

Canteen Steams Up with Inspiration

By Eilidh Fraser and Christine Simms

The canteen was a hive of cooking activity with four chefs from Moray College cooking up a variety of simple, nutritional dishes featuring vegetables. The chefs presented to an audience of pupils, staff and members of the public keeping them entertained and finishing the evening off with a 'Ready Steady Cook' competition. They demonstrated how to make a selection of dishes from soups and stir-fries to beetroot cake and pasta. The chefs also promoted not only the Hospitality courses the college offers but also highlighted many of the exciting events they put on in the Hospitality department throughout the year.

The evening started with a presentation from Rick Cooper, Facilities Officer who works with School Meal Services across Moray. He spoke about the importance of not only delivering a nutritional, well balanced menu to school pupils but also the importance of how to encourage more pupils to have a school meal.

As well as the demonstrations, a talented group of budding chefs in S2 were feeling the heat in the Home Economics department as they competed to create a tasty nutritional vegetable dish which was judged by a group of people including the head Chef from Moray College, Alistair Fowlie, Head teacher Carol Stuart and Rick Cooper. One competitor, Wendy Macdonald said: "I really enjoyed the experience and I feel more confident making nutritious meals". At the end of the evening all students taking part received a certificate.

The runner-up was Maddison Major and the overall winner was Dylan Price. Both students received an apron, a copy of the Young Enterprise cookbook and will also get a day's work experience in the school canteen. As well as all this Dylan's winning dish of Spicy Red Pepper and Smoked Ham soup along with Maddison's Roast Pepper and Sweet Potato Soup with Croutons will feature on not just the Forres Academy School Lunch menu but all Moray Secondary School menus once it has been nutritionally analysed. Mr Cooper said: "The standard of food we sampled today was exceptional and it never ceases to amaze me the high standard such young people can produce. It was a very calm, collected mood in the kitchens. Well done to everyone". The event was a great opportunity for students and parents to learn more about healthy eating and get inspiration for their own meals at home.



Taste of the Future

By Lauren Bruce and Niamh Henderson

Moray College opened its doors to welcome S3 pupils from across the Authority to a Taster Day. Pupils could choose from a wide range of activities and were asked to choose three options. With all pupils getting their first choice and the majority their second and third the day was off to a promising start.

Pupils were given the chance to try their hand at construction, hairdressing, beauty therapy, The events ranged from Sport to Hair Dressing and Hospitality. As the pupils have the opportunity to opt into College for a day in S4 this was a perfect chance for them to get a flavour of what is on offer. James Nicol, who has already signed up for Rural Studies next year was very impressed with the facilities on offer. He said: "I really enjoyed the day. I want to go into something like farming or gamekeeping when I leave school and I think this will be a real help". Fellow pupil, Lucy Evans added: "It was a really good opportunity to see what life at college would be like. It was a good experience to meet lots of new people".



Schools Success in Scottish Sport Award

By Ruari Fraser and Jack Noel



Forres Academy have become the first secondary school in Moray to win the Sport Scotland gold school sport award. The award is a National Lottery funded initiative designed to encourage schools to continuously improve physical education and sporting opportunities. To qualify the school had to achieve nine core areas. These core areas are what drives the application for the award forward. Through having a sport committee it allows pupils the opportunity to make a difference and have a voice in what happens with school sport. Having young ambassadors also provides an opportunity for pupils to come forward with ideas that can be further developed in the school to attract more participation and encourage further development to take place, hopefully creating sustainability within the school. A main focus is having effective school and community links such as working in partnership with Active Schools and engaging with Moray Sport Forums and Governing Bodies. This allows pathways to be created and participation levels increased at the different levels of development.

Pupils who are heavily involved in sport were invited to attend the event. Eve Newlands (S4) said: "It was great to see the school being awarded for their sporting achievements and pupils recognised for their success."

Stewart Harris, Chief Executive of sportsScotland said: "I would like to congratulate all of the staff and pupils at Forres Academy for putting physical education and sport at the heart of their school and local community. They should all be extremely proud of this fantastic achievement. This was reiterated by Alan Clark who presented the award on behalf of SportsScotland at the event.

The school couldn't have won the award without the excellent contribution of the sporting pupils with young ambassadors, national champions and local volunteers all enrolled at the school. Sport is something that the pupils at Forres excel in with the help of the Pe staff and Sports Coordinator Ann Rossiter who organises sporting activities to benefit the pupils and get them involved in new activities.



