



TAIN ROYAL ACADEMY

ACADAMAIDH RÌOGHAIL BHAILE DHUBHTHAICH

Parents' Newsletter



Volume 9 Issue 1

Cuairtlitir

September 2009
An t-Sultain 2009

9th September 2009 truly was both an historic and memorable day for Tain Royal Academy. We were delighted to host HRH the Princess Royal to celebrate the Bi-centenary of the granting of our Royal Charter by King George III. The visit was a great success and every single pupil was a credit to themselves and the school. The Royal party were very complimentary about our pupils. I was very proud of them and I hope that they will remember the visit for a long time.

Donnie Macleod, Rector



All at TRA were delighted to be able to welcome the Princess on a glorious, sunny, breezy day. After introductions to invited guests and senior staff, she was led by Mr Macleod to several classrooms - in the Maths, History and Science departments - where she showed great interest in pupils' work.



The Princess then met groups of pupils in the Assembly Hall. She began with a group who had taken part in the Alladale Challenge and discussed with them their own experiences and the proposal to reintroduce wolves to the Alladale estate.



Next was a Room 18 group with Ms Harpham, with whom she discussed Room 18 projects and talked of pets.

She was introduced to Neil Gordon and Lana Hurren, School Captains, along with the Vice-Captains (as pictured on the left).

HRH The Princess Royal's Visit



And then on to Mrs Rush's Home Economics group who had worked with Mr Mtete, Head Teacher of our link school in Malawi. The Princess showed extensive knowledge of Malawi and international issues.

Gizzen Briggs had been playing in the Hall as the Princess arrived at the school and a small group continued playing while she moved from group to group in the Hall. She met Mr J McLean and a small group of musicians.

Mr Macleod then introduced her to Ms Wilkinson and pupils who have participated in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and then to Mr Paul Hoggarth, Chair of the Parent Council, and other Council members.

The party then moved on to a group of sports

achievers, including Anna Giongrandi who is the Scottish Schools Javelin Champion.

The final group to be presented had experienced a week at the Columba 1400 centre in Skye where they participated in a leadership for young people course. The Princess is patron of Columba 1400 and is very familiar with the organisation.

The primary reason for the Princess' visit was to see the original Royal Charter, recently restored, and to unveil a facsimile which is to go on permanent display. On the Assembly Hall stage she met Mr and Mrs McAllister, who have been very much involved in preparations for the bicentenary preparations.

While the Princess was meeting groups in the Hall, all other pupils not involved directly gathered to

watch the unveiling ceremony. After a few words from Mr Macleod the Princess spoke to the whole school, emphasising the importance of the work done in the Academy and of individuals reaching their own potential. She was presented with a specially made striking Tain Silver brooch and a bouquet.

Following this, the Princess left for the Tain Rose Garden. Here she heard Gizzen Briggs members playing again and was shown the work done in association with the BBC's Beechgrove Garden team to restore the Rose Garden. She also met members of staff and pupils who had worked with other members of the community on the restoration project.

Finally, the Royal Party met a Young Carers group in the Tain Parish Church Hall. It was extremely pleasing that, before leaving Tain, members of the Princess' party paid TRA pupils great compliments on their behaviour throughout the visit.

The event was an extremely memorable way of celebrating a major historical milestone in the life of the school. The Princess showed herself able to put people at their ease and everyone appreciated the interest she showed in the work of the school and in the achievements of individuals.

There is no doubt that members of the school community will remember the day for many years to come.

The Rector has received a thank you letter from the Princess Royal which is copied opposite

Angus Gray, Depute Rector



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

16th September 2009

Jane Mc Macleod

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal has asked me to write and tell you how much she enjoyed her visit to Tain Royal Academy and would like me to thank you all for the warm welcome she received.

Her Royal Highness was very grateful to you for showing her around and for explaining your fascinating history. It gave her enormous pleasure to help you commemorate your Royal Charter bicentenary. You have an exceptional school with such a wide and interesting range of subjects and activities.

The Princess was delighted to have the opportunity to meet so many of your staff and pupils and much enjoyed talking to them and viewing the various stands in the assembly hall. You have a lot of very talented children and the Gizzen Briggs Music Group is amongst them. Her Royal Highness would like me to thank them for playing so melodiously. Please, too, will you thank all the staff and pupils who took so much trouble to organize such a special visit.

