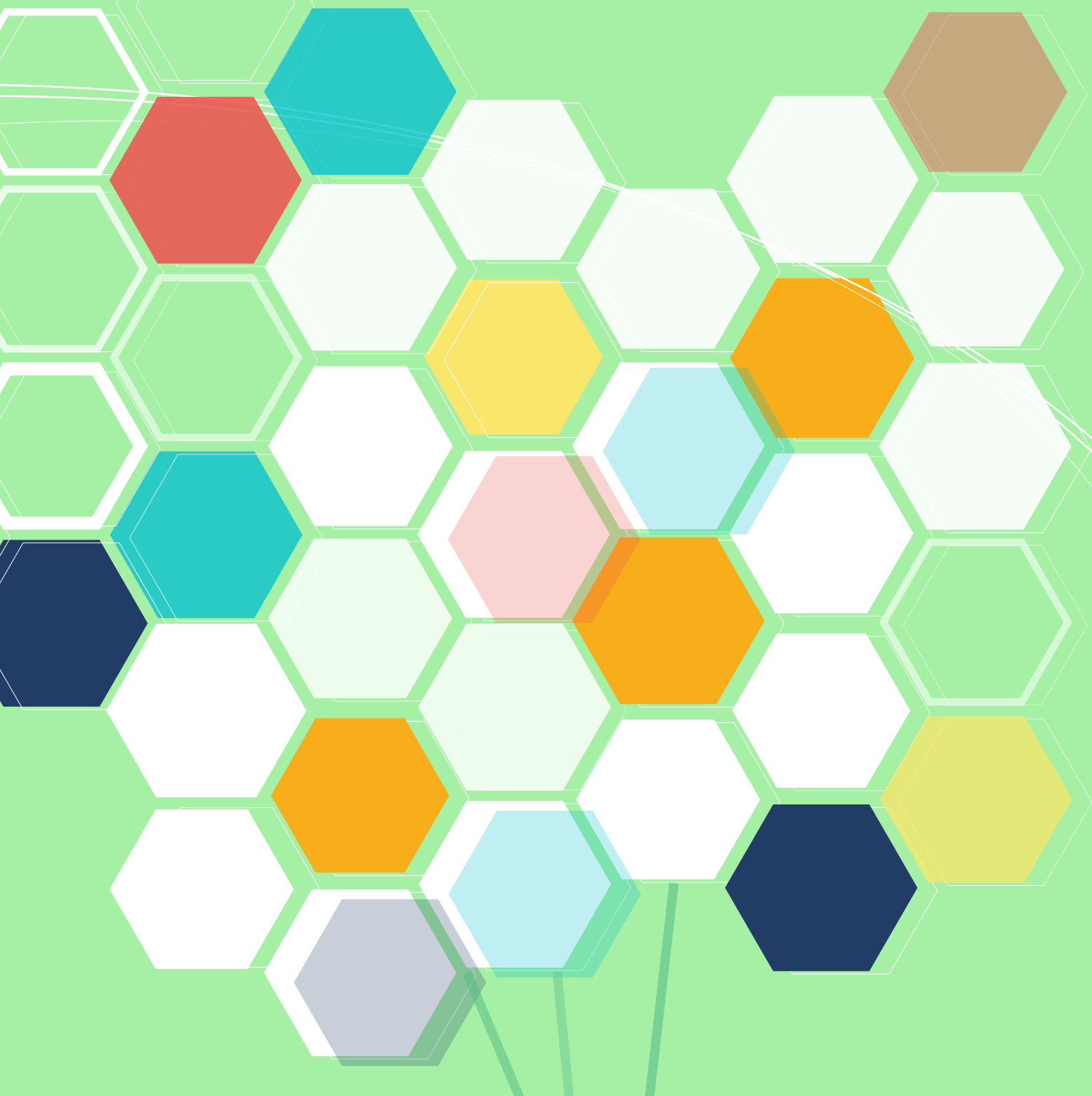


**BIANNUAL
PUBLICATION**
ISSUE 55
JUNE 2025

fortunas





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Fortunas 56

Many thanks to everyone who contributed articles or images to *Fortunas* 55; the deadline for submission of articles for the Christmas issue is **Friday 3 October**.

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

FROM THE RECTOR

With the end of the summer term—and all that goes with it—upon us, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the latest edition of Fortunas, our much-loved biannual publication. Within the pages that follow, you will find a celebration of our community's achievements, milestones, and the unwavering spirit that defines Dollar Academy.

Fortunas 55 encapsulates the essence of our collective journey—one that is marked by resilience, creativity, and a profound commitment to excellence and inclusivity in education. From inspiring pupil accomplishments to the dedication of staff, Fortunas showcases the remarkable stories that shape our school's rich tapestry.

As we reflect on the past academic year, filled with challenges and triumphs alike, I am reminded of the enduring strength of our Dollar Academy community. Together, we continue to forge ahead, guided by a shared vision to nurture intellect, compassion, good character, and leadership amongst our pupils. Our strength—through the highs and the lows—lies in our togetherness.

I extend my gratitude to all who make Fortunas possible, from our talented writers and editor to our generous contributors. Your passion and dedication bring our community's stories to life, inspiring us all.

I invite you to immerse yourself in what follows. May these pages serve as a testament to the boundless potential of our pupils and the enduring strength of Dollar Academy.

Warmest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Munro". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first name.

Ian Munro



BUILDING THE FUTURE: A NEW CHAPTER FOR LEARNING AT DOLLAR ACADEMY

Dollar Academy has long been known for honouring tradition while embracing progress. This summer, the school marks a major milestone as construction begins on the new Futures Institute building—a space designed not only for learning, but for reimagining what learning can be.

As regular *Fortunas* readers will know, the building, designed by acclaimed architect and Dollar FP Andrew Whalley OBE, represents a bold step into the future. At the heart of the campus, it will stand as a physical embodiment of the school's commitment to educational innovation.

Traditional school buildings, shaped by centuries of custom, have been designed around the needs of individual subjects: a classroom for maths, another for languages, a lab for the sciences. In 2025, this compartmentalised approach is limiting. It does not reflect the way the world works beyond the school gates, nor the ways in which today's students will need to think, collaborate, and solve problems in their future careers.

Our new building is a conscious shift away from this compartmentalised approach. It will bring together a range of learning spaces: science labs, design and engineering studios, hands-on maker spaces and collaboration zones—all integrated under one roof, allowing pupils to move seamlessly between disciplines and modes of learning. It is a space designed to inspire curiosity, foster teamwork, and encourage bold, creative thinking.

But the Futures Institute at Dollar Academy (FIDA) is far more than a physical structure. Since its launch in 2021, FIDA has been a pioneering educational initiative with a mission to reimagine learning for the 21st century. It is founded upon an interdisciplinary approach—the idea that real-world problems do not come neatly labelled as 'Science' or 'Geography', and that the best solutions emerge when people apply their minds to problems rather than subjects.

This vision has already borne fruit. In the course of the past year, FIDA has launched a new national qualification

for Scotland: the *International Sustainability Diploma*. Pupils learn by devising solutions to real-world problems connected to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, from climate change to inequalities; and by presenting their work in ways that are meaningful beyond the classroom. The Diploma is credit-rated on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework at Level 6 and carries UCAS tariff points equivalent to one Higher. It has been piloted in seven schools across Scotland in 2024–25, including Dollar Academy itself; and the first cohort of learners will receive their Diploma in August—another FIDA milestone.

For those who know Dollar, this kind of initiative will come as no surprise. The school has always sought to prepare young people not just for exams, but for life. Today, FIDA is a key part of that endeavour, seeking to give pupils new opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and aptitudes they need to thrive in a rapidly changing world. These include creative problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, communication; and above all, a sense of agency and purpose in the face of global issues of sustainability that can seem overwhelming.

That these aims are being achieved is borne out by feedback gathered from teachers leading the Diploma course at the schools involved in the pilot.

One teacher at a school in Dumbarton said: ‘Much of the Scottish curriculum is geared towards feeding a lot of information to pupils. We’re not necessarily asking them their own thoughts or their own ideas and asking them to go and gather information for themselves. The Diploma does this really well, and the pupils love it.’

Another teacher at a school in Alloa commented: ‘It’s definitely geared towards the future. The pupils have been able to personalise what they’ve wanted to learn, which I think is a real bonus... One particular pupil sent me a four-page letter, saying thank you and describing how much she enjoyed the experience. She said that it had opened her eyes to so many new issues around the world, and that she had enjoyed the whole style of learning because it was so different from the norm.’

Within Dollar Academy itself, the entire Junior 1 year group has just completed a yearlong FIDA project that involved investigating threats to local wildlife and designing their own solutions. From ‘habitat in a bag’ kits for hedgehog protection to high-tech colour-sensing squirrel-feeders that would discern red squirrels from grey, their ideas were as impressive as they were innovative. With this experience behind them, these young learners will be well equipped to grasp the opportunities that the new Futures Institute building presents when it opens its doors to them, midway through Form I.

For them and for countless others, the new building will be an invitation. It will invite pupils to see learning not as something that happens in a fixed sequence of lessons, but as an active, evolving process that they can shape. It will invite teachers to work across traditional boundaries, co-designing projects that reflect the complexity of the real world. And



it will invite the wider Dollar ‘family’—FPs, parents, staff, governors, the local community and partner organisations—to be part of this journey, making the building an important hub for innovation and exchange.

Importantly, the building will also reflect the values it aims to promote. Sustainability has been a guiding principle throughout its design, with a focus on energy efficiency, low-impact materials, and the creation of healthy, flexible learning environments flooded with natural light. The architecture itself will be a teaching tool, a demonstration of how thoughtful design can help us live and learn more sustainably.

We are proud of the progress FIDA has made over the past four years. The construction of the new building marks the beginning of an exciting new phase, but the work of FIDA will remain rooted in Dollar values: harnessing the best of tradition and progress and embodying the principle that education should not simply prepare young people to take their place in the world—it should empower them to change it.

Jacqueline Smith (FIDA Director)

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL: THE POWER OF A BURSARY

When Logan received news that he had been offered a full bursary to attend Dollar Academy, he could not have imagined the journey ahead. Now serving as Head Boy in his final year, he describes his educational experience as unequivocally 'life changing'.

Logan was raised by his mother and grandparents; he first attended St Mary's Episcopal Primary School, and it was a chance conversation that changed the course of his life. 'The plan was for me to go to Dunblane High School,' he explains. 'But my mother was speaking to another parent who suggested that we try applying for a bursary.' After taking the Form I entrance assessment, Logan received a bursary offer. His response: 'I was absolutely delighted. Once I knew I'd been accepted, there was no question about where I would be going.'

Embracing Opportunities

Arriving at Dollar was initially overwhelming: 'I was taken aback by the sheer number of opportunities: labs, pitches, buildings—an amazing range of activities.' Following his mother's advice to 'try everything', Logan threw himself into school life; he has excelled across a range of activities, but particularly in debating. Under the mentorship of Mr Neil McFadyean (Head of History), Logan represented Scotland at the 2024 World Schools' Debating Championships in Serbia; on this world stage, against the very best young debaters in the world, Logan's team won.

Leadership Growth

Logan's journey culminated in being named Head Boy this session, a responsibility he never imagined when he first entered Dollar. 'I never thought this was something I'd be able to do.' The role has taught him valuable lessons about leadership and collaboration, allowing him to give back to a community that has given him so much.

Exceptional Teaching

Logan emphasises the inspirational impact of Dollar's teaching staff, particularly their ability to go beyond exam preparation. 'We're pushed to think harder than the exam requires us to; that is excellent preparation for life and academic study beyond school.' The smaller class sizes, he explains, create space for deeper engagement with subjects and more individualised attention, with teachers willing to spend extra time helping students improve.

Endlessly Enriching

When asked what receiving a bursary has meant to him, Logan doesn't hesitate: 'It's no underestimation to say that it has changed my life.' His time at Dollar has instilled a



quiet self-confidence: 'If I put the work in, I know that I can achieve good things.' To young people considering applying for a bursary, Logan's advice is emphatic: 'Do it. One hundred percent. At this school, identities build and evolve around achievements and interests rather than financial circumstances.' Logan does not know the identity of the donors who made his bursary possible, but his gratitude is profound. As he prepares for university (he hopes to study Politics), he says: 'All I can think about is positive things, about how lucky I've been. My time at Dollar has been transformative. I can't emphasise that enough.'

You can read a longer version of Logan's story on our website. To find out how you can support other children like Logan and offer them life-changing opportunities; please contact our Fundraising Manager Rebecca McFarlane on mcfarlane-re@dollaracademy.org.uk or 01259 742 511.

Rebecca McFarlane



FAREWELL TO ROSE CHAMBERLAIN

I first got to know Mrs Chamberlain when she was a Tutor in Heyworth House, and the night every week that she was on duty quickly became my favourite. Always calm and prepared, her presence put those around her at ease. Late-night Maths homework in the House was accompanied by laughter as she dedicated herself to helping us reach the answers, but also to truly understand. Her passion and enthusiasm for mathematics and teaching shine through. The word that comes to mind when I think of her is genuine. She's genuinely invested in those around her, whether it's teaching, chatting about our day and plans (or, often, discussing the movie *Dune*), or sharing a good laugh. Mrs Chamberlain's kindness, energy, patience, and dedication have left a lasting impact on the school and upon everyone who had the privilege of getting to know her.

Beatrix C. (Form V)

I was fortunate enough to have Mrs Chamberlain as a teacher since I joined the school, and she always supported me through any struggle, never hesitating to give me extra help. She always balanced professionalism with a sense of fun, which is why she is such a great teacher. She always managed the (sometimes tough) job of making Maths entertaining. Whether it was graphing games or Maths relay races, she always made the class lively and enjoyable. One of my favourite memories was when she made a deal with me: if I got an A in my prelim, she would do the Griddy dance. More than anything, Mrs Chamberlain's passion for teaching is truly genuine, and that is what makes her so special.

Robbie G. (Form V)

It is hard to describe how grateful we are for everything Mrs Chamberlain has done—for making each of us feel seen, for her support, and for pushing us to do better while bringing so much warmth to the school. Most importantly, we are grateful for how deeply she believed in us. I know this personally, as she was not just my university advisor, but someone who helped me find a path towards my dreams. Undoubtedly, I am just one of many she inspired along the way. Mrs. Chamberlain leaves a lasting impact on Dollar; wherever she goes next, she will continue to inspire and leave the same mark. We wish her all the best in what lies ahead.

Selma L. (Form VI)

MRS CHAMBERLAIN: HEAD OF MATHS

A Maths teacher or a mathematician? This is a regular topic of discussion amongst the Maths teachers of the world (or maybe just within the Dollar Maths Department...). There are those who sit, definitely, on one side or other of the fence, and there are those who balance, either happily or precariously, on the fence itself. Rose Chamberlain is one of the latter. She is a dedicated teacher with a natural passion for the subject, and when she announced her departure from Dollar (at the end of this session's spring term), there was genuine sadness on the part of colleagues and pupils alike.

Arriving in August of 2022, Rose quickly made her mark as a leader with vision. But she is also a leader with compassion and kindness, thus making her a very natural fit at the school. Her love of teaching is easy to see; her classes are always interesting, and her pupils appreciate her calm approach. She got to grips very quickly with the nuances of the SQA systems and also with the many and varied idiosyncrasies of one of the largest departments in the school. The staff in the Maths Department formed a strong team around her; encouraged to teach in their own individual manner, they knew that she was supportive, but also ready to challenge. She is a consummate professional, but with a wicked sense of humour—appreciated in many areas of the school.

One way to a Maths teacher's heart is through their stomach, and it came as a very pleasant surprise to learn that Rose is an exceptionally good baker. She began new traditions in her Maths Department meetings: each one began with a piece of something delicious accompanied by discussion around a Maths problem. Teaching and learning were rightfully the focus of these meetings, and Rose put much thought into how to highlight good practice in the classroom. Teachers were encouraged and empowered to try new things, and there was always time given to reflection and discussion. She happily shared her own professional learning, and I was always interested to see what she had read or listened to each week.

Rose always demanded the best from her pupils, firmly believing that all have the potential to exceed their



own expectations. She taught pupils not merely how to solve equations, but also how to think around complex problems, thus ensuring they had confidence in their ability to perform in Maths. I remember watching her teach not long after she started at the school, and I was struck by the lively atmosphere and the challenge presented in the classroom—and also by the patience, clearly demonstrated in front of pupils. They knew that she cared deeply about them as individuals.

She demonstrated this caring nature outside of the classroom as well. She was fully involved in the co-curricular life of the school: braving the elements to lead Duke of Edinburgh groups, braving the stage both to play in the Orchestra and sing in the Choir, and braving the javelin to assist at Athletics events and at Sports Weekend.

Katherine Johnson, the American mathematician and NASA scientist, said 'Like what you do and then you will do your best.' Rose exemplifies this possibly better than anyone—both as Maths teacher and mathematician.

We, colleagues and pupils, will sorely miss Rose and her family—Craig, Bea and Jess—but Dollar's loss is undoubtedly Settlebeck School's gain, and we wish her every success in her new role.

Vicky Mason

KATYA CUNNINGHAM

Katya Cunningham joined the English Department in 2017 and (after surviving the Covid years together, a uniquely bonding experience) it is very hard to imagine the department without her humour, kindness and warmth.

When I asked everyone what they would remember about her, quite a few people mentioned her distinctive footsteps. You always knew it was Katya coming along the corridor from the echo of her brisk, purposeful heels and that sound typified her whole approach: she was incredibly efficient, full of energy and enthusiasm. The department certainly benefited from her positivity and her determination to find solutions rather than dwelling on problems. We'll miss her cheery 'Hellooo' from the PSE cupboard first thing in the morning and—whether she was guiding Form VI pupils through their dissertations, teaching 1984 to a Nat 5 class, or enthusing Form I about trees down by the River Devon—she gave everything she did her full attention, and the pupils certainly appreciated it. Her classes spoke of her as a particularly patient and supportive teacher, who always had time for them—although one Form V boy might not forgive her for mistaking him for his dad on a parents' evening call!

Katya was also part of a huge number of cocurricular ventures too. For a long time, she co-ran the Film Club, introducing Form I to the wonders of cinema and dishing out the popcorn, on Friday nights, when everyone else's energies were depleted at the end of another busy week. She was part of DofE, Running Club, Alpaca Club and Surf Club. She played football for the Charities Committee and co-directed the Form I play. She planted trees with the Geography Department, led yoga sessions and hosted the Burns Supper with real aplomb... I'm sure I have forgotten something, but that list alone reflects the dedication and commitment she gave to the school, her classes and her colleagues. She was never afraid to try something new and help others out.

We wish her all the best as she, Erik and Ranald begin their next adventure in pastures new. I hope that she knows that her hard work and support has been very much valued and that her—extremely stylish—shoes will be very hard to fill.

Julia Nozedar

Ms Cunningham: Head of PSE

Being the Head of PSE is a job of paradoxes: it involves leading the biggest department in the school, yet often working solo; it requires

meticulous organisation, yet demands constant creativity. It's about juggling societal changes that spiral faster than a Form IV TikTok trend, and it all must be somehow woven into one coherent programme. Katya did this with unparalleled flair and her characteristic boundless energy.

Katya ran the PSE programme so successfully, responding to society's ever-shifting sands with precision and care. Whether it was crafting awareness videos on topics like 'snuss' and internet safety, or organising an impressive roster of speakers for year groups and parental evenings, she never stopped moving the department forward. She kept the MVP programme thriving and collaborated with the school counsellor in training and supporting our Form VI Mental Health Ambassadors. She also co-ran the Diversity Inclusion Working Group, preparing assemblies on Black History Month, LGBTQI and mental health. She also played a crucial role within the school's guidance team.

Katya's smile and endless positivity were constants, even amidst the chaos that comes with such a demanding role. I know all too well the sinking feeling when the speaker doesn't show up and you're left with 200+ Form V pupils in the Captain's Room or Auditorium, eagerly waiting a riveting talk on the dangers of drugs, and you must channel your inner improv genius—something at which Katya was very adept.

She will be missed in many areas of life at the Academy. We wish her, Erik, and Ranald all the best as they embark on this exciting new chapter in Düsseldorf.

Liz Langley



FAREWELL TO DAVID YUILL-KIRKWOOD

'A'reet bonny lad' The Geordie greeting hangs in the air between the visitor and David's effusive and infectious smile. His eyes twinkle with gentle mirth and boundless good humour. No matter who came to see him in his office, the greeting was unfailingly warm. Unless you happened to be a contractor who had let him down. Then, the smile would be the same, but the greeting more likely to be, 'What're yee doing here? Yee'sve got work to do!'

David's positive and upbeat manner was matched by his dedication to keeping the Academy always looking its best. Not that the aesthetics of the place were his prime concern; David's concern for health and safety was his hallmark. Coming from a background in which he had been responsible for such things in a more commercial and industrial environment, he was ideally placed to help drop the complex layers of legislation over the Dollar Academy campus like a blanket. He soon developed a coded system for all of the annual and periodic essential items that needed to be covered off by checks and controls: 'his statutes'. We can all be grateful to him for this often hidden, unglamorous, but essential contribution to the safety and wellbeing of all. In short, he brought system and method to this vital area; he managed it. Properly.

His workload would break a camel's back—the endless lists of repairs and improvements that landed on his desk in the course of any given year had to be seen to be believed. A campus of the age and complexity of Dollar brings with it a host of defects to contend with, as well as planned maintenance items, topped off by the demands of an understandably and laudably ambitious staff who seek improvements, alterations and ameliorations to accommodation, classrooms, and equipment. All of these were dealt with methodically and in an orderly fashion, despite sometimes intense pressures to get a job done in haste (which inevitably leads to it going wrong), or to get a pet project moved up the priority list.

David actually controls the largest individual budget in the school—with queues of people attempting to get their hands on it, too. Managing this requires the spreadsheeting abilities of an accountant and the diplomacy of, well, a diplomat.

It also requires a particular sort of canniness. And, just very occasionally,

the obduracy of a very large rock. Through attention to detail, careful planning and spending, David always made sure that we knew where we stood. To the penny.

He maintained, and expected, high standards from those who worked with him and from contractors who came onsite. He would suffer no fools, nor being hoodwinked. Ineptitude and carelessness drive him to distraction. 'I'll tell ye once, I'll tell ye twice, but I'll not tell ye a third time.'

That David leaves the Academy in great shape is down to his drive and dedication. He should be proud of all that he has achieved and how far he has brought the campus on.

He is a man of many parts and many careers: a musician, too, and excellent 'on the tools' himself. All of this gives him a practical, commonsense approach to life and work. He is also a fully trained butcher. Unable to restrain my curiosity, I thought it would be a good idea for David and me to buy a lamb and then I could observe, at first hand, the butcher's art—pompously imagining that, in the manner of the College of Surgeons' open anatomy classes, I might learn something of practical anatomy in the process.

When the lamb arrived (from Gill Robb's farm), it has to be said it was possibly the biggest beast ever to grace a Scottish hillside. It was enormous. Anyway, off to David's garage it went, and we set about the task of (there's no way round this) reducing it down to shanks, shoulders, and other component parts. David, deft with his boning knife, explained what was what as the trays of meat grew ever higher. There was enough to feed, literally, an army. Well, McNabb House, at least...whose denizens consumed most of it during their summer barbecues. As I left David's house with the back of the car full, I managed to knock down his garden wall. I won't tell you what he said, but most of it consisted of incomprehensible Geordie objurgations. The words 'bonny lad' were not amongst them. It was, in fact, rather a small wall, and David, of course, couldn't have been nicer about it.

David, you've been a good friend as well as a fantastic colleague. Here's to you and to a long, happy retirement with plenty of trips across the water to see your son in the Rocky Mountains of Canada.

Justin Wilkes (Former Bursar)



A CLARION FAREWELL

Recently, we said a fond farewell to Clarion, our resident polar bear in his Library den. Clarion was created by Bamber Hawes, an artist from South Shropshire. In 2021, Bamber carried Clarion 306 miles to COP 26, in Glasgow, to raise awareness of climate change. After COP26, Bamber kindly let us use Clarion for a FIDA project—and he has lived in our Library ever since! We wish the best of luck to Clarion and Bamber as they head back down to England, to join a climate protest outside of Parliament.

Kerr Spanswick

JUSTIN WILKES: EARLY DAYS

Justin was taking notes, I thought. In an interminable SCIS meeting in a sunlit lecture theatre in Edinburgh surrounded by heads and bursars, he was looking up only from time to time, while engrossed in meticulous notetaking. All seemed to be on the one page: a doodle had morphed into an extraordinarily complex piece of art, as a tiny dwelling had magically been transformed into Gormenghastly castles in the sky. By this time, others around him were focused on Justin's elaborate work; the vanity of the speaker and triteness of the subject matter had been ignored; and the artist had a rapt audience which gave him a quiet round of personal applause at the end. He explained that he had a low boredom threshold.

There are many styles of bursars in HMC schools—deputy heads who have moved sideways, former tank commanders ready for new conflicts, and accountants, bored by pages of figures, hoping vainly to see the link between numbers and practical outcomes. Justin arrived in Dollar as Assistant Bursar from his position of lieutenant commander in the Navy. He joined the then Bursar, Commander Mike Fox, and seasalt yarns trickled from the little bursarial office on the Burnside—along with laughter. Inevitably, when Mike retired, Justin won the challenge for the post. Memorably, on the day his appointment was broadcast at the staff briefing, the warm applause resounded for almost five minutes. Bursars don't generally command such open affection.

The reasons for this popularity were clear: he valued the opportunity to manage by walk-about; he knew the names of all teaching and ancillary staff; he took notes, and he ensured that things were done; and his open demeanour enabled him to strike up warm friendships throughout the Dollar community. The then Chairman, John Cameron, valued the extent to which the Bursar was fully in tune with school needs. While in summer term he might occasionally have donned his uniform of old for CCF events, he was much more at home in boots and gaiters on DofE expeditions or even further afield in masochistic mountaineering exploits. He readily engaged with young people and was fully at ease throughout the extensive school campus. His loping stride took him rapidly to untrodden areas.

Bursars can so often be narrowly obsessed with cash-flow and numbers. While Justin was adept in this routine, he saw the bursarial function as something wider and indeed visionary. Yes, architects were engaged with and building schemes were scrutinised in fine detail, but as befitted an Oxford Arts graduate (the only UK bursar with a degree in Italian, I hazard), it was the historical context of the Dollar setting that mattered most to him. Thus today, for instance, the hedges of pre-war times have been reintroduced, and these have revitalised the otherwise pure green setting.

Over the years I relished meetings with him—



boredom was never on the agenda as pungent judgements were exchanged. The soundproofing on the Rector's doors was rigorously tested. Justin thought educationally, and he grasped new ideas with passion. Linguistic detail was as important as the numbers. Dollar moved on significantly during his long tenure; his return to the sea—as he makes his recently purchased boat fit for purpose—allows his circle to be neatly completed.

*John Robertson
(former Rector 1994–2010)*

JUSTIN

Just a few days after I arrived at Dollar as a new and slightly disorientated member of staff in the Maths Department in 1998, I received a summons to the Bursar's office. My previous experience of bursars had been of rather severe and remote figures, and I anticipated a dull meeting about some arcane details of salary or tax. When, however, I entered the inner sanctum of the bursariat, I was surprised to see walls covered with photographs of climbing and mountains. It turned out that the only reason for the meeting was for Justin to appraise me as fellow mountaineer, and our chat never made it as far as anything even vaguely financial. Our friendship was almost instant and has lasted and deepened ever since. Justin and I have enjoyed many wonderful Duke of Edinburgh expeditions in Scotland in the 24 years since that first meeting, and we have climbed and explored together, always with much hilarity, around the world.

Justin was my closest friend at Dollar, through thick and thin—but then, he was a friend, if needed, to every member of the school community. I was always amazed by his personal knowledge of, it seemed, every employee, and by the way he made it his business to find time to get around the school and show a genuine interest in what everyone—whether staff or pupil, and however lowly or lofty their position—was doing. With this overview gained over many years, he probably uniquely had his finger on the pulse of Dollar; his commitment to the school was deep and humane.

Justin took the responsibilities of his job seriously and they often weighed heavily upon him, especially more recently when navigating the Dollar ship through the treacherous financial waters of Covid. Now, in retirement, he can, I hope, deservedly relax and enjoy sailing his recently acquired boat in calmer waters and also renew his enjoyment of being in the mountains; I look forward to many more adventures together.

Robert Durran

FAIR WINDS...

One of my earliest meetings with Justin was at Betty's Tea Shop in Harrogate. We were both attending a conference and took some time out to get to know each other before I started in role. Relationships between heads and bursars can be notoriously difficult, but three things immediately stood out: Justin was passionate about Dollar, he was extremely direct in his assessments, and he was (much to my relief) a team player with no delusions of grandeur. Later, I would discover much more, such as his super-sharp Oxford-educated brain and his tendency to use naval analogies to describe any situation. However, I think it was that passion that stood out the most. And, at Betty's, he showed similar enthusiasm when setting about the cake on the table!

Bursars are called on to do many different things, and I think Justin really enjoyed the variety inherent in the role. His eye for aesthetics and feel for history kept architects on their toes and ensured that our building plans prioritised both quality and value. His dedication to ensuring that the school was an inspiring environment was unmatched, and he took great pains to ensure designs were as close to perfect as they could be. He truly cared about the small details and would never 'spoil the ship for a ha'p'orth of tar.'

He loved these projects, and his curiosity and enthusiasm carried others along. My guess is that this was the part of his role he enjoyed the most. On the other hand, he never neglected the humdrum: whether a bench needed painting or a gutter needed clearing, he always ensured it was done quickly.

Justin's financial expertise meant his advice was highly valued by the school's governors and its senior leadership team, but his energy led also him to contribute more to the co-curricular side of the school than I have seen from any other bursar. He loves the outdoors, particularly climbing, and was a regular participant in DofE activities. He attended a wide range of

school events and sometimes genuinely enjoyed them! And if he didn't—well, he would do his duty for as long as was necessary, would charm and entertain for a while, and would then head off to do something more valuable with his time. How wise.

Although a man of action, Justin is also very much a people person. His openness, friendliness, energy, and humour make him immediately likeable. What might have been less obvious, to some, is just how caring he is. I cannot count the number of times he sat in my office suggesting ways to help a particular individual who was struggling. He took an interest in everyone and was usually a great supporter of the underdog. He believes strongly in communal support and when asked to take on a leadership role among Scottish bursars, he did so without hesitation. I know he was highly respected by his contemporaries who appreciated his readiness to assist generously with his time and counsel.

There are few things more enjoyable in life than working effectively together as a team for the good of others. Justin was a key member of many different teams at Dollar for 30 years. In retirement he will find new teams, and new interests, and I know he will make the most of those opportunities. I wish him 'fair winds and following seas.'

David Knapman
(former Rector 2010–2019)



RUSSELL HALL

Russell Hall is delighted to be joining Dollar Academy as the new Head of Mathematics. He has spent the past eight enjoyable and successful years running the Mathematics Department at St Leonards School in St Andrews. A graduate of the University of St Andrews, he left the town for a few years, teaching in Larbert High School for one academic year, before joining Fettes College in Edinburgh as a Teacher of Mathematics and Assistant Housemaster. He enjoyed four happy years working at Fettes where, in addition to teaching Mathematics and working in the boarding house, he led the cross-country team, entering several youth teams into the Scottish Islands Peaks race, a sailing and running race on the west coast of Scotland.

A former pupil of the High School of Dundee, Russell's first (of many) visit to Dollar was back in 2000 for a rugby fixture. Whilst he has fond memories of those clashes, he does recall that the matches against Dollar were always the most anticipated and intimidating fixtures on the calendar. When pressed on which school was generally the more successful, he is a little hazy.

Russell's mantra for the Mathematics Department (staff and pupils) is: *'Maths—where everyone counts.'* He believes encouragement from teachers and parents—alongside positivity, practice, perseverance, and patience from the pupil—harvests progress. He is already feeling the warmth of the Dollar community, and is enjoying getting to know colleagues and pupils. Working at Dollar is

even more special because of the unique opportunity it affords to work alongside his twin sister, Chloe Muir, in the History Department.

A keen runner, Russell is looking forward to trading the tarmac for the trails of the Ochil hills. He regularly competes in half marathons and, if he can avoid injury, full marathons (always aiming to clock below the three-hour mark). He enjoys swimming and cycling, too, and to preserve his knees, he has started completing triathlons. He is eyeing up several in slightly warmer climates in the year ahead. An active person, Russell's more sedate sources of pleasure involve sea and loch kayaking adventures, hill walking, and brewing his own kombucha.



JOANNE MACLENNAN

Joanne MacLennan joined Dollar Academy's Support for Learning Department in January. She previously worked at Crieff High School as Principal Teacher of Pupil Support. She was drawn to Dollar by its impressive reputation for academic achievement coupled with its supportive environment. She has been so impressed with the hard-working, polite and respectful pupils. Staff have been very welcoming, too, making her arrival so enjoyable.

Joanne completed her undergraduate degree in English and Psychology (Hons) at Strathclyde University before commencing her PGDE (specialising in English). Working as an English teacher, she discovered her passion for supporting pupils, and for developing relationships with pupils and parents beyond the classroom. She next completed a PGCert in Inclusive Education: Research, Policy and Practice at Glasgow University and moved into Pupil Support, finding it highly rewarding. She believes that all young people can achieve their potential with the right support and mindset.

In her spare time, Joanne keeps as active as possible. She started golf lessons last year and is keen to pursue this in the future, as weather and time allow! Weekends and evenings are often spent taxiing her two children around to various clubs and events in their social calendar. She also loves the theatre and music and feels fortunate to find so many related co-curricular activities at Dollar; she has already joined the Mixed Voice Choir and is helping with the school musical this year.



JIM RICHARDSON

Jim Richardson was delighted to join the Physics Department in August. He brings with him 15 years of teaching experience, including the last five years as Head of Physics at Bloxham School, a boarding school in North Oxfordshire. He was drawn to Dollar by its impressive reputation and extensive co-curricular programme. Since joining, he has thoroughly enjoyed being part of the Physics team and supporting Mr Hose with Form 2 rugby. He has also appreciated the warm welcome he received upon joining McNabb & Tait as a House Tutor.

Jim studied for a degree in Physics with Sports Science at Loughborough University, graduating in 2005. Whilst at Loughborough, he was part of their rugby programme, being dual registered with the Worcester Warriors academy. He then completed his teacher training at the University of Gloucestershire.

In his spare time, Jim's hobbies revolve around sport and the outdoors. He enjoys rugby, tennis, five-a-side football, and cycling. He also spends as much time as possible exploring in his campervan with his wife and their dog, Bug. They have taken many trips in England and Europe, and they are very much looking forward to seeing more of Scotland.



JENNIFER SLOAN

Jennifer Sloan is delighted to return to teaching in the English Department at Dollar Academy, having previously taught at the school from 2020 to 2022. Originally from Northern Ireland, she studied English Literature at the University of Edinburgh and completed her Postgraduate Diploma in Education at Moray House. In 2011, Jennifer moved to Guernsey, where she taught English and served as Head of Year and Coordinator for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at La Mare de Carteret High School. Following her first spell at Dollar, she took a brief career pause to start her family; most recently, she taught at Boroughmuir High School in Edinburgh, Linlithgow Academy, and Fairview International School.