Johnny Proves to be a Real Ambassador for Sport

By Jenny Mitchell



To be invited by sportsScotland to join the Young Ambassadors team is a great honour. However, when it's your third year running, not only as a Young Ambassador but on the conference team delivering speeches, it's even more impressive. No one knows this better than Johnny Bichan, S6, who is thrilled to be invited back by sportsScotland to continue his work. Completing training in Glasgow and Largs, as well as travelling across the country holding conferences, is something the aspiring cross-fit trainer is looking forward to.

As a member of the conference team, Johnny will be "inspiring the future Young Ambassadors" across the country, offering up his experiences to those who are just beginning what he initially did three years ago. It's not just the traveling that he is looking forward to. As part of his role as a

Young Ambassador, Johnny will be taking part in training sessions with other Young Ambassadors, offering not only an opportunity to improve on his training but to "meet new people and network".

China Meets Scotland

By Niamh Henderson and Lauren Bruce

With Burns night and the Chinese New Year occurring almost simultaneously one S2 class saw this as an opportunity to hold a joint celebration which brought both Scottish and Chinese cultures together.



The class worked across several different curricular areas including: English, Modern Languages and RME to create a performance which incorporated the Chinese zodiac, the myths and legends surrounding the Chinese dragon and our very own Loch Ness monster and the origins of the Burns Supper.

As part of the project the pupils created a dragon and wrote a brand new legend which involved it meeting and falling in love with Nessie. The pupils created a story which was narrated using Mandarin and Doric and also a reading of Chinese love poetry



ry and a recitation of one of the Bard's most famous love songs.

The performance was kicked off by parading the dragon and Nessie around the school accompanied by drummers and completed by a rendition of 'Auld Lang Syne' played on the piano by pupil, David MacLean.

Two members of the class, Rhys Pumfrey and Libby Killeen spoke about how much they had enjoyed the project: "This was one of the best things we have done. It was great fun creating a project which brought the two cultures together. The dragon was spectacular. It took quite a bit of hard work and a lot of time to put him together which meant giving up most of our lunchbreak for a couple of weeks". RME teacher, Paul Moore-Bridger added: "It was a very enjoyable event and the class was very engaged and dedicated to the project. It was also well researched."

Forres Duo Swim, Shoot and Run Their Way to National Finals

By Ruari Fraser



Lucy Evans and Peter Cannard both qualified for the National Pony Club Winter Triathlon competition. They qualified through a local qualifying round which was held in Grange-mouth and consisted of a 1500m run, a 7m shoot and a timed swim of three minutes. The pair excelled in

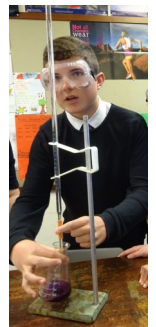
their respective areas with both of them finishing in positions that qualifies them for the national event held in Milton Keynes. This is the first time that they have qualified for the event and speaking about it Peter said: "It will be a great event to be involved in and I am very excited to take part".

Lucy trains with the school swim team and they both train with the Forres Harriers. Peter is a member of the Forres gun club where he practices his shooting. The duo compete in the 12-14 age group and they hope to qualify again for the summer event which will involve a horse riding element. They were inspired by older pupils Robert Fraser and Anna Mcfadyen who both competed in this event when they were younger. The budding athletes will travel to Milton Keynes the night before the event which is being held on the 19 March and will hope to repeat their success on the national stage.

Straight From the Students Mouth: Stan Whitmore

By Christine Simms and Eilidh Fraser

No new member of staff escapes being interviewed by Forres Academy News Group but they have decided to change their focus and target some of the students at the school to get their views and opinions on life at the school.



Stan Whitmore (S3) has made many valuable contributions to the school. He has been an active member of the Pupil Forum where he was never afraid to voice concerns on behalf of his fellow pupils. He also played a major part in the Glasgow School of Art project on promoting mental health and wellbeing by helping to create a poster which will be displayed across all schools in Moray. As well as this he has presented at Parents' Evenings where he has talked and shared his learning experiences.

Stan believes the school offers great courses for subjects across the board, he said: "There is a great, safe learning environment in every classroom and the relationships with teachers are all really good". He hopes to go on to study Psychology at Glasgow University and then go into Criminal Psychology. He believes the school is preparing him well for his future.

School Says Farewell to Long Serving Member of Staff

By Cameron Stewart and Fraser Cumming



One of the school's most well-known faces, Sandy Burgess is leaving the school to enjoy a very much well-deserved retirement. Sandy has been janitor at the school for the last 29 years and in that time has seen many changes. He has seen many additions to the school building: the Modern Languages department, the auditorium in the Music department and of course the latest extension and new entrance to the school.

