

Hello to all F.P.s. Pleased to have received some more replies this year and welcome to new contributors. Thanks also for all donations. Best wishes to all for 2012.
Margaret Masson

COMMITTEE

President – Mrs Irene Carson

Honorary President – Mr Bill Templeton

Mrs Betty Grant, Mrs Shirley Findlay, Mr Stewart Grant, Mr Sandy McCook, Mr Walter Dempster, Mr Ian Masson, Mrs Janet Flannery, Mrs Seonaid Vickerman, Mrs Daphne Ritchie and Mrs Margaret Masson

Minutes of AGM held in Grant Arms Hotel on 2 April 2011

The General Meeting of the Former Pupils' and Old Guard Clubs was held in the Grant Arms Hotel prior to the Biennial Dinner on 2 April 2011. Irene Carson, President, welcomed the company and gave a short update on school activities and informed the company that due to the increased number of pupils a new teaching block had been erected containing refurbished Maths and Science departments. Students were doing well and had also won musical national acclaim. She also thanked the Clubs for continued prize monies and library donations to the school. She then called on Sandy McCook, the new chairman, to conduct the business meeting.

Apologies were received from Mrs Chrissie Grant. The minutes of the last Biennial Meeting were read and approved. The financial statements were also approved and accepted. Due to funds dropping it was agreed to donate only £500 to school funds this year. The meeting continued with the election of office bearers and the committee was re-elected en-bloc. School ties were available for purchase at £5 for anyone wishing to buy same from Daphne.

Sandy welcomed all and noted with regret the passing of two stalwarts of the Clubs, Miss Jean Paterson, who died at age 104 and Ian Smith, aged 84 - both of whom will be greatly missed. He also thanked Bill Templeton, who was chairman for a number of years, for all his input to the Clubs. Bill was delighted to be proposed as Honorary President. Sandy thanked all Former Pupils for donations received and asked for any ideas on fund raising. The meeting closed and dinner was served.

The speaker, Billy Laing, a former pupil, was welcomed and gave a very amusing and informative talk, after which the raffle was drawn – see his letter on page 3.

Front page cover – courtesy of Scotavia Images (www.scotaviainages.co.uk)

ACCOUNTS FOR 2010-2011

GRANTOWN GRAMMAR SCHOOL FORMER PUPILS' AND OLD GUARD CLUBS					
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT 2010-11					
2010	RECEIPTS	2011	2010	PAYMENTS	2011
£801.42	Balance - Deposit Account	£1,477.84	£0.00	School Donation - Library/ Prizes	£500.00
£903.95	Balance - Flexible Savings Account	£905.20	£184.36	Postages (magazines and info slip mailing)	£180.72
£1.02	Interest - Deposit Account	£0.12	£74.52	Photocopying	£70.89
£1.25	Interest - Flexible Savings Account	£0.91	£11.00	Envelopes and labels	£20.19
£150.00	Magazine Orders	£144.00	£14.72	Paper/Plastic combs	£20.00
£64.00	Magazine Sales (including Grantown News)	£174.00	£0.00	Dinner for 44 (including gratuity and non-paying guests)	£860.00
£731.00	Donations	£468.00			
£15.00	New Recruits (4@£5)	£20.00			
£0.00	Tie Sales	£25.00			
£0.00	Dinner Tickets	£860.00	£1,477.84	Balance - Deposit Account	£1,687.16
£0.00	Raffle during dinner	£170.00	£905.20	Balance - Flexible Savings Account	£906.11
£2,667.64		£4,245.07	£2,667.64		£4,245.07
Audit Certificate: Audited from books and vouchers presented and found to be in agreement					
Signed <i>Alastair McKenzie</i> Print Name <i>ALASTAIR MCKENZIE</i> Date <i>12/12/2011</i>					

Grantown Grammar School – Former Pupils and Old Guard Clubs

2011 Biennial Reunion – Grant Arms Hotel

It was with some hesitation that I accepted an invitation to address the 2011 Reunion, after all I left our school in December 1952 to start work in a 5 year apprenticeship as a projectionist at the 'Picture House' in the Square, taking over from Billy Mitchell who had been called up for National Service.

Almost 3 years later the Cinema was burnt down and I was transferred south to complete my apprenticeship at cinemas in Grangemouth, Rutherglen and Kirkcaldy. During this period I attended a college in Edinburgh for electrical engineering (Day Release).

In October 1959 I was then called up for National Service in the Royal Corp of Signals. After basic and trade training I was posted to Germany where I spent the rest of my military service. On demob I came back to Grantown and worked for a short time at Shaw Brothers Garage before Joining Gleaner Oils Ltd in 1961 as a Tanker Driver at their Grantown Depot.

After a year I was appointed to a position of Petroleum Representative based at the Elgin Depot. In 1968 I was appointed Manager and in 1974 was appointed Managing Director, this position I held till 2006 when I took over the role of Chairman a post I still hold. My work with Gleaner has been a challenging and enjoyable journey and like many other industries we had always to be adaptable to changing markets and industry requirements. From a small local company we are now covering the whole of Scotland with a turnover in our last trading year of £117m.

At the reunion gathering, the only person from my school class was Seconaid Vickerman (nee Grant) and this was the first time we had met in about 56 years. I was also delighted to hear that Billy Templeton had accepted the position of Honorary President. Billy had spent some time in Forres as the Manager of RBS Bank - Billy lived in Nelson Road on the same road that I do.

Could I take this opportunity to thank Sandy McCook and his committee for the invite to share the past of my early days in Grantown and for the opportunity to share my business experience also with others at this reunion, ***I know that the foundation of my early days at Grantown which was not always easy for many of us, help me, to uphold standards that I was taught and never forgot or altered.***

Finally my sincere thanks and appreciation for the welcome extended to myself at the reunion.....I will be back.

Billy Laing

December 2011

Excerpt from Committee Meeting held in the Staffroom in GGS on 12 December 2011

There was discussion on future plans for the Club. Sandy McCook, Chairman, raised a concern that in a few years' time we will see the demise of the Club as there isn't enough interest and income to sustain it. The whole Committee, including the President, was of the same opinion. Suggestions were made to involve the senior pupils of the school with the magazine, perhaps to have a few pages with their input; to start up a form of mentoring support system for pupils leaving the area, for example with Former Pupils who are in the university cities; setting up a Facebook page for the Club; a link from the school Web site (**www.ggschool.com**) to a FP Club website containing details of the Club, how to join, Club activities, etc; publicity through the School prospectus and so on. If anyone has any ideas, please send them to **sandy**.

