



Club Newsletter

December 2006

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EDITORIAL

Although, each Newsletter cannot be issued with a greater feeling of optimism than the previous one, I do feel that certainly, this issue should strike that note.

We had an excellent Annual Dinner, thanks in no small measure to the sterling efforts of Ross Graham, his helpers and the excellent culinary exertions of M/s Groom's. In addition, we had a first class Christmas Lunch at the Royal Highland Fusiliers Museum and, also a group of stalwarts from in and around Toronto, enjoyed a convivial Allan Glen's Christmas Lunch.

At the back of the Newsletter there is a copy of a letter sent by Our President to The First Minister, Jack McConnell, re the possibility of discussions regarding Mr McConnell's proposals to introduce Science Academies for fifth and sixth year students. A sub committee has been set up under the stewardship of Past Chairman David Shaw. We will implement a direct e-mail for this Committee.

We have at last gone some way to introduce more articles and information from current Old Boys. To continue this trend, the remedy lies in your hands. If there are any noteworthy events, relating to yourself or to the School Club, no matter how indirectly, send the info to : editor@allanglens.com and I shall ensure that it appears in a future edition.

Dates for your Diary - 2007

23 April - Annual General Meeting - RHF Museum (5.00 for 5.30)

East of Scotland Club

20 April - Annual Dinner - Murrayfield Golf Club (7.00 for 7.30)

7 July - Pitlochry Annual Theatre Show - 11.45am (Lunch + Matinee) Meet in Theatre Car Park or Foyer (Dependent on weather)

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2006 Allan Glen's Club

Annual Dinner



2006 AGSC Annual Dinner - Ross Graham

First of all, many thanks to Club Members for the splendid support for this year's Dinner. A total of one hundred and thirty-three attended the Trades Hall on an evening mercifully benign in weather conditions. The profile of those who booked places was Top Table, thirteen; Guests, twenty-five; Trust Scholars, two and Club Members, ninety three.

The proceedings opened with a welcome from the President, John MacDonald, and a presentation of the School and Club History and Club Tie to the two graduate scholars of the Educational Trust.

Grooms, the caterers, then provided a meal of outstanding quality which paved the way for the Loyal Toast. Iain Lambie, A.E. our oldest member then proposed the Toast to the School and the Club. It was remarked that Iain had left School eighty years ago.

The Guest of Honour, David McKail, Actor, related that he was the third of a line which started with Sir Dirk Bogarde, continued with Duncan Macrae and ended with himself, who, on first meeting the latter at the Citizens Theatre, was offered an apple. David recalled that at school he was encouraged in the pursuit of an interest in the arts by such icons of his time as 'Soapy' Sommerville, head of English, Maurice Blythman" who taught German, and that great man of course, Ralph Cowan. David's family had expected him to pursue a career in medicine, but early experience on the stage and radio inevitably lured him to the sound of the boards and the smell of the greasepaint. The playing of character parts and the fortune of often being in the right place at the right time, resulted in a busy and fulfilling life in many theatres, towns and cities throughout the UK. An encounter with a somewhat agitated Lawrence Olivier was explained by a colleague that, "Larry had been the fag at school of the fourth person present and was always uncomfortable in that person's presence."

The Vice-President Alan McLellan then gave a broader description of the Top Table guests. Replying on behalf of the guests, Willie McDougall, MBE former senior police officer and currently security adviser to EUFA, combined tributes to the School and illustrious former pupils with tales of the 'Tartan Army'.

The proceedings were closed by former President, Norrie Kilpatrick, expressing the 'Club's thanks to the President for the unique manner in which he had conducted the Dinner and also gratitude to those who had contributed to and organised a most enjoyable evening.

And the dinner in 1937.....

HELD in the Grosvenor Restaurant on Saturday, 23rd October, 1937. The attendance was about 150

The guest of honour was Sir John Weir, K.C.V.O. Mr. Ernest L. Reid, president of the Club, introduced Sir John, and traced the rising fortunes of the man who, he said, had gone as a bursar to Allan Glen's in 1892. Leaving School in 1895, his ambition was to enter the medical profession, but that could not be fulfilled at once, and he was for seven years in commercial life.

During these years he studied and, presumably, collected the wherewithal for a University career. "I know for a fact," said Mr. Reid, "that many a morning it was 2.30 before he went to bed and he was up again at 6.30."

In 1922 Sir John became Physician to the Royal Family, and four kings have been his patients.

Sir John, in reply, thanked the company for their kind response to the toast. He had the honour, with Lord McGowan, to be a vice-president of the London Club of Old Boys, and he was sure, now that it was affiliated to the Glasgow Club, there would be much closer co-operation.

He then recalled the School and the staff of his boyhood days, and said that his only criticism was that the curriculum at that time was, perhaps, too highly technical.