A local loon, he was born in Forres but brought up in Findhorn where he attended Primary school before heading to Forres to complete his education at the original Forres Academy, now known as Andersons Primary. On leaving school he took up a post in the Mace store on the High Street where he worked for 19 years before moving to the Academy to take up the position of school janitor. Over his working life he also served 29 years as a Special Constable.

He said the role of a janitor is very varied: "No two days are the same. You have to be able to turn your hand to everything from setting a mousetrap to

constructing and putting up shelves".

It is not just a nine to five job either as the role carries a lot of responsibility. Being a key holder he had to be prepared to be on call and over the years has been called out many times when the alarm has gone off: "I never knew what I might find when I got here. It could be anything from a broken window to a break in". He clearly remembers the visit of Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher and being at the school well past midnight because the whole building had to be checked and secured by the police prior to her arrival.

When asked if there was anything he would miss about the school he said: "The company. I have enjoyed working with everyone here".

In his spare time he is a keen bowler and gardener. He also enjoys looking after his grand-daughter. He will be spending much more time at the bowling club as he has agreed to take over the care of the grounds.

He will be a great miss to the school. All staff and pupils wish him a very happy and healthy retirement.

S1 Pupils Aim for Apprenticeship Success

By Heather Prentice

Edinkillie S1 pupils have been busy creating innovative products as part of their Personal Hygiene module in PSE. Guidance teacher, Cath Reilly has been exploring opportunities to create more interest in PSE, making projects fun to encourage participation and enthusiasm. This was exactly the case with the class's recent 'Apprentice' style competition, in which groups of pupils created and pitched their personal hygiene products to a panel of judges, vying for the first place trophy. The competition was judged by two members of Forres Academy's Young Enterprise team, Heather Prentice and Chloe Smith, who managed to decide upon two winners, one from each class. Products included innovative deodorants, toothbrushes, face washes and even a full body scanner. S6 judge Chloe Smith said: "It's really great seeing the pupils excited and enthusiastic about this topic. It was obvious they had put a lot of thought and hard work into their products. I'm sure we are looking at some future Young Enterprise pupils here".

Literacy Links Graduation

By Amy-Leigh Moody and Chloe Shallicker



Literacy Links is now an integral part of the school and has a valuable part to play in supporting pupils with English skills such as reading and comprehension.

Pupils attended three times a week and are offered a variety of learning experiences such as language games, listening to audio books, one-to-one reading activities and computer programmes.

Principal Teacher of Support for Learning, Kenny Allison, who oversees the programme believes that it is a very beneficial activity for the pupils which is supported by clear evidence.

The majority of pupils attending have now graduated from the programme and were all awarded a certificate to celebrate their success. Mr Allison said: "I'm very proud of all the young people who took part".

Teacher Feature

By Alice Meacher and Chloe Shallicker

New Principal teacher of Biology, Helen Higham, joined the school just after the summer holidays. Miss Higham is an ex pupil of the school and has many fond memories of her time here. One memory that sticks in her head is when she was studying the environment at Sanquhar pond she got stuck in the pond which ended up with her teacher having to give her a fireman's lift to get her out!



One of her great passions in life is horses and horse riding which lead her to University where she studied for a degree in Equine Science.

Before she joined Forres Academy Miss Higham taught for nine years at Kirkcaldy High School in Fife. Last year she was awarded the UK STEM teacher of the year award at the House of Lords and gained an amazing prize of a trip to Cern in Geneva!

When she's not at work she spends most of her spare time with her horses, training for competitions in Dressage and Show Jumping across the country.

Miss Currie Scores With PE Department



Physical Education teacher, Hailey Currie has been teaching at the school now for almost a year.

She was born in Glasgow and attended Balforn High School

where her favourite subjects were P.E, Biology and Home Economics. Her drive to become a P.E teacher was founded as a result of her own personal experience at Balforn High School where she said she had inspiring P.E teachers that made her: "want to pursue a career in teaching." After deciding that she was going to teach P.E she went to University of West Scotland for her undergraduate honours degree in Sports Coaching and then

University of Strathclyde for her Physical Education Degree.

Before coming to Forres she taught at Mintlaw Academy and Peterhead Academy. She also spent four months in America coaching at the International Sports Training Camp in Pennsylvania and during her time there she travelled around the USA.

Miss Currie is thoroughly enjoying her time at the school and has found it to be: "a brilliant school filled with friendly staff and pupils." She has also been enjoying running an after school volleyball club which is very well attended.

In her spare time she enjoys keeping fit by running and is also teaching herself to play guitar.

