



"My lasting memories of Morrison's are freezing en route to the Refectory and singing in the choir. School was a very happy place for me."

- Kathleen Warden (nee Sharp)

## EXERCISE VIKING TREK



During the month of August a group of eleven Morrisonians undertook an expedition to the Hardangervidda Plateau in Norway. It was a thoroughly enjoyable, successful trip with amusing memories and more than a few magical moments.

After a long journey from Crieff to Norway we were driven to Halne from where we were to start our expedition. From Halne we walked south in overcast and often rainy conditions, enjoying a brief lunch stop to eat our sandwiches. After ten miles we reached our first night's campsite at Stigstuv at which point the rain came down leaving us to cook in the cold and wet before heading straight to bed for an early night.

Our second day consisted of a further ten miles in somewhat kinder conditions although the previous night's rain had left much of the ground damp and boggy. Arriving in the early evening just short of the lake we enjoyed an overcast but thankfully dry evening.

The next day dawned and we headed off, considerably earlier than the day before, east toward Heinseter then south to our third campsite at Hansbu. Within an hour of starting, the sun had come out and we basked in the much appreciated heat.

Following lunch, we began to head south towards Hansbu. It was at this point fatigue began to hit the group as we struggled uphill in a powerful sun. Several of us decided to try swimming in the deep river only to discover that despite the warm day the water remained remarkably cold!

Waking early again on the fourth day we enjoyed a magical view, standing high above the clouds watching the peaks of the mountains emerge out of the cloud below. This provided a truly awe-inspiring start to the day as we headed east again towards the entirely unpronounceable Ulvelillaegret. During this walk we became "geographically misplaced" and were forced to backtrack having added around 2 hours to our journey.

Following a short break for lunch we forced ourselves up what seemed like a vertical face with our tired legs protesting at every step. From there it was of course, famously "downhill all the way". Once again our legs disagreed as any minor bump seemed like a Munro. We finally reaching our campsite and thoroughly enjoyed our final night and a much-deserved meal.

On the final day we slipped into a rhythm as we battled to finish what had been a long trek. We finally reached the end and enjoyed a lunch stop, somewhat lengthened by the bus's inability to arrive and pick us up.

That evening we sampled a meal of reindeer and salmon or a vegetarian option which was greatly appreciated by all after five nights of dehydrated food. From there it was a quick night's sleep followed by a repeat of the four hour bus journey to the airport and a return flight with only a few minor mishaps.

The trip was a fantastic experience much enjoyed by all even if at points we questioned our sanity as we marched up a seemingly endless hill. However, now looking back on it we are all given a tremendous sense of achievement as well as many great memories. So now we rest our weary legs and await the next opportunity to get out on the hills and enjoy another trek.



# NEW FACES



## STEPHEN JEWELL

Stephen joins the Art Department following his probationary year at Kilwinning Academy as one of that rare breed – a male Art teacher. He worked as a graphic designer before undertaking his PGCE at Jordanhill in 2005. His interests include photography, mountain biking and travel. His first impressions of Morrison's are a strong sense of community, motivated pupils, dedicated staff and a warm and friendly atmosphere.



## GILLIAN WILKIE

Gillian has joined the staff as our full time Additional Support for Learning teacher. Gillian taught for over fourteen years throughout central Scotland, initially as a Geography teacher. After gaining a qualification in Additional Support for Learning she taught ASL for the past three years in Coatbridge. Although based mainly in the Primary School, Gillian also has responsibility for working with Senior School children.



## BRIGID THOMSON

Brigid has been working in Nursery since August and has subsequently been appointed as the Head of Nursery. Brigid brings wide experience to the post having been involved in pre-school education in a variety of capacities. She was a Nursery Manager in Nottingham, where she also worked for the council setting up out-of-school clubs and was a trainer of students studying for childcare qualifications. She has already had to cope with a recent Care Commission annual inspection and so had a most exciting start to life at Morrison's!

