

THE KINTULLAGH VOICE



The newsletter of
St Louis Grammar School
Ballymena

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 13

MARCH 2016

ST LOUIS EXPANSION PLANS UPDATE

Over recent months thankfully a number of building upgrades have come together. We are delighted that we have now secured £4m from the Department of Education to fund the total refurbishment of the Convent House and build a new Drama Studio on the site of the existing Chapel. Kintullagh House will become a Centre of Excellence for Creative & Expressive Arts and will contain all our Music/Drama/Art and Moving Image Arts classes.

We also have plans at an advanced stage to create a 40 space car park in the wooded area to the front of Kintullagh House, costing approximately £400k.

In January we received word that £1m has been secured to rebuild our school Canteen. This is a big project in that we will have to demolish existing building and re-build on same site and feed over 1000 pupils each day!

Our School Council will meet with Architects to have an input to the final design which we hope will have a real 'wow factor' as well as provide high quality food distribution.



Many thanks also to those generous benefactors, parents and past pupils who have enabled us to match fund our sports project which will enable us to develop a new multi-purpose indoor gym, dance studio, spin/fitness centre and sports seminar facility. The project comes in at £560k and will start over the summer and our students can hardly wait. The completed project, funded by Mid & East Antrim Council/Sport NI and St Louis benefactors, will have a community link and provide a valuable opportunity for out of school use by local sporting and non-sporting groups.

Finally, we are in the final stages of preparation of a business case to transform our grass pitch to a multi-purpose 4G pitch, which will enable all our inter-school matches to be played on a home venue.

So as you can see, it's certainly going to be a busy 18 months for all involved with St Louis upgrades...we are confident, however, this extensive capital investment will add to our resources in a way that will benefit every member of our school community for many years to come.

St Louis GS... Be proud of it... Be part of it...



Good luck to our senior hurlers in their All-Ireland Final!

Monday March 28th at Semple Stadium, Thurles against Abbey CBS, Tipperary.

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THAT'S THE SPIRIT, NATHAN



Year 14 pupil, Nathan O'Kane, has been named a finalist in the 2016 Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards.

Year 14 pupil, Nathan O'Kane, has been named a finalist in the 2016 Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards.

The All Ireland awards recognise post-primary students for "outstanding" acts of volunteerism and the positive contribution they make in their local communities and further afield.

Nathan is one of twenty finalists and has been a member of St John's Ambulance for seven years. He gives up three nights a week to carry out patient transfers and his dedication began after he himself suffered a serious injury and was tended to by St John's Ambulance members.

On weekends, Nathan provides first aid as part of an ambulance crew at events such as stock car racing and football matches. He also works as part of a crew to provide ambulance response in unison with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service to reduce the pressure on their paramedics during busy periods.

Principal of St Louis Grammar School, Mr Rafferty said: *"Nathan is an exemplary student in every respect who is very modest and does not seek any recognition for his work. He is a very genuine and caring student who truly wants to help the community and continues to do so despite his previous injury. He is a shining example to his peers, with great courage and integrity."*

The twenty finalists, who hail from all corners of Ireland, will be presented with €500 and an engraved silver medallion at a gala awards ceremony which will be held in Lough Eske Castle Hotel and Spa in Donegal.

At the gala, two of the twenty students will be named All Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year, receiving €1,000 for a charity of their choice; a gold medallion; a crystal trophy for their school and an all-expense paid trip to the United States in May to participate in the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards Ceremony.

Caroline Faulkner, Senior Managing Director at Pramerica Systems Ireland said: *"The high calibre of entrants is exceptional in the program's special 10th anniversary year, and we are honoured to recognise Ireland's youth who are committed to volunteerism... they are a benchmark for other young people to strive towards."*

We are delighted that Nathan's tireless work has been so fittingly celebrated and we wish him all the best for the gala awards ceremony.

MEET SOME YEAR 11s!



My name is Fergus O'Neill and I'm from Ballymena. I chose to study History, Construction, Business Studies and ICT for GCSE. My favourite subject is ICT as I find it very enjoyable. I hope to study Business Management at University.



My name is Iona Miller and I'm from Carnlough. For GCSE I have chosen to study History, French and Art. I love French as I enjoy learning a different language. In my spare time I play the guitar and sing. I hope to pursue a career in Graphic Design.



