



Slí na Mainistreach

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The Abbey Way

THE ABBEY CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Ceiliúradh – An Ghaeilge sa Mhílaois Nua
Celebration – Irish in the New Millennium

Irish Department Scoops National Award

Education Ministers, North and South, Present Awards



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- Unique honour for Fergal Boyle
- Blessed Edmund Rice fun day
- 3 in a row for String Quartet
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Philip McClorey wins his second Brother McFarland Trophy



The finalist and adjudicators picture before the final

The Abbey CBS hosted another very successful senior debating night on Tuesday 8th April. Philip McClory claimed the trophy for a second time, winning for the first time in 2005 as a Year 12 student; Ryan Martin came second and Conor McGuigan was placed third.

Senior finalists competed in preliminary rounds chaired by the English department to gain a place in the final to debate for the Br McFarland Trophy. Indeed, it was the influence of Br. McFarland that established such a strong debating tradition in the Abbey. Mr Jude Collins (lecturer, author, and columnist) attended as guest speaker and adjudicator and commended the finalists on the high standard of debating shown. Local solicitor, Mr Rory McShane, was also in attendance as sponsor of the competition and adjudicator. Mr McShane praised the competitive nature and spirit of debating that is so evident in the Abbey and clearly demonstrated by the finalists.



Rory McShane, sponsor and adjudicator, presents Philip McClorey with the Brother McFarland Trophy. Also pictured are: Miss A Reynolds, teacher in charge of debating, Mr Jude Collins, guest speaker, and Headmaster, Mr Dermot McGovern.

Public Speaking

Well done to the Abbey Year 11 team who entered the 'Open Your Mind' competition for the first time in November 2007. The competition is run annually and organised by the Southern Health and Social Services Board, the Newry & Mourne Health & Social Services Trust and Menssana who come together to promote awareness of the factors that can impact on our mental health.

Team members this year were: Ryan Kearney, Gregory McChesney, Christopher Hughes, Jack Bradley and Rory McKay.

A. Reynolds

Spelling: New Hardspell Champion is crowned

After Garbhan Mc Kevitt's brilliant 3 in a row success, 'Hardspell' finally got a new winner in 2008. Declan Doyle, Slemish 3, tells Slí na Mainistreach how he became the latest Abbey Spelling Champion.

There was lots of excitement on the big day of the spelling competition. We had all competed within our own class to get to the final and the money was in our grasp!

This is my third year in the Abbey and in the three years I have been in the final. So I wasn't as nervous as the other contestants. However, nerves were creeping in. In the previous two years I hadn't finished in the dominant three. So I knew I had to win this time as it was my final year competing. Last year, I came fourth so it was disappointing not to finish with a money prize.



Hardspell winner Declan Doyle, Slemish Three, is presented with a dictionary and a cheque for £100, by Miss McAleese, English Teacher. Also pictured are runners up Joseph Reynolds and Conladh Quinn

On the morning of the final we all were brought in early so we could settle. But people were nervous and anxiety had set in for many. We all flicked anxiously through our spelling sheets and there was great reluctance to give them up to Mrs McAleese.

Our form classes started to stream in and the tension was rising. The spellings started off being rather easy and weren't too difficult. However, under the pressure it was easy to make a mistake. The words were getting harder and harder and more people started to make mistakes. Next I knew there were only five of us left and we all were getting very close to the money prizes. The prizes were £100 – 1st place, £50 – 2nd place, £25 – 3rd place. So I was concentrating on winning one of them.

We went rounds and rounds without any of us making mistakes and the atmosphere was tense. Finally one contestant made a mistake and there were only four remaining. On the next round two of the contestants spelt a spelling incorrect, and that meant I had at least £50! We watched the other two battle out third place and it was very tight.

When third place had been decided me and the other contestant battled for 1st place. It was rather daunting standing in front of the whole of junior school but I was determined to win. The words were deadly and we both got our first few wrong. Luckily for me though I got a word correct and it was all up to him to spell his word correctly. Unfortunately for him and luckily for me he spelt his word incorrectly, and I had won the competition.

I was delighted with winning the money as £100 is a lot! I also got a medal but it's fair to say that it was the £100 that drove me to success!

Declan Doyle SL3

SELB award for Fergal's amazing attendance record

Mr Pádraig McKeever, lower sixth year tutor, is pictured presenting Fergal Boyle with a cheque from the Southern Education and Library Board. Fergal was presented with an award for 100% attendance throughout his primary and post Primary education. That equates to an amazing 12 years of school without missing a single day!



Past Pupils

Abbey Honours Former Deputy First Minister and Former Pupil, Seamus Mallon.



Past pupil and former deputy first minister, Seamus Mallon, pictured at the unveiling of a portrait in his Honour with Irish Foreign Affairs Minister, Dermot Ahern, TD

Veteran SDLP politician, Seamus Mallon, delivered a witty, powerful and at times a movingly raw address on the occasion of the unveiling of his portrait at the Abbey Grammar School, Newry Co. Down, his alma mater. The portrait by artist, Bruno Patron, was unveiled by Mr Dermot Ahern, TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs before a host of dignitaries, family and friends.

Speaking at the unveiling Mr Dermot McGovern, Principal, welcomed the assembled gathering by recalling how the famous maiden speech made by Seamus Mallon at Westminster in 1986 'set the scene for politics in Ireland for the next twenty years'. Dr John McCavitt, Head of Politics, commented that when Mr Mallon went to the Abbey in the 1950s 'it would have been unthinkable that an 'Abbey boy' could achieve such high political office in Northern Ireland... Now Abbey students can aspire to the highest office in the land... Seamus Mallon, I am proud to say, has been an engine for that change and living testimony to it'.

Former Northern Ireland Office minister, Lord Dubs, recalled introducing Mr Mallon to the Commons following his election victory in 1986 and concluded that the former Deputy First Minister had done 'a fantastic job for peace, for the people he represents, for the whole community here and indeed beyond'. 'I and I am honoured to have known him'. Mr Mark Durkan, leader of the SDLP, described Mr Mallon as 'a person of real character' who 'stood for hope in days of hurt', one whose 'gut conviction and determination and doggedness but downright decency at the same time' is widely admired, not least on Capitol Hill.

