

# FORMER PUPILS' SECTION



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# editorial

It is some eighteen months since we last penned an editorial for the F.P. section. As most of our readers will know, this is because the decision was taken, in conjunction with the school authorities, to change the date of publication from Christmas-time to near the end of May to coincide with the end of the school year, the statutory leaving date, Prize Day and the introduction of new class time-tables which now takes place at the beginning of June.

We must first apologise for the F.P. Section again appearing in the same sort of "home-made" form as the 1985 issue. This is due to the continuing effects of the industrial action by teachers, and we can only hope that, before our next issue is due, a radical change in government attitudes towards education will not only salvage what is left of teacher goodwill, but begin to rebuild some of the extensive damage which has been done by policies which were both mistaken and incredibly insensitive.

We feel obliged to mention that, since the last issue, we have reached school leaving age, and in fact retired in June last year, but decided, like Mr. Donaldson, our predecessor in the editorial chair, to continue our contact with the F.P. Clubs.

At the A.G.M. last October it was decided to ask Mr. John Stuart to continue in office for a further year as Honorary President, and to ask future holders of this office to serve a two year term. Mr. Stuart agreed, and we are pleased to welcome him for his second year. We welcome also two ladies, Mrs. Ross (Margaret Davidson) and Mrs. Masson (Margaret Stuart) who were coopted to the Committee.

Arrangements for the next Biennial Dinner are in hand - we are delighted to have acceptances from Mrs. Roy Weston (Sheina Donaldson) and Mr. W. (Billy) Templeton as the speakers, and the provisional date is Friday, 15th April 1988. Venue and prices are not yet decided.

Like this editorial(!) some of our columns are longer than usual due to the need to cover 18 months' events. Members will note also that we have dubbed this the 1986-7 issue to preserve continuity of dating. Otherwise the composition of the magazine is much as usual. Our thanks to all those who returned well-filled information slips which makes compiling "News from the Outposts" a pleasure. Keep us the good work! Our thanks also to George Dixon for an interesting article on the school buildings timed to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the Old School, and to Nicola Bans for her impressions of Finland.

We are grateful also to the Rector for adjusting the size of the photographs to suit our format, and again to David Calder (now head of the School's new Computing Department) for invaluable help with the preparation and printing of the lists.

Finally we would be obliged if readers would let us know if we have made any mistakes or omissions in the lists. Thank you and best wishes.

I. S.

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\* ENGAGEMENTS and MARRIAGES \*  
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We offer congratulations and best wishes to the following on their marriages:

Shirley Masson and Ian Findlay, wed at Inverallan in June 1986.  
Amanda Munro and Stuart Farquhar, wed at Nethybridge also in June 1986.  
Isobel McCafferty and Davie Asher, wed in Inverness in July 1986.  
Sally Farquhar and Barry Main wed at St. Columba's in October 1986.  
Daphne Duncan and Stephen Ritchie wed at Advie, also in October 1986.  
Iain Beange and Teresa Scott wed at Newcastle in November 1986.

and to the following on their engagements:

in September 1985 Lorraine Gordon and Frank Peet, and also Malcolm Smith and Samantha Pettifer.  
in March 1986 Charles Ross and Christine Polson.  
in May 1986 Sheila McCulloch and Stephen Drumm, and also Shonagh George and Sergeant Richard Dunn, R.A.F.  
in August 1986 Debbie Allan and Kenneth Kinnaird, and Ian Munro and Alison Conagan.  
in November 1986 Derek Walker and Catherine Gordon.  
in December 1986 David Clark and Sheonaid McGregor and Elizabeth Wallace and Stuart Young, and  
(just as we go to press!) Sandy McCook and Marion Miller in April.

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\* NEW RECRUITS \*  
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We bid welcome to the following new members who joined on leaving school:

Louise Forbes of the Home Farm, who is studying Physiotherapy in Aberdeen; Jennifer Grant, Tomdhu who is doing Communication Studies at the College of Commerce, Aberdeen; Vikki MacLean (Head Girl 1985-86), who also goes to Aberdeen to do a B.Ed. in Primary Teaching; Cindy Masson of Boat of Garten, who is to take a S.H.N.D. in Information Studies at Queen Margaret's College, Edinburgh; John Rattray (Head Boy 1985-86), who is studying for a B.Sc. in Accounting at Napier Collegem Edinburgh, and Rona Wallace who completed a course at Telford College, Edinburgh and is now a travel consultant with Pan Pacific in London.

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\* SWIMMING CLUB MEMBERS \*  
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Dorothy Bruce; Hazel MacKenzie; Elizabeth McLeod; Eddie McTavish; John Rennie; Alma Scobie; Sinclair Scobie; Linda Sim; Edna Smith; Fiona Strachan; Margaret Masson (Secretary and Treasurer).

## H. M. Services

Captain John Clark is now at the British Outward Bound Centre in Norway for the next 2 years "enjoying lots of fresh air, climbing, canoeing and ski-ing". Archie Liggat occasionally passes over Grantown, not like a phantom, but in HIS Phantom! Otherwise he is in the throes of creating a garden out of what seems to be a stretch of old battlefield in Fife. Andrew Liggat is commanding a flight of R.A.F. Regiment at R.A.F. Honington. He is also Station Winter Sports Officer, (which was a good excuse for two visits to the Cairngorms this winter!) Parachute instructor David Ross is off on secondment to Oman in August for his final 2 years of service. His sons David, a photo printer at the R.A.E. Farnborough and Andrew, a student at Farnborough "Tech", have both made parachute jumps despatched by father, but David reports that he can't persuade his wife Betty to take the plunge! Thomas Stuart is "Still employed on N.A.T.O. Planning Duties at Headquarters Strike Command. R.A.F. High Wycombe, but expecting a new appointment any day now."

# Obituary

We received notification from her husband at the turn of the year of the death of MRS. ELIZABETH LITTLEJOHN (Elsie Young) which took place in December 1984. With her husband she ran "The Sheaf and Sickle" at Long Lawford, Rugby, till ill health forced her to give up her part in 1983. We send the condolences of the Clubs to her husband and family.

We are indebted to her brother, Bert Mackintosh, for the following obituary of MRS. I.C. GRANT, M.A. (Bella Mackintosh) a faithful Former Pupil:

"Mrs. I.C. Grant (Bella Mackintosh) of Tir nan Og, Nethybridge, died on 14th Jan. 1986 and was laid to rest in Cromdale churchyard. When she was a Grammar School senior pupil, her French teacher suspected that she was slightly deaf but did not consider it serious enough to report. At Edinburgh University Bella suffered the shock of being told that she had a form of hereditary deafness. The sympathetic doctor who broke the news advised her to take up golf and bridge, from both of which she derived much pleasure for the remainder of her life. She was a primary school teacher in Grantown Grammar School at the time of her marriage in 1947."

