

# Royal High School Performing Arts

## Extracts from Annual Reports, 1968 – 2018

This report details all references to performing Arts in school Annual Reports from 1968 through 2018. To make its 26,000 word content slightly less indigestible, the main content is split into three sections, with Tom Bacciarelli's extra analysis provided as a further topic. Schola Regia editions over the years have had extensive Arts content, but in post Regent Road editions, the detail diminished gradually then dramatically (no pun intended) from around 1985. One example is included, and this source will be re-examined in due course.

Click any of the four topics shown below to take you to the individual component.

[1968-1977](#)

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## Performing Arts reports, 1968-1977

This data is a compilation of information about theatre, music and dance from the **Annual Reports** covering the years 1967 to 1977. Additional information is available in contemporary Schola Regia editions.

### 1967-1968

SCHOOL CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA.

The choir have continued to earn high praise from the professional critics. During this session they have increased their number of radio and television performances and have made a gramophone record (produced by BBC Radio Enterprises) of one of their last concerts in the old building. An increasing number of our orchestral players are being brought into the end of term concerts.

The Dramatic Society under Mr David Campbell broke new ground by joining with James Gillespie's High School for Girls in a most interesting and notable production of Durrenmatt's 'The Physicists'.

### 1968-1969

CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA

In addition to their end of term concerts, which continue to receive praise from the professional critics, the choir have given recitals in St Giles Cathedral, St Mary's Cathedral and Paisley Abbey. They hope to return to St Giles on 7th of September to give a recital during the Edinburgh Festival. The choir also made a visit to Aberdeen where they recorded a programme for Grampian Television, an event which prompted a two-page article on the school's music in the T.V. Times.

Two pieces of music written for special choir occasions by Mr Bowie have recently been published by Oxford University Press.

The orchestra, and smaller ensembles from it, have contributed to the choral concerts and have presented an independent concert of their own. Many of the players are enthusiastic enough to travel every week from our own after—school rehearsal straight to the rehearsal of the Edinburgh Secondary Schools' Orchestra.

Although it is impossible to record all activities, mention must be made of the Dramatic Society's presentation of "Themes on Love and Hate" in the Edinburgh Schools' Drama Festival and their combined production with James Gillespie's High School for Girls of "Songs and Drama of the UK." At present they are engaged on the production of a play by Beverley Cross called "One More River."

### 1969-1970

## **The Choir and Orchestra**

Those of us who heard the Christmas concert will never forget the sadness of the occasion, nor the beauty of the boys' singing, especially of Charpentier's "Messe de Minuit". With Mr Bowie's death and Mr Ditcham's promotion, the activities of choir and orchestra have been curtailed, but I am grateful to Alan Buchan and John Smellie for keeping interest alive.

## **The New Society**

This year it was decided to amalgamate the Literary and Debating Society, the Dramatic Society and the Folk Singing Club, since so many of their activities overlapped. The hope was that not only would the work of the societies coalesce in new and interesting ways but that flagging attendances would be halted. The response has been encouraging and the society has produced interesting themes with drama, mime and folk song.

At Christmas the society joined with the girls from the Mary Erskine School to produce a programme of dramatic entertainment in song, movement and theatre on the theme of Christmas.

In the Edinburgh Schools' Drama Festival the boys presented a composition of Absurd Drama.

## **1970-1971**

### **SCOTT BI-CENTENARY**

To mark the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of one of Royal High School's most distinguished sons the English department and senior pupils organised a Scott supper, after which they entertained staff and guests to dramatised readings from Scott's works, together with a symposium of the views of other writers on the 'Shirra'. A special edition of Schola Regia has been produced by the boys, and the Scottish Tourist Board have asked permission to reproduce poems, articles and illustrations from it in their current brochure which they have named Royal High View, and which will publicise Scotland and the Scott bi-centenary all over the world.

The James Gordon Brown Memorial Lecture took the form of a dramatised version of 'The Twa Drovers'. It was delivered by the well-known Scottish actor, John Cairney.

In October it is intended to have a play and exhibition based on Scott themes.

### **MUSIC**

The school is presenting Lionel Bart's 'Oliver' in conjunction with The Mary Erskine School for Girls. The Preparatory School won the Cup in the Inter-school Verse and Song Competition.

## **1971-1972**

### **DRAMA**

This year the Drama Society, together with girls from Mary Erskine's, presented a very successful and entertaining Olde Time Music Hall, produced by Mr Young and directed by Mr Price.

### **SCHOOL MUSICAL ACTIVITIES**

The musical pulse of the school is beginning to beat strongly once again. In December a choral and instrumental concert was held, and £30 was collected for the Instrumental Fund. The Special Choir gave performances at Cramond Kirk, Corstorphine Old Parish Church and St. Giles' Cathedral. There has been a big increase in the number of boys receiving instrumental tuition—now about 150 from our seven peripatetic teachers, and an instrumental concert was held in June to demonstrate this increasingly important aspect of the musical life of the school.

At the Edinburgh Musical Festival our boys had a number of important successes. In the John Fellowes Trophy, for chamber groups under 18 years of age, first place and an honours certificate went to Michael Ritchie, John Gourlay, Alistair Adamson and John Cowie. In the Open Chamber Music Class, second place and an honours certificate went to Michael Ritchie, John Gourlay and John Cowie; while fifth place and a merit certificate were awarded to George Scott, Allan Ireland, Andrew Jeffrey and Colin Butcher. In the Solo Cello Class for under 16 years of age, Malcolm Smith won first place and a merit certificate.

In June, the School Choir appeared on STV in a live broadcast from the Kirk of the Canongate.

### **1972-1973**

In the last week of March the school Music Society joined forces with girls from James Gillespie's School to promote three performances of "The Beggar's Opera" by John Gay (arranged by Benjamin Britten). These were the first school performances in Scotland of this lengthy and complex work. In all 80 boys and girls were involved in staging the opera.

There are at present 150 boys receiving instrumental instruction at the school, and 30 are currently playing with various Edinburgh Secondary School Orchestras and Bands. Seven boys were entered for various grades of the Associated Board Music Examinations, and all were successful, three being awarded distinctions, including John Gourlay in Grade 8 on the Oboe.

### **1973-1974**

The Music Department has also been very active and, with the help of seven visiting instructors, over 200 pupils are now receiving instrumental tuition. At the same time, arrangements are being made to enable instruction to be given to the feeder primary schools in our catchment area of our school orchestra, fourteen boys are also members of the Edinburgh Secondary Schools Orchestra. A Christmas concert was given by the junior mixed choir, the senior choir, the school orchestra and for the first time, the school jazz band. In May, the Music Department and the English Department joined forces with girls from James Gillespie's High School to stage four performances of the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera, Princess Ida.

### **1974-1975**

At Christmas time, the school joined forces with the girls of James Gillespie's in a production of Agatha Christie's play "Murder at the Vicarage." The part of Miss Marples was interpreted in a totally original way by the inimitable John Wood and he was ably backed up by the unflappable Vicar, Donald Johnstone, and his charming wife Griselda, delightfully played by Fiona Glover. The senior Gillespie girls lent a welcome glamour to the production as well as a certain maturity of style which our own younger girls would have had difficulty in achieving, but their day will come. The school operatic production this year was Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Mikado," which was staged for three nights during the last week of session. Once again we were greatly indebted to James Gillespie's High School for supplying us with our female principal characters. Well over 100 pupils were involved in the production as singers, orchestral players, stage crews and make-up artists. In addition many of the cast were responsible for making their own costumes. A great amount of hard work was put in by all concerned, pupils and staff alike, and a commensurate amount of enjoyment was obtained from the project.

### **FOREIGN TRAVEL**

This year probably more pupils than ever before have been, or will be, involved in organised visits abroad, in addition to the many who accompany their parents or take part in privately arranged exchange schemes. Three in particular must be mentioned. With much good will and assistance from the City of Edinburgh's Twinning Officer and some very practical support by the British Council, a party of 90 persons, including staff, present pupils, a few former pupils, and some senior girls from James Gillespie's went on a cultural visit to Florence during the Easter holidays. The objects of the visit were twofold, to give a series of concerts and entertainments to various sections of Florentine society and to integrate as fully as possible with the people of Florence during the visit. The party offered an extremely varied bill of fare—an orchestra, a wind band, a jazz band, a full choir, a small choir, Scottish dancing, singing and piping, and various vocal and instrumental soloists. Two orchestral and choral concerts were given at the magnificent Palazzo Vecchio, with the audience on both occasions exceeding 1,000 persons. In addition, smaller groups from within the party were sent to entertain various sections of Florentine society, such as a school for deprived children, a senior citizens home, a student centre, and the English Church of St. Marks. The musical activities tended to dominate the visit, but the party had many opportunities for sightseeing and making individual contacts and friendships with people of their own age range. The trip proved to be a resounding success, and the Commune of Florence has extended an invitation to The Royal High School for a similar visit in 1977. To Mr Murray

and the various members of staff who helped him to raise money for the tour and accompanied the party, we offer our grateful thanks.

### **1975-1976**

As parents will know, a wide range of musical activities have been fostered over the past few years and these continue to thrive. The Christmas concert featured the Senior and Junior Choirs, the Special Choir, the Barber Shop Ensemble, various vocal soloists, the School Orchestra, Jazz Band and several instrumental ensembles. Groups of pupils have also given concerts for the Parent- Teacher Association and for the recently formed Cramond Music Society. The Jazz Band, in particular, is proving as popular as ever and were guest artistes at the annual Musicians' Union Dance, as well as performing at the Davidson's Mains Gala Day and the School Fete. The Music department is at present rehearsing the musical 'Pickwick' which will be staged early in the new session.

The Senior Choir now numbers 170, and over 200 pupils are receiving instrumental lessons from a team of 10 visiting tutors. The scheme, inaugurated two years ago, of giving string instruction at Cramond and Davidson's Mains Primary Schools is bearing fruit, since during the year eight of the primary pupils became full members of our Orchestra. In addition, around 40 of the pupils are now playing with one or other of the Edinburgh Secondary Schools Orchestras. The School Choir and Orchestra have been invited on a return trip to Florence, following the success of their trip last year. This will involve taking a group of 160 people to our twin city during the Easter Holidays in 1977, and giving concerts and recitals to various sections of Florentine Society.

### **1976-1977**

For the Music Department, to begin with, this has been a busy and profitable year. A team of nine visiting teachers give instruction to over 200 pupils; the main School Choir new numbers some 250 Voices, and in addition there is a Special Choir, Junior Choir, Orchestra, Wind Band. String Orchestra, Jazz Band and various chamber ensembles. Since the start of 1977, the Jazz Band has played in the Pilton Festival and at the Musicians' Union Dance; the Special Choir have sung at St. Mary's Cathedral and Greyfriars Kirk; the Junior Choir have performed at Cramond Kirk, and a group of senior pupils gave a recital at the Georgian House in Charlotte Square. The summer term has been taken up with rehearsals for a Junior School concert and Gilbert and Sullivan's Comic Operetta, 'Ruddigore', to be staged during the penultimate week of session.

The major disappointment of the year was the enforced cancellation of the projected tour to Florence, owing to the bankruptcy of the travel agents, the withdrawal of funds and the consequent escalation of costs. However, the invitation from the Commune di Firenze was an open-ended one and preparations are in hand for a tour at Easter 1978.

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## **Performing Arts reports, 1978-2000**

This data is a compilation of information about theatre, music and dance from Annual Reports

### **1978-1979**

Relief from the more depressing aspects of the session came from a pleasing selection of termly entertainments. Senior pupils, under the aegis of Mrs Hutchison and Mr Dunlop, presented two contrasting plays — 'Zigger Zagger' at Christmas and 'Charley's Aunt' at Easter—and all concerned deserve to be congratulated on lively and polished performances. Very shortly after the impressive 850th Anniversary Concert in the Usher Hall, the Music Department mounted a smaller but enjoyable Christmas concert in school. Also at Christmas, a group of enterprising and enthusiastic pupils, led by Kenneth Thomson of the Fifth Year, sang madrigals and carols in St James' Centre and other local shopping areas. Some measure of their success was the £200 raised for charity, including a local record of £78 in 90 minutes. Much of the remainder of the session was spent preparing for two

operatic productions— ‘Oliver’ presented by the Junior pupils and ‘The Gondoliers’ by the seniors—as well as for a trip to Munich, where the Music Department is taking a choir of some 90 pupils to represent Edinburgh in a ‘twinning anniversary’.

### **1979-1980**

This session, the Department has been dominated (but not subdued) by preparations for four major events—The Usher Hall Concert at Christmas, the return musical visit to Munich at Easter, the Junior production of ‘Hip-Hip-Horatio’ and the Senior production of *Iolanthe* in June.

This year, welcome initiatives were taken by Sixth Form pupils in the organisation of carol singing of the highest quality (q.v.), the arranging of a successful Sixth Year/Staff Dance and the production of a one-act play, ‘The Man In The Bowler Hat’ by A. A. Milne.

The Usher Hall concert repeated the pattern of the successful 850<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert, with the involvement of staff, parents, present and former pupils, and pupils from Clermiston, Cramond and Davidson’s Mains primary schools. It was closely followed in the last week of term by a less formal orchestral and choral concert in the school hall. Also in this busy term, the Special Choir was recorded by Radio Forth for a seasonal Christmas broadcast, while the senior pupils who formed the KT II madrigal group—led and organised by Kenneth Thomson—repeated their success of the previous year in raising over £400 for charity by singing in shopping centres in the city. The summer term opened with two performances of ‘Hip-Hip-Horatio’, sharing the bill with the Sixth Year production of ‘The Man in the Bowler Hat’, and closed with *Iolanthe*, billed also as one of the main events in the Cramond Festival Week programme. Links with our primary schools have been further strengthened by the arrangements made for instrumental tuition by tutors based in the Royal High School, thus providing valuable continuity between the primary and secondary phases of musical education. A novel event in the year was the Nation singing contest in March, in which more than 150 enthusiastic vocalists took part. Mr Ian McCrorie, chorus-master of the Scottish Philharmonic Singers, kindly agreed to adjudicate the choirs, madrigal groups and soloists representing each Nation, and judged the Picts to be victorious.

At the end of March, the school’s second visit to Munich in a year took place, when 46 pupils and 5 staff prepared and performed joint concerts with our twin school, The Theodolinden Gymnasium. These concerts, one of secular works performed at the Sophiensaal, the other of church music at the Emmauskirche were attended by large and appreciative audiences. The members of the group received generous hospitality from the families of the Theodolinden pupils and hope to reciprocate this hospitality in Edinburgh next Easter.

### **1980-1981**

In November, more than 60 of our pupils made a sizeable contribution to the Edinburgh Secondary Schools Choral and Orchestral concert in the Usher Hall, and a month later our own Community Concert took place in the same venue. This ad hoc orchestra and choir of some 350 pupils, parents, staff, primary school pupils and former pupils have now produced three concerts of high quality, and it does seem very sad that, owing to lack of adequate support and the escalating costs of the hall, this event may have to be discontinued. A broadcast by Radio Forth on Christmas Eve included some carols recorded by our Special Choir at the end of a busy term. At this point the enterprise and successes of a number of our pupils deserve recognition. Elizabeth Thomson of the Fifth Year, assuming the mantle of

her elder brother, Kenneth, fashioned the ‘KT. 3’ group and, with their help, raised nearly £200 for charity by carol singing at a range of venues; four of our senior boys (Andrew Armstrong, Donald Hay, Richard Phalp and Neil Thomas, all of the Sixth Year) reached the Scottish finals of the T.S.B. National Schools Rock Competition, and three other Sixth Year pupils - Christopher Bacon, Adrian Day and Alastair Russell—have written a jazz-rock musical called ‘Life - Styles’ which has been accepted for performance as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe later this year. The second term’s preparations culminated in two performances by pupils from S.1-S.3 of the jazz—based musical, ‘Dracula Spectacular’, closely followed by the return visit of staff and pupils from our twin school, the Theolinden Gymnasium of Munich. In the last week of term our German guests joined enthusiastically with our own pupils to present a choral, orchestral and jazz concert at The Royal High School and a more formal concert of sacred music at Cramond Kirk, under the auspices of the Cramond Heritage Trust. The summer term was spent preparing for the end-of—session senior stage production of Offenbach’s ‘Orpheus in the Underworld’ which gave us a further opportunity to enjoy the varied talents and enthusiasm of our pupils. At the annual Edinburgh Competitive Music Festival, the Recorder Consort gained an Honours Certificate in winning the Open Recorder Ensemble Class and the Special Choir retained the Marion Ritchie Cup by winning the Secondary Schools Choir Class. With regard to curriculum development, the department now provide specialist and instrumental teaching in all three of our feeder

primary schools and a C.S.E. course to cater for the less academically-minded musicians among our own pupils. This course adds a new dimension to the range of courses already offered.