Describing Mr Mallon 'as a personal hero of mine for many, many years', Mr Dermot Ahern, TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs said that it was 'a particular honour to be here tonight and to be given the privilege of unveiling this portrait'. Recalling that the Deputy First Minister never shirked from calling 'a spade a spade', he paid tribute to him for his political achievements, not least in relation to the reform of policing in Northern Ireland.

In what Conor O'Clery, former foreign correspondent of The Irish Times, described afterwards as a powerful 'vaedictory' address, Mr Mallon began by chirping that it was a 'tremendous honour for me that the school are going to hang me in a short time ... and that so many of you came along for that occasion'. He recalled his days at the Abbey and being part of the first 'day school' to win the MacRory cup in 1954.

Mr Mallon outlined the inspirations which moved him to a life

in politics. In the 1960s, Civil Rights songs had 'reverberated across the Atlantic' and there was a mood for change 'in the air' in Ireland. During his early days in politics he recalled the political 'injustice' which prevailed, calling to mind the old days of discrimination in housing at a time when 'poverty' was rampant.

Motivated by the 'need for a just society', he began 'a very stony road' when he was elected a councillor in 1973. Reliving the dark days of the Troubles he spoke movingly about the deaths of many whom he knew, including a UDR man who was 'as decent a man as ever wore shoe leather'. Again and again, he recalled speaking out against the excesses of the UDR and the RUC only to be compromised by Republican paramilitaries killing members of the security forces, on one occasion witnessing the dying moments of a man left 'under a cattle truck'. His condemnation of these killings in turn earned him brickbats on various gable walls. One mural satirised him as 'Lord Mallon of Markethill'. In typically stoic fashion his reaction was that 'I thought there were enough scoundrels in the House of Lords without me'.

Recollecting that he was accompanied by a BBC crew on the first day that he went to Westminster in 1986, the reporter asked him at the St Stephen's entrance 'how does it feel coming into the mother of parliaments, coming as you do from the hills of South Armagh... I said as good as any man there and better than most'. Describing the Commons as 'a very fair place... a very just place', he said it baffled him that it has been the scene of so many 'unjust' deeds, singling out Peter Mandelson's attempts to water down the Patton reforms on policing and Tony Blair's justification of the decision to go to war in Iraq.

With the tenth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement fast approaching, Mr Mallon recounted that negotiations had been ongoing for many years previously. Those experiences

distilled for him that the 'secret of negotiations is to listen for the nuances, for the things that aren't said, rather than the things that are being said'. Unionists, he believes, adopted a quantifying approach to talks. Nationalists, by contrast, 'conceptualise rather than quantify... maybe it was because for so many years they hadn't much to add, subtract or divide'.

Commenting on the contrasting reputations of the two power-sharing regimes, Mr Mallon referred to the so-called 'odd couple' (himself and Trimble) and the 'chuckle brothers'. Putting on record his high regard for the former First Minister, he ruefully remarked that Mr Trimble had put his trust in the 'wrong Prince' (Mr Blair). Political circumstances, what is more, were much more difficult in the immediate aftermath of the Good Friday Agreement: policing and decommissioning had to be dealt with, Drumcree was 'raging' and there was the 'awfulness' of Omagh. By the time the new power-sharing 'regime' took office in May 2007, the new executive had inherited 'ready made 'arrangements' in relation to the structures of government. In a rapier-like thrust aimed at the 'chuckle brothers', Mr Mallon commented that he had met the Queen and Prince Philip who Edinburgh 'walks the same distance behind her (the Queen) as McGuinness does behind Paisley'.

In a hint perhaps that he disapproves of merger proposals between the SDLP and Fianna Fáil, he described the SDLP as 'in danger'. In his view the institutions set up under the Good Friday Agreement will persist in the event of the British 'leaving here... down the line', as he believes they will. Then the 'almighty questions will be asked', including whether there would be a '32 county unitary state'. Concluding by making a 'foolish prediction', he anticipated that there will be a 'federal Ireland' that will enshrine 'self respect' for Unionists. 'Safe' in the knowledge that he will be not be around to see if his prediction comes true, in the event that it does he asked his audience to 'get a large glass of whiskey, preferably Jameson's, with very little water and drink it for me'.

Prestigious Siemens Medal For King



Wins the prestigious Siemens Medal

King Yit Law, a student on the Electrical and Electronic Engineering degree at Queen's University, has been awarded the Sir William Siemens medal for being one of the top engineering students in the UK. He was presented with his medal at an awards ceremony earlier this year at the Company's Headquarters in Surrey, by Mr Tom White, Chief Executive of Siemens UK. As well as the medal, King Yit received a cheque for £300. King Yit, who hails from Newry and is a past pupil of The Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, was one of sixteen students chosen from universities across the UK to receive the prestigious Siemens medal. The criteria set for the award required an excellent academic record, together with significant involvement in industry.

King Yit was nominated for his award by Dr John Morrow, lecturer in the School of Electronics, Electrical

Engineering and Computer Science at Queen's. Dr Morrow commented that 'King Yit is the best student on the MEng in Electrical and Electronic Engineering degree at Queen's'. He is also the recipient of a Power Academy Scholarship from Central Networks, worth over £22K, and has undertaken summer placements working for different sections with E.ON UK. During his year out in industry last year King Yit also worked with Latens in Belfast who provide software solutions for Pay-TV operators.'

The Siemens medal programme was launched in 1993 to celebrate the Company's 150th anniversary and with the aim of raising the profile of science and technology within schools and universities. The first Sir William Siemens medal was in fact awarded back in 1883 by London University's Imperial College, so the present day programme revives a tradition more than 100 years old. In keeping with tradition, the new medals are struck using the die of the original medal by the Royal Mint.

On completing his degree King Yit plans to become a Chartered Engineer. There is currently a high demand for graduates in electrical and electronic engineering both locally and in the UK as a whole, with demand outstripping supply. Starting salaries for the class of 2007 graduating in this discipline from Queen's ranged from £20K to £36K.

Geography Reviews

TORNADOES AND HURRICANES:

As part of our Year 8 Geography course pupils have been studying violent weather events. They particularly looked at tornadoes and hurricanes using Hurricane Katrina as one of their many case studies. To conclude the topic each pupil was given the opportunity in class to watch the movie 'Twister' before writing their own review of the movie. Here is one of the top reviews.....