Having met her future husband playing hockey in Guernsey, they returned to Scotland in 2019 after an adventurous four-month skiing experience in Austria. As an avid hillwalker, Jennifer enjoys exploring Scotland's rich history and landscape with her family. Before motherhood, she completed several walking expeditions including the West Highland Way, as well as summitting Munros.

The warm welcome back to Dollar and the opportunity to work in such a beautiful environment alongside inspiring colleagues have been true delights. She has appreciated witnessing the growth of pupils over the years and learning about their impressive achievements. She has thrown herself into Dollar's co-curricular life, too, including goalkeeper training for Hockey Club and coordinating the Dollar Burns Club Writing Competition. She has also enjoyed being a part of the athletics programme this summer term.



ARGYLL

From silent discos to laser tag, this term has been an eventful one. It kicked off with a celebration of Chinese New Year, when we enjoyed a delicious feast before the real highlight of the night—some truly atrocious karaoke performances. As always, shopping trips to Edinburgh and Glasgow provided opportunities for retail therapy, while a definite favourite was the Supernova 5K run at the Kelpies: we lit up the night in our neon clothing and glow-in-the-dark face paint.

This term has been adrenaline-fueled in other ways, too: the Scotland v Wales game at Murrayfield had us on the edges of our seats—and often leaping out of them. We were more than ready to unwind with puppy yoga in the Assembly Hall. The puppies, at least, distracted us from some hilariously awkward yoga pose attempts.

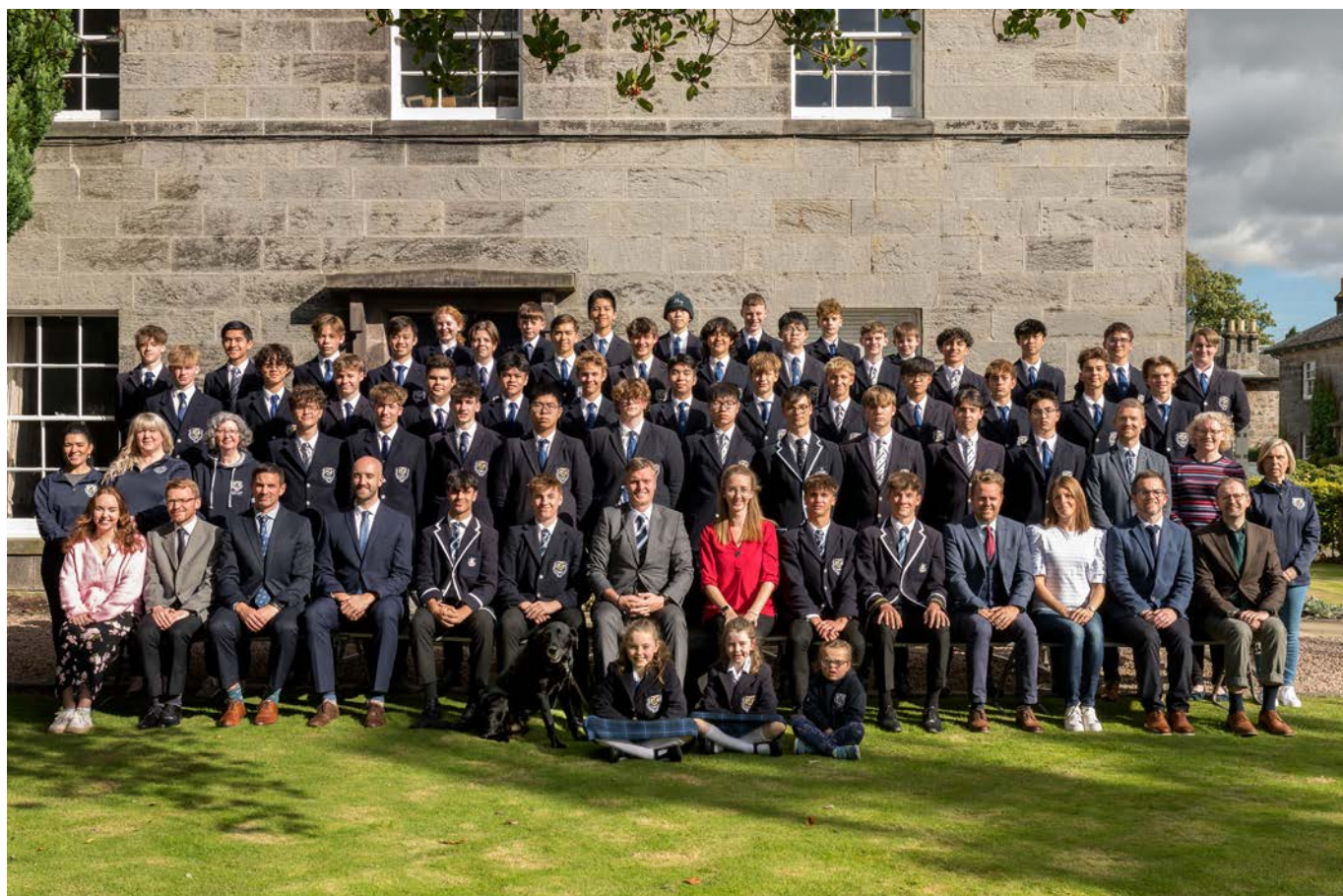
And for those seeking more intellectual pursuits, Mr and Mrs Johnston's House Book Club provided a space for philosophical discussions that are always *entirely* relevant to the book under discussion... For others, late-night kitchen chats are a perennial favourite, fuelled by snacks and Kayleigh's latest stories of wild adventures, whether she's scaling mountains,

crossing borders, or somehow managing both in the same weekend.

One of the most special nights of the year is Spanish Night. Inspired by the Valencian tradition of Las Fallas, we crafted and burned our very own miniature figures—everyone from Donald Trump to Chappell Roan. As we watched the flames flicker, we sang songs and talked around the fire. This term finally drew to a close with the Whole-House Trip, a wild ziplining adventure at Killiecrankie. We loved the mix of thrill and terror as we screamed our way along the wire strung 100 feet above the River Garry.

As I write, we are heading into the Easter break and exam season beyond. We hope this will bring more sunny weather to relieve our labours. And we look forward, as ever, to whatever new adventures the summer might bring, knowing that Argyll will be filled with laughter and friendship.

Natalie Y. (Head of House, Form VI)



McNABB & TAIT

As the days grow warmer and the daylight hours longer, it can be easy to lose sight of the daily humdrum routines of Dollar Academy, but the boys of McNabb & Tait have worked hard to maintain the (high) House standards. This holds true, whether we strive to go above and beyond in academic pursuits—Affan D. (Form VI) taking part in an international debating competition at Oxford, for instance—or whether we excel in sport—Ollie F. (Form VI) captaining the rugby 7s team this spring, for example.

We ended the first term better than anyone could have imagined; we returned the Leggat Cup to its rightful spot (in McNabb & Tait!), winning the judges over with our rousing Queen medley and some questionable dressing-up. With that important victory firmly under our belts, it is now (at time of writing) time for us to shift our focus to the annual Sports Day Tug o' War, an event steeped in tradition and pride for McNabb & Tait boys. This is one of those times that the boarding house can be seen at its best, as boys from across all age groups come together to train and refine techniques that have been passed down through boarding history. I have every faith that, given the determination seen last year, McNabb & Tait will bring the trophy back home again.

This year marks the end of a long boarding journey for the McEwan family, who have undoubtedly been one of the most important factors in making this House (and the wider boarding experience) so special for so many boys over the years (a full farewell will appear in *Fortunas* 56). One of the talents Mr McEwan perfected during his tenure has been the planning of the weekly House trips. He impressed again this term, taking the boys on one of the most popular trips to date: a visit to the Royal Yacht Britannia. This was followed by another highly popular trip to Scotland's Secret Bunker (an underground nuclear command centre). Beyond the trips, though, Mr McEwan will be missed for the depth of boarding knowledge, expertise and humour he brought to the House. The boys, and everyone attached to the House, will miss the McEwan family very much. The McEwans' departure opens the door for new Assistant Houseparents, and this role will be filled by our very own Mr Iain MacDonald and his family. Mr MacDonald joined us in August as the school's Head of Drama. He has already made a big impact, helping to choreograph our House Turn, not to mention his surprising FIFA knowledge (and his love for football). We must also say goodbye to Ms 'Hev' Holloway, who leaves us after the Easter

break—but not before taking us to one last Partick Thistle game.

After a long and exciting wait, the second goal has finally arrived in the House back garden, and it has been lovely to see the boys making use of it during the sunnier weather. Though, judging from recent performances, the Form V five-a-side team could do with some more practice. 'McNabb & Tait's Got Talent' also premiered this term with performances of wide-ranging quality throughout the night. It was Paul M. (Form V) who emerged victorious with his impressive rendition of the House anthem, 'Don't Look Back in Anger' (played on the pipes). The House is better represented in the school musical this year than ever before; many of our boys have been given roles, and the lead will be played by our very own Flynn G. (Form V). The boys on stage will be enthusiastically supported by Finlay T. (Form V) and Konstantin G.v.K. (Form VI) in the pit band.

Tait have been representing the House well this term; many boys have made it onto a variety of sports teams: Jerry C. (Form IV) plays on the basketball team, following in the footsteps of the mighty Thomas G. (Form VI). Olly C. (as captain), Raphael M.-R., Jake T., Enzo G. and Mac S. (all Form III) also form the backbone of the Form III rugby squad. McNabb also boasts athletic excellence with Christian S-W. (Form V) winning this year's Kelpies 5K run; many of our boys took part that night, sporting neon makeup and funky glowsticks. The return of Monday night football has also sparked some fierce sporting rivalries; McNabb battled it out with Tait one week and Forms V and VI went head-to-head against one another, too. Some questionable decisions from

our referee/DJ (along with some very clearcut rule-breaking) led to many mid-match debates...

Earlier in the term we were surprised to face the consequences of Storm Eowyn: a power cut that resulted in a day free from lessons. Facing the prospect of a screen-free day, the boys of McNabb & Tait came together to compete in pool, table tennis and darts tournaments. We even played some board games, only slightly soured by some rather shamelessly unethical approaches to the pursuit of victory during the second hour of Risk. For dinner, we put the pizza ovens (firm favourites in the House) to good use. When the power eventually came back on, many of us were surprised to find ourselves a little disappointed; life with no devices had proven to be not quite so terrible as we had imagined. This shows the importance of having a closeknit group of boys and a strong House spirit. Without it, the power cut would have meant a long day of boredom. Instead, we all came together and made the best of it.

Overall, the boys of McNabb & Tait continue to impress across all elements of school life with an attitude and approach that represents the House perfectly; I am sure this is something we will all carry on into the final term of this session.

Ben C. (Head of House, Form VI)



HEYWORTH

The final term is within reach and there is lots to look forward to within Heyworth, but there are also many great memories to look back upon. Christmas is always a very special time of year for boarders—most notably, the Boarders' Ceilidh. It is the highlight of the year for many of us, and a fantastic way to celebrate the end of the first term. For some, particularly our international students, it will probably be one of the few times in their lives that they will have the chance to experience a ceilidh. It is always a boarding community favourite.

After the Christmas holidays, we were sad to say goodbye to our Tutor, Miss Anna Watkin. She returned home to the USA, and everyone at Heyworth wishes her the best. We were, however, delighted to welcome Mrs Emma Poole who joined the school's Mathematics Department in August. Mrs Poole is a very kind-hearted person; it is fair to say that she is always mobbed at prep time (being a Maths teacher); many of the girls are grateful indeed for her presence.

Then it was straight into prelims for those of us in Forms V and VI. That was a pretty stressful time for many, but hard work was done, and we powered through. Since then, we have undertaken lots of trips—we have been

pottery painting; we climbed Arthur's Seat and (a familiar favourite for all boarders) we went to watch some Six Nations rugby. This year we were lucky to get tickets for the Wales v Scotland match; that was a brilliant day out—not least as Scotland came out on top. Puppy yoga (I'll leave it to your imagination), involving all three Houses, was an absolute blast!

For our Form VI, there is great excitement—impatience for some—as we hear back from universities about what our future holds. We have a diverse range of personalities and aspirations in the House, and this is very clear when you look at what they are heading off to do next. It is a bittersweet moment for many of us beginning a new chapter in our lives, but the chapter closing is a significant one. Everyone at Heyworth reaps the benefits of living here, whether it be the kindness and attention shown by our wonderful Houseparents, or the commitment and engagement of our brilliant House staff and the House Tutors—and we must not, of course, forget the affection and fun provided by Paddy the dog.

Looking back on the year, at the time of writing, I can declare that it has been nothing short of amazing. We have had a lot of fun, but we have also worked hard.



We are now beginning to turn our attention to the business end of the year, with summer exams fast approaching. For many in Heyworth, we are reaching the end of our time at Dollar, but it is safe to say that we have all been shaped by our time here. And now, the sun is emerging again, and the delights of the final term are stretching out before us.

Libby D. (Head of House, Form VI)

PREP 1-3 NATIVITY: Ned's Christmas Discovery

With great excitement, the shining stars of Prep 1, the skilful chefs of Prep 2, and the traditional Nativity cast of Prep 3 practised their singing and acting, determined to kick off the festive period with an entertaining performance for mums and dads, grannies, grandpas and friends.

Ned's Christmas Discovery was full of tradition, but given a modern twist. Some superb solo performances were interspersed with group and whole-class singing, and some dynamic acting brought the show to life. Pupils dressed up brightly as toys and gifts, shopkeepers, animals, and even Santa, before the true meaning of Christmas was shared. Ned the Donkey learned that there was far more to Christmas than receiving gifts and having treats, as he journeyed to Bethlehem led by Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, and the wise men. The angels and stars sang beautifully at the stable, and the Auditorium was a joyful place.

A full cast of singers, actors and narrators delivered the story with great confidence and composure, launching the festive season for cast and audience alike.

Karen Thomson and Monika Harewood

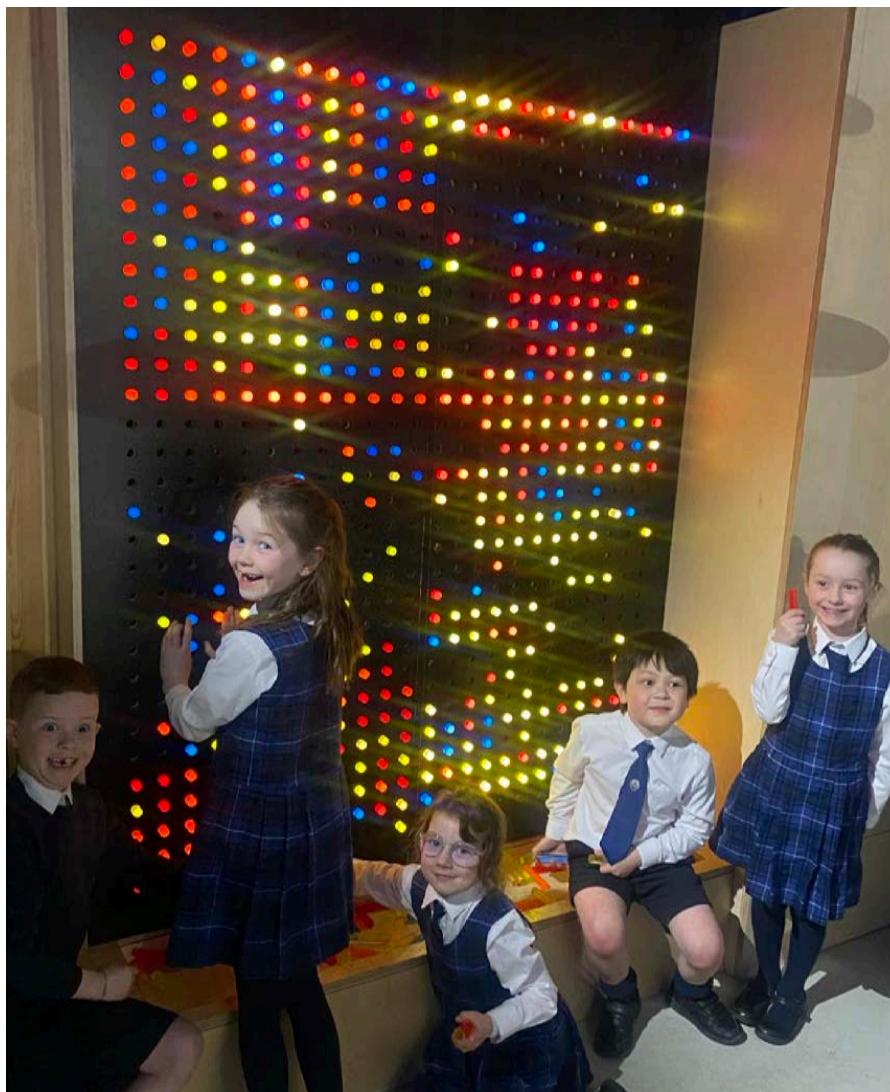
PREP 2 EXPLORE LIGHT AND DARK

Is there a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow?

Prep 2 have not found it yet, but we have discovered how a rainbow is made.

Prep 2 have recently been exploring the topic of 'Light and Dark'. We experimented with shadows, discovering that they are created by light. We enjoyed creating shadow pictures using the sunlight and our hands. We noticed that the size of our shadows changed throughout the day depending upon the sun's position in the sky. We learned that light is vital for life on Earth. We also explored how humans and animals have adapted to 'day and night' living. And this inspired some artwork. Next, we investigated our sense of sight; we looked at how we see colour and compared this to other animals. We enjoyed learning about nocturnal animals and how they can see their prey in the dark. We discovered that humans have had to create artificial light sources to allow us to function successfully in the dark, for example: torches, streetlights and lamps.

Groups of pupils were challenged to build an electrical circuit that would switch on a light bulb. We were all successful! We discovered that electricity flows in one direction and



that the light would only switch on if the circuit was complete. We went on to investigate other sources of light and discovered that light moves in straight lines. Our experiments showed us that light can travel through air and water, but not through solid objects.

At the end of our topic, we had the opportunity to extend our learning with a visit to the Dundee Science Centre. The interactive exhibits tricked our minds with optical illusions,

making us all laugh! We also had many chances to explore other areas of science, and we loved the exciting, hands-on experiences.

*Kerri Baird, Louise Thomson and
Lorna Barlow*



FROM THE PUPILS:

'I'm less scared of the dark now because I know it's dark when we're facing away from the sun.' -Ellie

'I loved trying to find new ways to connect the wires in the circuit to make the lights work.' -Eva

'I enjoyed making fireflies with glowsticks.' -Rowan

'Nocturnal animals have really good hearing. I loved listening to all the animal sounds and trying to work out which animal made each sound.' -Rory





JUNIOR CANTATA

Junior 1 pupils brought the house down with a rousing performance of their School-O-Vision Cantata on 11 March 2025. This witty and engaging show brought different areas of Dollar Academy to life in a humorous way, through songs and sketches.

The pupils took on various roles including the Junior School staff, DAPA members, the Dining Hall staff, Prep 1 pupils, the janitors, Junior School pupils, and Eurovision Song Contest presenters. The winners of the evening were 'Haute Cuisine' with their legendary performance of 'Chips and Beans'. The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone, and the Auditorium was packed to capacity. A big thank you to Mrs Timney and her Music Department for their patience and passion throughout the experience.

There were seven instrumental performances: Samantha G., Cameron U. and Tom W. all played bagpipes; Aniruddah S. played acoustic guitar; Norah T. performed on the clarinet; Rebecca C. and Megan B. performed a violin duet; Hugh C. played electric guitar; Logan W. played alto saxophone and Zain W. and Christian S. both played side drum.



Heather Holloway



BENMORE RESIDENTIAL

From 10–14 March 2025, Junior 2 pupils swapped the classrooms of the Junior School for Benmore Outdoor Centre and its beautiful surroundings on the Cowal Peninsula. The week was filled with success by every measure, and accompanying staff thoroughly enjoyed the company of the whole year group.

The programme of outdoor activities was extensive: cycling, canoeing, gorge walking, climbing and abseiling and caving, as well as opportunities to explore the forests and hillsides around the centre. Pupils quickly adjusted to the daily structure of Breakfast–Activity One–Lunch–Activity Two before rumbling tummies encouraged everyone back to the centre for perhaps the most welcome ‘feed’ of the day, ‘Cake O’Clock’ at 4.30pm. With a record five pupil birthdays during the week, candles and a ‘Happy Birthday’ chorus were very happy additions to this routine. Dinner and the evening activity that followed ensured that everyone fell into bed every night with remarkably little resistance!

The centre staff kept everyone going all week, with apparently endless energy. They ensured everyone was active and happy, but they also challenged pupils to experience the thrill of being pushed out of your comfort zone. We hope pupils will take this knowledge with them as they make their transition into the Senior School next session.

Pupils were asked to reflect on all aspects of their experience and we hope their musings, along with these photos, give a flavour of their incredible week away.

Katie O’Hanlon



Everyone had an amazing week at Benmore. There were so many brilliant activities where people challenged themselves and worked together. For many, caving was a challenging but enjoyable experience. It was scary crawling around a dark, damp cave but, in the end, everyone helped each other to learn to face their fears and stay calm in an unfamiliar situation. Abseiling was brilliant fun and one of the most thrilling activities. As we all took our turn to stand on the edge of the cliff our hearts pounded. We were terrified as we started to walk down, but after that first panic it actually started to become fun. When we reached the bottom, we felt proud of what we had achieved. Benmore was an incredible time and we would all love to go back.

Katy M.

Benmore was filled with thrilling activities, and we had to push ourselves! Children were organised into dorms in the grand Benmore House. There were bunkbeds with storage trays underneath. We were all sent to bed at 9pm each night, but it is no secret that we did not always fall asleep straight away! Many memories were crafted at night as we whispered and shared secrets. Many friendships were born that will last a long time. The endless adventures with roommates was probably the best part of it all.

Fergus M.

Benmore was an amazing trip, not just because of the activities, but also because of what we learned about ourselves. For a lot of people, this was their first time away from home for a long period. Surprisingly, only a few felt homesick. It was also a rare chance to be away from electronics. A lot of people didn’t think they would be able to manage for a whole week, but everyone coped just fine. This proved that we are able to stay



off screens and enjoy plenty of other activities to keep ourselves busy instead! We learned skills such as lighting fires and canoeing, but we also learned about each other, about each other's lives are like. We learned how to cope with others, whether they are your best friends or not, something which will be an important skill in life. Overall, Benmore was an amazing experience for all the physical activities, but also because it helped us in ways more to do with the mind.

Dara L.

Benmore was one of the best experiences. Lots of people said they were so lucky to have the opportunities like abseiling and caving. Benmore is an exceptionally large house. There are so many halls and rooms, it was almost unbelievable. It was hard to find our way around the place at first; in the end, we knew the house and staff so well it felt like home. The instructors amazed us with their outdoor knowledge and skill. Every trail was full of adventure and excitement. We all agreed that Benmore was an amazing opportunity: the best experience possible for Junior 2. When I asked other pupils to describe Benmore, this is what they said: 'I loved canoeing because of the teamwork and I got to jump in the loch!' 'I loved having more opportunities and time with my friends!' 'I would love to go again.' 'It was unforgettable!'

Maya W.



JUNIOR SCIENCE FAIR 2025

This year's Junior Science Fair was a fantastic display of creativity and innovation, showcasing an impressively high standard of projects. A big thank you to all the Junior 2 pupils for their incredible hard work and enthusiasm—and to the judges who generously gave their time from industry to support the event. Their expertise truly made a difference in making this much-anticipated event on the school calendar such a success.

Phoebe M.'s project, *Skincare Secrets*, investigated (using pig skin samples) how different skincare products affect the skin. Despite initial challenges in obtaining samples and expert advice, Phoebe's experiment was a success, producing conclusive results after careful testing. She was excited, but nervous, during the Science Fair, and she was thrilled to be named the winner. She was also offered the opportunity to visit a skincare lab in England, and she received advice on pursuing a career in the industry after university.

Daniel W.'s project, *Bring Back the Bounce*, focused on reducing the carbon footprint of tennis balls by experimenting with repressurising old balls to improve their bounce. The process involved repetitive testing, but he remained committed to accuracy and perseverance. Nervous yet prepared, he enjoyed sharing his findings with the judges. Proud to be named runner-up, Daniel felt great satisfaction in his achievement and the opportunity to contribute to sustainability in tennis.

Mike McComiskie



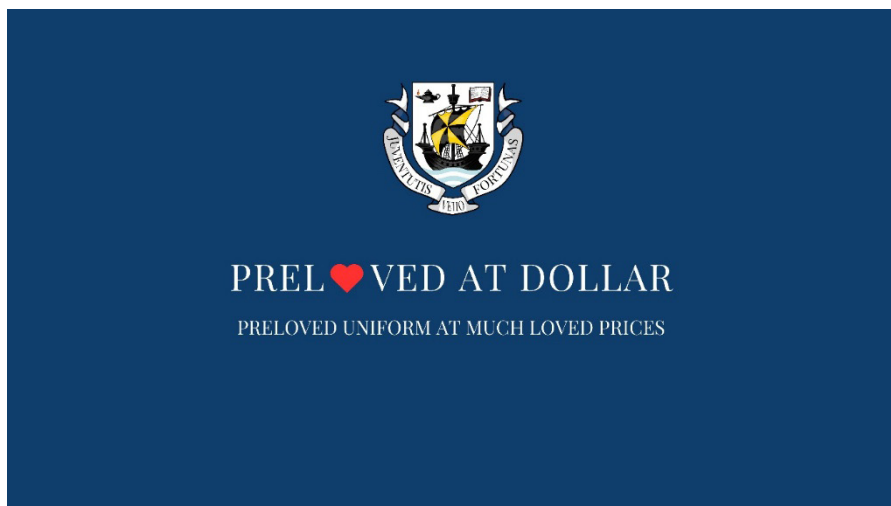
PRELOVED AT DOLLAR

PRELOVED AT DOLLAR is located under the Prep School; it is organised and run by a group of 18 dedicated volunteers. They 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.

As we enter the last term of this school year, we are delighted to report that the shop has continued to be busy. Thanks to our volunteers, we have hosted a total of 21 Sales Days, generating £13,000 in gross sales. We hope to increase this even further with the seven Sales Days remaining before the end of term. Details of these can be found on the school website and on our Facebook page.

Our share of these funds helps to provide Dollar pupils with exciting new equipment that enriches the education of pupils from Prep 1 through Form VI. This has included netball equipment for the Netball Club (netball stands and balls); football equipment for the boys' and girls' teams (goals, footballs, bibs); curling equipment for the Curling Club (shoe grippers, step-on sliders, crutches/supports); tents for the boarding houses (for their expeditions); large picnic benches (for pupils to use during breaktimes and for classes to use in lesson time); books for gifting to Junior School pupils transitioning into Form I; Numicon (to support conceptual understanding of Maths in the Prep School); Kapla (which promotes perseverance, collaboration and the development of cognitive abilities). We have also agreed to fund several other items which are in the process of being procured; we will update via our Newsletter once these items have been purchased and are in use.

Our customers can get a great bargain on school uniform items when they buy from us, and selling your children's gently-used, outgrown uniforms is very easy. Once you have



an account, just drop off the cleaned items for sale. When they sell, we transfer 80% of the sales price into your account.

Thank you to our volunteers and to all the parents who support us throughout the year with stock and sales. We hope that you continue to help us by selling your school uniform items through PRELOVED AT DOLLAR.

Lee Deane

P.S. Don't forget: we also sell handmade Keepsake Bears made from recycled uniforms—perfect as graduation gifts!



FUTURES FAIR

On Friday 1 November, we were delighted to welcome over 60 industries to our first annual Futures Fair. Many industry and business representatives came along to give our pupils important information and insight into the huge range of career opportunities out there. All pupils had a chance to wander through, study the displays and ask any questions they wanted over the course of the day. As many of the representatives had links to the school, there was a strong sense of community that made it easy to build contacts and connections.





A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF EDT

Junior 1 have been unleashing their creativity with some incredible pencil-holder designs inspired by the mysterious 'Creatures of the Deep'! Not only did they bring their imaginative ideas to life, but they also mastered new skills in the workshop to manufacture their final products.

Meanwhile, Form I have been busy crafting their 'Block Bots', skilfully shaping pine with a variety of hand tools. They then switched gears to embrace the world of Computer-Aided Design and Manufacture, transforming their Steampunk lamp concepts into reality with modern manufacturing methods.

Form II have taken on an exciting mix of challenges in Engineering Science and Graphic Communication, including building a functional birdfeeder for the Design and Manufacture course.

Not to be outdone, Form III Design and Manufacture students have been refining their metalworking skills, crafting sleek aluminium mobile phone holders, aptly named 'Laid-back Lou'. Their creative skills were really put to the test in their designs for Alessi-inspired pizza cutters. After having made the pizza cutters, the pupils very much enjoyed putting them to the test on actual pizza!

To top it all off, our Form III Graphic Communication pupils tackled both manual and digital design challenges to produce innovative 'Gizmo' concepts, designing an engaging crawl tunnel for a children's play area.

Claire Brownbridge



MODERN LANGUAGES CAROUSELS

Our annual Modern Languages Carousels took place in February, allowing our pupils, and many pupils from other schools, to converse in French, German, Spanish, and Mandarin with native speakers. We would like to thank the volunteers who kindly gave up their own time to put learners through their paces, giving them a great preparation for their Speaking exams and making their learning relevant.

Susan Rice





WORLD BOOK DAY 2025

This year, the Senior School celebrated World Book Day with a visit from the Scottish comic artist and writer Edward Ross. Edward spoke to Forms I and II about his love of comics and graphic novels, and he also held a comic-making workshop in the Library for aspiring writers and illustrators.

The next day, our annual Pre-loved Book Fair took place in the Library. As ever, it was a lovely event to celebrate the power and magic of books. Thank you to everyone who kindly donated books.

Kathryn Rambaut





BURNS SUPPER 2025

The annual Form VI Burns Supper brought together over 200 pupils, staff and guests for an enjoyable evening in celebration of the life and works of Robert Burns. The Burns Committee (Miss Olivia Bell, Mrs Beth Wright and Form VI pupils Lucy M., Logan M. and Konstantin G.v.K.) put together a talented lineup of speakers, singers and performers.

Mr Graeme Morrison, our Chair for the night, set the warm tone of the evening. From the very first performance—Jamie O.'s impressive 'Address to a Haggis'—it was clear that the night would be a success. Logan's 'Immortal Memory' provided contemporary insights into Burns' continuing legacy, both politically and culturally. Konstantin's 'Address to the Lassies' and Anna J.'s 'Reply to the Lads' were both witty and clever, landing well with everyone in the audience. Rhiannon M.'s 'Toast to the School' captured the heartfelt gratitude that we all share as we look back upon our time at Dollar, and Dr Bill Beveridge's 'Reply from the School' was thoughtful and funny, reminding us of the importance of our shared values. The recitation and song performances by Zuzu J., Freya R., James M. and Amy P. showcased the diverse and impressive talent within our year group. It all made for a night to remember.

Lucy M. (Form VI)



FORM I DRAMA CLUB

The Form I Drama Club rounded off 2024 with a delightful performance of Roald Dahl's much-loved *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, adapted for the stage. Pupils spent the weeks following the October break diligently rehearsing in order to bring this classic tale to life. The stage was filled with woodland creatures, including the clever Foxes, wise Mr Badger, industrious Mole, and playful Squirrel. Each character contributed to delivering a very entertaining evening—despite the constant harassment from those three revolting farmers: Boggis, Bunce, and Bean. The audience was captivated by the vibrant costumes, expressive acting, and the lively set design that transported them into the heart of the story. The dedication and hard work of the pupils were evident in every scene, making the performance a memorable event for all who attended. Form I Drama Club will now begin rehearsing a new play, which promises to be just as exciting; it is due to be performed sometime this summer. The anticipation is already building, and we can't wait to see what they have in store for us next!

Iain MacDonald





GIRLS LIKE THAT:

The Form VI Play

This year's Form VI play was *Girls Like That* by playwright Evan Placey. A powerful play exploring the challenges that young women face in the digital age, it examines the destructive impact of social media and peer pressure. When a compromising image of Scarlett is shared around the school, rumours spread like wildfire and her reputation becomes toxic.

Rehearsing for the play was an intense but extremely rewarding experience, challenging us as individuals and as actors. After the first read-through, we began the process of dividing up lines and then researching the play's themes. This play, more than most, dealt with thought-provoking topics that we knew today's young audiences, especially, would relate to. Due to the fast-paced nature of the play, we had to work cohesively and bounce off each other's energy; this certainly helped to create a dynamic atmosphere during rehearsals and during the performances, too. The exchange of energy kept us all on our toes and made the whole thing exciting and challenging; every individual's input and involvement was crucial. This play was a truly memorable experience, one to be cherished long after we leave Dollar.

Zoe M. (Form V)

CREATIVE WRITING CLUB

In the spring term, pupils from our Creative Writing Club focused on completing their one-act plays ahead of the exciting event performance that took place in March. The plays they wrote were diverse in theme, but had in common their clever humour and engaging characterisation. Mungo S. (Form II) wrote very engagingly about Ariel's descent into the Underworld for a meeting with a hapless Hades, whilst Christie M. (Form III) wrote a highly amusing piece called 'How To Interview'. Her play was full of surprising moments and original humour, and the audience laughed at all the right moments! Darcy K.'s (Form I) piece was a brilliant satire on the world of high fashion at the HQ of couture magazine, *Vague*. Each piece was brilliantly crafted and directed with real skill by the writers themselves. Next term we look forward to focusing on writing poetry (in the style of William Carlos Williams) inspired by objects and producing graphic novels, inspired by Edward Ross' visit to the school earlier in the spring term.

Beth Wright and David Chant



A NEW COLLABORATION:

CREATIVE WRITING CLUB AND DRAMA

The Creative Writing Club and Drama Department joined forces to present an evening of new plays, performed in the Drama Studio this March. This collaborative event showcased the creative talents of pupils (Forms I to III) in the Creative Writing Club, as they were given the chance to see and hear their original plays brought to life by two professional actors. The evening was a celebration of young writers' imaginations, each play offering amazing insight into its writer's mind and, indeed, the creative process. The professional actors' performances added a layer of authenticity and professionalism, giving the pupils a rare opportunity to see their work handled with immense skill



and dedication. The audience was treated to a diverse range of themes and genres, from heartfelt dramas to whimsical comedies, each play reflecting the individual voices and visions of the young playwrights. This event was a great opportunity for the writers to see their work performed, whilst offering a valuable learning experience that gave insights into the process of bringing a script to the stage. The pupils were justly proud of what they had produced. This first collaboration between the Creative Writing Club and Drama Department proved to be a resounding success.

Iain MacDonald



The Reliable Leader

I find myself back once again
spent, yet burning eyes look into mine—
Voices of people they try to combine,
their efforts though are left in vain.
Her memory, this photo; it is an eyesore
I vowed never to look back upon.
Small girl, there's qualities you lack.
Compassion won't save all you adore.

From little her I have long evolved
the new, detached demeanor received with bliss,
but a means to lead, to solve.
Shell of a former passion, now hollow,
my fiery eyes extinguished and cool, still
finally, I am what people want to follow.

Emily G. (Form III)

A sonnet inspired by reading Percy Bysshe Shelley's 'Ozymandias'

ANTLERS

The spray lacerated me, leaping up from the waves like cold sharp bullets. Beauty all around, despite death shadowing the island. The gunshot left the hills shaking. Her flank was warm, and wet to touch. Glassy eyes looked up at me, and I looked back...

