



SOLAS



Thirteenth Edition
June 2019





The Editorial Team

This magazine is a celebration of the wonderful diversity of talent and interests of our students, showing that they live out our school motto, Ut Vitam Habeant, to the full. We really hope that you will enjoy reading this year's edition of Solas magazine - it is testament to the fantastic achievements of our pupils both academically and in their extracurricular successes.

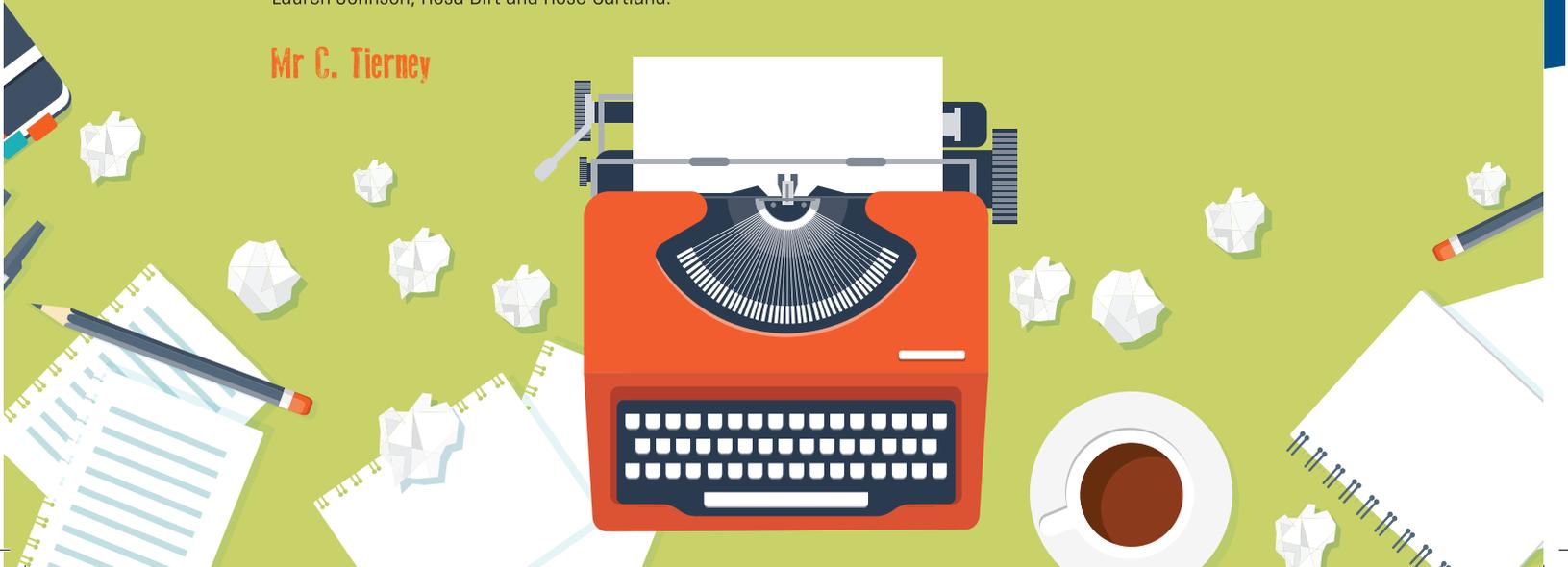
We are very grateful to the exceptionally dedicated and hardworking members of Rathmore staff, who not only give so freely of their time towards organising so many extracurricular opportunities, but also for their help in supplying the Editorial Team with articles and pictures. Thanks to Mrs Jenny Meek for her excellent photography which really enhances Solas magazine; her help is greatly appreciated.

This year's cover is a collage of work from Lauren Carroll, Lauren Johnson, Rosa Birt and Rose Cartland.

2019 Team:

Charlie Kelly,
Flynn Ryan,
Ryan Elwood-Clarke,
Marykate Kelly,
Katie Boyle,
Sarah Crawford,
Caolán Laverty,
Lara Herbert Fox,
Caoimhe Hunter,
Sarah Magee,
Matthew Colqhoun.

Mr C. Tierney



Student Council 2018/2019

The Student Council in Rathmore provides a meaningful platform which enables us, as pupils, to voice our opinions and to have a say in decisions which affect us. As a Year 13 representative, I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of the Student Council this year taking part in many meetings where the pupils' ideas on a wide range of issues have been discussed.

The main focus of the Student Council this year was the development of a pupil version of the Child Protection policy. All pupils were given the opportunity to contribute to the different sections of the policy through discussions in tutor group and the tutor group representatives gave feedback at the weekly meetings. The new pupil version of the policy will be put into our student planners for next year so that all pupils have access to the policy.

This has been a very busy year for the Student Council. In December 2018, the Junior and Senior Councils met with Mrs Hamilton and members of the Senior Leadership Team in order to discuss a variety of issues. These included an Eco-Club for juniors with a focus on recycling, the possibility of retreats for Year 11 and 13, canteen arrangements, girls' sports, behaviour on buses, the KS4 LLW curriculum, the pastoral programme, GCSE and A Level subject choices and positive mental health awareness. As a result of the main Student Council meeting, subsequent meetings took place between staff and pupils to further discuss some of the issues raised.

Discussions between staff and pupils have also led to the installation of WIFI boosters in the sixth form studies, a preordering system in the canteen, discussions between Year Heads and pupils about our pastoral programme and a new PE uniform for the boys.

The Student Council has raised awareness among pupils and has received pupil feedback on the whole school focus on "Challenge." Pupils have discussed how teachers can get the best out of their pupils and what "being challenged" should mean for pupils. This feedback will be given to teachers for planning purposes. Make sure you take a look at the new Challenge noticeboard just outside the staffroom to find new ways to challenge yourself!

Recently, pupils have discussed appropriate conduct on the corridors in order to ensure everyone's safety and we have asked for feedback on this year's Trócaire Campaign.

I would encourage everyone to get involved in the Student Council at some stage in their time at Rathmore. It has been an amazing experience as it has enabled me to develop skills and qualities in leadership. It has also given me the opportunity to contribute in a positive way to the life of Rathmore. This year, I have certainly seen many examples of the important role of Pupil Voice in our school.

Marykate Kelly





CHANGE

Change is a chick learning to fly,
Change is a six-year-old learning not to be shy.

Change is a cub learning to walk,
Change is a baby learning to talk.

Change is trees being cut down,
Just to make room for a brand new town.

Change is the ice caps melting into the sea,
Change is a jungle filled with debris.

But the thing is, good changes happen too...
And there is definitely more than a few.

Change is the voice of the poor being heard,
Change is the one race not being preferred.

Change is a problem that you have overcome,
Change is the setting and the rising of the sun.

Eoghan Sherry (8/6)

SCIENCE CLUB

When Year 8 starts, a variety of clubs begin. These clubs happen during lunch, from 1.15pm until 1.40pm. Some of the clubs start at the beginning of the year and others half-way through. This is a great way to help you settle in to Year 8 in Rathmore.

I had heard about Science Club during one of the Year 8 assemblies and I thought that I would give it a go. It was the week that science club started and my two friends wanted to go too. On the first week we got our passes.

Once Science Club started a Sixth Form year pupil came to help out with any experiments that we may be doing during the session. In Science Club we do a selection of experiments such as; making a rainbow from acid, alkali and universal indicator, making hydrogen gas and using the Van de Graaff generator.

Science Club is a great way to spend my Monday lunchtime.

Lauren Smyth 8-4



MY FIRST DAY AT RATHMORE

On 29 August 2018, I started Rathmore. I felt quite nervous because I knew I would be meeting lots of new people and trying to make new friends. I knew some people from my primary school who were also starting but, there was only one of them in my tutor group.

My mum dropped me off at 8:45am and brought me into the reception area. Mrs McCormick saw me and beckoned me into the assembly hall. She showed me where my tutor group was sitting and I joined them. I started talking to people and quickly made friends with them. Mrs Hamilton welcomed us to Rathmore and then our Buddies brought us to our tutor group. There I met my Mrs McKenna, my friendly tutor who talked to us about the school rules and routines.

After meeting our tutor, our Buddies, Olivia and Ryan took us to the canteen where we had juice and biscuits. Next they took us on a tour of the school and explained where everything was. After the tour, we went back to our tutor group room where we received our timetables and planners. Mrs McKenna explained to us how to use them. I was really looking forward to doing Science and History.

Despite starting the day feeling anxious, I really loved Rathmore and I was looking forward to starting proper lessons. My dad collected me at midday as all Year 8 pupils were allowed to go home early. My parents were keen to hear what happened that day and were pleased to find out that I had enjoyed my first day at Rathmore. I could not wait for Monday, all of my nerves were replaced with excitement!

THE SUMMER CAMP

During summer, as it grew closer to the first day of school, I became more and more nervous. I was scared to start school because I didn't know anybody in my class. I had been really worried, but the summer camp changed all of that! The activities were so much fun and they brought me closer to other pupils. Some of the other students I had fun with are now my best friends. We participated in multiple activities during the week to build our team work. We were in groups led by an Upper Sixth. The Upper Sixths are really nice and welcoming. By the end of the week, I was really enjoying it and was very sad that it was over. By the time September came around, I was so excited. I could not wait to start school and I am sure all of the new Year 8 will feel the same!

Aoife Kennedy



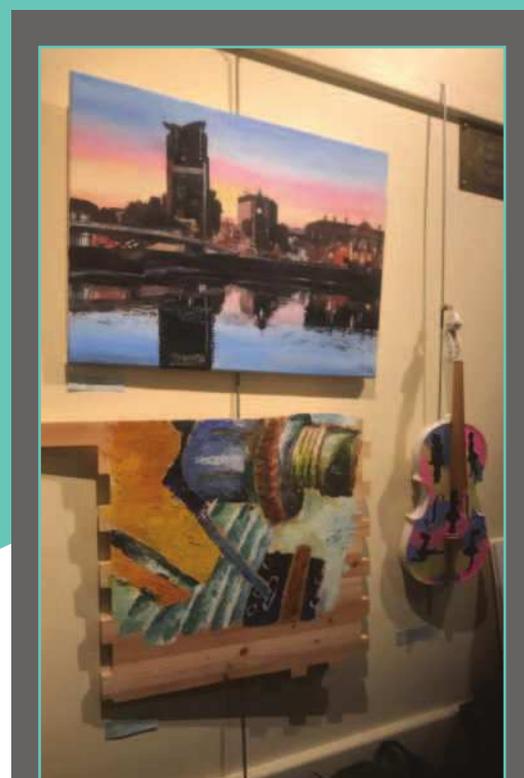
STREET WALKING TOUR

In October 2018, Year 13 and Year 14 Art students received a guided tour around Belfast's Cathedral Quarter to view Belfast's vibrant urban and street art scene. This was part of Seedhead Arts' annual Street Art Festival, "Hit the North". Over 30 artists from

around the world came to paint in Belfast. Styles ranged from traditional street art design to almost photorealistic recreations of modern masterpiece. The bitter weather did nothing but amplify the harsh and raw environment and atmosphere of street art. Every piece had

a deep-rooted intriguing theme and meaning, from societal and political commentary to views on today's art world. All students were heavily inspired by all the pieces that they viewed, and they got a great insight into the growing world of immersive urban art.





TRUE COLOURS

In February 2019, GCSE and A-level Art Students visited the Ulster Museum to see the annual True Colours Exhibition. The work of both top GCSE and A-Level candidates in Northern Ireland was on display for viewing. As with every year, the entire Art department

was extremely impressed by the high standard of work and the diverse range of themes and media. All students returned with great drive and inspiration from the exhibition, and with the anticipation of further developing their own work for the year.



RUA VISIT

Sixth Form Art students paid a visit to the Ulster Museum in November 2018 to see the Royal Ulster Academy exhibition. The work inspired the A-Level students greatly and the plethora of vibrant pieces on display was of an overwhelmingly excellent standard. The range was diverse; from intricate sculpture work to hyper-realistic

portraits and expressionistic work. We got to see a glimpse into the real working world of art, from a local perspective. This was extremely motivational and eye opening to all who were on the trip, and everyone is excited in anticipation of next year's exhibition.

MALONE HOUSE EXHIBITION

In February 2019, Art Students from Years 8-14, entered into 'Expressions of Ireland', a school-wide competition held in Rathmore. The abundance of pieces was of an impeccable quality and standard, with a range of incredibly unique stylisations and subjects. Fifty pieces had been chosen for exhibition in Malone house and a very professional looking display was created. We were very proud to see such wonderful pieces side by side!



BDO COMPETITION



On February 6, myself and four other Lower Sixth Business Studies pupils (Marykate Kelly, Amith Varghese, Calum Hanna and Luke Jenkins) participated in the NI Schools' Business competition 2019 along with other schools including St. Dominic's, Methody College, Dalriada School and St. Mary's to name but a few. We were given a task that involved a range of practical business challenges that were all centred round a real scenario provided by Henderson Group and their corporate social responsibility and whether Henderson Group should continue to implement it.

At this point we were faced with the terrifying challenge of presenting in front of everyone. Despite our nerves we remained calm and put forward our arguments. We faced tough competition but notwithstanding this we were crowned eventual winners! As a group we won £500 for our school, Belfast Giants tickets and a Bespoke Trophy all thanks to Henderson Group, BDO NI and Queen's University Belfast.

Aside from claiming victory, we gained first hand practical experience of what it is like to work in a fast-paced business environment, as it gave us an insight into future possible careers through talking to professionals, lecturers and experience in communication, critical thinking, teamwork and project management. Laura Jackson, partner at BDONI said, "I was so impressed with the level of thinking from the students I met and know that they will bring a fresh level of expertise to business in NI in the future." The NI Schools Business competition is very worthwhile as it provided us with so many opportunities including work placement and a guide in what to do after completing studies.

Fiona Flynn

Each of us took responsibility for specific parts with Luke doing the CSR policy's positives and negatives, Amith and Calum doing the waste disposal strategies and myself and Marykate taking control of the financial aspects. We compiled this into a 15-minute presentation that we had to firstly deliver to Henderson's board of directors and Queen's University lecturers. After all schools had presented, the judges came together and deliberated about whom the three finalists would then be. This was a tense wait for all schools present, but finally the finalists were announced were Rathmore Grammar School, Dalriada School and Our Lady and St. Pat's, Knock.



YOUNG ENTERPRISE

The Rathmore Young Enterprise team was created by a group of 18 Lower Sixth pupils with an aim to develop, market and sell our product. The Young Enterprise team was called 'Kraft for Kids' and we set out with the aim of solving the problem of photographs getting deleted and lost, we decided a good solution for this would be a completely customisable photo frame that would allow people to put their photographs in and preserve them.

In December, to earn some money for Kraft, we purchased 100 boxes of candy canes and sold out entirely, giving the team the confidence we needed to launch our products.

Our first foray into selling our product was at the 2019 Open Day in which we completely sold out all of the products that we had available; we used open day as a launching platform for our photo frames in general, selling in school from Open Day onward. While selling our photo frames in school we also began to sell the ski hoodies to everyone going on the ski trip, this allowed us to make extra income, provide a service for our friends and develop our bartering skills.

Upon the closure of the business we had completely sold out all of our photo frames, sold over 60 hoodies and we earned a massive £1,143 profit overall. The Young Enterprise Team project was a greatly worthwhile experience which taught us all about sales and marketing, it has shown us the world of business and how to manage our money and time to make the best business we could.



Coca Cola

When we arrived at the Coca Cola factory, we were invited into the Heritage Theatre where we experienced a cinematic atmosphere, learning about the remarkable 125-year history of Coca Cola. Our guide then took us on the gallery tour where we witnessed a bird's eye view of products being made, packaged and stored. One thing that we saw was how they use high tech equipment to produce high quality products whilst striving to minimise environmental impact. To end, we visited the interactive zone and explored further the world of Coca Cola. The guide was very informative with regards to our GCSE course and we had an enjoyable day!



a day with brUISer theatre company



On 23 January 2019 the AS Theatre Studies class was able to go to a 'Day with Bruiser' in the MAC Theatre, Belfast. Bruiser is a Northern Ireland based theatre company which is known for its 'over the top' style and interaction with the audience. As part of our AS drama practical we have to reinterpret a script in the form of a different theatre company, we chose Bruiser so this day was extremely helpful in showing us what we should include.

