FEEDBACK SNAPSHOT

“We had a blast. The atmosphere during the two days was terrific and that was down to all of you. Pity it took us 50 years, but it was all the better for that”

“What a crazy, wonderful and unforgettable experience. Great to see you all”

“... For me it was a big moment at this time of life. As you say it did come across that everyone entered the spirit of the occasion and there did not appear to be any negatives whatsoever! And what a donation!”

“... From someone who was initially quite apprehensive, along with many others no doubt, I was among the last to leave both evenings!”

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

REUNION PHOTOS: Digital Photo Link to Reunion Photos: view and purchase at:
https://jamieharperphotographyscotla.shootproof.com/gallery/PA50th
Password: PA1969

STAY CONNECTED: Updates to future lunch arrangements, Newsletters and 2021 Reunion plans can be accessed by regular visits to our website below. Please also refer to the last page in this newsletter for all contact points:
http://www.perthacademy1963-1969.btck.co.uk

POST REUNION GET TOGETHERS: Lunches & Activities over the months since the Reunion.

OUR OLD SCHOOL NETWORK: Some newsy pieces from old pupils on what they’re up to now.

WAIT… WHAT!!! A next reunion – 2021 ?? Why NOT?? Let’s CELEBRATE being 70 together !!!

SCHOOL DONATION: IF ALL THAT FABULOUS FUN AT THE REUNION WASN’T ENOUGH …

A grand total of £2000 was raised and a cheque presented to the Rector after the Reunion. Our donation will go towards the provision of laptops.

You can see in the presentation photograph the difference in Rector dress style of 2019 versus John Kerr in our days of 1963-69!!!
POST REUNION LUNCHES

There are two main locations currently co-ordinating lunches as shown below. If any of the Reunion Community can think of other areas where lunches would be a great way to keep connections going please contact either Evelyn or Joan, contact info below, who will support your thinking around the organisation process.

Future Lunches

The intention is to have a regular cycle of lunches. In Perth (or perhaps occasionally in Edinburgh), on the last Friday of January, May and September; and in London on the first Friday of February, June and October. There will be reminders and updates on our Website, by email and posts on Facebook”. However, you can always email to make sure your name is on the list.

PERTH AREA: Info Contact: Evelyn Kelly via the PA 63 – 69 FB page or evelynannkelly@icloud.com

There have already been a couple of catch-ups in the Perth area both pre and post the Reunion in June. The intention is to co-ordinate regular catch-ups for those interested throughout the year, and possibly not always in Perth. Consideration is also given to Edinburgh. The recent post reunion lunch was organised on Friday 27th September in the back room at Cardo’s, Perth city centre. Despite past efforts at the April lunch and the lunch at Reunion time, yes we were all welcomed back …
LONDON AREA: Info Contact: Joan Powell via the PA63-69 FB page, there is a separate London page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/196868984371665/ or joanie_powell@yahoo.com

Also several London Area catch-ups have occurred pre and post the Reunion in June. The third and most recent was held on Friday 11th October at Bistro Savoir Faire in Holborn. These lunches are for anyone who happens to be in the area, or in reasonable travelling distance — they are not limited to those of us who live in London. Fortunately we are not superstitious, as on this occasion there were 13 of us, including Mairi Robertson and Mike Batho who both live in Scotland but just happened to be in London on the day. The group had their own private area downstairs so there was plenty of room!

Frank Allan was first to arrive at the restaurant; while he was waiting, he started chatting to the owner and mentioned our connection with Perth. Small world … although it’s ostensibly a French restaurant, the owner and her husband are from Dundee so regarded us as near neighbours! It looks as though Savoir Faire will be our regular venue.

Here we all are. Left to right: Frances McErlain (Shepherd), Moira McManus (Mackay), Frank Allan, John Turnbull, Mairi Robertson, Joan Powell, Mike Batho, Joan Turner, Mike McLean, Linda Brown (Montgomery), Moira Butcher (Edmonston), Graham Shirra, Sandra Johnstone (Laing).

DOWN-UNDER AREA: Info Contact: Edna McKelvey via the PA63-69 FB page or ednamckelvey@gmail.com

HA HAA!!!!!! –

There’s not really a Down-Under lunch group, maybe there should be.

Peter McVean & Edna McKelvey are in Sydney. So anyone ever visiting down-under and specifically Sydney please make contact, and maybe we can do a spontaneous, random ‘down-under’ catch-up.

