

BIANNUAL  
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# fortunas







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will take place on Saturday 27 January.

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HIGHER PASS  
RATE IN 2023

68%  
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**Fortunas 53**  
Many thanks to everyone who contributed articles or images to *Fortunas 52*; the deadline for submission of articles for the summer issue is **Thursday 28 March**.

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



## FROM THE RECTOR

I hope readers enjoy this copy of *Fortunas*, which is bursting full of stories and articles that will delight anyone connected to the Academy! Compiling such a rich demonstration of the Academy's commitment to holistic education is not an easy task, and one which we must congratulate our editor, Heather Moore, and her team for achieving so admirably.

It is perhaps fitting that we bid farewell to Simon Burbury, Deputy Rector, within such a diverse edition, as he was a great proponent of rounded education. He and his family left for Malaysia this past summer with our good wishes for the future. At the same time, we welcomed a fantastic group of new staff who will, over time, leave their own indelible mark on the history of Dollar as part of the Academy's ever ongoing evolution.

I commend Eilidh Munro and Kirsty Mack's pieces to you, which can be found within the FP section of *Fortunas* 52. They exemplify very well what amazing things our pupils can achieve off the back of a broad Dollar education, as well as offering a few important words of wisdom along the way.

Given the richness of what lies ahead, I think it is best that I finish my introduction promptly and let the following pages, which bring the Academy to life in such vibrant colour, do the talking.

I wish you all the very best for the festive season and the year ahead.



Ian Munro



## FIDA: THE FUTURES INSTITUTE AT DOLLAR ACADEMY

The autumn term has seen some exciting new initiatives for the Futures Institute at Dollar Academy (FIDA), which continues to grow in scale and impact. Open to pupils from Dollar and schools across Scotland, FIDA offers a range of projects, design challenges and competitions, all of which are rooted in the UN Sustainable Development Goals and co-designed with experts from industry and universities. Each project involves designing a solution to a real-world problem and gives pupils opportunities to develop important skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration and communication.

### Home Transformers

In September, the Academy hosted a one-week FIDA project called *Home Transformers*, developed in partnership with Barratt Homes, the UK's biggest housebuilder. The project emerged from a real and pressing problem for the UK: the nation's housing stock is the oldest and least energy-efficient

in Europe, and the energy used in heating and running our homes accounts for around 20% of the country's carbon emissions. Barratt have pledged that, by 2030, every new home they build will be 'net zero' in terms of carbon use and will have a net positive impact on biodiversity—but while this may be possible to achieve with the blank canvas of a new building, the UK's 27 million existing homes pose an enormous challenge. In our *Home Transformers* project, pupils were given access to a mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century cottage in a state of considerable disrepair. Through a combination of fieldwork, research tasks, expert-led seminars and brainstorming activities, they worked in teams to develop their own plans to renovate and upgrade the cottage. Their brief was to reduce its carbon footprint as far as possible and to introduce measures to create and improve wildlife habitats, while working within planning constraints and preserving the building's original character.

The project proved extremely popular. Initially conceived for 15 pupils, it was immediately over-subscribed and was extended to 34 participants from four schools: Dollar Academy, Alva Academy, Lornshill Academy (Alloa) and Wallace High School (Stirling). Over the week, they had the opportunity to work with Barratt Group's Directors of Sustainability, Biodiversity and Design & Technology, and researchers from Edinburgh Napier University's Institute for Sustainable Construction. A highlight of the week was a research trip to the Cammo Meadows construction site in Edinburgh, where the group was hosted by Barratt's expert site team and had the opportunity to visit homes at various stages of construction.

Pupils worked in mixed-school teams to develop their plans, which they presented to an expert panel on the final day of the project. Barratt have generously offered an opportunity for a young person, who made an outstanding contribution, to undertake work experience with the company. At the time of writing, candidates are being considered by the senior team at Barratt. The winning candidate will be supported by a bursary to cover travel and accommodation.

### Clackmannanshire Wellbeing Hub/ Lochies School Design Challenge

Clackmannanshire Council called upon FIDA to co-design a competition for secondary school pupils to design an outdoor space for the county's new Wellbeing Hub and Lochies School complex. In response, we have produced high-quality learning resources that are freely accessible to teachers and pupils across Clackmannanshire. These explore the positive health impacts of physical activity and social interaction; and guide pupils through the process of designing an outdoor space, from concept to detailed sketch or model. Pupils from S3-S6 across the county are eligible to enter, and the competition will ensure that young people have a strong voice in the design of Clackmannanshire's largest





infrastructure project—a facility that they and their families will use for years to come. Once again, connections with the world of employment are key. The design team, including architects and landscape architects, will host a workshop for five shortlisted candidates, and from these an overall winner will be selected to embark on longer-term work experience with the professional team.

### Wildlife Welcome Here

Our entire Junior 1 year group is working, throughout the 2023–24 session, on a FIDA project focusing on wildlife conservation that will also see them gain their John Muir Award. Readers may be interested to read Mr Eliot Sedman’s account of their work to date elsewhere in this edition of *Fortunas* (page 32–33).

### Sustainability Diploma

FIDA continues to cement its place as a nationally-recognised beacon project in terms of curriculum innovation. We are working with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) to build our existing suite of projects into a one-year qualification at Level 6, the same level as a Higher. This new qualification—the FIDA Sustainability Diploma—will be university-accredited and recognised by employers, colleges and universities. Much detailed work lies ahead to develop the course materials and assessment frameworks to meet the requirements of a rigorous and robust credit-rating process. Dollar Academy staff and colleagues in our network of state school collaborators are working together on this important and exciting workstream. Our goal is to pilot the new qualification in the 2024–25 session with pupils from Dollar, Alva, Alloa and Lornhill Academies, and, thereafter, to scale up to a national offering over the following years.

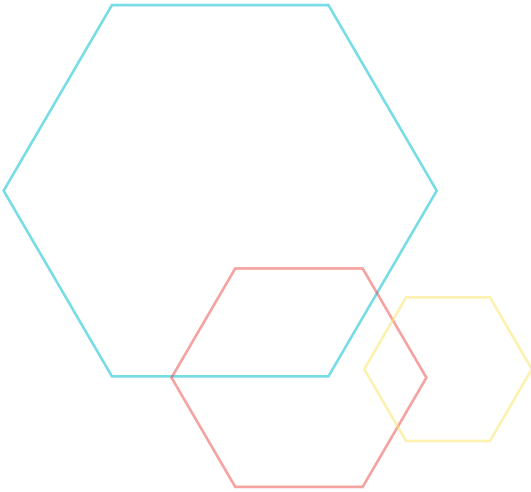


### Futures Institute building

Clackmannanshire Council has granted planning permission for our ambitious new Futures Institute building, designed by globally renowned architect and Dollar FP Andrew Whalley OBE. Its innovative classrooms, laboratories and design facilities, integrated under one roof, will enable creative and collaborative working that breaks down subject boundaries. The majority of the funds for the building are in place, and a fundraising campaign has been launched to raise the remaining sum required. Donations of all levels are welcome; more information on the campaign and its aims, and how to donate, can be found at <https://dollaracademy.org.uk/support-us-futures-institute-building/> or using the QR code here:



*Jacqueline Smith (FIDA Director)*







## FAREWELL TO MR SIMON BURBURY Deputy Rector 2020-23

Simon is clever, hardworking and someone who always puts the needs of pupils first, and I was delighted to be able to appoint him to the post of Deputy Rector at Dollar. It was a role that he fulfilled with enthusiasm and commitment throughout his tenure.

Surely one of Simon's greatest strengths—and he has many—is his belief in the power of holistic education. At times, this commitment very much took centre stage—quite literally in some circumstances, as all of us at Dollar have been wowed by one of Mr Burbury's choirs or ensembles at one point or another. Then there was, of course, his prowess on the water, where he led many an adventure for the good of our pupils. At the same time that he managed all this hands-on practical activity, he also worked very hard behind the scenes to try and accommodate the many competing timetabling demands of our co-curricular programme to put every activity or discipline on an equal footing. This is not an easy nut to crack, but Simon persevered so that our pupils could try new things, develop their passions and be happy.

He also always kept a very calm head under pressure, and this is an essential trait of an effective deputy. Indeed, it was put to a very firm test during the Covid-19 pandemic, where Simon played a central role in turning national guidelines into effective operational practice. This was often

done at short notice and against a backdrop of conflicting views within our community, but always with balanced and reasoned decision thinking. I am in no doubt that Simon's efforts were one of the reasons we emerged so strongly from the pandemic.

There were lighter moments, too, of course: Discovery Day, the mountain biking mishap and the misplaced pet snake...which all formed part of the rich discourse between two good colleagues, and I will definitely miss Simon in this next stage of the Academy's development.

I would describe the Burburys, very fondly, as life-enthusiasts. Full of energy and eager to embrace new experiences and cultures (Simon once ran across the Sahara Desert as a competitor within the Marathon des Sables!), I always thought he would be very well suited to an international headship. To become the Master of Marlborough College, a most prestigious international posting, is a real feather in his cap. I wish him, Jenny, Chloe and Ollie all the very best for their next adventure.

*Ian Munro*

## MR BURBURY

During my time at Dollar, Mr Burbury was a very influential person, someone I always looked up to. I first really got to know him during the rehearsals for the bicentenary production of *13: The Musical*, performed at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2018. For three weeks that summer, I got to experience his fast-paced and enthusiastic directing style, which I grew to admire and understand. Although *13* had its challenges (from the questionable props and costumes we found at the theatre venue, to the food poisoning contracted by half the cast), Mr Burbury led us through it all. Looking back over many years of involvement in many musical projects, that one is still one of my favourite shows. Some of my best memories of Mr Burbury were on the New York and Boston Tour (Music and Golf) last October. He took on so many different roles on that trip, including shutting down room gatherings, accompanying some of the singers and even helping our very stressed driver to drive and navigate the bus! There are many things about Mr Burbury I will never forget, but not least was his ability somehow to sing all the parts in Mixed Voice Choir (voice cracks included)...and, of course, his very favourite word: 'Louder!'. Thank you, Mr Burbury.

*Laura Koechlin (FP 2023)*

The 2022–23 session was Mr Burbury's last-ever year as choirmaster of Dollar's Mixed Voice Choir. This autumn term, he began his new role as Headmaster of Marlborough College Malaysia. Over the last few years, as a result of the pandemic, Dollar Academy had to make some adjustments to abide by the government's Covid rules and guidance—as did all schools. Whether it was running virtual assemblies or moving Prizegiving outdoors (on a particularly windy day in June 2020) or conducting a masked and distanced Mixed Voice Choir before an entirely virtual audience, Mr Burbury was always right there with us through all of the related challenges and tribulations of those years, and we will be forever grateful.

A gifted musician with a master's degree in music, Mr Burbury was always involved in Dollar's active Music Department. Mixed Voice Choir was his main endeavour, and we still stand in awe of his ability to sing the soprano lines louder than all of us combined. Mr Burbury also featured in DAJO in 2020, when they recorded a very impressive rendition of 'Sparkle and Shine' from the film *Nativity!* And, in October 2022, Mr Burbury joined us on our very busy, very successful New York and Boston Tour. He is, of course, a fabulous accompanist, a top-notch page turner, but more than any of that, he is great company. We created some unforgettable memories with Mr Burbury on that tour, and we hope he thinks of us often and recalls the amazing time we had.

*Rebecca Currie (FP 2023)*

Over the years Mr Burbury has done so much and been so involved in so many aspects of life at Dollar Academy. He was heavily involved with the Navy section in Dollar's CCF, as well as with



the Mixed Voice Choir and DAJO (Jazz Orchestra) as part of the school's Music Department.

With the Navy, he often supervised day trips to Port Edgar to help teach sailing and powerboating, as well as joining longer adventures to the Scottish isles to teach the more nuanced skills of journey planning and navigation. Throughout these unforgettable trips, his love and excitement for teaching and for sailing was obvious. Despite (or because of) his particular knack for capsizing sail boats, he is enthusiastic and passionate about Navy trips, even to a fault. This was perfectly demonstrated when, on one occasion, he forgot to fill in the paperwork for the 12-hour sailing race. (Luckily, the organisers had some sympathy for his plight, and the sailors were still allowed to compete). Mr Burbury's delight and keenness also extended to the Navy section's games. The game of spoons is simple: run into the middle of the circle and grab a spoon. There's always one fewer spoon than the number of people in the circle and someone is eliminated each time. After a few rounds there were sometimes a few bangs and scrapes, but it was all in good fun—after all, it's every person for themselves in a game of spoons.

We all saw a different side to Mr Burbury on last session's USA tour. Perhaps the width of the Atlantic was sufficient to allow him to take a brief break from the immense responsibilities involved in looking after Dollar. He could usually be found watching the mischief unfold from the sidelines, always with infinite patience. His final acceptance of the nickname of Burbs was a long time coming and inspired the choice of the group title 'The Bubbles' for his group of pupils on the tour.

The Burbs' mishaps and hijinks with the Navy section will not be forgotten in a hurry. But, above all, his enthusiasm for and love of music (and his constant urging of the choir to 'Sing louder!') will echo round the corridors and auditorium of the Gibson Building for a very long time to come. Wherever you looked (or listened), Mr Burbury was a much-respected figure at Dollar Academy. He was involved in every part of the life of the school, and the hard work he put in behind the scenes to keep the school running smoothly was, is and will be for a long time very much appreciated.

*Michael J. and Lottie L. (both Form VI)*





## JENNY BURBURY

The two words that spring instantly to mind when thinking about Jenny are ‘energy’ and ‘kindness’. Jenny was a pocket dynamo around the campus, effortlessly sashaying between the many departments, buildings and activities in which she was involved, from SFL to EAL, from Argyll House to the Astro, from the Prep School to the senior school, from Pupil Support to the alpaca enclosure, Jenny simply took everything in her (very fast) stride.

The child was undoubtedly at the centre of everything Jenny did, whether they were a Prep 1 struggling to grasp their phonics, a Form II pupil struggling with friendships, a senior grappling with the English language or a teaching colleague searching for strategies that might unlock the learning potential of one of their pupils. Jenny wanted the very best for every pupil or colleague; she made time for us all and we learned so much from her.

The boarding community was always close to her heart, and she loved

spending time with the girls in Argyll, playing games of sardines around the campus, undertaking a Wednesday night Wordle or staging a Eurovision party. Even when she stepped in as Houseparent in Heyworth during the pandemic, a ‘virtual’ house of girls simply meant creating that home-from-home atmosphere in a different way with virtual karaoke and impromptu quiz nights. She also stepped in without a second’s thought to support the hub for key workers’ children in the Prep School, doing anything within her power that ‘just might help’.

With wanderlust in her blood, she has found her dream job in Malaysia. Already, she is creating bubbles of magic for her pupils and colleagues there, just as she did at Dollar.

*Alison Morrison*

## MRS BURBURY: ASSISTANT HEAD OF YEAR

Mention the name ‘Jenny Burbury’ and, as the previous article attests to, the word ‘energy’ comes to mind. At any given moment, when I would visit 1JB, there would be a palpable sense of energy amongst the group; maybe the pupils were undertaking a class quiz, a Kahoot task, listening to a PowerPoint presentation, or engaging in a lively discussion, but Jenny’s class was always buzzing in the mornings. Naturally, when she took on the Assistant Head of Year role, you knew there were going to be extra kilowatts lighting up the guidance team. Barely had a task been assigned to her before she leapt into action to undertake whatever was required. Jenny made a significant contribution to the Form II guidance team and particular praise must be given for the time, effort and care that she offered so willingly. She greatly benefited a large number of the Form II year group cohort, as well as offering reassurance and comfort to parents who always knew their child was in very capable hands. In her role, she brought experience and enthusiasm to whatever situation she was presented with, whether helping oversee the alpaca therapets initiative or assisting with Tennis Club after school. I would like to offer my sincere thanks for the help she gave to so many people during her time at Dollar.

*Fraser Muirhead*

## RUNNING COMMUNITY LANGUAGE CLASSES

Afternoon tea, haggis, yoga, alpacas, origami, cheese grater, vodka, ceilidh dancing, curling... what could all of these things possibly have in common? Jenny Burbury, of course. That list is just a small sampling of the diverse—and often hilarious—topics and events covered with Jenny during the delivery of our adult Community Language Classes. Nothing was off limits. In fact, the more bizarre, the better. Jenny brought a huge sense of fun and infectious enthusiasm to every session. Not only that, but her compassion and determination to ensure we were doing all we could for our Ukrainian friends did not end with the evening’s class. University applications, job searches and complicated IELTS tests were just some of the ways in which she provided support. I learned a lot from her positive attitude and her absolute belief that no challenge is insurmountable. I will miss working with her and wish her all the best in the future.

*Fran Mackie*



## ESOL TEACHER

Mrs Burbury was in charge of the school’s ESOL lessons for our international students, but it would be naïve to think that this is all she did. With Mrs Burbury in a classroom there was never a dull moment; she took a great sense of pride in her teaching and strived for integrity in the classroom, but she always managed to balance these things, effortlessly, with her unexpectedly silly jokes and always-merry attitude. Along with the high spirits she displayed in her lessons, she brought with her an eternal well of patience and thoughtfulness towards her students; she clearly understood the struggles and frustrations that come with having to live your day-to-day life in a foreign language. Mrs Burbury was always quick to help, always without judgement, making many of the international students at Dollar feel supported when undertaking the toil of learning a new language.

And we must not omit mention of her contribution to the boarding community. Mrs Burbury gave up her Wednesday evenings for the girls at Argyll, and she took

her job there very seriously. As in the classroom, however, her two personalities came to light: not a single girl was out of her room past bedtime when Mrs Burbury was on duty, but the games of Manhunt and the Eurovision extravaganza nights were a certainty as well.

So, on behalf of everyone at Dollar, I want to thank her for all of her time, compassion, knowledge, jokes, encouragement—and for how much she believed in this school and every single one of its students. We wish her the best at her new school in Malaysia, and we hope she knows that she will always have a home at Dollar Academy and in our hearts.

*Alicia V.-S. (Form VI)*



## EDEN WOOD

There is no question that Eden Wood is Dollar through and through—indeed, were we to chop her in half, like a stick of seaside rock, I believe we would find the word ‘Dollar’ running right through her. She is herself an FP, and a number of us ‘more experienced’ teachers on the staff had the privilege of teaching her back in the day. And since I had kept a careful eye on this particular Classics teacher-to-be, it seemed almost inevitable that she would find herself a teacher in the very department that had fuelled her academic passions those few years before.

A delight to teach back then, she proved just as much a delight to teach beside during her five years with us. Having had the good fortune to introduce her to Virgil in Higher Latin, I wish I could say that I taught her everything she knows, but it would be much closer to the mark to confess that it is I who learned from her. One of life’s enthusiasts, she brought incomparable energy, unflagging positivity and much fun to the Classics Department. With her strong academic background, she very quickly grew to be our Classical Studies specialist. She was happy to participate in trips both overseas and closer to home in order to share her passion for all things Classical; she worked hard to fathom the unfathomable SQA marking criteria, and, latterly, took up a place on the marking team to (no doubt) keep them right! She embodied the pupil-centred approach to teaching, and her pupils always appreciated her support and generosity with her time. Those after-school revision sessions (fuelled by Double Biscuits and too much



Haribo) were always well attended. These qualities rendered her an ideal addition to the guidance team, and that briefing huddle of Miss Wood, Mrs Caine and Miss McLean soon became a familiar sight in the mornings. She clearly never received the new staff memo offering the sane advice to avoid saying ‘Yes’ to every request. From helping with the Senior Musical to being a boarding house tutor; from running the Burns Supper to running Friday’s *Myths and Glyphs* club, her contribution has been wholehearted and sincere. These words, taken from her own Form VI pupil farewell letter, chime just as true now as they did then: ‘Eden has been commendably determined to get the most out of her time at the school. It is no exaggeration to state that her school career has been exemplary. Indeed, Dollar Academy has been lucky to have her.’

*Heather Lumsden*

When it came to guidance, Eden was like an egg: adaptable to everyone’s needs. In a hard-boiled state, she was someone to lean upon (tough and dependable), and she could give the right amount of tough love when required. How do you like your eggs? Everyone’s answer is unique, and Eden



realised this. The time she spent getting to know pupils was second to none. She genuinely cared for each pupil, and she could guide them toward seeing even the most challenging situations ‘sunny side up’. Above all, she was the egg in the cake recipe, the substance that bound all the ingredients of a year group together. What came first, the chicken or Eden? Who knows? But when Dollar found Eden, they found a Fabergé egg: a priceless jewel.

*Kayleigh Caine*

Eden was also an integral part of the boarding community during her tenure at Dollar and formed part of the ‘Thursday Club’ in McNabb & Tait House. Never short of energy, she was fantastic at supporting the boys in all aspects of their time at Dollar. She was frequently known to go above and beyond, including supervising the infamous isolation spells at Lendrick Muir during the time of Covid-19 restrictions.

*Ranald Baird*

## ELIZABETH GOODWIN

For the pupils and staff in the Chemistry Department, the labs are where the funny smells are, where the flames are, where the bangs and flashes and fizzes are; it’s where our classes are able to enjoy a really hands-on learning experience. Behind every one of those chemical reactions for the past 12 years has been Elizabeth Goodwin, our beloved Chemistry technician, who retired earlier this year.

A Hutchesons’ Grammar girl, Elizabeth joined us after working in the chemical industry in England and, more locally, at Grangemouth, after bringing up her family of three girls: Helen, Alison and Catherine. The girls were already pupils here when she started, so the school was well known to her, and she took over a well-run Prep Room from Kate Carmichael (another very popular and successful Chemistry technician).

In her time here, Elizabeth has trialled every new experiment when new courses have been introduced, teasing out problems and re-writing procedures. She has organised our inventory with care and dedication, disposing of chemical waste and chemicals which had been re-classified, and she has ordered chemicals and equipment, always with cost in mind. She has ensured we kept up with changes to safety regulations and she has serviced our fume cupboards. She has read endless journals to extract new ideas, bringing these to our departmental meetings. She has generally helped to drive the department forward with her direct, no-nonsense approach.

She has taught most of us in the department all we know about



thin-layer chromatography (an area of real expertise from her industrial experience). She has also created and organised countless class-set kits of experiments, each one made with tremendous care and attention to detail—all topped up between lessons, and always ready for the next teacher, ensuring the ongoing success of lessons in our busy department. In short, she has been our caddy; she has guided us through the sand traps of each experiment, a constant source of positivity, friendship and support. She once said, ‘No teacher likes to be told what to do.’ But we have loved being told what to do by Elizabeth—such is the respect we have for her knowledge, experience and commitment to the department.

So, what’s next for her? Well, the

introduction of some poor wordplay in the previous paragraph is something of a clue: you can be sure that golf will feature heavily. As a low-teens handicapper, she regularly plays four or five rounds each week, often locally at Glenbervie GC (where she is a member) or at numerous courses in Ayrshire (she has a holiday home in Prestwick); her husband Kenneth is secretary of the famous old golf club there. Yes, you can guarantee that she’ll be out in all weathers, swinging in the rain, somewhere in Scotland. If it’s not too many golfing puns—Elizabeth, you’ve been tee-riffic, the best by par. We will miss you tremendously and hope you have a retirement as long as your drives and as satisfying as a chip-in from off the green!

*The Chemistry Department*





# INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW DEPUTY RECTOR: The Head Girl and Boy Meet Mr Robin Pyper

**Adom:** What was your first impression of Dollar?

**Mr Pyper:** When I came for interview, I was totally blown away. I realized that this was just the most incredible place in terms of the landscape and the staff and the pupils who were all so warm and welcoming. The breadth of education is staggering, and I was quickly very inspired by everything that goes on here.

**Evie:** Can you describe your first day on the job?

**Mr Pyper:** I was quite nervous, and I don't normally get nervous—I was talking to the whole school in assembly, which is quite a big thing here. That first assembly was the start of this new chapter for me, and it was a fresh start for many other people at the school, too: staff and pupils. I had felt quite emotional before it; the pupils were coming up the drive, parents were

dropping their children off for the first time, a pupil was piping outside, the sun was shining... And when I sat at the front of that packed Assembly Hall, I remember thinking, wow, I'm part of this community. I felt very proud and very pleased just to be here.

**Adom:** Why did you apply to Dollar and what set it apart from the other schools you might have applied to?

**Mr Pyper:** My wife will tell you, I'm quite picky. I don't go scatter-gun with job applications; I am very careful. I'd read some very good stuff about Dollar. It stood out for me because of the breadth of education on offer. It's not just about the teaching and learning that happen in the classroom here; it's the teaching and learning that happen everywhere across the school: in the Dining Hall, walking up and down the school drive, playing rugby, playing hockey, rehearsing for musical performances, taking part in CCF—all of those things add so much to the wider experience of learning. I think it really is incredible.

The other thing that sets this place apart is the teachers. They love teaching—and that might sound like a ridiculous thing to say, but I've worked in schools where teachers don't necessarily love teaching. They

just do it as a job. But the teachers here are very committed; they've got a passion for what they do. And finally, it's the pupils. They are so warm and welcoming, polite and well behaved. This is just awesome.

**Evie:** How would you describe the job of Deputy Rector of Dollar Academy to a layperson?

**Mr Pyper:** Most people would say that the Deputy Rector is the person in charge of the day-to-day running of the school. They are responsible for the operational part of the school, for making decisions (often quickly) regarding how to make the school run smoothly. The Deputy Rector keeps the wheels turning and that is a broad and varied remit. The best bit is the really fun stuff: engaging with people like yourselves, leading staff and trying to inspire them to go bigger and better.

**Adom:** When you worked in the classroom, what was your favourite subject to teach?

**Mr Pyper:** I did sports science at university, and then I taught PE. Within that, I really love physiology; that was the bit that I always enjoyed teaching the most.

**Evie:** Is there anything you miss about teaching in the classroom?

**Mr Pyper:** I don't think the pupils I taught would miss me! But I do miss the day-to-day pupil interaction. I get to spend less and less time with pupils, and that's one of those funny things in schools: as you get promoted, you move further and further away from pupils. You've got to be quite disciplined to spend time getting out and about at lunchtime, in order to engage directly with the pupils in the school. This—spending time with you today—this is the part of my day that I have been looking forward to most.

**Adom:** Following on from that question, what are the particular challenges of working in school management?

**Mr Pyper:** Above all, it's being able to consider and assess the bigger picture. You need to give attention to detail, but you also need to think about which thing on your desk is important and which is not—then you must be able to focus on those really important things that are going to make the school a better place.

**Evie:** Could you tell us a bit about your own schooling and your own education?

**Mr Pyper:** Our family, the Pyper family, is a pretty dull family; we are all teachers. The last *five* generations on my dad's side have all been headmasters. So that's been the path. At school I tried to say I was never going to be a teacher; I thought—I'm going to try and buck the trend. I went into the world of work and did a year of financial recruitment, and I hated every minute of it. So I thought, 'OK, I'll give teaching a go.' Of course, I absolutely loved it from the moment I started.

**Adom:** How did your own education influence your career path?

**Mr Pyper:** I was rather naughty at school. My dad was my headmaster and that, I think, was tough for him. It was probably tougher for him than it was for me! I got in quite a lot of trouble—not big trouble, but I was just annoying. I needed to sort myself out. It was my housemaster who sat me down and said, 'Look, you've got two choices here. You can carry on the way you're going or not. You've got potential, and I believe in you; I have faith in you.' A lot of other teachers had written me off at that point, so to have that one person say he believed in me—well, that was massive. That moment really influenced the directions that I've chosen in my career as well.

**Adom:** What was the best and most memorable moment from your school days?

**Mr Pyper:** Well, Maya Angelou said, 'People won't remember what you said, they won't remember what you did, but they will remember how they made you feel.' I don't remember particular lessons from those years, but do I remember that feeling of overcoming challenge, the satisfaction that came from doing that. There are so many opportunities at school to take yourself out of your comfort zone, to really challenge yourself.