LADY PAMELA BAIRSTO (PAMELA GIBSON) 1939 - 1945

The news I should have given last year is that I remarried in May 2010. My husband is Air Marshall Sir Peter Bairsto. Thanks for all the work of the committee, which enables so many F.P.s to keep in touch with news of our old school.

CHRISTOBEL BAHZAD (TERRIS)

Celebrated the 40th reunion of the graduation of my medical class this week. It makes you realise how fast time passes when you see the white hair on your contemporaries! George and I continue to travel as one of our hobbies. We visit Speyside regularly and are saddened at the state of the High Street, though some improvement has been made since the repair of the furniture store. Regards to all old friends.

LORNA M BANKS (STEPHEN) 1947/48 – 1959

Our elder daughter Caroline spent 3 months at the end of 2010 in Borneo working with Raleigh International on a conservation project to save the Bornean Sun Bears. Then she spent Christmas and New Year with my sister and her family in Sydney, after which she had a 6-week touring holiday in New Zealand.

MARGARET CARSTAIRS (McWILLIAM) 1943 – 1953

Just been up north this March 2011 for a sad funeral (we are really all in a bad age group). The Cairngorms were lovely covered in snow with the strong sun shining on them, like a picture postcard. Hope you all enjoyed the Reunion Dinner in the Grant Arms Hotel on 2nd April. My sister Marlene attended and had a really good time. My latest two great grandsons are now 2 years old (just one week between them), Terry and Mason. They keep you fit and on the move. My oldest great grandson is now 12 years old and starts at Buckhaven High School this year. Will try and visit up north this summer. Keep up the good work on the magazine.

MRS R JOHN CHAPMAN (ELIZABETH McDONALD) 1947 – 1959

My husband has been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. Over and above our GP we have a doctor who specialises in "elder care" (Don't you love it!) and has a huge interest in P.D., so we are very lucky. Our daughter lives in New Plymouth. A second grandchild is due in London in December (2011).

ROSEMARY M CHARLISH (MASSON)

Wonderful visit to Australia in March to see Kyle, Catti and my beautiful twin granddaughters. Very much looking forward to seeing them in December, when they come over for a month. Also especially looking forward to seeing Kayleigh, who is coming home from Vietnam for Christmas, as is Ellen who visited her big sister in July along with Granny. Not sure who looked after who!!

GEORGE COUTTS 1951 – 1957

This is an echo from the past, indeed from the dim and distant past. It is more than half a century since I left Grantown Grammar School but I still look back with nostalgia to my school days and indeed with gratitude for the quality of the education I received from the teachers at that time under the no-nonsense headship of Dr Bain. Was there ever a better English and History teacher than George Donaldson or a better Modern Languages teacher than Alex (Slim) MacKenzie. I can still hear him encouraging his charges to improve their French accents. "You must learn to roll your R's. RRRrrr,RRRrrr,RRRrrr" said he, clutching and manipulating his larynx as he expertly demonstrated how to do it. And his other favourite expression "Come on, you can do this, there's nothing patent about it"! I shall always be indebted to him and all the other fine teachers who provided me with my basic education in the arts and sciences in Grantown School.

Yes, those were the days but time marches relentlessly on, so fast forward to the present. After many years in the veterinary profession I am now retired and living quietly in Norfolk, or at least as quietly as five grandchildren, aged from 12 to 2, will allow. Otherwise my aged fox terrier dog takes me for walkies every day, which helps to keep me fit. He is named Dorback after the Dorback burn which flows through the Dava Moor. Sadly he is now 13 years old and approaching the end of his time on earth. I cannot imagine life without him. He has been my constant friend and companion through all these years.

My other big interest in life is owning, maintaining and driving my Armstrong Siddeley car. It was made in 1958, the year after I left school and is still going strong (at least some of the time!) I have owned it for 42 years so it's a bit like a member of the family. It is one of about twelve known

roadworthy examples of its model (234 Sapphire) left in the UK. It has been a source of pleasure at times and exasperation at other times. And expense all the time!

Then there is my collection of gramophone records. I started collecting 78 rpm records soon after I went to Grantown School, mainly Scottish fiddle and accordion music and Scottish and Irish songs. I used to buy 78s in Donaldson's the ironmongers in the High Street (is that shop still there I wonder?). As time passed of course I moved on to LP and CD formats but I still treasure my 78s, cracks, chips, scratches and all! I have at least one recording of most well known Scottish songs, but two which have eluded me are "I lo'e Nae a Lassie but Ane" and "Within a Mile o' Edinburgh Toon" so if anyone up there has a recording of either of these beautiful old songs, perhaps in a box of old records in their loft I would be very pleased to hear from them although I think the chances are very small. I might just add that I still have two old wind up gramophones on which I occasionally play my 78s although modern equipment plays them much better and without damaging the playing surfaces.

On so to holidays. Well we didn't have one this year but last year we had a very pleasant week in a rented cottage in Nethybridge. From there I was able to visit some of my old haunts around the area including the Dava Moor and the Dorback burn. I also stopped briefly outside the old and new schools although I didn't go in. The weather was perfect during the entire week which added to the enjoyment.

And now I think I have rambled on long enough. I doubt if many of today's pupils will be much interested in these reminiscences from an old timer like me but perhaps some of their grandparents will. Anyway I would like to send best wishes to all pupils and teachers in the school. Success to the pupils in their chosen fields and success to the teachers in preparing them for the wide world that awaits them.

WILMA COWAN (IRVING) 1942 – 1954

Am now feeling more or less back to normal, following a major operation last year. Came as a bit of a shock, as I have always been quite fit and never needed the doctors much. We are now trying to catch up on the trips we missed last year. Have had long weekends to Cumbria, N Wales, Nottingham, flying visit to Dublin to catch up with the American granddaughters, who were on a tour of S Ireland, now off to mid Wales and at the end of August a long planned week to Inverness and Grantown for our Golden Wedding. Where have the years gone??