### **1981-1982**

Despite the reduction in staff in the Music Department due to the promotion of Mr Duthie, there has been much activity on the musical side. In November, a group of 30 pupils gave a choral and chamber music concert for the Cramond Heritage Trust, and the term finished on a resounding note with the Christmas Concert in the Assembly Hall, involving choirs, orchestra, wind band, jazz group and finishing with the audience participating in the carol singing. Much of the second term was taken up with the preparations for the Usher Hall Concert on the 30th March in which, once again, parents and Former Pupils joined forces with our school choir. We are particularly grateful to the Bank of Scotland without whose generous sponsorship and publicity promotion this concert would not have taken place. In the summer term, pupils from S. 1-8.3 performed enthusiastically in the Stage musical 'Smike', and the session was rounded off

with a visit by 46 Music pupils and 5 staff to our twin school, The Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich. Among the pupils who deserve mention are Janet Cowan of S.6, our first International Baccalaureate candidate, who gained a Distinction award at Grade 8 Associated Board on the Flute and who was partnered by Pauline Smith (also S.6) as soloists in our Usher Hall Concert in Bach's 5th Brandenburg Concerto; and Elizabeth Thomson (S.6) who once again organised a group of singers who raised over £300 for charity at Christmas by singing carols at various venues round Edinburgh: their fundraising has reached £1200 over the last four years of carol singing. The Jazz Rock group run by Mr Cathrine also helped local Charities by giving a concert in the Maybury Road House, and by performing for the hospital broadcasting service, Mayfield Radio. In the area of curriculum development, we were able for the first time to have

practical sized classes in S. 1 and 5.2., with the beneficial result of an increased number of pupils opting for a certificate course in music. Our nine instructors now teach more than 200 instrumental pupils, and it is hoped that this flourishing trend will not be adversely affected by the present uncertainty regarding temporary instructors' contracts.

The young Drama Department also stretched into the area of extra-curricular production with a large share in the organisation of 'Smike' as well as involvement with the extravaganza which we have now come to accept from the authorship of Messrs Bacciarelli and Ward, the Bisto Kids of the English Department. Entitled 'Eric's Dream' and having a vague plot hidden amongst the luxuriant foliage of extravagant Buffoonery, this was a successful comedy show involving pupils and staff and appalling to all ages and intellects.

### **1982-1983**

The new Higher Music syllabus beginning this session resulted in an increase in numbers studying this subject. The original elements of performance, harmony and counterpoint, and the history of music remain in the syllabus as options, together with the new elements of project and composition. The aim is to give candidates more scope and to offer a course more suited to individual abilities and interests. Musical skills were extended by participation in the Edinburgh Schools Concert in the Usher Hall and a performance of Haydn's Organ Mass in Cramond Kirk. At Christmas, the pantomime 'Not the Sleeping Beauty' was performed in the school hall under Miss Hunter's direction, with a joint cast of pupils and staff: the spectacle of a hilarious performance by so many familiar figures, while not unique to the festive season, is especially appreciated then. The year 1982 ended with a Carol Concert and a further magnificent fund-raising effort by the K.T.5 Carol Singers. This year's musical activities have included the participation of the Special Choir in an Usher Hall European Concert, and the successful performances of the group 'Zone 9', who reached the finals of the T.S.B. Schools Rock Competition, aided by Mr Clouston and Mr Clark. At the end of the Easter term, the Music Department embarked on its most ambitious tour to date. A joint party of 55 pupils and staff from this school and 35 from George Heriot's took a combined orchestra and choir to Munich and to Northern Italy. The marked

degree of co-operation and inter-mixing between the students of two traditional rivals was a highlight of the tour. In the Bavarian capital, the party was accommodated with families of our twin school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium. Pupils from all three schools rehearsed together and gave a concert in the Emmauskirche, as well as several performances of Scottish piping and dancing, and a Rock Band concert. The staff and students of all three schools then proceeded to various towns in Northern Italy for more orchestral and choral concerts, two rock concerts and further displays of piping and dancing. In spite of poor weather, the party had many opportunities for sightseeing. One measure of the trip's success is that bookings are now open for a repeat in the summer of 1985.

### **1983-84**

In the Music Department, the new Higher music course is proving popular, as seen in the large number of presentations; and there are many talented youngsters demonstrating their enthusiasm both in and out of class. There were many varied musical events during the session. A new series of lunch-time concerts to introduce promising young soloists

was launched and over 40 performers took part in front of enthusiastic audiences. Senior pupils participated in the Edinburgh Schools Choral and Orchestral Concert in the Usher Hall, and our own annual school Christmas concert involved a wide variety of music makers. Special mention should be made of the K.T.6 Carol Singers, organised and rehearsed by Neil Watson, who raised a magnificent £639 for charity as a result of much activity. During the second term, success in the T.S.B. Schools Rock Competition was achieved by 'Snowblind', comprising Sean Bechhofer, Stewart Box, Grant Forrest, David Milne and George Pascoe-Watson of the Sixth Year, and David Stewart of the First. They gained third place in the Scottish finals. This led to further performances, including one in the Assembly Hall, where

they performed with three other groups from the school. Two events dominated the summer term - the Choral and Orchestra Concert at the Queen's Hall on 31st May with pupils from George Heriot's and our twin school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich (who spent the last week of May with us); and the final musical event of the session, 'H.M.S. Pinafore', successfully presented on a cooperative basis by several departments, using mainly senior pupils. In addition to participation in this last venture, the Drama Department has had a session of increased activity. The Fifth Year drama group delighted Primary and O.A.P. audiences with their Christmas pantomime, 'Cinderella', which was part of their course: and then entertained the staff with 'The Not So Royal High School'. Senior pupils went to many Festival productions and saw performances in school by Tony Crerar and Lothian's Theatre in Education Group. They participated in workshops by Scottish Ballet and the Creative Dance Easter School. Further down the school, the successful mutation of the lecture theatre into a drama studio has made it possible to give the junior Years some drama experience.

### **1984-85**

For the first time Drama was made available to all First and Second Year classes this session, ensuring that pupils electing to study it have all had some experience of the subject. Theatre visits included Reg. Bolton's Circus, Festival productions, pantomimes, dance and exhibitions. The Seniors' production of Sleeping Beauty and Scrooge delighted our pupils and local primary school audiences alike with its humour and unpredictability. In the Music Department, the traditional Christmas concert gave the wind band, string orchestra, the three choirs and various soloists the opportunity to display their musical talents. It was also the occasion for the KT Carol Singers to give a selection

from their repertoire; their efforts in the second half of December raised over £850 for charity, a result on which they are to be greatly commended. In the Community Concert in May F.Ps, parents and staff combined with pupils to produce a very enjoyable performance of works by 18th century composers and by Gilbert and Sullivan. Finally, the most ambitious foreign excursion yet planned by the department took place in June. It involved a party of 90 pupils and staff visiting Florence and Munich to give several concerts in each city in collaboration with staff and pupils from

our twin school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich.

### **1985-1986**

Drama is now fully established on the curriculum of First and Second Year pupils. Senior pupils enjoyed visits to the Festival Fringe and to the Cumbernauld Theatre, while pupils taking modules in Creative Drama and Theatre Arts delighted local primary schools with a production of Snow White at Christmas. In the Music Department, improved teaching accommodation has greatly benefited both class and extramural activities. Since the emphasis is now on music making, it is hoped to raise enough money to provide an electronic keyboard lab to allow individuals to improve their keyboard technique using headphones. This would be the basis for a keyboard course in Second Year for new modular courses and for practical work at Standard Grade. The traditional Christmas concert at the end of the first term once again gave a large number of talented pupils the chance to display their musical expertise in a selection of pieces for wind band, string orchestra, choirs and soloists. The customary audience participation in the carols, with choir and full orchestra, helped round off a most enjoyable evening's entertainment, the proceeds from which went to the RSSPCC. Taking part in the Concert were the 16 KT8 carol-singing group who proved to be more than worthy successors to the previous KT ensembles. This enthusiastic group, led by Karen MacIntyre, spent ten days at Christmas singing at a wide range of venues and raising an impressive £1250 which went to

deserving charities. In June a party of over 90 pupils and staff from our Bavarian twin school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich, rehearsed with performers from our own school and George Heriot's for Mozart's great Requiem Mass at the Queen's Hall. This special relationship with our German partners has been consolidated through regular contacts, strong musical performances, and several school generations of active pupils and supportive parents. Musical activities closed with a concert in the school Assembly Hall at the end of June, featuring the choirs and instrumentalists who had performed at Christmas.

### **1986-1987 (Music only, no stage)**

At Christmas the KT9 Singers, led by Karen MacIntyre, managed to surpass last year's marvellous achievement by raising

£1350 by singing carols at a number of venues in and around the city. The highlight was a visit to the Esso plant at Mossmoran where over £200 was raised. The charities benefitting included the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund, Multiple Sclerosis, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Spina Bifida. Throughout the session the choir, string orchestra and wind band have been rehearsing regularly. An appreciative audience supported the Christmas Concert at which

Choir, orchestra and soloists demonstrated their versatility in a varied programme. A second concert rounded off the Easter term: this included Faure's Requiem, which was taken on tour in the first fortnight in June, when ninety students and ten members of staff went to Munich and Northern Italy. This was the latest in a series of twinning operations dating back to 1975. In Munich the choir were involved in a joint performance of Mozart's great Requiem Mass with our link school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium. While in Italy formal concerts were given in Castiglione, Bologna and

Florence of the Faure, with the string orchestra performing works by Bach, Corelli and Vivaldi. In addition to the formal

element the party offered a Rock Band and a taste of Scottish entertainment featuring dancing and music for the fiddle

and the clarsach.

### **1987-1988**

This year the Drama Department presented for National Certificate modules for the first time: next session even more

pupils in the upper school will follow Drama courses than in the past. As part of their programme this year, many pupils attended performances at the King's and the Pleasance Theatre. The senior class performed Aladdin for our local primary schools, and the Fourth Year class raised over £70 for Comic Relief by performing their play for fellow pupils and staff. The school has always had a fully developed social and cultural involvement centred on Music. The many musical groups that meet and rehearse regularly throughout the year (senior and junior choirs, KT Singers, string orchestra and wind band) were given an opportunity to display their talents at the Christmas Concert in the school hall to a large and appreciative audience. An innovative item in the programme was provided by a Dance Group from the lower school who performed two lively disco formation routines to introduce the concert. Several informal lunchtime concerts gave instrumental soloists a chance to present pieces they had practised for examinations to interested staff. The session ended with a formal choral and orchestral concert in which a new jazz group added a further dimension to the range of musical activities. The KT Singers celebrated their tenth anniversary at Christmas by raising a sum of £1500 for charity during a fortnight of intensive effort. Contrary to popular opinion, the KTs do possess a repertoire outside of carols! They meet on a weekly basis to prepare a range of music including motets, madrigals and other part songs. This session their Christmas efforts created a new record, and since their foundation they have contributed over £7,000 to a variety of local and national charitable organisations. It is a splendid record. In June we received another visit from our twin school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich.

Since the link began in 1978, there has been an annual reunion alternating between Scotland and Bavaria. On this occasion 86 students, 8 teachers and 2 bus drivers were housed and looked after by our admirably supportive parents. A week of intensive choral and orchestral rehearsals culminated in a concert of music by Schubert in the Queen's Hall, involving some 200 performers from the

two schools who combined again with students and music staff from George Heriot's School. Old friendships were renewed, new associations begun, and the groundwork was laid for the school trip to Bavaria and Northern Italy in June 1989. This continuing association is unique, both in Lothian Region and in Bavaria, and I wish to record my thanks to parents and staff in both schools who ensure its success. Over the years more than 700 of our pupils



have participated in these exchanges and performances, becoming enriched culturally, linguistically and socially. Long may they continue!

### **1988-1989**

Much of the time during the first term of this session was spent preparing for our annual Christmas Concert in the Assembly Hall in which a variety of groups took part from junior and senior choirs to wind and jazz bands, string and full orchestras, the latter accompanying the audience in a grand finale of carol singing. The Jazz Band also gave a performance in Waverley Station in December to raise more than £50 for Dr Barnardo's in 30 minutes. The KT XI Choir, ably organised by Rachel Shewan of the Sixth Year, fulfilled another punishing ten day carol singing schedule prior to the

Christmas holidays and equalled the record of their immediate forerunners by amassing £1,500 during this period. This sum was donated to The Malcolm Sargent Cancer Relief for Children Fund and since their formation in 1978, successive 'KTs' have raised over £7,000 for a range of charities and are always interested in hearing of new and lucrative markets for their talents.

In June a party of 90 pupils and staff went on the biennial tour to Munich and Northern Italy. This year was a significant

one for our twin school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich, since it represented the 50th anniversary of their founding and the 10th anniversary of our link with them. A choral and orchestral concert was given at the Anton Fingeler Centre to mark these twin celebrations and we were joined by pupils of George Heriot's School and their twin school, the Luisa Schroeder Gymnasium, in performances of Schubert's 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony and Carl Orff's Carmina Burana.

And so on to Italy where formal concerts were given in Bologna, Castiglione di Pepole and Prato. Vivaldi's joyful Gloria

represented the major choral offering and the group displayed its versatility by including in their diverse repertoire a 'Scottish Entertainment', complete with pipers, singers and dancers, a Rock Band and a Jazz Band. These links, an idiosyncratic mixture of tourism, music making and European diplomatic relationships, are unique in the Region and, since the first link with Florence was established in 1975, nine major tours have been undertaken and over 850 personnel have been exposed to the combination of hard work and hard play which characterises a music trip. Two other events in the calendar, the 'Music for a Summer Evening' in June and our forthcoming production of Gilbert

and Sullivan's Pirates of Penzance have enjoyed considerable enthusiastic support and co-operation from many staff as well as parents and pupils, especially in 'Pirates', scheduled for the week beginning 16 October next term

### **1989-1990**

The Music Department has been to provide the practical skills and instruments to enable every pupil to develop to the best of his/her musical potential. We are grateful once again to the PTA, who assisted with the purchase of another electronic keyboard. This will enable us to meet the increasing demand we face as pupils from our S2 and S3 keyboard courses progress. Two new modules with a strong emphasis on the Music Technology field are to be introduced next session. Members of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra got the Department off to a flying start with a joint workshop and concert for orchestra and pupils. The momentum continued with junior and senior choirs, a dance group, the K.T. Singers, jazz band, string orchestra, wind band and staff barber shop group practising and performing

throughout the session. A new departure was a six day trip to the Cotswolds where a hectic schedule included formal concerts in Worcester Cathedral and local Churches and a Scottish Entertainment at our hotel and a local school introducing Scottish Country Dancing. A visit by the Band of the Parachute Regiment in May was followed by the return of The Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich and a period of intensive rehearsal culminating in a concert in St Mary's Cathedral in June. Many departments have been establishing specific curricular links with industry through

the Education Industry Links Scheme which has set up a network of contacts with local employers. The employers have the opportunity to see for themselves the changes taking place in the curriculum. Perhaps one of the most satisfying aspects of the work of departments is when there is cooperation between them, and this session Music, Drama and English, with much support from other staff too, combined their considerable talents to put on several shows. The Pirates of Penzance in October saw 100 pupils and over half of the staff produce a performance which won the Edinburgh Gilbert and Sullivan Society Cup for the best school production of 1989. Christopher Christmas was presented by the 5th and 6th year Drama Group and an Easter Musical Extravaganza of song and dance to

contemporary music was followed by Theseus and the Minotaur presented by the junior school. (We are advised that Rosie Kay starred as a headless Minotaur in this production)

### **1990-1991**

Once again it has been a busy year for the Music Department. A series of lunchtime concerts introduced soloists and small groups, including a senior pupil barbershop group and the Ceilidh Band. The Annual Christmas Concert drew together the Senior Choir and K.T. Singers, staff and pupil barbershop groups, the Wind and Jazz Bands, String Orchestra, a dance group and a number of soloists. Many of these performers later performed for the Edinburgh Gilbert and Sullivan Society and gave a concert at Stockbridge House to raise funds for the Edinburgh and Leith Old People's Welfare Council. Victoria Smith and Christopher Craig were selected from this concert to take part in a Gala Concert in the Queen's Hall in September. At the end of session two larger events, the Community Concert in St. Mary's Cathedral and the Choir Tour to Munich and Italy kept everyone busy. Ninety pupils and ten staff spent six days in the Appenine Mountains giving a series of formal concerts, rock music, jazz concerts and Scottish Entertainments as well as fitting in some sight-seeing in Florence. The party then moved on to Munich to join with the Theodolinden Gymnasium for a concert in the famous Herkulesaal. In March the Ceilidh Band, Annasach, were invited by an Edinburgh Travel Agent representing American Airlines to promote Scottish Tourism at an airline travel agents' convention in Chicago. Nicholas Randall, Victoria Smith, Cara Nolan, Hannah Manson, Stephen Maniam, Michael Smith and Christopher Craig presented a well received display of Scottish music and dancing during their hectic two day visit. A Rock Night has now become established as part of the annual tradition when pupils, staff and invited guests perform before an appreciative audience.

