

James Gillespie's High School



Newsletter

Message from the Head Teacher

May 2006

We were very saddened to hear of the death of Muriel Spark on April 13th. She was one of our most famous former students and is perhaps more responsible than anyone else for the school's worldwide reputation. We will be investigating the possibility of a commemorative plaque or perhaps a piece of sculpture and have already dedicated an annual essay competition to her memory.



Muriel Spark
1918—2006

Another famous former student, Dorothy Dunnet, was also in the news last month. A commemorative stone was unveiled at the Writer's Museum ensuring her enduring reputation as one of Scotland's most well-known writers. I attended the ceremony with

two current JGHS students, Julia Rampen and Kathleen Rutherford, both national prizewinners in essay writing and poetry, and members of the James Gillespie's Trust. Dorothy Dunnet fans were delighted to see copies of the registers and school magazines from her time at James Gillespie's. We would also like to honour her with a commemorative work and I would appreciate ideas from current students and parents as to how best to do this.

Amongst our current student body we are fortunate to have two recipients of National Awards. Josie Vallely in S4 was awarded Young Scot of the Year for her contribution to the environment and Jake White in S2 was awarded Young Scot of the Year for his contribution to citizenship. The school is very proud of the way our young learners take responsibility for such important issues and also demonstrate independence of thought in the way they contribute.

We have been visited by an HMI, David Gregory, for a good practice visit on curricular flexibility, Pat Campbell from Learning and Teaching

Scotland who used us for photographs in a forthcoming publication on inclusion and also Carol Wood from the same organization who wished to feature us as a case study in the HMI/LB forthcoming publications/DVDs a "Journey to Excellence". We are flattered that we are seen as worthy of entry into all these national publications and were delighted that all three visitors commented on the calm, ordered environment in the school and the positive and welcoming attitudes of our students and staff. There was also an excellent two page article in the Times Educational Supplement on our Global Citizenship project in South Africa entitled "The Long Walk to Escape Poverty in the Township".

The school's reputation continues to grow nationally and internationally .



Mr. A. Wallace

Inside this issue:

Message from the Head Teacher	1
Updates from our Depute Head Teachers	2
Sports News	2
News about events	3
Diary and News Roundup	4

Special points of interest:

- ◆ News of two of our former pupils (*page 1*)
- ◆ News of the good work done in JGHS goes national (*page 1*)
- ◆ What you have all been waiting for; the answers to the PTA "J.G." quiz (*see page 3*)
- ◆ Need help with your investments? (*see page 4*).
- ◆ Learn about sponsoring students in South Africa on *page 4*.
- ◆ An important message about the use of mobile telephones in school on *page 4*.
- ◆ News update from The James Gillespie Trust (*page 4*)
- ◆ Check your important diary dates against the school's (*page 4*).

News From The Deputes

Gifted and Talented success

Ten students in our current S1 were successfully nominated for this year's Gifted and Talented summer programme. This session we have pupils participating in all five categories: Creative Writing, Art, Drama, Masterchef, Engineering and Environmental science. A further 12 students have been placed on the waiting lists. The programme will run in August at Broughton High School. Nominations were made by the relevant departments and the high success rate this year further confirms our impressions of the depth of talent in S1.

Learning and teaching

Some exciting developments

- ◆ Success with Gifted and Talented nominations (see above)
- ◆ Positive report on our approach to Flexible Curriculum by HMIE, particularly the integration of IT into S1 PSE course; and the Flexible option offered to current S3 students.
- ◆ Successful completion of cluster writing project with the English department. This project was funded by a special 7K grant jointly awarded to James Gillespie and Boroughmuir cluster and enabled excellent collaborative work to be carried out on the writer's craft element of 5-14 writing.
- ◆ New Software is being piloted by the physics department in support of the Assessment is for learning initiative. It is called Qwizdom and facilitates increased levels of classroom interaction and feedback. Early work with pupils confirms that the software substantially improves learner engagement.

T. Rae—DHT.

Trip to South Africa

- ◆ The trip to South Africa really was the most valuable and enjoyable experience of my life.
- ◆ I've learned to actually be grateful for the education I received.
- ◆ It has made me look at my life differently, appreciate my home life.

These are just three of the comments made by students on their return from South Africa during the Easter holidays. It was a privilege to have the opportunity to spend quality time with the twenty one students from James Gillespie's. They worked extraordinarily hard sharing Physics, Geography, Drama and English classes with the students of Zwelibanzi. In addition to this they ran a ceilidh for students and parents, organised a beach party and a five aside football tournament. No one will ever forget the nail-biting final between Scotland and South Africa. South Africa Committee, I applaud you.

We are hurtling towards the end of the academic year and preparations are well under way for the transition inductions. A recent review of the new vertical guidance and community system indicated that the move has been a positive one and we look forward to welcoming our new S1 students in June.