My name is Rian McCann. I'm from Ballymena and alongside essential GCSE subjects, I study ICT, Business Studies, PE and History. My favourite subject is PE and I play both Gaelic football and hurling for school.



I'm Katharine Mullan and I'm from Dunloy. I have chosen History, ICT and Technology as my optional choices for GCSE. My favourite subject is PE and I play camogie for school and for Dunloy.



I'm Dylan Galloway and I'm from Glenravel. I am studying History, ICT and Technology for GCSE. I have a strong interest in Maths as I enjoy challenges and problem solving. I hope to study Engineering at University.



My name is Cara McCloskey and I'm from Antrim. The optional subjects I've chosen for GCSE are: Geography, Business Studies and Spanish. My favourite subject is Spanish as it is very interactive. I also have a keen interest in Drama. I am part of the Ardan Theatre Group and I am currently rehearsing for a production of the Wizard of Oz.

EYE FOR EDUCATION

On Monday 5th January 2016, Year 14 students took part in the "Eye for Education" project to help them develop their interview skills for the future. Students were given the scenario that they were applying for a job with the American company, Amazon.co.uk.

The day began with students filling out a standard job application form, which highlighted their qualifications, personal information and interests. The students then carried out an intellectual test, consisting of 25 Maths and English problems which the company actually uses in real life interviews. The final task the students had to undertake was designing a mobile application to try and tackle childhood obesity. This particular challenge tested students' teamwork attributes, helping to identify natural leaders and key contributors.

Finally, students had to partake in a 30 minute interview. Immediately after, students were given a final one-to-one analysis of their performance in their interview and a review of their score in each test. The six most successful students were given a prize, and everyone felt that they had developed their interview skills significantly.



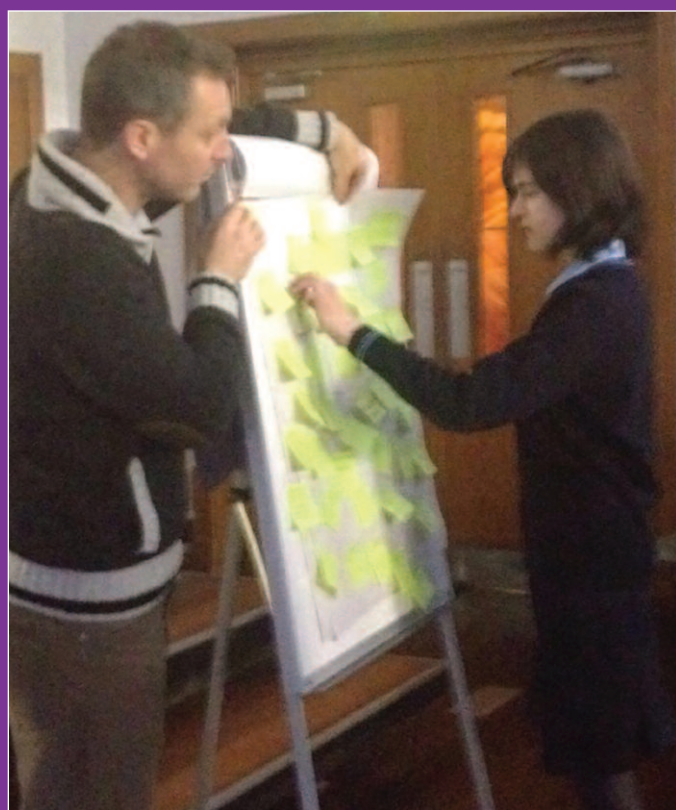
EXCELLENCE AWARDS



St Louis student, Naythan Rafferty, attended the Excellence Awards at Parliament Buildings in Stormont. Naythan achieved 1st in Northern Ireland for Applied Business Studies. He received his award from John O'Dowd and Justin Edwards.

Congratulations, Naythan!

WORLD DEVELOPMENT DAY



On Friday 12th February, Year 12 Geographers and a number of Year 9 and 10 Geographers took part in a 'World Development' workshop organised by the St Louis International Schools Network.