### **1991-1992**

The Drama Department started a Standard Grade course with a good uptake by pupils. Drama combined with the Music Department to produce the Mikado in November. Well-rehearsed, and backed by the skills of a wide range of pupils and staff, we enjoyed another successful and memorable show. The performance was enhanced by the new stage curtains which were provided by the RHS Club Trust. The Music Department has had a busy year preparing for the joint concerts with visiting European guests, but has still found time to take a party of pupils to a percussion workshop by Evelyn Glennie, organise a piano recital by Edinburgh University Music students in the school, continue the activities of the K.T. Singers at Christmas and make another enjoyable musical visit to the Cotswolds. The SCOTVEC Contemporary Popular Music class organised this year's Rock Night which featured the new Scottish group SMILE who played to an audience of over 200. The restoration of the organ in the Assembly Hall has been a magnificent gesture by Mr Joe Maloney, a former pupil who sadly died at Easter and will not be with us today to enjoy this wonderful musical resource.

The K.T.XIII Choir completed their annual 'Carolthon' and this year raised £2000, divided between the Leonard Cheshire

Foundation, the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund for Children, the Multiple Sclerosis Society and the Western General Radiation Oncology Project.

### **1992-1993**

There was particular excitement in the Music Department when fifty of our own pupils played alongside members of the combined bands of the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Royal Scots at a concert following an all day workshop. The Music Department continued to provide a platform displaying the great range of musical talents which our pupils enjoy through concerts featuring the many different groups. The highlight of the year was certainly the award of a European Arts Festival Award of £1000 to the school for outstanding good practice in developing a strong European dimension in the Arts. Of the six prizes gained by UK schools, ours was the only Scottish award. It was a formal recognition of our partnership with our twin school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich, which has now lasted for fifteen years. The prize for the award will now go towards establishing a European Travelling Arts Fellowship. I am

delighted that both the PTA and the Former Pupils' Trust have both added their contributions to this fund and we hope to send our first fellow abroad in the coming session. Meanwhile the work goes on! This session our musical young people have performed in France, Italy and finally, at the celebrated Herkulesaal in Munich, gave a joint performance with the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich of Schubert's G major Mass. Before the concert began I (presumably John Murray) was delighted to present my Munich counterpart, Herr Weigl, with a presentation plaque donated by our P.T.A. to mark our European Award

### **1993-1994**

(June Nelson's first entry in an Annual Report)

No entry for Drama (despite there being a Drama Dept. and Drama prizes)

The popularity of Music is evident not only in the increasing numbers following certificate courses but also in the large

measure of support given to a very full calendar of musical events this session. A musical Information Evening for parents was well attended. A visit to the Usher Hall for a concert by Evelyn Glennie was the departmental contribution to the school's Equal Opportunity Week. Concerts by the K.T. singers and soloists at the Cramond over-60's Club and St Giles Cathedral in November maintained our profile in the community as suitable preludes to the

Christmas Concert. Our Young Musician of the Year Competition where 120 young musicians competed for trophies in each of 3 categories will certainly become an annual event. In the Finals concert the winners were Eilidh Ross (S1) in the Beginners class, Lindsay Carroll S2 in the intermediate class, and Jacqui Nimmo S5 won the Open class. A Community Concert at the beginning of the summer term was a foretaste for the prestigious Usher Hall Concert. June 1994 witnessed several new developments to our long-standing European musical links. The biennial visit of the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich offered us an opportunity to hire the Usher Hall as the venue for the closing concert, to invite representatives from our other musical twin schools - the Schola di Musica G. Verdi from Prato, and the Lycee Antoinede-St-Exupéry of Lyons — to join with us for The event and to involve our wider community by the reinstatement of a Community Choir, comprising parents, teachers and former pupils, and the formation of a combined

Primary 7 Choir from our associated Primary schools. Altogether, some four hundred were involved in the concert and it is hoped to sustain the Community Choir in future years. In addition to the unique four-way European tie-up, it was delightful to receive some two dozen adults from Munich — parents and ex-teachers from the Theodolinden-Gymnasium - who flew across especially to attend the concert. I am most grateful to all the parents and colleagues who enabled this event to take place by giving accommodation to our one hundred and ten European visitors.

This was an exciting year for the Drama department as eleven pupils were among the first in Scotland to be presented for Higher Drama. Excerpts from *The Crucible*, *The Steamie* and *Bondages* impressed both the Drama Adviser and the visiting examiner. Other presentations this year included *Many a Woman* by the Higher class.

### **1994-1995**

The Drama Department enjoyed success with its first presentations at Higher Level and three pupils have moved on to college to continue their studies in the Performing Arts. Third Year drama pupils presented a short play on homelessness for Comic Relief Day which was very well received by a large appreciative audience and a number of theatre visits have taken place to venues such as the King's, the Traverse and the Theatre Arts Centre. This year's Junior Drama Club has been a thriving one. Thirty 1st and 2nd Year pupils have enjoyed workshops on themes as varied as the circus, Aneka's Challenge and mystery plays. Sixteen of the club also enjoyed a visit to the Theatre Arts Centre where they delved dramatically into Scottish History. The Music Department's trip to Italy and Munich saw performances of Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Mozart's *Requiem*. The Munich performance of the *Requiem* in the Herculose Halle was dedicated to the memory of Herr Karl Wimmner, the late Depute Head and ex Head of Music of the

Theodolinden Gymnasium in Munich. Increasing numbers of the school's instrumental pupils now take part in Divisional Orchestras and Bands, the result of much hard work and practice both in the department and at home. The new Strathspey and Reel Group made their debut performance in the well-attended Christmas concert. In the finals of the Young Musician of the Year competition the winners were Susanna Cheng (flute), Jan Dinwoodie (saxophone) and Catherine Durward (violin) in the Beginners, Intermediate and Open Awards respectively. At Christmas the KT singers, ably supported by a large number of Former Pupils, raised over £2,000 for charity through a series of carol singing expeditions across the City.

### **1995-1996**

This year the Drama Department has expanded again to take in 2 Standard Grade classes in both S3 and S4. The S4 class

received a Certificate of Achievement for their successful Red Nose Day Assembly on the subject of Homelessness. S3 meanwhile helped raise money for Amnesty International by taking part in the Secret Policeman's Ball. The S2

Drama Club also presented a piece for the concert. Two S3 pupils, Rachel Freeman and Shona Gillies received Certificates of

Excellence from the Burns Federation for their presentations of poetry. The Higher class presented various excerpts for their Higher examination. There were also visits to various theatres and the department hosted a visit by Telford drama students. The English Department produced outstanding exam results and continued to offer a wide range of activities inside the classroom and beyond. Activities included theatre visits; theatre workshops; author talks; reviews and designs for the Book Festival as well as visits to it; writing workshops; a tour of The Scotsman offices; winning through to the production stage of the Disney video competition; contributions to National Poetry Day; editing an edition of Lothian Sound; a trip to Stratford in bleak mid-winter. A group of 81 pupils came third in the national Daily

Telegraph Newspaper Competition and Emily Oyama (S2) came joint first in the Pushkin Prize with Lindsay Douglas gaining a Special Endeavour award in the same competition. The ESL Service has supported and monitored the work and progress of approximately 30 pupils. Support is curriculum-based and has included largely mainstream work with some tutorial sessions for S5/6. The service has initiated cross-age paired-reading projects and looks forward to further developing this approach in collaboration with English and Learning Support. A training video will soon be completed and ready for use in the next academic year. The Music Department's activities continue to increase and diversify, with rises in pupil numbers in Standard Grade, CSYS and the Lothian School orchestras. Tracy McIrose (S4) won a scholarship to study at the RSAMD, Glasgow, both she and Katy Durward (S3) are now playing in the Edinburgh Youth Orchestra; a further 16 pupils played in the Edinburgh Schools Childline Charity concert in December, and the KT Singers (in their 18<sup>th</sup> year) raised £1800 through further carol singing. In the Young Musician competition, Katy Durward and Emily Macdonald (S6) were joint winners of the Open James M Sharp Trophy award; Emily and Katy joined by Shona Thomson (S6) and Lindsay Barr (S3) won the new RHS FP Group Performance shield; and Sarah Burns (S3) and Caroline

Millar (S4) won the Beginners and Intermediate class shields respectively. In November the Wind Band represented Lothian Region schools at the carol singing at the Mound, and the annual Christmas concert again drew a large and enthusiastic audience. The KT Singers were again invited to the carol service at St Cuthbert's Church, and performed

a lunchtime choral and chamber music concert at the same venue after Easter. In April S3 Standard Grade pupils took part in a Carmen operatic workshop at the Festival Theatre and in May the Junior Choir was the sole representative of Regional schools in the Junior Saltire Scots singing competition at the Edinburgh Music Festival, gaining an Excellent in their class. The ceilidh group Glayva has extended its repertoire with performances in and around the community,

including one at the 'Amnesty' concert and other school ceilidhs including one for the visitors from Europe. In June the P6 and P7 cluster primary pupils were invited to attend a concert to give them a foretaste of our musical activities. The climax of the year's activities - and of the 'week of welcome' to our foreign guests - was our European Cities concert in

the Usher Hall where pupils and staff from our twin schools from Munich, Prato and Lyons joined our own pupils, staff, parents and pupils from the cluster schools; a fitting tribute to the strength and support we enjoy from our unique European links and from the Royal High community.

### **1996-1997**

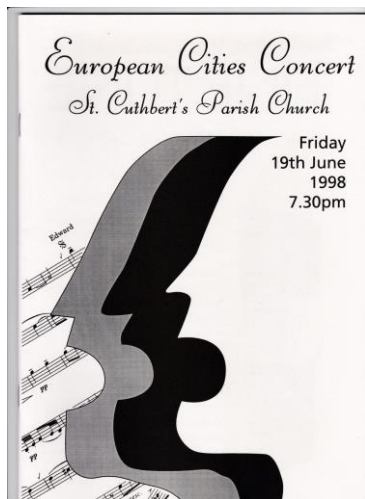
The Drama Department spurred by the success in exam results once again had a good uptake at Standard and Higher grades. These groups have been actively encouraged to participate in various theatre visits throughout the year including during the Edinburgh Festival. One FP entered the QMC Drama course while another appeared in Take the

High Road. We have members of the National Youth Music Theatre and the Scottish Youth Theatre within school. Katie Arrowsmith took up a one year place at the Stratford-Upon-Avon College and took part in the 1996 Edinburgh Festival Fringe with their touring company. In the Music Department another intensive year of musical activities began in September when the School Wind Band visited Loaningdale for a weekend rehearsal workshop for a subsequent concert. Our Music Information Evening for parents in October was well supported. The Christmas term ended on two high notes: the KT singers raising over £2000 for the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund for Children, and the Christmas concert held in the Assembly Hall. The Young Musician Competition was again well supported and displayed new musical talent: winners included Anna Torp-Peterson, (S1) Beginners, Sarah Boyne (S3) Intermediate,

Katie Durward and Lindsay Barr (S4) Group, and Anthony McGuire (S3) Open/Advanced. Katie Durward also achieved a Distinction award on violin at Grade 8. In March our Wind Band came a creditable 5th out of 15 contestants at the Balerno Wind Band Festival, the first time they have played at this level. The Summer term began with the school hosting a concert given by the Hoegskul Stord of Helgesund, Norway, in conjunction with our own Strathspey & Reel group. Tristan Turner and Matthew Hogg (both S4) are to be congratulated for organising and performing in a Rock Night concert which raised £200 for Leukaemia and Cancer Children's Fund. The Wind and Jazz Bands, String Orchestra & Strathspey Group and Junior Choir gave a concert for the S6/S7 pupils from associate primary schools, a number of whose pupils joined in the concert. The concert at the start of May in St Cuthbert's Church gave our Munich/Florence group an opportunity to perform part of their programme for the tour in June.

### 1997-1998

In the Music Department the Wind Band made another visit to Loaningdale at the start of the session for a workshop weekend, leading to a performance in a successful concert in early September, with another performance just before the October break at Cramond Church Hall. In December the KT XX Singers put their vocal talents to good use in raising in excess of £2000 for charity (the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund being the main beneficiary) with participation in two City Christmas services with support from pupils in the Art Department who designed the programme for the SPIFOX charity event. A group of Wind Band instrumentalists together with pupils from Broughton raised nearly £1000 for St Columba's Hospice by performing at the Gyle for a day and a further group of S3 Clarinetists raised over £100 in 45 minutes for charity. Our annual Christmas Concert in the Assembly Hall featuring all our choral and instrumental activities provided a suitably climactic close to the term. In January S3 Standard Grade pupils were invited to work in the Music Department with three members of the RSNO and the composer James MacMillan, the resultant composition by the group being performed with the RSNO players at the Festival Theatre prior to the concert



performance MacMillan's own piano concerto - the inspiration for the workshop. The annual 'Young Musician' competition in March again brought the talents of our pupils to the fore with the winners being; Beginners' class - Beverley Hope S3 (accordion); Intermediate class - Martin Hay S4 (tuba); Group class - Sarah Burns, Katy Durward, Lindsey Barr, Elizabeth Bentley, Mhairi Archibald (all S5). Katy, a previous winner in this class, also won the open James Sharp Trophy. A special feature of the event was a performance by a group of distinguished FP jazz musicians; the RHS Alumni Jazzmen, with Stan Greig, as a tribute to two internationally famous musician FPs Sandy Brown and Al Fairweather, in whose memory a bronze plaque presented to the school by the RHS Club Music Society was dedicated in the Assembly Hall. The summer term's activities were taken up with the annual concert by our choral and orchestral groups for the cluster primary pupils and our biennial **European Cities Concert** involving guest visitors from schools in Munich, and Prato in Italy in which their choral and orchestral forces were joined with our own pupils, past and present, parents and staff, to perform works by Beethoven, Bach, Fauré and Puccini in St Cuthbert's Parish Church. See inset for the front page of the programme.

We also concluded the term with phase one of a special Amnesty International Concert project with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and 200 Edinburgh schoolchildren, due to be presented at the Assembly Rooms in November. A Dance Group, led by Debbie Irving, met regularly throughout the year. A dance residency, involving the Glasgow group Kulyer Dance Company was arranged for a week in June. A series of workshops enabled pupils in S 1 -3 to experience a variety of dance styles (including street dance); In addition, pupils worked all week on producing an entertaining performance. This week generated a lot of interest in dance and some provision for pupils is being planned for next session as a result.

### 1998-1999

A very busy year for the Drama Department began by its becoming involved with the Traverse Theatre on a young play writers' project entitled Class Act. S4 Standard grade pupils had the opportunity to work with professional writers, actors and director who performed our pupils plays to the public in November. Following on from intensive workshops in school, pupils were also treated to a free performance of Liz Lochhead's Perfect Days at the Traverse and a backstage tour. The Traverse has published their scripts. S3 pupils have enjoyed outings to Les Miserables and Jesus Christ Superstar at the Playhouse Theatre where they also attended an Educational workshop prior to the

performance. In March they presented their own work in school to raise money for Comic Relief. Half of the S3 pupils took part in a Moderator's training day for the SQA, an enjoyable if nerve racking experience. Higher Drama pupils have seen no less than three versions of the Crucible this year, but modestly prefer their own interpretation of this Arthur Miller play. The help of three Moray House students has also been very valuable.

Amongst extra events, the Amnesty Concert in the Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh (November) gave senior pupils the opportunity to perform with pupils from other schools and with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in a new choral work by the Edinburgh based composer Geoffrey King to highlight and raise funds for this important charity. The Higher Music class benefited from a four week operative workshop based on the forthcoming new Festival production of Puccini's Turandot. S3 pupils enjoyed the experience of attending a one day workshop with the cast and producers of the musical Jesus Christ Superstar at the Playhouse Theatre in January which included a matinee performance of the show. An often overlooked feature of the Department is the highly successful presentation of students at Associated Board exams: nearly 100 were presented this session with a virtually 100% pass rate. Congratulations due to all especially to S6 pupils Lindsey Barr (violin) and Sarah Burns ('cello) both of whom gained passes at the final Grade 8 exam in the Easter term. Of the regular events, the Christmas concert again demonstrated successfully the commitment and enthusiasm of our many musical pupils in the wind and jazz bands, orchestral groups and choirs, and gave a lot of pleasure to our loyally supportive audience. The KT Singers set a new record over the Festive season in carol singing for charity.

