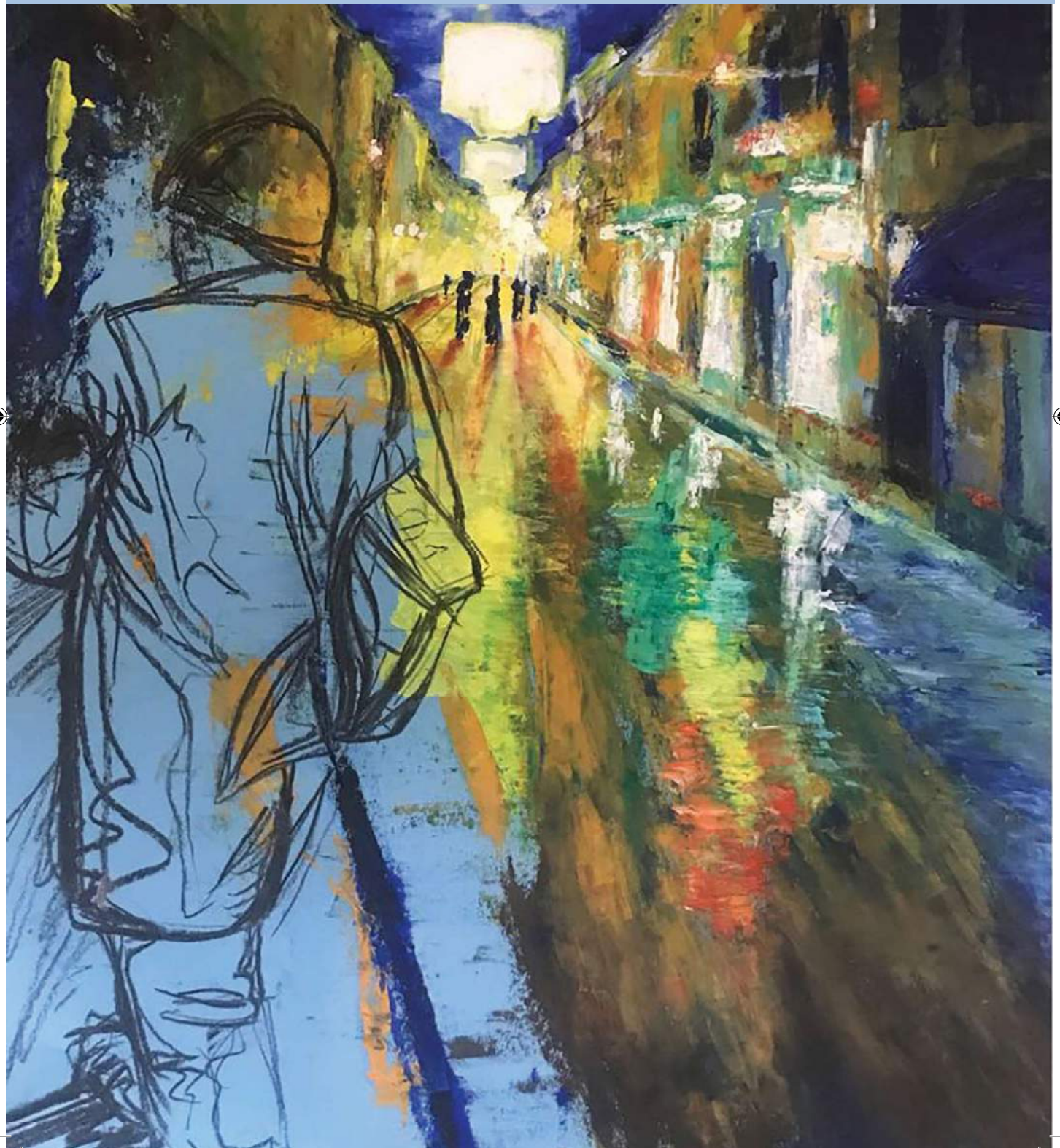


SOLAS



Twelfth Edition
May 2018





The Editorial Team

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. 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.

A word of thanks must go to Mr Paddy Boyle for his outstanding photography which really enhances Solas magazine; his help is greatly appreciated. We are most grateful to the dedicated and hardworking members of Rathmore staff, who not only give so freely of their time towards organising so much extracurricular activity, but also for their help in supplying the Editorial Team with articles and pictures.

Congratulations to Caolan Plumb in Upper Sixth for his wonderful artwork for this year's cover.

Mr C. Tierney

Editorial Team: Andy McGowan, Alannah Carr, Roma Bannon, Kirsten McFerran, Amy Finnegan, Beth Hamill, Ciara Devlin, Anna Prenter, Aine Murphy, Hannah Canning, Diana Badoi, Anna Wilson and Declan Mallon



Student Council 2017/2018

This year, I have been the Communication Officer for Year 12 and I have really enjoyed working with the tutor group representatives, as they are totally committed to ensuring that the voice of all pupils is heard. We have had some very lively and worthwhile discussions as they have put forward the views of their tutor group on a whole range of issues.

The main focus of the Student Council this year was to raise awareness on the dangers of risk-taking behaviour such as taking drugs. We asked students to consider a whole range of scenarios and to decide on a course of appropriate action for each one. The Communication Officers read and simplified the current Drug Policy and created a student-friendly version for the student planner. KS3 Art students took part in a competition and the winning design will feature on the student-friendly policy.

The Student Council launched an initiative last year which aims to help recycle spare items of school uniform that pupils may have at home. The initiative has been a great success as this year many pupils have availed of the opportunity. We continue to encourage all pupils to bring in items of uniform which are clean and in good condition.

The Student Council has met with Mrs Hamilton on several occasions. Some of the points raised included Uniform, Homework Policy, Recycling, Internet Access, Digital Platforms and Mental Health. Students also gave feedback on school evacuation procedures, the Careers option process and their attitudes to learning. In response to a student request, all Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth pupils received training on the recovery position and Year 8-12 students are being taught it in PE class.

Groups of students also met with canteen staff to discuss the possibility of having meal deals and improved vegetarian options, both of which are being enjoyed by students and staff.

Students, parents and staff can keep up to date with the great work of the Student Council by following us on Twitter and checking out the school website and the new feedback section of the Student Council noticeboard.

Anna Campfield Upper Sixth



Buddies 2017/2018



Prefects 2017/2018

ART CLUB

Three of our Upper Sixth students (Niamh O'Brien, Grace Magee and Amy de Meulemeester), set up and led an Art Club for a group of Year 8 students. The purpose of the club was to create a welcoming, comfortable environment where Year 8 could come and make new friends whilst getting a chance to make something. Some of the activities we did included felting, printing, and paper folding to explore different mediums and techniques of art. We hope you all enjoyed your lunchtimes spent in Art Club, as well as our parties!

TRUE COLOURS 2018

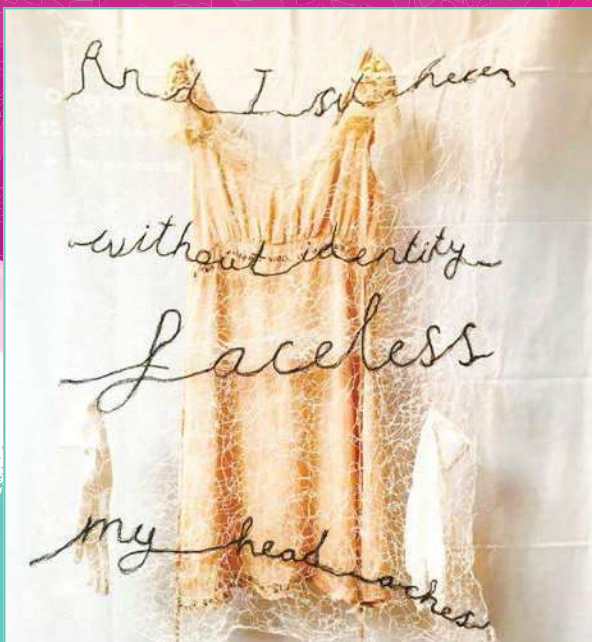
In January 2018, the Art department took its annual trip to the Ulster Museum to browse the True Colours art gallery. True Colours collates the most outstanding and cutting-edge art projects from Northern Ireland GCSE and A-Level art students and displays them in the Ulster Museum for several months. Every year without fail, the work is breath-taking and extremely impressive. From woodwork to fashion pieces, there is something for every artist's taste.

Yet again, True Colours served to inspire and encourage all of the students and teachers in the department for another year of Art and Design.

ART HIGHEST ACHIEVERS

Rathmore's Art department produced many incredible candidates last May, even having multiple students achieving full marks at GCSE and A-Level.

At GCSE the highest achievers were Anna Wilson, Ellie Cunningham and Ellen McDonnell. Congratulations to all of these candidates on their achievements



COMMONWEALTH FASHION EXCHANGE

On 19 February this year, my mum and I accompanied my sister, a past pupil, Chloe Dougan, to Buckingham Palace for the Commonwealth Fashion Exchange. This took place during London Fashion Week, with representatives from the 53 commonwealth countries invited to London to showcase their designs and talent. My sister was the chosen representative for Northern Ireland.

The Exchange was held by The Duchess of Cambridge, Kate Middleton and The Countess of Wessex and the event was organised by Livia Firth. The whole day was spent in excitement and anticipation and was spent sightseeing to hopefully get rid of our nerves. The day before, we walked to Buckingham Palace, as our hotel was very close, to see where my sister would be spending this exciting night. When the time finally came around, my mum and I dropped my sister off at the doors of the Palace. Inside was extremely lavish and incredibly decorated, as described by my sister. Many of the guests included the Editors of Vogue, Anna Wintour and Hamish Bowles, Supermodel Naomi Campbell and designer Stella McCartney.

This was an amazing experience for my sister, who has been designing her own clothes for her business, Chloe Dougan Designs, for four years now. We are extremely proud of her!

Mollie Dougan

SIXTH FORM PRINT OVERLAY WORKSHOP

Sixth Form students were invited to stay after school to participate in a print overlay workshop, hosted by artists from outside the school. They began by telling us what technique we were going to try to replicate and informed us of artists such as Dryden Goodwin who had inspired the technique. I had never really seen art like it and was eager yet apprehensive to try.

We had to trace the basic outlines of one of the pictures we had previously printed off in preparation for the workshop. For something so simple this had a huge visual impact. We then had to overlap this image with another one. The artists that were hosting the workshop were very helpful on giving us ideas on what images to pick, where to place them and what colours of ink to use in order to get the best outcome.

Once we had our basic outlines we were ready for colour! There were so many different mediums we could use, including watercolour, ink, pencil, chalk. I decided to use colouring pencil as I wanted to have a lot of control on how pigmented the colouring was. But not only could you decide between different images, colours and mediums, we could also choose different patterns and whether to change the colour where the images overlapped.

It's safe to say that with all this variety, our outcomes were all very different, even though they boil down to one simple technique. I was extremely pleased with my outcome and hope to try this type of art again.

Grace Magee



COLLOGRAPH PRINT WORKSHOP

Over two weeks in November, myself and seven other Upper Sixth Art & Design students got the opportunity to visit the Belfast Print Workshop in Cathedral Quarter for a two-session course in collograph printmaking. Armed with our portfolios, we headed to the workshop and received a tour of the premises. It was interesting to see practising artists at work and earning a living in the professional industry, an idea which can often hold young artists back from pursuing a career in the field. The diverse types of people working in the print workshop was so inspiring and sent a clear message to all of us that the art industry is as viable an option as any for those who are passionate about a career in the industry.

The workshop itself was excellent as we were provided with the professional tools needed to create prints of a high calibre. The collograph technique involved collaging different textured materials in the shape of our own images from our portfolios in the first session, creating two different printing plates. In the second week, we applied ink to the printing plates and placed damp printing paper on top before rolling them through the printing press. When they came out of the other side of the press, lifting up the foam layer to reveal the prints was a great surprise to see how well everyone's prints turned out. In the end, we were all able to bulk out our portfolios with beautiful pieces whilst learning a new technique which we are able to now recreate on a smaller scale in school.

Jay Kennedy



RUA VISIT

In November of last year the sixth form Art classes got the chance to go to the Royal Ulster Academy exhibition. RUA is one of the "largest and longest established body of practicing visual artists in Northern Ireland." We were all immediately greeted by a huge display of poppies at the entrance of the Ulster Museum. This display set the mood of amazement for the rest of our viewing.

The exhibition was like nothing I had seen before; there were so any different styles of art, the only thing being in common, they were all created by truly talented people. The variety of art on display seemed nothing short of limitless and it was great to see that there are so many talented artists in Northern Ireland.

I had two favourite pieces, the first being a huge abstract painting. I had no idea what message the artist was trying to convey but something about the colours they used really interested me. The second was a small ceramic piece involving Alice in Wonderland. The two artworks were complete opposites and yet they both stood out to me. This day gave me a lot of food for thought; it showed me that amazing art isn't everyone in the class doing the same thing, it's each individual speaking through paint, pencil, pen or whichever medium they choose.

Hannah Canning

YEAR 11 SEA COURT WORKSHOP

Year 11 pupils got the chance to try dry-point printmaking, an interesting and experimental technique that was thoroughly enjoyed by the class. As with every workshop there were many outstanding pieces of work from students who may not have even seen the technique before. It was interesting to see the variety of work that can come from the same technique and it truly shows how those in the Art department (no matter how long they've been a part of it) can take something and individualise it.

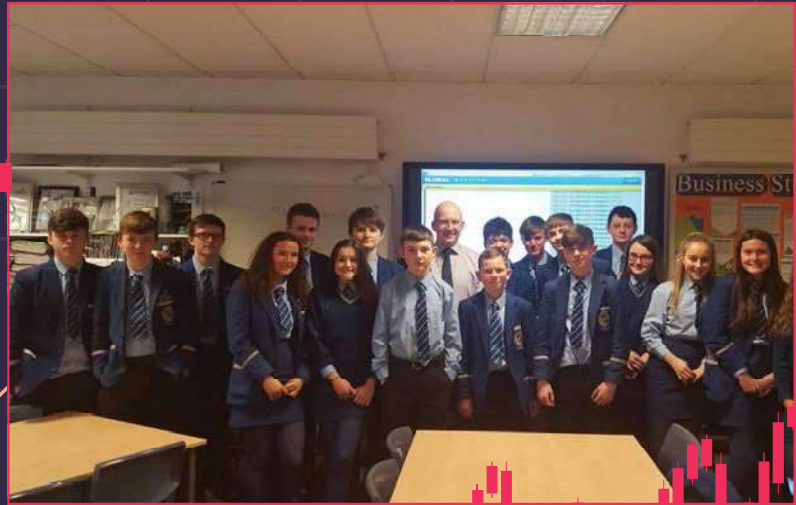
The technique involved using etching ink, paper, water, a plate, fabric and newspaper. These materials could seem daunting to a budding artist when they know that painting or pencil is their strong point and that is why workshops are so quintessentially important to the growth of a young artist's mind. They help you to understand that it's good to try something new and if it doesn't work out then that's fine, but at least you have expanded your knowledge of art.

The class got to experiment by placing different amounts of the ink in certain places to create a darker effect and enhance the light and darkness. They also got to try using different ink colours and layering them on top of each other. Through the use of colour the students could make an image more vibrant, exciting and joyful but could also create a more sombre piece of work. All in all, the workshop was beneficial to the class as it helped those involved to step out of their comfort zone and explore the ever changing world of Art.



STOCK MARKET CHALLENGE

Every year, the Stock Market Challenge provides our Business Studies pupils with a unique opportunity to experience the excitement of dealing on a live trading floor in competition with other schools in the Greater Belfast Area. Our intrepid brokers begin the game with a fund of shares and euros worth £100,000. The object of the game is to maximise the team's fund value by buying and selling shares in the nine listed companies and by trading in the euro while competing against other regional schools. Taking part showed our Business Studies pupils what it would be like to work as a trader on the financial markets. The development of essential key skills such as team work, analysis of information and effective communication are also encouraged. The Stock Market Challenge is a fast moving and demanding activity that requires our teams to work to a high standard under pressure. As they encounter challenges during the game, they need to use their problem solving skills and act together as a team.



Year 11 Visit to Coca-Cola Hellenic

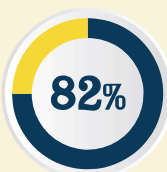
In term one, the Year 11 Business Studies pupils visited the Coca Cola HBC Bottling plant in Lisburn where everyone experienced first-hand the reality of production in the Soft Drinks Market. Such visits continue to form an essential part of the Business Studies learning experience and the pupils continue to enjoy the benefits of visiting cutting edge businesses working in the secondary sector of the NI economy.



