to this, my final year of playing for the school. A member of Hockey Club since Junior 1, I have enjoyed the competitive elements of hockey alongside the importance of working together—and the joy that comes from winning. Miss Allan has been a mentor and a friend to me for ten years, and she is easily the most influential coach I have ever had, always pushing me (and others) to be the best versions of ourselves whilst nurturing a love and passion for the game.

The experiences that came from hockey have been beneficial in life off the pitch, too. I would never have pursued a close understanding of diet and nutrition, or enjoyed strength and conditioning sessions in the gym, if hockey hadn't encouraged these things. It has opened pathways for me outside

of school, too, as I have had the honour to play for my country internationally, gaining experience and making friends. I will treasure these things for the rest of my life. I was hugely honoured to be appointed the captain of the 1st XI for the 2022/23 season. It has been a privilege to represent Dollar in competition against the other leading Scottish schools, and I look forward to continuing my love of hockey at university. It is difficult to convey how much I and the other Form VI players cherish our Dollar hockey experience. I am sad to leave behind friends, coaches and the exceptional environment in which I discovered my love for the sport. If I leave Dollar a more focused, diligent and compassionate individual, it is down to hockey. These, more than any technical skills, are the qualities that will stay with me forever.

Freya L. (Form VI)



RUGBY 2022/23

1st XV

There is no doubt this was a challenging season with mixed results at the senior end of the school. There were highs and lows for the 1st XV, and I know that the season felt a bit of a failure at times from the players’ points of view. But, let me assure them, it was anything but. Whilst they might not realise it, they are the envy of just about every school and club in Scotland. They demonstrated that they had the resilience and self-belief to bounce back after a crushing defeat to Merchiston, saving their best performance of the season for the Cup game against Stewart’s Melville College just a few weeks later. This epitomised the never-give-in attitude that really defined this year. That was a game that could have gone either way, right up until the final whistle. The boys should feel justly proud to have come so close against such high-quality opposition. Despite this setback, the squad regrouped and performed well throughout the rest of

the season. Whilst results remained inconsistent, the application and team spirit were second to none and the boys should be very proud of their achievements.

The season began with one of the best preparation camps I have ever been involved with: a trip to Tignes. It is a camp that, I hope, will be repeated for many years to come. We all looked forward to the National Conference games, knowing these would test us against the best rugby-playing schools in Scotland. Conference results proved challenging for the senior section; the National Conference is a competition that includes all our sides from Form 1 to the 1st XV, both on an individual basis and as a whole school. The idea is that every side is as important as the other and every team contributes to the whole school result. I am extremely proud that we came third as a school, and that we were only beaten by schools that are considerably larger than Dollar.

For me, success is never measured by results alone. Obviously,

they are important, but they need to be kept in perspective. Three questions must be asked in measuring the success of our rugby section. Firstly, and most importantly, one must ask whether all age groups and coaches have adhered to our basic playing principles. Dollar’s ethos is what binds all our teams together. Secondly, one must ask whether our rugby section has delivered on our core values. Are we creating an environment where we all live these values and, hopefully, work toward becoming better people (and not just better players)? Thirdly, are we as coaches providing the opportunity for every player to develop, flourish and enjoy what they do?

I feel very fortunate to have led a talented group of coaches who have done a fantastic job throughout the 2022/23 season. There is no doubt that the pressures (ranging from injury concerns to the aftermath of Covid) have affected all of us, and every school has suffered from decreased player numbers. Whilst it was very challenging at times, I am grateful to

everyone involved that we were always able to fulfil our full set of fixtures—often playing three, four or even five different schools at a time to make sure as many of our boys as possible got a game. Put into perspective, we continue to be one of only three schools nationally that are able to do so, and the other two, again, are considerably larger than ourselves. This testifies to the dedication and commitment of all our coaches who work hard to ensure that each player’s experience is as rewarding as possible. I cannot thank them enough for keeping our players motivated and enjoying themselves, in all weathers. Our boys have played some fantastic rugby and always with smiles on their faces.

I was told at the very start of my sporting career that if you want to be any good you should surround yourself with good people. The rugby section is full of them...and I don’t mean just the coaches. It’s the teams within teams that make Dollar so special: the guys on the 2nd team—all as good as many 1st XV players out there; the doctors; the nurses and physios who ensure we’re one of the safest places on Saturday; the referees, whom we obviously couldn’t do without; the caterers; the groundsmen; the partners (wives and girlfriends, husbands and boyfriends).

Angus H.’s (Form VI) performances as captain of the 1st XV have been outstanding and he is owed huge congratulations. He worked tirelessly throughout the season and led from the front with his dynamic attacking style of play. His example is a credit to the man and will be a hard act to follow. He has carried the mantle of Dollar captain with distinction and pride. The whole of Dollar wish him well.

Regional and National Selection

It is only natural that having such talented players attracts the attention of national and regional selectors, and this season has proved no exception. Congratulations to all our players for taking the next step on the developmental ladder, all fully deserved

as a result of strong performances throughout the season. Leading the way is Angus H. who deservedly gained selection for the Scotland U18s to play against the Welsh Academies. Unfortunately, further selection was cut short by a nasty nose injury which also meant that his rugby-playing days for Dollar came to an end. Angus was joined this year by Wilfie T. (Form VI), who graduated into the National Rugby Academy. This represents a fantastic recognition for both boys, only offered to those players with the potential to forge a career in the game.

We are also proud to announce that many more of our young players have also been recognised for their efforts and been selected for regional squads. Selected for the Caledonia U18s this season were Angus H., Angus C. (Form V) and Fraser G. (Form VI) with Angus H. taking the next step and winning selection for the combined Glasgow and West regional team.

At U17 level, Rory P., Kieran P., John H., Angus C., Rio A. and James R. (all Form V) were all selected to represent Caledonia. At U16 level, Daniel R., Troy A., Adam K., Andrew R., Adam H., Ethan M. and Bobby S. (Form IV) were also selected to represent Caledonia. Adam K. and Bobby have both also taken the next step on their rugby journeys, representing Glasgow Warriors U16 against Edinburgh.

Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s

The season finished with the much-anticipated trip to the prestigious Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s. The tournament began back in 1939 and has evolved into the world’s largest school rugby tournament with over 10,000 boys and girls aged between 11 and 18 competing over the course of the week. Three Dollar teams attended this year, and they all did incredibly well against some very strong and famous rugby-playing schools. The seniors were cruelly beaten in the last play of the game against Bradford Grammar School to end their hopes of a repeat of last year’s heroics. And I don’t think anyone will forget the performance of our U16s sealing an

historic win against Millfield, or our Form 1 side drawing against Caldicott Prep School (a side that has won the Prep tournament more often than any other side). It was a great experience for all the boys to play against such illustrious opposition. Their strong performances there further enhanced the name and reputation of Dollar Academy.

Further down the school there was also much to applaud, and each of the coaches has contributed (below) in their own words or in the words of their captain. Finally, I would like to extend a hearty thank you to everyone, not least to the Form VI boys who are leaving us. Thank you for all that you have done over the years and good luck to every one of you.

Don Caskie

Junior 1 (Coaches B. Munro & E. Smith)

The Junior 1s have been a pleasure to coach this year in a season that saw the boys begin their competitive rugby journey. The hard work, commitment and attitude were second to none, and they showed great character and teamwork throughout the year. As the confidence of the players grew, so did the match performances. It was clear to everyone just how much they enjoyed playing. With their love of rugby growing, work focused on their core skills and game knowledge, which helped them develop as individuals and as a team. Their resilience and ability to bounce back has been really impressive, despite some very challenging opposition and score lines. This was embodied by all the boys, but particularly by the hard-working and dedicated James S. He led the way with his fantastic discipline and attitude, always giving his all and listening to feedback.

Junior 2 (Coaches G. Hinshelwood & D. Pattison)

The end of the second term brought the curtain down upon another great season of rugby at Dollar Academy. The boys have worked tirelessly in

their games lessons, in co-curricular sessions and in Saturday matches. They embraced the cold, dark weather and competed with pride and passion for their school and teammates against some very strong opponents. At times they struggled to find the results they wanted as a team, but the boys have continued to make great strides in their individual performances. They never gave up, always offering 100%. The team did pick up some great wins, getting to the semi-finals of the High School of Dundee tournament, before being knocked out by the eventual winners. They rounded it all off with an excellent end-of-season performance at The Edinburgh Academy tournament, picking up four wins out of four matches played.

We ended the season with 30 players in our squad, having welcomed newcomers Ben R. and Ruaridh Y. and, after Christmas, Hunter (yes, you really do have to wear boots) D. They have all made big impacts, together with some boys who are completely new to the game. Without a doubt, this squad boasts many talented players who are developing well. The boys should be proud of their performances this season. They have great team spirit, particularly evident in the humorous and heartfelt farewell they offered teammate Jacob M., just before he left for Australia. In what was a highlight of the season, his teammates carried their comrade around Goldenacre—to the surprise and delight of everyone watching. This is what playing rugby for Dollar is all about.

