

The OWL

Belfast Royal Academy

Christmas 2021





The Owl Team 2021

Editor: Miss Watson

Photographs: Mrs Graydon

Thanks to: Mr. Coulter, Mr Carolan, Mr McCamley, Mr P McKenna

The Owl Team: Sarah Saunders, Ruth Davis

Cover design by Kate Sturgess LVI



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 approval of the Board of Governors, become a member of the Academy upon the payment of a registration fee of £1. Applications should be made to the Head of Finance and Corporate Services 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:

OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

School Liaison Officer:	Mrs W Graham
Chairperson:	Mrs N. Johns
Vice Chairperson:	Ms C. Dillon
Hon. Secretary:	Mrs C. McGovern
Hon. Treasurer:	Miss J. Richardson

To join the Association, please email: BRaoldgirls@outlook.com

Registered Charity Number: NIC104739 Annual Membership: £5.00

OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

President:	Mr Trevor Sturgess
Hon. Secretary:	Mr P. McKenna c/o Belfast Royal Academy, Cliftonville Road, Belfast, BT14 6JL or email: philmac49@gmail.com

Hon. Treasurer:	Mr N. Simon, 210 Belfast Road, Dunadry, Co. Antrim, BT41 2EY
-----------------	---

Membership, annual dinner
and alumni enquires: alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net

London and Edinburgh dinner
enquires: doc_malone2004@yahoo.co.uk

Annual Dinner enquiries iainknox@cd-group.com

Life Membership.....Old Boys' Committee has suspended membership fees.

Membership (School Leaver)First year after leaving is free.



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Dr. K. M. Bill, M.B., Ch. B., F.C.A.I., F.R.C.A., F.F.I.C.M. (Warden)
Mr. D.G. Walsh, B.Sc., M.B.A., C.Eng., M.I.M.E. (Senior Vice Warden)
Mr. N.W. Beggs
Dr. A.A.W. Bell, B.Sc., B.Agr.Sc.
Mr. M. L. Blake, LL.B., B.L.; Attorney at Law
Mrs. K.L. Burns, B.A.
Mrs. A. Clements, B.A. (Hon. Secretary)
Ms. J. C Cornell, A.B., M.A., M.F.A.
Ms. C.R. Dillon, B.A.
Mr. P. G. Dorman., M.Sc.
Dr. J.A. Hill, F.R.Eng., B.Sc., Hon. D.Sc., C.Eng., F.I.C.E., F.I.StructE.
Mr. K.A. Knox, M.Sc.
Mrs. C. Latham, B.Ed., M.Sc., P.Q.H.
Mr. B.W. McCormack, B.Sc. (Econ), F.C.A.
Mrs. G.E. McGaughey, LL.B., Cert in Professional Legal Studies
Mrs. G. McQuiston, B.Ed.
Mr. B.D. Monroe, B.Sc.(Accts)., M.Acct., F.C.A.
Prof. J. A. I. Montgomery, B.A., Ph.D.
Mr. M. Orr, Q.C., S.C.
Mr. S.B. Orr, LL.B.
Mr. D.E. Porter, M.Sc., C.Eng., M.I.C.E., M.C.I.H.T., M.C.I.W.E.M.
Mrs C. E. Rowan, B.Sc. (Management)
Mr. G.R. Simon, F.R.I.C.S.
Mr. J.D. Twinem, B.A., D.I.S. Pg.Cert., Pg.Dip., M.Sc., M.Inst.L.M., M.C.G.I.
Mr. D.G. Walsh, B.Sc., M.B.A., C.Eng., M.I.M.E.
Mr. S.J.S. Warke, A.C.I.I., Dip P.F.S., T.E.P. (Hon. Treasurer)
Mr. G.W. Watt, M.A.
Mrs. J. Weir, B.Sc., C.Math., M.I.M.A.
Mrs. H. Woods, B.Sc., B.Ed., P.Q.H. (N.I.) (Principal - Non-voting member)

MEMBERS OF STAFF

Principal	Mrs. H. Woods, B.Sc., B.Ed., P.Q.H. (N.I.)
Deputy Principal	Mr. M. Wilson, B.Sc., P.Q.H. (N.I.)
Vice Principals	Ms. W. Graham, B.A., M.A., P.Q.H. (N.I.) Dr. A. Bell, B.Sc., B.Agr.Sc., PGDH., Ph.D.
Senior Teachers	Mr. M. Harte, B.A. Mr. P. Dorman, B.Th. Mr. T. Hughes, M.Sc.



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

ART AND DESIGN	Mrs. L. Patterson, B.A.
BUSINESS STUDIES	Mrs. G. McQuiston, B.Ed. (Mr. N. Irwin, B.Ed.)
BIOLOGY	Dr. D. Currie, B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D.
CAREERS	Ms. J. Adams, B.Ed.
CHEMISTRY	Dr. B. McMurray, B.Sc., Ph.D., M.R.S.C.
ENGLISH	Mr. W. Spence, B.Ed., M.A.
GEOGRAPHY	Mr. C. Nash, B.Sc.
HISTORY	Dr. J. McCombe, B.A., Ph.D.
COMPUTING/ DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY	Mrs. A. O'Neill, B.Sc., M.B.A.
MATHEMATICS	Mr. S. Graham, M.A.
MODERN & CLASSICAL LANGUAGES	Miss. K. Williams, B.A.
MUSIC	Ms. M. McMullan, M.A., Mus.B., L.T.C.L., A.L.C.M.
P.E. AND GAMES	Mr. I. McGonigle, B.Ed.
PHYSICS	Mr. R. Budden, M.Sc.
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	Mr. P. J. Martin, B.Ed.
TECHNOLOGY	Mr. K. Lunn, B.Ed.

