



Firrhill Heights

Summer 2017

Produced by the Parent Council

Firrhill Heights

Firrhill Heights is produced by the Parent Council and consists mostly of excerpts from previous issues of *Firrhill News* and showcases some of Firrhill's exceptionally talented pupils, special events and success stories. Read *Firrhill News* on the school website.

For more information, contact the Parent Council firrhillpc@gmail.com

Sports Day

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Sports Day was organised in three zones: the "Tough Mudder"; the "Energy Zone", which comprised various "potted" sports events, face painting, sponge throwing and sumo wrestling suits; and the "Athletics and Fun Races", which included all of our traditional competitive events plus some fun events – such as the egg and spoon race and the three-legged race. This was the school's first opportunity to run a competition including all four houses and Caerketton ended up as Firrhill's first ever Sports Day House Champions.



Thanks to Miss Carmichael CL Health and well-being, and to all the Firrhill staff who arranged and ran sports day.

S2 Netball

On Monday 27 February, the S2 netball team, coached by Mrs Harkness and Miss McCaig, played Lathallen, Dundee in an exciting quarter-final match. The teams were well matched and both played very well throughout, but Firrhill had the upper hand and finally won 31-26 this fast-paced, exciting silver cup match. The S2 team played in the Scottish Schools Cup Finals at Ravenscraig, but lost the Silver Final 23-18 to Balwearie High.

Well done to all who took part – great team work!



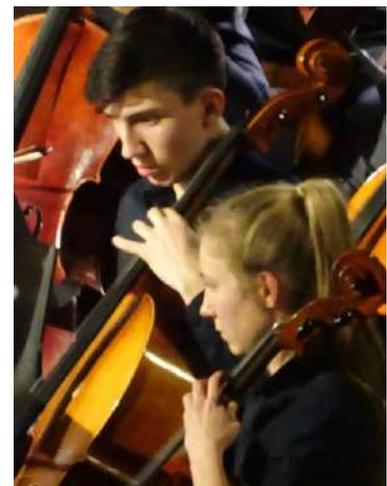
Fanfare Concert

Many Firrhill musicians took part in the annual Fanfare Concert at Central Hall Tollcross on 25 November (and also in the December Childline Concert). The Edinburgh Secondary Schools Wind Ensemble, conducted by Graeme Hodge, played "Mr Blue Sky" and "the Olympic Fanfare".

Groups performing included:

Edinburgh Secondary Schools Orchestra;
Edinburgh Secondary Schools Rock Ensemble;
Secondary Schools Choir and "Piping Hot",
Edinburgh Schools Performance Pipe Band.

 Follow on Twitter @FirrhillMusic



Sports Information Evening

On Wednesday 12 October the Health and Wellbeing Faculty held a sports information evening. Miss Carmichael CL introduced the school's sports ethos and outlined how to join the sports membership scheme for £22 per year. This was followed by our Young Sports Ambassadors Lisa Irvine and Susan Rome interviewing Ieuan James S6 (kayaking) and Lucia Rizza S2 (tennis). Josef Pechar introduced films about Keanna MacInnes and Lexi Waller (S4 swimmers). These talented pupils are all aspiring Olympians.

Lorna Norman, Active Schools, gave a presentation on Positive Coaching Scotland. Market stalls in the concourse included shinty, Boroughmuir Thistle Girls Football Club, Kingsknowe Golf Club, Edinburgh Leisure and Community Hub. Taster sessions were available for fencing, squash, golf and shinty.



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Volunteer awards were presented to parent volunteers: W. Kenyon (Sunday league netball) and M. Hifnawy (U14 football); teacher award: K. Harkness (netball coach) and pupil volunteer awards to E. Baxter and M. McLean (netball). Well done everyone!

Young Sports Ambassadors

Follow on twitter @FirrhillPE

The school has four YSAs: Susan Rome, Lisa Irvine, Josef Pechar and Heather Tring. There are also three Tennis Ambassadors: Calum Young, Calum MacKerron and Lucia Rizza. These pupils along with Lexi Waller, Keanna MacInnes and Amy Lickley had the amazing opportunity to meet First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and Scottish Olympian and Paralympian winners at the Oriam, the new sports performance centre at Heriot-Watt University.



ParalympicsGB

School of Tennis

In March 2016 the Tennis Foundation launched a School of Tennis programme. Twenty-one secondary schools across Great Britain have been established as "Schools of Tennis"—the aim is to create 150 by 2018.



In Edinburgh James Gillespie's, Firrhill and Liberton High Schools are taking part in the pilot scheme, and will each receive around £5,000 worth of support for the pilot. They will work across key themes: Teaching and Learning; Student Leadership; Facilities and Equipment; and Community Links. A training day was held at Loughborough University for teachers, coaches and students from the 21 pilot secondary schools, in order to equip them to implement the programme.

