

# James Gillespie's High School



# Newsletter

## Message from the Head Teacher

May  
2005



It is with immense pleasure, and relief, that I can inform you that I have been appointed Head Teacher. I can now look to the future with a certainty I have been unable to feel since taking up the Acting position. However, I hope you have felt that Gillespie's has, in the last two years, continued as a dynamic learning organization with a well articulated self improvement agenda.

Our reputation nationally and internationally has grown over the last year with features on radio, television and the press, in areas such as our Friends of the Neighbourhood scheme, Pax Warrior (an interactive software package on the Rwandan genocide), and the South African Project. Our young musicians and dancers have performed for the Japanese Consul-General and the World Congress on Natural Disasters and have been invited to take part in an event related to the G8 Summit called Truth and Reconciliation, a seminar for young people focusing on young people in Africa. The particular emphasis is Confronting Genocide

and the seminar will include speakers, debate, music, dance and drama. We are particularly excited about our involvement in this event since it will allow our students to work closely with young people from Rwanda and Zwelibanzi (funding has been made available to fly some students over).

A special *Diversecity* will be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June dedicated to the memory of those who died in the Rwandan genocide. More information will follow.

The end of June will be a busy time since we are also having our first Founder's Day Dinner on 29th June. The Gillespie's Trust is promoting this event. It will include the unveiling of a specially commissioned stained glass window in Bruntsfield House to celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> birthday of the building. A special concert on 22<sup>nd</sup> June will take place to celebrate the history of our famous school and our benevolent founder.

May is, of course, a very busy time for our senior students with SQA exams running throughout the month. Please be supportive and encouraging and recognize the pressures the students are under. We wish them well and look forward to the results in August. Our attainment figures remain consistently high. We expect this tradition to continue. This is also the month when we spend a lot of time in our feeder primary schools preparing the P7 children for

their transition to high school. It is always a joy to see the lively dispositions and expectant faces of these primary school children as they look forward to the three day visit and their move to the "big school".

I hope you will be impressed by the range of events and successes, especially sporting, mentioned elsewhere in the Newsletter. Educating the whole person is certainly our core philosophy.

We are very much looking forward to our new timetable and period structure which will commence on 3rd June. The changes to the Pupil Support structure will also strengthen and improve our already excellent provision. I hope you recognize that these changes are made for the benefit of all with learning and teaching as the focus for change.

Finally may I say how much I am looking forward to working with the staff, students and especially you, the parents. I am deeply committed to ensuring the best education possible for all who attend JGHS. I promise you my full commitment to the future of this wonderful school. We are an internationally recognized "House of Learning", but there is always more to be done. You have a key role to play in this future. I welcome you to work in partnership with the staff and students and to talk to me on any matter pertaining to Gillespie's.

*Mr. A. Wallace*

### Special points of interest:

- ♦ *Message from our Head Teacher (page 1)*
- ♦ *A hugely successful year in sport is described on pages 2 and 3.*
- ♦ *Get up to date with all the Music Department events (page 4)*
- ♦ *Please take note of the new school day (page 1)*

### New School Hours

From 3<sup>rd</sup> June the school week will be as follows.

#### Mon/Tue/Wed/Thu

Registration	08:30-08:40
Period 1	08:40-09:40
Period 2	09:40-10:40
Break	10:40-10:55
Period 3	10:55-11:55
Period 4	11:55-12:55
Lunch	12:55-13:40
Period 5	13:40-14:40
Period 6	14:40-15:35

#### Friday

Registration	08:30-08:40
Period 1	08:40-09:40
Period 2	09:40-10:40
Break	10:40-11:00
Period 3	11:00-12:00

# SPORTS

## Girls' Basketball

The under 14 team have participated in the Scottish Cup but unfortunately were knocked out at the group stages. The team achieved greater success at the BAA Youth Games.

The under 15's had another prosperous season reaching the semi-final of the Scottish Cup losing to a very strong side from Lasswade.

After fifteen years we had a Senior Girls basketball team in the Scottish Cup.



## Boy's Basketball

S1: A flourishing S1 side with good success in various tournaments against local schools.

Under 14's: Reaching the quarter finals of the Scottish Cup and were runners up in the Biggar High School Competition.

Under 15's: Another fantastic season, which included a trip to Stornoway, losing a very exciting game 52-54.

Senior Boy's: An excellent 1<sup>st</sup> season for this team qualifying for the group stages of the Scottish Cup losing out to Penicuik.