SENIOR SUBJECT TEACHERS

CLASSICS	Mrs. J. McGowan, M.A.
DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES	Miss S. Tinman, B.A.
ECONOMICS	Mr. J. M. Patterson, B.Sc.(Econ.), M.S.Sc., D.C.G.
GERMAN	Miss R. McCay, M.A.
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS	Ms. K. Barnett, M.A.
HOME ECONOMICS	Mrs. R. Morrison, B.A.
LEARNING FOR LIFE AND WORK	Mrs. J. Robb, B.Sc.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	Mrs. N. Nicholl, B.A.
SOCIOLOGY	Mrs. J. Robb, B.Sc.
LEARNING SUPPORT	Ms. D. Keenan, M.Sc.

KEY STAGE LEADERS

Key Stage 3	Mrs. K. McIntyre, B.Sc.
Key Stage 4	Ms. S. Ardis, B.Sc.
Key Stage 5	Mr. N. Irwin, B.Ed.



HEADS OF YEAR

FORM I	Mrs. E. Thornton, B.Sc. Mr. D. Morrison, M.Sc.
FORM II	Mrs G. Morris, B.Ed. Mr. P. Stretton, B. Ed.
FORM III	Mrs. J. McNally, B.Sc. (Mr. P. Rowntree, B.Ed.) Mr. M. Neill, M.Sc.
FORM IV	Mrs. R. Chambers, B.A. (Dr. J. Shiels, B.Sc., Ph.D.)
FORM V	Mr. C. McCarey, B.Sc. Miss. K. Brady, B.Sc. Ms. K. Barnett, B.A., M.A.
FORM LVI	Ms. L. Craig, B.A. Mr P. Porter, BA(Hons), BD(Comm), H.Dip.Th., PQH(NI)
FORM MVI	Mrs. R. Morrison, B.Ed. Mr. D.J. Creighton, B.Sc

CAREERS ADVISERS

Ms. J. Adams, B.Ed.	Mr. S. Murphy, B.Ed.
---------------------	----------------------

GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Dr. C. Adair, Ph.D.,	Mrs. S. McCoy, B.A.
Dr. U. Anderson, B.Sc., Ph.D.,	Ms. S. McIlhatton, B.Eng.
Mrs. J. Bell, B.Sc.	Mrs. S McIlwaine, B.Ed.
Mrs. K. Black, B.A.	Mr. C. McGloin, B.A.
Dr. G. Brown, B.A., Ph.D.	Mr. A. McKillen, B.Sc.
Dr. C. Burns, B.Sc., Ph.D., M.R.S.C.	Ms. A. McMillen, M.Sci.
Mrs. D. Cain, B.A.	Dr. O. Mort, B.A., Ph.D.
Ms R. Christie, B.A.	Miss. N. Newton, B. A.
Mrs. J. Cleland, B.Sc.	Mrs. L. Nicholl, B.Sc.
Mr. G. Forde, B.Mus.	Mrs. R. O'Donnell, B.A., Dip. A.D., A.T.D.
Mrs. F. Gilmore, B.Sc.	Mrs. C. Prior, B.Mus.
Mrs. S. Graydon, B.Ed.	Mrs. A. Reynolds, B.Sc.
Mrs. C. Hare, B.A.	Mr. S. Roberts, B.A.
Miss. M. Hayes, B.Ed.	Miss. E. Robinson, B.Sc.
Mr. S. Healy, B.Sc.	Mrs. J. Shaw, B.Sc.
Mrs. N. Henry, B.Sc.	Mrs. M. Sheeran, B.A.
Miss J. Herron, M.A.	Mrs. J. Smyth, B.A.
Mrs. C. Hughes, B.Sc.	Dr. S. Springer, M.Sc., Ph.D.
Miss. J. Jeganathan, B.Sc.	Mr. C. Stewart, B.Sc.



Miss. E. Kennedy, B.Sc.
Mr. J. McAleer, B.Sc.
Ms. T. McBeth, M.A.
Mr. K. McCleery, B.Sc.
Mr. J. McClements, B.A., M.A.
Mrs V. McCombe, M.A., A.L.C.M.

Mrs. H. Tate, B.A.
Mrs. A. Terek, B.Sc.
Ms R. Wallace, B.A.
Miss. H. Watson, B.A.
Mrs. M. Wilson, B.A.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Head of Finance & Corporate Services
Finance Supervisor
I.C.T. Manager
Finance & General Administrator
Part-time Finance Administrator
Finance Administrator
Part-time Librarian
Part-time Librarian
General Office Administrator
General Office Administrator
School Administration Supervisor
Communications & Development Office
Covid Officer

Mr. S. Burrows, B.Sc., F.C.C.A.
Mrs. H. McClean, B.A., F.C.A.
Mr. J. Cleland, B.Sc.
Miss G. Boyd, B.A.
Mrs. L. Hogg, B.A.
Mrs. T. Crozier, B.A., Assoc. CIPD
Mrs. T. Corcoran, B.A. PG.Dip. I.M.
Miss E. McAtamney, B.A. PG.Dip. L.I.M., M.Sc.
Mrs. A. Foy
Miss. C. Reid
Mrs. K. Holland, B.A.
Mrs. J. Harvey, B.A., M.Sc, Dip.M (CIM).
Miss. C. Craig

ANCILLARY STAFF

Laboratory Assistants

Technology & Design Technician
Art & Crafts Technician
Study Supervisor
Study Supervisor
Estates Manager
Assistant Estates Manager
Senior Groundsman
Grounds Assistant

Swimming Pool Manager/Instructor
Estates Assistant Maintenance
Estates Assistant Maintenance
Estates Assistant / Bus Driver
Estates Assistant / Bus Driver
Estates Assistant / Janitor
Estates Assistant / Janitor
Modern Languages Assistants