Reviewed by Mark Mc Gennity SI 8

This movie was about storm chasers with a new invention, called Dorothy. It sent sensors inside the hurricane. It measured the wind speed inside the hurricane.

The main characters were Joe and Bill. Bill was a retired storm chaser who had fallen in love with a girl and proposed. He then turned his attentions away from this dangerous job and became a weather forecaster. However, he returned to Joe on order to pick up divorce letters from his ex wife. Whilst attempting to pick these up he learns Joe is tracking the biggest hurricane he has ever seen. He agrees to join Joe in

order to track it, but swears that afterwards he really will retire.

Bill and Joe then venture onto an off road dirt track that they cannot find an exit to. The "twister" swerves into the track of the two. They scramble from the car and hide under the nearest shelter they could find, a bridge. They cling to the side of the bridge for dear life as the "twister" ravages the land around them.

The pair then return to their group and begin to chase the next hurricane. They position Dorothy in the suspected path of the tornado. However, the tornado swerves to avoid the trap the hunters have set for it. They then head towards the nearest town to rest. Jessie spots the hurricane moving towards their position on the radar. In an attempt to prevent any of the locals being hurt, they gather everyone in the area and move them to a nearby garage in order to make a makeshift shelter from the huge "twister".

After much chaos the hurricane finally passes over head and continues its path of destruction towards the town in which Joe's mother lives, Wakita.

The tornado destroys the town just as Bill and Joe arrive. They attempt to find Joe's mother by screaming

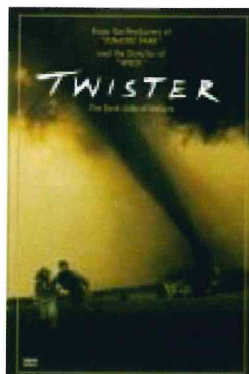
her name. They find her trapped underneath a shelf. They manage to save her from the wreckage of the house along with her dog.

They travel towards the next "twister" and set Dorothy in its path in an attempt to finally capture the hurricane. The hurricane blows Dorothy out of the

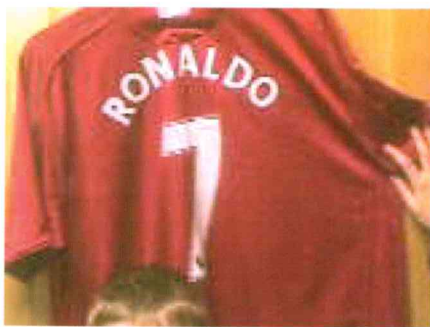
way and all of the sensor's fall out. In her desperation to save the sensor's Joe takes off her coat and puts the sensors inside it. The hurricane then heads straight for them, Bill drags Joe into the car. They then head off once more to attempt to catch the "twister". They meet their ex-crew member who refuses to listen to Bills advice and heads straight into the "twister's" path. He eventually runs right into the "twister" and is killed

Joe and Bill head to a nearby cornfield where the "twister" is spinning. They put a stone on the accelerator of the

jeep with Dorothy on the back of the vehicle. It drives right into the eye of the "twister", and the sensors begin to fly up and into the 'twister'. The storm heads for Bill and Joe. They run to a cabin close by and strap themselves to a pole. The 'twister' moves directly into their position. They survive the storm and the divorce papers never get signed.



First year trip



Conor McCann, Oriel One, shares his experience of this year's first year trip while Aiden Donnelly, Breffni 1 shows slí Na Mainistreach some of his favourite snaps taken on the trip.

It was a cold dark Thursday morning as my mum drove me into the Abbey to go on the annual school trip to Manchester. I was very excited as I got onto the coach but I was also a bit apprehensive as well. From the coach we were travelling to the Dublin Port to get the boat out to Holyhead in Wales. As we travelled up to Dublin we were all talking about who was going to win the match against Manchester United and Chelsea on Saturday as there were both Manchester United supporters and Chelsea Supporters on the bus having a heated discussion on who was going to win the Premiership.

As we arrived in Dublin and docked onto the boat the water was really rocky and a few people felt sick after a couple of hours sailing. As we got off the boat in Holyhead there was beautiful scenery and the man on the bus then put on the brilliant film Casino Royale, as we made our journey to Old Trafford. After a few hours on the coach we then arrived in the heart of Manchester; it was an amazing experience.

About half an hour later we arrived at the famous Manchester stadium, Old Trafford. As we drove up to the stadium everyone was amazed at how big it looked from the outside. After a short while waiting a man took us on a tour of Old Trafford. It was just brilliant as we got to see all the trophies that Manchester United have won during their careers. We moved through the tour and got out into the seats of the stadium. When the tour was over we got to go to the shop to buy items for our relatives. I bought two Manchester United jerseys: one for myself and one for my younger brother Mark. We then left Old Trafford and headed for the hotel. The hotels were very nice and Thursday night passed very quietly.

It was Friday morning and I rushed down to get my breakfast. The stairs were very long. As I arrived I was pretty early so I got into the line and ordered a full English fry. It was delicious. After breakfast everyone hopped on the bus for Alton Towers.

We were now in the Land of Rollercoasters, Alton Towers. When I got a map from one of the teachers I was amazed to see how many activities there were to do. I quickly ran in to the theme park and nearly went on every rollercoaster there was. Alton Towers was a brilliant day and I would strongly recommend this

to anyone as it would be a great adventurous family day out.



Saturday morning arrived; the last day of our holiday. I had really enjoyed the trip and today was no exception. Firstly we went to the Blue Planet Aquarium. It was really good as there were game consoles and activities. There was also some really cool fish. After lunch everyone got on to the bus and we headed for Holyhead. It was a really long journey and the boat journey was even longer. There was so much craic on the bus going home, it was hilarious. Everyone had a brilliant trip and I would really like to go back some day.

By Conor McCann, Oriel 1.



Class of 2008



Before bidding a final farewell to the Abbey Grammar School, the seventh year pupils took time out to pose for a photograph with the teachers who worked closest with them throughout their last, action packed year. Pictured with the pupils are form teachers; Mr A O Rourke, Mrs M MC Evoy, Dr. S Fee, Mrs M Lane and Acting Year Tutor Miss A Reynolds. Slí na Mainistreach wishes the boys well in their chosen paths from the Abbey.