The biennial music tour to Northern Italy and Bavaria took place in June when a party of 45 pupils and 4 teachers under Dr Murray's leadership spent 6 days in Castiglioni dei Epoli followed by a week in Munich. For the Italian leg of the tour they were joined by a group of IR pupils and teachers from the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich and, in

combination with the students of the Scuola di Musica 'G Verdi' dei Prato, gave two joint concerts in the cathedral in Prato and Castiglione's parish church. The major works performed were Faure's Requiem and the Summer and Winter concertos from Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" with soloists Lindsey Barr and Katy Durward. A number of Italians then travelled with the group to Munich and, following an intensive week of rehearsals, all gave a performance of Haydn's Nelson Mass at the celebrated Hercullessaal der Residenz, a setting that provided a suitable musical climax to the tour.

In June there was the Community concert at Cramond Kirk as a prelude to the following musical trip to Italy and Germany.

The highlight of the year was certainly the Secret Policeman's Ball, which involved some 100 pupils performing in the show and raised £1000 for Amnesty International. Following on from last June's extremely enjoyable and energetic Dance Week with the Kulyer Dance Theatre Company, a number of wide-ranging dance activities has taken place this session. Workshops with the highly Acclaimed San Francisco Ballet, contemporary groups like the V-Tol Dance Company and Union Dance as well as a visit from the Maori dancer Mi:Ka, who taught the S2 rugby team, among others how to perform the haka, have been well attended and enjoyed by many pupils, providing an opportunity to experience a rich variety of dance styles and disciplines. In addition, the services of a dance teacher, Clare Hughes, were secured and she worked enthusiastically on a weekly basis throughout the year, worked on a number of routines and performed successfully in The Secret Policeman's Ball and also in The Happy Hour. It is good to see dance increasingly represented in these shows and indicates how much potential exists among pupils. It is hoped to build on the successes of this year and step out even further.

### **1999-2000**

The activities of the Music Department become ever more varied, and this session saw a number of new ventures beyond the already regular concert items; in November pupils were invited by Cramond Kirk (as part of a Millennium fundraising project for the homeless during the Festive season) to perform a concert entirely of solo items. The success of this concert prompted a further invitation to perform a similar concert in the new session. Once again the KT singers, organised by Alexander Johnston (S6), excelled themselves in a very busy three weeks at Christmas. This included representing Edinburgh schools by singing at the City Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony on the Mound and also in the St. Cuthbert's Parish Church Christmas Service, and by raising £3,000 for the Children's Cancer Charity Sargent Scotland. There were two Christmas concerts this year, junior and senior. In the Young Musician competition in February, honours were shared by winners Laura Melrose (Beginners), Cara Bleiman (Intermediate), Martyn Byott, Stephen Clark, Ross Hamilton, Jonathan May and Grant More (Group) and Gemma Proudfoot (Open). At the start of May, a Wind and Jazz Band concert took place giving further soloist opportunities to our CSYS music candidates. On the curricular front, in the first term our Standard Grade, Higher and CSYS students were involved in

a singing workshop with soloists from the Scottish Chamber Orchestra Chorus, and were invited to the final rehearsal by the SCO for a performance of Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony at the Queen's Hall. The school percussion group participated in a master-class led by the world famous percussionist Colin Currie, again at the Queen's Hall. A cluster liaison group involving all primary music specialists with the Royal High music staff to develop 5-14 Recording and Assessment was established, and the spin-off benefits have included a series of joint concerts at the primary schools and a stage musical performance of Persephone by choirs from Blackhall, Cramond, Clermiston & Davidsons Mains Primaries together with the SI Choir at the Royal High School in June. The climax of the session was the Millennium European Twinning concert at the Central Halls, Tollcross, in which choirs and instrumentalists from the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich and the Scuola Musica 'G Verdi' from Bologna joined forces with our own pupils, staff, parents and former pupils in a concert of Scottish music and works by Mozart, Barber, Beethoven and Schubert, happily celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Munich/Edinburgh twinning link, a fitting tribute to the hard work of staff and pupils over many years of joint European music-making. Dance activities have continued to prosper this session. The dance club met regularly, showcasing work in December as well as in the two Amnesty shows. Many thanks to dance teachers Clare Hughes and Jennifer Blake who have extended the quality of dance in the school. In January and February there was a series of breakdancing sessions, appealing mainly to boys, and a week of an extended series of workshops led by students from Telford as well as a dance workshop by the acclaimed VTOL dance company. The provision of dance opportunities has certainly been extended this year looking promising for the future. More spectacularly, the Secret Policeman's Ball in October played to packed audiences and raised another £1,000 for Amnesty (continuing the Royal High as the biggest fundraiser in Scotland for the charity). There was another highly entertaining and successful show in May (mainly for pupils in S1, S2 and S3). The quality of production and performance in both shows testified to the range and depth of talent present in the school. In another showbiz arena, pupils had the chance to see two performances by figures from the world of pop; in December Justin, and in May the boyband, Northern Line, performed in front of boisterous and appreciative audiences.

## Performing Arts reports, 2001-2017

This data is a compilation of information about theatre, music and dance, extracted from Annual Reports.

### 2001-2002

#### Music

The new session's activities within the Music Department began with a charity concert given by our Strathspey and Reel Group in Blackhall Church at the beginning of November at which they raised over £500; three weeks later our new annual event, the concert for soloists and chamber groups (mostly from our Standard Grade and Higher music pupils) at Cramond Kirk, drew an appreciative audience to enjoy the high standards of performances from our pupils to begin the series of winter concerts at the church. Once again the KT Singers (organised this year by Alistair Hodgson S6) began their annual 'Carols for Charity' singing marathon at the end of first term by performing at the City Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony and ultimately reached their target of £3000 with their laudable carol singing Efforts. Our Christmas concert involving the school choral and orchestral and jazz groups rounded off a very busy first term. In February our Standard Grade and Higher Music pupils were invited to Moray House College of Education's Music Department to participate in a morning 'Gamelan' workshop exploring through performing and inventing the unique timbres of Indonesian music, a useful introduction to World Music and a valuable adjunct to preparation for their SQA Listening exams. The major part of the remainder of the session was taken up with the preparations for our European Cities concert at St Cuthbert's Parish Church in the last week of term, where joined by our twin school colleagues from the Theodolinden Gymnasium, Munich and the Munich Brahmschor, we performed a joint choral and orchestral concert with our own school pupils and parents, staff, and pupils from Cramond Primary School – a stirring finale to not just the session (and final weeks joint rehearsals), but also a tribute to the continued success over the last two and a half decades of our strong European musical links.

### 2002-2003

#### Music

This session was dominated by the arrangements for refurbishment of the Music Department which has brought us much needed additional practice rooms and a long-awaited recording studio to enhance our musical provision for the future. The additional three practice rooms will give us more flexibility for timetabling our visiting instrumental teachers and will allow students to use the extra facilities for exam and classroom preparation, and the recording studio will enable us to cater for more of the National Qualification course options which now include Sound Engineering 7 already piloted and successfully run by our Higher level students this session. Two of our senior students, Catriona Morison (S6) and Cara Bleiman (S6) have also been presented for the new Advanced Higher course, and additionally their national musical achievements (noted in last year's Annual Report) have been further recognised - deservedly so – with their award of school colours for music early in this session.

Despite the difficulties imposed by a mid-session three-month decant to the other side of the school campus, the musical activities continued apace. Though we had to say a fond farewell to our longest serving instrumental teacher Mr Tom Clouston, his thirty year legacy of guitar tuition was taken up by Mr Gordon Ferries who joined us this session and has now formed a new Guitar Ensemble. Our new woodwind teacher Mr Dan Hallam who also runs the Edinburgh Schools Jazz Orchestra has reinvigorated our own Jazz Band; they performed a stirring commissioned work from local Jazz musician Dick Lee for Tom's retiral celebrations; and we are further pleased to welcome Mr John Duffy as Brass Teacher to replace Mr Andrew Barker who was seconded as Acting Chief Musical Officer to Edinburgh Council last session, and also Mr Julian Appleyard who replaces Mr Hamish Whittle as woodwind teacher and now runs our thriving Junior Wind Band. Once again we were invited to present a Soloists' concert as part of the Winter Concert Series at Cramond Kirk in late November.

The KT Singers were again invited to open their annual Christmas Carol Singing for Charity by performing at the Council's Christmas Lights Ceremony in Princes Street and under the organising efforts of Claire Addison and Jenny Mcleod (both S6) very nearly reached £3000 albeit on a much tighter, reduced time scale than last year — all credit to them! The annual Christmas concert presented by all our choral and instrumental ensembles — with much appreciated catering support from the school PTA and an enthusiastic audience enabled the term to end on a triumphant and high-spirited seasonal note.

On our return to the refurbished Department just before Easter an Open Night organised by Mr Andrew Morley for the Department, with an informal concert (and again refreshments courtesy of the PTA ) plus the offer of a tour of



the facilities, drew support from many interested parents. The build up to the summer exchange tour to Germany and Italy was highlighted with a further concert in Cramond Kirk with the combined school and Community choirs performing works by Pergolesi, Vivaldi, Mozart and Rutter, before taking these performances onwards to Europe. The European tour was a great highlight of the year for all participants, 45 pupils and 5 staff. In particular it proved a fitting climax to their school music careers for the 22 S6 pupils who have done so much to support musical activities. Concerts were given in Munich in collaboration with our link school, the Theodolinden Gymnasium, and in Prato and Castiglione, old friendships were renewed, new friendships established and, in addition to the formal concerts of choral and orchestral music, our German and Italian friends were initiated further into the intricacies of Scottish Country Dancing. With such dedicated commitment from our students and staff over a very difficult session, and the promising new facilities in our refurbished accommodation, the future for music at The Royal High School looks very bright.

### **Dance**

Dance sessions ran throughout the year for pupils in S1—S3, whilst a group of senior pupils had the opportunity to work all year in PD with a qualified dance teacher. Whilst opportunities to show the range of dance activities were limited this session, the Amnesty show allowed some pupils a chance to showcase their talents. The school was involved in an educational project with the Edinburgh Festival, enabling over 20 pupils to see a production of 'Luminous' and this year has been invited to review dance performances in the Festival. A strong interest in dance has, therefore, continued this session.

## **2003-2004**

### **Music**

Alter some excellent results from 2003's music cohort we returned to the newly refurbished department in a very positive mood with significantly increased numbers particularly in 83 and S4. The new recording studio facility has opened up more options for students up to Higher level with 16 this session now choosing the Sound Engineering & Recording option and 5 the MIDI Sequencing option. Music Technology is now thriving very well in our department, where most students now use the Sibelius computer software for inventing work, an area we hope to expand into junior classes in the future.

Our musical activities began with the Jazz Band having an open rehearsal in the Music Department with their director Mr Dan Hallam during the school Open Night in October. We were then invited to join with Craigmount High School in November in a concert involving the Junior Wind Band, the Guitar Ensemble and the Jazz Band, two soloists and a joint choral/orchestral finale in the Edinburgh Freemasons Hall as part of a fund-raising for Charity organised by the Corstorphine Rotary Club. This new link led to two of our most promising players, Ewan Bleiman (S5) and Cara Bleiman (S6) taking part in the following term in the Rotary Club's Young Musician of the Year competition, in which over 200 competitors from the South of Scotland, from the Borders to Central region took part. Cara to her credit reached the sector finals and was beaten only by the Finals competition winner in that round. Cara has since been accepted for an extra year of music study at the Specialist Music Unit at Broughton High School, and we wish her well.

Our annual concert for soloists at Cramond Kirk later in November was again supported by an enthusiastic audience with over twenty of our students each playing a solo, and the term was rounded off with our Christmas Concert in the school hall in which all our choral and instrumental ensembles and some soloists provided a wide selection of music, all of a seasonal nature. We must also not forget the KT Singers who were awarded a certificate in 2003 for the most money raised in Scotland on behalf of Sargent Scotland, the Cancer charity for Children from carol singing last Christmas. This year they sent an even larger cheque to the same charity for their vocal efforts in December. We are very proud of their loyal work for charity over the last 26 years and they deserve much credit for it. The Lowland Army band also paid us a visit for a joint workshop and concert involving a number of our wind band players and performed to S1 and S2 classes in the afternoon, a useful and enjoyable experience for our young band players, not to mention the army bandsmen too, who already have one of our FPS playing with them, and may well soon have a few more future recruits.

The second term concluded with a Variety Concert involving again our many choral and instrumental ensembles and soloists, set with a new seating plan with tables and refreshments helping to provide a more convivial 'café' atmosphere. Amongst the many exam successes we should congratulate Katie Munro (86) who gained a high Merit in her final Grade 8 Saxophone exam.

## **RHS/TLG Music Exchange**

This year sees the 25th anniversary of the music exchange between the Royal High School and the Theodolinden Gymnasium, Munich, as well as the 50th anniversary of the twinning between the two cities. As part of the celebrations, a special concert took place on June 24th in the Reid Concert Hall at the University of Edinburgh featuring music by Haydn, Pachelbel, Weber, Chilcott as well as traditional Scottish music, performed by the joint choirs and orchestras of the two schools. As in past years, the week of the exchange has been a chance to forge new friendships and renew old ones as well as performing some of the masterpieces of the European musical repertoire in one of Scotland's finest concert halls.

## **Dance**

Dance activities continue to thrive, thanks in part to those dedicated staff who continue to provide opportunities for pupils to participate and to perform if they wish. Samantha Baigrie held regular classes throughout the year for S6 pupils, giving the PD group the chance to perform in Portobello Town Hall in a dance evening run by Dancebase instructors. Classes were also held after school by Samantha throughout the year for S1 and S2 pupils, with some impressive work from a dedicated and enthusiastic group being showcased in the summer show. The enthusiasm for dance was also revealed in the Secret Policeman's Ball and in the Christmas Dance Night where a plethora of talent was displayed in a variety of dance styles including ballet, tap, jazz, Asian as well as the more familiar pop. It is hoped that pupils will continue to take advantage of this opportunity to get themselves in shape and to have some fun at the same time.

## **2004-2005**

### **Music**

Another busy year has yielded positive developments in music. Further increases in numbers opting for the subject in the coming session are due to music now being offered in two serial columns to the new S3 cohort. A significant number from the present S4 moving up to S5 together with increased numbers in the new S6 show that the music technology aspects of the course make it a more popular choice for a wider range of students. Over the year nearly forty pupils have been presented for and passed Associated Board music exams (from grades one to seven) and four senior pupils have chosen to be entered for free standing performing units at Advanced Higher and one at Higher level, over and above their own timetabled curriculum requirements.

Our range of activities - choral, orchestral and instrumental, including opportunities for solo and small ensemble performances - enjoy healthy numbers from our pupils in all years, and we must pay tribute to our committed and enthusiastic team of instrumental staff who assist us not only with the important teaching provision, but also with rehearsals and preparation for Concerts and exams beyond the normal working day. Our annual concert at Cramond Kirk in November again attracted an enthusiastic audience, and gave our soloists a chance to reveal their musical skills prior to exams later in the term. In mid-December the brass group and KT singers made a strong contribution to the Cramond Kirk Christmas service. At the end of term the regular Christmas concert featuring all our singers and instrumentalists proved a great success with participants and audience alike.

In mid-March the S3 Intermediate 2 music class enjoyed a visit to a Gamelan workshop at Moray House College exploring the delights of Indonesian music making, and the 'cafe' format of our end of Easter term Variety Concert proved once again to be an enjoyable evening of light musical entertainment for the enthusiastic audience.

### **Choir**

2004/05 has been an extremely busy year once again for the school choir. The school year started with a concert as part of the Festival of British Youth Choirs in the Methodist Central Hall during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The choir performed remarkably well considering nearly an hour's worth of music was intensively rehearsed in just three weeks and received a very favourable review on the internet music guide, 'EdinburghGuide.com'. In December the choir was, as usual, to be heard in various locations around Edinburgh singing carols in aid of Sergeant Scotland. Performance venues included the Balmoral Hotel and we raised well in excess of £1,000 for this very worthy cause. In May, the choir took part in two performances in as many weeks, first of all in a joint concert with the school's Community Choir in St. Columba's Church, Blackhall. The following week we were involved in recording a song called 'Choices for Life' as part of a drugs awareness campaign being organised by Lothian and Borders Police. In

June we continued our links with the cities of Munich and Florence spending a week as the guests of the Theolinden Gymnasium, a link now in its 26<sup>th</sup> year before moving on to the hilltop town of Castiglione dei Pepoli in Northern Italy. Musically the highlights of the tour were the concerts given in Munich, Florence and Castiglione but equally important were the continuing and new friendships which have become a feature of our links with these two very different but beautiful parts of Europe.