Straight from the student's mouth: Cerys Whitehouse

By Christine Simms and Eilidh Fraser

S1 pupil Cerys Whitehouse is thoroughly enjoying her secondary school experience. On arrival in August she felt welcomed into the school and couldn't get over the big change between primary and secondary, particularly the freedom. She feels the teachers treat her like an adult and this has benefited her learning greatly and she feels she gets on better with her teachers because of it. Her favourite subject in the school is music because she can express her creativity.

Cerys is a member of the Forres Academy Cheerleading Squad and is thoroughly excited about the forthcoming performance in front of the school at this year's sports day. When she leaves school she hopes to study medicine and knows the school will support and prepare her for this. So far she has been impressed with how much she is learning and how well organised everything is which really helps her when it comes to completing homework and meeting deadlines.



Young Sailor Wins Prestigious Award

Jack Noel



S2 pupil, Jamie Paterson has had yet another success out on the high seas. In September last year he was successful in reclaiming his UK title in the Honda Youth Rib Challenge where he won a new boat for his club. The Royal Yachting Association has acknowledged his success by awarding him RYA Scotland Young Person of the Year.

Jamie will now be facing tougher competition as he will be moving up an age category this year but he is very hopeful. "I spend most of my free time out on the water. It's what I love doing. Winning this award has been one of the best achievements in my life".

Country Ranger Gives Taste of Wildlife

By Lauren Bruce and Niamh Henderson

Pupils in the Asfl department were treated to a talk from Moray Countryside Ranger, Ged Connell. He talked to the pupils about all the different types of wildlife common to the Moray area. He spoke about the types of environment animals such as deer, badgers and squirrels.

He also brought in a range of items such as a stuffed owl, fox and otter, which he had borrowed from the Falconer Museum to give the pupils more of an idea of what certain creatures looked and felt like.

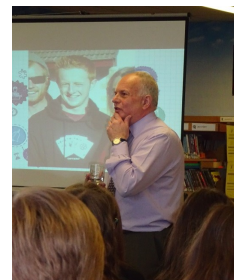
He talked to the pupils about how to identify animal tracks and showed them the difference between a dog print and fox print. Asfl, teacher, Carolyn Carrott said: "I'm really impressed with the enthusiasm from the children and how they have really connected with the wildlife."



Mr Anderson Talks Money.

By Cameron Stewart and Fraser Cumming.

Former Guidance Teacher, George Anderson visited the Academy to give a presentation to senior pupils about how to manage their finances when they head off to University, college, start an apprenticeship or any other job.



Mr Anderson represents the Stewart Ivory Financial Education Trust, a programme which principally aims to provide guidance and advice on issues such as, budgeting, saving, avoiding debt, and much more, for young people about to leave school.

He spoke to the pupils about the importance of not only managing their finances in the short term but also asking them to think about financial issues for the long-term, including savings, mortgages and pensions.

He gave them important information on issues such as: budget planning, choosing an appropriate bank account and the necessary and unnecessary expenditure when living independently. Many of the pupils were unaware that they would need to purchase a TV licence if they wished to watch live television or that their parent's insurance would often cover certain aspects of their personal belongings.

Mr Anderson said: "This is an important issue to address as one in seven students drop out of University simply because they have not been able to manage their finances".

Library Gains a New Assistant

By Eilidh McRitchie and Jennifer Spencer

The school library has had the benefit of a pupil assistant over the last few months and he is thoroughly enjoying his new role. Connor McNally (S5) helps out once a week scanning books, sorting and putting the returned books back on the shelves. His Guidance Teacher suggested that he might like to help out in the library as he likes being in quiet and peaceful places. Assistant Librarian, Shirley Munn said: "He is one of the library's best customers. He is a very methodical person and this job suits someone like Connor." Connor added: "I enjoy the quietness of the library and I sometimes come across new books that I might like to read". On leaving school he would like to work somewhere with books especially ones that deal with history and arte-



Students Have Their Poems Published

By Ellie Leinster and Erin Young



The English Department hold a weekly Writing club for pupils who are interested in all aspects of creative writing. The group meets every Wednesday lunchtime and is run by English teachers, Lorna Smith and William McIntosh.

They are celebrating the success of two pupils from the group who have just had their poems published in a 'Busta Rhyme' poetry anthology. Pupils were asked to submit a poem about something they felt strongly about and the two winning entries from Forres Academy were from Jenny Mitchell (S4) who wrote about inequality between the sexes and Shavonne Connor (S5) who wrote about eating disorders.

The anthology included poems from pupils across the UK and our two winners both received a letter of participation from the publisher. Teacher Mrs Smith said: 'I'm very proud of the poems and also how powerful the pieces were.' Shavonne added: "I was very excited when I got told that my poem was going to be published. It was great to see my name in print and to think that this included pupils from across the UK".