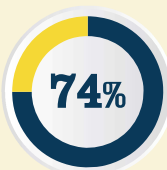
YOUNG ENTERPRISE COMPANY PROGRAMME

This programme is open to all Year 13 students as an enrichment programme to encourage self-employment as a career option. The Company Programme enables participants to experience what it's like to set up and run a student company.

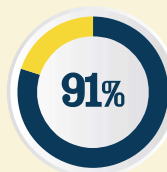
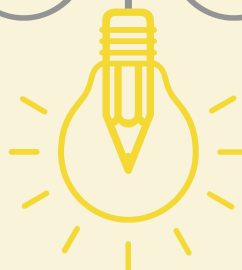
Running throughout one academic year, students make all the decisions about their enterprise, from deciding on the name and product to creating a business plan, managing the student company finances and selling to the public. Students are covered by Young Enterprise Public Liability Insurance. All this takes place with the support of a volunteer Business Adviser who brings a wealth of business knowledge and expertise. A range of resources are provided to help manage the company. Teams track their progress using self-assessment tools and even compete against other schools in local, regional and national competitions. Recent evaluations showed:



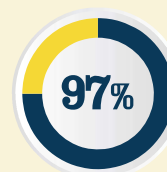
82% OF STUDENTS felt that taking part in Company Programme gave them the confidence to succeed in the future.



74% STUDENTS felt more ready for the world of work.



91% STUDENTS felt that their involvement helped them better understand their own strengths and weaknesses.



97% OF YOUNG PEOPLE reported skills progression of at least one employability competency.

YOUNG ENTERPRISE

This year, a group of sixteen eager and entrepreneurial Lower Sixth pupils took part in the young enterprise company of the year programme. In October the team came up with the company name, "Cable Blue" which symbolizes connectivity and our school ethos. After establishing our brand identity, we embarked on the journey of developing our product. After many discussions within our team we finally settled on "The Wallet Bottle". Our product is a reusable bottle designed to hold money, cards and a key. The whole team were given the opportunity to sell on various occasions at different locations including: Creightons, Y.M.C.A, Queen's PEC and St. Anne's school fair.

This process has given us a greater insight into the world of business and has helped to develop our confidence, communication and team-working skills. On a whole, young enterprise has proved a success and was very enjoyable to partake in.

Anna McGurran and Anna-Jane Shearer Year 13





Sive

In February, Year 13 Drama students made their way to Dublin to see "Sive" at the Gaiety Theatre. The story is a John Keane classic, depicting the troublesome tale of a young Irish girl, Sive, and the highs and lows of a particularly unusual example of family life in 1959. We plan on using the theatrical elements that we picked up from this experience for our AS Theatre Studies exam in May, by comparing this production to the play we are studying. My favourite part of the show was the set, as I thought the use of the empty cupboards reaching up to the ceiling was ingenious as it showed the family's never-ending poverty. This powerful message emphasised a true problem for families all over Ireland at this time. After seeing famous faces such as Tommy Tiernan from

'Derry Girls', we could all agree that his talent transferred seamlessly from screen to stage. He played the role of the Match Maker, a quirky, creepy character who attempted to set Sive up with a much older man for the financial profit of her family. Undoubtedly, this revealed to us the diversity of actors and their ability to convey a range of emotions, motives and traits while also contributing to varying moods during the show.

Watching the show, we paid particular attention to the costumes, lighting, sound, set, and of course performances, in order to apply these elements to our own text. All of these factors added something to our viewing experiences and gave us a rich feeling

of the time period it was set in and the intentions of John Keane. We were all hooked on the story, therefore the plot twist that closed the show left us moved and astonished, as the projection of water in the woodland area outside the house showed Sive drowning, after the pile up of pressure and misunderstanding in her life. The performance of all the actors, and the hard work from the musicians and technicians contributed to the success of the production and did not go unrecognised. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day and it enhanced our understanding of Naturalism in theatre.

Aine Murphy





In October, our school performed our production of 'Oklahoma!' Although I hadn't heard of the show before, I was curious about the storyline and felt excited at the idea of involving myself in a production that was completely new to me and out of my comfort zone. When auditioning last year, I was extremely nervous and I had no idea that it would be such an amazing experience. I was lucky enough to get the role of Aunt Eller. She is the fun-loving, caring and witty aunt of Laurey. The rehearsals began at the end of summer and at first I wasn't sure how to do such a strong character justice. However, as we rehearsed more I began to gain confidence and by the end I felt completely comfortable performing in front of the large audiences that came to see the show.

The many hours of rehearsals allowed me to meet people from other year groups and form friendships that I otherwise would not have had the chance to. These new-found friendships have lasted long beyond the final curtain call. For this reason, my favourite moment from the whole show experience ended up being the celebration we had in the canteen after the last show. I had never felt such a sense of community as I did then. Another great memory of the show was opening night, as despite the nerves experienced by chorus members and principals alike, after the bows we all felt an undeniable

sense of achievement and looked forward to doing two more shows. It was also amazing to see such a positive response from my family and friends who came to see the show, and I felt proud of the confidence I had developed.

The supportive and energetic atmosphere from the audience was electric, and was one of the main factors in my growth of confidence; I could feel how much everyone believed in me, in turn making me believe in myself. I can't give enough thanks to the Drama, Music and Art departments for all their hard work in making the show live up to its full potential. Of course, the last few weeks before the show were some of the most stressful in my life, as I had an underlying worry that we wouldn't be ready for opening night. However, with commitment as persistence from the entire cast, we were fully prepared for our performances, and being as well-rehearsed as we were made the experience all the more enjoyable. Overall, the chance to play a principal role and be part of the production has taught me to embrace the things that scare me and believe in myself. There is no doubt that sometimes the things that make us the most anxious lead to the most personal growth.

Aine Murphy



PAT RYAN WORKSHOP

Pat Ryan, storyteller and writer, led a group of thirty Year 8 students in a two-day workshop entitled 'Me, Myself, and I'. He delivers workshops across the UK and internationally, using storytelling to develop creative writing, to explore literature such as Shakespeare and to explore visual art and history topics. He adopted a creative approach and employed a number of strategies to encourage the pupils' creativity. They participated in group and pair activities and adopted an innovative approach to writing. Each of the pupils produced a series of poems and short stories in their own time and in the second workshop worked on these and refined their initial attempts. The end result was two wonderful booklets which covered a range of genres and captured the pupils' best writing. In conjunction with World Book Week, Pat returned to the school and did another session with Year 8. During Book Week, another Year 11 had a workshop with Byddi Lee, former biology teacher in Rathmore, who has since become a full-time writer. She came in and talked about her root to becoming a writer. They found this a really enjoyable experience.

Aoife McCann 8G

THE MINOTAUR

He could hear a loud snort from no more than ten feet away. He quickly turned around, only to see a pair of deep, angry golden eyes staring at him with fury that the beast was fighting hard to restrain. The hot air from the beast's mouth made beads of sweat trickle down the side of Theseus' head.

The beast was colossal, with its hair long like thick strands of rope. Its actual human part was only one foot taller than Theseus but its head was that of a bull, which was at least five times the size of Theseus' forearm. It seemed to be too big for the body, so the head was tilted to the right affecting the Minotaur's step, as the Minotaur struggled to keep it upright. His horns were huge and seemed to be crushing the Minotaur's head below. They were sharp though and its tips were dripping with blood, the rest of his horns were strained with the red substance, which made Theseus think of how many victims this beast had claimed.

Theseus lifted his sword without hesitation, his adrenaline building up as each second passed.

Yet he knew better than to make the first move against a monstrosity like this. At the sight of the sword the bull looked baffled, none of his victims had ever come armed with a sword before. But he refused to let that stop him. He suddenly charged at the hero, the blood from his horns dripping onto his feet. He blundered towards Theseus at great speed stumbling over the bones that were on the floor. But Theseus was too quick for the beast and moved swiftly to the left, in a blink you would have missed his movement. The bull was then travelling too fast in time to stop and came crashing into the wall and the sheer force of the blow made one of the stained red horns detach from the great beast's head. It came flying through the air and landed next to Theseus. For a while there was a deafening silence in the cave as the minotaur looked confused, as it sat there his hands touching where the horn had once been, now just a white stump. Then its eyes looked at Theseus, then to the horn and back to

Theseus. A look of realisation crossed the Minotaur's face and its fury began to build.

The smoke was coming out of its nostrils.

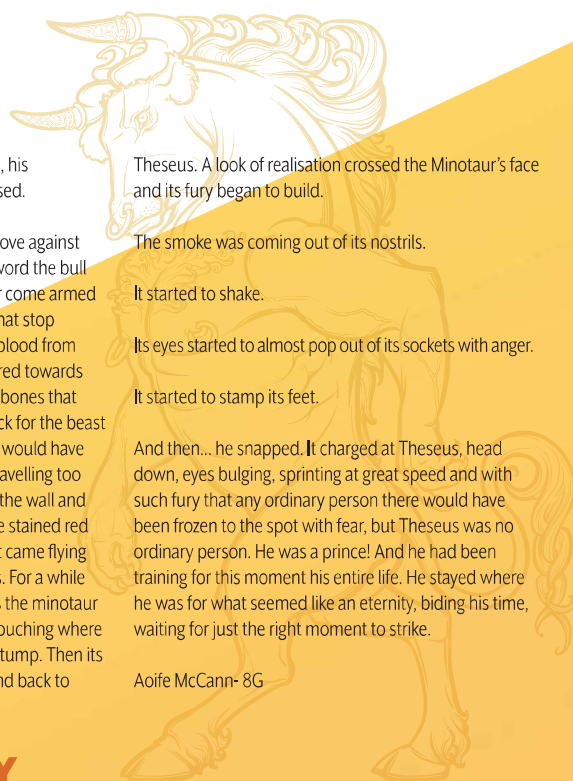
It started to shake.

Its eyes started to almost pop out of its sockets with anger.

It started to stamp its feet.

And then... he snapped. It charged at Theseus, head down, eyes bulging, sprinting at great speed and with such fury that any ordinary person there would have been frozen to the spot with fear, but Theseus was no ordinary person. He was a prince! And he had been training for this moment his entire life. He stayed where he was for what seemed like an eternity, biding his time, waiting for just the right moment to strike.

Aoife McCann 8G



AS ENGLISH TRIP TO SEAMUS HEANEY HOMEPLACE

On 27 February, the two AS English classes took a trip to the Seamus Heaney Homeplace located in Bellaghy. Upon arrival, we were absolutely amazed at the modern, state of the art building located in this little rural village. The building was a visual representation of Seamus Heaney's legacy- as the boy who had to win a scholarship to receive secondary education and became the famous poet, who taught his craft at Oxford University and Harvard University. Our tour allowed us to spend time in a gallery about Heaney's early life and experiences. We were informed of how each experience impacted his later work. We then listened to a lecture by Queen's University Professor Fran Brearton. This was very useful and each of us took notes which we later included into our annotations when we

came to study the poems. At lunch while we walked through the café, some of us unbelievably ran into Seamus Heaney's youngest brother Dan. He informed us that he was the baby in 'Mid Term Break'; "The baby cooed and laughed and rocked the pram." He kindly allowed us to get a photo with him, and I felt it was a reminder of Heaney's humble beginnings. Since meeting Dan, our class has definitely approached Heaney's poems in a more personal way as we feel that small sense of connection to the famous poet, whose work is admired by so many. After lunch, we spent a session annotating poems with the help of an English student Emma. Overall, we thoroughly enjoyed the day and both classes have found the information we gathered useful as we continue to study Heaney's poems.



ROMEO AND JULIET YEAR 9

On 7 November, pupils from Year 9 got to see a production of Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' by C21 Theatre Company, directed by Arthur Webb. The production was a more modern, bite-size adaption of the story, designed for smaller venues. The play was performed in the assembly hall, with full staging and lights. The pupils are now studying the play, and are finding it much easier to understand after watching the performance. After the performance, they each wrote a review and the response was very positive.

Aimee Travers; "My favourite character was Juliet. I thought the actress captured the first moment that Romeo and Juliet met really well! I enjoyed how the play was modernised with the characters having mobile phones."

Alex O'Connor; "In my opinion, Mercutio was the best character as he was funny. I think the actor played his character very well. Overall, I thought that their interpretation of a modern-day Romeo and Juliet was very well done."



SPEECH AND DRAMA SUCCESS!

Massive congratulations to three Year 9 pupils who recently took part in the Belfast Festival of Music, Speech and Drama in the Lyric Theatre, Belfast. The girls had to perform an intense series of tasks including monologues, duologues, acted scenes and Shakespeare pieces. Between them, the girls achieved two 1st places, two 2nd places and two 4th places. Well done girls!

Left to right:
Charlotte Mooney, Brianna Armstrong
and Eimear Logan

ENGLISH WORKSHOP WITH FELICITY MCCALL

On Wednesday 21 March, Mrs McCullagh's Lower Sixth English class got to take part in an excellent workshop with the well-known Irish author, broadcaster and journalist Felicity McCall, whose screenplay credits include 'Agnes' and 'Jam'. She talked about her childhood growing up as an aspiring author and the motivation that it takes to get involved in such a difficult industry.

The class had to write a 50-word long story on the themes of "Coming Home" and "Commitment" in just 20 minutes which was a challenge!

Some examples included:

"'Blood, sweat and tears', the coach said, 'is what it takes to be the best.' It had been a long hour. We looked at each other, all drenched, some gashed, trying our best to suppress the pain in every muscle, confused, until we realised what is means to be the best."

"The luke-warm autumn breeze and the whispering of leaves always reminded me of her. Rosy cheeks, crinkled eyes, aged hands. Still smelling her perfume, the one that seeps into your jumper every time you embrace. Stepping off that memory-heavy plane, remembering what she said, wiping away the tears, 'Home doesn't have to be a place. Home can be a person.'"

The workshop was a great experience and it helped us think of writing as a future career. We gained an insight into the mind of a writer and also received excellent tips on how to write our own stories. It was a great opportunity to hear about Felicity's life and was a lovely break from exams for a double period before returning to our Heaney poems.



Senior Debating

I joined the Senior Debate team in September, and since then we have been involved in five debates. The first four debates were part of a knockout round wherein the topics ranged from the use of genetically modified foods as a means of ending world hunger, to the complex political, economic and environmental impact of China on Africa. In the initial set of debates, we achieved four unanimous victories, allowing us to move straight from the first set of rounds to the third.

The motion for the debate which I was involved in was: "For women to access leadership positions, gender quotas must be implemented." I was in a team with

Johanna Lundy, and Upper Sixth pupils, Caitlin O'Neill and Megan McEvoy Morgan. We had several meetings about assigning specific areas of research and discussing arguments for potential rebuttal. I really enjoyed the opportunity to learn, research and write about my area – the economic benefits of implementing gender quotas and employing more women. I even managed to change my own mind on the issue!

Since then, I have largely been assisting the team through research and brainstorming. We meet frequently outside of school hours, be it either straight after school or at Mrs. Sutherland's house over the weekends, (so, suffice to say, it certainly requires dedication to spend the end of your weekend discussing the negative impacts of globalisation on LEDCs). Presently, we are preparing for the debate on globalisation, and, while I am not speaking in this debate, I am helping to research the often-overlooked negative health impacts of globalisation.

Perhaps my favourite parts of the debate team are the diversity of tasks available, and the generally relaxed and informal atmosphere of the meetings. Debating provides me with a constructive outlet, as my research is almost entirely self-led, allowing me to take speeches in the directions which I want to take them and not the direction set by CCEA. I enjoy the meetings as a break from learning about content from my four subjects for summer exams, and instead independently leading my own research about humanitarian and social issues. I'm glad I took the opportunity to get involved in September, and I look forward to seeing where debating takes us later in the year – hopefully to the all-Ireland finals!

Matthew Duffy Year 13



Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition

On 22 November, myself and four other girls took part in the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition. Soroptimist International is a global volunteer movement, who work together to transform the lives of women and girls, with nearly 80,000 members in 124 countries. Every year, a public speaking competition is held, addressing a range of thought-provoking topics. I chose the topic 'Immigration- how open should our doors be?'. Other topics included 'Is it right to criminalise another's culture?', 'Every generation has had its problems – what's in store for me?', 'Ill health begins in the mind', "Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without" New England Proverb' and 'What does Brexit mean for young people?'. Each competitor gave an interesting and thought-provoking speech and I was overwhelmed by the confidence of each girl. I was lucky enough to come in second place. Overall, I learnt a lot from listening to each girls' argument as many chose the same topic as me and we all had different points to make.