### **Dance**

Dance activities continue to thrive with an increase in uptake and a range of classes offered for all year groups twice a week throughout the session. Our dance teacher, Samantha Baigrie, deserves special mention for continuing to generate enthusiasm and commitment from her many pupils. Thanks to lottery funding, classes for our feeder Primaries have also been offered on Saturdays for most of the session, ensuring future support for an energetic and enjoyable activity. The high quality work from all year groups (including the S5 PD group) culminated in an impressive Dance Show in April which attracted a large and enthusiastic audience over two nights. The range of dance styles, the sheer energy of the performers and the stunning costumes (especially in the Cats medley) contributed to a high quality show. The interest in dance was also encouraged through well-supported workshops taken by Scottish Ballet in September and Scottish Contemporary Dance Theatre in April. With outings to each company's show, as well to 'Fame' in June, adding to the pupils' enjoyment. Dance is now one of the larger extra-curricular activities in terms of pupil participation and has the potential to involve even more pupils given continued support within the school.

## **2005-2006**

### **Drama**

Our first major project this year involved S4 Standard Grade pupils working with writers, directors and actors at the Traverse Theatre. This was an exciting experience which culminated in a public performance of the RHS pupils' plays by professional actors at the Traverse Theatre. Those of you who attended will know what an entertaining and rewarding evening it was. The plays are published in an anthology called 'Class Act'. Well done S4! Christmas was a busy time too as S4 revived their pantomime, '40 Winks For Beauty' for the end of term concert and Eleanor Morton of S3 appeared with the Lyceum Theatre in 'Scrooge'. Our S3 drama class enjoyed the performance immensely and were able to use the experience to write great SG Theatre Criticism essays. All first and second year pupils had a short course in drama this year and the junior drama club was well attended by enthusiastic S1 and S2 pupils. Thanks are due to Jessica Rodgers and Callum MacDougall so for their help with this. In March more than a hundred pupils were seen by Victoria Beanie when she was casting for a new feature film called 'The Waterhorse'. Look out for this film set in Scotland, filmed in New Zealand and involving a 'waterhorse' similar to the Loch Ness monster. Twelve of our girls and two boys were chosen to audition for leading roles and although they were pipped at the post they had fun being filmed acting from the script. S4 pupils achieved a high standard of performance in their final practical pieces and will be the first year to sit separate Credit and General papers in K&U.

### **Music**

The pace of change in curriculum and extra-curricular events has increased over recent years and this year has been no exception. Our Music Information Evening after the October break gave parents the annual opportunity to discuss pupil progress and related queries with our instrumental staff, and it was well attended. A group of S2 and S3 pupils attended with Mr Morley a performance of the 'Blood Brothers' musical at the Festival Theatre a week later, and our annual invitation to present a concert of solo performances in the Winter Series of concerts at Cramond Kirk in November gave 21 of our talented musicians the opportunity to play to an appreciative audience. December brought us further performance opportunities: the Brass group playing under the direction of Mr Hodge at the Cramond Kirk Christmas service, and the return of the KT Singers who in their 28<sup>th</sup> year still work tirelessly to sing carols for charity, often in their own time. This year they successfully raised over £1300 for 'Sargeant Scotland' - the Children's Cancer charity, performing at a number of local venues and at our annual Christmas concert in the school. This event was well attended by a large and enthusiastic audience, giving another opportunity for school musicians to perform in larger groups. Choirs, bands and ensembles and provide seasonal entertainment to round off the term in style. A number of musicians were also performing at the European Youth Parliament Day held in the school in early

March 7. Bobby Ross on bagpipes provided a musical introduction to welcome the guests at the start of the day, and a group of string players directed by Miss Nelson provided further musical interludes at morning break and lunch. Mr Nicolson took the senior Sound Engineering students to a workshop at the Sound Café studios, at Nine-Mile Burn, where promising links with the profession have now been established for future projects. A double bill of our Variety Concert and the Edinburgh Schools Jazz orchestras concert (on 28 and 29 March respectively), both in our established 'café' format With refreshments served at tables during the concert brought a fitting end to a busy second term.

In mid-June four of our S3 pupils took part in a two day Gospel Choir workshop for Edinburgh School pupils at the Traverse Theatre, and much of the term was taken up otherwise with preparations for our Twin Cities Link with the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich. The Munich music exchange; now in its 27th year, this year's exchange between The Royal High School and the Theodolinden Gymnasium took place between 18-25 June. Pupils from the TLG were hosted by our own pupils with the week culminating in a concert in St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral featuring music by Bach, Vivaldi and John Ritter. Once again the week was a chance to forge new friendships and renew old ones and we all thoroughly look forward to returning to Munich next year.

Despite a reduction in funding from the Edinburgh Council we are still maintaining regular presentations of pupils for Associated Board exams, held in the school - 38 candidates so far this session for grades one to eight. On the curriculum front, the NQ revision of the Muse courses presented from next session has now simplified the many permutations of exam choices to either 'Music With Performing' or 'Music with Technology' at all levels. This has considerable ICT resource implications and we were very pleased to be awarded Enterprise Funding with additional School funding to provide the latest iMac intel processor computers to run 'Garageband' as an educational project for S1-S3 with pilot work already begun in S2 in May this year. This will also provide the necessary equipment and software resources for senior classes who now have an even greater dependence on technology in the new music courses.

## **2006-2007**

### **Music**

A year of considerable reflection on and change in our activities in Music has put much pressure on staff, but as ever the benefits will be evident to us all. We welcomed a new singing teacher to our visiting peripatetic staff cohort – Mrs Sarah Gillan joined us through the Youth Music Initiative to take on singing pupils for half a day per week, and when she left on maternity leave at Christmas, she was replaced by Ms Maggie Brown who continued her good work for the rest of the session. Our Music Information Evening after the September break gave parents the annual opportunity to discuss pupil progress and related queries with our instrumental staff, and as usual, with assistance from our local instrumental supplier to answer queries on buying and renting instruments, it was well attended. On the curriculum front, we at last were able to run our pilot courses through the Enterprise Initiative on GarageBand using our new Mac computers, and with a visit to the 'eLive' Centre, took advantage there of a short starter course with a selected class from S2 to introduce all our S2 classes to this popular new creative software. Our Christmas concert in the Assembly Hall gave all music making instrumental and choral groups the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and talents to a large and most appreciative audience, prefaced by a selection of carols from the KT singers before the concert. This event yet again provided suitable seasonal entertainment to round off the term in style.

Our highlight in the second term was a visit in March to our school by the Markham District School of Toronto who wished to perform as part of their British tour at least one concert in Scotland. We were the lucky recipients, and an afternoon of musical entertainment was very ably provided to the first and second year classes by this most talented, near professional standard Wind Band of 85 Canadian High School pupils. An afternoon to remember for all.

Our presentation of pupils for Associated Board exams numbers are still quite well maintained if limited to a small group in November, and a further much larger group of 33 candidates in June this session for grades one to eight. A further new initiative planned already for next session will be a collaborative project between a 'regional' band and a school based ensemble when Mr Dan Hallam and Miss June Nelson take The Edinburgh Schools Jazz Orchestra (including a substantial number of our own players) together with our own Royal High Scottish Fiddle Group on tour to Krakow, Poland in September, with a preview concert (note for diaries) in the school Assembly Hall on the evening of Monday 27 August.

It is heartening to see new projects like these developing to involve more pupils in bringing their musical expertise to the wider community, and we hope this will continue in the years to come.

### **Choir**

This has been another exceptionally busy year for the school choir. In November a small group drawn from the more senior members of the choir took part, along with Beeslack and Biggar High Schools in a world premiere performance with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra of a piece by the composer Brian Irvine called *The Boy Who Kicked Pigs!* This was certainly a new experience for all involved but all the pupils enjoyed the experience, especially with getting the opportunity to perform in Glasgow City Halls and Edinburgh's Queen's Hall with a professional orchestra.

Also in November, Mr Morley and three choir members attended the Standard Life Awards in the Hub on Edinburgh's Royal Mile in which we had been nominated for the school's exchange with the Theodolinen-Gymnasium in Munich.

December saw the KT Singers performing carols in various locations in Edinburgh and raising money for Sargent Scotland as they have done for the last 29 years.

In March the choir was invited to be part of a joint Edinburgh School's Choir for a concert of Carl Jenkins' *Armed Man Mass* performed in the Assembly Rooms with the Edinburgh Schools' Symphony Orchestra. This was another first for the choir and is one which we hope will be repeated in future years.

Finally, the highlight of the year for the choir once again has been our exchange with the Theodolinen-Gymnasium, Munich and the town of Castigione dei Pepoli in northern Italy. The choir performed concerts in Florence, which is also twinned with Edinburgh, and in the Carl-Orff Saal in Munich, one of the city's most prestigious concert venues. As a warm-up concert we also performed some of the tour music in St. Columba's Church, Blackhall on 25th May in which the school choir was joined by the Community Choir, a group made up of former pupils, staff, parents and other members of the school community. Once again the tour provided a unique musical and cultural experience for all involved and we look forward to the return visit next June.

### **Dance**

Dance activities have continued to prosper with over 120 pupils from all year groups participating in weekly after school sessions throughout the year. These dance sessions have enabled dancers to develop technique, fitness and creativity – skills which were evident in the range of routines performed in the *Spring Fling* dance show in March. This show also gave pupils from our cluster primaries a chance to share the stage with our own pupils, giving them a taste of some of the many styles of dance that are on offer at the school. In addition to attending these weekly sessions, pupils had the chance to participate in workshops with Ballet Rambert and a group of senior pupils worked on an extended eight week project with The Curve Foundation, one of Scotland's foremost contemporary dance companies, culminating in a public performance of work at Dancebase in March. Visits to shows like *Chicago* and to performances by companies as diverse as Ballet Rambert, The Curve Foundation and Y Dance gave pupils the chance to enjoy a wide range of different dance styles. The successful bid for a lottery-based grant from the Young People's Fund has provided some security for existing activities and has provided an opportunity to extend dance provision even further over the next four years. Already pupils have had the chance to take part in sessions of ballet for a ten week period and there are plans to offer sessions in street dance and break dance in the coming year. The high commitment and enthusiasm of the pupils is due in part to the efforts of Samantha Baigrie, our dance teacher, whose own creativity and dedication enhances the quality of our provision. Sam also takes an S5 dance group as part of the PD programme. The many pupils who have also committed to participating in the school's Fringe production of *We Will Rock You* this August have had the benefit of Sam's choreography and expertise. With so much publicity about the need for young people to participate in more physical activities, it is worth recording that dance at the school has involved significant numbers on a weekly basis (often even more when rehearsals for shows are underway) and that all participating pupils have developed their fitness, co-ordination, creativity and group skills. As long as pupils continue to give their commitment to after-school dance sessions, then dance provision will remain strong and should continue to develop – a healthy situation all round.

## **2007-2008**

### **Music**

This year's calendar was dominated by the retirement of Mr J Nicolson after over thirty years service to the school. His tenure of the Department leaves a legacy of professional admiration and personal affection amply demonstrated by the archives of successful and high-quality concerts and his affectionate place in the collective memory of staff and pupils.

Similarly the school and pupils owe much to Mr Morley for his successful steering of the Department through the critical second term, including such major events as practical examinations, SQA submissions and supporting supply staff.

On the instrumental staff we welcomed Mr Bryce, replacing Mrs Gillon as our singing teacher and welcomed back Mrs Creswell after a sabbatical. During her absence Mrs Coates had kept the cello players well up to standard.

On the curriculum front it has been a major year for technology. The new Apple Macs have been well used and a healthy and enthusiastic uptake for National Certificate courses in Music Technology has been achieved. The recording studio seems to be one of the classrooms in the school the pupils are always asking to go into!

A major input in the certificate curriculum was the SCO 'Masterworks' project. Pupils attended a series of workshops where their creative ability was developed through composition and analysis of two contemporary works by well-known SCO players. This also gave the pupils an informal insight into the life of a professional musician.

Similarly the joint 'Critics Project' with the English Department promoted not only analytical listening but the skills of expressing both positive ideas and suggestions for improvements in professional language.

The Department continued to present a large proportion of instrumental pupils for Associated Board Exams. These ranged from grades 1-7 over the year with some notable individual performances, including distinction passes. It remains a major strength of the Department that we can submit enough pupils to warrant a special visit and be examined on 'home ground'.

As part of the promotion of the school community ethos, we had some exceptional help from S6 prefects in S1 and S2 classes this year. These older and experienced musicians helped the youngsters in their basic performing and composing skills and were on hand to lend avuncular advice to the more junior pupils. Our thanks go to Hazel Murray, Stephen Watson, Ross Winter and Alastair Murray.

Our major concert, at Christmas involved over one hundred musicians. In addition to the choir and orchestra, we had contributions from the wind band, jazz group, brass ensemble, guitar ensemble, barber shop group, Strathspey and reel group and other chamber ensembles, a healthy turnout of over three hundred ensured a memorable night during which the performing standards were a credit to all involved.

The well-known chamber choir 'The KT Singers', now in their thirtieth year, were once again in demand in the best addresses in Edinburgh including the Balmoral Hotel and Jenners, raising over £1000 for 'Sargent Scotland' which provided support for families of children with cancer.

The Royal High School Fiddle Group had a very successful, fun-filled trip to Poland with the Edinburgh Schools Jazz Orchestra in September.

We continue to offer a number of lunch-time activities across the range of ages and abilities with a 'something for everyone' philosophy. These range from the traditional choirs and orchestras to specialist advanced groups. The string quartet, for example, helped to inspire the cluster primary pupils through a spirited rendition of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*.

Finally, we welcomed back our exchange partners, from the Theodolinden-Gymnasium in Munich. In just over a week's visit they experienced an intensive schedule of social events and music activities culminating a highly successful concert in St. Mary's RC Cathedral, York Place. We look forward to our return visit in 2009 maintaining this highly-treasured social and cultural contact.

Another exciting opportunity is the prestigious invitation for the Fiddle Group to visit Belgium to play at Ypres on the 90th anniversary of the end World War I.

## **Dance**

Dance activities continued to thrive in the school throughout the session with over 120 pupils from all year groups taking part in weekly dance sessions and with further groups participating regularly in tap, ballet and breakdancing lessons. All of these sessions took place after school but a large number of pupils in S1, S2 and S3 had the opportunity to experience breakdancing in their PE lessons and these proved very popular. The high standard of dance was demonstrated in a number of high profile performances – the Fringe performance of *We Will Rock You* in August, the Charity Show in December, the *Spring Fling* in April – all of which showcased a wide range of dance styles and involved a large number of pupils. In addition to these events in April nearly 70 dancers performed to an appreciative public audience in the National Museum – dancing in the main hall by the Millennium Clock – as part of

the Celebration Party Weekend, part of the activities marking the closure of this section of the museum before its extensive renovation.

Other projects that developed dance skills included workshops for S5/6 pupils in contemporary dance led by The Curve Foundation (one of Scotland's top contemporary dance companies) and workshops for S1 pupils with Rambert Dance, Scottish Ballet and Scottish Dance Theatre. All of these workshops were followed by visits to performances by these companies. Other outings included *Cats*, *The Snowman* and *The Alvin Ailey Company*. Pupils in S4-S6 participated in a workshop held by Dance For All whose students performed extracts from *Wicked* for them. Scottish Ballet visited the school on a number of occasions delivering a talk to senior PE classes about conditioning, discussing training and choreography with the S5/6 dance group and visiting S3 pupils in English to discuss aspects of performance.

The enthusiasm of the pupils has been encouraged by very effective teachers – in particular Bilal Oussalam (currently the Scottish Breakdancing champion) and especially Samm Baigrie who continues to develop the skills and interests of pupils. Indeed two of our senior pupils, Katrina Rankin and Hannah Atchison, will study dance next year – a testimony to Samm's ability to nurture and develop talent. We have continued to offer a variety of dance styles and a range of experiences to meet the interests of pupils and to develop their fitness, creativity and enjoyment of dance.

## 2008-2009

### Music

If the phrase 'Change is the only Constant' ever had particular relevance it is surely to the Music Department this academic year. We have seen major changes across all the major departmental elements of staffing, curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

In staffing we were both sorry to lose Andrew Morley but delighted for him on his promotion as Acting PT Music at Drummond High School. His replacement, Alex Liddle, has enthused both the pupils and the school with his infectious enthusiasm for music and technology. His new lunchtime groups and after-school rock sessions have added yet another dimension to experience of pupils at the Royal High.

We also marked the retirement of John Foley, our Clarinet Teacher after 12 years service. John was an erudite and widely experienced woodwind player and teacher and many of our senior students remembered him with affection as was apparent at his leaving ceremony.

Alan Cleobury-Jones also left the city to take up new challenges on the Isle of Skye and again goes with our best wishes and long-standing gratitude. Initially, his timetable was temporarily covered by Michael Bryans whose organisation and commitment imbued the pupils with fresh enthusiasm after an extended break from lessons. Hazel Morrison took over permanently after the Christmas holidays and has again inspired both junior school and presentation drummers with confidence.

