

"Morrison's always tries to bring out the best in you, always offering new opportunities and challenges, along with a sense that the teachers really want you to succeed."

- S1 Pupil



## THE SOUND OF MORRISON'S



for good measure.

For local culture the festival organizers put on an Irish Night on the Friday evening which was an undoubted highlight: not just marvellous Irish music and dancing but genuine Irish stew (as if we needed anything more to eat.....)

Mrs. Taylor and her girls are to be warmly congratulated on a significant achievement at a prestigious event. The lure of the Emerald Isle may now prove just too strong to resist in future years.



On the same weekend that the crowd at Murrayfield had to witness the closest of Irish victories on the rugby pitch the Morrison's Academy Chamber Choir was over on the other side of the sea, competing in the Coleraine International Choral Festival.

Readers will be delighted to learn that national pride and honour were duly restored and that we took first place in a very competitive Youth Section against a number of excellent Irish school choirs (and one from France).

This is our choir's third visit to Coleraine over a period of seven years. In 2005 we were delighted and maybe even a little surprised to come third; this time the possibility of something even better was certainly in everybody's mind, but after a three-week lay-off for Prelims there were some pretty rusty-sounding voices

to be knocked into shape before hopes could fairly be raised.

Fortunately, however, the combination of some bracing Ulster air, nourishing North Coast food and drink, and the unprecedented experience of actually having the whole choir together in the same place and at the same time all worked together to raise morale and focus minds in very short order.

Apart from the obvious benefits of success, there was also the whole business of "just being there" – the opportunity of hearing and meeting a wide variety of other choirs, observing, taking in and learning from the whole spectrum of vocal activity on offer at this wonderful festival.

And of course you couldn't be there without doing the tourist thing as well - seeing the Giant's Causeway, braving the rope bridge at Carrick-a-Rede, and of course a little shopping

And as if all this were not enough, only a day earlier, on the home front, the School String Quartet also won the Intermediate Quartet Class at the Perth Competitive Music Festival ("Perform in Perth") so all of our musicians can hold their heads high both at home and overseas.



## CHARITY WORK



### Morrison's For Malawi: On Your Bike!

Pupils and staff are getting on their bikes in a whole-school charity project to build a meeting house for the orphans and carers of Likhubula in Malawi.

The project involves raising money to allow Likhubula House, Malawi's first outdoor centre, to construct a multi-purpose building. This will enable young Malawians to enjoy their mountain environment just as we at Morrison's enjoy ours. At weekends the centre is used by AIDS orphans and their carers, often an older sibling. With the provision of the meeting house there will be room to expand the basic educational instruction and healthcare that is provided. These classes are often the only teaching the young children can expect to receive. The meeting house will make a significant difference to the lives of a large number of young people in a country where there is on average one teacher for every hundred pupils at the Primary level.

After a very successful first term of fundraising for Scottish charities, the Charities Committee is asking the school to dig deep and raise the £5000 needed to construct this important building. Senior pupils will be taking part in a "Skills and Stamina" day on mountain bikes; Transitional pupils will concentrate on "Safety First and Always", whilst pupils in the Nursery and lower Primary will get the chance to do their bit in a sponsored cycle at school, in an activity endearingly known as "Little Wheels, Big Hearts". As you read this, Secondary teachers Richard Anderson and Peter Lovegrove will be preparing to spend a week of the Easter holiday taking "The Long Way Home", a 1000 kilometre sponsored cycle, starting on the north coast of Scotland and ending at the school gates.