Mrs. D. Beattie
Mrs. D. Younge, B.Sc.
Mrs. A. Faulkner, Fd.Sc.
Mr. M. McCreight
Mrs. L. Atkins
Miss. P. Maxwell
Ms. T. Ritchie
Mrs. J. Lambert, BSc, Arch DAAS ARB
Mr. P. Hughes
Mr. A. Gaw, B.Tech.
Mr. J. Hull, B.Sc., Dip AAS, RIBA, Dip
Project Man, MAPM
Mr. R. Dougan
Mr. P. McCartney
Mr. J. Craig
Mr. W. Dunn
Mr. I. Stinson
Mr. K. Hogg
Mr. D. McKee
Ms. Y. Colin
Ms. H. Aguilar Martínez
Ms. S. Gushurst



CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Miss. G. Ashe, B.A.	Miss. E. McAtamney, B.A. PG.Dip. L.I.M., M.Sc.
Mrs. H. Blair	Miss. O. McCann
Mr. L. Bonnar	Miss. M. McGarry, B.A. (Hons), DipLCM
Mr. D. Calvert	Mr. J. Meuwese
Mrs. I. Campbell	Miss. C. Morrissey, M.Sc.
Ms. C. Colwell, B.A., P.G. Dip.	Mrs. O. Purcell
Mr. M. Gillen	Miss. E. Ratcliffe, BA (Hons), GCert
Mr. D. Graham, B.A.	Mrs. A. Rea, B.A., P.G.C.E., B.A.
Mrs. G. Hanna, B.A.	Mrs. J. Reid
Miss. P. Hill	Mr. G. Rice
Mrs. J. Hermon	Miss. C. Sirbu, M.A.
Mrs. F. Holley, B.A.	Mrs. K. Tepe
Mrs. P. Hull	Mrs. R. Tsang, B.A.
Miss. C Hynds	Mrs. D. Townsend
Miss. B. Jamison, B.A.	Mrs. N. Watson
Mrs. E. Leinster, B.A., P.G.C.E.	Mrs. C. Winning
Mrs. L. Lyons, M.A.	Miss. O. York, B.A.

PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

Principal, Mr. R. Coulter, B.Ed., M.Ed.

Mrs. S. Bell, B.A.
Mrs. J. Chapman, B.Ed., P.G.Dip, A.T.S.
Mr. P. Ingram, B.Ed., M.Sc.
Mrs. J. Lawther, B.Ed.
Mrs. P. Lennon, B.Ed.
Miss. N. Friel, B.Ed.
Mrs. E. Wilson, B.Ed.

ANCILLARY STAFF

Secretary	Mrs. F. Gouk, M.A.
Classroom/After School Club Assistant	Miss H. Crossen, B.A., M.A., P.G.C.E.
Pre-Preparatory Group Assistant	Mrs. L. Kyle
Building Supervisor	Mr. R. Crawford
Cook	Mrs. L. Johnston
Part-time Catering Assistant	Mrs. M. McEwan
Pre-Preparatory Group Assistant	Miss L. Mitchell
Part-time Classroom Assistant	Miss. K. Wallace



Contents

Valete	8
Obituaries	19
The COVID Chronicles	20
Then and Now.....	24
Distribution of Prizes	48
School Societies	70
Music in School	87
School Games	88
Trips and Events	90
Literary Contributions.....	103
Ben Madigan Preparatory School	112
History Corner	120
Alumni News	122
Births, Marriages and Deaths	134

Valete



GEOFF BROWN

Geoff's contribution to Belfast Royal Academy over 21 years is significant and spans many aspects of school life. He was appointed to the school in March 2000 as a teacher of Mathematics, having completed his teaching practice here. His Head of Department at that time was Dr Catherine Scully, who commented in her recommendation to the Headmaster that "he will be a most valuable asset to the department and to the school as a whole". And so it came to be.

Geoff contributed to the curricular and extra-curricular life of the school by taking the football team, involving himself in Scripture Union and preparing pupils for Oxbridge entrance. In 2003, he was promoted to the position of Head of Mathematics following Dr Scully's promotion to Senior Teacher and worked hard to maintain the high academic standards within the department, alongside involving pupils in the UK Mathematical Challenges. In January 2009, Geoff was promoted to Senior Teacher and then in September 2011 he was appointed to the position of Curriculum Vice Principal. In this role, Geoff has demonstrated that he is highly organised and efficient, he provides valuable statistical analysis and, through his review of the tracking system, he implemented a system to monitor pupil progress effectively. He introduced

Health and Social Care to the school and for a number of years, fulfilled the role of Subject Leader for Rosemary and Helen.

Geoff is a man of many contrasts. He went from being a pupil at a rural grammar school in Magherafelt to studying Physics at Balliol College, Oxford, a college where four British Prime Ministers were educated. Whilst at Oxford, he has had encounters with two of them – Harold McMillan and Boris Johnson (whom he played football with). We get the impression that Balliol is less than proud of its fourth prime minister but they can have much to be proud of in reflecting on Geoff's career in terms of the impact he has had on the lives of young people.

Although he studied Physics, he teaches Mathematics. And like many great educators, he carries his intellect lightly. Never arrogant or aloof, Geoff takes as much pride and satisfaction from teaching the pupils who struggle to master the basic mathematical concepts as he does from coaching our Oxbridge candidates.

