

# The OWL

Belfast Royal Academy

Christmas 2019





## *The Owl Team 2019*



## BELFAST ROYAL ACADEMY

The Belfast Royal Academy was founded in 1785 and is the oldest school in the city. Originally situated near St Anne's Cathedral, in what is now Academy Street, it was transferred to the Cliftonville Road in 1880, when the present building was erected. For more than a century, the School was named Belfast Academy. In 1888, Queen Victoria granted permission for the School to style itself Belfast Royal Academy.

It is a voluntary grammar school and its management is vested in a Board of Governors on which parents and teachers are represented, along with Governors elected by members of the Academy and nominees of the Minister of Education.

Any past pupil who attended BRA for at least three years and who is twenty one or over may, subject to the Governors, become a member of the Academy upon payment of a registration fee of £1. Applications should be made to the Bursar at the School.

Past pupils are encouraged to join the Old Boys' and Old Girls' Associations. The cost of membership and contact details are as follows:

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Vice Chairperson: Ms C. Dillon  
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Hon. Treasurer: Miss J. Richardson  
To join the Association, please email: [BRAoldgirls@outlook.com](mailto:BRAoldgirls@outlook.com)

Registered Charity Number: NIC104739

Annual Membership.....£5.00

### OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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Hon. Secretary: Mr P. McKenna c/o Belfast Royal Academy,  
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Hon. Treasurer: Mr N. Simon, 210 Belfast Road,  
Dunadry, Co. Antrim, BT41 2EY  
Membership, annual dinner  
and alumni enquires: [alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net](mailto:alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net)  
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Art & Crafts Technician	Mrs. L. Atkins
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Estates Assistant	Mr. C. Rogers
Grounds Maintenance Supervisor	Mr. M. A. Gaw, B.Tech.
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Maintenance Assistant	Mr. J. Craig
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Janitor	Mr. K. Hogg
	Mr. D. McKee
Supervisory Assistant	Mrs. A. Thompson
Modern Languages Assistants	Miss S. Astl
	Mr. E. Chavez
	Mrs. A. Richard





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Mrs. E. Wilson, B.Ed.

## ANCILLARY STAFF

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Pre-Preparatory Group Assistant  
Building Supervisor  
Cook  
Part-time Catering Assistant  
Lunch Supervisor/PT Classroom Assistant  
Part-time Classroom Assistant  
Part-time Classroom Assistant/  
Part-time Nursery/After Schools Assistant

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Mr. R. Crawford  
Mrs. L. Johnston  
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Miss L. Mitchell  
Mrs. A. Millar  
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# Valete

## ANITA CAROUX



facilitate its remit would not have not been possible without Anita's unstinting support, dedication and good humour.

We wish Anita the very best for her future career in France. She will be much missed as a friend and a colleague and we will always appreciate the value of service she gave to the Chemistry Department.

*B.M.M.*

## COLLEEN CLYDE

Anita Caroux was the Chemistry Technician for twelve years at the Academy, starting in January 2007. Anita was one of the most professional, hard-working, self-motivated members of staff that I have had the privilege of working with. Nothing was too much trouble for her and she would carry out all tasks with no fuss whatsoever. Her attention to detail was exceptional and everything was carried out with a smile.

The Chemistry Department will miss this smiling face from the top floor of the Bruce and her commitment to her post of technician. She was the catalyst and driving force of the Chemistry Department and our ability to







Mrs Clyde has long associations with the school, having been a former pupil. She joined the school as a staff member in August 1999 in the role of Receptionist / Telephonist after a successful career in banking. She continued in this important role in the school as the first point of contact for visitors and parents until 2011, when she decided to take a change in direction. She was at that time appointed to the role of Sixth Form Study Supervisor, giving her the opportunity to work directly with pupils and to try to impose an atmosphere which was conducive to study for the pupils for whom she had responsibility. She continued in this role until her retirement in May 2019.

In this role, she was both methodical and consistent, adopting a 'firm but fair' approach. This role was at times, challenging, given the reluctance of some pupils to utilise their study periods effectively. Over time, she developed a system which worked well, and many of the pupils she supervised appreciated her approach and realised that she had their best interests at heart.

Colleen also assisted with preparing articles for the web-site, and assisted in administration tasks and other duties which arose throughout the school.

She has made many good friends during her time at the school, and staff frequently took her advice on the best 'fine dining' venues in the Province, an area on which she is an authority! We wish both Colleen and her husband George well in their retirement, and hope that she will have more time to spend trialling new recipes and developing her legendary cooking skills. We hope she will also have the opportunity to enjoy many more relaxing cruises in the years ahead- no doubt she has already booked a number of cruises for the 19/20 year during term time!

**E.H.**

## ALBERT CREIGHTON



It is my pleasure and privilege to say a few words on behalf of the RE department and the School about our departing friend and colleague, Albert Creighton.

Albert Allan Creighton has finally called time on his career at Belfast Royal Academy after 42 years. In his time here, he acted as Head of PE briefly, was Head of Religious Education, was appointed Senior Teacher and eventually Vice-Principal. In 2015, he stepped down to a three-day week phased retirement, ultimately retiring in June 2019. Besides the notable career progression mentioned, it would be remiss not to mention the huge impact Albert has had on everyone he has come into contact with, be it his fellow teachers, ancillary staff, pupils and parents.

Albert was a brilliant classroom teacher who got the best out of his pupils. His love for the movie, "Dead Poets Society" highlights this to some extent – a movie in which Robin Williams, the school teacher, uses some pretty unconventional methods to engage his pupils to a point where they are (for want of a better expression), "eating out of his hands" and have a genuine desire to learn. Whether standing on



desks, smashing cups over at Wingfield or teaching from his seat at the front of the classroom, Albert's classes were never dull and he was a superb classroom teacher.

I was privileged to see Albert's leadership qualities first-hand, within the RE department. He always led by example. He created a vision that he believed in and that he believed his department could and would follow. He inspired those around him and led with wisdom and expertise. I can say with my hand-on-heart that we would not have such a strong department today, were it not for him building those foundations. This was evident during the week of his final term in June, when we as a department had a fabulous evening, where Vera Heaslip and Jane Connolly were able to join us to reminisce and celebrate Albert's career.

Outside the classroom, Albert's leadership and ability to inspire, continued. His contribution on the Rugby field was vast, not only as a very talented player himself but as a leader of young men. His personal honours include captaining the BHS 1st XV, playing for Ulster Schools, representing Loughborough University 1st XV and eventually North Rugby Club 1st XV.

As a school master, he was in charge of 7 Medallion XV teams, leading 5 of those teams to finals. He was also master in charge of the 1st XV for 6 years, reaching the semi-final of the Schools Cup twice.

Unknown to many, Albert held the post of master in charge of the 'Save the Children Fund' from 1978-1994, further demonstrating the genuine care he has for others.

Furthermore, Albert was the instigator and driving force behind the 'life-changing' Malawi trip. Hundreds of people (staff and pupils) have benefitted from this trip and it has impacted the lives of thousands of Malawians over the past ten years.

Albert also instigated and organised the hugely successful MVI Form Ball, where staff and pupils enjoy a social event in a setting that all are (reasonably) at ease with.

Other activities include his involvement with Junior and Senior Christian Unions, trips to Rome with the RE dept, ski-trips and his latest favourite hobby, dressing up in Lycra, AKA - Cycling.

Ultimately, I believe that Albert has called time on his career to spend more time with his family. I believe that Albert's family are a credit to him and Caroline. Albert in his role as Husband, father and more recently, grandfather has excelled and you should be very proud. I know that much of this is down to the values he received from his parents, and his faith. I know that his faith is central to his life and believe that with that he will never go far wrong.

Albert, I want to thank you on behalf of everyone connected with Belfast Royal Academy for your tireless work, your excellent humour, your friendship and for your impact and huge influence that has touched the lives of thousands of young people over 42 years. Although you are not leaving us for another post, I want to assure you that you will be greatly missed. I wish you on behalf of everyone here, the happiest of retirements.

**P.M.**

**ANDREA KERNS**





Andrea joined the school in May 2014 as a Senior Administrator. This was a new role in the school, to assist the Vice-Principals and Teaching Staff with school organisation and various events.

From the outset, Andrea displayed impressive organisational skills, and set up systems including electronic filing systems, which have proved invaluable for those following in this role.

She was extremely dedicated and conscientious, and established lasting friendships with many members of staff. As evidence of her commitment to the School, Andrea continues to be involved with the school through Friends of the Academy.

We wish her well in her new role, and hope that she will continue to keep in touch with the staff here.

*E.H.*

## KRISTIN KYLE



Kristin Kyle joined BRA in September 2015 as a part time teacher of Technology. She left in March to take up a full time position in Down High School in Downpatrick.

In her years at the Academy, Kristin proved herself as a committed and highly collegiate teacher who was always willing to help her colleagues and pupils in any way she could. She was highly motivated to ensuring the best for the pupils she taught. She prepared assiduously for her classes and would often devote great time to finding aspects of a topic which would interest every pupil she taught. As a member of the Technology department, her contribution to preparing high quality resources for pupils and her passion and expertise for the electronics aspects of the A level course were highly valued.

While primarily teaching Technology, Kristin also taught RE, HE, ICT and LLW. In doing so, she demonstrated the breadth of her skills and the transferability of her fundamental gifts as a classroom teacher. The variety of her timetable meant that each September her registers were filled with hundreds of names but every name was learnt in an impressively short time and a pupil who perhaps only saw her once a fortnight could be sure that within the first few weeks Ms Kyle would be able to greet them by name in a corridor.

Kristin enthusiastically gave her time to the wider life of the school. She assisted with the Young Engineers club and was a key member of school trips to Paris and Malawi. On these trips she displayed a deft ability to combine the required authority of managing pupils in an unfamiliar environment with good humour- her supervision ensured the safety of the pupils but it was her personal presence that enhanced their enjoyment of these trips. As a member of the Pottinger house team, her organisational skills were appreciated in organising the technical aspects of the assemblies and running the Google classroom. It is for no want of





effort by Kristin that the Evans Trophy still (unfortunately) eludes Pottinger.

We wish Kristin all the best as she continues her career at Down High. While she will undoubtedly retain close ties to Academy staff, she will be greatly missed around the school as a colleague and friend.

**S.C.S.**

## **KAREN STUART**



On completion of a degree in Computer Science, Karen was employed as a software engineer. After a year in industry, which obviously honed her technical skills, Karen made the move into teaching.

She began her teaching career in Belfast Model School for Girls and taught the full range of general and vocational subjects within the ICT Department as well as having a pastoral role as Assistant Head of Year. After eight years' teaching in the Model, Karen successfully applied for the post of Head of ICT Department in Ashfield Girls' School, a post she held for one year. When the post of

Director of ICT came up in BRA she successfully applied for this and began in May 2014. Karen very quickly established herself as a highly regarded teacher and Subject Leader. It is clear to us that her excellent rapport with pupils, parents and staff, enthusiasm for her subject and sense of fun make her eminently suited to the teaching profession.

Karen has always prioritised giving the pupils access to the best curriculum at all key stages and she designed the KS3 IT curriculum to ensure that the pupils were exposed to coding at an early age and therefore better positioned to make the transition to GCSE Computer Science. At A level she introduced the Digital Technologies and System Software Development courses and her pupils have long recognised her enthusiasm for the subject and her professionalism throughout their school career.

Karen is always well prepared for class, always on time and her encouragement to all her pupils delivered as a mixture of stern adherence to coursework deadlines and a motherly concern for those pupils who were struggling with the workload usually ensured that the pupils performed to their best. Indeed, her expertise as a teacher was rewarded last year when one of her pupils was awarded first place in Northern Ireland in the A level SSD course. Karen has been an excellent mentor and role model for the other members of the department over her time in BRA especially those staff who were 'persuaded' to deliver the KS3 curriculum.

Karen does have a very parental attitude towards the pupils she teaches. One glance into her classroom in the Crombie will see the pupils working hard but also availing of the soft drinks freely dispersed from the fridge in the back of the classroom, the Percy Pigs consumed at a rate proportional to the errors in their programming code and occasional



Domino's pizza orders when deadlines have been met.

Karen has embraced life within BRA and has shown the pupils how much she values them by supporting them in their extra-curricular activities. She is a faithful and loyal supporter at cricket matches and her own musical expertise in playing the flute and saxophone made her even more appreciative of the Music department concerts. Karen is genuinely interested in our pupils and their academic, sporting, musical and other extra-curricular activities and the pupils respect that and this is reflected in their generous response to her.

When the post as Subject Leader of Computing in Down High School was advertised and Karen decided to apply, we were fairly certain she would be appointed. In fact, we had the job advert written and ready to be published before she had her interview. It is such a sensible decision for Karen – Subject Leader in her former school, 20 minutes' drive from home and where her eldest boy is a pupil. The lure of the lie-in instead of spending an hour in a traffic jam on the Westlink was too much to resist. We know that our loss is very much Down High's gain and we hope that they appreciate you as much as we do. A member of staff remarked to me how quickly you settled into BRA and became one of us and that is a testament to your generous nature, your professionalism and strong work ethic.

Please accept our sincere appreciation for everything that you have brought to Belfast Royal Academy over the last five years and with it our best wishes for much health and happiness in the years to come.

*H.W.*



## CATHERINE SCULLY



Catherine's academic journey began at St Joseph's Primay School, Drumquin, and from thence to Loreto Convent Grammar School in Omagh where she took A Levels in Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Physics and Irish. She then read for a Pure and Applied Mathematics and Computer Science degree at Queen's University, Belfast, graduating with First Class Honours. With a career in teaching in mind, a PGCE in Mathematics followed. However, lured by her heart for Physics and Mathematics, she returned to the Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics Department at Queen's to complete her PhD "Semi-classical phase-integral solutions of a Fokker-Plank equation for a Ferromagnetic particle" under the supervision of Professor Derrick Crothers.

This temporary hiatus from teaching ended in September 1993 when Catherine was appointed by Mr Silery to the teaching staff at BRA as, "A teacher of Mathematics to A-Level". She quickly gained a strong reputation



with pupils as an excellent class teacher, not only because of her mathematical prowess, but particularly because of the care she took with pupils, of whatever ability, to ensure that they fulfilled their mathematical potential. Whether it was long division with Form 1 or conic sections with the Middle Sixth, her desire to see all of her pupils develop fully, both academically and intellectually, made her a favourite teacher in the Mathematics Department. Her presentation, whether oral or written, was always wonderfully clear, and I for one have always envied the quality of her hand-writing as it often appeared on the white board of the room we shared. Mr Young wrote of her, “Dr Scully is one of the leading Mathematics teachers in the province. She is very strong in all area of teaching and learning, equally at home with Oxbridge candidates as she is with lower achievers”, an apt and fitting description of Catherine in the classroom.

It was clear from early on that Catherine’s organisational abilities and pastoral care for pupils would mean that she was destined for higher positions in school. Indeed, there are not many roles in school that she hasn’t filled: Head of Year, Head of the Mathematics Department, Deputy Exams Officer and Deputy Senior Teacher, Exams Officer and Senior Teacher, Vice Principal and Deputy Principal, all done with the same efficiency, aplomb, good grace and a sense of humour.

Catherine embodied BRA’s ethos not only as a fine classroom teacher, but also in her dedication to and participation in the extra-curricular life of school: the Chess Club, Irish for beginners, the Belvedere exchange, the Staff Room Committee, and more recently the Eco group were among her many interests. Of course, dearest to her own heart was the Traditional Music Group which she started in April 1995. Since then, the Trad group has played a full part in the musical life of school, and, like everything that Catherine undertakes, its standards have always been amazingly high. Of the many highlights over the years,

representing the School at the Royal Albert Hall was perhaps the pinnacle, and a fitting reward for her many hours of patient tuition and choreography.

Catherine’s dedication to our school has known no limits. Many times out of school hours her car remained the only one in the carpark, indeed I would sometimes come into school at some random time to find a post-it on the Crombie alarm: a signal that Catherine had not yet left the building! Her generosity with time is legendary, often spent doing vital things that no one else would either see, or have an appreciation of the amount of time and effort involved: organisation for AQE days and Open days, special circumstances for public examinations, organising prefects, Special Educational Needs, phone-calls to parents and UCAS, to name but a few.

Catherine and I have had many discussions over the years about what is it in the nature of BRA that makes it such a special place. Philosophers call it essence; we might call it soul. Catherine Scully has been the soul of BRA over twenty-five years. Part of that soul has always been the willingness to go the extra mile for pupils, and indeed there are many former pupils of the School who could testify to Catherine’s care for them in times of personal difficulty. Whether as counsellor, advisor, or confidante, she was always ready with a listening ear, always calm, never rushed, always giving pupils the sense that her time was theirs until the matter was sorted. Her heart particularly for those who were struggling, her patience and her determination to make things better has been an inspiration.

We wish Catherine well in her new position as Principal of Jordanstown School. She will be a blessing to the young people there, of that there can be no doubt.

**G.J.B**





# Obituaries

## JENNIFER NICHOLL



Former pupil, Jennifer Nicholl died in March 2019. She was 54.

Jennifer came to the Academy from Cliftonville Primary School. She later worked as a dental nurse before becoming a child chaperone for various film and television studios, as well as Belfast's Grand Opera House.

Jennifer finally succumbed to cancer in the Mater Hospital, Belfast, having kept her illness from her family until near the end of her life. In keeping with her selfless personality, she did not want anyone to pity her or to see her ill; neither did she wish to interrupt the professional development of her two daughters,

to whom she was devoted. Alice had just started work as a dentist in England, and Connie was studying Veterinary Science at Grenada in the West Indies.

Jennifer Nicholl was a kind and generous woman. In addition to her busy caring life, she volunteered for numerous charities, including the Royal British Legion. She will be sadly missed by her family, those she worked with, and the many others she encountered in her charitable work.

## DR JOHN GRAY





John Gray, whose family had a long association with the Academy, died in August 2019. Like Jennifer Nicholl, John died at the untimely age of 54.

In 1983 John Gray achieved a notable triumph when he became the first Academy pupil to win both a scholarship from the English Speaking Union and the Sir Francis Evans Leaving Scholarship. After two terms at Salisbury School, Connecticut, John went up to Queen's College, Oxford, where his elder brother and sister, Peter and Helen were studying Medicine. After graduating in Biochemistry, John then moved to Queen's University, Belfast where, in 1996, he graduated in Medicine.

Dr Gray joined the staff of the Ulster Hospital in 2002. His career as a consultant began in the Mater Hospital in 2008, and in 2016 he transferred to the South Eastern Trust. He was renowned throughout his career as an outstanding clinician, a considerate colleague and a deeply thoughtful individual. Away from his busy professional commitments, John Gray involved himself with reconciliation work at the Corrymeela Community, and with the rehabilitation of young offenders.

It was during his time at the Ulster Hospital that John met his future wife Sarah, with whom he had three children. His sudden death is an irreparable loss to his wife and family; it also deprives the wider community of gifted doctor, and a humane, generous citizen.





# Literary Contributions

## The Turtle

As slow as a snail he drives through the ocean,  
Majestic is every motion without causing a commotion,  
As green as an emerald he dips and dives,  
Again and again he strives,  
Safety is all he craves,  
Trying to stay away from the crashing waves,  
He's got the shield of a shoulder,  
To protect itself in field,  
As gentle as a turtle,  
It cruises through the endless sheet of ink we call the ocean.

*Shane Gaffey (I)*



## The Chicken Nugget

One sunny day, I was hanging out with my third cousin, Bertha, and I turned around and there was a man standing behind us. He slowly reached down and picked Bertha up. I was outraged as he took her away as we were in the middle of discussing *Little Quack Squawk*, the rapper chicken! I started to peck his legs and these horrible boots he's been wearing since, like, 1990. He must have heard my thoughts or just had enough of me pecking him angrily and let out a low grunt and swooped me off the warm ground.

That made me even more angry, so I squawked as loud as I could until I was bundled into a cage, at the back of a van, with 13 other chickens. I could even see my Uncle Jerry in the corner. The chicken beside me was wearing Chick Chick Chanel 6.2 and I wondered where she got it as it smelt amazing. Anyway, our



driver got in and shut the door and sped off. Bertha and I wondered what we were doing in such a dark van. We thought we might be going on a road trip to China Cluck, or maybe even to get our feathers trimmed at Auntie Sandra's Salon. But, unfortunately that was not the case.



The van stopped and we 15 chickens huddled together and the van's door opened up, fifteen different men stood there ready to take one chicken each away. The first man reached in and took Uncle Jerry (a nice plump chicken) away into the unknown. Bertha was next, then me, and we quickly said our goodbyes, and that she would squawk me on messenger later. As I was hauled away, I had a sense of unease at where I was, the way he was holding me and the sounds and smells. I was so scared, I let a white egg come out by accident.

I was roughly put down on a metal table and I squawked in protest as I had just gone to the gym and my bones were aching. Then I realised what was going on as he was putting on gloves and reached towards my neck. This is what my chicken parents warned me about! I need to get out of here! But it was too late. He put his hands on my neck and twisted and everything went black!

*Sophia Beswetherick (I)*

## All About Me

Swimming is the sport that I love most.  
I'm pretty good but I don't want to boast,  
I love everything about cats,  
From the way they walk to the way they talk.  
Holly is the name of my pet cat,  
She is black with a patch of white.  
She sleeps during the day and during the night.  
My favourite food is calamari,  
It is chewy and crispy,  
It reminds me of holidays,  
Because that's when I like to eat it daily.  
Karate is another sport I enjoy,  
At the start our Sensei shouts, "Yoi!"  
I love B.R.A,  
It is a great place to go to school,  
And much to my delight it has a swimming pool,  
The junior choir is great,  
And the songs that we sing are all fresh and up to date,  
This is my poem all about me,  
I hope you enjoyed it,  
Now you can go and make some tea.

*Anna McWilliams (I)*







### Look Before You Waddle

As I waddled around on the glacial wooden floor looking for safe place away from the massive feet of the large creatures, I remembered what my caring mother had once warned me about - staying high up from the floor and away from the dog. Billy was a careless boy, he was rushing out of the door to catch his bus, when suddenly I felt a powerful push to my beautiful, green, precious little shell. I slipped quickly off the black, shiny marble counter at about one hundred miles per hour. I flew ferociously down from the 3-foot counter (that was now practically impossible to get back up to!). I let out an enormous caterwaul but you see, since I'm a turtle, not one person could hear me due to my tiny little voice box.

So, as you most probably guessed, I was in an utter amount of pain... and that brings us back to me, Sid, waddling around on this cold floor. Unfortunately, I was just a bit too late, I was a split second away from my death and I saw a dark, gloomy shadow and felt a push on my shell and I just wish that I was more careful to look before I waddled.

*Caitlin Shaw (I)*

### All About Me

This poem is all about me,  
From the hair on my head to the features you  
can see.

I have brown crazy hair that won't sit still,  
Which isn't what you'd exactly call brill!  
My eyes are as blue as sapphires,  
I love music and animals and my heart's desire,  
Is to help save the world from things like  
global  
warming, pollution and wildfire.  
My favourite book series is Harry Potter,  
I'm a very big fan!  
For example, did you know that Hermione's  
patronus is an otter?  
I think you see what I mean and,  
Don't tell me that you've only seen the  
movies!  
That is most definitely not groovy!  
I don't really care about what I wear,  
Or if I've remembered to brush my hair.  
I just care about being kind all around,  
Because that is what life is really about.

*Beth Stewart (I)*







## Into The Mind

My mind is weak. My mind is weary,  
My mind has become dark and dreary,  
A look inside makes me teary,  
However, the part that is most eerie,  
Those who look upon me do not fear me,  
They look and see a happy face,  
Hiding the deepest darkest place,  
This thing is the cause of my internal war,  
From this moment it will be forgotten  
forevermore.

*Ethan Kielty (II)*



## Paralyzed

I ran as fast as my legs could carry me, deeper and deeper into the forest. The air felt cold all around me. Every breath I took felt like there was a knife in my chest. Footsteps seemed to be getting louder and louder. The trees with their warped, twisted branches created faces from within the shadows. I came to a sudden halt.

My lungs were burning inside my chest. Shouts and screams came from behind me. I suddenly

turned around only to see a pair of large, menacing red eyes staring me down. I was frozen, paralyzed. I couldn't speak, I couldn't breathe, I couldn't move. The cold air wrapped itself around me. The creature started growling. Every bone in my body was screaming at me to run, but I couldn't. Was this my fate? Was this how I was going to leave this world?

I guess you'll never know...

*Carla-Lina Gueye-Dorval (II)*



## A Survivor's Guide to the Apocalypse

I remember when the missiles rained from the sky like fiery hail. The mushroom clouds made of smoke and radiation consumed all of my hopes and dreams for the future I had once wanted.

There had been an old man who had been saying that this was going to happen since the end of the war, but no one had believed him. In hindsight, we should have. He had built a bomb bunker for this very situation, so it was a



safe place to hide away from the new world created by the bombs. My family had been kind to him, so he allowed us to stay with him.

If we rationed well we would have enough food and supplies to last a month or two, this meant I didn't have to face the mass panic and looting with Ma. She wouldn't stop saying, "He'll be fine, he'll be fine, he'll be fine," while rocking back and forth. She must have been talking about Pa, he was in the army but he never said what section of it he was in. My friend's Pa was in the army and he told him where they were stationed but my Pa never told me. Actually he never told me anything about what he did in the army, so he must have been very important.

We almost didn't survive for very long. This was a week or two after the old man had locked the bunker doors and about two weeks before Ma became depressed. We were all playing cards when we heard a dull, thumping noise on the other side of the three-inch-thick doors accompanied by the sound of a person shouting for help. A few seconds later we heard a scream followed by the sounds of loud, manic eating.

When Ma became depressed she began drinking the stored beer, once she drank enough of the stuff she would finally go to sleep. I had to look after myself. The old man had gone outside to see what had happened to the area around us but when he got back inside he succumbed to radiation poisoning. I would collect rain water through a filter and eat when I should.

Eventually we ran out of food and that pushed me out of the bunker. Yeah just me, Ma wouldn't go outside no matter what I did. She was at death's door when I had to leave the bunker. She did say one final thing to me though, "Stay safe." With that she died. I looted the last of the things in the bunker and

poured a small Jerry can of fuel down the cellar, lit and threw a match. As the smoke and fire began to bellow from the hatch I cried my eyes out for the last time. That was when the new me was born from the ashes of the old world.

*Andrew Cleland (II)*



**Blast This!**

## Prologue

It was an alright plan, of course it didn't account for us getting stabbed in the back. The plan was to infiltrate a hostile base masquerading as a ski resort in the Swiss mountains. We wanted to find out what had happened to some missing Swiss soldiers who had been sent to investigate said hostile base. We also had to find several tourists who had gone missing at the base several months ago.





Due the fact that soldiers went missing, it was assumed that the cause was terrorists, not bad weather. The UNSF (United Nations' Special Forces, the secret service I work for) then sent in my squad, a spy team from an international secret service made up from agents and soldiers from many intelligence service or armies.

Our mission was to infiltrate the ski resort, confirm the status of the missing, administer first aid, liberate the ski resort and disable any defences. Our team was made up of ten different agents including myself who's in charge. I'm a captain from MI6; I was first in command. The second in command was the lieutenant from the German intelligence. Third in command was a regimental sergeant major from the CIA. Fourth was a medic from the Canadian secret service. The remaining members of the team came from Polish intelligence, the Australian secret service and the French army. Not everyone made it out alive.

*Diarmund Butler (II)*



**Seesaw**

Young and juvenile souls bounced up and down,  
The repeated seesaw game, is innocent,  
Soon the young blood ages, becoming sour and bitter,



Much like the arguments, petty.

The meaningless emotions, the affection fading,  
Wondering who will get off this repeating seesaw game first,  
The souls are no longer parallel,  
Whoever got off first, would cause the other the pain of a thousand falls.

I witnessed this repetitive seesaw game,  
I was arrogant and naive to be oblivious to the meaningless emotions,  
I was a mere infant when the seesaw game began,  
My father was the first to get off, his pride had swallowed him whole,  
My mother took the fall, even though my father seemed victorious,  
He was alone, my mother had fallen but earned the true admiration of her precious son.

*Simone Simeou (II)*

**Extract from 'A Spy Story'**

Arnold Wojzek is a private man. He knows how to keep himself unknown. That is what his work requires him to do. He is a hired assassin. He is also very wealthy as he has completed many missions. His job pays very well as it is very dangerous. Arnold hides his wealth as he



thinks it will attract too much attention. He doesn't have a wife or kids and has no immediate family. He thinks that it just gets in the way of his work. He also has a completely different name than the one he was given at birth. In fact, he has three different identities.



He has all the normal things a normal man would have, a birth certificate, passports and everything else for his three identities. He is currently under the name of Kevin Smith. Arnold Wojzek is a tall man with muscles that bulge out of his shirt. He is also a very smart man and has used his wit to get out of some bad situations. He is from a little village in Russia called Estrov. It is now completely destroyed, thanks to Arnold. He killed everyone who once lived there in case they had any memory of him. Arnold does not care about anyone but himself. He is a very ruthless man.

David Patton is a 'normal' 17-year-old boy. He lives in a quiet village just outside Belfast. Early one Sunday morning, his Mum sent him

down to the corner shop to buy some milk for breakfast. David was busy playing a game on his phone and walked straight into a tall man with muscles bulging out of his shirt. "Oops, sorry," said David. The man just looked at him and grunted. David noticed the man had dropped a piece of paper but when he turned around to give him it to him, the man had disappeared. David shoved the paper in his pocket and completely forgot about it.

What people don't realise about 'ordinary' David is that he is actually a Special Operations Agent who works for MI6. He was chosen by MI6 because he had exceptional marks in maths, science and P.E. in school.

***Kenzie McColgan (II)***



### **Diary Entry Inspired by 'War Horse'**

*Thursday 3rd September, 1914*





I did it. I have locked myself away in the bedroom from Albert. He is not on speaking terms with me anymore. When we came back to the farm he merely glared at me before walking through the door.

I went straight to Lord Denton with the money. He asked me how I got it so quickly, and I replied with a mumble about selling one of the farm horses to the army. I wanted to yell at him for putting me in this situation, for making me loath to go back to the very place I was trying so hard to keep, but I couldn't. I would have to face Albert's rage again.

Albert's rage is not a hot-tempered, brief irritation.



It is a long, almost melancholy anger, that will never truly go away. It is his way of making me accountable for what I did with Joey. His glares to represent his anger, his anger that I did not consult him first, that I did not even tell him in advance, so he could tell Joey all his goodbyes that now must hang on his tongue for perhaps the rest of his life.

But Albert's silence speaks the greatest volumes. His silence represents the now empty part of him, once filled with Joey, but now filled with just flat, lifeless memories.

I usually try to stick to only drinking only on a Tuesday evening, but I think I might just go down to the pub now. My hangover has come and gone, and on top of the stress of trying to start Zoey ploughing for the winter, I have Albert constantly reminding me of what I did with Joey.

Just a few sips of alcohol and everything becomes so much more manageable. It's all a façade, really. The effect is temporary. But still, to me now, as ever, it is a fair price to pay for those few hours of escape.

*Clara Walsh (I)*

## **WHY I BELIEVE WE MUST SAVE THE OCEAN FROM PLASTIC**

Right now, billions and billions of plastic items are choking our land, rivers, streams and oceans. This is completely unacceptable! Scientists estimate that our oceans are filled with seven million tonnes of plastic, from bottles to microbeads - that's a staggering truck full of rubbish every minute! Our oceans are turning into a plastic soup. Every day plastic entangles countless, helpless seabirds, fish and sea mammals. They mistake it for food and then it clogs their stomachs. Plastic is now entering every level of the food chain and therefore in the seafood we eat. Big companies must act to reduce their plastic footprint as 80% of plastic in our oceans comes from supermarket packaging. The time for change is now.

Now you know why the ocean must be saved, you must be informed how. There are many ways to do this: you could start by simply recycling water bottles or picking up plastic





litter on the street. There is one big way you can help, and that's cutting down on single-use-plastics including water bottles, take out packaging, plastic bags and straws. These create pollution, destroy ecosystems and endanger marine life.

According to the WWF, there could be a pound of plastic for every three pounds of fish within the next decade, and by 2050 there will be as much plastic in the ocean as fish. To minimize your impact, you should remove single-use-plastics from your life. Straws could be the start of your journey, if everyone used just five less straws per year, 5 billion straws would be kept out of landfills a year! Do you want your children to grow up eating plastic in seafood? Yes, it's actually happening!



As plastics spread around the ocean a substance known as Styrofoam breaks into smaller parts, and its polystyrene parts sink and pollution spreads. Not only are toxins in plastic affecting the ocean, like sponges, they soak up toxins from outside sources and can potentially harm us. This is because, as I mentioned, fish

and sea mammals mistake the chemically contagious plastic for food and ingest it. This means when we ingest the food it still contains some of the unremoved toxins that could eventually link to cancers and health problems. The long term causes of plastic pollution are yet to be discovered. Please, if you care about the safety of our oceans, our animals, us and most importantly our children, act now and save the ocean. Follow some of these tips I have shared and if you can, donate to an environmental charity. Thank you.

*William Glendinning (III)*

## PORTRUSH TRAVEL BLOG

The day started with a wonderful spell of sunshine and a soothing breeze of northern wind. It is 27 June, 2019. Today we are going to our form trip to Portrush which is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful places in Northern Ireland. All the students of our Form were asked to meet at the school campus at approximately nine in the morning. According to plan, everyone met at the school campus in a very exciting and jolly mood. We went to the dining hall and sat there for about half an hour and the teachers gave us information regarding the trip and what we could do in Portrush.

It was 10:30am in the morning and we were set to go. The bus was about fifteen minutes late but it passed like 15 seconds because there were so many friends all around. Just imagine the whole Form 4 - about 200 pupils at a single place! Wasn't it amazing? It was indeed one of the best experiences of the whole academic year.

We boarded on the bus along with our house. Glimpses of enjoyment and happiness were clear in everyone's face. Everybody indeed was looking forward to the wonderful moments they were going to enjoy. We were busy in planning about what we were going to do in Portrush. But for everyone, 'Barry's Big

Dipper' was the first choice. So for anyone who doesn't know what Barry's is, it is one of the best amusement parks in Northern Ireland therefore everyone was excited, especially me as I had never been to Barry's before.



Finally, we reached Portrush. The wonderful spell of sunshine, soothing breeze and the natural beauty of Portrush really impressed us. Then the members of staff gave us a token which let us board on any of the rides available. My mates and I chose to board the big dipper roller coaster with our free single token. Everyone was very thrilled and impressed by the experience of the big dipper. Then almost every one of us went to the next thrilling ride, 'The Extreme Orbiter.' It was unimaginably thrilling and everyone was exhilarated by the intensity and trajectory of the ride. It was good, but some of us felt dizzy for a while. After that we went to all the other rides, one by one. The rides had unique and specific excitement and thrill. I personally prefer the bumper car dodgem.

After finishing all the rides in Barry's amusement park, we went to Dominos where we had pizza and some of us had ice cream from the shop inside Barry's amusement. At last, after a delightful day, we went back to our respective buses according to our houses which took us back to school. It was definitely a wonderful and remarkable day for all of the pupils in Form 4.

*Adrib Ahmed (IV)*

## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE ABOUT PLASTIC WASTE?

Plastic pollution is a big deal - so big in fact that it has killed over one million aquatic animals. With that in mind, when will plastics become too much for humans to handle and kill us? By 2050 there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish. To put that into perspective there are currently 3.5 trillion fish in the sea. Fish eat micro plastic and we eat fish... Does this seriously not concern anyone, that when we eat fish for dinner we could be potentially poisoning ourselves over and over again? Yes, right now it might not kill us but what about in 40-50 years' time? As the amount of plastic in the ocean increases, the more fish eat it. Will humanity have to stop eating one of its main food sources for good?



If you don't believe that plastic production and plastic dumping into the ocean is a big deal, think about these facts. One million plastic bottles are produced every minute worldwide, 91% of these bottles aren't recycled. One rubbish truck of plastic enters the ocean every minute, that's 1440 rubbish trucks of plastic every day. So what can we do about plastic pollution?



Well, here's a list of just a few things you can do to help recycle:

1. Empty plastic bottles and containers before you recycle.
2. Give them a quick rinse.
3. Squash plastic drinks bottles to save space in your recycling container.
4. Remove pumps from liquid soap and cleaning product bottles, as these are not recyclable.
5. Put trigger spray tops back on bottles.

We need to do something to help our environment soon or there will be serious consequences.

*Aaron Gourley (IV)*

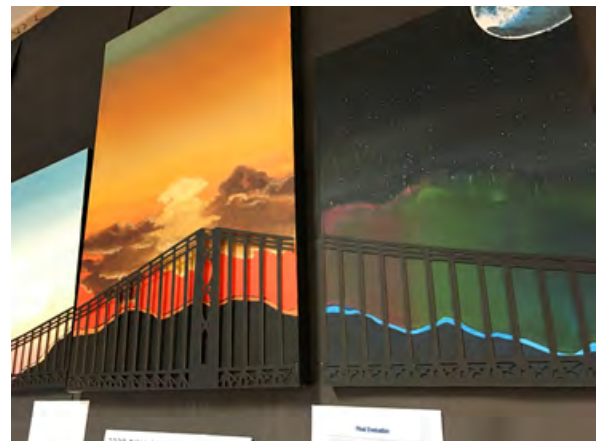
### **Extract from 'Polymeris Arachnia'**

In your yard, yonder your kitchen window, there be a new form of creepy critter. Burrowed deep, the nest of this creature has been set, with many a colony to grow into an ever larger community. This is the hidden kingdom of the Polymer Spider, named after its tendency to swig oil on its downtime.

This leads to its body hair being vibrant with iridescence. At night, they venture out of their burrows, going their separate ways to find their feast. Some hunt for an unexpected prey for the Arachnid lineage, a juicy mushroom. Others may be threatened, however, which makes

their feeble fangs drool for lymph pumping meat. However, the one we'll be focusing on, Tony, has taken a much different path. His four, gleaming eyes are upon the humble human snack – cookies.

He webs up his fangs, applying his saliva as he grows so they may harden. It takes him a mere moment to have them fully adorned with tough plates, and a third to hide his weapons when not in use. He doesn't want to risk looking overly hostile in the chance of being caught. Prepared to proceed, he aims his three fingered claws at the mail slit on the door, spewing a strand of silk from his palms. He proceeded to scale this colossal obstacle, lifting the flap on the slit out of the way and climbing in with a small struggle. It didn't pay to have an area of one foot squared, at least this time.



Tony had succeeded, he had penetrated the Great Gate of Man. He gracefully drops to the floor; he must be prepared for anything. He sees the flashing of their Light Box, the source of what they value most. Tony was not interested in enhancing his mind, his eyes cannot be taken from the goal. He lumbers four legs with each step. He may be small, but he is still a tank of heavy armour. He takes a great leap onto the Chrome Cylinder first, trying not to get distracted by the smell. He then hopped onto the large, worse smelling rectangle adjacent to him. He was already drawing close! He shoots both tethers from his great claws





again, hoisting himself up with pull after pull, ascending up the wall as far as he could rise. When at the top, he scanned his senses, not wanting to be caught just yet. His abdomen raises, fine hairs increasing their total surface area. Even in the dead of night, he could feel his whole environment bounce upon his surface. The coast is clear... leap!

*Aaron Willdridge (V)*

## The Smooth God

“Shiny, clear, pleated, strong.  
Fantastic for baskets, it lasts oh so long.  
Use it in bottles, in packets, in bags!  
It doesn’t grow mouldy, get tatty, or ragged!”  
Or so the advertisements blab.  
They don’t speak of littered lands, littered by  
human hand.  
A perfect material, made weak by its strengths,  
Each many-things string having gone to great  
lengths... To live.  
A modern Gilgamesh.  
Meshed with myth and cautionary tale.  
“A miracle material!” The con-men presented,  
“Asbestos is headed in just the direction we  
need as a species!”  
Oh, please, sheep.  
You left all our warnings unheeded, now these?  
Cancerous, caustic, cheered for, applauded.  
Does no one think of the consequences?  
These dense-heads used lead pipes and a  
million toxic paints!  
Now The Smooth God has conquered them.  
What’s next?  
Hold your tongue, voice of vitriol.  
Your biohazardous spit only adds alcohol to  
passions inflamed, with shifted blame.  
Do not pick and choose.  
Steel, glass, and silicon see through your ruse.  
There is still time to make up for past mistake,  
Be it waste in lakes or belief in unkindly fate.  
The Smooth God is more than one part.



Some are of demonic heart while others hum  
alongside harps.

Those brightly burning stars that may be  
doused can still be used in bursts and spouts.

The endless, enduring heap of trash may not be  
fed again by careless hand.

And that which still exists may be rendered,  
Rendered into pulp and paste with human fist.

So do not tarry, voice of vitriol,

For better men than you or I will unite us into  
care and loss of listlessness.

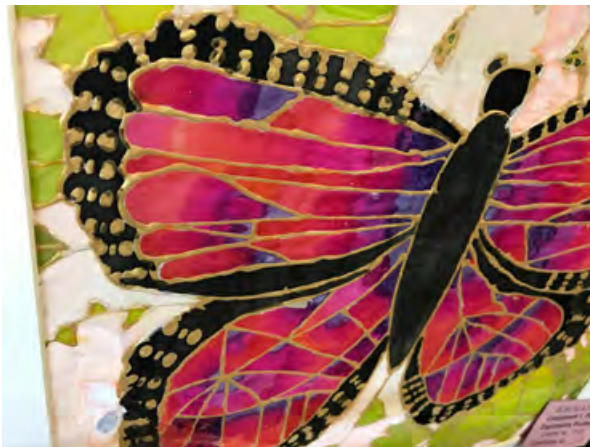
Perhaps. The un-thought of pre-cog is still not  
good for business.

Let them be hindrances.

Well, only since you insisted.

*Jack Green (MVI)*

## **NATIONAL POETRY DAY RUNNER UP**



### **Veritas**

Various words mean truth  
Endlessly twisted and bent  
Repeated after the actual event  
Individual to every person  
Tastes bitter and sweet  
A brilliant source of information  
Sincerity, veracity and candour, it's all  
about the truth

*Bryn Mawhinney (I)*

### **Truth**

A lie is like a fire burning up inside

the more lies you add the more it burns  
and the flames will rise and rise.

The truth is like the water; it suffocates the  
flames.

One word of the truth and the flame  
will die and won't return again.

A lie is like a brick you carry all day long  
and with each lie you add the more bricks  
you get until you have a wall.

The truth is like a wrecking ball coming  
to smash the wall away to lift  
the weight to let you breathe and help you  
face the day.

So take this poem as advice  
Pass it on to those you know  
Remember the power of the truth  
And let the lies all go.

*Lucy Smyth (I)*





# *Distribution of Prizes*



The Annual Distribution of Prizes took place this year on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October at The Spire's Centre. The Warden, Mr K. A. Knox welcomed parents, pupils, staff and the Guest of Honour, Mrs Karyn Harty, LL.B., to the prize-giving ceremony. He gave thanks for all the work done throughout the year by all to support the School and its pupils.

The Senior Orchestra gave a rousing performance of 'Radetzky March' by Johan Strauss while the Chamber Choir gave a soothing performance of 'If Ye Love Me' by Thomas Tallis.

