

James Gillespie's High School



Newsletter

Message from the Head Teacher

September 2005

Prior to the summer holidays we were invited by Martin Hutchison of the CEC to take part in the authority's G8 activities. The school worked with Drummond H.S. and the Traverse Theatre to deliver breathtaking performances working with our students and young people from Rwanda and Zwelibanzi H.S. This type of work symbolizes what we hold most dear in JGHS. We strive to provide opportunities for young people to excel at what they do in whatever area of endeavour that might be. We are committed

to the development of responsible citizens and the recognition that what other schools in Edinburgh do, is equally valid. And we are passionately committed to the concept of global citizenship. We expect our students to be proud to be members of Gillespie's and to recognize that they have more than one identity. We live in Scotland, we live in Europe, we are citizens of the world.

This Newsletter will, I hope, demonstrate our belief in holistic education where learning is perceived as equally valid in Maths and Mu-

sic, in Sport and English, in Modern Language and Art. Attainment and achievement have equal importance in our school. Excellence is what matters and that can occur in so many different ways.



Mr. A. Wallace

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Special points of interest:

- *School will be closed for the local holiday on 19th September 2005. Pupils will return on Wednesday 21st September at 08:30hr.*
- *Take part in the School Board Elections—be part of the action.*
- *Former students University graduations —page 2*
- *Become part of our South African Project, details on page 4*
- *Join our PTA (page 6)*
- *Help us stamp out absence—page 8.*

School Board Elections

This year we will be holding elections to the School Board. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents to become involved in the running of the school. The School Board work closely with the school's Board of Management and is part of the decision-making process.

You should already have received from The City of Edinburgh a letter describing the process. This has been sent to every household on our data base. If you

have not received a letter you may obtain one from the school. It is important to let us know if you did not receive a letter so we update our database. We will close our electoral roll at 15:00hr on Tuesday, 13th September 2005 so you must let us know before then. Only those parents on the electoral roll at that time will be eligible to vote and stand for election.

Parents wishing to stand for election to the school board may obtain nomination

forms from the school from Wednesday 21st September 2005. These should be returned to the School Board Unit by 15:00hr on Tuesday 4th October 2005. Candidates may prepare a personal statement not exceeding 250 words.

If there are sufficient candidates to warrant an election, this will take place on Monday 7th November 2005 with a closing time of 15:00hr. Votes will be counted after school hours that day.

Successful Former Students

A number of our former students have been successful in gaining places at universities and in achieving outstanding results.

Sara Alexander gained a 2:1 Degree of Master of Arts in Geography from the University of Aberdeen.

Sharon Beatty gained Degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery from the University of Aberdeen.

Martin Booth gained a 1st Class Degree of Master of Engineering with Honours Mechanical Engineering from the University of Edinburgh.

Jenny Brown gained a 2:1 Degree of Bachelor of Laws (with Honours) from the University of Aberdeen.

Stephanie Campbell gained a LL.B. (Hons.) from the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne.

Stephan Carter gained a B. Arch. From the University of Glasgow.

Lucy Chan gained a 2:1 Bachelor of Science with Honours Biological Sciences with Management from the University of Edinburgh.

Ruo Chen has been awarded a place at New Hall, University of Cambridge to study medicine.

Fiona Cheung gained an Undergraduate Diploma of Higher Education from the University of Edinburgh.

Carla Davidson gained a M. A., First Class from the University of Glasgow.

Joanna Deary gained a 2:1 Master of Arts with Honours English Literature from the University of Edinburgh.

Susan Forrest gained a Postgraduate Certificate in Education Secondary Education from the University of Edinburgh.

Rachel Hamilton gained a Merit Postgraduate Certificate in Education Secondary Education from the University of Edinburgh.

Katy Ho gained a Postgraduate Certificate in Education Primary Education from the University of Edinburgh.

Lisa Hogg gained a 2:1 Master of Arts with Honours Italian and German from the University of Edinburgh.

Peter Jack gained a 2:1 Bachelor of Science with Honours Biological Sciences (Genetics) from the University of Edinburgh.

Alastair Jackson gained a M.A., (2:1) from the University of Glasgow.