To Bert, who travelled up from Edinburgh frequently to visit his sister, during her later years of failing health, and to her other relatives and friends we extend the sympathy of the Clubs.

Mrs. Marjorie Cooke wrote to inform us of the death of her husband, CHARLES W. COOKE, which took place in June 1986 at the age of 74. A Cromdale boy, Charles entered the former National Commercial Bank branch in Grantown on leaving the Grammar School and made his career in banking till his retirement in 1972 when he was accountant at the Partick Branch of the Bank. We send sincere sympathy to Mrs. Cooke in her loss.

We are also indebted to local member Gordon Jack for the following obituary of his brother Alister: ALISTER JACK died in the Royal Masonic Hospital, London on 24th November 1986 after a year long illness. Born at Grantown-on-Spey on 15th March, 1925 he attended the Grammar School where he eventually became School Captain. After taking his Highers he joined the R.A.F. and was sent to Canada where he trained as an Air Bomber. In 1947, after release from the R.A.F. he joined the Metropolitan Police as a 'Beat Bobby', but after a year he was accepted into the C.I.D. He eventually became a Detective Sergeant in the 'Flying Squad' and later took charge as Detective Inspector at Bow Street Police Station where he served for three tours of duty. On leaving the service in 1974 he became Personnel Officer with a firm of Building Contractors. Alister is survived by his wife Irene and daughters Deborah and Heather to whom and to his other relatives and friends we express the sympathy of the Clubs.

We mourn the loss of a very faithful member in the death of JOHN BURGESS which took place in Ayr Hospital in March. He was one of the best known and loved local personalities of his generation in Grantown, and the visitors who patronised his High Street tailor's shop will also have happy memories of his good humour and pawky stories. He had many interests, among them hill-walking, natural history, local history, golf and latterly swimming (we remember admiring the determination with which he applied himself to learning to swim at the age of about 70!). He was an elder of both the former South Church and of Inverallan and a keen member of the church choir and the former men's choir. Many people, among them former Scouts and Sunday School pupils will also have happy memories of expeditions and outings he

helped conduct. He was however above all an enthusiastic Grantonian, and we will remember how, not long after his second marriage and his move to Ayr, he ensured that he had a summer home to return to in his beloved Grantown. We will remember him too, clad in the kilt which he wore so well, either chatting to friends in the High Street or telling his stories as "fear an tìghe" at a local ceilidh, or making sure that he had ordered his school magazine, for he was always one of the first to do so.

We send our sincere condolences to his wife Jean, and to his son Iain and family.

DAVID WILLIAMSON died peacefully in the St. Francis Hospice, Havering on 17th December 1986. Son of the late Mr. A. Williamson, the dispensing chemist of the former Grantown branch of Boots, and his wife, David made his home with his late mother until her death in 1984. Shortly after this he became ill with a rare but inoperable tumour and moved south to join his sister Margaret who is a consultant psychotherapist in Hornchurch.

David spent most of his working life as a telephone engineer employed in the local exchange, but moved latterly to a maintenance post with the Cairngorm Chairlift Company. A keen curler and golfer, and of an obliging nature David was popular with his colleagues and will be sadly missed by his friends. To his sister Margaret, who informed us of his illness, we send sincere sympathy on behalf of the Clubs.

Since we completed the above obituaries we have received notification of the death of Mrs. Frances Grant which occurred suddenly in Inverness on 17th February, 1987. Mrs. Grant (Frances Cooke) formerly of Balmenach, was the sister of Charles Cooke, whose death is recorded above. To her family and friends, and in particular to her husband and daughter Katherine, we offer sincere condolences on behalf of the Clubs.

We extend sympathy to the following who have suffered bereavement since our last issue:

the Gordon family at Achnahannet on the loss of their grandmother, Mrs. Brooks.

the Mutch family who lost their grandfather, Jimmie McKenzie.

the Stuart family on the death of their father in Portsoy.

Hamish and Mae Marshall on the loss of their mother. Mrs. Wilson (Helen Scott) on the loss of her mother.

the Gordon family, Lower Delliefure, on the loss of their grandfather.

Mrs. Butler-Lee (Amy Campbell) on the loss of her husband.

Tom Hunter on the loss of his wife Terry.

Keith McKerron on the loss of his sister Hilda.

Mrs. Crichton (Lorna Forbes) (late of Balmenach) on the loss of her mother.

the Robb family on the loss of their father.

the Mortimer family on the loss of their father

George, a former town councillor and Dean of Guild.

Mrs. Clark (Janet Barclay) on the loss of her mother.

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\* BIRTHS \*  
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We are pleased to record the following "happy events":

a daughter to Allan and Sandra Callum (nee Paterson) in September 1985; a son to Hugh and Wendy Mackintosh, also in September '85; a daughter to Ian and Annette McGregor (nee Hogg) born in Oslo in November 1985; a son to John and Fiona Hunter (nee Henderson) in February 1986 and a son also to Michael and Jessie Wood in February '86. A daughter to James and Diane Shand in May 1986; a son to Bruno and Susan Bettolini (nee Grant) in September 1986 also a son to Ross and Mairi Notman (nee Paterson); a son to Colin and Evelyn Brazendale (nee McMurray) in February 1987; and a son to Gordon and Alison McConachie (nee Grant) in March 1987.

# News

## from the Outposts

"I've finally beaten sex discrimination and am now a "Fellow" at Aberdeen University (actually this is a cheap way of getting younger research staff to lecture!)" explains Eunice Allan; she continues "I'm working in the Agriculture Dept. as a bacteriologist. Family - well I'm the only one left who is still single since Sandy's marriage in September!" Mrs. Allan (Mona McLean) is "still enjoying retirement and, while on holiday in Grantown, very appreciative of the welcome and good games at the Bowling Green." Captain Alan Anfield resigned his Army Commission in April 1986 after 23 years service and is now learning the intricacies of Insurance and Finance with Allied Dunbar, Cheltenham. And enjoying the change of work! "Have just spent 12 months in Helsinki, and its b..... cold there now, but I didn't see one polar bear or penguin" writes Nicola Bans "AND Finland is not a communistic country!!!" she adds, obviously anxious to clear up any misunderstanding. Her Finnish address is: Hausgatan 1B 32, Helsinki.