WALTER DEMPSTER 1949 – 1955

"Tempus fugit" I was reminded recently when Gary, our youngest son, was clearing out some things in the old shed here and came across a small suitcase. This contained several jotters from my time in the Grammar School, including English, History, Geography, French and German notes and what struck me was how my handwriting varied considerably over the years. However what intrigued me most was a timetable for my third year in 1951-2, copy of which I have sent on to Margaret – see over. First period on Monday morning was Latin with Mr Thornton of course, hence the opening. He was also a great help with my Cairngorm badge. Thank goodness we did not have to swim in the Spey in our day. On a couple of occasions we were in the old school for a Farmers' Market and I had a wander along the corridors. Apart from the somewhat garish colour scheme there did not seem to be much difference. The parquet floor and the wall bars were still there and in my mind's eye I could see us all standing there for morning assembly with Mr Hunter or Doc Bain. The treat of the day was to go up the town to get a hot pie from Duncan's Bakery on the High Street and of course we had to walk up to the Church hall for lunch. The curse of "Health and Safety" had not arrived. Those were the days. Enough of the past. We still enjoy our visits to the town and attend the U3A and the Grantown Society on a regular basis. I look forward to seeing Seonaid, Sheena and George, whose encyclopaedic knowledge of the area never ceases to amaze me. It is also a joy to visit the garage just to see Margaret's smile. We still do a lot of walking in Rothiemurchus and it helps to keep us young. Walter and the family come up from Larbert. Granddaughter is now in her second year at the West of Scotland University and grandson is in fourth year in the secondary. Last year he was diagnosed with diabetes but seems to have coped well with the daily injections. Gary spends most of his time in Ayrshire and the website I mentioned last year is finally up and running. All you keen golfers have a look at www.scottishgolfmuseum.co.uk and be amazed at his huge collection of golfing memorabilia. Some day he is hoping to put it on display.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1) Latin Mr. Thornton	English Mrs. MacGillivray	German Mr. MacKenzie	Algebra Miss Grant	P.T. Mr. Cullen
2) Geography Mr. MacDonald	History Mr. Donaldson	German Mr. MacKenzie	English Mrs. MacGillivray	Science Miss Grant
3) Geometry Miss Pyper	Algebra Miss Pyper	Arithmetic Miss Grant	Latin Mr. Thornton	English Mrs. MacGillivray
4) History Mr. Donaldson	Latin Mr. Thornton	English Mrs. MacGillivray	French Mrs. MacGillivray	French Mrs. MacGillivray
5) English Mr. Donaldson	P.T. Mr. Cullen	French Mrs. MacGillivray	Art Miss Grant	Bible Mr. MacDonald
6) Latin Mr. Thornton	French Mrs. MacGillivray	English Mrs. MacGillivray	Art Miss Grant	Latin Mr. Thornton
7) French Mr. MacKenzie	Geometry Miss Pyper	Latin Mr. Thornton	Geometry Miss Pyper	German Mr. MacKenzie
8) Latin Mr. Thornton	English Mr. Donaldson	Geography Mr. MacDonald	French Mr. MacKenzie	German Mr. MacKenzie
9) Music Mr. Hunter	Arithmetic Miss Grant	Football Mr. MacDonald	English Mrs. MacGillivray	Algebra Miss Pyper

Time-Table 1A Grantown on Spey Grammar School

SHIRLEY FINDLAY (MASSON)

Where has another year gone? Our little grandson Bradley is now running around keeping everyone on their toes. Claire enjoys visiting Dundee to see Sian who is now in her second year at Dundee University.

ELSPETH M FRASER (MITCHELL) 1935 – 1947

Lucky to have two sons and one daughter and their families living beside me. Eldest son and family live in Aberfeldy. Had a lovely holiday with them in Portugal in July.

MARLENE A FRASER (McWILLIAM)

Had a lovely time at the F.P. meal and thoroughly enjoyed Billy Laing's talk. Took me back many years. Thanks so much to the committee for their work arranging it – much appreciated. Hope to spend more time at the cottage next year (2012).

ROBIN U FRASER 1951 – 1954

Life goes on as usual, apart from becoming a year older. Nothing of note happened during 2011. All the best to everyone for 2012.

ALLAN GRANT

As I write this I am 5 days away from flying back to visit Scotland again, so hope the weather is kind! I am still working in the same school in Sydney (although many would question working!) and will see my working days out here. Luckily, I am still really enjoying the job and the students, although pretty streetwise, are good to work with. They love their sport and PE although I'm not teaching as much PE now as I also teach junior music. Diane broke her ankle in three places prior to Christmas last year and is just back to walking close to properly now after the usual physio etc. She is retired and thoroughly enjoys working in the garden and using the computer. Still see David Scott from Nethy very often as we are Godparents to both his sons and caught up with his brother Drew when he was over last Christmas. Thanks for keeping the magazine going. It is always good to read people's news. Until next time - G'day!

DR ALISTAIR (ALEC) GRANT 1957 – 1968

Working as a principal lecturer at the University of Brighton; teacher, writer, social researcher. One wife, two lovely grown-up daughters and a granddaughter and son-in-law. Brother Jimmy now lives in Hampshire. Nearly 60 and life is good!

BETTY GRANT (TEMPLETON)

Had a lovely holiday with the family in Majorca during the last 2 weeks in September. Came back home to enjoy exceptionally fine October and November. All gardening up-to-date and had a fair number of walks in the surrounding district in which we are fortunate to live. It was good to meet in with Jane Marshall recently. She was happy hearing about the whereabouts of her former school friends. She is very well and now lives in Gloucestershire. I have frequent telephone conversations with Mrs Isobel Spalding (Poppy Gunn) – she is always happy to hear news of her old home town and what is happening in the area. Her memory is pretty good. She looks forward to receiving the GGS FP magazine and to read news of FPs. She would love to see her old shop (M&C's) in which she was hairdresser, in business once more. She sends good wishes to all.

FIONA GRANT 1961 – 1974

Still working in Ophthalmic Eye Unit of Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. Still finding it a fascinating part of medicine after almost 30 years. No two days are the same. However, drawback now of too much paper work and not enough time in my clinic to see patients. Off to Majorca with Mum and Dad again in September. They love the pool and the heat.