Sister Fionnola, Ronan and Eugene from Dublin, organised a range of activities that made students think about some of the issues that we face both locally and globally. Students learned about the global development goals and more importantly made them more aware of the small changes that can be made within our community to help achieve these goals. It was a fun filled day for all involved and thanks to Ms Gildea and Miss Pickering for helping to organise it.

FRIENDS FOR ROMANIA

Thirty eight students accompanied by five members of staff travelled to Transylvania for the annual St Louis winter trip to Romania from 3rd to 10th February.

St Louis pupils and staff have been working in Romania for the last twenty five years and provide much needed support and assistance to various children's homes, schools and orphanages in the Brasov area.

Under the leadership of Mr Marquess and with the help of three local assistants, the staff and students enjoyed spending time with children and young adults in various places of care. The incredible fundraising efforts of the Lower Sixth students ensured each centre in the Brasov area was provided with much needed resources and equipment. The trip, while intense and emotional was a very rewarding and humbling experience for all involved.

Niamh Gould, a Year 13 student, reflected on her experience: *"Our time in Romania proved not only rewarding but also gave us a new perspective on how advantaged we are, as well as highlighting the importance of helping those in less favorable situations. Although at some points our trip was difficult, we all enjoyed our experience in Romania."*

Visiting a number of home and schools for children allowed us to see the benefit of the extensive fundraising we carried out before leaving. Being able to spend time with the children and to provide them with aid was an amazing experience. It was evident, when visiting these homes, the improvements that Friends for Romania have made to the lives of many who would otherwise have very little.

What I found the most striking about my trip was how grateful people were for things which we take for granted. Romania helped to make me aware of the extent of work charities like Friends for Romania do for those suffering from poverty and also allowed our group as a whole to successfully help the people who need it most."



LIVING HISTORY WORKSHOP

Our Year 10 pupils enjoyed a World War One 'Living History' experience on Thursday 7th January.

They got the chance to work with replica weapons, try on World War One clothing and equipment and further their knowledge of the greatest conflict of the twentieth century. We are delighted to welcome the Navan Centre back each year to work with our pupils!



ALL STARS

St Louis is celebrating the news that nine students received Ulster Colleges' All Star awards this year. Six male students were honoured with Hurling All Stars while three female students were Camogie All Star recipients.

Both sports held a first set of trials in early November and players were then selected to attend a final trial later in the month. As always the standard was very high and to have six hurling all stars in one year is exceptional and this equals the biggest representation from a single school in the 28 year history of the scheme.

St Louis hurlers won the Mageean Cup back in October for only the second time in the school's history. Player of the match in that final, James McNaughton won his first All Star award in 2015. James joins his brother Nicholas and sisters Una and Lucia who all collected Ulster Colleges' All Stars during their time in the school. The Loughgiel clubman is also an Antrim and Ulster Boxing champion.

Mageean captain Cathal McNaughton collects his second award, as last year he was selected at centre half back and in 2015 he was selected at full back. The St Louis list is completed by the Dunloy quartet of Ryan Elliott (Goal Keeper), Eoin O'Neill (mid field), Conal Cunning (corner forward) and Ciaran Elliott (corner forward). The four Cuchullians players were central figures in their club's county success in 2015 as well as to the St Louis Casements and Mageean campaigns in the last two years. Ryan Elliott is the son of former Dunloy, Antrim and Ulster keeper Shane, who was selected on the first ever Colleges' Hurling All Star team in 1998. St Louis' total of All Stars now stands at 40.

13 of the 15 Hurlers selected on this year's team come from Antrim schools. While St Louis have the highest representation, Cross and Passion have two, St Killian's have two and beaten Mageean finalists St Mary's CBS also have two. Colaiste Feirste and Rathmore Grammar in Belfast both have one All Star each.