Geoff is a fantastic problem solver. Not only in class when he whips out his Sherlock Holmes pipe from his drawer to puff on when he and the class are pondering a particularly challenging problem but when he is writing the timetable. It is not easy writing the BRA timetable from scratch each year whilst meeting the many and varied permutations involving 1450 pupils and 88 staff. Geoff takes pride in coming up with an elegant solution; he was greatly helped by his timetabling assistant Mark Shields and latterly by David Morrison but I think that many of us are unaware of the many hours that Geoff invested in getting the timetable as close to perfect as he can.

Geoff has a great sense of fun and he never takes himself too seriously. From participating in the Staff Revue as a member of the Superman Troupe, to the Mathematics Department synchronised swimming team and more recently, Lord Geoffemort in the Harry Potter sketch, Geoff



enjoys contributing to the social aspect of school life. He always takes the opportunity to play football and has been a stalwart of the staff 5-a-side team for a number of years.

Belfast Royal Academy is in Geoff's DNA and his commitment to supporting pupils in their academic endeavours, in their sporting, musical and dramatic events is a testament to the value he places on educating the whole child. His own children, Conor and Molly, attended the school and he took great pride in their achievements whilst still managing that tricky balance of being a teacher in school as well as their father. Geoff reflects the school's values in how he conducts himself and how he is as a parent – he respects knowledge, he is not afraid of hard work, he values diversity and he has high standards. Conor and Molly are a credit to Geoff and Lynn and also to Belfast Royal Academy and we hope that their values will remain with them for life.

And Geoff has been a friend, counsellor and confidante to many of us over the years. Geoff has worked closely with support staff, and in particular the office staff and we all know how close he was to the Office Manager, Patricia Ferguson. He has been an extremely valued colleague within the Senior Leadership Team, particularly as we have navigated all of the additional challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past 18 months.

Geoff retired as the Curriculum Vice Principal at the end of August 2021 and on behalf of all the pupils, parents and staff, I would like to wish him a long, healthy and happy retirement.

H.W.



DEBORAH NICHOLL

Following a successful school career at Orangefield Girls, where she was Head Girl, Deborah Miskelly, as she was then, graduated from the Queen's University, Belfast in 1984 and obtained her Post-Graduate Certificate in Education from the same institution.

Her teaching career started at the Academy in 1985 and so began an association with the school that was to last for 36 years. Appointed by Mr Sillery, she participated in many extra-curricular activities such as Scripture Union and the World Wide Quiz.

In 1991, she resigned from her full-time position to devote her time and energy to her growing family. It was during this period that her sons Daniel, David and Andrew were born. In 1999, she rejoined the Geography Department in a job-share post with her good friend, Helen Miller. This was the first job share post at the Academy and was initially for a one-year trial period. They worked tirelessly to ensure that the job share was a success and this continued until retirement.

She was a teacher of the highest standards whose enthusiasm was both infectious and legendary. She inspired her pupils and encouraged an independence and spirit of inquiry long before such things became part of the educational dogma. Within the Geography department she was responsible for cataloguing the various resource materials and her production of worksheets was valued highly by colleagues and pupils alike. At GCSE and Advanced Level, she prepared a series of notes on several aspects of the courses. Never cynical, her common sense, calm approach was



much valued by her charges and by the staff.

She will be much missed within the Academy and in the Geography department in particular. I am very grateful for her constant support to me and the department. I wish her many years of good health to enjoy with her family.

A.S.



HELEN MILLER

After graduating from the Queen's University, Belfast in 1984, Helen Knox, as she was then, continued her studies with a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education, in which she was awarded a Commendation.

She began her teaching career at Bloomfield Collegiate school, Belfast, in 1985 and this was followed by a permanent post at Omagh Academy in 1986, where she remained for the next six years. She joined the Academy in 1991 and as luck would have it, she replaced her good friend Deborah Nicholl. She participated in many extra-curricular activities such as Scripture Union and the ski club.

During her first few years at the Academy, her children Rachel and John were born. It was shortly after the birth of John that the possibility of a job-share post was explored with Mr Sillery. He agreed to a trial period and the post was shared with Deborah Nicholl. The professionalism of both Helen and Deborah ensured that the arrangement became permanent. Helen was a dedicated teacher who always put the needs of her pupils first. Her professionalism and caring nature were much appreciated by her pupils.

She was involved with the NICCEA Examination

Board and attended several courses and agreement trials at GCSE and Advanced level. She freely shared her notes and expertise with those in the department – many of these will be used for years to come.

Within the Geography department, she had responsibility for developing a data base of videos and DVDs. She recorded, faithfully, the minutes of Geography departmental meetings for several years.

The Academy will miss her greatly but it is in the Geography Department that her absence will be most keenly felt. I valued enormously the encouragement she gave to me and to the department as a whole. I send her the very best wishes for a long and enjoyable retirement with her family.

A.S.



RYAN PATTERSON

Ryan Patterson joined the Academy in August 2018 as a newly qualified teacher of Mathematics. He was an award winning student on the teacher training course at Queen's University, Belfast and this quickly translated to the classroom where he was an enthusiastic and encouraging presence. He not only brought this energy to the classroom but also to the rugby pitch as a Form I coach and also to the SU.

Unfortunately for BRA, the opportunity to return to teach in the school he had been educated, and to return to the west of the country to a more rural setting, was too strong. In February 2021, he joined Omagh Academy to take up the position as a teacher of Physics.



We are sad to lose such a dedicated teacher with such a great future ahead but delighted for Ryan that he is able to fulfil his ambition. We wish him all the success for the future.

S.G.



GERALDINE MCCADDEN

Mrs Geraldine McCadden began teaching at the Academy in 1999 as a part-time teacher of Art and Design. Prior to this she completed her degree at the Ulster College of Art, specialising in 3 Dimensional Studies i.e. Jewellery, Silversmithing and Ceramics. She then progressed to Ulster Polytechnic to complete her Teacher Training qualification.