It is particularly appropriate for Morrison's to be raising money for a Malawian project. It was Scotsman David Livingstone who was the first western explorer in the region. Missionary work was and still is undertaken by the Church of Scotland. In colonial days, Scots settled in Malawi, establishing tea and coffee estates not many miles from Likhubula. It has often been claimed that Malawi was Scotland's colony. Many Malawian pupils to this day have Scottish names, a reminder of the Scottish influence in this beautiful country. Several members of staff have worked in Malawi in the past, and a former pupil is currently teaching there as part of a gap year project. The Likhubula meeting house gives the school the opportunity to build upon these connections. Indeed it is our ambition to create a permanent link that will allow for some level of exchange between Morrison's Academy and a Malawian school. The school sees the meeting house project as the launch of a long-term commitment to developing links between the school and Malawi in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## NEW FACES

### Teresa Lafferty

Teresa has been a great addition to the school since joining the English Department in August from Crieff High School where she was acting Head of English. Prior to that, she spent 16 years in St Thomas More High School in Essex as Head of Media Studies and Pastoral Deputy of 6<sup>th</sup> Form. She is already embedded into school life after becoming involved with the editing and production of the Morrisonian Magazine.



### Alison Ross

Alison joins our Administration Team working closely with both the Rector and Mr Harley. She brings to the school an extensive knowledge of educational practices and procedures having been school secretary at Dunning PS then seconded by Perth & Kinross to mentor and train other school clerical staff within the Authority. Last year she successfully gained an HNC in Administration & Information Technology and is very pleased to be back working in a school community.



### Martin McKeever

Martin joins our Science Department as Chemistry Coordinator after teaching both Chemistry and Mathematics for the past eleven years at Belmont House School, Glasgow. His interests include playing squash, regular visits to the cinema and learning to play the guitar. He has been delighted with the move to Morrison's where he feels there is a real spirit of teamwork amongst the pupils, parents and staff.



# PUPIL SUCCESSES

## Courier Schools' Debating Competition

Marianne Inglis and Catherine Lovegrove finished in second place at the Courier Debating Competition Grand Final in St Andrews. The Morrison's team proposed the motion that "This House Would Ban Non-Reconstructive Cosmetic Surgery" and set up a tremendous debate in Lower Parliament Hall, the University's grandest setting. The girls were judged to have come second in the debate to Kinross High School and so were rewarded with the runner-up prize, an all-expenses-paid trip to London. It is a remarkable achievement for the Morrison's team to finish so well placed in the largest juniors debating competition in the UK.



## Transitional Quiz Team

Morrison's Transitional quiz team emerged victorious from the Rotary Club's Schools' Quiz, which was held at Crieff High on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March. This now annual competition sees a number of local schools competing against each other. The team successfully negotiated a series of challenging rounds of questions on topics as diverse as mathematics, Greek mythology, capital cities and spelling to win by a single point. As a result of their success, the team now goes forward to represent the school in the regional final in Perth.



## Bright Sparks

As part of the Nursery Science Week term, the Nursery paid a visit to the Science Department for a special Science Experience. Mr. Mair's laboratory provided the perfect venue for experiencing Science in action; the experiments involving Electricity, Sound, Mirrors and Magnets were enjoyed by everyone. A particular highlight was the Static Bad Hair Day for Mrs. Gina Thomson as she was connected to the Van de Graaf generator. The pupils enjoyed their visit very much and had lots of ideas of how to apply what they had seen and learned.



## World Junior Curling Championships

Eve and Glen Muirhead both represented Scotland at the World Junior Curling Championships in Minnesota. Particular congratulations must go to Eve on being part of the women's Scotland team which won the world championship. It is quite something for the school to have two national representatives in the same sport and a world champion.



## Language Presentation

S2 pupils at Morrison's Academy recently attended a talk by Mr Tim Steward of Languages Network Scotland on the importance of foreign languages to the Scottish business community. Mr Steward delivered an entertaining and informative presentation which will make pupils more aware of the importance of including a foreign language in their skills portfolio as they begin to choose the subjects they will study in S3.



## Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama

Second year pupil Rachael Smart has continued to make great progress with her musicianship, gaining a place at the Junior Academy of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD) in Glasgow.

Rachael still continues with her other musical commitments both locally and nationally. Apart from School Orchestra and String Quartet she plays with Perth Youth Orchestra and for the past couple of years she has successfully auditioned to be a member of The National Children's Orchestra of Scotland.