Straight out of the Student's Mouth: Matthew Angell

By Christine Simms and Eilidh Fraser

Matthew Angell is Forres Academy's go-to-guy for any occasion. Matthew joined the school in S3 and immediately felt very welcomed. He found the teachers were very helpful and supportive in making his transition to the Academy as smooth as possible. He is now in his final year at the academy and his favourite subjects are French and Modern Studies. On leaving school he plans to go into Politics and International Relations and he feels the school has prepared him well and given him plenty of advice and guidance. He finds the school really good and the relationships between the teachers and students are really strong, he believes this is unique to the school and it's really important. He thinks there is great out of school opportunities and the atmosphere and environment in each classroom promotes good behaviour and learning.



Matthew contributes to the school through his prefect work. He was an active member of Rights Respecting Schools and he directed last year's S6 Show. If there are any visitors to be shown round the school Matthew is usually the one to do it. Depute Head, Anne Smith said: "Matthew has a wonderful personality and he is caring, kind and very generous with his time for the benefit of Forres Academy pupils, staff and any visitors. He has been a real asset to the school. When he leaves, we will miss him!"

Maizy Scores Big Time

By Niamh Henderson and Lauren Bruce

S2 pupil Maizy McAfee's love of football has paid off. Although she does not support any particular team she has been playing the game for as long as she can remember. She currently plays for the school football team and is also a member of the Moray girls football team in Elgin where she trains every Monday evening.

Along with one other player, she has been selected to trial for the under 14s North of Scotland team and has been invited to take part in their training course which begins in March in Aberdeen.



PE teacher, Kirsty Deans said: "Maizy is a very skilful player who is doing really well in the school's football team. She is a great team player who is always willing to help other members of the team and this is a very exciting new experience which she's going to love". Maizy added: "I'm excited and nervous for this new opportunity but I can't wait to get stuck in and hopefully get scouted by some other teams so I can develop this hobby into a future career".

A Successful Venture

By Kayleigh Bowers and Amy-Leigh Moody



Forres Academy's Young Enterprise group are busy at work, promoting their new cook-book, 'Secret Recipes of Moray'. The book has been very successful and is now on its third run of copies, having sold over 150 books so far. Forres Academy English teacher, Jacky Davidson mentions that, "the book is great, simple, tasty, and economical".

The Young Enterprise Group, 'Venture Local' recently attended Elgin Farmer's Market, promoting their product to the people of Moray. This was the group's first opportunity to sell directly to Moray citizens as their previous market had been held in Inverness before Christmas.

Their book is now for sale in a number of retailers such as Gordon and MacPhail and Waterstones Elgin Branch.

The group are now preparing final report and presentation which will be held at the Ironworks, Inverness in April where they will be up against other Young Enterprise Teams from Moray and Highland.

Teacher Feature

By Lauren Bruce and Niamh Henderson

Born and bred in Glasgow Modern Languages teacher Mhairi MacFarlane has been teaching for the past 20 years. She originally thought about becoming a translator or PE teacher but settled for languages. She studied MA Honours French and German at Glasgow University and after gaining her degree she took up the opportunity to work for Visit Scotland which she thoroughly enjoyed as it not only increased the use of her vocabulary but she got the chance to meet fantastic people from all over the world and learn much more about her own country.

She has travelled a lot, especially to Eastern Europe before any of the countries were in the EU. She found crossing the borders fascinating, and sometimes quite a scary process.

She was Guidance teacher for five years and has also worked in Additional Support Needs for a year. She is enjoying her time here and said: "I have felt very welcome since I started here. It's also incredibly nice to hear pupils to say thank you at the end of the lessons".

In her spare time she enjoys reading and going to the cinema. She used to run for Glasgow and did compete regularly. In her spare time she still likes to get out for a run or a cycle but with as many coffee and cake stops as possible!



Students Get Locked Up

By Fraser Cumming.

Pupils studying Advanced Higher Modern Studies recently paid a visit to Inverness Prison to gather information for their Crime and Justice Unit

Pupils were given a tour of the prison and visited two cells and also the solitary confinement cell where vulnerable or disruptive prisoners are held. They were also given the opportunity to interview prisoners about their experience.

The visit ended with a questions and answers session with two of the prison guards which allowed the pupils to ask some in-depth questions on the prison system and the difference between the public and private sector. Student, Heather Prentice said "It was eye opening and made me appreciate the hard work of Scotland's prison officers. It gave us an insight into the realities of the Scottish prison service and what the prison officers have to face and struggle with day in and day out".