Finally, The Princess Royal has asked me to thank you for the beautiful flowers and that lovely Celtic design silver brooch which will always remind her of a most enjoyable morning at Tain Royal Academy.

*Yours sincerely
Her Majesty The Princess Royal*

Lady in Waiting to
HRH The Princess Royal



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RECTOR'S COMMENT

It is often in times of adversity that the true spirit of people and an organisation become apparent. This was very apparent in TRA at the start of this session. Unfortunately we had to move all classes from our two-storey block due to a significant amount of water ingress during the re-roofing work. I am indebted to every member of staff and to all of our pupils for working so well together through that difficult time.

We are very pleased with our SQA results this year with positive results and pupils doing particularly well across the curriculum. Many thanks to parents and carers for your support with study, homework and revision over the last session.

Despite the roof problems, we have had a great start to this 2009-10 session, and let's work even more closely together to realise my vision that we work together to "help each individual pupil reach their potential". We are moving into an exciting new era of curriculum development which will involve pupils being more actively involved in their learning and participate in new and exciting opportunities for learning.

Donnie Macleod, Rector

TRA PARENT COUNCIL

Well don't they look smart in their uniforms? Congratulations to all parents and carers, I think we have done a great job. No more 8.00am rows or quick changes of dress before departure for school - what a relief!!

In June's notes I used the title of a golden oldie to support the introduction of the uniform. This time 'Up on the Roof' by The Drifters comes to mind. If you have been unaware of the two storey block roof saga at the Academy it supports my following comments.

Plans were made during the early summer for a replacement pitched roof to be constructed on the two storey teaching building at TRA. The original 1960's flat roof was well past its sell-by date and leaked like a sieve. Buckets were the order of the day on the top floor in wet weather. Despite the promised inconvenience during the closing weeks of the last session in June and the chance of a limited rollover at the beginning of this new session it would all be worthwhile.

To their dismay upon returning to the Academy as the summer holiday drew to a close the Rector and his staff discovered no sign of the new roof. Readers will remember that July and early August were very wet and the old flat roof had been partially removed, when the heavens opened. Interior damage to the building was significant making it unusable. The project was now weeks behind schedule.

With the new session just days away, plans were agreed then implemented. Whole departments were relocated, others physically reduced in size, equipment, books and other teaching aids required new temporary homes. It was a sizeable logistical exercise involving all of TRA's staff.

On Tuesday August 18th, Tain Royal Academy opened its doors (except the two story block) and our children's education in the 2009/2010 session began.

On behalf of all TRA parents and carers my I pass on our thanks to Rector, Donnie Macleod, and ALL his staff for their tremendous effort which brought success out of adversity. Well done TRA staff.

Paul Hoggarth, TRA Parent Council



OCTOBER HOLIDAY 2009 - school closes Friday 9 October
Inset Days - Monday 26, Tuesday 27, Wednesday 28 October
School re-opens Thursday 29 October for pupils

SPONSORED EVENTS



Friday 11th September proved an excellent day for our Sponsored Events. Pupils on the walk had excellent weather on the

route round Tain Hill and even those with very sore feet persevered and made it back.



An innovation this year was a barbecue back at the school for returning walkers and for the Sponsored Read-in pupils in the afternoon. Staff from A & I Quality Butchers in Culloden organised the barbecue which was extremely popular.

We were also very pleased to welcome Mr McCaffrey of the local police who accompanied the pupils on the walk.

The funds raised by the walk and read-in go towards supporting the extra-curricular activities available to pupils. Last year's final total was over £6,500 and we are hopeful of bettering that this year.



We are extremely grateful for the support of families and friends of the Academy in this, our biggest fund-raising event of the year.

Angus Gray, Depute Rector

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 ★ **CONGRATULATIONS** ★
 ★ **Laura Beesley 6E** ★
 ★ **and Sarah Groves 6C** ★
 ★ on their appointments ★
 ★ as **Head Buddies** ★
 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CHILDREN'S SERVICE WORKER

I'd like to take this opportunity of saying a warm welcome to all the new first year pupils and their parents and to introduce myself. I am Jan Thompson, children's services worker based here at TRA.

My role here is to support children who are finding it difficult to cope with a variety of issues ranging from bullying to home based concerns. Family liaison and support can also be key to my work.