We began by getting a bus from school to the MAC where we then went in to begin our course; it's safe to say that we were all a bit nervous to meet the people we'd been studying, but our strong feelings of excitement pushed any qualms aside. We attended four workshops throughout the day. The first was a course on vocal skills where we practised techniques using accents and projection, which we then showcased to our group as a whole. We then went to a performance workshop where we began by playing drama games as a warm-up, then looked

at freeze frames as a way of communicating a story to an audience. Also in that workshop we began directing a scene from 'Bouncers' using Bruiser techniques, which was a highlight of the day as it gave us the opportunity to receive an insight into the creative process.

We then did a prop workshop, using items as props which they were not intended for and then volunteering to perform in front of the group. The final workshop was one relating to the areas of drama of theatre making and how to begin getting a career. I found this the most helpful as it gave me a far better understanding of how to persevere a career in this field. We ended this amazing day by watching, the people who hosted our workshops, perform 'Bouncers' which was extremely funny and entertaining. Overall, this was a really good and insightful day!

Year 13 Students



Les Miserables trip

On 19 December 2018, students from Year 11 to Upper Sixth went with the Drama Department to see the UK and Ireland touring production of Victor Hugo's 'Les Miserables' at the Bord Gais Theatre in Dublin. We met at the school early in the morning and were greeted by Miss Johnstone, Miss Bell and Mr Leyden before beginning our journey to Dublin. When we got to Dublin we firstly visited some of the most renowned sights such as Trinity College, O'Connell Street and we luckily even had time to shop in Grafton Street. Throughout the day Miss Johnstone captured some lovely moments and even had us create some drama method 'freeze frames'.

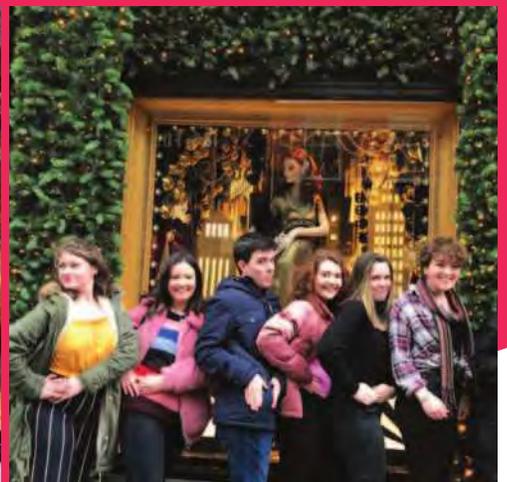
We were then taken to the Bord Gais Theatre for the 14.00 matinee performance. When we arrived at the theatre the smell of popcorn filled the air and programmes were being passed around, reinforcing the setting to us all and creating a sense of excitement. Luckily as we were early we were able to sketch the proscenium arch theatre of the Bord Gais and take photographs of the set which immensely helped our A level and GCSE exam questions, as we have gained an experience of live theatre.

overwhelmed by the iconic score, choreography and dramatic techniques which were useful in stimulating our theatre study practicals. After the performance we were taken home and although we were all exhausted from the day's excitement and events it was worth it for an experience not soon to be forgotten as it has been the highlight of my school career.

Grace Cunningham

The performance was breath-taking, highly emotional and inspiring for Drama students, as we were





Live Theatre trips

This year, the Drama department entered a partnership with the Lyric Theatre, allowing us to see many live productions, ranging from smaller, independent productions such as "Dear Arabella", a series of monologues performed by just three actresses, and "Good Vibrations", based on the life of Terri Hooley here in Northern Ireland to "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street", the iconic Sondheim musical horror. In fact, the A level pupils attended a rehearsal of "Sweeney Todd" a few days prior to the live performance, and the department engaged in a pre-show discussion with the director, giving us an insight into the theatre industry in Northern Ireland. This was an incredibly worthwhile

experience, especially for the A2 students, who study "Sweeney Todd" as their set text.

Most recently, A level students saw the Hitchcock thriller "The 39 Steps", performed by Bruiser Theatre Company. This was especially useful for the AS students, as we had to employ the distinctive Bruiser style as part of our practical performance. It was an extremely worthwhile experience as the performance was very unique, with only four actors multi-rolling to play a wide range of characters - 139 in total! Following the performance, my classmate, Claire McKinney, and myself were lucky enough to meet Michael Condron, a cast member, who gave us insight into Bruiser

productions and his experience of physical theatre, which was an amazing experience for us.

Each live theatre trip has been completely unique, as we have now seen performances from completely different genres, set in a range of time periods and places from 1970s Northern Ireland to Victorian London. Each performance has proven to be an invaluable learning experience for each year group in the Drama Department, and we hope to continue to attend these productions.

Ella Crossey





THE WRITING WORKSHOP WITH BYDDI LEE

Recently, author Byddi Lee came to Rathmore to present a writing workshop that I was lucky enough to take part in. She took us through her journey from Biology teacher at Rathmore to author, before beginning to show us how we would structure and write our own book from beginning to end. Overall, the workshop was a great experience and offered a great insight into the world of an author and writing.

JOFFRE WHITE

Joffre White, a professional author with four books published and twelve written, came to deliver a workshop with our class, 10J, on 26 March. He started the talk by telling us about his past and that all his life had he never expected or even wanted to be a professional writer. In fact, when he told stories people would tell him that he should write them down. He ignored these people until ten years ago, when his son asked him to write him a story, and Mr White complied; this is how his book 'Frog' came about.

From there he talked about how he came up with ideas when writing. He collects objects, such as cameras, and uses them by placing them on a sheet of paper and drawing a mind map around it. He then taught us how to use this technique and gave us some objects. We had 180 seconds to write as many words as possible relating to the object and then words relating to the words already written! This resulted in a complicated looking branching mind map with hundreds of words! Most people achieved around 70 words, but the best got over 120.

After that he answered some questions from the class regarding his work such as: 'Would you like your books to be turned into films?' and 'What's your favourite book?'

I enjoyed the talk, especially how he showed that everyone in that room could do what he did as he encouraged us to be confident in our ideas and how that is important whether you become a writer or not.

Conor Looney 10J



MATT HARVEY WORKSHOP

As part of a series of events for World Book Day, the Year 11 had the privilege of attending a talk with screenwriter Matt Harvey. Matt Harvey is a feature film and TV writer who specialises in thrillers, action films and factual dramas. His work includes Impact Earth, Hard Target 2, Tristan and Isolde and An Act of Defiance.

Screenwriting is not celebrated as much as acting and directing; however, Matt explained to us the intricacies of screenwriting and how it can start from an idea. You may have an idea for a character, a plot or a setting, the main thing is to nurture that idea once you have it.

In order to generate some inspiration, Matt asked us to get a piece of paper and draw a character. Then we passed this piece of paper on to someone else giving them a name. That person passed it on to someone else who described where they lived. This continued until everyone had a unique individual, showing us that once we had an idea (the drawing), we could develop it fully into a character.

After hearing some introductions to his screenplays, he asked us to make our own based on the image of a hand. It was a new way to tell a story but it was interesting and exciting as it we wrote it for people to act as well as making it dramatic for a viewer. Learning about a medium of writing that it is not widely taught was a great experience and it taught us about how the films and shows we love to watch are composed.





Seamus Heaney HomePlace

On 8 February the AS English classes visited the Seamus Heaney HomePlace, which celebrates the life and literature of the poet. The HomePlace is located in the village of Bellaghy, just 45 minutes from Belfast. Seamus Heaney himself was born and raised within the area and chose Bellaghy as his final resting place. The centre has two levels with a performance space, and a permanent exhibition devoted to Heaney's life and poetry, beginning with his parents, siblings and neighbours, exploring the influences of his upbringing on Mossbawn, the family farm. Each display of photographs and text is connected to at least one poem, which is both printed and heard through headphones in Heaney's voice. The verses evoke the rhythms of the rural world in which he grew up, and the tightly bound connections between language and place, nature and the wider world. The HomePlace brings Heaney's life and times to being through photos, memoirs and extracts from his poetry. It is a great place showcasing Heaney's work and achievements in an accessible way.



bernie MCGILL

As part of World Book week, writer Bernie McGill took Junior and A-level classes for a writing workshop. She encouraged us to get involved in writing exercises by providing prompt sentences and we had to develop a story around it. We were also given pictures and we had to examine the character, considering their motivations, background and feelings. It was such an enjoyable experience as we got to express ourselves creatively outside of the classroom.





GEOGRAPHY MAGILLIGAN FIELD TRIP



For a one-night residential trip, AS geography students went to The Magilligan Field Centre in county Derry, in November 2018. The centre offered us a valuable opportunity to study firsthand the changes in soil, vegetation, wind and temperature along a sand dune ecosystem. They also allowed us to gain experience in using specialized data collection equipment such as a lux metre and a quadrat. The staff were helpful in explaining to us how to use the equipment and this proved to be useful out in the dunes. We were split up into teams to collect the data, and

despite the several hours we spent on a cold and windy beach, it was a worthwhile and extremely enjoyable afternoon. The centre itself supported not only our education but our entertainment needs and a fun night was had by all. The next day we ventured to a local river and Roe Valley Forest Park, where we investigated other features of our course. Overall the trip was a beneficial in learning about our area of study and left us with great memories.

Catherine Grant

We had a lot of fun on our residential trip this year; it was a memorable and worthwhile learning experience for the class. One of my favourite parts was the following day, when we went and visited a river, similar to a study we carried out on our Year 11 Geography trip. It was exciting to see the advancement from Year 11 to Year 13 and how much our knowledge and understanding has grown. The data we collected throughout the trip will be very helpful for our AS fieldwork exam at the end of this school year, as well as having been an enjoyable experience for the class.

Sarah Sloan





GEOGRAPHY CLUB

The Geo-Club continued this year on Wednesday lunch-times for Years 8 & 9. They engaged in lots of fun Geography-related activities with the main emphasis this year on making model volcanoes and earthquake-proof building models which were then used on Open Day.

REGIONAL HEAT OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOLS GEOLOGY CHALLENGE 2018

Two groups of Year 13 students from Rathmore competed in the regional heat of the Schools Geology Challenge on 30 January. The competition heat was organised by the Northern Ireland Regional Group of the Geological Society of London (GSL) and hosted at Rathmore. The students were tasked with creating a poster and delivering a short presentation on the theme 'the energy transition - moving on from fossil fuels'. Rathmore Geography students gave excellent presentations on geothermal energy and fracking. Our teams came 2nd and 3rd in the competition. Year 13 students involved were Sophie Aicken, Catherine Grant, Sean McCambridge, Erin McKeown, Nathan Reilly, Sarah Sloan, Charley Simpson, Matthew Early, Meabh McAtamney, Andrew Johnston, Aisling Shrimpton and Anna Young.



YEAR 12 FIELD TRIPS TO COLIN GLEN FOREST PARK

In September 2018 our Year 12 students went on trips to Colin Glen Forest Field Centre to undertake a river study that formed part of the GCSE Controlled Assessment. The students studied the changes to the river from source to mouth as it wended its way through the forest park. The Park Ranger, Paul Bennett, gave us a very interesting guided tour of the park explaining all the different changes to the river along with explanations of the associated geology and wildlife.



BATTLEFIELDS TOUR



BELGIUM

Early on June 18, we waved goodbye to Rathmore for a few days setting off on the first leg of our trip to Dublin airport bound for Brussels National Airport. Despite the three tiresome journeys ahead (from RGS to Dublin, on to Brussels and then to our final destination) the excitement in the air rose rapidly due to a long school year of suspense about what lay ahead.

Late evening, we finally arrived in the quaint town of Ypres where we were staying in Hotel Munchehof, our very well equipped hostel with sports facilities and even a bowling alley! After our day of travelling, we sat down to a very well received dinner.

The next morning, we woke early in an attempt to fit in our visit to Langemark, home of 44,000 buried soldiers having evolved from 1915, at which point it only housed a small group of graves. A while later, we jumped back onto our coach, ready for our guided tour of the Ypres Battlefields which had a strong theme of home as we explored many Irish sites and memorials. Throughout a long day, our tour guide took us around the Pool of Peace, the largest of 19 mines blown by the British Army during the Battle of Messines, the Island of Ireland Peace Park, remembering the Irish soldiers who fell during the war and the graves of William Redmond MP and 14 year old John Cordon, Irish boy soldier. We then visited the new Irish/ Ulster Memorial honouring all the Irish soldiers who fought in the devastating Battle of Passchendaele which had taken place in Ypres. Note that these are only few of the tragic sites we experience on tour, just some of the most memorable.

Following another much needed meal at our hostel, our group

was privileged to attend the famous Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate, held every evening at 8 o'clock. The ceremony's serene atmosphere allowed a calming end to our travels that day as we experienced the commemoration of over 54,000 officers and men with no known grave. We then headed back for the opening night of a quiz from the mysterious mind of Mr McIlvenny, one that had us all a little bewildered, teachers included!

On our third day, we proceeded to visit the first of two museums, the Flanders Field Museum, presenting to us the story of the First World War in the West Flanders front region, its location, the Cloth Halls of Ypres, being an important symbol of wartime hardship and later recovery. Our group then headed to what we can safely say was one of our favourite parts of the trip, Leonidas Chocolate Shop, who were ready and waiting for us with great deals and delicious chocolates and then of course we enjoyed some ice cream and waffles!

Well-fed and leaving with a year's supply of chocolate, we hopped back onto the bus heading to my favourite of the museums, the Memorial Museum Passchendaele, a very modern, interactive museum, where we climbed through trenches and got an even more vivid teaching of the Battle of Passchendaele. The group experienced the smells, weapons, clothing and poignant simulations of life during war.

When we eventually arrived back to our hostel, the sun shone down and we all found our rooms provided great relief from the sweltering conditions! We all took advantage of our great hostel



and despite the heat, enjoyed an intense game of basketball or joined some of the teachers bowling. After dinner on our last night, part two of Mr McIlvenny's quiz caused ructions, as each team ran around tirelessly in a great attempt to take the most desired winnings – about three Fruitella each.

On our final day, we first headed to Tyne Cot Cemetery, Passchendaele, which was in place in recognition of the sacrifices made by the British Empire in the defence and liberation of Belgium during the war. There, we were sent on a wild goose chase to find a particular name on one of the panels or graves in what was an extensively large cemetery. From Tyne Cot, we travelled to Brussels for a guided bus tour of the city and drove past Royal Palace Brussels, the European Commission and were given the opportunity to take some picturesque photos with our friends in front of the Atomium. The highlight of our last day by far was our impromptu Passenger concert outside of where we ate lunch. Thanks to Mrs Bailey for taking us there instead of McDonald's!

Despite it being short, our trip to Belgium had been thoroughly enjoyable with only one downfall – school the next day. The accompanying teachers – Mrs Bailey, Mr McClenaghan, Mrs Stronge and Mr McIlvenny – made the trip both insightful and were great company, fun and laughter. It combined educational visits and respect for the war as well as teaching us more about the history of our Irish soldiers at war giving us real willingness to learn more!

Marianne Toal.





BRITISH



As we set off on the surprisingly sunny morning of 15 February, there was a clear feeling of anticipation as our entourage of A-Level History and German students left our classmates behind and headed south to Dublin Airport. The journey flew by and we made our way through the airport, onto the plane and up in the air. As we looked down at the lands and seas below us, we looked forward to the experiences that awaited us on the days ahead, to enhance what we had learned in the classroom and see it all for ourselves.

We arrived on the outskirts of Berlin that evening and made our way to the nearby train station. While on the train we got our first glimpses at the city of Berlin – the lights, buildings and skylines that would be our delight to explore for the next few days. We made our way to the hostel and, after settling in and dropping off our bags, we headed out for dinner to round off our long day of travelling.

The next morning, we were up bright and early to set off for a very busy day. After filling ourselves up with breakfast, we headed out for our day in which our first stop was the Reichstag building. On the way however, we took the time to see the Brandenburg Gate – one of Berlin's most famous landmarks. We then made our way to the Reichstag and got the chance to see much of the vast cityscape of Berlin from the dome on the top floor, learning much about the history of the city.

We then travelled to see the Berlin Wall, or rather

what's left of it. The Wall has been transformed into a terrific art gallery composed by artists all across the globe. We walked along the edge of the wall, admiring the diverse and impressive paintings and murals and, of course, taking plenty of pictures. After all the walking we had just done, we were more than happy to make our way to the Mall of Berlin to get a bite to eat for lunch.

That afternoon, we went to the Holocaust Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. The monument was striking and impressive and the underground museum that accompanied it brought a new dimension of reality to the atrocities we had learned about in our classroom. We later went to the Topography of Terror exhibition, a fascinating museum that featured many details about the Nazi regime and even a special exhibit about Kristallnacht - a key event in our course.