**Evie:** You have children in the Prep School; how have they found their first few weeks at Dollar?

**Mr Pyper:** Amazing. We were initially quite nervous about moving them up here. That's a big change! But they have loved every single minute, and the clearest indication of that came on the second morning. They'd had their first day and on the second morning, they were up at 5:30am, fully dressed in their uniforms, waking us up saying, 'Can we go to school yet?' They had had such an awesome experience on Day One, and that's just carried on. They've got lovely friends; they're learning loads and they're happy. That's been great to see.

**Adom:** What do you think your kids like best about Dollar so far?

**Mr Pyper:** I think it's the friendships actually. They've settled in and they are so fortunate to have these people who are very like-minded around them. They also, already, love their teachers!

**Evie:** As a parent, what do you think Dollar does particularly well?

**Mr Pyper:** It's understanding that there is more to education than just getting good grades. Lots of people in life will have good grades and lots of people will have bad grades as well, but it's what you do with your life, your skills and your attributes that is most important.

**Adom:** When you first heard about the Dollar values, what did you think?

**Mr Pyper:** Actually, at first, I thought they were quite simplistic—I questioned them in my interview. 'Is that really challenging enough?', I asked. But, actually, I think that simplicity is the source of their strength. Those values are very easy to apply to one's own life, and it's important that the values are there for the pupils, but for the staff as well. It's become important for me, in this job, to remind myself of what they are and to live by them.

**Evie:** If you were a pupil here, what co-curricular activities would you take part in?

**Mr Pyper:** The one that I really want to go and see is Guitar Building Club. I like the idea of the project of building something. Beekeeping, surfing are others that appeal; I do really love sport.

**Adom:** Do you miss being involved directly in PE?

**Mr Pyper:** I feel really fortunate to be coaching the Form 3B girls' hockey team, and we are having an awesome time. They're a lovely bunch, and we are learning a lot, and it helps me to keep that connection with the pupils.

**Adom:** A big question now: what is your vision for the future of the Academy?

**Mr Pyper:** That is a meaty question! From my point of view, it's to make sure that the systems and processes in place allow people to get on and do what they're really good at. It's allowing teachers to get on and teach and engage with young people and not get bogged down in other things. The other key part of my vision is to continue making the school as strong as possible in terms of the holistic education that we offer—to make sure that we're educating pupils in every possible way, not just focusing on the classroom.

**Adom:** What is your favourite song and why?



# REBECCA McFARLANE

Rebecca McFarlane joined us in February 2023 as the Academy's new Fundraising Manager; she brings 20 years' experience of working with charities at board and management level, and she has successfully run a social research agency supporting charities for the last 10 years. Having lived in Dollar since 2010, she previously managed the Dollar Community Development Trust, so hers is a familiar face around the village. Married to Sean McFarlane (FP 1991) and daughter-in-law to former staff, Bill and Jane McFarlane (Economics and Business Studies Departments), she is delighted to be continuing the family's long connection with the school. Professional fundraising is a new function at Dollar Academy; here she tells us more about the role and what she's working on.

Throughout my career, fundraising has always been a large part of what I do and many of my skills have transferred easily into an educational environment. I've really enjoyed getting to know the charity that runs Dollar Academy over the last eight months. Essentially, the role of a fundraiser is the same wherever you work—put simply, it means identifying people who have a passion for a particular cause and facilitating a connection that will enable them to make a difference.

So where does this role fit within a school? The fundraising function within an independent school is formally known as 'development', and the development team usually work closely with marketing and admissions. The role of development is to engage with alumni, parents and other stakeholders to generate support and income to advance a school's strategic aims, particularly in relation to its charitable objectives. As a result, I work closely alongside Kirsty Molnar (our FP Registrar), but fundraising is very much a wider team effort, so I also work closely with the Rector, Bursary, and, of course, everyone within the Marketing, Admissions and



Development Department.

Why now? With the increasing external pressures currently facing independent schools, fundraising plays a vital role in providing an additional source of income to support the school's ongoing development—be it from philanthropists, grants or corporates. At a time when budgets are tight, fundraising income ensures that a school can continue to fulfil its charitable objectives without impacting fees. It can, for example, be used for widening access to independent education for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and/or improving and enhancing learning environments and resources for pupils. These are two fundamental aims of the FIDA initiative and so my focus, for the time being, is supporting FIDA by fundraising for the Futures Institute building to ensure the initiative can thrive.

Why FIDA? Over the last couple of years, I have been watching the FIDA initiative develop from afar. I was drawn to its ethos and aims, and I have been impressed with the bold approach the Academy is taking to change education for the benefit of all young people across Scotland. As the mother of an eight-year-old, who I hope will attend Dollar in the future, I jumped at the opportunity to work at the Academy and be involved in FIDA, to do whatever I can to support its success.

The role, however, is not without its challenges. While the

school was initially borne out of a philanthropic gift and has continued to receive gifts from philanthropists over the last 200 years, there is still some way to go to develop a strong culture of giving. But I strongly believe in what the Academy is trying to achieve, and how it is redefining itself as a charitable organisation, and I'm very much up for the challenge.

Rebecca McFarlane

## Launch of the FIDA Mass Appeal

As Fundraising Manager, one of my main activities since joining the Academy has been the preparation and launch of the Futures Institute building's mass fundraising appeal.

While the school has already received several generous donations from philanthropists (FPs and parents), which have helped to ensure the majority of funds are in place, we are continuing with our fundraising efforts, engaging with our school community, local businesses and grant-giving foundations to help us achieve our funding goal.

The mass appeal, successfully launched in late October, enables anyone to donate to support the building. So far, the appeal has raised over £10,000, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have already donated. It's been interesting to find out why individuals have chosen to donate. One person told me, 'I decided to donate because I really like the scope and focus of the FIDA initiative and in particular its offering to school students across Scotland.'

Another donor said, 'I was really pleased to see the positive outreach aspects of FIDA and wanted to contribute to support these aims. I'm also aware that I benefited a lot from experiences linked to the fantastic facilities at Dollar, and I like the idea of trying to support more and more children to have access to experiences which will build their resilience and capacity for exciting

and useful learning!'. While a third person explained that 'Dollar shaped my career prospects; the opportunities which the Futures Institute will afford to our young people knows no bounds, so I felt compelled to support this project in the small way I could.'

For donations of £250 and over we are offering supporters the opportunity to have their name on our Donor Recognition Wall, which will be inside the Futures Institute building. This will be a permanent installation designed by the young people involved in our FIDA challenges. Being on our donor wall means a donor's name will forever be part of the school.

Any donation, whatever the level, is hugely appreciated. All our supporters are offered the opportunity to receive updates about the building's progress, the wider FIDA initiative and how their support is making a difference. In addition, they will be invited to the building's opening ceremony.

We are also running a series of fundraising events and offering corporate sponsorship opportunities. The first of these will be a James Bond Musical Extravaganza, which will take place on 23 March 2024. If you are interested in finding out more or discussing these further, please contact me at fundraising@dollaracademy.org.uk.

If you would like to find out more about how you can support the fundraising appeal, please scan here:



or follow this link:  
<https://dollaracademy.org.uk/support-us-futures-institute-building/>



**Mr Pyper:** I was listening to the song 'This is Me' last night from the musical *The Greatest Showman*. It's all about people being comfortable in their own skins, believing in themselves. It's hard for people your age in the world right now, but you must find that confidence, that self-esteem. You must figure out how to say, 'I'm going to be my own person. I'm not going to be like someone else.' The message of that song is amazing.

**Evie:** Dollar has many familiar dogs around the campus—which is your favourite?

**Mr Pyper:** I might get sacked if I don't say Darwin, Mr and Mrs Munro's dog.

He is a cool dog who mostly hangs out in Mrs Gallagher's office chewing bits of paper, sitting in a seat, looking like a human and thinking he generally runs the show. Perhaps he does.

**Evie:** Finally, and importantly...will the alpacas return?

**Mr Pyper:** I've heard very good things about the alpacas. I sincerely hope they will be back!

Interview conducted by Evie P. (Head Girl) and Adom A. (Head Boy)





## CLAIRE BROWNBRIDGE

Claire joined the Engineering, Design and Technology (EDT) Department in August of this year. Having previously taught Design and Technology at Strathallan School and Perth High School, and Art and Design at Kilgraston, she was drawn by Dollar's welcoming atmosphere and community ethos. A keen hockey player, she has played for her local club, Kinross, and at international level for Scotland as a member of the over-40s Masters Team. She has fond memories of facing Dollar with her Strathallan team, a fixture she always enjoyed because of the friendliness of the Dollar pupils. She is delighted to be sharing her experience of playing and coaching hockey with Dollar's Form II hockey team.

Prior to teaching, Claire studied at Edinburgh College of Art, completing a BA(Hons) in Design and Applied Arts, specialising in Furniture Design, and then a

Postgraduate Diploma in Design and Applied Arts. The classical training she received during her time there included art history and life drawing and, after graduating, she remained at the College to teach life drawing to students in the Design School. She then completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Technical Education at University of Edinburgh and embarked on her teaching career. She also transfers and develops her passion for the creative subjects through other work outside of teaching, combining her artistic, graphic and design skills to create prints for homewares and gifts.

She is enjoying her first term and has been made to feel most welcome by staff and pupils alike. She feels privileged to be part of such a strong department and has been stimulated by the interchange of skills and knowledge with her colleagues in EDT. She looks forward to a happy, exciting future at the school.

## MATHIAS BAUER

Mathias was delighted to join the EAL and Modern Languages Departments in August 2023. Growing up near the Bavarian Alps, he developed a passion for the outdoors and sports. In addition to football, water sports, climbing and skiing, he also enjoys running and completed his first marathon in Edinburgh this year.

He worked as a language assistant in the UK for a year, which led him to pursue teaching as a profession. Having read English, Geography and Educational Sciences at university, he completed his teacher training in Regensburg, Bavaria. When Mathias moved to Vienna in 2014, he took a ski instructor course and enjoyed teaching on the school's skiing trips. Two years later, he moved to England to teach Geography, EAL and German. As Head of EAL and a Gold DofE Award Leader, Mathias was able to combine two of his greatest loves.



In summer 2023, he moved to Edinburgh with his family. He was drawn to Dollar by its exceptional co-curricular provision and the variety of languages on offer. A member of two departments and the CCF's Navy section, he looks forward to continued involvement in these areas, helping pupils to become kind, hardworking and open-minded individuals. Having been warmly welcomed by staff and pupils alike, Mathias thoroughly enjoyed his first term at the school.



## DAVID CHANT

David was delighted to join the English Department in August. Born and raised in Canada, he completed his Hons BA in English and History at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and later his teacher training and BED at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

He was drawn to Dollar partly because of a significant family connection: his wife, Christina, is a Former Pupil (1999), as is his brother-in-law, Niall (FP 2000). David and Christina met at the University of Glasgow in 2006-07, where he completed his Master's in English Literature and she worked within the university's Widening Participation programme.

David began his teaching career in 2012 in his home province of Ontario at Trinity College School, where he taught English, coached ice hockey and football, and served as a boarding house tutor. In 2017, he and his family took the exciting opportunity to move to Canada's west coast, where he took up a position teaching English, coaching ice hockey and rugby, and continued his work as a boarding house tutor at Shawnigan Lake School on Vancouver Island.

After living together in Canada for 13 years, David and Christina made the decision to move their family back to Scotland in 2021. Since that time, David has worked as the Head of English at the Edinburgh Academy and as an English teacher at Fairview International School in Bridge of Allan, the town where Christina grew up, where her parents still live, and which the Chant family now calls home.



## AMY GREIG

Amy was thrilled to join the Classics Department at Dollar Academy in August, teaching both Classical Studies and Latin. Educated at Hutchesons' Grammar School in Glasgow, Amy studied Classical Studies and Latin at the University of St Andrews. She has a particular interest in Classical Greek art and in Roman pottery, and she has undertaken additional study in pottery restoration in Italy. Following this, she completed an MSc in Museum Studies at the University of Glasgow, which allowed her to foster connections with a range of local museums and heritage sites. Amy also volunteered with the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society, developing tours, signage and events at sites across Glasgow. Through this work she discovered her passion for historical education, for making the past accessible to a wider audience and she, therefore, decided to pursue a career in education.

Amy initially trained as a primary teacher. Working in schools in South Lanarkshire, she has had experience of being curricular lead across a range of subjects. Amy has always been passionate about being involved in a range of co-curricular activities, and she is excited to help lead the Myths and Glyphs club.

Outside of school, Amy spends much of her time travelling with family and friends, visiting as many historical sites and exhibits as possible. Having recently moved closer to Dollar, she hopes to explore the area with her Labrador, PJ.





A very warm welcome to the Class of 2036  
and a fond farewell to the Class of 2023







## INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD BOY AND GIRL: ADOM AND EVIE

Mia: So, be honest: how many bands have you lost in your time at Dollar Academy?

Evie: Too many...

Adom: No comment.

Harvey: Who’s your favourite teacher?

Evie: Another very controversial question! I will be in trouble for this, but my favourite teachers are in the Geography Department. (But I take Advanced Higher Geography; I’m a little biased.)

Adom: The teachers in the Biology Department. They’ve helped me out a lot—especially at Higher.

Mia: Do you like to play sports?

Evie: We’re both quite sporty, as are the whole Top 6. Sport is a great outlet; if you’re feeling stressed, you can go for a run and it re-sets you. I do some unusual ones: triathlon and one called modern pentathlon.

Adom: I do athletics and football, sometimes rugby. There are the physical and mental health benefits of sport, but the social aspect too. It’s a great way to meet new friends. And it doesn’t matter what your ability is at Dollar—whether you’re competing at national level or just starting out, you will always be welcome.

Harvey: What other clubs would you recommend at Dollar?

Evie: The Debating Club. I debated last year, and it was terrifying, but it’s a very good skill to have. That club environment is very supportive, and Mr McFadyean is great.

Mia: What has been your hardest year at Dollar Academy?

Evie: Fifth year was tough. It’s an important year: the exams matter, you’re choosing your Advanced Highers and starting to think of uni. It’s intense,

but Dollar has a very good support web in that year.

Adom: First year was tough for me. I had first joined the school, and it was so big and scary, but everyone was friendly, and it went really well in the end.

Harvey: If you went back in time, what advice would you give your 11-year-old self?

Adom: Try not to take myself too seriously; enjoy myself a bit more. At that age, I tried to get everything right all the time, to be perfect. I would tell myself that it’s okay to make mistakes, especially if you learn from them.

Evie: I agree; it’s easy to put a lot of pressure on yourself, but everything does work out. Whatever path you go down will be a good one. Most importantly, be kind to everyone. Don’t ever fall out of that habit.

Adom: 100%, yes.

Mia: What is your most embarrassing moment in Dollar Academy?

Adom: I have so many embarrassing moments! In Form II, I had my blue lunch tray and one of my mates tripped me up by accident. I fell, hit my head and my food went everywhere. It was horrible then, but now can I look back at that moment and laugh about it with my mates; it’s a good story!

Evie: Mine was also in second year. It was the Cross Country Championships, and that senior course is quite brutal. I ran past a big group of sixth-years; I had to dodge them and I fell in the ditch in front of all those older pupils. Everyone helped me, but it was so traumatic at the time.

Harvey: If you were a Disney/Pixar character, who would you be and why?

Adom: *Cars* came out the year Evie and I were born, and it was my favourite film, so I’ll say Lightning McQueen, because...‘I am speed.’

Evie: The daughter from *The Incredibles*: Violet. She’s very cool, very impressive: an independent young woman. That’s something we need to look up to.

Mia: What is the biggest challenge you’ve overcome at school?

Evie: I’ve always liked every subject, so deciding what to study at every stage was difficult. The school is great in ways that you’ll experience yourself: there is subject choice guidance and careers advice—but narrowing it down to three Advanced Highers was hard. I still take an extra Higher!

Adom: I’m different from Evie; I’ve always known what I wanted to do and, I’ll be honest, there are subjects I didn’t enjoy. I find public speaking a struggle, but I work hard to overcome this by practising speaking and reading aloud.

Harvey: What is your favourite subject?

Evie: I love Geography and Biology. At Dollar, both departments are amazing, and the courses offer some great research tasks.

Adom: For me, it’s Mandarin. My Mandarin teacher has helped me a lot over the six years I’ve studied with her. Learning a different language lets you speak to people from different places, which is very cool.

Mia: If you were a dragon, which dragon would you be?

Evie: A dragon!? I’d love to be a dragon! One that could fly. (Can all dragons fly?) And breathing fire would be quite cool. Just a little speedy dragon that could fly and breathe fire.

Adom: I was not expecting this question! But have you seen *How to Train Your Dragon*? Well, I thought of Toothless straight away. I want to be Toothless—because he’s cool, because he has that relationship with Hiccup. That’s the thing: if you have a relationship like that with your team, then everything’s a lot better. (And also being able to fly, there’s benefits to that—you could get places a lot quicker than running even!)

Harvey: What’s your favourite Dollar memory?

Evie: My first day at school, at the end of Prep 5, was a special memory. I was so nervous, I was literally shaking. But I immediately felt welcomed. Back then we had door codes instead of bands, and people always made sure I didn’t get locked out. What really struck me was people’s kindness. That is something I hold in my heart.

Adom: My core memory is also from Form II. We were playing rugby against Robert Gordon’s, and my brother came to watch me for the first time ever. I scored a try in the final minutes, and we won the game. I remember running up to him, hugging him and crying—because he had never come to watch me play rugby before. I looked up to him so much. He played rugby, too, of course, and you want to be as good as your older brother. That moment was very special to me.

Mia: What do you want to do when you leave school?

Evie: I plan to study Biochemistry; it’s all about the chemical applications of living things. There’s so much scope for research and medical advancements in that field.

Adom: I would like to go on to study Medicine and hopefully become a doctor—maybe a surgeon. (Or I’ll be a professional sprinter...)

Mia: How do you hope to influence this school as Head Boy and Girl?

Adom: That is a big question. I would like for us to be remembered as a group of six—for people to say: ‘That was in 2024 when it was Evie and Adom, Inaya and Callum, Clara and Rio.’ And I’d like us to be remembered for highlighting the core

values, for making sure that everyone’s kind and involved.

Evie: I want us to strive to get people to listen to each other, to build an environment in which everyone feels supported and is kind. It’s also important to recognise a wide range of achievements—different talents, different strengths. Finally, we want to build even more connections with the Dollar community. The village is very much the school, and the school is very much the community. We’ve got a big role to play, and we can do a lot of good with it.

*Interview conducted by Harvey P. and Mia T. (both Junior 2)*

## INTERVIEW WITH THE DEPUTY HEAD GIRL AND BOY: INAYA AND CALLUM

Grayson: When did you start at Dollar?

Callum: I started in J2, which gave me a useful transition period before entering senior school.

Inaya: I started in Form II, so straight into senior school, but I’ve loved it.

Ben: What inspired you to come to Dollar Academy?

Callum: The piping and the rugby, and the school atmosphere in general.

Inaya: I started at Dollar after moving from England to Scotland. Initially I was daunted because it was massive; there were so many more people than at my old school. But talking to the teachers and to the older pupils, who were all very welcoming, inspired me to come to Dollar.

Ben: What are your favourite subjects at school?

Callum: This year it’s between Advanced Higher English or Advanced Higher Spanish. Spanish is really interesting; I’m starting to get more of a grasp on the language. And English is a lot of discussion-based stuff in class; it’s good fun.

Inaya: My favourite is either Advanced Higher English or Advanced Higher Latin. Latin is great fun: it’s a small class and Mrs Lumsden is the best teacher ever.

Grayson: Do you play instruments?

Callum: I’m a bagpiper, and have been since I was eight years old. I also started teaching myself the piano and now take lessons at school.

Inaya: I play the piano, too, and I used to play the cello. I’m also in Chamber Choir, and I take voice lessons.

Ben: Do you help teach any subjects, like swimming



or Prep classes?

Callum: I am a Language Ambassador, so I help in a Form II Spanish class once a week.

Inaya: I have helped with the Prep School. My brother’s just recently gone into Junior School, so I often go down there at break times for duties and to see how he’s getting on. The Language Ambassadors and Mental Health Ambassadors all get to teach in the senior school.

Grayson: What did it feel like when you found out you were elected to the Top Six?

Inaya: It was a big shock. I was in the Coop, and Evie (Head Girl) FaceTimed me. I assumed it was to tell me that she was Head Girl, and I screamed ‘Congratulations!’ very loudly into the phone. Then she turned the phone, and it was Mr Munro! I couldn’t believe it at first; it was a great honour.

Callum: I wasn’t feeling well that week, so I was at home watching *Drive to Survive* on Netflix when I got a FaceTime from Adom; I was half asleep at the time, very drowsy on cold medication. That’s how I found out, and it was indeed a great honour.

Ben: Do you get paid?

Inaya: We get paid in smiles and laughter from the younger years!

Grayson: Do you have to come to school early and stay until the last bus every day?

Callum: If I have a piping lesson in the morning, I’ll be in early, and I’ll stay for the late bus (or later) most days. Very occasionally I hang about with friends, but that’s quite rare.

Inaya: I’m in early most days and usually late to leave too. I come into school early to organise the Assembly prefects. When you get to senior school, you’ll see that assemblies are massive; everyone is there.

Ben: Do you get to use the staff room?

Inaya: Not usually, no, though I’ve just come from a meeting in the English staff room. When you reach sixth year, there is a jump in how you are treated by staff.

Callum: There’s not so much of a boundary.

Inaya: Yes, you get along much better with your teachers—probably because you are less annoying when you’re in sixth year! They can tolerate you a bit more.

Grayson: Do you do any sports at school?

Inaya: I do Ultimate Frisbee, which is so much fun. We just had a tournament. It’s basically the same rules as rugby, but you have a Frisbee. It has the same intensity—but without the contact!

Callum: I have played rugby for the 1<sup>st</sup> team a few times

and for the 2<sup>nd</sup> team. I haven’t played rugby this year, though—just not enough time.

Ben: Do you speak any other languages?

Inaya: I speak Urdu fluently. I also learn French and German at school.

Callum: I’ve done Spanish since J2. It’s a great idea to learn a language, though not many people speak four like Inaya!

Grayson: What are your hobbies?

Callum: I like running; whenever I have time. I also read a lot, play the piano and the pipes.

Inaya: A big part of my outside-the-classroom activity is CCF, which I love. This year, I teach the younger cadets. It’s great to have progressed up through the CCF and gone from someone being instructed to someone instructing. I also love to read and I bake, too.

Ben: What do you want to be when you grow up?

Callum: I want to study Law at uni and hopefully become a lawyer.

Inaya: I’m hoping to study PPE at university—Politics, Philosophy and Economics. I’ll probably go into finance, though eventually my hope is to go into politics. That’s the dream.

Interview conducted by Ben S and Grayson P. (both Prep 4)

## INTERVIEW WITH THE DEPUTY HEAD BOY AND GIRL: RIO AND CLARA

Idris: When did you both start at Dollar Academy?

Rio: I’ve been here since Prep 3.

Clara: I’ve been here since Junior 2, which helped a lot going into senior school.

Felix: Do you like Dollar Academy?

Clara: 10 out of 10. It’s a place with so many great opportunities.

Idris: Who has been your favourite teacher so far?

Clara: That’s too hard to answer; all of them are amazing. They’re all very supportive, great teachers. They’re all kind and the right amount of strictness.

Rio: I’d probably say Ms Robinson. I’ve also got a new teacher this year, Mr Brown, a Music Tech teacher. He’s been really helpful.

Felix: What’s your favourite subject at school?

Rio: Probably Economics or Geography.

Clara: I agree. Geography: top subject. Environmental Science is also very good. I’m taking it as a Higher in sixth year, and it’s very interesting.

Idris: What do you want to do after school?

Rio: I would love to play rugby professionally—

maybe a contract with Glasgow Warriors. I am might do a real estate management or a surveying course at university—maybe pursue a modern apprenticeship where I can get a degree and work at the same time.

Clara: I’m not entirely sure what the future holds, but I am passionate about the natural world. I’d like to do a job that is beneficial to the environment, something that has a positive impact on people and nature.

Felix: Where do you go for your lunch breaks?

Rio: I’m a Stephens man—steak bridie.

Clara: I’m usually in the Dining Hall, sitting with my friends, enjoying a warm, freshly cooked meal.

Idris: How did you make most of your friends at school?

Clara: Probably in the Junior School. You’re in one class for most of the day, so you become close with those people. I’ve had many of the same friends all the way through school. You also make friends in clubs, which is a good reason to get involved with absolutely everything.

Rio: You make close friends in PE, too—in sports like football and rugby. And in the senior school, you’re with the same people every morning in registration, so you make a lot of friends there, too.

Felix: What has been your favourite club at Dollar?

Rio: Rugby

Clara: Pipe band. Or CCF... though hockey this year has been very good too. Each of these clubs tends to produce a closely knit group of people.

Idris: Do you think Dollar Academy has prepared you for university?

Clara: Definitely, the support system here is so good and everyone’s helpful with UCAS. There are lots of ways to get insight into what university life will be like.

Felix: How does it feel to be in your final year at Dollar? Are you sad or are you happy?

Clara: It’s terrifying. My next-door neighbor’s niece joined Junior 2 this year, and I suddenly realised I wouldn’t see her in the senior school next session. That was a terrifying moment.

Rio: It is scary. I remember coming into Form I, wondering what it would be like to be in Form VI; it seemed so far away. Those years went by very quickly.

Clara: You used to look up at the Form VI pupils and think they were big and scary. Now we are the big scary ones.

Felix: Who’s your favourite author?

Rio: J.K. Rowling, because I like Harry Potter.

Clara: Agatha Christie. Who’s your favourite?

Idris: Rick Riordan

Clara: I love Percy Jackson! My favourite god is

Athena, the goddess of wisdom and battle strategy.

Idris: Do you like writing poems at school?

Rio: In the Junior School I remember writing a couple of love poems...

Clara: I did enjoy writing poems when I was taking English. Poetry is a good way of expressing how you feel.

Felix: What have you got really, really good at since you came to Dollar?

Rio: Probably speaking to people. Socialising.

Clara: Being at Dollar definitely boosts your confidence—not in a bad way. It doesn’t boost your ego, it just makes you more aware of how to communicate with others and step out of your comfort zone.

Ms Petrie: What were you most looking forward to about being the Top Six?

Clara: The Christmas dances.

Rio: Yes, especially when Top Six lead ‘YMCA’. We should start practising, Clara...

Clara: And we’ll be at the Prep School dance! We can’t wait!

Idris: Why did you ask Prep 3 to interview you?

Rio: Because Prep 3 is the best year. That’s why we chose you guys!

Clara: Rio joined in Prep 3, so we thought it was fitting to, somehow, close the circle: start in Prep 3, end with Prep 3.

Rio: Maybe I’ll come back to interview you when you’re in the Top Six in ten years’ time!

Interview conducted by Idris A. and Felix S. (both Prep 3)







## HEYWORTH

It has been a busy first term for all of the boarders of Heyworth House; everyone (from our newest arrivals to our veterans) has had a successful half-term, and, as it ends, we can confidently declare that it has not been a boring one.

That first Sunday of term we headed for the Willowgate Activity Centre, near Perth, for a day of wild outdoor fun. The boarding houses merged to take part in either land- or water-based adventures: everything from axe throwing to paddle boarding. A delightful barbecue, hosted by McNabb & Tait followed, and we were all grateful for their warm hospitality. As we gathered round the House games tables, there was much anticipation regarding where the year ahead would take us. Some made promises to re-match in pool when next we met, whilst others struck up conversations with those whom they may never have spoken to before in their lives. Many of us discovered that other Dollar boarders hailed from our own home nations, and many more harboured similar interests or pursued similar hobbies.

In Heyworth itself, we are thrilled to see strong bonds forming among the girls in what is a tremendously supportive and open environment. Every day is full of fun events, and Friday pizza nights and JustDance competitions end every week. We all come together in the computer room during prep time to support each other and collectively prepare for upcoming Biology tests (they seem the most common) and History essays (they seem the most frequent). Whether it's morning runs, late-night gym sessions or Thursday afternoon rounders, we all aim for positive changes and an active lifestyle, and both are readily facilitated by our boarding community.