Choir Record Feis Success



The Abbey Choir won the Church Music section in this year's Warrenpoint Feis with a powerful rendition of David Haas' "Now We Remain" and a vibrant rendition of "Lord of the Dance".

Feis Hat - Trick for Abbey String Quartet



The String Group at the Abbey Grammar have won the Ellie Neary Memorial Cup at the Newry Feis for the third successive year.

Violinists, Niall O' Flaherty, Stephen Beattie, Ronan Kearney and Sean Rooney, under the direction of Head of Music, Miss Anne Mullan, scooped the top prize at the Town Hall event on April 10. They performed Telemann's Concerto in D for four violins.

"The boys have worked really hard all year and I am very proud of them," said Miss Mullan.

Young Enterprise



Young Enterprise at the launch of their company Spektrumproperty.com at the Quays Shopping Centre on Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th March. Pictured with Dominic Bradley, SDLP, and Margaret Richie, Minister for Economic Development, are Front row: Niall O'Donnell, Myles Gray, Paul Toner, James Murphy, David Burns, Eugene Mc Ateer Back Row: Dominic Bradley MLA, Margaret Richie MP, Mr Paul Ferguson, Mr Dermot Mc Govern.

New School Project Pro

The Latest News

In the Last edition we reported that the ceremonial first sod had been cut by members of the Abbey Community, at the site of the new building at Castleown. In this issue Sli na Mainistreach/ The Abbey is proud to have the latest pictures of the work currently being done as work gets into full swing. Headmaster, Mr Dermot Mc Govern, told Sli na Mainistreach that the site and building works are progressing 'extremely well' and that the contractors have indicated that they are currently on schedule with the work, in line with the published timeframe. To date the foundations have been laid and the erection of the steelwork is well underway as shown in these latest photographs. The complicated work to lay the state of the art, third generation sports pitch has also begun, with the use of laser technology being used to ensure a perfectly flat playing surface - a true novelty for those of us who have played their schools football on the rolling hills of the current Abbey pitch!



Fundraising in Full Swing.

Several fundraising projects are currently up and running with many past pupils and present members of the Abbey community already on board with generous contributions to aid the fundraising drive. The school have recently published a new school development booklet to highlight some of the major achievements that the Abbey currently boasts. It is hoped that this booklet will allow potential sponsors to see just what investment in the Abbey Grammar School can achieve.

If you too would like to help raise some vital funds for the New School Project, please contact the Headmaster, Mr Mc Govern to discuss the matter.

Shortfall to be met by Abbey Community

The school is being built in line with the government's recommended provision, published in the Department of Education Handbook, which basically outlines the number of classrooms, offices, laboratories etc that a school such as our is entitled to.

The school management and the Board of Governors consider, after long consultation, that this provision will not meet all the educational requirements of the 850 Abbey students that currently attend the Abbey, nor will it meet the aspirations of the teaching staff in three key areas. Knowledgeable of the historical shortfalls in the provision of educational facilities for pupils in this area, Mr Mc Govern is determined that the new Building will meet the demands for a totally modern educational resource for future generations of Abbey Boys.

Three areas are considered to be inadequately served by the department's handbook. They are: Educational provision, Sporting provision and Religious provision. The shortfall in these three areas has been addressed in the design of the new school. The Department of Education has allocated £15.7 million for this project. However the shortfall is to be funded independently by the School authorities. The figure to be raised by the Abbey has been costed by the Department of Education at £1.3million.

The Religious Provision at the New School.

The Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School in its newest form will remain firm to the ideals of Edmund Rice and will ensure that its ethos of commitment to a caring, Christian and Catholic culture will continue to be a central part of school life. The Department's building formula, outside the provision of standard classrooms for the teaching of compulsory curriculum Religious Education, does not provide any recognition of the importance of the religious life of the school.

The Management of the school will address this exclusion by providing a designated School Oratory. The design of the school recognises the importance of this Oratory to the overall well-being and culture of a Catholic school by its placement in the centre of the ground floor close to the major entrance and by its unique design features which emphasise its placement. The Oratory will provide accommodation for a complete year group and will be supplemented by provision of a connecting Oratory Annexe and an office for the full-time Chaplain.

This will enable the school to respond to all religious events and occasions within the academic year and will provide a quiet and peaceful facility for reflection and prayer for every student every day.



Progressing on Schedule



The Education Provision at the New School.

The essential component of any school building is the provision of the required number of teaching spaces each of which allows for pupils within the normal class and their teacher to have a motivating and quality learning experience. Every teacher within the school must have their own ultra-modern equipped teaching room to assemble and store their resources and materials and to prepare their lessons. The current schedule of the Department's Building Handbook falls short in this area.

The school will provide the 4 extra classrooms to fulfil this necessary requirement.

Each classroom in the building is a standard size. The new Northern Ireland Curriculum demands a minimum of 27 subjects to be offered to pupils in a Grammar School. Many of these required subjects are occupationally based studies which require extra equipment and additional classroom size. Construction Studies, recently introduced at 'A' Level in the school timetable, has become very popular with students and is a good example of a subject with special requirements.

Consequently the School will provide 9 increased size classrooms to fulfil this necessary requirement.

This century has seen an unprecedented development in Information and Communication Technology. A new range of skills in these areas are an essential prerequisite for future employment. At the same time new and innovative methods of teaching are available using these facilities. The future Abbey will have to meet the challenges of this educational vista. Each classroom and departmental office will be equipped with interactive whiteboards and connecting data projectors. Each room will have computer terminals for teacher use. These facilities will be provided as standard by the Department of Education. The School Management and its ICT Department have agreed that this provision is inadequate.

Consequently the School will provide a number of additional computer terminals and machines. They will deploy them in a number of 'cluster' groups throughout the school.

All departments in the school will enjoy constant access to these areas and every class engaged in any subject will be able to benefit from an individual machine for each pupil.

The provision of all these extra educational resources is vital to the maintenance of excellence within the Abbey. They will revolutionise learning strategies. Currently the school has embarked on the development of independent learning skills by the pupil. The every-day availability of these resources will enthuse the students to push themselves to new levels of achievement. A new learning culture will evolve – the pupils will become critical thinkers, independent learners and eager researchers – the essential qualities that future employers will demand.

The Sporting Provision at the New School.