We began the stalk to the north of the island, working our way through the grass and heather. Scarba was truly beautiful—even the looming clouds didn't change that. We crept along a ridge, following our keeper, a friendly man named John. Below us lay a meadow of flowers and grasses, with heavily trodden routes clearly visible. We saw where thousands of animals had made their way through, carving out canyons in the grass, creating one large maze of deer, badger, rabbit and fox highways. The sea was rough and dark, but the white horses of foam that rode the tip of each wave caught the sun, leaving the ocean glittering. We had left Degnish behind; the wild, bleak little peninsula on the west coast of Scotland that we were calling home for the summer holidays. Degnish means 'wet bog' in Gaelic, and it's a very accurate description. Ignoring the house, it's just a wedge of hilly marshland that juts out into the sea towards the big red mountain that is Scarba: a craggy, cave-riddled island covered with invasive bracken; the dead plants smother the island like a lush crimson blanket.

My admiration was cut short when I bumped straight into my dad (the reason I was here; I was following in his footsteps). I realised, and kept quiet, struggling to get a

look. John had stopped moving, and when John stopped, you stopped. On the ridge opposite, three male red deer had stumbled into view. They were out of season, so we waited until they walked on, observing them for almost 30 minutes. We had a few more encounters, but with deer we couldn't shoot at that time of year, and so we marched on. Two hours in, creeping along the edge of a large sea ravine, we spotted the deer. They were about a mile away, on the flank of Cruach Scarba. We made our way to a small hill that sat directly opposite the deer. We commando-crawled to the top and set up the gun slowly, so as not to scare the jumpy animals, now just 80 yards in front of us. The cold metal woke me from my fascination, and I got ready to take the shot, lining up my scope.

'Just below the shoulder,' I heard John say.

I lay with the crosshair sitting frozen for what felt like forever, and breathed. When I was younger, I stood strongly against my dad when it came to his shooting. It took years for him to convince me to join him one day. He argued that if you are prepared to eat meat, but you are not prepared to kill for it you might as well become a vegetarian. It took a while, but that argument eventually worked on me—though until that day I maintained doubts. My finger brushed the trigger, the gun ready. The heavy breathing of the men on either side of me, the warmth of the sun wrapping around my neck. I noticed everything in the moment before taking a life. I had decided, and I knew, if I hit it right, the deer wouldn't suffer. We wouldn't waste anything, keeping it in our freezer until all of it was eaten. I breathed in. Out.

The crack of the rifle shook the mountain and echoed for miles. Even wearing ear protection, it was deafening. The deer perked up, confused, and stumbled. It gazed to the sky, fell, and lay on the slope, unmoving. The rest of its herd seemed lost, then became infected with a desire to run; they dashed out of sight in seconds. I received pats on the back, and several 'Good shot!'s, and I felt proud. John went off to get the quad bike so that we could bring the deer back to the jetty, and Dad and I started our hike up to the deer, slumped halfway up the steep hill. When we got there, I turned her over, looking for the entry wound. It was exactly below the shoulder bone; the bullet had gone straight through the heart and out the other side. Its large, wild eyes had glassed over, and its flank was warm and very soft. That mature doe was the most beautiful animal I'd ever seen, and I felt horrible.

We carried it down between us and waited for John. When he didn't come, we clambered back up our hill to lie down. The initial shock of the gunshot had scared all the life out of me, but the initial fright soon faded away from every other living thing on the isle. The wildlife bloomed. Butterflies, birds in huge flocks, deer in the distance. On one hill, we saw some goats, and at the bottom of a valley to our south we spotted badgers through our binoculars. Enjoying the improving weather, I leaned back and scoped out the mountain behind me. Another herd trotted into view, and I noticed a fawn. I thought about the circle of life: the most natural thing in the world. Every animal, apart from humans, simply accepts it. These animals walk around an island littered with bones, and it doesn't bother them

at all. Perhaps we are just softened by the luxuries of modern life, because my ancestors would have taken that shot instantly. Today, billions of farm animals are slaughtered, in traumatic conditions, for food annually. That deer lived a better life than any cow, and, sadly, I'd even go so far as to say it lived a better life than many people.

The boat arrived, and the deer lay gutted on the slipway. Her entrails, thrown behind a bush, would quickly be eaten, and even from the boat her stomach stood out like a bright blue jewel. We raced back to Degnish, deer secured, and we noticed that almost every island was smothered by a heavy fog that sat low above the sea. Scarba and Degnish, however, were glowing—highlighted by the sun's rays as though they were being abducted by godlike aliens. The heavens were visible, breaking through the clouds, and I imagined the deer was up there somewhere, grazing in golden meadows that smelled of fresh grass and bracken. Golden meadows and bright blue waters: places suited to all kinds of life... and death. Two sides of the same beautiful, ultimate coin.

James S. (Form IV)

AFTER-DINNER C O F F E E

My mum and I drink coffee after dinner. A blend of bitter grumbings of the day and delicious gossip. The process of making the after-dinner coffee is carefully considered.

Step 1: Get my mug, then reach up to the cupboard and extract Mum's mug—the one with the blue pattern and red rim. If it is catastrophically absent from the cupboard, take the back-up mug.

Step 2: Milk. This is a particularly tense moment in the process. Too much milk and Mum's wrath is upon you. Too little milk and Mum's wrath is also upon you.

Step 3: Survive the trauma of the ancient coffee machine.

Step 4: Drink it.

By this point my mum has retreated from the dinner table and is curled into the nest (the most comfortable chair in the house). I am not of suitable status for a comfy chair, I'm at the table. I look forward to the days when I'm a mother myself and I will have my very own nest. Until then, however, I think it's important to make the most of our coffee-drinking days together. I find it hard to believe I will ever find as good a coffee-drinking companion as my mum.

Part of drinking coffee is the snacks to go with it. Caramilk is a favourite as the large bar maximises crumbs needing eaten. A Double Decker is a decent snack as the sweet contrasts with the bitter coffee. However, by far the best are Revels. The orange packet will sit in the cupboard for days, peeping out from among the other biscuits. Every day the compulsion to grab it is high, but we both know timing is important. Revels can't just be gobbled any day. Only when my mum or I come home tired and low does a hand reach for the Revels. The packet crackles as my mum opens it. We both reach in and take a Revel. As you will know, if you

eat Revels, they all look roughly the same. Spheres of chocolate perfection, with different flavours hidden in each one. My mum and I have the same favourite. Toffee. There is, therefore, great apprehension as we both bite our first Revel. Almost always, my mum gets a toffee. How she does it is beyond me, as to my young eyes they all look the same. I guess there is a wisdom that comes with motherhood that gives her the uncanny ability to locate toffees. One day she'll have to teach me. I reckon that will only come when our coffee drinking days are over and the toffees are safe from competition. A packet of Revels has a lifespan of around three days. After that, the Revels enter the graveyard of the biscuit tin. The orange bag finds its final resting place with the forgotten chocolate-coated raisins (or at least what my mum and I believe to be raisins) rattling in the bottom like old bones.

Now comes the most important element of after-dinner coffee. The discussion. This begins when we take our first sip. My dad will have retreated to work, and there is quiet in the house. A vast variety of topics are covered—the highlights and the irritations of the day. My mum is the best listener. Fuelled by coffee and chocolate, she can easily sit for hours of my tales. I could tell her the dullest of stories, yet she would listen as though it was the most fascinating thing she'd ever heard. It is a powerful skill of hers, as I tell her absolutely everything about my life. When something interesting or exciting happens in my day, I find myself immediately thinking about how I will tell it to her. Not because I feel a duty to tell her, but because I want to. There is satisfaction in providing her with an interesting story—a satisfaction I rarely find elsewhere.

My mum talks to everyone. She is endlessly out meeting up with her friends. This is an important job, as, in return for my stories, I need some in return. You would have thought that the gossip my mum gathers would be of little interest

to me, but you would be wrong. You cannot underestimate how exciting the gossip in a small village can be. But it isn't the substance of the gossip I enjoy; it's the way she tells it. There is a certain sense of suspense and drama that can turn the most mundane information into priceless gossip. From the moment she sits down, I can tell when she has uncovered a juicy piece of gossip. There is a smugness as she sips at her coffee. Then a standoff. Obviously, I don't want to seem too desperate and beg her to tell me. But at the same time, she manages to hide behind her coffee cup in such a way that forces me to ask her. Eventually she gives in, and the deepest secrets of the village are shared. But gossip is not the only conversation exchanged. She also shares her worries and troubles. This is what I value most. You can share gossip or a funny story with anyone, but not your innermost struggles. I want to be the person my mum is to me. A storyteller and a therapist. When she shares her concerns with me, I know I am fulfilling both roles. I feel proud knowing that I can reduce her burden by lifting the weight of worry off her shoulders. She always does the same for me. I presume that is part of growing up. There is an equality between my mum and me that wasn't there before I started drinking coffee.

By now our cups are empty. Every last gulp of now-cold coffee has been taken, and we get up. When after-dinner coffee is finished, we both set to work. I'll do my homework; my mum will continue the never-ending housework. It probably only takes us twenty minutes to drink our coffee. But those precious minutes are often the highlight of my day. I would say that I love coffee, but I'm not sure that's true. Coffee is alright, but it is after-dinner coffee I really love.

Rowan B. (Form V)

THE ROAD TO EMPATHY

Growing up in a small community in Scotland where the bushes are nicely trimmed and houses are well-kept, I only had a basic grasp of poverty across the world. It was something we all learned about in History lessons, something that was often in newspapers, but it was always ‘over there’. I couldn’t fathom how much my perception would be changed by a school hockey trip to South Africa. There, I saw poverty right in front of me, not just in textbooks. Seeing poverty in its most immediate form changed me.

The steady hum of the bus and the sun’s warm glow rocked us to a calm sleep, curled in our chairs. When the bus jolted to a stop, we woke, stretching our legs and rubbing our eyes. Outside the bus, corrugated roofs reflected harsh light upon a town of sombreness. Makeshift rusted-metal homes, wooden planks and plastic scraps peppered the town. This was poverty. Smoke from wood and rubbish billowed up into the sky. But something else caught my eye too. People working tirelessly in the streets: people who came to seem a symbol of perseverance and resilience. People who had a spirit about them despite the bleakness of their surroundings. As we stood in the shantytown, our stillness and silence were deafening. It felt almost as if we were disconnected from reality, as if this was all an illusion. I thought I knew what shantytowns were before I came, but seeing the reality, I felt shocked that people could survive here. Yet, somehow, it felt a safe haven—though the makeshift shelters were constructed from things we would toss into the skip at home. Our rubbish was someone else’s treasure: a means of survival, perhaps even a source of joy or inspiration. The bus revved its engine, we boarded and soon we were rolling down the motorway again. The shantytown vanished as quickly as it had appeared. The moment felt doleful, but within minutes, it was gone. It became just another passing scene for us, especially as the blur of the road intensified. Not long after, this scene was replaced by a grand waterfall, caught by the unrelenting flashing of tourists’ cameras. Then, the low growl of the engine continued as we journeyed on.

In a small, dimly lit hockey club with flickering lights buzzing, the smell of dust circled the air. The opposing team welcomed us with open arms and generosity, providing us with a meal of chicken and chips. We sat in their humble, cosy room where their passion for the sport was clear from the pictures on the walls: smiling players in basic kit. As we sat eating, I did notice the silence of the other athletes, despite their happy presence. The South African team watched us with the same fascination and interest that we felt for them. It seemed to me that, while we may have had different life experiences, in that moment, we were the same, united by our common love for sport.



Later we played hockey together under the hot African sun and made friends we might stay in touch with. But later, I saw the hosts picking through the leftover food they had prepared for us, and I felt both deep shame and gratitude. We weren’t the same at all, I realised. They had sacrificed the small resources they had to make us feel comfortable. I felt a gut-wrenching sense of my own privilege and deep guilt. I still can’t shake it off. The small things that I once thought ordinary or standard are luxuries to others. We so easily forget to appreciate and acknowledge things in our lives that others can only dream of. It was a wakeup call: this reflection on the power and necessity of gratitude. I was self-aware enough to know that this experience didn’t mean I now understood poverty. But I had a newfound appreciation for my own life and a sense of responsibility to do whatever I could to improve the lives of others in need.

A childcare charity was our next stop. Cracked walls and worn-down floors—but it was a room full of laughter and warmth, too. The charity helped farmers who found it hard to take care of their children while working long hours. The children’s faces were vibrant, bright with happiness, despite the absence of luxuries. The teachers, despite their under-resourced facilities, exuded kindness and dedication. Love and support were the measures of true wealth here. Watching them work, as we played with the children in the grass, was humbling: their focus wasn’t

on what they didn't have, but on what they could give. Their smiles were contagious; human connection made them happy in ways that, maybe, money could not. But I also felt immense gratitude for my own education: for the modern classrooms I learn in; the up-to-date textbooks; the library stacked, floor to ceiling, with books. The contrast was sharp and jarring. The privilege of having a good education is something I never questioned; it was all I have ever known. Now, in South Africa, my education and home life felt like luxuries. And then it clicked. Poverty isn't about the lack of material goods someone has, it's about the lack of opportunities, the absence of choice and the feeling of being invisible to the world because of one's lack of economic power.

On the journey to the airport, I was filled with questions about my own life. Why did I feel entitled to so much? Why did I have access to opportunities simply because of where I was born?

The plane rose away from the golden, sun-drenched hills and fields, and liquid sunlight poured through the small window as I watched the landscape shrink beneath a thick cloud sea of white. I rested my head on my friend's shoulder, and I fell sound asleep. After a long journey, I reached my home back in Scotland. And I noticed everything: the perfect gardens, the shiny new cars. It all felt less significant than it once had. I could not unsee the living and working conditions of the people I met in South Africa, the people who carried themselves through hardship with humility and grace. In the months after, I signed up for volunteer programmes that tackle global poverty; I wanted to support people even in a small way. My visit to South Africa changed how I see poverty and how I see the world. I understand that poverty limits people's life opportunities. The luck of where a person is born, and to whom, determines the life they will have to a huge extent. This is unfair. It has been said that the opposite of poverty isn't wealth, it's justice. After my visit to South Africa, I would agree. The people I met face injustice and deserve better. I hope, one day, to play a part in helping to overcome this injustice.

Poppy Y. (Form V)



THE GIRL IN ROOM 45

Room 45 of the National Gallery. A girl no older than me, painted into silence.

I've been coming here for years. At first, I didn't know why I kept returning. I would sit on the worn leather bench, reluctant to move—even when a first date was going horrifyingly wrong next to me. I would simply watch as the light shifted over her silken gown and the rough stone surrounded by hay where she was to kneel.

I told myself it was fascination, or maybe habit—some quiet ritual I performed without understanding its purpose. But now, as I sit once more before her, I realise what it really is.

I am searching for something.

She is smaller than I remember from textbooks. A girl, not a queen. The milky fabric of her gown pools at her feet, unblemished, untouched. He has painted her in white, her body swallowed in silk, as if innocence alone could save her. But nothing can. Delaroche has frozen her in the unbearable moment before—before the blindfold suffocates the last of the light, before her hands fumble for the block, before the axe splits her from history and turns her into something other than human.

I wonder if she realised, standing there in the cold silence, that she would not be remembered as a person. Because history does this. It wraps suffering in silk and lace, strips it of its rage and resistance, makes it delicate enough to be palatable. Their names change, but the story does not—bodies turned into symbols, fates decided by hands that were never their own. They are painted in pale shades, spoken of in hushed tones, their fear mistaken for grace. I wonder if she realised that she would become a lesson.

A lamb to the slaughter.

I see this phrase in almost every book I read, nestled comfortably between yellow pages faded by time, quiet resignation dressed up as wisdom. It hides in the glass-eyed commuters whose faces I try to memorise to no avail, their hands tightened around coffee cups, lips pursed against words they will never say. I hear it in the way people talk about tragedy as if dressing it in poetry makes it any less unbearable. It's a cliché, a tired image repeated so often it seems to have lost all meaning. An easy phrase, the kind that rolls off the tongue without thought. But the more I hear it, the more I feel it gnawing at me, hollowing out meaning where there should be something raw. But it's not the phrase itself—it's the lie buried inside it. A lamb does not understand. A lamb does not see the knife coming. A lamb does not know what it is being led toward. It is docile, trusting, unaware. A lamb does not see the knife until it is too late.

And yet, we use it to describe people like her.

I had read about her in school. The child queen, the

nine-day ruler, the victim of forces too great for her to fight. *She was a lamb to the slaughter*, the librarian said, and I nodded vigorously in agreement—to a 10-year-old who had heard the exact same phrase used to describe Auggie in *Wonder*, it appeared an intelligent observation. Without question, I pressed the words into the margins of my mind like a fact instead of a distortion.

But sitting in front of her now, watching the way her fingers reach blindly into the dark, I know that those words are wrong. Jane was no lamb. A lamb does not write letters from its prison cell, ink smudged with shaking hands. A lamb does not spend its final days watching the sunlight shift on the walls, measuring the passage of time until there is none left to measure.

A lamb does not know.

I think about her more than I care to admit. Not just her, but the way we talk about people like her. The way we take fear, suffering, resistance—things that should ache, things that should scream—and flatten them into something neat. Something inevitable.

She was a lamb.

She was led to the slaughter.

It was tragic, but it was fate.

I hear it when we talk about the women who should have run faster, fought harder, known better. *Well, she was a lamb to the slaughter*—as if that explains anything.

But no one is a lamb. No one walks toward their own undoing without feeling the walls closing in. We always know.

People drift past, pausing only briefly to take photos before moving on. I wonder how many of them see her at all. They see the execution, the sacrifice. But do they see Jane? History tells us she was graceful, poised, dignified. That she met her fate with the solemnity of a saint.

But what if she didn't?

What if, in the moment before the axe fell, she had wanted to scream? What if she thought of the weight of the crown they had forced onto her head, of the men who had spoken her name like a strategy in a game she had never agreed to play? What if she thought of all the things she would never get to be? And what if she had no time to think at all?

Just white silk, a blindfold, and trembling fingers on cold stone.

And then—nothing. Why is it so often women? Helen stolen. Iphigenia sacrificed. Joan burned. The poet, the lover, the girl who trusted the wrong hands.

History is full of them. And they are always painted the same way.

Lambs.

Soft, docile things, white as the pages men use to write their stories, retold with a kind of tragic inevitability.

It is easier, I think, to believe that Jane was a lamb. Easier to believe she was led forward, unknowing, instead of seeing the truth. But, in fact, she stood there, a girl made of flesh and breath and trembling hands, and she understood exactly what was happening to her.

We want to believe suffering is graceful. We want to believe tragedy is poetic.

But what about the moments before?

I think about the blindfold; her final steps; her small, slight body kneeling, fumbling; the breath hitching in her throat as she searched for the block with trembling fingers. I think about her heart, beating wildly in her chest, screaming at her to run—except she couldn't. There was nowhere to go.

I hate the phrase *lamb to the slaughter* because it makes suffering sound quiet. It turns pain into something graceful, inevitable, instead of something that rages and claws and begs to survive. I think about all the times I have felt like I was being led somewhere I did not want to go. All the times I have seen the walls closing in and been told, *well, that's just how it is*.

And I think about her, seventeen years old, reaching out into the darkness—knowing.

And yet, they will call her a lamb, because the truth is too unbearable: that she saw the knife coming—and she went anyway.

Naomi G.-B. (Form V)

GOD ON SPEED DIAL

Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret

I remember reading those words for the first time, feeling an instant pang of recognition. Judy Blume's 1970 novel, adapted into a film in 2023, wasn't just about Margaret's search for faith—it was about uncertainty, about longing, about asking questions without expecting immediate answers. It was about a girl who wasn't sure where she belonged, caught between the Jewish and Christian traditions of her parents, yet still feeling the pull of something greater than herself. I was that girl, too, in my own way.

Margaret talked to You, God, even when she wasn't sure You were there. And as I sit here now, I find myself doing the same thing.

Hello?

Is this... You?

I don't know why I expected a ringing sound, or maybe a celestial switchboard, but I guess if anyone's always on the line, it would be You.

I suppose I should follow the custom of kneeling and say: 'Are You there, God? It's me.' And I guess that's the whole problem, isn't it? I don't know if You're really there. I don't know if I should even be calling You—or what number to dial in the first place. But I'm here anyway, so...

The thing is, I've spent my whole life watching other people know exactly how to talk to You. Where I grew up, the place where I was born, You go by the name Allah. As I'm sure You well know, Islam is not just a religion in Dubai; it is the pulse of life itself.

Your name was called out five times a day, a grand echo expressed by the Muezzin, as the Ahdan would revive the morning and welcome the twilight. You were at the centre of that world. The weeks began on Sunday and ended on Thursday because of You. And that structure felt as natural to me as the desert heat pressing against my skin. And as for Fridays, they were sacred. Reserved as 'the day' to talk to You and wish for prayers to be answered and fulfilled. The entire Emirate would transform, emptied of the usual rush, filled instead with families making their way to the mosque, dressed in crisp white dishdashas and flowing ebony abayas. Bismillah—in the name of God—one didn't need to be Muslim to feel the weight of devotion in the air, the unshakeable certainty that faith was not just a belief here—it was a way of being.

And when we lived in Bali, You arrived with the morning offerings, the plumes of incense curling through our house like whispered prayers. Hinduism has its origins in India, but in Bali it was different—younger, uniquely Balinese. Every morning, our doorstep would be adorned

with petite palm-leaf baskets—canang sari—filled with frangipani, rice and sandalwood, and the scent of burning incense mingled with the salty breeze from the ocean—all creating something that felt both sacred and ordinary. You made the divine feel simply like another presence in the household. Temples were not just places of worship; they were vicarious extensions of You. I vividly remember honking our car after passing every one of Your temples as an act to warn the spirits and deities not to cross the road and cause an accident—we cared so deeply, even if we were *bule* (a white foreigner). Oh, and how can I forget! Every six months, Galungan and Kuningan would arrive, and You made the island ascend. The long bamboo poles—penjor—arched gracefully over the roads with their golden ornaments swaying in the humid breeze. We, too, became part of Your rituals. It was a true blessing to be able to live on the 'Island of the Gods'.

And now, here in Scotland, You're quieter. Subtle. In the worn leather-bound prayer books stacked in the chapel, their gilt-edged pages leafing open to ancient psalms. In the murmured hymns at assemblies, voices rising in holy harmony, swelling beneath the grand ceiling of the William Henry Playfair Building. In the solemn stone of St James the Great Church, candlelight flickers against weathered pews and the scent of melting wax lingers in the air. You echo in the toll of the church bells. Every Sunday, You are carried by the wind, disappearing into the dreich horizon. You exist everywhere, in different languages, as different names, in different rituals. And yet, somehow, I've never quite known where You exist in me.

And now that I'm finally talking to You, I think about all the ways I've carried You with me, even without realising it. I have always worn four necklaces around my neck—a Shinto jade talisman, a Hindu Om-Shanti-Shanti-Shanti, a Saint Christopher and Fatima's Hand. I wear them as an ode to all the places I've lived, all the versions of You I've encountered. But sometimes, it feels like they're tugging in different directions, each one asking for something I don't know how to give.

But my search for You finally made sense when I watched a film—maybe You know it? *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*. I suppose You would, seeing as it's partly about You.

But this wasn't just another coming-of-age film to me—it was a mirror, reflecting a quiet moment of revelation. You see, I have always had questions, and Margaret, like me, was searching and had questions too. She didn't belong to one faith, one tradition, one path. And that uncertainty? It wasn't an ending for her. It was the beginning. Watching her talk to You, fumble through doubt, and still feel comforted... it made me wonder. Could I do that too? Would You answer, even if I didn't come to You with perfect faith? With clear devotion? With certainty?

I've always had a deep appreciation of art, no matter the form. And this film was unequivocally transformative. I mean it. One scene, in particular, has

stayed with me. Margaret kneels by her bed, whispering into the quiet, unsure if anyone is listening. It is an act so simple, so tentative, and yet it carries the weight of a thousand unspoken fears. I recognised that feeling—the hesitant outreach, the vulnerability of belief without proof. Watching her struggle between her Jewish and Christian heritages, trying to grasp something solid in a sea of ambiguity, felt a reflection of my own experiences. The tension of navigating faith, of yearning for certainty but fearing commitment, mirrored my own search for understanding. My sole understanding has always been that I am 'Protestant'. And with no disrespect, it has always been more of a formality than a feeling.

And yet. And yet, I think I want to believe. Not just in You, but in something bigger than myself. In love, in goodness, in connection. Religion has always been a source of comfort for people, a guiding light in the dark. And if I'm being completely honest, I need that right now. Not the rigidity, not the rules, not the pressure to pick a side. Just...faith.

Faith that there's something beyond all this, faith that I can be better, that I can do better. Faith that, even when I don't know how to find You, You might still be able to find me.

I know I am running out of time so, here I am, God. I don't know if I've dialled the right number. I don't know if I'm speaking in the right language. But I'm here. And I'm hoping—no, I'm believing—that maybe that's enough.

...Hello? Are You still there?

Leah W.-J. (Form VI)

RAGING FIRES

Raging fires dart endlessly around me

and charred walls crumble to soot.

Flung is my body, onto the ground,

as the floorboards shake underfoot.

Blind, I crawl through the scattered remains

of the place, once called home.

And it seems as if there will be no more hope—

I am undoubtedly all alone.

Shadows scramble amid the fire

and hands lift my broken form.

I am rushed out of the burning building

to escape the scorching storm.

I cough and splutter

and I open my eyes.

I look to the heavens

and see a blood-red sunrise.

Douglas S. (Form II)

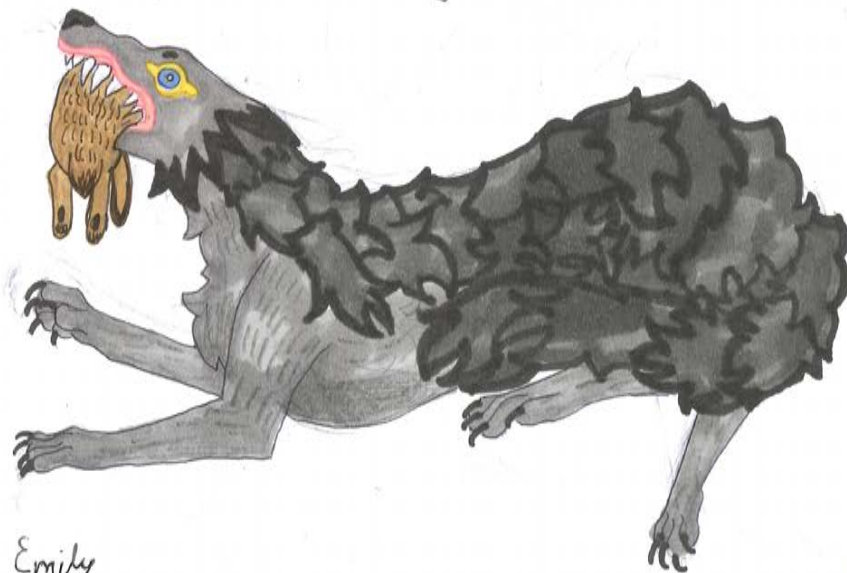
Miller House

My friend is now gone, lost to the snow,
In his eyes I saw,
Velenchuk had turned into a screaming hare,
The hounds outside the door no longer scare me,
Afterall we both know the old songs,

The crows beside me, waiting, now seem like friends,
The forest ahead is a large, hungry mouth,
I now realise that the hounds and I are the same,
People expect them to be the strongest, the smartest,
But it's the moving forward that makes them stand out,

I was nothing before and I'll soon be nothing again,
What am I between now and then? Is it only suffering?
Or is it that yearning to hear that old song again?
If instinct takes over I'll become another hare,

The darkness of night is now my only comfort,
I've lost parts of myself to the snow,
But the memories of home and the song stay,
Good night,
For I may not see another day.



Emily

Emily M. (Form II)

‘It Started with Smoke’

It started
with smoke.
Someone
spilt a spark,
and soon paper green
replaced pure
green,
passed between
blood-blemished hands
whilst smoke stained
land and trees
and sun and seas.
When our addiction
became virulent,
you, our earth, began
coughing up floods and
sweating out fires,
feverishly trading suffering
for suffering, smoke for smoke.
Even in your death
we always thought you were beautiful.

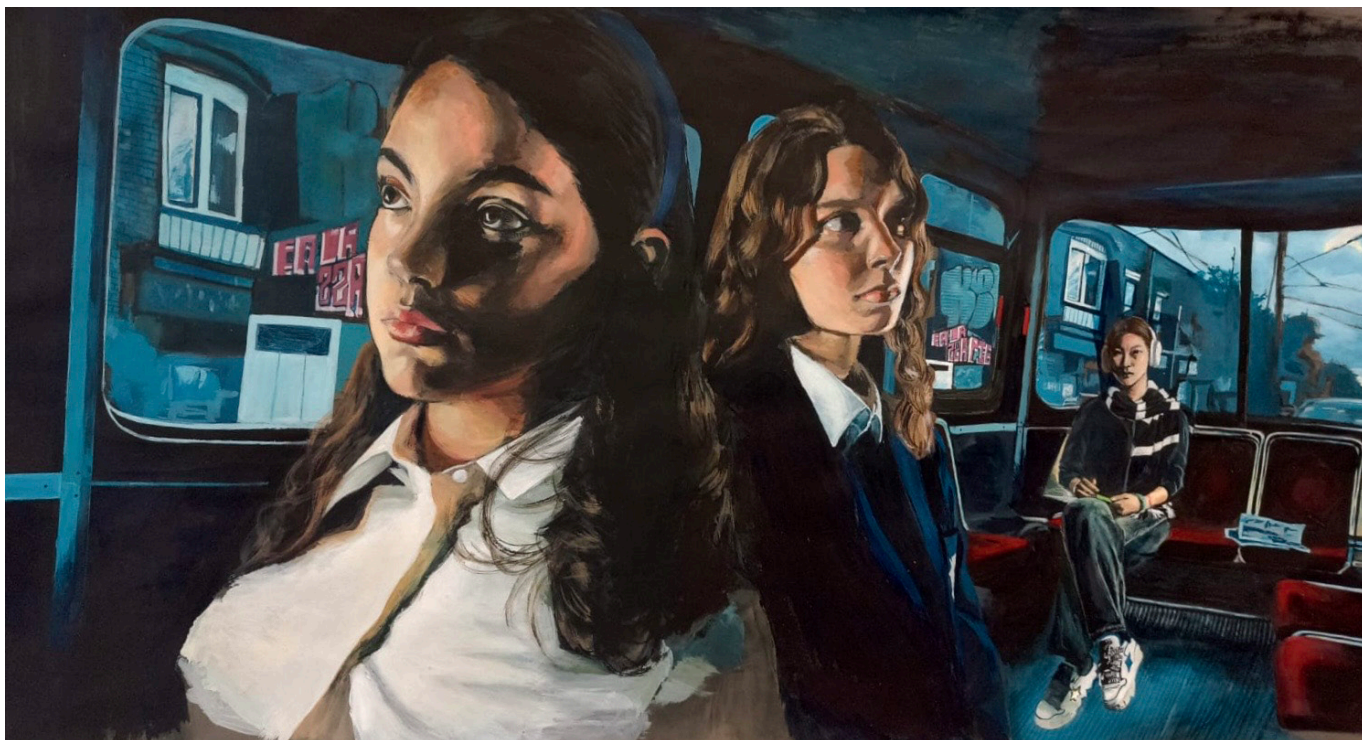
We tried to wrap you in the
bandages of our greed.
We built golden cages and
terracotta clay pots,
moulded you to our plastic will.
Now you lie
broken-boned
in a sterilised white-capped bed
and we play a reckless game
of Hangman
with the plastic tubes in your arm.
We ignore
the shoes that fit too tight
and protect ourselves against smoke
with paper masks
that we will eventually
discard, damaged,
in your palm.

Each screech of the spade
against your skull digs
the grave deeper.
We worshipped
and hated
and failed you —
every time you shudder,
the black smear
of smoke
is wiped away
before consequence
becomes too heavy —
we have never been good
at admitting
we are violent.

The lights in the hospital:
fluorescent, inescapable.
Clock watching and feet tapping
to the funeral march
of your monitor,
we didn't see the blood
that dripped
down our temples,
darkened our shoes.
Someone was coughing,
and it wasn't you.

Rhiannon M. (Form VI)

*This above is the first part of a longer poem submitted in fulfilment of
the AH English portfolio requirement.*



THE CALEDONIAN CLUB: LONDON FINE ART COMPETITION

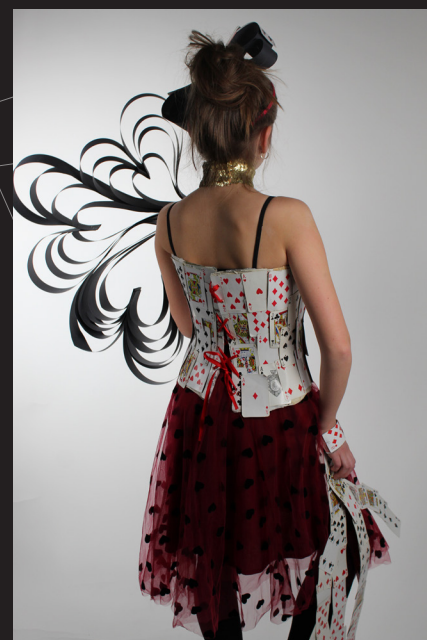
Congratulations to Coco J. (Form VI) who has placed second in The Caledonian Club's highly prestigious London Fine Art Competition, as well as winning the Members' Choice Award. Her stunning piece is currently on display in the main school foyer.

This year's competition adjudicator was Jill Blackwood, a renowned Scottish designer and textile artist. Here is what she had to say about Coco's artwork:

"This artist has set an intriguing story for the viewer to work out: "What is going to happen?" Or is it "What has happened?" Tremendous use of the colour blue. An interior painting, yet it is also outside. Complicated, but appears soft and fluid."

Club Members and visitors to the exhibition were also excited about Coco's piece; it received the highest number of nominations in the Members' Choice Award. Tremendous congratulations to Coco for this impressive achievement.

Cath Kelly



FASHION & TEXTILES CLUB: UPCYCLING, RECYLING, REPURPOSING



The Fashion & Textile Club has been passionately focused on upcycling, recycling, and repurposing. Each week after school, a fantastic team of energetic and enthusiastic pupils come together to create an outstanding collection of recycled fashion and costume designs.

Sourcing old clothing from the Dollar Academy community—including old school shirts, vintage ties, and old knitwear—these young designers have transformed forgotten fabrics into showstopping pieces that wouldn't look out of place on a Paris Fashion Week catwalk.

Pupils began their journey with innovative fashion illustrations, brainstorming unique ways to give new life to discarded materials. Next, they explored pattern cutting, garment construction, and textile manipulation techniques, working both by hand and with sewing machines. Through experimentation and collaboration, they crafted stunning, one-of-a-kind

designs.

After months of dedication and creativity, we celebrated their achievements with a professional photo shoot, capturing their incredible designs with props, accessories, and expert lighting in our photography studio. The results? A truly inspiring showcase of talent, sustainability, and innovative fashion thinking.

Becky Munro



FORM II SET DESIGN PROJECT ART AND DESIGN

From the Winner...

When we first learned about the Form II Set Design project back in October, I thought it sounded really exciting. I immediately began to research and plan my project; after a lot of thought, I decided upon a scene from the 1952 film *Singin' in The Rain*. I thought the iconic lamppost scene would translate very well into a set design model.