SHELAGH M GRANT

Still working with British Midland Airways at Edinburgh Airport and enjoying the challenges it bring every day. Frequent holidays are an added plus.

PATRICK GRANT 1961 – 1967

Now 5 years into my (early) retirement I managed to drag the creaking body round the Lumphanan “de-tox” 10k on 2nd January 2011 – and have barely tried jogging since! However I am grateful to continue to be fit enough to climb hills; in July I accompanied my wife, Linda on her final Munro in the Fannaichs, aptly names A’Chailleach. Our little motorhome, which served us well earlier in the year in the Pyrenees and other parts of Spain and France proved just as adept at the top end of some Scottish glens – aye it’s a tough life being retired!

SALLY N GREENLEES (GRANT) 1964 –1976

Enjoyed the FP dinner in April at the Grant Arms. Many thanks to all those involved in running the FP Club and producing the magazine each year.

MRS KATHLEEN HARRIS (DUNN) 1956 – 1968

I hope all ex-classmates have enjoyed their “special” birthdays throughout this year! I retired from my teaching post this summer and, so far, am managing to fill my days (and evenings, with no preparation for the following day at school) quite successfully! My already retired friends are keen to advise me of all the “perks” on offer at various stores/garden centres etc with their special rates cards for those of a certain age!! We can even use our bus passes to get there!! Thanks for all the hard work producing the “mag” every year – lots of work but much appreciated and a great way of contacting other FPs.

MRS P.A.M. HIGGINS (PAM MacPHERSON) 1949 – 1956

All activities greatly curtailed this year, as I have been ill for several months with a bad bout of pneumonia. My husband Malcolm has done a fantastic job throughout, looking after me, the dogs and the household. My recovery has been very slow, but am now returning to good health.

GEORGE G ILLINGWORTH 1935 – 1939

George and Elaine now 54 years living at Delmore, Cupar, Fife. Three of a family – in Norway, Glasgow and Edinburgh and ten grandchildren.

JOHN IRVINE 1936 – 1948

Had cataracts removed from both eyes and find that colours have improved. Still getting about on my mobility scooter. Enclosed photograph is of boys in 1948 – left to right – James Hair, Michael Purdy, Jim Johnson, George Hamilton, self, John McDonald and John Duncan.



KATHRYN LINDSAY LAING 1952 – 1964

My family and I have just enjoyed another week in August at Carrbridge. Nicholas, my older son, has a time-share at Lochanhully and his family look forward to their yearly visit, from Somerset, with great enthusiasm. We were joined this year by Julian, my younger son, and two of his boys (twins) and a friend from his Dyce school days and young son, travelling in a very grand mobile home. They camped at Loch Morlich and had great fun boating and enjoying the facilities. We all met up at the Cairngorm Hotel for Sunday lunch (highly recommended) and then on to the steam train, belonging to Strathspey Steam Railways, for a very nostalgic trip to Broomhill and back to Aviemore. (Many a Saturday we travelled on the train, at the age of 8/9 years from Grantown to Aviemore to Miss Henschel's horses and ponies at Altnacriche, accompanied by June Anderson, her sister Heather (Bumps) my sister Jaclynn and possibly, for a short time, Gill Ross. Louise Collyer and her sisters also frequented Altnachriche) Sorry Louise we missed our reunion, this year! My family also had a great day out at "Landmark". The children adored the water slides, and I am pleased to report that I and youngest members succeeded in jumping off the 50 foot pole! We all had a great time in Strathspey, and the twins, when back in Old Windsor were sobbing to their mother saying "when are we going back to Scotland"? I met a few well kent faces and caught up with the news. Grantown is looking well and prosperous. Here's to the next Highland Holiday!

ELIZABETH MAIN (MacGILIVRAY)

Most of us believe that disaster etc. only happen to other people but never to us but I and my family found out differently. On Friday 5th March 2010 our shop premises, Beale & Pyper, was totally destroyed by a horrendous fire. It was frightening to stand and watch 50 years of our living going up in flames. I personally thought it was the end of our business. However one year later it "arose from the ashes" rebuilt and although the interior is changed, outwardly it remains the same as before. We have learned so much from this disaster, for example never to take life for granted and also the kindness and support from our customers, friends and the public has been very humbling. I, and the family, feel very blessed to be able to carry on our business in Grantown and friendship of all around.

IAN D MASSON

Started the year enjoying ski-ing with the girls, Elise and Natalie. We also did a kilt ski. Our holiday in Gran Canaria in April was wonderful with glorious sunshine. When we came back we sold our house and moved in with the in-laws while our new house is under construction. In May I was honoured to be RWM as Lodge Craigellachie 241 celebrated their 200th year. Start of June was a great family/friends get together for my birthday. Managed a week in Portugal in October – great weather to set us up for winter! Natalie has now joined her big sister Elise at school. Both have busy little lives with swimming, Brownies etc. Managed to play some golf and tennis when weather allowed.

MARGARET J MASSON (STUART)

Not a good start to the year with a nasty virus infection but improved greatly in July/August when I spent over 3 weeks in Vietnam visiting my granddaughter Kayleigh and her boyfriend Ryan. Ellen (my 11 year old granddaughter) came with me (not sure who looked after who!!) We flew to Paris then on to Singapore and spent a few days there where Kayleigh met us. Watched the Independence Day practice parade and firework display sitting by the sea. Also went on the Singapore Flyer. Then on to Vietnam where we travelled extensively going from the far north to the far south. The mountains at Sapa in the north were spectacular. The photographs we took don't do them justice. It was a very exciting holiday. Went on a cable car to an island holiday destination Natrang where the sea and swimming pools were so warm! Kayleigh and Ryan pulled out all the stops to make this a truly wonderful experience taking us to visit all the interesting and informative places. Now looking forward to seeing them home from Vietnam at Christmas along with grandson Kyle, Catti and great granddaughters from Australia.

BILL MITCHELL

Life is still treating me well, apart from the usual aches and pains. Enjoyed a visit recently from my great grandson Oliver, aged 4. Needed all my energy for that! Sent him home with a Scottish rowan tree from my garden to plant at his new house, to keep away bad luck! Tuesday mornings big four at the golf is still going strong – Norman Kinnaird, Raymond Davidson, John Grant and myself.