In a school of 850 boys sporting competition and activity has traditionally occupied a central and multi-layered role in the life and development of its pupils. The values of Sport have long been documented and emphasised. Team games are an important asset in learning valuable skills required in current employment criteria. Organisation and self-discipline, decision-making and teamwork are the building blocks to successful professional careers and are just as essential in preparation for exam success. Modern society also stresses the need for regular exercise routines to address the 21st century problems of physical obesity and mental stress.

The Department of Education, in this area of school provision, provides a number of standard facilities. A fitness suite, a gym and a sports hall are the indoor provision while a number of playing pitches are allowed for this size of school.

The School Management Team regards these allowances as inadequate.

Relying on the standard building formula the Department of Education will provide a Sports Hall of 440m². Consultations with the Northern Ireland Sports Council indicated that this size of Sports Hall would be rather too small to meet the needs of our pupils. Accordingly the Abbey Sports Hall will be enlarged to 580m². This increased size of sports hall will be sufficient for all our pupils to engage in a wide variety of activities within the specifications of the appropriate international sporting bodies.

The indoor provision also includes a 100m² fitness suite. This facility is funded by the Department but the school will provide the cost of additional cardiovascular equipment to the level of the most modern commercial fitness gymnasium.

This facility will be available to members of the school community at all times. In addition the school will equip a modern weight training room which will cater for the more specialised training demands of those elite pupils who are representing the school in top level competition.

The Department allocates to this size of school 5 playing pitches. It also allows for the provision of a synthetic playing area if the site does not contain sufficient space for the allocated number of grass playing areas. The school site has sufficient space for only 3 pitches. Thus the school will provide 2 grass pitches and one synthetic pitch. The School Management are in agreement that given the number of teams in different sports playing and training on a regular basis, the occurrence of inclement weather and the quality of light at certain periods of the year, a full-sized Gaelic Football pitch and appropriate flood lighting must be available to enable all our students to participate fully in these activities during all the academic year.

These increased sporting facilities will enable all our students to engage in their choice of physical activity on a regular basis at their appropriate level, from the recreational to the competitive.



Cúrsaí Gaeilge



GLEO 2007 / 2008

National Award for the Irish Department.

As the month of May drew to a close the Irish Department attended the prestigious Foras na Gaeilge 'GLEO' Awards Ceremony in Dublin to collect a National Award for promoting spoken Irish. The primary aim of this scheme is to recognise best practice which promotes oral Irish in English-medium primary and post-primary schools on the island of Ireland. GLEO

is a great opportunity to recognise and celebrate the efforts of primary and post-primary schools in promoting spoken Irish. 24 schools, primary and secondary, throughout the island of Ireland descended upon Merrion Square Dublin to accept awards in recognition of their hard work in promoting our National Language. Mr. Batt O'Keefe TD, Minister of Education and Science, and Ms Catríona Ruane MLA, Minister of Education for Northern Ireland presented the Award to David Digney, Year 13 Student, and Mr Desmond Tennyson, Head of Irish. Along with the trophy and certificate the Irish Department was presented with a cheque to further advance the promotion of Spoken Irish in the Abbey. This was without doubt an immensely proud and historic day for the all the members of the Irish Department Mrs. Pauline McClean, Mr. Seán Gallagher, Mr. Maurice McKevitt and Mr. Desmond Tennyson.

Tugann Connall Havern léirmheas dúinn ar an chéad Lá Edmund Rice. (Graingrafanna ar laethanch 8.)

Fear iontach cineálta ba é Edmund. Thug sé seans do na daoine bochta foghlaim. Anois déanann daoine seo ar fud na cruinne ar son na mBraithre Chríostaí. Sin an

fáth ar chaith muid an lá seo soar óna ranganna. Lá iontach a bhí ann.

Ag tús an lae bhí an ceant againn. Ghlac na daltaí rud amháin isteach le cheantáil. Chuaigh an t-airgead chun déirc. Ní raibh orainn na headaí scoile a chaitheamh mar lá spraoi a bhí ann.

Chuaigh achan duine ó bhliain a h-aon go dtí bliain a cheathair síos chuig an pháirc peile. Bhí cuid mhór cluichí ansin le h-imirt. Bhí rang s'agamsa ag imirt peile agus rugbaí ar dtús. Chaill muid an dá chluiche. Nuair a bhí sin thart, chuaigh mé go dtí an tsiopa agus fuair mé uachtar reoite. Nuair a bhí an uachtar reoite ithe agam chuaigh mé chun páirt a ghlacadh sa phúc fada. Tháinig mé insan dara háit. Bhí mé iontach sásta liom fhéin.

Nuair a bhí na cluichí thart chuaigh muid chuig an taobh eile don pháirc. Ansin, thosaigh muid ag imirt chluiche "Gladiators," ar chaisléan preabadh. Nuair a bhí an lá críochnaithe, chuaigh muid abháile. Bhí lá maith agam ach bhí lá scoile againn an lár dar gcionn.

Connall Havern. 1ú Bhliain

Spoken Irish Awards

Annual Abbey oral awards for the most fluent speakers of Irish have become much coveted prizes among the student body and Slí na Mainistreach will keep you informed about the battle to retain these prizes in the next issue.



Pictured here are the members of the Irish department in the Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Mr. Maurice Mc Kevitt, Mr. Sean Gallagher, Mrs Pauline McClean and Mr. Desmond Tennyson with the winners of the annual Abbey oral awards for the most fluent speakers of Irish in each year group. Also in the photograph is the Vice-Principal, Mr Paul O'Shea.

The trophies are dedicated to former members of staff who either taught Irish, or contributed to the promotion of the language in some capacity or in one case to a former student who excelled in the subject.

The first year trophy (Bás Chuchulainn), dedicated to the late Brother Beausang, was awarded to Sheá Hanratty.



The second year trophy (Méabh agus an Donn Chuailgne) dedicated to the late Mr. Patrick Arthur Crinion, a former teacher of Irish and the Classics, was jointly awarded to Ciaran Davies and Declan Doyle.

The third year trophy (Corn Durkin), dedicated to the late Matt Durkin, was awarded to Stephen Doherty. Following the sudden and unexpected death of this former Abbey student, his classmates decided to present an award to the school in his memory. Ever since, it has been presented annually to the best Gaeilgeoirí in third year and indeed it lead to the decision to present similar awards to each of the other year groups.