The School of Tennis programme, run by Britain's leading tennis charity, the Tennis Foundation, aims to change the way tennis is delivered in secondary schools, making it more relevant and engaging.



There has been a decline in the popularity of tennis among teenagers. The School of Tennis programme aims to reverse this trend by giving schools the support and funding needed so they can deliver tennis in a way that best suits their school and pupils.

Tennis Scotland has been working in partnership with the Tennis Foundation, and the aim is to grow the game in the pilot schools through close links with coaches and clubs in the local community.



Head Teacher Interview

In November 2015 Graham Hamilton started as Head Teacher at Firrhill High School. Here he tells us a bit about himself, and most importantly his hopes and plans for Firrhill High School

When did you become a teacher?

I started my first teaching job as a Science teacher in April 1989.

Where did you previously work?

After training in Scotland I headed south to London and worked for over 20 years in Balham, SW London.

In January 2010 I started at Queen Anne High School in Dunfermline. I began as Principal Teacher of Pupil Support before becoming a Depute Rector.

What are your first impressions of FHS?

I have been impressed by the young people I have met. They are almost all friendly, willing to talk and interested in improvement. There is a buzz about the school that I find refreshing and exciting. The staff group are great to work with. There is a high level of commitment to the young people at Firrhill and a dedication towards achieving the very best.



With Mr Hamilton as Head Teacher, we look forward to Firrhill High School moving from good to excellent under his leadership.

Green Flag Award



In December 2016 Firrhill gained the Eco School's prestigious Green Flag Award. Mrs Barley, Lead Eco teacher, said "It's fantastic!" Environmental issues are covered throughout the curriculum but a lot of additional work has been done in order to achieve this award, including: book reuse; plastic bottle recycling; litter picking; reducing energy use and improving the school grounds. Pupils, staff and parents have created a school meadow, the Celebration Garden, the Anne Frank Garden and the Pond Garden.

Mr Hamilton Head Teacher said "This represents a tremendous achievement for all those involved".



These encourage biodiversity through the provision of nest boxes, log piles and bird feeders. Pupils have enjoyed helping with planting and garden maintenance. New picnic benches have been provided by the Parent Council and the PTA.

Band Night Follow on twitter @FirrhillMusic

On Tuesday 21 March, Firrhill presented an evening of music from the Junior and Senior Wind Bands, Big Band and Flute, String and Saxophone Ensembles. Thanks to the pupils, the Instrumental Music Instructors, and thanks to Ms Stephen, who organised Band Night.



European Karate Champion



Gold medal winners 4 October 2015
Wishaw Grand Prix (3rd on left).



Kyle Thomson S6 has had karate as a hobby for 10 years and is competing successfully at a very high level. He is the current U16 -63kg European Champion, Scottish Champion, Wado Champion and a Scottish National team member. He competed in the European Championships in Zurich in February as part of the Scottish Karate Squad. He was part of the team in the 2012 Celebration Karate International Open Championships in Sheffield. Kyle is a member of the Chris Ewing Karate Club and was selected to take part in the Wado-Kai World Cup 2016 in Japan.

Kyle was first in Kumite Male U16 -63kg at the 43rd European Wado-Kai Championship in Luxembourg, in October 2015. In September 2016 Kyle won gold at the British Open in Sheffield as part of the Male Junior Team Kumite. Recent successes included winning the 44th Wado European Championship 16-17yrs -68 kg, in Belgium in November 2016 and winning the Ishoj Kumite Cup 16-17yrs -68 kg in Denmark in February. Exceptional results!

Kayaking World Champion

Ieuan James, former pupil, who left Firrhill in May 2017, has been kayaking for many years and is a member of the Forth Canoe Club. In July 2016 Ieuan took part in the Junior and U23 World Sprint Championships, which were held in Minsk in Belarus. At these he achieved 6th place in the 200m solo Kayak A Final.

Achievements as part of the British Canoeing team included:

- Ieuan James (Forth Canoe Club) – joint sixth in the U18 K1M 200 m A Final
- Ieuan James (Forth Canoe Club) and Charles Smith – ninth in the U18 K2 1000 m A Final

In June 2017 Ieuan James became Junior Sprint European Champion in the K1 200m sprint kayak event, in Belgrade, the very first Scottish athlete to win Gold at a European Sprint Championship. In a tight finish between three athletes, Ieuan 18 took gold by just 0.15 seconds ahead of Russia's Anton Sashilin.

Ieuan James was crowned kayak sprint World Junior Champion in Pitesti, Romania, in July 2017. Great Britain's first kayak sprint world junior title for 22 years. He claimed gold in the K1 200m in a time of 36.192 seconds, 0.104 head of Russian Ilia Zotov and Slovakia's Csaba Zalka.