All of this is only possible because everyone contributes toward making Heyworth House feel like a second home. This year we are taking the lead and introducing new ideas and groups to get everyone involved in the running of the House. The Social Committee is working to plan exciting weekend trips (Edinburgh Dungeon, Flip Out trampoline park and St Andrews, to name a few) and the Aesthetics Committee generates all kinds of ideas to keep Heyworth's décor looking modern and fresh. We also spend time in other Houses, building friendships and making meaningful connections with the other boarders. Through activities like karaoke nights at Argyll and firepit gatherings at McNabb & Tait, this session's boarding community is swiftly becoming one big family.

At the time of writing, ahead of our relaxing October break, we look forward to the many activities and celebrations promised in the lead-up to Christmas and in the new year beyond. Our focus will soon shift to the upcoming prelims; the highs (and lows), the triumphs (and the stresses) of that time are things that we, as a House, will share together. We always support one another, which makes the daunting times that much easier to navigate. Those of us living at Heyworth are very excited to see what the rest of this session has in store for us, and we are determined to take full advantage of everything on offer.

*Laurie S. (Form VI, Head of House), Mariia P. and Sadie S. (both Form VI and Deputy Heads of House)*

## ARGYLL

With a new session kicking off, Argyll House has welcomed both returners and newcomers. We started the term as we always do, with a firepit. All the girls got to know each other over sweet s'mores and diverting stories from our many different backgrounds and cultures. We ended the night with some ceilidh dancing to give our newcomers a taste of Scottish culture, and I am happy to say that they loved it! In the same week, we had our traditional all-boarder trip to Willowgate, where we had the chance to try everything from paddleboarding to axe throwing, from archery to clay pigeon shooting. That eventful day was rounded off with a barbecue where all Dollar's boarders had the opportunity to play some competitive games of pool and build friendships at the same time.

Life in the ever-dynamic Argyll involves doing many things together. Our House would not be complete without Pictionary (some people get very competitive), where we show off our 'amazing' drawing skills and teamwork. We also enjoy movie nights, relaxing in our cosy living room, sharing snacks and sampling a huge cross-section of films (we particularly enjoy Bollywood movies). We all have great memories of the boarders' silent disco, when Argyll definitely won the 'Best Playlist' award. Everyone loved our choice of songs. A trip to Edinburgh Zoo let us visit the penguins, monkeys and even lions (though these great cats proved rather elusive). A highly memorable trip was our white-water rafting excursion. We went on what was one of the coldest possible days to be near (in) a Scottish river. Though it was freezing, everyone still got in the water; we even managed to push Mr Johnston into the river. (Sorry, not sorry!)

At the time of writing, it is October and we are looking forward to a go-karting expedition and then Hallowe'en—the most-anticipated, best-celebrated festival in Argyll. We will play lively games and have a feast. Our days grow busier with the approach of Christmas, and preparing for our big event, the Boarders' Ceilidh, keeps us busy. It is at the ceilidh that the winners of the all-important House Turn will be announced. We will work to prepare the best possible show in order to continue our legacy of House Turn victory. All the while, the prelim diet will have begun (in November for some), whilst others will be preparing for those exams in the new year. When you read this, it will be Christmas time. Rest assured that we will have enjoyed many festive trips and events, whilst also coping bravely and triumphantly with the challenge of prelims (past and, for some of us, yet to come).

So the rumours are entirely true: we lead a lively life here in Argyll House. We have the best times and most uproarious giggles in the House, and we successfully balance our lives in the classroom with our lives in the House, creating memories with our lifelong friends and just being... Argyll girls. We always look forward to our next adventure.

*Melisa G. (Form VI, Head of House)*





## McNABB & TAIT

After the long summer vacation, the McNabb & Tait boarders were finally reunited. We were delighted to see many new faces alongside our returning boarders, and there are now 50 boys in McNabb and Tait—the youngest is Aryaman R. (Junior 2) and our eldest is Octavian S. (Form VI). On our first weekend back, we enjoyed a great trip to Willowgate with all the boarders. This, and the evening barbecue, provided us all with a brilliant opportunity to revive old friendships and, especially for our newest boarders, make new ones.

As is traditional, many of our boys represent Dollar Academy on the rugby pitch. Leo W. (Form VI), Hunter K., Ben C., Nicky S. (all Form V) play for the 2<sup>nd</sup> XV. McNabb & Tait is also well represented in the 1<sup>st</sup> XV rugby team by both Ollie F. and Hamish W. (both Form V). The future of rugby in the House appears to be healthy, as Raphael M.-R., Macmillan S., Enzo G., Jake T. and Olly C. (all Form II), Alastair E., William S. and Caleb H. (all Form III) also play rugby for their respective age groups.

We have a lot of fine football

players in the House this year, too. Julian R., Felix T. (both Form IV), Konstantin G., Blair B., Georgy A.-S. (all Form V) come to football training twice a week. We also have Hal S. (Form IV), Oskar B. (Form V) and your author, Toni V. (Form VI), who all play for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI football team. Many younger children will also go on to represent the school in football, such as Drew I. (Form I), Enzo and Caleb.

But it's not all just about rugby and football. Basketball is enjoying a boom in popularity across the school, not least among our boarders. Hayk K. (Form VI), and Thomas G. (Form V) both play for the Dollar Academy basketball team. Other sports are represented, too. Jake, Cameron L. (both Form II), Ashton L. and Jerry C. (both Form III), Jimmy W., Jasper T., Aston L. (all Form IV) and Jason L. (Form VI) all attend Badminton Club every Friday. We are also very lucky to have Affan D. (Form V), whose table tennis skills have won renown far beyond Dollar. McNabb & Tait also boasts some excellent golfers; Hunter and Luis S. (both Form V) play for Dollar Academy, and, just a couple of weeks into the first term, they had already won a couple of tournaments.

This year we are fortunate to have star athlete Henry J. (Form

VI) back in the house; Henry plays tennis for Great Britain and is one of the best U18 players in the world. He was welcomed back to the House with great joy after competing in the Junior Championships at Wimbledon this summer, where he was successful in getting through the first round.

Sport is not the only thing McNabb & Tait boys shine at. Many of us are part of the Mixed Voice Choir, including Konstantin, Ethan G., Hamza I. (both Form VI) and your author. And together, Seb A. (Form VI) and Affan form a strong part of the Literary and Debating Society, led by our previous Houseparent, Mr McFadyean. Involvement in the CCF is also a hit with the boys, and many attend every Friday; it has been good to see Flynn G. (Form IV) attending weekend camps.

McNabb & Tait has a lot of great boys living under its roof, and every single one makes the House proud in his own way, but the boarding house would not be the same without our Houseparents, staff members and House Tutors. Our Tutors come on all weekdays; they are there to help us during prep time and to chat to us in the evening. Sadly, Miss Pollock left as our Tutor after many years in McNabb

& Tait, and we already miss her Tuesday 9pm Tea Club sessions. Miss Wood also left, and her joy and chat are sorely missed. We are, however, very lucky to see our new House Tutors swiftly becoming a part of the McNabb & Tait community. Mr Tod joins us on Wednesday nights, always ready to play a game of FIFA against some of the boys, and Mr Riddell comes along on Tuesday and Thursday nights, a great person for the boys to talk to. On Tuesday nights, we are also very lucky to have Mr Chant, who gives us a taste of Canadian culture, teaches us about baseball and talks about his university experiences in Canada.

Finally, the Assistant House staff: we could not be more grateful

to have them in the House and it truly is impossible to convey everything they do for us in just a few words: from simply chatting to us to putting out snacks for us after school, from preparing supper for us to doing our laundry every single day. McNabb & Tait would not run half as smoothly without them, and no single boy will ever forget them after leaving Dollar.

After their first full year as Houseparents of McNabb & Tait, Mr and Mrs Baird continue to lead the ship by inspiring and supporting us. Their lessons will resonate far beyond our years at the school. We also want to thank our Assistant Houseparents, Mr and Mrs McEwan, for always helping us and generally keeping us right. Mr

McEwan also plans the best House trips (karting and paintball, to name just two), and we are very grateful. Those Sunday House trips truly make weekends special. We are all excited and fortunate to live in McNabb & Tait this year, and we can't wait to see what the rest of the session will bring.

*Antonio V. (Form VI, Head of House)*



# WILDSIDE NATURE WORKSHOP

As part of our Biodiversity and Interdependence topic, Prep 4 welcomed Donald from Wildside Nature. He led a workshop about Scottish wildlife and about how we can encourage greater biodiversity in our school grounds. Here are some of the pupils' thoughts...

### Building Beaver Dams

'We worked in teams to build our own beaver dams. Beavers build dams to protect them from predators, to have a safe place to live. They use mud, sticks and moss to make it strong. Sadly, beavers are becoming endangered because people hunt them for their thick, furry coats. I go to Beavers, so it was fun to see how real beavers make their homes.'

-Finlay C.

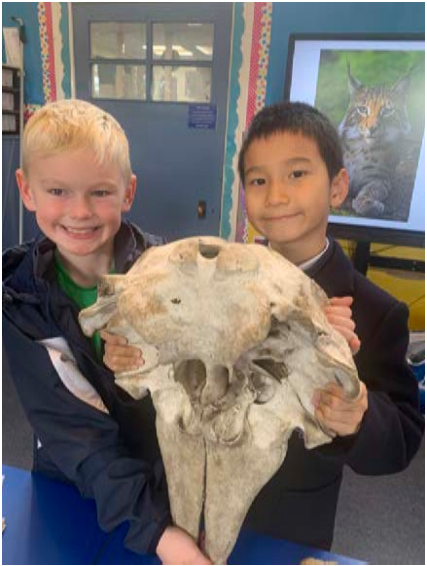
'I loved making a beaver dam. The best part about it was having fun with my friends and learning at the same time. It's important to look after wildlife; the next time I see a beaver dam I will try to protect it.'

-Greta

### Squirrel Tag

'We also played squirrel tag! Lottie and Blair wore bibs and pretended to be grey squirrels. They had to tag us, the red squirrels, so we turned into grey squirrels. Slowly the number of red squirrels got smaller just as they did in Scotland when the number of grey squirrels increased. It was a fun game, but it made me think about the effect new species can have on our ecosystem.'

-Amelie



### Building a Bug Hotel

'We built a bug hotel to help increase biodiversity in our school grounds. It involved stacking wooden pallets—the largest at the bottom. We inserted white plastic pipes in between the pallets, then put moss and tiles on the top. I was really proud when it was complete. I hope the hotel gives the insects and arachnids a safe place to live.'

-Sebastian H.

'We made bug hotels from scraps that we don't use any more to help look after bugs. I was happy that our bug hotel looked big and natural. Working as part of a team was great fun!'

-Bruno

### Bug Hunt

'My favourite activity was the bug hunt. We caught three squirming worms, a tiny black beetle and a wood louse. I felt happy and adventurous. I am proud that I helped some bugs and created a new home for them.'

-Alex



# PREP 4 WORK WITH SCOTTISH OPERA

For only the second time ever, in May 2023, a Dollar Prep 4 class was given the incredible opportunity to work with Scottish Opera industry professionals. This year's musical and theatrical experience was *The Curse of MacCabbra Opera House*, and the children (as well as their teachers) put in a lot of time and effort to learn all the songs, practise the dance moves and become familiar with the characters. The pupils were excited from the very beginning. Firstly, they were divided into three smaller character groups: the Critics, the Workers and the Singers. Each group had to perform their own song and this, naturally, made them curious about what the other groups were doing, as they did not know each other's songs.

The Scottish Opera team arrived on the morning of Tuesday 2 May. All the children waited in the Prep School and were very excited to meet the Opera soloists when they arrived. The first session brought everyone together to work on both the opening and the closing songs: 'Raise the Dead' and 'Masterpiece'. Rehearsals progressed quickly and, soon, the large ensemble was divided into smaller working parties, each led by their own Scottish Opera soloist, to rehearse the solo songs.

The dress rehearsal took place after lunch, and that led directly to the end-of-day performance at 2.15pm. The seats quickly filled with audience members, and the children waited, excited and a little bit nervous, in their costumes. Beautiful music, composed by Alan Penman, filled the Gibson Auditorium. The story of the haunted opera house began. The Prep 4 children enjoyed the whole experience, not least their final performance—and so did all of the proud teachers who helped them along the way.

Pawel Piwowar

December 2023  
Fortunus 52





"Dollar Academy supports the Sustainable Development Goals"



## J1 FIDA PROJECT

### Wildlife Welcome Here

This year, Junior 1 pupils are piloting a new FIDA project called 'Wildlife Welcome Here' which links together our existing outdoor learning sessions (based around the John Muir Award) with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on Land. All pupils in Junior 1 will be involved over three terms, and each term has a different focus.

At the beginning of the first term, pupils learned about the diversity of nature and the importance of insects and plant life in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. National Trust Rangers Laura Livingstone and Helen Costin led workshops on how to identify invertebrates using simple identification guides, magnifying glasses and sampling trays. Leaf litter samples were taken from woodland areas at Mill Green and Dollar Glen and, after closer examination, pupils identified invertebrates such as beetles, centipedes,



earthworms, millipedes, slugs, snails, spiders, woodlice and pseudoscorpion using the equipment provided. We also discussed the important role that invertebrates play in decomposing dead leaves and other organic matter, providing ecological services that underpin plant growth and survival.

Later in the first term, we looked at the role of plants and animals, and we took part in conservation activities such as tree planting with the Dollar Community Development Trust. Each pupil planted an acorn in the raised beds of the Junior School playground. We hope that these will flourish so that we can then transplant the young oak trees back into Dollar Glen where they will provide a habitat for invertebrates, mammals and birds.

In the term ahead, pupils will research and explore the specific threats to and needs of a particular species in and around Dollar. Then, in the summer term, they will



work in groups to design solutions to the particular threats. Throughout the outdoor learning sessions pupils are given opportunities to discover and explore nearby green spaces, and they are encouraged to share these experiences with others. Feedback from pupils involved in the project so far has been positive: they have enjoyed learning about and interacting with nature.

Like the other FIDA challenges, this project will be added to the online FIDA platform encouraging other schools and organisations to develop their own outdoor learning sessions. You can read more about FIDA and other initiatives on pages 5-7.

*Eliot Sedman*







# JUNIOR 1 TRIP TO LARGS

Wednesday 17 May was an eagerly awaited date for everyone in Junior 1. When it finally arrived, we embarked on our trip to the Inverclyde Sports Scotland Centre in Largs with huge excitement. We bounced on trampolines in the gymnastics hall and we scaled the dizzy heights of the climbing wall; every moment brimmed with fun and laughter. We formed new friendships, practised our teamwork skills and made many fine memories.

On the first night we visited the famous Nardini's for two delicious scoops of ice cream...with a sea view. The following days were full of excitement and sports as we took part in lacrosse, den building, archery and the nightline. A ferry trip across to Cumbrae gave us a chance to scramble around the rockpools and inspect (up close!) the starfish, lobsters and sea anemones at the Field Studies Centre. The Vikingar! visitor attraction brought our trip to a close. In an 8<sup>th</sup>-century Norwegian longhouse, we experienced a day in the life of a Viking.

Largs certainly lived up to our expectations, and this trip was a highlight of the Junior 1 year. We thank Mr Young, Mr McEwan, Miss Thain and Mrs Burt who accompanied us and joined in our fun.

Annie Sheridan



# JUNIOR 1 DUMYAT CLIMB

Inspired by Gavin, Claire, Mot and Michael in our class novel *Light on Dumyat*, the Junior 1 pupils embarked on their own adventure to reach the cairn atop Dumyat, some 418m above sea level. Dumyat, when translated, literally means 'hill fort'. The year group split into two halves with one group ascending from Menstrie and the other from Logie Kirk.

With a steep ascent to begin with, the Menstrie climb provided stunning views of the Devon valley, the Ochil villages and a fresh perspective upon those living near to us. The bluebell path near Logie Kirk was in full bloom as the group meandered along its trails, following in Gavin's footsteps, and enjoying our own exploration.

The two groups met at the summit and touched the cairn, which had been constructed by the Menstrie Scouts in 1977 to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee. We all enjoyed a well-earned rest and a hearty lunch. The scramble down seemed short in comparison to the uphill climb, and our legs were tired. We were grateful to see the buses waiting to transport us back to the Junior School. A special thanks to Mr Gibb, Mr Sedman, Mr Lumsden and Mrs Ainge for accompanying us on this trip.

Annie Sheridan







## JUNIOR 2 MUSICAL: THE LION KING

In June 2023 the Junior 2 cohort took to the stage to embark on an impressive and emotive week of performances: the end-of-year musical, *The Lion King JR.* This beloved Disney classic was a visual feast with amazing costumes, a beautiful set, great singing voices, wonderful choreography and characterful acting. From beautiful giraffes wandering across the Pride Lands, to an army of terrifying hyenas, the pupils' performances—their characterisation, acting, singing and stage presence—attained an impressive standard. As Timon and Pumba sang out in 'Hakuna Matata', the audience left with 'no worries'—only glowing memories of these wonderful performances.

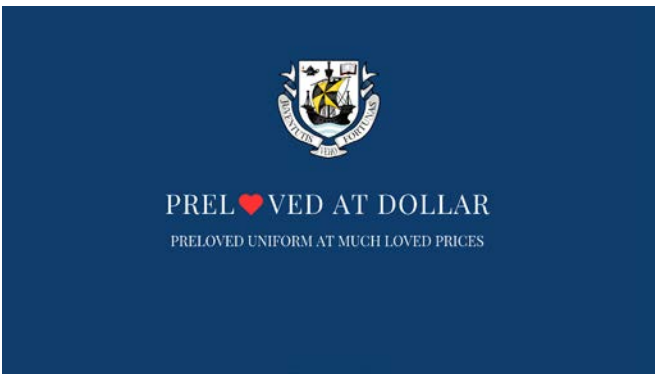
*Sophie Petrie*

In the summer term of my Junior 2 year, I was lucky enough to successfully audition for the role of Mufasa in the Junior 2 musical, *The Lion King JR.* This was the only role I auditioned for, as it was the part I really wanted to play. When I heard I was successful, I was so pleased. The rehearsals were great fun, but as the week of the actual show drew near, we all began to get a little nervous. Reality had hit! The set, however, looked incredible and, by the time we had our costumes on for the dress rehearsal, it somehow all just came together: we were ready. I loved the fact that we all worked so well as a team, encouraging each other and keeping one another calm. The opening night was nerve wracking, but the audience were amazing and gave us so much support. By the third night, we were all much more confident and, by the end, we felt sad that it was over. I have so many great and funny memories from my time in *The Lion King*, and I really hope to be involved in the Senior Musical in the future.

*Murray M. (now Form 1)*







Preloved at Dollar (formerly known as the Thrift Shop) provides gently worn uniforms at an affordable price. Preloved at Dollar has been supporting the school for over 40 years. Originally located in the Legion Hall, now the Dollar Museum, its current home is underneath the Prep School. Fully refurbished in 2022, this space is now a bright and welcoming shop. Rebranded this year, the shop's new name more accurately reflects the quality of the clothes and the sustainability of its mission.

The shop is organised and run by a group of 18 dedicated volunteers who price and stock items, clean the shop, host sales days twice a month, facilitate the payments to parents and organise the funding of items for the school.

In the last trading year, the shop turned over annual sales of £22,500 and was able to contribute valuable equipment to enrich the education of pupils from Prep 1 to Form VI. This included a specialised marimba for older musicians, Bee-Bot robots for the Prep School, a golf simulator for the ever-growing golf team, 3D terrain map kits, a playground world map, a Cricut Maker, digital equipment for the Prep and Junior School, gardening resources for the Gardening Club and books for pupils in the Prep and Junior School. Sheena Gray, chair of the talented team behind Preloved, said she 'hopes to build on this success this year and be in a position to purchase even more resources for the school.'

Not only do parents benefit from lower prices for uniforms, those with accounts also receive 80% of the sale

price for items that they have handed in to sell. Any clothes that are not suitable for sale are donated to a charity in Kenya or made into fabulous Keepsake Bears. The shop currently has over 300 parent accounts, which record the items parents wish to sell and ensure that payments are made for any clothes that are sold. The shop also accepts donations of uniform items, the proceeds of which go entirely to the shop. Each year, volunteers go through each item during a stock take and remove those that have not sold after being on display for two years; those items are then recycled with proceeds going to various charities.

The shop sells the following good-quality 'pre-loved' items: blazers, kilt skirts, pinafores, Prep boy shorts, ties, hats, scarves and sports kit (such as mid-layers, rugby and hockey tops, skorts, tracksuit bottoms and tops, quint tees and winter coats). New items include Dollar Academy golf umbrellas, golf balls, bobble hats and Keepsake Bears. Keepsake Bears are of particular interest, as they are all created from items that made it to the shop's recycle bin, giving someone's much-preloved uniform a second life. They are made with the Dollar tartan and school badge, and are then sold in the shop.

Preloved has been very successful in its open days in the first term, already generating over £8,000 of sales. The shop is open on the second Saturday and the fourth Wednesday of each month, though this can vary slightly depending upon school holidays. They also open on additional dates throughout the year to accommodate things



like school Open Days, the start of a new term and at Christmas time. These details are communicated on the Facebook Group (Preloved at Dollar) and on the school website.

Please also keep an eye out for the Preloved newsletter, which the school sends out by email. It is always full of information about open days, new merchandise on offer and other news. For any more inquiries or to set up an account, please email [prelovedatdollar@gmail.com](mailto:prelovedatdollar@gmail.com).



## DOLLAR ACADEMY PARENTS' ASSOCIATION (DAPA)

Your child's years at Dollar are an important stage of their life. The priority, of course, is to obtain an excellent education, but the school is also a community, and the Dollar Academy Parents Association (DAPA) will be an important part of that. DAPA works with the school to support events and drive initiatives forward that will benefit all pupils and groups at the school. Some examples of the events we support include school Open Days and Come and Play Sessions; coffee mornings; Sports Days; charity events and various social events. DAPA also provides a forum for the discussion of matters of general importance to members. We facilitate mutual communication between parents, governors and the senior leadership team and we foster relations between parents and others associated with the school. DAPA works in an active and effective partnership with the school and has representation across the Prep and Junior School and the senior school.

This year, the school's new Deputy Rector, Robin Pyper, has been working closely with DAPA to integrate and enrich the pupil experience. He has come on board with new and refreshing ideas which we will support over this academic session.

We would like to introduce our office bearers for the 2023-24 academic session:

Our new chair is Pam Corsar (née Murray, FP 2000). She has been a parent at the school for four years. As a Former Pupil herself, she is passionate about Dollar life. With her background in a process-driven industry and marketing, she is leading the team in a slightly new direction.

Craig, our new vice-chair,





Craig Anderson



Marie Munday



Lorna Cameron



Pam Corsar

with other parents and values opinion and suggestions with a view to filtering them onto our agenda.

Our new treasurer, Marie Munday, has 30 years' industry experience of Nippers Nursery, a group of private nurseries, and she is the managing director. She has been a parent at the school since 2012 and has two children.

Parent governor, Ollie Pearce, is a chartered accountant with over 20 years' experience within private practice and industry. He was the finance director for a Scottish high-growth software start-up company, and he is currently the bursar at Ardvreck School. Ollie is well placed to offer insight across the whole school, as he has children in the Prep and Junior School, as well as in the senior school.

Sheena Grey is our Preloved at Dollar representative, and she has two children at the Academy. She has taken on the mammoth role that is Preloved! Whilst the two entities (DAPA & Preloved) are becoming more independently aligned, Sheena sits on both committees to ensure transparency. Her knowledge and



Oliver Pearce

background in management, catering and property services bring gravitas to DAPA.

DAPA is the voice of the parents, and the committee hope to develop that role. If you would like to be more involved or have your voice heard whilst helping the school to grow and evolve, please get in touch with us at [dapa.dollaracademy@gmail.com](mailto:dapa.dollaracademy@gmail.com).

*Pamela Corsar (FP 2000)*



## THE YOUTH PHILANTHROPY INITIATIVE

The Youth Philanthropy Initiative is a fantastic programme that gives Form I pupils the opportunity to select, research and pitch for a charity to secure a £3,000 grant from The Wood Foundation. In teams of four, we first investigated different social issues. A Charities Fair, in the Assembly Hall, let us interact and find out more about the different charities. It was so great to see so many charities all together, and we all learned so much—not just about CHAS, but about many other charities too.

The members of our team were extremely touched by the work that CHAS does. They ran a bright, positive stand at the Fair. Their representative, Lyndsay, had a joyful expression, and her message drew us in instantly. We soon discovered more about the heart-melting support that CHAS offers to the families of terminally ill children: activities, accommodation, nursing and after-death therapy for families in need.

During class time, we worked within our groups, creating speeches, presentations and videos. Witnessing our

peers' campaigns come to life was inspiring, and it made us aware of how many good causes there are in the world.

Another fundamental aspect of the YPI are the visits undertaken to the chosen charities. Our group went to see Rachel House in Kinross. When we arrived, we were warmly greeted by Lyndsay who took us around the House and told us everything that we needed to know. Rachel House is an incredible place. There are rooms customised for the child, a sensory room, a pool room and bedrooms upstairs. We also learned about, but did not see, the Rainbow Room—a space where the child is placed after death, giving their loved ones time to say goodbye. That room was extremely private, to give families the time they needed. We all became very emotional, especially when we heard stories about the children who had stayed there. We began to understand why the £3,000 would mean so much to CHAS, and the work we were doing became still more important to us.

Morale was high on Showcase Day, when everyone would pitch for their charity and the causes that had grown close to their hearts. The teams were going through their lines again and again, adding final, finishing touches. Every presentation was moving; there were no dry eyes. Then it was our turn. Our cause meant so much to us, and we really wanted to help. When the presentations were finished, we could only wait with bated breath for the results.

When we were announced as the winners, we felt so proud, just knowing that we made a difference and helped a charity we truly cared about. Lyndsay had come to watch, and it was wonderful to see her suddenly become so happy.

Going forward, we all have a new outlook on charities and what they do. Before taking part in the YPI, we were aware that charities existed to help people. But taking part in YPI made us realise that charities are incredible things, full of people who give up their time to support others in need of a helping hand. CHAS describe themselves as 'holding families' hands when going through the unimaginable', and we saw that very clearly. Charities raise money for things they care about, and they often depend on donations, services and extra support for their causes. Our team was so moved by CHAS' willingness to dedicate time to their families that we have since become ambassadors for the charity ourselves, to continue helping them as much as we can. The YPI was an incredible experience, one that has changed us all forever.

*Christie M., Louise N., Scarlett M. and Layla S. (all then Form I)*



## PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION REVIEW: THE SUMMER AND AUTUMN TERMS

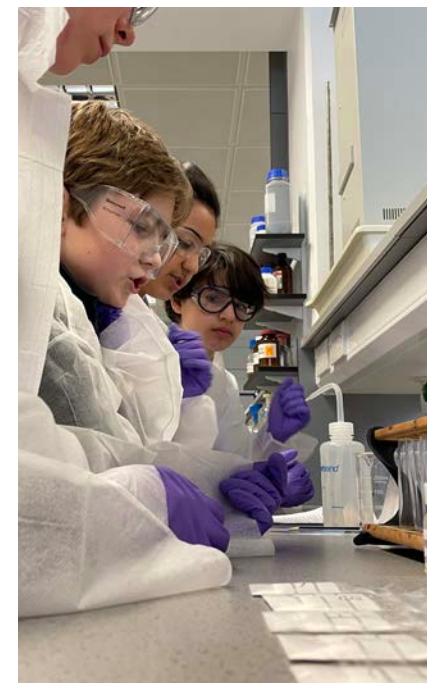
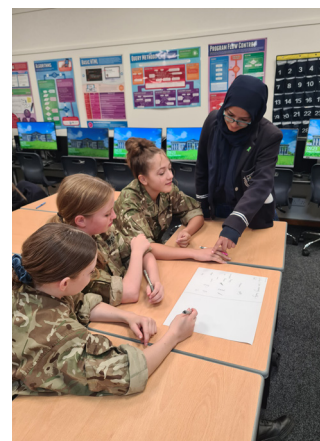
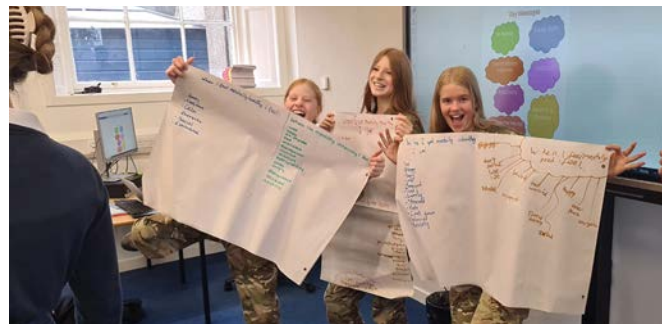
Recently a pupil in my Form I class asked me, 'What is personal education?' Good question. Isn't all education, in some way, *personal*? Can we respond to literature or history or even a science experiment without our own person playing a part? It seems unlikely. But the 'personal' as it relates to Personal and Social Education is explicit. It is designed to help our pupils understand their behaviour, reactions, thought processes and overall mental wellbeing. It is only after understanding and accepting our own thoughts that we can successfully 'Work Hard, Be Kind and Get Involved'.

