



Fettes News

Fettes College

ISSUE 2, JANUARY 2009



High demand for music

The Fettes Music Department has been exceptionally busy recently with weekly Coffee Concerts, the Autumn Concert featuring Poulenc's Gloria and then the end of term Carol Concert that provided a beautiful and reflective end to the term and start of the holidays.

The Chapel Choir was also requested to perform at The Balmoral Hotel's Christmas client party. The Balmoral was delighted with the performance and as a note of thanks would like to offer all Fettes parents and staff a free room upgrade if you

quote 'Fettes' when booking accommodation at the hotel (www.thebalmoralhotel.com)

Fettes College continues to have a retiring collection on behalf of charity at the end of each of our concerts and is delighted to have recently donated money to The Ben Walton Trust - Action Against Oral Cancers in the Young (www.benwaltontrust.org) and The Sandpiper Trust - Improving Emergency Medical Care in Scotland (www.sandpipertrust.org). Many thanks for your donations.

Oxbridge results so far

Fettes College is delighted to announce that at the time of going to press, 12 of our Oxbridge candidates have received offers, four at Cambridge and eight at Oxford. However, we are awaiting a few confirmations before we have the final figures.

"Our candidates here have worked really intelligently at their applications over many months, sifting out the right course for them, developing a genuine independence of interest and depth behind what they have to offer. Some of these successes are once more in the most competitive subjects of Medicine, English and Law. Beyond the successes, a group of candidates will have had very near misses indeed and I think all have enhanced their motivation for their chosen courses. This will make them potentially leading students at their other chosen universities." Tony Reeves, Assistant Headmaster.

And now, of course, as all but one of the offers are conditional on A Level and IB results, they have to work very hard to ensure they meet the specified grades. And on Thursday, we start work on next year's group!

Fettes 1st XV triumph

For the second year running, Fettes College has won the Colin MacKay Memorial Trophy against Dollar Academy. Played annually between Fettes and Dollar in memory of Colin MacKay, a Head of PE at Dollar who died in 2002, the annual match is always closely contested.

The conditions for the game were not ideal due to the icy weather but the Fettes team started with real conviction and continued to challenge their opponents to achieve a creditable 13-10 win. The 1st XV thank the Fettes staff, pupils and parents for their unwavering support which they believe helped them to win. Congratulations.



Welcome to the second edition of Fettes News. If you have any comments or would prefer to receive the newsletter electronically, simply email fettesnews@fettes.com



Flanders to Ypres

Two parties of Fettesians set out for Ypres at the beginning of October half term. The Third Form historians, led by Messrs Fern & du Vivier and Miss Mair, explored the Great War battlefields in detail. An act of remembrance was held at Thiepval, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme which holds the names of 11 OFs. We were moved to find details of no fewer than three of them on the new register of missing soldiers. The adult party of staff, OFs and pipers made a rather more leisurely trip around the Front.

Both groups met up for the Dedication of the Plaque to the Fettes War Dead in St George's Memorial Church, Ypres. This was an extremely interesting and moving occasion, with a fine sermon from the Chaplain, the poetry of an OF, John Humphries, read by the Headmaster, and the names of all 29 OFs killed at Ypres – starting with the oldest, aged 46, and ending with the youngest, aged 19 – read out by the pupils. Afterwards, we took

part in the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, the daily memorial organised by local people since 1918. Ross Turner and Sam Cooper played a lament on the pipes, RSM Willie Ross read the Act of Remembrance, and two third formers laid a wreath with the school crest and the names of the eight OFs listed as missing on the Menin Gate.

In addition to these memorials, poppies were laid on the graves of several other OFs, including Lt Col WH Anderson VC, killed in the German advance of 1918, and Capt Peter Alexander MC, who fell at Passchendaele and is buried in the huge, impressive British cemetery at Tyne Cot.

It was a splendid trip, hugely enjoyed by, and leaving a tremendous impact on, all those who went. As the Chaplain put it, the best thing we can say to the school's fallen is the simple message of one of the third form as he placed a poppy on an OF's grave – 'thank you.'

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World views

The Political Society has recently broadened students' knowledge of EU legislation and the US elections in two insightful lectures; Mr John Edward, Head of the European Parliament Office for Scotland, explained the purpose and future of the EU, and took questions on some of the many complex issues surrounding it at present, including the Georgian crisis, accession of new countries and the various myths of Euro-bureaucracy.

American Consul Dr Lisa Vickers, then gave an in-depth analysis of the recent Presidential Elections including the Democratic dominance of the Senate, the nomination of Obama's people and his decisions on policy. Ms Vickers took us through the arrangements that form the background to these momentous changes – a clear and resonant briefing for our budding politicians.



Remembering our heroes

In 1914, there were fewer than 2000 living Fettesians, of whom some 900 were over 40.

By 1918, 1094 of them had served of whom 246 had given their lives for their country. Our Remembrance Day Service is always a powerful and moving ceremony with the whole of the College participating. A special invitation is extended to Fettesian Veterans and their families who join us in Chapel and at the War Memorial for two minutes of silence and the wreath laying ceremony. The day was a time for reflection, remembering and appreciating the sacrifice others made for us.





House drama

Moredun House delivered a powerful stage performance of 'Twelve Angry Men' at the end of November 2008.