MRS ANN MURRAY (STEWART) 1959 – 1965

Continuing to enjoy retirement – how did I have time to work? Enjoy gardening, dog walking, yoga, zumba, country dancing, volunteering and an occasional day out with hubbie!

SIMON MACAULAY 1963 – 1969

Retired from Educational Institute of Scotland in May 2011. Now Honorary Teaching Fellow, University of Aberdeen. Executive member/field worker of Scotland-China Education network. Currently chairing Scottish Government Working Group on Languages.

GILBERT MACKAY 1949 – 1956

I have uploaded my Primary 5 class photographs, together with photographs of the GGS staff and another infant class, to the friendsreunited.co.uk website. Perhaps other FPs may be able to fill in names that I've omitted or mis-labelled.

RACHEL MACKAY (MacROBERT) 1964 – 1969

Retired from teaching last July. Best move I ever made. Retirement is terrific. I don't know how I managed to fit in work. Did get talked into teaching an evening class over the winter – thoroughly enjoyed that. Pupils wanted to be there and wanted to learn and no forward planning, exams, marking etc to do. Making the most of the opportunity to go on holiday outwith school holidays.

HANNAH McCOOK 2005 – 2011

I am now a student at Stirling University studying marketing and sport studies. I am lucky enough to be able to continue with my golf through the University. I have travelled Europe extensively this summer playing golf.

JOHN McCOOK 2003 – 2009

I am studying for an HND in Sports coaching and the Development of Sport at Aberdeen College. I am also currently working as a coach at Aberdeen Football Club.

SANDY McCOOK 1971 – 1977

Just completed six years as chairman of the Grantown Grammar School Parent Council, now chairman of the Former Pupils and Old Guard Clubs having taken over from Bill Templeton. Still covering the Highlands for the Press & Journal.

ELIZABETH M McCLELLAND (LAWRENCE) 1947 – 1952

Grandchildren growing up too quickly. Granddaughter Jenna goes to High School in August. She is one of the lucky ones going to a brand new school with a panoramic view of the Clyde. Grandson Jonathan is very keen on sports and had recently taken up golf. Maybe we'll have a new "Tiger Woods" in the future. Hope to go down south in August to visit my sister.

GORDON MacGREGOR 1938 – 1951

Retired in 1995 – Rector of Alyth High School. I am still on the "Fiddle" with the SFO (Scottish Fiddle Orchestra) and making lots of money for various charities. My son Ewan runs a computing and PR business. My daughter Lynn is head of Dept. of Home Economics, Blairgowrie High School and also a member of the SQA panel. Grandchildren Kirsty has her own Media Business in Glasgow; Gordon, the chef, has been in Thailand for six months, then Australia for a year working hotels. He has now been selected for a post in Gleneagles Hotel; Nicola has now been given a permanent post teaching mathematics in Arbroath High School; Lynsey will graduate this year Food and Nutrition advisory systems. Marjory, my wife and myself are always interested in Grantown.

MRS IRIS McINTOSH (FORBES) 1948 – 1961

When I received my magazine in December 2010 I put a memo in my 2011 calendar to send my contribution for this year's edition. The date I picked to write the said contribution was 30th June and as it is now 7th July I must exert some discipline and put pen to paper!! We have not been holidaying quite so much of late due to fact that our Westie, Corrie has now reached 13 years of age and is requiring lots of TLC. He has a surrogate mum who is so good to him but I want to be around to take care of him myself. We did manage three weeks in USA last October visiting West Virginia and Tennessee and I have been in Shropshire in May of this year – what a delightful part of the country. In September we head for Vancouver Island and on to Toronto to stay with friends for 2 weeks. Can't complain really, we still get around. Our grandchildren continue to thrive – Alistair is almost fourteen and about to enter his third year at Spalding Grammar School where he excels in sport. Ross will join him at the Grammar School in September hoping there will be loads of computers for him to "tinker" with as he has little or no interest in sport. Abigail will start P3 at Lhanbryde Primary in August and Freya will have her first taste of Nursery, again at Lhanbryde. "Old Father Time" certainly does not stop for a breather as he marches along!! Harry and I seem never to have time on our hands but we are fortunate we have no aches and pains to stop us in our tracks and for that we are so very grateful. The magazine seems a little "thinner" than I have experienced before! We need more Former Pupils to send in their "news" – always of interest to others although may seem trivial to themselves. Try harder folks or our magazine might not be able to survive. Best wishes to everyone

RANALD McINTYRE 1939 – 1943

Still busy with internet and research and contact with some friends old and new! Depreciation and running costs of the new car and caravan too high to be practical, therefore sold them both! Enjoy life by helping others.

KEITH McKERRON 1937 – 1940

A happy bonus this year was another trip to Australia to visit daughter in Melbourne. The use of a wheelchair between flights was gratefully received. Unhappily my younger sister Connie (Sports Champion of 1938) died at her home in Florida in July aged 85.

MICHAEL McTAGGART 1940 – 1947

Still enjoying life and seeing the world! Recently downsized and have yet to solve the problem of what to keep and what to take to the local rubbish dump. Family flourishing generally though I lost a granddaughter to cancer aged 28 and just married. Ventured north to Svalbard aboard a Dutch vessel this summer to find polar bears and whales.

ERNEST & AMELIA (EDWARDS) OAKES 1952 – 1957

Can hardly believe it's this time of year already. We never seem to have time to fit everything in. Summer time was busy as usual – visits from family and friends, golf and gardening. Mixed results in garden and on golf course – blaming the weather!

MARGERIE PATERSON (MACAULAY) 1969 – 1974

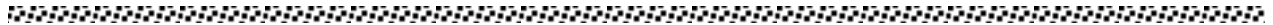
Still being kept busy supply teaching, bell ringing, trying to learn Gaelic and all that is involved with being a minister's wife! In my spare time, I enjoy gardening and walking. My main achievement this year was climbing Goat Fell on Arran.

MONA RAE (GRANT)

I have finally retired at the end of June and so far done not much other than babysitting my 2 wonderful grandchildren.