## FIONA HARVEY

Fiona started her teaching career in North Lanarkshire and this is her second full year of teaching. She spent a substantial part of last session teaching and working in both West Africa and Sri Lanka. Fiona has established herself quickly into life at Morrison's and is already running Primary Drama Club. She is involved with other staff in moving our Eco Schools status forward.



## MAJORY ANDERSON

Marjory joined the staff last session and is now firmly established within the Primary School team. She has come back to Scotland after teaching in Hong Kong for fourteen years where, amongst other duties, she was in charge of IT throughout her school. This is a particular area of interest of Marjory's and she has now established a thriving Computer Club as one of our Co-curricular activities.



## MARGARET KIHLEN

Margaret joined the staff of the Science department this term after completing her Postgraduate Diploma in Education at the University of Strathclyde. This is Margaret's first year teaching full-time and she is delighted to have been appointed as a chemistry teacher at Morrison's. She was immediately impressed by the positive ethos of the school and the wealth of extra curricular activities.



## EMMA McCORMICK

Emma has been a great addition to the P.E Department since joining in August from Our Lady and St. Patrick High School in Dunbartonshire where she completed her probationary year. She has taken over the coaching of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year hockey teams and senior girls' netball.



# PUPIL SUCCESSES

## PERTH BURNS CLUB COMPETITION

Kirsten Longmuir was awarded first prize for singing at the annual Perth Burns Club competition where Primary and Secondary pupils compete in singing, instrumental performance and poetry.

Kirsten sang *The Fidgety Bairn*, and she was complimented on her expression and clarity by the judge, Mr Henry Neil MBE.



## SKELETON BOBSLEIGH

Fiona Crowe is off to Calgary for a week to train in the adrenaline-based sport, skeleton bobsleigh. Fiona, who is a member of Morrison's Combined Cadet Force, underwent a vigorous selection process conducted by the British Army Ice Sports Team: her enthusiasm and out-going personality won her the slot. She was selected for one of the two places available to members of the CCF and Army Cadet Force in Scotland.

Fiona will be trained by the British Army Ice Sports Team who are hoping to identify Olympic competitors for the future. Following intensive training, Fiona will have the opportunity to make two runs a day down the Olympic track.

## BARCELONA HOCKEY AND RUGBY TOUR

Morrison's Academy senior girls' hockey team and senior boys' rugby team undertook a tour to Barcelona over the October half-term holiday. Each team played three matches against club teams in the area over a five day period. The tour provided an added element to this year's hockey and rugby programmes and playing abroad against strong opposition provided a significant challenge for the squads. It was a very rewarding and exciting experience for the players. The staff were delighted by the way they applied themselves, mixed well together and took full advantage of the opportunities open to them.

## FOCUS PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION WINNER

Jasmine Thomas won first prize in her age group in the National Focus Photography Competition. She captured Loch Turret in wintry mood, with ice breaking on the shore of the reservoir. Jasmine collected a prize of £200 and a framed copy of her print at a special presentation ceremony at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh. The school received an equal amount which has funded extra photographic equipment for use in Higher Photography classes and the John Muir Award.

## MIDLANDS DISTRICT HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December the senior indoor hockey team took part in the Midlands U18 district tournament. The tournament was organised by Dundee Wanderers and was hosted by The High School of Dundee. The competition took the format of a round robin tournament. After drawing our first game against Bell Baxter, convincingly beating Dundee Wanderers and The High School of Dundee, we went into our final game against Strathallan knowing that a draw would secure overall victory. We lost an early goal but the team stayed calm and Fiona Donaldson led by example scoring an excellent solo goal. The whistle eventually blew allowing us to take great pleasure in accepting the trophy which we last had our hands on sixteen year ago. The Scottish Indoor Finals now await us in January. The girls can go with great confidence after their exciting and polished performance.

## CHARITY FUNDRAISING

The Charities Committee has been working on some unusual events and have raised a fantastic amount of money for both local and national charities. The first event organised by the Charities Committee was a successful 'Odd Shoe Day'. Pupils were encouraged to wear a different pair or even two odd shoes to school for the day and collectively raised over £480 for the Laura Crane Trust which gives aid to teenagers and young adults affected by cancer.

