



# Firrhill News

December 2015

## Christmas Market



Firrhill Christmas Market took place on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November, featuring lots of craft stalls, entertainment and festive fayre. Despite stormy weather there was a good turn out for this enjoyable event including our Depute Head Teachers and our new Head Teacher Mr G Hamilton, pictured here (on left) meeting parents.

**Thanks to Ruth Gebbie and the PTA for organising this very successful event**



Christmas Market stalls included: Eco/Environment Group selling plants, knitting and cards; SMESU (South Morningside Explorer Scout Unit) fundraising for their trip to Cambodia; Tiphereth sold jam; Ngoli Village Charity sold African crafts and there were homemade soaps by Planet Soap.



The Christmas Market helps to raise funds for the school. Thanks to all who gave support



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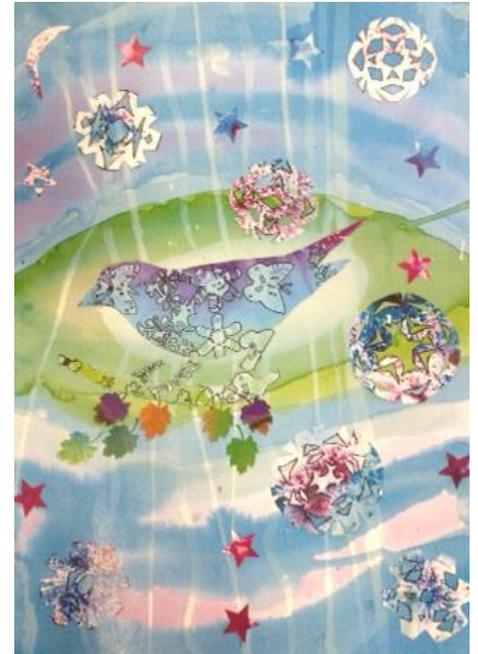
## School Christmas Cards and Calendar

S2 students were getting into the Christmas spirit early this year as they designed images for entry into Firrhill High Schools' own Christmas card competition, and the City of Edinburgh's Winter Windows competition. The top 50 of these were selected for display, and over the course of a week, students, staff and visitors to the school voted for the card that they felt should be chosen to be printed as this year's winner.

Michael Glenwright was voted as the winner in this year's Firrhill Christmas card design competition, with Anna Archibald and Charlotte Young being runners up.

Michael's design has been printed and used by the school as this year's official Christmas card.

Michael received a complimentary set of cards, and his design will be on display throughout December along with the runners up and finalists.



*The robin design, shown above, is by Michael Glenwright S2 (Card winner). The blue inked bird design, above right, is by Karen Grant S2 (Winter Windows winner). The image below, by Amelia Howard S2 is from the 2016 Firrhill Calendar.*



A selection of the card designs were also entered into Edinburgh City Council's "Winter Windows 2015 Competition". There were more than 200 designs sent in from across Edinburgh for just 25 illuminated windows. The winning windows will be on display in Princes Street Gardens over the Christmas period.

Competition was fierce and the judges had a really tough time. However, we are delighted that one of our entries from Firrhill was selected for a winning window this year. This was by Karen Grant in 2A3. Karen and her family will attend the launch event on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015 when they will have a special tour of the Winter Windows and be able to see them lit up for the first time.

We hope that many of our pupils and wider school community will have the chance to visit the Winter Windows in East Princes Street Gardens, take pride Karen's winning design and perhaps get inspiration for next year

14 students from last year's S1-S6 have also had work selected for use in the 2016 Firrhill Calendar.

*Pack of 5 cards @£2.00 & Calendars @£3.00. Please return completed order forms with payment, cheques payable to "Firrhill High School" to Ros Nixon, office beside waiting area*

**"Well done to all our Christmas winners!" Says Mrs Graham, Curriculum Leader, Expressive Arts**



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## S1 Parents Social Night



S1 parents were invited to an informal social evening on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October to meet other S1 parents, parents who have children further up the school and some staff: Acting Head Teacher, Mr McClellan  
Depute Head Teachers:  
Miss Statham (Allermuir),  
Mrs Porter (Braidlaw), Acting DHT Mrs Ranger (Caerketton)



There was general chat and mingling plus refreshments. Some introductions and questions written on "post its" were answered such as: What should you do when your child is ill? Can younger year groups wear the school blazer? What is a tracking report?

Pupils work and photos showing other aspects of life at Firrhill were on display including: Forest Schools; the Celebration of Creativity; and the Hockey Club. Parents were encouraged to come along to the Parent Council meetings and working groups.