St Louis camogs reached the semi final of the Senior A competition only to lose out by three points to eventual champions St Patrick's Maghera who had a comprehensive victory over St Mary's Magherafelt in mid-December. Victoria Edgar, Therese McKinley and Caitriona Graham were key players in the St Louis 2015 campaign and were worthy recipients for Colleges' All Stars. Once again Caitriona Graham retains the goal keeper jersey to collect her second award. The Ahoghill star was also recently awarded the Most Promising Young Player of the Year award at the County Presentation evening following a good year with the Saffron U16 team. Therese McKinley and Victoria Edgar both received their first awards and were selected in the forward line. Therese's brothers Ciaran and Donal were both awarded Hurling All Stars during their sixth form years in St Louis. She was also part of the victorious Loughgiel Shamrocks team which won the Antrim Intermediate championship this summer and then the Ulster Junior Championship in the autumn. Victoria Edgar has battled back from a serious knee injury and has been in fine scoring form for St Louis as well as her club and county in 2015.

Head of PE and Sport in St Louis, Gearoid Adams was full of praise for the nine students who were honoured as All Stars this year and added, "to have nine All Stars in two codes in one year is an incredible achievement for the school. Those who were fortunate to be selected have been consistently performing at a high standard for us and also achieving on the pitch with their clubs and county. They are great role models for their peers and the junior pupils in St Louis. We have had a very successful year with the hurlers and the camogs, and their mentor Miss Donaghy deserves credit for their efforts as they have competed with the best schools in Ulster and have bridged the gap in terms of results and standards at that level. We know these recipients will be the leaders in the promotion of Gaelic games in St Louis which is our key focus at present and our games staff and players are constantly working hard to achieve more success. Well done to all - we are very proud of them."



ST LOUIS CELEBRATES WORLD BOOK DAY!

Our school ran a number of events to mark the occasion of World Book Day which took place on Thursday 3rd March.

These included a Book Swap during registration and 'Drop Everything and Read' when pupils in KS3 had the chance to read their favourite novel during Period 1. All KS3 pupils had the opportunity to write a review of the novel they had chosen to read during Period 1 and to enter their review into a competition. At the time of going to press, the judging panel was still to make their final decision on the winner! Well done to everyone who took part in these activities – it really helped to make our World Book Day a success!



MACLARNON CUP SEMI FINAL



Patrician Carrickmacross 2-11 St Louis Ballymena 0-8

St Louis' attempt to complete an Ulster Colleges double this year unravelled in Lurgan on Saturday 27th February as Patrician Carrickmacross earned their place in the 2016 MacLarnon final.

Despite going on the attack from the throw in, St Louis were a point in arrears after ninety seconds of play and this was a lead Patrician did not relinquish over the sixty minutes of play. Their opening score came from the boot of mid-fielder, Ronan McDonald who was a dominant player for the Monaghan side. Less than a minute later, Alan Kieran got his first score of the day to double Patrician's lead. Eamon Fyfe opened the St Louis account in the fourth minute as he converted a 13m free following a foul on Eoin Campbell. Patrician tagged on three more points by the tenth minute as on each occasion the St Louis attack broke down and the opposition worked the ball quickly up field allowing Edward Walsh, McDonald and Shane Duffy to all score from play. Mid way through the first half, Connell Lemon got on the end of a well worked St Louis move to reduce the gap to three points. Duffy and Keelan Molloy traded points for their sides before St Louis were struck a hard blow as referee Kevin Falloon awarded Patrician a penalty following a 23rd minute foul inside the danger area on Karl McMenamin. Duffy duly converted the spot kick and St Louis found themselves trailing by six points. However, Mr Adams' side scored the next three points through a converted Fyfe 13m free, another Keelan Molloy curling left footed shot and Ronan Kelly scored with his first touch of the game following his introduction into the forward line in place of Michael O'Connell. St Louis had done well to reduce the gap to three points but on the stroke of half time, Alan Kieran got his second point of the game and as both teams headed for the changing rooms, Patrician had a 1-7 to 0-6 half time advantage.

Patrician always looked dangerous on the attack during the second half and two converted frees from Fergal Hannerty either side of another Shane Duffy free gave Carrickmacross a six point lead after forty five minutes of play. When Shane Woods was judged to have touched the ball on the ground, Keelan Molloy converted the resultant 20m free but it was to be his side's last score of the game despite having the majority of possession in the final twelve minutes of play. Unfortunately, Connell Lemon's goal bound effort skimmed just across the front of the goal line in the 52nd minute. Shane Duffy converted his second free of the half three minutes from time but the game was well out of St Louis' reach. Patrician advanced to the St Patrick's Day showpiece against Holy Trinity College Cookstown.