The annual Children In Need events, of course, stayed on the calendar. The Primary School parents ran a cake and candy stall whilst school pupils donated their loose change to the cause. Members of the committee, with a little help from others, spent much of the day counting out the enormous collection of coins, eventually calculating the total to be £1066.33.



# CO-CURRICULAR

## DEBATING SOCIETY

The crowning glory of a busy debating term came towards the end of term when Captain of Debating Sandy Jackson and partner Arthur Learoyd made it through to the finals of the Aberdeen University and the Scottish Round of the Cambridge University Schools' debating competitions. Meanwhile, junior debating continues to thrive. A crop of new young debaters including Ruth Thomson, Marianne Inglis, Ben Thomson, Lindsey Macdonald and Jenny Lovegrove have joined old-timers Emma Robertson and Catherine Lovegrove in competitive debating. They have fought their corner on charging for water according to use, force-feeding anorexics, abolishing the National Lottery and banning Christmas

## PRIMARY FOOTBALL

The members of the Primary Football Club were delighted to receive a set of brand new strips recently. Funded by the generosity of MAPA, the strips will be used by the Primary team in matches with other schools and have met with universal approval. Until now the team has not had a strip of its own. The fact that the Morrison's colours of dark blue, white and maroon have been incorporated into the design should enable the children to represent their school with added pride. The embroidered lettering of the school's name on the shirt means that there is no doubt over the team's identity.



## ESCAPE COMMITTEE

It has been another busy term for the Escape Committee. In September we took the ferry to Arran and enjoyed some superb mountain biking in the moorlands and forests behind Brodick. Too soon, it seemed, we had completed the climbs and survived the descents, finding ourselves back in Brodick. Hardy souls took stock and then went out for some more around and above the Castle, while others found the lure of the crazy golf course less scary.

In November another group took on 'Ropes and Boats' in Alberfeldy. The ropes course in the morning featured an outdoor climbing wall, a pole climb and then a crate stack game. The pole climb, and even the jump, seemed to bother most of the group less than the business of standing up on the top platform just prior to leaping. With nothing to hold on to, and a swaying pole beneath you, it was suddenly attention-grabbing just how much fresh air there was to fall into all around you.

## FROM THE RECTOR...

This autumn has been no less busy than its predecessors. The term started very well with an excellent crop of examination results that saw a very strong performance at all levels. At Intermediate 2 we achieved a 96% pass rate. Last year at the same level we achieved a 94% pass rate. At Higher we achieved an 88% pass rate, 12% up on last year and Advanced Higher saw a similar improvement from 75% in 2005 to 90% this year. These are highly commendable results and reflect well on both the quality of teaching and the talents and hard work of the pupils involved.

The start of the new academic year saw the re-launch of the school's website. It has been completely redesigned and rewritten with, amongst many other features, a special secure area for parents and an archive section, with galleries of photographs, for Former Pupils. We are always looking to improve the site as well as include current items of news, so if you have any suggestions for improvements or items of interest you would like included please email them to the administrator on [webadmin@morrisonacademy.org](mailto:webadmin@morrisonacademy.org)

I am pleased to be able to report that the Charities Committee has been very active this term. So far they have raised money for the Earl Haig Fund, The Salvation Army, the Laura Crane Trust (childhood cancer) and over £1000 for Children in Need. The majority of the latter came from pupils bringing in loose change gathered at their homes. In addition, the school collected over 70 shoeboxes of goodies for the Blytheswood charity who will deliver them to needy people in Romania at Christmas. The aim of the Charities Committee, which is comprised of members of S5 and S6, is to provide annual support to an international charity, and to this end they are working with the Scottish Executive to find a project in Malawi, as well as local and national organisations. I will write on this subject again when I have more to report.

Talking about charitable giving seems to me the right note on which to conclude as we look forward to Christmas. I hope you all have a joyous Yuletide and a successful and happy 2007.

Simon Pengelley

