



THE

KINTULLAGH VOICE

Preparations for

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

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April 2019

The Newsletter of St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena



Success at the

BRITISH EDUCATION AWARDS

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**Northern Ireland
Top Grammar
School 2018**

A Level Grades x 5 Subjects
A*-C 95% (NI Average 78%)



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BRITISH EDUCATION AWARDS

In January, Year 13 pupil, Evanna Woodside and recent past pupil, David Byrne were finalists at The British Education Awards (BEA) in the GCSE and A-Level categories, respectively. BEA have been established to promote excellence in British education. This award recognises the value and importance of education and learning as the foundation to a good quality of life and for the future success of our Nation.

The BEA identifies and celebrates individuals who have excelled within our British education system. In doing so, this award acknowledges that success comes down to personal endeavour and application. Educational attainment is not possible without the desire and commitment of each student to further themselves through knowledge and learning.

The gala award ceremony took place in the Hilton, Manchester. David was overall winner in his category. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend the event but Ms Gildea accepted the award on his behalf. Evanna commented on her experience, "It was a memorable event celebrating the success of many young people from across the UK and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience."





PREPARATION FOR PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Breath-taking Landscapes and Lasting Memories in Preparation for Gold President's Award.

As the brighter evenings have now kicked in, the last weekend in March also marked the beginning of the President's Award for the current Lower Sixth Pupils.

The purpose of this weekend was for training. The idea of sleeping in tents and navigating through different mountain terrain seems a good idea, but when put into practice can be very different. The pupils of St Louis embarked on an expedition to North Donegal, basing themselves in the Gaeltacht area of Gortahork, to challenge themselves in what would be the first of three expeditions this year.

The training began on Saturday morning, with local business K&G McAtamney Butchers sponsoring the group with sausage baps to set them up for the day. We thank Gordon and his team for their kind donation. Once the pupils had been fed thanks to the excellent cooking skills of Mrs Toner, Miss Glavin and Miss Doherty, they travelled to Errigal Mountain where they would begin their Navigation training.

The pupils had the difficult task of Climbing Errigal Mountain, making their way across to Alton Lough, and finishing up in Glenveagh National Park. Throughout the day, pupils passed different check points along the route where they tested their navigation, compass and timing skills that they had previously built up during enrichment lessons.

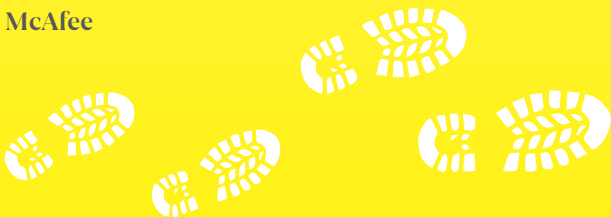
Although the climb to Errigal was wet under foot at the beginning and tested our pupils both physically and mentally, the views from the top were amazing and it felt rewarding to have made it to the peak.

After an exciting weekend, the pupils left on Sunday morning, feeling accomplished, proud, and with the experience of walking in difficult mountain terrain.

Thanks to Mr McLernon, Mr McNaughton, Mrs Toner, Miss Drain, Miss Glavin and Miss Doherty for giving up their time this weekend to facilitate the President's Award.

The pupils now travel to the Mourne's for an assessed practice in two weeks' time.

Mr A McAfee



A big THANK YOU to K&G McATAMNEY!

See page 29



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OPEN NIGHTS 2019

St Louis Grammar School was filled to capacity with P6 and P7 students and prospective 6th Form students as they sampled the experiences in a range of subject areas on both Open Nights on 23rd and 24th January.

Parents and pupils were welcomed by Mr. Rafferty who addressed many of the positive dynamics of the school, not least of which being superb academic achievements, high quality pastoral care, personalising the learning programmes and the holistic learning experiences which indeed sets St Louis Grammar School apart from most other schools. Mr. Rafferty also referenced the new building upgrades which will enhance the fabric of the school substantially over the incoming years.

The atmosphere was one of positive engagement and the school community was a buzz of activity with the many interactive demonstrations being led by current students and teachers.



Excellence, Endeavour and Empowerment...

GRAMMAR SCHOOL EXAM PERFORMANCE (17/18)

SCHOOLS WITH THE HIGHEST % OF PUPILS ACHIEVING THREE OR MORE A-LEVELS AT GRADES A* TO C

	SCHOOL	3+ A-LEVEL
1	St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena	95.3
2	St Dominic's High School, Belfast	94.5
3	Dominican College, Belfast	91.7
4	St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel	91.2
5	St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt	91.1
6	Friends' School, Lisburn	89.2
7	Rathmore Grammar School, Belfast	89.0
8	Aquinas Diocesan Grammar School, Belfast	88.4
9	Banbridge Academy	88.1
10	Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Belfast	88.0

ST LOUIS TOP GRAMMAR IN NI

Congratulations to our wonderful staff and pupils on maintaining our position as the top grammar school in Northern Ireland! This is a true reflection of our school mantra...

'Excellence, Endeavour and Empowerment'.

Well done everyone!



PRAMERICA

Spirit of the Community Awards

On Thursday 28th March, I attended the Pramerica Spirit of the Community Awards held in the Aviva Stadium in Dublin. Whilst there, I was awarded with a silver medallion and €500, alongside 19 other honourees from all parts of Ireland.

About Pramerica

The Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards programme recognises and rewards post-primary/second-level students for volunteer work carried out in their communities, through an exciting initiative that provides recognition and generous financial rewards to the finalists.

This Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards programme was launched on an all-Ireland basis in 2006. Since then, the programme has honoured more than 2000 outstanding volunteers from over 300 schools across Ireland.

My work

My volunteer work started when I was nine. My immediate family organised a charity cycle event that would become known as Rasharkin's Annual Charity Event. The event has been ongoing for 9 years and has raised a substantial amount of money for various charities including: Friends of Cancer, Cheat, Heart and Stroke and Dementia Awareness. My work involves taking registration, helping in the kitchen and even participating on some occasions.

Alongside this, I went to Romania with St. Louis with the charity Friends of Romania, to offer rest bite to the local schools and orphanages. Before completing this trip, I had to raise £500 that would be spent on the schools and orphanages to deliver appliances such as fridges that they were in need of.

I have also completed a fundraiser for Chest, Heart and Stroke and sponsored walks for MS.

By Eimhear Hardy, Year 14



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SOROPTOMIST INTERNATIONAL

Public Speaking Final

Jordayna Magill writes on her experience of the Soroptimist International Public Speaking Competition:

After having previously taken part in the regional heats of the Soroptimist International Public Speaking Competition and winning, I qualified for the Northern Ireland final which I recently took part in on the 9th of February. In the final, I recited the prepared speech that I had composed for the regional heats which had to last between 4 and 6 minutes and was titled, "Real Wealth is Never Measured by Money or Possessions". On the day, I also had to complete the task of creating another speech; an impromptu or extempore speech. This section required me to write a 1-2-minute speech in a 5-minute time frame on a title that I had never seen before. The title given was "Comfort and Growth Cannot Co-Exist" – needless to say, it was quite the challenge.



Jordayna Magill, pictured with her Mother, Sister and Chairperson of Soroptimist NI.

I was very proud of my performance and Mrs Beattie, who did a commendable job preparing me for the competition, and who said my performance was excellent and I was a credit to myself. Unfortunately, I did not place but my spirits were not dampened, as I had not only learned a lot and endured a wonderful experience, but I also executed something I never imagined I could – a speech, written by myself, in front of an audience, no stuttering, no shake in my voice, just pure enjoyment!