The PSE curriculum for Forms I and II offers a focus on mental health, self-esteem and mindfulness in the autumn term, before we move on to topics relating to relationships, risk-taking behaviours and the wider world. This year, in Form I PSE, teachers are trialling a new programme, 'Feeling Good', in which pupils learn to become more mindful through breathing practice and mindfulness theory, before moving on to apply these skills to their relationships and their use of social media. Mental Health is at the forefront of the Form II programme. Following a series of lessons focusing on self-esteem, each class works with our trained Form VI Mental Health Ambassadors for five weeks; the Ambassadors facilitate lessons about stress, anxiety and other areas of mental health.

This term we have also commenced our Mentors for Violence Prevention sessions. We have over 20 Form VI pupils working with younger pupils to run discussions about bullying and other types of behaviour that might require pupils to become active bystanders. We are grateful to our wonderful cohort of Form VI pupils who give up free periods and lesson time to support the PSE programme.

To support pupils' wellbeing across the school, the department continues to engage with a wide range of visitors and initiatives. This term, pupils have received guest talks on combatting anxiety, on nutrition, alcohol, drugs awareness, resilience, peer mentoring, relationships and many more topics. Excitingly, our Health and Wellbeing framework is supplemented by a new app: 'Tellmi'. This app allows pupils to seek and provide peer support anonymously in a safe and moderated environment. Our aim is to build our Health and Wellbeing framework to be as inclusive as possible, offering different tools for pupils to use as and when support is necessary.

Katya Cunningham



## FORM I SCIENCE COMPETITION

It seemed like the blink of an eye since our last visit to Edinburgh for the annual STEM competition, but the Heriot-Watt University-led event was upon us again in May 2023. I was, once again, blown away by the number of keen and talented young people willing to put themselves forward to participate. I am (almost) certain that we could have filled the entire lab with Dollar Academy pupils, let alone the two teams we had been allocated!

Our aspiring researchers were asked to demonstrate strong communication skills as they worked through a series of unfamiliar experiments, based in forensic science, with a view to solving a classic 'whodunnit' murder mystery. Despite losing out to the eventual winners, Edinburgh Academy, each pupil had only positive things to say about their experiences in Edinburgh when we returned to school. I am sure that the stories they shared with the younger members of our community will inspire future applicants to attend what is a truly fantastic day.

Huge congratulations to our 2023 Science team: Ethan G., Eve M., Sam M.-S., Hamish M., Christie M., Heidi N., John P. and Amy S. They did themselves—and Dollar Academy's Science Department—proud.

Mike McComiskie





Tyrone, Dyhia, Mihaela, Alba and Demi

## THE LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS

### From Mihaela

*Ciao a tutti!* I was born and raised in Romania until I was 12. At that point, my mother decided to move us all to Italy for a better life. It was a substantial change, difficult at first, but I soon realised that it was the best thing for us. Italy has a wonderful and rich culture, and the people are kind and welcoming. The Italian language makes you fall in love in the blink of an eye. I felt ‘at home’ almost immediately. I met my best friends there and I realized how lucky I was. But life is strange sometimes and, after almost 15 years, I decided to go live in Spain—initially I went to Granada in Andalucía, and later I went to the capital, Madrid. I fell in love with the energy of the Spanish people and with

the city that never sleeps: another culture, another world, another wonderful experience of almost five years that will live in my heart forever. Then, almost three years ago, I decided upon another tremendous change: Scotland, here I come. What a change! A new time zone, new food, a new side of the road to drive on! What can I say? It was a challenge—passed with honours, I think. Scotland is different, but incredibly special. And, after three years, here I am—at Dollar Academy, and it’s very exciting. I was amazed at what I found here: wonderful, helpful people; special bonds with the pupils; so many things to discover. I hope to update you about all that I have learned next year...

Mihaela Soican

### From Alba...

Before I came to Dollar, no one could have told me how many opportunities this place would offer; how many fascinating people I would meet; how many new things I would learn. Here I am, three years later, still making the most of it, still learning as much as I did on my first day. A day in the life of a language assistant is quite busy. First, we organise the schedules for all the pupils who come to practise speaking with us. Then, we go to the classes where we attend with the teachers and help pupils to improve their skills in our own language (in my case, Spanish). It’s never boring! Every day is different, and we always face new challenges. This makes me feel that I am learning and maximising my time. There is no doubt that the best part of this job is the pupils; they are why we wake up every morning wanting to go to school. Who could have guessed?! I have found this experience very enriching and fun.

No day is like another, and the children always have smiles to give. In October, we also started delivering the adult class. I love meeting local people and creating a bond with them through sharing my language and culture. I feel lucky to claim the last two years of adult classes a great success, because many of my students have continued with their studies again this year. I feel very privileged to belong to this community, to feel loved and valued. It’s a wonderful feeling because, although I am away from home, I feel as though I belong to a big family here at Dollar Academy.

Alba Maria Ontin de Rozas

### From Dyhia...

This is my third year as a French language assistant at Dollar Academy. The previous two years were so enriching, personally and professionally, that I was reluctant to cut the experience short. The job of a language assistant is more than just assisting teachers in the classroom. In any single day we might hold one-to-one sessions with pupils, help teachers and work with groups of pupils in the classroom. We might prepare fun language activities to help build the pupils’ interest or take trips to consolidate the pupils’ trust in us. I have seen my own skills and knowledge improve even as I helped pupils in their language-learning journeys—mainly just by talking with them. I also teach a group of adults from the Dollar community, which has helped me to improve my communication and organisational skills, and also improved my teaching of French (and languages generally) to non-native speakers. This

session I have also taken up the role of House Tutor to support our boarders in Heyworth House. I have loved this experience and feel so welcomed by the girls and supported by the staff members of the boarding community. I am grateful for having been given the opportunity to work with the pupils for another year in the Modern Languages Department (and in Heyworth). I look forward to the next two terms of teaching and learning!

Dyhia Bia

### From Tyrone...

*Guten Tag!* My name is Tyrone, and this is my first year at Dollar Academy as the German assistant. My story begins in Namibia, a country once under the colonial administration of the German Empire (now gone). I spent the first four years of my life travelling back and forth between Namibia, Germany, Zambia and the United Kingdom. That time of my life left a lasting impression upon me. Many different languages and styles of communication were available to me from a very young age. I hold onto these memories, and I believe that they are the reason why, today, language and its spell-like qualities are very dear to me. My favourite aspect, by far, of helping to develop our pupils’ German-speaking skills is demonstrating what German and English choose to agree on and where these languages diverge. I am also currently a student of Literature and Religious Studies at the University of Edinburgh, and I am very glad to experience the virtue of education in its many manifestations. As I write this, I reflect upon how Dollar stands out to me as a cooperative

environment that schools both staff and pupils alike. Not once have I gone home at the end of a day without having learned something new! I am excited for the remainder of my time here, and I am certain that I will remember it very fondly in the future.

Tyrone Foye

### From Demi...

This is my fifth year at Dollar Academy, and I still find it very motivating and satisfying to see pupils progress both academically and non-academically as rounded people. Helping with school trips, with Sports Days, with PSE activities and with translating academic terms for our Mandarin/Cantonese-speaking boarders (as well as teaching Mandarin to adults) have all shown me see the difference I can make in this community. Being a teaching assistant reminds me of when I was in school; the pupils are funny, honest and well-mannered. They are awesome. I like the pupils I work with very much, and I enjoy the positive rapport we build with them. One of the things I like about this job is having the opportunity to talk about a range of subjects with pupils. I don’t want them to think I am only knowledgeable in one subject; this means I work to develop my knowledge across many different areas all the time, just to keep my batteries charged. As a team, the language assistants have a valuable role to play in the school community; we share ideas and work together to implement them.

Demi Tian





## THANK YOU TO DAPA: Playground World Map and 3D Landscape Models

Examining a map and visualising what that landscape would look like in reality is not easy. Roads, rivers and buildings can be easily interpreted, but reading the shape of the land shown by contour lines can be significantly more challenging for young geographers. A critical skill for identifying landscape features like corries and aretes, map reading is also useful for interpreting the advantages and disadvantages of development sites (like a supermarket, for instance). Map reading is an important skill for answering potential questions in SQA Geography exams, but it's also an important life skill, aiding navigation and route planning for activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions.

To help teach this skill, the Geography Department has invested in 3D landscape models, covering well-known mountain areas like Ben Nevis, Glencoe, Helvellyn and Snowden. By matching these models to Ordnance Survey maps of the same scale, pupils develop the ability to visualise the contour lines and interpret the landscape.

Teaching global patterns of migration, wind or trade can also sometimes be difficult in a classroom environment. Over the summer, a world map was painted onto the Prep School playground using a template developed by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS). This resource has already enhanced lessons; classes can identify islands, seas and oceans and the plot the major ocean currents using this map. Active learning like this helps to embed learning and improve recall.

Both the 3D landscape models and the painting of the playground world map were funded by the Dollar Academy Parents' Association (DAPA) using revenue generated through the newly rebranded Preloved at Dollar shop. These initiatives have made a tangible difference to learning at the school and both resources are available for use by everyone in the school community. You can read more about both DAPA (p. 39) and Preloved at Dollar (p. 38) in this edition.

Alastair McConnell



## DRAGONS' DEN COMPETITION 2023

This year's finalists impressed the dragons in the 2023 Dollar Dragons' Den Competition with some fantastic ideas. There were magnetic earrings—a welcome innovation when an increasing number of people suffer from metal allergies. Walking Pictures incorporate someone's name or a chosen picture onto the bottoms of wellington boots (as you walk on the sand, your name or picture is left behind, imprinted on the sand). Bike Warmers captured the imaginations of the cycling enthusiasts, as cold hands are a common complaint. There were also goalie shades, an unusual cocoa drink, a jiggle fidget and multi-purpose clothing, all innovative concepts.

This year's panel of dragons was made up of judges who came from both within our school community and beyond it. Mrs Nicola O'Donnell was the Chief Dragon, ably assisted by Mrs Kirsty Molnar. They were joined by Mr Jack Urquhart (FP 2012), the Director of Ugym, and Mr Ian White, Director of Finance and Business Services at Autism Scotland. Two pupils also joined the team of dragons: Katy H. and Finlay M. (then Form VI).

Hazel Duncan







# JOBS OF THE UNKNOWN: EXPLORING STATISTICS

On 27 September, a group from the Advanced Higher Statistics class attended the Jobs of the Unknown event run by the Royal Statistical Society and held in the Maths Department at Edinburgh University. This event was organised as part of Maths Week Scotland.

There were ten mystery guests, all of whom work in a statistics or data science field, and we questioned them, one by one, to find out what their jobs involve. What surprised us most was the sheer variety of jobs that exist within the statistics and data science field, from demography researching to working as a statistician for the Church of Scotland. It is fair to say that we all built upon our knowledge of the opportunities available in statistics and data science after university. One of the most popular questions asked after we successfully guessed one of the mystery guests' jobs was, 'What school subjects would you say relate most closely to your job?' There were many more answers to this question than we anticipated, ranging from Medicine, Geography,

Modern Studies and even Criminology. We moved on to questions about their day-to-day work, asking whether they worked alongside the government or whether their work had ever made it into the news. Some of the statisticians had worked on various Covid-19-related projects, so a lot of what they did had featured in the news during the pandemic, reinforcing for us the very real importance of their jobs.

Before leaving, we were supplied with an abundance of statistics-related souvenirs, and we had time to ask some final questions to do with statistics-related university courses. Finally, we headed back to Dollar filled with new insights and knowledge. It had all been an amazing experience.

Rachel W. (Form VI)



# Language and Landscape Day: Form I Pupils 'Re-Wild' Their Language

## Question:

*What do the following words all have in common?*

**Fern, Buttercup, Hazel, Catkin, Heather, Conker, Heron, Cowslip, Ivy, Cygnet, Kingfisher, Dandelion Lark, Mistletoe, Nectar, Newt, Otter, Pasture, Willow, Acorn, Adder, Ash, Beech, Bluebell**

## Answer:

*They are all words that have been cut from a recent edition of The Oxford Junior Dictionary.*

On 23 May, the entire Form I year group spent a day outside in the landscapes around Dollar. The aims were simple: to delight in being



outdoors, to look and listen carefully, to 're-wild' their language—that is, to expand their vocabulary of words linked to the landscape, weather, flora and fauna they would encounter. They heard stories related to medicinal plants in Mill Green; they netted and identified mini-beasts in the leaf litter of Dollar Glen; they learned to name the clouds and river features in the green fields and along the riverbanks to the south of Dollar. The pupils spend all day looking at, listening to, smelling, touching and even tasting many features of the landscape. Each pupil kept a 'word hoard', and they were expected to collect (and treasure)

the new words that they gathered. Staff from the English and Geography Departments led the day, and two guest speakers joined us: a Scottish storyteller named Amanda Edmiston and the National Trust Dollar Glen Ranger, Laura Livingstone. At the end of the day, groups of pupils created 'list poems' using their favourite new words and natural materials they found around them.

Heather Moore





## **PORTRAIT, PEOPLE AND PLACE: ADVANCED HIGHER CREATIVE WRITING TRIP**

On Tuesday 3 October, pupils studying Advanced Higher English enjoyed a trip to Edinburgh to the National Galleries Scotland: Portrait and the National Museum of Scotland. Their focus was to gather material that would inspire character, setting and narrative in their own writing; the creative writing folio is a fundamental part of the Advanced Higher English course. The pupils completed several tasks in their writing booklets, prompting them imagine, create and write in response to the paintings, photographs and objects they saw—each with its own unique story and history. It was delightful to observe the engagement of pupils with the extraordinary setting of the Great Hall and the Library in the Portrait Gallery. In the afternoon pupils had the opportunity to focus on some extended writing in the museum and to gather ideas for poetry, prose and drama from a cornucopia of cultural objects and artefacts.

Beth Wright



## **MARCH CONCERTS**

March 2023 saw a series of weekly concerts showcasing the talents of our musicians from the Prep School up through the senior school. The concerts were a great opportunity for parents, friends and family to see and hear what their children had been rehearsing over the first two terms. For many, it was the first time they had performed in a choir or ensemble setting, so it was also an opportunity for them to learn the etiquette and protocol for a concert.

Our Form I and II musicians opened our concert series on 2 March. A range of ensembles from this age group took over the Gibson Auditorium. The evening of music was varied and consisted of some orchestral classics such as ‘The Ash Grove’ and ‘Ye Banks and Braes’ as well as a medley from *The Sound of Music*. The String Group went with the theme of ‘dances’, performing pieces that included a French folk dance called ‘Mattachins’ and ‘Waltz’ from Tchaikovsky’s *Sleeping Beauty*. The Form I and II Wind Band played the well-known ‘Hogwarts’ March’ from *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, and then had the audience tapping their feet with an arrangement of ‘Uptown Funk’ by Bruno Mars. The Jazz Ensemble (led by Isabella P., then in Form VI) performed two numbers including the energetic ‘La Bamba’, and the Form I and II Choir closed the evening with their rendition of ‘African Alleluia’ and the pop number ‘Fight Song’.

Many Form I and II pupils also provided solos; these included participants and winners from our 2023 Young Musician Competition: Will C. on flute; Eilidh S. on piano; Jessica C. on trombone; Mac S. (all then Form I) on clarinet, as well as Adelaide A. on trumpet, Fraser P. on drum kit and Maisie C. (all then Form II) on flute. The Junior 1 Cantata evening followed on 7 March, featuring soloists from Junior 1 performing Roald Dahl’s *Cinderella*, a short choral work involving the entire year group. (Articles about both of these concerts appeared in *Fortunas* 51.)

Later in the month, it was the turn of the senior musicians from Forms III to VI. Their concert took place in the Assembly Hall on 16 March; it opened with the First Orchestra playing Bizet’s ‘Farandole’ followed by Copland’s ‘Hoedown’ and Sousa’s famous ‘Liberty Bell’. The Wind Band performed ‘Jupiter’ from Holst’s *The Planets* and Silvestri’s theme from *The Avengers*, while the String Ensemble delighted audiences with television theme tunes from *Fawlty Towers* and the period drama *Bridgerton*. The newly formed Saxophone Ensemble made their debut with two jazz classics. This was also Mr Simon Burbury’s last concert with Dollar Academy as director of the Mixed Voice Choir. The group did him proud, performing Mozart’s beautiful ‘Ave verum corpus’ and the contrasting ‘Somewhere Only We Know’ by Keane. Chamber Choir performed a medley from *West Side Story* with solos from Finlay M. and Rebecca C. (both then Form VI), and Sarah C. (then Form VI) played a remarkable solo harmonica in their second piece, Billy Joel’s ‘Piano Man’. The concert ended in warm and lively fashion



with DAJO playing a number of jazz works including ‘Enjoy Yourself’ with a vocal solo from Finlay M. and Mixed Voice Choir backing him. Many staff, pupils and parents joined the floor to dance in what felt a warm farewell to both Mr Burbury and the many Form VI leavers.

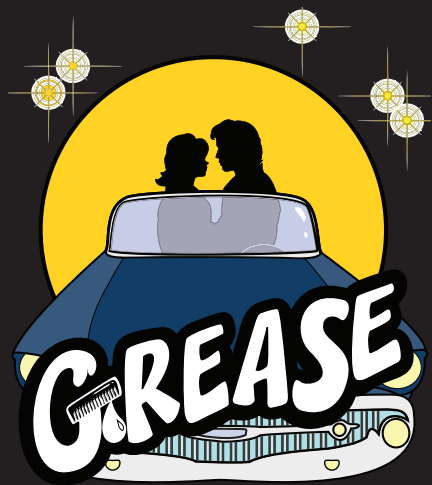
That March concert also featured the senior winners from our Young Musician of the Year competition. Olivia M. (then Form V) was the winner of the Intermediate Singing Class; Laura K. (then Form VI) was the winner of the Advanced Vocal Class and Isabella P. was the winner of the Advanced Instrumental Class.

The final concert of the term was from the Prep and Junior pupils. They, too, performed in the Assembly Hall with an afternoon concert for friends and family that took place on 21 March. The Prep 3 Singing Club opened the event with the comedy song ‘Blame it on Brian’. The Prep Orchestra were confident in their performance of ‘When The Saints Go Marching In’ and One Direction’s ‘What Makes You Beautiful’. The Prep Choir were up next—fresh from their recent performance and win at the Perthshire Music Festival. They sang, with immense joy, their ‘Swing Low Medley’ and then the contrasting ‘Hear the Wind’. The huge Junior Choir squeezed onto the stage to perform a number of songs including ‘Double Trouble’ from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and Katy Perry’s ‘Roar’. The Junior Orchestra concluded the afternoon with their piece, ‘A Pirate’s Voyage’.

As you can tell, March was an incredibly busy month for our musicians and an overview of these many performances allows for an excellent reflection of the progress made by pupils, at all levels, in their musical journeys. Congratulations to all involved.

Louise Timney





After the spectacle of the 2022 production of *Me and My Girl* with its palatial sets and flamboyant costumes, the production team wanted a complete contrast for the Senior Musical 2023. *Grease* was 'the word', and a record number of pupils auditioned to be a part of it. After hours and hours of preparation and rehearsal, we delivered three memorable sellout performances at the Macrobert Arts Centre in Stirling. Accompanied by a band of pupils and staff, the cast dazzled in their 1950s-inspired costumes: singing, dancing and acting with a powerful energy and enthusiasm that had the audience joining in at every performance.

George M. (then Form V) played super-cool Danny Zuko, while Laura K. (then Form VI) portrayed the innocent and wholesome Sandy. Ethan G. (then Form V) led the T-Bird gang as Kenickie, assisted by Duncan W. (then Form VI) as Sonny; James M. (then Form IV) as Doody; and Charlie W. (then Form VI) as Roger. Against them, the Pink Ladies were led by the vulnerable, but sassy Rizzo, played by Eve M. (then Form VI). Her gang consisted of the hilarious Morag P. (then Form VI) as Jan; Daisy A. (then Form V) as the aspiring Frenchy; and Olivia M. (then Form V) as the glamorous Marty. Humour and style were in abundance with Duncan K. as the Teen Angel and Vanessa W. (both then Form V) as Patty.



There were so many moments of pure magic. The opening 'Summer Nights' set the tone for what was to be a truly professional production; the boys' chorus dazzled audiences with their high-impact dance moves in 'Greased Lightnin'; and the audience hardly dared to breath as Laura K. sang Sandy's iconic solo, 'Hopelessly Devoted'. The show's finale, 'You're The One That I Want', had everyone singing along—from those at front of house, backstage and onstage to the musicians in the orchestra pit. Everyone felt the joy as the show ended on a high with a much-deserved standing ovation.

Louise Timney





# DOLLAR BURNS CLUB CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION 2023

*But pleasures are like poppies spread,  
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;  
Or, like the snow-fall in the river,  
A moment white, then melts forever.*

-from Robert Burns’  
‘Tam O’Shanter’

Now in its fifth year, the Dollar Burns Club Creative Writing Competition of 2023 took for its theme the concept of ‘Time’, and aspiring writers from Strathdevon Primary School and Dollar Academy were challenged to submit work inspired by this theme.

The main categories were Strathdevon Primary School; Dollar Academy Junior School; and Dollar Academy Form II. There was also a Dollar Academy Open Category for any Dollar pupil who wished to submit writing. This year’s panel of judges included teachers, members of the Dollar Burns Club and Keith Broomfield, a local author. They all agreed that there was an exceptional number of very fine entries in 2023. There were short stories about time travel; Gaelic verse about the ceaseless running of time through our lives; and personal essays inspired by the poetry of Emily Dickinson. I hope you enjoy reading the winning pieces from Dollar Academy in the pages that follow.

Heather Moore

## Results of the 2023 Competition:

### Strathdevon (Primary 5-7)

**First Place:** Freya S.

**Second Place:** Eva P.

**Highly Commended:**

Amber H.

Struan M.

Molly M.

**Commended:**

Aila S.

Jonathan M.

Emily C.

Tom M.

Blythe K.

Jack G.

Cameron C.

### Dollar Academy Junior School (Junior 2)

**First Place:** Zara W.

**Second Place:** Imogen D.

**Highly Commended:**

Cameron D.

Pippa R.

Oliver E.

**Commended:**

Jai P.

Freya C.

Tomas N.

Madeleine J.

Holly P.

### Dollar Academy Form II

**First Place:** Skylar J.

**Second Place:** Eva G.

**Highly Commended:**

Orla R.

Emma G.

Niamh M.

**Commended:**

Fraser P.

Esme K.

Ursula P.

Sophie R.

Vanessa W.

### Dollar Academy Open Category

**First Place:** Inaya S. (then Form V)

**Second Place:** Christie M. (then Form I)

**Highly Commended:**

Anna M. S. (then Form VI)

Lottie L. (then Form V)

**Commended:**

Fraya A. (then Form IV)

Shylah S. (then Form VI)

Valerie A. (then Form VI)

Ash H. (then Form III)

Rowan M. (then Form V)

Riley G. (then Form VI)

*\*The Highly Commended and Commended winners are listed in no particular order.*

## Winner of the Junior School Category

### Time

When weeping willows sweep  
with branches long and slim,  
the thoughts of faint change shimmer with life,  
but you know it is time.

When students become elders  
with exotic robes of indigo,  
the swishing of fabric through halls of age,  
but you know it is time.

When pens lack ink,  
every stroke fading from each moment,  
the writing of a piece long and forgotten,  
but you know it is time.

When parchment grows old,  
with rough yellowish feel;  
the wax seal darkens and melts,  
but you know it is time.

When loved ones live too quickly  
with no chance of proper farewells,  
the last touch of their warm pads of thumb,  
but you know it is time.

It has many powers  
to pass each unique season,  
to create wrinkles in one’s hand,  
to make final scratches of letters,  
to leave paper untouched yet alluring,  
to give last goodbyes and sobs.

Time is unforgiving,  
Time is strong,  
Time is weird,  
Time is chaotic,  
Time is long,  
Time is joyful,  
Time is infuriating,  
Time is upsetting.



All these descriptions, yet it still stays the same.  
We cannot change what has never been changed,  
so it must stay as it is.

You know it is time,  
and time knows it is you,  
but the silence still haunts,  
lingering with each choked, sharp breath.

Clocks tick,  
with each ember of a memory stretching;  
the destiny of a child occurs,  
but a child cannot accept the illusion of time.

This word—time—  
being used more frequent than often.  
Grieving, loving, growing, learning:  
four things it forces us to do,  
whether tricky or simple,  
or somewhere in between.  
You know it as time.

*Zara W. (then Junior 2)*

Winner of the Form II Category

AMONG THE STARS

‘Where do we go when we die?’ I asked my mother. She sighed, looking at me with sad eyes. I had asked this question many times before, and every time she gave me the same answer.

‘Where we go is the stars, my child. We take our place among the stars. When the time comes, our souls drift into the sky and whatever we were on Earth remains with us, in another place. We become more than just human.’ I always loved the way she said things. Her soft voice always comforted me; the tale of the stars was the only thing that kept me happy. The sky above us held everyone we had ever loved, everything anyone ever was. Here, the stars were so real, so close, it felt as if I could touch them. As the day reached its end, I gazed out of my bedroom window. The wartorn fields overgrown by grass and flowers relaxed me. The war was over. The war that had killed our new planet was a part of history. I don’t remember any of it, but I do know that it took my family. Everyone—except me and my mother. I hadn’t been born yet when we moved planets—when we made it to Sotras, the saviour planet—when the landmass was split.

As I awoke, the sun glared into my eyes through the window. The visit to the village had been scheduled for today. I was only allowed there once a month, when the barriers opened for the monthly festival—the June festival. I dressed in a hurry—I had to make every second count. I shoved on my trusty leather boots, plus my worn jacket, and ran out of the house with a quick goodbye to my mother. She knew what day it was; she wouldn’t mind. The red grass had grown thick as spring rolled on. It tickled my ankles as I ran.

There it was: the village. I reached it just as the gates screeched open and the sweet smell of pastry wafted through the air. As I entered, the market was already in full flow, the citizens filling the streets. Food sizzled on grills and vendors shouted about their wares.

‘Hot steaming noodles!’

‘Warm rolls!’

‘Bratwurst! Currywurst! Unique Earthan German food!’

I was sprinting through when I suddenly stepped on a small object. Tumbling onto the cobbles, my head smashed against them. I groaned quietly as I turned myself over before standing up and dusting off my knees. My hands went to my head. No blood. I sighed with relief. But what had tripped me up? A small, golden pocket watch. I picked it up, tracing the cracks on the glass covering the face. I tied the chain around a button on my jacket and heard a faint ticking sound coming from the watch. And then, suddenly, I was falling, my brain spinning until I settled. I found myself in a forest, a bright sun shining above me, moss cushioning my knees. I hadn’t realised I had fallen to them. I hadn’t seen this kind of moss before. And the sun wasn’t as bright as usual. I stood up and a man rushed past me—the same pocket watch that I had just tripped over, clutched in his hand. The very same pocket watch that was now tied to my jacket. He ducked behind a tree before a storm of men on robotic horse-like creatures barrelled through.