*It was a very worthwhile and enjoyable event.*

*Thanks to the Parent Council and members of the PTA who thought up, planned and hosted this very successful evening.*

*Thanks also to Mr McClellan, Acting Head Teacher, pupil support staff and all the staff members who attended.*





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## Planning the Edinburgh Schools' Holocaust Memorial Day 2016

On Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October the Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) Committee met at lunchtime with Mrs Watson, Firrhill teacher, to discuss plans for the forthcoming Edinburgh Schools' Holocaust Memorial Day which will take place at Firrhill High School on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January. Special visitors attended: Elaine Samuel, Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation; Una Dobson, True Colours; Katie Allen, The Anne Frank Trust and Mrs Carolyn Hargest, Firrhill Parent. Preparations are well underway for HMD 2016: guest speakers booked; a programme outlined with music, poetry and acts of remembrance. It will be a very special and worthwhile occasion!



On HMD it has been suggested that each person should bring a pair of shoes, as an act of remembrance for the people whose possessions and lives were taken from them in the concentration camps. The shoes will later be donated to charity.

The "Anne Frank a History for Today Exhibition" will be on display in the school library and S3 pupils will act as tour guides to help others learn valuable lessons from the life of Anne Frank

Firrhill pupils, Iseabal and Koren, our "Lessons from Auschwitz" Ambassadors will speak at the Queen Margaret University HMD 2016 afternoon on 27<sup>th</sup> January

## The Lessons from Auschwitz Project

On 3<sup>rd</sup> November Mrs Watson, art teacher, attended the Holocaust Educational Trust's reception at the Scottish Parliament with first minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP. Nicola's speech confirmed that the Scottish Government would continue to back and financially support the Holocaust Educational Trust's 'Lessons from Auschwitz' project.

This initiative is based on the premise that "seeing is not like hearing" and 400 students every year from schools all over Scotland participate in this project where they visit Auschwitz-Birkenau, hear a survivor speak, find out about pre-war Jewish life and make plans as to how they will share their experience with their school communities and beyond.

*Firrhill High School has taken part in LfA project for past two years. Nicola made it very clear that she wants to take part in LfA project herself*

"By supporting the official Edinburgh Schools Holocaust Memorial Day we can remember the millions murdered in the Holocaust under Nazi persecution and also in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur; we can honour the survivors of these genocides and learn lessons from their experiences in order to challenge hatred and discrimination in Scotland today" said Mrs Watson, art teacher





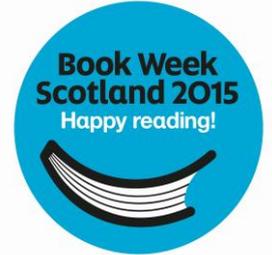
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## Book Swap Event

Book Week Scotland 2015 was from Monday 23rd – Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November. It is a week-long celebration of books and reading which takes place every November and there are many events all over Scotland to celebrate books and reading. It also links in with S1 and S2 pupils who are being encouraged to read more as part of “Read for Gold” in group tutor time.



Firrhill High School enjoyed holding a book swap event as part of the “Book Week Scotland” celebrations.

Some Firrhill Parents shared the titles of their favourite books:

- Ruth Gebbie “Sunset Song” by Lewis Grassic Gibbon
- Mari Yiannopoulos “The five people you meet in heaven” by Mitch Albom
- Carolyn Hargest “All the pretty horses” by Cormack McCarthy
- Ian Gebbie “The Crow Road” by Ian Banks



Thanks to staff and parents who organised these lunchtime sessions in the School library, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November, which gave pupils the opportunity to own and read a preloved book and also to swap one of their own books.





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## Teen Titles Celebration

To read more visit <https://edinburghliteracycalendar.wordpress.com/>



“Books for S1-S3, see the “Great reads for younger teens” leaflet available in the School Library Resource Centre” says Ms Dickson, School Librarian

On 27 August 2015 the Teen’s Titles Celebration was held in the Reference Library of the Central Library. Some Firrhill students and Ms Shauna Dickson, School Librarian attended. Above left is a photograph of Amanda and Charlotte Kinnear, Firrhill S5 pupils with authors Cat Clarke and Helen Grant. The celebration had a great party atmosphere and a number of authors spoke about their work including, pictured above right (L-R) Elizabeth Wein, John Fardell, Alex Nye, Keith Gray, Kirkland Ciccone, Kirsten Lamb (Barrington Stole) and Linda Strachan.

## Author Visit – Michael Byrne



On 1st October a group of S1 pupils and staff enjoyed a talk by author Michael Byrne in the Memorial Hall at Merchiston Castle School.

Michael Byrne is a former English teacher and taxi driver who now works as a full-time author. Lottery Boy is his first novel.

*“It was great to hear Michael Byrne talk about his life and how he started writing”*