Aoife Murray: Recipient of MICHAELA FOUNDATION WINGS AWARD

Huge congratulations to Aoife Murray in 10 Layde, who was awarded the Michaela Foundation Wings Award in the 14-16 age category in Belfast on Wednesday 27th March.

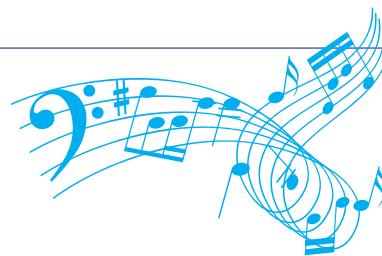
Speaking of her experience, Aoife says, *"I was honoured by a nomination for Michaela Wings award on the 27th March. I was surprised and thankful, evermore so when I was announced as the winner. The award was presented by the Tyrone Manager Mickey Harte; whose daughter the Foundation is named after. This opportunity has been one that I will never forget and I am grateful for the enormous support I have received from the school and to Mrs. Doherty for nominating me."*





ULSTER ORCHESTRA

Come and Play



Every year the Ulster Orchestra runs an initiative called the 'Come and Play' day, giving young aspiring professional musicians the opportunity to experience rehearsing and performing with the Orchestra in the iconic Ulster Hall. Two of our students - Jude McCann (year 11) and Rebecca McDonald (year 15) - took part in this event in January. Rebecca describes her experience:

My name is Rebecca McDonald and I am currently a lower sixth student studying music at A level and working on my grade 8 violin. My career goal is to become a music teacher as well as perform in professional ensembles and orchestras and therefore, being given the opportunity to play in the Ulster Orchestra at their 'Come and Play' event was a great pleasure.

I was posted the pieces three months in advance and upon opening them, I became extremely nervous. The skill level of the pieces seemed daunting and the event was becoming a reality. Nevertheless, I worked on the pieces with my teacher and this gave me the confidence I needed.

Before I knew it, the day had arrived and whilst I was looking forward to the experience, I was extremely anxious as I was going by myself and had no idea what to expect. As soon as I entered the Ulster Hall I was greeted with smiling faces and I felt instantly at ease. I began to see faces I knew from the senior youth orchestra I am part of, and this made me realise I wouldn't be alone in this experience.

I was then introduced to my mentor, Claire, who was very kind and allowed me to feel comfortable to ask questions if I was unsure of anything. The morning began with a string sectional. It was interesting to be introduced to new ways of conducting and how to listen to those around you as well as being able to experience playing in such a large hall and hearing new acoustic sounds.

After our break, the whole orchestra came together to rehearse, and I was overwhelmed by the rich sound and texture we created together. I thought it was amazing that a group of amateur players could come together in such a way and sound so professional; a true testament to our talents. The more I got used to the conductor's techniques and how the orchestra moved together, the more excited for the concert I became.

After a break for dinner where I chatted to some of my fellow youth orchestra members, it was time for our parents to hear what we had been working on. I could see my parents in the balcony above the orchestra and I became nervous to make them proud. We played exceptionally well and to see my parents smiling assured me we had sounded great.

The day was over before I knew it and I walked away feeling invigorated and with an even deeper passion for music and the violin. It really was a phenomenal experience and I would recommend it to any musician with a passion for music. It really affirmed my dream of becoming a professional player and I hope someday I can provide the exceptional experience that I was provided for another aspiring musician at the 'Come and Play' event.



DePAUL VISIT

The service users at Stella Maris were overwhelmed by the gifts, thought and generosity shown to them by the students of St. Louis in January.

The students were privileged to meet some of the people who are trying to cope with homelessness and the hardships of life, and Henry and Kate in particular made a huge and significant impact on them. Henry is a native of Ballymena and his sister attended SLG many years ago; he became quite emotional during his conversation and so moved was he that the young people from his home town cared so much for him and others like him.

Kate, the only female resident at present, was so delighted that she opened up her room, allowing the students to see the full range of service that Stella Maris and DePaul provide for the homeless.

Thanks to everyone who has supported this initiative - it has made such a difference to the lives of so many.





FRIENDS FOR ROMANIA **Winter 2019**

In February, I had the spectacular opportunity of travelling to Romania alongside 51 other Year 15 pupils, accompanied by 4 teachers. Months of preparation and fundraising had been undertaken before departure, consisting of a series of enrichment classes, facilitated by Mr Marquess, alongside individual fundraising activities, and we embarked to Romania filled with excitement, determined to put our grand fundraising total, in excess of £21000, to good use.

After a tiring journey, we were all eager to begin our outreach to the orphanages, day centres and schools, providing much needed aid and essential supplies. On our first day we purchased a plethora of resources, ranging from equipment to food and basic materials, that we would distribute to each location throughout the week. This was an amazing experience for all involved as we could see that our fundraising efforts were bearing fruits of support for the people of Romania who needed it most.

As the week progressed, whilst the trip proved to be an emotionally intense experience provoking thought and

reflection surrounding the circumstances of the orphans and vulnerable adults we visited, our time in Romania was an overwhelmingly rewarding and humbling venture, filled with laughter and enjoyment. In each place of care we visited, we were all shocked by the gratitude and happiness of the adults and children living there as they were filled with joy when presented with simple items that we all took for granted. This gave us a new perspective on how advantaged we all are, as, despite the tough and unfavourable situation of the adults and young people we spent time with, their delight and joyfulness was incredible.

I can say with confidence that Romania has opened our eyes to the plight of the poverty – stricken and disadvantaged throughout the world, whilst reiterating the inspirational work carried out by charities such as 'Friends for Romania' to tackle these issues. We all feel incredibly privileged to have been part of this life-changing trip and we have formed memories that will touch our hearts for many years to come.

Ruairi McAleese, Year 15





ROYAL VISIT

On Wednesday 7th of March I was invited to an event in the Empire in Belfast that celebrated young people in Northern Ireland's achievements.

I was there representing the Diana Award as an award holder and face of their new 'Change Makers' campaign. I had the opportunity to meet and talk to the Duke of Cambridge at the event during their surprise visit and I was talking to him about my Diana award and what I did to achieve it which he said was really important work and causes. The Duke then went on to talk about his mother Princess Diana and told me that she really cared about young people and it was so important that young people carry on her legacy, which was such a memorable and special moment for me.

I also attended the 30th Anniversary of Cinemagic on Thursday 8th of March as a young ambassador for the charity which the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge also attended. I helped set up vox pops for young critics, showing and teaching them about camera and lighting while having them presenting their reviews to camera in front of the Duke and Duchess.

Daniella Timperley



MOCK COUNCIL

Every year schools are invited to participate in the event and nominate a small group of students to role-play a mock meeting of the Council of the European Union. Recently Sixth Form students from St Louis took part in this event.

The Mock Council of the European Union continues to provide an interesting and exciting experience and an opportunity to develop debating skills and increase students' knowledge on the European Union.

Year 14 student, Brendan McLaughlin, wrote about his experience:

The mock council was very well organised giving a sense of authenticity to the event. As the representative for Cyprus for the debate on the refugee crisis, I found it enlightening that I could take the opportunity to both research ideas for a way forward on what is a very important issue and test them on a mock geopolitical platform. This was made especially pertinent with the unique circumstances with which Cyprus is faced: those being its place on the frontier of refugee ships and its less than desirable relationship with one of the main land routes taken by refugees and migrants, Turkey.