WILLIAM T REID 1952 – 1962

I am now retired as a Partner in my legal firm and enjoy 3 days a week as a Consultant. The hard core of university friends met to remember 45 years since graduation. Catriona and I celebrated our Ruby Wedding in company of our 3 sons and their wives/partner. Our daughter and her husband and 3 children still live in Melbourne, Australia. My brother Andrew still lives in Coventry. He is now grandfather to 4 grandchildren. We have 3 grandchildren by our daughter. The boys are lagging behind! My sister Elizabeth Beattie enjoys a well-earned retirement near Forres. She has 2 girls Claire and Jill in Glasgow and Dundee respectively.



Sing to 'My Favourite Things' from the film 'Sound of Music' – originally sung by Julie Andrews in 2011

*Botox and nose drops and needles for knitting,
Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings,
Bundles of magazines tied up in string,
These are a few of my favourite things.*

*Cadillacs and cataracts, hearing aids and glasses,
Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses,
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings,
These are a few of my favourite things.*

*When the pipes leak, when the bones creak,
When the knees go bad,
I simply remember my favourite things,
And then I don't feel so bad.*

*Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads for bunions,
No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions,
Bathrobes and heating pads and hot meals they bring,
These are a few of my favourite things.*

*Back pain, confused brains and no need for sinnin',
Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinnin',
And we won't mention our short shrunken frames,
When we remember our favourite things.*

*When the joints ache, when the hips break,
When the eyes grow dim,
Then I remember the great life I've had,
And then I don't feel so bad.*



DAPHNE RITCHIE (DUNCAN)
My year in pictures...

JANUARY - Still a bit of snow in the valley



FEBRUARY – Some sunny days for sunbathing



MARCH – The stick shed was full, so we had to start a new pile...

APRIL – A visit to Ferring and Littlehampton to visit Stephen's Aunt



Here's another regular visitor to the garden
←

Fine weather for cycling in Glenmore



MAY – A weekend in Aboyne on Deeside

Eggs in my bird box



JUNE – babies



JULY – A weekend in Dundee and St Andrews,



and rain at home



The Scottish Open at Castle Stuart,
The Open on television,
Maree's wedding at North Queensferry



AUGUST – A job as photographer at the farmers' show



SEPTEMBER – New windows in the house and a bit of hill-walking



OCTOBER – Alistair McKenzie's daughter, Pam's wedding in Elgin. Holidays to Arnhem, Maastricht, Brussels, Ypres and Bruges with the McKenzies.



NOVEMBER – Fine mild weather and Walter Jones's wedding celebrations in the Golf Club where I met up with John Shand – our class mate from Mackay's Restaurant in the Square. Hadn't seen him since our schooldays!

DECEMBER – The start of the snow again...



DAVIS ROBERTSON (THOMSON) 1951 – 1964

As Wilma (Watt) mentioned in her news in last year's magazine, we try to meet up annually at her daughter's in Germany. Also, as she said, two university friends and I went to the Passion Play at Oberammergau in September. We decided we'd better go in 2010 as who knows what state we would be in, in 10 years time!! As anyone who has witnessed this spectacle will tell you, it really was an experience of a lifetime. This year as a proper "retirement" treat to myself, a friend and I are doing "The Rockies Tour" and sail to Alaska in September. I'd planned so many things for retirement but never seem to have enough time to do all but a few!! Best wishes to the F.P. committee and thank you for your commitment to ensuring the continuity of the eagerly looked forward to magazine each year.

ALEX ROSS 1950 – 1960

Now fully retired! Grandchild number 5 arrived in July 2010 so kept busy. Visited Grantown and Nethy frequently over the past year but still looking for sunshine! Kept busy on my allotment especially at this time of year.

PATRICIA H ROSS (MacDONALD)

Over for a wedding at Grantown, staying at Hamish MacDonald's till Friday.

WALTER ROSS 1946 – 1958

Visited New Zealand and Australia for 8 weeks last winter. Wonderful countries. Would love to go again but it is a very long flight. Going to South America this coming winter for a few weeks.

BARBARA STOREY (SMITH) 1969 – 1975

It is very strange and sad not having any family living in Grantown any more but I still love coming back and fortunately so do the rest of my family. We have been up twice this year – the first time – early May when the weather was beautiful and the countryside was looking idyllic, the second in August when you would hope the weather should be good, I had five layers of clothing on as we toured the north east coast and watched the dramatic storm waves breaking over the harbour walls of the coastal villages. I still continue as HE Manager with Booker Tate but have managed to negotiate a change to a 4 day week. After 24 years working full time without a break it is wonderful to have a day off in the week to catch up on all those jobs you never get round to. This year has also seen a new addition to our family – one rescue dog, Aris. We thought a rescue dog would be easier than starting again with a puppy – how wrong could we be! However, after hours of agility training lessons and lots of patience and perseverance we have gradually got to know each other and he has become a well behaved and much loved member of the family.

CARL & LAURA STEWART (FINDLAY)

Both working hard (Carl at Dicksons in Forres and Laura at the Sports Centre). Have just had a great weekend in Dundee. Bradley enjoyed seeing his Auntie Sian. Be nice for him to see his Australia cousins at Christmas. He enjoys seeing his cousin Ben in Aberdeen and Elise and Natalie in Grantown so we'll see how he gets on with his little girl cousins.

NEIL STUART 1951 – 1963

Have celebrated my 65th birthday but still await my first pension! We had 62 people here for a family celebration and the sun stayed out all day. We do like to get up to Grantown now and again with the caravan. Much of our time is spent with our 3 grandchildren. I keep busy with the Edinburgh Concert Band and a local brass band – playing percussion. We hope to be off to Austria this month (September) to a wedding – a long drive – visiting friends in Holland en route. Glad to be feeling healthy again and looking forward to coming north sometime.

THOMAS B STUART 1937 – 1950

Celebrated our Golden Wedding in March with a city break to Berlin (a present from our children) where we were stationed with the RAF in the early seventies. Much changed but many happy memories re-lived. My sister Helen is now in Grandview Nursing Home in Grantown (the old Palace Hotel in the High Street). How long she will stay there is uncertain but although frail she is still very mentally alert. We have several holidays planned for the coming year so will bore you with the details in the next issue of the magazine.

ELSPIT SUTHERLAND (McINTOSH) 1945 – 1947

Have been quite ill for some time due to severe allergy to medication. Haven't done anything exciting – got to know several doctors in hospitals and a very good impression of N.H.S. I wish you every success. The committee is doing a good job.