We also congratulate Mr. Bryce on his marriage during the term.

Outwith these individual mentions, our Instrumental Teaching team continue to give the school service well above expected requirements. We are fortunate to have a team of teachers who, in addition to their commitment to the Royal High, are in demand as performers, recordings artists and tutors for ESSO, ESJO and Regional Residential courses. The ongoing work and expansion of the Jazz group, Cello Group, Fiddle group, Guitar Group, Orchestra Band and Choir are all testament to their commitment and professionalism.

The diary of the years performing activities has also been full. In addition to our major concert at Christmas, we had groups and individuals out of school performing at such diverse events as the FP's dinner, GTC Reception, Edinburgh Council Civic Ceremonies, Carol Singing in Jenners and hosting a neighbourhood guitar day welcoming guests from Craigmount, S. Queensferry and Currie and St Augustine's.

Our major foreign trip of the year was the Fiddle group's trip to Ypres. Under Miss Nelson's leadership, the group raised funds by 'bagging' at Sainsbury's and acquitted themselves exemplarily on the trip as musicians and ambassadors for the Royal High. A DVD of the trip has been made by Mr Hallam. Well worth watching! Today will also be the first presentation of the Randall prize for Traditional Music, kindly donated in memory of their son by Mrs and Mrs Randall. We are also grateful to them for donating new equipment to enhance the work of this group. We continue the tradition of presenting many instrumental pupils for Associated Board Exams. Over forty pupils have sat grades exams this year in both theory and practical subjects and results have included distinctions and merits in both.

The German exchange, whilst smaller this year, remains a major event for those participating. We are especially grateful to Mr Bacciarelli's experience and expertise in supporting this. The pupils participating will have had a unique opportunity to take part in a performance of Handel's 'Messiah' in one of Europe's foremost concert halls. Within the department, we are delighted to see an increase in uptake for the new session and a similar enthusiasm in the senior school with many of the Higher candidates opting for Advanced Higher.

## **Dance**

Dance has continued to flourish this session, building on the success of recent years. Over 120 pupils have participated in dance sessions every week after school, with classes taken by dance teacher Samm Baigrie. As well as classes for each year group involving a range of dance styles, regular sessions in contemporary dance, tap, and musical theatre have extended the dance skills of the many pupils who take part in after school dance. Further sessions to extend dance technique have also proved popular with more committed dancers in S1-3. There have also been regular breakdancing sessions taken by Scottish breakdancing champion Bilal Ousselam and these have catered for a variety of groups – S4 boys from September to February and a mixed group of S1 and S2 dancers in May and June.

In addition to these regular sessions, there have been opportunities to work with other professional groups. A number of S1 and S2 pupils worked with *Dance Ihayami*, a company specialising in Indian dance, and they produced an impressive piece which was performed on St Andrew's Day during a day of celebration in the Museum of Scotland to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the museum's opening. They were accompanied by the tap group, the contemporary dance group and Highland dancer Marliese Perks to provide a varied, colourful and creative programme celebrating Scotland's cultural diversity. Opportunities to work in different dance styles and with different professional companies were provided throughout the year with the Flemish company *Bal Moderne* (associated with the Edinburgh Festival), *Rambert Dance* and *Breakin' Convention* all delivering workshops to groups of enthusiastic participants.

The interest in different types of dance was also developed through regular visits to performances throughout the session, with large numbers of pupils attending shows as varied as *Flashdance*, *Mary Poppins*, *Rambert Dance*, *Joseph*, *Cabaret*, *Chicago*, *West Side Story*, *The Pied Piper* (in which second year pupil Susie Faull performed) and *The Breakin' Convention*.

All after school dance groups, as well as the PD group, had a chance to show their skills in December's *Charity Show* as well as in April's *Spring Fling Dance Show*. The quality and variety of dance performances in these shows demonstrated the diversity of talent that exists in the school and the range of dance provision. A number of dance acts also performed locally in June for senior citizens at Strachan House.

Dance continues to provide fitness, creativity and enjoyment for large numbers of pupils – and its popularity is shown by the weekly commitment made by these pupils to after-school activity. The quality of dance skills has risen in recent years, along with participating numbers – thanks to the tireless efforts of staff involved, particularly Samm Baigrie. There is scope for developing dance involvement even further but even if current levels are maintained, dance can be seen as a significant success story in the school.

## **Shows:**

This year pupils have had a large number of opportunities to participate in some high quality performances at the school. The start of session saw another impressive Fringe production put on at the school. Building on last year's success, pupils performed *High School Musical* to large and appreciative audiences. This highly polished show, with a talented cast whose commitment was rewarded by five star performances, put many professional companies to shame with the quality of its production values. The cast and staff involved gave up a massive amount of time – including much of their summer holidays – to ensure that the show met the highest standards. All those involved (including Wiley the bear mascot who nearly stole the show with his cavorting in the finale) deserve to be proud of such an ambitious and successful production.

In December a large cast of singers, musicians and dancers performed in the *Charity Show* over two nights (raising a large sum for Cancer Research as a result). The range and variety of talented acts proved once again that the school has a massive amount of performing talent and that it is fortunate to have the opportunity to display it thanks to the tireless commitment of a small number of staff. This was shown once again in April's *Spring Fling Dance Show*. With over 170 dancers and a large number of singers and musicians, this was one of the biggest as well as one of the most impressive shows that we have put on. With well over 200 pupils performing, including some from our associated primaries, there were packed and appreciative audiences on both nights. Once again, the production values were



extremely high and added to the quality of the experience. The many performance opportunities provided this session have enabled a very large proportion of pupils to experience the fulfilment of participating in such activities.

## **2009-2010**

### **Music Department:**

If the phrase 'Change is the only Constant' ever had particular relevance it is surely to the Music Department this academic year. We have seen major changes across all the major departmental elements of staffing, curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

In staffing we were both sorry to lose Andrew Morley but delighted for him on his promotion as Acting PT Music at Drummond High School. His replacement, Alex Liddle, has enthused both the pupils and the school with his infectious enthusiasm for music and technology. His new lunchtime groups and after-school rock sessions have added yet another dimension to experience of pupils at the Royal High.

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We also congratulate Mr. Bryce on his marriage during the term.

Outwith these individual mentions, our Instrumental Teaching team continue to give the school service well above expected requirements. We are fortunate to have a team of teachers who, in addition to their commitment to the Royal High, are in demand as performers, recordings artists and tutors for ESSO, ESJO and Regional Residential courses. The ongoing work and expansion of the Jazz group, Cello Group, Fiddle group, Guitar Group, Orchestra Band and Choir are all testament to their commitment and professionalism.

The diary of the years performing activities has also been full. In addition to our major concert at Christmas, we had groups and individuals out of school performing at such diverse events as the FP's dinner, GTC Reception, Edinburgh Council Civic Ceremonies, Carol Singing in Jenners and hosting a neighbourhood guitar day welcoming guests from Craigmount, S. Queensferry and Currie and St Augustine's.

Our major foreign trip of the year was the Fiddle group's trip to Ypres. Under Miss Nelson's leadership, the group raised funds by 'bagging' at Sainsbury's and acquitted themselves exemplarily on the trip as musicians and ambassadors for the Royal High. A DVD of the trip has been made by Mr Hallam. Well worth watching! Today will also be the first presentation of the Randall prize for Traditional Music, kindly donated in memory of their son by Mrs and Mrs Randall. We are also grateful to them for donating new equipment to enhance the work of this group. We continue the tradition of presenting many instrumental pupils for Associated Board Exams. Over forty pupils have sat grades exams this year in both theory and practical subjects and results have included distinctions and merits in both.

The German exchange, whilst smaller this year, remains a major event for those participating. We are especially grateful to Mr Bacciarelli's experience and expertise in supporting this. The pupils participating will have had a unique opportunity to take part in a performance of Handel's 'Messiah' in one of Europe's foremost concert halls. Within the department, we are delighted to see an increase in uptake for the new session and a similar enthusiasm in the senior school with many of the Higher candidates opting for Advanced Higher.

### **Dance**

Dance has continued to flourish this session, building on the success of recent years. Over 120 pupils have participated in dance sessions every week after school, with classes taken by dance teacher Samm Baigrie. As well as classes for each year group involving a range of dance styles, regular sessions in contemporary dance, tap, and musical theatre have extended the dance skills of the many pupils who take part in after school dance. Further sessions to extend dance technique have also proved popular with more committed dancers in S1-3. There have also been regular breakdancing sessions taken by Scottish breakdancing champion Bilal Ousselam and these have catered for a variety of groups – S4 boys from September to February and a mixed group of S1 and S2 dancers in May and June.

In addition to these regular sessions, there have been opportunities to work with other professional groups. A number of S1 and S2 pupils worked with *Dance Ihayami*, a company specialising in Indian dance, and they produced an impressive piece which was performed on St Andrew's Day during a day of celebration in the Museum of Scotland to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the museum's opening. They were accompanied by the tap group, the contemporary dance group and Highland dancer Marliese Perks to provide a varied, colourful and creative programme celebrating Scotland's cultural diversity. Opportunities to work in different dance styles and with different professional companies were provided throughout the year with the Flemish company *Bal Moderne* (associated with the Edinburgh Festival), *Rambert Dance* and *Breakin' Convention* all delivering workshops to groups of enthusiastic participants.

The interest in different types of dance was also developed through regular visits to performances throughout the session, with large numbers of pupils attending shows as varied as *Flashdance*, *Mary Poppins*, *Rambert Dance*, *Joseph*, *Cabaret*, *Chicago*, *West Side Story*, *The Pied Piper* (in which second year pupil Susie Faull performed) and *The Breakin' Convention*.

All after school dance groups, as well as the PD group, had a chance to show their skills in December's *Charity Show* as well as in April's *Spring Fling Dance Show*. The quality and variety of dance performances in these shows demonstrated the diversity of talent that exists in the school and the range of dance provision. A number of dance acts also performed locally in June for senior citizens at Strachan House.

Dance continues to provide fitness, creativity and enjoyment for large numbers of pupils – and its popularity is shown by the weekly commitment made by these pupils to after-school activity. The quality of dance skills has risen in recent years, along with participating numbers – thanks to the tireless efforts of staff involved, particularly Samm Baigrie. There is scope for developing dance involvement even further but even if current levels are maintained, dance can be seen as a significant success story in the school.

## **Shows**

This year pupils have had a large number of opportunities to participate in some high quality performances at the school. The start of session saw another impressive Fringe production put on at the school. Building on last year's success, pupils performed *High School Musical* to large and appreciative audiences. This highly polished show, with a talented cast whose commitment was rewarded by five star performances, put many professional companies to shame with the quality of its production values. The cast and staff involved gave up a massive amount of time – including much of their summer holidays – to ensure that the show met the highest standards. All those involved (including Wiley the bear mascot who nearly stole the show with his cavorting in the finale) deserve to be proud of such an ambitious and successful production.

In December a large cast of singers, musicians and dancers performed in the *Charity Show* over two nights (raising a large sum for Cancer Research as a result). The range and variety of talented acts proved once again that the school has a massive amount of performing talent and that it is fortunate to have the opportunity to display it thanks to the tireless commitment of a small number of staff. This was shown once again in April's *Spring Fling Dance Show*. With over 170 dancers and a large number of singers and musicians, this was one of the biggest as well as one of the most impressive shows that we have put on. With well over 200 pupils performing, including some from our associated primaries, there were packed and appreciative audiences on both nights.

## **2010-2011**

### **Dance Club**

Dance continued to be one of the largest regular after-school activities throughout the session. With a large uptake for weekly sessions in all year groups, an additional dance teacher was required in S1 and S2 to cope with numbers. Classes in Tap, Contemporary Dance and Musical Theatre were also provided alongside sessions for year groups and there were also two Advanced Groups for pupils who wished to develop their dance skills further. Additionally sessions in Hip-Hop and Breakdance, lasting between 4 to 8 weeks, were provided at several points in the year (with workshop sessions also given to PE classes).

One off workshops with *Alonzo King Lines Ballet* and *the Breakin' Convention* also took place. Many of the sixty dancers celebrated the completion of *Get the Hex*, a film exploring astronomy through dance, braving the snowy conditions in December for a screening in school as well as a chance to experience the Royal Observatory's Starlab.

Throughout the year large numbers of pupils attended many dance shows and musicals, experiencing all kinds of dance - from ballet to breakdancing – and developing their appreciation of the performing arts.

In April *The Spring Fling* dance show allowed all 14 dance groups as well as 3 groups from the cluster primaries to showcase their talents. This vibrant and exhilarating display of talent over three evenings, involving more than 250 dancers as well as a large number of singers and instrumentalists, was appreciated by packed audiences on all nights. Clearly a great deal of talent exists in the school in the performing arts. Next session we plan to maintain a similar level of provision as well as offering a qualification in Higher Dance for older pupils. After school dance provision continues to be an inclusive activity as well as one that nurtures and develops talent. Thanks to Bilal Oussilam (Breakdance), Christina Gusthart (Hip-Hop), Peter Twynham (Tap, S1 and Contemporary 1) for their help throughout the session. A particular thanks to Samm Baigrie who continues to encourage and enthuse pupils about dance – making it one of the largest extra-curricular activities in the school.

## **Music**

2010 -11 has been another year of personnel change, examination success and regular performance opportunities in the music department.

We began the year with the reorganisation of the Instrumental service. We welcomed Mrs Roger (Woodwind), Mr Ross (Brass), Mrs McCann ('Cello), Ms Senior (Piano/Keyboard). Mrs Rigg (Voice) to the team of Instrumental teachers in the Royal High. Sadly we lost the services of Mr. Hodge, Mr Lamb (Brass), Mr Appleyard and Mr Hallam (Woodwind) and Mr Bryce (Voice). We thank these longstanding and excellent teachers for their service to the musical life of the school.

The only staff who remained unchanged were Miss Nelson (upper strings), Miss Tracey (percussion), Mrs Melrose (Double Bass) and Mr Ferries (Guitar), although our time allocations were slightly altered.

In the classroom our pupils performed well in the SQA exams. In addition to the success of our Intermediate and Higher groups, we were particularly pleased for our first presentations of Advanced Higher for some time, and these pupils can be justifiably proud of their achievement.

As ever the instrumental staff have presented pupils for the Examinations for the Associated Board. Nearly thirty string, woodwind and brass students have been presented for both practicals and theory from grades 3 – 8, achieving some notable results including merit and distinction passes. A new departure this year is the presentation for New Traditional Music Exams developed by the RSAMD. These will take place in late June.

The department remains a busy one outwith the classroom and timetabled time. There is now an extra-curricular group associated with every instrumental timetable in addition to the choir. Notable new groups this year have been the samba band, string chamber group and a brass group. Likewise the return of full Tenor and Bass sections to the choir is very welcome. The wind band is grateful to Mr Rogers who agreed to take on the band and whose humour and experience meant an enjoyable learning experience for the pupils

All these groups exist to introduce pupils to the challenges and pleasure of performing and we have had several major opportunities and events over the course of this year.

We began this time last year with a highly successful exchange week and final concert involving our German partners from Munich. The performances involved Drama, former pupils, present and former staff, in addition to the combined vocal and instrumental resources of both groups.

As is now a major school tradition, the KT Choir struggled against the winter weather carolling at various prestigious venues across Edinburgh, raising over £400 for their chosen charity. This year's leaders, Charlotte Kilby and Rachel Geddes, demonstrated both initiative and persistence in arranging and re-arranging venues at short notice.

Similarly, our Christmas Concert was in doubt up until the day of performance and only a team effort including Mrs Frith and Mr Simpson clearing the car park ensured it took place! Whist the programme displayed many of the diverse talents in the school the finale with the orchestra playing 'The Marriage of Figaro' Overture has received most positive feedback from parents, staff and audience alike.

A new event on the calendar this year was a 'Scots Night' in February where pupils were encouraged to display talent from classroom activities in Music, Art and Drama. This was well supported by parents and pupils and may become a permanent fixture on the calendar.

Our final group concert was again a new departure: Mr Morley prepared and organised a concert of repertoire music for choir and orchestra in St Mark's Church, Portobello, including 'Rejoice in Lord Alway' by Purcell with six soloists drawn from our own choir. This performance was extremely well received.

Our main individual group The Fiddle Group, performed at three major public events: the Childline Concert, The Annual Former Pupils' Dinner and The City of Edinburgh's Academic Service in St. Giles cathedral.

## **2011-2012**

### **Music**

Following the retirement of Mr. Wilson, former pupil Aimee Brown was appointed to a temporary position in the department between August and December, and has since moved on to Holyrood High School. Miss Holland, an experienced teacher previously working in East Lothian, has been appointed to a permanent position. Mrs. McCann, cello tutor, was replaced by Ms. Jablonska.