While I found the lack of opportunities to speak regrettable, I can only imagine that this is the real experience that smaller nations will come to in the European Council as the conversation will be dominated by larger powers.

Brendan McLaughlin





LOCAL DEMOCRACY EVENT



On Wednesday 6th February, a small group of Year 11 pupils were given the excellent opportunity to attend the Mid and East Antrim Schools Youth Council Programme which provided us with an introduction to Council, Local Democracy and Good Relations. St Louis was one of many schools to attend and the event gave us the chance to interact with pupils from other schools.

On arrival, we availed of the hospitality and enjoyed a lovely cup of tea! Afterwards, the Mayor, Cllr Lindsay Millar, spoke to us about her role as Mayor and gave a presentation on how the council benefits us as residents of the borough.

After the presentation, all attendees were split into four large groups to participate in four forty minute workshops. Our first stop was the Role of the Councillor Workshop which allowed us to have conversations with local councillors and ask them somewhat challenging questions about their role in the council.

The second workshop was the Mock Council Meeting which was my favourite part of the day. We held mini debates about issues which might affect young people today, such as the legal driving age and the length of the school day; needless to say I made sure to argue my opinions!

I also liked the mock council meeting as we actually had to use the councillors' microphones and we would appear on large screens in the chamber, which was slightly unnerving at first but I got used to it.

Next, we attended the Good Relations Workshop which was a more light-hearted aspect of the visit – essentially, we just made lots of noise using djembe drums and bells which was really good craic.

Finally, we had a tour of the museum at the Braid which was interesting as I had never visited the museum despite having been in the Braid Arts Centre on numerous occasions! We then returned promptly to the theatre where we were given food which disappeared very quickly!

I enjoyed the trip to the Braid as it gave me an insight into what happens in our borough council and it allowed me to put faces to the names that you hear and read about locally. I can't imagine that the job of a local councillor is an easy one given our increasingly diverse society and there is no escaping the fact that it is simply impossible to please everyone all of the time.

By Cara Pirie, Year 11

YEAR 13 MINI ENTERPRISE

SWEETS N' TREATS

This year myself, Michael McErlain, James Crilly, Georgia McCann, Connor McCrory and Erin Buick set up and ran a mini enterprise in the school as we were all interested in learning more about the practical side of business. We held twice weekly meetings to discuss everything from what product to sell and who to target market. I was appointed Managing Director after a vote with the group members.

Georgia was elected Marketing Director, Michael and James were our Sales Directors, Connor was our Finance Director and Erin was appointed Production Director. We thoroughly researched the sweet market including the competition we would face and then sourced our supplier deciding on Makro. We placed our order and agreed as a group the price per unit would be £2.50. We also decided that all our profits would be going to the Student Outreach group for the Homeless since this was a charity we all felt passionately about.

After the sweets were ordered the Marketing Director began designing posters which were then placed in class registers and put up around the school to spread the word of the selling date.

Once the Makro delivery arrived in school, our production team was able to put all the units together, set up a production line and begin making up and packaging the sweet bags over breaks and lunchtimes.

On the 15th of December we were ready to sell and were excited to sell 2/3 of our inventory within the first 20 minutes. We were delighted to raise just over £270 profit which was all donated to the Homeless.

Overall, it was a great experience that we were all glad to be a part of; we learned all about the practical side of running a business, teamwork, meeting deadlines, marketing, finance, production and how to deal with customers.

Clara Devlin Year 13





ULSTER CAMOGIE FINAL

Cross & Passion Ballycastle 3-8 St Louis Ballymena 0-5



In the end, Cross and Passion Ballycastle completed their three-in-a-row of Ulster senior titles in Ballymena on Saturday 19TH January but they were pushed all the way by St Louis in an intense game of camogie.

Ballycastle's greater experience of finals at this level meant that they were able to weather the Ballymena storm and come out the other end.

Ballycastle's Roisin McCormick and Maeve Kelly were well shepherded throughout by the hard work of Maura Downey and Caoimhe Molloy.

Four points from Riana McBride in the six minutes before the break opened a gap between the teams, but in the second half it was the decisive running of Ciara Laverty that created the goals to put CPC in the clear.

The Ballymena defense was heroic, particularly Eimhear McMullan and Bronagh Laverty, while Áine Graham brought off a number of stunning saves in the opening half.

Bronagh Laverty demonstrated a brilliant block on Roisin McCormick in the opening minute to set the tone for the first half and after 27 minutes it was no surprise that the teams were locked on 0-2 each, with excellent defense from both schools.

Then, Anna Connolly shot through the centre to release Riana McBride. She went for goal, but somehow Áine Graham turned it over for a point. Over the next three minutes, McBride picked up three possessions and delivered three more points for her side to turn around with a 0-6 to 0-2 lead.

Immediately on the re-start, Ciara Laverty's run released Charley McCarry for a point and Laverty then created the opening that saw Áine Magill hit the first goal of the tie in the 38th minute.

If that score did not close the door on St Louis who continued to hit confidence-sapping wides, then Ciara Laverty's solo effort in the 41st minute did.

Maura Downey popped over a Ballymena free in reply. Our defense continued to hold firm, but so did Ballycastle's and there were only two further scores: Maeve Kelly picking up a half-clearance in the 58th minute and placing Charley McCarry for a low finish, while Riana McBride reminded everyone of her earlier contribution by posting a lovely point a minute from time.

Mrs Doherty and her team dedicated hours of their free time training outside of school to reach this stage and we couldn't be prouder of them. We now look to the future where a breakthrough win would be much deserved!



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MEET SOME YEAR 9 PUPILS...

Michael McPeake, 9 Lurig

Hi, my name is Michael McPeake and I am from Carnlough. My favourite subjects at school are Maths, Physics, Biology and Chemistry, as I find them really interesting and enjoy the practical elements and experiments in Science.

At GCSE, I hope to choose Geography, History, PE and Drama- Drama is something that I particularly enjoy, as I feel that it is a good creative outlet and way of expressing myself. Outside of school, I enjoy playing football for Carnlough; I go to Jujitsu and this weekend, I am completing a grade for my black belt. As well as this, I am a member Carnlough Rowing Club and this summer, I will be taking part in the All-Ireland Rowing Competition. I cannot wait!



Conall McAuley, 9 Lisbreen

My name is Conall McAuley, I am in 9 Lisbreen and I am from Ballymena. My favourite thing about St. Louis is PE, as I really enjoy sports, especially when we get the chance to play football or rugby. Apart from that, Maths is probably my favourite subject - It is probably the subject I am best at and enjoy the challenge. Outside of school, I play soccer for Northend every weekend and I also play the violin: currently I am on grade 5. I have really enjoyed my first two years at St. Louis and I am looking forward to beginning my GCSEs in the next couple of years.



Niamh McAllister, 9 Laragh

Hi, my name is Niamh, I am in 9 Laragh and live in Antrim. I enjoy most of my subjects at St. Louis, but my favourites are Spanish, Geography, Chemistry, Biology, English and RE. I particularly enjoy RE, as I love learning about the different religions and traditions throughout the world. My hobbies include reading and horse-riding. I love competing in jumping competitions and have been doing so since the age of 5. So far, I have won 60 rosettes and 2 trophies in horse riding competitions. My favourite type of competition is a Derby, because of the variety of jumps involved and the fact that you don't have to wear a blazer, tie and blouse!