On reflection, St Louis can be proud of their performance during the campaign. On numerous occasions during the semi final, they attacked with flair and style but the Patrician team was slick on the counter attack. Many of the St Louis MacLarnon squad are on the All Ireland hurling panel and they must be commended for their commitment to the senior teams.

POPE JOHN PAUL II AWARD

On Thursday 4th February, 10 sixth year students facilitated by Miss Bigmore, received the Pope John Paul II Award.

The Pope John Paul II Award is dedicated to the memory of the late Pope John Paul II whose love of young people was so profound.

The Pope John Paul II Award enables pupils to become more actively involved in the life of their parish and community. The aim is to ensure that young people realise that Religion is not just for learning, nor a list of rules designed to stop you doing what you want. Religion is for living through taking an active part in your church and community.

As well as the feeling of personal achievement that the young people gained from taking part in the award, participation also shows future employers and educators that they are a young person who can make an on-going commitment to a task. The award is non-competitive, flexible and voluntary.

The 10 students who received the award are: Fiona Blaney, Therese McKinley, Maeve Donaghy, Nicole Traynor, Kerrie McGuckian, Rebecca Dixon, Niamh Butler, Mary O'Neill, Sarah McLarnon and Emma Lagan.

We wish these 10 young people good luck as they move forward in their faith journey.



YPI

This year, St Louis participated in the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative which has become a tradition in school. YPI provides pupils with a hands on experience of philanthropy through an academic course which gives them the skills to assess local community needs and make grants to grassroots charities.

Pupils build relations with representatives from their chosen charity and, following skills training in investigation and public speaking, present on the reasons their proposed charity is most deserving of support. The group judged to have made the most compelling presentation in each school wins a £3000 grant to award to their charity.

During the process, pupils develop teamwork, communication and presentation skills. This year's winning team consisted of Ciara Fraser, Ciara McKittrick, Sinead Devine and Taylor McNeill.



Ciara Fraser reflected on their group's experience:

"The charity we chose was the Motor Neurone Disease Association which helps people suffering with this condition in our local community. Motor neurone disease is when your muscles stop working over a period of time and it has a massive impact on the person's life as well as their loved ones.

We worked in class and at home on our project and divided the parts evenly. We wanted to be able to give MNDA something even if we didn't win, so we raised over £140 by collecting spare change.

We had to compete against the other groups in our class and Miss Pickering and our class decided which group would be the best to go through to the final. The final took place on February 11th. The winning groups and wild cards out of each class took part and the four judges decided who deserved the prize. A member of the MNDA also came and watched the final. We chose MNDA because a member of the group is deeply affected by MND and we believe it needs to be addressed more in our community. The YPI project has helped us, individually and as a group, become more confident and aware of the issues in our community and also we found it very enjoyable."

BELFAST EXPOSED

A-Level Art and Moving Image Arts pupil Sandra Janik has successfully gained a place on the Belfast Exposed Futures Project.

Belfast Exposed Photography is Northern Ireland's principal gallery of contemporary photography, commissioning, publishing and showing work by local and international photographers. This project has provided Sandra with the opportunity to participate in monthly workshops where she works with pupils from other schools in Northern Ireland to gain knowledge, understanding and practical skills in photography.

Sandra offered an insight into her experience: *'In this project I am gaining the opportunity to create professional photographs utilising traditional techniques such as developing in a dark room. So far we have visited Belfast Exposed Gallery, MAC Gallery and University of Ulster, where tutors informed us about Photography and Fine Art degrees. I have been able to work with pupils from other schools which has improved my communication skills through expressing my opinions in relation to Art. In the forthcoming sessions we will be working towards our final outcome. I am very much enjoying this experience.'*

We are delighted that Sandra's photographic talent has been recognised by such a prestigious organisation which is renowned for creating significant springboards for artists to build their careers!

STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

St. Louis Student Leadership Team organised all 148 Prefects for their termly meeting on the week of Monday 10th- 15th January.

Each Student Leadership Team member was responsible for their own prefect group which included: Careers Prefects, Marketing Prefects, Noticeboard Prefects, Hospitality Prefects, Locker Prefects, Mentor Prefects, Reading Room Prefects, Sport Prefects, Supervision prefects and Year Book Prefects. Each SLT member was responsible for producing an agenda for their meeting. Minutes were taken and action points were decided.