Emma Jeffrey gained a 2:2 Bachelor of Education with Honours Primary Education from the University of Edinburgh.

Jasmine Leung gained a 2:2 Bachelor of Music with Honours from the University of Edinburgh.

Melissa Madjitey gained a 2:1 Master of Arts with Honours Business Studies from the University of Edinburgh.

Samantha McDonald gained a 2:1 Bachelor of Science in Medical Sciences with Honours Reproductive Biology from the University of Edinburgh.

Jenny McGill gained a LL.B., (2:1) from the University of Glasgow.

Sally Miller gained a 2:1 Degree of Master of Arts in Geography from the University of Aberdeen.

Rebecca Milne gained a M.A., (2:1) from the University of Glasgow.

Julia Morrison gained a 2:1 Master of Arts with Honours English Literature from the University of Edinburgh.

Michael Oldham gained a 2:1 Master of Arts with Honours Sociology from the University of Edinburgh.

Ross Scott gained a 2:1 Degree of Master of Arts in Economics (Political Economics)-Management Studies from the University of Aberdeen.

Peter Wands gained Degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery from the University of Aberdeen.

Minsi Wang gained a 2:2 Bachelor of Science with Honours Mathematics from the University of Edinburgh.

Fiona Wark gained a 2:1 Degree of Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from the University of Aberdeen.

Iain Weston gained a M.A., (2:1) from the University of Glasgow.

Joe Williams gained a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery from the University of Edinburgh.

Gavin Willshaw gained a 2:1 Degree in History from the University of York.

Marion Wilson gained a M.A., First Class from the University of Glasgow.

Enterprise @ JGHS

"Enterprise is having ideas and imagination and using them."

But it also about REAL situations, taking RISKS and taking RESPONSIBILITY.

Enterprise in Education is one of the Scottish Executive's priorities for education in Scotland and should be available to all young people from nursery through school and on into college and university.

James Gillespie's has a long tradition of offering Enterprise opportunities through curricular classes and as an extra-curricular activity. This year we have a group of Fifth and Sixth Year students who attend an Enterprise class four times a week as part of their senior curriculum. They are really beginning to take off with their ideas and projects some of which will undoubtedly make money. Enterprise is not just entrepreneurship however. It is about the life skills which employers say they are looking for in young recruits: teamwork, planning, organisation, making decisions, prioritising, negotiating, being flexible, etc.

The group at the moment are working on the following :

Selling interlinked wristbands in blue

with Fidelis et Fortis on and yellow with Live, Love and Learn on. Hopefully selling enough of these to our students, parents, teachers and pupils in our feeder primaries will allow the group to donate money to Zwelibanzi School in South Africa and also to buy and send the interlinked bands there as well.

They have commissioned a photograph of our beautiful new stained-glass window to be the front of a school Christmas card and this will go on sale later in the term.

Another group are busy organising a five-a-side soccer competition on our astro turf for First Year teams. If this proves popular then they will offer a similar one to Second Year teams.

A third group is now making African jewellery from beads and safety pins to sell at social events and parents' evenings during this term.

One member of the group has taken responsibility for most of the advertising posters.

As the year progresses we expect the projects to change and they may not always involve a sellable product but might be more about promoting an idea or offering service to those less fortunate than ourselves. Time will tell !

MEALAI BH UR NAIDHEACHD!!

CONGRATULATIONS!!

Congratulations are due to Anna Roberts in S6 and Kirstie MacLeod, Beth MacPhail and Kerrie MacKinnon in S5, for winning 1st place in the Gaelic TV quiz show, "Aon, Dhà, Strì". The girls answered questions on topics ranging from history, geography, to maths, science, literature, sport, music and general trivia. They did exceptionally well to defeat teams from schools all over the country, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The programme is due to be shown in the Autumn on ITV1 and runs until Christmas, so look out for our team on your screens soon!

F.McArthur, R.Craig
Modern Languages

Scripture Union Group AKA X:Change

This is a Christian-based group that's running again this year after a great year last year. If you've ever wondered what Christianity is about, if you want to know more or if you want to ask questions, please come along. Christians and non-Christians both welcome - it would be great to see you there. Please bring a packed lunch and we'll have different activities such as games, discussions, dramas, videos and more. It runs Thursday lunch-time every week in L8, Mr Carson's room. For more information, contact Anna Roberts, Alison Sneddon, Miriam Davey, Ben Traynor or Andy Irvine, all in S6.