M. Chetty—DHT

The school has registered as a health Promoting school to confirm our commitment to the school community. Recent assemblies have focused on the importance of sleep to our young people and the importance of exercise. as well as focusing on our emotional Health. Our Eco Group, is very active and has focused this session on recycling – paper and aluminum cans. They are also in the process of planting trees. A very beautiful garden area is also being created in the centre of the school, led by Mr. Mc Dougal. This environmental work will be intensified during the School's alternative Time Table.

Closer collaboration with the kitchen has meant healthy eating fruit juice and water instead of carbonated cans, regular no chip days, more fruit and salads, natural ingredients including low salt and fat. Water fountains have been installed and all vending machines removed. The school continues to consider the welfare of its staff with regular alternative therapy visits and a very healthy number of staff clubs focus days like mental Health day

This year we have a very exciting Alternative week with over 9 Excursions and opportunities. This year has also been a rich year for Foreign excursions with 7 foreign excursions to Sweden for football, Barcelona for basketball, Music in Belgium, The American exchange, Ski Trip, Geography field trip in The Alps, History trip to France and Belgium, Trip to London Paris and The visit to South Africa by senior pupils.

S. Westerman—DHT.



Anthems being sung before the Scotland vs. South Africa football match.

Events

Ski Trip 2006

In March 33 enthusiastic students set off to Les Deux Alpes in France to ski. It snowed the day we arrived and kept snowing for another three days. The students enjoyed the fantastic snow conditions but we not so keen on the poor visibility. However we did get three days of sunshine and finally on our last day we were able to ski on the glacier allowing some of us to ski from the top of the resort all the back to the hotel. Jumps were the order of the day with some taking every opportunity to practise the perfect 360 degree turn. They even built a small jump outside the hotel to practise first thing in the morning and last thing at night.



We were lucky this year to have the help of an ex student Elliot Green who is a qualified ski instructor. His enthusiasm and energy were much appreciated. The students were a fantastic bunch and they all really enjoyed the trip with the only complaint being the food in the hotel. Some did find it tiring though, with one student falling asleep in the snow while he waited for a ski tow to restart.

D Greig, J Smith



BAA Sporting Success.

At the BAA Edinburgh Youth games the school had 50 pupils participating in an excellent day at various venues around Edinburgh. The results were ;

Boys Basketball - 1st
Girls Basketball - 2nd

Gymnastics - 2nd
Tennis - 2nd

Girls Football - 3rd
Girls Hockey - 7th.

The pupils also won the Loudest cheering school award. The trophies are on display in the School reception.

SENIOR BOYS FOOTBALL

So Close!

The seniors boys football team lost out by the narrowest of margins on Friday 29th April to Portobello High School in the League Cup Semi - Final. After a very close and competitive game the Full time result was 2-2. Extra time could not separate the teams, so the game was decided on penalties. Portobello winning through 4-3. Congratulations to the S5 / 6 boys on an excellent performance.

SPORTS CLUBS

Lacrosse Club S1 - S3

Due to popular demand the lacrosse club is back on a Thursday at 3.35 - 5.00 on the Astroturf. Caroline McCosh, Lacrosse development officer, will take the club. Any Questions then please see the PE department.

Table Tennis Club S1 - S3

The table tennis club is on a Thursday in the gym 18.00 - 20.00 All players are welcome to attend old and new.

Girls Basketball

The girls basketball club is running on a Thursday from 3.35 - 5.00 in the Games Hall. All players are welcome to attend old and new.

Boys Basketball

The boys basketball club is running on a Wednesday from 3.35 - 5.00 in the Games Hall. All players are welcome to attend old and new.

Tennis Club

The tennis club is running on a Friday from 12.00 - 13.00 on the Astroturf. All players are welcome to attend old and

new.

Badminton Club

The Badminton club is running on a Friday from 15.30 - 17.00 in the Game Hall. The club has a new coach, Helen Chisholm. All players are welcome to attend old and new.

JAMES GILLESPIE'S HIGH SCHOOL PTA

"J.G." QUIZ

THE ANSWERS

1. An easy one to start with: the founder of our school. **James Gillespie.**
2. You might find a pagoda here. **Japanese Garden**
3. Parisian author of, "The Thief's Journal" **Jean Genet**
4. Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald & Jelly Roll Morton are three of these. **Jazz Greats**
5. The first names of the author of, "Empire of the Sun". **James Graham**
6. A.K.A Bette Lynch. **Julie Goodyear**
7. 2004 Film starring Ben Affleck & Liv Tyler. **Jersey Girl**
8. Paul Weller. **Jam Guitarist**
9. An area of Edinburgh. **Juniper Green**
10. Climbing Frame. **Jungle Gym**
11. Star of, "The Rockford Files". **James Garner**
12. Author of, "The Pelican Brief". **John Grisham**
13. "Big Brother" contestant. **Jade Goody**
14. French Fashion Designer. **Jean-Paul Gaultier**
15. 1970s Captain of Glasgow Rangers FC. **John Greig**
16. Wine tasting celebrity who got out of there. **Jilly Goulden**
17. This woman studied chimps. **Jane Goodall**
18. Founder of George Heriot's Hospital. **Jinglin' Geordie**
19. 1954 Film starring Joan Crawford. **Johnny Guitar**
20. Former wife of Cricketer, Imran Khan. **Jemima Goldsmith**