Clare McCorry Year 13





Year 8 Lenten Public Speaking Competition

As part of our school's Lenten Trócaire campaign the English Department held a public speaking competition for the Year 8. The theme for the speech was 'Poverty is...', an open-ended title in order to let our talented Year 8 pupils express their significant creativity. A total of 18 pupils participated, three from each English class, with Cormac Dwyer and Paula O'Halloran from our Sixth Form acting as our adjudicators.

The standard of the speeches was incredibly high and included a wide range of amazing ideas and fascinating facts. The speeches were well researched, informative and lively. All incorporated thought-provoking statements that really made us all want to make a difference in the world in which we live today.

The audience, which was made up of Year 8 and 9 pupils, was impressed with the confidence of our Year 8 speakers, their passion and their knowledge. Congratulations go to Gloria Ifonlaja in 8J who won the Public Speaking Cup. Gloria's speech captivated us all, and her delivery and ability to engage the whole room was most impressive. Congratulations to the deserving runners-up, Felicity Mooney and Lucy Sutherland.



GEOGRAPHY MAGILLIGAN FIELD TRIP

In November 2017, AS Geography students went on a one night residential trip to Magilligan Field Centre, in County Derry. The Centre has excellent access to high quality habitats, including many National Nature Reserves and has easy access to contrasting urban environments. We spent several hours on a freezing cold beach examining changes in vegetation, soil, wind and temperature along successive sand dunes. The following day

we went to a local river and Roe Valley Forest Park to explore other aspects of our AS Geography course first hand. Apart from the miserable weather, it was a very enjoyable and valuable trip that helped us to gain some more knowledge into this area of our studies.

Anna Glover





GEOGRAPHY CLUB

Geography club has been on-going for Year 8 students every Tuesday throughout the year under the watchful eye of Mrs Wright and Miss White. It has been a great way for the students to further their interest in Geography and have fun at the same time. Within the club they were able to create their own exciting geographical experiments such as making volcanic eruptions, making mini-earthquakes, waterfall modelling and much more!

NATIONAL SCHOOLS GEOLOGY CHALLENGE

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 'critical geological resources'. Rathmore Geography students gave excellent presentations on minerals and water shortages. Congratulations to Ellen Cunningham, Catriona McCoy, Megan Lundy, Christie Hamilton and Pearse Smith who came first and to the runner up team of Matthew Donaghy, Anthony Gallagher, Thomas McCarney, Anna McGurran, Ellen Murphy and Ellis Turley. On 22 March, after the success of the regional

heats, the winning Rathmore team was lucky enough to travel to London to compete in the National Schools Geology Challenge. The competition took place at the Geological Society headquarters in Burlington House in Piccadilly. Each team delivered a poster, presentation and afterwards completed a six-round quiz, with a final round on geology puns. As well as this, different members of the society gave talks about their career paths throughout the day, including a former pupil of Rathmore. When the competition was over we had the chance to visit different parts of London, including Buckingham Palace and overall the day was very informative and a great experience for everyone involved!

Ellen Cunningham Y13



GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIPS

It has been a very active and exciting year in the Geography department, especially due to the wide range of annual field trips carried out. These included all Year 11 GCSE Geography students visiting the Colin Glen Field Centre for a full day. Here they investigated the river from source to mouth, studying the changes at ten different stops. Year 9 pupils also got the chance to observe river features at River Lagan for a half day at the end of June last year. They saw river meanders, flood plain and river management strategies. In March, all A2 students went on a bus tour of the Causeway coast to study coastal features and management which is one of their current topics. They stopped at Cushendall, Ballycastle, Ballintoy and Portrush to observe different coastal characteristics, for example stacks, arches, caves and raised beaches. These trips help to remind the students of the active and fun element to their studies!



YEAR 10 TRIP

TO THE BATTLEFIELDS



BRITAIN

On June 15, we set off from Dublin airport, bound for Charles de Gaulle. After an early start, we finally arrived in France and our coach headed toward the country's capital. Our coach took us on a guided tour of Paris; taking us up the Champs-Élysées and past some of Paris' most renowned monuments, including of course, l'Arc de Triomphe and the Eiffel Tower. We stopped the coach and disembarked for some well needed fresh air and ice creams, and were able to snap some picturesque shots of the Eiffel Tower from the Trocadéro. As our tour came to a close, we started heading to our home for the next few days; the quaint town of Ypres in the North of Belgium, very close to the French border. The lengthy four-hour journey was lightened with quiz questions and games of 20 Questions, before we finally arrived in the late evening. On Friday morning, we were up early for breakfast, then hopped on our coach headed for the Somme battlefields, where we met our tour guide for the trip- Miguel. He took us around the tragically beautiful fields, showing us the dugouts and the front line, now mossed and overgrown. Afterwards, we visited the Newfoundland Memorial, stopping for lunch at the Ulster Tower and then continuing on to the Thiepval Memorial and the Lochnagar Crater, finishing our day paying a visit to the Delville Wood Memorial. As we walked through the forest, Miguel brought us to the "Last Tree", the only tree that lasted through the artillery shelling from the Germans, now scarred with shards of shell casing. Part of this memorial was the South African Forces Museum, which illustrated the South Africans' contribution to the war effort- holding their position during a cold, harsh winter in the wood, completely surrounded by enemy forces. After returning to the town and devouring another lovely dinner, we proceeded to the town centre

to view a Last Post Ceremony at Menin Gate, which the town holds every single night to commemorate those who gave their lives in the First World War. Ypres was the site of the devastating Battle of Passchendaele, whose centenary it was later in the Summer, making it even more poignant. We arrived back in our hostel and were gathered downstairs to take part in a quiz fashioned by Mr McIvenny. After countless conundrums, speedy sketches and general knowledge questions, the winning group received a massive bag of sweets for their winnings.

On Saturday, we headed to a local attraction- the "In Flanders Fields Museum". Here, we were free to walk around, looking at the historic artefacts and war memorabilia, viewing video re-enactments of soldiers and prominent battles and climbing the 231 steps to the top of the Bell Tower. The Bell Tower provided a picture-perfect view of the town and on descending, we were able to view the bells in action. We then paid a visit to the Leonidas Chocolate Shop in the town square and afterwards hopped back on the coach to visit some of the biggest war cemeteries near us including Langemark, Tyne Cot and Poelcapelle; where walking along the endless rows of unmarked graves allowed for a solemn silence to fall among the group, fascinated by the sheer magnitude of it all. We also paid a visit to the Battlefields of Messines and the Pool of Peace- a now serene and contemplative place, contrasting its brutal and tragic past. On the journey back to Ypres, we stopped to view a memorial closer to home; the Island of Ireland Peace Park and the cemetery of Wyttschaete, which the 16th Irish Division captured on the first day of the Battle of Messines. We returned to the hostel and spent our final night split into teams and playing a survival game, ending with



a talent show, with the prize being served breakfast by the rest of the group the following morning.

On our final day, we headed up to the famous city of Bruges, where we took a tranquil canal tour through the city, allowing us to take in some of its most renowned sites. Before we had lunch, we headed to the “Choco-Story” Museum, which outlines the history of turning cocoa into the great treat it is today; chocolate. This museum showed us everything about chocolate from the whacky ways people used to make it to the health benefits of eating it (because we all want to hear about those). We were also given a complimentary chocolate bar on entry, to allow us to fully indulge in the chocolate experience before we were free to wander around the town square and grab a bite to eat. Some of us decided to spend the in the shops or enjoying an ice cream to ease the heat from the humid air and beating sun. We then met up by the coach and embarked once more on our final journey—the dreaded end to our trip—the airport.

After arriving back late on Sunday night, we were all left with a pang of sorrow, partly because we had school the next day but mainly because the trip had been the best mix of people, laughter and learning, all kept thoroughly enjoyable by the accompanying teachers; Mrs Bailey, Mr McClenaghan and Mr McIlvenny, our tour guide Miguel and of course, the sun- which shone down on us every day. It was the best way to incorporate education and respect for the war, and being in the area it all took place made it feel closer to home and a lot more relevant to our everyday lives.

By Alice Marron





WINTER
FESTIVAL



On 9 February, we arrived at school excitedly, bags in tow. While our friends were heading off to class, we immediately hit the road on the first leg of our trip to Dublin airport (after a slight detour to pick up Mr Connolly's forgotten passport). The excitement in the air was palpable- we had looked forward to this trip for so long, eager for this opportunity to connect our learning in the classroom to reality, and to enjoy this incredible opportunity surrounded by our friends.

After arriving at our hostel in the early evening, we had a quick dinner before heading out to get our first taste of the city. Berlin at night was a beautiful sight, surrounded by so many sights and sounds, from the bright lights which covered buildings and trees to the musicians playing in the street. Even at night, the vibrancy of the city was obvious. There was not a dull building in sight- even the shopping centres were illuminated beautifully by an array of colours. This made us all the more eager to start our exploring the next morning.

On Saturday morning, we explored the city of Berlin from the comfort of our very own coach, assisted by our tour guide Rudolf. The sights included the beautiful place of Charlottenburg, the Brandenburg Gate and of course the infamous Berlin wall, which the locals prefer to think of as a gallery for young artists to showcase their creativity and talent. A line of two cobble stones in the ground throughout the city marks the position where the wall stood for almost three decades and serves as a reminder of the physical and cultural separation faced by the people of Berlin for such a long time. It was fascinating to hear Rudolf's insights into growing up in such a unique city through all of the changes that occurred. It was also very interesting to hear not only the historical issues of Berlin, but also the modern issues that the city is currently facing.

We hopped on and off the bus to explore these incredible sights for ourselves and get a real sense of the history that surrounded us, but after a day of walking in the cold Berlin air, we looked forward to our evening out to the cinema.

We woke up to cold, grey sky on Sunday morning which reflected the sombre mood during our trip to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. To be able to visit the camp was a worthwhile and eye-opening experience, but definitely not a joyful one. It was difficult to grasp the harsh reality of what the 200,000 victims experienced during the nine years that the camp operated under the Nazi regime. Many of us were overwhelmed by how cold it was in such a vast, open space which was made only worse by bitter, fierce winds. This one discomfort we experienced helped us individually to understand just a tiny amount of the pain and suffering the prisoners experienced on a daily basis.

Later that day, we ventured back into the centre of Berlin to visit Checkpoint Charlie as well as a fascinating exhibition called the Topography of Terror and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. The architecture of the columns at the memorial was breathtaking in its vast darkness. It was a day of reflection and respect to the victims of the Holocaust, but a very educational and worthwhile one that will not be easily forgotten.

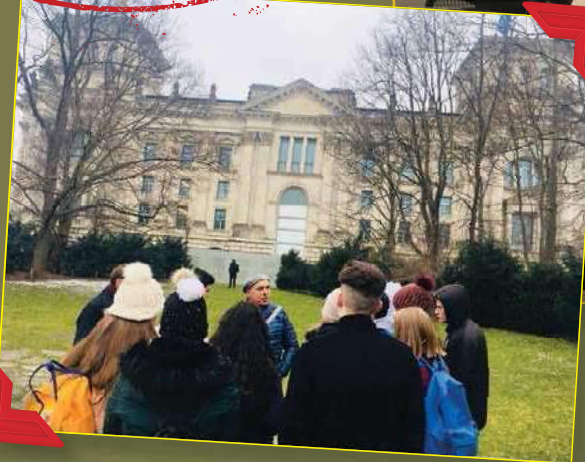
We spent our final evening in Berlin bowling, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the entire group. The competition was lively as we played game after game with our teachers and friends.

Before departing on Monday morning, our group took a final outing to the Deutsches Historisches Museum, which was filled with relevant exhibitions concerning not only Nazi Germany, but also our Russian Revolution course. The exhibitions were fascinating and we were given the freedom to explore at our own pace. The museum housed a huge range of content from Nazi propaganda to a solid red sculpture showing Lenin, Jesus and Mickey Mouse holding hands (represented that Lenin was presented as a deity and celebrity)- this was one of the most controversial and interesting pieces.

When we got back to the hostel to collect our bags and head to the airport, the reality that our trip was coming to an end hit us. The coach journey and our time at the airport was spent playing games and making the most of being around all our friends. It was bittersweet to touch down in Dublin airport on the Monday evening, glad to be home but also disappointed that the trip we had anticipated for so long was over so soon.

Our history trip to Berlin was a once in a lifetime, incredible experience that every single one of us enjoyed. While the trip succeeded in its purpose of relating our classroom learning to reality, it also brought us closer together and left us with memories which will not be easily forgotten.

Alannah Carr





UPPER SIXTH DAY TRIP TO DUBLIN

As part of our Partition of Ireland module, our A2 History class took a day trip to Dublin on Tuesday 13 March. We took part in a walking tour around the city, ably led by our guide Lorcan, who provided information on the period leading up to the 1916 Easter Rising, in addition to the Rising itself. Throughout the tour we visited a number of sites around Dublin that are of particular interest in studying the Easter Rising including the GPO where Patrick Pearse read the proclamation of the Irish Republic in front of the rebels. The GPO was also made into the rebels' headquarters and main stronghold, with the front of the building and the nearby O'Connell Monument still showing visible evidence of artillery fire. In addition to the walking tour, we visited Glasnevin cemetery which houses memorials to those involved in the 1916 rising, and those who were executed after. The most striking monument within the grounds of Glasnevin commemorates the founder of the cemetery, Daniel O'Connell, but the most famous memorial is the grave of Michael Collins. The cemetery also houses a museum containing stories and records of those buried there, thus providing the ability to conduct a personalised genealogy search to find out more about your own family history. The day provided an interesting and worthwhile insight into an important period of Irish history and was certainly enjoyed by all.

Caitlin Cullen



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

When my year group was given an assembly on becoming a Eucharistic Minister, I was enthused as it was an opportunity to get a better understanding of my faith. Eucharistic Adoration is a practice in which the Blessed Sacrament is adored by the faithful, this practice may occur either when the Eucharist is exposed, or when it is not publicly viewable because it is reserved in a place such as a church tabernacle. In school, I had the honour of getting my hands blessed by the priest so that now I can expose the Eucharist every Tuesday at lunchtime for half an hour during Eucharistic Adoration.

Eucharistic Adoration is such an important part of my week as it gives me time out of my day to reflect on the week and speak to God. It also grants us a great sense of community as many students from different years come together to pray as one. Adoration is a sign of devotion to and worship of Jesus Christ, who is believed by Catholics to be present Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity under the appearance of the consecrated host, that is, sacramental bread.

What I believe is one of the key parts of Eucharistic Adoration is that it gives us time out of our busy schedule to recognise the most important aspect of our lives. It is so easy to go a whole day without silence; we get into the car and turn on the radio and we carry phones with days' worth of music in our pockets. Even if we are in a quiet environment, we are usually accustomed to checking our phones. Eucharistic Adoration allows you to sit in silence and just be with Jesus.

I am so glad I took this opportunity as it has made me feel like a much more spiritual person who is closer to God. I would highly recommend Eucharistic Adoration to anyone who wants to explore their faith or just wants some quiet time to speak to God.
Lauren McCollum Year 13



JOHN PAUL II AWARDS

On 8 February 2018, nineteen Rathmore pupils proudly received their John Paul II awards in recognition of their dedication, commitment and participation within their schools, communities and parishes over the previous fourteen months. The award seeks to encourage pupils to become more active members of their faith, to work in their community/school, to meet other young people, to have fun, to challenge themselves, to use their talents and to learn new skills. Indeed, the award is intended to

make them realise how important and valued they are in their community and parish.

Eoghan Duffy reflected on his participation in the award saying, "The Pope John Paul II Award was an extremely worthwhile and enjoyable experience. It encouraged me to give back to the local community and volunteer in a variety of different roles. These roles included volunteering in my local parish's Children's Liturgy, in a local charity shop and the Royal Victoria Hospital. Volunteering the Royal Victoria Hospital gave me a

chance to gain valuable experience into my chosen career path whilst helping those in need. My role was to communicate with the nurses and the family and friends of the patients. This required me to be calm, caring and compassionate, traits firmly rooted in the gospels, as I helped to make those who were anxious about their loved ones feel a bit more at ease. The Pope John Paul II Award encouraged me to persist with my commitment and step outside my comfort zone, helping me to grow in confidence."

GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT EVENT

In a celebration of the Good Friday Agreement twenty years on, Rathmore's Lower Sixth Government and Politics class attended a celebratory event at Queen's University Belfast. The event involved three panels full of influential voices in the Peace Process including Senator George Mitchell, Bill Clinton, Bertie Ahern, Tony Blair and many more.

