



MARY ERSKINE FORMER PUPILS GUILD

MES FP News

ISSUE 21
OCTOBER 2019

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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](https://www.facebook.com/mesfpguild)

twitter.com/mesfpguild

[instagram.com/mesfpguild](https://www.instagram.com/mesfpguild)

NOTICE OF AGM:

Thursday 21 November
7.30pm, The Dean,
Ravelston Terrace,
Edinburgh, EH4 3EF



Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter

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

We have been very busy since our last newsletter in March way back in the spring. We have held events such as the Act of Remembrance, the Summer Reunion for our FP's and celebrated the next chapter of girls into our Guild with the Strawberries and Champagne event and the gift presentation during their Prizegiving Ceremony.

We received very positive feedback regarding our Reunion, and it was wonderful to hear how appreciated our Committee are following their hard work and dedication to the event. The food and drink was spectacular, as always, and the S1 and S2 choir, led by Mr. Chenery and Mr. Matthews, ensured there was some order to the singing of the school song. I am not going to admit which version I preferred!

We attended the opening of Yotel, the new hotel in Queen Street, and were delighted to see the plaque remains on the wall. We did enquire about the Chopin plaque and we are still awaiting a reply. For those wondering, in 1848, Fryderyk Chopin gave his final concert in the Hopetoun Rooms.

We have also welcomed our new S6 Representatives to the committee, Emily, Amelia, Stefani, Aamani, Katie and Katie. They have a tough act to follow from last year's girls who were the true

embodiment of Mary Erskine Girls – very helpful, polite, and they approached every task with grace and good humour. Thank you to Caitin, Emma, Aileas and Lucy.

As the year comes to a close, we will be hosting our Annual General Meeting at the new location of The Dean. our Annual Winter Lunch at The Bruntsfield Golf Course and our Winter Coffee Morning, details of which are on the last page.

This year we have also taken the opportunity to ensure that our activities match those laid out in our Constitution. We have decided to not run the Christmas Fair anymore and instead ensure we are meeting the needs of members across the spectrum which includes working closely with the FP Club at Stewart's Melville to run a joint event.

Please let us know how we can help you keep communications open between you and your peers and 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)

Guild Coordinator:

Ms. Sam Roger

Additional Thanks:

Thank you to Mrs. Christine Collingwood and Mrs. Dorothy Sharp for their work with the archives.

Thank you also to the Borders Club who donated £95 towards the funds raised following our Christmas Fair 2018.

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



*The cloakroom pegs
are empty now,
And locked the classroom door,

The hollow desks
are lined with dust,
And slow across the floor

A sunbeam creeps
between the chairs
Till the sun shines no more.

- Philip Larkin*

Your Memories

At each of our events, we host a memory tree. Starting at the sixth year Strawberries and Champagne event, we welcome the girls to leave memories of their school days which we store and will bring them out at their 10 year reunion.

From sitting with the plants in the art department to the first year the Sixth year Pavilion was opened, we all have memories of our time at Mary Erskine's. Some of these memories are little stories, some merely one word. We are pretty sure that the word "Carbisdale" can bring up a hoard of memories all on its own. Here are some more memories which have been shared with us:

Staff

The formidable Miss Jennings who could bring a shudder to many a former pupil; the wonderful Dr Doreen Waugh who made English a pleasure; and the Fifty Shades of David Gray. Every teacher had their fans and their opposers but what they did was share with us their wisdom and teachings.

Exams

"If the postman hadn't come before you left for school, you had to go to a room and once everyone was there, Miss Jennings read out your results (and made comments about them.) All rather stressful!"
(Fiona Allan).

School Uniform

The introduction of the kilt brought with it a mix in uniform until it was fully integrated. Some hung onto the navy skirt for as long as they could and others were quick to adopt it. *"My parents bought me the kilt immediately and I remember hating it as I had gone from a slightly short skirt to a maximum length kilt so I could grow into it!"*

School Lunches

"In the 1950s it was vats of rabbits boiling on the stove in the dining hall in Queen Street. We were considered lucky having meat!" Dorothy Morrison remembers, which was a far cry from the *"Baked beans with cheddar and chips"* that Irene Hoel remembers or Marion Bell's *"chips and pizza on a Friday."*

Memories and Photographs

Please do send us your memories and photographs that we can share with the ladies of the Guild. In the words of Baz Luhrman, "In 20 years you'll look back at photos of yourself and recall in a way you can't grasp now how much possibility lay before you and how fabulous you really looked..."