Mrs. Brazendale (Evelyn McMurray) has been "Taking a break from nursing, eagerly awaiting the birth of our first child in February '87." Please see births! Mrs. Brocklehurst (Margaret McWilliam) dislikes the cold of the Scottish winter and spent some of November and December on a safari holiday in Kenya, then went off to Madeira for a month in January, fully exploiting the opportunities offered by retirement! Sandy Calder sent good wishes from Inverness but had no news to report and none from son Alasdair's bachelor establishment either. "Still working away as a Curriculum Development Officer" reports Gillies Campbell. Mrs. Cowan (Wilma Irving) "Had a very enjoyable family get together in Lincoln the week before Christmas for the wedding of our second son, Adrian. My mother, now aged 84, thoroughly enjoyed the trip." Lesley Craib writes from Aberdeen that she has just been accepted for a post-grad. primary teaching course at the college in Aberdeen. Regular reader Mrs. Craig (Dorothy Calder) was one of the earliest to return her slip.

Mrs. Crichton (Lorna Forbes) is working as a Secretary in the Personnel Department at Woodend Hospital, Aberdeen and living in Aberdeen's new dormitory suburb at Westhill. "Iain Cumming continues sailing round the world, still under the British Flag" writes Mrs. Cumming (Fiona Ledingham) who is working part-time as a community occupational therapist with Lothian Region. Regarding the family "Alexander has started school and James has started walking!" Please note their new address. Kirsteen Cumming is now working in a residential school for speech and language impaired children in Northern Ireland, and editing a magazine for the Northern Amateur Theatre Association. We hear that inhabitants of Rogart, Sutherland were startled by some celestial music recently - no, not the heavenly hosts, but only their local vet, Grant Cumming, who was so enraptured by the thrills of hang-gliding that he burst into song in mid-air, unaware that his voice would carry downwards so well!

Duncan Davidson, now retired, had no news from Ayrshire. Mairghread Davies is "Currently studying at The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art - and enjoying life to the full." George Dixon was appointed Regional Archivist by Central Regional Council in July 1986, and elected F.S.A.Scot. in October 1986. Having completed her training in February 1986, Jane Dunlop took up an appointment as a staff nurse in Ward 1A, Gynaecology Unit at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness. Clive Elrick notified us of his new Elgin address, while brother Nigel continues "as a senior enrolled nurse at the psychiatric hospital in Elgin." A well filled slip from Mrs. Erskine (Michele Heawood) reports her parents are now in Greenlaw, her acquisition of a black mongrel called Taffy (what a major upheaval the arrival of a new dog is!), holidays last year (and this) in Yugoslavia and the award of a plaque for fundraising in a Charity Walk. Mrs. Farquhar (Amanda Munro) is now working in Ninewells Maternity Unit, Dundee - Special Baby Care Unit. She reports "I am now what

you call a Neonatal Paediatric Nurse (NNPN) but I continue on Staff Midwife status and General Nurse wages!!! (not a lot)." Her engineer husband has been made redundant and has been having difficulty finding another job. We wish an immediate ration of good luck! Mrs. Tom Ferguson (Pamela Macdonald) had "Nothing new to report this year at all." They are still in Currie. We noticed that Sine Fergusson signed her slip as "Jean" this year. Is this significant? Recently married Mrs. Ian Findlay (Shirley Masson) is now living in Hatton and working with Simmers Bakery. Mrs. Forsyth (Nancy Gray) says she is "Still busy - Gardening; Paliticking; Guide Dogging; Grandmothering - not in that order of course!!!" Mrs. Fraser (Elspeth Mitchell) "Appreciated getting the school magazine last year in spite of all the school problems."

"Still enjoying life" reports Robin Fraser "although working for a large company becomes more difficult, as the Oil Boom fades in Aberdeen. Still involved with The Boys' Brigade, and still having a tune on the old accordion. My daughter, Susan, got married in May 1986 and now stays in Lincoln - so father's pocket is now 'gie empty'!!" Mrs. Gordon (Ann Paton) writes "We retired last year and moved house in September. The days never seem long enough for all we want to do." A common experience in retirement we think! Congratulations to Helen Gordon who completed her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award in time for last summer's presentation. We wish her good luck for her finals for Pharmacy Hons. which she sits in June. All going well she is due to start her Pre-Registration Year in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary in August. James Gordon graduated Ph.D in July 1986 and is with B.P.'s Technology Department.

Mrs. Allan Grant (Margaret Telfer) is still in "the Broch" as Head Teacher of Tyrie School. Giving us advance notice of his forthcoming marriage Graham Grant writes "There seem to be more preparations for our wedding than there were for the Duke and Duchess of York!!" We were pleased to hear the following from Patrick Grant: "I have recently moved back from local government to the Civil Service, but am still in Scotland, based in the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries office in Hamilton. So regular weekend forays to the hills are much enjoyed. However I'm not too sure about the family growing up with "Glasgow accents!" Civil Servant Valerie Grant still lives in the curiously named "Bread Street", Edinburgh. Walter Grant has been threatening fellow F.P. Sam Munro that if the latter beats him again at Indoor Bowls he will arrange his expulsion from the Elgin Club where they both play!

Mrs. Greig (Margaret Grant) is still enjoying retirement very much. "Went to Majorca for the winter this year and so far have planned Yugoslavia and Cyprus for this summer. Last year we both won prizes at the Flower Show. Bill for plants and me for knitting." Donald Gunn is another who is clearly pleased to say "enjoying retirement". "We had a lovely day" (at the wedding of Sally Farquhar and Barry Main) reports Mrs. Harris (Kathleen Dunn). "Jill, my daughter was flowergirl - can now understand Princess Diana's anxiety - only difference being there weren't millions viewing our wedding!!" We noticed Albert Hastings' daughter Fiona was married in Nairn just after Christmas 1985. (Just too late to be reported last time!) Gillian Henderson is in the midst of a further degree in education, continuing to lecture in Physiotherapy at Curtin University, and half time in private practice. She is planning a visit to Scotland in July 1987 and is loving Australia.