The fourth year trophy (Clann Lir), dedicated to Brother Aidan Quinlan, who during his time in the Abbey was a founder member of Féile Scoildrámaíochta an Iúir,

was jointly awarded to Seán Cunningham and Turlough Tinnelly.

The fifth year trophy (Bás Chuchulainn) dedicated to the late Brother W. O. Murphy, former Head of Irish and Vice-Principal of the Abbey, was awarded to David Digney.

The sixth year trophy (An Lóchrann), dedicated to Mr. Hugh Murphy, Lislea poet and former Head of Irish, was jointly awarded to Conor Bell and Philip McClory.

An additional trophy (An Lóchrann Beag), for the best 'Gaelscoláire', was jointly awarded to Lorcan Evans and Tiarnán Jackson.

The Feast Day of Blessed Edmund Rice

Thursday the 8th of May saw staff and pupils leave their books aside to enjoy a day of fun in celebration of the feast day of Blessed Edmund Rice. Slí Na Mainistreach was there, in the glorious sunshine, to capture the excitement.



En français

Slí Na Mainistreach is proud to include its first article en français, which is an account of the recent trip to Paris by the French department.

LE VOYAGE A PARIS

C'était du 5 au 8 mars 2008 que l'Abbey a organisé un voyage en France. Direction : Paris.

Durant cette excursion, nous avons vu les monuments importants de la capitale française tels que la Tour Eiffel, l'Arc de Triomphe, les Invalides, la cathédrale Notre-Dame, le Louvre, l'Obélisque de la Place de la Concorde, la Défense (le quartier des affaires de Paris) ; nous avons remonté en car l'Avenue des Champs Elysées qui relie la Concorde à la Défense, et où se trouvent toutes les grandes boutiques de luxe ; nous nous sommes promenés dans le jardin des Tuileries qui donne sur la cour du Louvre...

Ce voyage nous a permis à tous de vivre une partie de l'Histoire de France avec la visite du Château de Versailles, demeure du « Roi Soleil » Louis XIV. Grâce à la visite du Musée d'Orsay, ancienne gare reconvertie en musée, nous avons pu admirer de l'art moderne à travers sculptures et autres tableaux. Mais ce voyage nous a aussi permis de nous divertir avec la sortie à Aquaboulevard, plus grand parc aquatique d'intérieur d'Europe, et de nous amuser et vivre des moments magiques à Disneyland. Autre moment magique : la Tour Eiffel scintillante la nuit ; c'est là que le surnom de « Ville Lumière » prend tout son sens.

Ce voyage reste à chacun un moment mémorable où tout le monde a pu se libérer du stress de l'école, vivre une aventure commune, découvrir une autre culture, un autre pays, et surtout partager ensemble un souvenir inoubliable.

Vocabulaire difficile

nous avons vu = we saw
le quartier des affaires= the business district
qui relie= which links
les grandes boutiques de luxe =the main fancy goods shops
qui donne sur la cour du Louvre=which overlooks the Louvre courtyard
demeure=residence
ancienne gare reconvertie en musée=former railway station converted into a railway station
plus grand parc aquatique d'intérieur d'Europe=largest indoor water park of Europe
la Tour Eiffel scintillante la nuit =the Eiffel Tower sparkling at night (what a beautiful sight !)
le surnom=the nickname
Ville Lumière =city of light
partager ensemble un souvenir inoubliable=share together an unforgettable memory

Zambian Immersion Project

As part of the 2009 project, Mr Evans and Mrs McKernan visited Zambia for the first time, last month. Mr Evans shares his first impressions of Livingstone and Zambia.

Being a keen follower of African history and current affairs I was in no way apprehensive about going to Zambia for the first time at the end of May. As I glanced at Victoria Falls from my airplane window spirits were high, especially in light of the Champions League Final from the night before!

Touching down in Livingstone and heading into the town for the first time it was certainly not what I was expecting. The town is reasonably well developed, with shops, banks etc and there was little evidence of the poverty I had been expecting to find. However, this would quickly change whenever we went out into the surrounding areas and it was here that I found the Africa that I had been expecting to see. Livingstone has one main road which runs right through the town and straight onto the capital of Zambia, Lusaka (which is a seven hour journey away). Aside from this road it is really only dust tracks, with massive potholes littering most of these. The only way to get around is with some sort of jeep or with trusty Toyota pick up trucks, which are everywhere.



We met up with Sister Mary Courtney at the St Francis Medical Centre and were taken off on day care visits. Driving down the various dust roads really gave us a feel for what life is like for most Zambians – a struggle to survive. The tracks were full of men, women and children all going about their daily business. Many children were going to school but equally there were many, with no shoes, who were carrying cans of water or carrying younger brothers and sisters on their backs. Women were walking with food baskets or water cans balanced perfectly on their heads. I wondered just how far they had been walking like that and it quickly became apparent that for most it was a journey of many miles to the nearest market or place to get water.

The daycare visits involved going out into villages and providing AIDS awareness education and also drugs to those in need. What struck me at these meetings was the warmth of the greeting you received from these villagers: they were all anxious to give you a seat and ask you various questions about Ireland. It was clear at these meetings that many of them were very sick but they seemed not to let it bother them and were very grateful for the help that they were receiving from Sister Mary and her care centre. Another thing that struck me whilst I sat giving out medical supplies to the villagers was that AIDS is everywhere in Zambia – if a person wasn't 'infected' then they

were said to be 'affected', as no doubt they had a family member who had the virus or had lost family members to it. Here I could see the money donated by the Abbey making a difference as these programs are essential throughout the Livingstone area if it is to try and combat the spread of AIDS and for ensuring that essential medicines reach the people



We also went out on home visits with the Sisters to people who were too sick to leave their homes. Home is a term that I would use loosely as they are nothing like the luxury that we live in here in Ireland. Most people live in a small one room brick room or a mud hut. It was here that I saw the worst human suffering I have ever witnessed. One young 29 year old girl we visited was clearly dying with a combination of illnesses and as I sat talking to her I got a real sense that it was only a matter of time, maybe even only hours before she passed away. Still, despite this she kept smiling. Another person we took medicine to couldn't move his legs and spent all day in virtual darkness in his one room house with very little light, waiting on his sister (who had tuberculosis), coming over and waiting for the local church to feed him, though the positive thing for him was that he would get better eventually.