While rugby is always a team effort, special recognition must be given to the following players: Ben R., Toby C., Ewan C., David H. and Murray M. have proven themselves to be reliable and hard-working players. They have shown great attitude in training and great sportsmanship on the field. The boys have played excellent competitive rugby in line with the Dollar ethos. Boys like Hamish M., Charlie M., Jack K., Dexter L., Ronan P., Cameron D., and Siddharth P. are great examples of athletes who worked their hardest and, as a result, excelled individually,

benefiting the entire team. I would like to thank the parents and all those at Dollar Academy whose support helped to make this such a positive season. We have built and strengthened a great squad, and the players will, I suspect, be capable of still greater things when they move up to the senior school next season.

Form 1 (Coaches S. Newton & C. MacPherson)

Considering the small number of boys in the year group, there have been strong numbers attending practices and matches. Our policy is that every boy who is available each week will get at least a half in matches. Form 1B have improved considerably under Calum MacPherson, who has been brilliant again.

The key players in the B squad have been Lucian J.-R., Enzo G., Noah M., Andrew O. and Troy K. The Form 1A squad are a particularly talented group of players, suffering only one defeat all season to a very physical/big Merchiston side. They won 16 matches, scored 731 points and conceded just 102, with notable wins over George Watson's College, 47–0, and Stewart's Melville College, 48–0. This is the best 'tackling' Form 1 team I've seen in school rugby, best seen in the 7s tournaments this year. They were very unlucky to lose 12–11 in the final of the Merchiston 7s, and then went one better to win the Stewart's Melville 7s. One of the highlights of the season was, of course, the trip to Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s, where the boys played some excellent 7s against some very famous rugby schools. The key players this season have been Jack A., Hamish M., Aaron R. and Finn M.

Form 2 (Coaches M. Hose & C. Dineen)

Our Form 2 rugby squads competed well throughout the season scoring over 600 points in attacking games. Form 2A won 9 of their 18 games, while the B squad claimed 4 wins, 7 losses and 2 draws. The teams were ably led by Hamish M. and Max G. (A squad) and Nicholas L. (B squad).

As is the norm at this stage of our boys' development, we struggled with our initial matches against George Watson's College and ESMS, who have much greater numbers of boys playing in their year group. But, pleasingly, we were much more competitive in our return matches later in the season. We fought memorable battles against Merchiston, coming away with a win apiece in two very close games. Notable performers throughout the season in the A squad were: Jamie M., Paddy M., David J., and our top try scorer, Aiden P. B team standouts were Will S., Emmanuel D., Hamish H., and Lucas P. We were delighted to welcome some new blood to our playing group with the arrival of Alex W., Caleb H., and Alistair E. All three pushed themselves into the A squad and helped generate genuine competition between the two teams. The success of this group should not be judged by games won or lost, but by the growth in playing numbers, in the number of boys who are committed to training throughout the week and consistently make themselves available every Saturday. As well as expressing my thanks to all the boys, credit is due to my B team coach, Charlie Dineen, who has helped keep enjoyment and enthusiasm at a peak during all our sessions.

Form 3 (Coaches C. Smith & R. Ferguson)

It's been a pleasure to work with the Form 3 group this season and build on the momentum gathered throughout Form 2. Commitment to regular training meant that the group made good progress with individual and team skills and with general fitness, too. As the physicality of the sport increases, there will be an opportunity to work with Stevie Wilson, our strength and conditioning coach, in the near future. A solid foundation in strength training will benefit the boys on the pitch and throughout later life.

Technically, the shape we have played with has developed. The boys will doubtless be all too aware of our mantra: 'wider, deeper and faster'. Though we could always get

into position more quickly to play the handling game we desire, there has been tangible progress. When we have been able to give the extra pass through a 'tip on' or a 'tip back', the attacking play has been incisive, and at times we have been able to play through and round even the most organised of opponents. This was most apparent in the A team's 19–19 draw with Watson's in the second half of the season. A measure of the strong improvement in the B squad was the strong win over the same George Watson's squad against whom we had lost three close matches earlier in the winter.

A number of tough matches have seen the boys pulling together in the face of strong opposition, where their encouragement of each other has helped us significantly to raise the standard of performance. The teamwork of the group has seen the A team to impressive victories, particularly in the conference matches against Merchiston and Fettes, and the B team have worked hard to achieve a string of convincing successes towards the end of the season.

It has been very encouraging to see our numbers grow throughout the season and two well-organised teams take the field regularly. Numbers for the B squad have occasionally been tight, and we have had our fair share of NRRs (non-rugby related) injuries—we've had EDT (unpredictable computer chair), CCF (assault course), Boy Scouts (tin opener), NFL (over enthusiasm) and SFA (please, sir, someone stood on my foot playing football!). Thankfully, throughout, both boys and coaches have maintained their GSOH and enjoyed their season together.

**U16 (Coaches N. Gallagher & R. Baird)
Report written by Georgios T. (Form IV, captain)**

There were high expectations of the U16 team this year. We had reached the National Cup final the previous season and had a few players playing another year. I was grateful to have been picked

as captain, and the team looked very promising. Many individuals stood out, and it was just a matter of stringing the pieces together.

We started the conference very strongly with a 53–3 win over The Edinburgh Academy. Sadly the next couple of games did not go quite to plan. We regained our confidence, however, in an unexpected win over Merchiston, 28–11, with Ethan M. (Form IV) scoring the try of the season.

Not long after that impressive win, the Cup draw was out. We were to face the High School of Dundee in the quarterfinals. Game day arrived, and it was wet and miserable. However, that did not stop us from achieving a convincing win, with an amazing performance from Angus L. (Form V), gaining three tries.

The worst of luck gave us a semi-final against favourites Stewart's Melville College. We came into the games as underdogs with nothing to lose. (The same had happened last year—against the same team— and we had won.) This season's match was a thrilling game, with both sides showing a good brand of rugby. It was back-and-forth action with a try from Angus W.'s carry and a penalty from Stuart M. (both Form V). Unfortunately, we fell just short. It was great, however, to see many players perform very well and show class throughout the game; Dan R. and Bobby S. (both Form IV) deserve special mention. It was also great to see many B-team players step up for this game and perform accordingly: Nicky S. and Shreyas S. (both Form IV). The B team also performed very well in their own right, winning six games and losing just three over the course of the season.

Although our 15s season ended in disappointment, we did ourselves proud at the Rosslyn Park 7s tournament. We beat Millfield and enjoyed a masterclass from Fraser K. (Form V) who scored two tries. Adam K. (Form IV) also demonstrated great skills and awareness throughout the whole tournament in Rosslyn, playing a vital role in securing three wins.

This season, overall, had many

ups and downs. In the grand scheme of things, it was amazing to see so many teammates show such great character throughout the season. I am certain there will be names to remember from this U16 team—boys who will go on to achieve great things in their rugby careers.

2nd XV (Coach D. Smith)

After a very successful training camp in Tignes, the boys opened their season with a hard-fought, very narrow loss against ESMS. They showed real promise for the season ahead, and two resounding wins against The Edinburgh Academy and George Watson's College followed. Unfortunately, a string of four losses followed. This was partly the result of losing a couple of key players to injury; numbers were stretched thin. But the boys pulled together and went on to win the next five games with some great performances. The potential shown in early wins over those two strong schools certainly counts as a high of the season. Among the lows was having the last couple of games scratched due to poor weather. There were stars to note, too. Rory H. (Form VI) was noteworthy for always just quietly going about his business, being always willing to do what was required for the team. Rory Y. (Form VI) must be celebrated for never quitting; he has massive heart and sets a great example across the senior squad. His presence was really missed when he was out with a broken foot (though he played half a game with it first). Moments to be remembered include many on the Tignes trip. I especially remember waiting in the passport queue at Geneva Airport and feeling proud to receive very admiring comments about the boys' behaviour. Yes, high jinks followed at times, but this was a great group to be involved with.

Rugby Teams 2022/23



2nd XV



U16 A



U16 B



Form 3A



Form 3B



Form 2A



Form 2B



Form 1A



Form 1B



Junior 2A



Junior 2B



Junior 1



SENIOR SWIMMING GALA

The Dollar Academy Senior School Swimming Gala took place on Thursday 16 March. Over 100 swimmers took part, and it was fantastic to see so many enthusiastic pupils competing in the individual championship and class relay races. In front of a very vocal and enthusiastic crowd, the swimmers competed in the heats of the individual events. The standard was exceptionally high, and it was clear that the finals were going to be close, exciting races. Before the finals, the class relays saw 1CW winning in a very close competition; Form 2 was won by 2CS; 5NG won the Senior relay final. Congratulations to all pupils who took part in the event. The results of the 2022-2023 individual races and the overall champions are opposite.