We promise to remember *"the excitement of seeing everybody dressed up for the Christmas Ball..."* and not judge on those questionable outfits or hairstyles, we know you were *"on-trend!"*



Christmas Fair 2019

We have decided not to run the Christmas Fair this year and focus on improving Guild Communications.

We have split the funds raised at previous Fairs between Access to Excellence Fund; our Gap Year Fund and The Chesney Trust. We will be assessing ways in which we can contribute to these causes via other means.

Joint SMC FP Event

Many of our FPs have expressed an interest in attending a joint event with the boys club as many spent their school days in a co-educational environment. We are working with the team at Inverleith to confirm an event and will let you know as soon as we can.

Dr Iain Scott - Update

We presented Dr. Iain Scott, Director of Sixth Form at ESMS with a gift on behalf of the FP Guild at the S6 Strawberries and Champagne event. This small token of our appreciation consisted of some chocolates, a little wine and a booklet of your memories which was very well received.

Prizegiving 2019

We were delighted to attend S4-S6 Prizegiving this year where FP Tamsyn McLean achieved her lifetime ambition of being the guest speaker. Tamsyn passionately spoke about defining yourself by what you like, not what you are like, not worrying about 'having it all' and understanding that success is mainly determination, luck and most of all, being kind.



Development Office Events

London Meeting

On Saturday 12 October 2019, the Development office organised a catch up for Mary Erskine Alumni at Drake & Morgan in Pancras Square. For more information on future Development Office events in London, please contact the Development Office on 0131 311 1131 or on development@esms.org.uk.



Did you know?

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.

This year we offered a tour of the School where you can compare your memories with the excellent facilities the girls have (or even just visit the toilets, a popular destination on our tours!!); a chance to dress up at our school themed photobooth area; a lunch and gossip with your friends and a chance to view our archives and see that Merchant Maiden you forgot you were in!!

Why not celebrate your 6th, 18th or 67th year since leaving by getting your friends organised for lunch and a catch up at the Reunion?

From the Archives... by Mrs Christine Collingwood

Q: Where are the FP Guild Archives stored?

A: The Guild's Archives are stored at school, mainly in a shared room on the lower floor of Ravelston House.

Documentation includes minutes, reports and other records, contributions from Former Pupils to the Guild of photographs, slides, uniform, needlework, medals, badges and books (some were school prizes); copies of Merchant Maidens through the years are also a valuable resource for research.

In the Erskine Room in the main school building you will find some of the Guild's furniture and items on display, including framed memorabilia. Furniture can also be found in the Principal's study and a number of medals and sports badges are on display in the 'Schools' Exhibition' at the Merchants' Hall, Hanover Street.

Digital material is retained by the Guild Coordinator. There is an inventory of items and a protocol for the preservation of all the Guild's historic material.

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

Upcoming Events

Annual General Meeting - Thursday 21 November 2019 - 7.30am

It is your chance to view the latest edition to the ESMS estate -The Dean - and attend our Annual General Meeting. You are welcome to join us complete the business of the day, hear in a little more detail what we have been doing; enjoy some light refreshments and see the building.

Winter Lunch - Saturday 7 December 2019 - 11.45am

Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society is the location for our next Winter 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 with a festive feel. Tickets are £22 for members and £24 for non-members.

Winter Coffee Morning - Saturday 25 January 2020 - 10am to 12noon

One of our most popular events held at The Merchants' Hall in Edinburgh. A morning spent with coffee, home baking and laughter to brighten up your January!

SMCFP Club / FP Guild Event - Friday 6 March 2020 - 7.30pm

Joint event to be held at Inverleith Clubhouse. Details to be provided as soon as possible. Please contact us by email to be alerted once details are confirmed.

Summer Reunion - Saturday 6 June 2020 - 10am to 2pm

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 £30 per non-member.



Contact Details

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www.formerpupilsguild.com



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

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

Winter Lunch (£22 tickets: _____ / £24 tickets: _____)

Winter Coffee Morning (£5 tickets: _____)

Summer Reunion (£22 tickets: _____ / £30 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. E: fpguild@esms.org.uk