In terms of exam results, there were many excellent grades in the Performing element (at all levels) with 9 candidates achieving 100%. This is an outstanding achievement and a tribute to the hard work of staff and pupils alike. The instrumental tutors present a large number of pupils for Associated Board, and successes include Rachel Peach achieving Grade 8 violin.

The Christmas concert, organised by Mrs. Almond, was a great success with a high turnout. All the music extra-curricular groups took part, and pieces ranged from classical favourites like the Bach Toccata, to American musicals, jazz, and Dire Straits. Senior pupils organised a Christmas Market and the Parent Staff Association served mince pies and mulled wine to add to the festive atmosphere.

As part of the Inter-disciplinary project S2 pupils worked alongside CDT to create a short animated film incorporating the software Garageband. In addition, a group of about 20 junior and some senior pupils took part in the *Spring Fling* performing a number by Adele.

### **Dance**

Dance activities continued to thrive throughout the session with 18 separate dance groups running on a weekly basis, involving nearly 200 pupils. This number does not include the 3 cluster primary groups (covering all age groups) that meet every Saturday throughout the year. The type of dance offered this session included hip-hop, tap, cheerleading, musical theatre, jazz, and contemporary dance whilst Higher Dance was also offered as an after-school class. The enthusiasm and commitment of pupils was encouraged by attendance at shows as various as The Shen Wei Dance Company in the International Festival, 'Legally Blonde', The Breakin' Convention, Matthew Bourne's 'Nutcracker', DanzaContemporanea de Cuba (with the latter two acclaimed companies delivering workshops at the school). In addition, a two day dance residency in September by the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble (who appeared in the International Festival) gave large numbers of pupils an insight into the disciplines of Indian Dance.

Pupils had a chance to showcase their talents in March when over 250 dancers (and over 50 other performers) took part in the Spring Fling Dance Show. Performing over 3 nights to full houses, the dancers showed the range of their talents in an entertaining, energetic and high quality show.

Throughout the year a committed group of dance helpers assisted with Saturday dance classes for the cluster primaries and hard-working dance captains for each dance group ensued that activities ran smoothly through their leadership and commitment.

Plans are already in place to enhance dance experiences further. In addition to developing the weekly dance sessions further there are a number of activities planned including one which involves the school in a prestigious UK wide pilot project (involving the Festival Theatre and The Prince's Foundation) which will include working with Scottish Ballet and performing at the Festival Theatre.

The range of dance offered– and the sheer numbers taking part – testifies to the commitment of the teachers and organisers who provide so many opportunities for our pupils, encouraging them to develop their skills and interests in dance. Thanks to Heather Brown, Lisa Aytoun and Peter Twyman for their commitment and encouragement throughout the year and to Tom Bacciarelli for his continued support of dance in the school. In particular, special thanks to Samm Baigrie who has done so much to enable many pupils to develop their enjoyment of dance and to ensure that it continues to make a vibrant contribution to the life of the school.

## **2012-2013**

### **Music**

Kate Rigg, our singing instructor, returned from maternity leave; our thanks to Susanne Bell for covering.

Music students continue to achieve well in examinations and there were consistently strong results in performing. A number of Intermediate 2 pupils gained close to full marks in one or both instruments ; at Higher, 8 /11 pupils achieved an A in first instruments and 7/11 pupils achieved an A in their second instrument. High grades were also achieved in Associated Board examinations: Thomas Kettle (S3) gained Grade 8 violin and Hannah Gardner (S6) achieved Grade 8 piano. We entered three talented S4 pupils for early presentation at Higher, all of whom achieved A grades.

Music pupils were involved in some exciting projects this year. In September all 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> pupils took part in the SCO Masterworks project, attending a presentation and performance of a new piece of contemporary music by the composer Sally Beamish. Some of the Jazz Band played at a Law event in Edinburgh and the Stomp group culminated their work with a surprise performance in the canteen in April. The Glee group performed in front of Gillian Tee, Director of Children and Families.

The Christmas Concert is always a well attended highlight of the year. One of our senior pupils, Louis Plummer, presented the event, and a wide range of styles and pieces were performed, from Lynard Skynard to Vivaldi and Purcell. The new Glee group, featuring a very large number of pupils from junior music classes, showed their singing and guitar skills. The evening was rounded off by the percussion Samba Band.

The last event of the year is the *Spring Fling*, in which the Samba Band and a number of music pupils will perform a range of pieces.

## **Dance**

Dance has continued to flourish this session with continued popularity in uptake for weekly classes in a variety of styles, including jazz, contemporary and hip hop. The high participation rate of nearly 200 pupils has been maintained throughout the year, with the commitment and enthusiasm of participants being encouraged by the dance teachers (Peter Twyman, Lisa Aytoun and, in particular, Samm Baigrie). The quality of dance has continued to improve with sessions for more advanced dancers being offered. Higher Dance, providing a recognised qualification in Dance, was studied by a number of pupils for the first time and results are now eagerly awaited. This course is set to run again this session with another cohort of talented students. The energy and creativity of pupils was celebrated recently in June when the Summer Dance Show took place. This involved well over 250 dancers, including the primary groups that run on Saturday mornings, and a range of musical acts. Performing to full houses over three nights, the talented cast showed the impressive quality and range of dance education in the school.

In addition to weekly classes, pupils participated in a number of workshops that provided a range of dance experiences. In August over 80 pupils took part in three workshops by the world-renowned Deborah Colker Dance Company from Brazil as part of an Edinburgh Festival project and large groups of pupils took part in workshops with Rambert Dance and with Scottish Dance Theatre. These were followed up by visits to see the companies perform. Other theatre visits included *Cats*, Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Snowman*.

Nearly 50 pupils in S1 and S2 took part in the national Dance Quest project that enabled pupils to enjoy sessions of salsa, street dance and percussion as well as seeing performances by Batsheva Dance and Scottish Ballet (*Sleeping Beauty*). The project culminated with pupils working with Scottish Ballet in creating pieces which were performed to a large audience in the Festival Theatre on a snowy January night – along with other acts by senior dancers from the school and guest performers from Scottish Ballet. This highly successful project will now be rolled out to other schools in the city. Dance groups also performed in DanceFest, a celebration of creativity as part of the build up to the Commonwealth Games. These many opportunities to see and be involved in performances have given pupils rich experiences of dance.

With further projects already being planned for next session, dance continues to thrive in the school. None of these activities would be possible without the hard work of dance teachers, in particular Samm Baigrie, and of Mr Bacciarelli.

## **2013-2014**

### **Dance**

Dance activities continued to flourish throughout the year with extra-curricular weekly sessions running for all year groups in a wide range of dance styles – 17 separate groups within the school as well as 4 primary groups. Pupil assistants, working with younger groups, have continued to develop skills in leadership and responsibility. Higher Dance, run after school, continues to have impressive results. At the start of session several groups took part in

workshops with the LA Dance Project who were performing in the Edinburgh Festival. In January the Advanced Group was invited to dance at the Festival Theatre as a guest act in the *Dance Quest* project (run by the Children's Trust and the Festival Theatre), giving an eye-catching and highly praised performance to a large and enthusiastic audience. Throughout the year pupils had the opportunity to see dance performances (Scottish Ballet's *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hansel and Gretel*; Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*; *West Side Story*, *The Lion King*). The quality and range of dance in the school, as well as the commitment and engagement of participants, was evident in the recent highly successful *Summer Dance Show* which ran over 3 nights and included over 250 performers.

The vibrant contribution that dance plays in the life of the school is down to the commitment of the teachers as well as the engagement of the pupils. Thanks to Peter Twyman, Lisa Aytoun, Hazel Douglas and Emma Smith for their work and enthusiasm and to Mr Bacciarelli for organising much of the dance programme. In particular, thanks to Samm Baigrie whose commitment to developing dance in the school remains undiminished.

## Music

The KT singers were once again busy over the Christmas period performing carols at venues such as the Davidsons Mains Christmas lights ceremony, Jenners and the Balmoral Hotel. Under the excellent leadership of Joshua Baillie and Harriet Barton the choir raised over £1,000 towards our two charities, Waverley Care and the school's Romania Project.

The tuned percussion group led by Mrs. Morrison played for the Childline fundraising concert at St. Paul's and George's in March, and the Cello quartet with Miss Jablonska toured the associate primary schools in May, performing new arrangements of classic pieces.

## RHS Fiddle Group and String Quartet

Both the RHS String Quartet and Fiddle Group have had a busy year. During the autumn term the Quartet and Fiddle Group provided music at the opening and as part of the Sunday Service for the Academic Service at St. Giles Cathedral on 27<sup>th</sup> October. In December the Quartet played at St. Mary's Cathedral and the Lord Provost's Christmas Party as well as part of the RHS Christmas concert. Providing music for the opening of Edinburgh Airport's International Lounge was undertaken by both the Quartet and Fiddle Group in January and a good day was had by all. Along with other pupils from the English department, the RHS the Fiddle Group provided a Scottish flavour at the GTCS (General Teaching Council Scotland) Burns Supper for visiting Foreign teachers. March was to be the busiest month. It opened with the Fiddle Group playing for the RHS FP Club at the Roxburgh Hotel and ended with both the Quartet and Fiddle Group playing as part of the Council Resonate Concerts and the British Airway's Ball at the Balmoral Hotel in the same week. The Quartet ends the year by playing music for the Piazzoni Art Prize at the National Art Gallery at the beginning of June and the Fiddle Group ends the year by providing music for the retirement of some of the RHS's long serving teachers.

## 2014-2015

### Dance

Dance activities continued to thrive throughout the session with weekly classes offered to all abilities and years. There are 15 separate classes run after school, covering Contemporary to Commercial styles and everything in between. The high quality of dance was reflected academically in excellent Higher results and through performances



in the Summer Dance Show. This involved 4 primary groups as well as all the current dance groups and testified to the energy and talent of our pupils. In addition to experiencing a variety of performances through trips to Scottish Ballet's *Nutcracker*, *Wicked and Rambert Dance*, groups took part in workshops run by Rambert Dance as well as performing in Dancequest at the Festival Theatre and in the Cluster Dance Show in March.

Dance remains one of the largest extra-curricular activities in the school and thanks goes to dance teachers Emma Smith and Peter Twynam and especially to Samm Baigrie, who has continued to develop dance in the school and in the wider community, and to Mr Bacciarelli, who has organised and co-ordinated the programme. The continued success of dance is down to their commitment and enthusiasm - as well as that of the many pupils who experience and benefit from the dance activities.

## **Music**

Several very successful school events took place this year which included Strictly Coming Dancing, the Christmas Concert, summer dance show and our summer music concert. These were all highly successful and gave students a chance to showcase their wonderful talents.

Specific highlights for Music were the highly popular and well attended Xmas and June concerts, featuring a full S1 orchestra ; involvement in the P7 Health and Wellbeing transition day, featuring vocals and drumming ; a trip to Wicked in November; and Thomas Kettle, S5, being accepted into the RSAMD in Glasgow

## **2015-2016**

**Music** saw excellent results in the Listening paper in particular. A high profile event this year was the Spifox charity event in the EICC, where 15 pupils performed, by invitation, at an annual event organised by the Scottish Property Festival of Christmas ('Spifox') to raise money for children's charities across Scotland. The afternoon auction usually raises at least £150,000 – an indicator of the scale of this event. Some of our senior pupils performed a John Rutter carol at St. Cuthbert's Church, to a full house of 600. Later, others in the group performed 'Price Tag' and 'For Good' from the musical Wicked, during a lunch and fundraising auction in the main suite of the EICC. This had an audience of nearly 1500 business people from the property industry, making it consistently the largest charity lunch in the UK. Our annual Christmas concert was again hugely popular, with a large variety of groups performing music from Bach to the Jungle Book.

## **Drama**

Higher Drama students attended exciting professional performances of Lord of the Flies and The Crucible. Both plays were used towards their Higher exam, along with Men Should Weep and Miss Jean Brodie. National 5 pupils this year performed excerpts from Blood Brothers and Shakers, gaining them all excellent marks for their practical drama work. Next year we are delighted to be expanding the Drama timetable as well as Drama staffing. We would like to thank Miss Hamill for her contribution to the department in her final term as a Drama student.

## **2016-2017**

## **Dance**

In terms of promoting learning beyond Modern Studies, Mr Snedden has continued to lend his expertise in the running of school shows this year, providing technical support to events such as Strictly Come Dancing, The Summer Dance show and the Christmas Concert. Prior to maternity leave Mrs Reynolds supported a "Colour Me Calm" club within the school on selected lunchtimes to better support the health and wellbeing of our young people by giving them opportunities to better deal with stressful or intense days in school, and Mr Forbes has continued to support the Debating society.

## **Music**

Our annual Christmas concert was again hugely popular, with a large variety of groups performing, from Bagpipes to Show Choir. There was also the Spring Concert performed in school, showcasing the class work of students from S1-S6.

Our Advance Higher students going on to study Music this year are: Josh McCullough – MA Music & French Glasgow Uni, Sarah Cronin – HND Music Edin College, Lachlan Riddell – Bmus Music Edin College. Exam results last year from 2016: Outstanding AH results in S5 from Ailis McLean and Harry Docherty. Additional achievements this year in Music: Julia McInally – Ad Higher Classical Guitar & Voice, Louis Boyd- Madson – Ad Higher piano & bass guitar. Josh Murray – Guitar & Violin, Lewis Petrie – Guitar & Keyboard, Rachel Sunter - Drums and Cello, Duncan Pittendreigh – Keyboard and bass, Rihanna Haggart – Grade III ABRSM Piano, Thomas McHarry – Grade 5 theory, Eoin Irvine –



Grade V ABRSM Theory. Cameron Duff – Grade V ABRSM Theory. Cameron Shepherd - Grade 3 Trinity rock school exam this year.

Our talented musicians this year have also played at various prestigious events including the City Chambers, Scottish Parliament, Young Apprentice Awards, EICC- Council Achievement Awards, Radisson Blue- World book event and the Resonate concert - Queens Hall. The Pipe Band in the 'Fair Trade Fiesta' parade to celebrate Edinburgh being a fair trade City and had 48 children from RHS and Davidson's Mains Primary School perform with the Red Hot Chilli Pipers!

Davidson's Mains & District Pipe Band were 3rd in the 'Novice Juvenile B' category of the Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships. We performed our arrangement of Ed Sheeran's 'Castle on the Hill' which has had a fantastic response on social media currently with 155,000 views and over 2500 shares all over the world. The pipe band were also awarded the prestigious 'Endeavour Award' - Demonstrating a positive ethos and attributes that pipe bands encourage, apart from excellence in performance they also demonstrated *Community Contribution, Inclusion and Diversity, Enthusiasm and Camaraderie, Innovation ,Perseverance and resilience!*



The Pipe Band were also 1st in the Dundee, Perth & Angus indoor competition and 4th in the British Championships in May 2017.

### **Drama**

Higher Drama students attended professional performances of *The Cheviot Stag* and *Curious Incident of the Dog*. Both plays were used towards their exam. Higher students put on a mini showcase of their SQA performance pieces to an audience of friends and family in preparation for their final exam. National 5 pupils this year performed excerpts from *Blood Brothers*, *Dead Dad Dog*, *Like a Virgin* and *The Steamie*.



## Tom Bacciarelli Annual Report extracts

Tom scrutinised the Annual Reports from 2004 through 2018, and has identified many Performing Arts topics not (necessarily) covered in the main Annual Reports extracts summarization.

### March 2018

**The Secret Policeman's Ball (SPB):** ran for over 10 years from 1995, involving many hundreds of pupils and raising considerable amounts for Amnesty International). It deserves a bit more heft in the history because it was the main vehicle for performance for large numbers of pupils).

**Charity Show** (07, 08 and 09 took place of SPB)

**Spring Fling/ Summer Dance Show** (from 07 – the earliest ref I can find but might be earlier – showcases dance as well as musical talent. Continue to present and show will take place in June 2018)

**Fringe Shows** were 2007, 2008 and 2010. In 2009 I was organising and leading the last away leg of the Munich trip – the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated with a performance of excerpts from The Messiah in the Herkules Saal in Munich). The Munich link lasted one more year and died after 2010.

**Inter-Nation Talent Show** – was run intermittently between 2010 and 2014 – Gary Snedden will have more details as we centralised our information).

**2007/8 AR** (in Dance section: ref to Charity Show as well as Spring Fling as well as WWRV Fringe Show)

The high standard of dance was demonstrated in a number of high profile performances – the Fringe performance of *We Will Rock You* in August, the Charity Show in December, the *Spring Fling* in April – all of which showcased a wide range of dance styles and involved a large number of pupils.