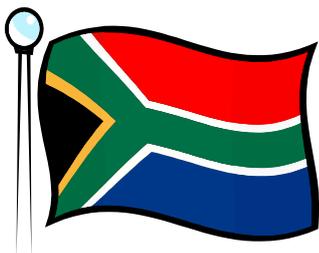
S1 Challenge

Please note that we have re-scheduled the S1 Challenge. This will now take place between late September and November. You will receive an invitation to attend your child's class presentation at least one week before the event takes place.

Fidelis et Fortis

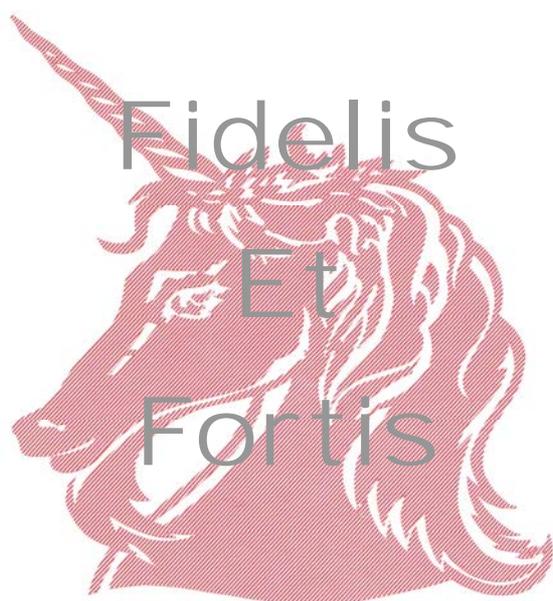
Catriona and Hamish Hepburn's family visited Zwelibanzi for a day in July. Themba, his staff and all the students made them very welcome. They toured the school and the surrounding township and were asked lots of questions on subjects ranging from the Loch Ness Monster to HIV. All the students wanted to know how they could persuade Themba to take them on the next trip to Gillespie's! Everyone was delighted that a Gillespie's family was visiting and the students staged a celebratory show of drama, dance and music. It was a great day.

Live, Love & Learn



South Africa Project

Since August 2003, we have been developing a project with our South African link school. This project is for the benefit of both schools. It is about global citizenship, learning and reciprocal support. We have pledged to support Zwelibanzi in resource terms because we are wealthier but we have much to learn from what happens there. Our project is nationally recognised as an example of excellent progress and we are looking at ways of ensuring sustainability and approaches which recognise the need for mutual benefit.



One of the main difficulties facing children in Um-lazi township is being able to afford to go to school. It costs £30 per year as state education is not free in South Africa. On our last trip to the school with staff, students and a **parent**, an idea emerged (mostly from the parent member it has to be said) that Gillespie's parents could begin to

sponsor a Zwelibanzi child for their secondary education. This would cost you £30 per year for the duration of the child's attendance at school.



The idea would be to supply you with a picture and some information about the youngster and to encourage some correspondence from that younger. Since we are trying to encourage JGHS students to visit Zwelibanzi while in senior school and to raise money to bring some South African students to come to Edinburgh there would also be a chance to meet up in the future.

The idea is at an early stage and full details are not as yet worked out. However, we would like to try to identify if there is interest from our parents and students. If you are interested please complete the tear off slip below. Please return the slip before the end of September to;

Mrs. M . Chetty, Depute Head Teacher
c/o School Office

Your Name: _____

Your Child's Name and Class: _____

Your Contact Tel. No.: _____

Music Department News

Summer Concert

Many thanks to all students and staff who contributed to the success of this concert.

This concert in particular was fairly difficult to run due to the suspension of all rehearsals for four weeks due to study leave, but everyone made a tremendous effort in June to ensure its' success.

Items included senior wind band, string orchestra, junior wind band, guitar and clarsach ensembles, flute ensemble, brass ensemble, percussion ensemble and senior and junior vocal groups.

Congratulations to all concerned.