Geraldine taught at a number of schools prior to the Academy. She taught in Forthill Girls Secondary School, Lisburn, for four years. Three of those years she worked as Head of Department. Shortly after this, she began teaching Special Needs Education as an Art specialist at The Park School, Belfast. She later moved on to Lisnevin Training School also as an Art specialist. Her time at Campbell College, Belfast, was one of her longest serving positions before joining Belfast Royal Academy. In between schools she took a career break to raise her family.

Golf and running were her favourite hobbies and if she was not on the golf course you would find her out on one of her many running routes. She was a valued member of the Art and Design Department for 22 years and she will be dearly missed. We thank you for your service to the Academy Geraldine, and wish you a long and happy retirement.

L.A.P.



PATRICIA KERR

Mrs Patricia Kerr (Donnelly), a former pupil of Little Flower Girls School, completed her BA Hons degree in Embroidered Textiles at Ulster University, Belfast, receiving first class honours. She went on to gain an Art Teacher Diploma with Commendation in Art Education, along with Art and Design Practical Studies.

She joined the staff at Belfast Royal Academy in September 1983 as a teacher of Art and Design. Her teaching began under Mr Baird, Head of Art and Design, and then under Mrs Rosemary McWhirter, before progressing to becoming Head of Art and Design Department herself in August 2010. To further her personal staff development, she completed a Masters Level Degree in Education with ICT specialism through Ulster University in 2012.

Patricia was a teacher of impeccable standards. Her care and dedication to the pupils along with assisting in the progress of their individual coursework and future career options was second to none. Many hours were spent during lunch and after school ensuring pupils had access to the resources needed to complete their course. Attendance at numerous

CCEA Agreement Trials throughout her teaching career allowed her to ensure pupils were receiving the best teaching experience possible, and becoming a visiting moderator for CCEA also helped to expand her knowledge. In 1991, she was given the opportunity to judge on the panel for the Northern Ireland Design prize alongside many other prestigious members.



Outside of school she was a member of the Embroidery Guild at the Ulster Folk Museum and regularly gave lectures at both the Folk Museum and the Women's Institute. Teaching embroidery classes and passing on her knowledge and skills gave her much enjoyment. Oil painting was her other love and she regularly exhibited her paintings in venues throughout Northern Ireland. She also ran an art gallery for five years, part time, inviting local artists to exhibit their work and to give demonstrations of their individual art and craft styles.

Patricia was involved in set painting for many school productions throughout her teaching career at the Academy and enjoyed seeing the work come to life in the full production. On a number of occasions, she had the opportunity to join the R.E. Department on their trip to Rome. During these trips she was able to teach staff and pupils about the sculptures, architecture and artwork around the city.

Patricia was the driving force for incorporating the Arabic with Art Project within the Art Department, spanning from 2015-2021. The project began with Form II pupils initially and then gradually expanded to all year groups having the opportunity to learn about the Arabic language and culture.

I know that all pupils and staff will join me in wishing Patricia a long, fulfilling and well-earned retirement, and we thank her for her dedicated service.

L.A.P.



KHALED BERAKDAR

Khaled Berakdar joined Belfast Royal Academy

in 2018 as a Tutor of Arabic Art, Culture and Language. Prior to this, he worked as a dedicated member of the health service. He also spent many years as an interpreter and volunteered throughout the pandemic with the Red Cross.

Within school, he dedicated many lunch time hours to running the Arabic Culture Club and Arabic Calligraphy Club. The staff benefited from his many hobbies, which included baking cakes and crocheting items.

Khaled was able to develop a good rapport with students and engaged them well in learning the Arabic language. He was very helpful when developing lessons and within the department. He was a valued member of the Art and Design Department and was enthusiastic about his subject. Khaled has moved on to work in a new role within the health service and we wish him every success in his future career.

L.A.P.



NATALJA RITCHIE

Natalja took over as School Matron at the start of the 2020-21 school year after the departure of our previous matron, Mrs. Nuala Loughran. Natalja had just returned from completing her nursing qualification in England and had to deal with some of the most demanding issues the School has ever faced as we attempted to re-open the School after a long period of lockdown.

Natalja worked diligently to deal with issues as they arose and her professional approach, coupled with a caring nature, proved very effective. Natalja was a popular member of staff; however, she moved on in January 2021 to continue her nursing

career and complete her postgraduate studies.

Natalja did, however, return in September for a short period to cover when the post became vacant again, enabling her to work with both her mum and her Auntie Kathryn.

S.B.



DEIRDRE ARMSTRONG

Deirdre took over from Natalja as School Matron in February 2021 and brought a significant amount of nursing experience to the role. Deirdre, like Natalja before her, faced a considerable challenge in coming to terms with School nursing as well as dealing with the unprecedented demands of a COVID-19 environment.

Deirdre worked very hard at getting systems and processes in place and reached out to other school nurses to ensure that best practice could be ensured in Belfast Royal Academy. Her professionalism and dedication were valued highly by the School however Deirdre decided to return to her general nursing career and left the School at the end of the Summer term 2021.

S.B.



LOUISE TUCKER

Louise started in the School in 2017 and worked on a job-share basis as a Sixth Form study supervisor, supervising Middle Sixth pupils. Due to the circumstances of the post, Louise worked on a Friday each week, ensuring that the pupils were able to work in an environment which was conducive to effective study.

Louise resigned from her post at the end of the Summer term 2021. However, she is currently volunteering in the Art Department where pupils are benefiting from her artistic skills and experience.

S.B.



HELEN CATHCART

Helen joined the School in 2019 in a job-share arrangement in the Finance team, working with Gillian Boyd. Helen was extremely professional in everything she did and was willing and able to take



on a variety of different tasks.