Callum McLeod

Form 1 Girls

Freestyle: Isla U.
Backstroke: Charlotte S.
Breaststroke: Isla U.
Butterfly: Isla U.
Form 1 Boys
Freestyle: Will C.
Backstroke: Cameron M.
Breaststroke: Mac S.

Form 2 Girls

Freestyle: Bianca R.
Backstroke: Bianca R.
Breaststroke: Bianca R.
Butterfly: Bianca R.

Form 2 Boys

Freestyle: Arjun B.
Backstroke: Arjun B.
Breaststroke: Ben T.
Butterfly: Arjun B.

Form 3 Boys

Freestyle: Alex T.
Backstroke: Alex T.
Breaststroke: Alex T.
Butterfly: Alex T.

Senior Girls

Freestyle: Perrie S. (Form IV) and Hebe W. (Form VI)
Backstroke: Hebe W.
Breaststroke: Perrie S.
Butterfly: Hebe W.

Senior Boys

Freestyle: Ben S. (Form V)
Backstroke: Ollie W. (Form IV)
Breaststroke: Ben M. (Form V)
Butterfly: Ben S.

Form 1 Girls Champion: Isla U.

Form 1 Boys Champion: Will C. and Mac S.

Form 2 Girls Champion: Bianca R.

Form 2 Boys Champion: Arjun B.

Form 3 Boys Champion: Alexander T.

Senior Girls Champion: Perrie S.

Senior Boys Champion: Ben S.

**There were no entries for the Form 3 Girls competitions.*

JUNIOR SWIMMING GALA

The Junior Swimming Gala also took place on Thursday 23 March. The results are below.

Junior 1 Girls Champion: Mia T.

Junior 1 Boys Champion: Nicky T.

Junior 2 Girls Champion: Poppy W.

Junior 2 Boys Champion: Siddharth P.

New Records: Nicky T. (freestyle) and Robert G. (Junior 2, freestyle)

PREP SWIMMING GALA

The Prep School Swimming Gala took place on Tuesday 14 March. Results for Prep 4 and 5 are below.

Prep 4 Girls Champion: Samantha G.

Prep 4 Boys Champion: William F.

Prep 5 Girls Champion: Georgia S.

Prep 5 Boys Champion: William M.

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EQUESTRIAN

When I joined Dollar at the beginning of Form I, there were other active equestrians, but there didn't seem to be an active equestrian team. Thanks to the efforts of a few horse-loving parents, we now have a really active, supportive, and fun equestrian community who are regularly out at competitions, proudly representing the school, and I am delighted to be captain of the school's equestrian team. This team is open to riders of all experience, ages and abilities. We have some junior members competing at lower levels at the beginning of their equestrian journeys, and we have older members out competing at 1.10m and above; and there is everything in between! We have competed very well in both show jumping and dressage at Pony Club and school-hosted events, and we are excited by the possibility of one day hosting our own hunter trials.

We've enjoyed some great success this season, including winning the Intermediate Team trophy (90cm) at the Fife Pony Club Team Show Jumping Annual Competition. Well done to Izzy H, Isla K-B.. and Sophie M. (all Form II) Most recently, at the Scottish Schools Competition hosted by Kilgraston, we did very well, as three of our teams qualified for the national finals. We placed 1st in the 1.10m and 1st in the 95cm. Team members involved at that event included Maudie G., Aoiffe P., Ferne S. (all Form VI), Evie P. and Molly K. (both Form V). And, in the 85cm, we placed 2nd. That team included Ava W. (Form V), Chloe M. (Form IV), Sophie and Isla. There were also some strong individual placings at the Scottish Schools Competition; in the 1.05m, Dollar placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd; we were delighted for Izzy, Maudie and Aoiffe. Chloe also placed 1st in the 55cm, and many of our teammates also gained rosettes.

Any equestrians interested in competing for the school should contact Mrs Smith. They will discover a very supportive community who have fun competing against various Pony Club teams and schools such as Kilgraston School, Strathallan School, Glenalmond College and Gordonstoun.

Aoiffe P. (Form VI)

Equestrian Vaulting Success

I was delighted to place fourth Junior at the British Equestrian Vaulting Championships held at Bishop Burton. Equestrian vaulting is becoming more and more popular; it is best described as gymnastics on horseback. Athletes compete nationally and internationally (in CVIs or Concours Voltige International) throughout Britain and in Europe. They are required to perform a compulsory round, involving set exercises performed by all competitors, as well as a freestyle round, where the competitor performs a minute-long themed routine (incorporating both static and dynamic moves) on horseback. Three judges score both rounds, and one judge also scores the horse's performance for both rounds. The horse's score is worth 25% of the overall score.



I started vaulting at age eight at Wee County Vaulters, and I have enjoyed competing for the past nine years in this physically demanding sport. Upper body and core strength and endurance is fundamental, and I really enjoy the training. I would recommend this sport, as it is a lot of fun, though it does require commitment and courage.

Ferne S. (Form VI)

GYMNASTICS AND DANCE DISPLAY 2023

I joined Dollar Academy in Prep 1 and, back then, I used to love watching the Gymnastics and Dance Display each year. I couldn't wait to be a 'big girl' and take part myself. Now, at the end of Form VI, I feel privileged to have been involved in many displays over the years. Sadly, the last display was in 2019, thanks to Covid. So the return of the Gymnastics and Dance Display in 2023 meant a very great deal.

I can assure anyone who is interested in taking part in this event that you will have a great time. It is immensely rewarding to be with a group of people who share a passion for gymnastics and dance, and I have made friends for life through my involvement. I have also learned valuable teamwork skills, whether that was as a result of Mrs Smith helping me with partner balances or choreographing a whole group number myself.

The audience turnout for this year's performance was better than ever. About 150 people attended—we even ran out of chairs! It was evident that everyone was delighted to see the return of this highlight on the school calendar. The audience members were not disappointed, and they enjoyed a very high standard of performances. There were solo, small- and large-group acro performances, ballet, Latin American dancing, line dancing, lyrical and modern dancing.

I am grateful for Mrs Smith's help and wise counsel over the years, and I will miss the Gymnastics Club very much. The displays were a highlight, but I also loved having the opportunity to compete at the Regional and Scottish Schools Floor and Vault Championships. I highly encourage you to come down to Maguire Gym and have fun making up a routine with your friends.

Katy H. (Form VI)





CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Prep 4 and 5 Cross Country Championships took place on 22 March 2023. Results are below.

Prep 4 Girls: Erin H.
Prep 4 Boys: William F.
Prep 5 Girls: Ruby W.
Prep 5 Boys: Hugo K.

The Junior School's Cross Country Championships took place on Thursday 2 March. Results are below.

Junior 1 Boys Champion: Struan P.
Junior 1 Girls Champion: Ailie G.
Junior 2 Boys Champion: Charlie M.
Junior 2 Girls Champion: Poppy W.

The Senior Cross Country Championships took place on Wednesday 8 March. 'The glorious sunshine on the day certainly made a big difference,' said Mr Steve Newton. 'It was incredible to see so many crossing the line with smiles on their faces! We had record numbers again, with 690 competitors.' Results are below.

Form I Girls Champion: Cerys R.
Form I Boys Champion: Finn M.
Intermediate Girls Champion: Jessica E. (Form III)
Intermediate Boys Champion: Raphael J.-R. (Form III)
Senior Girls Champion: Maya M. (Form VI)
Senior Boys Champion: Cameron M. (Form V)



ATHLETICS

The following Dollar Academy pupils competed and won medals at the Scottish School Athletics Indoor Championships at the Emirates Arena, Glasgow on Tuesday 31 January and Wednesday 1 February.

Huge congratulations to the following athletes.

Sophie T. (Form IV)	60m U17	Silver Medal
Shayna A. (Form V)	300m U17	Silver Medal
Maya M. (Form VI)	1500m U20	Silver Medal
Alfie A. (Form III)	60m U15	Bronze Medal
Amy J. (Form III)	60m Hurdles U17	Gold Medal

Furthermore, at the 4J Scottish Senior and U17 Championships at the Emirates Arena in Glasgow in early February, Amy J. (Form III) won U17 60m hurdles, taking her second gold in just a few days. Sophie T. (Form IV) won gold in U17 60m and silver in U17 200m and Shayna A. (Form V) won silver in U17 60m and bronze in 200m. Then, at the 4J National Indoor Relay Championship, the Dunfermline



Club U17 girls won relay gold, and this team had three Dollar pupils: Amy, Sophie and Shayna. The Dunfermline clubs U13 team also won silver at the National Relays, and that team also had three Dollar pupils: Poppy W. (Junior 2), Sophie J. and Lottie T. (both Form I). These pupils have all done well representing Dollar against some very tough competition.