That evening, we stopped to see Checkpoint Charlie as the main port of travel between East and West Berlin during the Cold War. We then ended our packed day with a meal for dinner and a trip to the cinema.

On Sunday morning we all made our way out of Berlin by train to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The nice weather that morning didn't do much to improve the atmosphere where you could just feel how sombre it was. Despite most of the camp having been destroyed, it was still possible to imagine what it

could have been like, with two solitary bunkers giving an insight into the horrific living conditions of the prisoners that were held there under Nazi rule.

Later that day, we got to go to the German Historical Museum which had many intriguing exhibits that conveyed 2000 years of German and European history. With a focus on 20th Century Germany, it was of fantastic relevance to our course. Afterwards, we headed out for dinner and (despite my questionable skills at the game) had a great night of bowling.

For our last day in Berlin, we went to the DDR museum. It featured many great interactive exhibits that gave an insight into the everyday life of the former East Germany, ranging from a kitchen to an interrogation room. After lunch and a good bit of shopping, it was time for us to pack our bags. Leaving the hostel and getting the train to the airport where our journey in Berlin began.

As we made our way home, it was clear that this was a trip that would be greatly missed by us all. Special thanks to Mrs Bailey, Mrs Lavery and all the pupils there for making this unforgettable experience what it was.

Ryan Elwood-Clarke



YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

Youth In Government is a group where we learn about politics across the globe. It's a fantastic opportunity to discuss politics and make friends in a surprisingly informal setting. It began with an application process from a large number of students from all across Northern Ireland; from this around 100 candidates were selected for interviews for a place on the programme. I was very lucky to receive a place on the programme and was humbled to be the only student in our school chosen for the project.

The group met once every week on a Wednesday, the agenda included a wide variety of topics from international justice, the political processes across the world and current affairs. During the time with them, we have questioned a panel of local politicians on a wide range of issues that affect young people including mental health, Brexit and the economy. We also went on a residential to Derry to learn about its history and Northern Ireland's as a whole. While there we received a tour of the Apprentice Boy's museum and halls and were guided around the Bogside by a victim of Bloody Sunday's brother. We



went to Dublin also where we visited the Parliament buildings and met with a Sinn Féin TD in order to discuss current affairs and topics on the history of Northern Ireland (not to mention the free time on O'Connell Street). We also went to London where we learnt about British politics and had the chance to question two MPs from the DUP, had a guided tour around the Houses of Parliament and were even allowed to visit St Paul's and the Tate Modern. We also visited Stormont where we met with local MLAs, received a brief tour and the programmes highlight

when we debated in official chambers on motions about wealth, young people's issues, war and animal welfare. It has been very rewarding on both a personal and educational level and is really enjoyable from those who know nothing about politics to those who have a keen interest.
Eoin Cummings

LISBURN AND CASTLEREAGH YOUTH COUNCIL

This is an organisation of 16-21 year olds who represent the young in the Lisburn and Castlereagh City area. In order to become a youth councillor, I had to complete an application and an interview in which we were expected to present a detailed policy pitch. It meets fortnightly in order to discuss issues that we see as important for our generation and we set the agenda rather than having it set by outside parties. So far, we have met with Council Members and the Mayor in order to raise certain concerns including mental health, the increase in violence and how to give young people a louder voice in the political sphere. We have also met with a panel of local politicians from Councillors, MLAs to the MP for Lagan Valley in order to bring issues directly to them and suggest ways to solve them. We also take part in organising events such as the

RAG/LAG Conference in order to further develop the voice of young people. We have the powers to reach out to prestigious bodies to bring an issue to light in such forms as letters and bilateral meetings. We have also had the opportunity to send representatives across Europe in order to gain ourselves more connects but also to promote Northern Ireland's voice in the world and young people's need to be invoked with politics at all levels. On a personal level, it has been incredibly useful in showing me how a career in politics would function and has given me invaluable links and knowledge in order to help solve issues within my own local community, which is highly rewarding.

Eoin Cummings



GET POLITICALLY ACTIVE...

I'm Peter McGregor, an Upper Sixth Government and Politics student and a political activist. I have been a member of the Socialist Party and Socialist Youth since September 2017. The Socialist Party is a cross-community left wing party which functions both North and South in Ireland; we have sister organisations in over 35 countries worldwide and we are part of an international body called the Committee for a Workers' International.

Since getting involved with the Socialist Party I have been involved in many campaigns and events such as Belfast Pride, the Repeal campaign in the South and Anti-fascist protests in Belfast. I joined the Socialist Party as I felt that there was a need to get active in changing society

and I saw that the main Stormont parties offered no true alternative. Since joining the party I have developed myself politically and have become a more avid reader and have even wrote some articles for our newspaper, 'The Socialist'. Joining the party alongside doing Politics at A-level has increased my knowledge of the world as a whole and I feel that I have grown in confidence in my ability to discuss major issues.

Joining a political party is something that I would encourage everyone to do and getting active in deciding our futures is something everyone should play a part in.

Peter McGregor

MOCK EUROPEAN COUNCIL

On Thursday 7 February 2019, three Year 14 Politics students represented Italy at the Mock European Council at Belfast City Hall. The event was organised by the British Council and involved Politics students from schools across Northern Ireland. The purpose of the event was for the students to represent the views of their assigned country on two issues facing the European Council. The first issue focused on climate issues and was therefore fairly uncontroversial (Sammy Wilson wasn't there!). The next issue for debate concerned each country's approach to dealing with

the ongoing migrant crisis within the EU. There followed heated discussions as each country put forward their concerns and fears regarding the issue. Pearse Smith was the key speaker in the first debate; I spoke in the second and we were both assisted by our runner Declan Mallon, who was essential in ensuring that we were up to date with factual information and the Italian government's stance on certain issues. He also used Twitter to share Italy's position live from the event. Although nearly all countries agreed on the need for new policies relating to climate change they couldn't agree on the

method, so the motion fell. On the second issue, certain countries adopted an ethnocentric approach and again the motion fell. We believe this sadly highlights the general inability to compromise on a global political sphere. Overall the experience was a learning curve for all of us and in general it provided a really excellent opportunity for young people to get involved in political debate. We would highly recommend taking part to all prospective Politics A-Level students – that is if it even exists after Brexit...

Ethan Tohill



SIR DECLAN MORGAN LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND



In November, we were honoured to receive a visit from the Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, Sir Declan Morgan. He met with Year 13 and 14 Debating and Politics students. Sir Declan was able to give us a unique insight into the role of the Judiciary in civic society. After hearing him explain the roles of the courts and the criminal justice system, we had the opportunity to ask questions. Sir Declan was very open and invited us to ask him questions on any issue – we took advantage of this - the most topical where questions relating to Asher's bakery and the trial involving NI rugby players.

Sir Declan was able to walk us through the reasoning of such decisions made by the courts, as well as giving his own opinion on reforms he sees necessary in the judicial system. Further, he gave us an understanding of the unique problems the judiciary faces without a sitting assembly which could pass laws.

We all came away with a better understanding of the role of the judicial system through this interesting discussion and we are very appreciative that Sir Declan was able to make time in his busy schedule to talk to us.

WHAT MATTERS TO YOU EVENT - #LISTENUP

On Thursday 15 November, five politics students represented Rathmore at the international café event held by YOUTH ACTION NI named 'What matters to you' – giving a voice to around 100 young people directly to our politicians from Stormont. MLAs such as Declan Kearney (Sinn Fein), Paula Bradley (DUP), Colin McGrath (SDLP) and Kellie Armstrong (Alliance) attended along with some others. They moved around each table every ten minutes while the young people stayed at their tables in groups.

Along with the five of us, we had a chairperson at the table to help make things run smoothly, as the politicians moved around, as did the topics for us to discuss; including education, our communities and our vision for the future. We had to put all of our points across first every time before the MLAs were allowed to speak which worked well, as we know they can be quick to cut you off and divert you from topics.

We started with Paula Bradley who was very nice to us, but nevertheless we stuck to our topic on education and let her know our thoughts about going through the education system in contemporary NI, and what we feel could be done to better circumstances not only in terms of grades and funding, but to help remove the green and orange divide and tackle it early on in education. All five of us were given equal opportunity throughout to voice our opinion and did so very well, giving the politicians a lot to think about and respond to. We were highly credited for our contributions to the event and representation of the school.

Peter McGregor



Ballymena MUSIC Festival



The Senior Saxophone Quartet returned to the annual Ballymena Music Festival this year, an ensemble which continued to thrive throughout this academic year under the tutelage of Mr MacAtasney. This year, they performed jazz piece 'Sir Duke', originally by Stevie Wonder, to a very high standard, working fantastically as always within their ensemble and as performers. Congratulations to our Quartet, and all the best for returning to the competition next year!

(Flynn Ryan, Ronan Cartin, Ryan Austin, Conal McCabe.)



bbc Radio ULSTER

NORTHERN IRELAND SCHOOL CHOIR OF THE YEAR



Rathmore Grammar's Chamber Choir graced the stage once more at the BBC Radio Ulster Northern Ireland School Choir of the Year competition on Friday 8 February at Grosvenor Grammar School. They competed in the fourth heat, performing Eric Whitacre's 'The Seal Lullaby', and finishing in style with Peter Anglea's joyful 'Jubilate Deo'. In the weeks approaching the heat, the choir worked exhaustively with Mrs Agnew, sacrificing lunchtime upon lunchtime, afternoon upon afternoon; but each rehearsal proved its worth when the choir acquitted themselves with distinction of performance and ensemble work before a panel of three prestigious judges, all of whom commended the choir on their tone, dynamics and team work. Congratulations to our Chamber Choir, and all the best for returning to the national competition in 2020!





Spring concert

For others, St Brigid brings the spring, but here at Rathmore Grammar School, the swarm and swell of sound emerging from the Music Department is always the season's preamble. From the Junior and Senior Irish Traditional Groups to the Rathmore Grammar Senior String Quartet, each and every musician from Year 8 to Year 14 has once again shown their true dedication and ability, rehearsing with our music teachers Mrs Agnew and Miss O'Neill from half eight in the lightening mornings to five o'clock in the darkening evenings, and the audience present on the evening of 7 March, showed their appreciation for their talents and tones with their sweeping applause.

Our four choirs dabbled in every musical genre under the sun, with songs ranging from Fauré's 'Cantique de Jean Racine' to 'For Good' from Wicked. The Senior String Orchestra began the night with a rather unique arrangement of Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' and the Symphony Orchestra indulged in Bizet's 'Habanera', providing a dazzling finish to the concert for 2019. Current students and past pupils were united once more as audience members, seated alongside parents and children, and all were entertained with every delight of the musical world, from Karl Jenkins' 'Ademius' to a medley of the golden hits of Swedish chart-toppers ABBA. An extensive congratulations to all involved in 2019's Spring Concert, and all the best for the Music Department in the coming year!



IBPW

BPW, which stands for 'Business and Professional Women', is a global organisation, which reaches over 90 countries, aiming to encourage and help professional women thrive in both their public and work life.

The competition organised by BPW was intended to imitate a meeting, enabling public speaking skills to be developed. Each team consisted of three members, a Chairperson, a Speaker and an Expresser of Thanks. The layout of the competition is that the Chairperson introduces the meeting and the speech. This was then followed by a speech on a topic, which the Speaker has prepared, giving way to questions for the Speaker, which were directed through the Chairperson, one from the audience and one from the Chairperson themselves. After questions, the Expresser of Thanks states their gratitude for the Speaker's insightful speech and highlights memorable moments, which provided

food for thought. Finally, the meeting comes to an end with the Chairperson closing the meeting. Each team is given a Speaker from another team, meaning that the Chairperson and Expresser had limited time to prepare, as speech and topic were only seen on the day; a daunting yet challenging experience.

On 22 November, my team and I (myself as the Chairperson, Sarah Crawford, as the Speaker and Luca Mullin O'Hare, as the Expresser of Thanks), all competed at the Belfast Heat. I was delighted when Rathmore achieved victory in the Belfast Heat and secured a place in the Northern Ireland Final, which took place on 2 February. Although we did not repeat the same success at the final, I still have found this experience extremely beneficial in improving my confidence and time management skills. Public speaking is a crucial skill for life that will set you apart. Being able to have the confidence



to discuss issues with limited knowledge and remain confident and convincing will be key in any professional career. It is also extremely useful for interviews and hosting meetings, which can be intimidating yet vital for any future career.

Louise McCarthy

Concern Debates

Members of the Debating Society entered the Concern Competition again this year and, corresponding to previous years, the motions debated were topical, varied and thought provoking. The Concern Team included: Matthew Colquhoun, Caroline Loughlin, Charlie Kelly, Matthew McAteer, Sarah O'Neill, Katie Boyle, Patrick Rogan and Flynn Ryan. These eight pupils were rotated to form a team of four whilst the other members of the society helped with research and points for rebuttal.

The Concern Competition raises awareness of social injustices on a global scale. Motions this year included: 'Individuals serious about combatting climate change, must give up eating meat'; 'Thirty years on, the world is no closer to ending the global HIV and AIDS epidemic'; 'NIKE should be applauded for standing with Colin Kaepernick' and 'The global population 'time bomb'

has been all but defused'. Rathmore saw off stiff competition from Hunter House, Belfast High School and St Louis, Kilkeel but it was a majority defeat against Friends, Lisburn which put paid to our entry into the next round. Admittedly, we were a little disappointed as the first prize was a trip to Africa, whilst second prize was a visit to The Hague Court in the Netherlands.

However, as the old adage asserts, the journey was as important as the destination and the skills we honed in debating were very valuable life skills. We learnt to craft a speech whilst being succinct yet relevant; we learnt to vary tone and pace to ensure maximum impact in our delivery; we learnt the art of rebuttal and the need to research reliable sources to support our arguments. Most importantly however, we learnt the art of teamwork and felt the elation of our shared success. By Charlie Kelly



IrFUW



On Saturday 2 March, we were delighted to win the All-Ireland Final of the Irish Federation of University Women

Public Speaking Competition (IrFUW). It was made even more special when we discovered that it is the first time Rathmore has won the competition in twenty-seven years! However, it is wishful thinking to assume our journey was as simple as this.

The competition required competitors to write a 2-3-minute speech on either education, the teenage years, health, the environment, travel and social media. Yet, the most nerve-racking aspect was that we could be asked anything on our given areas and the motion would not be revealed until 30 minutes before the competition began. No research notes, no phones, no Google! Preparations began in December, researching and keeping up to date with key events, whilst challenging ourselves during afterschool and lunch sessions to write a personal speech that encapsulated fact, humour and creativity. We were thrilled when we were crowned the winners of the Queen's University Heat and thus invited to the final in Trinity College Dublin. Despite an impeccable performance by the

representatives of the University of Galway, Trinity College and University College Dublin, we were delighted when the adjudicator, Mrs. Mary Morrissey (President of the IrFUW) called out "Rathmore" as the winners and Mr. Robin Barnett (British Ambassador to Ireland) presented us with the cup!

It was an honour to be involved in such an international female empowering organisation that aims to promote the understanding and friendship among university women of the world, irrespective of their race, nationality, religion or political opinions. It is wonderful to know that there are organisations committed to ensuring female presence in all levels of public life. We are thrilled to be able to share our views on issues that affect young women today but the greatest gift is the confidence we have gained.

Olivia Crilly, Sarah Morrison and Eva Kerr-Woodrow

Oxford Schools Debating Competition

On 19 January this year, three of my fellow Lower Sixth students (Charlie Kelly, Patrick Rogan and Caroline Loughlin) and I took part in the Oxford Schools debating competition held in Queen's. This was the first year the competition had been held in Northern Ireland and as the latter would follow the British Parliamentary format of debates, this was quite different from what we were familiar with through the Concern debates.

The competition involved debates on a given topic between two sides – the 'government', who supported the motion, and the 'opposition' who opposed it. Each side was composed of two teams of two from different schools, and so we had to debate alongside teams from a different school, although we were still also competing as a team of two within the round itself. Our first debate was on the topic of 'Private Schools should be banned', of which Charlie and myself were on the Opening Opposition side, and so had to speak first out of our side.

The challenge in the Oxford debating format was that we were only given the motions of the debate on the day, for which we had only 15 minutes to prepare a speech of up

to five minutes. This certainly proved a challenge, however we were able to piece together a cohesive argument in the time that we were given, and we were able to defend our position well in the first round. The second motion that 'Environmental Policy should be set by scientists' proved more challenging, and the teams we were up against were particularly strong, however we still managed to keep it together and each put forward a strong argument. Whilst it was an extremely rewarding experience for the four of us, we were challenged us to prepare for the unexpected. Preparing a speech in 15 minutes, as well as responding to challenges put forward by the opposing teams during our speeches.