‘Callis! Come out with your hands up!’

The man sighed heavily, and I crouched behind a bush. He threw down the pocket watch and gritted his teeth, stepping out in front of them.

‘So. I walked the Earth and you still found me.’



Earth? The real Earth? I was on Earth?

‘It’s been three years. It’s 2082. Leave me be,’ he continued, wiping the dirt from his face. I squinted. It couldn’t be. It was 2134. And I was on Sotras. Had I somehow gone...back in time? I had watched old Earth films, but I didn’t think it could be true. I looked at the watch, the hands now spinning quicker and quicker. They had been still when I fastened it to my jacket.

Suddenly, I heard a noise. A young girl sneaked out from the bushes and grabbed the watch, sprinting off. I directed my attention to her, before dashing after her.

‘Drop it!’ I shouted, as if she was a dog. She turned, sticking out her tongue as she escaped. I frowned, slowing down. The world began spinning again. An older woman now lay in front of me on a clean hospital bed, clutching the watch in her hand. I smiled softly at her, before I recognised her face. This was an older version of the girl from the woods—in fact, it was the girl from the forest. In the future. The pocket watch was taking me through time. I was seeing all its owners. The woman handed the watch to a younger boy, and I felt another spinning feeling. I found myself in a quiet metal room with large glass windows. I looked out, seeing stars, galaxies and the void of space. My hand went up to the glass, the cool smooth surface of it almost comforting. I turned and noticed a boy looking at me. The boy from the hospital.

‘I saw you with my grandma,’ he said, simply.

‘In the hospital?’ I replied, my hands going to the pocket watch on my jacket. I walked towards him. He shrank back, but I smiled at him, holding out my pocket watch.

‘Swap?’ I asked, now grinning childishly, as if we were merely swapping stuffed animals. I placed my pocket watch in my palm, and he held out his. I reached out to it with my other hand, and he did the same. I clutched it, and he copied me. Then I stepped away. Suddenly I was spinning again. New owner, new spinning feeling. And here I was. Back in the town. Hearing the same shouts, ‘Hot steaming noodles!’

‘Warm rolls!’

‘Bratwurst! Currywurst! Unique Earthan German food!’

Realising this must be the point I found the watch, I threw it to the ground, ducking away to avoid being caught by myself. I watched as I tripped and disappeared. The spinning feeling took over my mind once again.

I was back in that forest.

And the time loop continued. I couldn’t change anything. I was stuck. Stuck forever.

Forest.

Hospital.

Spaceship.

Village.

Forest.

Hospital.

Spaceship.

Village.

On and on and on. It continued until I was old—and frail. And that day, that day—that I was to be scattered among the stars...that day was today.

Skyla J. (then Form II)

### Winner of the Open Category

## THE THING WITH FEATHERS

There was a time, dots and dashes between milestones and formative years, where I lived wholly, unapologetically, in Hope. In my present mind, this period remains ever enigmatic, the beginnings of it obscured through the lens of time alone, but the clarity with which I recall its end is enough to cast a deep blue hue over the feeling forever.

It was thick in the air that summer. I basked in it because I knew no better. It’s telling, I’ve noted, how beginnings and endings never seem to come, or go, alone. Spring leaves, and takes with it my home, my island—St Aubin’s shores have never been so remote. And yet my shiva is cut short. Summer comes, and in its wake, Hope. It is completely vital, for the sake of my pride, that I mention that this all took place when I was young enough to excuse it, but old enough that I still harbour some (great) resentment about the whole ordeal.

I was moved from Jersey unwillingly and with great difficulty—Sisyphus’s boulder begrudgingly rolled down a sand dune—but in my juvenility, I could not help but have hope for new life in a new land. Fictitious and far-fetched ideas of what could be. A grand house, a sprawling garden to accommodate all the wildlife I was sure to meet in England—’Did you know there are six different species of deer there?’ I pestered my parents often as we drove around the island, no longer trying to pave the sandy roads into my mind—new friends, who within a few weeks, I was sure would no longer need the descriptor. All children can be tied together by one thing: all children live in a peculiar state. Not necessarily innocence or naivety, but a certain state of aloofness that I can only describe as out-and-out indifference. To things that trouble them, to things that waste their time, to things that they simply do not want to see. When do you lose the tact to simply close your eyes in the face of your problems? That indifferent state is fuelled and funded, of course, by Hope. Ignorance is bliss and Hope is the Rapture itself. When do you lose that last flicker? I had grown used to being in its sphere, and gradually, then suddenly, found myself yearning for a sip of the Hope I had thrown down the sink when the glass was still half full.

It had taken me but a month to leave grief at the shore and resign myself to my fate, to my new life—I had not even a heavy heart to show for my time. I think now that my newfound perspective, the guilt that comes in tow, is surely my penance for forgetting all too much, all too soon. Hope had continued to fester past all resistance as the promised land drew nearer. It multiplied and flourished, but what more can a child do in the face of something so sickeningly uplifting, if all a slightly wiser person can do is lament its loss? Hope does not sneak by you like age, does not ambush you like a tidal wave of nostalgia—it inflates like the most brilliant red balloon you’ve seen and bursts with no remorse before you can tie it down. Call it gluttonous, call it cruel; I would take a needle to another’s to have a single elastic scrap back, all to myself.

The day of reckoning came, I think now, much too quickly, but back then, even the



ferry ride stretched on as if the dock itself never ended. I have never struggled with seasickness. It is incredibly unfortunate, I think, for something as colossal, with the power to inspire such a feeling of insignificance within our hearts, as the sea to be overshadowed by mere queasiness. That day, however, I found my stomach stirring. A great fluttering of feathers too erratic to contain. I must say, it is admirable how Hope stuck by my side till the very end, till it couldn't possibly go on. It was bruised when the car drove through our new city— buildings greying, ashen; potholed roads—inhospitably teeming with urban decay. Marked with uneven scratches when our new house was impossibly empty, silent beyond all explanation, totally devoid of the gifts of home. Left disfigured after the new children in the playground turned their backs and stuck up their noses, after they were revealed as incapable of any intelligent conversation. It seems I had never struggled at all. *Hope is the thing with feathers*, Dickinson writes. It's poignant and fitting and yet a disgruntled asterisk finds itself scratched in the margin adjacent. I knew it had left, not just by the absence of feathers, but also by the way lights stopped turning green for me. Keats, too, writes to *Sweet Hope*, willing its silver wings to appear over his head as he dreams. The valiant foe of Despondency, heard even in the chilliest lands. What the Romantics neglect to tell you, however, is that Hope cannot perch in the soul forever. It cannot be trained, it must be wild, inclement, always. It most definitely cannot be called back on command, and when its feathered pinions grow too large for your own good, you must understand it has no choice *but* to leap. It will leave you barren and desiccated because you weren't careful enough, because you lacked moderation, because it can.

But futility has never frightened me. I know, for Hope, that it is better to search for an aeon in vain than miss out on a fleeting display because you hold yourself in too high regard. (Hope is dangerous, but Pride is the worser: negligent). I feel the need to make one more point, a duty of sorts to make it clear that I do not hate Hope. This isn't abhorrence, this is an elegy. I look, painstakingly, for what was once ubiquitous. I leave no stone unturned—it escapes me every time. *Hope is the thing with feathers*. It cannot stay. I know this and perhaps it's naive to expect to be the exception, but I do—and therein lies the paradox. Hope is present even where it's not. We can spurn it, bruise it, fail to protect it, but the fact of the matter remains that we anticipate its return silently yet eagerly, hoping to bask in it once more, to resign ourselves to the belief that things will be different. People are not the pessimists they think they are; I am not so bleak. Hope visits less often, must devote its time elsewhere now, but before taking off always leaves behind a feather or two for me—and the fluttering starts all over again.

Inaya S. (then Form V)

Safiyah A. (Form III)

# PAINTED EYES

The paint sank into the creases of the paper, running through the folds and the cracks like a river flowing upstream. I was completely oblivious to what my destination might be. As my brush moved over the paper, it was as though my mind was directing my hand without my conscious thought—strange, but that's how I create. I fixed my eyes to the piece, then to my reference, ensuring each line and shadow was in its correct place.

I looked over my shoulder at the others in the room; they all seemed about my age, maybe a few years older. One boy had a pencil carefully tucked behind his ear. I watched as he pressed oil pastels into his canvas, smudging and blending imperfect colours to create an elaborate portrait. I looked to a girl with long scraggly hair and an exuberantly patterned skirt; she painted with the canvas upside down, slowly adding layers of paint and scraping away the excess, revealing brightly coloured swirls under the muddy browns.

But *he* caught my eye. He stood out somehow, wearing a stained hoodie and trainers so worn you could barely tell they were white. In a room full of people with brightly coloured clothes, bracelets and rings of all kinds and messily dyed hair, he intrigued me the most. He had all his materials laid out in front of him, his canvas the right way up, closely focusing on his reference, barely acknowledging the painting.

The room was quiet. No one spoke, no one wanted to. All you could hear was the rain crashing against the window outside, buses driving past, the occasional clatter of brushes. The only time I truly understood the characters I was surrounded by was during crit. We stood in a circle holding our pieces, examining every brushstroke in each painted face. Then the art instructor would go through each one, asking us for our thoughts. For such expressive people, nobody really spoke. I know I wanted to, but my legs wouldn't stop shaking and the room felt warmer and warmer. When we got to my piece, I could feel my skin growing hotter. Having ten talented people ready to fire their opinions at my work was new to me; I stood and waited for a voice, one person, to say one thing, to get all of us out of this awkward situation.

The boy with the stained hoodie cleared his throat, and spoke. 'I like the blues. You know, it's all one colour. She uses blue a lot actually; I like that consistency.' The teacher agreed with him; she said his name was James. The name rang in my head as we came around to his. I planned exactly what I would say.

The strokes were bold and thick as if he had used every colour, even the ones he accidentally mixed on his palette. What was most interesting to me was that he had avoided the eyes. The painting was full of life, excluding the eyes, which, he explained, were purposefully left empty. The key to the soul, completely gone, making the person in the portrait seem lost as they stared right at you though they had nothing to stare with at all. I tried to pry my mouth open to speak about this, but found I couldn't. The rain outside felt too loud, the girl's skirt too bright, my legs too shaky. I stood there, silent, until the timer went off, and we all began to pack away.

I scooped up my brushes and took them down the concrete stairs. The basement made me shiver as I cleaned—the water that ran out from the tap, icy cold between my fingers as I rinsed paint out of the bristles. James walked down the stairs, waiting beside me to clean his palette. I had so many questions to ask him. Why didn't you paint the eyes? What inspires you? Do you paint every day? How did you learn anatomy? How long have you been painting for? Do you do Art at school? I asked none of them.

I no longer go to that art class. I finished the course and now my Saturday mornings are usually spent sleeping in. What really strikes me is that I will probably never see him again. Though we didn't speak, and I can only barely remember his name, I think I will continue to regret not speaking to him, not even telling him I thought his paintings were cool. Moments like those are moments I can't change, only understand. Still, I hope one day I will know for sure why he never painted eyes.





## THE HARRY BELL TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP 2023

*Over the last few decades, the Harry Bell Travel Awards have generated a great deal of interest and resulted in some remarkable journeys and pieces of writing. The awards are open to any Form V pupils who wish to travel during the summer holiday to study a topic of literary interest. Recipients are required to write a lively report reflecting upon their experiences of a particular writer and a particular place. In addition, the Harry Bell Travel Scholarship is awarded at Prize Giving the following year in recognition of the best written report. In 2023 this prize was awarded to Katerina Taylor Mojsovski (FP 2023) who went to the Outer Hebrides in search of Norman MacCaig’s Aunt Julia, made famous in the poem of the same name. In 2023, the reports were exceptional, and the judges also named two Highly Commended runners-up: Susanna Lyndon and Maiana Szapiro (both FPs 2023). An edited version of Katerina’s report is published below.*

### ‘AUNT JULIA’

The isle of Scalpay (Sgalpaigh na Hearadh) held a special place in Norman MacCaig’s life and in his poetry. It was a place to which he would frequently return—a place that was home to his extended family of aunts, uncles and cousins, many of whom would become characters in his poetry. He once wrote: ‘Half my thoughts and half my blood is Scalpay.’ One among his many poems about the isle—‘Crofter’s kitchen, evening’ (1959), ‘The Red Well’ (1967), ‘Return to Scalpay’ (1972), ‘By the Graveyard, Luskentyre’ (1983)—is ‘Aunt Julia’, written in 1967. For the young Norman—who visited this small island when it was road and car free—this was an adventure playground, a far cry from the bustling streets of Edinburgh where he was brought up.

The wonder of reading a poem or book is the image it paints in your mind; it is your own theatre stage, your own film production. For some time, my image of Norman MacCaig’s ‘Aunt Julia’ was of a strong and solitary woman with peat-stained feet, her croft isolated on a wind-swept, flat and peaty moorland—she, its sole occupant, left to battle the elements, for the most part, alone. Here was a character I could admire: strong, capable, and independent: ‘she wore men’s boots when she wore any.’ Julia MacLeod was born on the small isle of Scalpay and, in 1939 at the age of 74, she also died there.

I went in search of Scalpay—its culture, its connection to communities and landscapes, its characters and crofters. I had three objectives: to locate Julia’s croft with its ‘boxed’ and ‘spinning wheel’; to visit her ‘sandy grave at Luskentyre’; and to see if crofters still lived on Scalpay.

Preparation is everything, so I turned to census records and to Facebook. ‘There is a man with yellow wellies who passes our house every morning; I think he is Norman’s cousin’, and so I began the search for the man in the yellow wellies. It was not an easy search; as one Facebook participant pointed out: ‘Yellow wellies are pretty much standard issue in Scalpay!’

Today, the journey to Scalpay (land of seals, otters and eagles, where seagulls’ voices still welcome you and the inhabitants still proudly speak Gaelic ‘very loud and very fast’) is by bridge—a new addition to the Scalpay of MacCaig’s childhood. Before 1997 he would have crossed the few hundred meters across the Caolas Sgalpaigh by ferry.

My welcoming committee was a herd of Highland cattle who stubbornly refused to make way, eyeing this unwanted visitor with a knowing look and sense of purpose. The seals sunbathing on the rocks below the bridge looked on. Both seemed to tell me: you’ve arrived...slow down...breathe...relax. My introduction to a slower pace of existence had begun.

Scalpay is far from the peaty moorland of my imagination. It is a jarred rock, a four-kilometre-square craggy blob with peat and soil clinging to every accessible nook and cranny; it is like a rough pebble dropped in the Sea of the Hebrides east of the Isle of Harris. Its 291 inhabitants are a mix of MacLeods and McDonalds—all Johns, Williams, Roberts, Effies, Joans, Normans and Rodericks. Family names are passed down through generations, making tracing family histories and locating gravestones difficult. These families have crofted and fished on the isle for centuries. They have been joined by more recent inhabitants who have migrated hundreds of miles in search of (and for the most part finding) a better quality of life. But in such a place, existence means scraping out a living in these most volatile of surroundings where even the best of sunny summer days can suddenly turn to harsh weather reminiscent of winter. A blue morning sky can usher in a fog so thick and damp that even the hardest, toughened inhabitants close their doors and huddle by the fire.

This is an island of characters any author would be thrilled to create. Next door to my accommodation lived Sarah (no yellow wellies), now eighty-six, who remembered Norman MacCaig and his family. As a young girl, Sarah left the island for two days and travelled to Glasgow, about which she has no fond memories and no good words. She never left the island again. This was incomprehensible to me, yet I found myself almost envying the simplicity of her long and

happy life. Sarah asked what had brought me to Scalpay, and I told her about my search for ‘Aunt Julia’. I read her the poem and, at the end, she laughed and broke into Gaelic. For a second, I had found Julia—speaking Gaelic ‘very loud and very fast.’ I imagined them together: the young Norman and his aunt, speaking their separate languages, neither able to understand the other.

The local postman (still no yellow wellies) has delivered the post to the island for thirty years, and he remembered MacCaig’s frequent visits. He took me to the place where Julia’s house once stood. This had been no croft on an isolated moorland, but a small house in the centre of the village of Sgalpaigh close to the school that still stands. The building was first occupied by Julia’s grandfather, John MacLeod, in 1854. Far from the lonely, isolated character of my imagination, Julia was seventeen when she lost her mother (age thirty-nine) to influenza. Her father died just two years later, leaving Julia (the eldest child) to care for seven siblings aged between two and sixteen years of age. The 1891 census shows Julia still living in this small house at twenty-six years old, with four of her siblings. Her occupation, of course: spinner, as MacCaig so eloquently told us:

‘Paddling with the treadle of the  
spinning wheel  
while her right hand drew yarn  
marvellously out of the air.’

Most of the inhabitants of Scalpay have gardens full of homegrown vegetables and fruit to support their diets but, more formally, crofts are small farms often passed down through generations. Many abandoned crofts have received a new lease of life as people come to the island in search of a new life. There are now estimated to be forty crofts on the island. John McLeod is a crofter (wellies, but not yellow), but he, like most crofters, finds that he needs to supplement his income, so he is also a builder. Crofters’ activities include lambing and calving in spring and cultivating small areas of land with local variants of oats and barley. For many crofters, maintaining biodiversity, conservation and the environment generally is a priority and these are things that John feels passionately about. Instead of expensive fertilisers, crofters harvest egg or knotted wrack seaweed which they dry and mix in the soil. There is a great sense of camaraderie among the inhabitants; people help each other and on such a small island, the simple fact is that everyone knows everyone. For people beyond the island, this could be claustrophobic; for the islanders, it’s a matter of survival.

The hardships that Julia and her young siblings must have endured are hard to imagine. A glimpse of this could be seen at the crofting township of Geàrrannan on the Isle of Lewis. Here are the last of the blackhouses: traditional





thatched cottages, the last of which was inhabited in 1974. Here can be found the ‘box beds’ and the ‘spinning wheels’ of MacCaig’s poetry.

‘Hers was the only house  
where I’ve lain at night  
in the absolute darkness  
of a box bed, listening to  
crickets being friendly.’

The peat burning in the fireplace filled every crevice in the smoke-filled, small-windowed, two-roomed home. I wondered what Julia would make of her island today: the bridge; water flowing from a tap rather than being collected from the red well; central heating replacing the peat burning in the fireplace; a flip of a switch bringing light, replacing the burning oil lamp. These modern creature comforts would be alien, but so many things would still be familiar, for Scalpay is still Sgalpaigh na Hearadh.

With my visit coming to an end, nothing prepared me for the beauty in store as I rounded the last bend in the road: Traigh Losgaintir (Luskentyre). This expanse of pure fine sand would not be out of place on a tropical island; the sun beamed down from a clear blue sky as if to prove the point. All that was missing were the palm trees. The sapphire water was inviting, but chillingly cold (even in June) and unsurprisingly empty of swimmers. And I was entirely alone. No beach towels, no kites flying, no volleyball, no deck chairs or picnics, no surfboards. Only the Arctic terns paid me any attention—kamikaze dive-bombers, pulling out of a spin, millimetres from my head, screeching, impossibly avoiding hitting me, warning me away from their nests—as I wandered the path to the beach. I screeched back at them, running the gauntlet through the dunes.

Luskentyre Old Cemetery lies on the beach. Sandy graves are not generally common but on the islands, where the soil is thin, the sand dunes provide the only ground in which to dig a grave deep enough. My romantic notion of walking into the cemetery in Luskentyre, locating Julia’s grave, and standing for a while in reflection with her was not to be. After a long search, covering and recovering the



ground, there was no gravestone. How could this be? Julia seemed to have vanished like the mist that rolls across Scalpay—an unfitting end for a woman known to thousands of Scottish school children. She deserved remembrance and recognition...

No visit to Scalpay would be complete without a walk to the lighthouse, Eilean Glas. The first lighthouse in the Hebrides, it has stood here since 1789. On my last day I sat here, among the ewes and the rams and the drizzle, staring out from the headland in search of MacCaig’s ‘Basking Shark’—or perhaps the pod of orcas that had passed this way a few days before.

Before I knew it, my journey had ended and, as I crossed the bridge, I stopped to take one look back. My welcoming committee was nowhere to be seen; the same attention was clearly not paid to those departing Scalpay as to those who arrived. Maybe now they viewed me as one of the islanders, no longer just a visitor.

And so I returned home—yet my journey seemed incomplete, unfinished. That image in my mind of a strong, solitary woman with peat-stained feet had been replaced with a sandy, empty cemetery. So I contacted Helen—the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages on Harris—and my search became hers. By searching the lair book for the Old Luskentyre Cemetery from the 1920s and 1930s—and cross-checking this with the birth, census and death certificate information that I had researched—Helen found Julia. Julia was indeed on that sandy dune; she had purchased a lair for her husband, John, who had died the year before her. It is there, in what was an unmarked grave, lair 257, that they both lie. The grave is now marked with a wooden cross, placed by the cemetery supervisor at the request of Helen and myself. This will do for now, until I can again return to Luskentyre and stand by Julia.

Like many writers, I struggled with the title of my report. I changed its title many times, but I settled where I started because, for me, Julia MacLeod will always be simply Aunt Julia.

‘She was buckets  
and water flouncing into them.  
She was winds pouring wetly  
round house-ends.  
She was brown eggs, black skirts  
and a keeper of threepenny bits  
in a teapot.’

Katerina Taylor Mojsovski (FP 2023)

## THE FORM I DRAMA PRODUCTION

Last June, pupils in Form I performed three fantastic comedies that, together, made up this year’s Form I play. Pupils in the year group and the teachers guiding them through the process all worked extremely hard to put this together. All the cast worked very well to learn their lines in the time available, and we put on three amazing short plays, having had a great time along the way. The plays were three very funny comedies, and we certainly earned a lot of laughs from the audience. There were many roles, so lots of people were involved on stage, and other pupils took part by helping out with the lighting and sound, as part of the stage crew, at front of house and by doing the makeup; all of these were essential to the performances’ success. The whole event was produced and directed by Mrs Smith and Mrs Easto and, all in all, it was a fantastic production, much beloved by the cast, crew and audience alike.

### The Emperor’s New Clothes

The first play of the evening was a different version of the famous fairytale story. This show was enjoyable, and I think we all wish we could do it again. I loved playing the Emperor, as I was the boss and very confidently told people what to do. I will remember this play for many years to come.

Oli F. (*The Emperor*)



### Princess Alexandra Isn’t Very Happy

This play is about a princess’s parents trying to arrange her marriage, but she has other ideas about what she wants to be when she grows up. Hearing that I had got the part of Princess Alexandra was very exciting, but also a bit nerve wracking. I had seen the many lines I was going to have to learn! But playing Princess Alexandra was one of the best things I have ever done. It was fun, challenging, amazing and hugely enjoyable to be part of such a lovely group of people.



Mrs Smith and Mrs Easto gave us buckets of confidence to help us express ourselves on stage and bring the play together. I do not know what we would have done without them. I know I speak for everyone involved when I say: bring on the Form II play!

Annina L (*Princess Alexandra*)





## Romayo and Julie

I really loved playing Julie in *Romayo and Julie*, not because of the performance we put on or how hard we tried, but because I loved being surrounded by a group of people who all enjoyed the same things as me and who have similar personalities. We had a great laugh together. These are people whom I might not have had reason to talk to, whom I might not even have met, if not for the Form I Drama Production. The whole experience made me so excited to get involved with the Form II production. I hope that the others who worked on the Form I play will choose to be involved next year, too, because it was just so much fun.

*Eve M. (Julie)*

Form I had a blast in the summer term preparing for our drama performance. A lot of work went into the production of *Romayo and Julie*, a modern twist on Shakespeare's classic comedy. It involved weekly lunchtime and after-school rehearsals, learning lines and polishing our acting skills. We had a lot of laughs during the rehearsal period, but we did feel a bit nervous as the actual live performances loomed. We wanted to do a good job in front of family and friends. So, how did it go? Actually, a lot better than in the dress rehearsals! Feedback from the stalls was that it went down a treat. It was a real team performance with the makeup, sound and lighting crews and everyone else involved all coming together to give their very best at showtime. I want to say a big thank you to Mrs Easto and Mrs Smith for being very creative and for being very, very patient.

*Will C. (Romeo)*



## The Form II Play: Mmbeth (a play by Allison Williams)

We think that Caelin's review, published below in its entirety, captures everything that was so successful about this extraordinary production....

*'Overall, this play was an incredible experience, as it was interactive. We danced, we sang, we ate donuts and almost everyone died.'*

*Caelin S. (then Form II)*







## ANDREW WHALLEY OBE

(FP 1980): A VIRTUAL JOURNEY

On 1 June, to mark the Art and Design Department's Creative Industries Day, we heard a wonderful bespoke career talk from one of the world's most respected architects, Andrew Whalley OBE (FP 1980). Recorded live from New York, this talk took us back to the late-1970s Dollar Academy Art classroom where Andrew first discovered the art of making, as well as a love of the beauty of Dollar's natural landscapes.

Pupils were immersed in some of his earliest adventures: building bridges across Dollar Glen with the Scouts; concept re-development work for an Alloa estate; making an art school portfolio which sought to find new ways to represent the Dollar landscape. Next, he flew us along Muckhart Road to The Oysters, the RIBA award-winning building that he built and designed for his parents on a modest budget while still a student at GSA. Next, we were transported magically from Dollar to London, to New



York and beyond on a flying, virtual visit to the home of Grimshaw Architects; to the world-famous Eden Project Biomes; to London Paddington's historic reinvention; to the iconic structures of Shanghai Disney Resort; to New York's Experimental Media and Performing Arts Centre (EMPAC); to Terra, the Sustainability Pavilion for the World Expo 2020 in Dubai. It was an incredible journey. Jumping across several years, we heard about how Andrew Whalley

succeeded Sir Nicholas Grimshaw as Director of Grimshaw Architects and became a Fellow of The Royal Society of Arts. Finally, we flew back to Dollar Academy, where pupils looked at the development of our newest Dollar Academy building, the Futures Institute, with new insight. This project—Scotland's first building designed according to the principles of the Living Building Challenge—is being delivered by none other than the world's leading director of environmental sustainability, Andrew Whalley: an extraordinary, visionary architect whose roots are very firmly planted in Dollar.

Cath Kelly

To watch clips of Andrew talking about his inspiration for the design of the new building visit <https://dollaracademy.org.uk/hub/> and <https://vimeo.com/810352819>





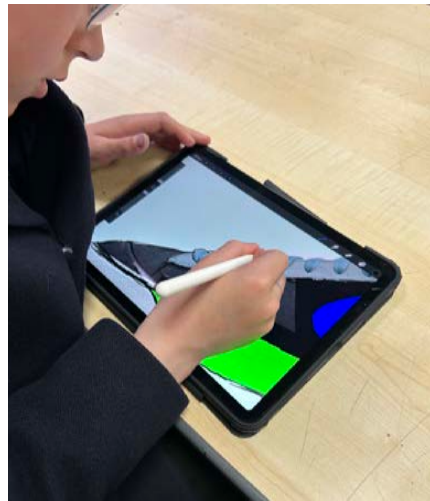


## CREATIVE INDUSTRIES DAY

Creative Industries Day was about building, designing and racing cars; walking the catwalk for the first time; creating miniature film sets with award-winning photographer David Gilliver; designing Nike products using industry software; working alongside Carenza Dickens (FP 2018, with a with a degree in Theatre and Costume Design) to create their own fashions and headwear. This was a Creative Industries Day to truly inspire our Form I pupils.

We were also delighted to be joined by Scottish designer, craftsman and layout editor of *Fortunas* magazine, Peter Nelson, as well as Charlie Anderson, who has collaborated with Ringo Starr, Urban Outfitters, Gordon Ramsay and Saatchi. Both artists brought a world of industry-related experience to our classroom.