‘On Athletics’ from Shayna A.

Athletics is more than just a sport to me. It is my passion. Without it, many achievements that I can now claim would simply not have happened. Most meaningful has been the opportunity to compete for Dollar Academy in a range of tournaments.



I remember the first time I was asked to run for the school: I had a painfully tied high bun, glasses too big for my face and tiny crooked legs (which, surprisingly, carried me rather quickly). I stared timidly at Mrs Galloway as she handed me a sheet of paper, announcing that I was captain of the Athletics Team. I was ecstatic and could hardly contain my excitement. I went to my next class with a horrendously

cheesy grin, bragging to my friend about my accomplishment. My friend could not have cared less. But I cared, and I continued to tell anyone and everyone about my new captaincy. We went on to win a small tournament and, let me tell you, it was one of the most memorable experiences. From the bus rides with our team, to the sincere words of encouragement from the staff, those early competitions meant everything to me. They came to serve as the foundation for bigger things to come.

A messy bun, glasses much more fitted to my face and embarrassingly crooked knees (some things just don’t change), I stared at Mr Hose (feeling so grateful), as he told me that I would be running for Dollar at the Scottish Schools Athletics Championships. There I would compete against athletes from schools across Scotland. I am so thankful for all the Dollar staff who were involved in this event, as it led to me being scouted. That, in turn, led to me competing for Scotland at international level. (And, as you might guess, I told everyone and their mothers about it).

Athletics is not only my passion; it is my life. It has been a gateway into a whole world that has let me achieve things that I am so proud of. It has taught me discipline and teamwork, and it has helped me cope with all the challenges that come with being a teenager. A lot of what I am grateful for is due to Dollar Academy. I never would have guessed, years ago, that attending Dollar Academy would provide me with the opportunity to compete at a national level.

Shayna A. (Form V)



ULTIMATE

We started our first ultimate frisbee adventure back in September at the Scottish University Beginner Championships, and so we felt fortunate to be invited to compete in the Irish Schools Championship in Dublin, Ireland. Accompanied by Mr McEwan and Miss McGookin, we spent the first day competing in the tournament, playing a wide selection of teams from across Ireland. Ultimately, we placed sixth overall and won the Spirit of the Game award, a proud achievement. We celebrated with dinner, ice cream and games, uniting the team and (occasionally) reducing us to tears of laughter. We were invited the following day to train with the girls of Santa Sabina, the reigning Irish champions. Over frisbee and pizza, we quickly became fast friends. Our trip ended with an open-top bus tour of all that Dublin has to offer—most notably, a wonderfully eccentric bus driver. Although short, the time spent with one another was really memorable, and we are grateful for the experience.

Form VI Ultimate Frisbee Team



SENIOR BOYS FOOTBALL

Season 2022/23 represented a fresh start for the senior boys' football team; fewer than a handful of pupils with any previous experience, at this level remained from last year. Related to this, we have blooded several Form III pupils across all our fixtures and, without fail, they have shown courage, enthusiasm and real ability against bigger and older opponents.

First up in the Northern Section of the SISFA Cup was a home tie against Glenalmond College on a drizzly autumn afternoon at Newfield. We took the lead with a beautifully executed strike from Finlay B. (Form VI) from just outside the penalty box, but we were quickly pegged back by a quick counterattack before we could build on our lead. A fine goal early in the second half from Harris O. (Form VI) put us back in front, but our opposition refused to be beaten, equalising once more midway through the second half. No further goals and a share of the spoils was the outcome.

In our next fixture we were at home again, facing Gordonstoun on the other side of the halfway line. After a scrappy start to the game, we got our noses in front through some predatory forward play from Robert K. (Form V), but our opponents restored parity before half-time. A superb strike from Harris with the outside of his right foot saw us retake the lead, and further goals from a Finlay header and a Sean G. (Form V) strike meant that we ran out 4–1 winners on the day.

The arrival of the chilly winter weather was accompanied by two difficult afternoons; our boys lost nine goals without reply against Robert Gordon's College,

followed by a 6–1 reverse at Albyn—our one goal coming from a spectacular long-range drive from Tom W. (Form VI). These were very different matches, as the first match saw us nowhere near our best against a strong side in top form. At Albyn, however, we played some excellent passing football, and the scoreline failed to fully reflect how close the match actually was.

In our final tie of the section, at home to St Leonards, we were far more ruthless in front of goal and our 8–1 victory was well deserved.

This was not enough to ensure qualification for the Cup quarterfinals, and so we dropped into the semi-finals of the SISFA Plate for schools who had also just missed out on qualification. We were happy to be given a home draw against The High School of Glasgow and, after a tight first half with no goals scored, we eventually ran out comfortable 4–0 winners with strikes from Tom, Sean (2) and Nathan P. (Form V), with Calum P. (Form VI) pulling the strings in midfield.

In the Plate final at Alloa Athletic's Recreation Park, we found Hutchesons' Grammar School a tougher nut to crack, eventually going down 7–1. Our goal came from Sean G. and, although the scoreline flattered our opponents, we had to acknowledge that we had been well beaten on the day by a bigger, more ruthless side.

Despite the disappointing end to the season, our departing Form VI pupils—Henry D., Rory H., Matthew S., Cameron L., Calum P., Tom W., Harris O., Finlay B., Freddie H. and Will S.—deserve great praise for their efforts over the months. We wish them all the best in the future.

Paul McKay

DOLLAR ACADEMY SKI RACING: SSSA DUAL SLALOM

It was great to return to Firpark on the local hills in Tillicoultry for our qualifying race. Three teams were entered: two senior teams and a Forms I–III team, and both teams showed real skill to reach the finals.

On Wednesday 9 November the finals of the SSSA Dual Slalom event took place at Snow Factor in Glasgow, and Dollar raced against the best schools from across Scotland. After last year's heartache—where we finished second—the team were desperate to deliver a victory. With Freddie H. (Form VI) reinstated for this race as team captain, the group raced with skill and speed to go undefeated and win the title for the school, gaining the Senior Cup for the first time. Gold medals, the cup and huge congratulations go to Freddie H (captain), Millie A. (Form VI), Seb A. (Form V), Christina D. and Ian M. (both Form IV). The senior B team also raced well, but, unfortunately, Adam H., Finn P. (both Form IV), Ben D. and Murdo M. (both Form V) failed to get out of the group.

The Forms I–III team raced extremely well and claimed third place in Scotland, despite being a very young group. Bronze medals were awarded to Seb R., Craig M., Heidi N. (all Form I) and Nicholas D. (Form III). Good signs for the future of Dollar skiing.

Milo MacDermot



CURLING CLUB

This year has seen a resurrection of the school Curling Club, after opportunities for curling almost disappeared during the pandemic. This year 15 young curlers regularly attended practice sessions at the ice rink in Kinross after school on Tuesdays, many of them learning this distinctive Scottish sport for the first time.

We began with an indoor street curling session in June of 2022 for every pupil in Junior 2. The aim was to introduce them to the sport and raise the profile of the club. Coaching on the ice began in September with our club coaches, Dottie Burt, Morag Wellman and Debbie Weir. These sessions ran throughout the first and second term. New curlers quickly developed the basic skills of delivering a stone and sweeping, and they are now starting to develop their tactical awareness. More experienced curlers gained experience of competing in game situations, consolidating their skills further with either Kinross Juniors on a Sunday afternoon or Stirling Young Curlers on Saturday mornings.

The season culminated in a schools competition in Perth at the end of March, the Hay Trophy. Dollar's team were very young in comparison with the other schools, and they gained a huge amount of experience playing against curlers who were often four or five years older. As this group of curlers moves up through the school, they have the potential to excel, and we look forward to seeing more success through the years.

Curling is open to anyone; complete beginners are very welcome to come and try the sport. Junior 2 pupils will again have the opportunity to try street curling in June, and the season begins again in September for anyone in Forms I to VI.

Alastair McConnell



MULTISPORT

Ten pupils were selected to represent the school at the Scottish Schools Aquathlon Championships on Friday 21 April. Attracting entries from all over the country, this is the biggest junior swim and run event staged annually. Form I and II athletes swim 250m, jump out of the pool, put their shoes on and run 2km. Dollar athletes were Anna H. (Form I), Jasmine M. (Form II) and Isla U. (Form I) along with Ben T. (Form II). Pupils in Forms III and IV swam 400m and ran 3km, with Jessica E. (Form III) delivering the fifth-fastest run split of the day. Lucy M. (Form IV) and Alex T. (Form III) both performed well in this category. Pupils in Forms V and VI were challenged with a 500m swim and a 4km run, and the field included the majority of the National Triathlon Academy squad. Cameron M. (Form V) placed an excellent 5th, closely followed by Killian T. (Form V). The afternoon saw the relay events. Dollar fielded two teams, consisting of one boy and one girl from Forms I—III and one boy and one girl from Forms I—VI. The Dollar team consisted of Alex T., Jessica E., Cameron M. and Evie P. (Form V); they produced an excellent 6th-place finish, while the team of Jasmine M., Ben T., Killian T. and Lucy M. were 23rd. Well done to all these athletes for qualifying and representing the school so successfully.

