

Communicate with Us

We love to hear from you, our members. Whether it is news and updates, requests for information or to purchase tickets to one of our events.

The Former Pupils' Guild of The Mary Erskine School, Ravelston, Edinburgh, EH4 3NT

Call us on : +44 (0) 131 347 5722 or email us at fpguild@esms.org.uk.

We are also on social media with the majority of our interaction taking place on Facebook. To join the page, please visit:



facebook.com/mesfpguild

twitter.com/mesfpguild



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What's New for 2019

Welcome to the latest, and updated edition of our FP News.

The end of 2018 was busy and full of change for the Guild Committee as we successfully ran our Christmas Fair; concluded another year with our AGM and welcomed a new FP Guild Coordinator.

Our Christmas Fair, now a firm fixture in the School calendar, gives the Committee and members a chance to work with the wider School community. A variety of stalls, Santa's Grotto and our ever popular annual raffle were accompanied by a Great MES Bake-Off and a photobooth. We successfully raised just over £3300 which was split between our FP Gap Year Fund (more on that later); The Chesney Trust and Access to Excellence.

I also had the pleasure of accepting the role of President from Mrs. Rachel Sneddon (Class of 1996), who I would like to thank wholeheartedly on behalf of all Former Pupils for her work over the last two years. Rachel brought a sense of glamour to our events with her amazing design abilities.

Ms. Sam Roger joined us as the FP Guild Coordinator. Sam will be working in the office on a Tuesday, so please direct any queries to her.

Your Committee is working hard on events and activities for 2019. Our broad membership base makes it often difficult to meet the needs of all of our members. These include ladies from Queen Street Girls; those who went to Ravelston; those for whom school days consisted 100% of girls to those who shared classes with our colleagues at Stewart's Melville (and we will not even mention the variations in the School Song!). Rest assured, however, that we have something for everyone – a Spring Lunch, a tour of the Ravelston Grounds or even a little shopping at our Fair.

Please let us know how we can help you keep communications open between you and your peers, and if you are curious about the changing School Song, come along to the Summer Reunion to find out!

I look forward to meeting you and hearing your stories of your school days at our events in the coming months.



Claire Cunningham

President and Class of 1997.



Mitis et Fortis

Your Committee

The beating heart of the Guild is definitely the Committee and the outlying members who join in to assist at events throughout the year. Their humour, hardwork, professionalism and dedication, and not to mention home-baking, makes being a part of the committee enjoyable:

Ms. Claire Cunningham (1997) - *President.*

VACANCY (Vice-President)

Mrs. Rachel Sneddon nee.

Brown (1996) - *Immediate Past President.*

Mrs. Claire Thompson nee.

Maxwell (1987) - *Honorary Treasurer.*

Committee Members:

Mrs. Susan Murray nee. Anderson (1983)

Ms. Mhairi McLeod (1988)

Ms. Dorothy Webster (1971)

Ms. Fiona Lawrence (1980)

Ms. Laura Willis (2005)

Mrs. Rachel Moriarty nee Roberts (2004)

Ms. Libby Garlick (2013)

Guild Coordinator

Ms. Sam Roger

Additional Thanks:

Mrs. Olive Skinner and Mrs. Noel Proven whose assistance at events is greatly appreciated alongside Mrs. Christine Collingwood and Mrs. Dorothy Sharp for their work with the archives.

Would you like to join our committee, assist with our pastoral items or even help out at the various events throughout the year? Please let us know.



We understand that not everyone lives in Edinburgh and travel to our events can be a costly affair. Our Branch clubs are set up to help you keep in touch in regions throughout the UK and beyond.

Tayside Group

Although small in number, this has not let this deter them in the organisation of three lunch meetings in 2019. Each time, meeting at 12 noon.

Monday June 17th 2019

The Joinery Coffee Shop, Meigle.

and

Monday 21st October 2019

Red House Hotel, Coupar Angus.

We vary meeting places to suit members travelling from a wide area.

For more details on the Tayside Group, please contact Elspeth Halliday:

elspeth.halliday3@btinternet.com

Borders Group

The Borders Group meet around three times a year, with both lunch and afternoon tea options. For further information, please contact Nancy Noble, at 01896-752724.

Highlands Group

The Highlands Branch centre their meetings around two lunches during the year, generally autumn and spring. The last event taking place in Inverness on 16th November 2018 at The North Kessock Hotel, Inverness.

“We welcome FP’s to our event who are living or even visiting the area”

Due to difficulty with logistics, the Highlands spanning such a large area, and recent feedback there is a suggestion that the next lunch in April will take place on the other side of the Beaully Firth and on a Friday.

For more information, please email Mrs. Sheila Crosby who would be delighted to hear from new attendees sheilacrosby30@yahoo.com

Manchester Group

The Manchester Group has not been active recently and due to having only two members has effectively closed. We can easily arrange an event should you wish to get in touch.

Local Branch Events

Less travel time, more social time – where are the branches near you?

London Group

Many of our members have met up for lunch at a convenient location for a chance to network. For details of the next event, a brunch on 30 March 2019 please contact Ros Toynbee: ros@thecareercoach.co.uk. There is also a WhatsApp Group which we can provide you with details of.

Summer Reunion

Although we focus on groups celebrating 10, 20, 30 etc. years since graduating, we welcome all ladies to our Summer Reunion and can often be a good chance to meet with friends from all over the world. Why not celebrate your 6th, 29th or 57th year since leaving by getting your friends organised for lunch and a catch up at the reunion? Tickets details are available on page 4.

Aberdeen Group

Mrs. Rosie Perry has details of the next event for the Aberdeen Branch and can be contacted on: rosieperry@btinternet.com

If you are interested in getting together with fellow FP’s contact us.