An entertaining DVD, compiled by Mr Jamison, that highlighted various pupils' successes and achievements from the past year was shown.

We are most grateful to Rev. P. McCrea, B.A., B.D., for opening the prize-giving ceremony.

## **The guest speaker, Karyn Harty's, address**

I would like to thank the Principal and Mr Knox very sincerely for their very warm welcome here today.

When I was driving up from Dublin this morning I got into Belfast and was trying to work out where I could park because I don't know Belfast as well as I used to. I suddenly saw hordes of BRA pupils, all very well turned out, heading out of this building and I thought that must be where I'm going. But I must say it took me back - I had a very happy time at BRA.

It's also fair to say that I probably had a slight 'impostor syndrome' for a lot of it. I did not come from a well off family and I felt a little bit at times like I was from the wrong side of the tracks. But I was blessed with teachers who really encouraged me. Names like Jack Snowball, Rosemary McIlroy, Jim Carolan (who I see here today), Ken Hawtin, these were teachers who truly inspired me to achieve.

I am going to talk (not for an hour of self-indulgence you will be pleased to hear) but I am going to talk for about 15 minutes if I could have your permission to do that. I am conscious it's a Friday afternoon and it's a warm room. And I have to tell you that it is a not inconsiderable relief to me that the walls of BRA can't talk and I'll say no more about that!



I have been asked to tell you about my slightly unorthodox journey and I think the best place for me to start is 1988.

I joined the Academy in the bicentenary year, 1985 and so in 1988 I was in third year. Two very significant things happened that year, which I am not going to dwell on but I need to mention them; because as I trace back how I got to where I am today they were very pivotal events. The first was around March of that year. I came home from school and watched the news and saw helicopter footage of the murder of two army corporals. It was a very shocking experience. I ran upstairs and, as I did when I was stressed in those days, I wrote a poem which I then scrunched up and put in the bin. That was what I did. What I didn't realise was that my mum was in the habit of retrieving these things from the bin. I'm going to come to that poem later on.

Later that year in October, in fact 31 years ago tomorrow (26 October), my best friend's dad was blown up in an IRA car bomb. And in the months of tending her and tending each other after that horrendous event I formed a view that I needed to change the world. I was going to make things different. The way I was going to do that was that I was going to join the army. At the time, as the Principal has mentioned, I was in the Air Training Corps, I was on the school shooting team and I decided that I would apply for a scholarship that was being offered by the Women's Royal Army Corps. And to mine, and to everybody else's astonishment I think, I achieved that scholarship. I was the first female in Northern Ireland to be awarded a scholarship to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. So at the age of 16 my life was planned out for the next 10 years. I would do my A Levels, I would do a degree, whatever degree I chose, the army would pay me through university and I would give them 5 years once I graduated from Sandhurst. And it all seemed very straightforward.

But I have to tell you that in the year that followed I began to have my doubts. Every female officer that I met at that time who was in the army was an administrator. It started to dawn on me that that wasn't really what I wanted. And I was in a position where my parents, this was huge for them, they knew that I was financially secure for the next 10 years and beyond, and they had gone through a lot of financial pressure to get me here and to keep me here at BRA. So there was a pressure to stick with what I'd chosen. Yet I knew in my gut that it wasn't for me. So I had to make the very difficult decision to change my mind and withdraw from the scholarship, which I did when I was 17. And I remember when I was 18, the day I turned 18, my parents sat me down and they said "*Karyn, we've done all we can for you, off you go*" and they packed me off to university. It was the best thing they ever did for me I have to tell you.

Now I didn't know when I made the decision to withdraw from the scholarship what I wanted to do. I picked five different degree programmes and I applied for all of them, I hadn't a clue, and I happened to get the grades for law. I thought alright that sounds like a useful degree and I went off and I studied law at Queen's University, and that was a huge turning point in my life because I developed a 'grá' for the law, a love for the law, and I have never looked back.

Now I did qualify here in Belfast as a solicitor and then I was tempted south of the border to McCann FitzGerald Solicitors. That was 21 years ago and I have been there ever since. I am now, I'm slightly embarrassed to say, described as a senior partner which makes me feel very old, and I am sure to you sitting here I am very old, but in my head I am still 21.

But I want to come back to that poem because there is a little bit of a story behind it. The poem that I wrote was a cry of despair, it was really crying out for a new



future for this country. It was called 'No Hope for Tomorrow' which is a slightly grim title and I am not going to stand here and recite it for you. My mother held on to the poem and at an opportune moment she passed it to somebody, who passed it to somebody and over time it got into the hands of a man called Senator George Mitchell.

Now I don't know if you've ever heard of him but Senator George Mitchell was the man who was given the thankless task of chairing the peace talks that led to the Good Friday Agreement. And I am told that at a point when things were tough he gave a copy of the poem to President Clinton who gave a copy to Prime Minister Tony Blair, at a very difficult point in the peace talks. And I am told that it had some part, some small part, in inspiring them to keep going and to persevere. And we ended up then with a peace agreement that nobody thought would ever happen and which has changed your lives, whether you know it or not, because the life that your parents and I lived is a very different one to the lives that you have lived and you're very privileged to be in that situation.

Now I don't remotely take credit for any of that other than to say that that poem was something that I was very embarrassed about for years. I never got the chance to edit it, I was always a bit of a perfectionist, and whenever you're into poetry or writing you like to play with things and improve them, and improve them and improve them and make them perfect, and I never got a chance to do that. And it's not the best bit of literature I ever wrote but it made an impact.

So my theme really for you today is don't spend your lives striving for perfection, it really doesn't exist. Strive for excellence because in an Instagram world there's this notion that you can, that somebody might have the perfect hair, or the perfect fake tan or whatever, but it really doesn't exist and

most of it is a construct, it is mostly artificial. So don't spend your time striving for perfection that you may never attain.

That is not to say you won't have little moments of brilliance (I once wrote an essay for Mr Carolan and I can remember the title of that essay, it was "Is it possible to be a radical conservative?" and he gave me an A+ and I've never forgotten it I can tell you). So you will have little moments of brilliance but when you get into the workplace, and I can tell you because I'm an employer, in my firm we have nearly 700 employees and I am hiring people and the people I really find it difficult to do anything with are the perfectionists because they're not very commercial, they spend all their time trying to get things perfect and things have moved on. So you have to be the sort of person who can get things done.

Now the next thing I will say to you is that authenticity is so important. Be your authentic self; don't try to be something you're not. It took me a very long time to learn that lesson and I have almost (I think) learnt it at this stage. But be your own authentic self and don't allow assumptions that other people make about what you can and can't achieve govern what you do. And be true to yourself. If you feel you have made a decision and it's not the right decision have the courage to change your mind.

You will make mistakes in life. I've made some awful mistakes. I've made some mistakes that I cringe even thinking about them but they have made me the person that I am today and I will go on to make mistakes and learn from them. And so *be prepared to fail*. That's not an easy message to take actually, the idea that failure is a good thing, but I can tell you that it is. Because it is those scars and those wrinkles that make life interesting; if everything was perfect, life would be very dull. That ability to be yourself and to come to terms with who you are is a very



important part of your development personally.

The final thing I want to say to you, well there are two final things. The way that we live today is curated in a lot of ways. So you see me here with my iPhone (in breach of the rules). If you follow all of your news on this, somebody's out there curating it, it's an algorithm that's deciding what you like, and even worse than that, every time you like something, or react, or even hover over something it registers it and it sends you more of that stuff; but it does another thing, it wants always to be interesting. So instead of sticking with the middle ground it goes to the extremes and it filters up stuff that is a bit more extreme and a bit more controversial and that is why to some extent we are in the political pickle we are in today, because too many people are stuck to these devices and they have forgotten the importance of facts, and truth and actual information. So don't fall into that trap.

Read anything and everything you can get your hands on, don't allow your thoughts and opinions to be curated by an algorithm or by some cynical political party that thinks you're too lazy to think for yourself. Think for yourself and always question and always have the facts.

The final thing I am going to say is that kindness is much underrated these days. In a world where politicians think it's okay to behave incredibly badly, and they get away with it to some extent, standards are changing. Don't let *your* standards drop. Kindness is such an important part of your make up and the culture that you have been brought up in at home and here in the school. And I work in a very competitive profession, law is highly competitive, and it's the easiest thing in the world to stick your elbows out and elbow people out of the way. But you won't find happiness that way and you won't find satisfaction in your career or your work that way. If you're the kind of person who looks out for others,

whether it's in the workplace or at home or in the community, and actively go out of your way to bring other people on and to really help them to thrive, then you will be a much nicer person to work for, you will also be a very good person to be with and you will be happy within yourself. So don't underrate kindness.

And finally, be thankful. As I stand here today and I watch your amazing video and all of your achievements I am, I have to say, humbled by it. But it does take me back to how fortunate I am to have had such an excellent education here and to have been surrounded by so many inspiring people. So be very thankful for the privileges and the opportunities that you have and make the most of them. I have been talent scouting already as I gave out the prizes so you just never know one of these days our paths may cross professionally.

I salute each and every one of you in this room, the teachers for your endeavours and your patience, God bless you; the parents and those at home who have supported you in getting to where you are; and you yourselves, for your incredible achievements in which you should be very proud.

Thank you very much.

## The Principal's address

Rev McCrea, Ms Harty, governors, staff, pupils past and present, parents, guests, welcome to Belfast Royal Academy Prize Day 2019.

I read an article recently about school prize distributions from a journalist who described these events as "an exquisite brand of torture, inflicted mercilessly on well-meaning parents and innocent community leaders". The article attacked the head teacher for indulging in an hour long speech which she had commandeered as her moment to shine, obviously seething from the discomfiture of watching talented





pupils receive prizes that the teachers and parents took the credit for instead of her. I promise that I will not inflict such an ordeal on you and whilst I acknowledge that you are a somewhat captive audience, I hope that this afternoon is not viewed as an instrument of torture but rather a celebration of the successes of our pupils which would not be possible without the support of you, their families. I promise that I will be smiling with pleasure and not seething behind gritted teeth.

I am delighted to welcome Karyn Harty as the Guest Speaker in this afternoon's Prize Day. If a school's success is judged on the professional standing of former students, then Karyn is a fine endorsement of the excellent education she received at Belfast Royal Academy. She left the Academy in 1992 to read Law at Queen's University. After graduation, she was apprenticed to Cleaver, Rankin and Fulton, one of Belfast's best known law firms. Karyn then moved to Dublin where she joined the litigation department of McCann Fitzgerald, a Dublin law firm that dates back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (so not quite as old as BRA!). She became an equity partner in 2005, specialising in complex commercial litigation and has been appointed to the Policy Committee.

Karyn married a fellow lawyer and combines a busy professional life with being a mother of four children. She speaks fluent Irish.

While at the Academy, Karyn won an honours blazer for shooting and went on to shoot for the Irish rifle team at long and short range. Something that individuals that she is pursuing for asset recovery would do well to remember!

Karyn – thank you for taking time to attend our Prize Distribution this afternoon.

This year, we will present a new prize that has been kindly donated by Ulster University. The recipient of the Ulster

Endeavour Cup will be chosen each year by school staff as the pupil who has demonstrated outstanding achievement throughout the year. It is not necessarily academically focused but the pupil is judged to have, throughout the year, benefited across the school in distinctive ways. I am honoured to now invite Professor Paul Seawright, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at Ulster University and former pupil of BRA to present the Ulster Endeavour Cup to the school.

As the school approaches its 235<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I would like to reflect on what the walls of BRA could say if they could talk. Our school has met many challenges in the past, not least the impact of The Troubles in our corner of North Belfast, and has survived and indeed, thrived. With the support of staff, Governors, parents and pupils, we will respond to challenges of the future, which no doubt will include financial difficulties and the rising mental health problems experienced by young people. However, I hope that all of our decision making and initiatives will continue to have our pupils at the centre. We exist, as we have done for the past 235 years, to serve the needs of our pupils. Our aim is to develop pupils so that they leave the Academy with more than just examination results. They will be equipped with the skills, knowledge and competence that will help them to succeed in the future and we ensure that their education takes place within a culture of respect and celebration of diversity.

If our walls could talk, what would they say?

I hope they would talk about the dedication of teaching and support staff and Governors who discharge their duties with expertise, dedication and a sense of humour. I would like to say a huge thank you to the Warden, Mr Ken Knox and our fantastic Board of Governors who put in so many unheralded, unpaid and largely





unrecognised hours on behalf of the pupils. I would like to acknowledge the work of the Head of Finance and Corporate Services, Miss Hull, the Estates Manager, Mrs Lambert and all of the support staff who work so hard for the benefit of pupils and staff. Michael Marland, the educational guru, wrote about three elements of success in the classroom: "The successful teacher teaches well, the successful teacher manages well, but the successful teacher cares." In my experience, every teacher of BRA cares about our pupils both in terms of their academic outcomes and their pastoral wellbeing. I count myself lucky to be a member of a great Senior Leadership Team who support me and each other through sometimes difficult decision making in both strategic issues and in the day to day management of the school. I would like to particularly thank the Vice Principals, Dr Brown, Mr Wilson and Ms Graham for their camaraderie, professionalism and, most importantly, for helping to create a positive climate within the school.

Dr Catherine Scully, Mr Albert Creighton and Mrs Karen Stewart joined the list of former staff in June 2019. After twenty-six years, Dr Scully, Deputy Principal, has been appointed to the position of Principal of Jordanstown School. Whilst we are absolutely delighted that Dr Scully's leadership skills and her expertise as an educationalist have been recognised, we acknowledge the massive contribution that she has made to the School over such a significant amount of time and the legacy that she has left. Throughout her time in School, Dr Scully has been an outstanding teacher of Mathematics and held the position of Subject Leader of the Mathematics Department. She was also instrumental in setting up the Senior Traditional Irish music group and has watched this thrive and develop to such an extent that there is now both a Junior and Senior Group who make a vibrant and

energetic contribution to whole school music performances. However, her genuine care and compassion for young people and desire to help them to overcome difficulties were most keenly demonstrated in the various pastoral leadership roles she held in school. Many current and former pupils will be aware that Dr Scully devoted endless hours of her time to help them and their families in times of difficulty, whether that was bereavement, illness, mental health issues or family breakdown and I know how appreciative they are. We wish Dr Scully every success in her new appointment and hope that she will always retain her close ties with Belfast Royal Academy in the future.

Mrs Karen Stuart, Subject Leader of Computer Science and ICT, has been appointed to a similar position in her alma mater, Down High School. Mrs Stuart had a vision for the Computing Department since her appointment five years ago and ensured that the programmes of study from Form 1 were amended to include coding and prepare the pupils more effectively for further study and also for employment. The success of her pupils at GCSE and A level is a reflection of her hard work and commitment and she was able to strike the right balance between discipline and support to ensure that the coursework deadlines were, mostly, met. We wish Mrs Stuart success in her appointment and hope that she enjoys the shorter journey to and from work.

Mr Albert Creighton has been a familiar figure to generations of pupils and parents in both the corridors and classrooms - where he is composed and eloquent - and at the side of the sports pitches at Roughfort, where he is often more excitable. Since his appointment to the School forty-two years ago he has taught Games and PE, and more recently, Religious Studies with passion and enthusiasm. Although he stepped down from the role of Vice Principal four years ago in order to begin a period of phased



retirement, his commitment and dedication to Belfast Royal Academy have never wavered and he continues to be a much-loved teacher and colleague who provides wise, pragmatic and helpful advice for any situation. We wish him a long and happy retirement and look forward to welcoming him to many future events and sporting fixtures, where he will be closely supervised. Although, as a note of caution, I would add that Dr Campbell also thought that he had retired a number of years ago, took a call from me at the end of August and is now Principal of Ben Madigan!

I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution that last year's Head Boy, Tom McKee, Head Girl, Samantha McGrath and Deputies Amber McCalmont, Megan Hamilton, Andrew Dorman and Odhran Cathney had in the smooth running of the school. Their cheerful demeanour when carrying out their duties and leading the Prefect Teams was much appreciated and I salute them for combining these leadership roles with their academic studies and contribution to the extra-curricular programme.

BRA boasts a vibrant Arts curricular and extra-curricular programme which aims to develop confidence and the ability to communicate well. Opportunities for music making increase every year with the formal and splendid annual Spring Concert in the Ulster Hall, performances in the annual Prize Distribution, the Summer Serenade and various other opportunities for musicians to perform in a more relaxed setting. A number of BRA pupils had the amazing opportunity to perform in the Music for Youth Proms in the Royal Albert Hall at the beginning of November with the City of Belfast Youth Orchestra.

Music is the window to a school's soul and the excellent quality of music provided by Ms McMullan and her teaching and peripatetic staff reflects a

soul that is ambitious, talented, eclectic and also one that loves a bit of George Ezra and Britney.

Drama is flourishing both through the School Play and the taught curriculum under the leadership of Ms Tinman. Pupils took to the stage in February to stage the comedy "Noises Off" under the able direction of Mr Roly Jamison. The pupils delivered the technically complicated play that required split second timing with aplomb whilst demonstrating perseverance and self-confidence.

Our Arabic project, funded by the Qatar Foundation, is well established and during the course of this year, a number of Sixth Form pupils began supporting Arabic speaking pupils in homework club in Conway Education centre after school. Belfast and BRA featured in a promotional book and video used to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Qatar Foundation. The organisers were keen to celebrate the innovative approach to connected learning through the medium of Art and Design.

The academic curriculum on offer continues to deliver a rigorous education to our pupils. There have been amazing achievements of pupils at GCSE and A level. Ella Harvey, achieved a magnificent ten A\* grades at GCSE and Mandy Zhang achieved 9 A\* and 2 A grades. Pupils have worked with determination and a number of pupils achieved at least 7 A\* grades which is a tribute to their commitment and endeavour.

At A level, two pupils, Jack Green and Rosie McQueen achieved an outstanding 4 A\* grades. A further three pupils, Dylan McGrotty, Cormac McGowan and Amber McCalmont, achieved at least 3 A\* grades. An A\* grade is awarded if a candidate has achieved an A grade overall and has averaged at least 90% in the modules taken at A2 Level, so the achievements of these



pupils reflect dedicated and committed study over the two-year course.

A significant number of pupils have been successful in gaining places at the country's leading Russell Group universities including Queen's University. Congratulations to other pupils who have successfully secured some valuable apprenticeships in Business and Accounting or who are setting off on some exciting Gap Year experiences.

The intellectual life of the school extends far beyond examination statistics, however, as teachers find enterprising ways in which to make their subjects come alive, and pupils respond with their own independent enquiries and ideas. Co-curricular opportunities abound across the curriculum and age range thanks to an extraordinary programme of talks, trips, competitions and projects.

The Junior Mathematics Team won the Northern Ireland final of the UKMT Team Competition. The team competed at the National Final in London and were the top placed state school which cements our standing as a school where mathematics thrives. Pupils also benefit from playing bridge at a competitive level and various public speaking and debating competitions.

Involvement in sport helps our pupils to develop teamwork and leadership skills, to foster resilience and to help manage risk. The honour of captaining a school team for many athletes is the ultimate accolade and an opportunity to inspire confidence in their team mates. However, there is probably no better acknowledgement of a pupil's sporting prowess than being selected to play for your province or country. We are extremely fortunate to have so many talented sports men and women who were called to represent Ulster and Ireland in their respective sports. Max Burton M6 was selected to play cricket for both Ulster and Ireland and in addition, played

an instrumental role in securing the Cricket Schools' Cup for BRA in a thrilling final match against Methodist College. This is the third time in 5 years that we have won this prestigious trophy and Max played in all three competitions. Captain of the 1<sup>st</sup> XV rugby team, Tom Stewart, achieved representative honours for both Ulster and Ireland U18 during the course of the year and was named player of the year in the Danske Bank Schools' Cup competition for the 2018 – 19 year a fitting recognition of his strength of character and integrity that his teachers and coaches have long recognised.

Niamh McIvor had the opportunity to captain both the Ulster and Ireland U16 and U18 hockey squad during various interprovincial competitions.

Tom McKibbin, Form 5 won an international golf competition over the Easter break to become the 2019 Junior Invitational at Sage Valley Champion.

In football, Callum Marshall Form 3, was selected to play football for the Northern Ireland U15 squad and Maddy Harvey-Clifford Lower 6, played for the Northern Ireland U17 squad.

Connie McDaid, Nicole McClean, Leah McCarter and Abbie O'Neill, Form 3, were selected to represent Great Britain at the World Gymnastics event in Austria in August 2019. It is the largest non-competitive event in the world with more than 50 nations represented.

Amy Harpur and Lucy McMahon-Beattie (Form 5) were selected for the NCU U17 Girls' Development Squad for the 2019 season.

Following National Squad trials for 2019-2020 a number of girls were selected for Netball NI squads. The U19 Development Squad includes Fabienne Cochrane, Ellie Collins and Leah Doran. The U17 Squad





include Nada Hawela, Catelyn Burns and Siobhan Baine.

In team sports, the 1st XV rugby team reached the fourth round of the Schools' Cup when they were defeated by Ballymena Academy.

The girls' 2nd XI hockey team reached the final of the Gibson Cup and narrowly lost 2-1. This is the first time that Academy team had reached this final and they played with determination and great spirit. The girls' 1<sup>st</sup> XI hockey team lost to Friends' School Lisburn in the semi-final of the Senior Shield after penalty runs. The U14 A team won the South Antrim shield.

The boys' senior water polo team won the Canada Trophy for the third year in a row, following two victories over Methody and St Malachy's.

The golf team, Keaton Morrison, Tom McKibbin, Noah Bickerstaff & Rhys Goodall, won the Ulster Schools' Scratch Championship for the 2nd consecutive year.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment and enthusiasm of all the PE staff and teachers who coach teams who give up time with their families after school and at weekends, to provide so many sporting opportunities for our pupils – it is hugely appreciated.

All three levels of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme remain as popular as ever and we are proud to sustain an excellent conversion rate as the vast majority of the pupils who commence their award see it through to completion, with the close support of the highly valued adult volunteers who devote countless hours to ensure the continued success of the scheme.

If our walls could speak, I am sure they would highlight the importance of the school community. We celebrate the vital part played by many people who serve our School in a variety of ways, but,

equally, helps the pupils appreciate the diversity and multi-faceted qualities and needs to be found in other communities.

The pupil council is made up of representatives of every year group who come up with great ideas about how to improve the school still further. The School's newly founded Environmental Group set up by Dr Scully has led the way in discussing various initiatives to promote and educate about this important issue and we look forward to the progress made by this group in exploring sustainability under the leadership of Miss Herron. Charity work is an extremely important aspect of the School's ethos and it is encouraging to note the various ways in which BRA pupils donate time and money to various charitable causes.

The sponsored walk is now a well-established School tradition thanks to former Head of Classics, Mr Ken Hawtin, with pupils completing a circuit on Cave Hill. Due to inclement weather the 44th annual sponsored walk took place in June 2019 instead of September. Each house has their own charity Cairns (Dementia NI), Currie (Chest, Heart & Stroke), Shaw (Marie Curie) & Pottinger (Habitat for Humanity).

Ten Lower Sixth pupils spent a day volunteering at Habitat for Humanity's RESTORE shop in Lisburn. Working in partnership with De La Salle College, the pupils renovated facilities, cleaned and repaired donations and stocked the warehouse of the charity's DIY/ furniture business.

In April, teaching staff and pupils accepted an award celebrating both our decade-long partnership with De La Salle College and our fund-raising efforts for the charity. In October the String Quartet entertained patients at the RVH Children's Ward as part of the Hospital's Musical Moments initiative. The Quartet was welcomed by



Professor Martin Bradley and performed a range of pieces for the children, parents and hospital staff.

The Save the Children committee raised £3300 this year from multiple fundraising events such as the BRA Bake Off, the staff revue, a bun sale, non-uniform day, “Guess the Teacher” baby photos and the barbeque at the sponsored walk. The school made an impressive contribution to various Christmas appeals including Women’s Aid and a toy appeal. In October 2018, pupils in Forms 1 and 2 participated in a fundraising event for Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for children raising £2100.

Representatives from the NI Air Ambulance Service and Lighthouse received donations from the School of over £1400 each as a result of the School and Pupil Councils’ non-uniform day held before Christmas

Belfast Royal Academy has just completed the fourth year of a successful partnership with St Malachy’s College with the concept of ‘sharing’ becoming embedded in the culture of both schools. The collaboration classes, while being part of the Entitlement Framework, continue to be an integral part of the ‘shared’ culture and were very successful. Facilitating these has been a driving force in aligning timetables which has had a positive impact on the planning of shared education events. The Lower Sixth enrichment programme which focused on TAHMI (Tackling Awareness of Mental Health Issues) but also involved a small number of pupils going to St Malachy’s College to learn about conservation has been especially successful with the original cohort having gained a recognised qualification and becoming involved in further Mental Wellbeing activities. The Careers Departments attended many events together and meaningful connections were established between pupils and staff. This was further enhanced by the medical mock interview events organised by Belfast

Royal Academy to which St Malachy’s College pupils were invited.

The House System has enjoyed a renaissance under Mr Dornan’s leadership and has succeeded in reviving many old traditions such as House Sport competitions and created new opportunities for rivalry such as the BRA Bake Off, the Lego competition and the Rubik’s Cube challenge. The House System has succeeded in facilitating more mixing between the different year groups, increasing community spirit, peer mentoring, boosting the existing rewards system, encouraging more pupils to become involved in competitions, and developing leadership opportunities for pupils at all levels. In June, Currie House lifted the Evans’ trophy much to the delight of House Staff Mr McCarey and Mrs Reynolds and the surprise of everyone else. This is the first time in living memory that Currie won the top prize. Those of you of a certain vintage will remember the advert for Murray mints with the slogan, “You can’t hurry a Murray”. You clearly can’t hurry a Currie either.

Educational visits within the United Kingdom and further afield, in addition to the intrinsic enjoyment factor of travelling with peers, are valuable enrichment opportunities for pupils to experience the language and culture of other countries, to develop their own skills and, in some cases, to contribute to the local community. Throughout the year, pupils studying GCSE and A level Spanish travelled to Asturias as part of their Spanish Exchange. A group of Sixth Form pupils and staff travelled to Warsaw, Poland in March. The team were involved in preparing and delivering over two hundred food parcels to many underprivileged in the Warsaw area, as well as taking part in a couple of local church meetings and helping to help lead a youth weekend for approximately one hundred Polish teenagers. Over the Christmas holidays, there was a very successful ski



trip to Austria involving over 100 pupils and staff. Towards the end of the school year, Form 1 pupils visited Hadrian's Wall and pupils in Form 4 upwards walked a section of the Camino de Santiago, another first for BRA and a valuable exercise in understanding the extent to which one can overcome difficult physical and mental challenges within a supportive team.

The school experience for all is greatly enhanced by the contribution and support of various groups who all pull in the same direction. Thank you to Friends of the Academy, the Old Girls' and Old Boys' Associations for your support, organisation of various enjoyable social events and very welcome financial support. A huge thank you to parents and grandparents for the sacrifices that you make and the trust that you place in us to look after your children. We take this responsibility very seriously. Thank you to the pupils, for your passion and commitment, for being willing to give things a go and for looking out not just for yourselves, but for each other, for your positive relationships with staff and who make Belfast Royal Academy the great school that I believe it to be.

This is the point in the proceedings when I turn to our Middle Sixth leavers and inspire them with all sorts of clichés about setting you free, permitting you to soar high with BRA as the wind beneath your wings. All that may be true but I want to say in all sincerity, that we are proud of the young men and women that you have become. I hope that your values, which have come both from your parents and Belfast Royal Academy will stand you in good stead throughout life's journey.

Whatever your background – rich or poor – you have been given one of the greatest opportunities in life – an excellent education. The majority of you have already embarked on your university career and this experience will allow for the free unfolding of your personality, gifts and

talents. As you make your way in the world you will have many choices before you. What do I want to do with my life? Who do I want to be? What should I study?

As tomorrow's leaders, we need you to keep challenging inequality, racism, sectarianism and to help us escape the troubles and wrongs of our past. Economic growth for a country more often than not fosters greater opportunity, tolerance of diversity, social mobility, commitment to fairness and dedication to democracy. We need you - our competent, ethical and ambitious young people to decide to be part of the solution. Barack Obama said that "We have a stake in one another...what binds us together is greater than what drives us apart."

What binds us together at this point in time is Belfast Royal Academy and I hope that this shared bond will continue to inspire you and enrich your lives for many years to come.

Warden, this concludes my report for the 2018 – 19 academic year.







# School Societies

## BOARD GAMES CLUB

The Board Games Club, in the library, continued to run very successfully, on the first Friday of each month, during lunch. The games played ranged from classic to modern. Students used their critical thinking skills to master the games whilst simultaneously enjoying an element of fun and competition.

*E.M.*

## BRIDGE CLUB

Bridge is a card game that challenges the mind, but also that allows friendships to develop in school and across Ireland with other pupils. New members are welcome and should speak to Mr. Graham in M10 about joining, or anyone wearing a red or blue blazer for Bridge. The highlight of the year continues to be the trip to Galway to compete in the Irish Schools' Teams competition. The club meets at lunchtimes



during the weeks and special beginner sessions are run near the start of each year.

This year the school finished 3<sup>rd</sup> (Lucy O'Kane, Conor Gallagher, Minseog Kim, and Xander Todd) and 4<sup>th</sup> (Joshua Boyd, Josh Mills, EJ Atienza and JP Miller) in the Irish Schools' Championships 'Gold Final' in Galway. The three other teams finished 2<sup>nd</sup> (Nathan Fung, Robbie Morrow, Ewan Todd and Ryan Ferguson), 5<sup>th</sup> (Helen Marshall, Sasha Trombino, Tiffany Chow and Alice Hew) and 6<sup>th</sup> (Hannah Toal, Alex Scott, Gabriel Brown and David Eyjolfsson) in the 'Silver Final'. This was a great performance although the first team were disappointed not to win after being in first place at the halfway mark.



In the Irish Schools' Pairs, which for the first year also took place in Galway over the same weekend, Joshua Boyd and Josh Mills won the



title defeating a couple of more experienced pairs in the process.

The Northern Ireland Under 20 team was represented by Xander Todd, Lucy O'Kane, Conor Gallagher and Minseog Kim. This is a great achievement and a target for Junior pupils to aim for.

This year also saw the return of the Ulster Schools' Bridge Teams and Pairs competitions, both of which were held at BRA in the library. We also managed some league matches versus Carrick and Bangor despite the transport restrictions. The Ulster Pairs was won by Lucy O'Kane and Xander Todd, with Layona Philip and Rachel Gamble coming a very pleasing fifth place, in their last year of schools' bridge. The Ulster Schools' team was won by Lucy O'Kane, Conor Gallagher, Minseog Kim, and Xander Todd.



A big thank-you to Dr. Lomas for her continued support for the club throughout the year and for organising Tuesday morning bridge lessons. Finally, thanks to Dr Springer and Mr Harte for accompanying the students to Galway during the year.

**S.G.**

## CLASSICS SOCIETY

During the year, the Classics Society and the Greek Club met at lunchtime every Thursday in S3. The meetings were attended by a very lively group of Third and Fifth formers.

Those learning Greek progressed at their own pace. The decision to start the EMACT Classical Greek Certificate to give the pupils something definite to work towards, was postponed until the following year, by which time they should have attained a suitable level.

New members are very welcome, both to the Classics Society and to the Greek club.

**J.M.G.**

## CHESS

Chess at BRA continues to be a very popular way to spend a couple of lunchtimes a week and many new members were welcomed this year. The atmosphere is always lively with good humour and good natured competition. A lot of proficient chess is played while lunches are eaten and fun is had. Black pawns seem to grow ever rarer (for inexplicable reasons) but some improvisation with various small objects means that as many as twelve games can be underway at any given lunchtime.

Large numbers signed up again for the house competitions and after many matches (running every day for weeks) the results finally emerged. At Junior level (Form I - IV) the winner was Alessandro O'Hara (Cairns) with Ethan Doloughan (Currie) and Jamie Wilson (Currie) as joint runners up. At Senior level (Form V - MVI) Jason Melville (Currie) won with Joe Desmond (Shaw) as runner up. Well



done to everyone involved and particular congratulations to the winners for their hard fought victories.

### S.C.S.

## EXTRACURRICULAR MATHS

The past year was another very successful year for extracurricular maths with both the teams and individuals achieving great success. BRA continues to triumph in NI and compete at a national level.

This year's Senior team was Jack Green (MVI), Cormac McGowan (MVI), Zak Thabeth (LVI) and Joshua Thompson (LVI). At the UKMT Team Challenge they came within four points of the winners with a very strong performance in all rounds. At the annual Queen's competition, they excelled and won convincingly. At the presentation ceremony, it was noted that BRA was the first school to win more than once and that this victory makes us champions for a third time in a competition that has been running for nine years. Much credit to the team for a successful year. They are worthy recipients of the first major senior honours awarded for extracurricular mathematics.



The Junior team had an excellent year by once again winning the NI heat of the UKMT Team competition. In beating nearly twenty teams from across Northern Ireland, they won the opportunity to represent NI at the National Final in London in June.

They were a credit to the school and NI. The team of Riya Raghuram (III), Sarah McCarney (III), Dara Connolly-Mulcahy (II) and Daniel Stewart (II) should be very proud of their achievements this year.

Over two hundred pupils from all forms participated in the UKMT individual Maths challenges with impressive results.

In the Junior competition there were nine gold certificates, seven silver and fifteen bronze. Matthew Jackson (II), Harrison Kirk (II) and Oliver Pearce (II) qualified for the next round (the Kangaroo).







At Intermediate level there were four gold, fifteen silver and twenty-one bronze certificates. John Gibson (V), Cameron McKee (V) and Jude Moorehead (V) qualified for the Pink Kangaroo and Riya Raghuram (III) qualified for the Grey Kangaroo.



At Senior level there were two gold, ten silver and twenty-one bronze certificates. Cormac McGowan qualified for the Senior Kangaroo and Jack Green qualified for the British Mathematical Olympiad.



Congratulations to everyone who earned a certificate or represented the school on a team. I continue to be so very impressed not just by the standard of mathematics but the huge commitment of individuals and teams to the many hours of training each week over the year.

*S.C.S.*

## ACCOUNT OF JUNIOR MATHS TEAM'S YEAR

Our names are Sarah McCarney and Riya Raghuram and we were part of the Junior Maths Team 2018-19.

After trying out for the team in January and getting selected, we were very excited. Soon, we got together with Daniel and Dara and we started getting ready for the regional competition in March. We encountered many challenging problems but managed to solve them as a team. After frequently practising each week, we were prepared for the competition which took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> March.

On that morning, we walked down to St. Malachy's and gathered in the main hall. We saw many other schools from all over Northern Ireland and our nerves started building up. After doing some practice questions, the competition started with the group round, followed by the cross-number round, the shuttle round and the relay round. As the rounds continued, we felt more at ease and we managed to overcome difficult questions. We did not know where we would place but we were ecstatic when they announced that we were first!

Now for the bigger challenge ... London! We continued to practise as the questions got harder and more teamwork was required. Before we knew it, the day of the national competition had arrived!

On Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June, we met up at the airport at 5am and despite the very early start, we were



excited for what was to come. Following a flight and a train, we walked around the city of London to do some sightseeing before the competition. We visited Westminster Abbey and had breakfast in a nearby café. After this, we walked to the Royal Horticultural Halls and sat down at our table. When we looked around, we were shocked at the number of schools present. We were quite intimidated, but knew that we had done well to get this far.

Alongside the four main rounds of the competition, we had to take part in an additional round – the poster round! For this, we designed a poster on Straightedge and Compass Constructions using research we had done. We took part in all the other rounds with enthusiasm and tried our best to do each and every question. In the end, we placed 67<sup>th</sup> in all of UK. We were extremely proud to have represented our school at this high level.

Overall, we thoroughly enjoyed being part of the team last year and would like to thank Dr Springer for his constant support and encouragement. This experience taught us a lot and we have a newfound appreciation for maths.

*Sarah McCarney (III) and  
Riya Raghuram (III)*

## INTO FILM CLUB

The 29<sup>th</sup> Cinemagic Film and Television Festival for young people returned to Belfast for October and November 2018, jam-packed with over 200 events and creative opportunities to inspire and motivate young people. The Academy Into Film Club and Miss McAtamney were thrilled to attend the award winning festival, which is the largest film and television festival designed for, and by, young people in the UK and Ireland. The Cinemagic Festival has many famous patrons including Liam Neeson, Colin Farrell, Pierce Brosnan, Dermot O'Leary and Christine Bleakley.



The festival this year boasted an ambitious and exciting programme of film screenings, world cinema, masterclasses with film and television professionals, school workshops, Q&As and young critic panels.

Northern Ireland is very clearly witnessing a golden era in the industry with the success of productions like BBC serial killer drama 'The Fall' filmed in and set in Belfast and the HBO fantasy series 'Game of Thrones', much of which is shot and produced in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland is cited as a new hub for the sector thanks to the operating costs and its proximity to London. There are wonderful opportunities for growth in this sector. There has never been a better time for young people to get involved in this area of work.

On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October, pupils from the Academy 'Into Film' club were treated to a trip to the Odeon Cinema to watch 'Guardians of the Galaxy' as part of the festival. Pupils were overjoyed to attend a Q&A with Jon Moore after the screening alongside pupils from other Northern Irish schools. Jon Moore is a freelance prosthetic make-up artist and concept designer with over 17 years' experience working in television and film. Projects include 'Guardians of the Galaxy', 'The Huntsman, Fury', 'Maleficent', 'Harry Potter', 'Captain America', 'WWZ', 'Doctor Who' and 'Critical'. Having completed work on the 'Guardians of the Galaxy: Vol 2' as prosthetic make-up artist to Dave Bautista, he recently worked on 'Avengers: Infinity War' and moved



straight onto the final series of 'Game of Thrones' and 'Maleficent 2'. Several pupils from the Academy 'Into Film' club were selected from the audience to ask Jon a question. It is wonderful that our pupils had the opportunity to ask questions to someone with such a wealth of experience from the film and television industry.



Ten pupils were also selected from the Academy 'Into Film' club to attend a screening of 'Wonder' at Odyssey cinema, on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November, as part of the 'Into Film' Festival 2018. Running from November 7<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>, the festival is the world's largest free film festival for young people and a firm favourite with educators. The film festival helps bring film to life by inspiring young people to watch, understand and make film in new and creative ways.



The ten Academy pupils thoroughly enjoyed their cinema trip to watch 'Wonder'. The book is read within the English department at the school and has also been read at the Junior Book Club as part of Northern Ireland Book Award shadowing.

*E.M.*

## JUNIOR BOOK CLUB



The Junior Book Club had a very busy and enjoyable year shadowing the Northern Ireland Book Award. The Northern Ireland Book Award is an annual event for post-primary schools across Northern Ireland. Local book award schemes to encourage and develop a love of reading had been springing up in England and Scotland, but no such award existed in Northern Ireland. In an attempt to





rectify this, two school librarians decided to introduce such a scheme to the province in 2009. The whole emphasis is on books that are exciting and encourage children to read more books. The overriding aim is to see book-centred social interaction and debate amongst young people.

The shortlist this year for the award was drawn up by the SLANI (School Librarian Association Northern Ireland) committee following a list of nominations from those with school library responsibility across Northern Ireland. The following titles made it to the shortlist and were enjoyed by the Junior Book Club:

- 'Children of Blood and Bone' by Tomi Adeyemi
- 'Boy 87' by Ele Fountain
- 'Flying Tips for Flightless Birds' by Kelly McCaughrain
- 'Tin' by Padraig Kenny
- 'The House with the Chicken Legs' by Sophie Anderson
- 'Kid Normal' by Greg James and Chris Smith



On June 5<sup>th</sup> Junior Book Club pupils attended a celebratory finale in the school library to find out the winning title. The winner of the book award as voted by pupils across Northern Ireland was 'Flying Tips for Flightless Birds' by Kelly McCaughrain.



*E.M.*

## JUNIOR SCRIPTURE UNION



Being part of Junior Scripture Union in Belfast Royal Academy has been an extremely memorable experience. Every Wednesday lunch it is a place where Forms I -III can meet to have fun, play games and most importantly grow in their faith, surrounded by others who are eager to learn about God. Over the course of the year, we tackled a range of topics and prepared talks on questions such as, "What does it mean to be a Christian?", "Who is God?", "Why should we read the Bible?", "What is the value of the kingdom?" and "How can we resist temptation?", as well as many others.

As pupils of the Academy we are extremely grateful to have a place where we can think deeper about God's word, share ideas with other pupils and ask questions in a caring and relaxed environment.



We are thankful to have such a large Scripture Union in Belfast Royal Academy that we can divide into Junior and Senior SU, which allows us to focus on making our talks relatable to each year group, as well as granting us the opportunity to hold discussion groups which allows Junior pupils to challenge themselves in their faith and ultimately build relationships with the Senior pupils in the school.

This year has been an extremely enjoyable and memorable year. It has been full of opportunities to grow our Scripture Union with events such as the One Way event and the Annual Big SU Weekend, all of which wouldn't be possible without the continued support of Mr Morrison.



For the committee, it is an honour to work beside you, putting in the time and effort each week and ultimately serving beside one another for our Lord, Jesus Christ.

*Katie Massey (V)*







## SENIOR DEBATING SOCIETY

This year proved to be another eventful and enjoyable one for the Senior Debating Society with a good attendance at lunchtime events. While the Society is open to pupils from forms IV - MVI, those volunteering to speak this year tended to come from MVI.

Our first lunchtime debate was on the subject of "Same Sex Marriage" and this attracted a good audience and several animated contributions from the floor. This was followed several weeks later by a debate on the motion; "This House believes that we should colonise Mars as soon as possible." Despite very passionate speeches in favour, the House was not convinced that resources should be provided for early colonisation and the motion was defeated.

Diversity of topics, which reflected the interests of speakers, continued to be a theme during the remainder of the year. The concerns of some about the blandness of modern music led to a debate on the motion; "This House believes that the modern music industry is killing musicianship." There were also the usual debates on topical political issues such as the desirability of a second referendum on Brexit and reducing the voting age to 16.

We know that the pupils who took part in the debates this year not only took pleasure in presenting an argument, but have developed useful skills for their future lives, and we extend to our MVI contributors best wishes for the future.

*M.P./H.T.*

## SENIOR SCRIPTURE UNION



Senior Scripture Union this year once again did not disappoint. From our annual Senior Weekend at Seaview, to great Friday lunch time meetings. It has been amazing! We are forever thankful for all the SU staff and

committee who spend so much time preparing talks, running pizza nights, outreach events and for creating an environment which welcomes anyone and everyone at any time. It could not happen without them. This year was the start of what will hopefully be a long running joint effort with Crown Jesus Ministries and Living Hope Belfast Church, that lead the week of outreach within school and the finale Friday night which saw some of our very own Su teachers, and even Ms Woods, get gunged!



Lots of fun was had and we have shown that SU isn't just about knowing about Jesus but learning how to enjoy the life He has given us! If you did not make it along to SU this year either Junior or Senior, I can not encourage you





enough to get involved, you will not regret it! Once again, thanks to all who attended Senior SU this year and all committee and staff for running such an amazing club. The blessings that pour out of SU are incredible and show how God works in such mighty ways.