Education was something more than a preparation for a trade or business; it was a training ground for the other graces. There was a great danger of the student living in a realm far removed from the stress of the world outside.

That point was recently mentioned by the Master of Baliol, when he advocated students spending a year, between leaving school and going to the University, in learning something of the world in which they would later have to work.

That was an idea, Sir John said, which he had always advocated for those going into the professions. The training at Allan Glen's was a help in that way because the boys were up against problems which had to be solved in a practical manner.

Reminiscences of the old School made them feel grateful to her. How best, then, could they serve her? Surely by enabling others to have the same opportunities as they had had. They had a great tradition which must be perpetuated.

There were men of to-day who had influenced the world's affairs, and who owed so much to their training at Allan Glen's. The good one man could do for humanity was often immeasurable. It would, therefore, be a great pity if even one such possible genius were not allowed to have full scope for his energies.

Before closing, Sir John advocated the institution of a benevolent fund to help the able boy whose School career was to be cut short by being set to work prematurely. Such a fund would also assist the very able old boy who had to begin work before he had done all he was able to do, say, at the University.

There was a wonderful chance for old boys to show their appreciation of Dr. Steel and their old School.

Dr. Steel replied to the toast of "The School and the Club," which was proposed by Mr. R. D. Robertson, M.A., B.Sc., Director of Education for East Lothian.

Mr. J. Menzies Anderson, the secretary, announced that the Club was endeavouring to secure "consuls" in the principal cities of the Empire. Those old boys of the School would be asked on occasion to give hospitality to young men, also former pupils, who might be passing through these cities to appointments abroad. He asked for assistance in getting in touch with old boys in the Colonies.

The Ontario Group - Ken Clark



Back Row (L to R) Gord McCallum Ken Clark Dave Kent Iain Murray
Front Row (L to R) Murray Irvine Jim Kerr Ross Morrison D Munro

The Ontario Group met December 8 at the Royal York in Toronto for hopefully, the first of regular lunches or other social occasions. The formation of the group was based initially on the School Club Database of former pupils living in Ontario. Contacts established from that list and publicity on the club website brought other members to the group so that by the time of our meeting we had 11 in total, of whom 8 were able to attend. (See Photo) Since then 2 additional former pupils have made contact.

We had an excellent time sharing stories which ranged from the delights of the dinner school menu to the psychotic tendencies of some of our teachers; the camaraderie was no doubt somewhat lubricated by some excellent wine which had been graciously provided by the Home Club. Several of the group knew one another from school and, of course, we had many school friends in common. Some people around the world should have been wondering why their ears were burning, based on the stories that were told. It says something for the spirit of the school that a group of former pupils whose attendance years range from the 40s to the 60s can come together and quickly enjoy each others company.

For the future, we agreed to meet again in early April by which time our winter, which can make travel unpredictable and not without danger, will be over. I should mention that the members of the group live widely separated ranging from Niagara Falls to Sudbury and many points in between. The distance is about 500 Km by road. Further efforts will be made to "Bring into the fold" names from the original data base from whom no reply was received to the initial contact letter. We have recently heard that there was a functioning "Old Boys Club" in Toronto during the '50s, perhaps we can locate members of that group to add to our numbers. If any readers know of former pupils living in Ontario please advise their contact details via the club in Glasgow. (membership@allanglens.com)

Finally we expatriates wish all of you and your families Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and best wishes for 2007.

Have You a Hacienda? - from Alan Mackay

It occurred to me recently that there may be quite a number of Former Pupils from the 40's, 50's and 60's who have enjoyed successful careers, and whose families have long since been booted out of the family nest to make their own way in the world, have perhaps, like me, invested in a second property abroad which they use on an occasional basis for holidays, or perhaps for rental income or as a property investment. There may very well be others from the School who have, after a successful bank heist or suchlike, retired to the 'Costa del Crime' or other such havens from the Law, and might welcome the chance to brag about their exploits to their old classmates on foreign soil rather than return to Blighty and be picked up by an eagle-eyed Immigration Officer at Dover or Heathrow ! Seriously though .. I was speaking about this only a few months ago to R. Keith Horn - an old classmate of mine from 1955 to 1961 - who also has a holiday place in Spain and rents it out when he doesn't use it himself. I am in much the same position - being in the middle of finalising the purchase of a holiday home in Murcia on the Costa Calida in Spain; and, although I am now retired, I only intend to use it during the off-season months from October/November through to March/April and rent it out during the summer months to holidaymakers and golfers (they are building Golf Courses all over the place in Murcia at the moment).

My proposal is for a Register, or a Club Website, on which interested members of the Old Boys' Club could post details of their properties with preferential rental prices for other Old Boys to take advantage of for holidays, when the owners are not in residence.

