

Edinburgh MUN 2008

Belfast City Airport, 7am, Friday 14th March 2008: Calum Adair had left his passport at home and Elizabeth Cardy had forgotten most of her research. These unfortunate blips, with which no conference would be complete without; signalled the start of the Edinburgh MUN trip 2008.



We had travelled to George Watson's College for their inaugural conference last March and it promised to be an excellent trip, both in terms of debating and of course the social aspect. And so, a 23-strong MCB party, including Mr Foster and Mrs Grant-Stevenson began their journey to Edinburgh.





Lobbying on the Friday evening proved to be successful. Yielding chains were created, resolutions were submitted and chosen for debate the next day and friendships were formed and reunited.



At the official Opening Ceremony on Saturday morning, we had the pleasure of being addressed by Nicol Stephen MSP, Party Leader of the Scottish

Liberal Democrats and a former Deputy First Minister. He spoke with clarity and conviction, emphasising that as a result of MUN conferences, young people have the ability to focus on and help solve real world problems.



Saturday was incredibly busy. The Political Committee discussed Child Soldiers and the controversial issue of Democrat vs. Despot. The Environment Committee hardly passed anything all day, but nevertheless debated issues such as pollution and bio-fuels. It was an exciting day for the Security Council who debated at Holyrood, the Scottish Parliament and managed to find time for a tour of the buildings.



Adoption and surveillance were the main themes of the Human Rights Committee whilst the Economic Committee had a successful day discussing inflation in terms of living costs and the economic impact of terrorism. Not to be left out, the Health Committee tackled some serious issues of the possible effects of a postcode lottery on a global scale and why poor countries are losing doctors and nurses. A further common topic of 'With Rights come responsibilities' was argued over with reference to each Committee.



Guest speakers addressed the various Committees in the afternoon and were informative and willing to answer questions on the diverse topics that each Committee was discussing. For example, the Environment Committee had the pleasure of hearing from Dr Graham Floater, Senior economist in the Stern Team at the Office of Climate Change. He has worked on financial and economic issues in the UK and Europe, and as private secretary to a Cabinet Minister. He was able to provide an insight into climate change - the past, the present and the future.

The entertainment always provides a central focus for the social calendar of MUN and this year's conference was no exception. Apart from an unfortunate incident involving the Secretary General and Stacie Novotny's ankle; the Ceidilh was a resounding success. Mr Foster was, perhaps, just a little more exuberant with his antics than Mr Roulston had been the previous year but nevertheless the MCB contingent were in fine dancing form.



On Sunday, General Assembly was in action, debating the motion, "Has the West had its day". There was going to be a particularly obvious divide on this one, but the debate turned out to be relatively peaceful, with only North Korea being thrown out for a declaration of war on Australia.

Bribing of the Chairs was carried out almost continuously throughout the day, as usual. However, it remains to be answered as to why Belgium still were not recognised to speak after sending the Chairs an entire box of hand-crafted Belgian chocolates. May it be a lesson to all of us that bribery and corruption are not the most effective ways of solving world problems.



Methody fairly cleaned up at the awards ceremony in the afternoon. Individual awards were won by ten MCB delegates. Finola Austin of Belgium, Human Rights, Aimeé Muirhead of USA, Environment and Alex Jeffery of USA, Political; surpassed themselves by winning the titles of Best Delegates in their respective Committees. Commended Delegates consisted of Matthew Smith, Tom Armstrong, Stacie Novotny and Leo Monreal. Meanwhile, Calum Adair, Bobbie-Leigh Herdman and Claire Henderson were all judged as Highly Commended by their Chairs of Committees.



And so it naturally comes to the time of year when pupils must move on. At their final MUN conference with Methody, (and in Edinburgh airport?!); the task was left to Alex Jeffery, Stacie Novotny and Bobbie-Leigh Herdman; who hold the three most senior MCB MUN positions, along with Mr Foster and Mrs Grant-Stevenson; to choose who will replace them in their posts.

It is fitting that Aimeé Muirhead will become the Secretary General for the 11th MCB MUN conference, having been a great and loyal delegate for many years. Angharad Thain will make a superb President of the Security Council, having given her all to MUN at home and abroad in recent years. The post of Chair of the General Assembly will be divided into two roles for the coming year; with Brendan McFall occupying the position of Head of the Emergency debate on the creative side of things and Finola Austin managing the conference in terms of the guest speakers and the opening and closing ceremonies.



As a familiar rugby chant was heard echoing down the driveway of GWC on the Sunday afternoon from the MCB party, silverware in hand; the words can be a poignant reminder of the sense of teamwork and satisfaction that MUN can provide. The words "MCB is wonderful, with all the boys, the girls and trophies, oh MCB is wonderful" have been true in many contexts; not least in the debating sense and will resound for years to come.

Mr Foster and Mrs Grant-Stevenson deserve our thanks for great organisation and a wonderful weekend, which is sure to provide many memories for all of us.

Elizabeth Cardy