I was gutted that this was my last year of SU as I move on from school, but the memories and friends I've made will last a lifetime - so why not come see what we're all about! #SUTID #ATID

*"The third comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"- John 10:10*

***Samantha McGrath (MVI)***

## LIBRARY CLUB

The Library Club entered into its third year. At Library Club pupils train to become pupil librarians. Organising pupils to help with the library not only ensures the smooth day-to-day running of the library, but also helps develop a sense of responsibility, achievement and self-esteem in pupils. Examples of some of the duties carried out by our pupil librarians include:

- Helping in the library during breaks and lunches.
- Shelving fiction books in A-Z order.
- Shelving non-fiction books by subject order.
- Keeping a section of the stock tidy and in the correct order.
- Helping with library displays.
- Helping other students find what they are looking for.
- Helping the librarian with the issuing and returning of materials.

***E.M.***

## POLITICS SOCIETY

With so much going on in the world of politics, Politics Society had plenty to talk about again this year. It is no surprise that some of our lunchtime meetings focused on Brexit, with one lunchtime devoted to seeing the political fallout from Theresa May's deal and the subsequent cabinet resignations. That lunchtime, predictions were made by members as to how long she would stay in Number 10; she lasted much longer than anyone foresaw; we have some way to go to make it as political analysts. Other topics during our meetings covered censorship in books, free speech, populism, mental health funding and restorative justice.



We also visited the cinema twice during the year to see the political movies 'BlacKkKlansman' and 'Vice', which gave great insight into politics in America during different eras. 'BlacKkKlansman' follows the true story of Ron Stallworth who was the first African-American detective in Colorado Springs and his efforts to infiltrate and expose the Ku Klux Klan in the 1970s. 'Vice' is a biographical comedy drama about former US President Dick Cheney as he becomes one of the most powerful Vice Presidents in history. Both movies provided the opportunity for students to see beyond Politics in the classroom and cast a critical eye over the stories as they were being told.



During the year, we had a visit from Tim McGarry, the host of BBC Northern Ireland's 'The Blame Game'.

As engaging and witty as you would expect, it was fantastic to hear about his background in



law and how he ended up in comedy. The session was packed with students and teachers asking a range of great questions which allowed Tim to give us his views on all manner of issues, some political and some not.



Finally, three of our students had some success in the Political Studies Association video competition. Sarah McIlroy, Michael O'Kane and Natalia Wisniewska were shortlisted after producing a three-minute video on what Brexit means to them. Their entry was a well-produced and thought-provoking video covering a range of areas where Brexit will affect Northern Ireland, the Good Friday Agreement and EU citizens living here. They were one of four teams shortlisted and asked to attend the final, which took place in the Speaker's Chambers in Westminster during the





October half-term where their video was played to the judging panel, which included John Bercow before being interviewed on it. Although they were unlucky not to win, they acquitted themselves very well, demonstrating their breadth of knowledge across an issue that even our politicians are unable to fully understand and solve.



***K.S.B.***

## READING GROUP

Reading Group is held by Ms Graham, in LL9, the first Tuesday of every month. The group met to discuss their favourite books, recent reads, movie adaptations and also specific genres and forms. We were kept fed and watered by Ms Graham's assortment of biscuits, coffee and various teas, and enjoyed a year of reading and exchanging ideas.

We started the year with Gothic fiction to get into the spirit of Halloween and also to help anyone doing AS English Literature by considering different themes and Gothic characteristics present in 19th Century texts. We mentioned works such as 'The Castle of Otranto', 'Dracula' and 'Northanger Abbey'. Throughout the year, we also looked into different forms of Literature from Poetry to Prose to graphic novels. With novels, we discussed the classic 'Harry Potter' series, The 'Great Gatsby' and Pullman's 'The Dark Materials' trilogy and his recent 'The Book of Dust'. We shared our favourite poems from

Seamus Heaney, Percy Bysshe Shelley and Carol Ann Duffy and also touched on graphic novels, particularly the adaptation of 'The Rivers of London' series in its graphic form.

Reading Group helped us all to discover new genres and authors outside of our comfort zone, which in turn, helped broaden our literary horizons. It is a helpful way to discover new titles which you might not have considered previously. It offers a comfortable environment and an opportunity to share and listen to opinions on certain works, and emphasises the idea that there is no single way to read a piece of literary work. There is a focus on what a novel is about and what emotions it provokes, rather than the close study approach of analysing specific writing techniques, which can take the fun out of reading.

Whether or not you study English, Reading Group can be beneficial in encouraging you to read around your academic studies and also consider new viewpoints and genres, regarding different texts. Overall, I would recommend it to all those with an interest in reading or even an interest in becoming a reader as Reading Group is the place to meet like-minded individuals to share books and ideas.

***Caitlin Sahin (MVI)***

## YOUNG EINSTEIN CLUB



The Young Einstein Club had another enjoyable year in school. It continues to



provide Junior school pupils with a relaxed environment where science is, above all, fun. We enjoyed putting the “fizz” into Fizzy Fun, we struggled to believe our eyes as secret messages were revealed and optical illusions were explored and we put our engineering skills to the test investigating which raft design could support the greatest load without sinking.



There was great excitement at our annual House Tower Building Competition where Currie were triumphant, claiming not only 1<sup>st</sup> place but 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place as well!



We thank our outgoing LVI committee for all their help throughout the year and especially our faithful junior pupils who approached each experiment with limitless enthusiasm.

*J.P.C./N.H./J.B.*





# *Music in School*



## **SENIOR ORCHESTRA**

There are very few music groups that pupils would be willing to go to on a Friday after a long day at school, but Senior Orchestra is definitely a highlight of my week! Led by Mr Forde, (who is so dedicated to the group he arranged a Britney Spears medley for us), orchestra is fast-paced, fun and a good opportunity to play more advanced pieces with senior members of the Music Department. After a lively performance of Handel's *La Rejouissance* at Prize Day, we turned our attention towards the big event of the year: the Spring Concert. The Britney Spears Medley was so much fun to play and definitely a crowd pleaser, but the highlight of the entire concert was undoubtedly our performance of *Riverdance*. After a beautiful soprano solo from Orla O'Kane at the beginning of the piece, *Riverdance* featured flute and violin solos alongside a flotilla of Irish dancers (with dance solos from Louise O'Neill, Lucy White and Bethany Hunter), all accompanied by the orchestra. The end result was absolutely

incredible and an experience I will never forget!

Huge thanks to Mr Forde, who gently encouraged us throughout the year: Orchestra would definitely collapse without him and his enthusiasm. The Music Department would also like to thank all the Middle Sixth pupils who made orchestra so special, in particular our leader Lauren O'Donnell and flautist Elizabeth McCauley.

*Eva Hayward (MVI)*





## CHAMBER CHOIR

2018/19 was a spectacular year for Chamber Choir thanks to the hard work of Ms McMullan! We kicked off the year with our prize day performance, of *For the Beauty the Earth* by John Rutter. This was thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils, parents and staff. We then began to prepare for our Christmas festivities, beginning with a community carol service in Duncairn Arts Centre where we were joined by St Malachy's Chamber Choir and other groups. We brought the winter term to a close with BRA's own carol service, where we were joined by the rest of the school's choirs and our string quartet, which got us all into the Christmas spirit.

The highlight of the year for Chamber Choir is the Spring Concert and this year was no exception! Our performance featured the American folk song, *Shenandoah* and a choral arrangement of *Lady Madonna*.

Although challenging, these were our favourite pieces of the year as they showcased the amazing talent in Chamber Choir. This went down a treat with the audience in the Ulster Hall.

Sadly, this was the last song for our MVI as their final year drew to a close. We said farewell to many fabulous members of Chamber Choir and would like to thank them for their dedication to music over the years. We

would like wish them all the best for all their future endeavours!

***Anna Midgley & Aoife Bennett (LVI)***

## WIND BAND

The conductor of Wind Band has always had a love-hate relationship with its members and this year wasn't going to be any different! That complex and labyrinth-like link was especially true for Ms McMullan who took the band every Thursday lunchtime for its 'seven month lifespan'. Many moments of joy and despair were experienced by Ms McMullan in the first few weeks, then came the worrying months when nothing seemed to be coming together, then the months full of despair when we couldn't play even the basic notes and eventually the hopeful month when she conducted us during the annual Spring Concert in the Ulster Hall. This month soon became the 'relieved month' once it was all over!







Like most years, there was a mad rush at the end to try and cram in the numerous semiquavers and trills the flutes were expected to be playing (preferably in tune) with only a few weeks to go before the concert. Meanwhile, if at least one of the two trombonists turned up to a rehearsal after their three weeks of ‘personally taken leave’, it was labelled a success and we were in full swing! This ‘leave’ was the usual justification for doing whatever trombonists usually do in their spare time - possibly collecting newts from nearby streams and delicately concocting potions and brews from their favourite novels such as ‘Harry Potter’ and ‘Twilight’.

When we got to our final performance of the year, sometime in the season of spring, in true Wind Band fashion we pulled it right out of the bag with an admirable performance which truly made it a night to remember! Finally, we would like to thank Ms McMullan for surrendering her free lunchtimes to the monolith known as ‘Wind Band’, and the Middle Sixth pupils who have dutifully played their parts for so many years.

*M.M.M.*

## BOYS’ CHOIR

While the Academy constantly and faithfully strives to bring together pupils of all backgrounds, interests, sporting and musical talents and academic potential, few clubs and teams accomplish it with the success, camaraderie and fellowship encompassed in the very foundation of Boys’ Choir. Whether your ability to sing is akin to that of a Chamber Choir expert or someone who has little to no experience in singing or music, all are made to feel welcome and always feel that they can call J9 their home.

The Boys’ Choir calendar contains two major highlights: performing our Christmas hits at assemblies and carol services in December, followed by our show-stopping performances at the Spring Concert held in the Ulster Hall. Some of our most loved melodies in the festive season include *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, *God Rest ye Merry Gentlemen* and *Merry Christmas Everyone*. Moving on to last







year's Spring Concert, it should first of all be said that the members of the Boys' Choir were very thankful to Ms McMullan, Matthew Logan and Stephen Moreland for their contributions on piano, drums and guitar respectively. They helped bring a strong percussive rhythm and even some tune to our display. These instrumental additions added an authentic feel to our Beatles Medley and to our rendition of *Take Me Home, Country Roads*.



I can quite confidently say that Boys' Choir is one of the highlights of my week and indeed my entire school career. Throughout the year, Miss Carson's room featured a large group of reliable, committed and passionate boys who wished to discover their own place in the infamous Boys' Choir assemblage. Although we have lost 16 dedicated and talented MVI students this year, we look forward to welcoming in a number of new Form III recruits. It is also here in J9 that we are transformed from schoolboys into young men, as Miss Carson takes it upon herself to play piano, conduct, criticise (mostly constructively!), fine tune and perfect our singing, for which the boys are most grateful.

If it weren't for Miss Carson, then there might be a shadow over the future of the Boys' Choir. However, her diligence in the arduous task of

directing, controlling and improving us ensures the continuation of the society's Tuesday lunchtime meetings. Very few times in academic life do so many students owe so much to just one person, but Miss Carson is without doubt the heart and soul of the Boys' Choir, a group which thrives and is so enjoyable.

*Michael Harvey (V)*

## JUNIOR STRINGS

I was a very late addition to Junior Strings compared to most of the other members of the group. I joined in Form III as I had only started playing the cello two years before that and it was not until then that I was able to play confidently enough to take the plunge. However, it is one of the best decisions I ever made. It is great fun to be part of it and it is not like you are playing all the old and boring pieces from the Classical era. The pieces that we play are much more up-beat and well-known.

Our first major occasion of the year was performing at the annual Spring Concert in the Ulster Hall. In this concert, we performed a modern take on a traditional Baroque piece called *Bach Rocks* and the hugely popular *The Show Must Go On* by Queen. We followed this by performing the haunting classic *The Highland Cathedral* at the Summer Serenade at the end of June.

The pieces that Mrs Prior carefully chooses are manageable for any level of musician, while still providing enough of a challenge that our skills are improved at every rehearsal. Being part of a group such as Junior Strings will have





such a positive impact on your musicality and it even re-ignited my love for music and swayed me to choose Music for GCSE.

Mrs. Prior is such a patient teacher and does an excellent job of keeping us in time and playing at the same pitch. I know I would definitely struggle to keep 20 budding, junior musicians playing together and making it sound good! Without her I don't think Junior Strings would be nearly as successful as it is year after year. Junior Strings runs on a Monday lunchtime in MU3. Extra violins, violas, cellos and even double basses are always welcome. Any young and budding string players in Belfast Royal Academy would be crazy not to join this group. Not only is it great fun but it makes you an even better musician.

*Kian Jan-Dickens (III)*

## SENIOR STRINGS

The past year has been a success once more for BRA's Senior Strings with many of our members participating in Ballymena Festival

of Music, Speech and Dance. With a lot of individual and group practise the following achievement were obtained:

BRA Senior String Quartet (Anna Quinn LVI, Eva Hayward LVI, Theo Hayward III and Neil Og Martin LVI.) ; string quartet (ages 14-17).

Anna Quinn, LVI and Eva Hayward, LVI; 2nd (joint) violin solo (open).

Maya Reilly-Stewart, IV; 2nd violin solo (ages 15-17).

Jonny Hayward, IV; 1st double bass solo (ages 15-17).

The Hayward string trio (Eva Hayward LVI, Theo Hayward III and Jonny Hayward IV) ; 1st place string ensemble (up to 4 instruments) (ages 15-17).

Theo Hayward, III; 1st junior viola (ages 13-14).







Throughout the year we rehearsed under the baton of past pupil Ellen Quinn, who took over from the very busy Ms McMullan. Ellen was more than happy to take on this role as she was keen to continue her contribution to the music department at BRA. With rehearsals every Friday lunchtime (which meant sacrificing curry day!) we practised many pieces until we found a repertoire that was well suited to the group and for the annual spring concert.

We ended up playing two pieces; Sibelius' *Andante Festivo* and Corelli *Christmas Concerto Grosso, movement III*. The Corelli piece involved a solo trio which consisted of Anna Quinn, Maya Reilly-Stewart and Amber McCalmont. This particular piece didn't require a conductor as the soloists had to work together to keep the ensemble in time which was very beneficial as it made our other piece, *Andante Festivo*, sound even better as we all blended as a unit. We then accompanied the vast Senior Choir in Handel's *Zadok the Priest*. This took weeks of practise with Ms McMullan who was very patient with our weekly rehearsals (which consisted of a lot of groaning about the difficult music). However, with intense practise we managed to pull it off and the concert sounded amazing.

Huge thank you to our wonderful MVI, Lauren O'Donnell, Amber McCalmont and Thea Reddington who were such a vital part of the ensemble who will be dearly missed. Another thanks to Ms McMullan who put up with us for

yet another year and managed to make the Spring Concert sound amazing yet again.

*Neil Og Martin & Anna Quinn (LVI)*

## SENIOR TRADITIONAL GROUP

This year has been without a doubt the most enjoyable and memorable for all of the of the members. 'Senior Trad' took place on Wednesday after school and for many involved, it was the only thing that made the mid week blues go away. Senior Trad had a total of 11 members, 2 of those being Middle 6th, Lauren and Elizabeth. In the Spring Concert we played a scintillating and tear jerking performance of *Plenty Fanny Power* followed up with a set of reels beginning with *The Tempest* into *Pink Frog* and finally *Tommy Peoples*. These lively reels definitely got the crowd of the Ulster Hall on their feet.

Since 1993, one teacher has been solely responsible for the Senior Traditional Group, none other than our favourite Dr Scully. To the members of Senior Trad, her departure from BRA has been sorely felt however, we will always be indebted to her work. Although she is impossible to replace, her legacy in BRA will continue as long as we can instil in our new members the spirit of Trad that Dr Scully has instilled in all of us.







From all the members in Senior Trad, we wholeheartedly wish her enjoyment and satisfaction in her new principalship.

*Ronan Poots (LVI)*

## BIG BAND



During 2018/19 the Big Band met every Thursday after school to rehearse. We began with trying potential Spring Concert pieces such as: 'The Bare Necessities' and 'Baby Elephant Walk'. This also familiarised the new members with the style of music played in Big Band.

After a few rehearsals the Band got stuck into learning pieces for the Open Evenings in January. We played pieces such as, 'Love Shack', 'Dynamite' and 'Jazz Police'. This event improves the likelihood of new pupils

joining the school while showing the music facilities on offer.

After the Open Evenings, we decided on the pieces we were going to play at the Spring Concert in the Ulster Hall. We decided on 'The Bare Necessities' and 'The Chicken'. This piece was difficult to play with an individual trombone solo however, by the time the Spring Concert came around we were well rehearsed and played very well during the performance. Overall, the year has been good with challenging and fun pieces which improved everyone's ability and interest in jazz music.

*David Russell (LVI)*

## INTERMEDIATE CHOIR

Intermediate Choir is the latest exciting addition to BRA's excellent musical groups. It was started in September 2018 by Mrs Prior as a choir exclusively for Form Three pupils before they move up to the Senior Choir in Form Four. Mrs Prior is the brilliant conductor of this choir and she chose inspirational and fun songs for us to perform at the school's various musical concerts throughout the year.

For the school's annual Carol service in December, we sang an arrangement of the beautiful carol *In the Bleak Midwinter*, perfecting our notes during rehearsals in the first term. This was followed in March by the





Intermediate Choir's debut performance at the majestic Ulster Hall. We performed the upbeat song *This Little Light Of Mine* and Coldplay's emotive *Fix You* to a packed hall and we enjoyed every minute of it!

Our final performance of the year was at the Summer Serenade in the school Assembly Hall in June. For this recital we performed the well-known *A Million Dreams* from the hugely popular film *The Greatest Showman*. This is one of my favourite songs, so I was really pleased when Mrs Prior told us we would be singing it.

Intermediate Choir was a fantastic experience for me and I loved going to it every Tuesday lunchtime. I really hope it continues to be an enjoyable and successful musical group for future Third Year pupils in Belfast Royal Academy. Thank you, Mrs Prior, for a really enjoyable and successful year.

***Eleanor Black (III)***

## JUNIOR TRADITIONAL GROUP

The Junior Traditional Group in BRA has been growing in popularity over the past few years and this year has been no different with one of the largest groups there has ever been.

For the Spring Concert in March in the Ulster Hall we played a set which began with the tune *Sprightly Kitty*, with the fiddle solo played by Maya Reilly-Stewart. This then led into blazing, fast fiddles and whistles playing *Shetland Night*. We also played a set at the

Summer Serenade in the Assembly Hall in June. This began with Ryan Ferguson and Fiona Murray playing a duet called *Farewell to Whalley Range*. Following this was a lively set of exceptionally fast reels including *McLeod's* and *Lisnagun*.

Overall, Junior Trad had a very successful year and this is down the commitment of every member turning up each Friday lunchtime and putting in the practice needed. However, none of this would be possible without Mr Forde. His enthusiasm, patience and good humour is unmatched, making Junior Trad a weekly highlight for many pupils in school.

***Fiona Murray (IV)***

## JUNIOR CHOIR

We joined Junior Choir in First Year and have loved it since day one. We never knew each other before we became members, and we are now best friends. That's one of the great things about Choir; you will meet a lot of new friends if you join!

During the year we sang in three different performances: the first one is the Carol Service in December, followed by the Spring Concert in March, and then finally the Summer Serenade in June.

At the Carol Service we sang *Carol of the Children* and *Angels We Have Heard on High* which helped to create a really special Christmas atmosphere. We were very excited for the Spring Concert in the Ulster Hall, and there we sang *Shotgun* by George Ezra, with





surprise trumpet solo by Harrison Kirk in Form II, as well as *Can You Feel the Love Tonight* from The Lion King film. For our last performance of the year at Summer Serenade, we sang two lively songs which put us in the mood for our holidays; *I'll be there for you* and *For the First in Forever* with solos by Faith Hillis and Jane Martin.

The Junior Choir wouldn't be possible without Callum Whiteside our amazing piano player in Form III, and Mr Forde our brilliant conductor. We would also like to thank him for putting up with us very annoying first and second years. He taught us how to sing amazingly and knows how to have fun with it. We would really encourage first and second years to join. It's a really great experience!

**Jane Martin & Izzy Worthington (II)**

## SENIOR CHOIR

Senior Choir had an exciting year from our stunning Christmas Carol Service at Rosemary Presbyterian church to the fab Spring Concert in the Ulster Hall.



From the beginning of the year there was a buzz in the music department at the potential of our very capable staff and students, which accumulated in each senior choir practice. Initially, our sights were set on the Christmas Carol Service which turned out phenomenally well thanks to all involved. The service began



with *Once in Royal David City* with the first verse being sung by myself and continued with a glorious performance by Orla O'Kane in *O Holy Night*. The night was full with classics such as *In the Bleak Midwinter* and *Away in a Manger* which made for a lovely night, enjoyed by all attending.

But there is no rest for the wicked as Ms McMullan began rounding up the group again to prepare for the year defining Spring Concert! The Senior Choir was ablaze as we heard our new songs were Whitney Houston's *I Want To Dance With Somebody* and Toto's *Africa* along with a medley of scintillating songs with the 80's theme for the finale, but first we had to tackle the demanding *Zadok the Priest* by Handel. The upcoming performance meant the Choir had to become dedicated to the craft and so we began to practise more regularly, committing our lunch hours to singing away in Mu2. However, soon we found that this was no difficult task as people from across the senior school squeezed into the room in good humour and friendship with Ms McMullan leading us in the charge. The concert was absolutely fabulous in the end and







many parents had teary eyes due to our awe inspiring choralography accompanying the tunes!

Being in the Senior Choir is a wonderful experience every year and this was no exception. A big thanks is due to Ms. McMullan for her hard work and past Middle Sixth who have sadly left. I would recommend getting involved in any choir in the school not only for the music but also for the opportunity to meet fellow music enthusiasts and friends.

*Sarah McIlroy (LVI)*

## ULSTER YOUTH ORCHESTRA

This year's UYO course was undoubtedly one of the best in recent years: not only was the playing of an incredibly high standard, but the craic was even better!

Under the baton of Rumon Gamba, we rehearsed from 10 in the morning to 9 at night (which was tough at times!), but all the hard work paid off in our two concerts in the Guildhall in Derry and in the Ulster Hall.

Performing Tchaikovsky's 6th symphony, Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis* and Liebermann's Flute Concerto with Eimear McGeown, the atmosphere in the hall was electric and the energy and connection within the orchestra really came across to the audience, making the two concerts absolutely unforgettable for all those involved.

The course itself was also amazing, with enjoyable activities every day, including a ceilidh and karaoke night. The friendships made will last a lifetime - we're like a big family. Overall it was a very professional and enjoyable experience and we would recommend it to any aspiring musicians who want to expand their repertoire.

*Maya Reilly Stewart & Jonny Hayward (IV)*







## Senior Choir

### SOPRANO

Giulia Allen  
Laura Browne  
Anna Buckley  
Catelyn Burns  
Emma Calderwood  
Ethan Carter  
Amy Convery  
Hannah Crawford  
Ruth Davis  
Caitlyn Donaghy  
Kate Duffy  
Maia Erwin  
Demi Gaspar  
Sabriel Gergett  
Sophie Hamilton  
Lucy Handcock  
Georgia Harvey  
Nadine Hawela  
Eva Hayward  
Lauren Hetherington  
Emma Irvine  
Lucy Jamison  
Alex Johnston  
Olivia Jones  
Jayne Kennedy  
Susie Kerr  
Molly Lawlor  
Ella Linton  
Kathleen Malone  
Shannon McBride  
Tara McBride  
Leah McCarter  
Elizabeth McCauley  
Ella McCullagh  
Eva McGoldrick

Rachael McGrath  
Grace McIlroy  
Jane McIlroy  
Niamh McIlroy  
Olivia McIlroy  
Sarah McIlroy  
Chloe McKnight  
Veda Meruga Perumal

Ellie Moore  
Claire Njanina  
Orla O'Kane  
Alexis Payot  
Sasha Peters  
Layona Phillips  
Anna Quinn  
Sophie Smith  
Maya Reilly Stewart  
Cara Reid  
Sarah Saunders  
Niamh Sloan  
Jing Yi Sung  
Jaana Tharun  
Emma Uprichard  
Ellie Walsh  
Christina Warnock  
Lucy White  
Jing Yi Sun

### ALTO

Sarah Adams  
Lauren Adams  
Kathryn Allen  
Aoife Armstrong  
Abbie Baxter  
Aoife Bennett  
Martha Bloomer  
Ellie Burns  
Elisha Carmichael  
Aoife Cavanagh  
Layla Creaney  
Alex Cronin  
Emilia Dimovski  
Emma Dobbin  
Louise Dorman

Maia Hamilton  
Meghan Hamilton  
Ella Harvey  
Eve Henderson  
Thomas Kennedy  
Roan Kershaw  
Kirsty Lee  
Jill Massey  
Amber McCalmont  
Victoria McClements  
Rebecca McClenaghan  
Jenny McCorry  
Kitty McCracken  
Samantha McGrath  
Naomi McGuckin  
Beth McMillan  
Erin McQuiston  
Laura Mecke  
Anna Midgley  
Jane Monahan  
Ellie Murray  
Lauren O'Donnell  
Aoife O'Hagan  
Anna O'Kane  
Rachel Patterson  
Rebecca Plackett  
Leah Potter  
Rachel Ramsey  
Thea Reddington  
Cara Reid  
Hermione Reid  
Dona Saji  
Wianne Salvatierra  
Caitlin Sahin  
Orla Shells  
Elise Swain  
Rachel Swann  
Magdalena Szlachta  
Erin Wallace  
Natalia Wisniewska

Courtney Todd Roper  
Doris Uche  
Kerry Uprichard  
Charley Walker  
Erin Wallace

### TENOR & BASS

Joshua Boyd  
Ireneusz Brunka  
Nathan Bunting  
Jack Carson  
Lorcan Convery  
Neil Elliott  
Oisin Gaffey  
Ben Golden  
Jonny Hayward  
Michael Lavery  
Matthew Logan  
Padraig Manning  
Cuann McCauley  
Oliver McBride  
Adam McCleave  
Michael McCormack  
Aaron McGroty  
Cameron McKee  
Conall McKown  
Mark McKillen  
Jason Melville  
David Monahan  
Robin Montgomery  
Stephen Moreland  
Ben O'Neill  
Ronan Poots  
Ben Read  
David Russell  
Logan Simpson  
Harry Smith  
Caleb Tennyson  
Zak Thabeth  
Ethan Thompson  
Ben Watt  
Peter Watt  
Archie Wylie



## Belfast Royal Academy

# Spring Concert

Thursday  
21st March 2019  
Ulster Hall, Belfast  
7.30pm



## PROGRAMME

<b>Senior Choir</b>	<i>Zadok the Priest</i>	G. F. Handel
<b>Ben Madigan</b>	<i>Scarborough Fair &amp; The Sound of Silence</i>	P. Simon & A. Garfunkel
	<i>The Place Where Lost Things Go</i>	S. Whitman & M. Shaiman
	<i>I Just Can't Wait To Be King</i>	E. John
<b>Wind Band</b>	<i>The Magnificent Seven</i>	E. Bernstein arr. S. Richards
	<i>Flashdance</i>	G. Morode arr. J. Nowak
	<i>Despacito</i>	L. Fons arr. P. Murtha
<b>Intermediate Choir</b>	<i>Fix You</i>	C. Martin arr. C. Prior
	<i>This Little Light of Mine</i>	Trad. arr. C. Prior
	(soloist: Ellie McIvor)	
<b>Junior Traditional Group</b>	<i>Sprightly Kitty &amp; Shetland Night</i>	Traditional
	(soloist: Maya Reilly-Stewart)	
<b>Big Band</b>	<i>The Bare Necessities</i>	T. Gilykson arr. J. Wasson
	<i>The Chicken</i>	A.J. Ellis arr. K. Berg
<b>Junior Strings</b>	<i>Bach Rocks</i>	D. Burndrett
	<i>The Show Must Go On</i>	F. Mercury arr. A. Talanov
<b>Junior Choir</b>	<i>Can You Feel The Love Tonight</i>	E. John & T. Rice
	(soloists: Jack Cairns, Siona Nibu & Alex Simon)	
	<i>Shotgun</i>	G. Ezra
	(soloist: Harrison Kirk)	
<b>Senior Strings</b>	<i>Andante Festivo Op. 177a</i>	J. Sibelius
	<i>Concerto Grosso no. 8 - Adagio</i>	A. Corelli
	(soloists: Anna Quinn, Maya Reilly Stewart & Amber McCalmont)	
<b>Senior Orchestra</b>	<i>Oops!..... He Did It Again.....</i>	B. Spears arr. GJF

## Senior Strings

### 1ST VIOLIN

Anna Quinn  
Lauren O'Donnell  
Eva Hayward  
Alex Cronin  
Thea Reddington  
Anna Midgley  
Aoife Bennett  
Aoife O'Hagan  
Kate Duffy  
Nathan Bunting  
Lauren Hetherington

### DOUBLE BASS

Jonathan Hayward  
Rebecca Plackett

### 2ND VIOLIN

Maya Reilly Stewart  
Hugo Reilly Stewart  
Jing Yi Sun  
Sarah Adams  
Eve Henderson  
Ryan Ferguson  
Ella Linton  
Sarah Saunders  
Ellen Loane  
Anna Wilson  
Rory Nethercott  
Shannon McBride  
Sabriel Gergett

### VIOLA

Theo Hayward  
David Eyjolfsson

### CELLO

Amber McCalmont  
Neil Og Martin  
Archie Wylie  
Jude Loane  
Niamh McIlroy

### DOUBLE BASS

Jonathan Hayward  
Rebecca Plackett

## Chamber Choir

### SOPRANO

Emma Calderwood  
Lucy Jamison  
Tara McBride  
Elizabeth McCauley  
Elisa McCullagh  
Samantha McGrath  
Sarah McIlroy  
Clare Njanina  
Orla O'Kane  
Sasha Peters  
Anna Quinn

### ALTO

Aoife Bennett  
Alex Cronin  
Louise Dorman  
Eva Hayward  
Eve Henderson  
Amber McCalmont  
Anna Midgley  
Lauren O'Donnell  
Aoife O'Hagan  
Leah Potter  
Thea Reddington

### TENOR

Jonathan Hayward  
Cuann McCauley  
Michael McCormick  
Jason Melville  
Stephen Moreland  
Archie Wylie

### BASS

Oisin Gaffey  
Michael Lavery  
Padraig Manning  
Cameron McKee  
Mark McKillen  
David Monahan  
Ronan Poots

## Junior Strings

### 1ST VIOLIN

Theo Hayward  
Hugo Reilly-Stewart  
Ryan Ferguson  
Rory Nethercott  
Alessandro O'Hara  
Sarah McCauley  
Anna Wilson  
Jessica Boyd  
Riya Raghuram  
Cara Campbell  
Cara McMahon

### 2ND VIOLIN

Jamie Wilson  
Jessica Lane  
Katie McCauley  
Rachel Anderson  
June Finnegan  
Katie Horkan

### VIOLA

David Eyjolfsson  
Alex Simon

### CELLO

Kian Jan-Dickens  
E. J. Nazareth  
Rosa Kerr





## Clarinet Ensemble

Anna O'Kane Eleanor Black Ellie Burns Olivia Thompson Leah McCarter

## Saxophone Ensemble

Ella Harvey Emma Dobbin Megan Warke Anna O'Kane Aoife Armstrong Erin McQuiston

## Junior Traditional Group

### FIDDLE

Jessica Boyd  
Ryan Ferguson  
Jane Finnegan  
Sabriel Gergett  
Ella Linton  
Shannon McBride  
Maya Reilly-Stewart  
Sarah Saunders  
Janie Wilson

### VIOLA

David Eyjolfsson

### TIN WHISTLE/FLUTE

Lucy Handcock  
Alice Logan  
Sasha Logan  
Sophia Mallon  
Jessica McCauley  
Ciara Murray  
Fiona Murray  
Couteney Adelman

### BODHRAN

Emma Upchurch

### GIITAR

Rozina Galla  
Hannah Crawford  
Caitlin Donaghy  
Emma Irvine  
Jayne Kennedy  
Cara McGrath  
Kate Sturgess

## Wind Band

### FLUTE

Emma Calderwood  
Eva Hayward  
Rohan Poots  
Victoria McClements  
Maya Reilly-Stewart  
Cora Reid  
Sasha Logan  
Lucy Handcock  
Sophia Mallon  
Amber Mallon  
Hugo Reilly-Stewart  
Shannon McBride  
Grace Ogilby  
Fiona Murray  
Alice Logan  
Julia Upchurch  
Noah Gilchrist  
Jessie McCauley  
Fiona Murray

### TROMBONE

David Russell  
Riona Millard  
Daniel Armstrong  
Andrew Cleland

### CLARINET

Jennifer McCorry  
Sam Haken  
Anna O'Kane  
Eleanor Black  
Olivia Thompson  
Nada Hawela  
Hannah Crawford  
David Kane  
Neil Elliott  
Grace McIlroy  
Lizzy Coburn  
Ellie Burns  
Beth Stewart  
Bradley Coburn

### BASS CLARINET

Leah McCarter

### TUBA

Jason Melville  
Leo Millard  
Jude Morrison

### ALTO SAXOPHONE

Elizabeth McCauley  
Ella Harvey  
Rachel Ramsey  
Georgia Harvey  
Megan Warke  
Erin McQuiston  
Emma Dobbin  
Ciara Murray  
Cormac Doherty  
Daniel McKewen

### TENOR SAXOPHONE

Aoife Armstrong  
Harry Smith

### TENOR HORN

Ben O'Neill  
Jamie O'Brien  
Holly Hooks  
Seraphina Rooney

### TRUMPET

Peter Watt  
Roan Kershaw  
Ben Golden  
Harrison Kirk  
Joshua Boyd  
Caitlyn Donaghy  
Ellie Murray  
Lauren Adams  
Emma Upchurch  
Kylie Rooney  
Adam O'Brian  
Emily Warnock

### PERCUSSION

Matthew Logan  
Magdalena Szychta  
Matthew Rankin  
Benjamin Read

### BARITONE/EUPHONIUM

Adam McCleave  
Ben Watt

## 15 Minute Interval

### Senior Orchestra

*Riverdance (soprano: Orla O'Kane)*  
*Soloists: Louise O'Neill, Lucy White, & Bethany Hunter*  
*Ensemble: (Lizzy Coburn, Lucy McKnight & Tianna Savage)*

B. Whelan arr. GJF

### Clarinet Ensemble

Eleanor Rigby

Lennon & McCartney

### Saxophone Ensemble

Danny Boy

Trad. arr. K. Street

### Chamber Choir

Shenadoah

Traditional arr. James Erb

Lady Madonna

J. Lennon & P. McCartney arr. C. Canning

### M6 Solo

Elizabeth McCauley (flute)  
*Hypnosis*

I. Clarke

### Boys' Choir

*A Beatles Medley*

Various arr. VC

*Take Me Home, Country Roads*

J. Denver, B. Danoff & T. Nivert

Matthew Logan: Drums  
Stephen Moreland: Guitar

### Senior Traditional Group

*Planxty Fanny Power, Drops of Brandy, The Trip to London*  
*The Tempest, The Pink Frog, Tommy Peoples*

Traditional

### M6 Solo

Clare Njanina

*I will Always Love You*

### Finale

*80'S Mash-Up*

Various

## Boys' Choir

Andrew Bassett  
Mayank Biswas  
Joshua Boyd  
Callum Brown  
Odhran Catney  
Lorcan Convery  
Andrew Dorman  
Ryan Ferguson  
Edward Ferrin  
Oisin Gaffey  
Ben Golden  
Lorcan Gourley  
Sam Haken  
Michael Harvey  
Jonathan Hayward  
Aiden Jain  
Rob Johnston  
Matthew Logan  
Zak Lundy  
Padraig Manning  
Adam Martin  
Adam McCleave  
Aaron McGrotty  
Cameron McKee  
Tom McKee  
Mark McKillen  
Johnny McNamee  
Robin Montgomery  
Stephen Moreland

Sol Morrow  
Ethan Murphy  
Brendan O'Boyle  
Adam O'Neill  
Ben O'Neill  
Alex O'Reilly  
Ryan Peden  
Rohan Poots  
Ewan Purdy  
Joshua Ramsey  
Stuart Rea  
David Russell  
Malachi Swen  
Daniel Taylor  
Caleb Tennyson  
Adam Tepe  
Zak Thabber  
Ethan Thompson  
Joshua Thompson  
Ben Watt  
Peter Watt  
Archie Wylie  
Mr P Dorman  
Mr G Forde  
Mr M Harte  
Dr J McCombe

## Intermediate Choir

Eleanor Black  
Jessica Boyd  
David Eljolfsson  
Elynn Elliott  
Robert Enriquez  
Rozina Galla  
Connor Gillam  
Eleanor Green  
Theo Hayward  
Alice Hew  
Amy Higgins  
Ebony Hoogelander  
Aleena Jain  
Anjana Kandel  
Lara Lennon  
Sophia Mallon  
Helen Marshall  
Sarah McCauley  
Cara McGrath  
Ellie McKewen  
Abbie McKnight

Sarah McLaughlin  
Anna Monaghan  
Fiona Murray  
Rory Nethercott  
Natasha Newton  
Jamie O'Brien  
Riya Raghuram  
Sofia Ramalho-McCourt  
Sophie Rutherford  
Anna Saunders  
Bella Scott  
Katie Scott  
Charlotte Spence  
Kate Sturgess  
Eve Taylor  
Hannah Thompson  
Kaitlyn Tool  
Grace Upchurch  
Cydney Waring  
Cassie Watt  
Emilia Zboralska  
Anna Wilson  
Lucy-Beth Watson

## Senior Orchestra

### 1ST VIOLIN

Lauren O'Donnell  
Anna Quinn  
Eva Hayward  
Aoife O'Hagan  
Aoife Bennett  
Anna Midgley  
Thea Reddington  
Sarah Adams  
Wianne Salvietiera  
Alex Cranion  
Jing-Yi Sun  
Nathan Bunting  
Lauren Hetherington  
Kate Duffy

### 2ND VIOLIN

Maya Reilly-Stewart  
Anna Wilson  
Sabriel Gergett  
Shannon McBride  
Eve Henderson  
Sarah Saunders  
Ella Linton  
Molly Lapworth  
Rory Nethercott  
Ryan Ferguson  
Ellen Loane

Eve Henderson  
Hugo Reilly-Stewart  
Jessica Boyd  
Connor Gillam  
Charlotte Beattie Logan

### VIOLA

Theo Hayward  
David Eyjolfsson  
Alex Simon

### 'CELLO

Amber McCalmont  
Neil Og Martin  
Nicole McClean  
Jude Loane  
Archie Wylie  
Niamh McIlroy

### DOUBLE BASS

Jonathan Hayward  
Rebecca Plackett

### FLUTE

Elizabeth McCauley  
Rohan Poots

### CLARINET

Naoimh Brown  
Eleanor Black  
Jennifer McCorry  
Leah McCarter  
Anna O'Kane

### SAXOPHONE

Megan Warke  
Ella Harvey  
Erin McQuiston  
Emma Dobbin

### TRUMPET

Roan Kershaw  
Peter Watt  
Joshua Boyd  
Ben Golden  
Harrison Kirk

### TROMBONE

David Russell  
Riona Millard

### HORNS

Ben Watt  
Ben O'Neill

### TUBA

Jason Melville  
Leo Millard

### PERCUSSION

Matthew Logan

## Big Band

**SAXOPHONE**  
Elizabeth McCauley  
Erin McQuiston  
Anna O'Kane  
Emma Dobbin  
Megan Warke  
Ella Harvey  
Hannah Crawford  
Neil Elliott  
Aoife Armstrong  
Eleanor Black  
Harry Smith

### TRUMPET

Peter Watt  
Harrison Kirk  
Roan Kershaw  
Ben Golden  
Joshua Boyd

### TROMBONE

David Russell

### TUBA

Jason Melville

### PERCUSSION

Matthew Logan  
Maya Reilly-Stewart

### PIANO

Zak Thabber  
Caleb Tennyson

### GIITAR

Padraig Manning  
Michael McCormack

### BASS GUITAR

Jonny Hayward  
Morgan Curran

## Ben Madigan

Niamh Curran  
Stuart Knox  
Jacob McLaughlin  
Lia Ashe  
Oscar Cooley  
Myles Hawthorne  
Eleanor Murphy  
Abi Wade  
Petra Keeling  
Isabelle McCune  
Bella Redfern McBride  
Rowan Ashe-McGurk  
Charlotte Hughes  
Jack Knox  
Angus Robertson  
Leila Scullion  
Sophia Simon  
Niamh McKenna Murray

## Junior Choir

Adam O'Brien  
Aidan Murray  
Alex Simon  
Alice Logan  
Amandine Chesnel  
Amber Mallon  
Andrew Cleland  
Anna Curran  
Anna Falls  
Anna McWilliams  
Beth Callaghan  
Beth Stewart  
Bethany Gibson  
Caitlin McGilton  
Caitlin Shaw  
Cara Campbell  
Catherine McCormack  
Ciara Murray  
Clara Schilling  
Darragh Quinn  
Ellie Bell  
Emily Read  
Emily Saunders  
Emily Warnock  
Eva Mitchell

Faith Hillis  
Grace Ogilby  
Hannah Convery  
Harrison Kirk  
Isabella Worthington  
Jack Cairns  
Jamie Wilson  
Jane Martin  
Jessie McCauley  
Katie McCauley  
Leah Hetherington  
Lois McGrath  
Lucy Donald  
Madeleine Morwood  
Madhumitha Pandiaraj  
Natasha Morrison  
Niall Blakett  
Phia Parry  
Rachel Anderson  
Riona Millard  
Rosa Kerr  
Sarah McLean  
Seraphina Rooney  
Bhuvanesh Venkatesan

## Senior Traditional Group

### FIDDLE

Lauren O'Donnell  
Eva Hayward  
Aoife Bennett  
Anna Quinn

### BODHRAN

Kathleen Malone

### TIN WHISTLE

Ellie Murray

### FLUTE

Elizabeth McCauley  
Rohan Poots

### HARP

Emma Calderwood  
Kerry Upchurch

### MANDOLIN

Maya Reilly-Stewart

### GIITAR

Oliver McBride  
Padraig Manning  
Aoife Armstrong  
Chloe McKnight

### UILEANN PIPES

Rohan Poots



# *Drama in School*

## **“NOISES OFF”**

Since my time as an Athenian boy in Roy Alcorn’s “Orestia” in 1970 until The Senior Dramatic Society’s, “Noises Off” this year, I have been involved in more than 40 school productions at BRA. Every one of them has been special in its own way but, I believe, Michael Frayn’s “Noises Off” was the most difficult piece of theatre I have ever undertaken. West End and Broadway productions have impressed audiences with expensive revolving stages and stunning visual effects; we had to rely on seven second hand doors from Gumtree and a lot of elbow grease. However, I also had the privilege of working with nine of the most gifted young people I have come across in one year group.



Noises Off is a modern classic farce relying on impeccable timing, intricate use of stage props and an unparalleled



awareness of where everyone is, both backstage and out front, at all times. This made the rehearsal process unbelievably difficult at times and on one occasion I had to simply cut the rehearsal short to get my head in order!