During a child's time here at TRA, it's possible I will work with him/her in a number of different situations whether it's one-to-one confidential work, group work or informal social groups. My work supports the pastoral care provided by the Guidance Department, school and other relevant agencies.

If you want further information regarding CSW work, please call the school or Tain Social Work office.



We are collecting Let's Grow Vouchers from Morrisons Supermarket for gardening equipment to build up a school garden. Can you please pass any on to Dr Ross (Biology).

TRA SPORTS UPDATE

ROSS-SHIRE SCHOOLS PENTATHLON

A group of TRA athletes competed in the above event in the last week of term before the summer holidays. The Pentathlon competition consists of each athlete competing in five events: long jump; shot putt; hurdles; 800m (girls), 1500m (boys); high jump (girls, 200m boys). Athlete's results in the events are converted into points and added together for an overall individual score.

TRA were very successful with the following winners:

S1 and U13 Girls	1st	Elspeth Hayes
U13 Boys	1st	Ross Gollan
U15 Girls	1st	Shirley Smart
U15 Boys	1st	Donald Matheson
U15 Boys	2nd	Calum Thomson
Senior Boys	2nd	Kevin Gilmour
Senior Boys	3rd	Alec Beattie

HOCKEY REPORT

This month sees the start of a new hockey season and TRA will have to work hard to maintain the standard set by last year's teams.

Training is on every Wednesday after school and on a Thursday lunchtime. It has been great to see so many girls coming along. One of the first things to be done was to get each team to vote for a team captain and vice-captain. Well done to the following pupils who have been selected.

S1	Captain	Danielle Ross
	Vice-captain	Eilidh Ferries
S2	Captain	Georgia Dryburgh
	Vice-captain	Jacqueline Greenlees
S3	Captain	Anna Stewart
	Vice-captain	Mary MacLellan
Snr	Captain	Rachael Murray
	Vice-captains	Kiera Scott and Samantha Keys

Our first fixture was against Alness on Wednesday 9th September and gave all four teams their first victory. Well done girls. Keep up the good work!

Audrey Scott, PE Department

FORMER PUPILS

We often hear, informally, of former pupils' achievements in further study, the world of work and in the community at home and abroad. Such endeavours can be highly motivating and offer a real focus for our current pupils. If you are aware of any news in this regard, please contact the school.

Graduations

Victoria Ross University of Glasgow
BSc (Hons) Psychology

Daniel Morrison University of Glasgow
BSc (Hons) Molecular and Cell Biology

Daniel continues to study for a Masters

Andrew Lewis Robert Gordon University
BSc (Hons) Computer for Internet and Multimedia (First Class)

Andrew was also awarded the Pragma Prize as top performing student in his cohort.

Gillian Smith University of Edinburgh
Bachelor of Laws (Hons)

Gillian continues to study for a postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice.

GÀIDHLIG NEWS

Lots of exciting things on the cards in Gaelic at the moment. Two pupils will be travelling to Londonderry to take part in Ri Cheile - a speech making competition for speakers of Gaelic and Gaeilige in October. Two other pupils are preparing for the annual BT Alba debate for secondary school Gaelic speakers in Stornoway. The department is buzzing with argument and debate on various subjects.

We are looking forward to visits from Dave Smith who will be showing us how to make short animated films which will be enhanced by workshops run by FilmG and leading up to the FilmG competition in November. We now have a Gaelic medium football club on Monday evening led by Mr Beaton. I am still hoping to start a small Gaelic medium band, so if there is anyone out there who has Gaelic and could encourage our many skilled musicians please get in touch.

R Robertson

NASA COMES TO TRA

Last session the school had the privilege of welcoming two visitors from NASA, the US Space organisation. US Navy Captain (Retired) Dick Richards is a veteran of four Space Shuttle missions, as well as being a former Navy test pilot. Dr Liz Warren is a physiologist working for NASA's Life Science division, carrying out research into the effects of space flight on the astronauts.



keen to hear what they had to say, and enjoyed in particular hearing Captain Richards describing first hand what travel in space is really like, and also where future plans are headed. The patience of NASA people when answering questions that they must have been asked many times before is legendary!



Both visitors were keen to see Science work being carried on in the classroom, and joined some S2 classes in an activity investigating different materials that could be used to shield spacecraft from the Sun's heat. They also discussed their work with the classes, and spent time answering questions on a variety of space related topics from both pupils and teachers.