The first panel chaired by Peter Sheridan, an honorary professor at the Senator George Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, included Rev. Harold Good, Bronagh Hinds, Danny Morrison, Dennis Bradley and Dr Judith Gillespie. The first panel of the event seemed to take a focus on justice and what can be done to repair cross-community relations. Rev. Harold Good, a decommissioning witness who alongside Fr. Alec Reid helped to decommission paramilitary weapons in 2005, made points that in many disadvantaged urban communities there is still a sense of tension and to end this there must be restorative justice for the communities which were affected horribly by the Troubles. Rev. Good also stated that there needs to be long term plans in place to bring stability back to these disadvantaged areas. The other main talking point on this panel was around paramilitaries and what can be done to end their presence in Northern Ireland. Dennis Bradley, the former Vice-Chair of the policing board for NI, made points about the Parades Commission. Bradley's

main point was that the Parades Commission can help to build a bridge between the two communities in NI and that cooperation is needed between the communities to help end sectarian violence and abuse. However, whilst the two main talking points were around building communities and getting rid of tensions, the panel finished on an incredibly inspiring point put forward by Bronagh Hinds and Dr Judith Gillespie that women are not just victims of the troubles but that they can and must be agents of social change to bring about cross-community peace and solidarity.

The second panel of the event was chaired by Jonathan Powell, another honorary professor at the Mitchell Institute and former Chief of Staff to Tony Blair and the Chief NI negotiator during his time as Chief of Staff. The panel played host to Gerry Adams, Lord John Alderdice, Dr Seamus Mallon, Professor Monica McWilliams, Peter Robinson and Sir David Trimble. The second panel mainly focused on what the Good Friday Agreement brought about and what else could be done to help diminish sectarian views in today's NI. The most notable points from this panel came from Seamus Mallon and Monica McWilliams. Seamus Mallon gave points around how the Good Friday Agreement gave everyone a welcome home. He also focused on how Nationalists must realise that NI also still plays home to their Unionist counterparts and that everyone must be respected and allowed space to breathe. Monica McWilliams focused her allocated time to make points about the fact that the process brought about peace and was a process which showed the benefits of allowing compromise. However, she also stated that there is a need for third parties to become

more influential as in the current system there are just two statespeople representing NI.

The third and final panel of the event, chaired by Senator Mitchell, had three of the most notable people involved in the Good Friday Agreement; Bill Clinton, Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern. This panel focused on the teamwork and friendship that was needed to bring about the Agreement. Tony Blair stated that Ahern and Clinton were both his personal friends due to their involvement in the process and that the hard work they put in, especially Ahern whose mother died shortly before the Agreement, was influential in the signing of the Agreement. Bill Clinton made points about the importance of compromise when looking for a solution he said that granting Gerry Adams a visa to the USA needed to happen as it showed people the power of compromise which was an integral part of the Agreement. Bertie Ahern voiced his concern of what would happen after Brexit as he felt informal meetings with Tony Blair in the EU Parliament played a big part in bringing about the agreement. Ahern also stated that whilst the three men on the panel had major influence on the process that it was the willingness of the people of NI that really brought about the Agreement.

The event was a good reflection of what the Good Friday Agreement brought about by way of ending the conflict in NI. The event also allowed many influential people involved in the Peace Process to voice their opinion on what is next for NI and what can be done to help end sectarian identity politics which are prevalent in Northern Ireland today.



BUILDING PEACE

THE BELFAST / GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT



Spring Concert

Thursday 8 March brought the highlight of the Music Department's calendar – the annual Spring Concert. Over two hundred pupils representing Years 8-14 took part in this event, showcasing their immense talent and commitment to music making. The programme was wide and varied, providing something for everyone. Our four choirs delighted the audience with music from the world of pop, music, theatre and film and the Senior Choir gave an impressive performance of *The Heavens are Telling*, from Haydn's *Creation*. Our Senior and junior traditional groups provided an enjoyable selection of dance tunes and our small ensembles showed the range of musical styles in which our pupils have the opportunity to play. Among these, our Upper Sixth music prefects Megan Kerr and Vincent Hale, in their last Spring Concert at Rathmore gave us a brilliant instrumental rendition of the very well-known *Despacito*! The Concert Band impressed with the famous *Great Escape* theme and the very contemporary *Viva La Vida*, while the orchestras performed music from film and music theatre, with the Symphony Orchestra ending with a performance of the very challenging *Hoe Down* from Aaron Copland's *Rodeo* suite. The Music department were extremely proud of the standard achieved by our pupils and their performances provided a fitting conclusion to the many months of hard work.





Ballymena Festival



On 22 February, our senior Saxophone Quartet travelled to Ballymena to compete in the Ballymena Festival. They had worked hard over the past few months with their tutor, Mr. MacAtasney and were well prepared for their performance of the jazz piece Subway. The boys achieved a very high standard of performance, working very well as an ensemble and won first prize in the School Instrumental Ensemble category!

In addition to this, Ronan Cartin (Y13) entered the Saxophone Open category playing a piece based around improvisation called Kenny'll Make It. Ronan was also awarded first prize for his performance. A proud day for Rathmore Music Department!

L-R: Ronan Cartin (Year13);
Flynn Ryan (Year12); Ryan Austin (Year13);
Conal McCabe (Year 13)



FRENCH DEBATING SUCCESS

On Thursday 15 March, four of our Upper Sixth French pupils took part in the Sixth Form French Debating competition organised by NICILT at Queen's University. Our team comprised Thomas McKeown (captain), Rachel Horner, Michael Kelly and Claire McGloin (Substitute Speaker).

Our pupils pitted their skills against the debating talent of the Upper Sixth French pupils from Wallace High School, Lisburn, whose teacher is coincidentally a past pupil of Rathmore! We were proposing the motion which was, "Le gouvernement doit imposer une taxe sur les produits gras et sucrés pour protéger la santé des gens". All three of our speakers performed superbly, arguing very convincingly that the introduction of such a tax would bring about countless benefits amongst which the obvious improvements on health, the reduction on pressures on our health system and the economic benefits that would emanate from an overall healthier society. The counter arguments of Wallace were impressive too as they denounced the perils of a nanny state and highlighted the risks of singling out and maligning one or two particular food groups.

We had to wait to the end of all seven debates before the results were announced and, although eager to find out our fate, we were able to sit back and enjoy the very topical motions being debated by the twelve other participating schools. When the winners were announced, we were delighted to learn that we had won our heat against Wallace, with Rachel being declared Best Speaker for our heat. The overall winners of the competition were Omagh Academy. Warmest congratulations to them!

We were delighted with our success and look forward to next year to participate once again in this really worthwhile competition.



LANGUAGE HIGH ACHIEVERS

Success came once again this year to the Faculty of Languages in the GCSE examinations. In German, Niamh O'Kane and Anna Lavery were placed second and third respectively in Northern Ireland. Anna Glover attained second place in Northern Ireland in French and Ciara Larkin attained first place in Irish. Well done, girls – a great achievement and richly deserved!

In A Level French this year, Emma Killen attained second place in Northern Ireland. This well-deserved success was the culmination of seven years of dedication and hard work by an enthusiastic linguist who also possesses excellent skills in Spanish. Well done, Emma and good luck in your third level studies and future career. *Progresse chaque jour avec audace vers tes rêves!*



YEAR 13 FILM AND DISCUSSION

In January, our Year 13 French students had the opportunity to attend a workshop and showing of 'Manon des Sources', the film that they are studying as part of their AS course. This was held at the Queen's Film Theatre in Belfast, and facilitated by NICILT. Mr Peter Tane from the School of French Studies at Queen's University then delivered a lecture in French on the film. Our pupils found the lecture stimulating and informative, and they very much enjoyed the quiz and subsequent discussion. The pupils are most grateful to QUB and to NICILT for running the event.



LE CLUB FRANÇAIS

Our Year 8 pupils continue to enjoy the fun activities provided by our French Assistante, Maryannick Drapier, in our weekly French club. These activities range from song, dance, craft activities and board games indoors to the more adventurous outdoor activities such as French bowls, a guided tour of the school and its grounds in French and even a Treasure Hunt. Not only do our Year 8 pupils enjoy their time in French Club but they are also developing their skills in the language through fun activities and conversation. Maryannick is assisted by the Lower Sixth French pupils, who generously give of their time every week. In the photo we see a group of our Year 8 boys as they head off on their "Visite Guidée de Rathmore", led by Maryannick and assisted by Aine and Kirsten from Lower Sixth.

AN GHAELTACHT

Ba chóir do gach scoláire a dhéanann Gaeilge dul chun na Gaeltachta agus freastail ar chúrsa Gaeltachta. Sa samhradh seo chaite, chuaigh cúig scoláire déag ó Scoil an Rátha Mhóir ar chúrsa C i Loch an Iúir i dtír Chonaill.

Nuair a bhain muid Coláiste Mhuire amach, thug an rúnai ainm an tí dúinn. Bhí mise, mo chara agus mo chlo ceathrar ag stopadh sa teach chéanna, teach a raibh iontach cóngarach leis an choláiste, rud a chur isteach orainn ar dtús mar bhí muid ag iarraidh siúlóid fhada a bheith acu. Agus muid sa Ghaeltacht, d'fhreastal muid ar na ranganna uilig i rith an lae; ranganna Gaeilge sa mhaidin agus imeachtaí eagsúla sa tráthnóna: damhsa, ceol, spórt, srl. Thug an t-eispéireas muinín dúinn ó thaobh na Gaeilge de mar chuir muid snas ar ár gcuid Gaeilge agus muid ag labhairt Gaeilge gach lá.

Bionn céilithe, díoscónna agus tráth na gceisteanna ar súil i rith an chúrsa agus ar an seachtain dheireanach, bhí muid ag cleachtadh don chomórtas na gcontae, an comórtas is iomaíochta sa domhan. Bhí an bua ag contae Thír Eoghain i mbliana agus ba mhaith an oidhreoraibh é. Mar is eol de chách, is é an céili mór an ocaid is brónach a bhíonn ann agus bhí sé mar is gnáth sa bhliain seo. D'fhan muid thar oíche sa halla mór agus ar a sé a chlog ar maidin, chas siad ceol trom agus gach duine ag caoineadh.

Thaitin an cúrsa go mór mór linn cé gur tháinig muid abhaile tuirse traochta caite amach. Chuir muid aithne ar a lán cairde nua agus bímid i dtéagmhail leo go fóill trí na meáin shóisialta. Ni féidir a shéanadh go bhfuil mó chroí go huile is go hiomlán istigh sa Ghaeltacht agus ní chailfínn ar ór na cruinne é.

Ciara Ní Lorcáin



IS TEANGA MHARBH Í AN GHAELIGE

An dtig leat teanga ar bith eile a labhairt? Thig. Labhraim Gaeilge.

Arú, Nuatheanga atá i gceist agam! Ni labhraíonn duine ar bith sin...

Tá mé ag déanamh Gaeilge don Ard-Léibhéil. Ní ábhar Ard-Léibhéil í sin.

Nó is minic mé ag labhairt Gaeilge le daoine eile agus cluinim an seanmhana "is teanga mharbh í an Ghaeilge".

Tá mé bodhar de bheith ag éisteach le daoine aineolacha á rá sin. Bionn an cáineadh ceomhar cantalach seo thart orainn i gcónaí agus caithear dhul i ngleic leis an dearcadh diúltach seo chun an fhadhb a réiteach.

In Oileán na Naomh 's na nOllamh, de réir an daonáirimh is déanaí, tá triúr as gach ceathrar ar a laghad, ábalta Gaeilge a thuigbheáil. Ni gá do na daoine seo iompú glan ón Bhéarla ach tá sé de cheart agus de rogha acu a mianta agus a mbarúlacha a chur in iúl trí mheán na teanga dúchasáí s'acu féin, ina dtír féin, ar a ndóigh féin.

Is mír shuibhir d'oidhreacht na tíre seo i an Ghaeilge agus mar sin de, ba chóir dúinn bheith ábalta í a úsáid gan bac ar bith ó dhuine ná deorai. Creid é nó na creid é ach is í an Ghaeilge an phríomhtheanga laethúil ag corradh le céad is a cúig míle duine in Éirinn.

Tá Clann na nGael le sonrú in áiteanna eagsúla in achan chearn den domhan mar gheall ar éisimirce. I Sasana, in Alban, sa Bhreatain Bheag, san Astráil, i Meiriceá, san Airgintín fiú. Ni féidir le duine ar bith a mhaiomh nach nuatheanga bheo i an Ghaeilge.

Nuair a chéadthosaigh an Gaeloideachas in Éirinn, bhí siad imeallaithe ag údarais na tíre. Bhí lucht na Gaeilge in isle brí, go háirithe sa Tuaisceart. Ach in ainneoin na neamairte agus na neamhairde agus mar gheall ar an fhorbairt leanúnach atá déanta ag na Gaeil, tá breis agus trí chéad naíonra, breis agus trí chéad bunscoil agus os cionn seachtó meánscoil ar an Oileán anois.

Is iontach go deo an obair a dhéanann na daoine sna Gaelscoilleana mar is léir nach airgead amú é aon chaiteachas ar ár dteanga dhúchais ach le fírinne is infheistíocht atá ann i dtodhchá chultúrtha na tíre.

Is oth liom a rá go bhfuil ceist na teanga fite fuaite le fadhb an tseicteachais go fóill. Tá daoine áirithe ann go fóill sásta á fhógairt nach í an Ghaeilge an teanga is mó labhartha in Éirinn agus nach fiú faic í as a shiocair sin. Ni hí an darna teanga is coitiantaí in Éirinn fiú. Is flúirsí an Pholainnis. Maítear gur teanga mhionlaigh í an Ghaeilge agus go bhfuil sí ag dul in éag. Ach ba chóir don duine a bhfuil

tuairim sin acu a thuigbheáil nach mionlach ar bith iad na daoine a bhfuil grá agus gean acu ar an Ghaeilge. Tá cuid againn dall ar an tubaiste atá á bagairt orainn i dtaca leis an teanga. Tugann an feachtas reatha, ón Dream Dearg d' Acht na Gaeilge ardán dúinn an cultúr s'againne a léiriú go dearfach don domhan. Ni cúrsaí teanga amháin atá i gceist. Tá sé giota beag níos casta ná sin. Is ceist chomhionannais í. Mar sin de, tá mé ag impi oraibh, bheith bródúil as an fheiníúlacht s'againn. Caithefidh muid an deis seo a thapú, nuair atá ceist na Gaeilge i mbéal an phobail, comhionannas a bhaint amach do na Gaeil.

Tá dualgas orainn go léir deireadh a chur leis na steiréitopaí seo mar is cinnte go bhfuil an teanga Ghaeilge beo beathaíoch briomhar, chan amháin in Éirinn, ach i dtíortha eagsúla ar fud an domhain.

Dá bhri sin, an chéad uair eile a chluineann tú daoine á rá "is teanga mharbh í an Ghaeilge", abair leo "Beatha teanga í a labhairt".

Ciara Ní Lorcáin





GERMAN DEBATE AT QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

In February we took part, for the second year, in the German Schools' Debate, organised by NICILT. Three Upper Sixth German students, Michael Kelly, Chloe Cassidy and Conor Martin took part in the competition. We had a dramatic start to our day when we discovered that Thomas McKeown, our captain, was unable to take part because of tonsillitis. Thankfully Conor stepped in at the last minute

and valiantly delivered Thomas' speech and Michael took on the role of captain. There were eight teams of A-Level students from across Northern Ireland in the debate, all of whom presented very convincing arguments. The judges praised the students' daring and creative communication skills, critical thinking and speeches that showed both individuality and effective teamwork.

The teams had been given only two weeks to prepare after the motion was announced. Each team member had to prepare and deliver a three-minute speech and then, on the day, they had 10

minutes to prepare a summary speech which was presented by the team captain. Michael Kelly was an exemplary team captain and was awarded Best Speaker of our debate.

The motion of our debate was "Gleichberechtigung ist kein wichtiges Thema mehr, da Frauen und Männer die gleichen Möglichkeiten haben", which translates "Equality is not an important issue anymore since women and men have the same opportunities", and our team opposed the motion against Strathearn School. The team was excellent and not only did we win our

debate, our team was placed second overall in the competition.

The debate was absolutely worth the hard work we put in and it paid off at the end when we managed to win. It was an enjoyable day listening to and speaking German, and it really improved my German and also helped my team as well. The debates are worth it as you get to not only speak German for the day but also discuss important world issues.