Meanwhile Peter & Edna will continue to do their best in keeping the flavor of ‘reunion lunches’ alive, albeit may only be 2 ex Academy-ites 0)

Here are both having a pre movie dinner on a Sunday night.
ON A RUGBY WORLD CUP YEAR, A WALK DOWN ACADEMY RUGBY MEMORY LANE … Perth Academy to Tokyo

from Nick Hosie & his old Academy Rugby cap!

I'm just back from the rugby world cup in Japan. It's a wonderful country that exceeded all expectations (regrettably, unlike the Scotland team!). The lovely, kind people, litter free everywhere you go, the 200mph Shinkensan bullet trains always on time and, most important of all, the high tech toilets everywhere with heated seats!

My trip made me reflect that I was first introduced to rugby at the Academy. It was Ian Cosgrove, Neddie Hunter's assistant, who persuaded me to play and was the biggest influence. He was a bit of a hero actually as he played for Jordanhill College, a top team at the time, in the Glasgow District and was on the verge of a Scottish cap.

I can still recall vividly the bus journeys to away matches on a Saturday morning once a fortnight (accompanied always by a teacher) meeting in the cold at the Albert statue at the North Inch. Also the old rickety, double decker, MacLennan bus to Strathallan and Glenalmond on a Tuesday after school, singing songs about "the yeoth" and "the boys of the ACF putting an end to his frolics..." in a certain way that rhymes! We used to field 4 or 5 teams every Saturday. Sadly, I hear that's no longer the case.

I also remember getting injured when I tackled Ronnie Malcolm playing 5-a-side footie at “Bells" the night before I was due to play for Midland Schools against Edinburgh (a team which included Andy Irvine). Neddie was due to drive Mike Rawlinson and myself to the match. He was none too pleased when I told him the next morning in his wee (smoke filled!) room next to the gym that I was injured and couldn’t play. His response: "You were injured playing what? Thoka!! Thoka!!! You chump!"

Son & I in Yokohama, before Ireland match

I also remember going to Murrayfield for the first time in 1964 with Smithy (Iain Smith) and Bill Kettles as well, I think. We were able in those days to get tickets through the school for the schoolboy seats around the touchline. It was a scintillating 0-0 draw against the All Blacks! We've never beaten them since. We should have that day.

In later years at school we organised a bus ourselves (no teachers!) through to the international matches in Edinburgh. A "rammy" would be the best way to describe it but always great fun! It was my first time in a pub - in Rose Street. I remember a few of us from the school going in and me asking nervously for "a half pint of beer". Surprisingly, I think I got served!

I continued to play after schooldays and I've been a regular at Murrayfield ever since, with trips as well to the 6 Nations matches in Dublin, London, Paris and Rome. I'm often asked on these trips if I ever played rugby.

It's funny - the older I get the better I used to be!

East meets West on the train in Tokyo (my knees!)
WHAT WE LEARNT IN SCHOOL DOES COME IN HANDY AT ‘SOME’ STAGE
from Sandy Ross, Eardisland, Herefordshire

In Eardisland our war memorial lists thirteen local men and boys from our parish who lost their lives in the 1914-1918 war. Prior to the 100th anniversary of the end of the conflict it was decided that our small village would honour their memory by drawing up thirteen circular walks from the war memorial and on each walk a memorial gate would be erected. Organised by an ex military man about ten of us, retired and of a certain age, volunteered to assist in various ways.
The walks were to vary in length from just a couple of miles to over fourteen and each walk would have some relevance to the individual soldier or sailor after whom the memorial gate was to be named. The gates were to be constructed from Hereford Oak and though designed by us they were made into kit form by a local school for adults with learning difficulties.

Thirteen brochures/maps were produced, each one listing what was known about the individual, why the walk was relevant to them, perhaps their house or work was on the route, and giving detailed notes on the walk and interesting points en route. 10 brochures have a photo of the individual and we are still researching in the hope of finding photos of the missing three.

Although all the village volunteers gave their time freely oak is not cheap so funds had to be raised. The regiments of the men were approached and all without exception gave generously as did our local community shop along with individual contributions. The plan was that the last gate would be erected and officially opened before Remembrance Day 2018, unfortunately come the date we were only up to gate 10. Hopes are high that as we are erecting the final gate this week that we will only be one year late.

All the gates have been opened with an official ceremony involving local dignitaries, military officials and often a piper or bugler.

TinRibs and Mr. Allen would be pleased to know that all the effort they expended trying to teach me tech drawing and woodwork finally did some good, even if it only materialised 50+ years later!