### 2008/09 AR

#### Shows:

This year pupils have had a large number of opportunities to participate in some high quality performances at the school. The start of session saw another impressive Fringe production put on at the school. Building on last year's success, pupils performed *High School Musical* to large and appreciative audiences. This highly polished show, with a talented cast whose commitment was rewarded by five star performances, put many professional companies to shame with the quality of its production values. The cast and staff involved gave up a massive amount of time – including much of their summer holidays – to ensure that the show met the highest standards. All those involved (including Wiley the bear mascot who nearly stole the show with his cavorting in the finale) deserve to be proud of such an ambitious and successful production.

In December a large cast of singers, musicians and dancers performed in the *Charity Show* over two nights (raising a large sum for Cancer Research as a result). The range and variety of talented acts proved once again that the school has a massive amount of performing talent and that it is fortunate to have the opportunity to display it thanks to the tireless commitment of a small number of staff. This was shown once again in April's *Spring Fling Dance Show*. With over 170 dancers and a large number of singers and musicians, this was one of the biggest as well as one of the most impressive shows that we have put on. With well over 200 pupils performing, including some from our associated primaries, there were packed and appreciative audiences on both nights. Once again, the production values were extremely high and added to the quality of the experience. The many performance opportunities provided this session have enabled a very large proportion of pupils to experience the fulfilment of participating in such activities. The school is fortunate that such a strong performing tradition, catering for large numbers but at the same time developing some outstanding performers, has been established through the dedication of a small group of committed staff.

**2004 AR** (refs to dance + 3 shows (SPB in Oct; Christmas and summer)

## **DANCE**

Dance activities continue to thrive, thanks in part to those dedicated staff who continue to provide opportunities for pupils to participate and to perform if they wish. Samantha Baigrie held regular classes throughout the year for S5 pupils, giving the PD group the chance to perform in Portobello Town Hall in a dance evening run by Dancebase instructors. Classes were also held after school by Samantha throughout the year for S1/2 pupils, with some impressive work from a dedicated and enthusiastic group being showcased in the summer show. The enthusiasm for dance was also revealed in the Secret Policeman's Ball and in the Christmas Dance Night where a plethora of talent was displayed in a variety of dance styles including ballet, tap, jazz, Asian as well as the more familiar pop. It is hoped that pupils will continue to take advantage of this opportunity to get themselves in shape and to have some fun at the same time.

## **Amnesty**

This year a loyal group met weekly to compose letters, send emails, write cards as part of Amnesty's Urgent Action against human rights abuses. The commitment of the group (comprising pupils from all years) to this work was impressive. It was gratifying to discover from a number of responses that several cases were successful and that the pressure exerted by individuals can still embarrass authorities into acting compassionately. Once again 'The Secret Policeman's Ball' raised a considerable sum for Amnesty International, maintaining our place as the highest fundraising school for this deserving organisation.

## **Some references to film and media in ARs**

(I don't have ARs from 2000 – 2006 though I have found a few files of reports on various pendrives). I have highlighted some refs to John. Initially the Film Club was a joint enterprise but as Friday afternoons were taken for meetings, John took ownership!).

### **2004 AR (entry under English)**

Media Studies continues to flourish and continues to generate high quality film work. One spin-off was the winning of a competition for the MTV awards in November.

### **2005 AR (entry under English)**

Pupils continued to feature in national competitions. A large group of S3 pupils worked in conjunction with the National Gallery to produce an anthology of writing based on paintings in their collection. Their work was filmed and both anthology and film is to be used as an example of high quality educational work after a launch in the National Gallery's new Weston Link.

### **2006 AR (entry under English)**

Megan Shandley, Barney Linforth, Danielle Allen and Daniel Kelly (all S4) won prizes in the ESU/ National Gallery writing competition whilst the National Gallery made a film of creative responses to paintings by 30 pupils in S4 to use as an educational resource for other schools....

.... A group of S3 pupils won the Scottish section of a script-writing competition organised by the National Lottery – their prize being the production of their winning script as a film, produced by a professional film-maker and to be premiered in the Filmhouse in September. Two S3 pupils, Rebecca Powell and Eleanor Morton, won the Scottish Screen script-writing competition, winning a visit to the set of *River City* as well as advice on scriptwriting from professional writers. On the film-making front, a group of pupils made a film exploring Scots poetry, entitled Poetry in Motion, which may be developed by the Authority for educational purposes. A committed group of S6 students worked throughout the year to produce a video diary of the school year, featuring highlights of many school activities – a pilot project which we hope to develop further next session.

## **2007 AR**

### **(entry under English)**

Pupils in S3 and in S5/6 following courses in Media Studies benefited from a visit by film-maker Andy Lawrence who worked with a number of groups on the production of short films. Senior pupils also attended a conference on documentary films run by the Film Festival as well as a lecture on digital technology and animation organised by Paisley University. Two pupils in S4, Eleanor Morton and Rebecca Powell, won a Screenshots competition, attending workshops on film-making and visiting the set of *River City* as part of their prize. Another group of S4 pupils won the lottery-funded *Futures in Motion* national competition, producing a film with professional film-makers which was premiered at the Filmhouse in September – complete with red carpets and stretch limos. The support of our AV technician John Stables has ensured that the many film projects undertaken by pupils are produced successfully. His assistance to all groups involved in filming but especially to the S6 group working on the school's video diary (recording the many events that take place over the session) has been invaluable.

## **2008 AR**

### **(under English)**

Over the whole session a group of pupils in S5 maintained a twinning arrangement via the internet with a school in Kielce, Poland, exchanging information about themselves, their country and their culture – we have a CD of Polish Euro-pop to prove it! Once again a group of S6 pupils compiled a video diary of some of the many activities going on in the school. As ever, Mr Stables, the AV technician, supported the work of the Department on many fronts and his invaluable help contributed to 3 films made by Media Studies students being nominated in 3 categories in the inaugural Edinburgh Film Festival Schools' Competition. Their films were screened over 2 days in June at the Filmhouse as part of the Film Festival programme and S6 pupils won a prize for acting in their film 'Trainspotting'

## **2009 AR**

### **(entry under English)**

Groups of S4 and S6 submitted film scripts to Learning Teaching Scotland which were used in the making of road safety DVD which has been distributed to all schools.

## **2011 (AR)**

### **(Entry under English)**

...creative writing projects with S5 and S6 groups involving Mary Paulson-Ellis as a resident writer over several months; multi-disciplinary projects involving film and writing as part of the Edinburgh International Festival (with work exhibited at the Hub...

...Media Studies was enhanced by visits to the Filmhouse's School Media Day, the Edinburgh Film Festival and successes in the Schools' Film Competition (a success we hope to repeat this year). The development of a film-making club next session should continue to nurture creativity in this area...

Throughout the year pupils benefitted from opportunities to visit the theatre and the cinema (for example, *The Crucible*, *A View From the Bridge*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard III*, *Dunsinane*, *The King's Speech* and films at the Edinburgh Film Festival) – opportunities provided by the commitment of staff who gave their time and encouragement.

## **2012 AR**

### **(Entry under English)**

Visits to the Filmhouse for films and for talks developed Media Studies skills for pupils in S5/6 and also S2 and S3. There was success in a number of creative writing competitions – a mini sagas competition and also the Red Cross competition linked to the film 'War Horse'. Some senior pupils had films selected for screening as part of the International Film Festival – evidence of a rich seam of film-making talent in the school (helped by the Film Club run by the department and Mr Stables).

### **2013 AR**

#### **(Entry under English)**

The quality of film-making continued to be recognized with a number of entries gaining success in the Edinburgh International Film Festival schools' competition (following up last year's success). Senior pupils also attended the Festival's conference in June, gaining an insight into film production and aspects of advertising.

### **2014 AR**

#### **(Entry under English)**

Film production was encouraged with over 90 pupils in S3 and S4 having a film-making workshop with SKAMM, as well as through the weekly Young Film Makers Club (run by the ever-enthusiastic Mr Stables). Sarah Tainsh, S6, won the Special Jury Prize at the Edinburgh Film Festival Schools' Competition.

### **2015 AR**

#### **(Entry under English)**

There was media success at the Edinburgh Film Festival, winning best film in the Schools' event, and with further entries to be screened this June. Pupils attended a variety of author talks as well as Media workshops linked to the Film Festival.

The image shown below shows that around the turn of the 1980's the performing Arts were in good health. More input from Schola Regia will be provided in due course.

**ALL QUIET ON THE MUSICAL FRONT**

Munich is renowned for good taste, friendliness and beer; so when the Music department of the Theodolinden Gymnasium (it's a school) took 50 pupils over to Edinburgh at Easter, Royal High was the obvious place to stay. Apart from that, they were making a return visit after we had taken a trip across to Germany a year ago, the two schools being twinned.

The party—in every sense of the word—arrived on Saturday 4th April, slightly delayed by the fact that half an hour out of York, they discovered that they had left one girl in the city and had to return for her. When they finally made it they were welcomed with open arms especially by the boys—it was an all-female party—and taken home to be entertained by the families with which they were staying. There was a slight language barrier, but we overcame it by talking in phrases from works which we had sung in German. For example: "The heavens are telling the glory of God": it's a lovely day.

"Achieved is the glorious work": my little brother has done his piano practice.  
 "How lovely are thy dwellings fair": Cramond is a picturesque little place, isn't it?

On the Sunday we went on a bus tour of Edinburgh, but nothing eventful happened; there were no ghosts, free whisky handouts, season tickets to Scottish Opera, or anything else you might have hoped for. But one interesting fact emerged: there are two sheep to every person in Scotland.

During the week we rehearsed in the mornings for the two joint concerts, which gave the German girls a taste of Scottish school life. They thought the uniform looked funny and they assumed that the salad for school lunch was a side salad, and went off with two main courses. So much for Scottish school life...

The two concerts were on Tuesday and Thursday. After the ordinary business of the first was over with—including a singer who, during a hushed pause in the middle of one of the Special Choir's songs, hiccuped resoundingly—"Tall Toad" played and were enthusiastically cheered by the Germans, even though nobody had managed to explain what "Tall Toad" meant. For the second concert, Mr Murray decided to liven things up and arranged the programme so that the choirs had to keep rushing from gallery to altar to gallery in Cramond Kirk, and the audience ended up con-

vinced that they had been to three separate concerts, each with a cast of thousands. It was at a rehearsal for that concert that Andrew Box said to a German girl the memorable words: "The trouble is you're not very British." He claims he was talking about National Health dentists.

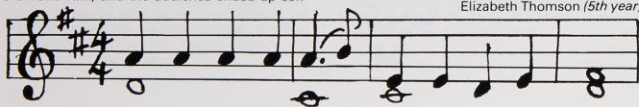
The rest of the time we spent going round Edinburgh, helping to choose tartan hats, climbing Arthur's Seat, missing the Gordon Brown Memorial Lecture and generally enjoying ourselves. For slightly more organised entertainment, we put on a performance of 'The Dracula Spectacular', were filmed for the Lothian Region Archives (they have an odd taste in archives) and went to a Civic Reception in the Regional Chambers. Councillor Crichton, the Convener, made a speech—and I quote: "I hope when you are married you will come back to Edinburgh and bring your children. That's what twinning is all about." That might have been why Frau Eckart (leader of the German party) said afterwards "The students are all mixed up".

On Friday we really got adventurous and went on a bus trip to Loch Katrine. A small but energetic party climbed a smallish but marshy mountain and witnessed the tragedy of Mr Cathrine's lunch. Mr Cathrine had rashly given Mr Duthie his lunch to carry, and discovered too late that Mr Duthie had disappeared making for the top and taking the lunch with him. Mr Cathrine spent the rest of the day muttering under his breath and threatening to throw Mr Duthie into the loch.

Finally on Friday night, we held a farewell ceilidh at Cramond Primary, featuring large amounts to eat and the most depressed-looking folk band I've ever seen. We spent the evening gallantly attempting Scottish country dancing, which degenerated into a kind of rhythmic chaos most of the time. A demonstration group tried to dance the Duke of Perth. They failed miserably, but they enjoyed themselves; one spectator commented that he had never seen dancers laugh so much. When we had stopped laughing there were presentations to people who had helped, and more food, and finally an eightsome reel, at which the language barrier became almost insurmountable.

On Saturday morning we turned up at school and waited to say goodbye. Everyone got sentimental at the last minute; there is a photograph of three Edinburgh boys cuddling three German girls. The negative is available to the highest bidder. Mr Murray kissed Frau Eckart, to wild cheers. Eventually—only half an hour late—we allowed them to go. But only after they had invited us back.

Elizabeth Thomson (5th year)



**MUSIC DEPARTMENT**

Among the notable events in the Music Department's activities this session have been the annual Christmas Usher Hall Choral and Orchestral Concert on 18 December (in which parents and pupils—past, present and future took part), the junior stage production of 'Dracula Spectacular' (in March) and the two Easter Concerts presented by us in collaboration with pupils of the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich (our twin school). Congratulations should also be accorded to Elizabeth Thomson and the K.T. II Carol singers (who raised £190 for charity at Christmas in local department stores and hostellers) and to the members of the "Swing Tones" group (Andrew Armstrong, Richard Phalp, Donald Haig, Neil Thomas) who reached the Scottish finals of the T.S.B. Schools Rock Group Competition in Dundee.

We look forward to further success with our end of session stage production of 'Orpheus in the Underworld' (Offenbach) on 22 to 25 June.

\* \* \* \* \*

The two concerts given in late April by the School and the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich deserve notice. The first was held in the school, and the second, of sacred music, in Cramond Kirk.

The special choir, under H. Duthie, gave a splendid performance of Palestrina's 'Tu es Petrus' and Byrd's 'Laetentur Coeli'. Equally good were the choral dances from 'Gloriana'. Janet Cowan's flute playing in Mozart's Flute Concerto was outstanding, and it was a delight to hear it again, as a bonus, at the second concert.

Of the German singing, most notable was an ambitious piece based on 'The Animals went in two by two', composed specially for the two choirs by the conductor, Wolfgang Schmitt. Our own Jazz Band under T. Cathrine played with exuberance and was clearly very popular with the audience.

Highlights of the second evening were Mozart's 'Ave Verum Corpus' and Brahms' 'How lovely are Thy Dwellings', culminating in the Coronation Anthem 'Zadok the Priest', with the combined choirs, all conducted by J. Murray. The quality of all these, especially the last, was excellent. All involved deserve congratulations.

**TRIP TO FRANCE**

At Easter a party of SIII pupils had the exhilarating experience of floating through the low clouds near Turnhouse, casting a tearful glance at the Royal High, and being whisked to sunnier Gallic climes. So began two weeks of experiencing the French way of life and the people, whose charms were evidently not inconsiderable judging by the tears shed on departure.

Having experienced that extra-galactic monument to French engineering, Charles de Gaulle airport (with disconcerting moving pavements and tube escalators), we made our first brave attempts to converse in French at Austerlitz station where it was discovered that a strange, bright green liquid was actually fit for human consumption. At Amboise we met our hosts, the crowd of a hundred or so people filling the platform to a point where a passing goods train nearly brought our stay to a premature end.

Our two week stay in Blere (near Tours) was not without its traumas and culture shocks, particularly early on: new faces and names, strange foods, and a bewildering foreign language. The exchange was one of many things: a large town, Edinburgh, for, in some cases, a hamlet; a suburban house for a farmstead; neeps and tatties for asparagus and artichokes; red buses for muscle-testing bicycles!

A trip to Paris, skiing in the Alps, a two-day long wedding, excursions, shopping and sightseeing in Tours, a birthday party, were some of the rewards for coping with handless coffee bowls, midnight meals, allergies to cats and school from 8.30 to 5!

In June our French hosts will be our guests and we hope their stay will be as rewarding and enjoyable as ours. And next year...

T. Rigg

**DRAMA COMPETITION**

Once again members of the Modern Languages Dept. have been searching for a suitable one-act play or, when the search proves fruitless, writing one specially for the event. Two teams are being entered this year. The junior entry is 'Le Fugitif' (written by Mr MacPhail and Mlle. Macpherson; produced by Mr MacPhail and Mrs Evans) in which a convicted burglar escapes from the police and turns up at home, where his unhappy wife is trying to control her unruly daughter and to cope with running the household during her husband's frequent enforced absences. Life at home is not so secure and peaceful for the criminal and to get some rest, he decides to give himself up! (Cast: A. McPartlin; L. Haddow; S. Hood; H. Knowles; C. Stephen; C. Patrizio; T. Poullain-Paterson; A. Seaton).

In the senior entry, 'Guerre au Troisieme Etage', by Pavel Kohout, the hero and his wife find their hitherto peaceful existence shattered by the intrusion by a series of officials. It is discovered that they have been selected by a computer to represent their nation in a new form of international dispute. Through their military ineptitude, the hero and his equally unwilling German foe convince the warlords that traditional warfare is perhaps more satisfactory after all.