Before I could confirm that this was indeed going to be the school play, I had to know that the young actors were capable of such a difficult enterprise.

After two weeks of rehearsals it was clear that they were indeed up for it and I duly applied for the Right to Perform. To my horror, the licence was not available for an indefinite time and I had to go to the cast with the disappointing news. To their credit, none of them blamed me and even agreed to let me write a play about our experience. As a last ditch attempt to continue, I wrote to Michael Frayn’s agents and they graciously gave me permission to stage the play on the understanding that I did not advertise the show on social media. From then on it was a joy for me to work so closely with Sophie,



Oisin, Niamh, Lorcan, Jolly Conor, Ben, Becky, Anna and Aoife. Their level of understanding and appreciation of the genre belied their years and it is not just blowing smoke to say that the success of this production is down to their amazing talent.



For those who are not aware of this play, it is basically a play within a play. In Act 1, the audience members become aware that they are watching a dress rehearsal of a traditional British Romp, when the director interrupts the performance to give notes to the somewhat troubled actors. In act two we see the same play but from back stage, (where noise is off), several weeks into the company's tour. In Act 3 we again see the same play from the front, but on the final performance of the tour when everyone appears to have fallen out with everyone else, where everything seems to go wrong and no one really cares.

This is a play I have wanted to stage for many years and it lived up to and surpassed any of my expectations. The joy for me was to be allowed to create a space for the exceptional cast, to give them some advice and then to watch them bring so much more than I could have hoped for to the production. Thank you seems so inadequate.



I am also indebted to my loyal stage crew and production team who did anything that was asked of them. I am also most grateful to those who auditioned, did not get a role but got involved in some aspect of the show. I am also grateful for my small, intimate band of teaching friends who gave up their time and talent to be involved.

I hope everyone who saw the show or were involved in any way, will have as fond memories as I do. "To think I used to do bullion vaults"!



*R.J.*











# School Games

## 1ST XV



*“The key is not the will to win. Everybody has that. It is the will to prepare to win that is important” -Bobby knight*

Rugby for the 1st XV squad began mid-July with players dedicating time in their summer holidays to strength and conditioning training. Saturday morning fixtures began with the annual Ian Graham Trophy tournament at Grosvenor Grammar School. In the group stages there was opportunity to play against

Rainey Endowed and Wesley College Dublin. The team won both games, showing great heart, especially against Wesley giving an opportunity to play in the final against Banbridge Academy in the final. The team played very well in the final winning 21-0. This was to be an excellent start to the season with the Ian Graham Trophy returning to BRA.

Traditionally, the fixtures on the run into half term are a great challenge. Playing schools of such a high pedigree gives an excellent measure of where the team is at, moving into

the new season. The game against Ballyclare High School was played on a beautiful morning at Roughfort. This was a very tight game. With BRA missing several key players, Ballyclare recorded a victory winning 12-11. The following week, a squad game was played against Limavady Grammar school with BRA winning convincingly. In the fixture against Methodist College, players showed resilience throughout the game; however, Methody won 33-13. The team then had a very good performance against Sullivan Upper School; however, frustratingly, we lost 26-16. Following this, there was a game against Wallace High School. Again, some aspects of the game were very good; however, Wallace recorded a 45-15 victory.

The next game against Ballymena Academy was a game where it was felt a win could have been recorded. The game was extremely close with two very even teams battling for a much needed victory. BRA controlled much of the game leading 8-7 into the last play of the game. Ballymena; however, managed to secure a penalty which, in turn, they converted to win 10-8. This was a very difficult defeat! Players were undoubtedly very disappointed; however, they needed to get over the disappointment quickly...the incoming week posed an exciting and fantastic challenge!

Methodist College were holding a 150th Anniversary tournament which we were very fortunate to be invited to. The tournament



would contain the very best Schools from across England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In our group we had games against Crescent College Limerick, Royal Belfast Academical Institution and St Michael's College, Dublin. In all of these games we lost very narrowly, showing some incredible heart throughout the games. There was a genuine feeling that even in defeat the team was starting to hit its stride, competing with the very best.

The tournament ran across two days. On the final day, we faced Ballymena Academy in the final of the subsidiary competition in the tournament. There was a sense that we had a point to prove given the result the week before! Much to everyone's delight the team recorded a moral boosting victory in this game. The team had come a long way in six weeks showing fantastic resilience to succeed when perhaps it looked very difficult. I, for one, was incredibly proud to be a part of this group at this fantastic tournament!

After the half term break, there was an air of expectancy! The Schools' Cup wasn't far away. Players were keen to make their mark! The next game came against Bangor Grammar School. Played at Bangor on a wet Saturday morning! The game ebbed and flowed with both teams showing promise in attack. The game finished with BRA recording a 33-26 victory! Down High School were next on the fixture list!

The victory against Ballymena in the tournament and Bangor Grammar gave the team a real boost of confidence! The week building into the game against Down High was excellent. However, a very disappointing loss was recorded (23-19). This was a very frustrating result! The team knew they were much better; however, they needed to be much

more consistent in their performances if they were to have a successful season.

Thankfully, the team turned around really well after this game recording some excellent results before the Christmas break. This included victories over Dalriada (28-12), Regent House (53-9), Coleraine Grammar school (39-22), Bainbridge Academy (50-12) and Royal School Armagh (12-10). Some of the rugby played in these games was excellent. Players were starting to gel very well as a group!

Two excellent victories were also recorded over the Christmas break against Campbell College (19-17) and Enniskillen Royal Grammar School (22-19). It was clear this team had real potential. They were matching the very best schools in the province and had now gone seven games in a row unbeaten.

After Christmas, the team travelled to The Johnston House Estate for their annual pre Schools' Cup weekend! There was a great buzz about the squad! Over the years, players have grown to love this weekend away. We had decided to go to a different venue! The hotel had on site a rugby pitch, gym, swimming pool and games room. This wonderful facility gave players the opportunity to train to a very high standard whilst enjoy down time with team mates! Departing on the Sunday, there was an air of expectancy! The team was ready to embark upon their Schools' Cup campaign!

The Schools' Cup draw revealed the team was to face Belfast High School at Roughfort. Little was known about Belfast High. They had recorded some good results during the year. Players knew they would need to be at their best! BRA won the game 17-3. Moving



through to the draw for the last 16. Although the team probably hadn't performed at their best, it was good to get a cup game and campaign underway! The draw for the next round took place on the following Monday at Kingspan Stadium. We were drawn away to Ballymena Academy, a team we had seen twice already in the season...

Preparation for the game was excellent. Players were focused and knew that if they were at their very best they could be in a Schools' Cup quarter final. The game was extremely close with both teams squandering early chances. It was ill discipline that cost the team points early trailing 12-0 at the break. The second half was close. BRA scored an early try which they converted. Ballymena replied with a try of their own. 19-7 with 15 minutes to go. BRA scored again leaving the score at 19-12 with one play remaining. Ballymena looked out on their feet. However, it was too little too late! As the team tried everyone to break Ballymena down they remained resilient and recorded a 19-12 victory. Although disappointed, as a coaching staff we could not have asked for any more from these players. They had given their all!

Moving forward there was a chance to compete in the Subsidiary Shield competition. Drawn at home to Dalriada who the team had beaten earlier in the season. However, the game was very disappointing. The game against Ballymena had taken its toll with several injuries picked up. BRA lost the game 22-7 bringing the season to a very disappointing close.

As the season drew to a close, it was apparent that, even though disappointed, much had been achieved. The team had shown resilience to produce some fantastic performances! There

was a feeling that this team had more to give but it wasn't to be. As a coaching team we were proud of the players. They dedicated so much to the season! We thank them and their parents for continuing to make sacrifices to be a part of this special team!

*D.J.C.*

## 2ND XV



The past season was one of success for the 2XV. Starting with a home win against Ballyclare High School. After the Ballyclare game, the team had a tough run of fixtures upcoming. However, even though the team was young, consisting of mainly Form V and LVI pupils, they performed well in the games, losing by a try to Methodist College and a point to both Wallace High School and Sullivan Upper.

At the end of this tough run, the team had an amazing come back away to Ballymena Academy. 12-0 down at half time, the team fought hard in the second half and won 19-17 with a last minute try. This was a real building block for the rest of the season. Following this, there were some comfortable wins against Armagh, Dungannon, Coleraine, Dalriada and Banbridge.

This led us to the Christmas period which saw the team having to play their first round game





of the 2nds cup with a comfortable victory. We had some fixtures to look forward to over the break, building to our next cup game against Ballymena Academy. However, the sides were unable to fulfil the fixtures meaning we had to go into the cup game, having not played in over a month.

In the match at Roughfort, we started well and had some great individual performances in the first half; however, the lack of game time showed early in the second half, where a very well drilled Ballymena side ran in some well worked tries, allowing them to run away with the game. The boys showed some great character at the end to get some tries of their own.

It was a disappointing end to a great season for the boys. Many of the pupils will be returning next year and hope to improve on this season and many have the potential to move up and play 1st XV rugby.

*I.M.G.*

### MEDALLION XV



There was a great deal of opportunity from the Medallion XV to improve both as an individual and as a team this season. The results in the early part of the season were disappointing; however, progress was being made and the

team approached the Medallion Shield with confidence.

The draw for the shield brought an away clash with Cambridge House. In a close match, the team did enough to weather a late storm and qualify for the last 16 of the competition. The side faced CCB in the next round and despite a spirited display, they fell short of qualification for the quarter finals; however, they had the plate completion to look forward to.

In the quarter final of the plate competition, the side faced a very strong Bangor Grammar School team who had recorded a handsome victory against them earlier in the season. The performance in this match was probably the highlight of the season. The boys showed great resilience, skill and determination to overcome the Bangor side and earn a semi-final match away to Rainey.

The performance against Rainey was somewhat underwhelming. BRA dominated possession and territory and led for most of the game. Unfortunately, a last minute try from Rainey put them into the final.

The team made great progress this season and deserve much credit both for the improvement of their skills but also for their perseverance and commitment. They will make a positive contribution to Senior rugby in School over the coming years. Special mention goes to Liam Davis for his excellent leadership both on and off the field.

A big thank you to Mr Patterson who assisted with the coaching throughout the season. His expertise and enthusiasm were invaluable.

*C.M.C.*





## U14 A XV



The U14 A team experienced a very successful and encouraging rugby season, providing much promise and expectation for the future. The season opened with two routine wins versus Ballyclare and Limavady. The side was lacking a little fitness, but demonstrated some glimpses of individual talent and proved that competition within the squad was strong.

The first loss of the season followed against a strong MCB side, who only narrowly won the tie through a well drilled scrum set piece. The game was played with great competitiveness and the team showed signs of possessing a grit and determination that would see them follow up with an eight game unbeaten run.

A 19-14 win against Sullivan saw Peter Richardson score a fantastic try during a thrilling and close match. The team then enjoyed a 22-10 win versus Wallace, where a signature powerful run from Ryan Ferguson saw the first score, followed by quality finishes from tricky full back Ryan O'Hara and prolific winger Henry George.

A high scoring win against Ballymena (that seen Richardson, George and Ferguson all add to their season tallies), provided great entertainment and eventually finished 36-26. This game also saw the introduction of utility back Archie Armstrong, whose tenacity and fearless tackling provided some much needed cover during a tough period of fixtures.

A game, next to a field of bovine spectators, against Dungannon came next, where the side strolled to a 47-5 victory. The team were gaining real momentum at this stage of the year, with structure from the training ground starting to show through clever forwards such as the towering Christopher Sayers.

As the season entered the cold November months, the team had two well-earned wins against Bangor and Down, where the steady hand of Josh McKee guided us through patient patterns of play while slotting many conversions to keep the scoreboard ticking. The cohort of regular try scorers continued their fine form during a 55-0 win versus Dalirada, where the skilful Jericho Balgos and rock solid Captain Oliver Scott also got in on the act. This great run ended with one of the seasons' best performances versus Regent that seen the wall like centre pairing of Charlie Johnston and Adam Gooderham score a try each, the former in particular finishing a fine move.

A match against a very strong Coleraine side proved too much off the back of this great run. A 6-5 loss seen the side display their best defensive performance all season but, despite a try from Ryan O'Hara and able cover provided by the reliable Jacob Burton and Daniel Houston, the team could not sustain their scintillating form with so many changes in key positions.

Mid December saw a round robin tournament versus Campbell and Ballymena. A comfortable win against Ballymena set the platform for a heavyweight clash, where the side narrowly lost out to a Campbell team who suspected they would endure an easier test. Tempers flared, but a back row trio which included the muscle and guile of Ben Dewhurst and Ben Anderson kept us in the physical battle. Miko Akmad, MOTM for the day, and Callum Savage also helped to keep the scrums steady during a really testing game. The match



finished with a controversial try, giving the home side a narrow victory, but one that we were confident could be reversed had Roughfort been the venue.

The New Year brought handsome wins at Killicomaine and Ballyclare, where Josh McKee and Callum Savage again provided many points. Unfortunately, this run of form again ended with another narrow loss to Campbell at their ground; a match where the able leadership of Oliver Scott demonstrated that this rivalry will run well into Medallion rugby and beyond.

Another win against Wallace was punctuated by two disappointing tournament appearances at Ballymena and RBAI that somewhat deflated what had been a very good year for the development of this special group of players. The loss of classy scrum half Oliver Smyth as well as Peter Richardson, Adam Gooderham, Charlie Johnson and Callum Savage to the Medallion squad, meant that the side struggled to recreate their early season form despite reaching the semi-final at Ballymena.

From a development perspective, the team somewhat benefitted from losing these key players. Huge strides in improvement were seen from fringe players such as Josh Canavan, Rory Magill, Jack Coyle, Scott Baxter, Christopher O'Donnell and Cameron Devlin. I have every confidence that some of these names, added to that of Daniel Houston, Archie Armstrong and Jacob Burton, could easily make inroads to the A side for the next academic year.

Special thanks must go to captain Oliver Scott for his organisation and support this year. I know he will prove to be an exceptional leader throughout his school career and beyond. Finally, I would like to thank all of the parents and guardians who passionately supported the team throughout the season; I am confident it

will continue into what I hope will be a memorable Medallion year.

*P.T.S.*

### U13 XV



The U13 XV A and B teams enjoyed an impressive season, during which they played with great levels of dedication, enthusiasm and skill. Form II rugby is a challenging transition, as players learn to adapt to the new pitch size, scrums and lineouts. However, both sides developed well as the year progressed, often utilising the wider space for creative interplay between forwards and backs. The team ethos was to play running rugby, but this starts with winning the ball in the rucks.

The season produced many memorable moments as well as a variety of learning experiences. Valuable lessons were learnt in an early defeat to Methody. The boys took this on board and worked hard in training to produce a string of impressive performances as the season progressed, most notably against Armagh, Coleraine, Wallace, Sullivan and Ballyclare.

It was a pleasure to work with such a large squad of talented and dedicated boys. In fact, our numbers grew as the season unfolded. Many boys played in both the A and B teams, resulting in a healthy competition for places each week. The boys are a credit to their





parents and guardians: polite, positive and extremely helpful to their coaches. They all wore the BRA jersey with pride and played with real passion for the game. I look forward to seeing them develop – both individually and collectively – in their future adventures. My thanks go to former pupil Conor McCauley for his great help this year. I would also like to thank Mr Hughes for his help in the previous years (which I forgot to write last year), as his experience, help and humour were invaluable.

***O.T.M.***

### **U12 XV**



The U12 rugby squad enjoyed a fantastic season on the rugby pitch. They played an entertaining brand of rugby and demonstrated great resilience and bravery in defence. After a tough first half-term of training, the U12 embarked on a challenging fixture list. Impressive displays against Down High, Limavady, Coleraine and Ballymena highlighted the squad's obvious potential. However, this team was looking to go a step further and set themselves high standards for the year.

Impressive victories against MCB, Campbell College, Wallace High School were just reward for this team and they should be very proud of these results and performances. At the annual Coleraine tournament, the boys put together an excellent run to the semi-finals were they

unfortunately ran out of steam to lose by a single score to Campbell.

This is an exciting group of rugby players and they will continue to develop. Special mention should go to the most improved player Daniel Blayney, who went from never playing rugby, to becoming a try scoring machine. The player of the year was undoubtedly Frank Davis who epitomised everything that was good about this U12 rugby squad. They were a pleasure to coach and I look forward to tracking their progress through the school.

***P.R.R.***

### **GIRLS' HOCKEY**

#### **THE GIRL'S HOCKEY CLUB**

The Girl's Hockey club welcomed the expertise and experience of elite coach Stephen Watt for a second 2018/19 season. Stephen's main focus was with the 1st XI and 2A XI although he also had an important input working with the junior teams through the week.

For the 2018/19 season, we fielded four Senior and four Junior teams every week for our Saturday morning fixtures, some weeks we played a 5<sup>th</sup> Senior team (if the opposing school were able to provide one), such were the high numbers attending our Senior club.

In addition to our eight regular teams, the Form I club practised every Saturday with numbers rarely falling below 30.

After Christmas, the Form I team played some friendly fixtures against Sullivan Upper, Methodist College, Friends' and Belfast High. Then concluded their season by playing in the long established annual tournament hosted by Grosvenor Grammar as well as the Carrick and Killicomaine Junior High tournaments.

The Owls Cup is awarded every year to the team in school that wins the most matches. This







year, the 2B XI were the winners, following their hugely successful season in winning their South Antrim League and reaching the final of their Cup.

As always, the club boasted girls who had gained representative honours: Harriet Dougan represented Ulster U21, Niamh McIvor represented Ulster and Irish U18s, Emma Uprichard, Olivia Beattie and Abbie Braniff all represented Ulster U16s and Olivia Beattie, Abbie Braniff, Sasha Logan and Molly McCourt all represented Belfast U15 Schools.

*N.N.*

### 1ST XI



**Played: 2 Won: 8 Lost: 8 Drew: 4**

In her 4<sup>th</sup> and final year of representing BRA 1st XI, Harriet Dougan captained the team with Naomi McGuckin as Vice Captain.

The 1st XI successfully progressed from their Superleague group by beating Portadown College, Regent House and Methodist College and drawing with Strathearn. A 1-0 loss to Banbridge Academy meant we went through in second place which was enough to get seeded into the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the School's Cup as reward.

As the second placed team we drew the Omagh Academy who were winners of a different group.

Away to Omagh made this even more of a challenge which the girls rose to by earning a well-deserved 2-2 draw but unfortunately the lack of experience in penalty runs saw us lose to Omagh and our progress halted.

We drew Dalriada at home in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the School's Cup and felt confident that we could progress from this fixture if we played to our potential.

The match proved to be an extremely close encounter and ended in a 1-1 draw with U14 player Olivia Beattie getting our goal. Again though we lost on penalty runs to go out of the cup and into the Shield competition.

In the quarter final of the Shield we had a comfortable 5-0 win at home to Dungannon Royal but the semi-final drew us tougher opposition in Friends School Lisburn who we had drew with earlier in the season. Again we played out a 1-1 draw with Friends and yet again we went out at the hands of the penalty runs!

We finished runners up in the South Antrim league winning all matches except to the





league winners Ballyclare High. Niamh McIvor finished top goal scorer for the 1sts.

N.N.

## 2A XI



**Played: 17 Won: 8 Lost: 8 Drew:1**

The team was captained by Thomasa Kennedy in her last year at BRA and had a good combination of younger and experienced players.

The team didn't take long to gel together with notable wins against Strathearn and Banbridge Academy in the first month of the new season.

Unfortunately, a second round loss away to Dromore High in their cup meant we had to compete for the 2nd XI plate.

The team managed to progress to the semi-final of this competition beating Lurgan College 2-0 in the quarter final. Unfortunately, they couldn't repeat this performance in the semi, however, and lost 1-0 to Grosvenor Grammar.

The team finished second in their South Antrim league losing only once in their last match against Larne Grammar.

N.N.

## 2B XI



**Played: 21 Won: 13 Drew: 5 Lost: 3**

**Captain:** Laurel Kennedy

**Vice-Captain:** Chloe Joyce

**2BXI Top goal scorer:** Laurel Kennedy

**2BXI Players player of the year:** Wrienne Salvatierra (46 goals scored in 21 matches)

**2BXI Squad:** Wrienne Salvatierra, Samantha McGrath, Sabriel Gergett, Ella Harvey, Sophie Bloomfield, Katie Craig, Beth Hillis, Chloe Joyce, Jessica Jackson, Laurel Kennedy, Beth Whiteside, Zara McClean, Fabienne Cochrane, Julliah Allen, Amie Bradley and Eve Wilson.

The 2B XI this season was a fantastic team and we enjoyed our most successful season to date. We were runners up in the Gibson Cup, 2<sup>nd</sup> in our League and we won team of the year in school.



Players always arrived to training and matches with enthusiasm and a will to win attitude.



This year's success was down to a group of girls from Form IV – MVI who bonded as a team very quickly. Team morale and spirit remained high throughout the season. It was a great pleasure to work with such a dedicated, and enthusiastic group of girls.



Every season, the girls compete in the Gibson Cup which begins in October. The matches were played in an initial group stage. The girls produced three excellent results which enabled them to progress into the next round. We faced a very strong Ballyclare side in the Quarter-Final. We drew 2-2 on Ballyclare's home pitch which led us to win on penalty runs with a superb performance from our keeper Wrienne. The semi-final saw the team being drawn to Strathearn. We played at a neutral venue, Civil Service, and again, after a hard fought match, both teams were unable to score, leading us to a 0-0 draw. Our penalty run team put on a fantastic performance with our Head Girl Samantha McGrath leading us to victory in the final penalty run of the match.

The Gibson Cup Final was played on 12<sup>th</sup> March at Civil Service. The girls worked very hard in the build up to the game. On the day we did not perform to our usual standard. Perhaps nerves got the better of us as we knew no other 2B XI from our school had made this final before. Panic, both on and off the ball,

during the first half led to us to concede two goals. We turned it around in the second half and came out fighting, Laurel Kennedy scoring to make it 2-1 at full-time.



#### Gibson Cup Results – Finalists

Fixture	Result
Down High (Section)	W 3-1





Grosvenor (Section)	W 5-0
Regent House (Section)	W 5-0
Quarter-Final v Ballyclare	D 2-2 (won on penalty runs)
Semi-Final v Strathearn	D 0-0 (won on penalty runs)
Final v Methody	L 2-1

This season the 2B XI came second to Ballyclare High School in the South East Antrim Schools League. The league consisted of Antrim Grammar, Ballyclare High School, Belfast High School, Carrick Grammar and Larne Grammar.

### South East Antrim League Results – 2<sup>nd</sup> in League

Fixture	Result
Belfast High	W 7-0
Ballyclare High	L 2-1
Carrick Grammar 2As	D 1-1
Antrim Grammar 2As	W 1-0

As a special thanks to the team for working so hard and showing commitment throughout the season, we had a team day out at Portrush Surf School followed by a meal in the Ramore. It was a lovely way to end the 2018/19 season.

Special thanks must go to Laurel Kennedy and Chloe Joyce who made a great team as Captain and Vice-Captain, motivating and encouraging our team. The four MVI girls leaving this year will be missed. I hope that Laurel, Chloe,

Samantha, and Jessica will carry on playing hockey at university or club level.



*J.R.S.*

### 2B XI CAPTAIN'S REPORT

The 2018-19 hockey season was very successful for the 2B XI. We began the season as a strong side beating teams such as Strathearn and Rainey Endowed. Our league run was also very successful with one unfortunate loss against Ballyclare High School, leaving us in second place overall.

The most successful and enjoyable part of our season was our cup run. Topping our group, we then faced a strong Ballyclare side in the quarter-final, finishing in a draw (2-2). We made it through to the semi-final by succeeding with a very strong and courageous penalty run team.

In the semi-final we faced a draw against Strathearn (0-0), however, our penalty run team once again proved too strong against our opposition and we made it to the final. In the final we played Methodist College. This was a very strong side and, unfortunately, the first half didn't go our way with two goals being conceded. We came back stronger in the second half; however, this wasn't enough, the end result being 2-1 to Methody.

Overall, this has been the most successful 2BXI season ever and I am very proud to part of such an incredible team.

*Laurel Kennedy (MVI)*





### 3RD XI



**Played: 12 Won: 11 Drew: 0 Lost: 1**

**Goals scored 22**

**Captain:** Abbie Baxter

**Vice-Captain:** Amy Harpur

**3rd XI Top goal scorer :** Abbie Baxter

**3rd XI Players of the year:** Eden McCoubrey

**3rd XI Squad:** Rachel Ramsey, Ruth Davis, Eden McCoubrey, Caitlyn Hennessy, Jessica Porter, Amy Harpur, Kaitlyn McCalmont, Laura Meeke, Abbie Baxter, Holly Adair, Molly Lapworth, Rebecca Greer, Ellie Walsh, Ella Linton, Rachel McGrath, Alex Johnston, Eva McGoldrick, Hannah Beattie, Jayne Kennedy, Lucy Handcock and Georgia Harvey.

This 3rd XI side was a pleasure to coach. The 3rd XI was made up of a mixture of girls from Form IV-LVI. Last season, we had a pool of around 25 or more players for our 3rd XI. It was great to see such a good turnout, although it meant that a lot of players were rotated each week for matches. I thank the girls for having such a good attitude and sticking with their school hockey. On some occasions we were able to play an U15 side against the larger Belfast schools who could provide us with a fixture.

Notable victories throughout the season came against Banbridge (1-0), Strathearn (5-0), Belfast High School (5-0), Regent (3-0) and

towards the end of the season we beat Sullivan Upper (4-0). Some excellent results.

I would like to thank the girls and in particular our Captain and top goal scorer, Abbie Baxter, for their dedication and hard work this year. It has been a very enjoyable and successful season for a talented group of players. I look forward to working with some of you again next season.



**J.R.S.**

### CAPTAIN'S REPORT

The 3rd XI had a very enjoyable and successful 2018/2019 season this year. The skill level of the entire team improved greatly throughout the season and everyone should be very proud of themselves.

We won the majority of our matches, starting of the season off with a tremendous win against Strathearn 5-0, followed by another incredible 5-1 win against Belfast High. Our toughest competition was versus Friends' when we, unfortunately, lost 3-0 which was one of our only losses this year. However, we redeemed ourselves with a 4-0 win against Sullivan Upper towards the end of the season.

I have been very honoured to captain such an amazing team and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Shaw for all she has done for us this season. Well done everybody and I wish you all the best next season!



*Abbie Baxter (V)*

## U14 A XI



**Played: 20 Won: 15 Drew: 3 Lost: 2**

**Captain:** Molly McCourt

**Vice-Captain:** Abbie Braniff

**Top Goal Scorer:** Abbie Braniff

**U14 A XI Squad:** *Molly McCourt, Hannah Thompson, Kate Sturgess, Charlotte Beattie-Logan, Olivia Beattie, Amy Higgins, Ellen Loane, Ellie McIvor, Anna Saunders, Lorena Del Castillo, Sasha Logan, Abbie Braniff, Grace Jameson, Anna Greer, Rachel Beattie.*

## CAPTAIN'S REPORT

This season I think we played very well and have worked consistently throughout the year. We got to the semi-final of the Junior Cup Competition where we played Rainey but, unfortunately, were beaten 1-0. It was a tough match but also very enjoyable for everyone. We finished the season playing in Antrim Sixes where we made it the whole way to the finals and, unfortunately, again lost by 1-0. Although on a high note we won the South Antrim League! We had a great opportunity to go on hockey tour to Holland and played a number of matches and had the chance to train with David Harte. All of the girls have really enjoyed this

season and could not thank our coaches enough for everything they have done for us. We would like to give great thanks to Steven Watt, Miss Allen and a huge big thank you to Miss Brady who would always go above and beyond for us. Thank You.

*Molly McCourt (III)*

## HOLLAND TRIP







## U14 B XI



**Played: 12 Won: 6 Drew: 3 Lost: 3**

**Co-Captains:** Regan Greer & Bella Scott

**Top Goal Scorer:** Claudia Clarke

**U14 B XI Squad:** Aoife Caldwell, Regan Greer, Kaitlyn Toal, Charlotte Beattie-Logan, Bella Scott, Cara McGrath, Tianna Savage, Anna Wilson, Sarah McLaughlin, Anna Greer, Lucy McKnight, Cassie Watt, Jorja McCurry, Claudia Clarke, Ella Maguire.



## CAPTAIN'S REPORT

I have really enjoyed being a part of the U14 B XI hockey team this season. The entire team trained hard and worked together to achieve some great results, including an away victory over Belfast High School, where an exceptional performance from the team led us to a 6-0 victory. Thanks to the staff as it was down to them that the U14 hockey tour to Holland was possible and ended up being the amazing experience that it was. We all appreciate it.

It has been a privilege to captain the U14B's and I am sure each of my team mates will be a great asset to whichever team they represent next season. I wish them all well.

***Regan Greer (III)***





The U14 squad have worked very hard both during training and matches to improve their hockey skills and fitness throughout the season. I was proud to see the U14 A XI team win the South Antrim Area League and also reach the Semi-final of the Junior Cup Competition, losing 1-0 to a strong team from Rainey Endowed. The U14 B XI team also had an excellent season with only three losses throughout the year, finishing with very strong results.

The teams took a trip to Utrecht, Holland in March where they faced two strong teams from Kampong Hockey Club. They also had training sessions with Irish International David Harte and his team mates. Aside from the outstanding hockey on display, the girls also visited the house of Anne Frank, enjoyed sightseeing and plenty of shopping. There were many laughs and fond memories made that will last a lifetime! I would like to thank all of the parents and players for their fundraising efforts and the various sponsorships we received towards the tour.

I would like to thank the girls for their dedication and hard work this year, it has been a very enjoyable and successful season for a talented group of players. I would also like to thank Mr Watt, Miss Allen and Miss Getty for all of their coaching and umpiring throughout the year.

**K.E.B.**

### U13 A XI



**Captain:** Sophie Burns

**Vice-captain:** Daisy Donaldson

**U13 A XI squad:** *Elyse Taylor, Madeline Morewood, Mia Collins, Beth Adam, Hannah O'Kane, Tara Dalzell, Lois McGrath, Emma Harvey, Evie Caldwell, Anouk Bosket, Anna O'Dowd, Emily Anderson, Zoe Plaice and Emily Lavery.*

We had a great season this year and I feel that, as captain, I can proudly say that we are a hardworking team who always support each other. Throughout the course of the year, the U13s have grown as a team making us come out stronger than before. All the girls are very good at showing up on Saturday mornings, after school practices and give 100% effort without fail whatever the weather is like which I have to thank you all for.

We played some tough games, with our away fixture against Ballymena Academy particularly standing out. We managed to show some great determination and strength of character to beat them with a fiercely fought 1-0 victory.

Finally, I would like to give a special thank you to Miss Corish and Miss Allen for being amazing coaches who set up matches week after week for us. I am excited to see what this year has to bring for us as a team.

### U13 B XI

**Captain:** Abigail Davis

**Vice-captain:** Catherine McCormack

**U13B XI squad:** *Rachel Baird, Kara Craig, Leah McCord, Sarah brogan, Ciara Murray, Natasha Morrison, Charlotte Boone, Ruth Matthews Devine, Riona Millard, Molly Hamilton, Aimee Courtney, Aleah McClinton, Emily Lavery, Erin McCann, Tara Dalzell and Alex Mulholland.*

This year, our team tried worked extremely hard, starting the season with a draw against



Belfast High. As we progressed throughout the season we started to pick up some more wins, with a few draws and losses. We won matches against Larne Grammar School and Regent High School, as well as draw matches against Victoria College and Grosvenor Grammar School. Our team played amazingly all season and our teamwork started improving. I would like to say thank you to Miss Corish and Miss Allen for coaching us all season.

We have a fantastic array of talented young girls in BRA who have shown tremendous dedication to extracurricular hockey this year. It has been a pleasure to coach such a bubbly group of girls who have displayed such a hunger to learn and enjoy their hockey. We had a mixture of results through the season, with some hard fought wins and some very low scoring matches. Technically the girls have been improving and there is no doubt that the team spirit is high. We are already looking forward to a new season and our upcoming tour to Paris in March 2020. Well done to all the girls for their efforts and enthusiasm throughout the season.



**R.E.C.**

### **OWLS LADIES HOCKEY CLUB**

Owls Ladies Hockey Club had yet another successful season in 2018/19, fielding three senior squads each week. This was facilitated by the support of our experienced coaching team. The 1st XI squad reached the final of the

Qualifying Plate and maintained a mid-table position in a tough Senior Two League. The 2nd XI had yet another extremely successful season, gaining promotion for the third season in a row, seeing them progress into Junior 4. The 3rd XI are now a more established team with a mixture of school girls and more experienced players coming together on a Saturday to field an ever strengthening squad.

More club success came in the form of Province and Country representation. Four members of the 1st XI team were selected to represent Ulster at the annual Interprovincial Tournament and a further member of the squad being selected to represent Ireland at the Masters European Cup in Rotterdam.

Going into the 2019/20 season, we aim to have all squads promoted and with the dedication of players and coaches. With increasing player numbers there is a possibility of starting up 4th XI to participate in cup competitions. This is definitely within Owls Ladies Hockey Clubs' reach.

We hope that this season will bring even more success for all our players and we encourage new players, coaches and club volunteers to get involved.

Training Times:

Monday: 7.00pm-8:30pm Roughfort playing fields (astro)

Wednesday: 7.45pm-9.15pm Roughfort playing fields (astro)

All new members are welcome. For further information please contact:  
[owlsladieshockeyclub@hotmail.com](mailto:owlsladieshockeyclub@hotmail.com)

**K.E.B.**



## OWLS LADIES MINI HOCKEY

*K.E.B.*

Owls Ladies Junior section has had yet another successful season in 2018/19, developing the hockey and social skills of girls aged 5-15.

The ever growing Minis section is for girls aged 5-11. The P4-7 girls thoroughly enjoyed taking part in competitive tournaments ran by Ulster Hockey and a number of local hockey clubs with great success in particular the Ballymena Tournament where the girls had medal success. During our training sessions, the girls can experience hockey through a range of progressive drills and games led by experienced coaches.

In addition to our Under 11 section, we have developing Under 13 and Under 15 sections. This year we had the pleasure of entering two for each sections into their respective competitions whether that be Ulster Hockey Blitz days or Ulster Hockey Development League. Throughout the season both sections are able to gain match experience, and develop their love for the sport.

This season we hosted several special events including an Easter camp, Movie Night, friendly tournaments, and our End of Season Dinner. We hope the 2019/20 season will bring great success and the girls continue to foster their love of hockey. Training information can be found below:

Under 13 & Minis (P4-P7): Wednesdays  
6.00-7.00pm BRA Playing Fields, Mallusk.  
(Astro Pitch)

Under 15: Wednesdays 6.30-7.30pm BRA  
Playing Fields, Mallusk. (Astro Pitch)

Minis (P1-P7): Saturdays 10.30-11.30 BRA  
Playing Fields, Mallusk. (Gravel Pitch)

All new members are welcome. For further information, please contact:  
[owlsadieshockeyclub@hotmail.com](mailto:owlsadieshockeyclub@hotmail.com)

## BOYS' HOCKEY

### 1ST XI



The 2018-19 season began with an air of confidence around the group, with only losing two players from the previous year's team. We believed this could be a promising season for the team. The season began with the Prior Shield which we had high hopes for. The first match was against the old nemesis Campbell. We began well with Ethan Thompson scoring an early goal but then the rest of the half was a poor showing from the team conceding three goals going into the half 3-1 down. This didn't go down to well with the coaches. We came out for the second half determined to right the wrongs from the first half, the boys played an absolute blinder scoring 3 goals to end the game 4-4 in what can only be described as an end to end match.

The team played their second match away against a strong Regent House team. The lads played well but, unfortunately, could not convert their chances, losing narrowly 1-0. We progressed into our third match knowing that to keep our hopes alive of reaching the quarterfinals we had to beat Grosvenor. The team played arguably their best game, controlling vast periods of the game, resulting in a convincing 3-0 win.

Our final group game was away to Ballycastle where a win would seal our place in the quarter





final. As we arrived into Ballycastle, the team felt good and were ready to get the win. The match was a cagey affair with no team really taking hold of the first half. In the second half, Ballycastle began the stronger of the two sides and they clinched the opening goal putting BRA under immense pressure. The game continued to ebb and flow until we were awarded a short corner in the last two minutes resulting in Ethan Thompson firing home the equaliser to tie the game 1-1.

This gave us just enough points to get through and into the quarters where we drew Banbridge. When the lads heard we drew Banbridge there was a bit of disbelief among the group, but they were ready for the challenge. Unfortunately, a strong Banbridge team overwhelmed us and we were well beaten on the day by a convincing Banbridge performance.

After the exit from the Prior Shield, the sole focus for the rest of the season was the annual Burney Cup otherwise known as the Schools' Cup. In the first round, we drew Ballyclare who we had played in a warmup match earlier in the season. We felt confident that we could give the game a good go and get a result from the match. Game day came around and the team was ready.

The game began with a tight first five minutes with neither side wanting to give an inch. As the game wore on, the weather slowly started to affect the game with the low temperatures starting to freeze the pitch underneath our feet. This resulted in several people losing their feet and making the already difficult task that bit harder. Chances did come with Isaac Jarman hitting the post. Unfortunately, these missed chances came back to haunt us and Ballyclare converted their chances and got the better of us on the day, but the lads could hold their heads high after a good performance to end the season.

This was the end of an era for a huge proportion of the team with ten of the squad moving onto further education. Leaving behind many memories and moving on to bigger and better prospects in both their education and hockey careers. Throughout my time as captain, I had a very enjoyable but challenging time. I'd like to thank the coaches for the trust they put in me and also my teammates who always gave everything they could, a special mention must go to David Rea and Ethan Thompson who have been ever present throughout my time on the 1st XI. Also, mentions must go to Andrew Dorman, Conor Gallagher and James Campbell who have played hockey since that first day of first year. For the rest of the Middle Sixth who joined us along the way, Rory Flynn, Isaac Jarman, Tom McKee and Zak Lundy, I couldn't have asked for a better bunch of lads to play hockey with week in, week out.

My time throughout school was often focused around hockey with many highs and lows. The highlight of my hockey career, and probably my entire time at BRA, was the 2016-17 season when we won the Prior Shield. The winning of the Prior Shield was a real combination of months of hard work and training combined with a group of special players who would never give up as long as there was a chance of winning. It was a privilege just to be a part of that team. The rest of that season was also special with the team going on to play some of the best hockey BRA has played in years even making a trip down to Dublin to play Wesley College. That year will live long in the memory of all who were involved and spectated the games.

As the Middle Sixth say goodbye to BRA, leaving our own mark on BRA history, I wish next season's team good luck and cannot thank Mr Morrison, Mr Lunn, Mr Harte, Dr Bell, Dr McMurray, Harry McNeill and Barra Patterson



enough for giving us the opportunity to play hockey at BRA. Without it I am sure my time at BRA would have been drastically different and much less enjoyable. If it were not for these teachers giving up their Saturday morning's and after schools for us. Thank You!

*Peter Watt (MVI)*

## CRICKET

### 1ST XI

**Played: 9 Won: 5 Lost: 4**

### SCHOOLS' CUP WINNERS



At first glance, the playing record of the 1st XI appears quite modest. The truth is that for the majority of our Saturday fixtures we were below full strength, due to the overbearing demands of club cricket on some of our team's key players. As such our Saturday record was Played: 5, won: 1 and lost 4. In our cup matches, with the side at full strength, we were much more formidable as a team. Although there was little evidence of the peaks ahead when we travelled to defending Schools' Cup champions Methodist College for our first of three meetings throughout the season.

Harry Warke won the toss and elected to bat on a cool, but pleasant mid-April afternoon. Unfortunately, his next act of import was to drive, firmly to short extra cover straight into the welcoming hands of James Hunter, who

made no mistake. With Robbie Moffett unable to get out of a work commitment this left only Max Burton of our 'big three' batsmen to affect the game. Luca Johnston and Nik Kane took the opportunity for valuable time in the middle, but were not good at rotating the strike to get the inform Burton back down the business end. Max was retired at 50, but such were our batting woes that he had to come back in at the end with Ben Brown to finish off our 25 overs. He ended up with 63 not out the only other batsman reaching double figures was Ryan Jameson who managed 14.

Our bowling fared no better. Methody only losing two wickets, but retiring a number of batsmen as their formidable top 6 eased passed our total in less than 14 of the 25 overs permitted. A chastening defeat for us to ponder over the Easter break.

Bangor Grammar were our opponents in the second round of the Schools' Cup. Us having received a bye and Carrick Grammar having conceded to Bangor it was for both teams our first outing in the cup. Bangor batted first and were restricted to a modest total of 86. The bowling unit performed well all round. Burton's off spin yielding 3-7 and Robbie Moffett mopping up the tail with 2 quick fire wickets. In spite of losing captain Warren early on in proceedings, Burton's quick fire undefeated 56 supported by 13 not out from Moffett ensured we were heading west on the A2 before long, a 9 wicket victory ensuring we were in the hat for the next round.

Ballyclare were next up in a friendly on a Saturday morning. Undoubtedly, the star turn for us was Robbie Moffett. His 46 runs and 3-3 with the ball ensured a fairly routine victory and a bit of momentum seemed to be building.

Campbell College were next up in the McCullough Cup where the host won the toss



and put us in to bat. Harry Warke continued his poor form with the bat edging Minford to Archie Johnston who made no mistake. Max Braniff, promoted to open the batting, and Robbie Moffett set about laying a decent platform. When Max was out for 23 in the 10th with the score on 44 they seemed to be doing just that. Robbie departed for 17 having added a further 22 runs with Nik Kane. At 66-4 with 6 and a half overs to go 110 seemed about the minimum total we would be happy with. However, on a tricky enough surface, combined with some poor shot selections and some abject running between the wickets we collapsed to 89 all out on the first ball of the last over. Campbell in reply got off to a decent start, helped by some wayward enough bowling at time from Sam Caldwell, but we kept breaking their partnerships as first Rory Linden removed Minford, then Robbie Moffett, who bowled a very tidy spell leaking only 5 runs in his four overs claimed the key wicket of Johnston. Hudson and Jackson steadied the ship a bit, but Warke brought himself on and removed both, the former stumped by Nik Kane and the later and excellent return catch. However, we were at least 10 runs short of what we needed to defend and loose delivery from Oran Corry was dispatched to the boundary for a 5 wicket defeat off the first ball of the last over.

The following Saturday the second part of our trilogy with Methody was played out at the Castle Grounds. Again, without Burton and this time Warke, our batting in particular was a bit below par. Robbie Moffett won the toss and elected to bat. Luca Johnston and Nik Kane were a bit too circumspect at the start as we tootled along at about 3 runs an over for much of the innings. It was only really when Ryan Jameson came in at 37-3 that any impetus was provided. His 36 not out off 27 balls with 4 boundaries, mostly to his favourite mid-wicket area with a bit of help in the last

couple of overs from Ollie Parkes lifted us to a semi-respectable 95-7 off 20 overs. We knew the way Methody played that we needed to get wickets quickly. Rory Linden picked up 2 in his second over removing Millar and the dangerous Hunter – well caught by Ben Brown at midwicket. Unfortunately, by that time 26 runs were already on the board. Moffett and Caldwell each picked up a wicket and at 59-4 another breakthrough might have exposed the Methody tail. However, Matthew Humpreys and Adam Reid, not for the last time it would turn out, put on a good partnership for the 5th wicket to see Methody home with not a little to spare.