Participating in The National Children's Orchestra brings with it attendance at music camps and public concerts in major venues. In April the Orchestra will be performing at The Usher Hall in Edinburgh and at the Perth Concert Hall.



# CO-CURRICULAR

## Combined Cadet Force (CCF)

In January we received a large number of new S2 cadets, who are currently working in four squads receiving instruction in drill, .22 shooting and safe handling of the cadet rifle. The instruction for the cadet rifle has been conducted by members of S6 who underwent a Skill at Arms cadre last term. The culmination of this training will be an overnight trip to Barry Buddon ranges at the end of term.

Cadets in S4 and S5 have concentrated on preparing themselves for their forthcoming Duke of Edinburgh practice expeditions which take place at the beginning of the summer term. Mr Buchan has been busy coaching the .22 shooting teams in preparation for the Country Life shoot which is held in March each year.

## Escape Committee

Tunneling must surely be in the blood of any escapee worth the name, but as the banks rose, the canal narrowed and the light dimmed, the entrance to the tunnel ahead beckoned and daunted in equal measure.

Drawn into the dripping darkness, eleven student paddlers and their adult partners, were en route between Falkirk and Linlithgow passing below Callendar Park. Paddling canals is an experience all of its own. Quietly rural at one moment, industrial and urban at the next. However, even the chill of an early March day could not detract from the half-lit and echoing excitement of the six-hundred metre tunnel. It was certainly another memorable Break Out.



## Mountaineering Club

The Mountaineering Club has been very busy again this year, with indoor climbing sessions taking place on most Friday evenings. Not only have staff and pupils been using the wall but they have been involved in setting up new routes and helping to train less experienced members and visitors.

Next term, we are planning outdoor climbing at Bennybeg and a trip to the national outdoor wall at Ratho. In addition, the staff are looking at organising a climbing trip at the end of the summer holidays to Fisherfield (Highlands). If any parents are interested in joining us please get in touch soon. Dates for next term's climbing adventures at Bennybeg are:

- Friday 20th April Level 3 course
- Friday 27th April Level 3 course
- Friday 4th May All Welcome
- Friday 18th May Junior School
- Friday 8th June Staff and Parents

Additional activities are planned for:

- Friday 12th May Ratho National Centre
- 13th – 17th August Fisherfield Trip

Please get in touch if you are interested in any of the above at [climbing@morrisonacademy.org](mailto:climbing@morrisonacademy.org)



## FROM THE RECTOR...

I am not sure how many of you are aware of the 'Curriculum Wall'. It is placed in the bottom corridor of the John Smith building and tries to encapsulate, in a strictly defined space, the entire curriculum. Academic subjects head up each column of bricks, while each row represent a year in the school starting with the Nursery at the bottom of the wall rising to S6 at the top. Each single brick describes a year's worth of work in a particular subject. Necessarily the syllabus description is kept brief but tries to give a distinct flavour of the work covered. At either end of the wall are photographs which depict the many and varied co-curricular activities that are on offer at Morrison's. If you have not seen the wall then I can recommend it to you and suggest that when you visit the school you take a few minutes out to go and have a look. If you don't know your way to the bottom corridor of the John Smith building ask a member of staff for directions.

I have use this newsletter to talk about the work of the charities committee on a previous occasion and I make no apology for doing so again. Last term the committee was very busy and raised over £5,000 for a series of worthwhile causes. This term they have set themselves the target of raising a further £5,000, this time for a single project. On this occasion they want to raise the money to allow Likhubula House, an outdoor centre in southern Malawi, to build a schoolroom. The structure will provide protection, for the young people who use it, from the very heavy rains that fall during the three-month wet season and from the intense sun that burns the plain during the months of summer. You will already have received a letter from the Charities Committee explaining how you can sponsor a 'brick' in the new building and I hope that you will support this worthwhile cause.

Simon Pengelley