Ian Herd has completed his HND (Business Studies) and is continuing study of this subject having joined the 2nd Year B.A. (Hons.) Business Studies Course at the Polytechnic of Wales. By the time we are in print he will have begun a year's industrial training. Andrew and Duncan Howlett had no news of note. Andrew is still in London and Duncan in Aberdeen. Mrs. Hunter (Fiona Henderson) spent 6 weeks in Feb./March last year in Raigmore before giving birth to her son Michael. Her daughter Rachel is now 2½. Fiona has started a part-time job in the Social Work Department finding families who will look after mentally handicapped children for up to 6 weeks a year. Tom Hunter is already looking forward to the '88 Reunion! "Looking forward to retirement in October 87!" exclaims Edward Illingworth. Isn't the anticipation great? But the fulfilment is even better! In October 1986 Arthur Innes was appointed Plant and Transport Manager (Scotland) for Geo. Wimpey P.L.C. Congratulations!

Marr Illingworth hopes to be in Scotland during July and August. John Irving also reported approvingly of the family reunion recorded under sister Mrs. Wilma Cowan's entry. Real estate tycoon Rodena Kelman writes - "The change of address indicates that I have joined the property market and bought a flat; (I probably own the door handle!). My job has been upgraded again, so that's good news, especially now when there's a mortgage to be paid!" Grace Kirk finds the F.P. Section very rejuvenating. "It rolls back the years so marvellously!" Mrs. Laing (Katharine Templeton) is "kept busy working as a Community Midwifery Sister at the Eastern General Hospital, Edinburgh." Jill Lennon called to see us early in the New Year and we obtained the following statement in front of witnesses - "Based at Kentish Town Police Station - have been pounding the beat for three months, covering Kentish and Camden Town. Really enjoying life as a WPC and there's no end of variety. Brother Robin is a Trainee Accountant with Nestle in Croydon and has settled in well. Met Andrew George at Hendon Training School - he was in the intake two below mine, and a budding PC in the Met. too."

Mrs. Lilley (Jane Macaulay) has had a "Very busy year, coping with a full-time job and 2 very demanding children." At present she is "virtually full-time on the TV page of 'the P. and J.'" A nice letter from Karen Low tells of her winter activities in Grindelwald working in a "confiserie", her plans to return to Interlaken for the summer and a recent holiday trip spent covering Canada from West (Vancouver) to East (Quebec). Mrs. Lugg (Jean Burgess) enjoys an active retirement with lots of interests and travel including a recent tour of the Peloponnese with Glasgow University Archaeology Department. She complains however it rains every time she comes to Grantown! E.I.S. Field Officer Simon Macaulay says the post-salaries campaign means there is "still an enormous amount of work to be done. At least though I now find time to paint the house, as I am no longer at meetings 5 evenings per week!" Claire McCann is due to complete her B.A.(Hons.) in Design this June. She did her thesis work in Florence last summer and more recently went ski-ing on Cairngorm "for only the 2nd precarious time since leaving school!"

"Nothing exciting to report" writes Mrs. McClelland (Beth Lawrence) "apart from the fact that my daughter Karen managed to gain 8 'O' Grades this past year, and is now attempting 5 Highers." (Good luck to her! Ed.) In spite of the downturn in the Oil Industry, Derek McCulloch (now Assistant Division Engineer with Halliburton Marketing and Services Ltd. in Aberdeen) reports that the decline has not in any way reduced the paperwork! We were glad to hear the following from oilman Alistair MacDonald in Adelaide - "Now fully recovered from severe burns suffered in gas explosion on site. Also survived recession resulting from fall in oil prices. Work now beginning to pick up again. Enjoyed exotic New Year celebrations in Singapore!" Telegram style imparts information efficiently! "Its a small world" comments James MacDonald, who, while on holiday last year, chanced on someone in a small Canadian town called Fergus with connections with his native Nethybridge. Mr. and Mrs. Andrew MacGregor (Pat Lawrence) have invested in a time-share in the Algarve...and on a golf course naturally!" Pat managed to break her hip in the classroom last October but doesn't say how! We wish a good recovery. Mrs. McGregor (Annette Hogg) gave birth to her daughter Eilidh in Norway 4 days after winning 2 gold medals at a swimming gala! No doubt Eilidh will take to water like a duck! Continuing her good work with young swimmers begun at G.G.S. Annette has now been teaching children at the British school for 2 years, and also acts as a life guard at the NATO complex. Douglas McInnes is "Still happy in Inverness. Still ski-ing and playing badminton." Mrs. McIntosh (Iris Forbes) writes of an unsettling year with her husband moving from Elgin for a time to Boots in Aberdeen, then being appointed "Managerial relief" in Scotland. Besides this her mother has had two spells in Raigmore. May 1987 be a happier year for the family.

Professor Donald McIntyre continues a busy life of lecturing and research for which he has earned international recognition including appointment by Edinburgh University as a "Distinguished Fellow". For his work in the applications of the computer to geology he was appointed last year a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a national lecturer for the association for Computing Machinery. "This has taken me", he writes "to New York, Washington and Boston as well as other places closer to 'home' (though they are further from the Spey!)" Donald's wife Ann is Session Clerk of the Claremont Presbyterian Church. Randal McIntyre is still in Falkirk. We hear he accompanied brother Donald on a quick dash north to photograph the sea cliffs at Portsoy for one of the latter's lectures. Gilbert Mackay had nothing of note to report this year. Dr. Sandy Mackenzie has completed a year in his new post as Regional Medical Officer. He wonders if we have any F.P.'s in Orkney or Shetland which he enjoys visiting regularly. He seems less enthusiastic about regular Thursday visits to Peterhead. Never mind Sandy, Buff Hardie would say that connection entitled you to write Ph.D. after your name!

We hope we may see Keith McKerron and other fiddlers entertaining us at next years Dinner. Mrs. Edith Mackintosh wrote that "the family is jogging along and all well". She has had successful treatment for eye problems, and finds great pleasure in being able to read as much as she likes. We are grateful to Bert Mackintosh for help with the obituary of his late sister Bella, whom he misses a great deal. Mrs. McLeod (Elizabeth Macgregor) enjoyed "a nostalgic browse" round the Grantown Society exhibition held in the Primary School recently. Congratulations to Raymond McMurray who has taken up his first post as a doctor at Harrogate District General Hospital after graduating M.B. Ch.B. at Edinburgh last year. We are relieved to hear that Ian Macpherson (Jun.) "retains Civil Service status as an R.N.S.T.S. inspector, whilst other departments of the Royal Dockyards 'Go Private'." By the time this issue appears, he points out, his elder daughter will be 18, the same age he was when he left Speyside! Rachel MacRobert reports she is "Still teaching in Bettyhill" and using her holidays to travel "as often as affordable!" "Darby and Joan now" reports Alan McTaggart from down under. "All three children are out in the world - Natalia is a vet near Brisbane, Anya works in New York and Steven dances with New Zealand Ballet. Obviously time for a new direction!"

