



"Although I didn't realise it at the time, I learned a lot about working as part of a team at school through sport, music and the CCF. Morrison's gave me a great start to my career in dentistry."
-Dr Catriona Hicks BDS

FOUNDER'S LEGACY LIVES ON



in his will in 1829 not only bears his name, as was his wish, but continues to live and promote his vision. Thousands of young men and women who have passed through the doors of Morrison's Academy have benefited from what he was responsible for endowing. In their turn they have gone on to contribute to the world in which they have lived whether as businessmen and women, lawyers, doctors, academics, engineers, artists and so on. Thomas Morrison created, through his wise giving, a living institution that, since 1860, has helped, through its members past and present, to shape the fabric of our society. I find it hard to think of anything greater than a man or women can do with their money than endow a school: well-educated people are of an incalculable benefit to the world."



The Founder's Day Commemoration at Morrison's Academy on Friday 30th September looked to both the past and the future as the school remembered and gave thanks for the vision of Thomas Morrison when he endowed the school which still bears his name today, 145 years after it first opened its doors to pupils on the 1st of October 1860. The family's enduring link to the school was highlighted by the presence of Richard and Iona Byers, direct descendants of Thomas Morrison.

New Town. In doing so he made the fortune which enabled him to leave his generous bequest.

The Rector drew on his own background as a historian to put the contribution of Thomas Morrison in context:

"I have studied history for many years and I have come to the conclusion that ultimately even the most famous men and women of their day are reduced to little more than words on a page. We read of their exploits and their deeds, the battles they fought, the reforms they introduced, the inventions they made or we see the creations of their artistic imaginations. For all of that they remain distant and in the past. In one way Thomas Morrison is no different, like them he is dead and gone and his name is remembered in a street, in the name of a school and in books on the history of the New Town.

In his address to the school, Rector Simon Pengelley recalled the early years of Thomas Morrison, born in Muthill in 1761, who learned his trade as a stonemason locally. Morrison worked for a number of years in Auchterarder before moving to Edinburgh, where he set up his own business and made a lasting impression on that city as the builder of a substantial part of the beautiful Georgian

But in another way he is very different. The school he endowed

Mr Pengelley's words were borne out by the Founder's Day Speech given by Mr Bruce Cartwright, now a Partner in the Edinburgh office of PricewaterhouseCoopers. Mr Cartwright encouraged the pupils of the current day to enjoy the all-round experience and outstanding preparation for life that they would receive at the school and expressed his hope that they would find it to have been as valuable as he himself had done.

The commemoration ended as it had begun with the a procession lead by the school's pipe band, resplendent in the uniforms provided through the generosity of former pupils, playing for the assembled company.



CHARITY WORK



CHARITY CONCERT

CHAS (The Children's Hospice Association for Scotland) benefited from the proceeds of a concert at Morrison's Academy, in which professional singers Graeme Danby and his wife Valerie Reid performed along with the girls' Chamber Choir and the newly formed Barber Shop Quartet.

Graeme and Valerie have performed internationally in operatic roles at the highest level, and frequently with Scottish Opera and the ENO. The accompaniment was provided by the Director of Music at Dunblane Cathedral, Matthew Beetschen, who has had a long association with Morrison's, instructing and performing at the piano and organ.

The programme included a selection of popular items from grand and light opera as well as hits from the musicals and folk songs, with even Flanders and Swan putting in an appearance. The music of Cole Porter, Mozart, Bizet, Rossini, Gilbert and Sullivan and Tom Lehrer created a most enjoyable mixture for the audience and the professionalism of the guests combined with the enthusiasm and talent of the younger performers combined into a memorable evening of entertainment.

CHAS provides hospice places for children at Rachel House and the recently opened Robyn House. Their main aim is to provide care for children, whose lives will be limited by illness, and support for their families. Music teacher Mrs Joan Taylor who organised the event presented a cheque for £500 to Mrs Norma Adam, fund raiser for CHAS.

FUNDRAISING

The Charities Committee has been raising money for a variety of charities. The year began with pupils taking part in the Macmillan Cancer Relief Biggest Coffee Morning in the World. £389.23 was raised by selling coffee, soft drinks and baking to pupils and staff. This was swiftly followed by a Non-Uniform and Wear a Hat day which saw a creative S6 wear some unusual creations. This raised £275.80 for the Brain and Spine Foundation in memory of William Sharp, a former pupil, who sadly died of a brain hemorrhage while at university.