This is the second termly meeting and much progress has been made from term 1. Mrs McGreevy stated, *"I am extremely proud of our sixth form Prefects. Our students are mature young adults who take the lead in directing their own sixth form. All Prefects have a role to play and the progress they have made since term one has been admirable. Well done to everyone concerned!"*

INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL O'NEILL



Soccer enthusiasts had the opportunity to interview past pupil and Northern Ireland Manager, Michael O'Neill on Friday 26th February. Year 13 students, Michael McCabe, Callum McCabe and Conor McAuley, along with Mrs Morgan and Mr Quinn, made the trip to the impressive new Windsor Park Stadium in Belfast.

A BBC School Report team filmed the interview which took half an hour and O'Neill spent a further half an hour chatting with the pupils. It was fortunate timing as O'Neill had just secured a new four year managerial contract. Therefore, in terms of media attention, he was very much in demand! O'Neill spoke to the pupils about his new deal, his hopes for the future and of course he also reflected on his school days at St Louis. He regaled of his footballing accomplishments with school and also praised the education he received which encouraged him to obtain a degree in Maths and Statistics.

We are grateful that Michael O'Neill took time out of his busy schedule to spend with our pupils. He is a great ambassador for our school and we wish him every success in the Euros!



KEEPING UP WITH TRADITION

Through the traditional group at school, we often get the chance to visit Castle Tower's Loughan School in Ballymena, which teaches children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Our most recent visit was on Thursday 25th February, when we performed for the pupils and staff of the school during their morning assembly. We love visiting the school as we always receive a warm welcome and they greatly appreciate us taking the time out of school to entertain them.

It is a great opportunity to play for children who enjoy listening to us and makes the dedication of practice on Wednesdays at break time worthwhile. We played a selection of tunes from 'Brian's March' to 'Scotsman Over the border' a Jig, as well as Happy Birthday for pupils and staff whose birthdays had occurred that week. Mr Convery also presented an award to the pupil of the month from each class.

It was a lovely experience to see the children so excited and happy when they received their certificate. At the end of the assembly we joined the children in their classroom to get a picture and talk to them.

We will fondly remember playing for the children and watching them happily clap along and we hope that St Louis' annual visit to Loughan School will continue for many years to come.

Kerrie McGuckin and Aoibhín Agnew





IRISH CONVENTION

On Friday 26th February, four Sixth Form pupils and I visited the Belfast Campus of the University of Ulster for an Irish Convention.

Mrs Wilson was very excited about the visit and her enthusiasm rubbed off on us; luckily we weren't disappointed.

The overall purpose of the day was to offer Key Stage 5 Irish pupils advice on the best ways to prepare for our Irish exams and how to make efficient use of our revision time. We worked with pupils from other schools and three Academics, including the Head Lecturer in the Irish Department at the University. He explained the significance of structuring revision and suggested methods to help us learn and remember new vocabulary.

Later in the day, all of the schools gathered together to be informed of the advantages of learning Irish and how our native language can improve our opportunities for employment in Ireland and beyond. We also got to meet several people whose qualifications in Irish helped them to achieve their career goals.

Overall the visit gave us an insight into how the resurgence of the Irish Language can greatly benefit our own career paths.

Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí! (Praise the Young and they will flourish!)

Sean O'Rawe

JUNK KOUTURE

On Friday 4th March, a group of pupils attended the Junk Kouture Regional Finals in Derry. They were accompanied and supported by Mrs F McAuley, in Mrs McDonald's absence.