"Since March '86 I have been working as a Staff Nurse in Ward 6C Raigmore Hospital, and am thoroughly enjoying it." reports Sue Martin. "Continuing to enjoy retirement" reported Wishart Milne in January, as he was about to set off for Australia via U.S.A. Bon voyage! New grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Bill Mitchell (Judy Stuart), (and great grandma, Mrs. Mitchell!) are enjoying their new roles immensely. Bill is looking forward to the "Open" at Muirfield this year, and "will be delighted to meet other golf fanatics in the P.G.A. tent between 12 and 1!" "Just off to spend Xmas in Australia. Hope to see Alan Grant and also his father and mother who will be there at the same time. Otherwise everything is fine here and business is booming!" reported Mike Moir from Hong Kong. Edwin/Sam Munro is "Glad to say still reasonably fit enough to enjoy both outdoor and in the Indoor Stadium bowling and occasionally win a competition!" Note the becoming modesty!

Jeannette Munro still keeps busy in a variety of ways and says "I have yet to find time on my hands" in her retirement. Thank you for the friendly letter. "Another year older, and a new one just begun" - the quotation from John Lennon was selected by Mr. and Mrs. Michael Munro (Anne Strachan). "A fairly uneventful year, but we're all fine and our two sons are thriving." We thought we had a fair record of attendance at Burns Suppers, but Mrs. O'Connor (Dorothy Cameron) performed the "Address to the Haggis" at NINE Burns Suppers in Canada and the U.S. last year! Her husband and she have also been presented with medals by the Canadian Consul for their work in producing, directing and taking part in a show to commemorate the 60th Jubilee of the Canadian Legion. Beatrice Oliphant writes "Marilyn and I met up with John Campbell (Carrbridge) now residing in Bishops Stortford and

actively encouraged him to become a member! As for myself I'm transferring to child psychiatry in March, remaining in Oxford." Mrs. Parrott (Catherine Douglas) is to be responsible for the raising of a million dollars to renovate the building in which her organisation houses 52 maltreated girls. "Atholl Crescent didn't quite prepare me for this" she comments, "but the committee is strong, so we'll do it!" Her domestic life has been somewhat disrupted by acquisition of a black Labrador pup. I wonder if it can be related to our delinquent two year old? Mrs. Perk (Ann Stuart) is back in Africa, in Zaire, the former Belgian Congo, to be exact. Ron Philip writes "am working hard to pay off the debts incurred in taking a year's sabbatical." 90% of his general practice is orthodox medicine, and he is still delivering lots of babies, though he has developed interests in "Osteopathy, Reflexology, Tsi Chi and Dowsing." (Your editor would have put an exclamation mark after the last item but Ron didn't!)

Mrs. Rae (Mona Grant) writes - "Really enjoyed the F.P. re-union. Can't make it yearly can you!?" (No, but we'd be glad to enroll you in our publicity dept! Ed.) Mona has been trying, without success so far, to get back into teaching, but jobs seem to be in short supply in the Highland capital, probably due to falling rolls. "Back teaching, in Turriff Academy, and settling down to married life," reports Mrs. Ritchie (Daphne Duncan). Ian Ritchie had no news from Saffron Walden. Mrs. Myles Ritson enjoyed the Expo 86 World Fair in Vancouver last year. She writes "had an enjoyable visit with Avril Mackintosh, (daughter of Donald Mackintosh formerly of Ardchattan, Dulnain Bridge,) who was here working at the British Pavilion for the Scottish Tourist Board." "I am beginning to feel my age" writes Mrs. Robertson (Davis Thomson) whose son Iain is about to start secondary school. "I should be improving as a linguist, with pupils coming from Czechoslovakia to Hong Kong and Algeria to Iran, but they are much more receptive to learning English than I am to learning Arabic or Cantonese!!" Mrs. Clark (Alison Ronaldson) takes care of three slips for us annually as the Ronaldson family is conveniently grouped in Westhill, Inverness. In a nice letter Alison comments: "We see lots of changes in Grantown, particularly in the shops, and some of the names in the Strathie are strange to us." Take our word for it this is not an experience confined to "exiles".

Our thanks to Margaret Ross (Broomhill) who wrote appreciatively of receiving last year's "home-made" magazine. We noted also from the "Strathie" that both Margaret and Richard Surtees had been through their boxes of old photos. Richard's 1930 class group was gathered around a youthful but easily recognisable Miss Mariel Grant. Victor and May Ross spent an enjoyable Christmas and New Year with their daughter Carole and family in Edmonton, Canada. Dr. Bill Sellar's daughter Sonya (18) has been unconditionally accepted to do Psychology at Aberdeen while his twin boys are at Rannoch and Merchiston Castle schools. "Have acquired a new status - that of grandparents" reports Mrs. Selman (Elise Kirk).. but she doesn't mention the extent of Grandma's pleasure and pride! Mrs. Shiach (Margaret Smith) sent good wishes for the success of the new publication date. Mrs. Shoesmith (Dr. Elizabeth Stuart) continues her medical work in Orkney.

Catherine Smith finds her historical interests keep her active and healthy in retirement. It's all these turret staircases she climbs in the course of tours with Cumbernauld Historical Society! She regrets that lack of a car prevents her extending her trips far enough to include Strathspey. "I've been in Singapore for a year now. I'm teaching in a government school - a Methodist Girls' School, believe it or not!" writes Mrs. Smith (Elspeth Gow). Mrs. Smith (Janette MacDonald) likes Perth and enjoys an occasional gossip over coffee with Mrs. Hollins (Maureen Gardner). Janette is also hoping to take part in the Mods again this year and compete for the Gold Medal. Good Luck!

Mrs. Spalding (Isobel Gunn) delivered her slip personally with a friendly greeting one Sunday in early March. Nicholas Spence sent lots of news - he is based back in Munich again, but returns to Scotland about once a month, and is in contact with his contemporaries Margaret MacLennan and John Stuart. He is already looking forward to the 1988 Dinner and a cast on the Spey. Veteran supporter Mrs. Squires (Isa Moyes), now nearly 86, finds the magazine "a great link". She has a new address in Quebec where she confesses she still dances to a tape of highland music sent by a friend in Lewis. Retired policeman Lachlan Stuart checked in from Portgordon. Alistair Surtees is enthusiastic about the joys of retirement, which include attendance at 'O' Level English Literature classes in his case. "Wonderful what you do when you are a volunteer!" he comments. Mrs. Stevens (Meta King) returned her slip from Leeds. In October Mrs. Stuart Khamsi (Rita Stuart) spent three weeks in China, partly working and partly sightseeing. She has now returned to her normal work with UNESCO in Paris.