The visit to the quarry was another moment which caused me to reflect and feel thankful for the life I have back home. Up at this quarry there was no machinery getting the stones; it was the people who were being utilized, and it was people of all ages – from 5 or 6 years old up to people who looked to be in their seventies and eighties. The work was backbreaking, with people sitting on the ground for 12 or 13 hours a day breaking up stones and filling up wheelbarrows. One wheelbarrow would get you around 70p. So you had people getting paid around £2 a day. What struck me up at the quarry was the little children sitting with their little hammers crushing up the stones, with dust covering them, their eyes, mouths and noses. Whilst there was a small school beside the quarry (it was really only a 1 room extended mud hut); most had to help their parents with the stone crushing

Visiting Libuyu school was a high point. Again you could see the money that the Abbey had raised being put to good use. The school has really developed, with classrooms being partitioned off, walls being erected and educational resources being provided, all thanks to the donations from Abbey parents and students. However, there is still much that needs to

be done to ensure the school survives and prospers. I managed to get some teaching time in as well and it was an excellent experience, sitting with a classroom of 40 children all eager and willing to learn, though when I brought out the pens that I brought over for the children I caused somewhat of a stampede as apparently red pens are like gold dust in Zambia, so not surprisingly everyone wanted one of these!

St Raphael's was another school that we visited and it was here that we met Brother Mick. He's been in Zambia for a long time now and it was great to see the work that the Christian Brothers have done here. He is in charge of a flourishing school with nearly 2000 pupils, which is also providing clean drinking water for the surrounding community through the huge water tank that is in the school grounds.

Probably the most poignant part of the trip centred around a little 7 year old girl who had been taken in off the streets by the Sisters and taken to a children's home. They didn't know how long she had been on the streets by herself – it could have been hours, or more likely it was days. The little girl was traumatised by the whole experience; this much was apparent whenever you talked to her. She kept asking about her mother and where she was. By chance they managed to identify the little girl's mother, who had been taken ill into the new hospice that had been open. We went to see the mother and were told that her AIDS had reached an advanced stage. It was heartbreaking stuff, with the implication being clear – the little girl would never see her mother again – she was effectively an orphan. I found this difficult to take in, though the sad fact is that this happens on a daily basis throughout Zambia and indeed Africa. A few days later we went to the children's home and I made a point of going to find the little girl. I gave her one of the teddy bears we had brought over for the children in the home and she was so happy. The nuns who work in the home told me that it had been a good day for her as she had been given a bed and she was so excited about this as she had never had a bed before. Again I could see how money contributed from the Abbey had helped bring a little bit of happiness to someone less well off than ourselves.



I hope that you read this and are shocked and saddened by what you have read as this is the reality for a huge portion of the Zambian population. Despite all this the Zambian people always have a smile on their face and I think we could learn a lot from them in Ireland. They have nothing and never complain whilst we have everything we could possibly need and more, but still complain. Fundraising for the 2009 Project will begin soon and I would encourage everyone to give what they can because the money is being put to good use.

Book Reviews

In this issue we feature two book reviews from two of our first year pupils

Title: George's Marvellous Medicine.

Author: Roald Dahl. Publisher: Puffin.

George is sick of listening to his grandmother and tired of her giving demands. But George has something up his sleeve to shock his grandmother!

The most memorable part of this book was when George was giving his grandmother her medicine, which was actually his crazy potion! George's grandmother transforms into amazing and wacky shapes. This part is hilarious and fun-packed. George is astounded and shocked what this mixture he makes can do. Even George's father wants to get in on the action!

George is my favourite character because he is very imaginative and clever when making his potion. He expresses a lot of feelings in the book from being astounded, to shocked, to scared. He is a very pleasant boy but this doesn't stop him from hating his grandmother!

Grandmother is the other main character in the book and she is very much the opposite of George. She is nasty, demanding and wicked in the way she speaks to George. She is lazy and sits in her chair all day long. She is small in height and always advises George to stop growing!

The book has many good points as it is a very funny and a very enjoyable story. However, the book is quite short and is for a younger age group, ranging from about 7-11. Nonetheless, it is a good book for anyone who is looking for some fun!

I really enjoyed this book from the beginning to the end. It was another great book by Roald Dahl, as I have read plenty of his books. I would rate this book 9 out of 10. This is for anyone who wants to read a short enjoyable book.

By Conor Mc Ateer, Slemish 1.

Skeleton Key.

Author: Anthony Horowitz Publisher: Walkers Books

This book is about a fourteen year old boy called Alex Rider who works for the secret service called MI6.

Alex is on a small island near the coast of Cuba where he has to stop the Russian General called Sarov from trying to take over the world by firing missiles at the main cities in the world.

The most exciting bit in the book is when Alex is tied up to a pole and there's a man guarding him. He unties himself and knocks out the guard. He then gets the guard's phone and rings MI6 to tell them that the Russian General Sarov is trying to take over the world by firing missiles at the main cities and he must be stopped. So MI6 track Sarov down, arrest him and they disarm the missiles. Alex is then returned to school where he waits for MI6 to call him for another mission.

My favourite character in this book is Alex because I think he is very brave and he would be up for any mission even if he put his life on the line! This book is the third in a series of 8.

Niall Mackle. Iveagh 1.

Seventh Years say farewell to Rathore pupils at the annual party

The pupils from both Rathore and the Abbey enjoyed themselves at their annual end of year party that took place in the bowling alley at the Sheepbridge Inn. Both sets of students were given the day out of class as a reward for their efforts in working together throughout the year with the ICT and Drama courses offered by the Abbey as part of our Social Spirituality Programme.



Basketball

Abbey first years win the Vince Halloran Shield



On Saturday 17th May, thirteen 1st years got to go to St Malachy's school in Belfast for the annual Vincent O'Halloran Basketball Tournament. This competition is played in honour of Vincent O'Halloran, who lived and worked as a fireman in the United States of America. He used to take a Catholic and a Protestant child over to America for the summer to train with the world's top coaches. This stopped, however, in the year of 2001. As Vincent G Halloran was a fireman, he was called into the Twin Towers on September 11th and sadly died like so many others in that tragedy. Our first match in the tournament was against St Malachy's (A). St Malachy's are the All Ireland Champions, so we knew it would be a hard game. The team that started the first quarter was; Joseph Mc Shane, Ruairi Daly, Michael Hassan and Conor O Reilly and, of course, me. Joseph Adams was the substitute. The team that started the 2nd quarter was; Daniel Murdock, Peter O Hagan, Rory Watterson, Aaron O'Reilly and Leo Gorman. Connor Cranny, Joseph Adams and Brandon Campbell were the substitutes. As this was our first match, we didn't know what to expect from ourselves, everybody was nervous.