Our next outing was a trip to Osborne Park to face our prospective Semi-final opposition in the Schools' Cup. RBAI, without star player Ollie Metcalfe, won the toss and elected to bat. On a wicket that lacked a little pace they made a steady start. Ben Beattie and Sam McLarnon accumulated well, taking few risks as they got the hosts to 53 without loss before Oran Corry accounted for McLarnon, stumped by Nik Kane with the last ball of the 10th over. In the





second half we did a pretty good job in not allowing them to capitalise too much on the excellent start. Our spinners Oran Corry 2-14 and Andrew Greer 2-24 were the pick of the bowlers. In our reply we were a bit too conservative as we allowed their openers, particularly the leg spinner Scott to dictate to us. After 6 overs we were 13-1 and the required rate was growing. Moffett came in and got the rate climbing and when Kane who had started to pick up the scoring was adjudged LBW it brought Jameson to the crease with us needing 59 to win off 7 overs. He and Moffett tried to keep up with the rate, but we had left ourselves with too much to do and we came up 10 runs short.



We were drawn away to Limavady in the Schools' Cup quarter final, in what we knew would be a very tough task. Having lost some of our top order early on in the piece we were struggling a bit on 42-3 off 12 overs. We were very thankful to some battling performances from the middle and lower order, most notably Nick Kane, whose 24 ensured our total of 115-8 in 25 overs was just about competitive.

As Limavady's reply started the total looked to be well below par. However, when the top order relented and the softer underbelly of the Limavady lineup was exposed we asserted our authority. Many bowlers chipped in with a wicket or two, but it was the miserly off spin of Max Burton whose 1-10 off 5 overs helped restrict the hosts to 98 all out and ensure a 17 run victory. Crisis averted and onwards we went, to a home quarter final with RBAI.

Against the back drop of a poor forecast RBAI came to the Castle Grounds. Star batsmen Ollie Metcalfe, fresh from his T20 appearances for the Ireland 'Wolves' side, benefitted from some loose bowling to make a good start, but while in the 'teens he hit a ball firmly, but straight at, Andrew Greer. Greer put it down and we were all to regret this as he was eventually dismissed for 116 out of a total of 170 before the rain came to our rescue. Mercifully no further play was possible.

The second attempt to play the game saw no play possible, so with the Castle Grounds pitch too wet for play we ceded home field advantage and travelled again to Osborne for a 25 over match. RBAI won the toss and elected to bat. In a change to the quarter final and first attempt of the semi-final Moffett took the new ball alongside Linden. This proved to be a very good decision as Moffett started with 2 maidens. Rose fell to Linden early and the shackles were kept on Metcalfe. By the time Dickson was out to Johnston the score was 28-2 at the end of the 8th over. In the 9th over Andrew Greer was bowling to Metcalfe who drove firmly in the air straight to the safe hands of Harry Warke at extra cover. Inexplicably the skipper juggled the ball, before dropping it. A huge let off for Metcalf, was this the moment that would turn the game?! He hit the next ball for a single.

Next over the first ball from Johnston was dispatched over long off for 6, but he exacted



his revenge clean bowling Metcalfe for 23 the very next ball as the score went to 36-3 in the 10th over. Our side was elated, none more so than Harry Warke. McNamara top scored with 28 as 'Inst' were eventually all out for 96 in the final over. Max Burton 2-9 off 4 overs and Robbie Moffett 2-12 off 4.4 overs were the pick of the bowlers but everybody contributed to a really good all round bowling display. Max Burton got out of the traps really quickly as our reply got underway. His 23 ball 40 taking the score to 58 in the 9th over before he played on to Peak. This ensure the required run rate was only about 2.5 runs per over. Harry Warke was out for 14 in the 13th over and Moffett and Luca Johnston followed quickly after. However, Nik Kane's 10 not out was a very mature knock in the pressured situation and was enough to guide us home by 6 wickets with two and a half overs to spare.

So we had earned the right to take on the defending champions Methody, an opportunity to avenge the defeat in last year's semi-final. On the morning of the final an aggravation of a shoulder injury put Max Burton's participation in jeopardy, but to all of the BRA players and supporters' relief he was able to play. Methody's plans were also affected as their skipper was unavailable to play due to having his appendix removed. His replacement Daniel Humphreys won the toss and elected to bat first. The makeshift opener McCreight was out early to Moffett, bringing the key man James Hunter to the crease. When he misjudged a lofted off drive and Sam Caldwell held on to a smart catch to give Moffett his second wicket, Methody were 18-2 and struggling a little.

Max Lyttle and Daniel Humphreys steadied the ship and Methody progressed to 59 before first Lyttle and then shortly after Humphreys fell to Luca Johnston. At 70-4 approaching half way both sides knew this was the key partnership. Following a very circumspect few overs

Matthew Humphreys (39\*) and Adam Reid (48) started to accelerate a little. Though in truth their running between the wickets never really put pressure on the BRA fielders. In the end when Reid was stumped by Kane of the last ball of the innings bowled by Burton the pair had added exactly 100 and set us a challenging target of 171 to win. Luca Johnston had definitely been the pick of our bowlers with 2-22 off his 7 overs. There was a feeling in the dressing rooms at the interval that we had let them off the hook from a very strong position at the half way point.

Our chase started very well with 9 runs coming off the first over. However, we hit our first hurdle in the 4th over when their strike bowler James Hunter had first Harry Warke caught at mid-on playing a slightly loose shot then strangled Robbie Moffett down the leg side, caught by Adam Reid first ball. Suddenly at 15-2 and with two of our key batsmen back in the sheds we were behind the 8-ball. Luca Johnston came out to join Max Burton, with the former happy to play a very conservative role, while Max set about picking off the loose balls on offer. Batting through some significant pain having injured his shoulder Max had got his eye in and was punishing anything in his slot. When he struck 2 sixes of Holohan in the 10th over to lift the score to 60-2 we were well placed. However, Johnston was to fall clean bowled by Matthew Humphreys in the next over.

Next in to support Max and enjoy his batting display from close up was Nik Kane. Unperturbed, Nik was to take 19 balls to score a single run in his innings, but in a partnership of 32, with Burton continuing to punish the bad balls at the other end it was all that was required. By the drinks break we had moved on to 96-4 and Max Braniff had joined his name sake who had moved, virtually untroubled on to 64. However, after taking 17



off James Hunter in the 18th over, including 2 very well struck sixers lofted over mid-wicket, to lift the score past 100, disaster struck. Max Burton's excellent innings of 82 off 58 balls with 8 fours and 4 sixers had come to an end, caught by Holohan off Matthew Humphreys. Now 115-5 and still needing 56 to win Methody smelt victory. However, the pace of Max's innings had left us needing less than 4 runs an over.

Over 21 saw Max Braniff hit successive boundaries off Matthew Humphreys to reduce the arrears by 11 while the following over Daniel Humphreys bowled to Ryan Jameson, inexplicably without a man out at cow corner. Ryan proceeded to hit three lusty blows to that, his favourite area and another 17 came off the runs required total. Now just 25 were needed off 13 overs and Hunter was brought back into the attack. A maiden was then followed up with a wicket in his next over as Jameson was cleaned bowled, ending a very useful partnership of 35. Linden came out to join Braniff with 21 still required and now 6 wickets down.

With Hunter now bowled out we were creeping towards the target, until Youssef produced another twist in the tale as he had Max Braniff caught behind by Reid for 19. Now 12 were required off 6 over and only 3 wickets in hand. The cool heads of Rory Linden and Ollie Parkes held their nerve and with 3 and a half overs to go got us across the line. For the 3rd time in 5 years we were crowned Schools' Cup Winners and, as he had done against RBAI as a 4th year in 2016 Max Burton had been the star turn. His innings was an excellent one, played with real determination in the face of adversity. The cameos from Braniff and Jameson had been enough to help us chase down the total, as Nik Kane had done in the semi-final, but Max's innings had ensured the pressure on them was a lot less than it might have been.

I would like to thank all the boys for their efforts throughout the year and to Mr. McGonigle and Johnny Terrett for their help throughout the season. For those leavers, particularly the three that may well be reading this article for the first time on the shores of Aotearoa, I wish to thank them for their involvement in what has been a golden era for cricket in the Academy. Few players can, like Harry and Robbie make the claim of being 2 time Schools' Cup winners and even fewer can claim to have won it 3 times. Max's innings in the final was impressive in and of itself. That it was done with the significant pain to his shoulder indicates how much, in spite of the mild mannered exterior, he was determined to succeed with and for his friends. Robbie was our other consistently good performer with both bat and ball, to the extent that he was rewarded with his selection for both the Ulster Schools' Interpro team and the touring party. Harry will no doubt look back on the season with some regret. From a personal point of view his form with the bat deserted him completely. However, he captained the side well and took some key catches at vital moments. I wish them, Rory and Oran every success moving forward and hope they continue to play and enjoy the game.

**M.G.H.**

## **COLTS XI**

The Colts XI operated as an under 16 XI on a Saturday and an under 15 XI during Cup competitions. This proved to be very successful. There were many highlights during the season. Ryan Armstrong captained the side with distinction. There were notable wins against Ballyclare who were bowled out for 46 runs. BRA easily managed the total within 8 overs.





The team performed particularly well in the under 15 plate competition. The team defeated narrowly defeated Grosvenor in the first round of plate completion after losing to a strong Banbridge side in the Cup. The team defeated Lurgan College in the next round bowling them out for 58 runs. The final against Friends' School was played in glorious sunshine. It proved to be another excellent bowling display, bowling out Friends' for 31 runs. We reached the total in 12 overs. An excellent result. Congratulations to all the boys on a successful season.

***I.M.G.***

### **JUNIOR COLTS XI**



The Junior Colts had a very successful season. An early victory against Ballyclare set the team up well. BRA won the match by 59 runs with good batting performances by Peter Richardson and David Kane. Some of the bowling was also excellent with David Kane and Oliver Smyth taking 2 wickets.

The team then had their first cup game against Friends School Lisburn. BRA won the game by 9 wickets. Oliver Scott, David Kane, Adrian Holywood and Oliver Smyth all took excellent wickets whilst Adam Gooderham showed great promise with the bat scoring 24. The team continued to train admirably. There was a great buzz about this team!

Another friendly game against Campbell College gave the opportunity for players to show potential before moving on to the next round of the cup competition. BRA opened the batting scoring 82 all out. Max Wylie was the stand out batsman scoring 25. The players knew they had a real opportunity to win this game going into bowl! The bowling was fantastic. Campbell scored 41 all out with Adrian Holywood taking 3 wickets. There was also some excellent bowling from Oliver Smyth and Max Wylie. This was a brilliant win showing the team the ability they had!

The next cup game was against Limavady Grammar school. Having won the toss, the team decided to bat first. The team scored 79 all out. Although there were fine batting performances from Adam Gooderham and Oliver Smyth, there was a feeling of disappointment as the team had not batted as well as they had in previous games. Limavady proved too strong in the end with one of their representative players scoring a century. Although disappointed, the team had to move on as there were still several games to be played!

This game was followed by an incredible game against Methodist College Belfast. BRA opened to batting scoring 147. The best score of the season. There were excellent batting performances from Oliver Scott, Peter Richardson, Adam Gooderham and Harvey Latham. M.C.B. went in to bat. The bowling innings started very well with two very early wickets. However, M.C.B.'s middle order batted very well. It came down to the last ball with MCB needing one run to win. Much to the disappointment of the team Methody hit the winning run! A difficult defeat to take; however, this was a fantastic school boy game of cricket!

The final came against RBAI and was played at Roughfort. BRA scored 32 all out. The team knew this would not be enough with RBAI winning the game by 6 wickets.



This was a very successful season. I would like to thank all the players for all their hard work and efforts. Their progression and dedication throughout the year was admirable. Many of these players have a bright future. I look forward to seeing them play next season.

*D.J.C.*

### U13 XI



It was a somewhat difficult and challenging season for the Under 13 Cricket team. There were many individual highlights and achievements throughout the season but these moments were often interspersed with some sporadic batting, bowling and fielding that resulted in a number of losses against RBAI, Campbell College, Methody and Ballyclare High School. Despite these defeats, the dedication and enthusiasm of this group of players was never in question and they deserve massive credit for their resilience in a number of testing situations. They remain an enthusiastic and talented cricket team with a number of exceptional players.

The season began with an excellent victory against Campbell College B team in the Under 13 cup. Chasing 79 to win from 20 overs at The Castle Grounds, Alex Place made an impressive 34 runs to secure a hard fought victory with 2 overs remaining.

A close defeat against Campbell College A team followed. Campbell were 72-7 at one

stage, mainly due to the excellent bowling of Rory Gordon who took 5 wickets that included a very rare hat-trick! However, some good batting by Campbell and some erratic late-innings bowling by BRA resulted in Campbell posting a score of 129 from their 20 overs. BRA never threatened this score but our batting line-up showed grit and character to bat out our 20 overs and achieve a score of 76-7.

Heavy defeats followed against Methody, Ballyclare in the cup competition, and then against RBAI in the last game of the season.

During the season our bowling improved immeasurably. Matthew Williamson especially is an extremely talented and accurate bowler. In many of the games mentioned above, the opening batsmen for the opposing team asked when his quota of overs was up – a true sign that these batters were worried by his pace and accuracy. Many of the balls that he bowled were too good for the batsmen and he often did not take the number of wickets that he deserved. Matthew was ably assisted in the bowling department by Alex Place, Joshua McLoughlin, Matthew McLaughlin, Rory Gordon, Ethan Pavlovic and Harry Salt.

Matthew McQuiston developed his wicket keeping skills during the season with some expert tuition by both Mr Harte (Senior) and Mr Carruthers – both exceptional wicket keepers for their school and much higher in a by-gone age! Matthew showed some excellent reflexes and footwork in the games mentioned above preventing a significant number of byes and leg byes by his agile wicket keeping.

The batting unit was quite erratic. Within each game there was generally one or two batsmen who played remarkably well. Alex Place batted very well in the Campbell B game mentioned above, while Harry Salt (18 runs) and Joshua McLaughlin (15 runs) batted well against Ballyclare; Matthew McQuiston batted



tenaciously against Campbell A, while Rex Henderson performed well against RBAI.

During the course of the season the team showed good potential and with hard work and determination they have the makings of a very competitive team. In addition to the boys mentioned previously the team could not have succeeded without the support from other players. Bhuvanesh Venkatesan, Matthew Jackson, Liban Hassan, Haydn Dillon-Wright and Johnathan Beck made the team a strong unit. Their tenacity, enthusiasm and team spirit made for an enjoyable season for everyone.

There is much talent here and every expectation that the side will improve as they move through the school. The boys can look forward with much anticipation to next year.

In closing, apart from the boys, I am also indebted to the hard work and professionalism of my fellow coaches during the year; Mr Harte and Mr Carruthers. Their support, dedication and love for the game made it a joy to be involved with coaching such a pleasant and enthusiastic group of boys.

***T.H.***

### **U12 XI**



An enthusiastic group of about 20 boys attended practice throughout the season. The boys showed huge enthusiasm for the game

and their skill levels improved as the summer progressed.

The highlight of the season was a thrilling one run victory over Ballyclare High School, played at a damp Roughfort. Academy batted first, making a respectable total of 85 all out. With the last over to bowl Ballyclare still needed 6 runs to win and despite some nervous extras the match came down to the last ball with the away side needing one run to tie and two runs to win. The batsman edged the ball along the ground, the wicket keeper gathered and Ballyclare declined the opportunity to attempt the run. After some minutes of confusion, the home side began their celebrations as the rain teemed down.

There is much talent here and every expectation that the side will improve as the boys move through the school. It was an enjoyable season and the boys can look forward to next year with much anticipation.

***P.R.R./A.S.***

### **GIRLS DISTRICT ATHLETICS RESULTS 2019**



**Antrim Forum, Tuesday 7th May**

#### **Mini**

*Q - Qualifies for Ulster Championships*





2<sup>nd</sup> 100m Anouk Bosket (14.2) Q  
2<sup>nd</sup> Long Jump Emma Campbell (3.69) Q  
4<sup>th</sup> Relay (60.0)  
5<sup>th</sup> Gabrielle Hannaway (6.25)

### **Minor**

4<sup>th</sup> 800m Tara Dalzell (2.33.50)  
4<sup>th</sup> Shot Erin McCrea (6.72)  
4<sup>th</sup> Relay (58.3)  
5<sup>th</sup> 75mH Evie Caldwell (17.1)

### **Junior**

1<sup>st</sup> High Jump Lucy McKnight (1.42) Q  
2<sup>nd</sup> High Jump Sophie Doran (1.39) Q  
3<sup>rd</sup> 100m Olivia Beattie (13.5) Q  
3<sup>rd</sup> 800m Anna Saunders (2.36.45) Q  
3<sup>rd</sup> 75mH Lucy McKnight (16.76) Q  
4<sup>th</sup> 200m Abbie Braniff (29.81)  
5<sup>th</sup> Long Jump Olivia Beattie (3.79)  
5<sup>th</sup> Triple Jump Abbie Braniff (8.19)  
6<sup>th</sup> 200m Sophie Doran (30.35)  
6<sup>th</sup> Relay

### **Antrim Forum , Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May**

#### **Intermediate team 2<sup>nd</sup> overall**

1<sup>st</sup> Relay team (52.85) Q  
1<sup>st</sup> 300mH Erin McMahon (47.54) Q  
1<sup>st</sup> Pole vault Abbie O'Neill (3.25m \*\*New District Record\*\*) Q  
1<sup>st</sup> 100m Abbie O'Neill (13.52) Q

2<sup>nd</sup> Pole vault Leah Doran (2.4) Q  
2<sup>nd</sup> 200m Ellie Collins (28.31) Q  
3<sup>rd</sup> 100m Beth Hillis (13.77) Q  
3<sup>rd</sup> 1500m SC Aoife Corry (6.03.02) Q  
3<sup>rd</sup> Hammer Eve Henderson (23.55) Q  
4<sup>th</sup> 200m Olivia Snoddy (29.97)  
4<sup>th</sup> 80mH Ellie Walsh (16.71)  
4<sup>th</sup> Discus Ellie Walsh (18.75)  
4<sup>th</sup> Hammer Sarah Saunders (19.81)  
4<sup>th</sup> 1500m SC Bryanna Catney (6.07.46)  
5<sup>th</sup> 800m Maia Erwin (2.47.26)  
5<sup>th</sup> 1500m Bryanna Catney (5.52.76)  
5<sup>th</sup> Triple Jump Ellie Collins (8.99)  
5<sup>th</sup> Javelin Caitlin Hennessy (18.94)  
6<sup>th</sup> 80mH Ruth Davis (17.5)  
6<sup>th</sup> High Jump Ruth Davis (1.30)

#### **Senior team 2<sup>nd</sup> overall**

1<sup>st</sup> 4x 300m (3.42.14) Q  
1<sup>st</sup> Javelin Ellie Bradley (20.50) Q  
1<sup>st</sup> Shot Amie Bradley (5.82) Q  
1<sup>st</sup> 800m Thomasa Kennedy (3.02.50) Q  
3<sup>rd</sup> 4x 100m (57.0) Q

### **Girls Ulster Schools' Athletics Championship Results, Antrim Forum, Friday 17<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

#### **Mini**

5<sup>th</sup> 100m Anouk Bosket (14.25)

#### **Junior**



8<sup>th</sup> High Jump Lucy McKnight (1.40)

10<sup>th</sup> 800m Anna Saunders

4<sup>th</sup> 100m heat Olivia Beattie

### **Inter**

*1st 300m Hurdles Erin McMahon (47.21)*

*Qualifies for Irish*

*1st Pole Vault Abbie O'Neill (3.10) Q*

1<sup>st</sup> Relay (Erin McMahon, Leah Doran, Abbie O'Neill, Beth Hillis) (52.13) Q

*2nd Pole Vault Leah Doran (2.40) Q*

6<sup>th</sup> 1500m Steeplechase Aoife Corry (6.19.11)

7<sup>th</sup> Hammer Eve Henderson (23.16)

7<sup>th</sup> 500m Steeplechase Bryanna Catney (6.23.98)

4<sup>th</sup> 100m heat Abbie O'Neill

5<sup>th</sup> 100m heat Beth Hillis

### **Senior**

4<sup>th</sup> 4x 300m Relay (Thomasa Kennedy, Amie Bradley, Ellie Bradley, Bryanna Catney) (3.23.78)

7<sup>th</sup> 800m Thomasa Kennedy (3.06.52)

### **Irish Schools' Athletics Championship Results, Tullamore, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June**

#### **Intermediate**

Abbie O'Neill finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in a very tough pole vault competition with a vault of 3.10m.

Erin McMahon finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the 300m hurdles (46.16)

Leah Doran finished 5<sup>th</sup> in pole vault (2.55)

The Inter relay team finished 4<sup>th</sup>

### **Tailteann Irish Schools Interprovincial Championships, Santry, Dublin on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

Congratulations to Abbie O'Neill, Leah Doran and Monica Del Castillo (reserve), who were selected to represent Ulster at this year's Interprovincial Championships in Dublin.

4<sup>th</sup> Pole Vault Abbie O'Neill (2.75)

5<sup>th</sup> Pole Vault Leah Doran (2.45)

### **BOYS' ATHLETICS CLUB**

#### **District Athletics Results 2019**

##### **Mini**

D Blayney 3<sup>rd</sup> Long Jump 4.09m

4<sup>th</sup> 100m 14.0 s

4 x 100m relay 4<sup>th</sup> 57.6s

J Nicholson 6<sup>th</sup> 100m 14.55s

A Caldwell 6<sup>th</sup> Shot 7.64m

##### **Minor**

M McLaughlin 3<sup>rd</sup> 75m Hdls 14.0 secs

4 x 100m Relay 3<sup>rd</sup> 54.9 s

J Manson 3<sup>rd</sup> 100m 12.8 s

A Baine 3<sup>rd</sup> 800m 2.23

M Jackson 5<sup>th</sup> LJ 3.84M







### Junior

C Savage 3<sup>rd</sup> Shot Putt 9.64m

3<sup>rd</sup> Hammer 22.44m

J loane 4<sup>th</sup> Hammer 21.37m

J Balgos 5<sup>th</sup> Javelin 21.95m

4 x 100m 4<sup>th</sup> 53.9 s

### Intermediate

R McCrea 2<sup>nd</sup> Shot Putt

A McGrotty 3<sup>rd</sup> Hammer 28.81m

4 X 100m Relay 4<sup>th</sup> 49.88 secs

J McKee 6<sup>th</sup> Javelin 27.57m

### Ulster Schools' Championships

#### Mini

Aidan Baine 7<sup>th</sup> 800m 2.19

#### Junior

Callum Savage 8<sup>th</sup> Shot Putt 9.94 m & 4<sup>th</sup> Hammer 31.24

#### Inter

Reuben McCrea 8<sup>th</sup> Shot 10.31 m

## NETBALL

This year we had eleven teams playing competitive games. The Junior A, Intermediate A and Senior A teams each played in Premier leagues for their age group. All other teams played in the District League Competition. It was lovely to see the playing numbers increase and the dedication given by both players and coaches involved.

Netball has continued to grow with talented and committed players emerging throughout the club. It is great to see many players competing at representative level. I would like to thank all of the players and coaches for their hard work this season.

**K.E.B.**

### Representative Honours

**U13 Regional Development Squad:** Penny Davidson, Tara Dalzell, Ciara Murray, Beth Adam, Layla Hunter and Courtney Adelman.

**U15 Regional Development Squad:** Fiona Murray, Sasha Logan, Abbie Braniff, Sofia Ramalho-McCourt, Siobhan Baine and Catelyn Burns.

**U17 Northern Ireland Long Squad:** Nada Hawela.

**U19 Northern Ireland Development Squad:** Fabienne Cochrane, Ellie Collins and Leah Doran.

## FORM 1



From the very first match, the netball team showed great potential. At first, it was slow



getting used to playing with one another as we had never played together but we soon settled into a team and began improving. Each person in the team has shown great netball skills and teamwork. We worked hard, succeeded in most of our matches and became closer along the way.

***Penny Davidson (I)***

We had over forty girls who played netball this year in Form I. The girls trained on a Tuesday with two teams playing competitive matches against other schools in their District. The players were extremely enthusiastic and committed and came determined to improve their skills.

I would like to thank the girls for their commitment and hard work at training and during matches. The level of participation and enthusiasm was excellent. I hope we continue to build upon their skills and promise shown next season.

***K.E.B.***

### **MINOR 'A' NETBALL**



**Captain:** Ciara Murray

**Vice-Captain:** Shannen Kelly

***Minor A Squad:*** Erin McCrea, Beth Adam, Etta Choi, Tara Dalzell, Ciara Murray, Shannen Kelly, Courtney Adelman, Layla Hunter and Maebh McAtamney.

The Under 13As had a very challenging season this year. Our first league match was against Ballymena Academy. We fought to the very last quarter when both teams were coming in neck and neck, but we finally got the edge and managed to come away with a win.

Our next match was against Dominican College, Fort William this was another good match but unfortunately, we let victory slip away from us in the third quarter.

Our last match in the league was against Belfast High; this was another match that didn't quite go our way as we again found ourselves going into the last quarter so close to winning but Belfast High came back out with a strong defence and we couldn't secure another win.

I'd like to thank Mrs Winning and Miss Brady for coaching us this season and I look forward to a better one next year.

***Ciara Murray (II)***

### **MINOR 'B' NETBALL**



**Captain:** Daisie Donaldson

**Vice-Captain:** Molly Cash

***Minor B Squad:*** Carla-Lina Gueye-Dorval, Daisie Donaldson, Molly Cash, Jasmine Mirfield, Eva Perry-Obana, Alana Joseph,



*Debby Ogunleye, Lauren Douglas, Emma Sheppard, Anna Topping, Robyn McDonald and Leah McCord.*

Our netball season this year was very successful with the team all working together to help us reach three league wins out of four. With the help of Mrs Winning, we were able to grow not only as a team but all of the girls began to become closer as friends. We were all so happy to be able to have competed in the league and have the chance to play a sport we love. We hope to continue to build on this next season.

***Daisie Donaldson (II)***

I would like to thank the girls for their efforts this season and the hard work they put in during matches and training. The squads have developed well and it was great to see many players from Form II playing each week.

***K.E.B.***

### **JUNIOR PREMIER NETBALL**



**Captain:** Fiona Murray

**Vice-Captain:** Sofia Ramalho-McCourt

***Junior Premier Squad:*** Kate Sturgess, Fiona Murray, Abbie Braniff, Eleanor Green, Faith Drummond, Sofia Ramalho-McCourt, Sasha Logan, Izzy Coburn, Lara Lennon and Caitlin Mooney.

This year the Junior Premier team had a great season which started with wins again Ballymena Academy and Regent House. In these matches, the girls showed both great attacking and defending skills and we worked well as a team. In our final match of the season, we were up against a strong Sacred Heart team but, with key players missing, we struggled to secure a win and, unfortunately, in the end we lost 25-17.

Overall the team had a good season and we enjoyed our training and matches. I would like to thank Mrs Winning, Miss Brady, Mrs McBeth and Mrs McNally for our coaching this season. I look forward to another great season next year.

***Fiona Murray (III)***

### **JUNIOR 'A' NETBALL**



**Captain:** Sophie Doran

**Vice-Captain:** Katye-Louise Richardson

***Junior A Squad:*** Ebony Hoogelander, Olivia Beattie, Sophie Doran, Katie Scott, Ash Pina Semado, Katye-Louise Richardson, Lara Lennon, Katie McKeown, Caitlin Mooney and Hannah Thompson.

Our team had a good year overall. We played our best in every match and were enthusiastic throughout. Unfortunately, in one of our matches at the Valley Leisure Centre we had a





poor turnout and had to ask a few Form II netball players to help us out. We won that match by working hard and encouraging one another. Overall, our team had good spirits and worked well together. We tried our best and had fun at the same time.

*Sophie Doran (III)*

### JUNIOR 'B' NETBALL



**Captain:** Jessica Boyd

**Vice-Captain:** Naomi Todd

**Junior B Squad:** Rozina Galla, Summer Moreland, Abbie McKnight, Jessica Boyd, Riya Raghuram, Naomi Todd, Holly Hooks, Sarah McCarney, Emilie Morrison and Aleena Jain.

The Junior 'B' netball team had a tough season this year. We played our first match against Dominican College in November. We did not do very well but by the next few matches we had improved a lot. We trained every Tuesday, after school, which helped us become better players and work together as a team. We would like to thank Miss Brady and Mrs Winning for helping us this year and we look forward to improving our skills next year.

*Jessica Boyd (III)*

Commitment from the Junior netball squad was excellent. I would like to congratulate and thank the girls for their effort and teamwork

throughout the season. It was great to see three teams compete for BRA- well done to all of the players who took the court! I hope to see the girls build upon this success next season.

*K.E.B.*

### INTERMEDIATE 'PREMIER' NETBALL



**Captain:** Ellie Collins

**Vice-Captain:** Ella Harvey

**Intermediate 'A' Squad:** Ella Harvey, Mia Delargy-Dubois, Leah Doran, Erin McMahon, Ellie Collins, Niamh McIvor, Megan Warke, Bethany Hunter, Ellie Murray, Olivia Snoddy and Eden McCoubrey.

We had a very intense and commendable season, starting off with an unfortunate loss against Assumption Grammar. However, we then worked our way up to getting into the semi-final of the Bowl and the Premier League competitions. It was a very enjoyable season, as we worked very hard for each other and although we didn't get to the finals for our competitions, we are more determined going into Senior netball next year. Thank you to Mrs Winning and Miss Brady for all of the hard work and encouragement put into our team throughout the season.

*Ellie Collins (V)*

### INTERMEDIATE 'A' NETBALL



**Captain:** Nada Hawela

**Vice-Captain:** Emma Connolly

**Intermediate 'A' Squad:** *Charlotte Stronge, Kristie Monro, Nada Hawela, Catelyn Burns, Katie Keed, Siobhan Baine, Emma Connolly and Fiona Murray.*

Throughout this season, we were really able to develop and grow both as individual players and as a team. This was the first year where we had the opportunity to train and play alongside some of our more senior teams, which really allowed us to push and challenge ourselves in ways we had not done before and, as a result, we grew stronger as a team. We also competed in the Intermediate Premier league where we did well and gave our all in each and every match we played and overall, it was a successful and enjoyable season.

**Nada Hawela (IV)**

## INTERMEDIATE 'B' NETBALL

**Captain:** Sasha McAuley

**Vice-Captain:** Rachel Stronge

**Intermediate 'B' Squad:** *Sarah Saunders, Jaana Tharun, Sasha McAuley, Rachel Stronge, Abbie O'Neill, Mia McCurley, Olivia Jones, Giulia Allen, Becky Lough and Alex Simpson.*

It was a competitive season for the Intermediate girls this year, it was great to see



so many girls at training every week. We had a very successful year as we won all our matches in our league against Dominican, Downshire and Belfast Model. Overall, the girls really enjoyed this season and look forward to next year!

**Sacha McAuley (IV)**

Commitment from the Intermediate netball squads was excellent this year and we had over 30 girls attending training each week. I would like to congratulate and thank the girls for their effort and teamwork throughout the season. I hope they look forward to the upcoming season and aim to improve their talent and skill level further.

**K.E.B.**

## SENIOR PREMIER NETBALL



**Captain:** Fabienne Cochrane

**Vice-Captain:** Julia Forbes



**Senior 'A' Squad:** *Fabienne Cochrane, Lois Sharpe, Julia Forbes, Hannah Hill, Nia McVicker, Jessica Kendell, Layla Creaney, Varia Peters, Caitlin Joyce, Olivia McConnell and Amber McCalmont.*

The Senior A team had a difficult season,; however, we have learnt a lot from it. Our first match was a cup match against Cookstown that we lost 22-20. We went on to play in the Bowl competition. We also played in had Premier League matches against Aquinas, Rathmore, Victoria and Glenlola. Although we were unable to come up with a win in our first few matches, we finished the season strong winning against Victoria with a score of 27-10. Although the season didn't go as well as would have hoped, the girls trained extremely hard and we thoroughly enjoyed both training and the matches. I would like to thank Mrs Winning for all the hard work she puts into training and also Miss Brady for organising all of our matches.

**Fabienne Cochrane (LVI)**

### **SENIOR 'B' NETBALL**

**Captain:** Eden McCoubrey

**Vice-Captain:** Nicole McClean

**Senior 'B' Squad:** *Mia Delargy Dubois, Eden McCoubrey, Nicole McClean, Zoe Sheerin, Lauren Macauley, Shakira Douglas, Samantha Cassidy- Campbell, Molly Noble and Ash Pina Semedo.*

This year, the Senior B Netball Team had a very enjoyable season. As a team, we developed and improved week by week whilst also thoroughly enjoying ourselves. Individually, everyone got better as the season went on as we learnt new skills, patterns of play and more. Throughout the season, we aimed to work better as a team which we achieved. Many different players had huge improvements and many were awarded player

of the match which was always well deserved. We enjoyed tough league games against St Dominic's, Dominican and Victoria. Although unfortunately we did not have the results we hoped for. Overall, everyone enjoyed this season and are looking forward to the season ahead.

**Eden McCoubrey (V)**

I would like to thank each player for their continued motivation and contribution to BRA netball. They worked tirelessly throughout the year to improve their skills and fitness. Many of this season's senior players are in MVI and sadly we must say farewell. I would like to thank each girl for her commitment and determination throughout many years of netball and I hope they continue to stay involved in the future.

**K.E.B.**

### **TENNIS**

#### **BOYS' TENNIS**

Boys Tennis once again ran on Fridays of the summer term and was enthusiastically attended by record numbers. In a break from tradition the weather was consistently fine and much good tennis was played. Many thanks to Fergal for driving us there and back each week.

**S.C.S.**

#### **GIRLS' TENNIS**







Unfortunately, due to the summer public exams now in LVI as well as MVI, coupled with the increased pressure to achieve the grades, the girls are less keen to give a commitment participate in summer sports. Tennis is a sport that has become completely dominated by the small number of schools who have Ulster players. Playing their 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year together as a team, the Intermediate team consisted Ella Linton, Emma Uprichard, Suzie Kerr and Olivia Jones.

The Senior team consisted of Julia Uprichard, Rachel Duff, Sophia Del Castillo and Ellie Armstrong.

The team got drawn into the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Cup but, unfortunately, drew Strathearn and lost to a very experienced team. This put them into the plate competition where again they got a tough draw against Sullivan Upper and, unfortunately, they also lost this match. Form I played a set of friendly matches against Belfast High School as an introduction to the sport.

N.N.

## GOLF



The 2018-19 season has been one of our most successful years to date. Our first outing of the year, the Irish Senior qualifying competition, was played at Kirkistown Golf Club. Unfortunately, we were robbed of two of our best players, Tom McKibbin and Keaton Morrison as they had other golfing commitments. They had played their part in

helping us qualify for the semi-final stage of the competition but their absence would see us struggle to compete with a very strong RBAI team. Nevertheless, our team consisting of Harry Warke, Ben Hopkins, Noah Bickerstaff and Josh Mckee competed brilliantly, but ultimately lost narrowly 3-1. This brave performance, although a defeat, gave the younger members of our team belief that they could now compete at a higher level.

Our first outstanding achievement this year was saved for an extremely blustery November day in Castleknock. Our Senior Team, consisting of Rhys Goodall, Tom McKibbin, Keaton Morrison and Noah Bickerstaff played and won the Ulster Schools Scratch Competition. This was a brilliant performance. The nature of the tournament means that the best golf played on the day, irrespective of handicaps, would determine the winners. Our combined best 3 scores saw us defeat a very strong field including RBAI and Campbell College, and take the title of Ulster Schools' Scratch Champions.

This success was to fuel their desire to succeed in further competitions. Later that academic year, in March, the Hilton Golf Club in Templepatrick hosted the Winter League Final where we were able to take revenge on our conquerors from last year, RBAI. Again, Tom McKibbin was unavailable due to other golfing commitments. However, our team consisting of Rhys Goodall, Keaton Morrison, Noah Bickerstaff and Josh Mckee, defeated RBAI 3 ½ to ½ to secure the trophy. It was an outstanding performance by all the boys who each made a valuable contribution to our convincing victory.

The other Golf Competition that ran either side of the Easter break was the Darren Clarke Schools Golf League. We were paired in this competition with Aquinas Grammar School, St. Malachy's College and Rockport.



Unfortunately, we failed to make it through to the latter stages but I believe this was largely due to us giving youth a chance. There were some excellent individual performances but unfortunately, some of our less experienced players were paired against some very able golfers, and despite handicaps being considered, our opponents were often too strong or played with handicaps that were too high! I am confident however, that with an extra year's experience behind them, this group of players will be much more competitive next year. The players that competed in this competition included Ben Anderson, Ryan Armstrong, Noah Bickerstaff, Aaron Caldwell, Josh McKee, Max McKittrick, Harper McCloskey, Robbie Morrow and Olivia Snoddy.

Unfortunately, girls golf in Ireland seems to lack the same support that the boys golf would have. Nevertheless, the one tournament that was available to the girls, the Irish Schools Championship, was played at the beautiful Carnalea Golf Club at the end of March. Olivia Snoddy (FV) represented the school in the Senior individual section of the competition and although she didn't qualify for the Finals, was competitive throughout, posting some very good scores in her round.

I would like to thank the players for their efforts throughout the year and also give special thanks to parents and grandparents (you know who you are) who regularly support and give lifts to various events. My job would be much harder without them. I look forward to the year ahead and am optimistic for further success.

Finally, and Sadly, this was Rhys Goodall's last year at the Academy. He has been a key player during his time at the Academy. I would like to thank him for his contribution to the BRA golf teams over the years and wish him well for the future.

*P.M.*

## SHOW JUMPING



Another season proved Form Two pupil Erin McCrea's rising confidence as a young rider, competing in the Meadows Schools Showjumping Novice League as an individual. Erin and her pony, Woodrow Rosewood, made it to every competition and consistently finished well throughout the season. She also attended the Gransha Schools Dressage competition, competing in the preliminary class, which resulted in a solid performance.



The Open team consisted of Captain Olivia Quinn (LVI), Rocco Quinn (V) and Jessica Davidson (V). Olivia rode Redwood Thor and Ricardo Colours, Rocco on Knockagarron Fear Bui Princess and Knockagarron Fear Bui Phoenix and Jessica rode NH Nadal. This team entered into the Meadows Schools Showjumping Open Team League, in which they consistently performed solid rounds, unfortunately the incredibly high standard for





the Open Team competition left us just outside of the top places.

Both Olivia and Rocco competed in the Novice class at the Gransha Schools Dressage, which resulted in a great performance from Olivia placing 5<sup>th</sup> and Rocco had a solid performance unfortunately missing out on placings.



For the Ulster Schools Derby Championship held at Gransha Equestrian Centre, BRA produced a team of just Olivia and Rocco. Olivia on Amiro Hemingway and Redwood Thor, and Rocco on Knockagarron Fear Bui Princess. Rocco had a fantastic double clear round with a superb fast speed round leaving him in 2<sup>nd</sup> place individually. Olivia on Amiro Hemingway had a great double clear however just missing out on top placings.



We are grateful to our parents for giving up so much time and dedication which enables us to compete at this level. Thanks also goes to Mr Murphy and Mrs Graydon whose leadership

skills, organisational ability, constant support and a listening ear have contributed to our success. We eagerly anticipate next season when we hope to add to our achievements and continue to make our school proud.

*Olivia Quinn*

## KARTING



2018/19 was another successful year for BRA Karting which saw the A Team qualify for the British Schools Karting Championship held at Whilton Mill, Northampton in June.

A team of five boys (David Rea, Oliver O'Kane, Reece Armstrong, Jack Gillespie and Ben Martin) accompanied by Mr Porter, Dr Campbell and Stephen Rea (former Team Captain) headed off to Whilton Mill on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June. Practice sessions were held on track later that evening to allow the team to familiarise ourselves with the track.

Race day took place on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and despite soaring temperatures the drivers managed to keep their cool. The highlight of the day came from Team Captain David Rea, who managed to finish his race in 3<sup>rd</sup> place after starting at the back of the grid in 14<sup>th</sup>.

Unfortunately, soon afterwards, an extended red flag left the karts and drivers stranded on the back straight, where the air-cooled karts quickly succumbed to the excruciatingly high





temperatures and overheated. Subsequently, the event had to be cancelled. Despite this disappointing end to the day, the team showed very encouraging pace and we have every confidence we can build on this success next year in the Championship.



An exciting development in 2019 was the securing of outside sponsorship for the team for the first time. Three sponsors came on board, international motoring giant Liqui Moly as well as two local firms - Kerr's Tyres and CD Group. This sponsorship covered the cost of the team's trip to the championship and allowed us to purchase some additional items of race kit. We would like to extend our gratitude to our sponsors for making such an incredible weekend possible.



We recently took part in the extra-curricular fair for this year's Form I intake and had a massive amount of interest with 52 potential new recruits! We hope this means we will

grow our membership significantly this year and secure the future of BRA Karting for many years to come.

The final word this year goes to our 2018/19



Captain David Rea. We would like to thank David for everything he has done during his time as Captain of the team and wish him every success as he moves on to University. We also wish Reece all the best for the future as he too leaves the team.

*Ben Martin (V)*

## FOOTBALL CLUB





In the 2018/19 season, the football team competed in the Belfast Cup and Northern Ireland Cup.

Our Northern Ireland Cup 1st round game was away to Cambridge House, and was played at Ballymena Showgrounds in good conditions. In an entertaining game, the Academy scored within 5 minutes, when Oliver McGrath ran onto an accurate through ball to calmly round the keeper and finish with his left foot. Two further goals were scored in the first period, with Aaron Richardson adding the second and Oliver McGrath the third. Unfortunately for Cambridge House, BRA came out for the second half with just as much intent as the first. Oliver McGrath added three more goals to his tally and Aaron Richardson scored from a free kick to finish with a brace, the game ending 7-0.

In the next round we faced a poor St Kevin's team at home. They struggled with our pace and quality in the final third, and it finished 7-2, with goals from Ryan McBride (3), Ben Hopkins (2), Aaron Richardson and Dylan Erwin. Although the opposition failed to test the Academy side, the game was a good exercise as it enabled different formations to be trialled and squad players to get valuable minutes.

An away draw in the third round against a strong Bangor Academy side made our chances of progression difficult. Their team included a number of players associated with Irish League clubs, and they had defeated Boys' Model in the previous round. The conditions were extremely difficult - strong wind and driving rain. The Academy played against the elements in the first half and found it very difficult to retain possession and create chances. Bangor dominated this period but struggled to break down a solid defence, with a string of impressive saves from Nathan Kerr keeping them at bay.

However, the Academy eventually conceded, when a quick free kick resulted in an accurate cross that was powered home through a back post header. In the second period BRA had the majority of possession but were unable to create any clear chances. Bangor scored against the run of play with 5 minutes to go, and it finished 2-0.