I used a sketchbook to take note of my initial thoughts as I developed them into what became the final idea. This was helpful, as it let me keep track of things as I went along. Next, after I had designed the set, I began to build it. I used many different materials including clay, paint, Lego and mini-LED lights. At the beginning, I had done some initial research into different ways to make actual rain, but I ended up creating the rain by putting light-blue A6 card through a small paper shredder. I also used a LEGO mechanical system to attach a music box to the paper shredder so that it would play the song and release the rain as you turned the handle.

Everyone put so much effort, imagination and thought into their projects, and the results were spectacular. On behalf of all competitors, I'd like to offer a special thank you to Miss Liz Langley judged the competition. Congratulations also go to Poppy W. who won first prize in the Architecture competition. I loved this competition as it let me create something and work hard in an imaginative way.

Pippa R. (Form II)



First Prize: Pippa R. (Form II)



Kardelen A. (Form II)



Forbes B. (Form II)



Anna C. (Form II)



Miss Langley and Mrs. Kelly



First Prize in Architecture Competition: Poppy W. (Form II)



CHRISTMAS ART AND DESIGN EXHIBITION 2024

Back at the end of the first term, the Art Department hosted this session's 2024 Christmas Art and Design Exhibition. The hallways were abuzz with activity, as an impressive 450 parents, pupils and FPs, teachers and governors gathered in the department to celebrate the artistic achievements of pupils from across the entire school. From Prep and Junior pieces to National 5, Higher, and Advanced Higher works, the breadth of talent on display was extraordinary.

Many sixth-year pupils were present in the studio where our artwork was displayed, allowing us to witness firsthand the audience's reactions. Their overwhelmingly





positive remarks and kind reactions were incredibly affirming, offering not just encouragement, but also valuable perspectives on our work and ideas for future projects. The exhibition allowed us to display our own art, but also to witness the overwhelming talent of our peers. Many of us spent the afternoon wandering around the department, jaws slack with admiration as we awoke to the vast extent of showcased talent. For me, one of the most wonderful parts of the evening was seeing the familiar faces of last year's Advanced Higher pupils, who, despite no longer featuring, took time to come along and immerse themselves in the

atmosphere of the Christmas Exhibition once again. And I am certain that this session's sixth-years will return for what will be the wonderful Christmas Exhibition of 2025.

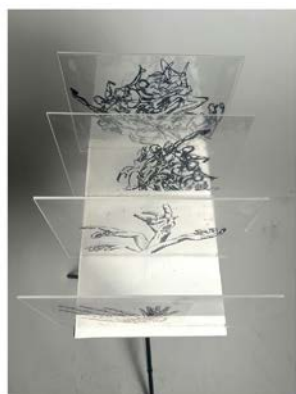
Rhiannon M. (Form VI)



Oscar P. (Form VI)

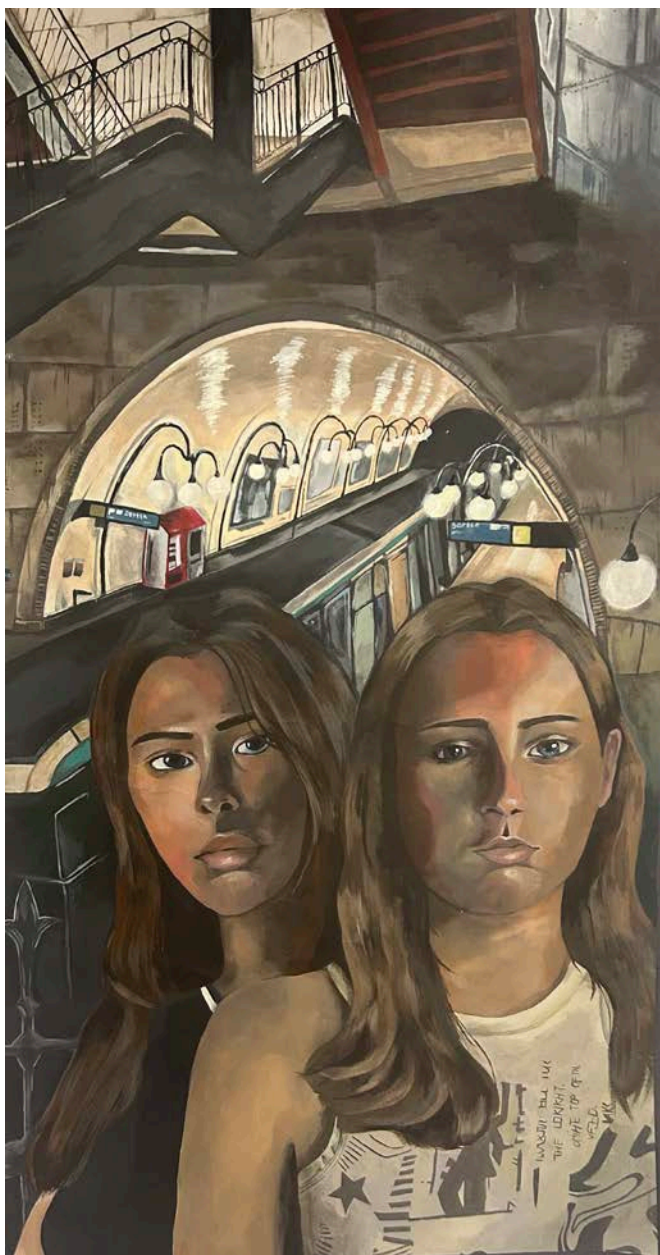


Zoe G. (Form VI)



Amy P. (Form VI)

GALLERY
2025



Erin G. (Form V)



Cara C. (Form V)



Ella H. (Form VI)



Hannah K. (Form V)



Esther L. (Form VI)



Ethan M. (Form VI)



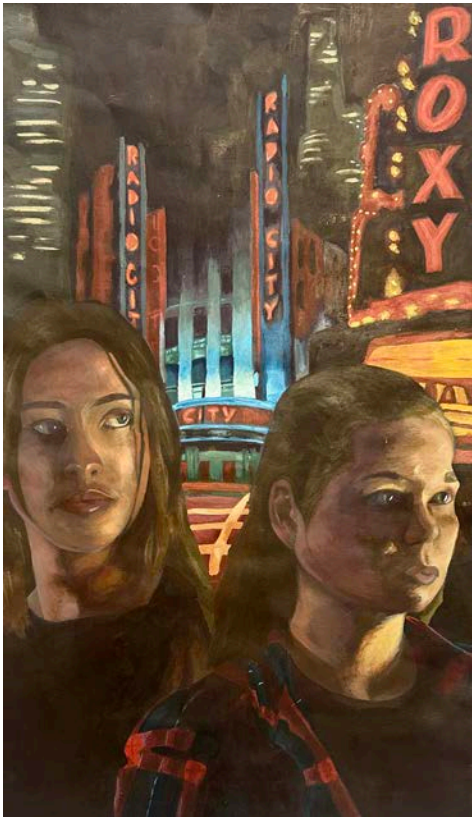
Isla D. (Form VI)



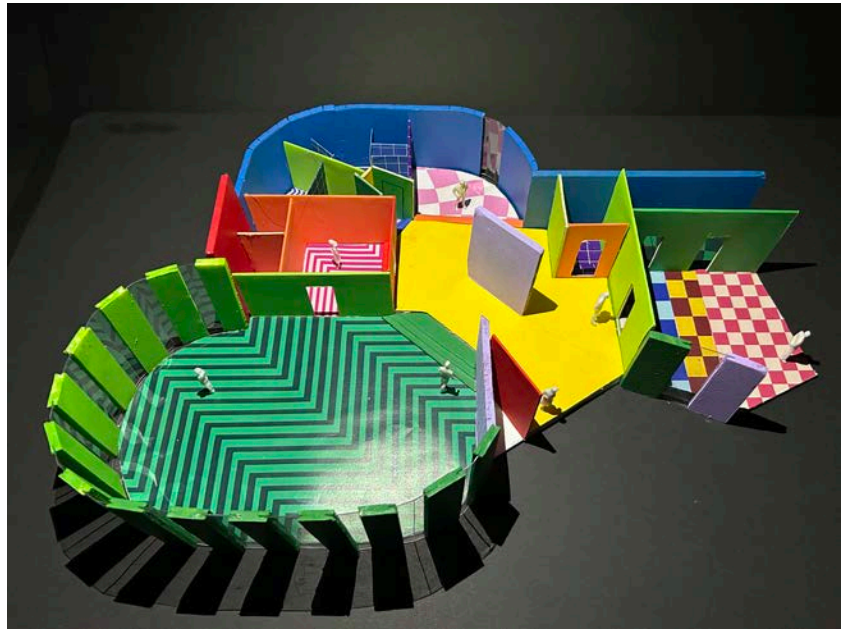
Rhiannon M. (Form VI)



Coco J. (Form VI)



Melissa M. (Form V)



Taylor H. (Form VI)



Lexi S. (Form V)

Prep and Junior Spring Extravaganza

Our Prep and Junior School musicians had their chance to shine on Monday 24 March when they took to the Assembly Hall stage to entertain their friends and family. The concert began with the Junior Orchestra, led by Andre G. (Junior 1), who performed three pieces: 'Lord of the Dance' and 'Last Quaver Blues', as well as Tchaikovsky's 'Dance of the Little Swans', featuring soloist Elodie P. (Junior 2) on flute.

The Prep Choir were next up, and they sang two songs: 'Tails Tails Tails' and 'Roller Ghoster'. This lively group entertained the audience with their dramatic actions and animated faces: it was obvious how much fun they were having!

Our flute instructor, Miss Laura Cioffi, then led the Flute Ensemble onstage—a group of players coming from across the Prep and Junior and the Senior Schools. They performed a selection of Scottish melodies, clearly enjoying the opportunity to showcase the potential of this beautiful woodwind instrument.

The Prep Orchestra were very excited to play, and many of them had never performed in public before. This ensemble of beginners began with 'Down the Track', followed by 'It's a Small World'. Like the groups before them, they took their applause with huge smiles and a great sense of achievement.

Last, but certainly not least, on stage was the Junior Choir. They sang beautifully, performing 'A La Carte' inspired by Mozart and 'For a Moment' from the recent musical film *Wonka*. They finished with 'The Beat of a Different Drum', complete with percussion accompaniment. With excellent harmonies and clear diction, they brought a beautiful afternoon's celebration of music-making to a close.

Louise Timney





YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR 2025

Over 80 pupils entered our Young Musician of the Year competition this session. The competition, open to any pupil in the Senior School, is divided into three categories: Foundation Level (Grades 1–3), Intermediate Level (Grades 4–6) and Advanced Level (Grades 7 and above). With so many entries, Music staff asked applicants to submit a video for Round 1; these were assessed internally before Round 2 candidates were invited to perform before two Music staff during a lunchtime or after school. After great deliberation, 19 pupils successfully made it to the final, held on Thursday 27 February in the Gibson Auditorium.

The audience were treated to a variety of vocal and instrumental performances with repertoire ranging from Stevie Wonder's 'Sir Duke' (played on bass guitar) to J.S. Bach's Violin Concerto in A minor. Musical theatre featured heavily in the vocal categories, including *The Addams Family*, *Hamilton*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *Oklahoma*. This year, the marimba (donated by DAPA) even made an appearance, played by Finlay T. (Form V); he performed 'Rain Dance' by Alice Gomez and Marilyn Rife.

The guest adjudicator was Mrs Joanna Petrie, a professional violin and viola player and music educator, currently teaching throughout Scotland and working with the Big Noise project. As she deliberated, our 2024 Advanced Instrumentalist winner, flautist Erin M. (Form VI), entertained the audience with 'Casta Diva' from Vincenzo Bellini's opera *Norma*.

Mrs Petrie commended all pupils on reaching the final and gave each a short critique of their performance before inviting each finalist forward to receive their prize; the winners were awarded trophies.

RESULTS:

Foundation Voice: Caelin S. (Form IV) performing 'A Whole New World' from *Aladdin*, music by Alan Menken and words by Tim Rice

Foundation Instrumentalist: Pippa R. (Form II, piano) performing 'The Rainbow' by Ray Moore

Intermediate Voice: Ruby L. (Form II) performing 'Pulled' from *The Addams Family* by Andrew Lippa

Intermediate Instrumentalist: Charlotte S. (Form III, saxophone) performing 'Black Sheep of the Family' by Christopher Norton

Advanced Voice: Charlotte M. (Form V) performing 'Gimme Gimme' from *Thoroughly Modern Millie* by Jeanine Tesori

Advanced Instrumentalist: Adrian T. (Form IV, violin) performing 'Chanson de Matin' Op. 15 No. 2 by Edward Elgar and Concerto in A minor (1st movement) by JS Bach.

The winners were invited to perform in a school assembly to celebrate their success and, as the winner of the Advanced Instrumentalist class, Adrian will now go on to represent Dollar Academy in the Independent Schools heat of the Scottish Young Musician of the Year 2025.

Congratulations to all who took part and a huge thank you to everyone who came along to support our young musicians on the final evening.

Louise Timney





CHRISTMAS CONCERT 2024

Dollar Academy is always looking for new opportunities for our pupils, new experiences that will be memorable and remain with them, as FPs, in the future. Having the chance to perform in some of Scotland's most beautiful concert halls is part of the Dollar experience. Our musicians have played and sung in Perth Concert Hall and Edinburgh's Usher Hall many times over the years, but they had never before performed in Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall. In December 2024, Dollar Academy ventured to a new city for its Christmas extravaganza, performing

at the Royal Glasgow Concert Hall on Tuesday 10 December, bringing with them the largest number of performers ever.

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall hosts many iconic orchestras and artists, and now many of our pupils can say that, over a three-year period at Dollar, they have had the opportunity to perform on three of the country's most famous concert stages during their time at school.

The concert was offered in two halves: the first celebrated the 80th birthday of the famous Welsh composer Karl Jenkins. The combined choirs of Prep and Junior, and Senior Schools (accompanied by the Senior Orchestra) performed *Stella Natalis*. They played the twelve energetic movements of this work, each celebrating different aspects of Christmastide, including

winter, the sleeping child, tidings of peace and thanksgiving; these take inspiration from a range of sources including the Old Testament, Zulu text and sacred text about the Hindu gods. There is something to suit all tastes—there is even a movement in which the choir pretend to be triangles! There was plenty of entertainment, especially from our featured percussion section and from guest solo trumpeter, Andrew Connell Smith.

After a short break, the choirs and ensembles treated the audience to a selection of popular Christmas classics. The audience joined in by singing, clapping, and even dancing. The programme included Leroy Anderson's 'A Christmas Festival' and 'Celebration' by Randall Standridge; there were also choral favourites such as 'I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every



Day', 'DJ Play A Christmas Song', and 'We Need A Little Christmas.' Chamber Choir sang a cappella with their version of 'Ding-a Ding-a Ding' by Greg Gilpin. But it was the Prep Choir who brought the stage to life with their rendition of 'Christmas Dinner, Country Style' by Ralph Freed and Grace Saxon, complete with life-size papier mâché turkey and jelly tower. DAJO ended the evening with Chris Rea's 'Driving Home for Christmas' and Mariah Carey's 'All I Want for Christmas Is You'. Members of the Dollar Academy Pipe Band made a surprise appearance onstage to accompany the choirs and orchestra in the communal carol 'O Come All Ye Faithful', before going on to perform an arrangement of Christmas tunes.

It was another memorable evening in a venue that we hope to return to in the future.

Louise Timney





MARCH CONCERT 2025

The March concert series gave our pupils the opportunity to demonstrate their many talents once again, as our senior groups took to the stage on 19 March for the annual Spring Concert. This year the Form I and II ensembles and choirs performed in the same event as the Form III–VI groups. The concert took place in the Assembly Hall, where the scene was set for an evening of music-making.

Konstantin G.v.K. (Form VI) welcomed parents, friends and family to the concert, outlining the array of talent that was to come. Form I and II Orchestra, led by Emily M. (Form I), opened the evening with several works including ‘Oom Pah Pah’ from *Oliver!* and ‘Eye of the Tiger’ from the *Rocky* films.

Their enthusiastic start made way for some of the Dollar Academy Young Musician of the Year (YMY) winners, including Pippa R. (Form II) playing ‘The Rainbow’ on piano and Charlotte S. (Form III) on saxophone playing ‘Black Sheep of the Family’. Both performers showed technical skill and musicality, demonstrating why they were chosen as YMY winners.

Form I and II Choir sang next with ‘Dear Evan Hansen’ and ‘Blue Mountain River’. They performed with beautiful three-part harmony singing. Next, violinist Adrian T. (Form IV), winner of the Advanced Instrumental YMY class, made his way onstage. His technical dexterity and excellent intonation resulted in a mature and stylish performance. Charlotte M. (Form V) was the YMY Advanced Singer winner, and she followed up with an emotional rendition of ‘Gimme Gimme’ from the musical *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. The final act of the first half was DAJO. The group entertained with energy and enthusiasm, and some impressive improvisations from members of the horn and rhythm section.

After a short break the First Orchestra opened the second half with a range of orchestral classics including

the ‘Crown Imperial March’ by William Walton, Dvořák’s ‘Slavonic Dance, No.8’ and movements from Saint-Saëns’ *Carnival of the Animals*. This featured Christopher J. on solo bassoon, Finlay T. (both Form V) on solo xylophone and our very own Mr John Delaney on double bass.

Wind Band were next, and they performed beautifully, playing ‘Shallow’ from *When a Star is Born* and John Williams’ ever-popular ‘Raiders March’. Wind Band were followed by our YMY winner Ruby L. (Form II), who performed ‘Pulled’ from *The Addams Family*, showing great confidence and theatrical style.

Chamber Choir demonstrated their skills, opening with Vivaldi’s ‘Gloria’ before silencing the hall with Eric Whitacre’s sensitive and moving ‘Sing Gently’. The ensemble ended with Carly Simon’s rousing ‘Let The River Run’ before Erin M. (Form VI) came on to perform Vivaldi’s Flute Concerto in D with the String Ensemble.

Just when the audience thought there could be no more groups left to perform, the Saxophone Ensemble took to the stage to play a folk song from the Mediterranean, ‘Misirlou’, to much applause.

Mixed Voice Choir brought the evening to a close, performing Toto’s ‘Africa’ featuring the tenor and bass section and Jonathan Groff’s ‘You’ll Be Back’ from *Hamilton*. They invited DAJO back on stage for their final item, ‘Proud Mary’ (complete with Tina Turner dance moves), which had the audience tapping their feet and singing along.

The evening showcased talent from across the Senior School, providing yet another happy music-making event at Dollar Academy.

Louise Timney





CLIMATE COMMITTEE

The Climate Committee is a pupil-run club that meets on Tuesdays after school in D3 to discuss and plan how we as a school community can tackle issues such as sustainability, climate change, and recycling, and we then talk about how we can put these plans into action. We hope to raise awareness of what individuals and the school community can change to reduce our climate impact. The club is open to all pupils in the Senior School. Below is a brief description of some of our projects from this session.

Christmas Outfit Swap Shop

To take on fast fashion, pupils brought in their Christmas dresses, suits, kilts and Christmas jumpers. This event was timed ahead of the festive season, with the goal of helping pupils (and their families) reduce costs by not having to buy new clothes for the Christmas Dances and Christmas Jumper Days, whilst also fighting the fast-fashion trend. This year, we took the first step toward making the Christmas Dance tradition at Dollar Academy more sustainable.

Dollar Academy Climate Fund Partnership with Soho Green Nature Fund

We have been allocated a fund in partnership with Soho Green Nature Fund, to enable us to award small grants to help local, national and international climate projects. This will help us to boost awareness of climate issues and inspire creative solutions. For further information, please email the Climate Committee (email below).

Climate Action Plan

We have been working on producing a Dollar Academy Climate Action Plan which outlines our ideas to make the school more sustainable and climate friendly, whilst also raising awareness of ways in which our impact on the climate can be reduced. We plan to publish this soon.

Climate Committee Assembly

By leading a Senior School Assembly, we raised awareness of how we, as pupils, can help fight climate change through small everyday actions that together make a huge difference. For example, we can look to reduce the quantity of foods with a high carbon footprint from our diets; we can seek to travel more sustainably (are you using the HomeRun car share app?); we can help with tree planting and we can always seek to reduce how much energy we use.

Please do get in touch with any ideas or questions or for more information, or if you would like to join the Committee.

The Climate Committee
climate@dollaracademy.org.uk

DOLLAR ACADEMY CLIMATE COMMITTEE



Help us make a change!

Dollar Academy Climate Committee are excited to offer grants for climate and nature friendly projects.

Applications are now open.



“What
happens next
is up to every
one of us”

David Attenborough –
Extinction: The Facts 2020



CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ROLE OF Dollar's Climate Committee

.....

Ewan - Chair
Oscar - Vice Chair
Ananya - Vice Chair
Allan - Secretary
Ema - Treasurer

CHARITIES COMMITTEE

This academic year, 24 Form VI pupils have met weekly to organise events for our chosen charities, all with the help of Ms Amelia Sanchez-Roman, Mrs Cath Kelly and Mrs Tamsen Livingstone. What follows is a chronological summary of our year of charitable activities.

Our first event was the Form I Disco in September. The theme of '70s Disco' was embraced by all! Money raised was donated to the charity All Minds, who provide support and mental health counselling. The Non-Uniform Day on 11 October let everyone show off their style, in aid of the World Care Foundation. The Junior School's Pumpkin Display brightened the steps of the Playfair Building with imaginative designs ranging from fairy cottages to pumpkins with toothpick teeth!

Arguably, the highlight of the school year was the infamous Teachers v Charities Committee football match. Despite the best efforts of the pupils (and largely thanks to Rory C.), the score was 5-2 to the Teachers! The football match reminded Ms Sanchez-Roman that she needed to do a fitness test before selecting the squad, and that Nicky S's fitness was the worst...maybe that's why Charities lost! Despite the loss, we raised around £1,000 for Children in Need—and this was, of course, the most important thing. The sales of cupcakes that week also contributed to the money raised for Children in Need, while keeping everyone sweet during the cold November weeks.

After our humiliating football defeat, the Committee regrouped and focused on more Christmassy pursuits. We organised the Christmas cards, designed and drawn by Rhiannon M. (Form VI). These were hand-delivered to the senior citizens of Dollar, and they also served as invitations to the annual Christmas Coffee Morning. That Coffee Morning took place on 13 December, when we poured tea and coffee, offered sweet treats and chatted with those who came along. The Chamber Choir joined us to perform some beautiful Christmas carols. Funds raised from Christmas card sales went to the Alloa Food Bank.

After the New Year, we organised the Pet Show to raise money for SPCA. The many pets who turned up provided wonderful entertainment before a busy day of school. On 14 March the Charities Committee and DAJO teamed up for a lunchtime concert, raising money and awareness for the amazing work done by Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance. The 1st XI hockey squad and the 1st XV rugby squad faced off in their annual hockey match, but this year we used the always-lively event to raise money for Comic Relief. The hockey girls were delighted to maintain their now long-established tradition of victory over the boys!

Finally, the biggest event for the Charities Committee is yet to come at the time of writing: the biennial



Sponsored Walk. This year's will take place in the final week of this session. This year, the Committee members have voted to support The Uphill Trust, Pebbles Project, Get Kids Going!, Parkinson's UK in Scotland, CHAS, Ochils Youth Community Improvement (OYCI) and Dollar Community Development Trust. We are all very much looking forward to the Walk itself, and to raising money for all of these great causes.

The Charities Committee will soon have completed a fantastic year of fundraising, thanks to a great team commitment. We could never have been so successful, however, without the hard work and support Ms Sanchez-Roman has given to every event this year, and we would like to thank her and her colleagues for all their help.

Freya R. (Form VI)





DEBATING

It is very easy, in our present day and age, to remark on how damaging the apathy of the young towards current affairs and the rise of post-truth rhetoric are for our political climate. Yet, people seem to struggle, if pushed to find a solution. Debating, where teams of two prepare arguments on topics as varied as the use of protectionism in developing states and the rise of fitness influencers, is an antidote to the madness. Enjoyable and rewarding in equal measure, debating has secured a rightfully admired place among Dollar's co-curricular offerings, and this year's cohort of lectern-braving argument enthusiasts has acquitted itself very well in this extreme (and unusual) 'sport'.

The season began with an autumnal sojourn to the St Andrews University Competition, where Dollar took the opportunity to establish itself as the dominant force on the circuit. Dollar 'A'—Natalie Y. and your author, Logan M. (both Form VI)—not only won the tournament outright, but also ranked as the top two individual speakers respectively. Meanwhile,

Dollar 'B', composed of Affan D.-A. and Lucy M. (both Form VI), reached the Silver Final. Dollar 'C'—our then 'novice' team of Paul M. and Naomi G.-B. (both Form V)—made it to the Bronze Final, with Paul claiming the deserved title of Best Novice Speaker in what was only his second competition.

Momentum continued at the University of Glasgow's tournament. In the early rounds, Dollar looked poised for another strong finish—until a series of 'interesting' judging calls (to borrow the language of multiple competitors) left us missing out, narrowly, on victory, despite our spirited advocacy, in the Grand Final, for the abolition of private schools. One need not take 15 minutes of 'prep time' to see the irony in such a proposition.

With February came the Scottish Schools' Mace, where Dollar advanced to the Grand Final, falling short again by an incredibly slim margin. Emerging from a series of semi-stressful prep meetings, fuelled by tiramisu and other caffeine-rich foodstuffs, Dollar's team (of Natalie and Logan) arrived at the Faculty of Advocates. En route, they argued for domestic-player quotas in national football leagues and against the

repatriation of the Elgin Marbles to Greece, before having to propose that dictators be granted immunity from prosecution in exchange for relinquishing power. Discussing matters of justice in such an historic venue was a poignant reminder that the issues we discussed were not abstract intellectual playthings, but real, concrete—and often unsolved—problems.

The highlight of the season, however, came at the Oxford Union Schools' Debating Competition: the most prestigious debating event in the UK. After completing a long and tiring journey to the dreaming spires, the team grappled with testing motions, including feminist advocacy in developing nations and whether politicians should be removed from office for breaking election promises. Against a field of over a hundred schools, Dollar placed second overall, narrowly defeated in the semifinal on a split decision. Notably, Eve G. (Form IV), competing in her first-ever tournament, ranked as the eighth-best novice speaker, while Logan placed fourth-best overall.

So goes this year's story of Debating at Dollar. And the future looks

equally promising. The Wednesday lunchtime Debating Society is enjoying its highest turnout from younger pupils in years, and Eve's recent selection for Scotland's Junior Squad—a precursor to the National Team—suggests that Dollar's reputation for lucid argument is being left in capable hands, even as our Form VI pupils prepare to move on to other pursuits.

None of this would be possible, of course, without the work of Mr Neil McFadyean, whose enthusiasm, intellect and uniquely sardonic brand of humour have helped us to develop as debaters and have made our activity far more enjoyable. The gratitude felt by all who step through the doors of P07 for his work is immense. More recently, Mr Calum Cunningham has taken over responsibility for coaching our younger, less experienced recruits: a most commendable task.

But what do we take from this activity? Put simply: an ability to think and to go beyond the implicit boundaries of education. Our terminology may seem sophisticated and our ideas, at times, perplexing, but we carry pride in our willingness to speak, to argue and, hopefully, to persuade. Newcomers are to be encouraged: those with a willingness to think and an interest in asking 'why' will always thrive in our discipline. Now, hand me my refill pad and multi-colour pen—and where is the nearest makeshift lectern? There is much to be discussed.

Logan M. (Form VI)





PIPE BAND

Winter and spring terms are when the hard work happens for the pipers and drummers in our three competition bands. During this time, pupils learn new material, make moves to the next stage of band and develop their skills for the new season ahead.

The past number of months have been no different. Seeing the new crop of players develop and flourish is always satisfying, however, regardless of what stage they are at in their piping and drumming journeys.

November saw our Juvenile quartets compete in the CCF Quartet and Trio Contest held at George Heriot's in Edinburgh. Our quartets placed 1st and 3rd, highlighting the talent and consistency that our pipers never fail to demonstrate.

The full band indoor season gives each band a focus as they prepare for this cluster of competitions and display the results of all the hard work invested. That season kicked off at the Glasgow Highland Club Contest, swiftly followed by the George Watson's Invitational and, finally, the Indoor Scottish Schools Contest held in Kilmarnock. Consistent results gave all three bands a great platform to carry on from into the summer season.

My thanks go to our instructors for preparing our enthusiastic pupils to perform at the levels they do.



Glasgow Highland Club:

Senior Band Contest: Juvenile (1st)

Intermediate Band Contest: Novice A (2nd)

George Watson's Invitational:

Junior Band Contest: Novice B (3rd)

Scottish Schools Indoor:

Juvenile: 2nd

Novice A: 5th

Novice B: 5th

Our soloists performed extremely well over the winter contests. Notable results were Bea C. (Form V), who won the Junior Piobaireachd contest at the CCF Scottish Schools and Paul M. (Form V), who won the prestigious Senior Piping contest at the Glasgow Highland Club Championship.

CCF Scottish Schools Piobaireachd Contest:

Senior: Paul M. (Form V), 2nd

Junior: Bea C. (Form V), 1st

Vale of Atholl Junior Contest:

Junior Piping: Toby C. (Form II), 2nd

Intermediate Piping: Ben M. (Form IV), 6th

Junior Drumming:

Christian S.-V. (Junior 1), 3rd

Zara W. (Form II), 4th

Zain W. (Form I), 5th

Intermediate Drumming:

Siena S.-V. (Form IV), 1st

Fraser P. (Form IV), 4th

Senior Drumming: Harry R. (Form IV), 1st

Glasgow Highland Club:

Senior Piping: Paul M., 1st

Intermediate Piping:

Toby C., 3rd

Ben M., 5th

Junior Piping: Murray M. (Form II), 5th

Junior Drumming:

Eliza D. (Form III), 2nd

Zara W., 5th

George Watson's Invitational:

Senior Piping:

Paul M., 2nd

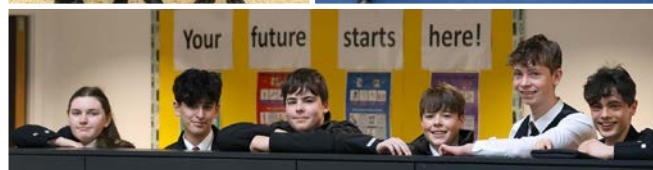
Bea C., 5th

Intermediate Piping: Toby C., 5th

Junior Drumming:

Christian S.-V., 3rd

Zara W., 4th



Away from the contest environment, we were thrilled to be asked to provide a stirring send-off for Doddie's Grand Tour, which used Dollar Academy as one of the stopovers. It was a very early start for some of our pipers and drummers, but a worthy cause to help raise funds for MND. This led to us being invited to provide pre-match entertainment for Scotland v Wales at Murrayfield; our pupils had the opportunity to meet many former international players, including our very own Rory Lawson (FP 1999). It was a great experience for all involved and an enjoyable bonus for our pupils in the Pipe Band.

Matt Wilson



CHARITY FUNDRAISING TALK FROM KIRSTY MACK (FP 2001) **From Surgery to Summit: My Everest**

On the evening of 5 March, over 100 audience members (pupils, their families, staff and members of the local community) gathered in the Captain's Room for an unforgettable charity fundraising talk by Kirsty Mack (FP 2001), a ski instructor and avid mountaineer from Menstrie. The talk was organised by the group of pupils who will be heading to Patagonia in October 2025 to undertake the O Circuit trek in Chile's Torres del Paine region. All proceeds from the talk and accompanying raffle went to The Juniper Fund and the Torres del Paine Legacy Fund.

Kirsty's adventures have taken her around the globe, as she's climbed some of the world's highest peaks, and her feats grew even more impressive as we learned more about her story. In May 2021, she suffered a severe skiing injury off the back of Cairn Gorm, dislocating her shoulder, tearing her rotator cuff, and breaking a few bones. For most, this would have significantly dampened down their outdoor activities. But not for Kirsty. Just three weeks post-operation, she summited Mont Blanc, single-handedly (pun intended) raising the bar for such mountaineering exploits. In July 2022, she reached the summit of Denali, 41 years after her late father, Tom Mack, had stood on the very same summit. And on 22 May 2023, she stood atop Everest, having summited the highest peak in the world.

Kirsty shared breathtaking photos, fascinating details of her journey, and even answered a humorous question about the state of her hair throughout her climbs. Her story embodied a quote from her favorite book, *The Boy*,



the Mole, the Fox and the Horse:

*'I can't see a way through,' said the boy.
'Can you see your next step?'
'Yes.'
'Just take that,' said the horse.*

We want to offer a huge thank you to all those who attended this event and contributed to what was a successful raffle, too. The raffle prizes were very kindly donated by Kirsty Mack, and they included a signed copy of the above-mentioned book, as well as some stunning prints from Kirsty's expeditions. The event raised nearly £600 each for both The Juniper Fund and the Torres del Paine Legacy Fund, two important charities committed to helping and preserving the natural areas we love and their communities. The group going to Patagonia hope that, when they are there, they will be able to meet with representatives from the Legacy Fund to hear more about how the funds they raised will be used.

We would like to thank Kirsty again for coming to speak, and we wish her the best of luck in all her future adventures. The heartwarming and inspiring story of her journey reminded us all to push our limits and embrace challenges, while honouring the legacies that drive us forward.

Beatrix C. (Form V)

OCHILS TRAVERSE: PATAGONIA TRAINING TRIP

Over the Easter weekend (led by Mrs Heather Moore and Mrs Catherine Munro) the group of 12 Form V pupils tackled a hefty day hike across the Ochils on a windy, brisk Saturday. This was organised as a training day for the team, who will be heading off for a 9-day trek in Patagonia in October 2025. In total, on 19 April, 10 hills were summited, 23 km covered, 1200m ascended and (very appropriately) many a Mini-Egg consumed.

We kicked things off above Bridge of Allan, starting near Sherriffmuir, and quickly ascended Glentye Hill before making a strong start up Mickie Corum. From there, it was on to Blairdenon Hill, before we commenced the boggy trudge across to Ben Buck.

Our lunch was eaten atop Ben Cleuch—the Ochil's highest point—snug inside fluorescent-orange bivy bags, shielding us from the chilly wind. Venturing back into the cold, we summited The Law, Andrew Gannel Hill and then King's Seat.

Next, we hiked up Tarmangie, but not without stopping to enjoy a warm and much-needed hot chocolate break, down in the Maddy Moss glen between the summits. Our final summit was White Wisp, and it was at that point that everyone's legs called it a day. We dropped down steeply into Dollar, past Castle Campbell and through the ramson- and bluebell-strewn Dollar Glen.

Back at Louis C.-H.'s house, recovery for our team of pupils came in the form of a good few Dominoes pizzas, whilst watching *Madagascar* and spending some quality time with four very cute and cuddly dogs.

Overall, it was a great day for the group, offering the chance to test out our kit, our strength and endurance, and to experiment with the best options for snacks (we were certainly not lacking in this regard). Best of all, every step and every conversation brought us closer together as a team. We're not sure exactly what Patagonia holds for us—this uncertainty is true of any proper adventure—but if it's anything like our day out, we know it'll be a great time.

Beatrix C. (Form V)



WHY BECOME A LANGUAGES AMBASSADOR?