Children In Need is an annual event at Morrison's and this year Angus Munro and Dirk Johnston held a lunch-time concert to raise funds. This led to a second concert where Second Year Rock Group "The Drunken Businessmen" performed. The Young Enterprise Group also joined in the act by donating some of their profits from the "Movie Magic" concert.

NEW FACES

Originally from Toronto, Canada, Ms King has joined Morrison's to teach Art and Design. She previously worked as an Art Director for a Film and Television Company. She is an avid basketball fan, and has begun assisting with the senior boys' team. She has found everyone at Morrison's to be very welcoming.



Mrs Eileen Roddick has joined our staff as a Science Technician. Eileen brings expertise having worked previously at the Scottish Crop Research Institute, Stirling University and most recently at Perth College. Her first impressions of Morrison's are of the lovely campus and the friendliness and approachability of the staff.



Mrs Christine Senior has joined the staff of the Nursery department. She has a degree in Education from Glasgow University and has spent the last five years as senior play leader at Dunning Stepping Stones playgroup. She has found the nursery to be very welcoming and has very much enjoyed her first term.



Mr. Andre Benesch from Würzburg in Germany is spending a year as Language Assistant. He has quickly settled into life in Crieff, playing rugby for Crieff 2nd XV and taking advantage of the wonderful countryside for hill walking and mountain biking.



Mr Graham Guile has joined the Science department to teach Physics. Previously, he taught for five years at Kinross High School. His first impressions of Morrison's: "The pupils are friendly and the working environment is very pleasant. The staff are friendly and the facilities for teaching are great."



PUPIL SUCCESSES

NATIONAL POSTER COMPETITION

Two pupils from Morrison's Academy have won prizes in this year's national poster competition organized by the Scottish Association for Language Teaching. Madeline Riddell (2B) won 1st prize in Secondary French and Hannah Lewis (2C) was Highly Commended in Secondary German. The theme for the poster was 'It's Our World' and was open to all pupils who study a foreign language at school.



SURGICAL SKILLS COMPETITION

Earlier this term a group of four S6 students (Sophie Heriot, Gemma Hill, Kathryn Nairn and Katy Ritchie) took part in the Scottish Schools Surgical Skills competition. This event, involving over a hundred schools, is being run by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh as part of their Quincentenary celebrations. The competition involved the pupils getting hands-on experience of stitching, plastering and key-hole surgery and then being asked to carry out a series of practical exercises testing their aptitude in these areas. In what proved to be both an interesting and enjoyable event the two Morrison's teams took first and second places in their heat. As a result Gemma and Katy have progressed through to the semi-finals which will take place early next year.



FOCUS PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Morrison's Academy pupils gained three prizes in this year's Focus competition, the national photographic competition for schools. Robert Gray (S5) was again commended, as were Andrew Foster (S4) and John Comrie (S3). The competition is organised by Scottish National Heritage and British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and is sponsored by Chevron Oil as part of its environmental and educational initiative. At a presentation ceremony at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, each boy received a framed copy of his picture, along with a framed certificate and a cheque for £50. The school also benefited by receiving a cheque for £150. The money will be put to good use to keep our photography equipment up-to-date.



A TASTE OF UNIVERSITY

In November, the Transitional pupils had a taste of what it would be like to study physics at Edinburgh University. The pupils took part in The Scottish Technology Roadshow and spent an afternoon in McEwan Hall where they enjoyed many hands-on activities designed by the Physics department to stimulate the pupils in this sphere of science. The highlight of the day was a lecture given by Dr Bob Kibble. Dr Kibble had the children captivated and springing from their seats with their many and varied questions.



WHITEHORSE CADET SUMMER TRAINING

This summer, Adam Murdoch was one of 12 cadets from across the UK to be selected for the Cadet Leadership Instructor Adventure course, which took place at the Whitehorse Cadet Summer Training in Yukon near Alaska. This involved working with cadets from Canada on leadership training as well as adventurous activities like abseiling, canoeing and zip lining. Adam has described this experience as "the chance of a lifetime, from which I have amazing memories that will stay with me forever."