Competing were:

Sandra Janik and her dress 'Metal Meltdown', modelled by Brogan Devlin and supported by Oilwia Midzio (all Year 13)

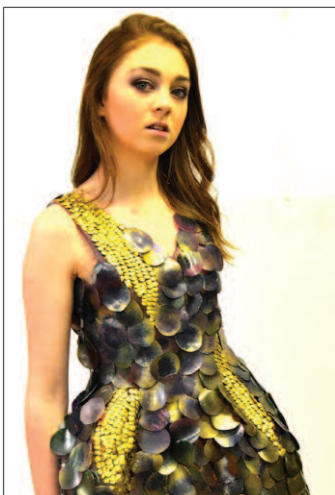
Ciara McGilligan and her dress 'Off the Scale', modelled by Rebecca McDonald (10 Layde) and supported by Eimear McAtamney, (10 Lyndon)

Naomi Lynn and her dress 'Tight Twist', modelled by Catherine Lennon and supported by Daire Wilson (all Year 13)

Lucy McMullan and her dress 'Musical Maiden', modelled by Anna McLaughlin and supported by Ruairi McLarnon (all Year 13)

Mrs C McFadden kindly accompanied a group of supporters to attend the evening show. The students as always were absolutely fantastic and tremendous ambassadors for St. Louis. They thoroughly enjoyed all the performances and have come away with numerous ideas for next year's competition.

Congratulations to all who participated; the dresses and performances were spectacular. Special mention, however, must go to Naomi, Catherine and Daire as 'Tight Twist' has been shortlisted to proceed to the Grand Final in Dublin later this term. We wish the team every success for the final and would encourage as many people as possible to get behind them and support them in Dublin.



LITERIFIC DEBATING COMPETITION

On Wednesday 25th February, three teams from the senior Debating Society took part in the Literific and Alpha Newspapers Schools' debating competition.

Team one was Hugh Dobbin and Eimer McAuley.

Team two was Ruari Carland and Aidan Campion.

Team three was Matthew Sullivan and Amy Kirk.

The Literific debating society belongs to Queen's University Belfast. It is the University's oldest society and hosts 35 events per annum. Having in recent years received a burst of life and activity, the members themselves ran the competition in the most part.

Over twenty teams participated in the preliminary round, with such a wide diverse competition it was a great opportunity for our school's debate team to compete against new schools, improving their skills in the process.

The motion for the preliminary round was, *"This house would tax unethical business higher"*, which was provided in advance. Each team battled it out against three to four others in a heated first stage with such a topical issue. All of our teams put forth challenging arguments.

Fortunately Hugh and Eimer were successfully nominated as one of the four teams in the final!

The final round consisted of the four best teams being faced with the more challenging motion *"This House would have an open door policy to refugees"* which Hugh and Eimer opposed. Unfortunately they did not snatch the prize in this competitive round, however the trip was a fun and worthwhile experience as the most senior pupils' last competition. St Louis' Debating Society looks forward to the Year 13 students returning to the competition next year and maybe even some fresh talent! The debating year will begin again in September and all newcomers are welcome and encouraged as it is an excellent skill to showcase to universities.



LET'S TALK POLITICS

On 29th January 2016, five 6th Form pupils attended a 'Let's Talk Politics' event run by the NI Assembly, kindly hosted by Antrim Grammar School.

The day started with a Question and Answer session with four local politicians representing the largest Stormont parties. Year 14 student, Ronan Hasson addressed the parties regarding the delay to on-going Legacy investigations. This generated a heated debate and tightened the collars of some of those on the stage! The UUP's Adrian Cochrane-Watson MLA even commented on the quality of our questioning!



After lunch we were joined by none other than the leader of the Alliance Party and Justice Minister David Ford MLA who also participated in the discussion. The St Louis contingent continued to press the politicians on big issues such as policing and the building of a new Casement Park in Belfast.

Thanks to Mrs Johnston for entering us into the event which was enjoyed by all and also to Antrim Grammar School for hosting.

Jack Hampton

OXFORD OFFER

I recently received a conditional offer to read English Literature at Oxford University. Having visited the university at an open day in September and learning more about the course, (which spans early medieval literature to the present day) I decided to apply as it offered an expansive and challenging higher education in literature.

The application process began in October with a personal statement, a piece of written work and an admission test called the ELAT all required. I then received an invitation for interview in November for St. Peter's College. Oxford consists of thirty eight colleges with St. Peter's being one of the smallest, friendliest and most central.

The interview process took place in early December. In preparation, Miss O'Neill and Mrs Kearney organised mock interviews for me which were extremely helpful. I had two interviews in the college and stayed for four days, as applicants may be called to other colleges for interview. The interviews were casual but challenging, essentially short but intense academic conversations with professors. They involved sight reading three poems and analysing them. However I wasn't asked anything beyond what I could be expected to know!