Chloe Cassidy Year 14

GERMAN EXCHANGE

Miles from home, yet eager and excited to see new places and meet new friends, we headed for the city of Bonn on 21 June 2017. We had messaged our exchange partners many times before we left for Germany but now was the pivotal moment - would we like each other, would we "get on," would it all just be awkward?

The first day passed in a blur with so many new faces. We met our exchange partners, their families and so many of their friends and acquaintances. With all the different dialects and so many new German words, I wondered would I ever become so accomplished in speaking German as they were at speaking English? Could we possibly have anything in common?

Each day the weather was warm and sunny and the scenery was simply stunning. We enjoyed day trips

trekking the Drachenfels Mountain in the hot sunshine and were overwhelmed by the incredible view when we reached the top. We gasped and screamed with delight enjoying the slides and rides in Phantasialand, suddenly realising that some of the rides were as breathtakingly fast as our trip which was fast coming to a close. After walking up the 533 steps to the top of Cologne Cathedral I looked back at the route I'd taken and how far I had come and was immediately struck by how far I had come since that first day at Rathmore when, knowing nothing of German or Germany, I had gingerly selected German as my preferred language choice.

Like this trip to Germany, it had all been a remarkable journey and experience - a bit scary at first but well worth the risk and what an experience! This had been the adventure of a lifetime. There had been meaningful and hopefully lasting friendships as well as wonderful memories and experiences.



I will never forget the atmosphere on that last night when we all gathered together as a group in the Rheinaue Park, hoping that the night, like the trip would not end. I loved everything about the trip and about Germany and long to go back. Like German, the exchange trip is something that I would definitely recommend and I simply wish that I could do it all again!



YEAR 8 GERMAN STUDENTS INTERVIEW OUR GERMAN LANGUAGE ASSISTANT

WHERE DO YOU COME FROM IN AUSTRIA?

I am from a small town called Wiener Neustadt, it's less than an hour away from Wien (Vienna). It's in the eastern part of Austria, sadly we don't have many mountains there!

DO YOU LIKE LIVING IN BELFAST?

I love living in Belfast! It is such a beautiful city and I really like the people here. Everyone is so nice and welcoming!

WHEN YOU FIRST MOVED TO BELFAST, DID YOU EXPERIENCE A CULTURE SHOCK?

If walking around with a big smile on my face does count as a culture shock, then yes! No, it didn't take me long to adapt to life here and I really love English, so it was easy for me to change my everyday language.

DO YOU MISS ANYTHING ABOUT AUSTRIA?

Honestly, not much. I miss my family, my friends and my cat sometimes, but I am really happy to be here. Oh okay, I really miss the mountains to go snowboarding! And we have more sunshine in Austria – I REALLY miss the sun.

DO YOU LIKE WORKING AT RATHMORE?

I really enjoy every day I spend in this school. Everyone is really nice and it's a beautiful building too. I am really impressed by the students' motivation to learn German.

HAVE YOU LEARNED ANY BELFAST SLANG FROM THE PUPILS?

Just a wee bit! Of course they told me to say things like 'town, brown, cow, now...' with the accent and told me about Derry Girls! What's the craic? Keep 'er lit!

HAVE YOU TRIED ANY LOCAL FOOD?

The food scene in Belfast is really big in general. I would say my favourite local food was an Irish stew with Guinness Pie. I still haven't tried an Ulster fry though!

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE IN BELFAST AND WHY?

My favourite Place in Belfast City is definitely the Accidental Theatre, because I made some great friends there and the improv comedy is always good banter! In general I would say that my favourite place is on top of Cave Hill (on a sunny day!) to enjoy the view over the beautiful city.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO STUDENTS LEARNING GERMAN?

I would recommend to watch movies and series in German. Almost every movie or series has been dubbed to German, so you can watch all the stuff you like in a different language! That's how Austrian people learn English properly – watching the original versions instead of the dubbed ones, like we usually do there!

HSBC BRITISH COUNCIL MANDARIN CHINESE SPEAKING COMPETITION

Back in November, I had the chance to enter into the HSBC/British Council Mandarin Chinese speaking contest. I had started learning the language in Lower Sixth with Miss Wang and it has been an amazing experience for me. Ever since, I have been fascinated with both the Chinese language and culture so when I had the opportunity to use my newly acquired skills, I leapt at the chance. I entered into the Individual Beginner's category and performed my two-minute presentation in Mandarin Chinese to the panel of judges and my fellow competitors at the MAC in Belfast. I ended up placing first in my heat and I was invited to the finals in London.

In February, I got to meet the Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast along with my fellow winners in my heat and then we went to the British Museum to compete once again. I had such a wonderful time getting to speak the language with other competitors and developing my conversation skills. In the end, I didn't place in the finals but I but received a trophy and certificate for making it to the finals as well as a Chinese dictionary to help further my studies into the language. So far, I have got my HSK2 in Mandarin Chinese and I plan to keep studying it in the future so that I can hopefully achieve fluency one day. I wish I could do the competition all over again!

Caoifhinn Farrell



LANCASTER UNIVERSITY MODERN LANGUAGES PRIZE 2017

This year, schools across the UK were invited to submit one 500-word essay from an A-level student, written in either German, French or Spanish. Students were given the topic 'Languages and Nation', which they could interpret freely. Upper Sixth pupil Michael Kelly wrote an essay in German about the importance of having different languages and their relation to a national identity. Each essay was judged by a panel of academics at the University of Lancaster, and Michael was awarded first place for his essay, receiving a prize of a £100 book voucher for his efforts.



AILO

On 29 January this year, Rathmore languages, Maths and Further Maths pupils took part in the qualifying round of the All-Ireland Linguistics Olympiad (AILO) competition. A two hour long paper was surprisingly enjoyable for most of the students – whether this was due to the analytical questions or the fact we got to miss class, who knows!

After a few weeks, the results were in. There were a total of 1306 competitors in Ireland and the top 100 students would qualify for the All-Ireland final. Three Rathmore students were delighted to discover that they had succeeded; these pupils were John Higgins, Noyal Jayan and myself. We nervously boarded the bus from Methody College, bright and early, on the 13 March, excited for the challenging day ahead. The All-Ireland final was being held in DIT, Grangegorman, Dublin and on reaching the College, we were met with a light breakfast to fuel the day before us. We were guided to the exam centre, where a

brief overview was given to the pupils and teachers alike of the AILO competition, the test and the day.

The individual round was up first and it certainly tested the competitors to a greater extent than had the previous round. The new format of the test meant that we had to include our observations of how each language worked at the end of each question. From Albanian to Vietnamese, it was no wonder that most of the pupils found themselves pushed for time and puzzled by the taxing questions.

Lunch was a welcome break, with each student receiving a free lunch from the College's canteen. A photo shoot followed, with each school, team and county being photographed together. The team round shortly began and this time, Ethiopian was the language we had to try and decipher.

Once we had cracked the main pattern, our team, made up of the three Rathmore pupils and a pupil from Victoria College, quickly worked through each part of the question and spent the last fifteen minutes scrambling to conclude the grammatical rules we came across and create a vocabulary list. Time was up!

The day was then brought to a close

and we drowsily boarded the bus back home. The top four students in the individual round and the winning team will go forward to represent Ireland in the International Linguistics Olympiad in Prague this coming summer but after the thoroughly enjoyable day, we can all agree that we will be happy no matter what the outcome.

Ciara Larkin



OPPORTUNITY EUROPE QUIZ

Warm congratulations to our team from Rathmore who came third in the Belfast heat of the European Commission Opportunity Euro Quiz, held at Belfast City Hall in February. Their knowledge of Europe was very impressive! The team comprised Thomas Lloyd and Ronan Hamill from Year 8, Louis Cameron and David Nolan from Year 9 and Jack Conlon and Daniil Zelenchuk from Year 10. Also thank you to our reserve students, Conor Broderick, Kate McCrory and Louise Mulholland.



JUVENES TRANSLATORES TRANSLATION COMPETITION

This year, Rathmore was selected to participate in the prestigious Juvenes Translatores translation competition for schools, run by the European Commission. Our pupils tested their skills in the fine art of translation across five languages: French, German, Irish, Romanian and Spanish.

Aloise Thomas and Conor Martin from Upper Sixth represented Irish and German respectively. Lower Sixth Pupil Jude Mallon translated from Spanish to English. Polyglot Diana Badoi studies French and Spanish at Rathmore, and translated from Romanian to English. Diana has also won a place to study French for a week at the University of Oxford Summer School. Noyal Jayan represented the French Department in the competition, and, he too has gained a place on the University of Oxford's Digital Platform.

Many congratulations to all our talented linguists. And 'bonne continuation' to Conor who will be reading Sociology at university, and to Aloise who has been awarded a placement on the BrightStart apprenticeship scheme with Deloitte.

The Spanish Exchange

From 19-25 June, GCSE Spanish students took part in the Spanish Exchange. We found it a great opportunity to not only improve our Spanish but also meet new people and make new friends, while also visiting the beautiful city of Madrid.

On Monday afternoon we arrived quite late but were delighted to find out that we had time in the evening to get to know our Spanish exchange partners better. We all met up and went for ice cream which helped with the warm weather since it was over 30 degrees every day! We spent the whole evening laughing and chatting with our friends and got to meet the families we were staying with, which was an amazing experience.

On Tuesday we got up early and we visited the Railway Museum which was very interesting; we got to learn about the Spanish railway system and we gained an

insight to the Spanish industry. Later that evening, we went to "El Parque del Retiro," which is a beautiful park in the centre of Madrid where we got to go off with our friends, go in a boat and have fun, always speaking Spanish of course!

One of the best days for us was definitely the Wednesday where we got to go to the theme park all day and enjoy the amazing Spanish weather that we don't get a lot of at home. We all got souvenirs and had nice food in the centre of Madrid that evening and we were happy that we had the opportunity to try the Spanish food we always hear about when we are in school!

The Real Madrid Stadium, Bernabeu, was one of our favourite places to visit as many of us are football fans and we were so happy that we got to experience the stadium in real life. We also went to the swimming pool that night where we relaxed and had fun with our friends and we were so tired after!

Friday was our free day, so we went shopping in the centre of Madrid to all of the big and fancy shops to buy our friends and family presents. It was a really great day as we got to do whatever we wanted.

On Saturday we all spent our day with the families we were assigned to and everyone did something different- we went out for lunch, went on walks and even went to a disco that night which was amazing as we all had a little party with our Spanish friends before leaving- we had to get up early the next day to go back home!

The trip home was sad as we didn't want to leave Madrid but we all had a great time on the trip and it is an amazing opportunity to improve your Spanish and also make new friends- the Spanish pupils and teachers were kind and friendly and we would go back anytime!

Diana Badoi, with the help of Mary Kate Kelly, Kate Gray, Lorcan O'Neill and Laura Rooney Year 12.



Spanish Debate

On 9 February, three of our A2 Spanish students participated in a Spanish debate at Queen's University. The motion we were proposing was "Sexism no longer exists". I was team captain, accompanied by Amy de Meulemeester as second speaker and Mark Conlon as third. This motion originally presented some difficulty, however, as a team we worked hard to present our arguments as succinctly and clearly as we could- with help from the Spanish teachers of course! It was a very exciting day, providing us with the opportunity to hear the different levels of Spanish throughout many schools. Unfortunately, we lost our debate; however, we emerged very proud of each other due to our ability to handle a difficult motion, rebut the other team and speak fluidly in a different language. I even won best speaker which was a great achievement! Overall, the experience was one that was worthwhile and hopefully will help with future speaking exams!

Caitlin O'Neill



The Spanish Club

Every Wednesday lunchtime we help with the Year 8 Spanish Club, run by the Mexican assistant Edith. We love helping out the Year 8 pupils to improve their Spanish by playing games and singing songs as it is more fun and easier to remember.

We loved playing games that included subjects, colours, siblings and pets and we also listened to music and watched videos. The Spanish club is great to meet new friends and also have fun speaking Spanish. It not only helped Year 8 pupils, but us too, as we got to practice speaking Spanish in order to help teach the pupils. We would say if you have the

opportunity go along and get involved because you will enjoy it and have a guaranteed great time!

Lauren Leckey and Lauren McCollum Year 13

LMC Visit

Patricia Mitchell from The Livestock and Meat Commission visited the different Year 9 classes during the first term. This was an interesting and tasty visit, as the pupils were informed about the rules and regulations of meat production, the importance of buying farm quality assured produce, the nutritional benefits of red meat as well as the current dietary guidelines for its consumption. During the various visits Patricia prepared and cooked a range of dishes including creamy beef stir-fry, cottage pie with leek and potato

topping, mini meatball marinara subs and quick massala which the students were allowed to try. Each student also received some recipes and information in a booklet which they were able to take home with them.

This was a very worthwhile visit and the Year 9 thoroughly enjoyed the delicious samples that they were able to taste. Many of them took the recipe book home to try the other creative recipe ideas.



Cookery Club

Cookery club takes place in the Home Economics department on Monday afternoons. Years 8-10 are invited to attend, with each year group having their own 6-8 week session. This year some Year 11 students completing the Duke of Edinburgh Award joined us to complete the skill section of the award. The club started, this year, with the Year 10 who were given the opportunity to prepare and cook dishes such as; mars bar scones, pineapple upside down pudding and reindeer shortbread. The Year 9s session has so far included pizza pinwheels, lemon cake and fudge cookies. Everything prepared by the different groups seems to go down a treat! Year 8 Cookery club will be beginning after the Easter break, and more information will be given closer to the time.



YPI WINNERS

The winners of the YPI final 2017 presenting a cheque to the representative from Lighthouse, a suicide prevention charity. The winning group (Maddie Donnelly, Aoibhean Larkin, Ciarraí McConnell and Aoibh Murray) played host for the YPI final event in the 'Great Hall' at Queen's University Belfast.



TENNER CHALLENGE BOI

Year 10 students received an award from Bank of Ireland for their entrepreneurial skills in raising money as part of the 'Tanner Challenge.'

YOUNG ENTERPRISE YEAR 8

Young Enterprise helped Y0ear 8 settle into school when they visited on 22 September. Pupils got to know each other by working in groups from different classes and completing quizzes. They learned about different roles in the school and had the chance to interview the Bursar.





future18

On Saturday 10 March, we attended the Future 18 Hackathon at Titanic Exhibition Centre, Belfast. The event is the largest of its kind in Europe, and challenges young people to create an app in the context of a particular theme.

We arrived at the Titanic Centre for 9:30AM sharp, and the morning began with some speeches by Akshay Ruparella, creator of online housing sale site Doorsteps, and Harry Beard who is a digital marketing consultant. They explained to us how they became entrepreneurs and how computer technology played a pivotal role in the start-up and eventual success of their careers. The event organiser then outlined our theme, which was media, education and finance. We would have five hours to come up with a concept for our app and prepare an accompanying presentation to pitch it.

We quickly decided to go with the theme of finance, as we felt that people found it difficult to keep track of their finances and that our app would therefore be useful to a wider audience. We eventually settled on a high-reward finance tracking app that would give you rewards for making smart purchases and saving money. For example, if you bought items that

were synonymous with healthy eating, you would receive points. Your points would then be converted to vouchers for sites and stores that would sponsor the app in what we described as a 'wealth for health system'. This was one of the many different customisations that our app would offer.

We had a lot to do and a short time to do it in, so we immediately got to work. We worked on our prototype, which would show exactly how our app would look if it was fully developed. We used a site called 'carrd.co' which allowed us to illustrate our vision to the judges and give a better impression of how the app would be used. Matthew and Jack created our presentation, which was a vital aspect of the project that aimed to effectively and efficiently explain the thought process and actual workings of the app. Daniel came up with our logo, and Jude devised a series of flow charts which would show the benefits the app would reap for the customers, shops and companies that would use it.

The clock struck 4:00 PM, and time had run out for us to work on our app. The judges spoke to each group about their app and then shortlisted the best five that would pitch their ideas to the room. We were the last group to be shortlisted, and Matthew and Jude gave our presentation. The judges were looking for an idea that would be easily implemented and applicable to the modern world, and that was well and confidently presented. We were lucky enough to place third out of the roughly twenty teams that were present, and each of us walked away with £50 cash and an

Amazon Echo Dot. Overall, we felt this was a valuable experience and we are looking forward to next year where we will hope to go two better and win!