Jude Osborne, 9 Lyndon

My name is Jude Osborne, I am in 9 Lyndon and I am from Glenravel. Currently, my favourite subjects are PE, History, Maths and English. PE is probably my favourite subject because you get to play outside and it isn't like other lessons. For me, the best thing about St. Louis is the PE facilities and the Gym. I currently play Gaelic for All Saints Ballymena and for the Year 9 school team and rugby for Ballymena Rugby club. I also play table tennis for Ballymena Table Tennis club and hope to compete in tournaments soon.



Charlotte McKeefry, 9 Layde

Hello, my name is Charlotte McKeefry. I am from Dunloy and am currently in 9 Layde. In school, I enjoy Drama and English. They are both very creative subjects that welcome your imagination. I hope to take on Drama as a GCSE subject, because it is fun and inventive and my ultimate goal is to have a career with English. Outside of school, I enjoy crafts, reading and spending time in nature with my family. We love going to the beach and for hikes in the forest. I also do afterschool gym club which gives students a great chance to use our great facilities. My friends and I go on the all-girls day, which is something I would recommend to all the girls at St. Louis as we really enjoy it!



Orlaith Murray, 9 Lismoyle

Hello my name is Orlaith Murray. I am in 9 Lismoyle and I am from Randalstown. My favourite subjects are Science and Drama; Science because it is interesting to learn about chemical reactions and Drama because it is good fun and different from other subjects. I am part of the Ardan Theatre Group and recently performed as part of the chorus in their production of 'Grease'. I also enjoy swimming and go to Antrim Forum once a week. So far, my favourite thing about St. Louis' is the fact that we are given lots of opportunities to take part in various extra-curricular activities- I am part of the Junior Choir and took part in the Year 8 Drama Club last year. I am looking forward to my Easter holidays before the final important term and summer exams.





KNIGHTS OF COLUMBANUS

Public Speaking Competition

The Knights of St Columbanus is an Order of Catholic Laymen which was founded in 1915 by Canon James O'Neill.

In recent years The Knights of St Columbanus have organized a very successful All Ireland Public Speaking Competition.

Congratulations to our Year 14 students, Gabrielle Carland, Eabha Lynn James McKeown who made it to the final of the prestigious competition in February. On the day they did themselves immensely proud, speaking with sincerity and conviction. Great ambassadors for SLG! Well done!



ST LOUIS VISIT NETWORKING EVENT

On March 5th, 2019, seven of my fellow classmates and I travelled to Dublin for a St Louis networking event. We started our day by going to school at 7:30 am, and began our journey, arriving at the Plaza hotel in Dublin at 10:30 am. Upon arrival we were greeted with tea and biscuits, until all the participating schools had arrived.

Once all 10 schools from different parts of Ireland, some travelling from Mayo and Monaghan, had arrived, we began the interesting presentation of our topic, Plastic. While in groups, we were given different presentations by many people, explaining how plastic affects our lives and things we could do to help our environment. The presentations we were given were extremely eye-opening, as I learned many things about Ireland that I had not known before. I learned that Ireland is one of the worst countries in Europe for recycling and we as a country produce 500 million tonnes of plastic a year, with 8 million tonnes being dumped in to our oceans and seas.

After the presentations, we completed various tasks. One of them was to place items like bananas, teabags, mobile phones and many other items we would use, and sort them in to order of how long each takes to be recycled and to decomposed completely, with a teabag taking 6 weeks to decompose and a mobile phone taking nearly 1000 years to fully decompose.

After these tasks, I became aware that a piece of plastic that I may have used 10 years ago could still be here on our planet and that made me begin to wonder where it could be and the effects that our careless use of plastic actually has on our world.

After all the tasks and presentations were done, we were given a delicious hot meal by the Plaza Hotel and soon after, we began our descent back to school, arriving at 6:00 pm. As a class, we began to think of ways our own school could reduce the use of plastic and how we could help our environment. The day was definitely interesting and extremely captivating, and I now wish to help our oceans, seas and environment with the new knowledge I have obtained.

Caoimhe McAuley, Year 12





DANSKE BANK MACLARNON CUP

Semi-Final: St Patrick's Downpatrick 2-15 St Louis Ballymena 0-11



Unfortunately, St Louis missed out on a place in the final in the MacLarnon Cup to St Patrick's Downpatrick on 12th February.

Wing half-back, Brandon Boyd was a constant spring-board for St Patrick's attacks, getting up to support the forwards and after 33 minutes he fired low to Daniel McNicholl's right-hand corner.

That score added to three points just before the break and opened up a gap between the teams. By the 40th minute the score-line read 1-12 to 0-6 and St Louis were falling behind.

However, St Louis persevered and rallied to hit four points in a row. Despite their determined effort, Brandon Boyd secured a second goal in the 55th minute.

Daniel McNicholl, in the Ballymena goals, pulled off a couple of brilliant stops and couldn't be faulted for either goal.

St Louis went 0-3 to 0-1 up inside the opening six minutes with points from Elliott, Peter Cullen and Scullion, but the Red High hit the next four points.

Scullion slotted over two points to level, but three from Red High between the 29th minute and half time opened a gap that got wider with Boyd's goal on the re-start.

A brief flurry of four points in as many minutes from McDonald, Eoghan McGrath and two Scullion frees briefly pulled the gap down to 1-12 to 0-10 with 15 minutes left, but Tim Prentor got Downpatrick going again with the second of his three points in a ten-minute spell.

The second goal from Boyd in the 55th minute goal put Downpatrick into a first final since they lost to La Salle in 2006.

Well done to our senior footballers for all the time and effort they put into reaching this stage!

'LITERIFIC' DEBATING WORKSHOP

Students from 'The Debating Society' at Queen's University, Belfast visited St Louis in January to facilitate a debating workshop. It was particularly wonderful to welcome back past pupil, Hugh Dobbin, who is President of the Society!





ART & DESIGN PUPIL FOCUS

Jarlath McLaughlin-Doran, 8 Lisbreen

Jarlath is a keen and talented artist whose flair for Origami knows no bounds. His skill and creativity in creating these magnificent pieces are mind-boggling.

Origami (折り紙), from ori meaning "folding", and kami meaning "paper" is the art of paper folding, which is often associated with Japanese culture.

In modern usage, the word "origami" is used as an inclusive term for all folding practices, regardless of their culture of origin.

The goal is to transform a flat square sheet of paper into a finished sculpture through folding and sculpting techniques. Modern origami practitioners generally discourage the use of cuts, glue, or markings on the paper.

A small number of basic origami folds can be combined in a variety of ways to make intricate designs. In general, these designs begin with a square sheet of paper whose sides may be of different colours, prints, or patterns. Traditional Japanese origami has been practised since the Edo period (1603-1867) and it is a craft which Jarlath is certainly doing everything he can to preserve and develop.

Well done Jarlath.



Bruiser Theatre Company DRAMA WORKSHOP

Our Drama exam classes thoroughly enjoyed a workshop facilitated by the Bruiser Theatre company in January. It helped them explore the three main aspects of their practical work: physical theatre, improvisation and devising.



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POPE JOHN PAUL II AWARD CEREMONY



The Pope John Paul II Award is a great opportunity for young people to develop their faith and get more involved in their parish and their communities. On Thursday 7th February, myself and 7 other students from St Louis Grammar School joined over 100 more students from many schools to attend the ceremony in St Mary's Church in Belfast where we received our Pope John Paul II Award certificate and medal.