MAREE THOMPSON 1989 – 1995

After leaving Edinburgh in 2002 and spending 2.5 years in Frankfurt, Germany with Standard Life, I ended up with Clerical Medical in Maastricht, Netherlands in September of 2004. Over the 6 years, in various positions, I ended my stint with CMI as IT Vendor Manager International Financial Services, working in both Heidelberg (Germany) and Maastricht. In 2010, redundancy and pregnancy/birth followed. On July 20th, 12 days overdue, our daughter Olivia was born at 19.37 hours weighing in at 3165 grams (just under 7lbs for you non-metrics), after a bit of drama with my water breaking in the supermarket, and a c-section and operation as the wee monkey decided not to turn round due to a large fibroid taking up space. On December 26th 2010, Vic proposed and I of course said “yes”. After a few months at home with the baby, in February 2011, I got a new job and started working full time with Vodafone Netherlands as Senior Contract and SLA Manager. On July 23rd 2011, Vic and I (unofficially) tied the knot, with a fabulous party in the Queensferry Hotel. There is a funny video on YouTube of my brother Gareth's speech (YouTube search: MareeThompson78) if you want to hear some terrible jokes and have a laugh at his pastoral certificate and conducting the ceremony with monster munch, onion rings and some creative vows. Officially we will get married at some point in the next year in Maastricht City Hall, due to a little bit of a delay in getting Vic's birth certificate from British Guyana (West Indies/South America) and the amount of paperwork it requires for non-Dutch nationals to get married in the country. As I am working full time, and my Mum Kate is now retired, she has moved over to Maastricht to take up a new “job” of looking after Olivia. So there is lots of work being done on the house, renovating the bathroom, making a granny flat in the attic and adding an additional bathroom. It keeps Vic very busy in his spare time. At 13 months Olivia is walking/running around. She has a varied vocabulary ranging from “dirty shoes” to “hide”. Like all proud parents she is the prettiest, funniest person in our lives.

SHEINA WESTON (DONALDSON) 1944 – 1951

I enjoyed the magazine as usual. My contribution this year is not very exciting. We have spent a lot of time looking after our twin granddaughters aged 6 while their parents fly off to meetings in Europe with their work. The only snag is they live in Stamford, 200 miles away! We had a pleasant trip exploring the East Neuk of Fife in June. September will be busy as we are having a short visit from my brother Keith and his wife, Gay, last seen in 2006. Then we visit Roy's brother and wife near Avignon in France. Then comes the winter season when even more Bridge is played!

KAY WILSON (ROSS) 1976 – 1981

Had an operation on my left foot in June to fuse the joint on big toe. Off work all summer with no driving, to enable it to heal. Craig moves out so stress free life at the moment. He will be 20 in October. Cameron is now 16 and has done well at school. Coming back to Grantown is now so different without my Dad – miss him so much and worry about Mum.

JOHN WRIGHT (HERBERT JOHN) 1931 - 1940

I can relate to those good folk who say they have nothing to report. I think that what they mean to say is that they do not believe they have anything to say of interest to readers ... I am in the same boat. The last year has been a difficult one. The sudden loss of one's longtime partner (almost 60 years) is not easy to cope with, as you will agree. It's quite an adjustment, but with the aid of family, some good friends and a microwave, I have been able to cope fairly well. I was advised not to contemplate moving or take any such major decision for at least a year, and to accept any and all invitations to meals, theatre or whatever... This turned out to be good advice, and I have been to the theatre several times and have lost count of the number of (nonmicro) meals I have had! There are several community theatres within an hour's drive, chief among them being the Stratford Festival Theatre, which brings in busloads of folk from all over the province, and from the USA. Apart from this theatre there are four others under the same organisation... in fact their recent claim is to be the largest repertory theatre group in the world! I have been there twice this year (Camelot & Merry Wives of Windsor) and will go in November to see Jesus Christ Super

Star. In short I am picking up the pieces as best I can, and trying to make the best of the time I have left!

STANLEY WRIGHT 1942 - 1953

Address change – we will be moving on 5th September to Maple House, 5 Ainstey Drive, Sparkford, Somerset BA22 7JT

NEW RECRUITS

Greg Lawrence, 10 Castle Road East, Career intentions - Engineer

Hannah McCook – see entry

OBITUARY (We apologise for any omissions)

J Wishart Milne

Kenneth I McIntosh

Mrs J D Hogg (Jean Cruickshank)

Isobel Orford (Calder)

Dr Alexander L Gordon (Sandy 1935 – 2011) (see contribution below)

Sandy died suddenly and unexpectedly on October 17th, 2011 in Winnipeg, Canada. The middle brother in a family of three, Angus being the eldest and Grant the youngest, Sandy was Dux of the school in 1952. He continued his academic studies at the University of Aberdeen, graduating M.A. Honours in French and German. This was followed by successful completion of a Licence and Doctorate at the Paris Sorbonne University.

In 1961 Sandy emigrated to Canada where he spent his whole career teaching French at the University of Manitoba. He was as successful in teaching as he was in research and publications. His career was honoured by the Palmes Academiques (France) and by the title Professor Emeritus (University of Manitoba).

Sandy had wide and varied interests ranging from making fine furniture to watercolour painting. In retirement he became devoted to crossword puzzles, sudoku and learning Gaelic! Throughout his fifty years in Canada he never lost his love for his Scottish roots returning regularly to Strathspey to visit relatives and friends, many of whom were his old school chums.

Full of wit and joviality, behind which was a basic seriousness and a devotion to duty, Sandy was held in the highest regard by his students, one of whom paid tribute to him “as an inspirational teacher, supportive thesis advisor, and enthusiastic Francophile who made French language and culture come alive... Above all, I will remember him as a sensitive, caring, gentle human being.”

SYMPATHETIC MENTION TO

Alexis Milne and her sister, Lindsay, on the death of their mum, Rona (see contribution below)

Pupils and staff at Grantown Grammar School were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of staff member, Mrs Rona Milne, who passed away on Wednesday 17 August. Rona played a key role in the operations of the school for 21 years through her work in the school office. Rona was highly skilled in the use of our various IT systems and did the clerical support for our work related to pupil options and timetables, the exam system, reporting to parents and photocopying. The loss of her expertise in these areas will be felt for a long time to come. As our designated first aider, Rona provided an excellent level of care and support to pupils whenever they were sick or injured.