Overall I would say the experience has particularly equipped me with improved confidence in public speaking and I particularly enjoyed the challenge provided by having to think on my feet. Participating in the Oxford debates was certainly an invaluable experience, and is something that I would recommend to anyone looking to further their public speaking and debating skills.

By Flynn Ryan



My Experience of Year 8 Debate Club

I have enjoyed every second of the Debate Club since I started attending in the first term. We cover so many interesting topics, from school policies such as homework and uniform to the magical world of Harry Potter. Debate Club is led by the Lower Sixth Debate Mentors who create fun and thought-provoking games.

Sharing ideas and opinions is really enjoyable. I love learning about the perspectives of others on issues that I am passionate about. More than this, the Debating Club gives people the opportunity to express why they hold their views and opinions, and it can be very eye opening.

Along with that, Debate Club has helped me to gain skills such as how to articulate my thoughts and how to think on the spot. I have learnt logical analysing and the ability to analyse information that I have been given, not to mention the confidence I have gained, the experience with public speaking, and the friends I have made.

Debate Club is definitely an amazing and enjoyable club to attend, and I would love to continue to be a member going into Year 9.

Eve Wilson



Soroptimist

On 14 November last year, Sarah Crawford, Ella Crossey, Louise McCarthy, Claire McKinney, Caoimhe Venning and I competed in the South Belfast heat of the Soroptimist NI public speaking competition. Soroptimist are an international organisation that aim to "transform the lives and status of women and girls through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities." Whilst the competition challenged our ability to write and deliver engaging speeches, I believe that the Rathmore girls rose to the challenge. I was placed second and Claire McKinney placed third, with the remaining team members receiving a highly commended award from the judges. It was amazing to be able to hear so many different speeches on current social issues, ranging from the "fake news" phenomenon to how we should go about tackling the issue of plastic. Sometimes it's easy to fall into the belief that girls aren't as interested in political issues, but when given a platform in a welcoming environment, we spoke so passionately about our ideas. On reflection, the team unanimously agreed they have a new found self-confidence to voice their opinions. Despite being particularly terrified while delivering my speech, I would relish the opportunity to be involved in any other public speaking events.

Niamh Heatley





ALPHA

Every Wednesday after school, around 25 Year 13 students met to discuss their Christian faith. Over nine weeks, we discussed a range of topics such as the role of prayer in our lives, forgiveness, the Holy Spirit and what having a faith really means. It was conducted in a relaxed and comfortable environment. The facilitator introduced each topic with a video, which was followed up with discussion in groups. The experience was made more enjoyable as it gave me an opportunity to meet others in my year group who I never get a chance to talk to. Each meeting began with some juice and biscuits and a quick game to get us started.

We celebrated the completion of our ALPHA course with a Prayer Service in St. Peter's Cathedral, during which we had time to reflect on our own faith journey and how we would continue to be witnesses for Christ. Each student received a certificate for their participation. I would recommend the Alpha course to anyone who is interested in taking time out to explore their faith in more depth.
Sarah McGirr Year 13

RETREAT

In Rathmore, Junior pupils have a retreat once a year, led by Fiona, a past French teacher in the school. The theme for the Year 8 retreat is 'belonging' and it is all about making us feel welcome in Rathmore. At the start of the year, things can be hard. Not only all the work and moving around the classrooms, but making friends and trying to fit in. Rathmore has amazing activities such as the summer camp and the retreat to help us become more confident.

Only half the people in a tutor group are in the same class and some pupils have probably never socialised with people from the other class. As you participate in the retreat with your tutor group, you can undertake challenges and activities with pupils who you normally wouldn't spend time with. During the retreat you play different games such as two truths and one lie where you are in groups of three, one person has to tell a lie and two truths about themselves. Everyone gets up and says them in front of the class and we have to guess which one is the lie. After lunch you celebrate the day with mass or a prayer service in the school chapel. Meditation happened at the very end of the day. It is really relaxing and helps you calm down after lunch. Fiona is great and leads the retreat really well. She is really nice and welcoming. Rathmore is such a great school because of how welcoming and supportive staff like Fiona are. The retreat is great and I can't wait to do it again next year!

Aoife Kennedy



JOHN PAUL II AWARDS

On 7 February 2019, eighteen Upper Sixth pupils proudly received their Pope John Paul II awards in recognition of their volunteering within their parish, communities and school over the previous fourteen months. The award is committed to helping young people enhance their spiritual and physical development by learning more about the role of the Catholic Church in the world and through working closely with other young people in their communities.



SISTER ELAINE KELLY

On 16 November 2018, Sister Elaine Kelly came in to school to talk to us about her experiences with her Catholic faith. She spoke at length to us in the school chapel in the convent, which I think was quite a fitting place. She began by providing us with plenty of background information about her life; she grew up in Belfast and excelled at school. Her success in school led to a successful career as a barrister of law. She believed that she had everything she needed: a good job, her own house and a partner to whom she was engaged but her mother didn't approve and even prayed that they would separate. Elaine's mother's prayers were eventually answered and the pair did separate. Shortly afterwards, Elaine began attending the Adoration Convent on the Falls Road once a week. She felt great peace at the convent and therefore began to attend masses more frequently. However, it had never crossed her mind to become an Adoration Sister. On a normal Sunday night in March 2014, Elaine was sat at home when she felt

a very strong requirement to go to the Chapel of Adoration. She led a reading at the night prayers for the sisters and it was during this reading that Elaine felt the words speaking to her. She sat down and began to pray, feeling a strong pull to remain in the chapel. Elaine then felt a touch on her heart and instantly she knew that it was the touch of Christ. She was filled with joy and it was made very clear to her that she would become a Sister of Adoration and she went on to do so. Elaine sees her time with the sisters as a time of grace and she now sees herself as a servant of God. She believes that she's been called to adore Christ in the blessed sacrament for all humanity. We felt privileged that Sister Elaine took time out of her busy schedule to come and share her story with us. It encouraged us to reflect on our own faith journeys.

David Dixon 12B



WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES

On 26 August, a group of Rathmore students and teachers attended the World Meeting of Families in Dublin. Most of us who decided to go could recognise the significance of the event, seeing as there hadn't been a papal visit since 1979. The journey down to Dublin reunited many of our group, having been off for the summer break. It was a day filled with reunions and catch-ups. This seemed to be the atmosphere of the event as a whole, as extended families came together in Phoenix Park for the Pope's appearance. The focus of the day was very much on the importance of family, and it was touching to hear the speakers' stories about their own take on what family meant. The ceremony of the day was broken up with various choral and musical performances- the best obviously being Daniel O'Donnell. The Pope's entrance provoked an outburst of excitement amongst the crowd of 130,000, and our group was able to get in close proximity to the car. The Pope spoke with sincerity and honesty about the Catholic Church's stained past in Ireland, and directly addressed the clerical abuse which had taken place. As young people attending the event this was important, as it showed the Catholic Church's desire to repair its previous failings in Ireland. Many of us felt that the day symbolised the progression of the Catholic Church in Ireland, and I actually noticed quite a large presence of young people there on the day. I was really glad that I attended the event, as I felt that it symbolised a lot about progression in Ireland, and in many ways it reignited my faith in the church. The McDonalds on the way home wasn't too bad either!

Beth Hamill Year 14



FRENCH CLUB

The Junior French Club has once again provided an outlet for Year 8 French pupils to show both their immense passion and aptitude for the language. This year, the club was hosted by our French assistant, Michael McKenna, and the AS French pupils were also invited to take part in many activities! Each Wednesday lunchtime was packed full of games of French boules, traditional French chocolat chaud and croissants. We also watched French short films, such as Le Petit Prince, complete with popcorn! Year 8 and Year 13 students were seen to be enjoying the games of unashamedly competitive boules in the staff car park!



YEAR 13 FILM AND DISCUSSION

On 27 November 2018, a group of AS and A2 German students enjoyed a NICILT workshop on the film "Goodbye Lenin", which is on the AS course. The event was held at the Queen's Film Theatre at Queen's University. Pupils watched the film, featuring the young German actor Daniel Brühl, and then participated in a workshop which was delivered in German by Dr Gillian Pye, Assistant Professor of German at University College Dublin. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the film and the follow-up workshop. It was a brilliant opportunity, too, to meet other students of German.

BERLIN TRIP 15TH FEBRUARY 2019

On 15 February our A2 German class joined Mrs Baillie's AS and A2 History pupils to set off on a joint trip to Berlin to immerse ourselves in the German language and the capital city's rich history. We stayed in the Meininger Hotel in Berlin Mitte, which was very centrally located.

We wanted to make the most of our time there, so both groups had jam-packed schedules. We met as a whole group every morning and every evening and shared our experiences of the different tours we had completed during the day.

Our German itinerary started off with a guided tour of the former Stasi Holding Centre in Hohenschönhausen (the Stasi was the East German secret police force). I was intrigued to find out that this prison had been the best kept secret in East Germany- it did not appear on any map. We had an excellent tour guide who spoke about his personal experience of being a prisoner there. His story was, at the same time, both heartbreaking and heartwarming because he talked about his

humiliating and cruel experiences and yet he was so positive about his life and about the things he had learned from those experiences.

We ended our first day with the Red Berlin Walking Tour, delivered by our very well-informed and passionate guide. This tour focuses on the Cold War period in Berlin. We walked the whole way around the former Soviet- controlled part of Berlin. The tour gave us a brilliant overview of the impact of the strained relationship that had developed between the former allies and we saw, first- hand, places like Bernauerstrasse and Friedrichstrasse that we had heard about in class.

We were also fortunate to take part in a tour, in German, of the Reichstag, Germany's Parliament Building, which was extremely enjoyable. I felt really proud that I could understand everything the guide said. We also learned a lot about daily life in the former East Germany through the interactive displays in the DDR Museum, which we visited on the last day of our trip.

I loved our trip to Berlin and would recommend a visit to this exciting and vibrant city. In Berlin ist immer was los und unser Aufenthalt dort war ein unvergessliches Erlebnis!



GERMAN DEBATE MARCH 2019

Recently the German Debating team (Anna Lavery, Ciara Burns, Jemma Campbell and Louise McNicholl) participated in a German Debate organised by NICILT at Queen's University Belfast. The motion was, "Childcare should be free for working parents." Our team argued for the motion, with the team from Methodist College Belfast arguing against it.

Our team was well prepared and did a great job on the day, firmly beating MCB and coming runner- up in the overall competition. It was a great experience for all of us. We were given the motion two weeks prior to the debate and we thoroughly enjoyed the afternoons after school researching and preparing our arguments, under the guidance of Marlene, our Austrian Language Assistant. We hope that the current AS German pupils have been inspired by the experience and that a Rathmore Team will return with renewed vigour next year to win the cup



VISIT BY IAN COLLEN

In October, Ian Collen, the director of NICILT (Northern Ireland Centre for Information on Language Teaching), came to speak to the Lower, Upper Sixth and Year 12 German classes. Ian Collen is a passionate advocate of language learning; he studied German and French at St. Andrew's University and holds a Graduate Diploma in Spanish. I recently read that fewer people are choosing to study languages at GCSE and A-level so I felt encouraged by Ian Collen's highly informative talk about the benefits of studying languages to degree level and the potential job opportunities a language, especially German, could offer us. He explained how German is currently one of the most sought-after languages by employers. I found the talk very inspiring and it strengthened my resolve to follow my dream of studying German as part of my degree at university.

HIGH ACHIEVER IN LANGUAGES

The Languages Department was particularly proud this year of the achievements of Michael Kelly who was placed 3rd in Northern Ireland in A2 French and attained first place in Northern Ireland in A2 German. Michael is an enthusiastic and talented linguist who has also made excellent progress in Mandarin, which he started as an AS pupil.



WORK EXPERIENCE IN BONN JUNE 2018

After finishing our AS exams last June, five of us set off for Bonn, where we were able to complete Work Experience in our chosen areas of interest. This was an amazing opportunity to practise our German, immerse ourselves in German culture and meet up again with our German Exchange partners and have great fun!

The work placements were varied - I went to a solicitor's office, Niamh went to a hospital, and Ciara, Louise and Gemma all went to a primary school. Not only was I able to develop my German skills by reading about various legal cases in German and presenting my ideas, but I

really enjoyed the thrill of attending several criminal court hearings. Although at the start it was difficult to get used to speaking German all the time, I adapted very quickly and found that I could speak German more fluently and easily as the week went on; soon enough I hardly needed to resort to English at all.

When the working day was over, we had plenty of fun activities planned for the evening, and were able to enjoy the lovely summer weather. It was great to watch the World Cup matches in the German fan-zones, sit in the sun at the Rheinaue and shop at all the stores that we

don't have at home and at the same time spend time with the people we had got to know during our Year 11 Exchange.

I was really sad to go home at the end of the week, but I have great memories of my time there and would definitely recommend the experience to all German students!

Anna Lavery

Questions with Marcos

1) ¿De dónde vienes en España?

Vengo de Salamanca, es una ciudad al centro oeste de la península ibérica. Se encuentran entre Madrid y Portugal. Es una ciudad medieval de gran riqueza histórica. Es un buen lugar para estudiar un año de Erasmus.

2) ¿En qué se diferencian la vida en Irlanda de vivir en España?

Obviamente el clima es muy diferente. No llueve mucho en Salamanca aunque en invierno hace realmente frío pero en Verano demasiado calor. La comida también es diferente. Prefiero la comida Española. Una cosa que no me gusta de Irlanda es que en invierno los días son cortos y tristes y hay pocas horas de luz. El centro de la ciudad se queda desierto.

3) ¿Cuáles son tus cosas favoritas sobre vivir en Irlanda?

Me gusta mucho que es una isla donde hay mucha naturaleza. Cuando tengo unos días libres me encanta perderme por lugares donde no hay mucha gente, lugares en los que se respire aire puro y hay animales. Durante las vacaciones de Semana Santa alquilé un coche con algunos amigos y fuimos a Glendalough, Kilkenny, Cork, Kinsale y Cobh.

4) ¿Cuál es su lugar favorito para visitar en Belfast?

Mi lugar favorito en Belfast es Cavehill. Me gusta ir allí los fines de semana porque es un parque natural que está muy cerca de la ciudad. Es bonito subir la montaña y ver toda la ciudad desde arriba.

5) ¿Te gusta trabajar en Rathmore?

Me gusta trabajar aquí. Los profesores intentan ayudarme lo máximo posible. Me gusta ser un auxiliar y ayudar a otras personas para que mejoren sus habilidades lingüísticas en español. Disfruto haciendo mi trabajo. Otra cosa que me gusta es que no tengo que trabajar el Viernes y por lo tanto mi fin de semana es más largo.

1) Where do you come from in Spain?

I come from Salamanca, it is a city to the centre west of the Iberian Peninsula. It is located between Madrid and Portugal. It is a medieval city of great historical richness. It is a good place to study a year of Erasmus.

2) How does life in Ireland differ from living in Spain?

Obviously, the weather is very different. It does not rain much in Salamanca, although in winter it is really cold, but in summer it is too hot. The food is different too. I prefer Spanish food. One thing I don't like about Ireland is that in winter, the days are short and sad and there are few hours of light. The centre of the city remains deserted.

3) What are your favourite things about living in Ireland?

I really like that it is an island where there is a lot of nature. When I have a few days off I love to get lost in places where there are not many people, places where fresh air can be breathed in, and where there are animals. During the Easter holidays I rented a car with some friends and went to Glendalough, Kilkenny, Cork, Kinsale and Cobh.

4) What is your favourite place to visit in Belfast?

My favourite place in Belfast is Cavehill. I like to go there on the weekends because it is a natural park that is very close to the city. It's nice to climb the mountain and see the whole city from above.

5) Do you like working at Rathmore?

I like to work here. The teachers try to help me as much as possible. I like to be an assistant and help other people to improve their language skills in Spanish. I enjoy my job. Another thing I like is that I don't have to work on Friday and therefore my weekend is longer.