Choirs

Absolutely everyone can join any of our choirs! No previous singing or musical experience is necessary - come along and join us for the Carol Concert in the Usher Hall.

S2/3 Choir — starting Tuesday 20th September, B2

Senior Vocal Group—starting Wednesday 21st September, B1 (for S4 - S6 students who specialise or particularly enjoy singing!).

Senior Choir—starting Thursday 29th September, B1 (open to all S4 - S6, regardless of experience).

S1 Choir—starting Monday 10th October, B1

ESSO Residential

Well done to the commitment shown by our students who attended this course which was held at Loaningdale House, Biggar from 31st August—2nd September.

The following students rehearsed with many others from across City of Edinburgh to present two concerts: the first at the Glasgow Concert Hall on 2nd September and the second at Central Hall in Edinburgh on Saturday 3rd September:

Vanessa Boyd, Stefan Ebmeier, Sukey Ho, Sarah Karlsberg-Schaffer, Patrick Kenny, Kirsty Main, Mhairi McLellan, Julia Rampen, Anna Roberts, Kathleen Rutherford, Jessica Traynor, Josiah Turner, Sophie Wawro, and Jack Young.

Thanks go to Yla Steven (strings teacher), Alasdair Rankin (percussion teacher) and Graeme Hodge (French Horn teacher) from the instrumental staff here at J.G.H.S. who contributed to these rehearsals and concerts.

Carol Concert

Yes, believe it or not, it's that time of year again! Rehearsals for all bands and orchestras will start the week beginning 12th September and are as follows:

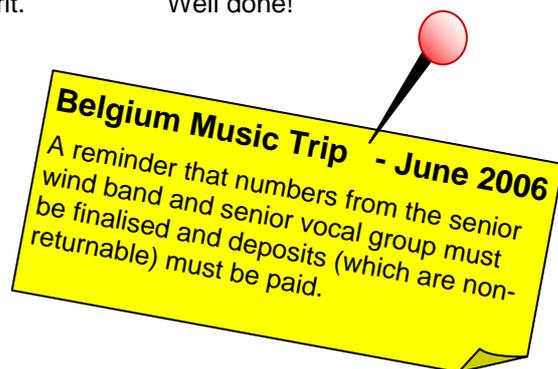
Senior Wind Band	Mondays 3.35 - 4.45pm	Hall
(this has been changed from the Tuesday rehearsal time listed in student bulletin)		
Senior Jazz Band	Mondays lunchtimes	B3
Flute Ensemble	Every 2 nd Tuesday 3.35 - 4.30pm	B1
Junior Wind Band	Wednesdays 3.35 - 4.30pm	Hall
Guitar Ensemble	Wednesdays 3.35 - 4.30pm	B3
Clarsach Ensemble	Wednesdays 3.35 - 4.30pm	B17
String Orchestra	Fridays 12.00 - 1.30pm	Hall
Percussion Ensemble	Lunchtimes weekly	Bridge Room

Students who receive lessons in school are obliged, as part of their instrumental contract, to participate in an instrumental group once they reach the appropriate standard of playing. Students who have learned an instrument out of school are very welcome to join a group and therefore take part in the Carol Concert - new S1 students are especially welcome.

Please see Mrs. O'Brien who will advise whether an appropriate standard of playing to join a group has been achieved.

Associated Board and Trinity College Exam Success

Congratulations to the many students (60 in total) who sat these exams in June. We are delighted that everyone passed, many with distinction and merit. Well done!



S1 Instrumental Auditions

A reminder that there are limited spaces in most instruments, and that most instrumental teachers may only be able to take on a few students from the auditions. These auditions will be taking place during the next couple of weeks -

Good luck to you all!

Parent Teacher Association

James Gillespie's High School has, at the moment, a very active P.T.A.

BUT

WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE NEW MEMBERS

SO

COME AND JOIN US

As a member of the P.T.A. you will:

- meet other parents regularly
- find out more about your child's education
- take part in school events
- help fund raise to improve the environment of your child's school
- and much more

The dates of the meetings are:

Tuesday 27th September
Tuesday 1st November
Tuesday 6th December
Tuesday 10th January
Tuesday 7th February
Tuesday 7th March
Tuesday 25th April
Tuesday 30th May
Tuesday 27th June

I would like to join the P.T.A.