The Register or Website might also be a useful pool of knowledge for any Old Boys perhaps contemplating the purchase of a foreign property and could also enable Old Boys - like myself, who go abroad on an intermittent basis - to make contact with others in a similar situation to their mutual advantage.

Perhaps you could think about this and let me know if there is any merit in my proposals.

Finally, Alan (he means the Editor!) .. and I really can't resist commenting on this as it is so typically "Glen's" (where Science reigned supreme and proper English was very much looked on as a subject of secondary importance)...your official title in the Newsletter could be misconstrued due to the omission of a hyphen between 'Vice' and 'President'. As it reads now, it looks as though your duties may be those of a procurer or 'pimp' ! Forgive me my quiet chuckles, but I am a retired English teacher after all !

Editor's Note. Anyone who thinks that this is a worthwhile project please write to me and we will try and see how this could be organised.

A Nice Wee Dram

This is maybe a good time of the year to remind you that bottles of the Allan Glen's 8 year old whisky are available from the secretary at £14 per bottle (£17.50 including postage in UK). You can also purchase this at the clubhouse in Bishopbriggs.



The “Harvest” Camps - Norrie Kilpatrick

At this years Golf Outing I was reminiscing with Jack McGuinness about our school days and the the subject of Summer Camps came up. During the Second World War, boys from Glen's undertook a variety of jobs on the land to help the war effort, including forestry, bracken cutting, potato lifting and grain harvesting. Although not all of this work was connected with the harvest, the camps were collectively known as “The Harvest Camps.” The work was undertaken in July when school had finished and in October when holidays were given which I believe established the present Schools October Break.

I attended two camps, the first being at Ballinluig, a few miles south of Pitlochry for potato lifting, ie tattie howking, and the second at at Inversnaid/Loch Arklet for bracken cutting. Why I went to Tattie howking I'll never know, I found it back-breaking and what was even more stupid, I went back for a second time! This was during my second and third years at Glen's. We were billeted in the local primary school, teachers came with us to supervise and to cook our meals. The work was hard for a puny wee soul who had never been away from home alone before. As we were in Ballinluig in October and some of the farms we worked on are in the Ae Hills above the Tay Valley there was quite often frost on the ground before we started work. They say that you always remember the good parts of an experience but, it was the reverse with me !

In my fourth and fifth years I went bracken cutting at Loch Arklet, which is just North of Inversnaid on Loch Lomond. The hotel at Inversnaid is one of the stopping-off points for walkers on The West Highland Way and it was at the back door of this hostelry that that the taste of strong drink - a glass of cider - first crossed my lips. For boys of our age, this was paradise. The hills overlooking Loch Arklet, which was and may still be, a “feeder” to Loch Katrine, were owned by what was then Glasgow Corporation. Sheep grazed on these hills and our job was to cut back the bracken with scythes in order to improve the grazing. I can hear you all saying “scythes” in the hands of 15-16-17 year olds - what about Health and Safety at Work ? No such regulations existed in those days, We were supervised by corporation employees who taught us how to use the scythes and, as far as I can recall there were no accidents.

Loch Arklet has a dam at the Inversnaid end and we were accommodated in huts at the Ae Dam Face. Members of staff came with us to look after our well-being???? and to do the cooking.

Abiding memories from Loch Arklet include : -

- 1) Mock trials, in which John Paul and Jack McGuinness took prominent parts;
- 2) Jimmy Logie's (French teacher) cigarette ash dropping into the mince, forcing him to give it another stir;
- 3) The “door-stopper” sandwiches, which invariably were filled with cheese, lettuce and tomatoes;
- 4) My introduction to “The Big Band Sounds” of such greats as Harry James, Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller and others. Not forgetting the Andrews Sisters belting out numbers such as “The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B” and “Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree.” I've been hooked ever since. All thanks to the boy who brought along a portable gramophone.
- 5) Your squad's turn to empty out and bury the contents of the dry lavatory - ugh !

I hope this stirred some memories and that some of you will remember forestry at, I think, Comrie and harvesting at Inverurie.

Norrie M Kilpatrick 1941 - 1946

Editor's Note. I asked Norrie if he had any relevant photos. He replied "Alan, this was wartime, if you were in possession of a camera, you could be shot as a spy."

Does Scotland need another Allan Glen? - Gregor Egan

Recently we were told that more than 50% of the Scottish population of working age is employed by the State and that our public to private sector ratio is worse than that of Communist Russia. In fact we are told that in some areas of Scotland the ratio is 3 out of every 4 people (75%) working for the State. And yet the social engineers in our midst still refuse to see the similarities between their Utopian ideals and the visions of George Orwell. Should we sit quietly squirreling our own nuts away and hope for the best or should we stimulate a debate that questions a strategy that never worked for Russia and is unlikely to work for Scotland? Should we go even further and question whether a new philanthropist with a similar outlook on social justice to that of Allan Glen would make a difference?