Oliver Looney and Jonathon Hamill



CINEMAGIC TRIPS

Last October, AS Level Moving Images Arts students and A2 Media Studies students visited the SSE Arena as part of the annual Cinemagic festival. Lower Sixth students were given the opportunity to attend a lecture by Tony McKibbin on famous film director and producer, Alfred Hitchcock. Hitchcock is widely regarded as one of the most influential filmmakers in the history of cinema and is responsible for producing tense thrillers such as "Psycho", "Notorious" and "Vertigo". Pupils were given the opportunity to enhance their own knowledge of styles and techniques used by Hitchcock- for example how he employed 'pure cinema' as a narrative tool. After the lecture, they enjoyed a screening of his classic thriller 'Rear Window.'

A2 students were treated to an informative lecture on genre in film and how it is possible to create 'Hybrid Genres' by blending two or more styles of film. After the lecture, students laughed their way through comedy-horror *Bubba Ho-Tep*, where Elvis and JFK took on an ancient evil mummy!

Once again, Cinemagic proved to be an inspirational and highly informative platform for students of Film.



FILM INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Last year, I participated in the BFI Film Academy at the NFTS in London, an amazing experience that has provided me with so many opportunities in the film industry, such as making a film for the 60 Hour Film Festival. In September, I was invited to the BAFTA headquarters in London to take part in a networking event. This was a chance to listen to the industry's directors, producers and talk to them on a one to one basis including, Director Sally El Hosaini and Producer Emilie Jouffroy.

Earlier this year I also visited the set of TV series "Game Of Thrones" as an extra. Just as I thought being on a huge set like that couldn't get any more surreal, I ended up meeting George Lucas the

creator of "Star Wars", who happened to be visiting set that day! There is an increasing number of Studios in Belfast and in February, I spent the day at one of the most recent additions on the set of the set of the new Warner Brothers TV series, Krypton, which will be aired later this year.

With Belfast becoming more of a hub for film, there are lots of events taking place such as the Cinemagic Film Festival which I volunteered at and got the opportunity to go to countless screenings of films and Q&A sessions.

I recently applied for a BAFTA mentorship, in which BAFTA will provide me with an established director

to mentor me and guide my journey in the industry; this scheme was open to me because I attended the BFI film academy. The applications are currently being processed and I will find out if I have been successful in the coming weeks. Participating in the BFI has really paved the way for my career and as a result the film we worked on (Look at What the Cat Dragged In) while at the NFTS was screened at Portobello film festival and Cornwall film festival, after its screening at the BFI Southbank.

Anna Campfield Year 14



Crumlin Road Gaol

On 12 December, both of Mrs Murphy's Year 14 Sociology classes went to Crumlin Road Gaol as part of our A2 criminology course. Crumlin Road Gaol opened its gates to prisoners in 1846 and for 150 years was a fully operational prison, closing its doors in 1996.

As the prison only closed 22 years ago, all original artefacts are still intact. This included: the historic holding cells, the tunnel connected to Courthouse, the Governor's Office, the C Wing, the condemned man's cell and hanging area, and burial area displaying the unmarked graves. Throughout the tour we gained an insight into the treatment of offenders throughout history – for instance, the treatment of women as they were held in the gaol until the early part of the 20th century, in the prison block house located at the end of D-wing. Simultaneously, children were also imprisoned for stealing items of food or clothing in a city where poverty in the working-class districts was rife.

Annie Kennedy



We'll Walk Hand in Hand

On Tuesday 27 March, our two Year 14 sociology classes went to the Lyric Theatre to see a new play by Martin Lynch, 'We'll Walk Hand in Hand', marking the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights struggle in Northern Ireland. The story follows two working class teenagers from Belfast and their involvement in the original Civil Rights movement in the '60s. The play went on to examine their grandchildren involved in the contemporary Civil Rights movement, issues of gender and ethnic inequalities and refugees. The play was educational and humorous and enhanced our awareness of Civil Rights. I definitely would recommend this show to anyone with an interest in current and past affairs.



ECO SCHOOLS

This year, ably assisted by Mr Graham, we once again established our Eco-Schools team, in order to make our school more environmentally friendly. Usually we meet every Monday either after school or during lunch with Mr Graham, depending on how much we have to get done. We cover many different areas of concern that we want to tackle, ranging from energy conservation to recycling or picking up litter. To combat these, we tried to encourage the Junior students to help us switch off all lights for a fortnight as well as trying to keep our school grounds cleaner by helping us go around and lift up litter. We are very lucky as this year; we have had many other projects to work on and we are currently working with a young Eco-Schools team from St Anne's Primary School. Together, we are trying to make our shared school sites more 'Eco-Friendly.' We meet with them on Thursdays to discuss recycling and ways that we can improve our school grounds. We have all worked very well as a team this year and we have managed to make our school a greener place.

Catriona McCoy



FORENSIC SCIENCE

After walking into the Assembly Hall and putting our bags down, we were greeted by a lifesize picture of a corpse of a young woman in school uniform. We were given a question sheet and had to solve the case of the poor Australian schoolgirl who was found dead. There was plenty of evidence found on her person, which we quickly started using. Firstly, we compared footprints found on the scene to the boots provided, this helped confirm the suspect's height and gender. Then we started looking into any toxic drugs or chemicals in her system and how long ago the body was found. This can be done in three ways: checking the temperature of the body to see if the murder had been within 24 hours, checking for rigor mortis (stiffened muscles) to determine if the victim was killed more than 36 hours pre-discovery, or checking for the build-up of insects in corpses that have been dead for a long time.

We also investigated the victim's text history to map out what happened leading up to her murder. It turns out the victim was in a relationship with the murderer, they met at the beach where the murderer spiked the victim's Coke with GHB. During the final minutes of her life the victim fought back against her captor, which gave us fingerprint and DNA evidence against the predator taken from the victim's ring. This was a most interesting day, that taught us numerous techniques regularly used by forensic scientists when solving crimes.

Daniil Zelenchuk & Jason McGoldrick Year 10

PEATLANDS PARK

On 6 October, all three AS Biology classes went on a trip to Peatlands Park in Dungannon. We researched the various species of plants around the bog area and used quadrants to measure this. We spent all day outside and had a great time learning new practical skills and enjoying the scenery around the park. We wrote up our results as we went along and we took photographs of everything we saw. We managed to all arrive back to school with only a few of us falling into the bog but we were all very mucky! All in all, we had a great day and everyone really enjoyed spending it outdoors.

Megan Lundy



ECO SCHOOLS LAURA LUNDY

This year, whilst continuing our usual Eco-Schools projects, our team has been fortunate enough to work with Laura Lundy from Queen's University Belfast. Laura was our guest speaker on Speech Day and she is heavily involved in promoting Children's Rights.

The project we have been working on is transforming a large report that was made by the UN concerning how environmental problems affect children rights into a short and concise youth-friendly document. We had one meeting with Laura when she first showed us the report, we were then divided into groups to look at certain pages

each and to pick out words of phrases that could be misleading to children or young people. After this, we met up in our groups and discussed better ways to talk about certain environmental issues and how to change phrases in the document.

Laura then sent us a shortened version of the document; myself and two other team members brought this document to a group of Year 8 and took them through it. The Year 8 told us what they didn't understand about the document and gave us suggestions on how to improve it further so that they could fully understand what it meant; it was great to hear their opinions on it!

We had another meeting with Laura, but this time she brought Soo Young Hwang who works in Brussels with

the UN special rapporteur for the environment, John Knox. We discussed the graphics that would be involved in the document and the colours that would be used. We talked to Soo Young about her role in the UN and got great insight into how Children's Rights are being infringed due to environmental problems.

Overall, it has been an incredible experience that I will never forget. We have all learned so much about Children's Rights and have furthered our knowledge on environmental issues across the world. We will meet with Laura again in a few weeks' time to see the final product and we are all really looking forward to seeing our heard work pay off!

Roma Bannon



RSC SCHOOL'S ANALYST COMPETITION

Of all the things to be doing at 10am on a Saturday, we did not expect to be carrying out multiple titrations in a race against eleven other schools; yet that is what we did! In 25 years since the Royal Society of Chemistry's School's Analyst Competition began, Rathmore entered a team of three AS chemistry students for the first time.

Within the labs themselves, each table was heavily laden with an array of chemicals, compounds and mixtures which we would analyse. Varying sizes of test tubes, beakers, conical and volumetric flasks were arranged neatly in single file beside them. It was all very intense. The instructions lay before us contained in a rather thick booklet. On flicking through this document, the complexity of it all made us laugh. "This is going to be fun", we thought.

So, we began; the girls and I working methodically and carefully through the booklet. Measuring acids and standardising solutions, we finally submitted the answer sheet for the first task. However, only then did we realise that we took an hour and a half out of the total three, simply for the first experiment and we still had two more to do. That's when we split up; one of us working on one experiment while the other two completed the third. Finally, we took off our rubber gloves and lab coats and made our way to lunch, feeling like we thoroughly deserved our chips. Outside waiting for us with a huge grin on her face, was Mrs Hamilton herself!

We all sat down to a great lunch of Southern Fried chicken and chips or vegetable stir fry with profiteroles for dessert. After we had all eaten, it was finally time for the prize giving. Initially, we all received a £10 voucher for textbooks for taking part in the competition. It turned out we didn't win, but it was a wonderful experience and great fun overall.

Noyal Jayan



RATHMORE'S CHESS COMPETITION 2017

In November, the Chess Club held their very own competition, which was overseen by Mr McIlvenny, who also presented the trophies on the day. Rathmore's Chess Champion of 2017 is Year 10 student Conor Murphy. It was a well-deserved win for Conor as he played very well throughout, checking his way through each year group. In second place is Darren Gill, a Year 13 student and in third place we have James Butler, a Year 10 student. Many congratulations to all those who took part!

BELFAST SCHOLASTIC CHESS SHIELD

Many congratulations are in order for Year 10 pupil, Daniil Zelenchuck, who won the Belfast Scholastic Chess Shield in June 2017. He was the winner of the Lower/Secondary level (Year 8 to Year 10). Among his successes, Daniil is ranked 50th in the Under 21 category of the Irish Chess Union. Well done Daniil!



PI DAY

Pi Day is celebrated on March 14 (3/14) around the world. Pi (Greek letter " π ") is the symbol used in mathematics to represent a constant—the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter - which is approximately 3.14159.

By measuring circular objects, it has always turned out that a circle is a little more than three times its width around. The mathematician Archimedes used polygons with many sides to approximate circles and determined that Pi was approximately 22/7. The symbol (Greek letter " π ") was first used in 1706 by William Jones. A 'p' was chosen for 'perimeter' of circles, and the use of π became popular after it was adopted by the Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler in 1737.

In recent years, Pi has been calculated to over one trillion digits past its decimal. Only 39 digits past the decimal are needed to accurately calculate the spherical volume of our entire universe, but because of Pi's infinite & pattern-less nature, it's a fun challenge to memorise, and to computationally calculate more and more digits.

In Rathmore, every student of Maths celebrated Pi day this year and the Maths faculty were seen sporting pun-filled Pi day t-shirts. The younger students enjoyed creating circular shapes and attempting to memorise Pi. The older students enjoyed a brief reprieve from their rigorous exam courses and partook in a Rathmore themed Pi day treasure hunt brain teaser.

All in all, Pi day was a hugely enjoyable event and because of this, every student of maths in Rathmore is looking forward to March 14th 2019!

Andy McGowan



SENIOR MATHS CHALLENGE

Our pupils recently took part in individual and team Senior Maths Challenge events. In the individual event we had 4 Gold, 11 Silver and 22 Bronze certificates awarded. Lower Sixth pupils really enjoyed the experience.

Congratulations to Ryan Austin, Jude Horner, Ronan Lawlor and Caolan Plumb for their Gold award! We also had five Year 13 and 14 students who qualified for the Senior Kangaroo Challenge and Conal Murray received a merit.

The Team Challenge was held in Rockport School and we were placed 7th in the Regional Final. The team was comprised of Mark Conlon, Jude Horner, Callum O'Kane and Michael Romano. Well done to everyone involved!

Extra Maths

Over the past few months, many pupils from Years 11, 13 and 14 have attended supplementary Maths classes on Wednesdays after school to help improve their skills and knowledge within the subject, should they be struggling or requiring additional guidance and encouragement. Each week, classes focus on a particular topic within Maths, with different teachers helping the class recap previously taught materials, allowing pupils to refresh their memory in certain areas of their course. These classes have proven to be of huge benefit to myself and have undoubtedly been of great assistance to fellow struggling mathematicians. Personally, I found areas of Maths such as logarithms, curve sketching and algebraic manipulation to be extremely challenging at first, but now I feel as though I have turned a corner and can confidently answer questions relating to such topics. I attribute this improvement in my mathematical skills to these supplementary classes, with teachers covering a broad range of areas in Maths in great detail, providing vital assistance which pupils don't receive in regular classes. Whether it be difficult differentiation, tricky trigonometry or irritating indices, additional Maths classes are guaranteed to help pupils improve their marks significantly.

Jude Mallon

women in maths

Two Year 13 students, Niamh Quigley and Eva McClean, were accepted to take part in a residential at Trinity College, Cambridge at the end of March. This event targets potential female applicants to Mathematics courses at top universities. The girls got the chance to meet current fellows and undergraduates and gain an insight into what it's like to study Maths at Cambridge.



Civil engineering

On 6 October, myself and three other lower sixth students attended Civilisation Belfast hosted by Queen's University. The experience was open to all Year 13 students studying Maths and a Science subject and was designed to show us what a career in civil engineering could include. It was an action-packed day attended by around 80 students from all across Northern Ireland, as well as lecturers from the Civil Engineering department in Queen's who explained the significance behind each location we visited.

We visited many places throughout the day to learn about the diverse career routes open to civil engineers, including the Terminal Pumping Station in Duncrue and Lagan Weir. We then visited AECOM, a multi-national engineering company in the centre of Belfast, where we had lunch and talked to recent civil engineering graduates about their experience and the range of projects they are currently working on.

The final location we visited was, in my opinion, the most interesting by far. Did you know that Victoria Square is also known as 'The Floating Shopping Centre'? This is because the Blackstaff River used to flow under the area where Victoria Square is now. You can see evidence of the engineer's work in the basement carpark, where intersecting metal columns are used to keep the basement water-tight and structurally sound. While standing in the dome of Victoria Square, Dr Siobhan Cox from Queen's took this opportunity to educate us on the history of the structures in the surrounding city including the Albert Clock.

Civilisation Belfast was an incredible opportunity for us, as young students, to experience what a career in civil engineering could be like. I think it is safe to say that it was a worthwhile experience that opened our eyes to a potential future career path.

Alannah Carr





Bloodhound Project

In June, 9J attended the Bloodhound Project STEM workshop in W5. The Bloodhound project is based on the Bloodhound SSC project, which in 2018 aims to set a new land speed record of 1000mph. The pupils were given an informative talk by Rob Bennett about the history of the land speed record and how the design of the cars impacted directly onto the speed which the car was capable of achieving. Key terms of anthropometrics and ergonomics were developed and the task of the workshop was introduced, to design and build the fastest rocket car. After much deliberation and manufacture, the cars were ready and we set off to the track. All the pupils watched on as each car flew down the track and waited nervously for the final results. These happily brought about great joy for 9J as the various teams achieved 1st, 2nd and 3rd with the winning car, which was designed and manufactured by Ben Hayes, Mateusz Pietrzkiwicz and Aodhan Graham reaching a remarkable 61mph!

ARKWRIGHT SCHOLARSHIPS

The Arkwright Scholarships Trust administers one of the most prestigious scholarship schemes in the UK. Schools must be invited into the process before they can submit applications, with a limited number of schools in Northern Ireland being offered this distinguished opportunity. The scholarship is open to applicants studying Technology and Design at GCSE, aiming to discover and support their studies at GCE level through financial assistance and academic mentoring with qualified engineers. Nine students undertook this process, which involved an in-depth application form and two-hour aptitude paper. The top students were then selected for interview - two students were selected from Rathmore (Jude Horner and Michael Carville). In July, Michael Carville was notified that he had been recommended for scholarship and has been successfully paired with appropriate sponsors.

2017 is the fourth year that Arkwright Trust has had affiliations with NI schools. With five scholarships across AS and A2, the Technology and Design department has continued with a strong influence in such an esteemed programme. Michael received his award in a ceremony held in Edinburgh over mid-term.



STEM Bus visits Rathmore

Technology and Design were pleased to welcome the STEM Bus to Rathmore recently. Providing an insight into CAD/CAM and the use of CNC routers to complete name plaques was a great extension to our GCSE and AS programmes of study. Sixty pupils from Year 12, AS and some A2 participated in three workshops throughout the day in which they used CAD software to design their own name plaque. This was converted to STL file which could then be translated by the CNC router machines and cut out on a MDF billet.