Speaking after the medal ceremony Ieuan James said: "It feels amazing! I have made so many sacrifices this year to make it happen and it's paid off for me today".



Job Fair

On Friday 16 June 2017, the Parent Council's Business and Enterprise group ran its sixth job fair. In a friendly atmosphere, with a wide range of jobs represented, there was the opportunity for informal discussion, stalls to browse and leaflets to take away.



The job fair focussed on S4 pupils and some S5 pupils were able to drop in. Thanks to the Business and Enterprise group! It is great for parents to help pupils understand what different jobs entail.

If you would like to take part in next year's job fair, please contact fhsjobfair@yahoo.co.uk

The Hair Salon *Grand opening with Charlie Miller*

On Tuesday 4 October, the Expressive Arts Faculty was proud to hold the official opening ceremony of the Firrhill hair salon. The Soul Band provided entertainment to set the celebratory mood, and the Food Technologies faculty provided refreshments. The salon was officially opened by renowned Edinburgh hairdresser Charlie Miller, who is himself celebrating 50 years in the business. The salon was kick started by the kind donation of furniture and a reception desk by Ali Harvey of Dudes and Divas Hair Studio in Gorgie. Hairdressing tutor Jacqui Lamont and students are delighted with the salon.



Students from Firrhill and surrounding areas will be able to access the salon to practise their skills for work and National Progression awards in Hairdressing. The salon is open to clients on Fridays from 11.30 am.

Recycled Fashion Show Follow on Twitter @FirrhillArts

On 17 May Firrhill and Braidburn pupils were involved in an eco fashion show using recycled materials to make their garments, with spring as their main inspiration. Staff and pupils worked together to make the recycled fashion show a successful evening and a valuable tool for collaborative learning.

Photos by Stuart Stott.



Bagpipes on Loan

In January the Firrhill Pipe Band club were delighted to receive two sets of refurbished bagpipes, on loan for a 2-year period as part of the "Bagpipe Amnesty" scheme organised by the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust.

Pupils at Firrhill and its feeder primaries can learn the chanter, pipes and snare drumming from P3-S6. There are also chanter and drumming clubs at Oxgangs Primary and drumming at Pentlands Primary.



Pupils are welcome to join these clubs. For more information, contact dawn.alsop@blueyonder.co.uk

Big Band & Soul Band

Special thanks to Stuart Stott for his excellent photos.



On Sunday 30 April, Firrhill's Big Band and Soul Band gave super performances to an appreciative audience in the Jazz Bar, Chambers Street. This relaxed venue lent itself to an afternoon of great jazz.

thejazzbar



Seniors Football



On Friday 12 March, Firrhill Seniors played Portobello at home in the Lothian Cup quarter-finals. Firrhill scored a goal in the first half and, despite further opportunities for both sides, the final score remained 1-0 to Firrhill.

It has been a good season for the Seniors – they went on to win 6-3 against Holyrood at home, and drew 2-2 when they played against Boroughmuir at Meggetland. On 21 April, in the semi-finals at Forresters, the Seniors lost against Musselburgh with a score of 3-2. Thanks to the parent coaches, friends and family for their support. [Follow on twitter @TheHillSeniors](https://twitter.com/TheHillSeniors)



Tobacco-free Generation

Firrhill has committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle for all of its students and staff. As part of this commitment, the school has signed up to the Scottish Government's Charter for a Tobacco-free Generation by 2034.



"Firrhill is reviewing its tobacco policy and updating its 'Personal Social Education' programme," says Mr Denvir. S4 pupils have been trained to give lessons on how to make healthy choices, as well as working with Colinton Primary School to produce information leaflets.

Be Smart: Don't start!

Scotland's Charter for a Tobacco-free Generation is an initiative to help deliver a Tobacco-free Generation by 2034. It is closely linked to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Like the UNCRC, the Charter seeks to encourage adults to involve children, be responsible for them, and use their power to help keep them safe, healthy and protected from harm.

Teachers working alongside our pupils on this policy are Mr Denvir Pupil Support Team, and Mr Walkinshaw, Health and Wellbeing.



CMS Career Insight Day for Law



As part of Firrhill's "Developing the Young Workforce" programme, on 10 January 15 S4 pupils and Ms Ranger attended a career insight day for law at the CMS law firm offices on Castle Terrace. The day was extremely well received by everyone, with pupil feedback including "I really enjoyed the tour – it made me realise all the different jobs there are in a legal office".



Hockey

On a cold dry Saturday in early December, the Firrhill Seniors played Edinburgh Academy away (their pitches are on Fettes Road East). The first IX won 4-1. The second IX won 1-0. Both great results! Thanks to the pupils for their commitment to the club. Well done everyone!