This was particularly evident during 2020 when the School had to re-adjust daily to the demands of a COVID-19 environment and periods of lockdown. Helen took over a number of different roles at short notice during this period, including the role of School Matron.

Helen's temporary role came to an end in the autumn of 2020 and she left the School just before completing her MSc in Human Nutrition.

S.B.



PETER HUGHES

Peter Hughes joined the School in January 2021 as assistant to the Estates Manager, Jill Lambert. Peter's enthusiastic approach to work was very welcome as he threw himself into his work with gusto.

The role of assistant to the Estates Manager is a varied role and Peter found himself dealing with a range of activities from clocks to bike sheds and everything in between.

Peter is a very sociable person and quickly established himself within the School community, working with teaching and non-teaching staff on a daily basis as well engaging with the Governors.

Peter recently decided to take up another opportunity and left the School at the half-term break.

S.B.



FERGAL MCCLUSKEY

Fergal left the School at the start of the 2020-21 School year after many years of service. He was a very recognisable face of the School as he worked as a bus driver/janitor throughout this period.

Fergal was always willing to help and worked well with other staff. Again, the life of staff in the Estates Team is varied and Fergal could be found picking up pupils at the station in the morning only to return to the School to take on a painting job, returning to driving the pupils to Games in the afternoon.

After a very difficult year for Fergal and his family in 2020-21, Fergal decided to take up a different opportunity and left the school in September.



S.B.

SUZANNE KENNEDY

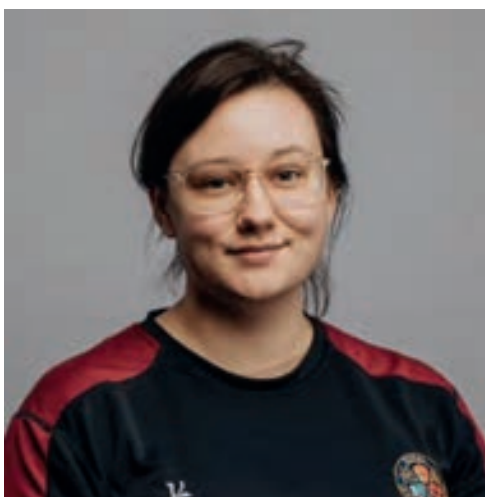
Suzanne joined the School in 2016 as a classroom assistant in the Learning Support team. Her



teaching background was invaluable in the role and she became a key member of the team.

Having already retired from teaching, Suzanne made a significant contribution to the School. However, she decided in autumn 2020 that it was now time to step away from these duties and devote all of her time to her family.

S.B.



SHANNON ALEXANDER

Shannon joined the School in 2019 as the Swimming Pool Supervisor, following in the footsteps of her mother. Shannon's knowledge of and enthusiasm for swimming and water polo were extremely useful as both school swimming and external groups using the school pool flourished.

During the lockdown periods in 2020 and 2021, while the pool was closed, Shannon assisted the school with additional administrative tasks and also helped supervise the children of key workers and the school was grateful for her commitment and flexibility.

Shannon has now moved to Scotland to take up a different opportunity and left the school at the end of the Summer term 2021.

S.B.



GILLIAN BOYD

Gillian Boyd left the School in October 2021 after 18 years of service. Gillian followed in her mother's footsteps, taking up a role in the Bursar's Office and spent this time working as the Bursar's Secretary.

Gillian's polite and warm personality endeared her to many and she has very strong friendships with both staff and Governors. Her knowledge of details and processes will be sorely missed.

Gillian also has artistic talents and many a staff wall carries one of Gillian's masterpieces. Over the last number of years, Gillian has been trying to establish her art business and will be concentrating on this in the future.

S.B.



GENEVIEVE EVRARD

Genevieve joined the School in 2019 as a classroom assistant. Genevieve was quiet, diligent



and hardworking. However, she also provided her opinion when it was important and was a key member of the Learning Support team throughout her time in Belfast Royal Academy.

Genevieve left the School at the end of the Summer term 2021 and returned to her native France.

S.B.



KERRY MILLEN

Kerry joined the school at the start of the 2020-21 School Year as a classroom assistant. However, she had previously worked in Ben Madigan and was no stranger to the BRA family.

Kerry's first year at the school was blighted by the impact of COVID-19. However, her polite, softly-spoken approach was appreciated in her role.

Kerry was offered an attractive opportunity at the end of the 2020-21 school year and she decided to take it, leaving the school at the end of the Summer term.

S.B.



JAKE HAWKEY

Jake joined the School in 2019 as a classroom assistant and his literary background was very useful in the Learning Support Team.

Jake was a valued member of the team and he split his time between working in the school and working towards his PhD. Unfortunately, it was impossible for Jake to provide the time to both roles and he regretfully had to give up his role in Belfast Royal Academy at the end of the 2020-21 School Year.

S.B.



HARRIETT WATSON

Harriett joined the School in 2018 as a classroom assistant.

Harriett was a key member of the Learning Support Team and her flexibility and commitment were much appreciated, especially through periods of lockdown in 2020 when she provided supervision



to some of our vulnerable children.

Harriett had been with the school for a number of years and decided to look for a new challenge. She left the school in August 2021.

S.B.



GRACE WARD

Grace joined the School at the start of the 2020-21 school year as a classroom assistant. Her enthusiastic and bubbly personality allowed her to integrate into the School and the Learning Support team very quickly.

Grace was very competent in her role but also flexible and she was happy to take on different roles whenever the opportunity presented itself, including a trip to Ben Madigan to fill in for a teacher who was absent for a day.

Grace is hoping to become a teacher in the future and has now taken up a great opportunity in London to further this career choice, leaving at the end of the Summer term 2021.