The ceremony opened with music from the Down and Connor Folk Group which was followed by an engaging speech from the Bishop. Before each young person received their award, 8 gold award winners shared their Pope John Paul II Award journey and gave everyone an insight into what activities they got involved in over the 16 months and what they enjoyed most about getting involved in this programme. It was a memorable experience receiving the award from the Bishop and it was a very proud moment.

Highlights from my journey on this programme would be the pilgrimage I went on with Living Youth to Taizé in France and also volunteering at the World Meeting of Families in Dublin. To complete the award, each person must complete one parish involvement activity per week for 20 weeks and one social awareness activity per week for 20 weeks. Many young people get involved in their parish by reading at mass, becoming an altar server, helping at their parish's GIFT programme, singing in the choir, cleaning the church or helping at the children's liturgy. Living Youth have programmes that young people can get involved in which count towards activities such as their summer pilgrimages and Youth Alpha programme. Young people got involved in their community by raising money for charity, attending charity events, helping out on school projects such as shoebox appeal, peer mentoring or coaching or going on residential.

By Daniella Timperley

SCHOLASTIC BOOK-FAIR

To celebrate World Book Day, a Scholastic Book-Fair was held in the library from 6th – 8th March.

Pupils had the opportunity to buy books, stationery and posters and to enter the Book-Fair Competition.

Enthusiastic pupils and staff spent £1217.58 on books which highlights the love of reading that exists in St. Louis. The value of books from this total for the school is £750.43! This allows our library's shelves to be continuously stocked with the most up-to-date books for our pupils.

A massive thank you to everyone for making the annual Book-Fair such an amazing and successful event!





GAISCE GOLD AWARDS

At an awards ceremony in Dublin Castle in December, President Higgins presented the Gaisce Gold Awards to seventy-seven young people, including St Louis Grammar students, who completed their personal development challenges.

Gaisce is the President's awards scheme which aims to foster young people's potential by encouraging them to set goals in a number of areas and then achieve them.

Speaking at the event, Paul Keoghan, Irish International Para Athlete said, "I'm delighted and honoured to speak at this event. This Gaisce award will equip these young people with the tools to live full and happy lives and to improve the lives of all those around them."

Guest speaker and Gold Award holder Olivia Sneyd added, "The ceremony is about the awardees, everything incredible that they have achieved during their Gaisce journey. I hope they enjoy this evening because they really deserve to celebrate."

Eleven students from our school successfully completed the challenge and were presented with their award at Dublin Castle. For those who attended, this was a special day for the students and their families. We congratulate the following pupils who have completed their Gold Award Journey through the school:

- Charlie Henry
- Kevin Heffron
- Aoife McAllister
- Sophie Donnelly
- Caolan Hay
- Lisa Walsh
- Aislinn McAleer
- Niamh Donaldson
- Eva Cross
- Ashlinn Stewart
- Killian Burke

We also congratulate Mr McAfee on his special recognition award for services to the Gaisce President's Award. A token of the hard work himself, and his team have put in over the years delivering a successful President's Award Programme at both Silver and Gold Levels.



YEAR 13 HOMEPLACE LECTURE

On Tuesday 26th February, AS Level English Literature students visited the HomePlace in Bellaghy to take part in a lecture series which was tailored towards the requirements for their upcoming examination. Featuring academic staff and PhD students from both Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast, the Key Stage 5 programme focused on aiding AS Level pupils to analyse, evaluate, compare and contrast the work of Robert Frost and Seamus Heaney.

A guided tour of the exhibition provided the opportunity to absorb the breadth and depth of Heaney's work, as well as his inspirations. A bespoke lecture focusing on Heaney's poems featured on the prescribed anthology.

Lastly, a seminar comparing and contrasting in detail a Heaney and Frost poem, allowed small groups to discuss and debate their learning.

Each aspect of the programme, had been specifically devised to ensure that each of the assessment objectives were addressed.





ST. LOUIS' READING PARTNERSHIP

The English department and school library are delighted that throughout Term 2, all of Year 8 and 10 became involved in a Reading Partnership Programme, developed by Queen's University, Belfast.

Year 10 pupils are paired with a Year 8 pupil and over the course of 10 weeks, participate in paired reading, acting as a tutor, questioning and guiding; with both pupils developing their love of and skills in reading. As well as improving literacy standards, the aim of this programme is to improve pupils' confidence in reading, develop their critical understanding and improve engagement with a variety of different texts, and allow pupils' creativity to grow by making new connections and being open to new ideas.

The benefits of peer tutoring, for both tutor and tutee, are extensive, including: increased attainment, enhanced motivation, better developed communication skills and enhanced teamwork skills. We look forward to facilitating this programme and observing the range of skills developed in our pupils.



WORLD BOOK DAY CELEBRATIONS

KS5 students celebrated World Book Day on Thursday the 7th of March with a day packed with fun literary activities.

Pupils began the morning with an assembly announcing the class winners of our Year 8 Book Idol Presentations; period 2 saw every KS5 pupil in the school Drop Everything and Read; and our avid readers in Year 8 took part in a special World Book Day quiz at lunchtime. Well done to all our winners and those who took part in the activities on the day!





BT YOUNG SCIENTIST EXHIBITION

Year 11 pupil, Matthew Wray details his experience of the BY Young Scientist Exhibition which took place in Dublin between 9th and 12th January: "While attending the BT Young Scientist Exhibition, I had the opportunity to showcase my project to the many friendly by passers and other participants of the exhibition. I presented my project to the judges, who gave critical constructive feedback, and shared their thoughts on my work. It was truly a fantastic experience that I strongly recommend anyone with an interest in Science to enter in the future.

My project was about random number generation in different languages, and the different algorithms they each use to generate their random numbers. To that end, I generated approximately 5,000,000,000 (5 billion) numbers in each algorithm. I then analysed how much each number was generated out of the 5 billion.

One of the most interesting parts of the experience was that I got the change to view the work of other participants. There were an extensive number of other projects to view, and I had a very enjoyable time observing and inquiring about their projects.

Sweet shops and pizza places were at the exhibition, as well as a section for companies and science firms to demonstrate their interesting products and experiments. Overall, the BT Young Scientist exhibition was thoroughly terrific and I highly suggest others should enter into it.



MAN UNITED TRIP Manchester v Fulham (8th December 2018)

On Saturday 8th December, forty-four pupils and five staff departed the school grounds in the very early hours to travel to Dublin port. They got the ferry across to Holyhead and made the journey up to Manchester for the 3pm kick off.

In an entertaining game, the fans were delighted with Manchester United scoring 4 goals over the 90 minutes so there was plenty of singing and cheering for the St Louis group! After the game, there was some time for shopping in the impressive Trafford Centre before arriving at the Ibis Styles Hotel in Crewe where they would be staying that night. After dinner, pupils were given free time before bed but after the 3am start, all pupils were tired! Needless to say, all settled very quickly for a good night's sleep!

After a substantial breakfast, they left the hotel at 10am on Sunday morning to make the return journey to the ferry and the group arrived back at school at 8pm on Sunday evening. While the tiredness will pass, the trip will be remembered as one of the highlights of their early days in St Louis.

Special thanks to Mr. Gillan for organising and leading the trip as well as Mr. McNaughton, Mr. McCorley, Miss Ferris and Miss Doherty who accompanied Mr. Gillan and the Year 8 and 9 pupils to Manchester.



The Manchester trip was my first time being abroad without the guidance of my parents but I had an amazing time! The atmosphere in the stadium was fantastic and we all had the time of our lives!

Overall it was the best experience ever!