Having completed this application process I was thrilled to receive an offer to study at St. Peter's. I would recommend anyone who is passionate about their subject to consider applying, as perfect grades are not a necessity; rather enthusiasm and wider reading. The interview experience is amazing as you meet lots of applicants from across the world, and you are free to explore the city. The best advice for the application process is to ask for help. Mrs Beattie, Mr. O'Hare and Miss Wallace helped me with every part of my application, and this was essential to gaining an offer. I owe thanks to Mrs Beattie who has taught me English since junior school and has greatly influenced my decision to study English at any university.

Eimer McAuley



SETTING SAIL IN SEPTEMBER

While most Year 14 pupils hope to enrol in their University course in September, I will be registering for a very different course: The Merchant Navy. Therefore, I have decided to enlighten you all as to what is involved, the benefits of this amazing career and how to get there. Essentially, the Merchant Navy transports cargo or passengers around the world.

I decided to join the Merchant Navy due to an exhilarating yacht trip that I attended with Sea Cadets in England in 2012. I worked with my team to get from Guernsey to Jersey and over to Saint Malo, France. This experience consolidated my interest in sailing and I heightened my research on how to pursue this career path. I found that there are multiple companies that I could apply to in order to undertake the HND route for a deck officer.

Subsequently, I completed a Skype interview with a sponsoring company and was invited to attend a face-to-face interview in Southampton in November 2015 which was both exciting and nerve wrecking. Thankfully, I was then offered a place for September 2016.

I feel that the Merchant Navy is an extremely beneficial and accessible career as not only do they subsidise the HND course but you are guaranteed a job upon completion of the 'Officer of the Watch Certificate of Competency'. The job itself involves navigating and steering the ship, chart (map) work, supervising the crew and loading and unloading cargo. Within this job you can enjoy a tax free salary and thirty days holiday for every month that you work, not to mention that you get to travel the world while getting paid.

I am highly excited to be able to travel the seas through this career and cannot wait for the exciting life that awaits me!

Rachael Jameson



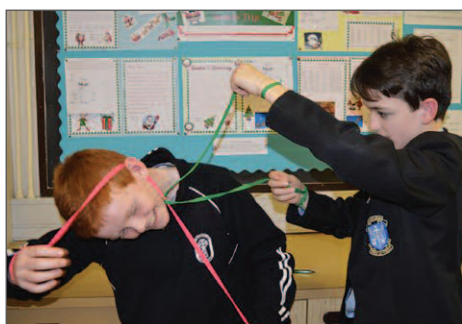


Best wishes to our senior hurlers and their coaches, Mr Morgan and Mr Gillan in the All Ireland Final on Monday March 28th at Semple Stadium Thurles. St Louis will play Abbey CBS, Tipperary.

The St Louis team produced a fantastic display at DCU Sports Grounds in Dublin to overcome St Raphael's of Galway in the Semi Final.

We hope their winning formula helps them to make history by winning an All Ireland title!

OPEN NIGHTS 2016



This year, we were delighted to hold two open nights which took place on Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th January.

Prospective students and their families were given a guided tour of the school, taking part in activities across a range of subjects. Thanks to all who came and we look forward to welcoming many familiar faces in September!

NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations to Mrs Monaghan on the birth of her baby son in January!

UPCOMING DATES & EVENTS

MARCH

Staff Development Day Thursday 24th March.

APRIL

Easter Holiday Friday 25th March – Friday 1st April inclusive.
Year 11 SAS Physics/ Yr 12 DAS/ Biology/ Chemistry/ Physics Resits Results: Thursday 14th April.
Year 11 PE GCSE Orienteering Practical: Tuesday 19th April – Thursday 21st April inclusive.
Years 11/12 MMR/ DTP Vaccine Thursday 28th April.

MAY

Holiday Monday 2nd May.
External Exams Begin Wednesday 4th May.
Year 8 History Workshop Friday 6th May.
Sports Day Friday 27th May.
Staff Development Day Monday 30th May.

JUNE

Year 9 HPV 2 Vaccine Monday 13th June.
External Examinations End Tuesday 28th June.



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