Hamish Templeton wins the first prize for prompt return of his information slip. Elizabeth Wallace spent a year as a Staff Midwife at Guy's Hospital and then became a district midwife attached to Lewisham Hospital. Other important news under "Engagements"! Best wishes for 19th June! Jay Ward now works for Premier Brands (formerly Cadbury Typhoo), and finds his firm under great pressure from financial institutions who charge them £1,000 per hour interest. This is apparently known as "survival motivation!". We are told that we owe the acceptance by Mrs. Weston (Sheina Donaldson) of the request to speak at the next Dinner to her 17 year old son who said "You couldn't do that Mum!" "I was stung into it!" says Sheina, and we are glad she is ready to prove him wrong! Dr. Margaret Williamson has been working as a Consultant Psychotherapist at the Ingrebourne Centre in Hornchurch, Essex for the past three years. David Winchester sent "Christmas Greetings" from Fort William with his slip, and Mrs. Wilson (Audrey Murray), another early returner, sent us good wishes from Aberdeen.

Accommodating reader Mrs. Wilson (Helen Scott) says - "I look forward to the magazine, whatever form it takes." We hear that all goes well with Mrs. White and family (Marjory Mackintosh) in Helensburgh. Michael Wood is "Still teaching at St. Columba's High School, Dunfermline and also lecturing at two evening classes per week." His two boys are now 3 and 1. Alison Wright is in Honours Year (4th) Microbiology at Aberdeen University. (Was it Principal MacNicol's plans which motivated you to emphasise it was the 4th year Alison?) (For the uninitiated, the Principal has suggested 3 year honours courses, and stirred up lots of opposition). Brother Alan is now entering final year of Chartered Accountancy exams with Peat, Marwick McLintock in Aberdeen.

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\* LATE NEWS EXTRA \*  
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Stuart Archibald has taken a year or two away from his electronic work to see a bit of the world! For the past year he has been travelling in America. Flying to New York then Miami, across to New Orleans up to Dallas and coincidentally down to Houston - where he "just happened to be in the right place" for a flight to Mexico City - when Scotland were playing in the World Cup! From there to Denver and across to San Francisco. At present he is in Colorado, getting some ski-ing and plans to move up to Canada shortly and work his way across from West to East before returning home.

Congratulations to Merchant Navy Officer Iain Beange who passed his Chief Officer ticket last year. He is currently with World Wide Shipping, Hong Kong, working as second mate, and congratulations also to Mrs. Angus (Ella Wood) who was awarded a medal to mark 27 years W.R.V.S. service. We note that John Calder and Calum Beange are among those helping to organise Grantown Highland Games. Calum is now with the Bank of Scotland's local branch.

Mrs. Beaton (Sheena McIntosh) writes "Back at College in Aberdeen doing a Diploma in Special Educational Needs - a student again at my age!!" Iain Brown is still

playing football and occasional rugby in an effort to keep fitter than his 2 year old daughter, star of the "Stirling Tumble Tots." Norman Campbell is Football Club Captain of Aberdeen University where he is now in 2nd Year Engineering. Sister Rhoda has almost completed her first year in Geophysics also at Aberdeen.

Adrian Cooke managed to sneak in a weekend at home at Easter while up in Edinburgh carrying out some work for his firm. Mrs. Davidson (Margaret McBeath) had nothing to report from Dumfries. Denise Grant is "currently employed by Citibank Savings in Dundee", and is enthusiastic about the widespread activities of its parent company, one of the world's largest banks. John and Betty Grant (nee Templeton) were "delighted to join THE CLUB of proud grandparents" with the birth of Alison's son Bruce John in March. (see births) Fiona and Shelagh Grant are off to Los Angeles in June for 2/3 weeks. Shelagh is hoping to take mother and father to Canada in late September to visit her aunt and uncle (Mr. and Mrs. Cropp) in London, Ontario. There seem to be decided advantages in working for an airline! Fiona is enthusiastic too about visiting L.A., but for her the Big event of the year is in becoming "auntie" to Baby Bruce.

Computer software engineer Donald Grant has a new address in Edinburgh. Younger brother Colin has been studying at Langside College, Glasgow with the aim of obtaining sufficient qualifications to enter a medical course. He has also been ski-ing effectively at home and abroad with the British Ski Team.

Mr. and Mrs. Alistair Jack (Susan Archibald) have a new address in Newport-on-Tay, Alistair having been promoted from the Londonderry Boots to manage the Dundee branch. Peter McNicol is still afloat; having recently been in the Caribbean heat for 6 weeks, he returned to snow in Quebec, then flew to London where he posted his slip. Grantown may be on his itinerary before too long - and he intends to be back for the reunion next year! He still keeps in touch with veteran Canadian exile Mrs. Squires (Isa Moyes). Mrs. Mitchell (Jan Templeton) writes "Have enjoyed visiting the family in the Isle of Man. Lancashire and Grantown! Seventh grandchild due

to arrive in September! Sister Margaret (Mrs. Paul Cropp) and her husband were home at Christmas and all going well hope to be in Scotland for August/September '87. Excuse for another Templeton family re-union!"

Mrs. Murray (Ann Stewart) reports "Have just completed 8 months supply teaching in a nursery school in Dunfermline. I'm now having withdrawal symptoms although my children are delighted at the thought Mum might be home at lunchtime again! Brother James flits between Paris, Norway and "Murrayfield!" Mrs. Newbould (Rachel Smith) has recently moved into a new house in Rossington, Doncaster and hopes to see more of her husband when he moves to R.A.F. North Luffenham after his last two postings - the Falklands and the Shetlands! Father has been trying to prove that the spade is mightier than the pen by helping lay out the new garden!

Alex Ross has recently been promoted to Detective Superintendent and moved to major investigation pool. "All I deal with now are murders. but then there is no fear of redundancy!" he quips, with the resigned realism of the experienced copper. John Smith has returned to the U.K. after six years abroad, having decided to start an M.B.A. course this autumn. He reports "occasional get-togethers of the G.C.S. folk in London (Messrs. Wilson, Fraser and Bramwell)" and reflects "it's amazing how rosy life 11 years ago seems now!" John's parents are leaving Burnfield to live in Chesterfield in order to be closer to the rest of the family.