The University of Bath hosted the British Laser Run Championships the following day, 22 April. This was, of course, particularly bad timing for the Scots, due to the imminent SQA exams. This meant that just a small contingent made the long trip south. Dollar was represented in the U15 Girls 3x (five hits on target, then a 600m run) by Lilia W. (Form II). She shot and ran well, qualifying for the final; she went on to place 13th. David K. (Form IV) competed in the U17 Open 4x (five hits on target, then a 600m run) and also qualified in 7th place for the final, where he placed 11th. We are hopeful

that these results may be enough to secure selection for the European and World Championships, to be held later in the year.

Billy Mitchell





GOVERNANCE AT DOLLAR ACADEMY

Who are the Governors and what do we do?

At Prizegiving every year there are always several people on the stage who are not teachers and who you might not even recognise. Did you ever wonder who those people are and what they have to do with the school? They are likely to be governors - but who are they and what do they do?

The Board of Governors at Dollar Academy are volunteers who give their time to help ensure the school runs as smoothly and efficiently as possible. The Board

is led by a Chair, Professor Jim McEwen, and comprises up to 18 other members. The range of skills of the governors is wide—we have people from the world of business and finance, law, health, architecture and higher education together with representatives of the parent body and various local organisations. Former pupils (FPs) of Dollar Academy make up a significant proportion of the board, and it is much to the credit of the school that pupils who have left are so keen to come back and help ensure that the school remains at the forefront of Scottish education.

As Dollar Academy is an educational charity the Board of Governors act as the trustees, ensuring that we comply with the charitable purposes set out in the Trust Scheme—the formal document

that sets out the mission for the Academy. As such, our main goal is to support the Rector and the staff in delivering the high-quality education that Dollar is famed for. We are not here to micromanage the teaching and education provided by the school: that is fairly and squarely the Rector’s responsibility. However, we do have an oversight and strategic role, making sure that the school runs as smoothly as possible and will continue to do so in the future.

There are other roles that trustees are bound to undertake. We must ensure that the school complies with all legal requirements and operates in accordance with the rules set down by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). One of the most important points to emphasise is that we have a legal duty to act in

the best interests of the charity and to manage its resources responsibly. Part of this is to act with prudence and to understand the risks that face the organisation, and to ensure that we pass the school onto the next generation in as good a condition as we can. This means making sure our historic buildings and beautiful grounds are maintained, and that strategic investment in buildings and resources are done within the context of maintaining Dollar’s place as a modern educational establishment, taking appropriate account of any risks.

Financial management therefore plays an important part of the Board’s duties, and it is our responsibility to set the fees for the school, determine the budget for expenditure over the year and to produce a strategy for the development of the campus as whole. Sometimes financial decisions in these areas are difficult, especially in economically challenging times like those we face today. A Board of Governors who takes the duties seriously is vital for a successful running of the school.

In addition to financial duties the Board also has a role in overseeing the development of school policies. There are several sub-committees of the board that look at aspects such as health and safety, safeguarding and wellbeing, and investment. These committees ensure that published policies and instructions are up to date and that the school keeps up with (and is hopefully ahead of) modern needs in these areas.

Finally, there is one other important job for the Board of Governors – to lead the selection process for the Rector and other senior staff in the school. Appointing a Rector is one of the most important decisions that the Board makes as it will have long-lasting impact on how the school runs.

Changing governance at Dollar Academy

Every decade or so it is good practice to hold a review into the governance processes in the school. We have just completed just such a review and this one concentrated specifically on how Governors are appointed. For many years, a seat on the Board has been given to several different organisations. For example, three of the ancient Universities in Scotland, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews, had automatic representation on the Board, as did some of some local organisations in Dollar. Each of the FP clubs also had an allocated seat. While this mechanism produced some excellent boards over the years who have helped Dollar Academy retain its position as an educational powerhouse in Scotland, the restrictions these rules placed on who could be appointed as a Governor were quite strict. After the review we have removed most of the automatic seats on the board and these will be replaced by a more open appointment process. For example, the automatic seats for the three universities are no longer guaranteed. This does not mean that won’t still value educational skills on the board, but now we can appoint the best education person from any background. Similarly, we value our links with local organisations, but we won’t have prescribed seats for specific organisations.

Beforehand, each of the FP clubs also had an automatic seat on the board. We have also removed this restriction. However, we have strengthened the rules so that we maintain a majority of FPs on the Board. This means that to be an FP Governor you don’t have to be a member of an FP club. This will widen the number of FPs eligible to be Governors and strengthen the link to the entire FP community. There is one seat on the board, however, that will retain its link to a particular group—the Dollar Academy Parents Association. We value our link with parents and the Board should

always have guaranteed parent representation.

The overall goal of these changes is twofold. First, it is right that the governance structures are brought into line with modern ideas about how boards are constituted. Second, we are well aware that Boards like ours often attract a certain demographic and we would like to see a wider range of Governors from different backgrounds that reflects better the population of the school as a whole. We would particularly welcome more recent FPs as Governors.

What makes a good Governor?

You might also be asking the question—what makes a good Governor? The short answer to that is anyone who has a passion for keeping Dollar Academy at the forefront of education in Scotland and who has some time to spare to make a suitable contribution. The main Board of Governors meets up to four times a year and so the initial time commitment is not too great, although there are other committees that can be joined to deepen involvement with the school. From time to time we will be looking for people with specific backgrounds to make sure that the balance of skills on the Board is suitable for the job we need to do.

Over the next three or four years, as we transition from the old system to the new, we will be making calls for new members of the Board. Adverts for available positions will be targeted at the FP community but will be supplemented by open adverts in the press. If you think you would enjoy being a Governor and be willing to make a substantial contribution to the future of Dollar Academy, then we would be pleased to hear from you in response to the adverts.

Russell Morris
(Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors)



Emma Macrae: Statistician

‘I’m still not sure what I want my career to look like...’

‘So, do you want to be a doctor or a lawyer?’ I was not wholly surprised when I was asked this at my Form II subject choice meeting, and I had come prepared.

‘No. I want to study Psychology at university.’ I had already researched pretty much all the Psychology courses in the UK; I knew all of the subjects I needed to take and the grades I needed, so after the initial question, it was a pretty easy meeting.

Since then, I have fulfilled my 13-year-old self’s ambition. After leaving Dollar I studied Psychological and Behavioural Sciences at the University of Cambridge. While academics were important (and I now reluctantly admit, enjoyable) to me, one of the main lessons Dollar taught me was that school, and life, is not just about work. While I was pretty apprehensive when Mr McGonigle told me he would see me at orchestra on Monday (back at the start of Form II), his ‘strong encouragement’ that I join was probably one of the best things that happened to me at school. Not only did I enjoy orchestra and make lots of friends and memories, but it taught me how to manage my workload. This was

particularly important at university. Even though I only had a ‘normal’ university experience for half of my degree, thanks to the pandemic, I absolutely did my best to make the most of it. I continued playing my bassoon and joined the university orchestra; I chaired my college’s students’ association and I took up netball. Without having been forced by my mother to stand in what felt like -50°C weather from Junior 1 to Form II attempting to play hockey, I would never have appreciated how much better the southern climate is for playing sports! Because Cambridge seemed so far away from Scotland, I also decided to introduce some Scottish culture to the southerners, and I started a Scottish Society at my college, running ceilidhs and Burns Suppers. The 13 years of social dancing lessons every Christmas at Dollar was definitely put to good use as I channelled my inner PE teacher to call the ceilidh. Eventually people understood what a phrase like ‘Strip the Willow’ really means, and I think I can say I converted them to loving a ceilidh.

I graduated aged twenty and, somehow, seven years after I made my National 5 subject choices, I still had no idea what I would do after university. So, during my final year, I pretty much applied for everything. After months and months of going back and forth on what I wanted to do, I decided to join the Civil Service Fast Stream as a statistician. I had (embarrassingly) never heard of the Civil Service before I came across the Fast Stream, but it is a great programme which places you in three or four different jobs across the UK



Civil Service, working on a huge variety of issues. If I hadn’t studied Advanced Higher Statistics I definitely would not have been confident enough to go for this job, and I only have Mrs Childs to thank for encouraging me to take it. I have kept my notes in the top drawer of my desk throughout university and my job, and they have come in useful more times than I care to admit.