The play is a memorable drama made famous in the great 1957 film starring Henry Fonda and Lee J Cobb: twelve jurors, locked in a New York jury room, must decide the fate of one – a young man accused of murder. A talented cast of young men from Moredun brought the play vividly to life on stage and played to packed houses for three successive nights. Atmospheric stage design and lighting, and performances of real conviction and strength brought a hot and claustrophobic New York jury room compellingly to life on a cold Edinburgh night.

A talented cast of young men from Moredun brought the play vividly to life

Further magnificent performances were given to us on the nights of the Arniston House Play also known as Arniston Towers School Show. The play showed the journey of a group of school girls growing into independent women and stereotypically categorised into the 'nicest girl in school' to 'the meanest girl in school' and 'the scholarship girl.' Congratulations to all involved, the performers, Director and all those who helped with the staging and costumes too.



Redecorating Silverknowes

Fettes College previously adopted a section of beach at Silverknowes but a contact made during the clean-up sessions resulted in an intriguing request for the CAS pupils (Community, Action and Service part of the IB Diploma). The owner of a local tearoom approached us to paint something that would be visually pleasing and reflect the nature of the environment.

Four of our Upper Sixth girls took on the planning and implementation of this vision spending time designing the mural and then organising the paints and resources.

The end result, was simple, yet impactful and very well accepted by the tea shop owner and his patrons. This project will continue as other shutters on the tea room will also be painted by other pupils over the coming months.

World-class athletes at Fettes

Fettes College pupils couldn't believe their eyes when they saw the Springboks training on the Fettes pitches prior to their match against Scotland in November as part of the Autumn Tests. The team was kind enough to sign rugby balls and T-shirts for a crowd of patient Fettes Prep pupils.

The following week the Headmaster's wife fulfilled a life-long ambition of running with Paula Radcliffe who was visiting one of our PE staff before heading to a Scottish Athletics dinner. Mrs Spens set such a pace running along the East Drive that Paula just kept on that pace for the whole circuit, much to her co-runners' surprise.

Paula ran the same 10k route that Fettes pupils and staff will be running for the annual charity 5k, 10k and Half Marathon runs taking place on March 15th.





World Wide Web

The replacement cycle of the computer kit at Fettes is a maximum of four years but, when it is working fine and has merely become obsolete, it always seems a shame to send it for recycling. So it is good to know that some kit at least is still being used in education.

Norrie Wilson of Computers for Tanzania wrote to us recently:

“Thank you so much for helping with our appeal. The computers eventually arrived after quite an eventful journey. Now they are working well and the folks here are cock-a-hoop with them. The picture is of a class using the computers in the Imbaseni Vocational Training Centre run by Scripture Union Tanzania, just outside Arusha in the north of that country.”



Left to right: Stuart Kinnaird, Matthew Tansini, Nicklas Lange

Hockey

Stuart Kinnaird (Glencorse) and Nicklas Lange (Carrington) played in the East U18 team and Matthew Tansini (Carrington) in the East U16 team in this year’s Inter-District Hockey tournaments.

Although both teams came runners-up to West District, Matthew who plays in goal, has been invited to join the U16 Scottish Training Squad on the strength of his performance in the tournament.



First shots fired

Fettes College Combined Cadet Force has unveiled its new rifle range facility.

Sited to the rear of the Glencorse garden, the new building houses an excellent 25 metre range with a viewing area behind the shooting platform. It has been custom-made to ensure we have a superb facility for indoor shooting practise. A wall-mounted display cabinet awaits a plethora of trophies we hope to be

awarded once indoor shooting regains its hold on the pupils’ imagination.

The first shots were fired by Lachlan Grassie of the Fifth Form with a gallery of spectators including the Headmaster, Contingent Commander, and representatives of the Fettes Foundation. The new range was made possible by the generosity of a number of benefactors coordinated by the Fettes Foundation.

School history republished

Due to popular demand a second edition of the School history *A Keen Wind Blows* has just been published, with a new chapter covering the last ten years – the tenure of our current Headmaster.

The whole book is vital reading for the informed and discriminating parent and is available from the Fettes Shop (www.fettesshop.com)

A day like no other!

120 Prep pupils re-lived the days of Roman occupation on Friday 7th November in a Latin Day extravaganza. The budding classicists came from all over Scotland and Northern England – Ardreck, Aysgarth, Cargilfield, Craigclowan, Fettes Prep, Mowden Hall, St Mary’s Melrose and Terrington Hall.

Re-enactment legionaries from the Antonine Guard and the newly re-constituted IX Legion from the North of Scotland put the Prep pupils through their paces with some rigorous training and shouting. Their teachers were also taught how to apply discipline to naughty pupils; make them march 50 km with a weight of 30 kilos on their backs – that will teach them! Other activities included enjoying the glorious day in a massive hunt for the cruel centurion Cuniculus Inscius who lay murdered in the Fives courts.

Finally participants had the chance to re-live the drama of the British warrior queen Boudicca whose blue-painted

soldiers overcame the arrogant legionaries at Camulodunum.

The Roman prandium was unforgettable. The MacLeod centre looked theatrical with its swathes of brightly coloured fabric – it was just like being at the court of a decadent Emperor – not to mention the fantastic Roman-inspired menu.

A brilliant and unforgettable day at Fettes College.

Dr T Aidonis