The Modern Languages Department has successfully run the Form VI Languages Ambassador programme for several years. Pupils in their final year volunteer one of their free periods each week to assist younger pupils in class, helping them enhance their language skills. This opportunity not only strengthens their leadership skills, it also adds value to their UCAS applications. Here's what the current Form VI ambassadors have to say.

Cecilia Wei

FROM THE PUPILS:

I became a Languages Ambassador because I was intrigued by the idea of expanding my knowledge of languages and cultures from different parts of the world. I also wanted to help younger pupils learn the tips and tricks that I wish I had known when I was at their stage.

Nikhil G.

By being a Languages Ambassador, I can help and give back to the department that has enabled me to enjoy languages. The opportunity to revisit previous topics and remember first learning them allows me to look back and see how languages have shaped me as a person.

Emily W.

I wanted to become a Languages Ambassador because I believe that Mandarin, like all languages, opens doors to understanding a rich and fascinating culture, helping speakers connect with millions of people globally. For me, it's about sharing my passion for Mandarin and helping others see the benefits of learning a language that, while often regarded as challenging, is incredibly rewarding.

Aadam H.

It allows me to consolidate my basics of the language and support my learning of Advanced Higher Spanish. I like helping with groupwork, as it allows me to connect with pupils in other years, and it helps me to improve my own communication skills. I enjoy trying different group activities with the younger pupils and seeing how these can build their confidence with language.

Fiona R.



I am a Language Ambassador because I take both German and Spanish at Advanced Higher and plan to study them at university. I enjoy revisiting the easier parts of these languages, and I sometimes even learn some new vocabulary.

Rebecca C.

I like being able to connect with other year groups and give them advice on different exam techniques. I love to help younger pupils resolve their queries on new topics and see them improve in the language. I also like making display boards of previous trips to help inspire the years below to take any opportunity to become more fluent.

Emily S.

It is viewed very highly by universities and employers when you can not only speak the language, but also assist in teaching it, as this indicates your level of understanding of the language. I enjoy being able to help build pupils' confidence. It is rewarding to see their interest grow, with regard both to the country and the language.

Cameron C.

CCF RAF

In December 2024, fourteen cadets from our RAF section travelled over 200 miles to RNAS Inskip to compete in the Regional Air Squadron Trophy (RAST). Teams from across Scotland and England compete across seven categories: shooting, first aid, drill, uniform, leadership, a test of knowledge, and a rotating bonus event. It was Dollar's second year attending, and the growth from our debut was remarkable. Even without a trophy, the progress made represented a clear success—the result of hard work and a determination to learn from setbacks.

Once our spot at RAST was confirmed, I quickly set about assembling our team. Though two months sounds like a lot, every moment counted. Many returning cadets couldn't compete, so selecting a new mix of experienced and promising younger cadets from Forms III to VI was a challenge—but vital for balance.

There was a buzz on the coach ride down, especially with Glasgow Academy aboard, sparking a light-hearted karaoke rivalry. At Inskip, things moved quickly: unpacking, claiming bunks, and pressing uniforms. Early the next morning, Dollar was first up for uniform and drill. Tensions were high as the inspecting officer scrutinized each cadet, but nods of approval helped ease nerves. Watching our team perform the drill sequence—once clumsy and hesitant, now sharp and confident—was a proud moment.

Afterward, we moved on to the test on space technology, followed by cyber, first aid, and shooting. Our cadets had trained hard—whether solving encryption puzzles, treating realistic casualties, or shooting unsupported with tricky Scorpion Air Rifles. With support from staff like Maj Scott, Flt Lt Stables, and Sgt Richardson, we prepared as best we could.



Our efforts paid off: we improved our overall score by 4.5 points, climbed three places in both drill and uniform, and held strong in first aid and shooting. Though we didn't place as high as we'd hoped, the feedback gives us clear goals for next year. I'll be handing over the reins, but

I'm confident the team will continue to grow. I'm incredibly proud of their dedication and progress—they should be too.

Sgt Fraya A. (Form VI)

EX GOLDEN LION 2025

Stepping into the weekend, I knew this year's Ex Golden Lion would be a big one—especially as it marked the first 'full-fat' exercise since 2019. Ex Golden Lion serves as the final major test for our Advanced Infantry cadets (primarily Form IV pupils), pushing them through 48 hours of intensive training. From patrolling to ambushes, they were tested on every aspect of our Infantry syllabus.

Deploying from Dollar to Barry Buddon Training Area on a Friday evening, we swiftly established a patrol harbour area to secure some much-needed rest. However, our respite was short lived. At midnight, the enemy—a mixture of senior Dollar and Strathallan cadets—discovered our position and launched a surprise attack under the cover of darkness. Forced to 'bug out' to multiple locations, we endured five relentless hours of harassment before the enemy finally withdrew. As dawn approached, we managed to snatch a brief, but well-earned, period of rest.

When we awoke, late on Saturday morning, the platoon was determined to reclaim the positions we had lost overnight. Throughout the day, we conducted search-and-destroy operations, successfully executing three assaults and ambushing an enemy reinforcement patrol. Exhausted but resolute, we then occupied 'Bunker Hill', a key vantage point overlooking the entire training area. From there, a reconnaissance mission revealed that the enemy had established their headquarters in a heavily fortified lighthouse with only one viable entry point—posing a significant tactical challenge.

After careful deliberation, we devised a plan: under cover of darkness, the platoon would patrol as near as possible to the enemy stronghold; 1 Section was tasked with breaching and clearing the base. By 2000 hours, we had succeeded in our mission. The enemy was expelled, and we secured our position for the night.

At first light on Sunday, fresh intelligence—courtesy of two defectors—revealed that the enemy was planning an airlift extraction near 'Bunker Hill'. Our final mission was clear: stop the extraction at all costs. This time, it was 3 Section's turn to finish the job. Moving swiftly and decisively, they closed in and eliminated the enemy in under ten minutes, bringing Ex Golden Lion 2025 to a triumphant close.

It was a physically and mentally demanding exercise, pushing many cadets beyond their comfort zones. For our Advanced Infantry cadets, it marked the final step in their journey toward becoming qualified instructors. And, as always, no cadet exercise would be complete without a well-earned visit to the Golden Arches, before swapping war stories on the ride home.

Sgt Mason N. (Form V)





CCF NAVY

Ex London Ships

The Navy section recently embarked on the Ex London Ships trip, an incredible opportunity for our cadets. Our cadets even slept on the HMS Belfast (in the crew cabins), a tremendous historical experience. The ship was docked between London Bridge and Tower Bridge, a vantage point that offered amazing views of the city all around.

There was also a visit to the Cutty Sark, once vital to the spice trade, and this allowed our pupils to see the difference between the role that the Navy played then (through trade) and the role it plays today; the HSM Belfast provides humanitarian aid and protection. On board the Cutty Sark there were immersive experiences available; for example, we could make our own personalised rope or navigate our own vessel through rough seas.

We went on to explore the National Maritime Museum, where we learned about different expeditions, modern and historical, that have shaped our view of the world today. We then navigated our way to the Royal Observatory in Greenwich where you can stand on the Prime Meridian line, watch the stars from ancient and modern telescopes, and learn about the mechanisms that make clocks work. We should all, now, be able to navigate across the seas...or at least to our next class.

To avoid the busy traffic in London, we opted to take Uber boats (very fitting for Navy cadets), and this quickly became an unexpected highlight of the trip. We all requested to stay longer to experience the sights of London from the water.

When we returned to HMS Belfast, our excitement continued with sea shanty karaoke and the recreation of RMS Titanic (without the sinking). Our visit to London concluded with learning about the history of the very warship we had been fortunate enough to call home on this fantastic adventure. HMS Belfast played a crucial role at Normandy in World War Two, as it was the second ship to fire a shot on D-Day. Ex London Ships was an amazing trip that included a range of experiences for the cadets; we hope that all sections might have the chance to experience it next year!

Erin M. (Form VI)



THE CCF ABROAD: NORMANDY BATTLEFIELDS 2025

The first-ever Dollar CCF international trip (to the battlefields of Normandy) commenced late on Friday 28 March. After an 18-hour bus and ferry journey, we arrived in France. As soon as we stepped off the ferry, our guide, Simon, began to explain the history of Normandy and its importance in World War Two. Soon, we were heading for our hotel in Caen and a much-needed rest.

Our first day of exploring Normandy began with a visit to Pegasus Bridge where the D-Day invasion really began. Then, it was on to Merville Battery, where Simon told us about the Allies' complicated plan to seize it. We had the chance to experience the inside of a plane used for transporting paratroopers on D-Day. A visit to Ranville War Cemetery followed, where all 36 cadets and instructors individually laid our regimental hackle at the 36 Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders' graves (parent regiment of Dollar Academy's CCF). This was very poignant because, as well as the regiment having been the same size as our party, some of these soldiers were the same age as some of our Dollar cadets. The day ended with a trip to Hillman Fortress and a tour around the British Normandy Memorial, just above Gold Beach.

Day Two began at Arromanches-les-Bains to see the famous Mulberry Harbour before a visit to the German military cemetery at La Cambe. It was truly fascinating to see the difference between the German and British war cemeteries, and the cadets had some excellent questions and observations. We then travelled to Omaha Beach and, though the tide was high, Simon explained how the most challenging Allied landing had occurred. A short visit to a German gun battery preceded the final stop of the trip: the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery in Bayeux. Here, as an act of remembrance, CSgt Fensom piped and the senior cadets read, before observing a two-minute silence. This all made for a deeply moving experience—not only for our party, but for the other visitors there that day.

Although it was certainly a trip rich in sobering insights and lessons, we still managed to have some fun in the evenings—not least with a highly competitive football match. I am very glad I had the opportunity to take part in this trip, and I would thoroughly recommend it to any cadet in the future.

RSM Frederick R. (Form VI)



Form III Art & Design Trip to London

The Art and Design trip to London was an adventure no Form III pupil will soon forget. Whilst enriching pupils' perspectives of art and fostering their creativity, it provided experiences that left a lasting impression, all recorded in our sketchbooks. The stage was set with *Hamilton*; Lin-Manuel Miranda's famous musical offered vibrant music and captivating sets, and the Victoria Palace Theatre's giant chandeliers and extraordinary engravings made for an inspiring venue.

On the second day we saw the 'World of Tim Burton' exhibition at the Design Museum. The main takeaway was that Tim Burton was a visionary filmmaker known for his unique, Gothic style and imaginative storytelling that have captured audiences' attention for decades.

After a short walk and Tube journey, we had a chance to see behind the scenes of *Harry Potter*, at the Warner Bros Studio Tour London. It was an enchanting walk-through exhibition that let us explore authentic sets, props, and costumes from the *Harry Potter* film series, revealing the magic behind the movies. Afterwards, we loved having a chance to go shopping at Westfield London, a highlight of the trip for many pupils.

On our final day in London,



we travelled to the V&A Museum; there we saw beautiful exhibits whilst decorating our sketchbooks with a final few drawings. After that, we had a little free time to explore Harrods, a design wonder in itself with its grand food halls and many floors of luxurious architecture. It was sad to leave; none of us wanted the trip to end, but we left London having experienced something spectacular.

On the train home, the winners of the competitions (that ran over the course of the trip) were revealed to us. There were two categories: sketchbook and photography. The winners could have been anyone. When sharing our sketchbooks and photographs, the wide range of talent was clear.

Overall, the Art & Design trip to London was a great success. It exposed us to many new experiences, sparked our creativity, and helped us to appreciate art in all its forms, all while strengthening our bonds as a year group—through art. It was truly something to remember, as all the pupils fortunate enough to take part in this London adventure would agree.

Christie M. (Form III)



Clères 2025

TASK:

Sum Up Your Trip in a Single Sentence

A whirlwind of experiences you will never forget; a trip you could never replicate.

-Iseabail G. (Form I)

Amazing: we visited the Eiffel Tower, shopped in Rouen and explored the historic DDay beaches and Bayeux.

-Grace T (Form I).

A life-changing trip—we saw the beauty of France and its wonders of culture and art, and we bonded with friends and learned new language skills.

-Zara W. (Form II)

The families are perfect; it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

-William C. (Form I)

The trip was the funnest, most incredible trip I have been on!

-Harvey P. (Form I)

Clères 2025 was the best school trip I have ever been on; the teachers took care of each of us really well.

-Eva L. (Form I)

From the top of the Eiffel Tower to the Teacups at Disney, it was the most exciting trip!

-Holly M. (Form I)



AH ENGLISH TRIP TO LONDON

At the end of January, an early rendez-vous at Waverley Station allowed us to reach London in time for a full day's literary action to begin. After settling into our hotel, we enjoyed a brilliant Bloomsbury Tour, led by two dapper, be-tweedeed tour guides, fully in character as Virginia Woolf (who had apparently evolved a Midwest American accent at some point in her life) and her husband, Leonard. They dished out an untold number of juicy anecdotes and tidbits of literary interest whilst taking us round the leafy streets and squares of Bloomsbury. That night, we attended the much-talked-about Jamie Lloyd Company's production of *The Tempest* at Theatre Royal Drury Lane, starring Sigourney Weaver as Prospera. This play is one of the two Shakespeare tragicomedies studied by AH English pupils. It's always good to look around a theatre full of people and realise that your pupils probably know the play better than 90% of the audience. This certainly encouraged us to exercise our finely honed critical faculties upon the flaws and weaknesses of the production—which we did. It was enjoyable nonetheless and provided much scope for heated discussion.

The next day, we were very fortunate to enjoy an excellent and lively tour of The Globe, led by a tour guide with more dramatic flair in his little finger than the lead in 'The Tempest' had shown the night before. We also enjoyed the costume room in Shakespeare's Globe Exhibition, and there was much trying-on of gowns and masks. A wander round the expansive and fascinating British Library followed, with ample time for book browsing and buying in the two excellent shops. Finally, after a quick coffee and some Tony's Choclonely for the long hours ahead, it was time to head for King's Cross Station for the train journey home. The trip gave our AH pupils to broaden and deepen their appreciation of literature in an exciting way, far from the confines of the classroom.

Heather Moore





DRAMA TRIP TO LONDON

Form II and III Drama pupils embarked on an unforgettable, theatre-based trip to London, packed with enriching experiences and thrilling adventures. The journey began with a backstage tour of the prestigious National Theatre, where our pupils were treated to a behind-the-scenes look at the intricate workings of professional theatre production. They marveled at the craftsmanship involved in set design, costume creation, and the technical aspects that bring a play to life. The trip also included a visit to the iconic London Eye (offering breathtaking views of the city) and the fascinating Science Museum, where pupils explored interactive exhibits and learned about scientific advancements. A highlight of the trip was the visit to Warner Bros. Studios, where they were immersed in the magical world of filmmaking, seeing firsthand the sets and props used in famous movies. The excitement continued with two West End shows: *Mamma Mia* and *Wicked*, both of which showcased high-quality musical theatre and left the pupils in awe of the performances. The overnight bus journey added an element of adventure, fostering camaraderie and creating lasting memories. This trip was an amazing experience for all, providing a unique blend of education and entertainment that will be cherished for years to come.

Iain MacDonald

FORM III SKI TOUR 2025



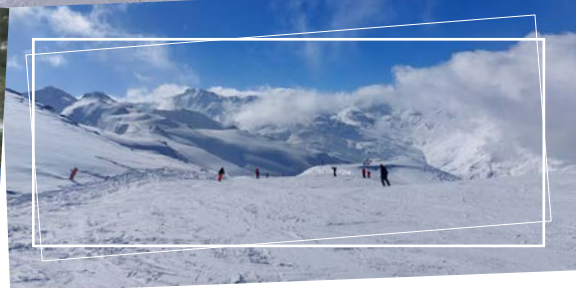
The first Ski Tour since Covid began with everyone getting their skis, snowboards and boots. And so the excitement began...

The first day was incredible for everyone. Many found themselves skiing on snow for the very first time, amid the spectacular beauty of the French Alps. That morning, all skiers and snowboarders were assigned to their ESF instructors, who were all so lovely. They took us on some amazing runs through the mountains and helped us to improve our skiing and snowboarding. After a nice warm lunch, it was back out onto the slopes. The afternoons were fun because we were able to choose our ski groups and what we wanted to do: everything from 'Blues and Hot Chocolates' to some very hardcore afternoons spent navigating the iciest black runs. And thus the pattern of the week emerged. There were some lovely days with clear skies and blazing sunshine: great days for pictures and fun skiing and snowboarding

with friends. One of the days, in particular, was not great in terms of visibility, but it was perfect for hot chocolate with crème Chantilly in cosy, slope-side cafes.

Every evening we had a good dinner and then got together for an activity. One evening was bingo, with great prizes (like your own choice of something from Amazon!). Another night, we had our own little version of the TV show *Taskmaster*, which was great fun. One night we went on an alpine rollercoaster, which got all of our adrenaline pumping—that night was my favourite! Near the end of the trip, we all felt sad to be leaving this source of so many fun memories where we'd spent amazing hours with our friends. But we were also glad to be home again after a week away.

Heidi N. (Form III)



A Ski Tour sounds like an impressive thing, right? Well, I must say that this year's Ski Tour certainly lived up to those expectations and we all felt very fortunate to have the chance to go. It really wasn't just another amazing holiday—the atmosphere created by both Dollar pupils and teachers was, to put it simply, wonderful.

It cannot be easy having to entertain 50 teenagers, but Mr David Lumsden organised it all so carefully that no one ever felt exhausted, but nor did anyone ever sit idle. Every night, after an exciting day's skiing, we were doing something. Whether it was snow games outside, bingo indoors or an alpine rollercoaster in the next village, we were never bored.

But it was the skiing that we came for, and it was the skiing that kept us on our toes. The first day was perfect sunshine; by the third day, however, the mist had descended upon us. If you have ever tried to ski in wet fog, you will know that it can prove challenging. This did not stop us Scots from getting out on the slopes. One particularly misty day, my group decided it would be a good idea to ski down

a heavily-moguled red slope. That was quite something. But what trouble can't a trusty snowplough get you out of? I loved those afternoon ski sessions because I got to be with my friends and we could (more or less) do what we wanted to do (always supervised by a member of staff, of course!). You might be able to get your hands on the video of my friends and I skiing though each other's legs most of the way down a green run, for example. It was great fun.

Our hotel was brilliant, as the slopes were right on our doorstep. It also had lots of shops around it—great if you wanted to grab a crêpe or a baguette (very popular) during a quick break.

The people on Ski Tour 2025 were all so lovely, and I want to say a massive thank you from everyone to all the staff who came with us on this trip—but most especially to Mr Lumsden for all of the hard work, attention and time he put into this trip and for making it happen. I know we will all remember it for a long time to come.

Annina L. (Form III)



1st XI

HOCKEY 2024–2025

The 2024–2025 season has been hugely successful in so many ways. We have had over 300 pupils playing hockey from Prep 4 through to Form VI. There has been a total of 328 games played and 20 teams in action. The pupils are very lucky to have such enthusiastic staff who give so much to the Dollar Academy Hockey Club, affording positive experiences and lifelong memories to so many girls. There have been several highlights for the squads and for individuals, too, but the list that follows offers a useful snapshot of just a few of the high points of this season:

- 1st XI: Scottish Plate winners
- 1st XI: Midland Tournament winners
- 1st XI: Midland Knockout Cup winners
- Form 3A: Scottish Plate winners
- Form 3A: Midland Indoor Cup winners
- Form 3A: Midland Knockout Cup winners
- Form 2A: Hutchesons' Grammar School Tournament winners
- Junior 2A: The Mary Erskine School and Glasgow Academy Tournaments winners
- Junior 1A: The Mary Erskine School Tournament winners

This is all fantastic, of course, but it's not just about winning trophies. We have hundreds of girls out on the pitch every week, developing their hockey but also developing core values for life. The Hockey Club and its players wish to express their immense gratitude to the staff who put in endless hours and effort, giving our players the best opportunities to fulfil their potential both on and off the pitch.

We also want to wish the very best to our Form VI players who leave us this summer. Many of them have been part of the Hockey Club since Prep 4, and they are fantastic role models for our younger players. We look forward to hearing about your future involvement in hockey. Best of luck to our players involved in Scottish and District squads throughout the summer: give it your best shot and make the most of each opportunity that comes your way.

As I move into my new role as Director of Sport, I would like to thank all the staff for all their support over the years. I have loved leading the Hockey Programme, and I am delighted that I will still be involved with coaching the 1st XI next season. I would finally like to take this opportunity to wish Mr Callum McLeod all the very best in his new role as Head of Hockey. This is a very exciting time, and I have no doubt that hockey at Dollar will continue to develop under his leadership.

Lynsey Allan

Junior 1

The Junior 1 team had an amazing first season. We've loved representing our school, both at home and away. We enjoyed spending time with our friends, working hard, and having fun while developing our hockey skills every Saturday morning. During practices, we learned new techniques, played fun games, and worked on our teamwork. It was great to see how much we all improved throughout the season. One of the biggest highlights was winning the Erskine Stewart Melville Primary 6 Hockey Tournament: such an exciting achievement for the team. Our away games always offered us a good challenge, while our home games gave us the chance to show off what we'd learned in front of our friends and families. We all supported each other, and our coaches always encouraged us to do our best. This season has been a great start for the team, and we are all looking forward to what comes next.

Louisa C.-T. (Junior 1)

Form 1A

As we moved into the Senior School, we welcomed many new, talented players and settled into training, all under the watchful eye of our inspirational coaches, Mr Olly Volland and Miss Heather Holloway. With over 40 keen Form 1 girls at training every week, their team selections could not have been easy. The Form 1A hockey team has had an outstanding season: developing skills and teamwork whilst having abundant fun along the way. This was a season to remember.

Our team started strong, securing early victories that set the tone for the rest of the season. With each 8-a-side match, our confidence increased and our teamwork improved. Notable highlights in the first half of the season included our thrilling win against George Watson's College (having suffered our only defeat to them a fortnight earlier) and then our dominant performance in the Fettes Tournament, where we reached the final.

Shortly before Christmas, we were excited to move to 11-a-side

matches, with the introduction of penalty corners and the ability to use the whole pitch. We are unbeaten as an 11-a-side team, which is testament to our dedication and our coaches' unshakeable belief in us, particularly during the more challenging matches.

Beyond the scores, this season has been about growth, sportsmanship, and friendships. The team has made immense progress, and our players have stepped up, ensuring a successful season and a bright future. Another huge thank you to our amazing coaches for their dedication and guidance, and to our parents who cheer us on (and get us to those very early buses!).

Ailie G. (Form I)

Form 1B

Being on the 1B team this season has been a lot of fun; we have trained hard and worked together to improve our skills. We loved travelling to away games, making lots of new friends in the process and embracing the challenge of playing new schools.

One of our favourite memories comes from a tournament at Fettes College when, on the bus ride home, we all played games like charades, Uno and Finish the Lyrics, just having silly fun together. It was at that tournament, too, that we had the chance to sit down with the Fettes players over lunch for a conversation about what their school was like, what their favourite hobbies were and more.

Another of our best memories comes from winning our first game of the season. We were ecstatic, and that win certainly set us up for the season ahead. We have enjoyed cheering our teammates and the other Dollar teams from the side of the pitch, celebrating goals and goal line clearances alike. We are so thankful to our coaches, especially Miss Holloway and Mr Volland, for all their help. We can't wait for next season.

Susannah M. (Form I)

Form 2A

The Dollar Form 2As have had a season to remember, not merely for our many victories, but for our determination.

Throughout the season, we have played to the best of our abilities, resulting in many great wins and some unfortunate losses. We have not only improved our hockey skills, we have also improved our communication and our teamwork skills. At a Form 2 hockey tournament held at Dollar, we placed third, beating Glasgow Academy and the High School of Dundee, whilst losing to George Watson's and Erskine Stewart Melville. We all love the exciting and challenging training sessions with Mrs Gill Robb, our brilliant coach, on Mondays and Wednesdays after school and at lunchtime every Monday.

Form 2B

The Form 2B team had its ups and downs with victories and defeats, but throughout the whole season it was our teamwork that mattered most. The B team has always been a close group with great communication, amazing passes and excellent assists and goals. We have used these skills to match and overcome teams that have, sometimes, been better than us—for instance, when we drew with the 2A team from Morrison's Academy. We love, and will remember best, how easy it is to make friends while playing other teams from different schools. All of this helped us to evolve into a more tightly knit squad ourselves.

Lily F. and Maddie J. (both Form II)

Form 3A

The Form 3A hockey season got off to a good start with three wins and two draws in our first five games. This streak was cut short when Erskine Stewart Melville narrowly beat us, 2–1, in our first defeat of the season. In October we enjoyed a successful hockey trip to the north of England, visiting Sedbergh School and Stonyhurst College, and we were delighted to come away with a win and a draw. Our biggest upset of the season was getting knocked out of the Scottish Schools Cup in the first round by Edinburgh Academy with a 3–1 loss. We had a mixed bag of results after that game, but we came back stronger and better in January thanks to our

amazing coach Mr Callum McLeod, who gave up time over the Christmas holiday to do extra training sessions with us. Undoubtedly our biggest achievement this year was winning the Scottish Schools Plate, beating Dundee in the final with a resounding 5–0 victory. Another gratifying win was confidently beating Edinburgh Academy, 3–1, the week before they went on to win the Scottish Schools Cup. Over the past few months, we raised our game and gelled more as a team, becoming a quite formidable squad. At the end of the season, we can hold our heads high. At the time of writing this piece we have an unbeaten winning streak since January with only a few games left to play.

Imogen M. (Form III)

Form 3B

Throughout this hockey season, our team has shown exceptional progress both individually and collectively. Whether training hard or playing an intense short corner, we always find a way to make it enjoyable and fulfilling. At the start of the season, we didn't have the best communication and we didn't flow very well. But, as the season has progressed, we became a solid team and we have won most of our games. Our victory-to-defeat ratio is 11–1. Overall, this team has shown great dedication, teamwork and hard work—and we have had an amazing time. Form 3 hockey has taught us a lot and helped us to improve our skills and how we play during a match; this season has set us up for success in our further hockey careers.

Robin Pyper

2nd XI

The 2nd XI hockey team had a fantastic season with every player putting in the hard work to achieve success. We have faced strong opposition throughout, but one of our standout performances came against Edinburgh Academy, where we played some of our best hockey to secure a 3–2 victory. The highlight of the season was the annual St George's 2nd XI tournament. Despite challenging conditions and tough opposition, we delivered strong performances, securing victories

against St George's School, Morrison's Academy and Edinburgh Academy. These wins earned us a well-deserved place in the semi-finals against George Heriot's. We fought hard, managing a 1–1 draw, but, unfortunately, we lost out on running penalties, finishing 2–1. The highlight of the match was an unbelievable penalty flick from Leigh A. (Form V) after having been taken out by the goalkeeper twice. Every player has given their all, both in training and on match days, showing dedication and commitment throughout the season. We'd like to give a special mention to our goalkeeper, Mhora B. (Form IV). She has been the backbone of our success, constantly motivating us and keeping us organised on the pitch. She has been determined to secure a clean sweep all season, and this was finally achieved in one of our last matches against Hutchesons' Grammar School: a win with a final score of 1–0. Overall, the 2nd XI has had an incredible season, and we wish the squad the best as they continue to set the standard for the future team.

Ruby K. (Form VI)

3rd XI

The 3rd XI had an outstanding season, filled with wins and many unforgettable experiences. The arrival of the Form IV pupils was a game changer, as each proved to be exceptional addition to our team.

Our journey began with matches against Glasgow Academy and Hutchesons' Grammar School, which set the tone for the fantastic season that followed. As a new team, we quickly found our rhythm and worked well together. Tay K. (Form IV) has been a rock on our back line, making it difficult for the opposition to break through, and speedy Ava M. (Form IV) has consistently shown her ability to score amazing goals. Our new goalie Lola D. (Form V) has been incredible this season, making some outstanding saves that have been crucial to our success. There have also been some memorable performances in goal from Anna M.-J. (Form V) and Katy W. (Form VI)—stepping up to make

sure the opposition was never too comfortable! From training to laughs on the bus and those early Saturday mornings, there is never a dull moment with this team. A tremendous thank you to Kody Fludgate and Mrs Verity Smith for all their support throughout the year; your constant encouragement has pushed us all to improve, and you will be missed very much by all of the sixth-years. We wish everyone all the best for the future.

Sophie B. (Form VI)

4th XI

Overall, the 4th XI team enjoyed a good run this season—not least as the new Form IV pupils brought new talent and skill to this team. Many friendships were forged on the South Africa Hockey Tour where our skills and fitness improved over the many games played.

The season began well with wins against Hutchesons' Grammar School and the High School of Dundee: a positive start to the season. And the team showed great talent; Erin C. (Form IV) brought the speed and the skills, eventually moving up from the 4th to the 3rd squad. Mimi C. (Form IV) brought real fire and power, putting up a strong fight against the opposition every time. There were laughs, both on and off the pitch, when a game against George Watson's required a change of kit due to the treacherous conditions.

We had two new goalies this season, too, who both stepped up to the challenge: Siena S.-V. and Lola D. (both Form V) who took their roles in stride and never backed away from a challenge. Throughout, our team spirit never faded—whether we won or lost, we all still showed up every cold Saturday morning. We'd like to extend a great thanks to Kody Fludgate and Mrs Smith for helping us to improve as players, and we wish all the leavers the very best in the future.

Katy W. (Form VI)

HOCKEY SELECTION

Form VI

Christina D.

Form V

Tabitha P.
Amy J.
Maddie M.
Grace S.
Lois W.

Form IV

Emily W.
Lara C.
Mia F.
Millie C.
Mhora B.

Form III

Abbey S.
Anna H.
Imogen M.
Rosalie P.
Kayla B.
Maya M.
Mhairi M.
Elliot O.

Form II

Toby C.

Further congratulations to Amy J. and Emily W. on their selection into the Scottish Hockey Emerging squad and to Tabitha P. and Christina D. on their selection into the Scottish Aspiring squad. Five of those players (Christina, Tabitha, Mhora, Amy and Emily) have been selected forward to the Scotland Emerging and Aspiring squads trials, and we wish them luck ahead of the squad announcements in mid-October.

Lynsey Allan



1st XI

CAPTAIN'S REPORT

The 2024–25 season has certainly been a rollercoaster of results, and the girls have played some amazing matches. The team was led by Captain Sarah C., alongside Vice-Captains India S. and Rachel N. (all Form VI). It goes without saying that the highlight of the season for so many of us took place before the season even began. South Africa was a truly unforgettable experience for those of us fortunate enough to take part. We played five matches out there, and the 1st XI came away with five wins. It was a great pre-season warmup, with the team being led by the one and only Mr Duncan Riddell. This pre-season tour let us brush away the summer cobwebs (for those who hadn't played) and set us up for a good start to the season back home; our first match was played the day after we returned!

And so we faced the first fixture of the season against Glasgow Academy after a long day of travelling. Perhaps not surprisingly, we lost 4-0. But it was a great test for our new squad as everyone sought to find their feet again. Over the next few weeks, everyone put in copious amounts of hard work (on pitch and off), ensuring that we were in the best possible shape

for the season ahead. This helped us to secure a brilliant 3-1 win over George Watson's just four weeks into the season—a good show of resilience and determination that began to demonstrate our full potential.

During the October holidays, we travelled down to Sedburgh ahead of the first round of the Scottish Cup. That trip provided a great opportunity for us to bond as a squad, and the benefits of that were evident on the pitch. We achieved a 1–1 draw against a top school in England. The following day we played Stonyhurst College, against whom we managed to secure a fantastic 9–1 victory, which set us up well for returning home to face Fettes College in the Cup. Unfortunately, a Cup win was not to be. It was a tough match for us and, in the end, we lost 2–0. This put us into the Scottish Plate. Losing that Cup game was a real test of character for everyone, so we had to pull together to keep our heads up and focus on the new challenge of the Plate campaign. Throughout the season, we have all grown a great deal and our team bonds have grown ever stronger. In the tougher times of competitive sport, we have always been there to support each other and this forges friendships which, we are sure, will be sustained over a lifetime.

December was a busy time for the team with many tournaments and important fixtures. We started



Form 1C



2nd XI



Form 1B



Junior 2A



Form 1A



Form 3B



Junior 2B



Junior 1A



Form 3A



Junior 2C



Junior 1B



Form 2B



4th XI



Form 2A



3rd XI

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powerfully by winning the Midlands Outdoor Tournament, an afternoon full of goals and hard work that helped us to secure a win in the final against St Leonards. We then went on the win the High School of Dundee Indoor Tournament, under the indoor expertise of Mr Riddell. This allowed us to qualify for the Scottish Indoor finals the following month. We said a very sad goodbye to Mr Riddell at Christmas—someone who had done so much for our squad—even as we welcomed Miss Allan back in January.

The new year saw us progress through the Plate, with a very close and heated semi-final win over Loretto 3–2. We played our best game yet against a very strong Heriot's side and emerged victorious, setting us up well for the final few games of the season. On 14 March, we travelled to Glasgow Green to face Glasgow Academy in the Scottish Plate final. Nervousness had well and truly set in; we all knew a hard shift was required. And we delivered. Fast attacking play in the midfield from Tabs P., Lois W. (both Form V) and Emily A. (Form VI), and an all-round star performance from everyone allowed us to triumph over Glasgow Academy, 4–1, to become Scottish Plate Champions. Some excellent goals were scored by Sarah C., India S. (both Form VI), Amy J. (Form V) and Mia F. (Form IV) which would not have been possible without a strong defensive back from Freya R., Rachel N. and Christina D. (all Form VI).

The last match of the season was played against Morrison's Academy, in the final of the Midlands Area Cup. It was an enjoyable last match that allowed us to secure yet another 4–1 win, making us Midlands Champions. This certainly allowed our sixth-years to go out on a high in what was their final experience playing for The Ship!

It has been a good season for all the girls with ups and downs along the way, but we made memories and learned great lessons, and we will be forever grateful for having had the chance to spend these days with one another.

Sarah C. (1st XI Captain, Form VI)



JUNIOR AND SENIOR PLATE WINS

On Friday 7 March our Form 3A hockey squad played in Scottish Hockey's Junior Scottish Schools Plate Final against the High School of Dundee at the Glasgow National Hockey Centre. It was a fantastic game of hockey: Sophie A. netted a hat-trick and Annabel K. added to the score sheet with two goals. The final score of 5–0 was a true reflection of Dollar's fine performance.

Just a week later on Friday 14 March, the 1st XI played at the National Hockey Centre in Glasgow against a strong Glasgow Academy side in the final of the Senior Scottish Schools Plate. It was a close first half, but then Dollar scored to take the lead. Goals from Captain Sarah C., India S. (both Form VI), Amy J. (Form V) and Mia F. (Form IV) resulted in an excellent 4–1 win.

Lynsey Allan





1st XV

RUGBY 2024–2025

This season had its share of challenges, with plenty of highs and lows for the senior team. The players might feel a bit let down about how things turned out, but I want to remind them that this season was definitely not a failure. Their strength in bouncing back from a tough loss to Merchiston—ultimately leading to their best performance of the season against Fettes just a few weeks later—shows a commendable attitude that was evident all year long. Even though the results were up and down, their dedication and teamwork really stood out, and they have every reason to be proud of what they achieved.

The season kicked off with one of the finest preparation camps I've participated in, a trip to Tignes, and we eagerly anticipated the National Conference games, knowing they would pit us against some of the top rugby schools in Scotland. The first was a real rollercoaster of a game; we sprinted to a 30-point advantage at halftime only to see Edinburgh Academy reel us in and pip us at the post in the last minute of the game. Although results in the Conference were tough for the senior section, the competition encompasses all our teams, from Form 1 through the 1st XV—and on both

an individual and collective basis. The goal is to ensure each team plays a vital role in contributing to the overall school result. I'm incredibly proud that we secured third place as a school, having only been beaten by two schools who are twice our size.