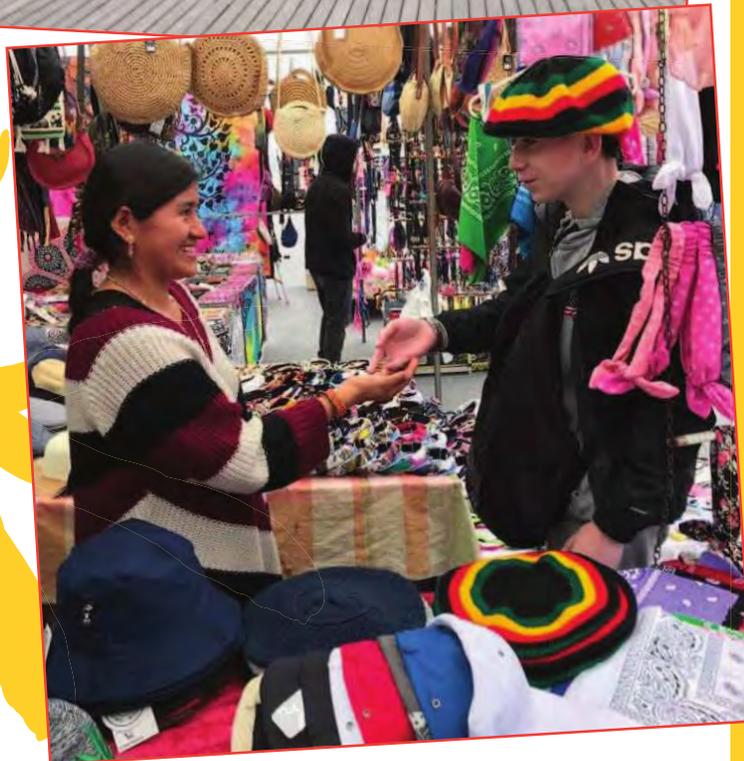


Queen's Film Theatre

On 23 November, the two Lower Sixth Spanish classes went on a trip to Queen's Film Theatre to watch the film, "El Bola," which is studied as part of the AS course. The visit included a workshop addressed by Dr Yolanda Reyes, who gave a lecture on the film. Pupils found the visit very engaging and informative as they were given the opportunity to play interactive games and joined in a discussion about the film, allowing them to learn new vocabulary, and to gain further insight into the film.

NICILT A-Level Spanish Debate

On 13 February, the NICILT 2019 A-Level Spanish debate took place in Queen's University. This involved AS and A2 students from schools around Ireland competing in five different debates. Our team consisted of Caolan Walsh (team captain), Declan McCaffrey, Niamh Heatley, and myself. We were facing St Malachy's College, and our task was to oppose the motion "Los reality shows son una pérdida de tiempo," or "reality shows are a waste of time." We were given two weeks prior to the debate to come up with our arguments, and with the help of our Spanish teachers, and our Spanish assistant, Marcos, we prepared three speeches, each lasting three minutes which we would deliver on the day. This was a rewarding experience as it allowed us to step out of our comfort zone and improve our confidence and speaking skills. We were able to accumulate a range of new vocabulary, and improve our listening skills, as well as our ability to come up with different arguments spontaneously. This will be of great use in our speaking exams. Lauren Johnston



The RGS Spanish Trip 2019

In April, a group of over fifty pupils and teachers from Years 9 and 10 travelled to Murcia, on the south-east coast of Spain. We were staying for five days in the Arbolar Centre, an activity centre right on the Mar Menor, which means the minor sea.

We arrived at Belfast City airport at 5am, bleary eyed, but excited and ready to set out on our intrepid voyage across Europe. All went well, and we had a safe journey.

We landed in Spain, already feeling the heat and eager to start our trip. We hopped onto the bus, and drove to the centre, weaving through the beautiful, arid Spanish countryside. We arrived just after lunch, ready to begin the activities. After being introduced to our 'monitores' - our Spanish leaders - Alejandra, Iker, Miguel and Carlota, we stepped outside the centre, right onto the beach and played some games to get to know each other as a group. We were all surprised

when we saw the sun beginning to set; the evening had simply flown by. When we woke up on the second day, we were all buzzing with excitement, as that day we were doing some water sports. We got to take part in kayaking and sailing in the giant lake we were staying beside. Everyone seemed to find it easy and great fun. Mr Newell and Mrs Sutherland, as novices, were very proud to have taken so quickly to kayaking ... until someone

pointed out that their kayak was in fact back to front.

That evening, we were shown how to make a traditional regional dessert, 'Tarta de la Abuela', which means Grandmother's cake. It was composed of layers of chocolate, biscuit and vanilla custard, topped with sprinkles. The dessert needed to set, so we would enjoy this in a day or two.



The third day was the day when we were travelling to the city of Cartagena. Cartagena is a beautiful old military town in the region of Murcia. In the city, we got to see an old submarine in a Navy museum, as well as visiting an ancient Roman theatre. The theatre was only discovered in the 1980s, because it had been hidden under other buildings for millennia. We were told that when the theatre was at full capacity, it could've held thousands of people. We all enjoyed going to see this truly amazing piece of architecture, and were fascinated by its story.

Later on that day, we had the opportunity to go shopping, and it was great to put into practice the Spanish we had learnt both on the trip and in school. We were delighted to be able to converse with the local shopkeepers, and to make ourselves understood. The day was nicely rounded off with a dinner of delicious tapas - squid, paella, Spanish omelette, patatas bravas and a wide variety of salads. On the fourth and final full day, we had a different experience of shopping, in a typical Spanish street market. The bustling side street was packed full of local shoppers - and a party from Rathmore.

We bought a vast variety items, from bracelets to shoes, from custard apples to churros, from spices to stuffed olives. Again, we were able to really enjoy using our Spanish in an authentic context and to learn new expressions.

As the afternoon came to a close, we returned to the centre to dance away our final evening doing Zumba by the beach, as the sun set over the stunning Spanish horizon.

Sad to be leaving, we were cheered up with the prospect of a party among old

friends and new. Some of our year groups and our teachers displayed their musical talents and it was a privilege to listen to them.

The next morning, with hearts as heavy as some of our suitcases, we boarded the bus and began our journey home. We had such a wonderful experience on this trip, and from everyone who was there, we wish to say a massive thank you.

Lucy Sutherland



ABAIR

Ar an séú lá déag de mhí Feabhra, ghlac Clár Níc Corraidh, Lára Sousa Ua Bruadair, Anton Ó Gallchóir agus mé féin páirt i gcomórtas cainte de chuid Gael Linn, Abair, sa scoil s'againne. Bhí scoláirí ó scoileanna eile páirteach ann chomh maith, Coláiste Feirste, Coláiste Caitríona agus Coláiste Oiriall san áireamh. Lá fada fiúntach a bhí ann agus i ndeireadh na dála, d'éirigh linn triúr áit a ghnóthú sa bhabhta ceannais, Lára agus Clár sa dara háit is mé féin sa chéad áit.

Bhí an babhta ceannais ar siúl i bPriosún Bhóthar Chroimghlinne ar an seachtú lá is fiche de mhí Mhárta. Tháinig buaiteoirí na réamhbhabhtaí uilig le chéile san ionad stairiúil seo agus is cinnte go raibh ardchaighdeán labhartha i measc na n-íomaitheoirí. Pléadh neart ábhar éagsúil ó Bhreathmeacht go teicneolaíocht. Ar an drochuair, ní bhfuair duine ar bith againn áit ach bhain muid sult agus tairbhe as an ócáid spreagúil.

Ciara Ní Lorcáin

IS CAILÍN MÉ

Is cailín mé.

Cailín atá ionam.

Cailín is ea mé.

Is peileadóir mé.

Is báicéir mé.

Is ceoltóir mé.

Ach, arís, is cailín mé.

An dtéann sé i bhfeidhm orm agus ar mo dheiseanna sa tsochaí gur cailín mé? Is í sin an cheist. Agus nach tráthúil an cheist í?

Is ceist achrannach í seo faoi gnéasachas atá ag déanamh scime dúinn le fada. Ba sa bhliain 1918 a tugadh cead le dlí do mhná na hÉireann le vótáil agus bhí ceiliúradh mór cead bliain ann anuraidh. Ba eachtra dhomhan-athraitheach é a chur tús le níos mó deiseanna ag mná.

Ag fás aníos, bhí orm dul i dtaithí le cúrsaí gnéasachais agus ar lámh amháin, b'fhéidir gur chuidigh mé leis.

Tá suim mhór agam i gcúrsaí spóirt agus nach aontóidís liom gurb iad na trí focal is tábhachtaí ar chláir na cruinne ná Cumann Lúthchleas Gael? Bíonn neart gearán ar na saolta seo fán easpa aird atá tugtha do mná sa spóirt maidir le urraíochta, airgid, tuairiscithe, srl. Ach ar chuidigh mé leis sin mar go ndéarfainn gurb é Aaron Kernan an peileadóir is fearr liom nó mar go n-imrinn peil na bhfir nuair a bhí mé níos óige?

Bhuel, domsa, is riléir nár chuidigh mé le rud ar bith seachas aois m'óige. Cé gur cailín mé, ní chaithfidh mé bheith in éadan buachaillí. Is féidir liom bheith scanraithe acu. Ní rud olc é dá ba mhaith liom bheith cosúil leo. Agus nach bhfuil an fód á sheasamh agam ar son na cailíní agus mé ag traochadh na buachaillí timpeall thart an pháirc.

Tá mé bodhar de bheith ag éisteach le daoine a rá nach ach "peil na mban" atá ann. Nach mbíonn mé ag traenáil chomh minice is a bhíonn na buachaillí? Sílim go mbíonn... Cá fhad a mhaireann an dá cluiche? Uair an chloig araon, sin an rud a shíl mé. Nár lige Dia go mbeadh ár gcuid gruaige i bpónaí!

Ach tá muid ag dul i ngleic leis an steiréitopa amaideach agus tá mé sásta a rá go raibh níos mó ná 50000 duine ag cluiche cheannais na hÉireann anuraidh. Ní raibh an slua chomh mór le sin ag cluichí leathcheannais na bhfir agus ba é imeacht spóirt na hEorpa is mó é. B'fhéidir nach bhfuil muid chomh lag leochaileach is a deir na fuathaitheoirí! Ní maith liom an fhocal 'feimineachas'. Tá an ciall caite ag coimeádaigh cé atá sásta le beag a dhéanamh do bhuaicillí le seo a dhéanamh dóibh féin. Is é sin an fáth nach dtugaim an ainm feimineach ormsa.

Ach ní chiallaíonn sin nach gcuireann sé idir brón agus fearg orm nuair a fheicim na staitistic faoin dóigh a

gcuireann steiréitopaí inscne isteach ar chailíní óga maidir le héadaí, lena smaointí, lena gcaitheamh aimsire, leis an dóigh a n-iompraíonn siad le daoine eile. Mothaíonn siad go bhfuil siad in isle brí agus tá dualgas orm mar leanbh Dé stad a chur leis. De réir daonáirimh, tá cailín óg as gach ceathrar in easnamh muinín mar gheall ar na steiréitopaí seo.

Gabh ar ais chuig do chistin agus déan ceapairí! Haha nach fir iad na cocáireachtaí is cáiliúla sa domhan? O, is ea, tá sin fíor.

Rud eile atá mar eilifint sa tseomra ná an locht samhnasach atá curtha ar mná i gcásanna éiginthe. Nuair a tharlaíonn éigniú, ní thig le duine ar bith locht a chur ar chailín mar gheall ar na héadaí a bhí uirthi nó an méid smideadh a chaith sí dubh, bán nó riabhach. Agus ní thig leo a fo-éadaí a chur in airde sa chúirt mar fhianaise. Cuireann sé seo samhnas orm go ndearna duine éigin é seo in Éirinn. Cad

An fadhb shíoraí é gnéasachas? Tá sé pléite agus athphléite agus athphléite arís agus is é an conclúid atá agam ná i ndiaidh a chéile a thógtar na cailsleáin. Is ea, is cailín mé ach ní chiallaíonn sé sin go bhfuil difear idir mise agus an fear sin a shuíonn in aice liom sa rang ceimice. Bhuel, seachas Y-chrómasóm!

LMC

All Year 9 classes were involved in a cookery demonstration organised by Wendy Donaldson from The Livestock and Meat Commission during the month of November. This was a very interesting and tasty event, as the pupils were informed about various aspects of meat production and the importance of buying farm quality assured produce. Wendy also discussed with the pupils the nutritional benefits of red meat as well as the current dietary guidelines for its consumption. During the various visits Wendy prepared and cooked a range of dishes including balsamic beef and tomato ragu, beef nachos, chilli con carne with quinoa and a tantalising lamb curry which the students were allowed to sample and enjoy. Each student also received some recipes and information in a booklet, which they were able to take home to try the other delicious recipe ideas.



COOKERY CLUB

The Cookery club takes place in the Home Economics department every Wednesday afternoon. So far students in Years 9 and 10 have each had their own six-week session. This year, the club began with the Year 9 who were given the opportunity to prepare and cook dishes such as raspberry and white chocolate scones, as well as taking part in a creative Christmas cookery session where mini no-bake Christmas puddings were prepared. One for the Year 10 soon followed this session. The recipes prepared by these students were a little more complex and included chicken curry, muffins and raspberry and white chocolate cookies. All the recipes prepared by the different groups so far seem to have gone down a treat! The Year 8 Cookery club will take place during the third term when we hope to be preparing dishes such as brownies, cupcakes, homemade pizza and much more! Special thanks must go to our present Home Economics Student Assistant, Miss McGeown, who organises all the recipes and ingredients as well as leading this very enjoyable club.

We are Be Strong Online!

Be Strong Online is a peer-led programme to help young people develop digital resilience from The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Campaign and Vodafone. Be Strong Online was first introduced into Rathmore in the 2017-18 academic year, with a large number of pupils in the Junior school (Years 8, 9 and 10) showing an interest in joining. Since then we have developed skills and different ways of reaching out to our peers.

In October 2018, we hosted a Be Strong Online Young Ambassadors training day. This was delivered by specialist trainers from England. Other schools from Belfast were also invited to attend. On that training day, a total of 18 Rathmore pupils in the junior school became official ambassadors, with 6 in each junior year group. We have been meeting on Wednesdays in Mr Kelly's room, Computing room 2, at break times following the training day.

Towards the end of the first term, we launched a poster competition on 'How to Be Safe Online' with prizes for the top three posters in each year group. This encouraged many pupils to get involved and there was a great number of entries. Mrs Hamilton presented the prizes to the Y8, Y9 and Y10 winners of the competition and many of the posters can be seen displayed around the school. On Tuesday 5 February 2019, Safer Internet Day, we delivered online safety presentations to raise awareness in the Junior school.

Currently, Be Strong Online are preparing to deliver workshops in June on the topic of Cyberbullying.

Be Strong Online is an amazing way for pupils to reach out and help each other to be wise when using the internet and many pupils have benefited from our presentations!



Pictured are the The Be Strong Online Poster Competition Winners – Anna O’Kane Year 8, Niamh Mahon Year 9, Jack Thompson Year 10.
By Gloria Ifonlaja



KAINOS EARN AS YOU LEARN

The Kainos “Earn as you Learn” is a scheme that allows you to join Kainos as an Apprentice Software Engineer instead of going down the traditional University route. Kainos is a software company that was formed in Northern Ireland and is one of the top software engineering firms in Europe.

The main advantage of being awarded an Earn as you Learn position is that Kainos put you through University and pay all the fees. In addition, you receive a monthly salary as well as gaining great skills. However, the part time degree lasts just over four years whilst a full-time degree can be completed within three years. That being said, what is a year between friends?

The process generally starts around late October/early November and the application is relatively straightforward whereby the applicant completes an online application that is available on the Kainos website, my application closed on 31 December. Following the online application, the Recruitment team reviews and draws up a shortlist of candidates and subsequently contacts the successful candidates to inform them that they have passed the initial stage and are invited to a series of interviews and workshops including one-to-one discussions.