Mrs. Storey (Barbara Smith) has returned to Personnel work, dealing with the overseas staff of the Booker organisation which now has an administrative H.Q. in Thame. Richard Surtees has just realised he is an exile of 50 years standing - but he does like his return visits! Mrs. Sutherland (Elspit McIntosh) was nearly too late for inclusion this year, but sent plenty news: the engagement of son Colin, and daughter Mairi's appointment as the Assistant Staff Manager at the Kilmarnock branch of Marks and Spencers. Mr. and Mrs. Billy Templeton (Rita Marshall) are looking forward to taking up residence in Nethy when Billy retires in November next year. We are of course looking forward to hearing from Billy at the Dinner next April.

Mrs. Webb (Margaret Templeton) "Loves to hear about people we went to school with and the progress of their offsprings." She has a new address in Berwickshire. Mrs. Wilson (Ada Imray) enjoyed a visit from Mary Tulloch in the summer. Ada's husband and she are on the verge of retirement and are planning to return to Scotland in about a year's time. Still in Culloden Paddy Wood regretted: "Sorry - no news."

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There follows the article written by George Dixon to commemorate the 150th anniversary of what we now know as the Primary School building. He has given it the paradoxical title:

#### THE NEW OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL



By a happy coincidence, the only surviving photograph of the pre-Victorian Grammar School was rediscovered in time for its 150th anniversary last year. It was taken about 125 years ago by Alexander Mackintosh Urquhart (1823-90).

Early in 1836 William IV was King, the School's Founder, the Good Sir James, was but 25 years dead, and the first purpose-built Grammar School, successor to a series of second-hand buildings, was about to be knocked down.

Built with stones carted from the ruins of the 17th-century Burgh of Regality of (Old) Grantown, it stood on what is now the west playground of the Primary School, a low, rectangular building with its longer axis parallel to South Street. Within it, the Rev. John Wink, with one assistant, and an annual salary of £25 plus about £30 of school fees, taught English, mathematics and book-keeping, and Latin and Greek as requested and paid for, to almost a hundred boys and about a third as many girls.

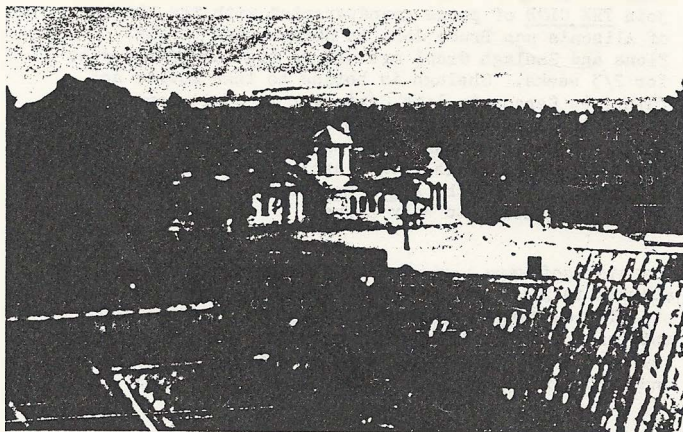
By the opening of the new session in September 1835, it was too small for the rising number of pupils from the growing planned town and its vicinity, and the Factor of Strathspey, Capt. John Grant, wrote to ask his employer, Col. Francis William Grant of Grant (the future 6th Earl of Seafield, who half a century previously had been educated in the old Grammar School on The Square) to ask him for the plan of a new school building, in order to take estimates for its speedy construction. Three months later, on 12th December, Capt. Grant was able to report: "I have contracted for the New Schoolhouse of Grantown, Grigory Grant has the Mason part Grigor Fife the Carpenter Work, James Forbes the Slating (all residing in Grantown) and Archd. Grant in Ballennellan (near Ballindalloch) the Plastering, from the Number of Competitors I must Suppose the Successful Candidates not to make rich by the Job, yet after allowing the Mason the Stones of the Present House and the proprietor furnishing the Slate, Amount to a sum exceeding Two Hundred and Forty pounds Sterling". Apart from the mason, the tradesmen were those who earlier that year had built the new west wing of Castle Grant.

The elegant new school, with its four internal sections and its spire-topped bell tower, rose during 1836, a storm-stressed year of famine in much of the Highlands, on what was left of the top of the School Hillock. It was placed behind and to the left of the site of its predecessor, its longer axis at right angles to South Street and its main windows facing the sun. After the opening of the 1836-37 session, the first in the new accommodation, Capt. Grant paid the tradesmen, on 31st October, a total of £241:13:9. He had kept closely to his predicted cost - and on the credit side the auction of the timber and windows of the previous school fetched £8:13:8. The Old Grantown stones went as agreed into the new building - and there at least some of them still stand, a century and a half later, because part of the 1836 walling lies encased in the present Primary School, forming the inner end of what was for many years the cookery room, between the infant classrooms and the hall.

Around this stone kernel of 1836, with its centuries-old historical associations, the Victorian and early-twentieth-century Grammar School grew and grew in an architecturally piecemeal and rather complicated way, as first one, and then another, and another, and another set of additional classrooms was clapped against the core, to cater for successive increases in the numbers of pupils and in the range of subjects taught them.

Apart from the hanging of the Mears-made bell in the still-empty spire in 1840, little structural change occurred in the new Grammar School during the middle decades of the century, because the town's educational provision was significantly increased by the opening of the Free Church School at the West End, following the Disruption of 1843, and of the Female School, now Burnfield, built in 1861 with money bequeathed for the purpose by Capt. Grant, the old factor. It was therefore not until the educationally revolutionary 1870's, with the closing of the Free Church School in the wake of the 1872 Education Act and the acquisition of the Grammar School from Lord Seafield by the new School Board, that the extension of the latter building became both necessary and inevitable. The complexities of its successive structural enlargements over the next 60 years are a story, or stories, in themselves, but the architect employed to add the first pair of new classrooms having recently been found to be none other than the famous Alexander Marshall Mackenzie (1848-1933), a brief anticipation may be allowed to round off the story of the 1836 School.

Under repeated pressure for expansion from the Inspectorate, the Board agreed on 5th April 1875 to authorize "Mr. A.M. Mackenzie to prepare plans for enlarging the Grammar School to accommodate 130 children in addition to the number at present accommodated", by lengthening the existing school and adding two classrooms. This Mackenzie, then a rising young architect based in Elgin, did, the £860-worth of extension being constructed in 1876, the pupils in the interim being taught in the Drill Hall (the west end of which still stands, as the garage of Garden Park).