For me, success isn't defined solely by results. While they are certainly important, they need to be viewed in perspective. What matters more is whether all age groups and coaches have adhered to the fundamental playing principles, which unify all our teams. Secondly, we must consider whether we have maintained our core values, and if we've created an environment conducive to living these values, ultimately fostering growth in character as much as in skill. Finally, as coaches, we must provide every player with the opportunity to develop, thrive, and enjoy his journey.

I feel fortunate to lead such a talented group of coaches who have made a significant impact throughout the season, despite the challenges. I'm thankful that we consistently managed to fulfil our matches, often playing multiple schools simultaneously to ensure as many players as possible had game time. Remarkably, we continue to be one

of only a handful of schools nationwide able to do so.

This accomplishment speaks volumes about the dedication and commitment of our coaching staff, who continually strive to make each player's experience as rewarding as it can be. Their efforts are extraordinary, and I cannot express enough gratitude for how they keep players motivated, ensuring everyone enjoys their time regardless of the weather—all while showcasing some excellent rugby with a smile.

Early in my sporting career, I learned the importance of surrounding yourself with talented individuals. The rugby section is full of them—not just the coaches, but also the teams within teams that make Dollar so exceptional. From the 2nd team, which holds its own against many 1st XV's; to the doctors, nurses, and physios who ensure safety on game day; the referees we rely on; and the caterers, groundsmen, partners, wives, and girlfriends—their contributions are invaluable.

It's only natural that talented players catch the eye of national and regional selectors, and this season has certainly been no exception. Congratulations to all of our athletes who have made significant strides in their development; their impressive performances throughout the season have rightfully earned them recognition. Leading the pack is Max G. (Form VI), who advanced to the Scotland U18 training camp but narrowly missed out on selection for the full U18 squad at the final hurdle. Alongside him, Adam H. and Troye A. (both Form VI) were chosen for the National Academy. Additionally, several of our young players have also been acknowledged for their efforts, earning spots in regional squads. The Caledonia U18 team this season includes Max, Adam, Troye, Bobby S. and Dan R. (all Form VI) with Dylan K. (Form V) having been selected for Edinburgh.

At the U16 level, Max G. and Max M. (both Form IV) represented

Caledonia this season, participating in training and competitions.

I must also highlight our success in the 7s format this year, a well-earned reward for the hard work of both players and coaches.

In the U18 category, our team was crowned winners at the Morrison's Academy 7s for the second consecutive year, triumphing over both Strathallan and the High School of Dundee in closely contested matches. We were also runners-up at the prestigious Caritas 7s (George Watson's), where we lost by just one score to Merchiston in the final. Additionally, we were runners-up again at the George Heriot's 7s, having notably defeated George Watson's in both tournaments. This group also competed at the North of England 7s for the first time, winning their group comfortably before being beaten by a formidable Kirkham Grammar School in the knockout stages. We concluded the 7s season with a strong outing at the Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s, where we only lost to the eventual Bowl finalists, King's School, Worcester.

The U16s celebrated victories at the George Heriot's 7s and also reached the semifinals at the Caritas 7s (George Watson's).

The Form 3 team emerged as Shield winners at both the SMC 7s and the Caritas 7s (George Watson's) and finished as runners-up at the Glasgow Academy 7s.

The Form 2 team were runners-up at the Caritas 7s (George Watson's); they also reached the semifinals at the High School of Glasgow 7s (2nd VII), and they enjoyed a commendable showing at the Sedburgh 7s.

The Form 1s won the Bowl at the Glasgow Academy 7s, finished as semi-finalists at the Edinburgh Academy 7s, and had a very successful performance at the Rosslyn Park 7s, winning four out of their five games.

And, finally, the U14 girls made history by becoming the first-ever, all-girls rugby team to represent the school at Rosslyn Park 7s. They gained valuable experience there,

which will serve this squad well in the years ahead. You can read more about this in the later pages of this edition.

As I finish my time as Director of Rugby at Dollar, I can't help but feel incredibly grateful for the opportunity to lead such a passionate team of coaches and players in a school with such a rich rugby tradition. The support I've received throughout this journey has been truly humbling.

There are so many people to thank: so many individuals that come together to create such a positive impact: colleagues, pupils, medical professionals, officials, caterers, and parents. They all play an essential role in our community. It is this collective effort that makes Dollar truly unique, fostering a nurturing environment where players can flourish and fully enjoy the sport they love.

As we enter an exciting new chapter for rugby, I'm delighted to welcome our new Head of Rugby, Mr Stevie Wilson, and to pass on a programme that recently underwent a robust and thorough selection process that included visits from Scottish Rugby to evaluate what we provide. This led to us being invited, along with just four other schools and three clubs, to take part in a groundbreaking age-grade competition where the top school and club programmes in Scotland will compete against one another for the first time. A significant challenge lies ahead, but I'm confident that Stevie will lead the school to great success.

Special mention must also go to our captain this season, Troye A., one of the most conscientious and respectful captains we have ever had. It's been an absolute pleasure getting to know him. His eye-catching performances have led to him becoming a National Academy player, and I have no doubt we have not heard the last of him on the representative front. He is so coachable and always looking to improve: a true inspiration to our younger players and utterly respected by his peers and coaches.

There is also so much to

celebrate throughout the school. Each coach has shared their thoughts below, often echoing the sentiments of their captains.

Lastly, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone, especially to those who are leaving us. Your contributions over the years have been invaluable, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Don Caskie

Junior 1

Coaches: Mr Abtin Pourgive & Barry Munro

This has been an outstanding year for the J1 rugby team, who have exhibited a commendable attitude both in training and during matches. They have celebrated many great victories, but what truly stands out is how they have handled their losses gracefully, demonstrating good sportsmanship and a willingness to learn from their



mistakes.

In our view, this has been the best year for overall development since we began coaching Juniors at Dollar. The B team has achieved remarkable results due to their hard work in training, while the A team has consistently supported and uplifted the entire squad. One particularly memorable match, that fully showcased our team's values, was against the

High School of Dundee; Dollar players supported one another entirely, lifting each other up and building a positive atmosphere. In the first half, Dundee dominated, leading 5–1, but our boys maintained their composure. They refused to turn against each other and instead chose to stick together. In the second half, as Dundee began to make mistakes, our boys capitalised on these opportunities and made a stunning comeback, eventually winning the game 10–5. This victory was a true testament to their principles, mindset, and team values.

We would also like to give a special mention to those players who started playing rugby for the first time this year. Barry and Mr Pourgive have been thoroughly impressed by their transformation and wish them the best of luck on their rugby journeys.

Abtin Pourgive

Junior 2

Coaches: Graham Hinshelwood & Calum Grant

As the rugby season comes to a close, we take the opportunity to reflect on what has been a remarkable journey for our J2 squad. This year has been filled with growth, teamwork, and unforgettable moments that will undoubtedly leave a lasting impact on all our players.

The team has shown incredible dedication and determination throughout the season. Whether it was in the rain or on chilly Saturday mornings, they demonstrated resilience and passion in every game. Key highlights include being victorious in the High School of Dundee tournament and finally overcoming our challenging Edinburgh opponents. These moments highlighted not just the team's technical skills but also their unwavering spirit and sportsmanship.

Beyond the scores and results, this season was about development. For many players, this was their first experience playing competitive rugby. Watching them progress—from learning basic drills to executing complex plays—has been nothing short

of inspiring. Coaches and parents alike have been amazed by the improvement in fitness, game awareness and, most importantly, the confidence of every athlete in the squad.

Perhaps the most heartwarming aspect of the season has been the bonds forged between all the players. Rugby has taught them not just how to pass and tackle, but also the value of teamwork, trust, and communication. The support they showed for one another, both on and off the pitch, was a testament to the positive environment fostered by Dollar Academy.

A big thank you also goes out to the parents for their unwavering support, whether it was cheering from the sidelines or ensuring the players were fully kitted up and ready to play.

As we wrap up this season, we are already looking forward to the next. The players have laid a strong foundation and, with continued hard work and enthusiasm, the future looks very bright for Form 1 rugby.

Graham Hinshelwood

Form 1

Coaches: Mr Steve Newton & Gregor Nelson

It has been a difficult year for the Form 1 squad with the Conference matches proving to be challenging. It is testament to the boys in both the A and B squads that they toughed it out and played some excellent rugby along the way. I have no doubt that this resilience will stand them in good stead as they move forward with their rugby. The highlight for many was the trip to Rosslyn Park, where they came together superbly and gained some notable wins, finishing 2nd in the group.

Steve Newton

Form 2

Coaches: Mr Martin Hose & Mr Jim Richardson

The Form 2 rugby squad's season has been filled with ups and downs, but I believe the ups far outweigh the downs!

We started the season on the back foot, facing a series of challenging matches against strong opponents. These games humbled us, but they also helped us build resilience and determination for the upcoming fixtures.

After a convincing win against the Stewart's Melville development team early in November, we began to understand the importance of teamwork over individual play. This shift in mindset allowed us to secure some satisfying victories against Strathallan, Howe of Fife, and North Berwick. These successes set us up well for the 7s season, which kicked off with our trip to Sedbergh.

Although the final outcome of that trip didn't match our expectations, we learned vital lessons and played some excellent rugby, all while fostering a tangible team spirit among the boys. Building on what we learned in Sedbergh, we advanced to the Cup final of the Glasgow 7s tournament, a significant achievement for us. We faced our old rivals, Watson's, in a fiercely contested final but, unfortunately, it wasn't our day.

This season has been filled with tough lessons and great fun, and we have undoubtedly grown as a team. We are continuing to familiarise ourselves with each other's playing styles, fostering trust. Many memories were forged; my personal favourites came from that fantastic trip to Sedbergh. We bonded as a team and learned, as Mr. Hose would say, how to let the ball work for us.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Hose and Mr. Richardson for expertly coaching us this season, providing inspiration, focus, and plenty of laughs along the way.

Murray M. (Form 2)

Form 3

Coaches: Mr Cameron Smith & Mr Russell Ferguson

This year, the Form 3 team has experienced a season filled with both challenges and triumphs. From injuries



to hard-fought victories against close rivals, we have truly been fortunate to play together as a team, guided by the experience and wisdom of our two coaches, Mr Cameron Smith and Mr Russell Ferguson.

Beginning with the integration of new players during pre-season training in August, continuing through to our final sessions before the summer term, we have improved and developed strong team bonds. As Henry Ford once said, 'The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing.' This sentiment resonates with our 2024–2025 season; we have learned to embrace our mistakes and grow from them. Moving forward to next year, we expect an increase in competitiveness that will test our resilience and determination.

One of our toughest challenges has been the cross-year match against the U16s. While they ultimately emerged victorious, we delivered a performance that we can all take pride in, showcasing our continual growth and passion for the game.

As the season drew to a close, we transitioned from the traditional 15-a-side format to the fast-paced and thrilling world of rugby 7s. With multiple tournaments approaching, our team eagerly dove into training, dusting off our 7s skills for the first time in over a year. We got off to a fantastic start, reaching the Cup final in the Glasgow Academy tournament, where we narrowly lost to Stewart's Melville in a challenging match. The following week, we boasted an unbeaten run at Merchiston, winning the Shield and maintaining a clean sheet in both the semi-final and final.



To cap off our U15 season, we celebrated another victory in the Shield, highlighted by a rare and spectacular try from our very own Finlay J., in what was one of our best performances to date. Acknowledging the immense effort of our players, we also recognise that none of this year's achievements would have been possible without the time and dedication of our two coaches.

On behalf of the entire squad, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Mr Smith and Mr Ferguson for their patience and commitment in teaching us invaluable lessons that will benefit us both on and off the pitch.

Olly C. (Form III)

U16

Coaches: Mr Ranald Baird & Gavin Blackburn

The U16 squad began the season with high hopes and strong ambitions, buoyed by impressive numbers across both squads and a remarkable work ethic. A productive pre-season helped prepare the boys to hit the ground running, and a thrilling pre-season match, where we narrowly lost 5–12 to Stewart's Melville, indicated that we would be competitive throughout the season.

Nic D. (Form V) was appointed captain of the A team for the season, and he did an outstanding job—leading by example, demonstrating powerful carries and aggressive defence. The Conference proved to be highly competitive, with the team winning three matches and losing three. A narrow victory against Edinburgh Academy set a positive tone for the Conference, followed by two

more wins: 29–7 away at Fettes and 22–11 at home against Merchiston. In the match against Merchiston, the team delivered what was arguably their best performance of the season in the second half, taking command of the game and playing with excellent tempo. Despite three losses, the squad was involved in several gripping matches that could have swung either way, falling narrowly short against Stewart's Melville College (17–19) and enduring a high-scoring battle against Strathallan (41–59).

The Cup campaign kicked off with a strong 38–5 victory over Loretto School. However, a disappointing performance against a talented Linlithgow Academy side led to the team's exit from the Cup and a shift to the Shield competition. Though not the desired outcome, this presented an exciting opportunity to build a run of victories. A challenging quarter-final draw saw the team face Glenalmond College at home. Once again, the boys displayed remarkable resilience, grit, and determination, defeating strong opposition 17–12 to advance to the semi-final. Following a convincing 49–19 win against Fettes, the team earned the right to compete against Edinburgh Academy in the Shield final at the Hive Stadium, Murrayfield. This was a fantastic occasion for the boys and a well-deserved reward for all their hard work. Unfortunately, the team struggled to find their rhythm on the day and, despite a valiant effort in the final moments, fell short with a score of 22–29.

The B team demonstrated themselves to be a dedicated group eager to improve and develop into a formidable side. Throughout the season, they secured impressive victories against George Watson's, Stewart's Melville, and Strathallan, showcasing disciplined structure and attacking flair.

As the season drew to a close, the squad embraced 7s season, including an overnight trip to participate in the Sedburgh 7s, testing



their skills against the talent from the north of England. They finished on a high note, winning the final tournament of the season at George Heriot's, defeating George Watson's in the group stage, and securing a significant victory in the final against the High School of Dundee.

It was a pleasure to see Max G. (Form IV) playing at centre and Max M. (Form IV) at scrum-half being selected to train with and represent the Caledonia region.

This squad has shown individual talent and a commendable ability to function cohesively as a team. There's no doubt that next year's senior rugby squad is in capable hands with this group of players moving forward.

Ranald Baird

2nd XV

Coach: Doug Smith

Building on the groundwork laid last season and a very successful training week in the French Alps, the boys were well prepared for this season. A strong core group from the 2023–24 season carried over, and their experience and maturity helped to foster a strong team spirit.

A record of 12 matches played, with 8 wins and 4 losses, speaks volumes about the effort the boys put in. While we faced a couple of significant defeats against Merchiston and Strathallan, our performances against Watson's, Stewart's Melville, and Edinburgh Academy were outstanding.

As was the case last season, our opening game against Stewart's Melville was fiercely contested, ultimately ending in a narrow loss. The boys dominated in terms

of play, however, only allowing Stewart's Melville into the game due to indiscipline, which was largely due to first-game enthusiasm. The subsequent match against Watson's showcased the true capabilities of the team, resulting in a great win. This was further bolstered by comprehensive Conference victories over Edinburgh Academy, Watson's, and Stewart's Melville. Friendly trips to Glasgow Academy and Marr College resulted in another set of strong performances and significant victories.

While all the boys gave their best throughout the season, a few standout performers deserve recognition: Jack R. (Form VI) emerged as a more-than-valuable team member by being a regular at training, consistently making ground in attack, and exhibiting real aggression in defence. Fred R.'s (Form VI) skills and continual desire to improve provided the team with stability, earning him several call-ups to the 1st XV. Robert M. (Form VI) improved with each game, becoming a more formidable attacking threat as the season progressed. Nonetheless, the undisputed standout player for the 2nd XV was Riley B.-W. (Form VI)—his speed put us on the offensive, while his strength and aggression in defence defied his size, and he often overpowered much larger opponents. Riley's coachability and positive attitude were commendable.

In conclusion, the 2024–25 season has been fantastic, largely due to the character of the boys. This has, by far, been the most enjoyable group I've coached to date.

Doug Smith



Form 1



U16 B



U16 A



Junior 1



2nd XV



Form 1B



Girls U14



Form 3A



Form 2



Girls Seniors



Junior 2



Form 3B

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CAPTAIN'S ROUNDUP

Looking back on this season as captain of the 1st XV, it has been a privilege and honour to have been part of such an amazing team, to have led this talented group who've not only given everything on the pitch but have also always shown character off it. I'll always carry memories of this year with me; it was an experience that filled me with an immense sense of pride and responsibility. It has been a tough season, full of many challenges, and one in which we did not always get the results we wanted. Even when the odds were against us, however, we showed perseverance and resilience, and we always came back with a strong determination to give our best shot at the next game. We trained hard, laughed and supported one another throughout the year, creating bonds and moments that will stay with us throughout our lives.

Coming into a new season, there is always a bit of pressure. Expectations are high and, after an amazing pre-season experience, the passion in the squad was huge—especially at a school with such a proud rugby status. Every training session, every gym circuit, every freezing Tuesday and Thursday practice on near-frozen pitches—and every Saturday, a new challenge to look forward to.

The early part of the season saw us building momentum with two highly competitive pre-season games; these were great challenges to prepare us for the season ahead. We started powerfully, finding a good rhythm quickly, with the forwards laying a foundation and the backs moving

with a lot of flair. Defence and discipline became a big topic of focus for us all, and conditioning and tackling were drilled into us at every session until we improved. Our line speed, breakdown intensity, and discipline set the tone for how we wanted to play.

There were a few fixtures that turned out to be emotional rollercoasters; playing Edinburgh Academy was one of those games (which the boys and I have been trying our hardest to forget about ever since). The game against Fettes College was one of our strongest displays of skill and confidence, and it was definitely some of the most fun we had on the pitch. The leavers' games were a definite highlight for a lot of the players, and our final 15s match against



Morrison's Academy was an impressive performance: both the 1st and 2nd XV players enjoyed the chance to play together for one last time. It was an emotional end to years of weekly performances and cold Saturday morning fixtures for this group of boys.

Beyond the results, this season was about something bigger. Being captain, and being a part of this squad, was not just about leading, but about fostering a sense of unity. We became a team that, week after week, gave our all, regardless of the outcome. The younger boys watching from the touchline, the pride in the badge, the chance to represent something more than just ourselves: these are the things that we will remember long after the final games. This journey has been bigger than any win because of the people in this squad and all of the lessons learned together. I'm incredibly proud of what we achieved together. I hope the spirit and traditions we have all created will continue through the younger teams and keep getting stronger.

I want to say a massive thank you to our coaches—for pushing us, challenging us, and believing in us, and especially to Mr Don Caskie, Mr Stevie Wilson, Mr Niall Gallagher, Mr Bob McKillop and to the physios who patched us up week after week. To our supporters and parents who showed up rain or shine, and to every single player in this squad—you made my job as captain one of the easiest and most rewarding roles I have ever had.

As we hang up the boots for the final time at school level, we can be proud knowing we gave it everything we had. Thank you for the years, boys. It's been something special.

*Troye A.
(Captain of the 1st XV, Form VI)*

U18 SEVENS

This year's 7s season saw an improvement in results following our 15s season. We began the season with a strong group stage performance in the North of England Sevens, winning all four games. Sadly, we were matched against a strong Kirkham side who bested us in the quarter-final, but this experience gave us a solid base for the upcoming tournaments.

Following this, we went to Morrison's Academy where, as reigning champions, we looked to retain and build on previous performances in this tournament. We began with two comfortable wins in the group stage, before defeating Strathallan in the semi-finals and going on to beat the High School of Dundee in the final, thus keeping the trophy in Dollar's hands.

With the confidence of that trophy win behind us, we came into the Watson's tournament with high expectations. Once again, we went unbeaten in the group stage. Following two impressive results, we moved on to the semi-finals against George Watson's who had beaten us in 15s twice previously. We managed to outshine them in this game, however, and proceeded into the final against Merchiston. Sadly, in that match, we suffered our first loss (in Scotland) of the 7s season.

Next came the Heriot's tournament, and we all felt that we had something to prove after our narrow defeat in the previous game. We kept up our group stage unbeaten streak, once again beating George Watson's before proceeding to the semi-finals against Stewart's Melville. This was our first meeting against a team that had played well in many earlier tournaments. We knew it would be a tough match, but we managed to pull through and beat them with a comfortable points difference. We then moved on to the final against the High School of Dundee. Sadly, the fatigue caused by playing so many tournaments in such a short time finally got to us, and we did not play to the best of our ability. We were narrowly beaten. Hard work lay ahead, as we faced the following week's training in preparation for Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s tournament.

When the day arrived to travel south, we felt ready. We had been building towards this trip all season, and now was the time to put it all together. Unfortunately, we were put in a group with some very strong sides including King's Worcester and Jumeirah English Speaking School (JESS), visiting all the way from Dubai. Our first game against King's was our hardest, and they managed to secure a win against us. This made it unlikely that we would get through to the elimination rounds. Since this match would be the final game of schoolboy rugby for many of us, we simply decided that we wouldn't let it affect us: we wouldn't let it bring down our morale. As a result, we went on to beat Leicester Grammar School with a very good score and we looked forward to our final game against the formidable JESS. We managed to look past their strong history and beat them with strong performances from all players, finishing off the season with a convincing win over a strong team.

Ollie F. (Captain of U18 7s, Form VI)

CALEDONIA U18s

Rugby has been at the heart of my school journey, shaping my character both on and off the pitch. My dedication to the sport has let me progress through various levels of competition—refining my skills, resilience, and tactical awareness along the way.

Representing Caledonia U18 at the District level has been a large part of my rugby routine. I have trained three times a week and competed in summer District and January games, constantly pushing myself to improve. This led to my selection for the Glasgow Warriors team. My experience with Glasgow Warriors, training and playing at a high level, has further developed my game, preparing me for the challenges ahead.

A particularly proud moment in my rugby career was being part of the side that won the 1872 Glasgow Warriors U18 Cup, an achievement that reinforced my commitment to teamwork, discipline, and excellence. My involvement in the Scotland U18 Development Camp in Ireland during the summer of 2024 allowed me to expand my understanding of the game, competing alongside some of the country's most promising talents. We trained with U18 teams from Ireland, Italy and Wales, and we had a day's training with each of the teams and their coaching squad. The training week ended with a tournament, where each side played the others in 30-minute games. This proved to be a great learning experience, exposing me to a range of coaching techniques.

Scotland U18 squad training has further elevated my performance; I undertook intensive sessions every weekend for eight weeks at the Oriam or the Hive, all on top of regular midweek training sessions. I was involved in a number of development games as part of the squad; we played against Newcastle Falcons U18 team and were victorious. This rigorous schedule sharpened my technical abilities, but it also strengthened my mentality and adaptability as a player. I was placed on standby for the Scotland U18 squad for the Six Nations, which I see as testament to my perseverance and ongoing drive to reach the highest level.

Through all of these experiences, I have developed a profound appreciation for the values of rugby—commitment, leadership, teamwork, and discipline. I am eager to continue my growth in the sport, embracing new challenges and opportunities that will allow me to refine my game further. Whether on the field or in training, I am always seeking ways to push beyond my limits and contribute meaningfully to my team.

Max G. (Form VI)

GIRLS RUGBY: A New Era

I was very excited to see Girls' Rugby introduced as a new addition to the co-curricular offerings this session, and I signed up straight away, attending all after school and lunchtime sessions (three times a week). I have also enjoyed the Strength and Conditioning sessions that took place at lunchtime on Tuesdays. This new club has given me so many opportunities—I soon found myself playing for the Scottish Regionals; this involved trialling for the East U18 regional team and then taking part in a performance camp when I was selected. My short time playing with and against so many other talented young women taught me a great deal about rugby itself, including the importance of a strong mentality and an aggressive approach. Playing for East U18 has also helped me to identify the key areas I need to work on.

Recently our U18 girls teamed up with Stirling County, forming a combined squad that would let us take on a touring team from Ontario, Canada. Though the game ended in a loss, it was an important learning opportunity for all of us—and a key experience for the Dollar girls who had never played in a 15-a-side game before. That match marked the many games (and wins!) to come. At Dollar, we have focused initially on 7s play, but we are always looking for chances to expand and encouraging the development of 15s rugby.

Our U14s have also shown enormous growth. Many of these girls began with little to no experience, and they are now playing full-contact games, learning and developing their skills each practice. Their first game against Alva Academy resulted in a well-deserved win, and they learned much about their strengths and weaknesses following a loss to Wallace High. They have also had the opportunity to also attend two rugby festivals at Goldenacre in Edinburgh, and they earned a coveted place at the famous Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens tournament.

I am sure that we are seeing just the beginning of a strong and healthy future for Girls' Rugby at Dollar Academy. Come and give rugby a go: it may be your chance to discover and develop a hidden talent! A huge thank you to our coaches, Mrs Verity Smith and Gavin Blackburn, for their dedication and time spent helping us grow and succeed as a team.

Amy R. (Form V)



Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens

Our U14s Girls' Rugby team made the trip to London to be the first-ever Dollar girls' rugby team to participate in the prestigious Rosslyn Park National Sevens tournament. Teams travel from across the world to play together at this tournament, and we were very privileged to be a part of it all. We were a very new team, but we had great spirit, determination and enthusiasm for what was to come.

We played three matches against Clifton College, Greys Court College and Jumeirah English-Speaking School (JESS). The games were challenging, but all the girls worked very hard and represented Dollar with real pride. We scored some tries, we conceded some tries; we tackled, we got tackled; we ran and, at times, we were outrun...but, most of all, we enjoyed playing rugby and representing Dollar at this world-renowned event. A big thank you to our coaches, Mrs Smith and Gavin Blackburn, for their support and guidance throughout the tournament. We have learned so much from this experience: about the game and about ourselves, and we look forward to next season!

Erin S. (Form III)





FOOTBALL

The 2024–25 season represented a fresh start for the senior boys' football team; several of last year's players had moved on, creating space for the remaining players to become more influential members of the squad; we were also delighted to welcome in some fresh faces.

In early October, we travelled to St Andrews to face St Leonards School for the opening SISFA Cup fixture. The blustery conditions allied to the tight dimensions of the pitch made it difficult for flowing football to be played, and neither side could gain a foothold in the match. This was reflected in the scoreline, as our boys took the lead twice, only to be pegged back—before they eventually emerged victorious by three goals to two, with two of the goals coming from Hal S. (Form V) and the other from Oli R. (Form V).

An identical scoring sequence and result followed in our next tie at home against Glenalmond in early December, but we played with far more purpose and control against trickier opposition. Four of the goals came in the first half; both of ours came from Finlay W. (Form V), including one from

the penalty spot. Finn V. (Form VI) scored the winner early in the second half to make it two wins from two.

We played our final two group matches in the same week in February, the first of which was a trip to Strathallan resulting in a fine 5–1 win in horrendous conditions. Four of the goals came from Hal, with Finn scoring the other. This set us up for the group decider against Stewart's Melville at Newfield. After a nervy start, Hal again showed how clinical he was in front of goal to give us the lead. The goal settled us, and we competed well against strong opponents, eventually drawing 3–3 (another from Hal and one from Finn), but we finished second in the group on goal difference.

This meant a difficult tie away to a strong George Watson's side in the quarter-finals, and in the first half we were very much second best, with Max O. (Form IV) and his back four keeping us in the tie. We were far more composed in the second half, and this improvement was underlined by two goals from Hal—the second of which was a sensational strike—with Watson's scoring a late consolation.

A home semi-final against St

Aloysius was our reward; it was Hal who, again, opened the scoring after springing the opposition offside trap with a finely timed run and finish. Ahead at the interval on our home pitch, we could see the final in our sights but, alas, it was not to be; St Aloysius scored two goals in quick succession to take the initiative away from us and, try as we might, we could not quite find the equaliser. It was the only time in the whole Cup run that we were behind, and it was our only defeat. It was a hard one to take, but our boys can hold their heads up high. They have been a credit to themselves and to the school throughout the campaign.

Sadly, we must say goodbye to leavers Finn V., Bobby S., Aaryn M. and captain Jamie O. (all Form VI), who led the side with distinction. We wish them all the very best for the future.

Paul Mckay





BASKETBALL

The 2024–25 basketball season has really been different to any other season for our Basketball team.

We began this season with higher hopes than ever before, believing this could be the year we truly put Dollar Academy on the basketball map. With several key players entering their final year, the squad had both the experience and skillset to make something special happen. As captain of the squad, I felt privileged to have this opportunity to win some games and put some high scores up. And that is exactly what we did.

We opened the season with five dominant victories, setting the tone early. Two of those wins came in the opening rounds of the Scottish Cup. We cruised past Beath High School by 56 points in what became the first 100-point game in Dollar Academy's history. That was quickly followed by another confident performance against Queen Anne High School, establishing us as serious contenders in the competition.

The next round brought a tough draw: Falkirk and Wallace High, both recent former winners. On paper, it looked like the end of the road, but we refused to adopt that mindset. Falkirk's squad was filled with national-level players, but we came out firing and we found ourselves racing to a 12-point lead in the first quarter. What they expected to be a routine win quickly turned into a battle. Though they did eventually edge ahead, I felt unmatched pride in our team's performance. Going toe-to-toe against a team of that calibre was something we could not have dreamt of three years ago. And Falkirk then went on to win the Scottish Cup.

On that note, I must offer a tremendous note of thanks and commendation to Mr Rob Florence. Without him, Dollar Basketball might never have even begun. His commitment and patience have been unmatched these past few years, and he has truly and singlehandedly transformed this squad.

This was clear again in our away game against Gordonstoun, another well-drilled and experienced side. After a shaky start, Mr Florence helped us regroup, and we



tied the game by halftime. Despite narrowly losing by just two points in a tense final quarter, the team's resilience and self-belief were on full display once more.

We closed the season with 8 wins and 4 losses: the best win percentage in Dollar's basketball history. It is a record I am proud of, and I have no doubt that Mario P. S. (Form V), who will be taking over as captain next year, will raise this high bar still higher.

A special mention must go to our first-ever U15 team, who also had an outstanding season. Under Aidan's leadership, they showed incredible determination to beat former Scottish Cup champions, Falkirk and Larbert High, by single-point margins. Their efforts point further to a bright future for Dollar basketball.

But even these results fall short in demonstrating the quality of this year's squad. We kept persistently chasing the goal of being the best team possible, whilst having fun and enjoying just playing basketball with our friends—and I really think that's all that matters.

Peter D. (Form VI)



NETBALL

We were very excited when a Netball Club started up at the beginning of this session (for the first time in recent memory), and it has been great to see so many girls taking to the sport. We have beginners all the way up through girls who play at District level; this really is a club for all abilities. The girls' commitment—especially during a Wednesday lunch!—has clearly paid off, as demonstrated by their new skills and improvements in their play. They are now using the space on court, reading the game and developing more technical skills such as footwork (which can catch a lot of people out!).

Dollar recently began playing matches against other schools, which always makes playing a sport more exciting. These games provide an opportunity to demonstrate the skills we have learned in training, while also facing new competition, sometimes in a new environment.

The Form I–III team were successful in their two games against Auchterarder High School, coming away with a well-earned win each time. After playing them the first time around, the girls were able to reflect on what they did well and what they could improve upon. They applied these lessons in their second game, when Auchterarder brought in a stronger squad—resulting in a more challenging game for Dollar. The girls did very well despite this, smoothly linking up and moving the ball up the court, with the shooters triumphant in the shooting circle. Again, their dedication and hard



work in training had clearly paid off.

The senior team, made up of girls from Form III–V, were also successful in their first game that term against Queen Victoria School. Dollar came away with a nail-biting win achieved with one goal, doing very well against a team who had clearly played together regularly. From countless turnovers and interceptions from defence, we were able to bring the ball up the court and capitalise on these opportunities. Even within the game, during the breaks we looked back upon areas we could have improved upon and focused on refining these particular skills in the subsequent quarters of the game.

Taking a moment to reflect on Netball Club this year has made me grateful and proud of how far this newly formed club has come. With



the support of Mrs Emma Poole and Mrs Claire Newham, we are now representing Dollar in another girls' sport. As always, netball is open to anyone who wants to try something new. All levels are welcome, from beginners to more experienced players.

The progress, the friendships and the memories made, on and off the court, through Netball Club have been wonderful, and these will undoubtedly carry on beyond netball. What has been achieved since September—including our undefeated record—makes me feel encouraged about the future of this great sport at Dollar. With more trainings and matches on the horizon, I'm sure we are all excited for netball's future—and for all the rewards, competition, and smiles that will come with it.

Lola D. (Form V)



SSSA DUAL SLALOM SKIING

Three ski teams competed in the qualifying slalom races at Polmont in October (one senior team and two junior teams). The pupils skied well with some great racing throughout the day. We also welcomed some new recruits to the group: Freya D., Alexander H., Tom L. and Thomas A. (all Form I). Two of the teams qualified for the finals after some tough races.

In the final at Hillend on 5 November, the teams raced against schools from across Scotland. Congratulations to the senior team—consisting of Fin P., Matt R.-D. (both Form VI) Lexi M. and Christian S.-W. (both Form V)— who blasted their way to third in Scotland, picking up bronze medals. Our S1–3 team, consisting of Heidi N., Seb R.-D., Craig M. (all Form III) and Will S. (Form II) finished third in their pool. This was a great day out for all involved.

Milo MacDermot





STRATHEARN SCHOOLS CLIMBING COMPETITION

For the second consecutive year, a group of climbers (from Form I–V) represented Dollar Academy at the Strathearn Schools Climbing Competition, held at Morrison's Academy in March. Dollar had what seemed to be the largest team at the event this year; 21 pupils competed across every age category (S1–2, S3–4, and S5–6).

This bouldering competition featured problems set across both the bouldering room and the main climbing wall at Morrison's, providing for a wide range of challenges. Each problem tested physical strength and problem-solving skills. Sometimes climbers had to figure out an awkward sequence of moves; sometimes they just needed the strength to hang on to the end; and some climbs looked harder than they actually were. Everyone was awarded a score for each problem, depending on how many attempts it took to complete the problem or, in some cases, simply how long they lasted! Some of the problems were certainly tricky.

Although the competition was challenging, everyone showed great determination and teamwork throughout the evening. We were all delighted when Natalie N. (Form III) came 2nd in the S3-4 category, beating out many strong climbers. A huge thanks must be extended to Morrison's Academy for organising such a fun event, and to Mrs Heather Moore, Mrs Sus Currie and Mr David Chant who took the Dollar climbing team to Crieff. Everyone had a fantastic time pushing themselves and trying something new. It was a great experience, and we can't wait to go back next year.

Jess K. (Form II)



EQUESTRIAN

The Dollar equestrian team has had another outstanding year, demonstrating our riders' talent and dedication to the sport. Our team consists of riders of all abilities and ages, ranging from those competing at an international level (in disciplines such as showjumping, dressage, and eventing) to those who are just beginning their equestrian journeys.