In the Belfast Cup 1st round we were drawn away to St Malachy's College, Belfast. Due to the quality of this side, we set up defensively, playing a 4-5-1 formation. As expected, the home team dominated possession and the majority of the game took place in the Academy half. However, there was always a threat from the BRA counterattack, with the pace of Ryan McBride and the quality of Aaron Richardson, Robbie Moffett and Will McCrum causing problems for the opposition.

At the beginning of the first half resolute defending frustrated the St Malachy's team, as they were unable to convert their possession into a goal. Then, with twenty minutes on the clock, a BRA breakaway led to a free kick wide on the right hand side of the pitch. The Robbie Moffett cross which followed was attacked at the back post by Will McCrum, who headed it just beyond the keeper. However, this lead always looked under threat, and with 5 minutes to go in the half the equaliser came, when good play on the left hand side produced a cross that was met on the half volley.

St Malachy's continued to dominate possession in the second period and scored two goals in quick succession in the 12th and 15th minutes. The Academy players continued to battle and pulled a goal back through a Moffett free kick with ten minutes to go. This panicked the opposition, who began to look nervous on the ball. Further chances were created but none were converted, and the game finished 3-2 to



St Malachy's, who went on to win the competition.

In all, it was a successful season, and the players deserve credit for their performances.

***R.B.***

## SWIMMING



The school's swim team has had a very successful year, achieving medals across all major Ulster Schools competitions. In October, they competed in the Ulster Schools' Relay Gala, winning a trophy in the exhibition Senior mixed medley. Later that month, they competed in the Ulster Secondary Schools Championship, where the senior boys' relay team achieved bronze in the medley relay. Swim team captain Lorcan Gourley (MVI) achieved bronze in the 100m back crawl, falling just short of qualification for the Ulster interprovincial team.

The Junior and Intermediate Cup was held in January, and again the school saw lots of success, winning both individual and relay medals. The team also won the cup for best Girls' Team at this event. Similarly, at the Ulster Grammar Schools gala held in March, the intermediate and senior boys' and girls' teams all achieved medal placings. Jericho Balgos (III), Luke Calwell (III), Sophie Doran (III), Giulia Allen (IV), Ewan Purdy (LVI),

Rosie Strutt (LVI) and Cher Enriquez (LVI) all won individual medals.



In April the aquatics teams came together to participate in the Elaine Alexander 24 hour sponsored memorial swim in aid of Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke. Through the efforts of the team (some of whom stayed all night and swam multiple times!) and some of the local Belfast clubs who use the pool regularly, we were able to raise £4,000 in total for charity. A massive thank you to all involved.

***S.A.***

## LIFESAVING

The school lifesaving team again sent a squad to compete at the National Speed Lifesaving championships, which are held annually in March. The competition is open to clubs and individual entry, and the squad did exceptionally well competing in an all UK championship.

The senior boys' relay (Lorcan Gourley (MVI), Ollie Parkes (LVI), Jericho Balgos (III)) were first in the super lifesaver relay and the obstacle relay, breaking competition records for their age group. Jericho Balgos (III) and Giulia Allen (IV) achieved individual medals and Lorcan Gourley (MVI) has since been selected to represent Northern Ireland in the Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships to be held in Leeds in 2020.





S.A

## WATER POLO



The school water polo teams saw success across the board. The Senior boys' team, captained by Phillip O'Callaghan (MVI), won the Canada Trophy for the third consecutive year, this time going undefeated in all their matches.

The Senior boys' team also enjoyed a tour in Edinburgh in December this year, playing several matches against local club teams.



The girls' U16 team played and won several matches against Victoria and Methody, participating in mixed training sessions with these teams to better foster a growing girls' sport.

The girls' teams had several players selected for the Irish squad in their respective age

groups: Cara Carson (MVI) and Ellen Loane (III).



S.A.



# Miscellany

## ART AND DESIGN

Eoghan Hughes Form V gained full marks in the CCEA GCSE Level specification.



The following work was requested by CCEA for inclusion in the 2018-19 True Colour Exhibition at the Ulster Museum:

- A2 Level by Anna McClurg.
- GCSE Level by Vivienne Johnston.

Mr Roy Donaldson from John Bush Systems presented three Art & Design students with a Student Art Pack award:

- Thea Reddington MVI.
- Molly Agnew-Boyce MVI.
- Nakisa Towfighi MVI.

All Art & Design GCSE, AS and A2 Level pupils attended the 2019 True Colours Exhibition at the Ulster Museum.



The MVI and LVI Art & Design pupils attended the 2019 Royal Ulster Academy Annual Exhibition at the Ulster Museum.





The Department is used every week for Duke of Edinburgh Art & Design projects, as well as CCEA GCSE, AS and A Level units of work.

Khaled Berakdar, our new Arabic Tutor was appointed on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2018. He teaches Arabic Culture, oral, written and listening lessons to all of the Forms I-III and enrichment programme to Senior pupils. He supports the Art Teachers in embedding the lessons with Art and Design masterclasses and workshops. He also led Arabic Culture Club weekly on Thursdays at lunch, where pupils learned Arabic alphabet and numeracy and Arabic conversation.



Due to a request by the Student Council, Art and Design Club began in November 2018 each Monday after school run by Art Technician Laura Atkins. Pupils took part in National Art competitions, art challenges and they made Artist Trading Cards. They also gained skills in handmade leather journal making, drawing human anatomy and facial expressions. Its great success encouraged pupils to attend a Mini Art Club that took place each lunchtime to free draw and support one another.

All pupils were invited to take part in the Inktober Challenge for a second year running, in which artists all over the world during October complete one ink drawing a day for the entire month. Students joined together in the Art Department every break-time for the whole month of October to draw and encourage one another using the official

Inktober prompts list. Drawings were displayed daily in the Art Department.



UTV Live ran a feature on the Study Buddy Project. This involves BRA Senior students supporting refugee children who have come to Northern Ireland to seek a better life. This has been highly successful, with very positive feedback from the participants and from the team at Conway Mill. The project so impressed the Qatar Foundation that they have decided to support the project next year.

Tony Calderbank, QFI spent the morning and afternoon on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March, touring the Arabic with Art and Mathematics Project currently underway at Belfast Royal Academy. He had opportunity to observe the Arabic Languages classes for Forms I-III. He also viewed Art projects on display created by our enrichment groups of Forms IV-VI, who have taken inspiration from the Arab world.



We have a newly installed Laser Cutter, Printing Press and a new Kiln courtesy of QFI funding.

As this is QFI's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and BRA is one of their UK signature schools, a QFI film crew visited the school on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018 to interview pupils and staff.





Conway Education Centre Volunteering happened throughout the year: Sixth Form students were involved in a homework club organised by the Conway Education Centre where volunteers supported 12 to 19 refugee children/young people in primary and secondary school. This took place on Mondays/Tuesdays/Wednesdays and Thursdays afternoon, during term time. This volunteering role required the commitment of one hour per week and included offering guidance and support to enable children to complete homework tasks. The afternoons were busy and had a really positive vibe, the children and young people were very eager to improve their English and to complete homework successfully alongside our BRA student volunteers.

North Belfast Area Learning Community Schools' Art Exhibition featured artworks from BRA, showcased at the Duncairn Arts and Culture Centre. Artwork from Nia McVicker, Ellen Campbell, Lucy Gaston and Jamie Sloan was on display.



Throughout the year, pupils were encouraged to be involved in the art world through competitions and projects outside of the normal school curriculum. Nia McVicker former Form LVI Art and Design pupil was a finalist in the CineMagic Young Film Category age 15-18.

The Department continues to develop staff and pupils training in the use of ICT hardware and software.

We continue to support PGCE students from UU. This year Korie Dickerson successfully completed his teaching practice in our department.

The Department continues to give pupils an insight into the Art and Design Career routes. This was supported by our guest speaker Ruth Cornett, who gave a presentation on the History of Art and her career path to our senior pupils. Ruth is the Director for Christie's Heritage & Taxation Advisory Service. She kindly extended opportunity for individual mentoring in History of Art, personal statements and guided visits to the Victorian Albert Museum and Christie's London.

Ben Madigan Preparatory School requested a painted mural to be displayed in their newly refurbished library. GCSE Art and Design BRA students have taken on the task of completing a collaborative painting on the theme of book and comic characters.



The June 2018-19 Annual Art Exhibition included an excellent variety of work from all forms. The sale of artwork this year totalled £210.00 was raised from the Staff Exhibition Preview. In addition, the Staff Preview and the afternoon Annual Exhibition raised a further £195.26 for Save the Children Fund.







*P.K.*

## COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP



In June 2019, our Form II boys took part in a community clean-up at the Waterworks. Through doing this we saw first-hand the impact of litter on the environment and did our best to try to reduce the problem. Thanks to Mark and Kathy at Belfast City Council for helping organise it and providing the equipment.

*K.S.B.*







## DANCE SHOWCASE



On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June, Belfast Royal Academy's dance team performed in the first ever showcase, 'Dancing Through the Musicals'.



Throughout the show, the team showcased some of their award-winning choreography from NICMAC 2019, but the focus of the night was on new choreography put together specially for the show, on the theme of 'musicals'. 'Aladdin', 'High School Musical', 'SIX' and 'Mamma Mia' were just some of the shows from which pupils took inspiration.

The highlight of the night, for dancers and audience alike, was the teacher's dance. A group of eight teachers and classroom assistants came together to perform a musical number from 'Grease'. I think everyone will agree that Mr McCarey and Mr Creighton stole the show with their improvised moves!



At the end of the evening, Ms Craig, Miss Cairns and the whole dance team said an emotional farewell to Dr Scully, who had been instrumental in introducing dance to BRA and has supported us at every show and competition. She will be sorely missed and we hope she will be able to find time in her busy





schedule to come along to our showcase at the end of the next school year.

*L.E.C.*

## FRENCH EXCHANGE



Our French Exchange with Lycée L'Oiselet began with an early start on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018, as we met at BRA at 8am to get the coach together to Dublin Airport. Even though we were tired no one could relax as we were excited about meeting our partners and worried about speaking French! Our lunchtime flight arrived just in time for the end of school in Bourgoin-Jallieu. Our host families met us at Lyon airport. Everyone met their partners (some kissed their cheeks to greet them!), and we all went our separate ways and drove 'home' to see where we'd be staying for the next four nights.

The next day, we met at 8.30am at the school and went to some of the classes at the Lycée. I went to Physics and English. It was so interesting to see the differences between Lycée L'Oiselet and BRA; for example, they don't have to wear uniform and their school days are much longer. At 10:30am we left our partners to visit La Grotte de Choranche (the caves) and had a picnic at a beautiful spot by a river called Pont en Royans. The weather was much nicer than the weather at home and we even got to spot some mountain goats. We returned to the school for 4:30pm and spent the evening with our host families.



On Friday we went on a day trip to Lyon. Unfortunately, the French pupils had to go to school. We had a guided tour and got to see some of the sights like the ruins of the Roman theatre and a beautiful viewpoint. We had our lunch in Lyon and then had some free time to buy some souvenirs. After that we returned to Bourgoin-Jallieu where we had dinner with our exchange partners at an Asian-Fusion restaurant which was arranged by the French students.



We spent Saturday with our host families. While some people spent the day alone with



their host families, others split into groups to do things together. One group went to Lyon again, went on the cable cars (which had been broken the day before) and climbed to the highest point in Lyon. After that we met at one of the French student's houses and tried the French traditional meal "la raclette". The other group went on a trip to the zoo by train and to the park afterwards.



Sunday was our last day in France. We spent the morning with our host families and then met at Lyon airport at 2pm to say our tearful "au revoir". Our plane was supposed to leave at 5:05pm but was delayed (again!), and we arrived home late.



All in all, we loved getting the chance to travel to France, make some new "amis" and practise some French!

***Maia Hamilton (MVI)***

## **GEOGRAPHY FIELDWORK**

### **FORM I TEMPERATURE AND WINDSPEED IN BRA**



During September 2019, the Geography classes were put into 10 different groups and went to different parts around the school playground to measure the temperature and the windspeed in the BRA site. The places we went to included outside the Crombie, the swimming pool and outside the Jackson.

We used a thermometer to measure the temperature and an anemometer to record the windspeed in the school grounds. We waited 5 minutes for the temperature to stop fluctuating. To measure the windspeed we held the thermometer in the air for 3 minutes and recorded the average speed. Then we went back to the classroom to find the average of all the results.

***(FI) Geographers***

## **FORM II GEOGRAPHY**

### **FIELDTRIP**

### **HOLYWOOD COAST**

Form II travelled to Hollywood for their Coastal Defence fieldwork during late May. We walked along the coastal path examining, photographing and sketching the main coastal defences on this part of the coast. All the pupils





had time to examine the rock armour, gabions, riprap, straight sea wall and the curved sea wall. Teachers explained how each of the defence measures we visited did their job. Back at BRA this information was used to complete the project.



***(FII) Geographers***

## **FORM IV GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP**

### **SHIMNA RIVER**



On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019, GCSE Geography pupils from Form Four went to the Mourne's to study the River Shimna. We arrived at the Field Studies Centre at Tollymore and were briefed on the procedures and safety issues.

We recorded the depth, velocity and width of the river at five different locations. We also sampled the load of the river to determine its size and shape.



This data was used to construct scatter graphs, pie-charts and bar graphs which we will use for the Unit 3 GCSE examination.

All in all, the trip was very successful and the pupils also found it a good experience.

***(Form VI) Geographers***





## LOWER VI GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP

On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December, AS Geographers travelled from Roughfort to Carryduff to carry out field work for their Module 3 examination. We stopped along the way recording data such as temperature, average wind speed and humidity; to determine if an urban heat island effect existed in Belfast. Pupils were split into groups of three and recorded data allowing us to take averages once we returned to school. It was a fun and successful trip and was enjoyed by all.

*(LVI) Geographers*

## MVI GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP MURLOUGH BAY

On 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the M6 Geography students set off for a field trip to Murlough Bay and Newcastle, Co. Down.

We studied the different coastal defence systems along the beach, stopping to draw sketches and take pictures along the way. We observed sea walls, gabions and railway sleepers acting as a revetment which protect Royal Co. Down Golf Course and the Slieve Donard Hotel from sea erosion.

When we arrived at Newcastle, we were given questionnaires which we asked the public to complete, with questions regarding their experiences of Newcastle as a tourist resort.



When we finished, we were picked up in Newcastle and delivered back to school.



Overall, the field trip was a success as we collected valuable first-hand information and got to see the coastal defences, which we had previously studied in class.

*(MVI) Geographers*

## HADRIAN'S WALL TRIP

I was thrilled to be granted a place on the Hadrian's Wall trip: a couple of days away from school was a welcome break at this stage in the term and the trip itself didn't disappoint.

The time spent on the bus was filled with the usual school trip 'craic' and everyone enjoyed the ferry to and fro, eating and playing the usual games. There was even a cinema on board.

Once in Northumberland, we visited Roman museums too numerous to mention, (well six), but the ones that stood out for me were: Corbridge Roman Fort – an impressive structure, still standing after so many years and still able to withstand 60 kids exploring its many nooks and crannies; Vindolanda – I was impressed with the replica castles as they gave us a practical experience of the architecture in Roman times; and Housesteads Roman Fort – it provided a lengthy but calming walk, giving great views of Hadrian's wall along the way.



I particularly enjoyed, Beamish Open Air Museum. It really felt as though we were in a different period in time completely.

Our visit to the Metro Centre appealed to everyone very much: we enjoyed the freedom to explore this vast mecca of shops. We also departed slightly from the Latin theme to see the latest 'Men in Black' / 'Toy Story 4' / Aladdin movies.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the Latin Trip and found it both educational and fun.

## JUNIOR MATHEMATICS TEAM



On Monday, the Junior Maths Team of Riya Raghuram (III), Sarah, McCarney (III), Dara Connolly-Mulcahy (II), Daniel Stewart (II) flew to London for the National Final of the UK Maths Trust Team Competition. They were invited following their first place finish in Northern Ireland earlier this year. A challenging day of mathematical problem solving followed, in which they competed

against the very best mathematicians from across the UK. The various rounds, including designing a poster on the theme of Mathematical Construction (which addressed certain points provided on the day), mathematical relay races and a 'a cross number'.



Although we did not win a prize, we were very pleased to be in the top seventy of the thousands of schools who participated and to be Northern Irish champions for a fifth time. Congratulations to Bancroft' School, Eton College and Westminster Under School for winning prizes in such a tough competition.



Great credit should go to our pupils for representing BRA so admirably at a national level and for the huge number of hours they have put in to preparing over the past year. Their teamwork, intelligence, determination and good humour have been commendable and





were sustained through this very long day (leaving home at 4am and arrive home at nearly midnight!).

*S.C.S*

## LESSONS FROM AUSCHWITZ



In March and April, Layla Creaney (LVI) and Caitlin Sahin (LVI) took part in the Lessons from Auschwitz project run by the Holocaust Educational Trust which saw 200 students from across Northern Ireland participate in the project which examines the Holocaust and its relevance for us today. Since 1999, over 30,000 students and teachers have taken part in the Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz Project. Based on the premise that 'hearing is not like seeing', this course explores the lessons of the Holocaust and its relevance for today. The LFA Project aims to increase knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust for young people and to clearly highlight what can happen if prejudice and racism become acceptable. The project culminated in a one-day visit to Auschwitz in March to allow our students to see for themselves the site where so

many people died, which they write about below:



The process began through a series of seminars. We heard the testimony of a Holocaust survivor, Janine Webber. She told us about the terrible conditions of the Warsaw ghetto where she lived for a number of years and the rapid spread of disease, which affected many of her family members. Her testimony was very emotional and moving, and so it allowed us to experience a much more personal view of how the Holocaust still affects many families and communities today as they still live with these memories. The seminars also helped us to prepare for the trip to Auschwitz and think about what we would expect to see and how we might feel.



What stuck with us most from visiting Auschwitz was the individual stories. When we saw the photographs of different Jewish communities and the vast exhibitions of confiscated suitcases, shoes and photographs at Auschwitz 1 and Birkenau, it gave an entirely new outlook, which we weren't able to learn in





school. Learning about the Holocaust can be centred on statistic and facts, which loses a sense of the individual loss of lives. The trip gave a new impression of how we should view the Holocaust as individual lives lost, with their communities and families directly affected.

With the rise of fascist groups in recent years and genocide still occurring today, it is very important that we take what lessons we can learn from the Holocaust to prevent any form of mass discrimination or genocide happening ever again. As we are the last generation to hear individuals tell their experience of this persecution and with the rise in number of Holocaust-deniers, it is vital that we continue to share what can be learnt and carry forward lessons from the tragedy.

It was important that we learnt how the persecution of Jews didn't just start with the Holocaust, it is significant that we all recognise this. When learning about how persecution began in the early 1930s and in some cases before that, it explained something that we can all learn from: that discrimination evolved because a majority of people didn't try to stop it and instead let it continue, which is what led to the mass genocide happening. This showed the importance of us all using our voices and actions to speak out against any form of discrimination from the very beginning.

*Layla Creaney and Caitlin Sahin (LVI)*

## **MOCK EUROPEAN COUNCIL DEBATE**

It was a Thursday morning when Olivia Quinn and Aoife Bennett and I took part in a Mock European Council debate at Belfast City Hall. We were accompanied by Dr Adair, who organised our participation in the event, and for that we thank all her hard work. We arrived at around 9.30am at the reception on the ground floor before attending the mock debate inside the council chamber.

Olivia and I took part in the first part of the debate representing the country of Bulgaria, discussing the issue of Climate Change and how the EU should protect itself from its dangers. After a quite harmonious debate, it was time to take a break and go for lunch in the hall along the corridor.

Each of us spoke about the main talking points from the first topic and then I switched positions with Aoife for the next debate on immigration. Both Aoife and Olivia took part in the debate, again representing Bulgaria, before finally voting on whether we should support the motions tabled in the debate.

Both the motions we supported failed to gain the support of the majority of those taking part in the debate. Afterwards, we were treated to a tour of the City Hall with pupils from the other schools before ending the day with a group photo on the staircase and return home.

We would like to thank those who organised the debate and Dr Adair, who gave us the opportunity to take part and have a stress-free day off out of a long school week.

*Edward Ferrin (MVI)*

## **NICMAC**

Belfast Royal Academy's dance team returned to NICMAC after the success at Ulster's last year, and performed extremely well. The entries for the competition were made up of groups of different ages and a number of duos. The intermediate hip-hop duo placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in a very strong section and the energetic junior fitness duo placed 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The group dances faced tough competition but achieved fantastic results. The hip-hop crew, choreographed by Ash Pina Semedo, once again placed 1<sup>st</sup>; the jazz routine, choreographed by Miss Cairns, placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and the intermediate lyrical dance, choreographed by Olivia Jones, was awarded 1<sup>st</sup> place. Belfast



Royal Academy's dance team is improving and becoming more recognised every year and we can't wait for the upcoming competition season.

*Olivia Jones (V)*

## CERN TRIP

### PT 1



In Spring 2019, I joined thirty-eight physics pupils from Belfast Royal Academy and St Malachy's on a trip to the CERN laboratories in Geneva. We visited many Genevan sites such as the UN office (the second largest in the world), a boat trip on Lake Geneva, the Geneva Motor Show and the CERN facilities. The trip allowed all of us to view physics in a completely different level compared to how we see it in a classroom. The difference between physics in school and physics in CERN was made most apparent to me when we visited the Antimatter factory and discovered how they produce antimatter and also how it is that the Particle Accelerator actually works. As well as visiting CERN, we journeyed into Geneva town by tram and saw this beautiful city first-hand, from the stunning architecture to the fantastic views across Lake Geneva, the city was nothing short of breath taking.

The trip was excellent and I haven't even begun to detail everything we did! I would recommend this trip to any budding physicists in LVI or MVI.

*Caleb Tennyson (MVI)*



### CERN II

### PT 2

Having the chance to visit the Large Hadron Collider, where the Higgs Boson Particle was first synthesised, was truly astonishing. We got to see the first computers capable of having two tabs open on one screen, as well as the smart ways in which the technology of the time was used to collect and store all the data and information of the collisions caused in the Large Hadron Collider. Sadly, the Collider was down for maintenance during our stay, but we still got a tour around the facilities and got to see it in all of its 27 kilometres of glory.







Visiting Geneva wasn't only great because of the scientific significance of CERN, there was so much more to do. For example, on the third day of the trip, everyone had the decision to either visit the Museum of Natural History or one of the biggest car shows in the world THE GENEVA MOTOR SHOW, where companies were showing off the future of automotive vehicles. The show included brand new electric cars from Tesla and Audi, supercars from Bugatti and Ferrari and my personal favourite, a flying car called the Pal-V.

*Zakir Thabeth (MVI)*

## POLITICS TRIP TO STORMONT



Lower Sixth Politics students enjoyed two morning visits to Parliament Buildings, Stormont as part of their AS Level course at the beginning of April. Another year passed and the teaching of Government and Politics of Northern Ireland was again with the absence of a government in Northern Ireland. However, the visit brings the subject to life a little bit more through sitting in the Assembly chamber (a privilege not allowed in Westminster) and division lobbies and hearing from MLAs who are as keen to get back to the business of government as we are to see that happen.

*K.S.B.*



## PRIMARY SCHOOL PROGRAMME

In the last academic year Sixth Form pupils participated in the School's long-standing Primary School Experience programme. From the start of October until Easter, the pupils attended one of nearly twenty schools in North or West Belfast every Wednesday afternoon to gain experience of working with children while supporting the class teacher. The wide range of activities offered to our pupils included literacy and numeracy support, PE and games classes, music and language lessons and drama productions. Our pupils were highly praised by the staff of their host schools for their conscientious attitude, helpfulness and good humour, and the pupils themselves thoroughly





enjoyed the experience while gaining valuable skills in a professional setting.

*W.G.*

## **QUB GERMAN DEBATE**

The BRA A-level German debating team, consisting of myself, Dylan McGrotty, Elisa McCullagh and Campbell Baird (Reserve) competed against Strathearn School on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Our debate argued that young people had less freedom compared to their parents at that age. We opposed the motion.

Although we debated well, we were closely beaten by Strathearn who won the overall trophy, beating both Rathmore Grammar and Wallace High School also. A really enjoyable day was had by all and we were glad of the opportunity to meet with other schools, including Methody and Campbell College. Many thanks are due to Sara Astl our German Assistant who prepared us so thoroughly for the debate.

*Edward Ferrin (LVI)*

## **THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY SCHOOLS' ANALYST COMPETITION**

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> March, a team of three Lower sixth pupils competed in the Northern Ireland Regional Heat of the Royal Society of Chemistry Schools' Analyst Competition at Stranmillis University College Belfast. The team consisted of Maia Hamilton, Ollie Parkes and Zak Thabeth and were up against eleven other schools from across the province.

The aim of the competition is to raise standards of practical analytical chemistry amongst sixth-form students and is based on problems relevant to industrial and social needs. The students are assessed in their practical skills as well as in their understanding of chemical analysis and their ability to work safely as a

team. The format of the competition is the same for each year. Each team carried out three experiments which all carried equal marks. This year the experiments related to the role of analytical Chemistry in pharmaceutical analysis. The three experiments involved the analysis of an indigestion tablet by a back titration, the analysis of a household cleaning product and the colorimetric analysis of Milton's sterilising fluid.

After three hours of practical work the BRA team were announced fourth in the competition and they each received a book token. The experience gained was invaluable to the members of the team and I congratulate them on their performance.

*B.M.M.*

## **SAVE THE CHILDREN**

Throughout this busy school year, the Save the Children Committee continued our fundraising campaign by setting up and running several different events, and encouraging all members of the school to take part.

To kick off the festivities we assisted with the Great BRA Bake-Off. This event involved students from all year groups showing off their creativity through a range of amazing bakes that were then judged by a panel of teachers. After much deliberation, the winners and runner-ups were chosen, each gaining valuable points for their house. The bakes were then sold at lunchtime, with all proceeds of the sale going to Save the Children.

The Christmas season at BRA brought many great fundraising opportunities. The first came with the very first whole school Christmas jumper day, in which staff and pupils were encouraged to embrace their Christmas spirit; a task which Dr. Springer once again excelled at. Then came the return of the infamous staff review, this year with a Love Island twist, in which teachers embodied famous celebs on the



hunt for someone special. The celebs were then sent on a variety of different dates; from the iconic Mamma Mia tribute band, to the dancing spectacular that was 'Sean-u-mission'. The event was a huge success, raising a lot of money for the fundraising campaign.

In February, love was in the air as the committee ran a Valentine's Day sale, in which pupils could be sent a rose from their 'secret admirer'. This was followed by a 'Guess the Baby Photo' competition, where students were given the task of trying to match the baby photo to a teacher from each department. This was not the easiest competition, as it's safe to say many of the teachers have changed A LOT since their toddler days.

We ended the year with the annual BBQ at the sponsored walk. As usual, with the help of staff, the burgers were gratefully received by the hungry pupils (and staff!) after their walk. It was a great day out for the pupils, and an extremely successful way to raise money for the foundation.

In total, we raised over £3000 for the Save the Children charity. The committee would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ms McMillen, Mrs McIntyre, Dr Bell and all the dedicated staff who make our events possible. Their continued support made our time serving on the committee a terrific experience.

### *Save the Children Committee*

## THE SCHOOL COUNCIL



Form I	Sofia Rea-Lavery Ben Guy
Form II	Makayla Weir Gopi Muruga Perumal
Form III	Nina Magee Adam Gooderman
Form IV	Veda Muruga Perumal Jack Dickinson
Form V	Nancy McConnell Hall Cameron McKee
Lower VI	Morgan McNeill Zak Thabeth
Middle VI	Thomasa Kennedy Cameron White
Head Girl:	Samantha McGrath
Head Boy:	Tom McKee

The School Council is a representative group of BRA's student body. We meet each term to discuss issues and look at opportunities for *improvement* within BRA, with the goal of making school life better for all pupils. The Pupil Council is composed of representatives from each of the four houses in each form. From this group, two pupils in every form, one boy and one girl, are elected to represent their form on the School Council. The Pupil Council meets regularly to assemble the agenda for School Council meetings and to respond to the School Council's action points. The School Council is chaired by Ms Graham, who was, this year, aided by the Head Boy, Tom McKee, acting as Vice Chair and the Head Girl, Samantha McGrath, acting as Secretary.

At the beginning of the academic year, the School Council began to act immediately. From the start we tried to represent the pupil body effectively, giving a voice to the ideas and concerns of all pupils throughout the school to improve its daily running. Several issues were presented for discussion by council members. These included recycling facilities, uniform and hair regulations, the issue of litter



in school, the honours system and the food available at break and lunchtime in the Jackson Suite and Canteen.

The School Council worked as a team to effect change, with each member being encouraged to take part in meetings. Additionally, Councillors worked individually, acting by consulting members of staff to achieve their action points. On behalf of both the School and Pupil Council, I would like to thank all the members of staff who met with us to help us reach our targets. This year, the School Council have built upon the hard work of last year's members and have created many positive changes, building important foundations which we hope next year's School Council will continue to expand upon.

In our first meeting, the Pupil Council chose the two charities that we supported this school year: Air Ambulance NI and Lighthouse - North Belfast's suicide prevention charity (based in Duncairn Gardens) were unanimously chosen. The School and Pupil Councils then organized a non-uniform day, which took place on Tuesday 20th November 2018. The total sum raised was just over £2400, £1200 of which we allocated to Air Ambulance NI with the remaining £1200 being given to Lighthouse. A representative from each charity visited the school at the end of term to speak to the pupils in an Assembly and receive a cheque for the money we raised.

The School Council would like to thank Jessica Jackson and Lauren Young, who acted as the secretaries to the Pupil Council. They produced the minutes for each meeting of the Pupil Council, which formed the agenda for the School Council meetings. On behalf of both the School and Pupil Councils, I would also

like say a big thank you to both Ms Graham and Mrs Robb for their continued work and support of both councils this year.

It has been an interesting and enjoyable experience to be a part of the School and Pupil Councils this year. We have worked hard to represent each and every pupil who has a suggestion or who wants their opinion to be heard. I am very proud of the fact that very soon the school will be introducing plastic recycling facilities to some parts of BRA This has been something we have really pushed for and it will be great to see our ideas put in place. It was a real privilege to be able to effect positive change within our school and I hope to see the School and Pupil councils continue to grow and thrive, taking a more influential role each year and working well so that the pupils' opinions will be listened to. We, as a team, hope we have improved each pupil's unique BRA experience this year and for the many years to come.

*Tom McKee (MVI)*

## SCHOOL LIBRARY



The school library creates a welcoming and secure environment. This year the library continued in its role of supporting the whole school community in the process of learning





and teaching to raise standards in literacy and encourage pupils in their enjoyment of books and reading.



On Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October, the Academy celebrated National Poetry Day 2018. National Poetry Day is an annual celebration that inspires people throughout the UK to enjoy, discover and share poems. It was founded in 1994 by William Sieghart and has engaged millions of people reading, writing and listening to poetry. Pupils were invited to submit a poem on 'change', which was this year's theme. Pupils responded enthusiastically to the poetry competition and worked exceptionally hard on their entries.

Congratulations to Jack Green from Middle Sixth on becoming the winner of the annual school poetry competition. Jack received a £10 voucher to spend at the Scholastic Book Fair. Three runners-up were each awarded with a £5 voucher to spend at the fair. Well done to Holly Strutt from Form IV and both Grace Rea and Gopi Muruga Perumal from Form III. A particularly high volume of entries got

submitted to the poetry competition. Judges were so impressed by the standard of work that certificates of commendation were also awarded to some of the entrants. We are extremely proud of the enthusiasm and hard work from our pupils.



The school library also hosted its annual National Poetry Day celebrations during lunch. This saw teachers and pupils both read poetry aloud to a packed audience. Our competition winners all read their poems aloud at the event. A wonderful pupil drama on the theme of 'change' also took place.

This year, an intrepid team of readers travelled across Belfast to compete in the Northern Ireland heat of the International competition that tests pupils' knowledge of children's literature. Questions were tricky from the off, with rounds on 'enchantments' and 'spies and fantasy'. The team representing the Academy did admirably, and were the joint overall winners of round six alongside Rathmore, Strathearn and Sullivan Upper. Mr Spence, head of English, also managed to win an audience round. Thirty teams from across Northern Ireland took part in the quiz held at Wellington College on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> November. Well done to our four team members who worked so well together at this thoroughly challenging literary quiz: Robyn Agnew, Niall Blaskett, Clara Walsh and Maddie Beggs. A huge well done also to Sydney Jones and Madeleine Morwood for their wonderful



entries to the character costume and poster design competition.



World Book Day 2018 also had its annual celebrations in the school library and across the entire school. All staff members were invited to dress as a book character on the day. The school library was filled to capacity with pupils from various year groups as they gathered to mark this special day. A big bumper book quiz, put together by the librarian, was aimed at cultivating and improving reading culture in the minds of pupils. Lots of prizes were won by pupils, including Harry Potter and Disney



merchandise. A Scholastic book fair was also held in the library in the run-up to World Book Day to add to the celebrations.

Finally, the Academy library celebrated World Book Day by acknowledging best performance at Accelerated Reader and awarding book vouchers to some of the top readers.

Form I and II English classes continued to attend the library for one period a week to participate in Accelerated Reader. This year witnessed more pupils than ever before reading over 1 million words. Huge congratulations to all of the following pupils:

1. Amandine Chesnel - Read over 5 million words
2. Clara Walsh - Read over 3 million words
3. Bradley Coburn - Read over 2 million words
4. Thomas Barnes
5. Rebecca Crooks
6. Luan McVicker
7. Aoife Scott





8. Madhumitha Pandiaraj
9. Ben McIlroy
10. Siona Nibu
11. Amber Mallon
12. Andrew Cleland
13. Anna Curran
14. Lucy Lyons
15. Aditi Krishna Saneesh
16. Caolan Lennon Reilly - Read over 1 million words
17. Beth Stewart
18. Oliver Pearce
19. Madeleine Morwood
20. Eva Finnegan
21. Abbie Gibson
22. Jamie Wilson
23. Rosa Kerr
24. Martyna Zgutczynska
25. Emily Warnock
26. Niall Blaskett
27. Ryan Calwell
28. Thomas Gillam
29. Grace Ogilby
30. Gabrielle Gibson
31. Harry Nicholson
32. Robyn Agnew
33. Aidan Murphy
34. Alice Logan
35. Gopi Perumal Muruga
36. Anna McWilliams
37. Sarah Brogan
38. Kenzie McColgan
39. Lucy Chambers
40. Clodagh McAuley
41. Harrison Kirk
42. Jake Campbell
43. Katie Horkan
44. Cara Campbell
45. Ethan Nicholson
46. Ruby Hanna
47. Georgia Crawford
48. Matthew McDonnell

***E.M.***

## **SU POLAND TRIP**



Before I experienced the Poland Trip, I never actually fully understood the work involved each year in Poland, to me it was just another trip that BRA offered to students. I became more and more involved in the Scripture Union, from being an attendee on the Big SU weekends and the Senior weekends, then eventually I became part of the Scripture Union committee. That was probably the best decision I have ever made during my time at BRA as being part of the committee meant I was offered the chance to travel to Poland with a team that consisted of 15 pupils, three teachers and also 1 past pupil to work alongside a Christian Charity organisation called the Joy Foundation.

We went to Poland on March of 2019 for four days and I remember thinking to myself that four days is not enough to do everything we had planned, but as soon as we landed on Polish soil we hit the ground running. We spent every single day doing charity work, such as distributing food and furniture to different sites of Warsaw. Then we also got to spend two days running workshops for some children from orphanages.

Those four days were honestly the most emotionally and physically draining days of my life but there was never a second when I regretted my decision of going to Poland with the team. We went there to help people but as a





matter of fact, to tell you the truth, I think the people we encountered along with the stories they told us about their lives and everything we witnessed helped us more. To travel to a country where the language was a barrier was the scariest part, but most of the time we didn't need words to communicate: smiles, hugs, acts of kindness and a lot of help from google translate helped make this experience unforgettable. Also to see how God works in the lives of the people we met was just humbling and was a blessing to hear their stories. You could feel the presence of God every single day on that trip and used the lives that he already helped as a living testimony.



For me, the most memorable night was when we had a praise and worship night, listening to the prayer spoken in Polish brought many of us to tears. We didn't need to understand what they were saying during the prayer, we only needed to feel God's presence, blessings and love.

This trip wouldn't have happened without the endless support of the staff who went with us: Mr Morrison, Dr Bell and Mrs Miller and also Beth Magill who was a former pupil at BRA

The opportunity to help people and spread God's word on a school trip is a rare opportunity that you don't get in every school and that's why.

BRA has such a special place in my heart. This school has truly become a second home and the members of the Poland Team and the SU Committee have truly become a second family.



*Wrienne Salvatierra (LVI)*



## SKI TRIP



This year many excited pupils from forms 4 to Middle Sixth headed to Ehrwald, Austria, on the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2018, with equally excited but bleary eyed teachers in tow. For this ski trip forms IV and V went to Dublin Airport via the school, then flew to Munich, Germany before driving to our ski resort in the Austrian Alps. A long day of travel. Sixth Form, however, met at the International Airport, flying at Salzburg then a three-hour journey to our excellent hotel, which would be our home for the next

week. We were then allocated our rooms and most of us were so tired that we went straight to sleep.



Next morning, after breakfast, it took a little time to be fitted into ski gear; however, anticipation was high and the excitement was buzzing. Luckily for the group, the snow and weather were phenomenal and there were almost perfect conditions the duration of the trip. We had many beginners as well as experienced skiers, who all thoroughly enjoyed the slopes, from the green to the black. Although some of us fell many times on the





first run of the slope, we managed to get the hang of it again and it wasn't long before we were skiing like young pros. We flew down those slopes like a rocket by the end of the holiday, some even matching the skills and speed of the Ehrwald locals. We also had the pleasure of going to another massive ski resort for two days, called Lermoos. These slopes were even bigger than ours near the hotel, and were incredibly enjoyable and daunting to go down.



In the evenings, we had many activities lined up for us, including exploring the Town Centre, air rifle shooting, swimming and watching fireworks on New Year's Eve Night. It was a fantastic lights show that lasted for ten minutes. The lights and flashes from the explosions glistened and bounced off the snow making the spectacular scene a memory that will last forever. On New Year's Day evening, we took a bus to another village for a ski show that lasted around an hour. It was amazing to see all of the talented locals show-off their skills by doing front flips on skis and snowboards. There were also lanterns carried by skiers up the slope in formation of '2019'. A huge thank you to Mr Murphy and the rest of the teachers for a brilliant ski trip that will forever be remembered by all who took part.

*Kitty McCracken (MVI)*

## WORLD WAR ONE BATTLEFIELDS TRIP



*Like many schools across Northern Ireland, the Academy was afforded the opportunity to have two Form III students travel to the First World*







*War battlefields as part of a funded trip by the Education Authority. Competition was tough for our places but Naomi Todd and Grace Upritchard were chosen through an essay competition and here they write about their experience and what they learned.*

Grace: Half way through third year, I was blessed to be given the opportunity to fly to Belgium and drive to parts of France from the 19<sup>th</sup> March to the 22<sup>nd</sup> March, with The Somme Association. Throughout this trip we visited multiple cemeteries, memorials, battlefields, trenches and museums. By the end of this trip my outlook on The First World War and the soldiers who had fought, completely changed.

Naomi: We met at 4:00 am on Tuesday morning, and travelled to Gatwick, London. There we met all the other pupils and got on the coach to take us to Fokestone where we would travel to France on Le Shuttle. We stopped at Calais to have lunch and to go into the Belgian chocolate shop. From there we drove the rest of the way to Belgium.

After a very long drive, we arrived at our first cemetery of the trip. We went into the cemetery and had a service by one of the graves, the guide told us about the man who was buried in the grave. Later on that night we went to the Last Post service at Menin Gate, it was nearly overwhelming to see all the names of the men whose bodies were never found. We were told there was 54,000 names written on the Menin Gate. Using the War Grave' Commission website we found two past pupils' names.

The next day we went to a German cemetery in Langemark, and instantly we could see the cemetery was completely different to the British cemeteries. Instead of individual white graves that stood up from the ground, they had black graves that sat in the ground with around twenty names on each grave. There were also around twenty mass graves, with hundreds of names on each side. The environment was completely different to the British cemeteries, it had a cold, chilling atmosphere.



The biggest cemetery we visited was Tyne Cot. It is incredible the number of graves and names written on the walls. As we walked through the rows upon rows of graves, it was hard to take it in. Then we visited a cemetery called Comines-Warneton. It looked like a colosseum with two large statue lions out in front. The walls of this colossal building were covered with names.

After that we went to Messines to visit the Island of Ireland Peace Park. It has an enormous tower based on a tradition Irish round tower, and has memorials to those who died from the whole island, either in the Ulster Division or in the Irish Divisions. Perhaps, because the tower seemed familiar and the poetry, prose and letters used around the park were so moving, it was an eye-opening experience to consider the lives lost from our own part of the world. We went to see a huge crater that had been created from an explosion. It had filled up with water and became a reflecting pool. Although it was as big as a lake, the one we saw the next day was even bigger.

Grace: On the third day of our trip we drove to northern France. The first place we stopped was Lochnagar crater, which was formed on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme. It was created by the detonation of a huge mine placed beneath the German front line. The explosion rose 4000 feet into the air and created a crater of 300 feet across and 70 feet deep. We walked around the crater, reading personal stories from it. There was a moving story of Tom Easton who fought

in the area. His account of sitting with another soldier who, unbeknownst to Tom, had been hit by shrapnel was very poignant. The wounded soldier said he could hear music; orchestras were playing and he saw his father. The soldier died a moment later and Tom said 'these things shake you. But, in spite of the shock, it gave me the courage to do my duty as a soldier'. After surviving the war, he visited every year, visiting the cemeteries and talk to the graves of his best friends. We read about how he had made a vow to help their families and so told them stories from home year after year until he was an old man.



We then visited Guillemont Cemetery where we conducted a service and read out some poems. On the day before our visit there was burial of remains of a Connaught Ranger who had been found just a few months before. Our tour guide, Tom, told us that there's still thousands of bodies missing and this soldier was just one of them. They knew he was Connaught Ranger because of a badge that remained intact in the ground.

We then visited one of the most well-known and largest memorials, Thiepval Memorial 'To the Missing of the Somme'. I was taken back to see the number of names inscribed in the walls of this memorial, names of soldiers who left home to unknowingly never return and for their bodies to never be found. It's one thing to read how many soldiers lost their lives in the war but it's completely different to see the

names on the wall, to have the graves right in front of you and to be standing on the land that they were fighting over. Those numbers become men and those men become fathers, sons, brothers, uncles and cousins who all have their own story to tell.



Later on that day, we were taken to the Ulster Memorial Tower, which stood in the middle of a battlefield where the 36<sup>th</sup> Ulster Division fought. Beside this was Thiepval Wood, a forest that contained trenches. A group of people from the Somme Association had excavated the original trenches and recreated what it to show it would have looked with beams, planks and sandbags. Our guide told us what life was like in trenches and stories of some of the soldiers that once lived in these trenches. He showed up some of the stuff they found when they excavated the trenches, such as empty wine bottles, rucksacks with personal items inside such as soap, photos and a moustache comb. We were told a story of a soldier whose life was saved by simply carrying a spoon in his Puttees, the bullet shot through the spoon instead of directly hitting his leg. Naomi and I were able to hold the spoon and place our fingers through the hole the bullet made.