Lorcan McQuitty, Year 8





RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WIN!

Congratulations to our team who won the 'Best Research & Development Project' at the recent First League Lego competition which was held at W5. A fantastic achievement up against stiff competition from all other Schools who competed from all across NI!



eti UPDATE

"St Louis Grammar School continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the pupils."

As a follow-up to our 2016 school inspection, the Education and Training Inspectorate visited St Louis for a sustaining improvement inspection in February. Once again, we were commended on our high standards, not only in regards to examination results, but also on our commitment to new and innovative teaching and learning strategies with the report stating, "The school's rationale for developing further the effectiveness of learning and teaching is founded on rigorous self-evaluation", as well as the safeguarding of our pupils. The fact that ETI highlighted no areas for development

is a further endorsement of our continued high quality evaluation and outcomes. Overall, we are delighted with the findings of the inspectorate, which is a result of a committed whole-team effort.

Full details of the inspection can be found at:

<https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/sustaining-improvement-inspection-st-louis-grammar-school-ballymena-county-antrim-542-0010.pdf>

ALL IRELAND WINNER KATIE BONNES

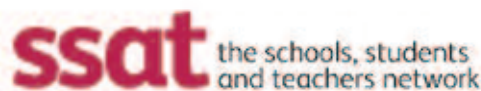
Scor na nOg for Recitation

On the 16th of February my family and I travelled to Castlebar in County Mayo for the Scór na nÓg All-Ireland Final. It was held in the TF Royal Theatre in the heart of the bustling town and was an amazing event of Irish culture, dance and music.

In my category, 'Scéalaíocht' or recitation, there were four competitors, one from each province. I was the first to say my piece titled, 'The Child I Did Not Know' by Patsy O'Hagan. The pieces that followed were mainly comical, there was a boy from Tipperary in Munster who said a poem about a donkey, before a boy from Roscommon in Connacht delivered his and the last act was a girl from Longford, who said a poem her dad had written for her- it started out funny but then it got serious and reminiscent.



There were several categories prior to the results being called but as it approached, I grew more nervous. When the Fear atí announced me as the winner my family and friends were hugging and congratulating me, some were crying, some were cheering but in that moment I could only feel the overwhelming wave of emotion. I was speechless, this was for two reasons; I couldn't believe it was me that had won it and; I couldn't have been more thankful for all the support I had.



St Louis Grammar accepted as a **SSAT LEADING EDGE SCHOOL**

SSAT Leading Edge has been connecting high performing schools for over fifteen years. They understand the challenges of achieving and sustaining high performance and believe that these challenges are best met with the support of like-minded professionals.

As the only national network specifically for high-performing schools, SSAT Leading Edge connects teachers to colleagues across the country, providing structured collaboration and regular opportunities to learn from each other's best practice.

We are delighted to announce that St Louis has been accepted as the first SSAT Leading Edge School in Northern Ireland. This follows on from our application of the innovative TEEP model of classroom practice as CPD for all staff to enhance student teaching and learning- and again, being the first school in Northern Ireland to do so. St. Louis continues to be on the cutting edge and indeed, leading edge of education in the country!

YEAR 13 TRIP TO STORMONT

On the 29th of January the Lower Sixth Politics class went to Stormont for the day to chat to five MLAs from each of the main Northern Irish political parties and receive a tour of the building. We journeyed up to Belfast from Ballymena and arrived at Stormont at around 10 o'clock, where we were greeted by the vast Parliament building and surrounding grounds.

When we got inside the building, we were amazed at how pristine it was kept and noticed that there were many civil servants still hard at work, even though the Assembly is collapsed and there were no signs of legislation being passed whilst we were there. We were then greeted by a member of staff who took our class and teacher into a small meeting room where we got an informative presentation on the basic understanding of the Northern Ireland government system, and shortly after got to meet the five MLAs we were going to be talking to.

First up was Steve Aiken from the UUP, who was able to give us a moderate Unionist perspective on the effects of Brexit, the party's recent electoral decline and how we as young people can be more progressive with politics.

Next up, we got a chance to talk to Claire Hanna from the SDLP who was the only female MLA at our event, and she was very articulate and enthusiastic when we asked her questions on her party's collaboration with Fianna Fáil, the implications of Brexit (as she was the Brexit secretary for her party at the time), and her thoughts on always feeling innately Irish and how that has impacted her politics.

The third MLA that we got to speak to was Stewart Dickson from the Alliance party. Stewart explained the justice system

in Northern Ireland to us as he is the Justice spokesperson and told us why he first got into politics and specifically joined the Alliance party in 1977.

Then we spoke to Philip McGuigan from Sinn Féin and asked him questions such as: why the reform of the Petition of Concern was not a red line in the draft agreement last January, as well as why do Sinn Féin do not take their seats in Westminster. This chance to scrutinise and question was definitely an interesting experience!

The final MLA we spoke to was Paul Frew from the DUP, and our class questioned him on difficult issues, such as why their party has blocked the Same Sex Marriage, Abortion and Irish Language Acts numerous times by using the Petition of Concern, as well as asking his thoughts on his colleague Ian Paisley Jr's recent undeclared holidays to Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

After this, we got a quick tour around the both the Old Senate chamber and the Commons chamber, in which we got to sit where the actual MLAs would when Stormont was still a functioning Assembly.

Overall, I found this trip very informative and insightful and I really enjoyed getting the opportunity to speak with MLAs from all backgrounds and viewpoints, as it helped me to understand each party's objectives more clearly. I believe that this experience will help me to benefit in my exam in May as I now have a better understanding of the workings of the NI Assembly.

Leah Barker, L6-1





CEIAG

Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

CAMBRIDGE OFFER

Last year, I was given an amazing opportunity to attend a Sutton Trust Summer school in Cambridge University. During the summer school, I was able to immerse myself into Cambridge life. Every day was full of activities, practicals and lectures by top professors as well as time to walk around and see the beautiful architecture of the university. This experience gave me courage and belief that I should try applying to this university.

When I came back from this experience, I began to work on my application for the Biological Natural Sciences course. I finished my personal statement, which was still a draft at that point. Oxbridge applications are earlier than the rest of the universities, therefore it required a lot of hard work to get everything sorted before the deadline. I sent my UCAS application and straight away started practising for the Admissions test. For my particular subject, I had about two weeks between the deadline and the admissions test. The assessment consisted of one 80-minute multiple choice maths and science questions and another 40-minute science specific test.

The next step in the process was to receive an invitation for an interview. Cambridge take into account grades, personal statement and admission assessment results when they pick people for an interview. Luckily, I was invited for an interview to Homerton College. The college provided accommodation to stay in the night before the interview.

The morning of the interview I woke up extremely nervous. My interview was in the afternoon so I had to sit in the waiting room for most of the day. My first interview was predominantly chemistry based and was taken by two professors. I came out feeling quite satisfied with my answers but I didn't let myself relax as there was a second interview to follow in less than 2 hours' time.

When I came into my second interview, I recognised the professor who took charge of my group in the summer



school. He recognised me as well but this didn't mean that he went easy on me, in fact the complete opposite! The first part of the interview was Maths based and was relatively ok, however the biological side of the interview was more than challenging.

Coming out of the interview I didn't feel happy, but I was prepared for the worst, especially after hearing stories about people coming out in tears. I returned back home, had a lovely Christmas and tried not to think about the application, because the more I thought about it, the more mistakes and flaws I found in my answers.