The basis of the “Earn as you Learn” scheme is that you work full time four days a week and attend a Computing Systems course at University of Ulster one day a week to achieve your degree. You’ll get to work with experienced software development professionals on live projects for real clients – it makes for faster and better learning opportunities and is much more rewarding. Also, you’ll get to enjoy everything that comes with joining an exciting, dynamic and award-winning business at the forefront of the I.T. Industry.
Alan Simpson

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE

The Rathmore Careers Department continues to support and guide its pupils to make informed choices at tertiary level through hosting representatives from numerous universities, inviting them to speak to Year 12, Lower and Upper Sixth pupils. As well as this, the Careers Department organises pupils to attend conferences and open days to certain universities, one of which was the Oxford and Cambridge Conference, March 2019. Mrs Murphy accompanied a number of Lower Sixth pupils to the event which was hosted at the Island Civic Centre, Lisburn. The programme ran from 9.00am until 3.00pm. The agenda was very structured and offered a number of lectures focusing on various specialities including Medicine, Law, P.P.E., Mathematics and Computer Science. Pupils identified the areas they were interested in. At each lecture, they were given a flavour of what the courses entailed as well as guided in how to make a successful application to the universities. There was also an opportunity to ask questions after each lecture; both admissions officers and lecturers proved very approachable and eager to help.
Charlie Kelly

YPI

Last year we were given the opportunity to be part of Youth Philanthropy Initiative. We had to decide a social issue to talk about in our classes and we chose homelessness. We were excited to be part of this knowing that we could win £2000 for our chosen charity. The charity who dealt with this issue whom we met was Simon Community, Northern Ireland’s largest leading homelessness organisation. Our first step in the process was competing against our class with our presentations. We then proceeded to the finals, which Years 8 and 9 went to watch. We competed against the winning teams from each class. The competition was fierce and the runners-up received £500 for the Charity SOS Bus. Then the panel of judges decided that we were the winners! We are so happy that the £2000 that we won for the charity will be put to good use, including; home packs, job interview preparation classes and much more. YPI is such a good opportunity which allowed us to take initiative and help less fortunate members of our society.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On 7 March, thirty Year 12 girls went to The Kingspan Stadium, to partake in an International Women's Day talk, given by Deloitte, a multi-national accountancy firm. The day out started off with us getting on the minibus that would take us to the stadium, to an event which we were not quite sure of what was involved.

We arrived early, just in time for the delicious food spread, and since we had all missed lunch we were STARVING! After eating as many chicken tikka sandwiches and chocolate brownies as we could manage, we were ushered to our seats and the tables surrounding a stage in the centre of the room. We were by far the biggest group there, with most schools bringing around five pupils; Rathmore was well represented!

The first task we were set was a quick online quiz, which was so much fun. Questions included how many women hold leadership roles in tech companies, and we were surprised at the answer - Less than 5%! The quiz brought out the competitive nature in us all, debating the answers amongst ourselves, before it was even put up on the screen

Straight after that we were set the task of drawing what we think the ideal woman will look like in the

business market in 2030, including desirable qualities and personality traits, and with the help of the Ulster Women's rugby team, we came up with lots of ideas at our table. This was harder than expected, as we had to take into consideration the changing business markets, such as an increasing focus on IT skills, but some of the ideas we came up with included having computer skills, being highly motivated and career focused.

The highlight of the whole event had to be when the guest speaker began her presentation. Hannah Shields walked on stage and began to tell us her life story, and by the end every single one of us was in awe of all her accomplishments. Hannah had trained to be a surgeon, but changed her mind, becoming a dentist, which she still works as today. In 2003, Hannah attempted to be the first Northern Irish woman to reach the summit of Mount Everest, but at just 100m from the 8,848 metre summit, she realised she couldn't make it, as even though she was willing to sacrifice her fingers and toes to frostbite, she knew continuing to climb put her team at risk, so she returned home, so close to reaching her goal. Hannah described how she was devastated at what she saw as her failure, and said it took her a while to regain her confidence. Eventually, she told us, she made up her mind to reach the summit on her next time no matter

what, and that's exactly what she did. She described to us how she was offered a trip, all expenses paid to Mount Everest, but turned it down feeling she wasn't ready. And in 2007 she completed the goal she set herself four years ago and became the first Northern Irish woman to climb Mount Everest. But her accomplishments do not stop there: she became the first Irish woman to ski to the North Pole, regularly runs ultramarathons, endurance mountain running, duathlons and triathlons, competing nationally and internationally. Her speech was both inspiring and entertaining, with regular comedic anecdotes such as how her perfume regularly attracted polar bears during her trip to the North Pole. The time flew in, and we soon realised she had been speaking for nearly an hour, although it honestly felt like fifteen minutes.

Unfortunately, we had to leave for school after Hannah had finished speaking to get back in time for buses, but the experience was fantastic. We were all inspired by Hannah's life, and were discussing on the bus back to school how we were all motivated to live our lives the way Hannah has; never giving up and working hard for our goals.

Áine McCann and Claire McStravick



YOUNG ENTERPRISE

As part of Learning for Life and Work course we recently participated in an event run by Young Enterprise NI. From Year 8 to 10, each year group had an activity day where Young Enterprise ran a session with a specific theme for each year group. They aimed to inspire young people into creating ideas that can change the world.

In year 9, pupils were taught what an entrepreneur is, what they do and how you can become one too. Pupils got into groups of five or six and created business ideas with a name, slogan, logo, promotional ideas and sale prices. This year's task also had to be a mobile app.

The majority of the Year 9, if not all of them, enjoyed this workshop. It really showed how a simple idea can hatch from its cocoon into a beautiful and prosperous success!
By Gloria Ifonlaja Year 9J

UCAS EVENT 2019

UCAS held an exhibition, in the Eikon Centre in February, at which there was a wide variety of universities, colleges and businesses. The event lasted two hours and gave us an insight into life at university and/or work. As well as information booklets for each university/college/business we were also able to get our tickets scanned and receive further information via email about open days, how to apply, course details etc. The event was very well run and decidedly informative. I really had a great time at the event and enjoyed talking to different people from all the different universities, it helped me further narrow my options down and gave me greater insight on questions I had regarding grade requirements, personal statements and things like student accommodation, to inform any decisions I might make to move away for university. I would highly recommend that all students, if given the opportunity, should attend the UCAS Event or other events of the like.

Conor O'Neill

LINE OF DUTY WORK EXPERIENCE

In November I had the amazing opportunity to go on work experience for four days on the set of hit BBC drama Line of Duty. It was extremely interesting to see how all the different departments worked together and how they organise the production in such a short space of time in order to complete every task and adjust every single detail before the cameras rolled. Although I

had had no prior experience on set, no one was condescending or rude; I was taken aback at how friendly everyone I worked with was. I was offered lots of helpful advice from people from different departments, ranging from what editing software is best, to what route of action is best in relation to starting a career in the film industry. I started by assisting the Assistant

Director department in directing actors to the green rooms and setting up backstage facilities. I then helped make props for the Art Department, including a memorial shrine for a character. I used software programmes such as GIMP and Photoshop to create fake police files and computer desktops. It was particularly edifying to see many of the props and sets I had worked on in the

recently aired new season on BBC. My work experience was organised through Northern Ireland Screen, to whom I am very grateful. I also got to express my thanks to Emma Thorpe and Bernard McCloskey from NI Screen at the Moving Image Arts Showcase in the SSE Arena. Anna Rooney



ANIMATION COURSE

Earlier on this year I was accepted into the Northern Ireland Screen foundation Academy for Animation. I had to attend a selection day at the Ulidia resource centre. This was very nerve wracking as I had to bring along previous works of mine and make a short animated film with people whom I had never met before. A couple of days later I found out that I had been accepted. I later attended an animation workshop with Joel Simon, an animator from Belgium who has won over 40 international awards for animated films and programs, including Gerry Anderson's On the Air series. At this workshop we used plasticine to create stop motion animations. I found this workshop to be extremely useful as it helped me to meet new people in the film industry and establish new connections. It also helped me to expand my experience with animation, I gained some extremely useful tips from Simon which I helped me complete my Moving Image A-Level. Grace Mulholland

WORK EXPERIENCE

In February I took part in a work experience programme run by Screenworks. I was working alongside Patricia Strong from the Patricia Strong Academy. Patricia has worked on many film and TV sets such as 'Game of Thrones' and 'Krypton'. Every day I learned new skills such as Facial Hair knotting which was taught by Laura Street who does the hair and makeup on set for 'Strictly Come Dancing' and Little Mix. I also worked on wigs and makeup. I styled many different wigs and learned how to do realistic Special FX makeup like cuts and bruises. This experience taught me a lot about the film industry in Northern Ireland and I believe that the skills that I learned will make me a more desirable candidate for future work as I have experience in many different areas. Grace Mulholland

WORK EXPERIENCE

I took part in a work placement organised by Screenworks to give young people a chance to learn skills useful in the creative and film industries. It was hosted by Clare Ramsey, a professional makeup and SFX artist who has worked on films such as Lord of The Rings. My placement spanned over three days, and during this time we were taught the skills of prosthetic making. She showed us how we could create different characters using makeup and special effects, including creating our own bruises, scars and cuts. We also were taught how to create our moulds and were given the chance to experiment with creating looks on other people. We were also given the chance to find out about the industry and ask any questions we had about starting a career in film. It was a brilliant experience that gave me the chance to learn new skills!

Mollie Dougan

This Easter, I was lucky enough to take part in Channel 4's work experience programme in London. Over 2400 people applied from all over the UK and a lucky 20 were chosen to visit their offices. The experience lasted two days, and during this time we were given the chance to find out more about the media industry and see up close and personal how a large scale company was run. On the first day, we got a tour of the building and a chance to meet with people from different sectors of Channel 4. We met with commissioners and their creative advertising team. This was a good chance to ask industry professionals questions and find out what their jobs entailed. We also did exercises that gave us a chance to experience what it is like to be an advertiser, as we had to think of creative ideas to draw public attention to popular shows such as "Derry Girls" and "Gogglebox". On the second day, we met with producers, commissioners and

developers from Film4. This was my favourite portion as I am interested in going into film. We got a chance to ask them questions about the movies they had produced such as "Three Billboards outside Ebbing, Missouri" and "The Favourite". They gave us advice on how to get into the industry and also opened our eyes to the many different careers within film and TV.

It was a brilliant experience as I got to meet like-minded people who were just as passionate about media as me and I also got to ask important questions to people within the industry. It made me even more passionate about film and TV and I hope to one day to work in the industry and create films and shows just like Channel 4.

Mollie Dougan



SCREENWORKS

Recently, I was lucky enough to be accepted for a Screenworks makeup placement, run by the Emmy award winning Pamela Smyth (Game of Thrones). The week entailed hands on experiences learning the techniques of the industry, as well as what it takes to be suitable for the job. We worked with prosthetics and facial hair in order to visually portray a character and their traits. We also learned the importance of set etiquette, punctuality and team work when working in the screen industries. Overall the experience was very insightful and I thoroughly enjoyed every moment!

Sophie Aicken



MIA SHOWCASE

In November, A Level MIA students had the opportunity to attend the annual Moving Image Arts showcase in the SSE arena as part of the Cinemagic Festival. Each shortlisted film was selected by a panel of experts, and the winning films were chosen for their strong

production values, story, originality and audience appeal. Students were very inspired by the creative and visually stunning works that they saw. They also had the opportunity to attend a film careers event afterwards, not to mention lots of free pizza!



Biology Year 13 Trip

In September all AS Biology classes went on a trip to Groomsport to practice sampling techniques. We travelled by bus and were there for most of the day. Groomsport is a rocky shore just outside Bangor, so wellies were a vital accessory. We used Quadrats and tape measures to take measurements using both random

and systematic sampling techniques. We mostly counted different seaweeds and shells but saw a few crabs as well! It was a really good day because we got to take Biology outside of the classroom and see how it applies in real life. It also came in really useful when we studied Biodiversity in AS2, as we had practical experience of

what we were studying. It was an all-round amazing day getting to have fun with other Biology students and learn about how our subject applies outside the classroom!
Jane McMahon



CPR

In November I participated in raising awareness about CPR. Three classmates and myself volunteered to research and present information on CPR at an Assembly for each Year Group. Each student in the school had an opportunity to learn how critical it is to be aware of the basic skills required to save a life. We found the research very interesting and learnt some new facts which were presented in a Power Point. Several Year 14 pupils were then trained on how to perform CPR and they used their new skills to teach other students in the school. Remember YOU could make the difference between life and death. Learn CPR and save a life!

Sarah McGirr



Eco Schools

Eco Schools takes place every Friday at lunch time and is a club dedicated to keeping Rathmore eco-friendly. Pupils from all year groups are welcome and we undertake a variety of tasks. At present we are currently cleaning the school pond in order to allow new growth and hopefully the introduction of some wildlife such as frogs.

Recently we took part in a litter clean up with P7 pupils from St Anne's primary school, by collecting any litter around the forested area in front of the primary school. It was enjoyable and good to spread awareness about the importance of respecting our environment to younger children. It was a privileged experience in order to set an example to the primary school children as we all worked together to clean up our school premises.

Eco Schools has a warm atmosphere and is attended by many people who are passionate about protecting our natural environments. All my fellow members believe that it is a rewarding experience. I highly recommend joining if you are interested in caring for the environment and meeting likeminded people.

Andrew Johnston



Forensic Science Day

The Forensic Science day was a great experience for those interested in forensics as well as those for whom it was unfamiliar; nevertheless, due to its exciting nature it is a subject that engages most people. We were tasked with figuring out how a girl from Australia had been murdered and who committed the crime. Initially, we watched some CCTV footage of where she was throughout the day and we saw a picture of the crime scene. To begin with, we examined the picture finding out if there was blood, details about the girl, what she was wearing and the surrounding area. Then we searched for finger prints on coke cans which had been thrown in a bin at the train station. We also used DNA samples from some hair found on the victim to determine whether the murderer was male or female, as the girl had indeed spoken to lots of people throughout the day.

Next, we looked at the last text message on her phone. Strangely, she was missing a shoe, and I cannot recall why, but we did look through a pile of shoes and matched the pair. This wasn't all we did, there was so much more! On final analysis, after all our research had been collected, we determined that she had been lured to a "bunker" by a man and had died due to a blunt trauma to the head. Afterwards, we were all invited to take pictures in dust-coats and body bags for fun. I would go again as it was good to have an insight into a different section of science and be aware of what careers are involved leading up to GCSE choices.
Zack Keane – Year 10.



BRITISH PHYSICS OLYMPIAD

The Y13 Physics students participated in the British Physics Olympiad, completing the AS Challenge paper. This paper requires them to apply their understanding of Physics to unfamiliar and complex situations, well beyond the level expected in a normal exam paper. Our students rose to the occasion admirably with Conor Doherty and Flynn Ryan achieving gold awards. The remainder of the students were awarded Bronze 1, Bronze 2 and Commendations.

SENTINUS TEAM R&D

Sentinus Team R&D is a programme which fosters links between schools and industry. Teams work closely with a link engineer, in this case NI Electricity Network, to develop a solution to a problem identified through site visits, school work and a residential at Queen's University, Belfast.

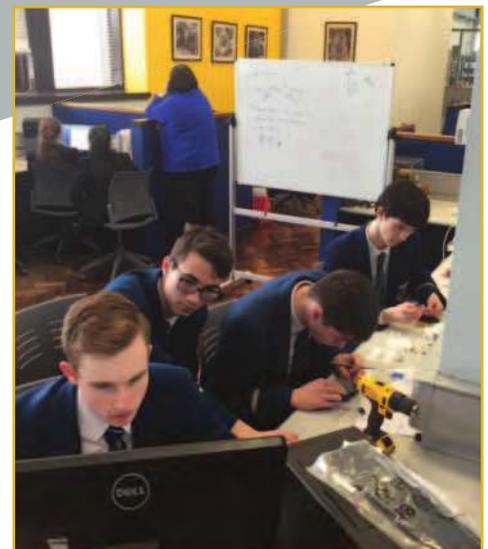
This year our team consisted of Conor Doherty, Ryan Elwood-Clarke, Alan Hyndman and Charlie Kelly, whilst Mr. Kieran Doherty was the contact teacher responsible for overseeing the project. Our link engineer, Andrew Devlin, outlined the problem NIE faced. Put simply, the amount of current that can be deployed along an electrical line is affected by external factors such as temperature. The problem NIE encounter is in regard to line ratings. These ratings are stated by the manufacturer as a guide to the maximum current value of a particular line. However, these ratings do not account for actual temperature or external factors such as wind. NIE cannot, with confidence, exceed these line ratings. We were tasked with researching and developing a Dynamic Line Rating Device that could measure the wind speed and ambient temperature of the surrounding area, allowing NIE to update their line ratings in real time. Initially our progress was slow and time had to be dedicated to research on the dynamics of our project. These included: what microcontroller device to use; how

to measure ambient temperature and wind speed and even what materials our design would utilise. Through this period, we were guided and advised by Rathmore's Technology Department, our link engineer and a briefing by Sentinus at Queen's University also proved greatly beneficial.