Inspired by what we had seen on the trip, we made looked on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website the names on the memorial in school to see where the men listed





on the memorial in school were buried. Seeing that two names were inscribed on the Menin Gate near where we were staying had us visit a second time. One of these boys was Robert Kelly Pollin (the Pollin Building is named after his brother). He died on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1916 when he was 20 years old. The other was George Frank Newell, who died 6<sup>th</sup> August 1917, age 26. Sadly, for his family, his two brothers also died during the war. Seeing these names and the connection to our school made the whole experience much more real.



As we were leaving on the final day, we asked if we could visit the cemetery where the remains of the another past pupil was laid to rest. It was a small cemetery, hidden away from the busy road with only five or six rows of graves, which was small compared to some of the cemeteries we visited, such as Tyne Cot. We could look at the countryside, now on the outskirts of Ypres and imagine the fighting that took place over a hundred years earlier. Tom explained that his cemetery would have been formed from the soldiers final resting place, not constructed afterwards. Within the cemetery there was also a grave to a German soldier; opponents in life, but buried together.

The final place we visited was a place where the soldiers waited to be executed if they had stepped out of line. We were allowed into the cells where the soldiers were kept. If you looked closely you could see messages, prayers and names that the soldiers had carved into the wall while they stayed there. Outside there was

a post where the soldiers would have stood while being executed and sometimes they were even tied to it. After this we were allowed to walk around the town centre for a while, it was really enjoyable walking around the streets of Belgium and being able to see how proud they are of the events, the history that took place in their small country. Every corner you turned there was some kind of memorial.

Naomi: Although I had studied the First World War in History this year, the number of people that lost their lives hadn't really sunk into my mind until I went on this trip and saw all the graves and names; it was a very sobering experience.

Grace: This trip has been my favourite thing in my school career so far; I really did enjoy my time in Belgium and France. It was beyond believable to stand on the same ground where history took place and by the end of the trip I had a much bigger appreciation for the soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for us. And although that perhaps sounds like a cliché, Tom, our guide said something which stuck with me "Don't be afraid to talk and laugh with your friends while in here because that's what the soldiers want to hear, that's what they fought for, the next generation." If you ever get the chance to visit, you should. Far from being depressing, it was inspiring.

*Grace Upritchard (III) and Naomi Todd (III)*

## THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD SCHEME







## **Bronze Girls' Foot Qualifying Expedition, Mourne Mountains Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

The Qualifying expedition started at Fofanny dam. We followed a road, went over a stile and walked alongside the road. We found many streams as we walked, luckily however, we could jump over most of them. We followed the road until we reached a junction. We climbed over 2 stiles which led us to Spelga dam. Straight away, we found that the land was very marshy, mainly because I fell thigh-deep in mud and had to be dragged out by my rucksack straps! We climbed up a hill nearby, where we stopped for lunch.

After we ate, we decided to stay at that level as we found that it was muddier closer to the water. This part was flat, but I found it very tiring as my boots sunk into the mud and I had to drag them out each step. After this, we had to climb up a steep hill. We soon realised we had climbed too high, so we had to climb back down again. This was very difficult as the terrain was very rocky and steep. Once we reached the bottom again, we were back on a path which led us directly to our campsite. Eleanor and Ebony set up the tent as I boiled water for dinner. We ate our dinner then returned to the tent. We went to sleep around 8.30pm.

We woke up at 6.30am the next morning. We ate breakfast then put our tent down. We left the campsite at around 10.30am and walked alongside a river until we reached at footbridge. We crossed the foot bridge then walked over contour rocky mountain. This was very tiring, but we found it easier to take frequent breaks. At the top we stopped for a longer break, then walked down the other side.

Once we reached the bottom we were on the Ulster Way which was relatively easy to follow. We stopped for lunch between leg 6

and 7 then continued on. The rest of the route was quite easy for me as it was quite flat. We reached the Kilbroney carpark at around 4pm.



Overall, I have very much enjoyed completing my Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition. My favourite part was walking along the Ulster way as it was quite flat and there was lots of nice scenery. I also enjoyed walking around Spelga dam as it was challenging but it was funny when people fell in!

***Anna Wilson, Jessica Boyd, Aoife Caldwell,  
Eleanor Green, Ebony Hoogelander and Eve  
Taylor (III)***

## **Silver Foot Qualifying Expedition, Mourne Mountains Friday 14<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2019**



On the first day we arrived on the outskirts of Tollymore Forest Park which is where we met our assessor, David. He talked us through the weekend ahead and told us the check points where he would aim to meet up with us.

We headed off around 10am from grid reference 362 322 and began along towards the forest. The weather was good it was dry with a bit of sunshine but there were some dark clouds looming over us so we knew a storm would emerge. We walked our route taking our breaks where we planned and making sure each of us had plenty to eat and drink to keep us going.



We stopped just beside Horn Bridge for some lunch, then we headed on our way. We followed the path past Parnell's Bridge and Maria's Bridge then we reached the edge of forest and continued on Trassey Track. By this stage, the weather was not looking good and this made everyone's spirits fall. We had a height to climb of 240, which nobody was looking forward to. We were climbing up between Slieve Meelbeg and Slieve Bernagh. By now the storm we knew was coming hit and it became extremely wet and windy; everyone was on edge as this made our journey very dangerous whilst climbing.

We reached the stile and crouched down behind at the Mourne wall, we were unsure what to do, so as a Team we decided to phone Holly. Holly gave us the advice to climb back down the mountain and head towards Meelmore where Dennis would meet us. On

the climb down everyone's spirits were at the lowest and thought of leaving the hills loomed over us all. Once we reached the camp at Meelmore, we all had a hard think and a chat with David and decided we can do this, so we got our tents up and hot food into us and our team morale returned.



On Day Two everyone had had a good night's sleep and a warm breakfast. The weather was still on the gloomy side but a lot better than the previous day. Spirits were high again and everyone was ready for the day ahead. We all had breakfast and packed everything in our rucksacks. David had joined us in camp and informed us that we would be doing bad weather routes as the weather was to continue to be bad. David told us he would see us later.



We set off from Meelmore around 09:30 with our new routes. We reached a car park just off Trassey Road and rested there for fifteen minutes with a view of Slievenamuck. We continued on our way towards Fofanny Dam.





On the way there we found this bird which was stuck in a branch, so we helped it to continue his journey too. We passed the dam and walked around it and crossed a river and headed up to Ott Carpark and had lunch at 12:30. We met a group of boys from another school who were also on their silver expedition.



After lunch we ventured on, following the telegraph poles towards Spelga dam. This is where we met Maurice, Shelly and David. The weather began to pick up and the rain had finally stopped and the sun was trying to come out.

We left Spelga and headed towards our camp for the night. We walked single file along the road towards Hen mountain, crossed the foot bridge and began our trek around the mountain. We made it the other side and everything became familiar to us because the road was to our camp which we had stayed in at bronze (243 262). We were one of the first groups to arrive to camp and by the time we pitched our tents, the other teams were arriving. After dinner, all the groups sat chatting about their day and the evening ended on a positive note.

Day Three- the final day. Breakfast was cooked, tents were done, rucksacks were packed and Shelly and David arrived to tell us that we would be doing bad weather routes again. David said he would meet us again on the path through the forest.

We set off around 09:30 and began our final day of walking. We reached Rocky Mountain and began our trek around it. We were about half-way around it when the ground became very marshy. I feared that this was never going to end well, and I was right, because exactly like our mishap on our Bronze expedition, Siobhán got stuck! By the time we finished laughing, she got herself free and we were on our way.



We had a break near Leitrim Lodge car park. We stopped to have lunch near the ford: the sun was shining and everyone was a lot happier. After good food and great company, we headed off again towards the end of our journey. We walked along the path through Rostrevor Forest. We caught up with David at Yellow Water River Bridge and told us this would be the last we saw of him. We thanked him for everything he had done for us throughout the weekend and he wished us all the best for the rest of our Duke of Ed experience.







We walked along the path in the forest and we finally reached Kilbroney car park. We did it! We met up with Holly and Shelly and everyone couldn't wait to get home to have a shower and to get to their beds.



My Duke of Ed Silver expedition was a tough but enjoyable one. At times I felt very low but the people I was with helped to keep me going. Our weekend had a lot of highs and lows but we got through and completed it.

*Eva McGoldrick-Mathers, Guilia Allen,  
Siobhán Baine, Catelyn Burns  
Molly Lapworth and Rachael McGrath (IV)*

### **Silver Foot Qualifying Expedition, Mourne Mountains Friday 16<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2019**



**Day One:** Bad weather route. Followed path up through Donard Forest, round Drinnhilly and down to the edge of the forest. Walked up

to quarry at edge of Tollymore. Followed path round the Drinns. Weaved down Tollymore, crossed Old Bridge to the Tollymore Car Park for lunch. Followed path to Parnell's bridge. Followed path weaving back up Tollymore to the edge. Handrailed wall to sheepfold. Followed path to camp.



**Day Two-** Contoured Slieve Meelmore to wall. Handrailed wall to style. Contoured Slieve Meelbeg to Fofanny Dam. Walk round Dam and up to road. Followed road to Ott Mt. Car Park. Contoured Slievenamuck to Spelga Dam for lunch. Followed River Bann to Spelga Pass. Followed Ulster way round Hen Mt. to Camp between Cock and Rocky Mts.



**Day Three-** Followed path to ford. Climbed up and over saddle between Sleivemoughanmore and Wee Sleivemoughan. Followed rocky river to footbridge. Climbed up and over saddle between Rocky Mt. and Tornamrock to lunch. Followed path through Rostrevor forest to our final Destination at Rostrevor forest.

*Ben Golden, Jack Dickinson, Aaron Gourley  
and Joseph McGuigan (IV)*



## Gold Foot Qualifying Expedition, Scottish Highlands Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019



We travelled to Scotland on the 11th of July, but we didn't start walking until the 13th because the first group left on the 12th and we were walking the same route.

### Day 1

On the 13th of July, we had breakfast at Morrisons, then got to the carpark for around 10:30 and we started walking towards Leanachan Forest and walked through it for around 5/6 Kilometres. At Mointeach we stopped to have lunch (this was around 12/12:30). We walked through the Forest for another 4/5 kilometres. At this point it got confusing because a new road was built which was not on the map. The weather was quite hot and dry for the majority of the day.

When we left the forest, we walked beside Stob Coire Gaibhre and a river until we reached our campsite at 283736. It was easy to spot because of the Bothy beside it, we put up our tents and had dinner, I had a vegetable curry. We went to sleep around 10/11 and the weather was good overnight, with no rain.

### Day 2



I woke up around 7am and set up the Trangia and had a Pot Noodle for breakfast. After packing up our tents and having had breakfast, we left around 8:30am. Initially, we had set off in the wrong direction because the path was very hard to spot, and it seemed obvious to follow the visible path. After being corrected, we walked from Lairig Leach to near Creag Ghuanach. This was a very hard walk because it was so hot, and we had drunk the majority of our water in the first hour.



We stopped for a long break at the edge of Loch Treig because we were ahead of time. We stopped for a two-hour lunch at the Bridge with one rail near Garbh Chriapan, where we sunbathed and I got sunburnt. I ate Mexican rice for lunch and the rest ate boil in the bags. We started walking again around 15:30, we walked at a steady pace towards our campsite and we got there around 18:00. We walked, following Gleann Lolairean which was a difficult walk because it was quite uphill and it





was very, very warm, and I had run out of water.



Once we got to the campsite, we set up our tents and had dinner, I had vegetable bolognese. This campsite had a lot of cleggs at it, but luckily there was a large, two storey Bothy at it, in which we cooked and dried our clothes.

### Day 3

We packed up and left at 08:20. We followed a track for the beginning of the third day; however, it was mostly grown-over and we ended up walking in a lot of marsh. We reached the pipeline around Lunchtime and we had a long break there. We then followed the pipe until we reached the Dam near Loch Elide Mor, where we had another 20-minute break. When we reached roughly grid reference 2063 we had a really good view of Kilochleven. The weather had died down by the third day and it was much milder and easier to walk. Our campsite was around 2 kilometres from this place, but it was a very difficult walk as it was hard on our feet because we had been walking on gravel tracks and a concrete pipe the whole day.

We arrived at the campsite around 18:00. The campsite was, in my opinion, the worst out of them all, it had little flat ground and pegs were hard to dig into the ground. I had a vegetable curry boil in the bag for dinner again and the rest had bolognese and chili con carne. Cher

got a tick and scared us all into our tents, so we went to sleep quite early.



### Day 4



On the last day, we started walking around 08:00, we joined onto the West Highland Way from our campsite and we followed the WHW for the majority of the day. We walked quite fast and we joined onto the forest in about 2 hours. We walked through Nevis Forest, where we met Shelly and Maurice and walked with them to the end. The weather was quite cold in the morning and it even began to rain at one point; however, it picked up towards the end. We didn't really stop for lunch as we wanted our expedition over and done with. We had





only a 20-minute break, which is the longest we had all day.

We finished at around 3:30 at Glen Nevis Campsite, where we had been camping at the start.

We were all really relieved to have finished our expedition.

I really enjoyed the Gold Qualifying expedition, as did my team, we made a lot of good memories, I think it was really a once in a lifetime experience, even though the walking was hard work. I think it all paid off in the end. It was really satisfying to finish each day knowing there was one less to do. I think the walk was really scenic and I loved our second campsite the most. There was only one time, on the second day that the walking was very hard. The weather overall was really good, maybe a bit too hot at some points. My favourite day walking was the last, it was straightforward navigating and we were all very motivated.

*Magdalena Szlachta, Savannah Delos Reyes,  
Cher Enriquez, Naoise McCormick,  
Katie Moore and Olivia Quinn (VI)*

## **DOE PROJECTS**

### **Vegetation in the Mourne, Bronze Project**

#### **Roberts Herb**

Roberts herb is a small, magenta coloured flower. It is very common and is found in most places. It is commonly seen along path borders and in shaded areas. It thrives in damp conditions. It is usually found amongst other weed type vegetation.

#### **Gorse**

Gorse is an evergreen, spiky bush with yellow flowers. It is extremely common in all habitats including highlands, coastal areas and urban areas. It is used by many birds and animals to provide shelter from the elements. It used to be used to burn in ovens to cook bread, as it was easy to access, at no cost.

#### **Hairy Violet**

Hairy violet is a small purple flower. It is prominently found on chalk grass lands but is also commonly seen on the edges of forests and roadsides. It flowers in the late spring and early summer months.

#### **Clover**

Clovers are a very common plant. They all have three leaves and are found in large numbers amongst grass. They are commonly associated with St Patrick, the Irish saint.

#### **Common Daisy**

Daisies are weeds which are commonly found in damp habitats. They are extremely common in the UK. They have a yellow centre and white petals which sometimes have a small amount of pink in the tips.

*Anna Wilson (FIII)*

### **Man's Influence on the Mourne Mountains, Silver Foot June Project**

From my experience in the Mourne Mountains, they are well kept by everyone who uses them. One of the eye catching things about them is the endless hills and green areas from all over.

Throughout our silver expedition, the most obvious structure in the Mourne is the wall.



The Mourne wall is continuous all over the hills. I feel like it does not have a negative impact on the environment as it just a wall made of rocks. Although it may seem useless, I can personally say it helped my team on our expedition. It helped us stay in the right direction, it shielded us from the rain at the top of a mountain and helped us to locate places on the map.



practice expeditions. As well as the lodges, dams have also been built including Fofanny and Spelga Dam, which personally I feel add more colour to the hills and give nice views from all over. Also, they are also very distinct on a map so they are good to use during navigation as they can be a check point or a meeting point which is easy to access.

Roads and Car parks have also been built throughout across the Mournes to help campers and hikers access the mountains more easily. There is, however, a downside to the roads. They can be very dangerous for hikers trying to cross because cars speed up and down them, which could cause a horrific accident. Although these things may have their benefits, I feel they are quite insignificant as there should be more walkers in the Mournes than cars, so really there is no need for the roads in the hills.



During our expedition we walked through both Rostrevor and Tollymore forests. We have been in Tollymore multiple times but this time I really noticed the awful sight that is deforestation. We walked past all of these trees but ripped out of the ground and chopped down. I feel like this has a huge impact on our environment as not only are we losing trees but the deforestation increases the green-house effect, which is growing at a rapid speed. It also makes the forest look very sad as chunks of it have been taken out of it for our benefit - which to me doesn't make me feel good. So, when we walked last all these trees, it did



Throughout the Mournes my group came across lodges for campers and hikers to use, for example Meelmore Lodge which we have visited countless times on our training and







really make think of the impact it is having on the environment.



Throughout the world, litter is everywhere: in streets, on public transport and in the seas polluting our environment; however, I am very pleased to say that my team found no litter throughout our time in the Mourne and this says a lot. This shows that is a place of nature and people respect that, which is always great.

Although one thing I would say is that the number of bins in the Mourne could be increased to keep up with the little litter in the Mourne Mountains.

*Eva McGoldrick-Mathers (IV)*

### **The physical and emotional effects that the expedition has on the team, Silver Foot August Project**

#### **Day 1: Ebb and Flow**



It was Friday, around 10:30am. The patter of rain grew heavier and heavier, growing to a ferocious roar on the window of the van as we pulled up to the beginning of what would be a trying day. Due to the heavy downfall, we had been given our bad weather routes, a multitude of twist and turns through Tollymore Forest that starkly contrasted our originally planned route of a near straight shot between Sleive Donard and Sleive Commedagh. Our naivety had convinced us that we'd lucked out and our new route was to be a haven, so, regardless of







the lashing downfall, we set off with high hopes for a brisk day ahead.



The day's journey began with an incline up Donard Forest. We made a steady ascent with good conversation, stopping here and there to admire the fast flow of a river or the foggy view of Newcastle; morale was fresh and high. Approaching the cap of Donard, with about 30 minutes of walking behind us, we were dismayed to find our path had been blockaded by some construction workers. Our only option, it seemed, was to push on and try and find some way around. One of the workers, who had seen our confused look around, offered the use of a side route around the work, in what he called "unideal terrain." Indeed "unideal" was putting it lightly as we were essentially walking against the flow of a mud river that seemed to engulf each of our boots one by one. Nevertheless, we persevered and once the final few metres of Donard were conquered, we rewarded ourselves with the first break. The blockage had made its mark though, and the first signs of cracks were appearing in our mood.

As the weather dried and the sun poked out its head, the next stretch of our walk went rather quickly. We made our descent out of Donard park and made child's play (after briefly losing our way and backtracking) of the climb up to the infamous quarry where we'd had so many fond times on expeditions past. There we took our second break of the day, being uplifted once

more by the familiarity of our surroundings. This would be our last moment of bliss for a long while.

What would come next undoubtedly ruined a good portion of our day. Not 15 minutes after leaving the quarry, the missing of a turnoff caused us to skip a sizeable section of the route round The Drinns. Oblivious, at first, to our mistake we trudged down the hill for a further 15 minutes. The fish began to stink eventually though and the sad realisation of the backtrack up the steep hill we'd just declined hit us like a sucker-punch to the gut. Not wanting to cheat, we begrudgingly climbed our way back and made the life-sucking walk around the Drinns that we had so nearly missed. By this point, the sun had evaporated all of the rain resulting in very sweaty and groggy conditions. To make matters worse, the end of The Drinns leg held an arduous 100 metre climb. Regardless, 1 hour and 20 minutes later, we'd defeated our foe with all but the final strands of happiness left.

By this point, it was almost 1 o'clock and our lunch destination still lay 2 hours ahead. We had decided to eat lunch at the carpark in Tollymore earlier that day, for it was our usual Tollymore lunching area. The path between us and the carpark however, although all downhill, was a weaving and winding one that we walked without break in near silence; we were simply too drained by The Drills to talk. The path was precipitous enough to drive painfully into the feet wearing them down to bone and dust, and along the way we passed at least 3 or 4 tempting traps that slyly offered a clear shot to lunch that we were forced to turn a blind eye to. Needless to say, by the time we finally arrived at lunch at 3 o'clock, we had reached a new low, and were eagerly ready to refuel.

Lunch felt hearty and well-deserved, and it seemed as though the day was finally turning around and that we would be at camp in no time. Of course, this was wrong. We left the car



park at 4 and my stomach sank when I looked at the map to realise we were only about halfway done, but not wanting to sadden my teammates, I kept this to myself. The leg between the carpark and Parnell's Bridge is easily the most hated leg of the entire weekend. A decision made unanimously by the group. It's not particularly steep, it doesn't push into your feet or require great leg strength, and it's a path so the terrain is relatively smooth and flat. The problem is that it is so nauseatingly long. A forty-minute track without sight of beginning nor end for the entire thing. It's so straight, in fact that each minor bend sends a glimmer of hope that is immediately replaced with disappointment and fatigue. This one stretch was singlehandedly responsible for robbing us of the energy gained at lunch, and we had reverted to tired zombies by Parnell's Bridge, our next break. The effects of this were felt for the next few stretches, of which I remember nothing but numbing dullness and the slight fear of the incline back up Tollymore that still loomed ahead. I think the whole team felt this fear and it sank our mood lower and lower till we reached Alyavaddy Bridge, which was to be our final checkpoint before the dreaded renaissance.

All of a sudden a miracle occurred. Somehow, and I really have no idea how, we slipped lazily back into conversation as we resumed our walking, and before we knew it, one of our teammates, Arron, had us hooked on a story that would diverge and side-tracked us all the way to the edge of Tollymore. Out of nowhere, we seemed to have shredded the most feared part of the day like a hot knife through butter. It felt like in an instant, moods were lifted and whatever had kept us down and sad for so long had been relieved off our shoulders. It's odd how the power of a story and friendship so easily transformed our mood.

With Tollymore behind us, the majority of the battle felt won, and the rougher terrain of the final few stretches felt more like a gift after the harsh paths we'd been walking all day. The

high the story had created had died down a little, but we were still in high spirits and a chatting mood as we approached the sheepfold that marked the beginning of the end. We wasted no time in hurrying to the camp, which was so close we could taste it. On the way we met up with our assessor who wished us a good night and congratulated us on a tough days walk, it did feel good to have it behind us. The location of our campsite had changed due to a bad experience one of our leaders had had the week prior, but this was all music to our ears as it meant we had less distance to travel.

All in all, we arrived at the camp at around 8 o'clock. With a fresh pair of socks and warm bellies full of food we found a sense of serenity at the camp that had been missed throughout the day. All of us ready to collapse, we went to bed at 9:30, to prepare for tomorrow's challenges.

## **Day 2: Reminiscence**

I arose, the first of my team, at 7:30. The night had gone much smoother than my first nights in the mountains normally had, largely because of the new level of tired I had reached the day before. We were due to leave at 8:30 and an hour seemed plenty of time to eat breakfast and pack up and ship out. I, being the over-anxious and pedantic person I am, was ready to go well inside of the prearranged time limit. My teammates, on the other hand, were not. They were very nonchalant in their preparing processes and it had me slightly on edge. In spite of my worrying, we set off half an hour late at 9 o'clock, and only 40 minutes later we had caught up to where we were supposed to be.

By Fofanny Dam, we had actually exceeded our planned route by 15 minutes, so we decided to spend that time resting well, more out of want than exhaustion. Fofanny held a special place in our hearts for not six months earlier, during our practice, we had gotten so far past our predicted timing that we had to take an hour rest there. That hour was our



fondest memory of our Duke of Ed experience, as we had spent it taking photos, skipping rocks, and bonding. Being there again really boosted our spirits.

At the Ott mountain car park, we once more met up with our assessor, who greeted us gladly with some cookies as a reward for our hard work. Onwards we continued over Slievenamuck, following the telephone poles where, at Bronze, one of our old teammates had requested a comfort break, only for us to realise that there were toilets 5 minutes' walk later at Spelga dam. Another fond memory that we had shared, and one of many more to follow throughout the day. Deciding to eat lunch at a reasonable time that day, Spelga became our location for dining at 11:30. Once again we spent an hour at lunch before heading off on our merry way. More memories flooded us as we traversed down the River Bann: we remembered the time on our bronze expedition when we followed the river faithfully for 3 hours, only to notice we had no clue where we were or how we'd got there; we recollected the time when we had all fallen in and were frozen to the bone as the sun set; we recalled the finding of a sheep skull that still lives atop my shed at home and the bridge where so many fulfilling breaks had been taken before. Every memory kept us occupied this time around and, thankfully, we made our way without incidence.



After resting at the base of Hen Mountain, (another area of fond reminiscence of a little tree that could be seen from our resting point) we started to contour round it. On the way we were halted by a flock of sheep whom we didn't want to disturb. To our horror, one of the

sheep had injured its leg and was falling ever further behind the flock, so being the good Samaritans we are, we coaxed it as best we could to catch up. We never did find out what happened to it, but I do hope it is recovered.

From Hen Mt. it was a simple straight path to our campsite between Cock and Rocky Mt., where we arrived at 3pm. Although still very tired, the day had been a breeze in comparison to the day before and all of us felt relatively well from start to finish.

We set the tents up, and with nothing much else to do we decided to nap until dinner time in 2 hours. After dinner, we stayed up a while longer before heading back to the tents to dream of the following night in actual warm beds.

### Day 3: The Straight and Narrow

The following morning played out similarly to the day prior. 7:30am, I was the first 'up and at 'em' after one of the best sleeps ever on an expedition. The same could not be said, however, for my tent mate, as he had apparently not slept a wink. Again, by eight thirty I was the only one ready to go, and again my nonchalant friends reassured me we would be fine.



9:10am rolled around and we were off to our final destination. We were greeted with our first real challenge since day one in the form of a saddle between Wee Slievemoughan and





Slievemoughanmore. The patter of rain began as we tried to solve the matrix that was the climb up. There was no sign of any path or indication of a route to the top, so we were left fending for ourselves trying to scale what felt like a vertical wall.



Once at the top, the trouble didn't stop there as we were presented with a labyrinth of potholes and trenches that we were required to weave our way through. What came next was no peach either, because there was even less of a path down the other side of the saddle and this time we were tricked numerous times by the faulty ground and had our boots filled to the brim. There was equally no path to be found along Rocky Water River, resulting in forty minutes of misery, consisting of stumble after stumble, and fall after fall. We were not happy. Sadly, the worst was yet to come. Although we finally found a path to lead us over the next saddle between Rocky mountain and Tornamrock, we were then introduced to Thor's anger. The heavens were unleashed upon us as we crested the saddle, buckets upon buckets upon buckets, worse than we had ever seen fell arounds us. We may as well have been walking through solid water; that's certainly what it felt like. Our clothes had become saturated to the point where we would not have been able to tell the difference had we been dunked in a swimming pool. We were pelted like this until we had fully made it the bottom of the saddle when a glimmer of sunlight informed us that this was the place to rest.

We saw no choice but to change out of our drenched clothing, and it seemed like as good a place as any to have lunch, so that's exactly what we did. Lunch on day three felt more like fuel and sustenance than enjoyment as it had done the days prior, but we were still glad the rain had stopped. From that point on the day went as smooth as ever. We knew that it was basically a straight shot to Rostrevor, and so we walked the whole thing with very few short rests here and there. The only thing of note really was our brief meet-up with the assessor and the other team as they sat down for their lunch, where we got a group photo and exchanged pleasantries. Later the other team would rush past us, trying to get to the end first as if it were some kind of race. But we didn't care about that; we just walked at a good steady pace. We reached the end with two hours to spare: our feet ached and our legs quivered, but nothing felt better than unbuckling the dead weight of the back off our backs for the last time.

All in all, it's easy to say that all of us enjoyed the weekend but were glad to see the end of it. As a group, we got on really well, never really fighting. The worst it ever got was a mutual silence out of respect for the tiresome feeling shared among us. The weather had a great effect on our mood be it sun rain or grogginess but the thing that lifted us up the most was familiarity with the route. I'd gladly do it again.

*Ben Golden (IV)*

### **Deforestation and destruction of forests, Gold Project**

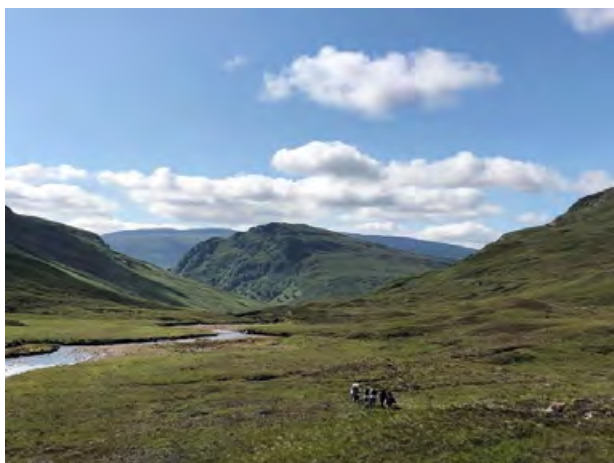
Deforestation is a process that has been taking place in Scotland for millennia, only a fraction of original native forests remains. In fact, almost all forests native to Scotland have been altered, cut-down or affected by man in some way. A frequent sight in the Scottish Highlands are trees cut down, with huge areas of land left



bare. Deforestation can happen for many reasons, including clearances for farming, cattle or sheep storage or plantation, gathering of timber for materials and resources, fuel and other things.

Thousands of years ago, Scottish forests were thriving; trees grew in a temperature and ecosystem that was perfect for efficient growth. As man started to inhabit these forests, what is now modern deforestation began. Trees provide a perfect building material and are a good fuel source and took up room that could otherwise be used for livestock. Deforestation continued to happen on a huge scale for hundreds of years, until only around 4% of Scotland was made up of Forests. After the Second World War, this figure went down to 3%.

The effect of man has not been totally negative. The issue of deforestation was recognised by the Government and Private Owners and since, the total forest coverage of Scotland has increased to 10%.



Deforestation is a problem because it poses a major threat to the ecosystem of the Scottish Highlands. If whole forests are cleared at a time, animals who are dependent on the forest habitat for shelter die. The natural predators of those animals also die. Deforestation reduces the natural workings of an ecosystem which, in order to survive, must contain diverse animals, plants and vegetation. Without any of this, the

Scottish Forests will be reduced to lifeless masses of land.

A photo taken on our expedition portrays a tiny number of trees left, after a huge chunk of trees were removed, the remains of which can be seen laying scattered around. This is the West Highland Way and while walking along it, we noticed the most deforestation. On our last day, while walking through Nevis Forest, huge amounts of the forest were cut down, and what appeared to be dense forest on the map, was nothing like that in real life. Native animals are dependent on thriving ecosystems, which can often only be produced by forests. The survival of these native animals is at risk as a result of such large-scale deforestation.

Trees play a hugely important role in the carbon cycle, taking in large amounts of carbon dioxide and giving out oxygen. With the removal of trees, larger amounts of carbon dioxide remain in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide, in large amounts, can contribute to global warming as it is a greenhouse gas.

### **Litter in the Highlands**

Littering is a problem in Scotland's hills and other upland areas of the UK. After a recent clean-up of the Scottish Highlands, more than 24 stones of litter were collected from Ben Nevis alone. Rubbish such as plastics, pose the biggest threat, due to the fact they are almost completely non-biodegradable. Non-biodegradable plastics and other materials take an unpredictable amount of time to decompose, fish and small rodents may get trapped in bottles and nets, they might also choke on plastics bags and die.

Litter is becoming more and more of a concern, combined with deforestation, the influence of man on the Scottish Highlands is becoming a huge threat to wildlife, plant life and ecosystems.



However, many initiatives are taking place in order to fix this issue. The Highland Council is supporting the “2019 Keep Scotland Beautiful Clean Up” campaign and is encouraging as many communities, businesses, schools and individuals as possible to get involved in a local community clean-up. £53 million of public money is spent addressing the issue of litter in Scotland each year. The 2019 Spring Clean Up campaign run by Keep Scotland Beautiful aims to help educate people to the negative effects of littering and encourage them to take pride in the Scottish Highlands. While compared to the Mournes, the Highlands are fairly clean, we still noticed litter present, especially in places frequented by man, such as Bothies or the West Highland Way.



*Magdalena Szlachta (LVI)*

## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO



The Camino de Santiago is a very well known walk across Spain where thousands of pilgrims from a number of denominations walk The Way which leads to the remains of the Apostle St. James. Some people do it for religious reasons, others do it as a way to detach themselves from the busyness of the modern world whilst many see it as working towards a goal and a sense of achievement.



When thirty students from Forms IV, L6 and M6 signed up for the first Camino, it was imperative to start mentally preparing students for long distance walking. Weekly walks from the Academy to South Belfast and back became an opportunity for the group to get to know one another, furthermore, it made the students realise that Dr. Springer had an unhealthy addiction to Taboo Donuts and Miss Watson loved nothing more than a hipster coffee from Kaffe O!

A tangible air of trepidation and excitement filled a coach bound for Dublin airport on a Friday morning in June. After a short journey to Bilbao, the group got a bus to Pamplona, where they would start the Camino the following morning. In this famous walled city which inspired Hemingway to write “The Sun Also Rises” and where men run away from





bulls to show their valour, the Camino group started their voyage at 6:30am in high spirits.



The first day was the most difficult; by 8am temperatures were reaching thirty degrees, hill climbs were incessant and Miss Williams and Miss Watson wanted candid pictures in cornfields. Very quickly, the silhouette of Pamplona was distant and the group was at the top of the *Alto de Perdón* or the Hill of Forgiveness, which is adorned with bronze figures of pilgrims with the words: “where the path of the wind crosses with that of the stars”. The descent was as problematic as the climb, with encouragement and the dulcet tones of Mr Tenner, the group made it to their first stop, Puente la Reina. After a shower, a dip in the pool and some food, Academy students were ready for a good night’s sleep.



The second destination was Estella, due to the heatwave, the group left at 6:00am after having been bribed with pizza and chips for dinner that evening. After having got over the worst part of the walk on the first day, the group reached Estella in no time, therefore allowing the group time to walk around the town, get

some snacks and chill out. Everyone enjoyed the copious amount of pizza, *patatas fritas* and *patatas bravas*.

On the third day on the way to Los Arcos, cornfields turned into vineyards. Students bypassed the Irache wine fountain which gave pilgrims unlimited amounts of red wine and fresh water.



On the fourth and final day of walking students and staff woke up with renewed vigour, knowing this would bring us to the end of our *Etapas*. It was a hot day and blisters, despite being carefully treated by Mr Stretton, were causing a lot of discomfort. However, not to be deterred, our students found immense inner strength and resilience to complete their first *Etapas* of the *Camino*. Well done to one and all and remember *Siempre estás en camino*- You are always on the way. ¡Buen Camino!

**M.C.S. / K.L.W.**



# *Ben Madigan Preparatory School*

## SCHOOL DIARY 2018/19

September 7 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 6 Military Tattoo	December 19 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 1-3 Nativity Play
September 20 <sup>th</sup>	World of Owls Visit		Prep 4-7 Christmas Trip to the SSE Arena
September 28 <sup>th</sup>	MacMillan Cancer Brunch	December 20 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 1-3 Trip to Funky Monkeys
October 8 <sup>th</sup>	Cancer Focus NI Visit		Pre Prep Nativity Play
October 11 <sup>th</sup>	Cross Country Antrim Forum	December 21 <sup>st</sup>	Pre Prep to Logwood
October 12 <sup>th</sup>	Jack and the Beanstalk	January 12 <sup>th</sup>	Ski Trip Leaves for Austria
October 18 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 3 Ulster Museum		Athletics NI Prep 5-7
October 25 <sup>th</sup>	Halloween Disco	January 16 <sup>th</sup>	Pre Prep Walk Around Community
November 14 <sup>th</sup>	Pre Prep to Ulster Museum		Ski Trip Returns
November 15 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 4 to Breckenhill Shared Education	January 19 <sup>th</sup>	Athletics NI Prep 5-7
	Shared Education	January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Pre Prep to Castle View
	Science Sue to Prep 5	January 25 <sup>th</sup>	Nursing Home
November 16 <sup>th</sup>	Children in Need Fancy Dress	January 30 <sup>th</sup>	Athletics NI Prep 5-7
	Pre Prep to Build a Bear	February 4 <sup>th</sup>	Travelling Book Fair
November 19 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 4 to Bangor Cinema – Captain Underpants	February 7 <sup>th</sup>	Shared Education Art Project Prep 4 and 5
November 30 <sup>th</sup>	Basketball at SSE Arena	February 12 <sup>th</sup>	Disability Sports Awareness
	Prep 4-6	February 13 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 6 and 7 Rugby Match vs. Strandtown PS
December 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Prep 4 Shared Education Cultural Music		Girl Guiding Ulster
	Prep 5 Shared Education Street Wise	February 25 <sup>th</sup>	Dance Workshop Prep 1-3
December 4 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 2 and 3 to Mount Stewart	March 4 <sup>th</sup>	World Book Day
December 11 <sup>th</sup>	Pre Prep Christmas Elf	March 7 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 4 to the Mac
December 12 <sup>th</sup>	Carol Service at Whitehouse Presbyterian	March 8 <sup>th</sup>	Theatre
			Prep 5 to Ulster Museum



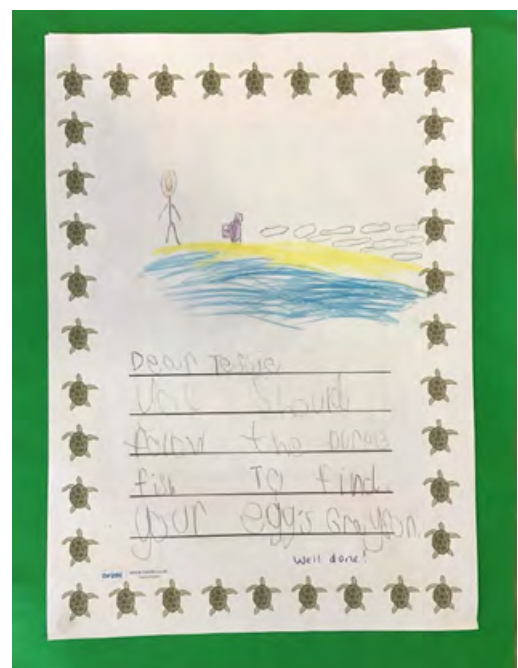
March 11 <sup>th</sup>	Preps 3, 5 and 6 Star of the Sea
April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Young Enterprise Prep 7
April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Cross Country at the Grove
April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Athletics NI Final
April 4 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 5 to Castle Espie
April 8 <sup>th</sup>	Made for More Assembly
April 9 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 4 to Whitehouse for Easter Week
April 12 <sup>th</sup>	Ben Madigan Bake Off
May 8 <sup>th</sup>	Sponsored Walk Pre Prep to We Are Vertigo
May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 5 to Clandeboye Estate
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 7 to Bow Street Mall Young Enterprise RNLI Talk
May 15 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 5 Rugby Festival at Roughfort
May 16 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 3 Balmoral Show
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Treasure Island
May 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Sports' Day
May 27 <sup>th</sup>	York Trip Leaves
May 28 <sup>th</sup>	Shared Education Sports Day Prep 4 and 5
May 31 <sup>st</sup>	York Trip Returns Prep 1 to Seaford Butterfly House
June 12 <sup>th</sup>	BRA Sponsored Walk
June 18 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 5-7 Windsor Park Trip
June 20 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 6 Primary Engineers Awards Summer Play Matinee and Evening Performance
June 25 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 7 Leavers' Party
June 27 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 4 to Clandeboye Estate Prep 5-7 Big Day Out
June 28 <sup>th</sup>	Prep 7 Leavers' Assembly

## PREP ONE

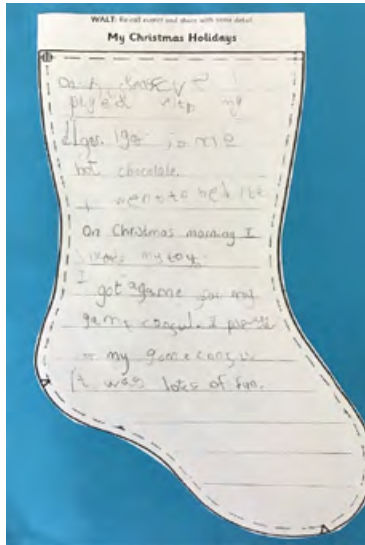
### THE BUTTERFLY HOUSE



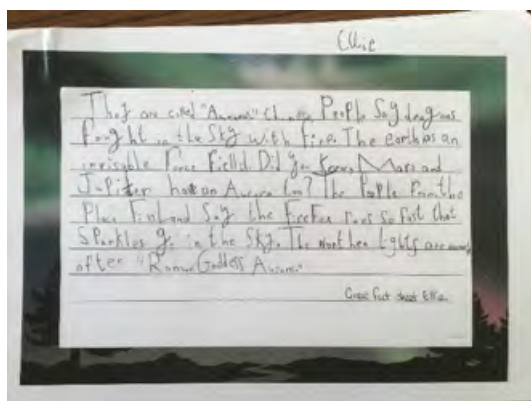
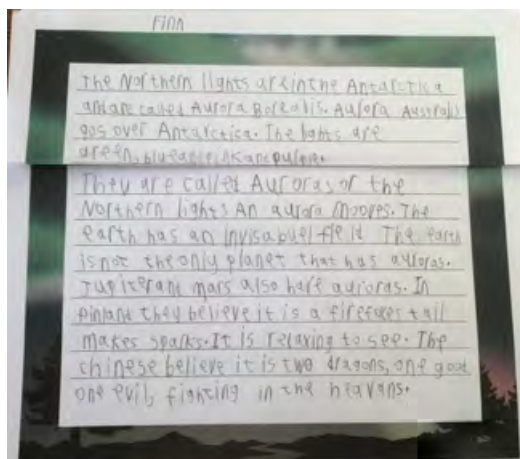
## PREP TWO







## PREP THREE WRITTEN WORK



## PIRATE WORKSHOP





## THE BALMORAL SHOW



Prep Three went to the Balmoral Show as part of their Farm topic. Pictured are Daniel Ingram, Darragh Morris, Henry George and Halle Sinnerton.

## PREP FOUR

### WRITTEN WORK

## THE DAY WE WENT TO BRECKENHILL

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Today I went to school at 08:50. At school we went on a bus with another P4 class and their school was called Park Lodge. On the bus we sang some Christmas carols while we were waiting to arrive at Breckenhill. Once we arrived we ate our break and got to know the other P4 class. Then we met the instructors and they told us what the first activity we were going to do was, which was the caterpillar. Instructions of how to play: Caterpillar – First you get split in teams and then line up facing each other with your hands out so a big ball could roll on your hands to the other side of the grass and the first team that does that wins. My team didn't win. Then we went in our group to the night line. You have to put a blind fold on and follow a rope through the forest without looking. I bumped into quite a few trees.

Next my group went to do paint balling. In paint balling class we had to wear a mask and we also had to keep our paint balling guns facing down at the ground because if we shoot someone with the gun it will hurt them very badly and the reason why we wore a mask was because if someone shoots you in the face it wouldn't hurt you. In the paintball arena we took the plug out of the paintball gun and then reloaded it with small paintballs. Once we did that we had to try and shoot some targets.