Your Name: _____

Your Child's Name and Class: _____

Your Contact Tel. No.: _____

The Health Promoting Group

"A Healthy School is a Happy School"

In line with national policy James Gillespie's aims to be a fully health promoting School.

Aims

We aim to make every member of the School, pupils and staff aware of their physical and emotional health. We hope that this will also extend into the homes and that parents will encourage good practice.

Success to date

Close collaboration with the Canteen resulting in more fruit available, low salt and fat burgers and also more allergy free food.

Drinking water available in Warrender girl's toilet and Spylaw boy's toilet. Please encourage pupils to refill water bottles at break and lunchtime.

- Water facility to be installed in PE and ground floor Warrender
- Successful staff health day which included alternative therapies

- Health promotion at assemblies S1-S6, free health snack bar to all pupils
- Greater provision of staff and pupil fitness/sports clubs
- James Gillespie's has joined Eco School project

Future activities

- "Skipathon" offered by the PE Department targeting assemblies and also available for pupil support
- Anti smoking group visiting school targeting assemblies and also available for pupil support
- Brain gym activity for pupils ongoing

Monthly Top Tip

Sit around the table as a family for evening meals and enjoy family discussions and debate. This will also allow time for your food to digest, as it takes 20 minutes for the brain to register that the stomach is full!

Cashless Catering

After the October mid-term holiday the school will move to a "cashless" method of payment for food from our Dining Centre. As you are aware, we have been taking our students' photographs in preparation for production of their cashless catering card. This card will incorporate their photograph and combines with the Young Scot Card which allows our students substantial discounts in Edinburgh, Scotland and beyond.

The cashless catering cards act in the same way as debit cards. Money will be credited to them using "Revaluation" machines located near the school Office and in the main foyer. Staff and students will be able to upload value into their cards by inserting their cards and coins into these machines. Staff and students will be able to use their card to purchase food from the dining centre while their cards are still in credit.

Use of the revaluation machines is the only way to add value to the cards, so students will have to bring with them sufficient coins to meet their needs. The school cannot process cheques or notes nor can we provide change as the school does not keep cash.

For students who receive free school meals their cards will be uploaded with the

value of the school meal each day and those students will use their cards to purchase meals in the same way as the other students. Any unused free school meal value left on the card will be removed at the end of the school day and will not accumulate. As with the other students those receiving free school meals can upload additional value to their cards using the revaluation machines.

In order to encourage the safekeeping of these cards we will charge £5 to replace a lost or damaged card. This will be refunded if a lost card is subsequently found.

The money collected for school meals is processed by the school on behalf of the school meals contractor, the school will therefore be unable to provide refunds of unused money on cards, for example, at the end of term. Because students can plan their requirements in advance the school will no longer be able to provide "credit" for those who arrive at school without money for their lunch.

If staff or students have any questions about the use of cards, or require replacement cards, the school office will be able to help during the school lunch period from 12:55 hr to 13:40 hr.

'Waste Not Want Not.'

Congratulations to Josie Valley 4R1, winner of the City of Edinburgh's 'Waste Not Want Not' competition, a competition designed to encourage us all to recycle and use rather than throw away.

Josie's 1.5 metre sculpture of a Heron made from junk, cans, newspaper etc. was the outright winner. The competition was open to schools, colleges/universities and professional artists.

It says something of the quality of Josie's work that she should win this prestigious competition and pick up a first prize of £500. Well done Josie!

SENIOR DEBATING CLUB

This resumes on Tuesday Lunchtimes in Room L9. Open to all wannabee debaters in S5 and S6. Come along and enjoy some stirring and controversial debates and take part in some exciting competitions with other schools. For further details contact Mr. Swinburne, Calum Darling, Seamus Macleod or Alison Sneddon.

Alternative Assessment Arrangements in SQA examinations

The City of Edinburgh Council has issued a new and very clear policy on the eligibility of candidates for alternative arrangements. If you think your child may be eligible because of a specific learning difficulty or an additional support need please contact Mrs. Hunter PT LSSN and she will forward the relevant information to you. If your child received alternative arrangements for Standard Grade Examination these will be continued in S5 and S6.