HOCKEY SUCCESS

The road to the U16 Midlands cup final was very long. The competition started for us way back in January with a hard fought victory, on penalty flicks, over Queen Victoria School. In the semi-finals we faced St. Leonard's School, who took an early lead. We needn't have worried as Fiona Donaldson was in devastating form, scoring a hat trick that assured our progress through to the final where Strathallan School awaited us.



Unfortunately, due to the congestion of both schools' calendars, the first available date was 8th November. The match however lived up to the hype and the wait. It was 60 minutes of enthralling end-to-end hockey played in an excellent spirit. Unfortunately, our girls were not able to score despite a number of chances and Strathallan eventually ran out 2-0 winners. The girls were rightfully very proud of their performance as we were of them; the heart, determination, skill and teamwork demonstrated that night was something to behold and to be praised.

The senior indoor team has, also, enjoyed some success by finishing runners up in the Midlands U18 indoor tournament on Saturday 3rd December. As a result, they have qualified for the Scottish indoor tournament to be held at Bells Sports Centre, Perth, in January.

CO-CURRICULAR

CHESS CLUB

Primary and Secondary Chess clubs are now running every Friday and Wednesday lunchtime respectively, with large numbers of Primary pupils regularly in attendance. The Primary team is looking forward to participating in the first round of the Scottish Junior Chess Championships, where four of our best will pit themselves against other teams from the local area. Looking forward to the Spring term, we shall again have a team in the Fair City Challenge.

DEBATING SOCIETY

The Debating Society has been busy this term, with teams participating in a number of competitions. Pupils have been challenged by some demanding motions, including the abandonment of the UK's independent nuclear deterrent; the making illegal of incitement of religious hatred; and whether or not to subsidise organic agriculture. Pupils have argued against a ban on boxing, condemned the Scottish Arts Council and demanded the lowering of the voting age to sixteen. On a lighter note they also recently opposed a ban on Christmas advertising directed at children before the watershed. Revolutionary stuff!

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

The Mountaineering Club has continued to be active this term. Pupils have been on four climbing trips to the Dundee wall to sample indoor climbing. Future plans include the annual winter skills courses. These consist of a day out on one of the local mountains where we try out crampons, and slide around using axes to stop. This is using equipment donated by MAPA. There will be two days out, the first will be for parents and staff and the second for pupils.



ESCAPE COMMITTEE

It has been another busy term for the Escape Committee with two Break Outs. The first to Sandwood Bay in the far north west was our longest term-time trip to date. We flew kites, did some ironing and explored the dunes of this truly special location. As one of the team later wrote, "we had slipped the bonds of our daily routines, briefly tasting the wilds of a spectacularly remote spot. Yet even more than that, we had also done some very silly things while we were there."

Our other venture this term was a Bikes 'n Kites trip to Tentsmuir Forest and Kinshaldy Beach in Fife. During our circuit of the forest, we participated in a 'slow' race, 'devil take the hindmost', as well as a handicap race. Back at the beach there was more flight time with the kites. Everyone had a fly of some seriously twitchy kites that split the sky with a screaming intensity that attracted a small crowd of on-lookers. Our thanks to Mr Lovegrove for his assistance with this trip.

FROM THE RECTOR...

A large number of events and activities take place every Autumn Term, far too many to mention in this limited space, but I want to tell you about a unique occasion which happened recently at school.

Some of you may have heard through your children that we held a special service at 10.45am on Armistice Day (11th November) in Memorial Hall to dedicate nine new panels which had been inscribed with the names of those former members of the school who won decorations and awards in the Second World War. The School is greatly indebted to two former pupils, John Downie and Hubert Strathairn, both veterans of the 1939-1945 conflict, who undertook all the painstaking research necessary to recover this element of the school's history. Indeed, Mr Downie has gathered together a wealth of documentary evidence which is now in the School's archive and even had some of it bound into a book.

The service, which was conducted by the Reverend John Wilson (FP) and at which the Lord Lieutenant, Sir David Montgomery, was present as the Queen's representative, was a most moving and memorable occasion. Former and current Morrisonian servicemen and women, relatives of those named on the boards as well as Mr Peter Robertson whose name appears twice, all returned to the school for this special day. The service was followed by lunch and all departed satisfied that their former comrades and school friends had received a fitting tribute.

When you next visit Memorial Hall have a look at the new panels.

Simon Pengeley