Once the dynamics of our design had been determined, we set about developing our project. This was done primarily through two workshop days held in the Queen's Ashby Building. Here, to manufacture our Dynamic Line Rating Device, we made extensive use of Solid Works and the 3D printing and laser cutting capabilities offered by the Physics Department. We designed an electronic device which fulfilled our brief, optimising current flow through the cable and allowing more customers to use the network.

Having manufactured our project, we compiled our design into a 10,000-word paper detailing our design brief, possible solutions, problems encountered and an evaluation of the product. The project will conclude with a Celebration Day in Ballymena in May where our design will be evaluated by teams of expert assessors. All four of us are keen to learn more about the everyday applications of our course contents and investigate possible future careers.

Sentinus provides a valuable opportunity for pupils to work closely with industry. The work is very challenging but, equally, it's hugely rewarding as we felt we had accomplished something very real, practical and useful which could be implemented in the future.
Charlie Kelly



"CHEMISTRY AT WORK"

This interactive conference held at Queens' University has traditionally been attended by our GCSE Chemistry students. This year was no exception as a group of Year 11 students experienced a wide variety of lectures, displays and activities relating to industries and careers where the study of Chemistry is advantageous.

Students experienced problem-solving in the world of equine studies in finding the best food and supplement combinations for thoroughbred racehorses. They were steered through the complex chemical and legal processes that international companies like ALMAC have to undertake when researching and developing medical treatments for serious medical complaints. There were opportunities to assist scientists in experiments, such as using liquid nitrogen to freeze everyday objects with W5 to "blowing stuff up" with the gas company BOC. Rathmore students were quite concerned when QUB Biochemistry research students were able to highlight all

the bacteria and micro-organisms living on their skin! The common theme throughout the conference was that students who have studied Chemistry can find a gateway into a wide variety of interesting career paths, many of which are not the conventional routes taken by Chemistry students. Of course the Rathmore spirit of tenacious questioning and participation did not go unnoticed as we were chosen as the school that "was most engaged" of all the schools that attended throughout the two day event, winning Chemistry related computer equipment for the school's Chemistry Department.



CIVILISATION BELFAST

I very fortunately got the opportunity to take part in 'Civilisation Belfast', which was an event organised by Queen's University to encourage Sixth Form pupils to get into civil engineering. The day consisted of us travelling around Belfast to see how civil engineers are impacting our daily lives through several different projects.

The day commenced with the students being given

a lecture on different engineering opportunities and how engineers shape the world. Firstly, we went to the terminal pumping station in Duncrue, owned by Northern Ireland water. We got the first hand opportunity to experience the process live, which saves more lives than doctors. Following this, we went to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, where we were given an insightful talk/tour on Transport Northern Ireland. Then we went to the Lagan Weir with the Department for Communities. We were shown how the tide is stopped and given an explanation on how it functions. This was followed with lunch at AECOM, which is an international engineering firm. To round up our day we

went to Victoria Square, which in fact is also referred to as, 'The Floating Shopping Centre.' We learnt about the challenges faced by the engineers who took part in the project and how they managed to overcome the obstacles in their way.

The overall experience was incredible at expanding my knowledge about roles of civil engineers across Belfast and seeing their effect. I would recommend the experience to anyone who is interested in potentially pursuing civil engineering, if the opportunity presents itself.

RSC YOUNG ANALYST

The Royal Society of Chemistry School's Analyst Competition is a National Analytical Chemistry competition involving teams of three from schools across Northern Ireland competing to complete a number of Chemistry practicals within a time limit. This was the second year that Rathmore had entered a team into the competition, which was made up of myself, Conor Doherty and Patrick Murphy, who are all currently studying AS Chemistry.

We met early on a Saturday morning in Stranmillis College for the competition, and after a short briefing, we were brought into the labs where we would spend the next three hours conducting Chemistry experiments. Within the allotted time, we had to conduct three separate

experiments, each revolving around a different practical technique. For example, one experiment involved the use of colorimetry to find the concentration of sterilising fluid; and another required us to conduct a back titration to work out the composition of an antacid tablet. At first glance, our task seemed rather daunting, as a number of the techniques used were at a level above what is studied at AS Chemistry, however there were a number of experienced scientists helping out to provide guidance so that the experience wasn't too uncomfortable.

With much to do over the three hours, we realised that managing our time effectively was key, and so we decided to do the longest practical, the colorimetry, first so that we didn't have to rush it at the end. We worked effectively as a team to create standardised solutions with indicators to produce a colorimetry curve to find the concentration of sterilising fluid, and once we had handed our first answer sheet, we realised it would be best to split up for the remaining tasks to ensure we got them finished. Over the next hour and a half, we managed to complete

two more tasks, with enough time at the end to check over our answers. By the end of the three hours, we were exhausted after the non-stop work, but also satisfied as we knew we had done our best to complete the tasks accurately and on time.

After the stress of the competition, we were glad to discover that we were getting a deserved lunch in the nearby canteen. After we had eaten, it was finally time for prize giving. We were acutely aware of the very high standard of completion from other schools, and so we were especially surprised to discover that we had placed first in the competition! For winning first prize, we received £150 of book vouchers between us, and we have also qualified for the national finals of the competition which will take place in Manchester in June. Overall, despite the stress of the competition, I found it to be a particularly rewarding experience, and I can't wait to represent the school in the finals in June.

Flynn Ryan



MY ARKWRIGHT EXPERIENCE

The Arkwright engineering scholarship is a very prestigious and very well-regarded award that is searching for the UK's "minds of the future" regarding engineering. It is open to all Year 12 students who wish to study Maths at A Level. I heard about this award through my Technology teacher, Mr Donnelly, who convinced me to apply for this award. The process consists of three stages; the application, the aptitude exam and the interview. The application section is a series of questions about why you are suitable for the award and a bit about your interests and hobbies. The aptitude exam is a 2-hour long design and problem-solving test in which you are given scenarios you have to solve with a product of your own design. The final and most daunting stage is the interview. This is where the final applicants try and sell themselves to their interviewers and show off their coursework. For winning the award I get £600 towards my education and the school is given £400 for new equipment and I also got to go over to Edinburgh for the awards ceremony where I was presented my award with my sponsor.

Conor Jones





AILO

On 20 March, 8 Rathmore students, including myself, made our way to Dublin City University for the final of the All Ireland Linguistics Olympiad, a problem-solving competition based on deciphering foreign languages. After competing in the preliminary round in January, the top 100 students qualified for the final. The day consisted of an individual paper and a team challenge. The individual round posed many tough puzzles, including decrypting the numbering system of an Aboriginal Australian

language spoken by only 240 people. That afternoon the two Rathmore teams each competed in the team challenge that involved interpreting the language used to describe many Irish coats of arms. Overall, the day presented us with many challenging but enjoyable puzzles and we are now left with waiting for the results and the exciting prospect of representing Ireland at the International Linguistics Olympiad in Korea this summer.
Ryan Elwood-Clarke

maths Club

Maths Club is a very fun and exciting club that takes place every Tuesday at lunch from 1:15 – 1:45. There are a lot of activities to do which change every week, including puzzles, treasure hunts, building towers and even a maths bingo where you can win prizes! However, one of the best things you will experience is the big trip in June, where the whole club gets to miss a day of school to go on a trip to W5. It's definitely one of the highlights of my year!
James Reel 9H

Junior Maths Team Challenge

On Friday 8 March, myself, Axel Sharif (Year 9) Ciara Conlon (Year 10) and Niamh Plumb (Year 10) along with Mrs Thomas attended the Junior Maths Team Challenge in St Malachy's College. The first round was basic over all Maths problems. The second round was a crossnumber- this was difficult but when we got into a rhythm we did very well. The next round was a shuttle.

Finally, there was a relay and this was a bit different as we had to run about. I loved the day as it was a chance for me to learn new things and to do something I was good at while representing the school. We came 7th out of 23 schools and considering this was our first time entering the Challenge, we did really well.
Peter Kelly



Senior Maths Challenge



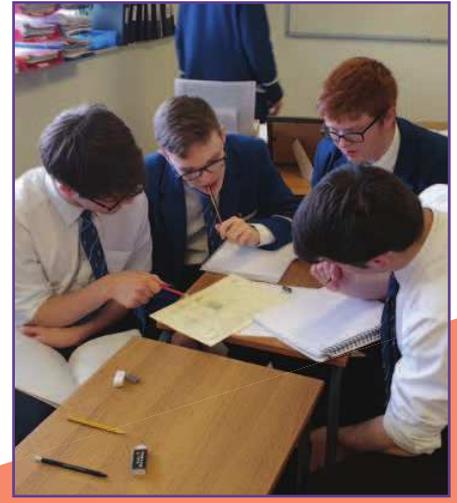
This year, Rockport School was the setting for the regional showdown for the Senior Maths Challenge. Our team included Jude Horner, Callum O'Kane, Conor Doherty and Charlie Kelly. They spent hours preparing through completing past paper questions under the guidance of Mrs Thomas and Mr McIlvenny. As always, the competition was stiff with over 20 schools taking part. The day itself was intense as the team completed a myriad of maths problems with increasing difficulty but also time-bound. One stage in particular was a type of relay scenario wherein the team was separated into pairs and each pair was tasked with tackling one component of the question, the answer to which formed the basis of the next question the second pairing would attempt. This year Rathmore came second to joint winners St Malachy's and Wallace, beaten by just one point. Their success has instilled confidence in the team, galvanising their spirits and whetting their appetite for next year.

Charlie Kelly

Pi Day

On Thursday 14 March Rathmore Maths students celebrated Pi Day. Junior school classes took part in Pi reciting competitions, made Pi chains and worked through some puzzles. Special congratulations to Faolan Conlan in 8G who recited 171 digits of Pi!

Senior school pupils took part in group activities where they raced against other teams to solve puzzles that were tailored to their course. It was a very enjoyable day and the puzzles brought out everyone's competitive side!



Careers

This year has been a particularly busy year in the Careers department. Some of the variety of work has included university deadlines to meet in October, mock interviews for applicants to teaching, nursing, medicine and midwifery. Interview Skills Day for Upper Sixth students was a great success, as was preparing subject choices days for our Year 10 and Year 12 students, subject choices interviews with Year 10 and Year 12 parents and pupils. Work shadow for Year 11 and Lower Sixth students continues to go from strength to strength, and the Miniversity week for Year 9 was very informative. We held a very successful Careers Taster Event back in October which gave pupils from Year 10 upwards the chance to meet experts and get advice from a very wide variety of professionals.



TRÓCAIRE

The theme for the 2019 Trócaire Campaign was Land Rights, and this year we focused on the stories of three families from around the world who have been forced, for different reasons, to give up their land. In Uganda, Evelyn and her family were expelled from their tiny piece of land by a clan member who is challenging Evelyn's right, as a woman, to own the land following her husband's death.

In Guatemala, José, Adela and their family, who are Maya indigenous people, have been evicted from their land by a wealthy plantation owner who has the backing of the

Guatemalan government, and who wants to grow sugar cane for biofuels.

Maya and her family from Syria were forced to leave their home in Damascus due to the civil war that has been raging in Syria since 2011. Maya and her family had to walk 229 miles to find safety in a refugee camp. Their journey became our journey throughout the campaign.

We measured the number of steps we took as we danced at the Year 9 Céilí and later at our annual Year 8 Disco, we counted the steps taken in the Upper Sixth Football Match, the Teacher/Pupil Basketball Match. This continued throughout all our events:

Mr Graham's CarPool Karaoke, the popular Talent Show which featured the talent of pupils and staff, the annual Non-uniform Day and the many quizzes and Bun Sales that were organised across the school. It has been a fun-filled and energetic campaign, which culminated in our Sponsored Walk on Friday 12 April, in which the whole school community walked a final mile in solidarity with children like Maya.

To date, we have raised £11,855.12 and would like to sincerely thank everyone for their wonderful commitment and generosity towards making this year's Trócaire Campaign such a resounding success.



Year 9 Céilí

On 15 March our Year 9 pupils enjoyed a fun-filled afternoon, listening to traditional Irish music played by Fearghal Leyden and watching a group of extremely talented Rathmore Irish dancers, some of whom are already World Champion dancers. Our Year 9 were then able to take to the floor themselves to learn some Céilí dances under the expert guidance of Miss Bell and Miss Wright.

The Céilí was the first of our Trócaire events for 2019 and was a huge success, thanks to the excellent organisation of Miss Hunter, Miss Bell and Miss Wright and the enthusiasm of our Year 9 pupils who fully embraced the experience and managed to raise a considerable sum of money for the Trócaire Campaign.



Talent Show



Trócaire Basketball & Football match



Trócaire Public Speaking Competition

During the season of Lent and our Trócaire Campaign, our Year 8 pupils have been learning about the importance of 'Land Rights' and how they play a vital role in the lives of some of the poorest people in our world. Each Year 8 pupil was asked by Ms Boyle to create a 2-4 speech minute entitled, "Land Rights are...". From 192 pupils, 12 finalists were selected to participate in the annual Trócaire Public Speaking Competition. Our judges, Mrs. McCormick and two of our Buddies, Clodagh Davis and Adam O'Neill, were very impressed by the enthusiasm of our students and the high standard of the speeches. With such a high bar set, our judges struggled to reach a decision, but eventually awarded first place to India Clements, second place to Eve Wilson and third place to Ronald Mathew. Congratulations to all of the finalists!



Catholic Caring

The Catholic Caring Campaign has been a very successful focus at Christmas time since 1998, when Bishop Walsh's letter on the "Cry of the poor" prompted an immediate response and was the beginning of the annual Catholic Caring Campaign. The initiative, which started as an endeavour to help struggling Catholic families at Christmas time, has now evolved into a wider community effort organised together by members of St. Vincent de Paul and The Salvation Army.

Led by our Prefect Team, pupils in each Tutor Group worked hard to collect money so that they could buy toys, a book and clothes for a local child and they brought in items for a festive food hamper for a local family. We were all overwhelmed by the kindness of students and staff. At the end of the Campaign there was an impressive display in the front foyer before everything was collected for distribution to local families.



NI HOSPICE

Last May, a team from Rathmore ran the Belfast Marathon Relay to raise funds for a cause very close to their hearts, the Northern Ireland Hospice. Kevin Donnelly and Anna Sutherland harnessed the support of their amazing year group - and even enlisted some Lower Sixth pupils - to take on their marathon challenge. A total of fifty five Sixth Year pupils signed up, plus a team of teachers. Kevin and Anna presented the Hospice with a cheque totalling £4507 - an amazing sum which will go a long way towards helping the great work undertaken by the charity.



Friends of the cancer centre

On Friday 5 October staff, and pupils from Years 12- Upper Sixth joined the Prefect Team for a Coffee Morning in the canteen. There was a wide selection of delicious treats available, most of which had been very generously donated by pupils from across the school. The Coffee Morning was a welcome delight for everyone and we managed to raise £ 3,103.12 for the Friends of the Cancer Centre which funds life-changing projects that make a real and lasting difference to thousands of local people whose lives have been affected by cancer.



NETBALL FINALS

On Tuesday 9 April, three Junior, Inter and Senior Rathmore teams competed in the NI Netball Schools League Final. The Juniors came out on top against Our Lady and St Patrick's, Knock with a 23-19 scoreline, which made them both NI Shield and League winners - well done girls!

Our Inters narrowly missed out by two goals against a very strong Aquinas team, finishing up 30-28. Our Seniors played Sacred Heart Newry who had been unbeaten all year, and at half time the score was drawn at 16-16. With two minutes to go it was again so close at 28-29. Despite some great play and some top tips from past pupil and NI/Mavericks Netballer Michelle Drayne, the ball broke in favour of Sacred Heart in the dying seconds of the match, finishing 30-28 to Sacred Heart. All matches were end to end and the girls were a great credit to school and Laura their coach; they fought so hard right to the very end. Well done to the other teams in the finals OLSPK, Aquinas and Sacred Heart; it was a great display of Netball.

The Rathmore netball teams have competed in seven finals in two weeks and have incredibly won five out of the seven; this is a fantastic achievement and we are all super proud of all your successes!

Rathmore Juniors: Shield and League Winners

Rathmore Inters: Shield Winners

Rathmore Seniors: Shield Winners

Below is Brianna Armstrong receiving the Shield from Gemma Gibney (current NI Netball team).



RDA U15

Last year we trialled for the Regional Development Academy and three of us were selected to go and train in RDA U15. I have made many friends when training and have really improved. We have developed our skills throughout the weeks and have done team-building exercises to work better together. We have also played matches to improve game play on the court and looked at different techniques to use in game situations. We have also practiced many drills. I have really enjoyed training with this team and am looking forward to progressing with my skills and teamwork.