The first equestrian competition of the season was the Strathallan School Showjumping Competitions held at Highfield at Howe Equestrian Centre. Many Dollar teams competed in the various classes, and everyone delivered exceptional performances against the other schools, riding clubs and pony clubs. Beginning the day on a strong note, Naomi A. (Form I) placed 2nd in the 50cm. Then the team consisting of Naomi and Rosie B. (Form I) impressively placed 1st in the 70cm class, against over 90 competitors. In the 85cm, the team of Chloe M. (Form IV), Neve W. (Form V) and Annina L. (Form III) brought home a very respectable 3rd place and, to conclude a successful day, the team comprising Genevieve H. (Form III), Izzy H. (IV), Lucy W (Form VI) and your author (Anna B.) achieved 1st place in the final 1m class. I finished 1st individually, Genevieve took 4th and Izzy took 5th.

The Dollar riders came together again for the annual Strathallan Scottish Schools Equestrian Championships on 16 March, which also incorporated qualifiers for the National Schools Equestrian Association (NSEA) National Championships 2025. With over 20 different schools competing, the day kicked off with Rosie collecting an individual 6th-place rosette in the 70cm. The success continued with the 90cm team of Neve, Chloe, Annina and Noor S. (Form VI) achieving 2nd place, piped to the post by the hosts. There were notable individual successes throughout the day, too. Lucy won the 1.10m, Annina came 3rd in the novice dressage class and Naomi placed 5th. Our dressage team of Annina, Naomi and Abi C. (Form II) placed 1st in the dressage, finishing with a total of 201.9 points, to conclude an outstanding season for our equestrian team.

I have been honoured to captain this year's equestrian team, and I have enjoyed watching my talented and ambitious peers work together with their horses and teammates to achieve amazing results. Their dedication, sportsmanship and passion for the sport have been truly inspiring. I now step back to watch from the sidelines, and I know the team continue to flourish. I hope Dollar will soon host its own event; the future of equestrianism at Dollar is very exciting.

Anna B. (Form VI)





CURLING

This season, the curling team have been very successful in competition, coming second in the Stirling Schools league and coming second in the Crabbie Trophy Low Road final.

The team competed in the Stirling Schools league in the first term. We were represented by many curlers representing a range of experience. The team had two very good results, including a confident win over McLaren High School; they also managed to edge out a win against Stirling High.

In late December the team of Lukas M. (Form II), Louise N. and Layla S. (both Form III) and Robyn M. (Junior 1) went to the Crabbie Cup in Edinburgh. In the group stages, they enjoyed a good win over George Heriot's School and tight losses to Elgin High School and George Watson's College. However, we did enough to secure a place in the Low Road final and, ultimately, we were the last independent school in the competition. Given that we were also the youngest team on the ice, this result was a positive boost for all of us.

We were unfortunate in losing two very close games at the qualifiers for the Scottish Schools, but at the time

of writing, we are preparing for the Hay Trophy in Perth, another competition taking place over two days.

The Curling Club has regularly seen 20 curlers on the ice on any given Tuesday, with pupils ranging from Junior 1 up through Form V. We are grateful for all the support from Mr Alastair McConnell, Mr Andrew McGlen, Mr David Chant and, of course, from Dottie, Debbie and Derek, our club coaches.

School curling will start again in September, and anyone is very welcome to come along and give this Scottish sport a try.

Lukas M. (Form II)

Dollar Academy Curlers Beyond School

In the 2024–25 season, Lukas M. (Form II) and Douglas B. (Form I) were selected for the Scottish Curling U14 Academy Programme, which provides access to high-performance coaching at the National Academy in Stirling. Over thirty U14 curlers applied for the Academy Programme and only twelve are selected (six boys and six girls). Both Dollar boys competed in the first-ever Scottish U14 Mixed Doubles Championships; Douglas won this

competition and Lukas finished 2nd overall.

Lukas plays lead in Team Cowie, the team that won two of the Scottish Curling U14 Slams (High Road); they also won the overall Order of Merit for the season. Douglas skips Team Brown, with Louise N. (Form III) playing vice-skip. Team Brown won two of the Scottish Curling U14 Slams (Low Road) and finished 6th overall on the Order of Merit for the season. During the final U14 event of the season in Kinross, Team Brown scored an 8-ender, when all 8 stones count when the end is finished—a very rare occurrence.

Louise also skipped the Kinross Juniors team at the U15 Funspiel in Perth, finishing 6th overall. Douglas skipped Team Asham at the U13 Funspiel in Perth, winning all four games and taking home the trophy. He also skipped the Kinross Juniors team at the Loofie Bonspiel (Cupar Province) and won the competition.

Douglas B. (Form I)

GYMNASTICS AND DANCE DISPLAY: A Celebration of Talent and Community

Dollar Academy's Gymnastics and Dance Display has had a positive impact on my experience at the school, from my very first display as a Junior School pupil to the most recent event on 6 March 2025. It's an event I always look forward to, where I can share my love for dance and gymnastics with others in a lively and supportive setting.

The event brings together students from across all year groups, from the youngest in the Junior School to those in Form VI, creating a sense of community and excitement. The variety of performances is what makes the display so special. Dance styles range from ballet to jazz to Acro, and the gymnasts (along with Mrs Verity Smith's renowned vaulting group) bring an extra level of excitement and energy to the show. This year's display was particularly memorable, with everything from Spice Girls-themed performances to gymnastics floor routines, and even a lively Form IV and Form V cheerleading squad performing 'Thunderstruck' to bring the event to a rousing close.

But beyond the incredible performances, what truly makes the Gymnastics and Dance Display special are the friendships formed. It's not just about the routines; it's about meeting new friends from different year groups and connecting through a shared love of movement and performance. Seeing the younger students admire the older performers reminds me of how I felt when I first started, when I was so inspired by the older pupils I had met.

The supportive atmosphere is



a great highlight of the event. Everyone cheers each other on, regardless of experience or skill level. The display truly welcomes all, with a wide range of abilities showcased, from beginners to more advanced performers. Everyone's contribution is valued.

Months of hard work go into preparing for the show, with rehearsals every Tuesday and Thursday lunchtime. The performers put in countless hours, practising and refining their routines to ensure the best possible performances. A huge part of the success of the display is due to Mrs Smith, whose time, effort,

and expertise help to shape a fantastic display year after year. She spends countless hours behind the scenes, organising rehearsals, perfecting routines, making sure everything runs smoothly. If you're thinking about getting involved, I would highly recommend it. The Gymnastics and Dance Display is not only a chance to develop your skills, it also lets you join a fun and welcoming community. It's given me some unforgettable experiences that I'll always treasure.

Lucy L. (Form V)



ULTIMATE FRISBEE CLUB

The Form VI Ultimate Frisbee Club sent a team to Dublin over the Easter break to compete in the Irish Schools Ultimate Frisbee Championships at the new Sport Ireland Institute. The pupils played teams from across Ireland, and some great performances on the day meant that we finished the tournament in a very respectable 6th place.

On the second day, we were hosted by the current Irish school champions, Santa Sabina College. We spent a great day training and playing games at their school, an experience that gave us the chance to test ourselves against some of the best young female players in Ireland.

A great time was had by all and a huge thank you must go to Irish Youth Ultimate for hosting us, as well as to the Dollar team for playing hard and for being superb fun from start to finish.

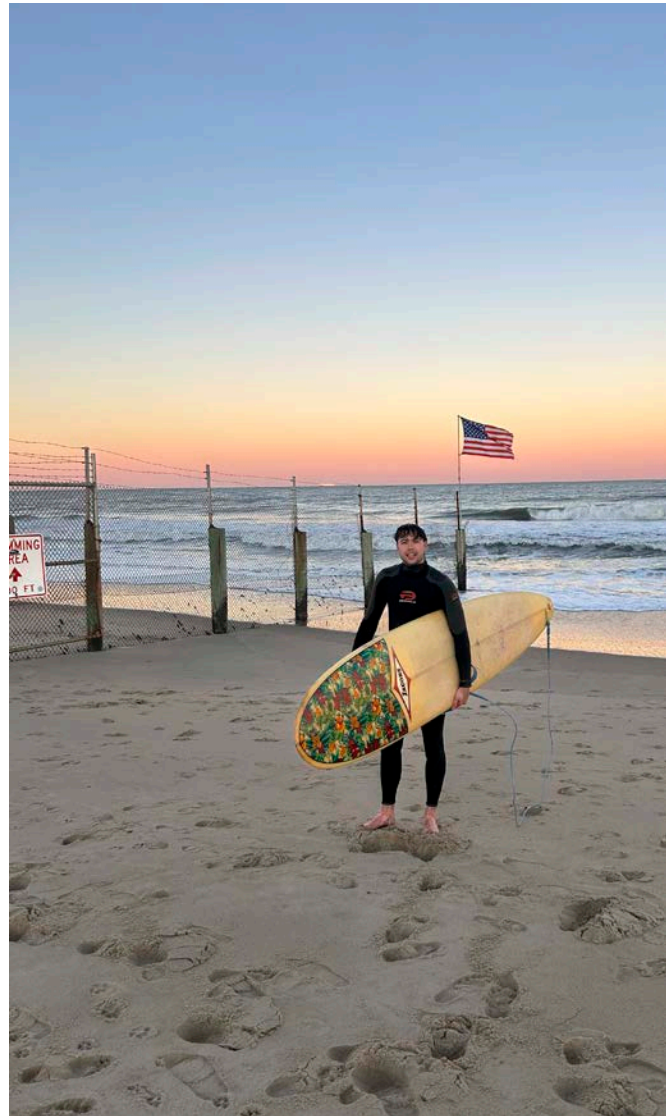
Neil McEwan

ADVENTURES FROM NORTH AMERICA: ST ANDREWS AND THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

It's 17.41 on Friday 20 September. Just outside Fredericksburg, Virginia, gorgeous shades of pink and orange fill the evening sky as I sit behind the wheel of a behemoth Ford F-150 pickup truck. With 480 horsepower under my right foot, we (my friends, Jack and Thomas, and I) are rumbling along the winding country roads towards the silhouetted ridges of the Shenandoah Mountains that border West Virginia. We're heading up into the mountains, where we'll be camping by a creek for the night, before heading to a nearby farm at dawn to film a class project. Secured in the truck's cargo bed is nearly \$20,000 of cinema equipment (rented from the university at no cost at all) for the project. We joke about whether we'll be eaten by bears before sunrise. Considering the amount of Wendy's and Chick-fil-A I had eaten earlier, I would surely be the first to go. But let me explain just how on earth I came to be driving through Shenandoah National Park with two new close friends when, just six months before, I had only ever dreamed of visiting the United States, let alone studying there.

I had applied to St Andrews' study abroad programme on one hell of a whim. I had never expected to be accepted anywhere, let alone to one of the oldest universities of the country—the institution attended by both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. After several essays, interview rounds, an acceptance letter (and some laborious visa admin), I found myself outside Richmond Airport, North Virginia in mid-August. Despite being 4,000 miles away from home across a very big ocean, the experience was only briefly daunting. Within an hour, I had met an Uber driver who offered me a round of golf at Pinehurst with him and his wife. Upon arriving on campus, I met a dozen or so fellow hallmates who would very quickly become my close friends. And—the icing on the cake—as I queued for my student ID card, the dulcet tones of a Fife accent cut sharply through the Virginian voices surrounding me. Wheeling round, I realised I had travelled all of this way to be joined by none other than a very good friend (and St Andrews classmate) from Leven. By the end of my first day, I had already learned a great lesson: the world really is very small, and you can never escape Fife.

But this was only the first of many lessons learned in the States. In no time, I was orientated (oriented,



Americans would say) and found myself starting classes. Most reserved Europeans would be mortified by the patriotism, the 'school spirit' on display in many American college campuses, unmatched by even the most exuberant Glaswegian subway-goer. One entire day of orientation involved learning the school songs and chants for the football games, while another began with a cheerleader display welcoming freshmen and exchange students. But all jokes aside, this loyalty and passion for an educational environment was enlightening. Compared to the UK, there was a heightened sense of belonging and, at William and Mary, you swiftly became part of 'The Tribe'. This has the effect of elevating your peers to the level of family, and the athletes of your school become your superheroes. At first, I found it cringe-worthy, outspoken and unfamiliar; but you soon realise that this is because it is a sincere display of appreciation for the privilege of one's education—something we sometimes lack or take for granted back home.

Embracing American culture took many forms, both within and outside of the classroom. In terms of academics, the classes I took (as an English Literature and Business Management undergraduate) completely redefined how I perceived my degree. Learning about American crime fiction greats such as Patricia Highsmith and Dashiell Hammett in English modules was completely fresh and unique compared to what I was used to at St Andrews. In my Advertising and Digital Marketing module, we explored the future of marketing and artificial intelligence, which proved to be one of the most interesting and thought-provoking courses I've ever taken. This same module required us to film a class project, hence why we found ourselves driving a pickup to Shenandoah. The whole educational approach was far more modern, hands-on and real-world orientated, demanding significantly more project work and peer collaboration. This was refreshing in comparison to St Andrews' more traditional, theoretical approaches and end-of-year examinations.

The College's facilities, too, were unrivalled. As mentioned, the library offered free rentals of state-of-the-art computers, cameras, recording and sound equipment, and it had numerous spaces for hire. There are eight soundproof recording studios in the library basement which can be used for podcasting, music recording, or photo and video editing. There are dedicated green-screen rooms and radio broadcasting suites. Every computer is an Apple Mac, with the latest software installed to provide students with as much creative freedom as possible, no matter what they are studying. But the university offers more than just a wealth of material facilities. Student services and healthcare were eye opening. Appointments could be made in seconds for everything from a GP appointment to acupuncture, dog yoga to counselling, or even nutritionist services. This holistic approach to nurturing student life—in the classroom, but also emotionally and physically—was an illuminating difference to student life back home (where 'nutritionist services' might consist of a 3am kebab shop discussion regarding whether to get the curry sauce or not).

Outwith the classroom, culture also took a great number of new forms. I never thought I would take part in Greek life at an American university, but my choice to join a fraternity yielded many treasured experiences—not least, I was embraced by yet another family. The resemblance of that world to some of my favourite movies—*Superbad*, *22 Jump Street*, *Bad Neighbours* and *Project X*—was quite frankly uncanny. Learning to line dance at Jason Aldean's bar in Nashville, surfing in Virginia Beach, enjoying a traditional American Thanksgiving (with a hand-picked turkey) are just a few of the many high points. I was introduced to a darty (day party), and I discovered that American Halloween celebrations are nothing short of phenomenal. The 2024 election was also in full swing, and it was, unsurprisingly, the source of some extremely tense discussions and much heated political debate. I had the chance to visit Washington DC just before the



presidential inauguration, a fascinating experience, and all of it broadened my understanding of American politics enormously.

Now, as I read back over this, I realise just how much I have omitted from my account of that time. This short summary offers just a few, fleeting snapshot impressions of my (brief) time in the United States. But I hope that this might be enough to inspire you to act upon that whimsical idea... you never know what might follow.

Jacob Timney (FP 2021)

A Happy Birthday to Hamish Brown (FP 1954)

The community of Dollar Academy, not least the many hillwalkers and mountaineers in its ranks, would like to extend a very happy birthday to Hamish Brown (FP 1954), who turned 90 in August. A writer, lecturer and photographer who specialises in mountain, outdoor and travel writing, *Hamish's Mountain Walk* was his first book. He has led a remarkable and adventurous life, and we are fortunate that he has written extensively about his wide-ranging experiences. His books include *The Last Hundred*; *Along the Fife Coastal Path*; *Chasing the Dream*; *Walking the Song*; *East of West*, *West of East*. His writing has drawn countless generations of adventurers into the Scottish hills and beyond.

Heather Moore

'An Influence and Inspiration to Many'

No book has had a greater influence on my life than *Hamish's Mountain Walk*. I bought it as a teenager in 1989 and read it in just two days. I had been ticking off Munros on family holidays for several years, but this book seemed to open up a whole new world of broader horizons for me. It describes the first-ever continuous (and self-propelled) round of the Munros in 1974. Unlike today's speed records, his journey was taken at a relatively leisurely pace, and the book is more a long love letter to the Scottish hills than a mere record of achievement. The possibilities seemed endless and my own Munro wanderings, alone or with friends, really took off. Completing the Munros over the next few years, poring over maps to plot routes and heading for the hills in all seasons and weathers gave me the best possible grounding for a lifetime of mountaineering; it instilled a deep love of Scotland's mountains which has been a bedrock for me ever since. Thank you, Hamish.

Over half a century Hamish has gone on to write many other books covering all aspects of the hills and walking, and he has produced several anthologies of others' writings. His *Poems of the Scottish Hills* collection sits on my bookcase next to his *Mountain Walk* and the later *Hamish's Groat's End Walk*. This second mammoth trek took in all the highest hills of England, Wales and Ireland, again much more of an exploration than the chasing of a goal.

Beyond Scotland, Hamish has travelled, climbed and walked widely and he has taken a special interest in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. He completed a three-month, end-to-end journey along the length of the range, described in *The Mountains Look on Marrakech*. When I and



Reasons for mountaineering are as varied as the participants and largely subjective. Analysis is of doubtful validity, I fear. Basically we do it for fun, or no doubt a Frenchman would express it better: it's a passion, a love-affair—and who would ask to justify love? To the unhooked it is just damn silly—but so is stamp collecting, sailing, or any activity done for pleasure. But the layman wants some understanding of what he regards as a dangerous activity, though I doubt if he can find it, any more than he can understand why a runner strains to achieve a four-minute mile.

There is a whole mixture of coloured pills: the lure of challenge and testing, the delight of achievement, the contact with our ancestral simplicity, the escape from a normal petty existence, the finding of values, of beauty, of vision. These are worth living for—and possibly dying for.

Hamish Brown (An extract from *Hamish's Mountain Walk*)

some Dollar colleagues visited Morocco to climb there some twenty years ago, he offered some invaluable advice.

Hamish's earliest Scottish hill-going was in his local Ochil Hills, just as that of later generations of Dollar pupils has been, often on Bronze Duke of Edinburgh expeditions. Later, while working at Braehead School in Fife, he went on to give pupils the best possible introduction to the hills. His *Mountain Walk* refers to many of these stravaigs in a more innocent time before modern guidelines and restrictions. Hamish has been and continues to be an influence on and inspiration to many.

Robert Durran (former Maths teacher)

WINTERS LONG AGO

Last time in the Dollar Museum at the top of the Burnside I was talking to a school prefect about something I'd enjoyed as a Dollar boy (1944–1952)—the 'Skating Halves'. He had never heard of them. (We decided their disappearance must be another manifestation of global warming.)

Fields beside the River Devon, known as the Deadwaters, were flooded in winter to make an extensive skating area, much enjoyed by staff, pupils, and town. There was a statutory right for pupils to have two Skating Halves each winter. I wonder when the last such took place. In those days we had winters.

Older folk tend to mention the winter of 1963 as being the most severe but the older old will recall the genuine worst, in 1947. Crowds of us would go by bus to the Alloa swimming baths on any Saturday when pitches were too frozen for playing on. My memory is of sitting upstairs in the bus and looking out over snowy fields on our level. The bus was going through a canyon cleared in drifts that deep. Roads were largely untreated and became compacted, to the extent that from our house on Muckhart Road I once skated down to collect the rolls for breakfast. (Once was enough; if skating down was fun, the uphill home was not.)

My most notorious misdemeanor at school came about one Saturday when pitches were frozen solid and rugger teams were sent to run up an Ochils' summit. I played regularly for the 2nd XV who, of course, were the whipping boys for the 1st XV. No love lost between us. I was a great wanderer in the Ochils so, on one occasion when thick mist came down, I was grabbed and told to show the way home. I knew I'd be hammered at rugger practice the following Tuesday (I was hooker), but it was worth it. The thugs of the 1st XV duly descended—to Blackford. (Weirdly, fifty years on, a garbled version of this was told to me; the person having no idea I was the culprit.)

Even then, I wondered at how little the school made of the Ochils presence and was astonished, later, to find that the Rector, Harry Bell, had been a life member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club. I did fall foul of Speedy Smith, our 2nd XV coach one Saturday. I woke to a brilliant day of sun and snow, one not to be denied so I made a

'piece', and headed off for the heights. Somewhere beyond King's Seat I realised I was meant to be playing rugger that morning.

A Bell anecdote. A prefect came to a Maths class to say the Rector wanted to see me. In puzzled fear I walked the long room to where the Bull sat, heart going into boots as Bell said, 'I've been trying to phone your father...' That bad? 'So you'll just have to do. Go and sort them. My bees have swarmed.' (Our family had several hives.)

The Ochils were a good training ground for what would become a lifetime of worldwide mountaineering. Studded cricket boots were excellent for steep polished grass or giving grip on frozen snow—long before ever hearing of crampons. In the broken ground beyond Dollar Hill I fell into a bottomless drift (quite a frightful experience), and the biggest avalanche I've ever seen in Scotland was on the far side of White Wisp. I once borrowed the coal shed axe to hack a route (first? only?), an ice climb up Kemp's Score to Castle Campbell. Sledging was regularly enjoyed on the golf course. 'Let's do the fourteenth', 'Watch the eighteenth: there's a fence at the bottom...' In those winters we had snow.

Another off-school activity long gone was the autumn tatty howking (hopefully frost free). Perhaps this was only a Junior School privilege but it went soon enough with mechanical developments. It was back-breaking labour but made good pocket money. A retrospective history lesson I suppose about all the work over centuries that saw people replaced by machines (weavers, salt panners, miners, typists).

Talking to that prefect in the museum brought much of this back. He was astonished that even in winter, up to Form III I think, all boys wore short trousers (the bug bear of 'Travellers') and open neck shirts. Winters couldn't have been bad for us. I'm still going up hills, aged ninety, luckily with memories still within reach, just regretting the passing of those winters we used to know.

Hamish Brown (FP 1954)



DODDIE'S GRAND TOUR: A Memorable Overnight Stop at Dollar Academy

On Thursday 6 February, Dollar Academy had the privilege of hosting an overnight stop for the 2025 Doddie's Grand Tour, a remarkable 700-mile cycle challenge raising funds and awareness for the My Name's Doddie Foundation. Led by former Scotland rugby captain Rob Wainwright, the tour brought together cyclists, support teams, and communities across Scotland to support research into Motor Neuron Disease (MND).

This year's event held particular significance for Dollar Academy, as it came just weeks after the tragic passing of Scott Stewart (FP 2000), who lost his battle with MND at the age of 42. As the school community rallied to make the stop a resounding success, memories of Scott were foremost in our minds and hearts.

The cyclists arrived on Thursday evening; they enjoyed a well-earned meal (provided by Thomas Franks in the Dining Hall) before settling into the Maguire Gym for the night. The Playfair Building, with its pillars wrapped in Doddie's signature tartan, offered a striking backdrop for the occasion, and it was all thanks to

the efforts of the Dollar Accies and Former Pupils Stephen Wands (FP 1993) and Alan Stewart (FP 1992). The school played host to the cyclists but was also proudly represented in the event itself by two cycling teams: the Dollar Accies, led by Steve Wands, and Doddie's Trogs, supported by our own Fundraising Manager, Rebecca McFarlane.

A highlight of the stop was the rousing send-off early on Friday morning. At 6am, the Playfair steps echoed with chants of 'Doddie, Doddie, Doddie! Oi! Oi! Oi!' before the school's Pipe Band, led by Mr Matt Wilson, played the riders off on their next leg. It was an emotional moment, uniting Former Pupils, current pupils, parents, staff, and supporters in a shared commitment to an important cause.

Support for the event extended beyond the cyclists. Prep and Junior School pupils produced a fantastic variety of motivational posters and banners which were

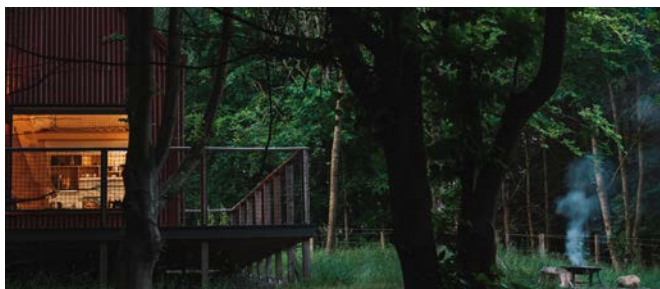
displayed around the school. Senior pupils took part in a spin challenge, surpassing their 700-mile a week target under the encouragement of Mr Steve Newton and raising over £1,200 for the cause. The Dollar Accies team raised an impressive £30,000 while Doddie's Trogs contributed over £25,000 in fundraising donation.

The event was made possible by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. Special thanks go to Thomas Franks for their outstanding catering; Mr John Vaughan-Davies and the grounds team for their support in preparing the campus for the teams' arrival; the Dollar Community Council for providing thermal high-viz coats; and the massage therapists who generously gave their time to aid the riders' recovery. A final thank you goes to Mike Robins and all the parent and grandparent volunteers whose hard work ensured a smooth operation throughout the evening and early morning.

As the Doddie Grand Tour concluded, and the Scotland v Ireland match approached, there was a sense of pride and gratitude in the Dollar community. The experience reinforced the power of teamwork and generosity, showcasing what can be achieved when we come together for a meaningful cause.

Rebecca McFarlane





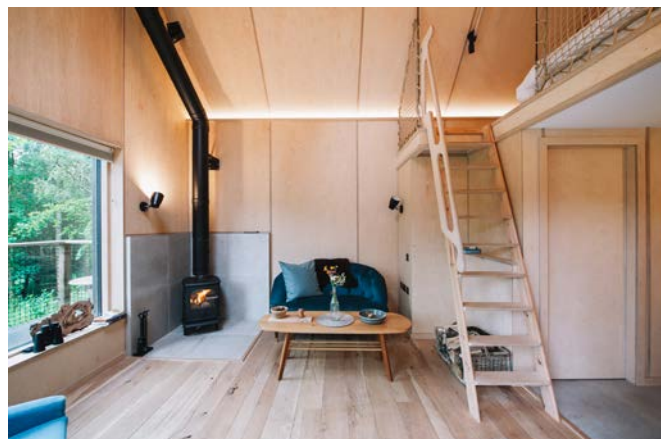
A JOURNEY: BUILDING LUXURY HIDEAWAYS

Victoria Bruce-Winkler (FP 1991) describes the inspiration behind the Brucefield Estate, offering luxury ecotourism that combines contemporary and sustainable design with conservation and wildlife.

Gardyloo! Stone tenement buildings, merchants, busy high streets, candlemakers, sailors—can you find all of these Brucefield Estate? Well, not quite. But they’ve always been in the back of my mind. Now owner and estate manager at Brucefield Estate, I still remember having Mrs Eileen Kamm as my teacher in Prep 4 and 5 at Dollar Academy. Mrs Kamm instilled (or maybe extracted?) a great love of history and design in her pupils. She read gripping stories aloud to us and guided us in drawing life-size characters from 17th- and 18th-century Glasgow and Edinburgh. Our classroom walls were beautiful and exciting, absolutely covered in brightly coloured scenes drawn from local Scottish history.

After leaving school, I studied Biological Sciences (and completed an Honours year in Physiology), before going on to work as a graduate assistant in a research laboratory. I eventually realised that the pen was much more fun than the pipette, and I began a ten-year career in medical writing. This was one of those not-yet-heard-of careers in the days when I was visiting the school careers office. Writing up clinical trials for medical journal publication by working with investigators and pharmaceutical companies became known as ‘ghost-writing’. In those days, the job description was medical editor—not medical writer (though that was, in the main, completely what it was). At the end of ten years, pharma had caught up, and professional medical writers became recognised and accredited. This background in research, however, still very much informs what I do now, whether it’s quadrats investigating worm counts with green manure or looking at the percentage of pioneering heather growth on the estate’s Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Moving on several decades: my family are having



lunch with Mrs Eileen Kamm, and we are reviewing the pen-and-ink map of our estate’s History & Wildlife Tour. It is clear to me that the seed planted in those Prep School lessons many years ago is thriving. What’s the connection between pretzels, St Margaret and the Scotland Yard chequered band? Our tour offers insight into these apparently disconnected things, delving into the history of Scotland from the 11th century. The stories we tell encompass everything from medieval barons and corn threshing machines to designed historic landscapes—all seen through the lens of our estate and its history.

Alongside the estate’s historic interest, the land also supports a remarkably wide range of flora and fauna. Made up of a mosaic of habitats, the estate includes semi-ancient woodlands of Scots pine, birch, and oak as well as heathery heath, wet meadows and fields. Though it covers a relatively small area (420 hectares or 1,000 acres), it supports a rich diversity of plants and animals, including many of conservation importance, such as pine marten, red squirrels, green woodpeckers, lapwings, woodcocks, tree sparrows, barn owls as well as reptiles and bat species.

The estate now welcomes holidaying guests in woodland cabins called Schenbothies. These have been built with a focus on conservation, employing a fabric-first approach. Our emphasis on build quality maximises insulation, which includes triple glazing and an extra construction membrane to reduce draughts. This reduces energy services, such as heating, and maximises cosiness. My instinct for a research-based approach is always in evidence.

I often think back to those Prep School lessons, when biology and history seemed inextricably linked. The medieval Scottish scenes that Mrs Kamm brought to life for me as a child inspired our estate’s History & Wildlife Tours. Now, guests from far and wide enjoy the lessons that we, in turn, seek to deliver: lessons that bring our local heritage and natural surroundings to life.

Victoria Bruce-Winkler (FP 1991)

DEATHS

BOLTON

Peter Bolton (FP 1958–1966) died on 1 February 2025 after a long illness. He was a proud Milne Medal winner (1965–66); he spent his working life based in Hastings.

FREW

Christopher (Kiff) Frew (FP 1959–1965) passed away peacefully on 8 February 2025 after a long illness. A boarder in Argyll House, Kiff played for the 1st XV rugby team, was an accomplished pole vaulter and a school prefect. His schooldays were among the happiest of his life. He attended the universities of St Andrews (Modern Languages) and Edinburgh (Law). He travelled throughout South America and lived in Rio de Janeiro from 1973–1975, where he taught English. Returning to Scotland, he completed a teacher training course and went on to teach French, German and Spanish at The Royal High School, Edinburgh. Kiff was proud to have attended Dollar, where his grandfather (James Frew) had been Head of Mathematics, and where his father (Dr James S. Frew) had been born and attended school. Kiff was preceded at Dollar by his elder brother, the late Mike Frew (FP 1957–1962). Kiff will be sorely missed by his sister, Alison; nephews, Graeme and John Frew; and nieces, Katie Frew and Jane Flint; as well as by his great-nieces and great-nephew.

GORDON

Nan Gordon (FP 1936–1941) died peacefully on 9 December 2024, aged 100. She lived in Alloa all her life and travelled to Dollar by train.

HOOFF

Ursula (Sally) Hooff (*née* Blake, FP 1939–1952) died on 28 December 2024 in Canada. See obituary in this edition.

LUSK

Margaret Lusk (*née* Ritchie, FP 1956–1964) passed away peacefully on 5 December 2024.

MARKHAM

Roland (Elmer) Markham (FP 1958–1964) passed on 1 July 2024.

McINTYRE

Bob (Telford) McIntyre (FP 1946–1958) passed away peacefully after a short illness on 19 January, aged 85 years.

SHOWERING

Moira Showering (*née* Murray, FP 1941–1948) passed away on 19 December 2023. She was in Argyll House, played in the 1st XI hockey team and was an all-round magnificent athlete and pupil. She went on to represent Central Scotland in hockey. Moira had special memories of her time at Dollar and enjoyed sharing them with her family. She will be missed.

STEWART

Scott Stewart (FP 1992–2000) died on 22 December 2024 after campaigning and battling for MND. See obituary in this edition.

SUTHERLAND

Wilhelmina (Minnie) Sutherland (*née* MacMillan, FP 1947) died on 18 December 2024, aged 94.

SUTHERLAND

Prof. Ian W Sutherland (FP 1949–1953) died peacefully in his home of 50 years, as he wished, with his daughter beside him on 17 January 2025, aged 89. Formerly Professor Emeritus of Microbial Physiology, University of Edinburgh, Ian led a long and fulfilled life, educated a generation of scientists, gave public service, never showed self-pity and was much loved all his life. Ian served on the Board of Governors between 1990 and 1997 as the representative of Edinburgh University.

FORMER STAFF

INGLIS

Greta Inglis, who worked as a science technician from 1970–1993, died peacefully on 20 February 2025, aged 92 years. See obituary in this edition.

MASSEY

Alastair Massey, Head of Music from 1972–1982, died on 18 January 2025, aged 93. He is survived by his wife, Eleanor, who worked as a Music teacher at the Academy with her husband; and their twin sons, Paul and Trevor (both FPs).

UNWIN

Elizabeth (Betty) Unwin passed away on 2 January 2025. She taught in the Junior School from 1975–1989.

STAFF

LUMSDEN

Heather Lumsden (Head of Classics) passed away peacefully in the Institute of Neurological Sciences at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow on Friday 21 February 2025. A treasured friend to so many, she is sorely missed by colleagues and pupils as a dedicated and compassionate teacher at Dollar Academy, where, since 1995, she held a variety of posts, most recently Head of Classics. A full obituary will be published in the next edition.

FP NEWS

DAGS SPRING MEET: MARCH 2024

The DAGS spring social took place on the Queen's Course at Gleneagles on Sunday 23 March. Following breakfast in the Dormy House, 25 golfers took to the course in unusually still conditions. Despite the calm weather, the contingent was clearly battling to remove the winter's rust. With talk of even a 5-putt(!) during the post-round meal, your author was able to look back fondly on his own 3-putts.

Some fine ball striking did exist in pockets with Chris Drysdale (FP 2002) taking home the men's scratch prize and Kayleigh Caine (staff) bagging a clean sweep of prizes in the ladies divisions. Mark Croman (FP 1991) was the pick of the stableford scores, securing victory with 37 points. Bruce Torrance (FP 2008), not wanting to leave empty handed this year, thumped the longest drive down the 6th hole, and Ian Galloway (FP 1963) stuck his tee shot on the par 3 17th to a few inches to take home the nearest-the-pin prize.

Thanks to Neil Blezard for cajoling the Academy staff turnout. DAGS hopes to meet again at Muckhart Golf Club in late summer. If you are interested in joining us, please email fpdollar golf@gmail.com.

Joe Fitzgibbon (FP 2008)

JOHN KITSON (FP 1962) AWARDED THE BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL

The Lord Lieutenant for Renfrewshire, Peter McCarthy, presented John Kitson (FP 1962) with a British Empire Medal for services to Scouting, in recognition of his work over many years as a member of the Inclusion Team. The presentation took place in Paisley Abbey when the minister, Revd



Jim Gibson, was delighted to welcome a large group of family, friends and Scouts to take part in the celebration.

John's current role in Scouting means that he has a specific remit to support leaders working in Scout groups operating throughout the UK in special education needs schools, hospitals and children's hospices. Until recently he was the lead volunteer at the group operating in Kilpatrick SEN School, where there are some 85 Scouts involved as part of their school curriculum. He also led international Scout trips for the West Region of Scotland to Denmark, the Czech Republic and Malaysia. He served for many years as the Deputy Lead Volunteer for the West Region.

John gained his Queen's Scout Award when he was a member of the Dollar Academy Scout Group. His leader, Robert Oliver, inspired his adventures in Scouting. He organised the lemonade sales that helped fund the school group, and he spent many evenings at the school pavilion, selling lemonade and crisps.

John was inspired to train as an accountant by his hero teacher, Jack Galbraith, who taught commercial subjects. Even after becoming a chartered accountant, however, he spent the time in the summer of 1962 helping at the

Scout meetings held in children's wards at Mearns Kirk Hospital. It was from there that his interest and love of working with those children who needed a little extra support developed. Over the years John has volunteered in hospitals at Mearns Kirk, south of Glasgow; Great Ormond Street in London; Yorkhill in Glasgow; and Crosshouse in Kilmarnock. He has also served in various support roles including as the Special Needs Adviser to Scouts Scotland and as the UK Scouts National Commissioner for Special Needs.