My first role was to help set up Environmental Standards Scotland, a new public body tasked with assessing public authorities’ compliance with environmental law and the effectiveness of that law. Being the first analyst to join the organisation (and being younger than some of my managers’ children) did not make for the easiest start to my first ‘proper job’! This definitely wasn’t helped by Covid, as almost all of my first year’s work was done remotely. To help me feel more involved in society, I drew on the lessons that Dollar had taught me about getting involved in things outside of my day job. I joined the Gender Equality Network, running their outreach programme, and I also volunteered for pretty much anything that looked exciting. I even got to work at COP26 in Glasgow as a media assistant. This was probably the most exciting job I’ve ever had. I watched Obama speak; I held the door for Greta Thunberg; and I made small talk with President Zelensky. Working in the public sector doesn’t have a great reputation, but when you are given the opportunity to attend an event like this, any free dinner or business-class flight pales in comparison.



I am now working for the Department for Work and Pensions, analysing poverty levels in the UK. This has taught me a great deal about how the Government works—from the seemingly endless parliamentary questions to answer, to the rush around budget time, to managing dynamics with ministers. I have also been involved in producing a couple of statistics publications, and it has been really interesting to understand where the data about our country comes from and how much work goes into ensuring it is accurate. After the pandemic, I think people’s awareness of government data—and how powerful it can be in shaping our understanding of society—is growing. I hope we continue to see data becoming more accessible and data literacy improving so that more people can understand what is going on in the world around them, and, hopefully, make changes to improve it.

Alongside the exciting work, one of the best things about working for DWP and the Government is that they have offices all across the country. I’ve definitely made the most of that and have built a bit of a reputation for always being on the move. Most of my meetings begin with someone asking, ‘Where are you today?’ However, I’ve also realised that no setting comes close to the landscape around the Ochils. I certainly did not understand how lucky I was to go to school in such an amazing setting, and it is only now that I appreciate how important such a setting is to my wellbeing.

As for the future, I’m still not sure what I want my career to look like. I’m pretty sure I won’t be a doctor or a lawyer, but I’ll be happy if I can continue to do something that helps people or the environment and keeps my brain engaged.

Emma Macrae (FP 2018)

PASSION MAKES PERFECT: FROM PUBLISHING TO POKÉMON

John Moore left Dollar Academy in 2014 and now lives in London with his husband, David, a children's author. Despite being adults, they are both still very much kids at heart.

In my many years at Dollar Academy, I was never entirely sure where my life

would lead. I was one of those pupils who liked almost all my subjects, except PE, and I would happily have made a career out of any of them. On one hand, this always seemed like a good thing but, as it came closer to applying to university and having to choose those all-important Highers, it made this somewhat common task seem Herculean in difficulty.

Eventually it became evident that languages and the written word were going to be my strong suit, so I decided to study, almost exclusively, modern languages and English. And yet the age-old question persisted:

what should I do with my life? I could be a translator, a diplomat, a writer, a teacher... there were just too many options, and it always felt as if I had picked the wrong one. I'd wasted my chance to excel. Dollar is a wondrous place, but it is also a place of immense pressure, and I felt it very strongly at age 16. Finally, like many pupils who are good at English, I decided that a career as a high-flying city lawyer was the correct choice. Boy, was I wrong. But I had made a decision; I would study Law, in London, and eventually become a multilingual human rights lawyer in the EU. I left Dollar Academy



with a vague plan and a dream, and that was enough.

Law school was...difficult. Nobody can ever prepare you for the experience of being used to earning exam results that consistently surpassed 90%, only to get your first legal essay back with a 53% stamped at the top. Apparently, that wasn't bad for a first try. I don't want to lie and say that I didn't enjoy law school. But it didn't live up to the dream shaped by all those American courtroom dramas that I grew up idolising. Rather, there was a lot of quiet study, many lengthy lectures and a realisation that I would never become the best at something I didn't love wholeheartedly. I met some amazing people, expanded my intellectual horizons and experienced all that London had to offer, and I left with a respectable 2:1 from King's College London. And yet, once again, there I was without a plan.

In the meantime, I did many things, including running a tea shop and, more formatively, working as a bookseller at Waterstones Piccadilly, their flagship store. This was a blast, and I got to work on events with the likes of Stephen Fry and Carrie Fisher. Whilst bookselling, I found my love for events and PR. Soon after graduating, I was very lucky to get my first proper career-defining job as the PR and Marketing Assistant for the world's largest independent children's publisher, Walker Books. Despite it being quite low paid, I knew that I had found something I could excel at and, more importantly, it was something I genuinely loved doing.

My five years with the Walker Bear were some of the happiest of my life. I started in the PR team, organising events and press campaigns, before eventually moving into my real calling:

marketing. Whilst on the marketing team, I ran our social media accounts, organised influencer activity, and briefed and designed both our digital and print assets to help support our books. I would have been more than happy to remain at Walker Books for the rest of my publishing career. But one day I decided to check the job listings at Pokémon on the off chance that there was a job I was qualified for and, by chance, there was. After a gruelling interview process including four interviews and a presentation to the Senior Director of Marketing, I finally waved farewell to my life in books and moved onto my new dream: Pokémon.

I actually got a job at my dream company. I have been a fan of the franchise since I was literally two years old, when I would sit on family members' laps reciting all 151 characters. (Can you believe there are over 1000 Pokémon now?!) As Associate Product Marketing Manager, I look after a lot of the marketing for the Pokémon Trading Card Game (TCG), which includes distributing sample packs across kids' magazines around Europe, asset approval, events and so much more. Every day I get to work on a brand I really care about. If you were to ask me, however, the best path to such a job, I don't know if I could be of much help. That, in a way, is the best answer to your question; there is not just one path. There are hundreds and thousands of ways to any particular career, and each of them is just as valid as any other.

To quote my favourite poet, Robert Frost, (about whom I wrote my Advanced Higher English dissertation—shout out to Ms Julia Nozedar:

*'Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.'*

I encourage everyone, no matter where they are in life, to follow their passion, regardless of what others think of it. I only found my career, my path in life, once I stopped doing what I thought I should do and started doing what I wanted to do. I wish I could go back and encourage my younger self to take the road less traveled, to live more myself much earlier on—it likely would have made all the difference.

John Moore (FP 2014)

NOTE TO SELF

The decision not to study anything performance related after school was a difficult one to make. Ultimately, I had two passions: performing and politics.

I left Dollar Academy in 2019 and immediately began my university degree, studying Politics and International Relations. I have been performing on stage since the age of nine and, while at Dollar, I had many opportunity to perform in plays, choir performances, musicals and concerts.

It was when I entered Form VI that I first got in touch with Monumental Pictures, who had announced that they were in the process of making a biopic of Amy Winehouse's life. Growing up, I had always been told I resembled Amy and I considered that, if the opportunity came about, I would audition for the role. The communication between me and the production team began, and I was excited about the possibility of an audition for the part, though I knew it would be years before anything came of it.

I worried, as I began university, that having to choose between my two passions meant that my prospects might narrow, that performing would no longer be an



option as I entered adulthood. I quickly realised that if this was going to be the case, the only person I could blame for the narrowing would be myself. I knew that I needed to seek out performance opportunities in order to have the best of both worlds and keep both passions alive.

In first year, I immediately joined the university's Drama Society and took part in a play in my first semester. This was an enjoyable experience and a good opportunity to make friends with the students in the years above me who shared my passion for both performing and academics. However, in the second semester of first year, Covid hit, and we were all sent home. As life was put on hold, so too were any performing opportunities. Had I indeed been studying Performance, those two years would have been even more of a washout. It wasn't until the first semester of my third year that I was able to access this part of my life again. I restarted singing lessons offered by the Music Department at university, and I met the brilliant Gillian Taylor-Jack who gave me excellent training and encouragement.

Throughout the first three years of my degree, I tried to remain in contact with the Amy Winehouse biopic team, though Covid had affected the industry badly. While



completing my semester abroad in Istanbul, I heard that casting for the biopic had begun. In a panic, I re-sent my CV photos and show-reels, but to my dismay I received an email from the team stating that they had likely already found an actor to play the role of Amy and that the auditions would no longer go ahead.

This was, of course, hugely disappointing. Throughout my academic degree the possibility of an audition for this film had been a source of constant excitement at the back of my mind. I took matters into my own hands and decided that—though I do not necessarily recommend this method to everyone—given the amount of communication that had occurred between myself and the production team, I wanted the casting team to see me face to face before making their final casting decision. To be honest, I was not expecting any more than a polite rejection.