Eimear Magee

NETBALL UNDER 15 SQUAD

To some people netball is a hobby, but to me it's so much more; it's a passion. Whenever I'm feeling sad or just not right, netball brings me back to my reality.

I first started playing netball at the start of Year 9 so I'm quite new to the sport. I played for around six months until I knew I was hooked so I decided to join Kingsway

Netball club. This really helped me improve my skills and help me become a better player and make up for the time I had lost starting so late.

It was the day of the trial and the nerves had really set in. This was my first time auditioning so it was a whole new experience I wasn't ready for. I remember walking in and seeing the immense amount of talent. Everyone was so intimidating. It didn't help being one of the smallest either. After warming up the trials began. We were given our numbers and we lined up and were taken through a few drills to test things such as balance, jump ability and more. Then we moved into drills in groups based on our positions. I was put up as a WD (wing defence). After this we played matches and then the trial was over.

It was around a week after the trial when we found out who made it. I was so nervous as I thought I didn't perform as well as I wanted to. Then Mrs Foster told me I had made it along with Eimear and Fay - I was ecstatic! I was so overcome with joy knowing I had made a N.I. team.

Through the RDA training I have made many friends and have made major improvements in my netball skills and ability. It has really helped me find a sport I truly love and what to play forever.

Cara Low, 10H



UPPER SIXTH NETBALL

Throughout my years at Rathmore and on the netball team, our year group always seemed to struggle. We played all our matches with everything we had but always missed out by a goal or two. This year, we had three matches in our division and we trained hard, wanting this year to be different to the rest, as it was our final year. We won two of our matches missing out by a goal in the third that was scored in the dying seconds of the game. We made it to the final against St. Genevieve's on 12 April and I am delighted to say we emerged victorious, with a closely contested scoreline of 27-24. I couldn't have thought of a better way to end playing netball for Rathmore. A huge thank you to Mrs Foster who helped us for seven years- we couldn't have had any more laughs in training without you (and some hard work of course!).

Kathryn Marron

NETBALL DEVELOPMENT SQUAD

It was a dreaded Monday morning, and to make matter worse I had just got my braces on. I was in so much pain, I didn't think there was any chance I would make the academy. I assumed I wasn't going to play very well but I thought I might as well give it a go. I arrived into school and the four of us got on the bus to Victoria. When we arrived there were already dozens of schools all doing their different warm ups. We found a spot to put our stuff and started doing our own

warm up. We were given numbers, so the coaches would know who we were. Then the trials began.

We were split into two groups; I was in the first group. We did another warm up, but this time the coaches had their clipboards and were assessing us the whole time. While the other group did their warm up I was nervous to see what was next. Shortly, the shooters and I did some shooting drills while the other

people did different drills. Then came the stressful part. Everything you did, every mistake you made was recorded. We did about 8 drills in groups of about 6. After this, we played a match where they tried us out in all different positions. When it was over all I could think was that I didn't make it. The academy said that they would let us know if we got on.

About a week later Mrs Foster told us to come to her at lunch. I knew she

was going to tell us how we did, but I thought that I hadn't made it. I was told I had made the team - I was shocked and excited. Shannon the coach got in contact and we had to fill out all the forms. Now we have training once a month and we will have a tournament day in June.

Orla McKernan.

After a series of trials, Orla McSherry (Year 13), Alex Watson (Year 12) and I were selected to join the Under 19 NI development squad. We, along with about 25 other girls, meet once or twice a month for training sessions. The sessions usually last three hours and normally take place in Antrim to accommodate for girls travelling from all over Northern Ireland. In these sessions we learn individual skills, team plays as well as working to improve our fitness. The advice and tips from our coaches are extremely useful from Amy and Lisa, who is the current goal shooter for the Northern Ireland open squad, having recently competed in the Commonwealth Games in Australia. We have recently been involved in match play against the NI U21 development squad and teams over from British colleges. This was a great opportunity to see the standard of netball played at this higher level and was a fantastic challenge for our team against such talented players. This squad has been an excellent experience to improve as netballers and to play and meet with new people.

Orla Gilligan



GOLF

Huge congratulations to Ciara Brennan (Year 13) and Olivia McCrystal (Year 12) who finished as runners up in the Ulster Senior Section of the Irish Schools' Golf Championship which was held in Carnalea Golf Club on Friday 29th March.

Well done to you Olivia and Ciara on an excellent combined 48 gross points. We are very proud of all their hard work and dedication



DELPHI

Last June 45 Year 10 students embarked on an adventure holiday of a lifetime to the Delphi Centre in Connemara. It was a long drive down to one of the most spectacular areas of natural beauty in the country. Over the three days, students enjoyed a fantastic array of physical activities, from surfing to ziplines, bog obstacles, high ropes and climbing. Students returned exhausted, but were unanimous in their belief that they had one of the best weekends ever!



BASKETBALL NI TRIP

I went to trial for Basketball Northern Ireland and got on the team to play for them. In December we went to Spain, from the 13th to the 17th, to play against the teams there. When we arrived we went to where we were staying and the day after we played against the Spanish teams. They were all very welcoming to us. We played about 5 games and had a training session during the days there and we lost some matches which helped us know what to improve on and to work better as a team but we also won some which helped our confidence. We had a tournament at a sports centre in Spain and it really helped us bond as a team and get to know each other. I made friends when on the trip and it was such good opportunity to take. I really enjoyed my time there and can't wait for other opportunities to take. ~Eimear Magee



Irish Dancing

The 2019 CLRG world championships were held in Greensboro North Carolina during the week before Easter. On the first day of the championship my age group competed in the heat stages, which was two rounds of dancing. My competition had nearly 200 hundred competitors that were split randomly into two sides, with the top 50% of each side qualifying for the final rounds the next day.

On the second day, the final rounds of my competition took place with three more rounds of dancing. There was a total of 31 adjudicators

for each age group split over the different rounds. At the end of the second day the results were awarded and I was crowned World champion for the fourth time in a row. To top it all off I managed to get a perfect score, which I still can't believe!

Also competing in Greensboro was Upper Sixth student Clodagh Davis who won the Under 18 World Championship, which was her fourth World Champion win. Congratulations Clodagh!

Blanaid O'Neill

SKI TRIP 2019

The grim and foreboding skies of Belfast were a distant memory as we jetted off at 6:30am from Belfast International Airport, reaching Verona, Italy a few hours later. A short bus trip through the breath-taking Dolomites followed before reaching our hotel in Pinzolo.

The trip, organised by Mr Tierney with his reliable wingman, Mr Graham, was exhilarating, giving first timers the opportunity to 'grace' the slopes with their newly acquired skills whilst allowing the more daring skiers like Marcus Lynch, Donal Harrison and Laura Rooney among others, to fine tune their existing expertise.

But it wasn't all hard work. There was a plethora of activities that followed an intense day's skiing. Staff and pupils enjoyed singing, dancing and 'kareoking' to the 'wee' small hours of the morning – well 11:00pm anyway! We had our old favourites like the poster competition. It's quite amazing how excited a box of Crayola and a few sequins can make a group of 17-year olds! And don't even mention quiz night... Let's just say, serious breach of the "No Phone's Policy" put paid to Mr O'Boyle's team's chance of victory as they were severely penalised by Quizmaster Graham.

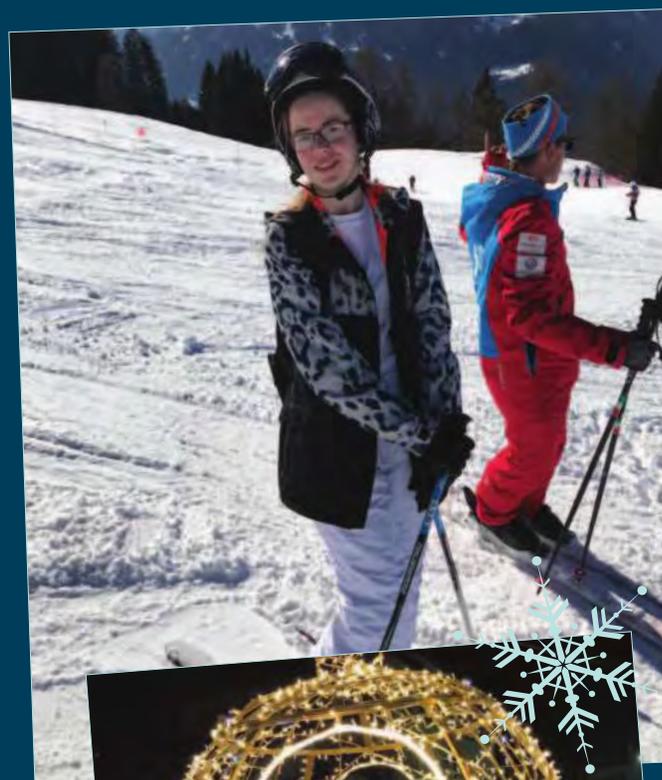
Fancy Dress Night brought with it a spectacular array of costumes demonstrating creativity, craft and... downright silliness. Spice Girls made an impromptu reunion in the guise of Caoimhe Venning, Antoinette McKiernan, Lucy Stubberfield, Sarah McGirr and Ellie Walsh. Plastered in blue paint, Charlie Kelly, Flynn Ryan and Conal Mervyn made a rather convincing portrayal of the Blue Man Group whilst "Best Costume" was awarded to the Jamaican Bobsleigh Team from "Cool Runnings". Daire Stevenson, Ross Murray, Joseph McCarney and Marcus Lynch donned skin-tight suits and, instead of a bobsleigh, used the bath to pretend!

One of the highlights of the week was the presentation night which pales in comparison to the Hollywood Oscars. Mr Tierney compered the event in his own inimitable style, and the slaggings were dished out as freely as the awards, which included "Skier of the week", "Couple of the week" and "Livewire of the week" - such accolades which were highly coveted on the Ski Trip.

The Ski Trip of 2019 was yet another roaring success and is simply testimony to the continued efforts of Mr Tierney, Mr Graham and the accompanying teachers who gave up their Mid-Term to facilitate the trip. Mostly, we emerged unscathed. There were one or two... or six or seven minor casualties including our dear own Mr Tierney, but these did not have any adverse effect on our overall experience.

The Rathmore Ski Trip has become something of a rite of passage for lower sixth students. It is a memory which is etched into our minds long after the snow has melted. The aches, the bruises, the tears from falling are transcended by the laughter, the giggles and the overwhelming sense of togetherness.

Charlie Kelly



CROSS COUNTRY

On 9 March 2019 the Year 9 cross country team (Daragh Toner, Thomas Lloyd, Noah Cavanagh, Conor Broderick, Tom Kearny) and I competed in the all-Ireland Schools Cross Country Championships in Clongowes School, Kildare. We arrived at Rathmore and got on the bus at half seven in the morning. The bus journey was quite long, and we were all talking about the race ahead. The size of Clongowes amazed me; it was huge. However, we didn't have much time to admire it as we warmed up, got changed and then went straight into the race. I finished third out of just over a hundred runners and our team finished fifth; a great result as it was an all-Ireland Championship. I was really happy with the team's result and my performance. On the way back, we got a Burger King in Applegreen as a treat from the school. The experience was amazing, and I can't wait to do it again next year.

Lughaidh Mallon



LONDON 2019 MARATHON

Sunday 28 April 2019 – the day of the London Marathon, and whilst many of you watched it from the comfort of your homes, I was there competing!

I was one of six from Northern Ireland fast enough to qualify for the 5km race which traced the last leg of the marathon and a route which brought us past iconic buildings like the Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace before finally finishing in front of the Mall.

I am a member of the Rathmore Cross Country Club but I also run for Beechmount Harriers outside of school, and it is through this club that I earned the opportunity to compete in London. I flew over with my team mates and coaches early on Saturday

morning after being dragged out of bed at half five, which allowed time to adjust to my surroundings and get in that crucial last training session.

The Royal Holloway University graciously played host to a number of the competitors. It was a long bus ride from here to the race but, given the multitudes who had descended on the city for the event, the journey took even longer than we had anticipated.

When I arrived at the start of the race, I was overwhelmed by the numbers of competitors jostling for position. There were approximately 150 athletes funnelling through a narrow street and we were all intent on getting to the front of the pack to maximise our chances of success. Retrospectively, it was quite an intimidating experience for a 15-year-old boy as there were runners who were older and more experienced than me. When the race began, competitors were pushing, shoving and often falling

due to the huge swell in the crowd, vying for that pole position. Adrenaline surged through my body and I channelled all my energy into sprinting forward, spurred on by my coach's advice and months of training.

I did not achieve my personal best but, as a young runner, what I derived from the experience was perhaps more important. Firstly, to qualify and represent Northern Ireland was an achievement of which I am immensely proud. Secondly, running is not just about being the fastest; it is a sport of strategy and knowing how and when to break from the pack to consolidate your chances of success.

The experience has altogether galvanised my efforts and, like a true sportsman, I fully intend to be fitter and stronger for London 2020- bring it on!

Pearse McBriarty Year II

Rathmore's Run to the Ulster Final

After six weeks of pre-season and 4 challenge games we began our Ulster Colleges' campaign against Aquinas in Cherryvale in the south of the city. We got off to a good start scoring 4 goals in the first 10 minutes and ended up comfortable winners. The next opponent was Coláiste Feirste on the Falls Road which proved a tight affair with the wind causing some difficulty, however, some great scores from Rudi Smyth from distance gave us a comfortable win in the end. Our final group game was at home against St. Malachy's. This was the tightest of all the group games and the team showed great character in coming back from a half time deficit.

Having topped the group we moved into the quarter final stages again Gleann an Ró from Derry

in Castledawson. Again early goals saw us go into a comfortable lead and we ended up winning by 25 points.

On we went to the semi-final in Newbridge against a well drilled St. Conor's College from Kilrea. We were missing Thomas Lloyd and Charlie Mickleburgh due to injury and the boys stepped up well and running out 15 point winners despite a few scares throughout the game. We were well set then for a final place against Loreto College, Coleraine.

We knew this would be our biggest challenge yet and it wasn't long into the game that this became a stark reality for us. Loreto raced into a nine point lead but by half time the sides were level. Again, Loreto pulled

ahead in the second half but with Michael Morgan spearheading our attack we managed to find the net three times in the final five minutes which brought us to extra time. After 80 minutes of football Loreto ran out two point victors, a crazy game with the scoreline of 10-19 to 13-08 got plenty of social media coverage!

We would like to thank Mr Flynn and Mr McClenaghan for working so hard with us and training on those dark, cold winter nights. We would also like to thank our caretaker who drove us all over Ulster to the games and gave their support on the sideline! Next stop, B football!

Rory McErlean and Lughaidh Mallon



Northern Ireland U18s

Playing for your country is arguably the biggest achievement that a football player can realise, no matter whether at senior level, or as a youth international. I was awarded my first cap last year after playing away to Austria in a 1-1 draw, and then in a 4-1 victory over Estonia, at Seaview stadium. These two appearances were for the Northern Ireland U16 team.

This year, I broke into the Northern Ireland U18 team, a year young, for the Centenary Shield 2019 tournament between Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. We started

before the tournament with a 1-1 draw in a friendly fixture against Australia, in front of 700 people at Inver Park, Larne. We then began the Centenary Shield with a 1-0 win over Scotland at Seaview. The second game was away to Wales in Aberystwyth, in this game we won 1-0 in front of a small crowd of 250 people. The following fixture was away to England, our closest challengers to the Centenary Shield, in front of the biggest crowd of the tournament, over 1200 people. We drew 0-0 in a closely contested game, meaning that the tournament winners would be decided on the last day of the Centenary Shield.

Our final game was a derby game, against Ireland at The Dub. Around 600 people came out to watch the game, which would see us become the Centenary Shield 2019 champions. A 3-1 win saw us lift the Shield for the 8th time in its history.

An unbeaten campaign for us was a massive achievement, and also for our manager, Frankie Wilson, who has remained undefeated over 15 games.

Ruadhan McKenna



Judo

Congratulations to Year 13 Pupil Caolán McKee who has received a Mary Peters trust award for his achievements in Judo. This award supports him financially in attending his competitions, training camps and sessions throughout the year representing Ireland, Northern Ireland and Rathmore Grammar School at an international level. This is the second year he has achieved this award.

Year 8 Rugby

Year 8 pupils were delighted when Mr Adams introduced the opportunity to try rugby out as part of the PE programme. Students found it very physical and a real challenge, but nonetheless a very rewarding and exciting sport.





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