PROVING IT’S NEVER TOO LATE TO CHANGE DIRECTION

... from Irene Munro (Hay)

I am retired and what I am doing is probably not classed as a hobby! Being a late developer and benefiting from lifelong learning I then did a BA in theology just graduating this year in July. I was ordained as a local minister (Church of Scotland) in Ross Presbytery as a chaplain to vulnerable groups. This has come about because of my involvement in Christian spirituality with people with learning difficulties and also with dementia. This is an unpaid and part-time role that leaves me time to visit the grandchildren.

Having had 14 years of care home experience as a Staff nurse back then, I did find it interesting to see that while cognition diminished, spirituality often increased.

Life does begin at 67 and onwards for another chapter!
A WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE… Rector’s Report for Session 1963-64 (A Synopsis)
from Alan MacDonald

The school session began on Tuesday, 27th August 1963. The maximum roll for the year was 1,266 with an attendance rate of 95% throughout the year.

Teachers welcomed to the staff at the beginning of the session were Miss C. Anderson, History (replacing Mr. A. Harding); Mrs. J. Eggo, Modern Languages; Mrs. C. Evans, Commerce; Miss G. Govan and Mr. D. Grainger, English; Miss E. Gordon and Miss I. Sutherland, Mathematics; Miss S. McIldowie, Science, and Mr. W. MacLeod, Classics. During the first term Mr. G. Ritchie commenced as Principal Teacher of English, and Miss M. Gardiner joined the Art Dept.

Resignations during the first term were Mrs. E. Loudon, P.E.; Mr. N. Hay, Modern Languages, and in the second term Miss I. Cameron, Music; Miss J. MacDonald, Art; Mr. A. Calderwood, English, and Mr. A. Webster, Science. (Was it something we said?) Resignations to take effect from the end of the session were Mr. A. Smyth, Classics, to become Rector of Tain Royal Academy; Miss A. Hill, Geography, to a post in British Columbia (she got well out of it, but would have been well enough qualified to find her way); Miss M. Hill, Mathematics, because of her forthcoming marriage; Mrs. E. Stewart. P.E., because of her “removal to England” (I wonder what she had done); Mrs. E. Strachan, Mathematics, for the intriguingly worded “for domestic reasons”, and Miss A. Galbraith, Mathematics, hopes to retire if a “suitable replacement can be found” (could there ever). Special Assistants appointed during the session were Mr. I. Nicol, English; Mr. A. Webster and Mr. A. de V. Bodell, Science, and Mr. R. Mackay, Modern Languages.

Donations to the school during the session included a cup from Craigie Hill Golf Club for annual competition amongst members of the school golf club (usually won by Nick Hosie); a skiing trophy from Grampian Travel for annual competition; a Junior trophy for speech-making for SI-SIII from the Excelsior Club and Dialectic Society, and a prize for Commerce from the Junior Chamber of Commerce. (OK, who won any of those prizes?).

And more than 1,000 pupils were presented with copies of the New Testament and Psalms at the beginning of the session from The Gideons International. (As I came to Perth Academy half way through first year, this is the first time I’ve heard of this, and I am decidedly miffed that I missed out. I trust you all still cherish your copy?)

Grants from the Calder Bequest, plus funds raised by pupils, substantially met the costs of four new tennis courts and shelter. The Garden Fete held in June raised over £1,300 for school funds, encouraging the rector to remark, “School funds are now in a healthier state than ever before, and this will ensure that the amenities and facilities available to the pupils in the future will far surpass anything enjoyed by their predecessors”. (Gosh, weren’t we to be the lucky ones!). Charitable donations from the school included a whopping £6 to Perth Old Peoples’ Welfare; £18 18s 6d to St John’s Kirk Trust Fund; and we played a significant role in sending the British Olympic Team to Tokyo that year by raising £10 10s for their appeal (which, if Granny Galbraith agrees from above, equates to a very generous 1.8d per pupil). Excursions during the year included visits to Pitlochry Theatre; unnamed Nature Reserves and Roman sites; Austria for skiing; Paris; and cruises on M.S. Dunera to Spain, Portugal, Gibraltar, and Holland.

If anyone has some more 1st year memories they wish to share, please do on the PA Reunion FB page.

My teacher memories from first year are the quirky punishments handed out by English teacher Mr. Calderwood: having to count the number of railings around the school, or the number of windows in the school building; and Neddy Hunter advising us not to smoke if we wanted to become sportsmen (despite being a prolific puffer himself), and one boy piping up, “but Jim Baxter smokes, sir”, to which Neddy responded, “he’s not a sportsman, laddie, he’s a professional socca player”.