## Kid-Fit

This year has seen the introduction of a 'girls only keep fit club'. They use various activities and a range of training methods. This has improved girls activity levels with over forty girls attending the sessions.

## 3v3 Basketball Tournament

Twelve teams participate in the mixed tournament with over sixty senior pupils involved.

## 3V3 Junior Basketball Tournament

This competition has run successfully with twelve teams of both



## Girl's Hip Hop Dance

This club has been a massive success with more than sixty girls attending. They have performed at Diversecity and The Marchmont Street Party.

## S4 Dance

The S4 girls have had continued success. They have choreographed a number of ethnic and modern dance pieces both in and out of school.

## Breakdance

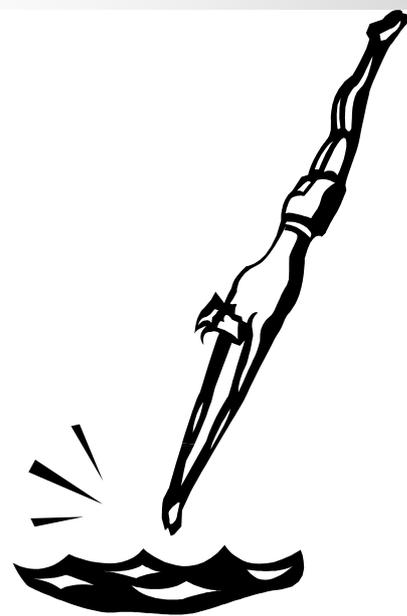
Two breakdance groups are now running, a beginners group with thirty S1/S2 pupils and an intermediate group of ten S3 pupils and have performed a various school events and national competitions.

## Bollywood Dance

S1/S2 girls attend the Bollywood dance group. They have performed in Diversecity and the Marchmont Street Party.

## Senior Girl's Dance

Involved 10 girl's who worked with Telford College to choreograph a contemporary dance piece for The Telford Dance Show "Branching Out".



## Swim for Fitness

This club continues to thrive with a range of pupil's swimming weekly, as well as competing at the Edinburgh School Championships. They also raised money by swimming a mile in the school pool.



## Lacrosse

This valuable club continues to run with regular attendance from a variety of age groups.

# SPECIAL

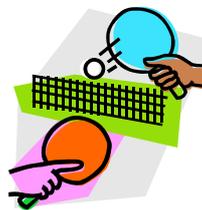
## Rugby

This year has seen the re-introduction of rugby with a combined team with Boroughmuir. They have competed regularly at weekends against a wide variety of schools including Madras College (St. Andrews) and Dunbar Grammar.



## Table-Tennis

A flourishing table-tennis club performing to an excellent standard at both local and national levels.



## Tennis

A thriving tennis section has developed, with pupils participating in local competitions.



## Hockey

Senior girls' hockey training has started. In response to its success, the club will expand in August.

## Free Runners

This is a new group of S1 - S3 boys who perform a mix of gymnastic and aerobatic activities.

## Football News

### Boys' Team

The boys U18 team made it to the semi finals of the Lothian Cup competition. While dominating the middle third of the pitch, little inroads were made into a strong Holyrood back four and two mistakes presented the opponents with a two goal lead. Although our attacking force brightened and pulled one back it was too little too late. When focussed on their game this season, the senior team has been a match for any of their opponents and with many S5 staying on into S6, prospects are encouraging for next season..



### Individual Success

Two students have scored international recognition.

First, Kyle Hay in S6 who has played for the Scottish Schools U18 team and has also been on tour to Canada with the Scottish squad.

Second, Rosie Adams in S3 who has played for the Scottish Schools team, representing her country in a 4 Nation tournament in Ireland.

Representing Lothian Kyle Hay and Roy Sandeman who played for this regional team which won the Scottish Schools Senior National Trophy. Stewart Hurd also appeared for this team.

### Girls' Teams

The girls' U15 team reached the semi finals of the Scottish Cup. Their road to the semis was a veritable goal-fest with many opponents being swept away. The team has continued to improve significantly, both collectively and individually, since last year's Coca-Cola Cup runner's up spot.

The S2 girls' 7 a side team who won the BAA Youth Games football tournament against 12 other Edinburgh schools. They also did well in the Coca-Cola Cup, qualifying through two rounds to play at Lesser Hampden and only going out on a heart breaking penalty shoot out.

### Other news

Our link with Granbyskolan in Sweden is still alive and kicking and I am visiting the school soon to consider possibilities for another exchange that will hopefully work both ways this time.