But Rona's contribution to the school community went well beyond her job description. Rona was a central figure in the life of the school and the school was a central part of her life. Rona, who spent many years as Clerk to the School Board, has made an enormous contribution over the years and has always fully supported a range of school events. Rona, a beautiful singer and a member of our staff choir, particularly enjoyed listening to our musicians and always loved coming along to our school concerts and shows.

Rona was a very special person. A lovely lady, who was caring, determined and always calm in a crisis. She will be missed immensely.

MEMORIES of REVACK (1934 – 1955)
Written by Anne Knight (Grant)
Part 3 (Final part) - The L.N.E.R. Railway Station

There was a path from the cottage down to the Railway Station where the lady and her husband in the little grocery shop made ice-cream. My brother and I would run down clutching a penny to partake of this wonderful treat. The station was also where we were kitted out with our gasmasks for the war. These we had to carry to school every day. The station master, who incidentally was a great fiddler, had a small dynamo rigged up down by the river Spey and for the sum of six old pennies he would charge up our batteries for our wireless. There were several trains in a day and the one o'clock whistle was taken by father as a signal to go home for his dinner. The farm horses working in the fields would also recognise the five o'clock whistle as time for knocking off. By comparison public transport was far superior then than it is today. It was possible to go to Aberdeen, Elgin, Forres, Nairn, Aviemore etc. from Grantown by rail from two stations and the trains stopped at all the little stations in between. Goods also arrived by rail and were transported to the town by horse and cart. One particular carter chewed tobacco and in the snow he would leave his mark at intervals all the way to Grantown (no spittoon on the cart!!) If you wanted to send a couple of hares, rabbits or whatever to your friend down the line all you had to do was tie a label to one leg and off it went on the train. ("Health and Safety" hadn't been invented). You could also do the same by post! Day-old chicks too came by train. Father would augment our flock of hens when necessary. There were several other families living round the station area.

The Dog's Grave

On the moor, just over the wall from the Restaurant there is a lone tree, which had been fenced off at one time. This is where one of the gentry buried a little dog.

The Head Gamekeeper

Mr McLaren, Head Gamekeeper, was lame, having been wounded in the first war. His injury however, did not affect his tongue, as he was so loquacious that he used almost a whole box of matches every time he lit his pipe!! He was also one of the first to own a car (with a dickey seat) and his first attempt to drive (no driving lessons or tests required then) resulted in him ending up in a rhododendron bush!! Mrs McLaren was a school teacher in Grantown. She was tall, thin and very prim and proper and stood absolutely no nonsense from her pupils. Neither did most of the other teachers; consequently no pupil left Grantown school without a good grounding in the three R's at the very least!! Mrs McLaren was also very house-proud (no children) and she must have given her husband a hard time occasionally as he used to say "Some people wouldn't be happy in Paradise." He said it as a joke but I think there was a grain of truth in there somewhere. Many of the farms round about were tenanted by families by the name of Grant and to distinguish between them they were known by their farm name. One such farmer who had also been wounded in the first war and had one leg much shorter than the other (we tend to forget the sacrifices these men made) heard that Mr McLaren was indisposed and decided to pay him a visit. They had never been very friendly so this seemed a real act of neighbourly compassion. However he confessed afterwards that he only called to make sure that Mr McLaren was well and truly housebound so that he could go off and do a bit of poaching!

After the War

When the troops all left, the whole place became over-run with rats. However, once they had eaten all the leftover food that must have been lying around, they soon disappeared – helped on their way to the next world by Mr McLaren sitting by the archway with his shotgun. There were a few well-known names came to shoot after the war, the most famous being the Crown Prince of Luxembourg. Each tenant brought their own staff – cook, butler, off-job man, maids and chauffeur etc. They also brought their own vehicles and I can remember going to the Braemar Games in the Palmer-Tomlinson shooting brake.

The Christmas Parties

During the fifties the Seafeld Estate would throw a Christmas Party for all their employees. There was loads of food and of course the drink flowed freely. This was too good to be true for some ("Wow!! Free whisky? – we must make the most of this folks!!") and, needless to say, they over-indulged to the extent that they became separated from their false teeth. A search ensued the following day. We never knew if they were all found or not. After all, it's not something one would

wish to broadcast next day when sober!!! After one of such parties my brother Donnie found an unopened bottle of booze in a rabbit hole. Whoever had hidden it must have become too drunk to remember where he put it!

The Broody Hen

One year the Head Gamekeeper (a Mr Douglas by this time) needed a broody hen to hatch some chickens, so we lent him one of ours. After she had done her duty she was duly dispatched back home. However, she refused to stay at home and kept going back. In the end we exchanged her for a cairn terrier!!

This tale ends in 1955 when Father sadly passed away and we moved into Grantown.



Grantown Grammar School Staff – 1977

THE WEE KIRK MOOSE

A puir wee kirk moose aw forlorn
Its furry coat fair sairly worn
Sank doon upon its boney knees
An prayed – for jist a wee bit cheese.

The tears ran doon its wee thin cheeks
But nane could hear its saddest squeaks
That drifted on the cauld nicht air
Till whiles it couldnae pray nae mair.

Syne daylight cam. The kirk bells rang
The doors swung open wi' a bang
Communion Day had come oan bye
Wi' wine an' plates o' breid piled high.

The wee moosie lay as still as daith
An' watched it aw wi' bated breath
Then thocht, "if I keep sae awfu quate
A bit micht jist fa' aff the plate".

And so it gazed as roon they went
Then jist as tho' twas Heaven sent
Whit landed richt upon its heid
But twa lumps of communion breid.

The staff o' life lay on the flair
Then, bounteous answer tae his prayer
Jist as he thocht "it looks fell dry"
Ae body cowped some wine forebye.

Wee moosie stoated up the aisle
Wearing sic a boozie smile
The fowk stopped singin' – fair aghast
Tae see a moosie stagger past.

The organist fell aff her chair
The meenister could only stare
Tae see a drunken, sinfu' moose
Cavorting in his sacred hoose.

At last it staggered up the nave
Then turned and gi'ed a happy wave
"I ken noo when its time to pray
I'll dae it oan Communion Day!"

Contributed from 'Bridges', the Inverallan Church
of Scotland magazine