Technology and Design STEM Club

Our Year 8 STEM club continued recently with pupils enjoying a practical based activity in Technology and Design. Pupils used a number of marking out and manufacturing techniques to produce a mobile phone holder, complete with functional circuit that illuminates when a call or text is received. Building

upon techniques and skills learned in class, pupils used try squares and steel rules to accurately mark out their sapele base before using the pillar drill to create a cavity for a small circuit to be hidden. Using a laser cutter to produce a design in acrylic, the various parts of the supporting piece were glued using

tensol cement, before assembling the various parts and testing. This was a great opportunity to develop understanding of CAD/CAM and workshop practices which was enjoyed by all.

Be Strong Online

In December, myself and another group of students attended an online safety and awareness course in De La Salle College. This course was run by The Diana Award, which has teamed up with Vodafone to create the Be Strong Online Ambassadors Programme. Some of the modules they cover are: Social Media, Cyber Bullying, Selfies and Self-Esteem and Critical Thinking Online. This programme is led by us young people, raising awareness by spreading our knowledge on the topics.

As it started off as only six of us, myself, Oisin, Aimee, Mark, Axel and Laura, we needed to expand our team; therefore people from all throughout years 8-10 were invited to join. As Be Strong Online Ambassadors we received a badge and certificate and everyone who attends the training, run by the six of us, will receive these at the end of their course too. We now have over 50 trainee ambassadors! To date we have created awareness of online issues by talking at Year 8, 9 and 10 assemblies and by creating a noticeboard in school. As a group we meet twice a month with Mr Kelly to discuss online issues and plan future activities. By the end of June we will be delivering a number of workshops on Selfies and Self Esteem to our Junior School peers.

Ciarrai McConnell (Be Strong Online Ambassador)



Our Marathon Feet - All 122 of them!

This year, our Sixth Form decided to run the Belfast Marathon Relay to raise funds for a cause very close to their hearts, the Northern Ireland Hospice. They took on the challenge of running the marathon in order to support fellow student and friend Kevin Donnelly and his brother Nathan in Year 10. Kevin and Nathan's mum was cared for by the NI Hospice. Kevin, along with Anna Sutherland in Upper Sixth, harnessed the support of their amazing year group - and even enlisted some Lower Sixth pupils - to take on their marathon challenge. A total of 55 Sixth Year pupils signed up, plus a team of teachers.

On hearing of our plans, Claire Bradshaw, Head of Communications at Northern Ireland Hospice said:

'When we heard the news of the gargantuan effort being made by pupils and teachers at Rathmore Grammar School in Dunmurry, on behalf of Northern Ireland Hospice, we were quite simply stunned! Never before has one organisation put forward so many Belfast City Marathon teams in support of Hospice.

We all know of the excellent reputation which Rathmore pupils have across Belfast and beyond. Yet this outstanding and selfless commitment by so many of the school's young people gives us great confidence in the next generation and their passion for helping people with life-threatening conditions in our community.

We will be out in force to support all the teams on the day!

We are so very proud of our young people, and wish them every success in the future.





Kumba's Story

"Most of the children are quiet and withdrawn. Many cannot sleep or they have nightmares. Flashbacks are common amongst survivors..."

In the early hours of August 14th 2017, a devastating landslide struck Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone. Four minutes is all it took to destroy the hillside community of Matome.

Kumba was a happy, charming little seven year old, until the day everything she had ever known came crumbling down around her and her life changed forever. Her family was one of the only families to survive the disaster as 80% of their neighbours were killed. It was in the early hours that Kumba awoke to see the panic-stricken fear in her mother's eyes as a deafening roar echoed around their humble home.

Finda, Kumba's mother, managed to grab on to one of Kumba's flailing limbs and drag her away from her bed just moments before their house was engulfed by the devastating tidal wave of mud. It was then that Kumba's little sister fell in the deepening dirt. She was rescued, but she suffered serious injuries to her leg.

Eventually, they reached the relative safety of higher ground but it was there that they were met with the haunting images of friends, neighbours and relations perishing right before their eyes.

Kumba's father Sahr and mother Finda lost the home they built and everything they owned. They are lucky to be alive but the challenge they face on the road to recovery and normalcy is daunting.

Children are particularly vulnerable after natural disasters. Without access to education, there is no hope for impoverished Sierra Leoneans, like Kumba, to pull themselves out of the clutches of poverty. Young girls are particularly affected by natural disasters as some parents will prioritise education for their sons ahead of their daughters.

This year, Trocaire is fighting hard to ensure that no child, regardless of gender, in Sierra Leone goes without education. Children have received school kits, which meant they had some basic materials and could attend a temporary school where they were staying nearby. Kumba loves school and hopes to have an important job one day. Give her that hope. She needs our love and compassion to give her the future she deserves.

Kumba's family has lost everything. Her parents' livelihoods were stripped away. With nowhere to live, Kumba has been separated from her family and is staying in a children's home with her mother and siblings, while her father lives with her brother. All they want is to be together again.

Kumba's bravery in the face of pain, suffering and adversity is an inspiration to us all within the Rathmore community and her bravery is one which we all should attempt and emulate in our everyday lives.

Heavy Load – by Jeffy Panikulangara (Year 8)

On his strong, sturdy shoulder,
A schoolbag heavy as a boulder,
All the way from the car,
To his desk, it's way too far.

Carrying a jar filled to the top
Filled with water, she cannot stop.
For miles and miles she walks alone,
As she must take this water home.

Complaining and weary, he reaches his desk,
He puffs and pants, he needs a rest.
He has to carry all these books,
It is such a chore, it really sucks.

Just another mile to go
In this heat she's sweating so.
She must carry on, be brave,
Her baby sister she must save.

On the Trocaire box he sees the girl
Carrying water from the well,
She is about his age, about his height,
And suddenly his bag seems light.

Grá Briste – by Patrick Morgan (Year 8)

Fear is the sense that holds the mind captive
Love is the key that unlocks it.
Love is the sweetness that slips down your throat
Fear is a lump in the texture.
Fear is the shadows all around you
Love is the light that dissipates it.
Love is the butterflies which fly around you
Fear is the wasps that can swarm you.
Grá Briste.
As love is broken we will mend it
Trocaire,
Grá deisiúcháin.

YEAR 9 TRÓCAIRE EVENTS!

The Year 9 came out in force this year for Trócaire. As well as taking part in the whole school Lip Sync Battle, Sponsored Silence and Non Uniform Day, they also took it upon themselves to organise other events.

The kind staff at Booker/Makro in Dunmurry donated drinks, crisps and sweets which we turned into a highly successful (albeit busy!) tuck shop and the pupils sold all their stock within two days!

With the help of Mr Jackson, Year 9 pupils Tiarnan Crosbie, Thomas Graham and Ryan O' Hanlon organised a mini world cup which tested their football (and organisational!) skills. The competition was fiercely fought but at the final, Germany emerged victorious! Well done boys.



LIP SYNC BATTLE

The Lip-Sync Battle occurred on Tuesday 20 and Wednesday 21 March. Many pupils and teachers took part in the event and it was a huge success. Around 400 people came to watch and the hall was full both days. Every penny raised will be sent to Trócaire to help Sierra-Leone, the inhabitants of which are still suffering the consequences of a mud slide last year; in which hundreds died and thousands lost their homes. Most of the survivors have nowhere to go, their belongings destroyed and their families split up. I participated in the Lip-Sync Battle with some of my friends, we sang "The Other Side" from The Greatest Showman. It was a fantastic

experience and all the other participants were very supportive. Doing the show was a bit nerve-racking but in the end, it was all great fun. Many people did comedy acts but some were trying to be really professional. Everybody did great, and had fun; whether they were a spectator, judge, host or participant. Rathmore also had a bake sale, tuck shop, disco, a sponsored silence and a spin bike event for Trócaire. I think everyone enjoyed the Lip-Sync Battle and in my opinion it was a big success, and I would love to do it again next year.

Gráinne Doherty, Year 8

TRÓCAIRE

For this year's Trócaire campaign, our focus was on Sierra Leone and the impoverished people there; we have witnessed and been informed of the struggles its people. As a hugely important issue, we put in as much effort as possible to raise as much money as we could.

There were ways in which almost every year group could support Trócaire this year; ranging from a Year 8 after school disco, a sponsored silence and of course the annual non-uniform day.

One of the most widely publicised event of the Trócaire campaign was the 'Lip Sync Battle' which included entries from many brave students and even a few members of staff. The talk of the school was the Simon Cowell-esque assessments provided by Mr Tierney, one of the Lip sync judges.

The sponsored silence on Friday 23 March showed the Rathmore school community standing in solidarity with the people of Sierra Leone. The Rathmore community are willing and exceedingly capable of standing out and giving a voice to the oppressed, sidelined and marginalised throughout the world. Rathmore 'broke the silence' with music and dancing,

showing that Rathmore will not cease to encourage philanthropic endeavours 'until love conquers hate'. Everyone involved in the school was sponsored for the silence and it was great to see such a powerful symbol of our whole school uniting as one to raise the issue of the struggling Sierra Leoneans.

From singing and dancing in the Year 8 disco to the singing and dancing in the courtyard of the school, the 2018 Lenten Trócaire campaign was a truly unifying experience for all involved.



Year 8 Disco

On Friday 16 March 2018, Year 8 had a disco to raise money for Trócaire. Our Buddies helped us to plan, collect money and decorate the hall with coloured lights; they also created a playlist that was full of our suggested songs. After school, we headed over to our tutor room to go over our prepared dances and get ready. When the disco started, we entered the hall and met up with our friends, took lots of photos and danced. Nola and I saw that everyone was crowding around chanting our friend Yoshwin's name so we had a look and saw he was dancing a solo! He was amazing, and looked like he was having great fun so we recorded it. After we did the tutor group dances, we got to go back and chat with our friends; some of us even got videos of our Buddies dancing. The part of this that mattered most to me, however, is the fact that just by paying two pounds entry fee, I will change a child's life with the aid of Trócaire. We must donate what we can to give a little girl or boy the life they deserve. The girl on the Trócaire box this year is called Kumba, she and her family were left with no home due to the mudslide in Sierra-Leone. I am glad that the money raised by this disco and the other school-run events went towards the important cause of rehoming and caring for Kumba and the other children like her who lost their homes. I would also like our buddies, Mrs McCormick and every teacher involved to know we all had an amazing time.

Hannah Cartland, Year 8



YEAR 9 PASTORAL PROGRAMME

Alongside their normal pastoral programme which runs throughout the year in tutor group, the Year 9 have also taken part in several other initiatives this year which has helped support this programme. In January, the team from Love for Life came to deliver their I-Zone presentation, working with the Year 9 on important issues such as identity and relationships. The group had fun taking part in the various quizzes and activities (and even a Mexican wave competition!) but also heard lots of good advice and hints on how to deal with any pressures or issues that may come their way.

Many groups have also taken their own individual assembly this year and based it around a topic or concept that they were interested in for example, one Wednesday we all learnt a lot that we didn't previously know about the celebration "Day of the Dead" in Mexico! Many pupils (and Year Heads alike) had seen images of this on TV and in magazines but had misinterpreted its meaning - in actual fact, through presentations and displays, the group informed us that it's actually a heartfelt reminder of loved ones who have passed away and it celebrates their lives.

Catholic Caring

The Rathmore community and the Prefect Team worked tirelessly once again to live up to the high standards established by previous year groups this festive season. The school went the extra mile once again to contribute to the Rathmore Christmas tradition of contributing to the seasonal charity programme of Catholic Caring.

The Catholic Caring movement was kickstarted by Bishop Walsh's 1998 letter on "the cry of the poor" which prompted and encouraged action from the public. Initially the scheme was dedicated on aiding the underprivileged Catholic community, but it has since evolved into a tool in the fight of poverty. Catholic Caring now helps all deprived districts and across all social divides.

The dedicated focus of Catholic Caring is on relieving some of the financial pressures faced

by families in our local communities, especially during the approach to Christmas.

Every tutor group in the school received the name and age of a young child, it was then each tutor group's responsibility to raise money in order to buy toys and clothes. Each tutor group also grouped together to organise a Christmas hamper for a family, donating an array of festive food items to be enjoyed by families struggling to get by during the festive season.

The Prefect Team then organised an impressive display of all the toys, clothes and hampers in the school foyer, awaiting the fleet of vans arriving to distribute the goods in time for Christmas Eve.

Andy McGowan



Friends of the cancer centre

On Thursday 28 September, the Prefect Team and Mrs McKeogh organised a coffee morning in support of Friends of the Cancer Centre. Our pupils really enjoyed the tea, coffee and sweet treats on offer. It was great to see everyone so keen to endorse this worthy cause!

Friends of the Cancer Centre has a long and proud history of helping local cancer patients across Northern Ireland for over 30 years. Friends of the Cancer Centre has helped many members of the Rathmore community in the previous decades and so it is a real honour to do something to help out such a unique charity close to Belfast.

Based at the heart of the Cancer Centre at Belfast City Hospital, the charity funds life-saving and life-changing projects that make a real and lasting difference to the lives of thousands of local people affected by cancer and in the last year alone, Friends of the Cancer Centre has put £1.2 million back into local cancer services.



BASKETBALL

I have had a great year so far with Basketball, not least because of the support and encouragement of Mrs Hamilton, Mrs McCann and the P.E department, my ever-understanding subject teachers (being out of class at competitions), Dr Deirdre Brennan and all the staff at BNI and my ever-patient Basketball coach in school and at Phoenix Basketball - Breda. Without all of their encouragement, support and understanding I would not have enjoyed or achieved so much in Basketball this year, or indeed for the last four years. All of these people have encouraged me to aim high and develop confidence, camaraderie, resilience, fair play and a willingness to constantly learn and reflect. I can honestly say this has also helped my other sports and my academic work. Determination, time management, self-discipline, respect and an ability to learn as much from failure as success, are skills from Basketball gleaned this year that I believe will help me continue to develop academically and athletically.

This year's Basketball personal success has its origin in June 2017 during the BNI (Basketball Northern Ireland) Academy Talent Development Programme (which my Basketball club nominated me for four years ago) along with eleven other girls from throughout Northern Ireland to represent Northern Ireland in Basket Ball Ireland's Post Primary Schools Inter Regional Competition, at the University of Limerick from 20-22 October 2017. This was a great honour and also a great opportunity, as this competition is used as a trial for the Ireland U15 girls' squad.

The Competition was very intense and extremely rewarding and helpful to my skills' development. We made some great friends from clubs throughout Ireland and learnt a great deal from fantastic players from across the island. Our hotel the Radisson, Limerick was lovely and the journey to and from the tournament was great fun.

Following the Limerick Tournament, the next development was an invitation to compete in two trials for a place on 'the North' Regional Academy of Basketball Ireland (which BNI was evolving into) with girls from Antrim, Derry, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Down, Derry, Louth, Cavan, Monaghan and Meath. The aim of these academies (north, south, east and west of Ireland) is to provide higher level skill development opportunities and to act as a platform for selection for future Irish Internationals. In particular, it is from these academies that the U16 Irish team is generated. These trials were intense and took place in Drogheda. Again, I had the privilege of learning from my peers and making new friends in Basketball and enhancing my skills set.

On 17 November I was informed that I had secured a place on the North Academy. I was extremely happy and conscious of the great opportunities this afforded me. This means more training in addition to my commitments to Rathmore and Phoenix Basketball teams which can only mean more development for me.

Aine McCann Year II



BOB DOCHERTY CUP 2018

On 24-26 March, I competed in the annual Bob Docherty Football tournament for the second time, which was held in Northern Ireland. This meant we were the home nation so there was added pressure on us. The teams consisted of England, Wales, Scotland, Republic of Ireland and an A and B team from Northern Ireland. Every team stayed at the Stormont Hotel, Belfast and all games were played at the Ulster University Complex, Jordanstown.

We were drawn to play against England and Scotland, a formidable duo. We played England first and took an early lead, but two disappointing late goals from England meant we narrowly lost. We were all bitterly disappointed and were determined to prove a point against Scotland. Unfortunately, we had a poor game and an excellent Scotland team deservedly beat us. Our last game was against a strong Wales team. Luckily, we saved our best for last and won 2-0. A deserving Republic of Ireland outfit ended up as overall winners. Even though we didn't win we all had a great time and gained valuable experience for the future.

Anna Wilson Year II

YEAR 8 BASKETBALL

Well done to our Year 8 Basketball team that just won the BNI Year 8 Tournament. They faced tough opposition from Aquinas, St. Dominic's, Hazelwood and St. Patrick's, Letterkenny.