These discussions continued in the staffroom and over lunch, as many members of staff were very



The visit concluded with a presentation to the senior pupils about the work of NASA, and Dr Warren's description of the work she carries out was an eye opener for many, as few people associate biological work with space. Many pupils left with a realisation that Space provides opportunities for work in a variety of fields, not just Physics and Engineering.

Overall, the visit was inspiring and informative for many members of the school community, and we would like to thank Careers Scotland who organised the visit as part of a regular interchange between Scotland and NASA.

Iain Carlton, Physics Department



Tain and Easter Ross Ward Forum

Wednesday 7 October 2009

in the Tain Youth Café from 7.30pm to 9.30pm

(refreshments and displays on local youth work from 7pm)

COME AND DISCUSS YOUTH WORK IN THE AREA

The Forum meets regularly and members of the public are welcome to attend.

There is a 20 minute slot allocated at the end of the meeting for questions from the public. Please contact Carol Elliot, Ward Manager, Tain Service Point or by phoning 01349 886643 or by emailing carol.elliott@highland.gov.uk, if you have any special requirements/needs to help you take part.

Further information can also be found on the Highland Council website www.highland.gov.uk under "Your Ward".

FITNESS CLASSES

Some fitness classes will carry on throughout the October holidays.

Classes are:

Monday - Third Age Keep Fit - 10.30-11.30am
Cardio Cycle - 7.15-8.00pm

Thursday - Cardio Cycle - 6.30-7.30pm

**NEW CLASS STARTING -
27th October**

Tuesday - Cardio Cycle 6.30-7.30pm

EVENING CLASSES

Please contact reception to show your interest in evening classes.

TAIN AMATEUR SWIMMING CLUB



Are you interested in Swimming, do you want to learn and train more? Contact a Supervisor at TRACC or the Swimming Club for more information.



AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

There are limited places available at After School Club. Please contact reception for further information.

SUMMER

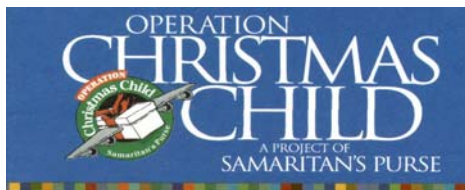
TRACC had a fantastic summer, with lots and lots of different activities for all ages. Playscheme, Rainforest Adventure and Art Wednesdays proved very popular as was the adult Cardio-cycle classes. Thank you to everyone who completed evaluation forms. It is important to us to receive feedback so we can continually try to improve.

CARD STALL

Charity Christmas card sale being held in the MPH at TRACC on the 7th November between 10am and 1pm. If you are interested in having a table please contact reception for further information.

OCTOBER HOLIDAYS

Please collect a brochure with our timetables and activities that are running over this period.



This year TRACC are participating in the **Shoebbox Appeal** for **Blythswood Care and Samaritans Purse.**

Your donations will fill shoeboxes for people who are victims of war, poverty and disease. If you would like to donate any of the items listed below could you please place it in the box (covered in Christmas paper) outside the school office, the HE Department or Room 10. **You could make this a Happy Christmas for many people. Thank you!**

Toiletries-

soap
shampoo
shower gel
face cloth
sponge
roll-on deodorant
moisturising cream
moist wipes
brush/comb
shaving foam/razors
toothbrush
toothpaste

Clothing-

hat/cap
scarf
gloves
socks
tights
Toys
small toys eg
ball/tennis ball
small puzzle
car/truck etc
hair accessories
Jewellery
No stuffed toys

Stationery-

notepad
colouring book
pens
pencils
crayons
felt pens
pencil sharpener
rulers
erasers

Miscellaneous-

sewing equipment
household candles
screwdrivers/pliers

Sweets

'best before March 2010'
(NO CHOCOLATE)

DUE TO IMPORT REGULATIONS ALL GOODS SHOULD BE NEW OR NEARLY NEW - DO NOT INCLUDE CERTAIN ITEMS DUE TO CUSTOMS REGULATIONS eg chocolate, other edible items (crisps, biscuits, tins or cake), clothing (other than listed), glass or fragile items

Articles in **bold** are the basics which would be most useful. Thank you.