So I flew to London, met one of my best friends (also from Dollar) and turned up at the door of Nina Gold's casting agency unannounced. I gave them no warning and I had no expectations. Of course, the agents who answered the intercom were hugely busy people. They were both confused and unamused that I, known to them as one of many options for the part, had decided to interrupt their day. After a brief conversation, they confirmed that they did not have time to meet me and that another actor was being considered for the role. As I began to walk away, unsurprised and a little embarrassed by the colossal failure of the interaction, my phone rang.

The casting agents had evidently had a conversation and thought twice about leaving me outside. I assume they had revisited my CV on their records. In any case, something changed their minds, as they invited me up for a brief 'interview'.

I was incredibly nervous and, looking back, would have been a total wreck if my friend had not been by my side. I ran back to the office to meet the team. The interview was pleasant, though they literally surrounded me for inspection upon arrival, which was daunting! I broke the

ice by stating that, surely, they should see me given my resemblance to Amy. They agreed with that. We had a chat and they were very nice, but repeated that someone else was indeed being considered for the part. Yet...I **was** there.

I left the office with a spring in my step and felt that, despite them reiterating that they had already found the actor for the part, I had had the opportunity to meet the team. It felt like a cathartic ending,

An hour later, to my huge surprise, the phone rang again. They were sending me scripts for a screen test. Two weeks later, I was back at the office being put through a videoed audition!

Throughout this audition process—despite that the casting director was very clear that the part was likely already cast—I had a wonderful experience. I was able to work with a leading industry singing coach and one of the most renowned casting agents in the UK. It brought my family together too, as they helped me to learn lines and rehearse scenes. I felt overwhelming support from my friends and learned more than I ever could have imagined about the process of casting a film.

One giant leap of faith—just turning up and taking a chance on myself—had paid off massively, though I had been just too late. Since this experience, I have returned to the Dollar Academy stage to perform with the Scottish Pops Orchestra and I have continued with singing lessons. And when I graduate in June, I will look towards my next adventures in stage performance and in academia.

The most important lesson I have learned over the last four years of university is that following one path in life does not cut off your access to another. Universities, especially, offer wonderful opportunities for exploring passions you may not have pursued in your school years. It's always a good idea to take a chance on yourself!

Olivia McKay (FP 2019)



THE DOLLAR CONCERT

Jo's Trust was formed in 2012, following the untimely death of Dr Joanna Morgan—Head Girl at Dollar Academy in 1987/88—with the twin objectives of supporting education for those wishing to pursue a career in the medical sciences, and supporting brain cancer research. From the outset Dollar Academy has been very supportive and is represented by two trustees. In supporting education, the Trust has provided five bursaries and also holds Open Evenings so that pupils (from across Central Scotland) can hear, first-hand, from medical professionals about life in medicine and health care; pupils can also access advice from university admissions staff. In supporting research, the Trust's focus has been to provide major funding to Professor Steve Pollard's team at the Centre for Regenerative Medicine, part of the Edinburgh Brain Cancer Group.

From the outset, the Trust organised annual major fundraising events at the Academy; an inaugural dinner was followed by several very successful Dollar Balls. It was in 2019 that we first discussed, with David Christie, the possibility of featuring his Scottish Pops Orchestra (along with other performers) in a very special Dollar Concert. Several of us had attended a concert by David's orchestra the year before, and we thoroughly enjoyed the evening. We felt that it would be both exciting and worthwhile, in terms of fundraising, to organise such an event in Dollar. And so it turned out to be.

Because of Covid, it was March 2023 before the Dollar Concert became a reality. But it was worth the wait. What a concert it turned out be! David had gathered 32 of the very best professional musicians in Scotland—in addition to three outstanding solo artists, each of whom have a connection with the Academy. Brian McBride teaches singing at the school; Gabriella Christie is David's wife, who has had a very successful professional career; and Olivia McKay is a Dollar FP (2019) who has wowed audiences with her performances in *Les Misérables* and *Chicago*, to name just a few (see article on previous page). The Dollar Concert programme featured music and songs from stage and screen, ranging from a quite outstanding James Bond medley to a truly memorable performance by Olivia of 'On My Own' and Queen's 'Radio Gaga' complete with full audience participation.

It is hard to describe just what a wonderful evening it was. Without exception, all those we spoke to were absolutely thrilled to have been present. One audience member summed it up beautifully, saying simply: 'It was magnificent.' Having such a large professional orchestra on stage, playing such a wide range of music, was simply fantastic. Not only is the Trust truly grateful to David for bringing his orchestra to Dollar, but we are also most appreciative of the unstinting support of the Academy and its staff—particularly the many sixth-form pupils—who helped make the evening go so well. We are all very much looking forward to the next concert in 2024.

Angus Morgan (Chair, Jo's Trust)
If anyone wishes to donate to Jo's Trust, they should contact Angus at angusmorgan747@gmail.com



Back row L-R: Neil Blezard (staff), Ian Forgie (FP 1975), Harry Johnston (FP 1958), Joe Fitzgibbon (FP 2008), Roddy Forgie (FP 2008), Scott Stewart (FP 2000), Grant Blair (FP 2011), Donald Griffiths (FP 2010), Bryce Russell (FP 2005)

Front row L-R: Rory M. (Form VI), Robin Cumming (FP 1965), Ian Galloway (FP 1963), David Christie (FP 1991), Kayleigh Caine (Staff), Iain Hood (FP 2010), Phil Rorke (FP 1989), Ali Bonn (FP 2005)

DAGS AUTUMN OUTING

Seventeen players took to the links at Elie on a calm and unexpectedly dry autumn day on 23 October 2022 to take part in the annual Dollar Academicals Golfing Society outing. The conditions resulted in some excellent golf being played. The Hastie Trophy (scratch prize) was won by Iain Hood (FP 2010) who shot an impressive 72 and the Rorke Trophy (Stableford prize) was won by the experienced Robin Cumming (FP 1965 and treasurer of DAGS), with an excellent 40 points.

DAGS SPRING MEET

The Queen's Course at Gleneagles was a superb venue for the DAGS Spring Social in March of 2023. Thirty-three players (with FP leaving dates spanning a period of 50 years) enjoyed a calm and dry(ish) day blowing away the winter cobwebs. Prizes were awarded for the lowest scratch score: Scott Stewart (FP 2000), who was clearly making the most of home advantage. The prize for lowest nett went to Allan Sutherland (FP 2013), and the prize for 'Shot of the Day' went to James Yuill (FP 2005). There were also various prizes for nearest the pin(s) and longest drive.

Recent months have seen healthy increases to the DAGS membership numbers, and we have benefited from generous support from a number of FPs. This will allow DAGS to continue to enter and support teams into various competitions, including the prestigious Queen Elizabeth Coronation Schools Tournament and the Grafton Morrish.

The next DAGS outings in 2023 are planned for Glasgow and Elie. If anyone is interested in joining the mailing list, please contact Joe Fitzgibbon or Scott Stewart (DAGS committee members) by emailing fpdollargolf@gmail.com.

DAGS COMPETE IN THE GRAFTON MORRISH TROPHY 2022

The Grafton Morrish Trophy is played by former pupils' golfing societies from those schools that are members of the Headmasters' Conference (HMC). It is a national competition with qualifying rounds in May/June, and the competition is played in September. The exact date depends on the high tide times, as the clubhouse at Hunstanton can get cut off! Scott Stewart (FP 2000) captained the DAGS side this year and sent this report:

We had five of the six team members present for our practice round, and we decided it was best to focus our attention on Hunstanton (where our first game was played), rather than heading down to Brancaster to squeeze in a round on each course. This was probably a good decision for the team. Despite playing just a single round, we were all quite tired as the wind was gusting between 25 and 35mph during our play. It certainly made some of the holes on the back 9 a tough proposition, and there were a few second shots where the driver was needed into par 4s—and that was just among the team's younger athletes!

On Friday morning, we were drawn to play Epsom in the second round. Both teams had received a bye through the first round of competition. The order of pairings was as follows:

- 1) Harry Adair and Scott Stewart
- 2) Andrew Johnston and Rich Johnston
- 3) Graeme Clark and Rob Watson

Conditions were good for golf, but the wind was still a significant factor. The forecast stayed true to its word with wind gusts reaching almost 40mph at times. This certainly made for some tricky holes into the wind, but it made for some very hard shots downwind, too—in particular at par 3s.

All matches were fairly tight through the first nine holes, and Epsom managed to pull away slightly in Match 2, which was settled first. Good golf was played on both sides. In the end, the Johnston brothers were defeated 4 and 3 in a match that was tighter than that score might suggest.

Match 3 was the next game concluded and Dollar prevailed with a hard fought 2 and 1 victory. The standard of scoring in the conditions was of real quality (I was informed that Dollar were +1 for 17 holes), and our strongest pair was matched against Epsom's strongest two players, one of whom had just returned from a stint on the Alps Tour.