ETHAN PURCELL

Ethan joined the School in September 2020 as a classroom assistant and was a great asset to the Learning Support team. Ethan is a former pupil and also had the advantage of his mother being close by to keep an eye on him.

Ethan's knowledge of the school and the staff was extremely useful and he was very effective in his role.

Ethan also provided assistance to the General Office staff at the end of the Summer term which was much appreciated by the school and the staff that he helped.

Ethan had been considering career opportunities and after taking up an opportunity with one of the world's biggest consulting firms during the summer, Ethan did not return for the start of the 2021-22 school year.

S.B.



SANDRA GRIFFITHS

Sandra joined the school at the start of the 2020-21 school year as a Sixth Form study supervisor. Sandra had a background in education, however, her start in the school was impacted by COVID-19 and whilst she worked well with the other study supervisors, it was difficult for her to get established in the role, given all the disruptions.

Sandra's commitment and flexibility were greatly appreciated throughout periods of lockdown when she helped to supervise the children of key workers who were still coming to school.

Sandra was offered another job opportunity in January 2021 which was closer to home and left the following month.



S.B



Obituaries

PATRICIA FERGUSON



It was with much sadness that the School community heard of the passing of Patricia Ferguson in the early hours of Thursday 10th June 2021.

Patricia McKinney, as she then was, was appointed in August 1998, as a Clerical Officer, working in the School's General Office under the supervision of Mrs Roberta Lynn. [Mrs Lynn had previously taught Patricia her word-processing/typing skills at evening classes in Glengormley High School.] On the retirement of Mrs Lynn in 2003, Patricia was promoted to Office Manager, a position she held until ill-health forced her to take leave of absence.

Patricia's appointment to the School Office largely coincided with the introduction of the Computerised Local Administration of Secondary Schools, CLASS, the fore-runner of C2K and SIMS. Patricia's knowledge of this system was second to none. From recording attendances to School Comms to Parentmail to SIMS Parent to EMAs, Patricia mastered them all with relative ease. In my years as Vice-Principal I know that I relied upon her to get me out of tricky situations, when using SIMS, more than once, especially when it came to end-of-year reporting and the dreaded Department of Education school census!

Patricia's involvement in School extended far beyond the School Office. Her three children all attended B.R.A. She immersed herself in the wider school life taking part in many of the Staff Revues,

a Staff trip to Malawi in 2003, a Staff ice-bucket challenge, end of term festivitiesthe list is endless.

Aside from her efficient running of the School Office, Patricia will be remembered by everyone who met her for her friendship and loyalty. She was always ready to help anyone who had a problem; she was a listening ear for those who needed it, a baker of extremely tasty chocolate cakes, coffee lover and a break-time cross-word solver alongside James Cleland.

Patricia was diagnosed with Small Cell cancer in September 2020. She underwent radiotherapy and chemotherapy stoically, never seeming to let her illness get her down. I know that she was immensely grateful to friends who visited, phoned, sent cards, flowers or presents.

Patricia will be much missed by her family, her friends, her colleagues in the School Office, the Leadership Team with whom she worked closely, all of the teaching and non-teaching Staff but most of all by her children Christopher, Ciara and Meghan and her grandchildren Paige, Katie, and James to whom she was devoted.

L.C.



The COVID Chronicles

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, education changed dramatically for staff and pupils alike. Members of the BRA staff reflect on how their roles changed during these unprecedented times.



MR MARTIN WILSON

As I reflect on the period of school closures and national lockdowns, and the impact which these have had on our school community, I am met with a mixture of emotions. I clearly remember meeting with key members of pastoral staff just after the initial announcement, trying to navigate our way through this ever-changing situation. The challenge was how to maintain contact with our pupils in school during a period of time when they would not be physically on site. All face-to-face counselling sessions ceased, as telephone appointments became more common. During this time, we endeavoured to phone the parents of all pupils in the school.

This proved to be a significant task, although we could only make direct contact with the parents of our pupils, rather than with the pupils themselves. I certainly felt that this contact was appreciated by many at the time, but it served as no real substitute to speaking to our pupils in person, even though a number of our parents put their son/daughter on the phone to speak. We also moved to create a

Google Classroom which was dedicated to support and wellbeing. Assemblies were uploaded, as were wellbeing tasks, to social media. I vividly remember the first ever trial of a Zoom assembly in June 2020, which was such an unknown at that stage.

As we moved to the second more recent period of lockdown, the live lessons helped to support further the interactions with pupils. However, there was no replacement for the subtle conversations in the corridors, or before, during or after classes. Pastoral staff sought to maintain contact using virtual assemblies and recorded messages, and pupils could contact pastoral staff for support at any stage during this time.

Pastoral staff missed the daily interactions with pupils, and opportunities to continue to build positive relationships. The school was simply not the same during these times. Empty classrooms, quiet corridors, playgrounds deserted. One of the many strengths of our school is the relationships which are fostered between our pupils and our staff, and there is no doubt that this was missed.



MR PHIL DORMAN

As a Senior Teacher in school, one of my roles is to have an oversight of eLearning. This vague term



carries a wide range of roles and responsibilities, and has a lot of flexibility built in to move with the ever-changing face of IT. However, the original job description didn't include "launch remote learning during a Global Pandemic!"

In the years preceding the pandemic, we began developing our use of Google software such as Google Classroom and Google Drive. We had the foresight to see how much potential the software had to help us manage our pupil's learning for the coming decade. Overnight, the 4 years from 2016-20 became invaluable as we were in a position to ask the whole school community to revert to Google Classroom as a means to aid teaching and learning.