Dr Iain Scott: Retiring in 2019

Iain Scott, Director of Sixth Form at ESMS, has intimated that he is to retire from ESMS at the end of the August 2019, after 40 years of distinguished service to our schools.

Iain has shown steadfast loyalty and commitment to our schools. As Director of Sixth Form, his professional reputation in Edinburgh and beyond is of the highest standing. Thousands of former pupils have benefited from Iain's wisdom, knowledge and guidance. Please share with us any memories you have of Dr Scott.

Your Memories

One thing we all share is our memories of school, whether you are a Queen Street or Ravelston girl. We asked some of our members for their memories:

"Prize-giving whether in the Usher Hall or when Junior prize-giving was at the Assembly Rooms - the happy memories of the school march and staff saying "Left, Left" as pupils made their way to their seats."

"The staple diet in the MES lunch hall of chips and pink iced doughnuts, until the new menus came into play."

"Queen Street, the lady who came with her pony and the 'Hurdy Gurdy' (organ grinder), a fascinating site which pupils were drawn to. Sometimes she had a small Capuchin monkey with her, which sat on the top of the organ."

"Having to kneel down in front of Mrs. Rolls to ensure that your kilt was the right length....then standing up, going round the corner and rolling your kilt back up again!"

And who can forget running along the Admin corridor as a short cut!

Questions from the Archives – answered by Christine Collingwood

Q: What are the yellow flowers on our logo?

A: The Former Pupils Guild has its very own crest. Very similar to the school badge that we know and love but is surrounded by branches of Broom.

Broom has long been the emblem of the Merchant Company. It is seen as very appropriate due to its sturdy roots, vigorous growth and abundant flowering. It was according to Lydia Skinner's book: *'Associated alike with the Erskine's of Mar and with the old Merchant Company tradition'*. The stock of Broom is used at Merchant Company functions.

It was well known that broom was very much loved by one of the Headmistresses, Mary Clarke (1914-1924.)

The record that she had fond childhood memories of Queen Victoria's Jubilee when all the windows at the front of the school were covered in Broom.

Please email fpguild@esms.org.uk with your questions for the Archives team.



GDPR Update Your Details

As part of our GDPR compliance, we are ensuring that all data we have for our members is up to date. Please let us know if your email or home address has changed in the last twelve months. Please update via email or via our website contact us form, and select the dropdown for 'Personal Details Update'.

Did you know? Gap Year Fund

The MES FP Guild Gap Year Fund was set up in 2010. It enables the Guild to support former pupils who are considering undertaking a worthwhile project. Other than in exceptional cases, no more than £500 will be disbursed annually so that the Fund can be built up for the future, with a minimum grant of £50 and a maximum grant of £300 per applicant. Applications from current pupils in S5 or S6 (and from FP's who are doing a Gap year immediately on leaving University) will be considered.



Previous recipients have included Kathryn Lennon (class of 2014) who spent time as a volunteer with the Christian Care Foundation for Children with Disabilities (CCD) in Thailand.

Upcoming Events

- **Spring Lunch – Saturday 13 April 2019 – 11.45am**

Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society is the location for our next Spring Lunch. This event is a firm fixture on our calendar. Free parking and the lovely surroundings of the Golf Club add to the ease and informal setting of this three course lunch.

Tickets are £22 for members and £24 for non-members.

- **Act of Remembrance – Friday 7 June 2019 – 2pm**

The Act of Remembrance occurs at 2pm at Greyfriars Kirkyard and is followed by Afternoon Tea (paid for on the day). The Act of Remembrance is **free for all to attend**.

- **Summer Reunion – Saturday 8 June 2019 – 10am**

We would like to invite you back to school to catch up with your classmates, have a tour around Ravelston and enjoy some lunch. The day begins at 10am with tea or coffee, followed by tours and a year group photo. Enjoy a glass of fizz ahead of a short performance from the school choir and a chance to sing the School Song. Several year groups go on to celebrate at night. If you require some assistance in organising an evening event for your year group, please contact us. **Tickets are £22 per member and £25 per non-member.**

- **Christmas Fair – Saturday 9 November 2019– 10am**Provisional Date****

Join us and over 30 stallholders as we enter into the festive period with a little shopping, visit to Santa's Grotto, some tasty homebaking and a chance to win some fabulous raffle prizes, **Tickets are available on the door, £3 per adult and children under 16 are free.** Everybody is welcome to attend.

Contact Details

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Order Form (Should you wish a physical ticket, please include a stamped addressed envelope with your order)

Please select the box for which event(s) you wish to attend and indicate the tickets required:

Spring Lunch (£22 tickets: ___ / £24 tickets: ___) **Act of Remembrance** (No. of tickets: ___) **Summer Reunion** (£20 tickets: ___ / £24 tickets: ___)

Title: _____ First Name: _____ Surname: _____ Maiden Name: _____

Class of: _____ Address: _____

_____ City: _____ Post Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Listing your email is optional but authorises us to contact you via email for future emails.

If purchasing tickets for others, please give full name, maiden name and 'class of' details:

Dietary Requirements: _____

Payment Details: Payment by Cheque Payment by BACS (*please tick*) **Payment Date:** _____

Send the completed booking form with a cheque made payable to "MES FP Guild" to the FP Guild Office, The Mary Erskine School, Ravelston, Edinburgh, EH4 3NT or alternatively, submit the payment via BACS to The Mary Erskine School Former Pupils' Guild, **Bank of Scotland, Sort Code: 80 02 78 Account No: 00683950**. Please use your name and the year you left school as a reference. Please then email us with details of your booking including the date you made payment.