January 14th was the day everyone received an email. I couldn't face opening the email on my own, so my friend and I went to IT room to face my fate. I opened my email and saw a message from Homerton College, I needed a minute before I could click on it. I opened the email and read the first line: "We are delighted to inform you that we would like to make you an offer". My friend and I couldn't control our emotions and screamed loudly! I was over the moon, and it took me at least two days to fully contemplate what had just happened.

Now that I have received my offer, all that is left to do is to work tremendously hard to achieve A*A*A.

By Alisija Sestakova



PAST PUPIL PROFILES



Name	Paul Dillon
Current job	Managing Director – Accenture. Responsible for Accenture's consulting, digital and technology work at our Consumer Goods, Industrial and Travel clients in UK and Ireland.
Location	London
Final Year at St Louis	1991
A Level/GCSEs	Maths, Chemistry, Physics
Career Pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queens University Belfast. MEng (Distinction) Chemical Engineering 1991 – 1995 • Management Consultant at Andersen Consulting LLP – London/Brussels 1996 – 2005 • Partner at Accenture UK/I – London 2005 – 2012 • Managing Director – Accenture UK/I Consumer Goods, industrial & Travel – London 2012 – Present



Name	John Hart
Current job	Head of NI Business Development – Pinsent Masons (international law firm)
Location	Belfast
Final Year at St Louis	2000
A Level/GCSEs	Ancient History, Biology, Chemistry
Career Pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LL.B. Law with Politics (Queens University Belfast) • MSc. Political Lobbying & Public Affairs (Ulster University) • Policy Analyst for boutique political lobbying consultancy • Communications & Campaigns Manager for Member of Parliament • Client Manager at large Belfast public relations agency • Executive Director of Governing Bodies Association • Public Affairs Specialist for Randox Laboratories • Head of NI Business Development – Pinsent Masons



Name	Tara McNeill
Current job	Celtic Woman- Principal member, Violinist and Harpist
Location	Dublin/Travelling 8 months of the year
Final Year at St Louis	2008
A Level/GCSEs	Music, Maths, Physics
Career Pathway	<p>Diploma in Music Teaching and Performance – First Class Honours 2009 (Royal Irish Academy of Music); Bachelor in Music Performance – First Class Honours (Royal Irish Academy of Music) 2015; Violin teacher at Mount Anville Montessori Junior School, Dublin; Freelance violinist with Camerata Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra; Joined Celtic Woman 2016; Debut album with Celtic Woman 'Voices of Angels' reached no. 1 in USA Billboard Classical, World and Classical Crossover charts 2016; Celtic Woman nominated for a Grammy Award and attended Grammys 2017.</p>

PATHWAY OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMME at Queen's University Belfast

This Academic Year 2018/19, I applied and was accepted onto a course at Queen's University, Belfast called the Pathway Opportunity Programme (POP). Eoin Marr and Leona O'Kane were also successful in gaining places on the programme. POP is for young people currently in Year 13 who may require additional support or encouragement to reach their full potential. Due to certain circumstances, I was eligible to apply for the programme. The programme has seven 'pathways' on it, and the pathway that I have chosen is the Food Microbiology and Environment.

On the programme, I have to complete several assignments throughout the year which are given and marked by Queen's University Academics. I also have to attend several on-campus days at Queen's University and in July, I get to take part in a week long residential at Queen's, where I will stay in Elms Village like a University student; take part in academic lessons during the day and have some relaxing and fun times with activities in the evening. If I complete the programme and final assessment on the last day of the residential, I will receive a guaranteed conditional offer in my Pathway (Microbiology) at Queen's, a £1,000 bursary and also up to a two-grade reduction on my UCAS offer.

So far, I have taken part in an Induction day in Whitla Hall at Queen's where I met the students I'll be working with (from all over Northern Ireland) and my academics. I have also completed my first assignment on a Virtual Learning Environment which involved a quiz and a 500-word essay.



I am very excited to continue my assignments and on campus visits, and I look forward to the Summer Residential!

If you'd like to find out any more information on the Widening Participation Unit, and the Pathway Opportunity Programme, their website is:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/wpu/PathwayOpportunityProgramme/>

By Alex Caldwell, Year 13

Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

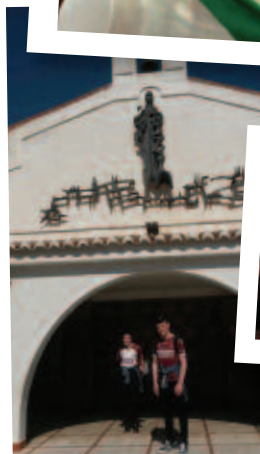


GLENS OF ANTRIM COMHALTAS TRIP

to Benalmadena, Spain

On Friday 15th March, Mrs McAuley, her son Patrick (Year 11) and daughter Gráinne (Year 8) travelled to Benalmadena, Spain to participate in a celebration of St Patrick's weekend events, centred around the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

"As members of the Glens of Antrim Comhaltas we were invited by Parish Priest Fr Gerard Daly, who is endeavouring to promote cultural events in his area. Our group played, sang and danced for a spectacular full-house concert on Saturday night and to a packed congregation at the St Patrick's Day mass and pageant on Sunday. These events were interspersed by several informal gigs which were also attended by large numbers who were overwhelmed by the quality of the performances. Such was the success of the trip that we have been invited to return for further musical events and we are assured that more opportunities will result from it. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Mr Rafferty for his support of this venture which has enabled our young people to see for themselves how a balance of talent and endeavour can generate really rich and life-changing experiences."



HOUSE TRIP

Winning classes of our Winter House Trip (8 Lisbreen, 9 Lurig and 10 Lisbreen) had a great time at the Grand Opera House, where they saw the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' pantomime at the beginning of January.



Students Celebrate SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE

Once again, Scoil Lughaidh celebrated 'Seachtain na Gaeilge' with all Key Stage 3 pupils. We were honoured to have Aoife Ni Chasaide (All Ireland club camogie player and Gaeilgeoir) who spoke to Year 10 pupils about the Irish language and sport. She then presented the year 10 pupils with the 'fáinne' for their competence in spoken Irish. All Key stage 3 pupils enjoyed lively céili dancing and a great day was had by all involved.





ACTION MS WALK

Well done to all our Year 8 pupils who took part in a sponsored walk for Action MS on Thursday 8th March in Portglenone Forest. They braved the elements and spirits were high as they walked for such an important cause.



LESSONS FROM AUSCHWITZ What can we Learn?

In March 2019 Dylan Magill and Brendan Shannon, Year 15 History students from St Louis Grammar School Ballymena, participated in a four- part course organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust in London. This course is entitled *Lessons from Auschwitz* and it explores the universal lessons of the Holocaust and its relevance for today. This project included a one- day visit to Auschwitz 1 and Birkenau concentration camps in Poland with orientation study seminars in Belfast increasing the students' knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust.

On 5th March, I was fortunate enough to accompany the Holocaust Educational Trust on their *Lessons from Auschwitz* Project.

Upon arriving in Poland, we first visited the town of Oswiecim (the Polish town which the occupying Germans renamed and constructed Auschwitz near). During this stage of our visit, we were shown the town square and which buildings were formally owned by the majority Jewish population of the town prior to the brutal Nazi Occupation - highlighting that the victims of this dreadful tragedy were simply normal, ordinary people who were discriminated against by the Third Reich.