The second photograph, taken by Urquhart in the late 1870's, shows Marshall Mackenzie's extensions, including the bell-tower which was added as an afterthought during the summer of 1876. Though his classrooms have been largely demolished and replaced by later work, it is fascinating to see that his tower, resited and heightened, still stands, and that the decorative granite stonework of his principal windows has been preserved, by transfer and retransfer to subsequent additions. It now surrounds the three main three-light windows facing South Street, and a pair of four-light windows at the extremities of the School. The Primary staff, as a consequence, can now look from their staffroom towards The Square through some of the earliest surviving work of the architect of the internationally renowned Marischal College in Aberdeen, amongst many other noted buildings in the North-East and elsewhere.

Grateful acknowledgement is made for access to relevant documents in the Seafield Papers in the Scottish Record Office and the Regional Archives in Inverness.

G. A. Dixon.



# LOCAL NEWS

It was nine years ago at our 1978 Biennial Dinner that a perceptive John Milne, in making the main speech, remarked on what he described as "a shift in the centre of gravity of the Spey Valley" away from Grantown in an up-river direction. In the past year a combination of dismay at the apparent decay of Grantown and resentment at the power now vested in Kingussie and Inverness has led to a proposal to turn back the clock and reverse some of the decisions taken at the time of regionalisation. A nostalgia for the palmy latter days of the Moray and Mairn administration is more than understandable, for it culminated in a period of expansion and development of whose fruits our new Grammar School, Grant House and the Health Centre are prime examples. Enlightened men like the then leading local figures on the educational scene, Director W.F. Lindsay, Chairman Dr. Joseph Grant and Dr. Bain were not hemmed in by worries about availability of materials etc. and lack of maintenance on buildings and were able to create facilities which we all enjoy.

George Dixon, ever a doughty warrior in defence of the status of his native Grantown, gave eloquent expression to the anxieties we have described, but did not win a great deal of support for the proposal to transfer out of Highland Region.

The causes of the apparent stagnation and decay in Grantown and the difficulties facing hoteliers and shopkeepers are perhaps not to be sought in any actions of the Regional or District Councils, but rather in the rapid development of Aviemore and the ease with which the greatly improved shopping facilities of Inverness can be reached via the upgraded A9, whether by private car or by the "free bus" run by one of the supermarket chains. Added to this there is the restraining effect of the stringent financial restrictions on the education and other social services budgets which have produced a tendency to centralise in the interests of economy and thus reduce local services. The plan to remove the maternity facilities in the Ian Charles Hospital is a case in point.

Let us hope that we may soon see a return to a period of expansion which would liberate energies and inject fresh vigour into our town.

We move on to some notes on the doings of our local members:

Vigilant G.P.O. employees John Calder and Kenny Edwards spotted some miscreants attempting a savings bank fraud at the local Post Office, pursued them through the town, and eventually after a struggle handed them over to the Police. Both received commendations for their courage.

Mountain man Eric Pirie often has his head in the clouds, be it in the Cairngorms as the youngest member of the Rescue Team, or as last year on a Himalayan expedition, but he comes down to the level of ordinary mortals again to play a very effective fiddle and to help run the family electrical business.

Mrs. Grant (Jane Stewart) and daughter of the Primary Deputy Head Gillian Sadler had a shared experience this year - both were winners of the Guides Trefoil Award, but with a time interval of 27 years.

Jimmy Grant has been made Honorary President of the Horticultural Society after 30 years of service. He had a serious illness which reduced him to living on sips of water for a time, but he has recovered well, and is as cheery as ever.

Sandy Telfer retired after 37 years with the "Burgh Squad". He was presented with an inscribed watch by colleagues.

Rally driving enthusiast Neil Mutch was recently runner up in a hill-climb championship.

The curlers have had quite a good year. Jock Paterson is determined to maintain the family

tradition. He keeps winning trophies his father also won, and lately he was coaching grandson Andrew MacArthur (Joan's son) and no doubt making clear what was expected of him!

Barry Main skipped the winning rink at one of the outdoor bonspiels this year. Barry's mother Mrs. Donald Main (Elizabeth McGillivray) serves as a District Councillor and has recently begun "surgeries" to deal with local problems. The family business (Beale and Pyper) celebrated its centenary last year.

Mairi Gordon has been helping run the local Brownie pack.

Longstanding T.W.C. members Jean Paterson and Mrs. Dixon (Beatrice Reid) had the honour of cutting the cake at the 40th Anniversary Dinner, while Mrs. Stuart (Marion Paterson) was in charge of an award winning team (including Vera Campbell and Sheila Wilson) which carried out a project on fifty years of change in their local area.

Talented pair Malcolm Smith and his fiancée Samantha Pettifer were among the prizes too, Malcolm for ploughing and Sammie for horse-riding.

The son of Mrs. Hamilton (Evelyn Mackintosh) graduated in Agriculture and her daughter Margaret is studying the same subject.

Pat McLean has reason to be pleased with the completion of the Abbeyfield House project at Nethybridge of which he has been secretary. It cost some £180,000 and has now been operating for over a year.

Ernie and Amelia Oakes (nee Edwards) are enjoying being back amongst old friends at Balmenach.

Mr. and Mrs. Bettoli (Susan Grant) recently had their son christened in Inverallan.

The McLeod family firm continues to be busy. This winter they have done a considerable extension to Holmhill and begun to convert Woodpark Villa (the former telephone exchange) into flats.

Walter Grant has again been active in Clan Grant affairs, being involved in the creation of a Shrine at Duthil Church.

This year will see the 200th Farmers' Show. Will Sandy Innes (husband of Jaclynn Wood) repeat last year's win?

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## IMPRESSIONS OF FINLAND

by Nicola Bans.

I arrived in Helsinki on the 4th January 1986 in a blizzard and a temperature of -21°, probably not the best time to arrive. The days, at first, were very short with an average of 6 hours day-light, but it was not long before they became lighter and I noticed the people got brighter and now I have many friends.

Finland being a very traditional country, they celebrate everything and anything. The 1st May is one of those particular days that sticks in my mind. All students past and present congregate at the statue "Havis Amanda" where they dress 'her' up and where they sing and drink and then move on to a park called the "Kaivopuisto" and when I went, there must have been about 50,000 students all wearing their graduation caps.

Then comes summer and most Finns have summer places on islands to which they retreat for the whole month of July. I was fortunate enough to be invited to a "Summer Place" on an island east of Helsinki called "Pellingne" and there I spent 4 weeks basking in the sun. The summers over here are very good with temperatures in the 80's, a far cry from when I first arrived here.

I would recommend to anyone, if they had a chance to come to Finland to do so. It is a beautiful country.