I believe that Allan Glen's motivation was to bridge the gap between the "them and us" culture that will always generate entrenched viewpoints on opposite sides of the social argument. He realised that the leaders would ensure that their own progeny became the new leaders and that the followers, devoid of opportunity, would provide the future followers. He would also have realised that inevitably some small number of the followers would aspire to be leaders but that this in itself would not bridge the gap. It was his intention to integrate the children of leaders and followers in the one educational establishment from a very young age and thereby create a cohesive group of people with similar goals and ideals free from the divisions of the exploiter and exploited. His success is evident from the achievements of former pupils from all sections of the community, from both prosperous and humble backgrounds.

Gregor M Egan

Editor's Note:

The above item is included as one member's view only and does not necessarily represent the views of the Club or the Committee. Other members are encouraged to submit their own opinions with the intention of gauging a majority view and perhaps lead to some positive action that the members might wish to take in the furtherance of Allan Glen's objectives.

A Trip Down Barony Lane - Eddie Glen

In the September issue of the Club Newsletter you mentioned the problem with lack of events other than obituaries! I went back in time yesterday, 13 December - not literally, of course, but I attended a Christmas Carol Service in what is now the Barony Hall of Strathclyde University. It reminded me of the services held there by Roy Sanderson, the School Chaplain, in my time in the 1950s when it was the Barony Church. At the end of the service there was the sense of freedom which we used to feel when we could leave for the 'holidays', and I had to restrain myself from shouting with joy!

My connection with the University in the present day is as a Campus Guide. Having attended classes there it is very easy to become involved in other things! While the Hall is used for many activities, it is open to the public during the summer months - usually at weekends. Its connection with Glen's is still very much in evidence. The Book of Remembrance is still kept there, together with the plaque commemorating the opening of the new school building, which was after my time.

It is amazing how much I didn't know, or try to find out, about the building when I was at school. There are statues and a mural which are most unusual for a Church of Scotland building. As a matter of interest the mural was painted originally by a firm of house painters based in Sauchiehall Street.

The University's connections with the school go way back to its days as the 'Tech', and currently it owns two of the buildings after which the school houses were named - the Barony and the Ramshom - now a theatre. Both buildings are open during the summer, although I cannot at this stage give actual dates. Any former pupils visiting either will be most welcome, and the attraction is that admission is free!

Editor's Note

Eddie's letter reflects similar sentiments expressed to me by another OB who said:-

"In addition do not miss the chance to go right through to the back of the church premises and see the modern stained glass windows. See if you can identify the name 'Greenhouse' in the right hand window as you look at it. I could see it but neither of the guides present could make it out."

PS (Ed) They couldn't see the pink elephants climbing the walls either...

Season's Greetings from Allan Glen's Club



Card Designed by the late Ralph Cowan 1996 and
reproduced with kind permission from his daughter Diana



John Macdonald - President,
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15 December 2006

ALLAN GLEN'S SCHOOL CLUB

Jack McConnell, Esq.,
First Minister,
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SCIENCE ACADEMIES

Dear Mr McConnell,

We have noted recent press reports of your pledge to set up "skills academies" in Scotland. We of the Allan Glen's School Committee have particularly noted the plans to set up some six Science Academies which would be open to pupils in fifth and sixth years.

As you are probably aware Allan Glen's was a School in Glasgow, where the curriculum was such that pupils who had an interest and ability in the sciences and technological subjects were attracted to the school and it produced a great number of young people skilled and qualified in these areas, who then went on to contribute greatly to Glasgow's and Scotland's achievements and prosperity.

If such an establishment were to be established within Glasgow, then representatives of our Club would be delighted to have a discussion with yourself or your Education Minister regarding possible input from our Club.

We have a number of assets which might be of interest to such an establishment, the most important of these being the name itself, Allan Glen's.

This would be a name which would endow the new academy with a history and tradition which would be immediately recognized nationally and internationally for producing young people well-qualified in the science and engineering fields. The name could be adopted by any establishment that would be newly-built or based within an existing school.

Our assets are governed by two Allan Glen's trusts. One Trust owns and is responsible for Playing Fields at Bishopbriggs. These Playing Fields are currently used as community resource, including use by local schools for sporting activities.

The Second Trust is responsible, jointly with the Education Services of Glasgow City Council, for the disbursement of Scholarships to Pupils of Glasgow Schools who are going on to study Science or Engineering at University. Depending on the structure of any possible new academy bearing the name of Allan Glen's and upon the existing terms of the relevant Trusts, some of these assets could be available to the new academy.

If you find any of the foregoing of interest to you, then we would be happy to discuss matters further either in the future or when you have more definite plans in place.

John Macdonald, President
Allan Glen's School Club