Following that, we were given an informative and deeply moving tour of the facility, with an emphasis on the horrifying scale of the Holocaust. One image in particular that accentuated this for me was the disturbing display of confiscated glasses from victims upon arrival at the camp. The unsettling size of this unnerving mound of mangled metal emphasised both the scale of this appalling mass murder and the innocence and normality of the victims of it.

We were then shown around the intimidating Birkenau facility (the largest section of the Auschwitz complex at roughly 400 square acres). During this, we were shown the horrific

conditions that the victims of these camps had to endure as well as the ruthless, brutal efficiency of the gas chambers. We were told many stories of individuals' harrowing experiences, which drove home the point that those who suffered during the Holocaust were innocent, ordinary people, who other than their race or religion, were no different from me and you.

To conclude our time at the Auschwitz complex, we attended a memorial service in Birkenau led by a Rabbi. He emphasised that the aim of the LFA Project is to ensure that we do indeed learn from history, and therefore take a stance against discrimination and prejudice in all its forms in order to prevent anything as horrific as the Holocaust from happening again. That we do not merely idly observe as bystanders, but instead take action against injustice and oppression.

Dylan Magill, Year 15





Year 10 Go

'OVER-THE-TOP' WITH HISTORY

Our Year 10 pupils were treated to an experience of The Great War in our Assembly Hall on Friday 4th Jan 2019. They tried on gas masks, fixed their bayonets, bowled grenades and modelled the very latest in helmets! The Navan Centre in Armagh provided a 'Living History' experience they won't forget and really helped bring their study of World War One to life.



BLACKOUT

A performance of Blackout by Davey Anderson was showcased at school earlier this year. This was organised by the Drama Department in collaboration with The Lyric Theatre touring company. The company visited many secondary schools across Northern Ireland to teach young people about the consequences of taking part in crime. As a result, this performance instigated a lot of thought provoking discussions and inspired many ideas for our drama students in preparation for their exams.

Blackout Review by Lily Cassidy Y14 Drama student

We all make mistakes but no one ever expects to find themselves in prison for it, we all deny that it would ever be us in that situation. 'Blackout' unapologetically shines the truth in our eyes that it could and does happen to anyone. James is young and impressionable as many of us are in our school years, he falls in with the wrong crowd in an attempt to fit in. Due to drug and alcohol abuse he wakes up in prison with charges of assault, arson and attempted murder none of which he can remember. The harsh reality is that this happens every day in real life and that's what makes 'Blackout' such a shockingly relevant piece of theatre. Furthermore, the un-naturalistic style of the piece forces its audience to think about what they would do in their own lives if it happened to them with constant narration of "and you would."

The actors in the piece were highly convincing in everything that they did and at times even left their audience taken aback and honestly quite scared for their own safety which heightened the sense of fear and caused us all to think more about the whole situation. The highlight of this experience however was the discussion with real people who had themselves ended up in prison. It was enlightening to hear their stories and learn about what drove them to commit the crimes they did, this mainly came down to either bad friends and drug abuse or others which were more accidental. Something quite shocking our Drama class discussed in our next lesson was how none of them 'looked like criminals' which highlighted how deluded we all are to believe that ordinary people brought up in good homes can't fall victim



to drug abuse and crime. This makes the piece undeniably effective as this is the exact intention of the performance.

The audience consisted of all GCSE and A-level Drama as well as AS Politics and English. Therefore, we were the perfect age for this performance to really get its message across as everyone in the room was 14 to 18 years of age. It had a colossal impact on the way each and every one of us view juvenile crime as none of us believed that it could ever be us and thought that criminals in this category were daunting and dangerous. One person even commented that it changed the way they perceived underage drinking as they never thought it could ever go as far as ending up in prison for attempted murder. It caused the audience to think not only of ourselves but of our friends and relatives and the impact it would have on them. It taught us a valuable lesson about the effects of bullying and the isolation caused by not talking to anyone about your problems.

All in all, the piece was thought provoking and humanised the criminals sitting in front of us so that we didn't perceive them as monsters who committed unforgivable crimes but rather as people who had made regrettable mistakes, and were working to improve their lives for when they got out of prison. Once and for all breaking down the stigma that all young offenders are bad people who don't change due to their experiences. I thoroughly enjoyed both the performance and discussion after. 'Blackout' as a whole has resonated not only with me but with everyone in the audience. We are truly grateful to have been given the opportunity to attend this indisputably amazing piece of theatre.



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St. Louis Grammar

WATCH IRELAND RUGBY TRAIN

During the 2019 Six Nations Rugby Championship, the Irish Team decided to have "Open" Training sessions, where the public could watch the team train.

At the end of February, pupils from St Louis School were lucky enough to be invited along to the Belfast Session, held at the Dub, Queen's University. Included in this St Louis group were several Year 10 boys who were members of the Ulster Cup & League winning Ballymena U14 Rugby team and the SLG's Year 8 Rugby team, who participated in many rugby tournaments this year.

The pupils watched the famous Ireland team train and got to see some of the world's best players such as Johnny Sexton, Rory Best, Jacob Stockdale, and Conor Murray in action. The SLG group all found it very interesting and enjoyable to watch the Ireland team do all their drills and go through all their moves.

After the training session, the crowd got to meet the players, get Selfies with them and even managed to get their autographs!

A great day, a great team and great fun!!

By Ryan Thom



COUCH TO 5K

A hearty "well done" goes out to all the participants who helped to get the first St Louis Grammar School Couch to 5k programme off the ground in January 2019, committing to completing 3 training runs a week for 9* weeks (*OK, maybe we added on a few!).

All the members of staff who took part in the training sessions, those who have 'graduated' and those hoping to reach a 5k target run this year, have proved themselves to be true ambassadors for promoting well-being in our school community.

And it doesn't have to end here! A ten-minute walk at lunchtime or a half hour run after school a few times a week will recharge your batteries and give you more energy. All new staff members are welcome to get in touch for further events and training.





Thanks to **K&G MCATAMNEY**

We would like to extend a special thank you to K&G McAtamney for their continued support of the SLG President's Award.

Preparations for all expeditions are on-going and we are very grateful to K&G McAtamney for their much appreciated support.



Calling the **CLASS OF '99**

Did you or any of your family members attend St Louis between 1992 and 1999??

The class of '99 are holding a reunion on Saturday 29th June 2019. It is open to anyone who started the Year group in 1992 or was part of it until 1997 or 1999?

There will be a gathering at the school in the afternoon followed by a meal in The Malone Lodge Hotel Belfast.

Contact Christine Doherty in the school office for further information (028 2564 9534).

IMPORTANT DATES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Term 3 begins Monday 29th April

Junior Maths Challenge 30th April

Year 8 Living History Workshop 3rd May

Bank Holiday Monday 6th May

Year 14 Mass Friday 3rd May

Year 12 Mass Tuesday 7th May at 1:00 pm

Years 11 & 12 GCSE Modules 9th May –
21st June 2019

Years 13 & 14 AS/A2 Modules 1st May –
21st June 2019

Year 11 Study Leave Monday 13th–Thursday
30th May inclusive. 11 Layde/Lurig only
on 6th June

Staff Development Day 27th May 2019
(pupils should not attend)

Junior Exams Mon 3rd– Fri 7th June

Year 13 Work Experience Mon 3rd– Fri 7th June

Phased release last week of June

Dates to be decided

See school website for full Diary of Events

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KINTULLAGH HOUSE

Project Progress May 2018 - March 2019

Another update on the excellent progress being made on the Centre of Excellence for Expressive and Creative Arts in the Kintullagh House building. Completion target is September 2019.





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