Many thanks to everyone who entered, there were four correct entries and the winner's name was drawn out of a hat. Congratulations to Mr Caddell of JGHS who won a £15 gift voucher to spend on tickets for the Filmhouse.

Look out for our latest Quiz, which has a music theme. All proceeds go to PTA funds which will be used to benefit our school.

**Sara Hood
PTA**

James Gillespie's High School

James Gillespie's High School
Lauderdale Street,
Edinburgh, EH9 1DD.



Telephone: 0131-447-1900
Facsimile: 0131-466-7035

Email:
Admin@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk

Website:
www.jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk

JGHS Diary

Tuesday, 9th May 2006	JGHS Trust Meeting
Friday, 12th May 2006	S1 Pupil Reports distributed
Thursday, 11th May 2006	S5/6 exams leave starts
Thursday, 18th May 2006	S1 Parents' Night (Practical Subjects)
Monday, 22nd May 2006	School Holiday
Wednesday, 24th May 2006	Pupils resume at 08:30 hr
Wednesday, 24th May 2006	S1 Parents' Night (Non-practical Subjects)
Tuesday, 30th May 2006	PTA Meeting
Tuesday, 30th May 2006	School Board Meeting
Wednesday, 31st May 2006	P7 Parents' Information Evening (19:00—20:30 hr)
Thursday, 1st June 2006	S3 Induction
Friday, 2nd June 2006	New Timetable starts for S1—S4)
Monday, 5th June 2006	S5 Induction starts
Friday, 9th June 2006	S3 Pupil Reports distributed
Monday, 12th June 2006	New Timetable starts for S5—S6
Tuesday, 13th June 2006	JGHS Trust Meeting
Thursday, 15th June 2006	Rock Night
Tuesday, 20th June 2006	Three-day P7 visit begins
Thursday, 22nd June 2006	Farewell Music Concert (School Assembly Hall)
Monday, 26th June 2006	Alternative Timetable begins
Friday, 30th June 2006	School Closes for Summer (12:00 hr)

News Round-up

Need help with your Investments?

Congratulations to the S3 Business Management team who reached the regional final of the Proshare Student Investor competition.

They beat of over 800 teams and were invited to Gateshead where they competed against the top 20 teams from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Northern England.

Although they did not qualify for the national final they were highly commended being one of the youngest teams in the competition.

Well done to Kyle Aitken, Philip Mshelbwala, David Malikov and Blair Stevenson.

J. Forrester.

Zwelibanzi Students Sponsorship

At present we have 91 students from Zwelibanzi being sponsored by families, friends and staff of James Gillespie's. The difference this makes to the lives of the young people, and their families, is quite substantial.

We have, at present, 4 Zwelibanzi students still needing sponsors. If you would

like to be a sponsor please contact Ian Watson at the school. The cost per year is only £30 per student which is to pay for their school fees - all students in South Africa must pay for their education.

I shall be in South Africa during the month of May and will deal with any offers of sponsorship immediately on my return.

I. Watson

Mobile Phones

We are becoming increasingly concerned about the misuses of mobile phones in the school. They are used during class time, bullying texts are sent, they are sometimes used in "happy slapping" contexts to film inappropriate events and generate crowds of onlookers for any conflicts that arise.

May I ask you first of all to discourage all students from bringing them to school, (how essential are they?) or at the very least discussing and encouraging responsible use. They should **NEVER** be switched on in a school building.

A. Wallace—HT.

James Gillespie's Trust

In the coming months, we hope that the James Gillespie's Trust will become a familiar feature on our school landscape. The Trust is a recognised charity and aims to promote the welfare of James Gillespie's High School and establish mutually beneficial relationships between the School and its alumni and community. The Board of Trustees is made up of members of the school management team, representatives of the PTA and the School Board, the local councillor and other interested people. We are delighted that Frances Benton, an experienced fundraiser and parent of a former pupil, has established a Development Office within the school and this will form the foundation of future Trust activity. We are hoping to involve the whole school community - staff, parents and students - in all aspects of the Trust, and look forward to hearing your views in the future. We will soon launch the James Gillespie's Trust website together with a small project grant scheme for both pupils and staff. Watch this space!!

J. Hughes

NEWSFLASH!

Trust's First Funding Success

The Trust has been awarded £5,000 for the feasibility study for the extension of the school library.