As the game got underway, the nerves kind of settled a bit. After the first quarter we were getting beaten by 4 points, but we were really good for our first time playing together. In the 2nd quarter we played very well also. In this quarter we had got our first score, it was from Peter O' Hagan. The 3rd and 4th quarters were very good also as we managed to rack up another 4 points. The final score was 14- 6 to St Malachy's (A).

After this match everyone's nerves were settled and we were all enjoying being there at the tournament. Our 2nd match was against Lagan College and we got off to a flyer scoring 4 points in the 1st quarter to nil. The 2nd quarter started and we got another couple of baskets, but they weren't about to give up yet, at one point there was just one basket between the two sides. In the 3rd and 4th quarter, we pulled away and ended up winning 12 to 6. Everyone was over the moon! As a result of us winning one of our games and Lagan College not winning any of their games we were through to the shield semi- final.

The team we were supposed to play in the semi-final didn't show up, so we got a bye into the final against Rathmore. After the first two quarters we were winning by 4 points and playing the best we had ever played. The score was 9-4 to Abbey in the last quarter but Rathmore scored another basket and were coming back at us! Suddenly we got the ball moved up the court, Daniel Murdock had the ball and he passed it to me and I shot and scored a three pointer. A couple of seconds later the referee blew the whistle and it was all over. We had won!

Páudie Mc Grath, Donard 1



Double Joy For the Abbey First Years.



After defeating St Pat's Maghera in an extra time thriller to claim the Martin O Farrell Cup for the first time since 1989, the Abbey first Year Football Squad rounded off a busy 72 hours, with the Ben Dearg Final. This time it was arch rivals St. Colman's, Newry, who stood between the Abbey and a clean sweep of first year trophies. The Abbey boys won a tense final, played in a very sporting manner, by the slenderest of margins. Following the one point victory, team manager, Mr. D Gordon, told Slí na Mainistreach that this was a significant victory for the Courtenay Hill men. "Winning is a good habit to be in, and these boys have earned their victory. The win shows that there is potential in this squad and if they keep applying themselves to their football, who knows where they can go?" Who knows indeed!

Back row (left to right): Travis Kelly, Conn O'Neill, Ryan Hughes, Eoin Mc Nally, Conor Mc Ateer, Eoin Mc Parland, Sean Cooper, Michael Hasson, Rory Waterson.

Middle row: Mr. Garreth Thornton (Kitman), Feargal Collins, Conor Lonergan, James Mc Conville, Ben Hughes, Ronan Miller, Paudie Mc Grath, Mark Flood, Caolan Murtagh, Tony Byrne, Rory Lavery, Mr. Dan Gordan (Coach).

Front row: James O Hare, Fionn Mc Evoy, Conall Lynch, Cormac Mc Cartan (with the Ben Dearg Shield), Mr. Dermot Mc Govern, Headmaster, Donnach Mc Aleenan ((captain) pictured with the O Farrell Cup) Daniel Kane, Cathal Donnelly and Niall Strain. Missing from the photograph: Michael Lonergan.



Golf

The Abbey Golf Team participated in this year's Darren Clarke Schools' Golf League with some success. The competition involved 30 teams from all over the North and was played over several different courses. The boys won their first two games against Newry High and Sacred Heart respectively. These games were played at Armagh and Kilkeel golf courses. Unfortunately the team were beaten against St. Colman's and St. Mark's. However, on the finals day in Armagh Golf

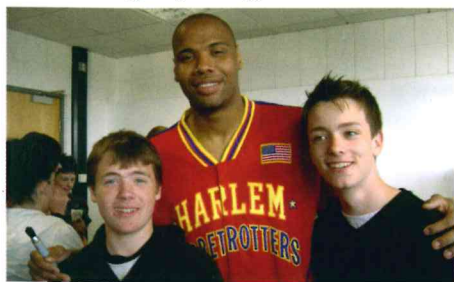
Course, John McGivern was on the winning fourball in a shotgun start competition involving 18 teams. Danny Mullan was nominated as this year's All-Star as the most improved golfer of the last year.

Pictured are the Abbey Junior Golf Squad – 2007/08

(Back row, l to r): Patrick Reel, Eoin Carlin, Neil McConville, Danny Mullan (captain), Gareth Rooney, Caolan Moan;

(Front row, l to r): David McGurk, Ciaran McArdle, John McGivern, Bryan Murphy, Martin McCabe.

Abbey players meet the Globetrotters



On the 14th May the Harlem Globetrotters were visiting Belfast on their world tour. Our basketball coach, Mrs McClean, made inquiries about this and organised a bus up to Belfast. She bought the tickets and ordered the bus so all we had to do was give her the money. We were all delighted at this opportunity and tickets sold out very quickly. Then my friend

somehow got his hands on three "meet and greet" passes and gave one to me and Mrs Mc Clean for all the hard work and effort in training us this year. She kindly gave my friend and me a lift up early so we could meet the players.

When we got there we entered a room with an open bar and other people waiting for the players. Some players soon came and they introduced themselves and signed some autographs. This was extremely exciting and it felt incredible to be so close and talking to some incredible players.

After that the excitement was not over as we still had to see the show. We got to our seats that were in a good position in between the two baskets and sat down to enjoy it. The players soon entered and it began with the players warming up and practising their shots.

The game then began and it soon came to my attention that not only were the players going to do some incredible stuff, but they going to make a joke about it. It went on and we watched in amazement at what they were doing and hoped some day we could do it too.

It all ended all too soon and as we left on the bus everyone was buzzing with excitement and chatting about what they had just seen and what they enjoyed most.

I sat there feeling very motivated and thought that our next training with Mrs Mc Clean was going to be very interesting and wondered if she could teach anything we had just witnessed.

By Conor Campbell