FROM TEACHING TO HELPING OTHERS ENJOY THE ARTS…AUDIO DESCRIPTION – SPREAD THE WORD!

from Trina Gillies

Having escaped early after a grand 34 years in the teaching profession, I was keen to get involved in something ‘useful’, but not necessarily anything full time.

In 2009, an article in the local paper caught my eye – looking for people to train as Audio Describers in the theatre. I’d never heard about Audio Description, so went along – just to find out – ended up doing the training and here I am 10 years later still involved and thoroughly enjoying life as a freelance Audio Describer. I have delivered descriptions in many theatres from Ayr to Inverness.

For those who are not familiar with the service, it is for any visually impaired person who wishes to go to the theatre. They receive a headset, and we are situated with a microphone somewhere in the theatre (usually a tech box). We tell them all about what’s happening on stage – describe costume, set etc. This description has to be prepared in advance, as it is done ‘live’ and not recorded. We receive copies of the script and go to numerous performances to fine tune our own script prior to delivery of the Audio Description. We are not permitted to speak when the actors are speaking - as the visually impaired person can hear them perfectly well and doesn’t want someone speaking over them. This can be a fair challenge at times!

I also work doing AD for Scottish Opera – which brings with it a whole new set of challenges, as we also have to take into account the language and incorporate as much of the translation as possible – again avoiding times when there is singing/ dialogue going on. Some of the opera patrons have only slight macular degeneration but find our service a great help with understanding the sets/costumes and who is singing.

It’s a great service, and every theatre should be offering Audio Description.

If you know of any visually impaired person, please make sure they are aware that this service is available – it is often not advertised - but ask at the box office!

I am just about to commence preparation of the AD for the pantomime at the Macrobert Centre in Stirling – great fun, but you really need to keep paying attention for script changes!

Spread the word please – and thank you.

AND… ONWARD TO OUR 70th YEAR…. 2021

A MASS CELEBRATION OF OUR 70’s. LET’S DO IT ALL AGAIN.!!!

WE’RE WORKING TOWARDS ANOTHER REUNION IN 2021, PROBABLY AROUND THE SAME TIME OF YEAR IN JUNE.

WE’LL KEEP YOU WELL INFORMED AS PLANS PROGRESS. MEANTIME - PLEASE TRY AND KEEP THIS TIMEFRAME IN MIND
1963 – OUR FIRST YEAR COURSES, ACTIVITIES & CLUBS

Compulsory subjects in our first year were: English, History, Geography, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, General Science, Art, Music, French, Homecraft or Technical Subjects, Religious and Physical Education. S.I Art included design and crafts; Music provided choir opportunities for both boys and girls (boys meeting on a Tuesday after school, girls on a Thursday); Technical Subjects were Woodwork and Metalwork in S.I and Homecraft was Needlework in S.I.

Activities were:
Athletics: for the girls, Hockey, Badminton, Tennis and Netball; and for the boys, Cricket, Football (the School’s appellation for Rugby), Hockey, Badminton and Basketball; with Golf and Swimming competitions and The Annual Sports in the summer.

The Army Cadet Force paraded on Mondays and Fridays; Boy Scouts were available for the boys and two companies of Girl Guides for the girls.

School Clubs and Societies available were:
Girls’ Excelsior Club; Boys’ Dialectic Society; Scripture Union, Sailing Club (for boys and girls), and the Camera Club.

The Parent-Teacher Association Awards for year 1 were won by Alison E. Mathieson and Michael G. Wyllie.

STAYING CONNECTED

Ongoing Communication:
A newsletter will be distributed each 6 months and we will advise when it is available with a short e-mail. It will be available on the PA Reunion website.

Link to Web Site: http://www.perthacademy1963-1969.btck.co.uk

We will also continue to communicate relative information on group lunches, events and forthcoming reunion via the PA Reunion Facebook page.

Link to Facebook PA Reunion page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/353185578518500/

Co-ordinating Group Update:
Some changes have happened with the co-ordinating group.

It’s farewell to Pete, Bill and Edna who are stepping back, and a big thank you for huge efforts for the 2019 Reunion.

Welcome to Alan MacDonald, Gordon Blair and Joan Powell who are now getting more involved. If anyone else has any interest in becoming more connected to the organizing group, don’t hold back. Just drop us an e-mail to below e-mail.

Co-ordinating Group e-mail:
E-Mail: perthacademy63to69@btinternet.com