GEORGE SHEPHERD (FP 1983)

George Shepherd (FP 1983) has been named an Honorary Fellow by the Marketing Society of Scotland, which is awarded to members who have demonstrated inspiring leadership and made a significant contribution to the Society.

He has over 35 years of experience in the advertising industry, having worked as a strategist at VML in London, and with agencies like Leith, Saatchi & Saatchi in Copenhagen, and Leo Burnett in Chicago. He has also held brand-side roles with BBC, Nike, and LEGO. As co-founder and Chief Creative Officer of Red Spider, he collaborated with top global brands, including Guinness, Star Wars, Heineken, and Coca-Cola. Since 2019, George has been with Edinburgh Napier University, where he developed their MSc Creative Advertising programme, and he actively supports students in gaining industry experience. He is also a strong advocate for the Marketing Society of Scotland's Star Student of the Year and Aspiring Creative Star Awards.

MARRIAGES

DUNNET- HENDERSON

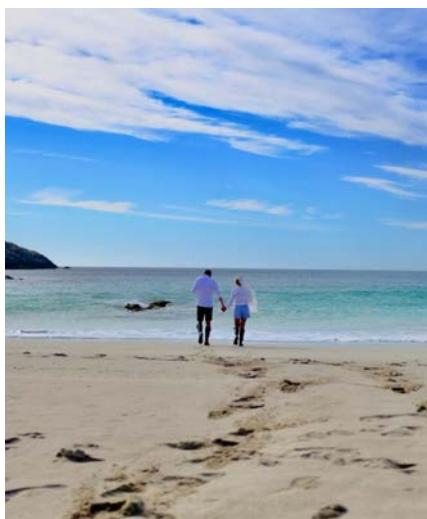
On 28 September 2024 at the Abbey on Inchcolm Island, Eilidh Dunnet (FP 1993–2003) married Jamie Henderson. The wedding was followed by a ceilidh in Burntisland.



STAFF

HALL-MUIR

We are delighted to announce that Chloe Hall (History and Modern Studies Department) married Blair Muir on 4 April. They tied the knot on Achmelvich Beach, with surprisingly glorious weather.



BIRTHS

STAFF

MCKAY

Elaine McKay (History and Modern Studies Department) and husband, Ryan, welcomed a son, Callum Robert Blair McKay, into the world on 19 August 2024, weighing 6lbs 11oz.



SINCLAIR

Hannah Sinclair (History and Modern Studies Department) and her husband, Andrew, welcomed a daughter, Cameron Caia Sinclair, into the world on 15 April 2025, weighing 10lbs 8oz.



MERCHANTS OF VENICE: A Reunion of Thespians

In March 1977 some sixth-year Dollar pupils (with support from other years) performed William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* in the Assembly Hall. The production was masterminded by the effervescent Bruce Baillie, driven by his incredible enthusiasm. The performers confronted their inhibitions and, after many hours of rehearsals, a half-decent version of Shakespeare's tale of Shylock demanding a pound of Antonio's flesh took shape. It was performed over two nights for the school community and parents.

It is reasonable to assume that for most of us, almost 50 years later, our memory of those performances is somewhat fuzzy. Nevertheless, it is also true that the experience was highly enjoyable and remembered with fondness. So when Lorna Milne (FP 1977) reached out to several fellow thespians to suggest that we all go to see the same play at Edinburgh's Royal Lyceum Theatre on 26 January this year (followed by dinner and a few drinks), she met with a very positive response. (Bravo, Lorna!)

And so it was, with the help of a WhatsApp group, that the merry band met at the Lyceum, just a day after Storm Eowyn caused havoc in Scotland. Lorna (Nerissa) didn't manage to gather the whole cast, but there was an impressive turnout. Tom Lewin (Shylock), Robin Mackenzie (Duke of Venice), Nigel Scott (Bassanio), Richard Gow (Lorenzo), and I (Prince of Morocco) were all in attendance. Malcolm Clark (Antonio), by a stroke of luck, also happened to be in town (visiting from San Francisco). As a bonus, some non-performing FPs also made it: Paul Burt (scenery painting) and Jane Ritchie (costumes mistress). The cast was also joined by several partners. Willie Jack (FP 1977) and his wife Sue had intended to be present, but the arrival of their first grandchild took precedence. (Apologies also to those whom we were unable to contact.)

The New York-based Theatre for a New Audience's production was stunning, we all agreed, holding us transfixed throughout. Unsurprisingly it garnered several 4- and 5-star reviews. (We did wonder, in fact, if it was the same play that we had performed!) Indeed we all agreed that, apart from our own lines, there was little else we recalled from our performances in 1977!

Afterwards we dined in the Grassmarket and, as the reunion was going so well, most of us ended up in the Bow Bar on Victoria Street until last orders. The opportunity to chat, catch up, and revisit our school adventures was too good to miss.

Late in the evening someone optimistically suggested that we should stage a repeat performance at the Edinburgh Festival. Readers will be relieved to hear this idea was quickly dismissed.

From left: Susan Rae (Jessica), Karen Macdonald (Portia) and Lorna Milne (Nerissa).



From left: Simon Parkes (Launcelot Gobbo) and Jeremy Forteach (Old Gobbo).



From left: Nigel Scott (Bassanio), Richard Gow (Lorenzo), Tom Lewin (Shylock), Robin Mackenzie (Duke of Venice), Lorna Milne (Nerissa), Malcolm Clark (Antonio), and Ian McAteer (Prince of Morocco).

A huge thank you to Lorna for her initiative. It was a marvellous experience, and lovely to see so many of our old school buddies in such good form.

Ian McAteer (FP 1977)

CLASS OF 1969: 55th REUNION

On 18 October a cohort of 19 FPs from the Class of 1969 gathered at the Murrayfield Hotel in Auld Reekie. It was our 55th reunion. Some came from nearby and a few came from afar. As we exchanged greetings, Father Time peeled back the layers of time effortlessly. It reminded me of the adage regarding the three stages of life: the beauty of youth, the attractiveness of middle age and the 'Oh, how well you look!' stage. Given that one cannot be said to have reached old age until one is over 75, we were comfortably still in the middle stage.

Settling down to lunch in a most pleasant informal atmosphere, we caught up on our wellbeing, news and views, our careers and life experiences. One attendee has had hip and knee replacements, which reminded us of the song 'One wheel on my wagon and I'm still rolling along.' Many FPs keep in regular contact with each other, and it was good to hear about others who couldn't make it and to reminisce about those who, sadly, died before their time.

We also remembered those who struggled in their lives after school. Our 50th reunion in 2019 had been more formal: a larger gathering when we didn't all get around to speak to one another—though it had been a memorable, enjoyable and well-organised event (recorded in *Fortunas*).

It wasn't long before we were sharing our school experiences and laughing at memories of events, escapades, teasings and misdemeanours. We recalled the variety of sporting activities: rugby, hockey, cricket, athletics, golf, trout fishing, hillwalking over the Ochils, CCF, shooting, Scouts, Girl Guides...to name but few. Friday night dance classes were popular, and the girls put on their glad rags. On Saturday evenings a film was shown in the school hall. We remembered the local shops: the Burnside Café; Fred ('the Swick') grocer's; Robertson, the bakery; Muckersie, for school books; McConchie, the ironmongers and cobbler; the paper shop on Bridge Street for comics and magazines. In February 1961 the Academy suffered a huge fire leaving the main school building a shell. Classes were held in church halls, the Legion Hall, the Board School and Harviestoun Castle (now demolished). The school building was rebuilt and reopened in 1966.

Many teachers had nicknames that were lifelong. Sadly, nearly all of our teachers have now passed away, but we shared memories of them. Most were helpful, kind and encouraging—others, less so. They all had the same aim: to ensure we left school equipped for the next stage in our careers in order that we could put bread on the table. Their legacy is in our memories and in the memories of the hundreds of children before us and after us. We pass on what we were taught. But, just as importantly, we thank



our parents who trusted Dollar Academy to provide a good education for us and at considerable financial sacrifice.

As the afternoon wore on and the comfort of conviviality came to a close, it was time to get our coats and make our ways home. Farewells followed and, in the traditional Scots tongue, we offered wishes of prosperity: 'Lang may yer lum reek'. We look forward to our 60th reunion in 2029 when we may greet each other with 'How well you look!'

We must thank Kenneth Morrison, Margaret Small and Carrie Watson for organising our 55th reunion get-together.

Jamie Lyall FRCS (FP 1969)

URSULA (SALLY) MARY BLAKE HOOFF

1934– 2024
FP 1939– 1952

The Blake family moved from Helensburgh to Dollar at the outbreak of World War II. Sally, like the rest of us, carried her gas mask to school. She was an excellent student, being a Milne Medallist. Sally was also a leading light in the Dramatic Society at the school. As she was a year older than me, we spent time together during the holidays. In these days of great concern over children's safety, I look back with gratitude to that carefree time. Our parents had only a hazy idea of our location after we set off walking or biking.

Sally went on to St Andrews University after school where she received an arts degree. She emigrated to Canada in the 1960s, living first in Montreal where she taught and met her husband, Bill Hooff. They later moved to Ottawa where I reconnected with Sally, spending time with Sally and Bill and their new daughter, Julia. Bill's job took them back to Montreal where Sally taught part-time. As a member of the Historical Society of Montreal she was concerned with preserving the old historical buildings. She co-authored a book about the area in which she lived: *Montreal's Little*



Mountain, a portrait of Westmount. Her interest in nature led to her publishing *In a Green Shade*, a book of her sketches and descriptions of trees in the same Westmount area.

Sally, Bill and Julia spent their summer holidays on Prince Edward Island (PEI) where they purchased a cottage. When Bill retired, they moved to the island they loved so well. They renovated an old manse, turning the ground floor into an art gallery. Sally was an accomplished sketcher and water colour artist, having studied at the Nova Scotia Art School. She loved to travel, always with her sketchbook. I recall her remarking on the amazing light after a trip to Canada's Arctic. Sally was a woman with many interests and an enquiring mind. She led a group tree planting near Malpeque Bay in PEI, and she researched the Scottish settlers who had landed in PEI.

Unfortunately Sally's last years were marred by illness. Rheumatoid arthritis affected her hands and dementia crept up slowly, which finally entailed her moving to a care home where she died.

Sally was predeceased by

her parents, George and Ellie Blake (her father was a well-known Scottish author) and her brothers, Michael and Christopher, both FPs. She leaves her daughter, Julia, and grandchildren, Peter and Erica, and she will also be missed by her nephews and nieces and many friends.

Pam Clayton (FP 1940–1953)



DEIRDRE BUCHANAN

1934–1924

FP 1948–1953

Deirdre Buchanan (*née* Kenyon) (FP 1948–53) died last summer aged 90. Born in West Yorkshire in 1934, she became the second generation of her family to come north for a Scottish education. A boarder in Playfair, her days at Dollar sparked a lifelong passion for music and drama, singing in the school choir and taking lead roles in school productions of *She Stoops to Conquer* and JM Barrie's *The Admiral Crichton*. Having already been accepted for The Scottish Hotel School, she swapped Dollar for Paris for six months of her final year, returning only for the last few weeks of the summer term, having become fluent in French. From Hotel School, Deirdre spent two years as a stewardess for British European Airways only leaving to get married in 1957 (in those days female aircrew had to be single). A career in the hospitality industry followed during which Deirdre, a

fellow of the BHRCA, also served on the board of the British Hospitality Association and the Yorkshire Tourist Board.

Having made countless lifelong friends at school, Dollar often featured in her thinking. Many sacrifices were made to ensure that both her children attended Dollar as boarders. For nearly 50 years Deirdre almost singlehandedly kept the North of England Dollar Academy Club alive, serving several times as Club president, a 35-year stint as secretary (only recently retiring), and two terms as the Club's representative governor until retiring in 2005. Until recently a regular attendee at the Donors' Lunch and various other school events, Deirdre much enjoyed keeping up with all matters Dollar. She would have been touched to know that the school flag, a flag originally donated by 'her' North of England FP Club,

was flown at half-mast on the day of her funeral. A later memorial service held in Yorkshire was well attended by Dollar folk, and Deirdre would have been honoured by the presence of the ex-Chair of the Board of Governors who kindly spoke at the event.



CHRIS CANNON

1936–2024
(Classics Department
1960–1993)

'Latin and Greek are not dead languages: they have merely ceased to be mortal'.

So went the first sentence I had to copy into my Latin notebook in the first Form I lesson. Chris Cannon was a Classics teacher who knew instinctively the worth of his subject, and he imparted that worth through his scholarship and great care of, and interest in, his pupils. A rigorous teacher of language, a sensitive literary critic and a knowledgeable historian, in every lesson he showed the scope of the subject and imparted it with unflagging enthusiasm which made us want to learn. He had the knack of making complex grammar and syntax seem easy and satisfying to work out, and his enthusiastic and detailed exposition of Virgil was the clinching factor in convincing me to follow in his footsteps to St Andrews and a career in Classics teaching. I had the privilege of being taught on my own by Chris in Form VI: it was in those wide-ranging conversations

that I realised that the man whom I had always known to be one of quietly evinced principle was also one who had a deep Christian faith which infused his whole attitude to his work and indeed to his life. He was a true all-round schoolmaster, dedicating his time to the wider life of the school.

Within two years of his arrival at Dollar in 1960, he was appointed librarian with the task of building up stock after the loss of 12,000 volumes in the fire of 1961. He became Head of Classics in 1976 but still managed to coach rugby, sing in the school choir, run the Scripture Union group and be crucial to every Sports Weekend as the one who readied all the competitors at the starting line. His pastoral instincts were astute: he always searched out the reason for poor behaviour and remedy was more important than sanction. I do not recall him ever raising his voice, far less losing his temper, and discipline resulted from the respect we all had for him. It was typical of him and his wife, Margaret, that they took some boarders into their home in Devon Road when accommodation was needed. He was just as popular among his colleagues: elected the first president of the Staff Association, he was responsible for drawing up its constitution.

Chris was well known beyond the school. The school library then served as the town library too; as a Reader in the Church of Scotland, he often preached in Dollar, and in Dunbar after his early retirement in 1993 following heart surgery. He and Margaret enjoyed a long and happy retirement where Chris continued his passion for crosswords and for gardening: he was an expert



horticulturalist, producing pounds of fruit and vegetables every year, and at one time he cultivated 80 different types of fuchsia. Chris was primarily a man of faith and family (his three daughters are FPs), but to many who knew him—over his career of 33 years (entirely spent at his beloved Dollar)—he was a teacher whom it was impossible not to respect, admire and want to emulate. In my own teaching career, I have known few like him.

David Fotheringham (FP 1967–73)

RON GLASGOW OBE

1931–2024

Head of PE 1960–1989

Ron was perhaps known best for his rugby—both as a player and a coach. A no-nonsense, hard-tackling flank forward, Ron was 31 when he made his international debut against France at Murrayfield in the opening round of the 1962 Five Nations. Then, in Cardiff the following month, he rose to wider prominence, scoring the Scots' first try there since 1935, en route to a first success on Welsh soil since 1937 and a first in the Welsh capital since 1927. He went on to win ten caps for Scotland, eight games for the Barbarians, and he represented the World XV during the South African Rugby Board's 75th Jubilee in 1964.

Ronald James Cunningham Glasgow was born in Aberlady, East Lothian and attended Knox Academy. After school, he joined the Scots Guards. He took pride in his military career, seeing active service in the Malayan Emergency in 1950–51 as part of Far East Land Forces and in the elite Guards Independent Parachute Company. Back in the UK, he participated in the Trooping the Colour ceremony in 1949, the first time this was done in full scarlet tunics and bearskins after WWII, the first in which the future Queen Elizabeth II rode, and the first to be witnessed by the present King.

After the military, he studied Physical Education at Jordanhill College before starting his teaching career at Robert Gordon's College in 1957. He played rugby for Gordonians, enjoying it immensely, but the lure of a Head of PE role was strong. He joined Dollar in December 1960 and remained there for almost 30 years.

Ron's hard but fair style did not endear him to all, but for many



he was inspirational. One noted, 'He gained respect by respecting and being fair with others.' He used his Scottish rugby connections to bring invitational sides to play against the school. These were special fixtures for the pupils—it's not every day that you get to play against current and ex-international players and British Lions.

Never one to be limited by conditions, if practice or lessons were off due to snow or frozen pitches, training would consist of a run up Dollar Hill. This would mean three or four runs up Dollar Hill over a day for Ron. Despite his enjoyment of such hard labours, he appreciated that an indoor facility would allow meaningful training to continue through the winter, and he took pride in having managed to persuade the powers that be to develop the Games Hall, still in use today.

Ron will also be remembered by many FPs for his time with the CCF—for the military activities, but also for the character-forming, adventurous training opportunities undertaken. Ron took over command of the CCF from his great friend Ivor Barber in 1983. Discipline, exceptional standards of turnout and highly motivated cadets were the hallmark of Ron's time; many FPs went into the Forces as a result. The CCF afforded equal opportunities to its girls and

was ahead of its time compared to many independent schools. Dollar girls' teams regularly outperformed some of the more illustrious schools' boys' teams at Highland Cadet Military Skills competitions, which delighted Ron! Adventure training was a huge part of CCF life, which played into Ron's great love of the outdoors; he taught pupils to be well prepared, well planned and resilient. There were many trips—all over Scotland but particularly to Ardgour. There, Ron and Ivor struck up a friendship with Lady Maclean of Ardgour, over whose rugged land the CCF camped and walked. For his service to the CCF, he was awarded an OBE in the 1990 New Year Honours.

Ron stepped down as Head of PE in 1983 and retired from teaching in 1989. In handpicking John Foster to be his successor, Ron ensured that Dollar would continue as one of the foremost Scottish rugby schools, maintaining the same standards of discipline, integrity, sportsmanship, and courtesy that he set for himself and his charges.

Ron's personal life was marked by tragedy. His first marriage, in 1958, to childhood sweetheart Nanette Bain, ended tragically in 1962 when she died from complications after the birth of their son, Callum, who was born with cerebral palsy. In 1964 he married Anne Fleming with whom he had three children: Catriona (FP 1983) and twins, Cameron and Anthony (FP 1984). Anne also taught PE at Dollar, and the pair loved the outdoor life that Dollar offered, especially golf, hillwalking and gardening. Sadly, Anne died from cancer in 1986.

He was immensely tough on the rugby field, but his friends knew that, like so many hard and uncompromising sportsmen, Ron could be gentle, loving and caring off it. His kindness to small creatures reminded his friends of Rabbie Burns and, as Ivor Barber noted, if reincarnated, you could not have done better than come back as Ron Glasgow's dog.

Whether serving in the Malayan Emergency, bringing on the next generation of oval-ball talent for almost three decades as Dollar's Head of PE or walking his dog in the hills near the family home, Ron was a larger-than-life character who thrived on hard graft and being there for those closest to him. Uncompromising he may have been, but he was scrupulously fair. He played to win, of course, but not at any price. He was a man who took the most severe blows that life can bestow stoically and with courage.

Ron retired to East Lothian where he enjoyed golfing, walking his dog and catching up with old friends. He returned to live in Dollar in 2015. Ron had been suffering from dementia for much of the last decade, and he passed away peacefully after a short illness on 6 October, 38 years to the day after Anne died.



GRETA INGLIS

1933–2025

(Science Department Lab Assistant c.1970–1993)

I first met Greta in 1985, when I arrived as a 'new boy' at Dollar Academy, fresh from 11 years at the 'chalk face' in Broxburn Academy. The world of Dollar Academy was a culture shock for sure, though I had dim memories of private school life as a boarder at Morrison's Academy. Things didn't go absolutely perfectly at the outset, as you will read later in this piece.

Greta was my lab assistant, and she made me feel at home almost immediately: a cup of tea and a biscuit were always on hand and, within days, we were friends for life. She had been in post for many years already, so we very quickly established an efficient and happy rapport, which did much to enhance the quality of teaching in the Biology Department. Animals were all fed, apparatus prepared, duplication completed, materials ordered—all to schedule, without ever a complaint or harsh word: a totally wonderful service, provided with warmth, good humour, and sometimes some excellent advice—always heeded. I might add that, on Greta's retiral from work in 1993, after 30 years at the school, her daughter-in-law Jane took up the reins in a similar fashion and continues the tradition to this day. I count myself very fortunate to have had these two excellent women working with me for the 25 years I ran the department at the school.

Greta was very much a local girl, born in Saline, the eldest of five children; she moved from there to Dunfermline and then to Dollar, where Ian, her husband, lived. They met in 1954 and were so keen to see one another that they would walk between the two villages to meet up. Now, that's 'green' travel for you.

When she retired, she would sometimes help with our children, when my wife and I were both at work—along with Mrs Hood, another feisty Dollar woman with strong connections to the school. My wife and I maintained that friendship for the rest of her life, and we are much the richer for having known her.

One anecdote I must share, recounted with much amusement in later years: in the first few weeks of my arrival at the school, I wanted to take a class of younger pupils out to estimate the worm population of the cricket pitch. Forks, buckets and spades, you ask? Certainly not. For this experiment, the pupils lay out quadrats (25cm x 25cm metal squares) and pour a liquid onto the grass which irritates the worms. They come to the surface, are collected, washed, counted and returned. Then, with some simple arithmetic, the total population in a given area can be estimated. Sandy Tewnion, my predecessor, had used washing-up liquid, but in Broxburn I used dilute formalin, which, I claimed with pride, was much more effective. So Greta prepared the liquid for the pupils to use, according to my recipe, and off I went with the class to count the worms on the cricket pitch. The worms flew out of the ground, and we caught hundreds, as over 20 squares had been set out on the grass. A great success I thought—until the following morning when the head groundsman visited me to enquire, as politely as he might, why there were little squares of dead grass all over his perfectly manicured lawn? Well, that took some time to live down. My formula had been correct, but I had forgotten to check the strength of the stock solution in the store, which was much stronger than that of Broxburn Academy.

Those were happy and eventful days, Greta, and you are greatly missed by all who knew you.

Andrew Morton (former Head of Biology, 1985–2010)



ERIC THOMSON INGLIS KING

FP 1957–1962
1944–2024

Eric Thomson Inglis King LVO MBA RAF (Ret'd) passed away on 20 February 2024, at the age of 79.

He was born in the village of Strathmiglo on 26 May 1944. In his early years, he spent several years living at Wester Upper Urquhart Farm at the foot of West Lomond, enjoying rural life and spending most of his days on a horse-drawn cart or riding one of the farm's two magnificent Clydesdale horses.

He began school at Strathmiglo Primary School and, at the age of 10, he was sent to board at New Park School in St Andrews. He was understandably nervous and, as a reward for his bravery, he received a new bicycle for his birthday. He started at New Park in August 1954. Feeling homesick, he promptly escaped and cycled the 21 miles home. His father returned him to school within the hour, this time minus his bike.

After passing the common entrance exam for Dollar Academy, and with much less apprehension, Eric began as a boarder in McNabb House in 1957. Dollar would become a huge part of his life. He achieved sporting prowess in rugby and cricket, captaining the 1st XV and representing the inaugural Midland District XV. He was a natural leader and, during his time in the CCF, he was Drum Major of the Pipe Band. His time in the band was not without incident

and humour, as recalled by Tom Barr (FP 1962), a lifelong friend:

'... not his prowess with the side drum, if that is what it is called, but as Drum Major. He was tall—immaculate in his kilt uniform and bearskin—and quite majestically serene as he headed the CCF parade at the summer term event of 1962, swinging his left arm, brandishing the mace in his right...when suddenly he dropped down a hole. A mantrap had been laid by rascally sixth-form leavers. All I could see, as company Sergeant Major behind the band, was Eric still marching in time to the band but on all fours, bearskin at a slight jaunty angle as he desperately tried to regain his feet. He was the epitome of cool composure and, afterwards (what a great sense of humour he had)—did we laugh!'

Dollar Academy was a source of many great friendships, and it was also where Eric met the love of his life, Barbara Montgomery (FP 1963). His connection to Dollar Academy remained strong throughout his life: as a parent—his children, Fiona (FP 1986) and Eric (FP 1988), both attended—and later as a grandfather. He was immensely proud to pace the touchline watching his grandsons, Robbie and Jamie (who attended Dollar for four terms). Always motivated to repay opportunities, Eric served as a member on the school's Board of Governors, bringing his leadership experience and strategic thinking to the role. He was a passionate advocate for a well-rounded education, emphasising the importance of both academic excellence and extra-curricular activities. He also worked to ensure that the school remained accessible to students from diverse backgrounds. His dedication to Dollar Academy reflected his belief in the transformative power of education.

After finishing school, Eric pursued his ambition of a career in aviation. Although he faced a setback when he was considered 'too much of a training risk' at the Royal College of Air Training in Hamble, his determination never wavered. He briefly attended Glasgow University Veterinary College and worked as a baggage handler at Edinburgh Airport before his persistence paid off. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1963. Eric's RAF career was marked by numerous achievements. He earned accolades such as the Leadership Trophy and Best All-Round Student during his training. He served on 46 Squadron flying the Andover and 36 Squadron flying the Hercules, where he formed lasting friendships and developed a strong sense of camaraderie. In 1979, he was chosen to command the Queen's Flight, a prestigious role that recognised his

exceptional piloting skills, professionalism, and leadership. He was later appointed a Member, and then a Lieutenant, of the Royal Victorian Order for his distinguished service to The Royal Family. During his early RAF training, Eric continued to court Barbara, who was now training to be a nurse in Glasgow. The numerous long drives up to Glasgow at weekends eventually paid off. They became engaged and were married on the 2 July 1966.

After 23 years of service in the RAF, Eric retired in 1986 to join the family knitwear business. He earned an MBA from Glasgow University in 1990 but, despite his efforts, the business faced challenging market conditions and closed in 2004. Eric handled this difficult situation with compassion and integrity, ensuring that all employees were treated fairly.

In retirement, Eric remained active in numerous pursuits. He served as an elder in the Church of Scotland, contributing to organisational aspects of St Giles and St Columba's Church in Elgin, and St Serf's Church in the Crook of Devon. He found joy in singing with the Glen Moray Male Voice Choir and the St Serf's church choir. Eric also enjoyed many adventures sailing on the west coast of Scotland, caravanning, and spending time with his family and friends.

Eric is survived by his devoted wife, Barbara, his children, Fiona and Eric, and his cherished grandchildren, Robbie and Jamie. He will be forever remembered as a remarkable leader, a devoted family man, a man of unwavering integrity and a dedicated servant of his country and community. His life stands as an enduring testament to the power of perseverance, service, unconditional love and the importance of giving back to the institutions that shape us.

Eric King (FP 1988)



SCOTT DOUGLAS STEWART

1982–2024

FP 1992–2000

Born in 1982, in Campbeltown, Argyll, Scott was the younger of Iain and Alison's two children, his sister Karen (FP 1997) having arrived three years earlier. The family moved to Dollar in 1987, when Iain and Alison bought The Priory on High Street, a shop well known to many Dollar Academy pupils (and staff!).

Scott's love of golf began as a toddler in Campbeltown with cut-down clubs; this continued at Dollar and Muckhart Golf Clubs and eventually culminated in him achieving his ambition of becoming a scratch golfer while a member at Gleneagles.

Rugby started with Stirling County Minis before he began playing for Junior, then Senior Dollar Academy school teams. During his time at school, Scott participated in the U18 Scottish Schools Cup final at Murrayfield. He was also a member of the three-man Dollar Academy golf team in the Golf Foundation World Team Championship at Loch Lomond.

After school, Scott studied International Business at Edinburgh University. While there, he continued to play golf for the university and was invited to join the Scotland Rugby U19s squad. That came to a halt, however, when he had the chance to complete the third year of his university course at the University of New Mexico's Anderson School of Business in Albuquerque (though he did play rugby with the UNM rugby team, The Lobos). After his final year

in Edinburgh, Scott began working in service delivery with Fujitsu, first in Edinburgh, then in London.

In 2010, Scott's sense of adventure and itchy feet led him to take a year out in Vancouver, where he had intended to seek out work connected with that year's Winter Olympics. Unfortunately, all the suitable roles had already been filled, but, after a short interview, he was hired by the manager of the Tommy Hilfiger store in the city. His enthusiasm, work ethic, an ability to sell sand in the desert (and perhaps his Scottish accent) all contributed to him regularly being named 'salesman of the month'.

After his year in Canada, having worked during university summer breaks at International Summer Camp Montana in Switzerland, Scott found himself back there on a full-time basis, working closely with the Programme Director; he soon became part of the management team. By the time life brought him back to Scotland in 2019, Scott had made a huge network of friends for life from all over the globe with whom he kept in regular contact.

Using the experience gained in Switzerland, Scott returned to university and qualified as a careers guidance counsellor, which led him to become a partner in The Career Place, delivering career guidance in independent schools throughout Scotland and in Europe. It was around this time that Scott also saw an opportunity to set up his own

business, and the online 59 Golf Shop was born. When Scott was unable to continue with his careers work, he was still able to run the 59 Golf Shop until the week before he passed away.

In 2021 Scott met Robyn. He said that, in meeting and being with her, he had found true happiness, further enhanced when their daughter, Rae, was born in May 2024.

Although he was experiencing symptoms suggesting MND from August 2022, it wasn't until eight months later, in March 2023, that Scott received a formal diagnosis. He very quickly decided that he would not hide away and that MND would not define him. He began documenting his life with MND through social media, to raise as much awareness of the disease, and its effects on those living with it, as he possibly could.

By August 2024, Scott had set up a Team Rae JustGiving page to raise funds for My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation, which had been so supportive of Scott and his family, with the hope that Rae would see a world free from MND. With the help of some of his good friends undertaking fundraising challenges (and given Scott's online presence), he soon soared past his initial target of £5,555 and, by mid-January, he had reached over £60,000 (a sum which is still growing).

In November 2024 Scott became the first recipient of the new My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation James Clarke Award recognising Scott's efforts to raise awareness and funds

in the battle against MND. Less than a month later, on 22 December, Scott passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family.

The chances of having MND in YOUR life are 1 in 300. Scott always said 'MND is not incurable, just underfunded'. Treatments and a cure are waiting to be discovered; research will find them and money facilitates research. Every penny raised brings that cure closer.

The Stewart family would like to take this opportunity to thank the Dollar Academy family—pupils, staff, Former Pupils, parents and friends—for the wonderful fundraising achieved on behalf of MNDF and for increasing awareness in the community and beyond. Thank you.

Robyn, Rae, Iain, Alison and Karen

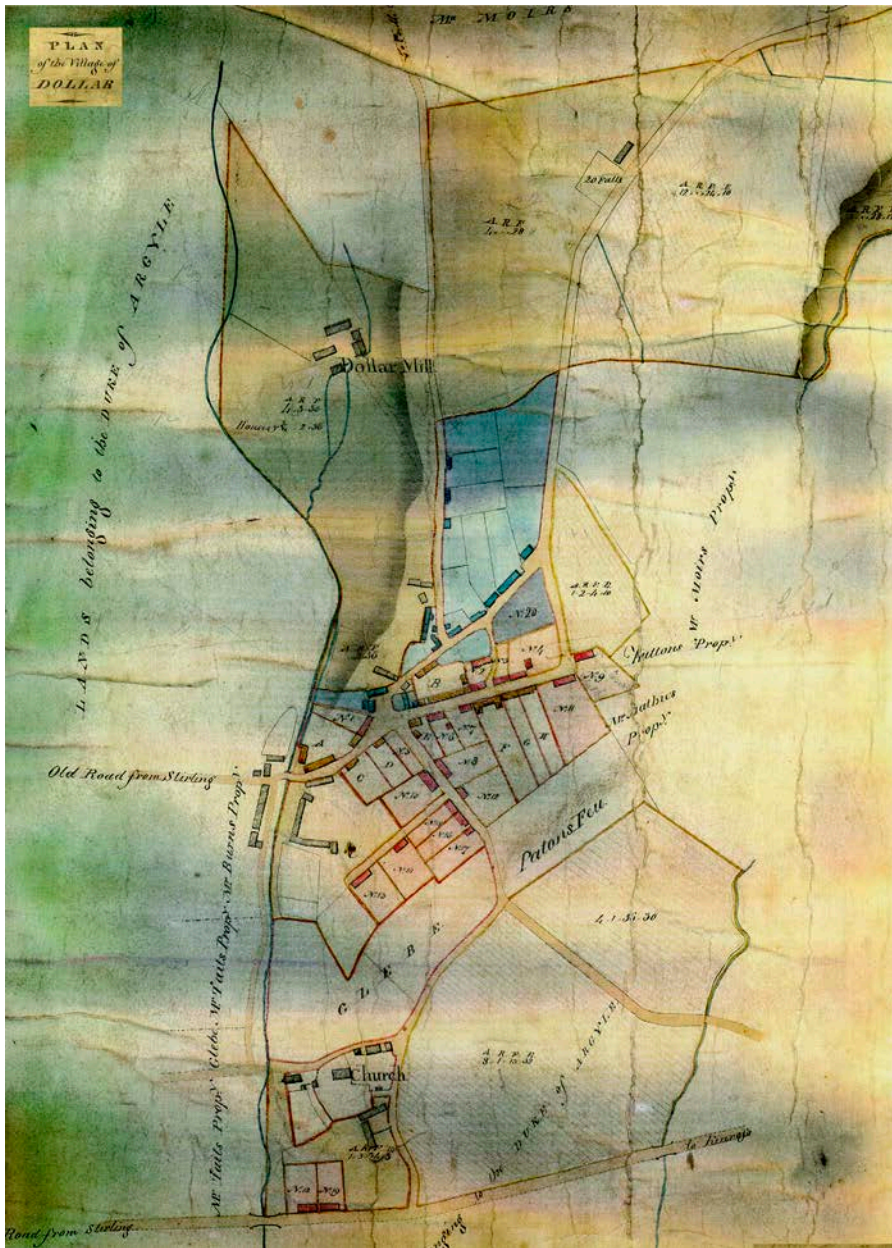
FROM THE ARCHIVES

In the summers of 1978 to 1980 Dollar Academy pupils took part in an archaeological dig, excavating the old grain mill in the Mill Green. They worked under the supervision of Lorna Main, the Regional Archaeologist, and the excavation was an offspring of the Mill Green Facelift Project organised for the Silver Jubilee. The Facelift Project was led by Mairi Hutchison (FP 1945–49) and won an award, resulting in a visit by HRH Princess Anne. Her visit is commemorated by a plaque on a boulder near the entrance to Dollar Glen.

When the dig took place the foundations of the mill were scarcely visible, as it had ceased to operate in the early 1800s. The diggers had to rely on a map of 1807 which shows the position of the buildings, water wheels and lade. The map is shown here—note that the school had not yet been built. Also shown is a selection of photos of the pupils involved in the dig. Some of the pupils have been identified but not all. If you recognise yourself or others, please do get in touch with your memories.

More information about the dig and the mill is available in Dollar Museum, where I have set up a new exhibition on Dollar Water Mills. A watercolour of the mill as it was in 1796, by the artist Hugh 'Grecian' Williams, is on loan and shows the mill complex in fascinating detail. If you cannot visit the museum in person, find out more at the website: dollarmuseum.org.uk.

Janet Carolan (Archivist)







Dollar Academy

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