Katie Walsh was awarded the most valuable player of the tournament (MVP). Well done to all who took part.



NORTHERN IRELAND U18

This year I got onto the Northern Ireland U18 schoolboys team after a lengthy process, which began in November and concluded in January 2018. We recently went to Jersey for a week, to bond with the other members of the team. We won the two games we played against Jersey's local U18 and U21 team. We were now competing in the Centenary Shield with two games remaining against the Republic of Ireland team and England and still had a good chance of winning the tournament having drawn 0-0 with Scotland and 1-1 with the Welsh team, in which I scored my first international goal. I was also selected for an U19 training camp which prepares us for the European Championships by helping to develop our skill and fitness. This took place in England and I hope to be selected to play in these championships at the end of this year.

Caoimhin McConnell Year 13



World Irish Dancing Success

Two Rathmore pupils saw off stiff competition over the Easter holidays to become World Champions at the recent World Irish Dancing Championships. Blanaid O'Neill in Year 9 won her title for the third consecutive year and Anna McElean in Year 11 was crowned World Champion for the first time; an incredible achievement for both girls. Well done!

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

What is The Duke of Edinburgh Award? The Duke of Edinburgh Award is a challenge / award which recognizes that there are a lot of aspects to a well-rounded person, including achievements outside the classroom. Anyone who puts in the effort will receive the Award, so young people can team up and have fun with their friends instead of competing with them.

In order to get into the group to do the DofE award, we had to fill out a form answering basic questions about ourselves. An example of this would be 'Why should you get to do the Duke of Edinburgh Award?' Numerous pupils applied, aware of the prestige that

the award endows its recipients, but only twenty were selected.

Once we secured our places in the group, we started to attend training every Tuesday after school to learn the basic skills we need to camp comfortably. On the first week, we were introduced to Raymond, our group leader, who taught us for ten weeks. At this stage, we also started the Skill, Physical and Volunteering aspects of the award. We are supposed to start activities pertaining to each section and do all of them for a minimum of three months, carrying our favourite on for a further three. Raymond helped us to bond with one another through the use of games and competitive ice breakers. He also showed us how to do numerous things that a large number of us had been previously inept at doing; he showed us how to assemble a tent, how to pack a bag for walking,

pointing out what was necessary, how to use a First Aid kit and do CPR, how to read a map and how to cook on a Trangia (a portable stove).

Our first practice walk was on Friday 9 March, and all twenty of us were taken to Belfast Activity Centre at Shaw's Bridge where we split up into two groups. We then used maps and our learned skills to navigate our way around Barnett's Demense. We walked for around five hours, and although this sounds less than appealing, it was really fun and every single person that walked then went home having really enjoyed themselves. We have two more practice walks in the Mourne Mountains and then we will go on to do a practice expedition and a final expedition, where we will hike and camp overnight. We will be assessed on all that we have learned and it will be decided whether or not we receive the award.

Sarah Higgins Year 11





JUDO

Judo is a contact sport between two opponents with the aim being to throw, pin, strangle or arm-lock your opponent to achieve an Ippon (victory). I have been a member of Yamakwai Judo Club since I was five years old, participating in many competitions within this timeframe; however, this past year has been my most successful to date.

The season began in August with the UK School Games in Loughborough University, Birmingham. This is a competition based on an Olympic Games model with multiple sports events ranging from judo to cycling and hockey which takes place over an intensive period of four days. On the first day after we had settled in it was time for the opening ceremony. This consisted of all participants taking part in a parade proudly waving the flags of their country. When the parade came to a close, it was time for the introductory talks and the nerve-

wracking weigh-ins. Later, when I had made my weight, the fighting began. I had six fights of which I won four by Ippon, qualifying me for the semi-finals. However, I missed out in the semi-finals meaning I had placed third overall giving me a bronze medal.

I was able to have a well-deserved day of rest and to partake in some enjoyable team building activities. It was then time for the final day of the competition which was the team competition. Sadly, team NI got knocked out in the third round of this but gave us the experience to bond and grow together and hopefully we will be back and better than ever in years to come.

A few months later, I was selected for the NITDP (Northern Ireland Talent Development Programme) which is an elite athletic training programme aimed to develop up and coming national players into high level international fighters. Since I have joined the programme I have attended four training camps and competed

in one international and three national competitions further developing my skills as fighter and gaining valuable experience.

Perhaps the most notable training camp which was made more exciting by the fact it was joined with the European Cadet Cup, which took place in Malaga in February of this year, where I represented Ireland. The competition was on the first day of our trip where I managed to pick up my first win on an international platform placing me as 97th in the world rankings. This also entailed four days of two-hour training sessions twice a day which commenced from day two. This was by far my best judo experience to date and has driven me to train harder to develop and achieve and strive further. I continue to train and work towards earning more experiences and achievements in the future.

Caolan McKee Year 12



JUDO ACADEMY

Judo has been a huge part of my life since I was eight years old and is continually growing in importance as time goes on. I am a brown belt and train three times a week with my club, The Judo Academy, and monthly with the Ulster squad. Our training usually consists of a range of things from team building activities, a strength and conditioning course and even the experience to coach the younger members. These experiences have allowed me to further broaden my knowledge, experience and make new friends. Over the years I competed in and won numerous competitions and achieved titles such as the Northern Ireland Champion and Northern Ireland Schools Champion in the U48kg category. I have grown to understand that a judo player needs to have commitment, determination and more importantly respect. In the future, my goal is to achieve my black belt and represent Ireland at a global level.

Aoife Campbell

OPEN JUDO CHAMPIONSHIPS

On Saturday 24 March 2018, I received a bronze medal at the Irish Open Judo Championships at the National Indoor Arena Dublin. This was my first competition at this great venue and it was a brilliant experience in terms of learning from other competitors, supporting my team mates and having them supporting me, as well as meeting elite athletes such as the world's number ten in Judo.

I also received a silver medal on Sunday 18 February 2018 at the Foyle Arena Derry Northern Ireland closed Judo Championships. Again, I learned a great deal and enhanced my confidence and skills. I also had the opportunity this year to train with the Ulster Academy Judo Squad which was intense but very enjoyable.

I have been doing Judo for just over six years and really enjoy the physical and mental training involved. The skills of determination, self-discipline, team spirit, staying calm under pressure and innovation are skills I believe help my studies, my other sports (Gaelic and Basketball) and will assist my career aspirations.

Conor McCann Year 10



ALL IRELAND SENIOR GOLF CHAMPIONS!

Having just been crowned the Senior Ulster Schools Golf Champions, Ciara Brennan and Olivia McCrystal went all the way to win the Irish Schools Golf Finals.

In the Senior category, Rathmore, Laurel Hill, Alexandra College, Loreto Kilkenny and St. Joseph's Secondary School had won District honours in order to earn their place in the All-Ireland finals. The girls fought off very stiff competition on the day and emerged as worthy winners.

The Mary Nowlan Cup for best gross score overall went to Ciara Brennan who had 26 gross points. What a fantastic achievement and the school is extremely proud of their successes.



NOONE CUP CHAMPIONS

We started to train around two months before our first match, with past pupil and Ulster Colleges All-Star Donal McKernan putting us through our paces from day one. Firstly, we had De la Salle and St. Paul's Bessbrook to contend with, but unfortunately St. Paul's could not make it on the day. We managed to beat De La Salle after valiantly fighting back from being a few points down at a half time, with Reuben Carleton scoring two crucial goals to get us over the line.

We found out that we were playing Crana College from Donegal in the final. We knew that they were going to be a big, physical side; so Mr. Peden taught us how to play to our strengths and work as a team. After the match being postponed for several weeks, due to adverse weather conditions, it was finally going to be played. After a shaky start with both sides coming in close at half time and a low scoring first half, Connla Maguire and Ruairc Murray managed to get us going with two goals in quick succession early in the second half, with a goal followed by Eamon Blaney. We continued to score and saw it through to the end of the game with a convincing score line of 7-12 to 0-1, and becoming Rathmore's first Noone cup champions! We are so proud of this achievement and I am extremely honoured to captain such an amazing team. We hope that this is the first of many pieces of silverware for the team.

David Robinson



U15 ACADEMY SQUAD

This year, I was fortunate enough to be selected along with Alex Watson and Orla Gilligan, for the Northern Ireland U15 Academy Squad. On the day of the trials, we took part in a mixture of drills aimed at assessing our ball handling, speed and change of direction. After that we took part in a match to test our match play. I was delighted to be chosen for the squad that we began training with in October. Here, we focused on improving our accuracy of passing and change of direction. Our coaches were Dawn Baxter and Gemma Hamilton, both ex-Northern Ireland players; they really helped improve our skills and offered us the guidance we needed in order to develop. Recently, we played in a tournament in Derry and it was great to have the opportunity to play against some of the best netball players in our age group. I have learnt many things from my experience in the Academy Squad that I can inject into my performance for matches and in terms of developing my confidence.

Lara Hanley Year 11



HOE BRIDGE

In February, our Year 9 and 10 netball teams hosted a school from England called 'Hoe Bridge Primary School'. They were on tour for their national finals which they went on to win for their third time and are the first team ever to achieve this. Upon their arrival, we all had lunch together before we started the match. We were extremely surprised at how good they were, especially for their age. It was also a great experience to play a team from another country and see their different tactics and game-plays. Everyone played exceptionally well and all in all it was a tremendously successful and exciting experience for all involved.

Jennifer Hughes Year 10



NETBALL WINNERS

With three netball teams in the NI Cup finals, 21 March was set to be an exciting day and one that we had all been waiting for. Proudly wearing our new sweatshirts, everyone was a bundle of nerves and excitement as we arrived at Lisburn Racquet's club, ready for the day ahead.

For the first game of the day, our Minor team took the court against Methody College Belfast in what would be an intense match from the first whistle. The team put out their best performance, fighting hard and working tirelessly to stay in the lead throughout the first quarter and were rewarded at halftime with a score of 8-5. It was after this that things got interesting. Once more the girls set out to maintain our lead, but Methody came back strong and fought their way back, equalising the score at 10-10 by the third quarter. It was all to play for in the last quarter and both teams worked with sheer determination right up until the final whistle, to end up with a score of 13-13. This meant that the match went to ten minutes of extra time and after the first five minutes of this period

the score was once again equal at 16-16. The intensity increased in the last five minutes and, rallied on by an excited crowd, our girls played their hearts out. The final score was reflective of the two brilliant and closely knitted teams who drew at 18-18!

This first highly competitive match set the tone for the whole day and it was not long before it was our Junior team's turn. They were also facing Methody. They started off a little nervously but their confidence quickly grew as they began playing. Some great spells of play were shown with excellent interceptions. Unfortunately, on the day, it was not meant to be, but our girls showed great determination, enthusiasm and spirit, battling to the very end and should be very proud of their performance.

Then came the much-anticipated Intermediate final, where we were up against strong opposition from Glenlola Collegiate. We were given a motivating team talk from our coach Laura, reminding us of how and why we got there, and also what our goal was. After defeating our Lady and St Patrick's Knock for the first time the week before to become winners of the premier league, we were

willing to give our all to win the double. We had a quick warm up and were soon ready to take the court by storm, cheered on by our supporters. The confidence we had in ourselves and each other paid off and allowed us to get off to a flying start, ending the first quarter 8-4. With crucial rebounds and interceptions from our defence, superb passing and working of the ball through centre court and accurate shooting, we maintained this lead throughout. When the final whistle blew with a score of 29-22 everyone was ecstatic. We did it- all of our hard work and training had paid off leaving us extremely proud of our performance.

I have been playing netball for Rathmore for five years now and it is safe to say that this has been the most challenging yet rewarding year so far. A massive thank-you from all our teams to our amazing, dedicated coach Laura Montgomery for her constant unwavering support and commitment for which we are very grateful. All three teams made the school as a whole immensely proud and we hope to carry these achievements and motivate us to do well next year.

Lauren Johnston Year 12



U17 NETBALL

At the start of this year, I was put forward to try out for the U17 Northern Ireland netball team. After three lengthy and demanding sets of trials, I was selected. In October, we flew to Cardiff to play against the Welsh national team, unfortunately they were the stronger team and beat us. Although we were able to take away a hard lesson and a great weekend of team bonding. It was a very enjoyable trip where we were coached by experts who gave us important lessons in developing our skills and also our mind-set in the lead up to games. I am excited for where the team will take us in the upcoming sporting year.

Rebecca Doyle Year 12



SKI TRIP 2018

Once again, this year Rathmore's amazing Ski Trip surpassed all of our expectations. The excitement of the week lying ahead for the Year 13 students made the 4am wake up on 11 February that bit more bearable. We spent a week in Lillehammer in Norway, where we skied at the Hafjell Olympic Ski centre.

It's safe to say that skiing was challenging at times and without the help of my amazing instructor - Philip, I would still be falling down the nursery slopes! Seeing everyone progress throughout the week and going down reds and even blacks (or in my case a big scary green slope) gave us all such a sense of achievement.

Each night, the teachers had planned an amazing activity for us. First we did the annual Rathmore poster competition; it's surprising how excited a group of Lower Sixth get over some markers and glitter. On the second night we did the amazing quiz and I can honestly say I have never seen the teachers get so competitive!

Our third night away was Valentine's Day and it was also Ash Wednesday. In the early evening just after dinner, some of us went to the local church where they said Mass half in Norwegian and half in English, we got our ashes and some people even did readings. Later that evening, we had a fancy dress Valentine's disco which was DJ'd by none other than Mr Tierney and Mr Graham. The teachers dressed up as 'Love Hearts' keeping with the Valentine's theme and we even had people dressed as 80s dance queens and 'Thing 1 and Thing 2.'

On our last three nights we went to a hockey game in the stadium beside our hotel, the atmosphere was absolutely amazing. We also went to the cinema in Lillehammer town and the amount of sweets and snacks at the kiosk was beyond anything I had ever seen. Finally on our last night we had our awards ceremony with people receiving awards for 'Best Skier', 'Most Determined' and 'Most Improved.'

We made it back to Belfast with only one broken collar bone and a few lost voices, however many more injuries came during the snow days when we got home! It was an amazing trip and I would recommend it to anyone! Everyone had an unforgettable experience in Norway, and we'd just like to thank all of the teachers who gave up their week's mid-term holiday to take us away. We all made amazing memories and I would give anything to be able to fall off a button lift just one more time.

Roma Bannon



SWIMMING

I am a committed swimmer training around eight times a week in preparation for upcoming events and furthering my swimming career. This year, I have competed at several Ulster and Irish competitions for swimming. At the Irish SC Championships, I came 5th in the 1500m freestyle and made finals on the 400m IM. At the Ulster LC Championships, I came away with a bronze medal in the 1500m freestyle. At the Ulster Qualifying Gala, I was lucky enough to come away with two gold, four silver and three bronze medals.

In lifesaving, I competed at the Welsh Lifesaving Championships and came away with two gold and

one silver medal. I was scheduled to compete, along with other students from school, at the National Speed Championships in Glasgow, but unfortunately this was cancelled due to adverse weather conditions. Swimming entails a lot of training both in and out of the pool and is very demanding. Myself and around five others trained for the RLSS National Lifesaving Championships all year which left us very disappointed to hear the competition was rescheduled for a time we could not commit to. We felt, both as a team and individually, that we could have done very well and placed in certain races, but we will focus towards this goal in next year's competition and hope for the same.

Ochran Mallon Year 13

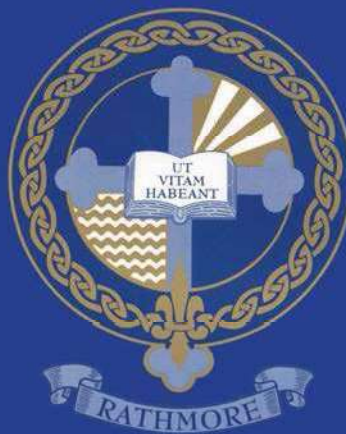


MY CROSS COUNTRY EXPERIENCE

My first race was the districts. This is a race between the cross country runners in Belfast and around one hundred competitors. I remember how cold a day it was and we were warned to stay on the move to keep warm. Despite this, I came third and went through to the Ulster competition. The Ulster's is a race between the top fifteen people in their districts and others who made it through with their teams, amounting to a similar amount of around one hundred competitors. The Ulster's were held in Mullusk and the route was the muddiest I have ever seen or run in! It was a tough day with even tougher conditions.

Pearse McBriarty Year 10





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