*Curt Finnemore*

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# James Gillespie's High School

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## JGHS Diary

Monday, 23-May-05  
Wednesday, 25-May-05  
Thursday, 26-May-05  
Wednesday, 01-Jun-05  
Monday, 06-Jun-05  
Thursday, 02-Jun-05  
Friday, 03-Jun-05  
Monday, 06-Jun-05  
Wednesday, 08-Jun-05  
Friday, 01-Jul-05

Public Holiday  
Students resume at 08:30hr  
S1 Parents' Evening (Non-practical)  
P7 Parents' Information Evening  
All students return from exam leave  
S3 Induction  
New Timetable starts  
S5 Induction starts  
S6 Induction starts  
Last day of term

### BBC One Night of Shakespeare



10,000 Young Actors  
400 Schools  
100 Theatres  
1 Night



On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July a JGHS S3 Standard Grade Drama class will be taking part in this national festival. They will be performing an abridged version of 'A Midsummer's Nights Dream' at The Bruton Theatre, Musselburgh. Tickets cost between £5-£7 and can be booked from the Box office (665 2240). Please book early since there are three other schools also performing abridged Shakespeare plays on the same night.

## Music Department News

### A SUMMER CELEBRATION' CONCERT

This year's fun extravaganza will take place on Wednesday 22nd June at 7.30pm in the school hall.

Groups performing include senior wind band, junior wind band, flute ensemble, percussion ensemble, JGHS pipe band, string orchestra, clarsach ensemble, guitar ensemble, senior vocal group, S2/3 choir, S1 choir and a couple of chamber items from smaller groups.

Tickets will be priced £5/£2.50 concession and will be available at the door on the night. Please come early to avoid disappointment as there is a limited number of seats in the hall.

### CONCERT REHEARSALS

Senior group rehearsals have been suspended over study-leave period and will re-commence the week beginning 30th May.

Please ensure that all senior students are aware that attendance at these rehearsals is essential during that week and the continuing weeks to the concert.

Junior wind band, pipe band, S1 choir and S2/3 choir will continue to rehearse during study-leave as normal.

### MUSIC SUCCESSES

Congratulations go to Kirstie MacLeod in S4 who successfully auditioned for the National Pipe Band of Scotland which is a massive achievement for a student of this age.

Congratulations also to Jocelyn Hannah in S6 whose Advanced Higher music composition was premiered recently at the Queen's Hall. Jocelyn's piece was chosen from many Advanced Higher Music students across Edinburgh who worked closely with the composer Rory Boyle as part of a Composer Laureate initiative where S6 music students collaborated with Rory and the SCO in the compositional element of the Advanced Higher course.

Kirsten Braden and Hannah Luqmani (both S6) were also chosen to work in this venture, which proved to be very successful. Well done to them all.

### ASSOCIATED BOARD EXAM SUCCESS

Congratulations go to all students who sat this exam in March and passed, most with flying colours. Well done!

### CLARSACH ENSEMBLE

Once again, Ramsay MacMahon, Alicia Dawes-Salazar, Bridget Bradley and Cairistiona MacKinnon have been in demand! The group have performed at so many events recently, including a reception at Edinburgh Castle, civic receptions and several weddings.

They have been booked to play at various events in June, including an Educational Conference fronted by Jack McConnell. Keep up the good work!

### EDINBURGH SCHOOLS ENSEMBLES

These groups include orchestras, wind bands, jazz orchestras, rock ensembles, Strathspey and Reel Society and guitar ensemble and is open to all students across

Edinburgh who receive lessons on any instrument in school.

This is a fantastic opportunity for students to perform in the wider community, improve their performance skills and make new friends.

Entry is by audition - please see either Mrs O'Brien for an application form, or your instrumental teacher.

### Edinburgh Secondary Schools Orchestra

Application forms for their residential course can be picked up from Mrs. O'Brien. Closing date for forms is Friday 27th May.

### TURAS DON PHARLAMAID

#### (A TRIP TO THE PARLIAMENT)

The S3 Gàidhlig class, and a number of S5 students under Marie Chetty's supervision, participated last term in an exciting new project to bring MSPs into Schools. In the first stage of our part of the project, Gàidhlig students met with the Parliament's Gaelic Officer. We were then visited by Colin Fox MSP. The class questioned Mr Fox on the recent Gaelic Bill. Finally, we were invited to sit in on the bill's first committee hearing. Now law, The Gaelic Bill has major implications for the future of the language. We were therefore privileged to witness history being made!