English Department News

A lot of new work by pupils has been posted on the website. Please take a look at the link "new stuff" on the home page. There are poems by S1 and S4, and some reports on issues surrounding the G8 by S3. We hope to have the creative writing pieces done by the S6 Advanced Higher English students on the web soon.

More Poetry news

Mr Crosbie in the English Department has had seven poems published in a pamphlet called 'Magistri Pro Pace' (Latin for 'Teachers for Peace'). The poems in the pamphlet are all written by teachers in Edinburgh schools. Copies are available at £4.00 each or £2.50 for orders over 20. Proceeds will be donated to the Stop the War coalition. Please contact Mr Crosbie if you are interested in purchasing a copy.

James Gillespie's High School

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Website:
www.jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk



JGHS Diary

Monday, 19th September 2005	Public Holiday (School closed)
Tuesday, 20th September 2005	In-Service Day, Pupil Holiday
Thursday, 22nd September 2005	S1 Challenge (1K1)
Wednesday, 21st September 2005	Pupils return to school at 08:30 hr
Monday, 26th September 2005	S1 Challenge (1K2)
Tuesday, 27th September 2005	School Board and PTA Meetings
Thursday, 6th October 2005	S1 Challenge (1K3)
Monday, 10th October 2005	S1 Challenge (1K4)
Monday, 10th October 2005	Start of S4 Students' Work Experience Week
17th-24th October 2005	Mid-term holiday
Tuesday, 25th October 2005	Pupils return to school at 08:30hr
Thursday, 27th October 2005	S1 Challenge (1M1)
Thursday 27th October 2005	S1 Fancy Dress Party
Friday, 28th October 2005	S1 Settling-in reports issued
Monday, 31st October 2005	S1 Challenge (1M2)
Tuesday, 1st November 2005	School Board and PTA Meetings
Monday, 7th November 2005	S4 Consultation Evening
Tuesday, 8th November 2005	Senior school mathematics challenge
Thursday, 10th November 2005	S1 Challenge (1M3)
Monday, 14th November 2005	S1 Challenge (1R1)
Friday, 18th November 2005	S5/6 Interim Reports issued
Thursday, 24th November 2005	S1 Challenge (1R2)
Thursday, 24th November 2005	S5/S6 Parents' Consultation Evening
Monday, 28th November 2005	S1 Challenge (1R3)
Friday, 2nd December 2005	S3 Interim reports issued
Tuesday, 6th December 2005	School Board and PTA Meetings
Friday, 9th December 2005	S6 Drama Performance
Monday, 19th December 2005	End of Year Concert, Usher Hall, 19:30 hr
Tuesday, 20th December 2005	S1 & S2 Parties
Thursday, 22nd December 2005	School Closes 12:00hr
Thursday, 23rd December 2004	Start of Christmas Holidays

Absence Call

The school has embarked on a trial of updated and improved software for our Absence Call system. This allows us to send messages to parents informing them if their children are not at school and we do not have a reason for this absence.

This is an automated parent notification system that will telephone parents to inform them that their children are not at school. It will request a reason for the pupil's absence. Parents have the option of responding immediately with the reason for absence or of calling back when it is more convenient. Calls will continue throughout the day until the school is informed of the reason for absence.

With this system we will be able to meet our obligations to our parents to keep them informed if their children do not turn up for school. It also allows us to meet our obligations to the local authority in terms of taking action to reduce truancy.

While the Absence Call system will keep parents informed of pupils' absence our real objective is to change from a system where absence notification is after the fact, to a proactive system where parents call the school in advance to inform us of absence. This will allow us to understand better the needs of our students.

A dedicated Voice-Mailbox has been set up to receive all calls from parents

concerning their child's absence. This is extension 300 which you may dial after the welcome message you hear when calling the school. You should leave a message stating who you are, your relationship to the pupil, the pupil's name, registration class, reason for absence and expected length of absence. **Please note that we cannot accept notification of absence by e-mail or text messaging as we have no way to verify the identity of the sender.**

Parents were requested last year to inform the school of any telephone numbers we have on record to which you would not like us to call. If you think we hold such a number you should let us know now.