The earlier results meant that the trophy hinged on Match 1, where the lead changed hands on a few occasions. Dollar had their noses in front after 15 holes and made good saves at both 16 and 17 to head dormie 1-up to the 18th tee. It is fair to say that 18 was playing as one of the toughest on the back 9, and Epsom managed to square the match and



L–R: Andrew Johnston (FP 2016), Harry Adair (FP 1981), Rob Watson (FP 2016), Rich Johnston (FP 2013), Graeme Clark (FP 1990), Scott Stewart (FP 2000)

force extra holes. On the 19th, Epsom made a birdie putt from 20 feet to claim the win. They went on to win the trophy.

Sadly, and by the narrowest of margins, Dollar had been knocked out. We headed to Royal West Norfolk GC on the Saturday morning to play in the consolation Solihull Salver competition, for all those teams that had been knocked out in the first or second round. Friday night was not a sombre occasion though. Despite our obvious disappointment, the night is probably best described as an enjoyable 'team-bonding exercise' that continued until the clubhouse closed just after 11pm.

The team thoroughly enjoyed their rounds on Saturday morning, although it may have taken everyone a few moments to shake off the 'cobwebs' from the night before. The playing conditions were fair once again, but the strong winds were still affecting scoring. The Dollar pairs returned scores of 25, 26 and 31—not quite enough to match the winning score of 91 posted by Solihull, or indeed to qualify among the top four for the Committee Bowl competition. At the time of writing, we were still awaiting the full results of that competition.

I'd like to make a special mention of Harry Adair, who stepped up to play at relatively short notice (despite some initial reservations about the level of competition). He acquitted himself exceptionally well under pressure, hitting many good shots and holing important putts. It should also be noted that he won the 'Best Dressed Team Member' prize every day, and I hear that Adidas are trying to sign him to a long-term clothing contract! Thanks must also go to Iain Fulton (FP1990) who was part of the qualifying team, but was unable to make the week due to a prior commitment: running the Chicago Marathon in a fantastic time of 3 hours

and 24 minutes.

I know that I write on behalf of the entire team when I say what a pleasure it was to represent DAGS at the 60th anniversary of the tournament. Despite our early exit, we should all be very optimistic about our chances in future competitions. The younger members of the team have already picked up a few years of experience in these competitions, and we can hopefully begin to blaze the trail for some significant results in the future.

Scott Stewart (FP 2000)

MARRIAGES

DUGDALE

Roger Dugdale (FP 1973) married Hilary in East Sussex in May 2022.

GOODWIN

Alison Goodwin (FP 2011) married Owen Jones at Balbirnie House Hotel on 25 November 2022.



DEATHS

ADAM

Janfarie (Jill) Adam (*née* Calder, FP 1942–1949) passed away on 16 July 2022. She trained as a radiographer at Guy's Hospital, eventually working at Perth Royal Infirmary. She enjoyed hillwalking, completing the Munros in August of 1999, and climbing holidays in Morocco in the company of friends, including Hamish Brown (FP 1954)

ARMSTRONG

Anne (*née* Ross, FP 1945), died on 16 March 2023, aged 95.

CAMPBELL

Sandy Campbell (FP 1966) died on 5 December 2022. Obituary to follow in the next edition.

FYVIE

Graham Fyvie (FP 1968) died on 27 September 2022, aged 73.

GARDNER

Christine Gardner (FP 1938–1945) died on 6 January 2023 in Canada, after emigrating in 1952.

GILMOUR

Arthur Gilmour (FP 1937–1951) passed away on 6 January 2023, aged 90.

HAGGARD

Piers Haggard (FP 1947–1956) died on 11 January 2023. He was an award-winning director of theatre, film and television, known for many works including *Pennies from Heaven* (1978) by Dennis Potter.

HOPE

David Forman Hope (FP 1954–1965) passed away peacefully at home on 10 December 2022, aged 75, husband of the late Sheila. He was the brother of John (FP 1956–1967).

MACKENZIE

Ian D. Mackenzie (FP 1946–1954) died on 20 March 2023.

McEWAN

Malcolm McEwan (FP 1959) died on 25 December 2022. See obituary in this edition.

RORKE

Dr David Rorke (FP 1944–1957) died in Tauranga, New Zealand on 20 March 2023. Much loved husband of Jinty, father of Kirsty and Cathy, grandfather of Flynn, Cody, Ethan and Levi, and brother of Janet (FP 1947–1960) and Joe (FP 1949–1962). Obituary to follow in the next edition.

STEWART-BENDORF

Ann Stewart-Bendorf (*née* Stewart, FP 1974) passed away on 25 February 2023 in Germany after a long fight with cancer.

WRIGHT

Alastair Marshall Wright (FP 1949–1955) died peacefully in Kintyre Care Home, Campbeltown on 26 April 2023, age 85. Formerly of Dalkeith and recently of Clachan, Argyll and Bute. He was a boarder in Parkfield House, brother of Eddie Wright and uncle of Marshall Wright.

FORMER STAFF

McFADYEAN

Gill McFadyean passed away, peacefully and surrounded by her loving family, on 28 October 2022 after a period of illness. Gill was appointed to Dollar Academy as a teacher in the Junior School in August 2000. Between 2000 and 2020 she taught in both the Prep and Junior School. She and her husband, Neil, took over as houseparents of McNabb House in December 2001, and they became senior houseparents of the newly amalgamated McNabb and Tait House in August 2007. A series of remembrances appears in this edition.

WALKER

James (Jimmy) Walker, died on 2 February 2023. He arrived at Dollar as Head of Maths in January 1964 and was appointed Assistant Rector in April 1973. He retired in 1989.



MALCOLM WILLIAM
McEWAN
FP 1951–1958
1941–2022

Malcolm, a day pupil at Dollar between 1951 and 1959, died in his hometown of Heemstede, the Netherlands, on 25 December 2022 following an aneurysm of the brain.

As a boy he lived outside Menstrie with the Ochils just minutes from his back door, and this gave him a lifelong love of the hills. He was still skiing and mountain walking well into his 70s. Malcolm was highly intelligent. He enjoyed History under an unconventional and at times acerbic teacher, but he excelled at Mathematics and Science. As a teenager he became a keen golfer—another lifetime interest—playing on the Hillfoots golf courses. He enjoyed chess, became an adept card player (later graduating to bridge) and developed a love of music.

He studied Chemical Engineering at the University of Edinburgh. While there, he acquired the unusual skill of drinking a pint of beer whilst standing on his head. That did not prevent him graduating with first-class honours in an era when only about 5% of school leavers went on to university, very few of whom achieved a first. This led to a research scholarship in Chemical Engineering at Cambridge University, where he further developed his computing skills alongside his understanding of industrial-scale chemistry.

This made him a very attractive proposition to industry. However, another very attractive proposition appeared in the form of Corry, a Dutch medical technician, who had come from the Netherlands to study. They fell in love and married in 1967. How could he then resist an offer from Royal Dutch Shell to work in the Netherlands? At Shell, Malcolm loved problem solving in malfunctioning factories and developing new and innovative technology. His invention of a new way to cool LNG led to projects in Japan and Australia and further international travel. He continued his interest in digital technology, becoming a departmental head of ICT when the first inter- and intra-net technology was being implemented. He always enjoyed working with teams and proved to be a supportive team leader.

In the years after Malcolm and Corry set up home in the Netherlands, Malcolm worked hard to assimilate to Dutch culture, including learning the language. They had two daughters, Sheona and Eileen, of whom Malcolm was rightly proud as they made their way into adulthood and found careers that suited them. Malcolm sustained and supported Katie, his younger sister, and her family, especially after the untimely death of her husband. Eileen and her husband gave Malcolm and Corry a greatly loved grandson, Hugo. The family was completed by dogs fondly named after characters from *Pride and Prejudice*.

In 1995 Malcolm suggested that we (his friends from Dollar) should all go on holiday together, with our partners, in the Rhone Valley. We continued taking these trips together, over the last 25 years, enjoying eight similar reunions across Europe. These trips always included generous supplies of good food and drink, a comfortable hotel, country walks and good conversation. After his retirement, Malcolm returned to one of his early interests: history. He drew on his long experience of research and of marshalling an argument to give talks on historical topics—such as the provenance of plays usually attributed to Shakespeare and the US moon landing of 1969—to appreciative audiences. His conclusions were often controversial, and Malcolm enjoyed defending them firmly against orthodox opinion.

In conclusion, Malcolm was a gifted, amusing, steadfast and loyal friend who could be relied upon to stimulate with a wide range of ideas and interests. We miss him.

Robert Crawford, Robert Dobbie and Alan Norton (all FPs 1959)



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