Thanks to the dedicated parents who run Firrhill's very successful hockey club, which caters for all year groups and all skill levels. The parents organise all aspects of training, fixtures and finances. Amazing results!



World Junior Championship Bronze Medal Winner



Keanna MacInnes, S5, swims for Heart of Midlothian swimming club and is a member of the Scottish Youth Squad and the National Open Water Squad. She holds the Scottish Junior records for 100m and 200m butterfly and is Scottish Junior Open Water Champion over 2km and 5km. She has competed in a number of major events this season. At the Ontario junior International Meet in Toronto, she won a silver medal in the 200m butterfly and at the Geneva International Meet, she won 2 gold medals, breaking the junior meet records for both 100m and 200m butterfly. She brought home 7 gold medals from the Scottish National Age Group Championships in Aberdeen in March and at the British Championships in Sheffield in April, she won the junior final of the 100m butterfly and finished 4th in the senior final of the 200m butterfly. At the recent Scottish Open Championships, she won the national senior title in the 200m butterfly in a very close and exciting race against Olympian Hannah Miley, also taking the senior silver medal in the 100m butterfly and the national junior titles in the 50m, 100m and 200m butterfly and 400m IM. As a result of her performances this season, she was selected to represent GB at the World Junior Championships in Indianapolis in August, where she won a bronze medal in the 200m butterfly in a new Scottish junior record time. *Photo: Keanna, with her bronze medal.*

Many congratulations to Keanna on her amazing achievements. We wish Keanna every success in the future!

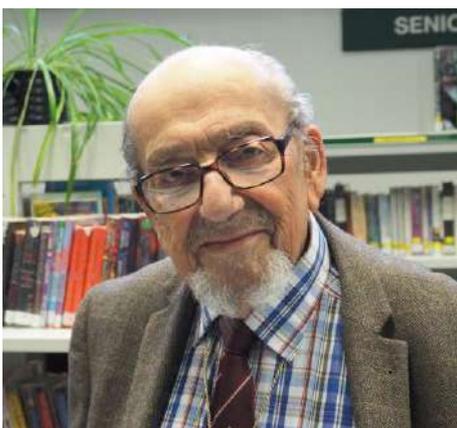
Spylaw Park Mural



On 15-17 May, S1 pupils with their art teachers worked hard to create a mural for Spylaw Park Colinton. Five S1 classes designed panels for the mural. Classes voted for the best designs and then the selected pupils presented their work to the Colinton Village Events Group, who made the final selection.

Holocaust Memorial Day

 Follow on Twitter @FirrhillHMD



Guest speaker Harry Bibring, born in December 1925 in Vienna, Austria, described his experience of *Anschluss* in 1938, followed by the exclusion of Jews from his local ice rink, then his grammar school, park and cinema. On Crystal Night his father's menswear shop was ransacked, and later his family attempted but failed to flee to Shanghai. Finally, Harry and his sister left Austria through the Kinder Transport system. He never saw his parents again. Harry's moving and informative life story ended with a request that everyone present should pledge to stand up against prejudice (which leads to discrimination – the starting point of hatred – which can lead to genocide). The Holocaust has been followed by further genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Darfur and now Syria.



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY 27/1

Card and Bus Stop Poster Design Winner

Follow on Twitter @FirrhillArts

Douglas Alsop in S2 is one of 12 winners of the City of Edinburgh Council digital bus stop display competition! Hundreds of pupils from across the city entered the competition. Look out for his design, which also won our school Christmas card competition this year on display in Princes Street Gardens over the holidays.

In our school Christmas card competition, pupils, visitors and staff had the chance to vote for their favourite card designs by S2 pupils. This year's runners up also created some really great designs.

Cards shown left to right
Douglas Alsop 1st place
Laila Davie 2nd place
Rachel Black 3rd place



Gold Duke of Edinburgh Practice Expedition

From Wednesday 28 to Friday 30 September, 12 Firrhill S6 pupils completed their Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award practice expedition, supported by staff members Mr Boyd and Mr MacIntosh. They walked in the Braemar area, covering a total distance of over 30 miles. The weather was wet and windy but with some sunny spells, and it was very cold during the night. The pupils walked in small groups carrying full packs. They wild camped in the hills next to highland burns and cooked supper such as pasta and couscous on camp stoves. Many lessons were learnt about expeditions in mountainous country. All the pupils were pleased and relieved to have completed their practice expedition, and they can now prepare for their qualifying expedition in Kintail in June.



Thanks to our team of staff for organising this practice expedition

S6 Commemoration Evening



The S6 Commemoration Evening took place on Tuesday 6 June. Pupils were presented with certificates and awards. Depute Head Teachers recounted the highlights of each pupil's school years. We discovered what they are going to do next and wish them well in their future careers.