Cath Kelly



Holly A. (then Form VI)



Mya M. (then Form V)



Darcy C. (then Form VI)



Riley G. (then Form VI)





Cameron L. (then Form VI)



Charlotte R. (then Form V)



Nina T-P. (then Form VI)



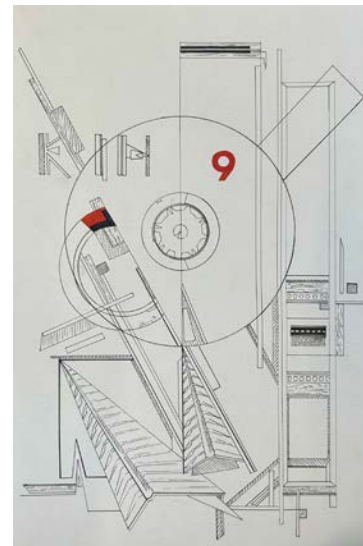
Stacy A. (then Form VI)



Imogen I. (then Form V)



Cameron L. (then Form VI)



Lois T. (then Form VI)



Nina S. (then Form V)



Cara P. (then Form VI)



Jane B. (then Form VI)





# Sponsored Walk 2023

In June, at the very end of the 2022—2023 session, Dollar Academy's Charities Committee held the school's (in)famous biennial Sponsored Walk. This half-a-marathon-long walk is now a Dollar institution, and it raises many thousands of pounds for many excellent causes near to home and farther afield.

And so, on Tuesday 20 June, the entire school escaped the classroom into the hill to enjoy the beautiful views surrounding Dollar. Although the Preps undertake a shorter circuit, everyone (from the smallest to the tallest) takes part in some way. The sky was clear of clouds (for most of the day), and the sight of Forms V and VI pupils dressed up in a colourful array of fabulous costumes did a great deal to dispel the occasional rain showers (and any hints of fatigue). The bride and groom (together with their seemingly never-ending chain of bridesmaids) were amongst my absolute favourites. The morale was further lifted by the teachers handing us sweets at the mile markers and at the staff checkpoints. Lunch was held on a field that marked the halfway point, where it was a great relief to arrive and throw oneself down into the soft grass.

Pupils could choose between freshly made burgers and Troy-Anne's all-time, best-beloved meals. The Dining Hall (who provided the burgers) kindly donated their profits from the day to our chosen charities as well. A stall with fragrant coffee and creamy hot chocolate was also not to be missed. After replenishing our much-depleted energy stocks, we all embarked upon the return leg of the journey. Though some sections were more challenging than others, the overall experience was certainly well worth the effort.

We raised money in support of seven charities: Mary's Meals; the Rainforest Alliance; The Uphill Trust; My Name's Doddie Foundation; Scottish Women's Aid; The Gate Charity, Alloa; and Strathcarron Hospice. We raised an astonishing £59,000, thanks to the support of parents and friends. At the end of the Sponsored Walk, we all shared the delightful feeling of fulfilment knowing that the mud and sweat, the exertion and the exhaustion, had all been in support of so many good causes.

Kamila S.

## Charities Committee 2023–2024

- |            |             |            |
|------------|-------------|------------|
| Holly A.   | Molly K.    | Maya S.    |
| Shayna A.  | David L.    | Millie S.  |
| Rory B.    | Angus L.    | Kamila S.  |
| Harry C.   | Maya M.     | Callum T.  |
| Freddie D. | Maisie M.   | Antonio V. |
| Darcy D.   | Sophie O.   | Iona W.    |
| Zoe F.     | Mariia P.   |            |
| Eilidh G.  | Alasdair R. |            |
| Hamza I.   | Archie R.   |            |



**THE 2023 DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD EXPEDITIONS: BRONZE, SILVER AND GOLD**

Another highly successful DofE season saw Bronze, Silver and Gold candidates complete both training and assessment expeditions in the Ochils, the Cairngorms, the western Highlands and Wester Ross.







# THE GALLEY

A staple within the Dollar Academy calendar is the biannual publishing of *The Galley*, the school’s pupil-run magazine. It doesn’t seem so long ago that I, sitting in my Form I English class, was handed my first copy. A quick perusal persuaded me to join, and my decision was vindicated, again and again, by every edition that has followed.

A lot has changed in those five years—not least the editors and writers. But what has stayed constant throughout has been the vehemence of passion espoused by each iteration’s team. This year has seen the magazine make a welcome return to its printed format, after having been confined purely to the online realm for the past two editions. Such a restoration of normality is perhaps a fitting reward for this term’s efforts.

As one of the Editors-in-Chief, and also a pupil, it is a genuine pleasure to read over such high-quality writing; to sense the true journalistic spirit which permeates the entire magazine; and to note the unwavering enthusiasm given by all of the writers, editors and teachers involved in the project. Speaking as a member of the production team, I feel compelled to remark of the privilege one feels in being able to work with such a devoted team. A selection of their fine work has been included (opposite) for your enjoyment.

Readers of *Fortunas* who are not pupils should note that past editions of *The Galley* are available in either online

and/or hard-copy format (and I would encourage you to engage with either). And pupils who enjoy reading *The Galley* should be aware that the doors of P23 are always open to aspiring contributors—few and far between are those who regret having joined. Who knows where working on our magazine might take you (aside from writing a brief piece for *Fortunas*)?

Logan M. (Form V)

## The Galley Team

**Editors-in-Chief:** Izzy B. (Form VI) and Logan M. (Form V)  
**News and Politics Editor:** Vanessa W. (Form VI)  
**Views Editor:** Natalie Y. (Form V)  
**Features Editor:** Honor F. (Form VI)  
**Entertainment and Culture Editor:** Imogen I. (Form VI)  
**Creative Editor:** Saffron P. (Form VI)  
**Sports Editor:** Affan D.A. (Form V)  
**Science Editors:** Evan W., Alex T. (both Form V)  
**Form I Corner:** Elliot C., Phoebe L., Aleena R., Jai P. (all Form I)

### From Entertainment & Culture

#### ‘Dark Side of the Moon’

Everyone has seen the classic diagram of a white line passing through a triangle emerging as a rainbow, whether in a Physics textbook, or, alternatively, as the cover of one of the most influential and iconic albums of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *The Dark Side of the Moon*, by British rock band Pink Floyd.

Before the bone-shaking guitar solos, hard-hitting lyrics and gut-wrenching vocals, the first track starts with one sound: a heartbeat. Though it’s a simple concept, the heartbeat acts as a sense of humanity, the core of *Dark Side* and life itself. It is the idea of being thrown into the world where one simple thing ties society together—a heartbeat. ‘Speak To Me’, the first track, is an auditorial collage of what’s to come. The defining sounds of each song carefully pieced together into one—an overwhelming insight into human life.

Safiyah A. (Form III)

### From Science

#### ‘The Universe is Random—Uncertainty Principle’

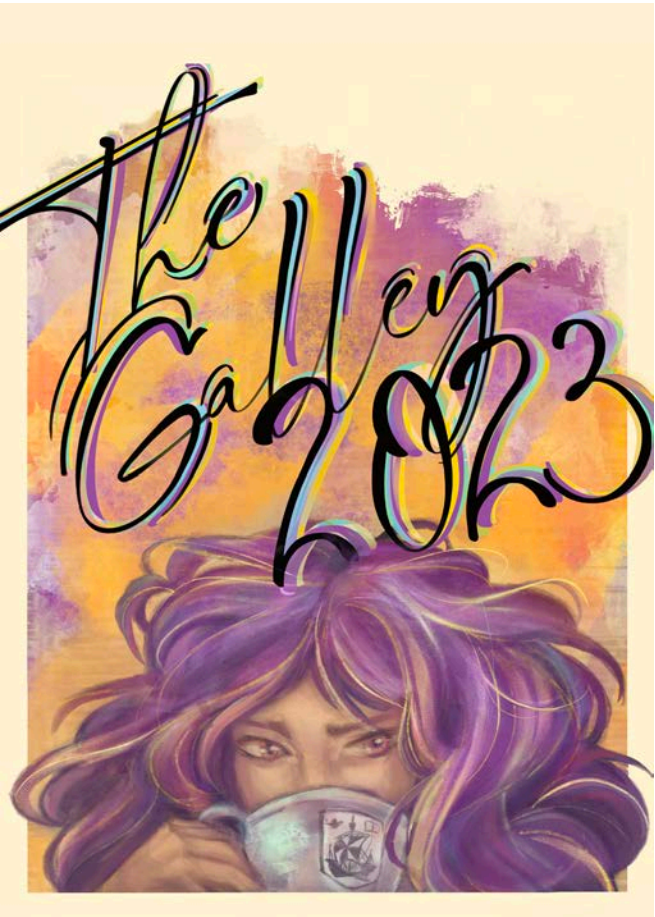
Our universe is an enigma. The deeper we explore, the more we realise how little we know. In 1803, John Dalton shared with the world his theory of the atom, particles which we thought to be indivisible, and which are, therefore, the building blocks of our physical world. But only a century and a half later, in 1964, physicists Murray Gell-Mann and George Zweig proposed the existence of quarks, particles which are hypothesised to make up the atom. This revolutionary idea shocked the physics world, but as Robert Oppenheimer said, ‘Theory will only take you so far.’

Evan W. (Form V)

### From News & Politics

#### ‘General Election 2024—The Long Road Ahead’

One would—perhaps—be justified in arguing that to dwell on matters not yet done is a mere waste of time; yet that is precisely what much of the UK’s media appear to have been engaging in this year. As the drumbeat that announces the opening of the polls appears to sound ever louder, the



people’s outlets for information have become ever-more fixated on something that is likely a full year away: the next General Election. The sound of this will excite some, depress others and fill the rest (I’d posit, the largest faction) with general apathy, or a simple feeling of being reminded about something not thought about for a long time.

As the event has drawn nearer, the descriptions most appropriately applied to the country’s main political parties have been seen with greater clarity. Labour appears jubilant and energetic; the Conservatives look weary, as though they fear the worst: removal from office. Yet some appear to have forgotten that nothing has been decided yet. All one has to base one’s predictions upon are mere opinion polls—and these far preceding an event whose exact date has not yet even been decided.

Logan M. (Form V)



# THE PIPE BAND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: A ‘FIRST’ AND A ‘LAST’

The 2023 pipe band season was again a very successful one for our pipers and drummers across all three bands.

For the very first year, we saw all three competition bands (Juvenile, Novice A and Novice B) compete at all the major championships—the only organisation to boast this achievement in 2023. This fact alone highlights the work and commitment that goes into being able to present three bands of such quality within their respective grades.

Another first (and another massive achievement): all three drum sections gained the Champion of Champions



title, including our very inexperienced Novice B Drum Corps. The title is awarded to the band or drum corps with the most aggregate points over the entire major championship season in each grade. My thanks go to our dedicated drumming instructors: Mr Innes, Miss Augaitis and Mr Lawson.

The Juvenile Band recorded another grand slam year by winning every major title, culminating with the World Championships at Glasgow Green in August. This victory became the band’s eighth world title since it first won the title back in 2010. All four adjudicators placed the band first.



Our Novice A, under the leadership of Mr Beaumont, had a great season, putting on some excellent performances and winning the UK Championships both as a band and as a drum corps in Lurgan, Northern Ireland. The trip to Northern Ireland was a highlight for many, and revealed what the pipe bands at Dollar are really all about. A mixture of pupils from Prep 5 through to Form VI had an engaging and enjoyable time together, and this helps our younger players aspire to the levels achieved by their older mentors. It is no surprise that our Novice B Band have done well this year.

It must be remembered that both our Novice Bands compete against many schools’ and organisations’ senior bands, emphasising the high standards set by our instructors. This World Championships also marked a significant ‘last’. It was the final time that Mr Craig Stewart would take the Novice B Band onto the contest field, as he now takes a step back from all things Pipe Band at Dollar to concentrate on his other roles within school. I would like to thank Mr Stewart for his lengthy service to the pipers and drummers of Dollar Academy and for all that he has brought to the Pipe Band programme.

*Matt Wilson (now Head of Pipe Bands at Dollar Academy)*





# MEMORIES, MEDALS AND MINUTES OF ANGLE

The day started off with the sound of pipes ringing across Bisley and across the county of Surrey. We marched in tartan onto Century Range, accompanied by the claps and cheers of our competitors. Target Rifle Shooting must be one of the only competitive sports where you applaud your fellow cadets before the event commences! Team Dollar looked smart and proud. Onward to the first shoot at 300 yards.

The day went by in a blur as we shot at three different distances in various competitions: the Cadet Pairs, the Cadet Fours, the Schools' Fours, the Reserve, the Spencer Mellish and the Ashburton Eight. We faced a multitude of challenges, not least sudden downpours of rain and gusts of wind that pushed both our shooting and our organisational skills to the very limit. Despite all of this, we still prevailed. Oscar P. and Grace M. (now both Form V, and pictured above) finished first in the Cadet Pairs, and we placed third in the Schools' Fours, the Cadet Fours and the Reserve. We also retained the London Scottish Vase for the 23<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year.

The success of the day truly sank in when we listened, at Prize Giving, to the opening remarks by Brigadier

Neville Holmes MBE, Deputy Commander Army Cadets, Regional Command: 'There are over 52,000 cadets from 500 CCF contingents in the UK. The strongest contingents send their finest cadets to Bisley to compete shoulder to shoulder against likeminded marksmen. All those who are invited onto the stage to collect a medal have achieved something of national note...'

To celebrate our success, we ended the day with a private dinner at the LMRA clubhouse; this event allowed us to reflect on the week and to say goodbye to our beloved Form VI teammates, including our captain (Alexandra R.). We will return to Bisley next July, hoping to place even higher and, ultimately, to bring home more memories (and more medals).

*Rhiannon M. (now Form V)*

Following one of Dollar's most successful CCF Schools Week competitions, nine of the most experienced members of



the team stayed on to shoot the prestigious 154<sup>th</sup> Imperial Meeting. This annual event is not only a test of marksmanship skills, but also a chance to enjoy camaraderie, develop independence and undergo personal growth. The experience proved to be particularly enlightening for those who, like me, who had never competed at the Imperial Meeting before.

On the first day of the competition there was a palpable sense of excitement and nervous anticipation in the air. The unfamiliar ranges, the high-stakes nature of the competition and the presence of seasoned competitors from around the world were certainly intimidating. But despite some initial jitters, Imperial turned out to be a fantastic learning experience for the team.

The competition demands a high degree of organisation, independence and adaptability. Each team member is responsible for their own equipment, from rifles to ammunition, for ensuring that everything is in perfect working order. This instils a powerful sense of discipline and self-reliance. Imperial quickly taught me the importance of meticulous planning and attention to detail, and these translate into better shooting and higher scores. At the end of the day, shooting is just as much a science as it is a sport.

As for the shooting itself, the weather was very mixed, and initially it was nothing short of extreme. High winds swept across the range, resulting in a few competitions being cancelled. Those (like me) who had had minimal wind coaching struggled the most. Other days were scorching hot or brought torrential rain, but it was during these most trying moments that our team truly came together, striving for success and helping each other through some challenging shoots.

During Imperial, competitors coach themselves

and adjust for changes in wind speed and direction in real time, relying on skills and knowledge acquired over years of practice. The older team members and friendly competitors happily share their expertise in reading the wind and honing their mental focus. However, when you are down on the firing point—ready to shoot—nobody can help you. Through grit, and perseverance, every competitor from Dollar managed to overcome the formidable winds and deliver some impressive performances.

In the end, the Dollar Academy Rifle Club returned home from Bisley in 2023 with more than just trophies and medals. We brought home valuable lessons and memories that will last a lifetime. We have all grown—not just as marksmen, but as a tightly knit team able to weather any storm (both literal and figurative) with grace and determination. Our experience at Bisley was a testament to the power of camaraderie, mentorship and a shared passion for the sport of shooting.

*Oscar P. (now Form V)*





## RECRUITS

The next cohort of Form II recruits joined Dollar's CCF in August, full of excitement, energy and questions regarding what the new experiences ahead had to offer. We began with the Recruits Training Day when the recruits are first introduced to the basic skills of CCF. This includes first aid, basic drill and camouflage, as well as getting to know their new instructors. After this, the instructors had the knowledge they needed to build friendships and bonds with their recruits.

When the recruits arrive at parade on a Friday afternoon (though the weather conditions might not always be in our favour), they are always eager to learn more, and they constantly surprise their instructors and me with their new depth of knowledge and their desire to gain further understanding of the lessons they are taught.

We are currently doing lesson rotations whereby the recruits are beginning to become wonderful cadets whilst learning essential CCF skills such as section attacks, grid references and skills at arms. At the time of writing, we are also preparing for Inspection Day: the recruits' first formal CCF event; getting drill up to our RSM's standard is crucial.

*Olivia M. (Form VI)*



## ARMY

The Army section has been hard at work—and play—over the past six months. April saw our then-Form IV cadets sitting their much-feared, but long-awaited Advanced Infantry test, the final step bridging the gap between cadet and instructor. I now find myself fortunate enough to be watching those staying on with Basic and Advanced Infantry find their footing as newly fledged Instructors and Directing Staff. As usual, the month of May brought us the joys of India Shield and Burma Cup. And then there was the Tilly Run: a team affair of running/marching/



walking from Tillicoultry to Dollar, which somehow always ends with the cadets putting the finishing line jerry cans to good use—the instructors, without fail, were drenched. This 'friendly' competition is always a highlight.

Passing Out Parade saw a great portion of last year's recruits choosing to continue their CCF careers in Infantry, leading to one of our biggest Basic Infantry sections—and busiest itineraries—of any year gone by. We also had an incredibly strong cohort of then-Form IIIs continuing to Advanced Infantry. The end of the 2022–23 CCF session brought great changes, some bittersweet goodbyes and a jam-packed CCF Summer Camp (see following page). But, most importantly, it also brought new beginnings—and the promise and potential that the coming 2023–24 session held.

Basic Infantry dove headfirst into the year with Ex. First Steps (as the name suggests, cadets' first foray into overnight fieldcraft exercises) kicking off in early September. At the time of writing, I can already bear witness to the incredible growth throughout the section as everyone learns (through regular Fridays, as well as the thrills of camps, cadres and parades) how to excel as Infanteers. This would not be possible without the help of our uniquely committed CCF seniors, and the abundant wisdom of Major Mark Scott and our newly promoted Capt Eloise Sharma, who recently completed her Exercise Conducting Officer course at Frimley Park. Advanced Infantry also find themselves with a similarly packed schedule this year—the intensity of Ex. Golden Lion and, for some, Drill Cadre are just two events on the (very) full calendar of events we are looking forward to. This session, like any, will bring its own set of challenges and obstacles, but I speak for all involved when I say that I cannot wait to navigate the hectic and amazing year we have ahead of us in Basic and Advanced Infantry.

*Inaya S. (Form VI)*

## NAVY

The start of this year saw a big change for the Navy section of the CCF. The member of staff in charge of our



section, Mr Burbury, had left the school. This took the wind out of our sails quite a bit, as he had been a constant rock, our anchor, always available to help steer us in the right direction. As such, Passing Out Parade in June was a tearful affair. But, like a gust of fresh air, the new ESL and German teacher, Mr Bauer, took the helm and has jumped at every opportunity presented to him on Friday nights. These evenings have included our annual swim test, in which a myriad of water-based PLTs work to improve the teamwork and leadership skills of our cadets whilst also giving a proper naval welcome to our new recruits. We have begun teaching the younger cadets the syllabus required for their promotion tests and the fifth-year team have done an excellent job in their new teaching roles. In short, this new era of Navy looks to be amazing—filled with sailing and camps and courses to teach our cadets some valuable life skills... and we will have a whale of a time along the way.

*Michael J. (Form VI)*

## RAF

Over the past six months, the RAF section has been busy. We went to Inskip for the annual RAF Summer Camp, and we've seen cadets take on leadership roles within the section. This year has also seen three of our more senior cadets taking on roles as Directing Staff within the Recruits section. Summer Camp was great, offering water sports, orienteering, fieldcraft and even a trip to Blackpool Pleasure Beach—all was rounded off with the all-important (and much-loved) drill competition, where Flight 5—led by Cpl Fraya A. (Form V)—came out on top.

Back at Dollar, both the Basic and Advanced sections enjoyed a mixture of indoor and outdoor lessons, ranging from the history of the RAF to more hands-on lessons, that involved making models of aircraft to learn about the rules of the air. Drone-flying opportunities are also popular, and every week our indoor or outdoor drones are flying through obstacle courses or taking on 'surveillance missions' around the playing fields. With





places filling up fast, gliding is up and running again this term. At the time of writing, the next date is just around the corner. This will be a first experience for many cadets... and an exhilarating one. Also coming up is the RAF overnight, giving cadets an out-of-the-ordinary night filled with section manoeuvres and fieldcraft. All in all, this year is set to be a good one for the whole section.

*Emily T. (Form VI)*

## SUMMER CAMP

Summer Camp has always been one of the biggest events on the CCF calendar. After a busy academic year, it always provides an energetic, adventurous start to the summer holidays. This year we had to run the camp as non-residential—and, to enable over 130 people to attend, this year's event was split into two three-day camps. During the camp itself, we undertake a wide variety of exercises and activities, all designed to ensure that we all have fun together. This year was special as we had cadets from Knox Grammar School in Sydney joining us for two days.

The first day was spent at Willowgate Activity Centre near Perth; there were team-building exercises on land and in the water, with exercises ranging from orienteering to races in an eight-person canoe. This day is

a favourite with absolutely everyone.

The adventure training days are also a highlight. The morning begins with laser tag, and, as no one particularly wanted to lose, we were all left feeling rather breathless. We then had a choice to go either gorge walking or tubing. Gorge walking basically means jumping from rocks into the freezing water below. Surprisingly, this proved to be a very popular option. Nothing beats the feeling of collapsing in a warm minibus seat after full immersion in freezing water! The tubing activity, by contrast, offered a relaxed float down the river—for some, a welcome change of pace from all the running around we normally do.

The shooting day was also enjoyed by all—especially the recruits, as this was the first time firing a rifle for most. The fieldcraft day was a big hit with the younger cadets, too, who had their first experience of an Infantry section attack. This makes for a lasting memory with the cadets.

*RSM Scott K. (Form VI)*

## ADVANCED HIGHER GEOGRAPHY: ABERFELDY RESIDENTIAL FIELD TRIP

The cohort of 28 young geographers taking Advanced Higher Geography this year at Dollar Academy is likely to be one of the largest in the country and is a significant increase on previous years. Since 2013, the school has been visiting a bunkhouse on the hill above the Highland town of Aberfeldy, spending three days learning the fieldwork skills needed to complete the course.

Rivers were measured; soil was analysed; beaches were profiled; microclimates were recorded; urban land use was categorised; pedestrians were counted; environmental quality was judged. All of the data were then interpreted through graphical, cartographic and statistical analysis, and pupils often worked well into the night to complete write-ups.

As always on this trip, the group cooked their own meals, and this year's spaghetti bolognese and chicken curry were particularly successful. Catering for numbers of this size is not easy, and the support of the Home Economics Department in preparing for this trip was invaluable as ever.

Rafting on the final day provided the thrilling culmination of an exhausting, but very memorable few days. Everyone was very excited to go away and begin their own individual fieldwork-based projects using the knowledge and skills developed on the trip.

*Alastair McConnell*







# 2023 ROMANIA COMMUNITY PROJECT

Our incredible two-week journey began at Glasgow Bus Station on 8 July. Fuelled by anticipation, we climbed aboard the coach and headed to Manchester Airport. We knew that what lay ahead, the Romania Community Project, would be a challenging, but fulfilling experience. We would be living and working in Little John's House (a home for disadvantaged children with special needs) in Cisnadioara, Romania for two weeks. What we didn't realise was how eye opening the experience would be.

Little John's is also home to six wonderful residents: Ana, Costica, Laur, Vlad, Julia and Andrada. Each resident has their own story about how they came to Little John's. Forging friendships with them was one of the greatest privileges we had. Whether it was Ana's cuddles, Vlad's impressive basketball skills or Costica's persistent calls for apă ('water' in Romanian), the residents always made us smile.

The first week of our stay conjured up many different emotions. At first, we were apprehensive—not knowing how many children there would be, how we would



handle different situations, how they would react to us. We need not have worried. From the moment the first smiling child stepped off the bus, we knew we were in for two fun-filled weeks.

The best part of every day was Summer School. A typical day at Summer School started at 8:30am when the first bus full of children arrived, always smiling, ready for the fun day ahead. We set up stations all around the House with different crafts and activities. The children could explore and find an activity that interested them. As helpers, we played games with the children or supported them in their crafts and projects.

At 11am we set up for Circle Time; each helper group performed an original dance to perform for the children at Summer School. Our undeniably impressive talent for dancing was revealed when we danced to Pitbull's 'Fireball'. For the rest of my life, whenever I hear that song, I will be transported back to those days in Romania. Despite our lack of rhythm, the children and residents loved this, and



we started encouraging them to join in with their own dance moves—most of which were far better than ours. We served snacks and refreshments, too, and those mornings were full of fun and happiness.

Our afternoons were spent undertaking activities outside of Little John's House, all designed to give us a sense of Romanian culture. We did a high ropes course, tackled an escape room, visited the waterpark, the local pool and the nearby Transylvanian city of Sibiu. We got to know our bus drivers, Nico and Lorenzo, really well, as they accompanied us, always with the karaoke tunes at maximum possible volume. Every activity brought us closer together as a group and provided us with even more fun each day.

During the weekend, we had a short break from Summer School. We travelled to Brasov on Friday afternoon, a town that's about three hours away from Sibiu. We all appreciated the break (especially the refreshing showers), but we were all eager to return to Little John's. We took the cable car to the Brasov sign, visited the Libearty Bear Sanctuary in Zarnesti and explored the famous Bran Castle (associated with Bram Stoker's *Dracula*). This was all an excellent chance to explore Romanian culture, but it was the children at Little John's who really made our trip special.



During the second week, we gave our all to the children. At one point or another, each of us had run laps round the garden with a child on our shoulders. It was the most perfect form of chaos, and we would not have had it any other way.

Finally, on our last day, we held the long-awaited and infamous apă fight. Costica had been looking forward to this for two weeks but, on the day, he didn't seem as keen. I think he was already anticipating our departure... The person who loved this event most was definitely Nico, our mischievous bus driver and Romanian father figure. He took great joy in ambushing us with large buckets of water before hiding away behind the barbecue. This was the most perfect way to end our project.

Over the two weeks, each child taught us something different—whilst keeping us on our toes. The most challenging moment of the whole project was leaving. After many tears and tight hugs goodbye, we departed early Saturday morning. But we all left behind a piece of ourselves at Little John's House. The project and all its parts provided an invaluable experience that highlighted how lucky we are in terms of our homes and the people who care for us.

I had been so excited to participate in the Romania Community Project, but I never could



have anticipated the effect that Little John's House—the six residents and the children at the Summer School—would have upon me. The poignant stories of the children made us realise how resilient and strong they are. I made memories that will last forever, experienced new things that made me appreciate the life we have at Dollar and created new friendships that will last a lifetime. I will be forever grateful to Little John's for providing this opportunity and for broadening my horizons to a world far beyond the Dollar bubble.

*Vanessa W. (now Form VI)*



December 2023  
Fortunas 52

December 2023  
Fortunas 52



# FELLBACH EXCHANGE 2023



Scotland v Germany! An opportunity for a friendly 'kick about'.



Molly had the opportunity to do work experience at a local vet practice.



Mariia did her work placement at a care home where she spoke to the residents and played games with them.



William carried out his work placement at an art and design shop in Fellbach.



The Dollar group at Mercedes-Benz World in Stuttgart.



Some of our pupils enjoying time with their exchange partners.



The Dollar Group outside our exchange school: the Gustav-Stresemann-Gymnasium, Fellbach.



Many friendships were formed as a result of the exchange and no doubt a lot of the participants will keep in touch with their exchange partners for a long time.