After that we took our masks off and went to the catapults and we had to try and shoot the other team with the balls you use for the catapult. It was really fun. Then we went to go on an obstacle course. Some people volunteered to go through the mystery tunnel but they couldn't get out, so they climbed to the entrance of the tunnel and got out that way instead. Finally, it was my go to go through the mystery tunnel. Inside the tunnel it was pitch black and it was a maze. Then we went for a ride on the go-karts, it was a race and me and Charlotte won one round and I was very slow at driving but we still won somehow. Next we had our lunch.

After that my group played the bunny game. The bunny game is where someone throws a bunny at you and you have to catch it and then say something about yourself. Then we went to build a cube and we had to find all of the pieces for it.

Next we played a game called orienteering. This is how you play orienteering: First you get a piece of paper and a map and follow it to get stamps. We went back to the bus with Park Lodge, came back to school and got ready for home time.

*By Gracie Denisiuk, Prep Four*

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING A RAINFOREST CAKE



These instructions will teach you how to make an amazing, delicious, lovely, messy (in a good way) rainforest cake.

You need:

- Wooden spoon
- Mixing bowl
- Baking trays
- Scales
- Cocktail stick
- Oven gloves
- Knife
- Rubber gloves
- Grease proof paper
- Oven
- Rolling pin
- Tea spoon
- Table spoon
- Golden caster sugar (225g)
- 3 large eggs
- Self raising flour (225g)
- 1 sachet lemon zest
- Unsalted butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Lemon curd (1 jar)
- Strawberry jam (1 jar)
- Green food colouring
- Pinch of salt
- Fondant icing (1 pack)
- Sweets – jelly snakes, mushrooms, rainbow laces

Step 1: Get your bowl and spoon on a clean table with your foods and your scales. Make sure you have a towel on hand as well.

Step 2: Make sure you use your scales to weigh the butter (that is unsalted). Keep putting butter on the scale until it gets to 225g. Do the sugar the same way as you did with the butter. Mix it.

Step 3: Use your 3 eggs but make sure you don't get any egg shell in it. Also get a pinch of salt and some vanilla extract. Put 1 tsp of it in a mix!

Step 4: Then use the self raising flour. Get the scales and weigh it until it shows 225g and one pack of lemon zest. Mix well until fluffy.

Step 5: Now it is the fun part. You have to transfer it from the bowl to the baking tray but first put your grease proof paper in the baking tray.

Step 6: Now you can preheat the oven to 180 degrees and wait for the cake to look golden. To make sure it's cooked use a cocktail stick. Also use an oven glove so that you don't get burnt.

Step 7: While the oven is hot and baking the cake, use the green food dye and 1 fondant pack. You will need rubber gloves so that your hands do not get green. With a rolling pin put little bits of food dye in until it is the right shade of green for the cake.

Step 8: Get the cake and slap the fondant on to the golden cake. If you want, you can use the rolling pin to even the fondant out. You don't have to put jam on the cake but you can cut the cake in half and spread the jam on.

Step 9: Now you have your cake so stick on some sweets, then EAT IT!

***By Niamh McKenna-Murray, Prep Four***





## PREP FIVE

### SHARED EDUCATION PROGRAMME WITH OUR LADY OF LOURDES

The second year of the programme has gone extremely well, with Prep 4 and 5 forming friendships and enjoying learning experiences with our neighbouring school. Prep 4 enjoyed a team building day in Breckenhill, some art, music and sports lessons, as well as a visit to the Mac to learn about World War Two. Prep 5 continued their art, music and sports sessions in addition to shared learning about the Egyptians through a trip to the Ulster museum. This programme has provided ample opportunities for learning inside and outside of the classroom and our own school community. It has been encouraging for staff in both schools that we are able to expand the programme for Prep 6 pupils in the next academic year.

*Miss R Corish*

## PREP SIX

### FEELINGS POEMS

#### Happiness

Happiness is yellow  
It tastes like newly baked chocolate cake  
and smells like freshly cut grass.  
Happiness looks like a bright blue sky  
and sounds like swaying trees.  
Happiness is like a man wearing a funny  
costume, making people laugh.  
Happiness feels like being lit up with joy.

*By Max Brennan, Prep Six*

#### Happiness

Happiness is bright colours  
It tastes of sugar and sweets

And smells of flowers and lavender.  
Happiness looks like a ray of sunshine  
And sounds like a scream of enjoyment.  
Happiness is like a paradise island where you  
can relax.

*By Luciano Morelli, Prep Six*

#### Sadness

Sadness is black  
It tastes like rotten meat  
and smells like a garbage bin.  
Sadness looks like a sad dog  
and sounds like a tiny scream for help  
Sadness is full of the devil.

*By Oscar Coiley, Prep Six*

#### Sadness

Sadness is blue.  
It tastes like dry ice and salt water.  
It smells like a forgotten bunker.  
It looks like dead animals  
And sounds like nothing but silence.

*By Myles Hawthorne, Prep Six*

## TRIPS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### HMS CAROLINE





Prep Six enjoyed the opportunity to visit HMS Caroline as part of their topic of the First World War. It was made even more poignant as 2018 marked the centenary of the end of The Great War. The children learnt about the vital part HMS Caroline played in the Battle of Jutland and experienced what life would have been like on the warship during battle.

## PRIMARY ENGINEERS COMPETITION



This year Prep Six entered the Primary Engineers Leaders Award competition. Each child thought of an issue or difficulty that affected them or the world at large and invented a solution to that problem.

As part of the programme they interviewed different engineers about their jobs both face-to-face and by webinar. They had to draw and annotate a picture of their invention and write a



letter to the judges identifying the problem and explaining how their invention would make a difference.

All the children received certificates for their efforts. Andrew Gemmell and Lucy Bittles received a Distinction for their work and Eva Sinnerton received a special Judges Recommendation. All three entries were shortlisted and ultimately chosen to be displayed at the Northern Ireland Region Exhibition in The University of Ulster, Belfast.

## STEM: BRIDGE BUILDING



Prep Six worked together to design and build a bridge that would be able to bear weight with varying success. Thank you to Daryl Marshall for giving up his time to come and share his expertise.





## VIKINGS

Vikings was our final topic of the year. Thanks to 'School at the Sea' the children were able to experience life as a Viking and were able to hold replica Viking artefacts.



## SPORT AT BEN MADIGAN

Last year was a busy year of sport in Ben Madigan, with many of our pupils excelling in a range of different competitions across the

province. We have pupils taking part and finding success inside and outside of school in athletics, football, cross country, gymnastics, judo, ballet, rugby, swimming, tennis and hockey. Pupils are continuing to enjoy and benefit from specialist coaching during their games programme each week, including Ulster coach and current BRA Director of Rugby Brian McLaughlin, the Irish Football Association, Netball NI, Athletics NI, Disability Sport NI and the National Cricket Union. We are excited to be increasing our links with the Grammar school by welcoming Stephen Watt into our hockey development programme, and introducing a Primary swimming gala.



The school hosted various local schools in our annual rugby and hockey tournaments with the use of the Grammar school facilities and assistance of senior pupils. Our Sports Day was full of fun, with a lovely welcome back to our past pupils from Form 1 in BRA who assisted in the running of events, much to the delight of the entire Ben Madigan family.

As a school, we haven't again raised a substantial amount of funds for local charities, including £1085 for Brainwaves NI and £462 for The Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children by our annual Sponsored walk on the grounds of the Cave hill Country Park and from our Charity Run on Castle grounds. We





Most Improved Boy Skier	James Joseph
Most Improved Girl Skier	Elizabeth Bates
Creative Writing	Anna Gemmell
Music	Niamh Curran
Musical Theatre	Jacob McLaughlin

are delighted as a school when we see past pupils excelling, and we would like to extend our support and encouragement to Stephanie Meadows and Tom McKibbin on their golfing triumphs this past year.

*Miss R Corish*

## BEN MADIGAN CUP LIST 2019

### Cup Winners 2019

Name of Cup	Winner
Athletics cup (Ryan Moore)	Cole Mullan
Athletics Cup (McCoubrey)	Sarah Teague
Cross Country	Elizabeth Bates
Swimming (Jacobs)	Marcus Murphy
Swimming (Girls)	Sarah Teague
Mini Rugby (School)	Finlay Baird
Most Improved Rugby (Academy trophy)	Stuart Knox
McCoubrey (Most Improved Hockey)	Mya Hammill
Hockey	Phoebe Bradley
Physical Education	Cole Mullan





# Former Pupils' News

## CLAIRE ARCHBOLD



Former pupil, Claire Archbold, returned to School to lead a discussion on career opportunities in government service for law graduates. She also, generously donated a number of books on aspects of the law to the school library. Claire has had a distinguished career as an academic, barrister and senior government legal adviser.

Former pupil Alister Burns, who is presently a high ranking officer in the PSNI, returned to the Academy in September 2018 to lead an Alumni Seminar on the importance of the work undertaken by himself and his colleagues. Chief Inspector Burns, who had just returned from a briefing at the FBI's Law Enforcement, Training and Research Centre at Quantico in Virginia, is now one of the leading figures in the PSNI's programme to combat cybercrime.

A group of sixth formers were privileged to be able to participate in a discussion on, what is now acknowledged to be, one of the most pernicious forms of criminal activity. This ranges from money laundering to terrorism. The PSNI, with three mobile laboratories, is one of the best equipped in Europe and, in liaison with MI5, enjoys an enviably high international reputation in this area of law enforcement.

## ALISTER BURNS



## REBECCA BURNS



Rebecca Burns left Belfast Royal Academy in June 2015 to study for her BSc Psychology in Queen's University, Belfast. In her third year, Rebecca volunteered to take a full year's paid



working placement before her final year of studies. She secured a placement as the Psychology Intern with the Student Wellbeing Service in Queen's University, developing promotional and self-help materials for the service while also working with students in need of support on a one-to-one basis. In June 2019, Rebecca graduated with a BSc Psychology with Professional Placement.

Outside of her studies, Rebecca worked part-time in retail while taking up a volunteering post with the Samaritans. Rebecca eventually joined the Samaritans Prison Team, a role which involved her visiting HMP Maghaberry and HMP Hydebank Wood every month, to provide emotional support and training to prisoners. In the academic year 2018/19, she was offered a role as a support worker in Carlisle House, a rehabilitation facility for alcohol and substance misuse.

Rebecca has retained strong links with BRA, volunteering with Duke of Edinburgh and giving a talk to L6 pupils as part of the Alumni Enrichment Programme in January 2019 on 'University Life and Resilience'. It was acknowledged that she had a natural rapport with pupils and could empathise with their difficulties. This led to her appointment as part of a new 'Listening Service' in school. She provided emotional support to senior pupils who were experiencing a range of personal challenges.

Rebecca's passion for mental health and wellbeing, paired with her keen interest in the forensic study of psychology has led her to apply for and successfully obtain a place at King's College London. She is currently working towards a Master's in Clinical Forensic Psychology. This involves a 2 day per week placement as a Clinical Psychologist in a forensic setting in the community with the South London Trust. Despite moving to London to further her career, Rebecca maintains that she wants to base herself in Northern Ireland to practice, in order to help with the mental health crisis that is on her doorstep. She is ambitious, hardworking and aspires to achieve a doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

## VERNON CLEGG



Vernon was born in Oldham, Lancashire in 1935 and at the age of three he and his family relocated to Belfast. Due to the war, Vernon's education started at Lurgan Model before moving to Harding Memorial PE School when the war was over. He then became a Probationer in the Cathedral choir in St Anne's, Belfast and later gained a scholarship to Belfast Royal Academy. After finishing school at seventeen, he started work in Short Brothers as a Student Aeronautical Apprentice.

He gained an HNC in Aeronautical Engineering in 1954 and, seeing an outlet for his artistic ability in the Technical Publications Department, he succeeded there as an Illustrator. He was then given technical writing opportunities and became a Technical Author, rising to Deputy Head and in 1978, Manager of the Department.

On leaving the Cathedral choir, he became a bass in his father's choir at St. Columba's, Knock. Later he became a founder member of the choir at Saint Gall's in Bangor and the semi-professional choir 'The Anderson Singers' for which he also served as chairman. Vernon made his home in Bangor with his wife and three children.

Since his retirement, Vernon renewed and strengthened his links to the institutions which





he felt had given him so much - St Anne's Cathedral and Belfast Royal Academy. He was a keen member of the Old Boys' Association, regularly attending committee meetings, lunches and events. He, with Jim Carolan of the History Department, was instrumental in the installation of a plaque in 2015 marking the original site of the Belfast Academy, as the school was then known, on Academy Street in 1785. In particular, he was very committed to recording and preserving the memory of those who served in World War One.

At the time of his death, he had been collaborating with the school over several years on the compilation of the biographical sketches of former pupils who served in that war. These were published in a book in 2018 to commemorate

the 100th anniversary of the end of the war. The dedication of this book to Vernon is a lasting tribute to his invaluable contribution to this project, and to the esteem in which he is held in his former school.

## IAN COULTER



Former pupil Ian Coulter, and his wife Anne, travelled from Coleraine to Belfast on the 21st November 2018, and were shown round the school by Mr McCamley. After leaving the Academy Ian joined the Ordnance Survey in 1971, and in his 44-year career as a mobile surveyor, he visited almost every part of Northern Ireland.

In 1992 he began hosting charity quizzes along the north coast, and to date has raised £81,000

for a range of worthy causes. He was awarded the BEM in 2013 for this selfless work. Ian very kindly donated a history of the Ordnance Survey in Ireland to the school library.

## TARA AND NICOLA GLASS



Alumne of Ben Madigan and Belfast Royal Academy between 1984 and 1991, the "Glass twins", as they were inevitably known, are testimony that hard work and following your dreams really pays off.

Tara Barwick (nee Glass) left BRA to study medicine at Edinburgh University. She undertook her core medical training and MRCP at St. Bart's hospital, London, and the London Radiology training scheme. She is now a Consultant Radiologist working in London with specialist expertise in Nuclear medicine/PET/CT, Body Oncology Imaging particularly in haematological malignancies, gynaecological, prostate and lung cancers.

Nicola Glass initially went to Edinburgh University to study Architecture, but quickly transferred to the Art College where she gained a BA in Jewellery Design. Moving to the Royal College of Art in London, she gained a Master's



degree in Fashion Accessories. She has since worked for famous brand, with names such as Gucci and Michael Kors, fulfilling her dream of living and working in New York. With the latter appointment in January 2018 she was appointed Creative Director of Kate Spade, New York. Her debut collection received huge critical acclaim.

### **PETER GULSTON**



The infamous “King of the Cat Burglars” (1931-2013) attended the Academy in the 1940s and was a reputedly an able pupil as well as a talented sportsman, playing for the first eleven rugby team. However, he was wholly uninterested in academic achievement.

As he admitted later, his compulsion to steal was present from an early age, his first memories of theft were linked to the desire to gamble in playground games, first targets being pens from blazer pockets. At the age of 16 he moved on to burglary, breaking into a semi-derelict Victorian house, coming away with bottles of scotch whisky and a handbag. For the next year, Gulston continued his activities in the Antrim Road area, using his BRA badge and rugby bag to deter suspicion.

His first criminal prosecution however came not from his burglary activities, but for possession of a firearm. This resulted in a court case which ended his time in the Academy without finishing his final exams. He then took a clerical job in John McNeill & CO. This position was short lived as he was fired following his prosecution for stealing and receiving stolen goods.

By 1953 he was in Crumlin Road prison serving a year-long sentence for housebreaking and larceny, although he himself claimed he could have been charged with more than 150 offences.

It is estimated that over the course of his career he stole more than £35 million worth of jewels and furs from the rich and famous from their luxury homes in London and the South of France. A feature film starring Judy Dench was based on his career. Gulston (who had changed his name from Scott) was jailed multiple times and in 2004 he took part in a Channel 4 series *The Heist*, reflecting on his crime-filled past. The end of his life was bleak, alone and living on benefits. But he never showed any self-pity and claimed that his straightened circumstances were a form of Divine retribution. He himself said “I got exactly what I deserved.”

### **DR STEPHEN HARRISON**



Stephen left the Academy and continued his education at Queen’s University Belfast, graduating with a first in Pure and Applied Mathematics continuing on to complete his PhD in Theoretical Physics. He continued to work in academic research before joining the defence industry. He then changed his career joining the Mathematics Department at the prestigious Harrow School. He has had a successful career in the school and was speedily appointed a House Master.

Stephen is now a member of the Senior Management Team, holding the role of *Director or Pastoral Care*, a vital role in the school. This involves him being responsible for all aspects of boarding life. He is also the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and member of the Pastoral Support Committee.

### **PROFESSOR SARAH HULL**

Sarah Hull left School and to study at Oxford University, graduating in 2005. Professor Hull



has been a forensic physician for more than nine years and has an honorary appointment as Visiting Professor at the University of Ulster and is Lead Examiner for the Diploma in Legal Medicine/Part 1 MFFLM exam. Additionally, she is a Fellow of the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine.



Professor Hull is now the clinical director at the Rowan Medical Tribunal Member on the Medical Practitioners' Tribunal Service Fitness to Practice Tribunals. She has medical managerial experience across the private sector, primary and secondary care, having been Medical Director of an Out of Hours organisation, Assistant Medical Director at NHS England

### **SHARON HUMPHRIES**

Sharon Humphries (nee Bell) 1988-1995, has been awarded MSc Nursing Sciences – Advanced Nursing Practice (Children's) by the University of Ulster.

During the course of her studies she was the recipient of the Professor Robert Bowman Memorial Prize for "Leadership in Nursing". Sharon is currently employed as an Advanced Paediatric Nursing Practitioner by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

### **MARK LAWSON**

Former pupil Mark Lawson, currently Professor of Engineering at the University of Surrey, returned to the Academy in October 2018. Professor Lawson, who had also attended the reunion to commemorate the triumphant 1968 Medallion Cup team earlier in the year, took an

alumni seminar in the Academy stressing the importance of engineering as a career. His presentation demonstrated the intellectual challenges of engineering, as well as its attractions as a career option. The sixth formers, including a student from St Malachy's College, hugely enjoyed the occasion, and the question and answer session which followed the presentation, gave rise to a number of penetrating questions.

### **CLAIRE LILLEY**

Former pupil and head girl Claire Lilley, who left the school in 1992, was included this week in the Evening Standard's annual list of the 1000 most influential people in London (cyber security category) in relation to her career in fighting child abuse online. Lilly was formerly head of child online safety for the NSPCC. She is now spearheading the fight against child abuse as Google's European Child Safety Public Policy Manager. Lilly campaigns against images of children being published on the platform. She also uses machine learning that is taught to pinpoint and remove footage.

### **DR TONY MACAULAY**



In July 2019, former pupil Tony Macaulay, renowned Northern Irish author and peace builder, was the recipient of the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) from his former place of higher education, Ulster University. Tony was selected for this prestigious honour for his services in the province, not only to literature but to peace-building and to his work in suicide prevention.

After leaving BRA, and after graduating from Ulster University in 1985, Tony dedicated thirty





years of his life to build reconciliation and hope in communities in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. Throughout his life he has helped youth groups and community groups alike, as well as building relations with churches, schools and government agencies with the intention of bettering his native island and its inhabitants.



Tony was born in Lisburn in 1963, moving soon after his birth to the Ballygomartin Road, an area in West Belfast. His debut memoir, the critically acclaimed *'Paperboy'*, published in 2011, documents his pre-teen years employed as a paperboy in that area. Since *'Paperboy'*, Tony has gone on to publish three more non-fiction memoirs which have all been excellently received: *'Breadboy'*, *'All Growned Up'* and *'Little House on the Peace Line'*. In 2019 Tony published his first work of fiction, *'Belfast Gate'*, a novel which deals with the lasting impact of the 'Troubles' in modern-day Belfast.

A graduate of Ulster University, Tony Macaulay received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) from Ulster University for services to literature and peace building at home and abroad.

An author, broadcaster, peacebuilder, leadership consultant and suicide prevention advocate, he has spent over 30 years working to build peace and reconciliation at home and abroad with hundreds of youth and community groups, schools, churches and government agencies.

An internationally published author, his debut critically acclaimed memoir *'Paperboy'* reflected on his experiences growing up in the Shankill Road. Following its success came *'Breadboy'*, *'All Growned Up'* and *'Little House on the Peace Line'*, the story of how he supported young people to reject sectarianism and violence as a way of life in the 1980s.

In the late 1990s he worked for the Rural Community Network, supporting rural community groups and organisations and influencing government policy. Now a recognised inspirational speaker and leadership development consultant with global organisations (e.g. Concentrix, RBS, HSBC, Allen & Overy, CDK Global) and a member of the Global YMCA Committee on Conflict Transformation. He is currently coaching a youth empowerment project in one of the biggest slums in Kampala, Uganda.

Coming from the most educationally disadvantaged community in Northern Ireland he is passionate about encouraging aspiration in education and the arts' and has been active in the development of integrated education in Northern Ireland. Tony Macaulay said:

*"I am extremely proud to have received an honorary degree from Ulster University. I strongly believe in the work Ulster University is doing to encourage educational attainment in young people from all backgrounds which has been a focal point in my career. I would like to dedicate this award to my wife Lesley and my daughters Beth and Hope (Lesley and Beth are also graduates of Ulster University), and wish all graduating today the very best."*

**CAPTAIN JACK MCCLEERY**



Jack McCleery was born in 1898 and when he was 18 years old he left the school and became one of the elite pilots that would help transform the nature of naval warfare. He was selected to participate in the development of the first aircraft carrier. Jack trained intensively for nine months for the position and was then posted to HMS Furious. Over the next two years, McCleery and his fellow pilots dedicated their time to developing the techniques of taking off and landing aircraft on a specially designed deck, and the HMS Furious became the world's first aircraft carrier.

He served in this ship until February 1919 during the Great War. He also flew a large number of aircraft and was present for many important moments in the war, including, reconnaissance missions off the coast of Denmark and the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet. He returned after the war to work in his family's flax spinning mill and died at home in 1983.



Captain Jack McCleery, 1916

## VALERIE MCKENNA

On the 28 November 2018, past pupil Valerie McKenna came into school to give a talk about her work as a Clinical Psychologist. At present, she works as a Consultant Clinical Psychologist managing the provision of psychology resources across three services in Northern Ireland. She works in the acute end of mental health, generally with people who experience



psychosis and have spent time in hospital. Valerie's talk was fascinating and appealed to a wide range of pupils including those who hope to study Psychology, Medicine, Social Work, Nursing and Counselling. Many thanks to Valerie for speaking to this interested group. It was very much appreciated.

## THE MCMANUS FAMILY



This year, in memory of their parents, three former BRA pupils: Andrew, Brenda and John McManus, donated a stained-glass window to St Peter's Church, Antrim Road. The Church has a long association with the Academy, and for many years was the host of the Academy's Christmas Carol Service.

The window, designed by Sinead Mallon of ArtGlass Ireland, was dedicated by the Rector



of St Peter's, Revd. Brian Lacey, on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019.



## THE NEWEL BROTHERS

David, George and Walter Newel all attended the Academy before leaving to fight in the Great War. Two brothers died during the war between 1915-1917. The third brother Tom, survived the war but had been seriously injured. They were amongst the 223 former pupils of the School who fought in the war.



A great nephew of the Newel brothers who now lives in Toronto tweeted this in reply to the

School's Armistice Day tweet: "These three men were my great uncles. Many years ago, my mother gave me a lovely photograph of them all together, proudly in uniform, along with the fourth brother who was wounded but survived."

The men are remembered on the School's war memorial. A further commemoration was made to these fallen pupils from the school in 2018 by hosting an exhibition of Perspex silhouettes of the men. The Newell brothers' silhouettes were placed side by side.

## PROFESSOR STEPHEN J SMARTT



After leaving the School, Stephen studied Physics and Applied Maths at Queen's University, Belfast and later went on to complete a PhD in Astrophysics in 2005. At the age of 37 he went on to win several major awards, including European Young Investigator Award, European Research Council Advanced Grant, the Philip Leverhulme Prize in Astronomy. He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy and a professor in the Astrophysics Research Centre in the School of Maths and Physics at Queen's University.

His work is based on understanding exploding stars and supernovae. He is passionate about engaging with the public about science, having given over 30 public and schools lectures, and is regular contributor to BBC radio, TV and online news stories.

## PROFESSOR JAMES STIRLING

The School community is deeply saddened to hear news of the death on Friday 9th November of former pupil Professor James Stirling. Prior to his retirement in June 2018, Professor Stirling





was the first ever Provost in Imperial College, London and he was a great friend of the Academy – always interested in current issues and the achievements of pupils.



He last spoke at the Former Pupils' Association Dinner in London in March 2018 and delivered a speech in the School Assembly Hall as part of the 225th anniversary celebrations. He was generous in the time that he so willingly gave to his alma mater and gracious in all of his dealings with pupils and staff. James Stirling joined Imperial following a distinguished academic career, where his work in theoretical particle physics resulted in more than 300 research papers, including some of the most highly cited of all time in the physical sciences.

Professor Stirling's work in quantum chromodynamics has been central to discoveries in physics and many of his calculation techniques have now been adopted as standard practice. His ground-breaking work in particle physics phenomenology led to his involvement in the MSTW collaboration studying the 'Parton' structure of the proton with the Large Hadron Collider.

After a double-first and a distinction in Part III of the mathematical Tripos at Peterhouse, he took a PhD in the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at the University of Cambridge.

Professor Stirling's research career included stints in the United States, at CERN, and, holding a series of academic and leadership roles, at the Universities of Cambridge – including as Jacksonian Chair of Natural Philosophy – and Durham, as the first Director

of the Institute for Particle Physics Phenomenology (IPPP).

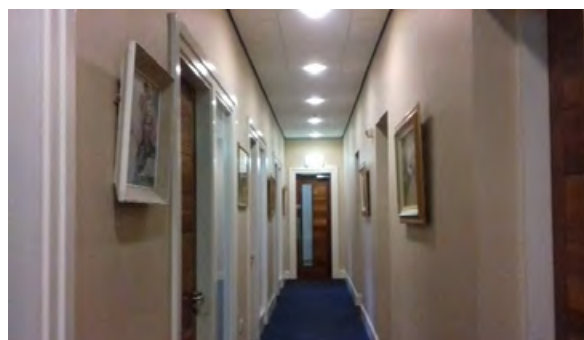


He led the Cavendish Laboratory at the University of Cambridge, home to some 29 Nobel laureates since its founding in 1874, before joining Imperial as the College's first ever Provost in 2013, retiring in 2018.

On 17th October 2018, he received an honorary degree from Imperial College during Commemoration Day. He received Imperial's highest honour for his outstanding contributions to physics.

## ANNE TAYLOR

Former pupil Anne Taylor died in February 2019. Miss Taylor, who was a lecturer in English and Education, left her collection of art works and books to the Academy. The paintings may now be seen on display in the Crombie Building. Anne Taylor was a noted authority on





the work of the famous Irish writer, James Joyce.



**SARAH QUINLAN**



On leaving the Academy, Sarah studied Law at Queen's University. During her undergraduate years and continuing thereafter, Sarah worked as an enthusiastic volunteer with human rights groups in Washington and Detroit. As a student eager to gain life experience, Sarah also travelling extensively into countries in the developing world, especially South America, witnessing the problems of underprivileged peoples, victims of the shocking inequality and exploitation so often ignored in western countries. These character forming experiences led her to commit herself to working in the 'Third' or Voluntary Sector' of the economy.

Sarah is now the CEO of the Children's Heartbeat Trust, which provides support for

children with congenital heart disease and their families. She has dedicated her life to understanding and helping with the clinical and social difficulties faced by children and their families especially as children's heart surgery is only able to be carried out in Dublin. It was for her contribution to this extraordinary valuable work that she was appointed MBE in June 2018.

**PROFESSOR IAN WHITE**



Professor Ian White (1977), Master of Jesus College Cambridge since 2011, has been appointed as the next Vice Chancellor of the University of Bath. He will leave Jesus College in April 2019.

Professor White has a long history of exceptional service to Education. He was educated at Belfast Royal Academy, followed by Cambridge University, receiving his BA in Electrical Sciences in 1980, his MA in 1984 and his PhD in Engineering shortly after. He was then appointed a Research Fellow at the University and Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Engineering, before leaving Cambridge in 1990 to become Professor of Physics at the University of Bath.

In 1996 he moved to the University of Bristol as Professor of Optical Communications. He returned to the University of Cambridge and Jesus College in 2001, when he was appointed the Van Eck Professor of Engineering.

The Master's wife, Margaret White, has also taken an active role within Cambridge University. She came up to the College in 1979 in the first cohort of female undergraduates. In addition to her role as Deputy Head Academic at St Faith's School in Cambridge, Mrs White



recently published a book called '*A Good Education*'.

Dr Stephen Siklos, Fellow at Cambridge University, said: "I am sure that everyone associated with the College will want to join me in congratulating Professor White on this prestigious appointment, and to wish him and Mrs White every success in this next chapter of their lives. In the coming months, we will be celebrating the outstanding contribution that Professor White has made to every aspect of College life."

Professor White said: "This appointment means a great deal to me. Bath is a University which I care about deeply, having worked there at an early and highly significant stage in my academic career.

"A College community is a unique and special thing, and I will miss the Fellows, students and staff very much. I will also miss our alumni, who have been incredibly supportive throughout my time here.

"It has been a privilege to be Jesus College's Master for the last seven years. The completion of the West Court development, which restored the College site to its original boundaries.

## SHARON HUMPHRIES



Sharon Humphries (nee Bell) 1988-1995, has been awarded MSc Nursing Sciences - Advanced Nursing Practice (Children's) by Ulster University.

During the course of her studies she was the recipient of the Professor Robert Bowman

Memorial Prize for "Leadership in Nursing". Sharon is currently employed as an Advanced Paediatric Nursing Practitioner by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

## THE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

The Association's Annual Dinner was held at The Europa Hotel on 3rd November 2018. The main event in the Association's calendar is the Annual Dinner. Last year's Annual Dinner was held at The Europa on 3rd November, hosted by the BRA OBA President, Professor Robert McIlhagger, and organised by Iain Knox with his customary skills.

The speakers at the dinner were:

Mr Philip McKenna who proposed the toast to the School.

The Principal, Mrs Hilary Woods, replied and proposed the toast to the Association.

The President responded and proposed the toast to our guests.

Councillor Brian Bloomfield M.B.E. responded.

The success of the dinner was again due, in no small measure, to the Dinner Secretary, Iain Knox, and his team, who work extremely hard each year to ensure this event runs smoothly. As we go to press, this year's Annual Dinner is planned for Saturday 23rd, November, 2019 at the Europa Hotel, and will be hosted by this year's BRA OBA President, Moore Dickson.







Belfast Royal Academy FP London Dinner @ the R.A.F. Club (9-Mar-2018)  
David Haslett (Organiser/Past President) Hilary Woods (BRA Principal) Robert McIlhagger (President BRA OBA) Lorraine Craig (Speaker) Jacqueline Weir (Past Warden)

London Dinner. Following on from the success of previous London Dinners, around 70 Former Pupils attended the sixth annual London Dinner at the RAF Club, Piccadilly on Friday 8th March 2019. School Principal, Mrs Hilary Woods, said Grace and after a delightful meal, Louise Craig proposed the toast to the School. The Principal responded on behalf of the School and the President's customary closing remarks left plenty of time for late evening socialising. Our thanks are due to David Haslett, Louis Campbell and Iain Knox for organising this event.

Edinburgh Dinner. The Edinburgh Dinner was held on Friday 26th April 2019 at the New Club on Princes Street. Around 30 Former Pupils attended. The guest speaker was Sam Henderson. Mr Henderson is a partner in a finance company HendersonStone. Again, our thanks are due to David Haslett and Louis Campbell for organising this event.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on 30th April 2019.

The following officials were elected for 2019/2020:

<b>President</b>	Moore Dickson
<b>Senior Vice President</b>	Trevor Sturgess
<b>Junior Vice President</b>	Bobby Gray
<b>Hon. Secretary</b>	Philip McKenna
<b>Hon. Treasurer</b>	Nik Simon
<b>Hon. Membership Secretary</b>	Michael McDowell

**Dinner Secretary**

Iain Knox

**Hon. Auditor**

Drew Wilkinson

The Committee for 2019/2020 was also elected. The future of the Association depends upon Old Boys becoming involved and we appeal to anyone who has an interest in joining the Committee to speak to the Hon. Secretary or any member of the Committee.

The Hon Treasurer, Nik Simon, notified the Committee, that after many years guiding our finances, it was time for him to step down. Our thanks to Nik for all his efforts.

This year we have welcomed Trevor Sturgess, Phillip Brent, Roly Jamison, Jim Carolan, Bobby Gray and Eddie McCamley onto the committee.

Annual Cricket match BRA OBs vs the BRA 1st XI: Unfortunately the annual cricket match between an Old Boys' XI against the School 1st XI was cancelled due to the weather.

Golf Society: The Golf Society, organised by Ken & Iain Knox, again attracted good numbers of golfers for the two main competitions. The results this year were: Picken Cup at Malone G.C. Thursday 14th June 2018: Winner: Jeremy Weir.

Dominic Walsh's Captain's Day at Royal Belfast G.C. Friday 13th September 2019.



Winner: Paul Dowdie.



Ferguson Cup for best aggregate score over two outings: Winner: Stewart Beattie.

The planned dates for 2020 golf competitions are:

Picken Cup at Malone GC on Thursday 11th June 2020.

Captain's Day to be held at Royal Belfast GC on Friday 11th September 2020.

## MONTHLY LUNCHES

Throughout the year, Robin Reid, with the assistance of a local member, once again organised monthly lunches held mostly in golf clubs around the greater Belfast area. These continue to be very popular, with around 50 members attending. There is also a summer lunch at the Royal Portrush GC in August, which had a record attendance this year.



Roy Henderson was 100 on 11th December 2018.

A very special milestone was celebrated at the 2018 December Lunch. Roy Henderson had celebrated his 100th birthday on 11th December, 2018, and was presented with a card by the President wishing him best wishes from the Association.



## NETWORKING BREAKFASTS

The Old Boys' Association have organised two Networking Breakfasts so far in 2019, and as we go to press, a third is planned for this Autumn. Our thanks to Martin Blake and Michael McDowell for their efforts, and also to the Old Girls' Association for their involvement. These





are scheduled around breakfast time so that as many people as possible can attend.



The first Breakfast for 2019 was held on 14th February, 2019, at the Ten Square Hotel, and the speakers were Alan Branagh, CEO of Insight Factory, and Karyn Harty, Partner at McCann Fitzgerald.

The second Breakfast for 2019 was held on the 22nd May, 2019. The speakers were Sarah Quinlan M.B.E. and Mark McCrory

Old Boys' Association Donation to the School 2018:



Each year, the Old Boys' Association plans to make a financial contribution to the School to support particular projects. In 2018, the Association, with the guidance of the Principal, donated £3,000 to purchase some sturdy benches for the play-ground areas around the school. It is worth noting that the Association has donated over £25,000 to fund various projects in School over the past number of years. The photograph shows Professor Robert McIlhagger OBA President presenting the cheque to the Principal. Also in the photograph

are Moore Dickson, Senior Vice President, and Ken Knox, Warden. A similar donation for 2019 is planned which will cover a variety of school projects.



## WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL BOOK

The Belfast Royal Academy - World War I – Memorial Book which contains brief biographies of former pupils who were killed in WW I, has been completed and a limited number of copies produced. This book was the result of lengthy research by the late Vernon Clegg – a long time and very active member of the BRA OBA Committee.

Old Boys' Website: The new Old Boys' website has emerged from a major re-write, managed and driven by Martin Blake with support from an editorial team. The new redesign was done by David Cavan and more recently by Mark Anderson (*'The Most Excellent Web Company'*). The new website [www.braoba.com](http://www.braoba.com) is now active.

Michael McDowell also promotes the Association on Social Media through the Old Boys' Twitter account @TheBRAoldboys.

Those with news or other information related to the Old Boys' Association should contact Kathryn Holland in the Alumni Office at [alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net](mailto:alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net) of any items of news for inclusion in The Owl and the Old Boys' Association website. Any notification of births/ marriages/ deaths or career developments etc. will be very welcome and of considerable interests to other Old Boys.

Please notify Kathryn Holland in the Alumni Office at [alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net](mailto:alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net) of





changes of email address, or contact details. Thank you.

New members are always welcome!

Thank you.

Philip McKenna

Hon. Secretary

[philmac49@gmail.com](mailto:philmac49@gmail.com)

## THE OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

Welcome to the 2018/19 update from the Old Girls' Association. We would like to warmly welcome our new Members and look forward to meeting you soon at one of our events.



The Old Girls' Association is open to all former female pupils and female staff. We have members from all over the world, as far afield as Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America – as well as many local ladies still living in Northern Ireland and other parts of the UK and Ireland! We are keen to add new members. Our aim is to support pupils of the School with all aspects of school life; sport, music, clubs, careers etc. We also aim to provide an opportunity for our Members to network, socialise and help raise funds for the School.

On the 20th October 2018 we hosted our very first 'Afternoon Tea' at the Clayton Hotel, Belfast. This was a resounding success with almost 70 ladies attending. We would like to



thank all who attended and gave generously to the raffle.



Funds raised were put to excellent use, covering the costs of a new 'Listening Service' that was put in place for senior pupils who needed support with their wellbeing. This service was provided by Rebecca Burns, who left BRA in 2015 to study Psychology at Queen's University, Belfast. Rebecca has had experience as a 'Listener' for the Samaritans. She worked with pupils who were experiencing a range of issues, offering these pupils emotional support.



In addition to this we also contributed towards the cost of the new 'Hockey Tower' at Roughfort, in a joint venture with the School and the Old Boys Association. This facility allows matches to be videoed and analysed afterwards, which provides helpful feedback for the players. This season has seen the continued development of hockey throughout the school, however video analysis was needed to take the teams to the next level.



Our AGM was held on the 20th November 2019. Agenda items included fundraising, increasing membership and events for the forthcoming year. We were delighted to welcome some new faces.

Our committee remains as follows:

Nikki Johns

Caroline Dillon

Chairperson

Vice Chairperson



Johanna Richardson

Claire McGover

Hon. Treasurer

Hon. Secretary



In December we invited the MVI girls to a coffee morning to help get to know the girls. It was a lovely morning hearing all their plans for the year ahead. We met again with the girls in May to wish them all the very best as they prepared to sit their A Levels. We hope all the girls enjoy the next stage of their lives as they go off to college, university or take up employment. We look forward to keeping in touch and hearing their news.







The London and Edinburgh dinners were again a success and I know those who attended found them very enjoyable. In London the guest was Dr Lorraine Craig (Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching, Faculty of Engineering Imperial College London since 2015). The speaker in Edinburgh was Sam Henderson.

February saw the first Business Breakfast of 2019. One of the speakers was Karyn Harty (nee Woods) who gave an excellent presentation. Karyn is a Partner in McCann Fitzgerald in Dublin, specialising in media law and in particular on complex media litigation.

We are very grateful to Old Boys' Association for continuing to organise these events and we



encourage all those who can to attend the dinners and business breakfasts in 2020.

As we moved into Spring we trialled a car boot sale on the 11th May in the school playground, our hanging basket stall was a great success with 65 being sold. Hanging baskets were provided by Dundonald Nurseries and the quality was outstanding. We hope to have another plant sale in May 2020.



The annual hockey match took place at Roughfort on the 11th May. The 1st XI took on the Old Girls', in what was a tightly contested match. The Old Girls secured a win with the final score ending in 4 – 2!



Goal scorers for the OG were:

Sarah Cowden x 2

Anna Wilson

Sasha Lawther

Goal Scorers for BRA: Olivia Beattie and Abbie Braniff.





Thanks go to Nadine Nicholl and Jessica Jackson (MVI pupil who is a qualified young umpire working towards being a fully qualified umpire) for umpire duties! It was a beautiful evening and the camaraderie between the participants was impressive to see. The teams had some refreshments afterwards and discussed plans for the next game in 2020.

The Old Girls' team looked great in their hockey kits; thanks go again to our sponsor Knightsbridge Private Hospital.



May was a busy month! On the 22nd May the Old Girls' also supported the Spring Business Breakfast, which was held at Ten Square. Sarah Quinlan MBE, Chief Executive of the Heartbeat Trust was one of the speakers and was very inspiring. These networking events are a great opportunity to hear outstanding speakers, as well as being a fantastic opportunity to network with former alumni.

During the year our Members have been involved in the School through a range of volunteering. Ben Madigan had support with library duties and reading skills, many pupils were provided with work placements, as well as supporting extra-curricular activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and sports clubs.

We love hearing from our all Old Girls who are located in NI and further afield. Do get in touch if you have an interesting story or some news to share.



This year we were delighted to add our congratulations to Jacqueline Weir who was appointed MBE for her services to the community of North Belfast. Jacqueline is heavily involved in Girl Guiding which is a lifelong passion. She also has an active role in her church and is on 3 Boards of Governors in North Belfast. One of these schools is of course BRA, where she is currently Secretary of the Board of Governors and has previously held the position of Warden. We are delighted that her contribution to education has been acknowledged in this manner.

Dr Catherine Scully has now taken up the post of Principal of Jordanstown Schools. As School Liaison with the Old Girls' she was incredibly supportive of our aims. We wish her all the best in her new role and would like to thank her for all that she did to support our organisation.

We would also like to congratulate Ms Wynn Graham on her appointment as Acting Vice Principal and welcome her as School Liaison for the Old Girls' Association. We look forward to working closely in 2019/20.

If you are not already a Member of the Old Girls' Association and would like to support us, please get in touch. Annual membership is just £5 and those who are previous life members can also subscribe to the annual fee. All fees



contribute to any financial contribution we are able to make to the School.

**Events for 2019/20:**

**Afternoon Tea:** 19th October 2019, Dunadry Hotel

**Table Quiz:** February (date TBC)

**London Dinner:** 13th March 2020 (Speaker Michael Haslett)

**Edinburgh Dinner:** 24th April 2020 (Speaker Christopher Johnston)

**OG vs 1st XI Hockey Match:** TBC

**Plant Sale:** TBC May 2020

Get in touch:

**Email** – [braoldgirls@outlook.com](mailto:braoldgirls@outlook.com)

**Twitter** – [@braoldgirls](https://twitter.com/braoldgirls)

**Facebook** – [BRAformergirls](https://www.facebook.com/BRAformergirls)

We can also be contacted via the Alumni section on the School website.





# *Births and Deaths*

## **BIRTHS**

**COOKE:** 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019, to Graeme and Helen, a son, Harry

**HUNTER-JAMISON:** 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019, to Connie and Scott, a son, Gabriel John

**MAGEE:** 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018, to Chris and Suzanne (nee O'Neill), a son, Frederick Joseph

**SMITH:** 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018, to Caroline (nee Moore) and David, a daughter, Penny Ellen

## **DEATHS**

**BUICK:** 6<sup>th</sup> October 2019, Fred

**CALWELL:** 6<sup>th</sup> October 2019, David Ian Lennie

**CUNNINGHAM (nee White):** 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019, Marion

**GRAY:** 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019, John Michael

**MOOREHEAD (nee Whitley):** 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019, Anne

**NICHOLL:** 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019, Jennifer

**REID:** 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019, Gerald

**ROGERS:** 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019, William

**WEIR:** 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019, Margaret

**WICKENS:** 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019, Ronnie