Dollar and GSG pupils: a wonderful image to celebrate nearly 30 years of partnership between the two schools. Long may it continue!

## Fellbach Doggerel

Thirty-seven of us on exchange  
in a land where the language is strange:  
we got into our swing  
and we all had a fling—  
not the easiest thing to arrange.

Downtown Fellbach's a great place to shop  
and our partners were cream of the crop.  
The parents were gentle,  
the meals continental,  
enjoyment was mental...non-stop.

Our teachers were brilliant and brainy.  
Mr Fynn (even Mr Delaney?),  
Doctors Hendry and MacLeod  
did each one of us proud,  
so we think they're allowed to be zany.

But it's over, and you'll comprehend  
we have finite finances to spend:  
so hard cash will determine  
our progress in German,  
And that's where this sermon must end.

Logan M. (now Form V)





## PHYSICS TRIP TO GENEVA

In the early hours of a Thursday morning, despite our lack of sleep, the Higher Physics pupils set out, full of excitement, for Geneva. When we eventually arrived, we were greeted by stunningly beautiful scenery and very high temperatures. (We were happy to take advantage of the heat, going swimming in Lake Geneva every day to cool off.) Each day of our trip was filled with fantastic activities; we visited museums, a chocolate factory, an escape room and even the United Nations Office. Of course, the purpose and highlight of our trip was to visit CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, and one of the world's largest and most respected centres for scientific research. At CERN we could put our knowledge of physics to the test. We visited the LHC (Large Haldron Collider) where the Higgs boson was first discovered. We even had the opportunity to go down inside the LHC, and this certainly captured the interest of our entire group. I highly recommend this trip to any Higher Physics pupils, as it's a great way to expand your knowledge of particle physics, and it also gives you opportunities to develop new friendships whilst exploring the beautiful city of Geneva.

Elizabeth D. (now Form VI)



## BELGIUM SPACE TRIP

This trip began with an eight-hour bus drive from Dollar to Dover on 4 May 2023, with rest stops along the way, of course. A ferry carried us from Dover to Calais, and another short bus drive took us to...a chocolate factory! We had a chance to make our own chocolate which (as you can imagine) was delicious. Then it was back onto the bus en route to Libin, in southern Belgium, and the Euro Space Centre.

We had a chance to settle in before a wide-ranging orientation session informed us about rockets, guidelines, meals and so on. For the next two days, we enjoyed a plethora of activities: we played at Mission Control; we used a simulator to experience walking on the Moon and Mars; we took an educational tour of the centre; we watched demonstrations on how vacuum chambers work; we drove the Mars rovers; we even got to try a multi-axis trainer, which spins you around in different directions and on different angles as you attempt to write something. My favourite part was making (and launching!) rockets. We, of course, named our group's rocket after ourselves.

We then spent an evening in Sedan Castle, in France, which we explored by the light of flaming torches. Most of it was underground and hauntingly beautiful. It was also very informative; we learned about the history of the



castle, how it was fortified and protected, and all about the daily activities that happened inside it.

After these action-packed days, we spent our final day of the trip at Adventure Valley, Durbuy: much fun was had tubing, adventuring in the treetops, playing fast tag, climbing and much more. It was a day filled with fun and laughter, and the smiles lasted throughout the long bus journey back to Dollar. There we were greeted by hugs from sentimental parents before heading home.

I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to visit the Euro Space Centre. I made some new friends, learned a lot, and enjoyed myself! Interestingly, for most of us, this was the first time we had been abroad without our parents; for some, it was their first residential trip with the school. Whatever the experience, it was well worth every minute.

Skyla J. (now Form III)

December 2023  
Fortinus 52





# The Macnaughton Classics Travel Award

*This award is open to Form V pupils of Classics and helps fund a trip to a Classical site with a specific writing project in mind. This year's recipient, Anna B. (now Form VI), investigated the ancient site of Akrotiri, on the Greek island of Santorini (Thera).*

As I flew over Santorini, the first thing that struck me was the geography of the island. The unusual crescent shape with the famed caldera sitting in the middle, surrounded by the sea. The land formation is testament to the

violence of events that took place here 3,600 years ago, the colossal natural forces that destroyed the sophisticated culture that once existed on this island. It is a reminder that, in the face of Mother Nature, no matter how advanced or resilient a society believes itself to be, disaster can lie just around the corner.

It was mid-August of 2023, towards the end of what had been a brutal summer's heatwave, sparking wildfires across the Mediterranean region, some of which had devastated other islands in the Aegean. Thankfully, on the day I went to the archaeological site of the city of Akrotiri, a cool sea breeze alleviated the strong sunshine and stifling air. Similar to the far more famed Pompeii, Akrotiri was buried and preserved in a catastrophic volcanic eruption in the 16<sup>th</sup> century

BC. Rediscovered in the 1960s, Akrotiri has been slowly excavated over the decades. While only 30% of the city has been uncovered, these remains have given archaeologists vital information into the extremely advanced culture that once thrived here. Like Pompeii, which has thrown invaluable light on Roman history, Akrotiri has done much for our understanding of the Cycladic culture, the wider Minoan world and, ultimately, the world of Classical Greece that we study at school.

To gain a better understanding of the ancient city, I hired a tour guide to take me around the site. Protected by a roof, the site's walkways weave above the ancient streets allowing the viewer a proximity that brings the tragedy of Akrotiri and its citizens to life. I could easily envisage all the many people rushing through the streets.

I could see the gate, through which visitors to the city would have to pass and pay tribute, flanked by a customs post and temple. I saw a main street with alleyways leading off of it. I saw the buildings on either side: shops, houses and workshops, built up several storeys. Inside of them, I saw traces of furniture preserved in the seven metres of volcanic ash and pumice that entombed the city. Akrotiri was also a centre for trade and culture, and its busy port was frequented by travellers from all across the sea. I could imagine the liveliness and bustle of each alley playing out over three thousand years ago. I thought of all the great people who could have lived in the city and all the children who might have grown up to be great: philosophers, playwrights, politicians, generals, perhaps even heroes who would have epic poetry dedicated to their brave exploits.

It was the beds—placed outside some of the homes and shops—which moved me most. The guide explained that the volcanic eruption was preceded by an earthquake. Having left the city until the danger had passed, the people felt it was safe to return home. They had experienced these earthquakes many times before and felt experienced enough to deal with them. However, as a precaution, many of the citizens pulled their beds out and slept in front of their homes, to guard their valuables and businesses. They had even begun to clear up rubble and prepare to rebuild the damaged buildings around them. They saw a future for Akrotiri and had no reason to think otherwise. They had no idea what was to come.

Those beds made me consider the fragility of life, as did the vases found underneath a table—carefully put there in anticipation of further tremors, their owners never anticipating the catastrophic events about to unfold. Often, we think that we know best, that lived experience is what makes us wise. However, there are no rules in nature, and no amount of preparation or prior knowledge could make the Therans' fate any less tragic. They were admired by all those

who passed through their city, for their wealth and civilisation. But, in the end, it didn't matter who they were or what their achievements were, as they still ended up lost to the sea and the ash.

When studying Classics, especially ancient civilisations, you have to be mindful that you are only viewing fragments of the bigger picture. We have only a smallest glimpse into the lives of those who lived in Akrotiri. The Museum of Prehistoric Thera, which I visited the day after Akrotiri, houses most of the artifacts that have been uncovered from the site. My favourite was the 'Gold Ibex'. This little figurine of a goat, made entirely of gold, was found in a wooden box. It is highly likely to have been an offering made to the gods, explaining why it was left behind when citizens evacuated. It's just a small insight into the luxury that the people of Akrotiri must have enjoyed.

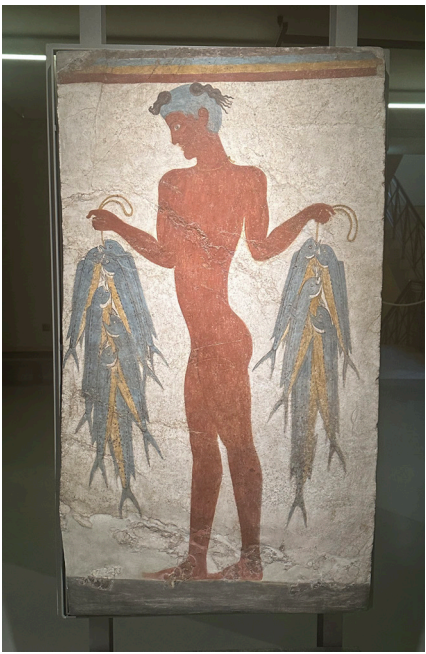
Many of the frescoes that survived and were found in the ancient city helped me to learn about this culture. Perhaps the most famous is the 'Fisherman Fresco', which shows a young man holding up his catch. Of course, Thera being an island, fish would have been a main source of food. This fresco illustrates that the Therans were proud of their trade and work, revealing a certain simplicity in their lives that is often overlooked when we think of Classical civilisations. While we know the names of all the great politicians and philosophers of the time, a man like this fisherman remains nameless, a speck in the history of the ancient world. However, such individuals were the backbone of thriving societies like Akrotiri.

I was also very taken with the frescoes depicting the women of Akrotiri. The 'Ladies Fresco' shows a very beautiful and well-dressed woman, standing tall and elegant. This differs from the depictions of the males, who are usually painted unclothed and working. With the men being so busy expanding the city and bringing in goods, often from other islands on ships, archaeologists suspect that this town may well have

been a matriarchal society. I was quite taken aback by this idea, considering the misogynistic attitudes seen so widely in Classical society. If Akrotiri truly was matriarchal, then it was widely different from the other Greek societies—an interesting, exciting thought. This made me think of what their civilisation could have become: they were already sophisticated compared to many of their peers. What might a few hundred more years of advancement have allowed them to achieve?

My trip to Akrotiri gave me an appreciation and insight into the groundbreaking way of life of those who lived there, but my trip also demonstrated that we must appreciate what we have and not ever take things for granted. The long passage of time doesn't make me feel for the people any less, and I wish we had had the chance to see how their culture might have thrived had it survived—but that wasn't to be. Through no fault of their own, the people of Akrotiri had their lives wiped out. Perhaps we should take note of this when we consider the threats to our own civilisation which are becoming ever more apparent and towards which we all too often show complacency.

Anna B. (now Form VI)





As tradition dictates, the Prep 5 pupils walked down to the Boys' Pavilion behind the Pipe Band to celebrate their final Prep School Sports Day. Prep 1 then opened the proceedings with the much-loved Wooden Trolley Race. The children took part in a number of traditional Sports Day races including the sack race, egg and spoon relays and running races. This was complemented with a rotation of other field events such as the long jump, ball throw and the tug o' war. The day culminated with the awards ceremony to announce the winners (see opposite), including Mar being named Overall House Winner. Finally, our youngest pupils then received commemorative Dollar shield badges to mark their first school Sports Day. A wonderful afternoon was had by all!

A group of children are playing on a grassy field. In the foreground, a girl in a white t-shirt, black shorts, and a blue bucket hat is jumping or running while holding a large yellow balloon. To her left, another child in a white t-shirt and a light-colored bucket hat is also playing with a yellow balloon. In the background, two more children are visible, each sitting on a large yellow balloon. They are all wearing white t-shirts and dark shorts. The field is green with white lines, and there is a chain-link fence and trees in the background.



Prep 5 Girls Champion: Georgia S.  
Prep 5 Boys Champion: Munro S. and Alex B. (joint winners)  
Best Piper: Ranald P. (then Prep 5)  
Best Drummer: Will M. (then Prep 5)  
Overall House Winner: Mar

Junior 2 Boys Champion: Charlie M.  
Junior 2 Girls Champion: Poppy W.  
Junior 1 Boys Champion: Nicholas T.  
Junior 1 Girls Champion: Mia T.

Form 1 Girls (Williamson Cup): Charlotte T.  
Form 1 Boys (Sweet Cup): Alex S.  
Intermediate Girls (Scott Cup): Amy J. (then Form III)  
Intermediate Boys (NCB Trophy): Alex T. (then Form III)  
Senior Girls (Heyworth Cup): Megan F. (then Form V)  
Senior Boys (Edina Cup): Tyler H. (then Form V)  
Tug O'War winners: The Day Pupils



# DOLLAR ACES SERVING SUCCESS ON AND OFF THE COURT

The Dollar Academy pupils training at the GB National Tennis Academy (GB NTA) have enjoyed tremendous success on and off the tennis court over the last 18 months.

In summer 2022 our first graduate Samuel Reeve (FP 2022) gained a Tennis and Academic Scholarship at the University of Memphis where Britain’s current Joe Salisbury



is a graduate. Joe has won the US Open Men’s Doubles title for the last three years in a row.

In summer 2023 two more scholars graduated from Dollar Academy. Millie Skelton (FP 2023) won the Macquarie



Quaich for Endeavour which celebrates extraordinary effort and character. She has received a tennis scholarship from Southern Methodist University (SMU), where she follows in the footsteps of graduates Maureen Connolly—the first woman to win a Grand Slam (all four major tournaments during the same calendar year)—and also American media personality and socialite Kourtney Kardashian! Ella

McDonald (FP 2023) also reached a career-high Junior World Ranking of 8 in January 2023 and became the first National Academy player to graduate onto the Pro Scholarship



Programme (PSP). PSP is the next stage of the British player pathway and aims to help Britain’s highest-potential juniors to transition into the professional game. The PSP programme has supported Britain’s world number 11 Cameron Norrie and former US Open Champion Emma Raducanu as former scholars.

Hephzibah Oluwadare (Form V), at 11 years of age, was the youngest player to come to the GB NTA in 2019. Hephzibah represented Scotland in the 2023 Junior Four



Nations, where she helped Scotland win the event. She was the first Dollar Academy pupil to feature in a Junior Grand Slam at Wimbledon in summer 2021. Since then, Dollar Academy has fielded current or former pupils in each grand

slam event since the Australian Open in 2022, including Charlie Robertson (Form VI), Henry Jefferson (Form VI), Matthew Rankin (FP 2023), Viktor Frydrych (attended 2022–2023), Ella McDonald, Hannah Read (attended 2019–2022), Hannah Rylatt (Form VI), Hephzibah Oluwadare, Millie Skelton and Talia Neilson-Gatenby (attended 2019–2020), with seven players competing in Wimbledon 2023.

Sam, Matthew, Ella, Hephzibah, Talia, Viktor, Henry and Charlie have all represented Great Britain in team events across the Tennis Europe Winter or Summer Cups and in the European Championships.

Earlier in the year, Ella McDonald represented



the Great Britain Team, captained by Tim Henman, in the United Cup in Australia. The team featured Cameron Norrie, Dan Evans, Jonny O’Mara, Harriet Dart and Katie Swan. Ella then went on to compete in the Australian Open Junior Championships, where she reached the quarter-finals in the girls’ doubles event.

Charlie Robertson joined Dollar Academy in 2018 as a promising junior player who gained selection into the



GB National Tennis Academy in August 2022. During the

year Charlie won 8 ITF titles in a phenomenal year where he climbed the Junior World Rankings from 852 in August 2022 to a current career high of 62 in May 2023. Similarly,



Hannah Rylatt enjoyed a significant climb up the Junior World Rankings after almost a full year out through illness and injury. Hannah rose from 2,253 in May 2022 to 371 in August 2023.

In the last academic session, Henry Jefferson



claimed his first ITF Junior World Tour titles, winning four times in doubles, as well as adding the Junior British National Tennis 18&U Championships to qualify for Wimbledon with partner, Charlie Robertson. Henry has also recently been awarded a scholarship to attend the University of Florida, starting in January 2024.

In an extraordinary 2022–23 saeson, all seven pupils from Dollar Academy were involved in winning 22 titles on the International Tennis Federation World Junior Tour.

Jason Atkins (Head of GB NTA)

Photographs of Millie Skelton, Sam Reeve, Hannah Rylatt are all courtesy of Rob Eyton-Jones.





## JUNIOR 2A HOCKEY SQUAD

Congratulations to the Junior 2A hockey squad who were runners-up at the High School of Dundee Tournament. They got off to a strong start with wins against Morrison’s Academy, Robert Gordon’s College, St Leonards and Strathallan School. They lost narrowly to High School of Dundee, resulting in them finishing in second place.

Lynsey Allan



## SCOTTISH HOCKEY NATIONAL BRAVE ACADEMY

Dollar Academy is delighted to announce the selection of 17 Dollar pupils into the Scottish Hockey National Brave Academy. The Brave Academy is an additional tier

in the talent pathway between District and International levels. The purpose of the Academy is to build on good work already being done across the country in schools, clubs and districts; to provide additional support to our talented emerging and aspiring hockey players; and to help them develop the tools and skills they need to bridge the gap between domestic and international hockey.

To do this, the Brave Academy will provide a combination of training and competitive opportunities on the pitch, along with support off the pitch in areas such as nutrition & hydration, sports psychology, and strength & conditioning. This will help increase the number of players capable of making the step to international hockey. Players in the Brave Academy will benefit from over 50 hours’ quality contact time on and off the pitch.

The Academy has three main centres: Dundee (Devils), Edinburgh (Lightening) and Glasgow (Thunder).



Congratulations to the following girls selected:

### Dundee Devils (Aspiring)

Sarah C. (Form V)  
Rachel N. (Form V)  
Tabitha P. (Form IV)  
India S. (Form V)  
Riley T. (Form VI)  
Emily N. (Form VI)  
Alyssa W. (Form VI)

### Dundee Devils (Emerging)

Mhora B. (Form III)  
Catie D. (Form IV)  
Anna H. (Form II)  
Amy J. (Form IV)  
Izzy M. (Form IV)  
Lois W. (Form IV)  
Maddie M. (Form IV)

### Edinburgh Lightening (Emerging)

Emily W. (Form III)

### Glasgow Thunder ( Aspiring )

Christina D. (Form V)  
Aideen M. (Form VI)

Further congratulations to the following girls, who have been named to the **Scottish Training squad**.

Riley T.  
Sarah C.  
India S.  
Tabitha P.

Lynsey Allan (Director of Hockey) says, ‘I am delighted to see so many of our pupils selected for the National Academy. It is a reflection of their hard work on and off the pitch. I would like to wish them every success as they progress through the program which, in addition to the school programme, will assist in the development of all aspects of their performance.’



# DOLLAR HOCKEY 2023







# THE HOLD FAST CHALLENGE

Dollar became the first school to complete the Hold Fast Challenge in August 2023. As part of their pre-season programme, 72 of our senior rugby and hockey players took on the Hold Fast Challenge: a day of running, jumping, finning, log carrying, ‘oppo’ carrying, bodyweight exercises and swamp runs. This was a completely unique and very positive day during which our young athletes exerted themselves mightily in preparation for the arduous of the season to come. They also had the opportunity to learn all about the Royal Navy’s Mine Clearance Branch and were given a chance to experience a taste of what it takes to become a member of this elite branch of the Navy. Hard work indeed—but great fun was had by all.

Don Caskie



# SRU NATIONAL ACADEMY SELECTION

No fewer than nine Dollar players have attracted the attention of national and regional selectors this season. Congratulations to all our players for taking their next steps on the developmental ladder through being selected to be part of the Scottish National and Regional Academies. The Academies’ aim is to accelerate the development of the nation’s most promising young players, and this recognition of our young athletes’ talents is fully deserved.

## Scottish National Academy

Angus C. (Form VI)  
Max G. (Form V)  
Rory P. (Form VI)  
Adam H. (Form V)

## Scottish Regional Academy

James R. (Form VI)  
Dan R. (Form V)  
Bobby S. (Form V)  
Rio A. (Form VI)  
Angus W. (Form VI)



# SCOTLAND U18 SELECTION

Congratulations to three Dollar players, Max G. (Form V), Angus C. (Form VI) and team captain, Rory P. (Form VI) who took a huge step forward in their rugby careers over the summer when they were selected for the Scotland U18. They attended a training camp held in Wales, where they trained and played against Italy, Wales and Ireland. This was a great experience for the boys, and it put them in a strong position going into this season. I have no doubt that their talents will be accorded further honours.

Don Caskie

Don Caskie





# GOLF UPDATE

*In the words of the captain:*

Over the last few years, golf has really taken off at Dollar. Whether a part of the Gleneagles programme, playing club matches or playing recreationally, we are always out seeking the perfect shot. We can often be found playing with different people out on the course every week, practising at the driving range or simulator, or working hard to understand our lessons. We're lucky because, most of the time, staff and pupils can play and train together. Collectively, we are striving for greatness, and of course, we are always hoping to go one up on one another! The competitive aspect really allows us to better understand the game of golf. Knowing what it can feel like to be winning or losing in a match, hitting longer shots or getting closer to the hole—all of this prepares us for the realities of competitive golf.

We play a variety of matches and competitions throughout the year. Some of these are against other schools; there is also some internal match-play. In its most challenging form, golf is a real test of strength and resilience. Knowing that we have represented our school and sought to play our best on the day, both individually and as a team, gives us immense pride. We are constantly reminded that we can do no more than play our own game and work solidly as a team. We have a wonderful group of staff, from across all areas of the school, who go above and beyond to help and support us. This dedication does not go unnoticed. None of what our Golf Club does would be possible without each and every one of them. Firm friendships have been forged, many of which might never have occurred were it not for a shared love of this game. Our formidable team mentality is extraordinary—even if we lose, we always support one another to help build ourselves back up for the next time.

*Skye-Rose T. (Form VI, Golf Club Captain)*

## Summary of Golf Achievements 2023

### October 2023

*Retained ISGA Northern Schools Cup Winner of the ISGA Northern Schools Individual Handicap: Andrew R. (Form V) Winner of the Dunhill Links Schools Senior Girls: Skye-Rose T.*

### June 2023

*Winners of the Scottish Schools Links Challenge Senior Boys' Champion: Hunter K. (Form V) Senior Girls' Champion: Skye-Rose T. PGA Eclectic Competition: Hunter K.*



## PLAYING FOR SCOTLAND AT THE 4 NATIONS GRADED INTERNATIONAL

*Lynette Pollock teaches Prep 5 in Dollar Academy's Prep School, and (in her spare time), she enjoys playing badminton. Here she describes what it was like to be selected and to compete for Scotland in the 4 Nations Graded International event held in August 2023 at the Sir Craig Reddie Centre in Glasgow.*

The last weekend of this last summer holiday was certainly a different experience for me. Normally, I'm busy making lesson plans or table labels, but this summer I put my scissors and laminator away. After a busy summer of playing as much badminton as I could, including some intense training sessions, I felt privileged to be selected to the Scotland team that would compete in the 2023 4 Nations Graded International on 19–20 August 2023. The selection process was based on a player's current ranking points gained from tournament success throughout the 2022–2023 badminton season.

The Scotland team consists of around 20 players from across the length and breadth of the country. The event provides opportunities for players to compete on behalf of

their country against other similar-level teams from the four nations (England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales). This year it was a home event at the Sir Craig Reddie Badminton Centre just outside Glasgow and, from start to finish, it was an incredible atmosphere for everyone involved. This was all the more true, as friends and family could support in person and via the online portal. A summer full of hard work and training was certainly going to be put to the ultimate test.

My first selection, and earning my first country cap in the process, was indeed a great honour. I started to play badminton when I was seven years old with my Mum and Dad in our local hall. I usually played against my brother before I began getting into various clubs around my town. I never thought that I would be pulling on my own Scotland top. I felt very proud to be there, wearing my kit, holding the Scottish flag, and seeing other teams with their flags. The entire weekend was suffused with a real feeling of team members supporting one another and an overwhelming feeling of pride. The event also provided the opportunity to talk with players across the other nations, to get to know them. And, amongst all the seriousness, it was a great opportunity to have fun playing a sport I truly love, as well as play competitive badminton. Being part of something like this has given me a lasting feeling of the importance of team spirit. After very competitive but enjoyable games against the other nations, it was a real triumph that my team finished in a podium place and could collect our silver medals. It was a very special weekend to be part of and is certainly a memory that I will never forget.

*Lynette Pollock*





## STAY CURIOUS AND DON'T PANIC (TOO MUCH)

*Eilidh Munro (FP 2008) describes the career path and life of a documentary filmmaker.*

I left Dollar in 2008 after nine years of boarding, with very little clue about what I'd do when I was older—the question that almost everyone seems to want to ask you. I'd decided to study History but didn't want to be a teacher and I basically postponed the rest of my decision making until I'd survived the next four years.

What I can tell you is that my current job wasn't even on my long list of potential careers, but that all the choices I've made between then and now have, without me knowing it, been stepping stones to what I currently do, which is make documentaries about the environment.

I remember the pressure of choosing which subjects I wanted to take for Standard Grades (now National 5s) and feeling like it would decide my whole future. Now, aged 33, I realise that the world would be a pretty odd place if your fate was sealed when you're 13. This isn't to say that the decisions you're making now aren't important—all of your choices will lead you somewhere—but it is possible to veer away from the path you're on and important to remember that this is just a starting point.

Hopefully my post-Dollar story will give you a bit of confidence about trusting your gut, making the most of the choices you do make and not giving in to the worries that you need to have it all sorted right now *or else* (because I really promise, you don't!).

### Career Choices

I left Glasgow University with a History degree and was grateful to be accepted onto the Aldi Graduate Training Programme. Relieved to have a job and also reassured that it was 'a good one' (demonstrated by the fact that they sponsored our university library's mouse mats—what other proof do you need?), I bought a few suits and picked up the keys to the company car. However, as anyone who had the displeasure of trying to wrangle Megan Gwynne and I into shape whilst we were in Argyll House will know, the extremely rigid world of Aldi was not suited to my temperament, and I left after about a year.

Next up was a position with an advertising agency called Leith. I was their Marketing Manager, and I loved the dynamic and creative world of advertising that suits someone in their mid-late '20s. After a few years, however, I started to feel constrained by the job, feeling that I was



mainly facilitating other people's creativity whilst making spreadsheets and presentations.

I started spending more and more time outdoors to counterbalance the long office hours I was doing and, using some money from a company bonus, I bought a camera and started to teach myself how to use it. This was a total turning point for me. I realised that wildlife photography and filming was the first thing in a long time that made me feel that rare mix of happiness, excitement and calm (even if the 'wildlife' were just the sheep on the hills and robins in the back garden).

But how on Earth does someone go from being a Marketing Manager to a Wildlife Filmmaker? Well, I did the obvious and Googled it—upon which I discovered three things:

1. There were actually quite a few Scottish wildlife camerapeople (amazing).
2. Most of them were men (less amazing—but I am stubborn, so this did help fuel the fire).
3. There's not one path to getting this job, and all of the camerapeople I could find had very diverse backgrounds (I suppose this is amazing, but it was also scary and unknown).

I learned that you can study Wildlife Filmmaking at master's degree level at some universities. This path was most within my comfort zone, having gone from school to university to a job—but it is expensive. Or, it looked as though you could plug away at it for years, take opportunities as they came and hussle. Seeing as I couldn't afford the master's, I chose Route Two. I spent all of my free time filming, taught myself how to edit, and—long story short—managed to get a job as the resident filmmaker in



a biological research station in the Peruvian Amazon. And thus, aged 28, I started a brand-new career and embarked upon many adventures.

**The day-to-day life of a filmmaker**

Since 2018, I have had the amazing opportunity to work in the rainforests of Peru and Bolivia, in the Saharan desert, in Senegal’s mangroves and on glaciers in Iceland. Some days (or months), I sit behind a desk to edit and, at other times, I’m out working either by myself or with a crew of people. To give you an idea of how unpredictable the job is, I recently filmed the president of Zambia, the physio of a lower league football team, a community choir and a documentary icon...all in one week. A spider monkey has quite literally wee’d in my mouth and recently I was left alone in an ice cave 60 metres underground for about half an hour. And then, other weeks, I’m writing funding applications for future projects that may or may not ever see the light of day.

The job is also a constant learning curve; the technology will continue to change and so does the world that we’re all working in. This year, in particular, has been a tricky one for the film industry, as the cost of living crisis has made companies, funding bodies and commissioners tighten their purse strings and make less work. So you have to keep adapting and diversifying, and try to find a balance between creative work and the jobs that pay well.

As a documentary maker you have the rare privilege of being welcomed into someone’s life for a brief window of time, and you can have conversations with them that they might never have with anyone else. It is amazing to see how open and vulnerable people can be with someone they have never met when given the opportunity to tell their story—and this is something that you should treat with great care.

Sometimes I find this pressure of telling someone’s story justice too much, and this can be one of the burdens of the job. Another ‘con’ is the uncertainty of being a freelancer. For a while I was always the friend who could never commit to plans in advance because I didn’t know where I’d be. (I once Zoom-called, from the Amazon, a Dollar friend on the morning of her wedding), and I frequently envy the bigger homes, paid holiday leave and more stable lives of my friends. (A pension? Crazy!) The beauty of having had previous careers, however, is that I know how lucky I am to have found something I truly love to do, and I hope I’ll be able to keep doing it for a very, very long time.

**You’ll be figuring this out for the rest of your life (and that can be really exciting)**

If you’re someone who hasn’t quite found their path yet, then I hope reading this has allowed you to believe that it doesn’t need to happen straight away. I’m so grateful



for the time I spent at university (even though I don’t directly use my History degree) and for the subsequent jobs I’ve had. Apart from showing me what I *didn’t* want, I also gained skills that I still use today (it turns out those ‘transferable skills’ we hear so much about when writing UCAS applications are actually a thing).

I’m also convinced that if I had started this career earlier in life, I would be a totally different filmmaker. I was quite reliant on the opinions of other people when I left school and university, and I am much more certain now about what I want to say and do with my work. So, my advice to any slightly worried pupils reading this is to take advice from good people, stay curious about what makes you happy and give yourself the freedom to carve a new path for yourself—even if it’s terrifying.

I’ve had those panic-in-the-pit-of-my-stomach moments where I’ve been desperate for things to change and, whilst they aren’t nice to experience, a healthy dose of anxiety might just be your body or brain telling you that something isn’t quite right. You may not find the answer straight away but, if you’re open to it, you’ll learn a lot and meet great people along the way. So, give yourself a bit of a break if you are prone to these feelings and have fun exploring what you want to do with your life—then work as hard as you can to get it.

*Eilidh Munro (FP 2008)*

Watch Eilidh’s films and read about her ongoing projects by visiting: <https://eilidhmunrofilm.com/> or <https://www.instagram.com/eilidhmunrophotography/?hl=en>

**Editor’s note:** Just before going to print, we were delighted to learn that Eilidh Munro had just won a Scottish BAFTA award (Short Film & Animation category) for her film ‘A Long Winter’



# FROM SURGERY TO SUMMIT: MY EVEREST

*Kirsty Mack (FP 2001) successfully climbed Mt Everest on 22 May 2023. In the article that follows, she describes that experience, her love of climbing and what led her to Everest. During her years at Dollar, she was particularly drawn to the sciences; teachers such as Dr Beveridge and Mr Lumsden inspired her love of Chemistry, leading her to study Medical Biochemistry and*



*Pharmacology at the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde, respectively. After university, Kirsty pursued*

*a career in MedTech working in ophthalmology for close to a decade, before moving on to the field of interventional cardiology. In an effort to help conserve the natural world she so loves from the effects of climate change, she more recently studied Sustainability at the University of Cambridge. In 2021, she was responsible for the first carbon neutral surgery in the world. Kirsty is also a qualified ski instructor and outdoor instructor, and she is a keen climber and mountaineer. Her father was the late Tom Mack MBE, an accomplished mountaineer himself. Kirsty believes it was Dollar’s supportive and stimulating environment that equipped her with the tools necessary to achieve her goals, both academic and athletic.*





*The sherpas light the incense, and the smell of jasmine surrounds me. We bring our climbing gear before the local lama, where both we and the equipment are blessed. It is the largest puja ceremony I have seen, and I close my eyes as my cheeks are daubed in flour—the grey beard, a symbol for a long life. I catch sight of myself in a friend’s sunglasses, struck by the realisation that, with this beard, I look more like my father than ever. He is the only member of my family who knows what I’m about to attempt, tucked safely in the pocket of my down jacket. He will be my compass through the mountain. We hold out our offerings to the gods, and I watch as the prayer flags dance above our heads. Until the ceremony is complete, there is no moving forwards. We are forbidden to touch the mountain without it.*

Like most mountaineers I was drawn to Everest’s mythology, its siren call. On the summer of my thirtieth birthday, my sister and I trekked to its base camp. I never planned to climb it, that much I knew at the time. But several years passed, and I found myself walking the same route to the camp, crossing rope bridges and watching the shaggy yaks as they carried our gear on their backs. I suppose it was all terribly impulsive. I signed up a week before the expedition departed, with a team I admire and with whom I’ve climbed on multiple occasions. As for the training, that was the sum of my whole life. My late father was an intrepid mountaineer, climbing Denali in 1981 and Mount Elbrus in 1993 among countless others. It was impossible not to be inspired. To date, I have completed five of the seven summits; I have stood on two 8,000 metre

peaks; and I have climbed 25 mountains in the Alps with altitudes greater than 4,000 metres. Climbing is a way to spend time with the people I love, whether they are physically with me or exist purely in my memory. When I am unsure or afraid, my father will guide me, sending signals through the snow or gut feelings I cannot ignore. This is how we communicate now he’s gone.

*I wake and, without looking at my watch, I know it’s 7am from the sounds of breakfast being served. As food is our greatest fuel, the chefs know how valuable they are and take pride in their work. One night, fajitas were served in flaming pans, which whilst almost setting the tent alight provided a touch of Michelin flair. The base camp sits at 5,364 metres, and our bodies are battling with themselves. I have already performed my rotation, spurring my body into creating more red blood cells in an attempt to alleviate altitude sickness. Everyone must do it. Only then can you push for the summit. The camp itself is on a glacier, and the tents stretch out before my eyes like a yellow city, nearly two miles long. When night comes and the temperature plummets, we huddle around the heaters and play chess, clutching mugs of lemon and ginger tea and swapping stories of past climbs. I tell them of Denali, how I traced my father’s footsteps through the snow and recreated the photographs he had taken forty years before. How I feel closest to him atop mountains. Everest is no exception.*



My father never climbed Everest, and I imagine he’d have cautioned me against it. After his stroke, the power of speech left him, and we had to find new ways to communicate. So I took him maps, relics, his old climbing photographs. We created a new language for ourselves, one of altitude markers and snowfall. They say a picture is worth a thousand words; for me and my father, a map was worth ten thousand. After he died, my mother printed out her favourite photo of him, crouched in crampons beside an ice axe, a wide smile lighting up his face. It’s with me on every ascent.

*I watch Lhakpa’s lips as he repeats it for me slowly: ‘We push for the summit today.’ I exhale. It’ll take five days to reach it, and the anxious anticipation in my body morphs into fear. Am I strong enough? What if my arm fails me? Will I have a panic attack if I see a frozen body? I’ve climbed with Lhakpa before, and he senses the change in me. At the Khumbu Icefall, one of Everest’s most dangerous segments, I am struck anew by the mountain’s beauty. Its eerie otherworldliness. It is an obstacle course of ladders and ice, where one wrong step will send you tumbling into a blue crevasse, an offering to the mountain and a warning to other climbers. I am pondering this fate when Lhakpa shouts, the ice beneath him crumbling. He leaps over an ever-expanding fissure and I have no choice but to jump with him, harnessed together as we are by rope. We land, safely. My heart is an avalanche in my chest.*

*When we near the summit, all I can think about is the cold. We are stuck behind another team, and I feel it creep into my feet, through my boots, my socks, my skin. I stamp them against the snow, but they remain numb. Someone drops a glove, and it hurtles past me. I mustn’t look down. The oxygen mask is claustrophobic, but I’ll die without it. When did Lhakpa say the sun will rise? I start counting back the hours in my head, conscious of the fact I am standing in the death zone, that my blood is dangerously thick now, that my cognitive processing is impaired. Then, as we reach the summit, I see it. A line on the horizon. I scramble for my phone and take a photo as the orange deepens into gold and spreads like a fire through the sky. I can see the curvature of the Earth. I hold up my father’s photo, so that he may see it too.*

For every person who encouraged me to continue, there were five others who told me to stop. To give up mountaineering, to find a softer, more suitable outlet. As I made it to the second camp, I realised it was two years to the day since the accident. Since I fell off my skis and destroyed my shoulder, and with it the use of my dominant arm. It felt like my whole world had ended. But strength grows in the moments where you think you can’t go on, yet you keep on going anyway. Surgery after surgery. Step after step. And here I am, the sixth Scottish woman to have summited Everest, and with the use of just one arm. So, if you are going to take anything from my experience, let it be this: that you must never, ever give up. I have found that there is always a way.

Kirsty Mack (FP 2001)





FP NEWS



Don Keith, Jim Blair, Helen Blair, Jenny Keith

It took some coordination, but recently Jim Blair (FP 1957), who lives in Perth, Australia and Don Keith (FP 1957), who lives in Cape Town, South Africa, timed their visits to their families in the UK so that they could meet up and reminisce about the old days while also catching up with more recent news.

STAFF AND FP PIPING SUCCESS

Well done to piping instructor Mr Callum Beaumont, who recently won both the Siler Star and the Gold Clasp at the Northern Meeting in Inverness. Two FPs also had success in recent piping competitions. Dr Innes Smith (FP 1998) won the Gold Medal for Piobaireachd at The Northern meeting and Sandy Cameron (FP 2015) won the Braemar Gold Medal.

ENGAGEMENTS

SUTHERLAND/TWIGGINS

Allan Sutherland (FP 2013) and Ciara Twiggins (FP 2014), who met at school, were engaged in St Andrews on Sunday 28 May 2023.

BIRTHS

*We are delighted to welcome these new additions to the Dollar Academy family.*

DEARDEN

Adam Dearden (FP 2011) and Yvonne, are thrilled to announce the birth of Archie Adam Dearden on 15 September 2022 at Forth Valley Royal Hospital.

GILLIAM

On November 20, 2023 in Brighton, to Robyn (*née* Daniel, FP 2005) and Harry, a son, Ruairi Forrest Max, brother to Sora and grandson to Geoff (former Deputy Rector 2020) and Iseabal.

TAIT

Campbell Tait (FP 2004) and wife, Emily, are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Louis David Campbell, at Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne, in July 2023, a brother for twins, Angus and Felicity.

MARRIAGES

ROSS

Peter Ross (FP 2010) married Laura Muncey at Dunglass Estate on 28 October 2023.



STAFF

RENTON/PETRIE

Sophie Renton (Assistant Head of the Junior School) and Ewan Petrie were married on the Isle of Iona on 21 July 2023.



SHARMA/FLORENCE

Eloise Sharma, now Eloise Florence, (Junior School) and Robert Florence (Biology Department) were married on 14 July 2023 at The Roman Camp Hotel in Callander. Many current and former Dollar staff were in attendance for a great, if rainy, day. Toby Chapman (Form I) and Ali Williams (FP 2022) played the pipes.



STAFF

FYALL

On 22 June 2023 June Pauline and David Fyall welcomed their second son, Donald David James Fyall, a brother for David.

DEATHS

CAMPBELL

Ian G Campbell (FP 1966–1972) died on 10 July 2023 in Dumfries Royal Infirmary surrounded by his family. His sons Hamish (FP 1998) and Roger (FP 2000) also attended Dollar Academy.

McGREGOR

Tom McGregor (FP 1957–1963), died on 9 September 2023 in Edinburgh. He went to Glasgow University and earned a first-class degree in Civil Engineering and went on to run a successful civil engineering business in Fife.

MURRAY

Hugh Murray (FP 1946–1952) died on 9 June 2023. His obituary (written by Jack Davidson) was published in *The Scotsman* in July and is reprinted in the following pages.

WALKER

William B. C. Walker (FP 1944) died in July 2023, age 96. See obituary in this edition.

WILSON

Alistair Wilson (FP 1951–1958) and boarder in Argyll House) died on 19 November 2023. Born in 1939, he became a world-class canoeist in his twenties, reaching the finals of the K1 1000 metres event at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. He also went on to design and manufacture the world-famous Lendal paddles. Full obituary to follow in the next edition.



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



## Thursday 23 May Golden FP Afternoon Tea

**Did you leave school in or before 1974? If so, you are invited to our first Golden FP Afternoon Tea in the Dining Hall from 2–4pm.**

**This will be an opportunity to catch up with your friends, chat with senior pupils and take (optional) tours of the school.**

**The invitation will be circulated by email in January to register, or call Kirsty (FP Register) on 01259 742511, with any questions.**



## SPORTS WEEKEND

**Friday 21 June:**

**Dollar Accies Golf Day & Annual Dinner**

**Saturday 22 June:**

**Sports Day: beginning at 2pm  
FP Sherry Party: 6pm**

**Sunday 23 June:**

**Pipe Band Display at 12 noon**

### Reunions

Year-group reunions usually take place on Sports Weekend. All it takes is lots of enthusiasm and a group to encourage friends to get involved. So get in touch and find out how we can help you get started. Early planning is recommended to encourage FPs living overseas to come along.

We recognise that Sports Weekend does pose some challenges: limited venues, lack of available accommodation and the daunting task of organising a reunion. To address this, we are organising a 'Decade Reunion' in September 2024.



## Class of '4' Reunion

**Leavers of the Classes of 1954, 1964, 1974, 1984, 1994, 2004 and 2014 are all invited to join us for the Class of '4' Reunion.**

Venue: Dollar Academy

Date: Saturday 28 September

Time: 11am–3pm

Cost: £20pp (£5 for ages 4–12)

Tickets include a welcome drink, a two-course meal, a glass of bubbles and a memento of the day.

### Timing of the Day

- 11.00 Guests Arrive
- 11.30 School Tours Begin
- 12.30 Drinks in Dining Hall
- 13.00 Lunch is Served
- 14.45 Group Photo by Bronze Doors
- 15.00 End of Reunion

Save this date, get in touch with your school friends and plan to come along. An invitation to register your interest in attending the Class of '4' Reunion will be shared with the '----4' year groups at the end of April.

Please feel free to email [dollarfp@dollaracademy.org.uk](mailto:dollarfp@dollaracademy.org.uk) or call Kirsty (FP Registrar) on **01259 742511**, with any questions.



## DR HUGH MURRAY FP 1946–1952 1935–2023

Hugh Murray was a leading Scottish and British international athlete who specialised in triple jump, an event more commonly known then as 'hop, step and jump'.

Scottish champion on three occasions, he also represented Scotland in the 1958 Empire and Commonwealth Games in Cardiff and later that year performed with distinction for Great Britain in contests against the Commonwealth and France. In the Commonwealth match he leapt 48' 2", one of his best marks, to finish third and first Briton. In addition to competing for Scotland in three international fixtures, all of which he won, Hugh claimed several Scottish Universities' titles for Edinburgh University and represented the Army, having won Army and Inter-Services Championships. He also broke the Scottish record for the event, but initially that was not recognised due to a rule then requiring the athlete to be Scottish born. After he made representations, the rule was changed to permit Scottish parentage and his record could be accepted.

Away from the athletics arena he was an empathetic, highly regarded GP with Edinburgh University Students Health Centre for almost 30 years, considered a complete gentleman and one who lived a full and varied life.

Hugh Miller Murray was born in Colwyn Bay, Wales, the second of four children of William and Elizabeth. His elder brother was Douglas and two younger sisters, Margaret and Alison. William was a chest physician in a tuberculosis sanatorium, a widespread condition then,

and Hugh grew up initially in nearby Abergele. In 1939 the family moved to New Cumnock in Ayrshire where his father was appointed Superintendent of the sanatorium and Hugh began school at the local primary.

In 1945 the family moved to East Lothian where William took up another tuberculosis-related appointment at East Fortune Hospital, at which point Hugh started attending Dollar Academy as a boarder.

He was a bright pupil, attaining six Highers by age sixteen and a year later recording his first significant athletics achievement, finishing third at triple jump in the Scottish Schools Championships. Winner that day and future rival was Tom McNab, later a multi-talented figure and worldwide athletics authority well known for his involvement in making *Chariots of Fire*. Recalling Hugh, he commented: 'He was a first-class chap and a very natural gifted athlete.'

After leaving school, where he had been Drum Major in the Pipe Band, Hugh began studying Medicine at Edinburgh University where his athletics career gathered momentum as he placed third at the Scottish Championships in 1954. Over the next nine years he won the title three times and was twice runner-up. He represented Scotland in internationals three times against Ireland and Wales, winning each time—while a highlight was competing for Scotland in the 1958 Empire Games, a memorable experience although he was disappointed with his performance, having suffered 'an off day'. Shortly after





he redeemed himself with an excellent leap in the Great Britain vs Commonwealth match at London’s White City, securing third place behind the Empire Games gold and bronze medallists, finishing first Briton as he did in the international against France in Paris.

In 1957 he demonstrated versatility, winning bronze at the javelin throw in the Scottish Championships, while in 1971 he staged a brief jumping comeback to compete in the Scottish Championships, finishing two places in the annual ranking list above a certain young triple jumper, Allan Wells. Hugh captained the university athletics team, was awarded a ‘Blue’ and in his final year was appointed to the prestigious post of President of the Students’ Union , liaising on occasions with the Chancellor, the Duke of Edinburgh and Rector, actor James Robertson Justice.

After graduating he was called up for National Service in the Royal Army Medical Corps, served with 3 Parachute Regiment in the UK, Aden and Germany, where he parachuted over the Kiel Canal, wryly recalling that ‘medics/ jumped first to be on the ground to deal with any casualties.

Once National Service was over, he landed what might be considered a plum post as personal physician to Robert Johnson II on a two-year round the world yachting cruise. Johnson was president of famous healthcare company Johnson & Johnson and engaged a small staff to accompany him, with visits to Tahiti and South Africa being among the standouts.

Following that, Hugh took up an appointment as GP in Saskatchewan, Canada, through a combination of a spirit of adventure and the need for doctors there.

While back in Edinburgh on holiday in 1967, he

met Janice Russell, a physiotherapist who shared a flat with his sister Alison, and a year later they wed in West Linton, going on to enjoy a long, happy marriage during which they had children, Jean and Alastair, and lived mostly in Edinburgh’s Fairmilehead area.

In 1970 Hugh joined the University Health service as GP, where he continued until retirement in 1998. Apart from family and practice, he enjoyed a range of activities and interests. His sporting enthusiasm continued; he was a regular attender at Murrayfield for internationals and in 1986 was appointed doctor for the athletes’ village at the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. Hugh was a keen curler with the West Linton club and for the BMA, while he also played golf at Baberton and Luffness. A lover of the great outdoors since his days at Dollar, he and Janice succeeded in completing all the Munros. Another interest was literature, especially poetry—he had some of his own work published.

Described in the history of Edinburgh University Athletic Club as ‘a very popular athlete’, Hugh was extremely likeable, kind, humble and thoughtful. He is survived by his wife, children, sisters and grandchildren David, Robbie, John and Anna.

*The above obituary originally appeared in The Scotsman and was written by Jack Davidson.*



## DAVID RORKE

FP 1944-57

1939-2023

The Rorke family came to Dollar in 1944 when David was five years old. His father, a minister in Fife, had recently died, and the family had to leave Flisk Manse. It was a difficult time, not helped by the fact that David’s mother was pregnant with his younger brother, Joseph (Joe). Luckily, friends came to the rescue and invited the family to rent the top floor of their house, Seberham, in Bridge Street.

At school David did well, winning prizes in Physics and Chemistry. He also excelled at cricket, helped perhaps by the fact his mother was a member of the first English Women’s Test Cricket team which toured Australia and New Zealand. Although CCF was compulsory, David managed to avoid too much drill by joining the Signals Section, where he learned about radios—useful to him later when he set up his own ham radio. He had a close group of school friends—Graham Petrie, Archie McInnes and Wyllie Fyfe—bonded by their shared enthusiasm for *The Goon Show*.

David was keen on travelling from an early age. Money was tight, so he funded his trips by working hard in holiday jobs. His first trip was a cycling tour of Ireland with Frank Berry (FP 1957). Then, as a student, he hitchhiked to and from what was then Yugoslavia with John Leaver (FP1956?). His next adventure took him even further—he and a student friend (whose father was a diplomat in Jordan) hitchhiked all the way to Jordan and then managed to visit Israel, too, which required two passports in those days.

But his biggest adventure began when he was a PhD student at St Andrews. He discovered sailing and, after a voyage to Norway crewing for a friend, he was determined to have a yacht of his own. By this time, he was married—to Jinty, a fellow St Andrews student. She, too, caught the sailing bug and, in 1965, they bought a bare steel hull. Their spare time for the next two years was spent in the old St





Andrews stables by the harbour, converting the hull into a fully-equipped, 30-foot, ketch-rigged Waterwitch. They named the yacht *Palantir*, from *Lord of the Rings*. Palantirs were the ‘seeing stones’ that allowed you to look to faraway places.

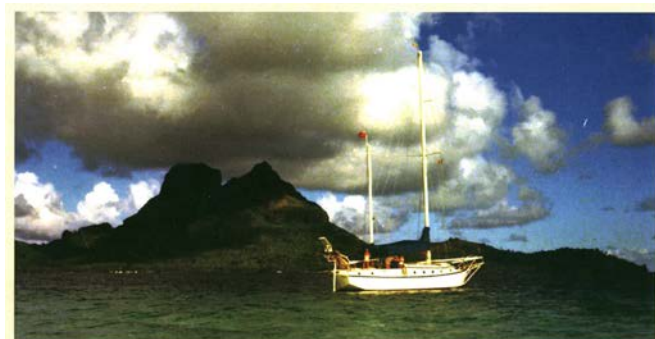
When they set sail from St Andrews harbour on 1 September in 1968, they had no idea that they would be living on *Palantir* for the next nine years. Initially their destination was the West Indies. After an eventful voyage, they made their landfall in Barbados on 14 February 1969. They then spent blissful months exploring islands, meeting the lively boating community and looking for jobs. By August they had both found teaching posts in St Croix in the US Virgin Islands. For the next five years they lived on *Palantir*, anchored in Christiansted. Their daughters, Kirsty and Cathy, were born during this time.

In 1974 they decided to leave St Croix and head for New Zealand. But first, David undertook the huge task of extending the length of the hull and putting in an after-cabin. This done, in February 1975 they headed for Panama, the Galápagos, the Marquesas, Tahiti, Rarotonga, Fiji and Tauranga and many places in between. It took them until October 1976, and it was truly the trip of a lifetime. David recorded their experiences in *The Voyages of Palantir*, a privately printed book based on the ship’s log, diaries and letters. It may be borrowed from the school library or from the archivist.

After they arrived in New Zealand, *Palantir* was sold, and they bought a house. David taught Maths and Computing in Otumoetai Collage in Tauranga until he retired. He then took up golf and created a magnificent garden, concentrating on native species. Very sadly, he lost his daughter, Cathy, in 2011 and his wife, Jinty, in 2014. David died on 20 March 2023. He is survived by his daughter, Kirsty; his son-in-law, Sean; and his four grandsons.

Janet Carolan (née Rorke, FP 1947-60 and School Archivist)

For more information about *The Voyages of Palantir*, please email: [carolan-j@dollaracademy.org.uk](mailto:carolan-j@dollaracademy.org.uk)



## The Voyages of Palantir



## WILLIAM BUCHANAN COWAN WALKER FP 1937–42 1927–2023

Bill died in his beloved Scottish Borders on 27 July 2023, aged 96. Born in Callander in 1927, he was an only child. The family moved to Dollar sometime before 1932, and Bill attended Dollar Academy until he was 15. The family then moved to Edinburgh because his mother’s illness required treatment there, and Bill’s last three school years were at Edinburgh Academy. He always loved the countryside, cycling, hill walking, camping, skiing, and being out of doors, whatever the weather.

Bill took his first degree at Edinburgh University, followed by an LLB degree. He worked in Glasgow for a couple of years, but came back to Edinburgh and married Rita. They had a family of three: Jane, Sandy and David. He became an Edinburgh lawyer and worked with Henderson and Jackson, and then Lindsays. He was Secretary of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society from 1968 until 1992, when he retired to his farm in the Borders. There, he loved being outdoors, working with his hands and fixing anything that needed to be fixed on the farm (skills learned when he was a member of the university’s Dramatic Society, and a founder member of the Edinburgh Graduate Theatre Group). His four grandsons all enjoyed spending time helping on the farm.

Rita Walker





# THREE SUNDIALS CONNECTED TO DOLLAR ACADEMY

## 1 An Old Dollar Sundial

This old sundial may be seen in the current Rector's garden in Academy Place. It bears the date 1821 and originally belonged to the first Rector of Dollar Academy, Dr Andrew Mylne. Dr Mylne was also the Minister of Dollar Parish Church from 1816 and the sundial originally stood in his fine Manse garden.

After Dr Mylne died in 1856, his widow donated the sundial to the school. At that time the Academy had a magnificent botanic garden, with a team of gardeners and apprentices. By the time the photos on this page were taken in 1910 and 1913 the garden had mostly been replaced by playing fields. Only the walled area between the old Technical Building and the original Dewar Building remained and it was looked after by just one gardener; the apprentices had long gone. It was a peaceful place to walk or to sit and read.

This last bit of the garden, and the greenhouse, were



lost when building took place north of the Dewar Building and the sundial was moved to Academy Place. The gnomon can be clearly seen in the photograph with Dorothy Allsop FP, taken in 1921. Today, the incised dial and date are just visible but the gnomon is missing from its slot in the dial.

## 2 A Very Old Sundial with a Dollar Connection

Another old sundial has a connection with Dollar Academy. This is the famous obelisk sundial in Drummond Castle Gardens, near Crieff. It dates back to 1630. The gardens have recently become very popular with visitors who are following

the trail of places featuring in *Outlander* - in series two Drummond Gardens stood in very realistically for Versailles.

The connection with Dollar Academy dates back to the 1870s. There is a Latin inscription on the obelisk explaining some of its complicated horological features. It has 61 dials with gnomons and 131 time-measuring systems in total. Dr Barrack, Rector of Dollar Institution from 1868-78 and a noted classics scholar, made a verse translation of the inscription. This translation is found in architectural and garden guidebooks. It begins:



*We are the hours on the pillar you see,  
Marked by the shadows that ever flee,  
And move with the sun in its course on high  
Noting the time passing swiftly by.*

The obelisk sundial was recently extensively restored and conserved. An article available online: *Restoration of the Drummond Castle Obelisk Sundial*, Part 1, by Alastair Hunter, 2019, gives a detailed, illustrated description of the latest research on the sundial. Drummond Castle Gardens and the sundial are well worth a visit. If you cannot visit in person, have a look at an excellent video taken during lockdown <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4RdLju1-aM>



## 3. A Contemporary Dollar Sundial

When the Westwater Building for Modern Languages and Economics was built in 2015 there was a planning requirement to include a piece of public art. A sundial was commissioned from the Edinburgh sculptor and horologist Tim Chalk. The intention was to 'provide a visual enhancement to the building, integrated within its overall design, and to create an educational tool to be used as a teaching aid to demonstrate the science and mathematics lying at its heart.'

The sphere demonstrates how the sun's light travels round the Earth in the course of the day. The two-sided panel carries text on the reverse showing the Equation of Time and the Longitude and Latitude, while the back half of the sphere emerges from the reverse of the panel.

The sundial is both elegant and innovative. As the school's Bursar, Justin Wilkes, wrote in *Fortunas* 37: 'It is hoped that future astronomers, mathematicians, geographers and physicists will find this object stimulates their interest and curiosity as well as adding something unique to the character of the grounds.' Perhaps a study of the principles of designing sundials, which also have the benefit of using no energy other than sunlight, might be the basis of one of the collaborative projects undertaken by FIDA.

Janet Carolan (Archivist)





**THE SUNDAY TIMES**

**SCHOOLS GUIDE  
2024**

**INDEPENDENT SECONDARY  
SCHOOL OF THE YEAR  
SCOTLAND**



**Dollar  
Academy**