We had a sense at the end of February 2020 that there was a slim chance that schools may close. This spurred us to meet and begin developing 'How to' guides for parents, pupils and staff. We weren't sure if these would ever be needed but inevitably they were.

On Monday 16th March 2020, the eLearning Committee met and put together a plan of how staff could post work to a central area, which would then be passed on to pupils and staff via Google Classroom. On Tuesday 17th March 2020, we held staff training and conveyed our plans to staff, should we go into lockdown. After a few user tests we were ready to go...

On reflection, Lockdown One was a very different beast to Lockdown Two. Firstly, the speed of organisation needed for Lockdown One was phenomenal. Creating an online school for 1450 pupils, with two weeks' notice was not something any of us had trained for. The IT aspect of the planning was a huge consideration, but the pastoral and welfare needs that arose from pupils using screens all day was another concern. Secondly, while many of our staff were competent computer users, the thought of online teaching brought about very real anxieties for them.

We offered the staff 'helpdesk' style support throughout the two lockdowns and created user guides and training sessions that addressed the issues as they were presented to us. Many of the challenges our staff faced were difficulties we hadn't pre-empted at the start of March 2020. Our staff should be very proud of how quickly they

adapted to online teaching.

In the middle of each week staff sent me their teaching material for the coming week, which was then arranged in a format that pupils and parents could access remotely. The weekly Google Sheet update containing lessons, tasks and activities was then uploaded to the Pupil Notes Google Classroom.

We began to hear rumours about a piece of software called Zoom; little did we know back then that it would become our main source of school communication for at least eighteen months to come. I can remember the very first Zoom meeting we held in the Heritage Room. Mr Cleland and I spent hours in advance, testing and planning for an online Subject leaders meeting. Six of us sat in trepidation in the Heritage Room waiting for the Subject Leaders to appear on the big screen. The novelty factor of this first Zoom meeting was equivalent to the first time I realised a VHS could record a TV programme!

On our return from Lockdown One, we felt it would be prudent to begin the process of training staff to be able to use Software that would allow us to conduct online live teaching, and so the term 'Google Meet' entered our lives. Between September and December 2020, we tested and trialled live teaching using Google Meet and offered the staff training sessions. It came to pass that in January 2021 our training was needed – live teaching had begun. Through the period of Lockdown Two, we created training videos for the staff as problems arose. We also learnt that we could 'dial in' to a staff device from home and help them remedy any problems they were having.

A Remote Learning policy was also written to help all of the stakeholders know what they could expect and what was expected of them. This document is still in use and is constantly being reviewed and adapted.

Live teaching brought its challenges, and staff and pupils alike had to adapt to a much more intense online teaching experience. Phrases such as "can you all turn on your cameras please?" became the norm. Encouraging pupils to participate in online classes, negating the impact of excessive screen time and encouraging pupils to exercise between classes became a priority for us.



We decided to assess the pupils in June; this in itself provided a huge logistical challenge, along with the need for staff to learn to use another piece of software – Google Forms. The staff and pupils coped admirably with the assessments and the feedback we received was very positive.

We could look back at this period and be self-critical; lessons were learnt and we critically reviewed our online learning provision, but I feel that as a school we should be very proud of what we achieved. Our staff created a virtual school that dealt with pastoral and wellbeing issues, taught a full school timetable period by period and still managed to provide stimulating activities such as virtual PE lessons and interactive House competitions.

My hope is that we don't lose the skills we gained during the two lockdown periods. To that end, in the 2021-22 academic year our staff are using Google Classroom on a much more regular basis, and we have shifted our mind-set now from IT being an add-on to teaching, to being a much more integral part of our day-to-day work.



MR SIMON BURROWS

As Head of Finance and Corporate Services, COVID-19 has had a unique impact on my life at the school. I started in my role on 9th March 2020 and within two weeks, the school had gone into lockdown.

By this stage, I had not even met the majority of the staff or got any sort of understanding of what the role entailed. I spent my time 'fire-fighting' on the acquisition of equipment to keep staff safe,

dealing with individual staff concerns, consulting on risk registers and any other necessary steps to ensure that staff welfare was maintained, as we tried to adjust to the new demands of running the school in a COVID-19 environment.

Once the initial adjustments had been made, I found myself working on site with very few members of staff trying to ensure that payments were still being made, staff were paid and that the vastly different operating requirements could now be supported.

Overall, it was definitely a challenge and I had to hit the ground running. However, I am only now seeing the school operating in a more normal way and getting a better sense of what my job really is.





Then and Now

THE ACADEMY: THEN AND NOW

In 1995, Friso Spoelstra, a photographer from Amsterdam, visited the Academy and took some very striking images of what a typical day at BRA looked like in the 1990s.



Some 25 years later, local photographer, Tara Torrens, spent time capturing images around the school, chronicling what life is like in the Academy in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Sixth Form Study and Common Room





Art



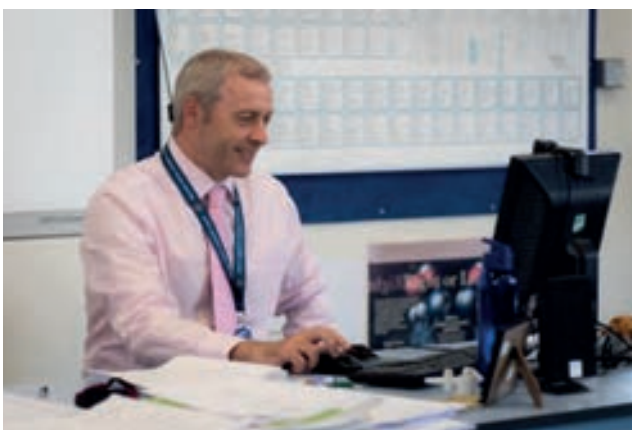


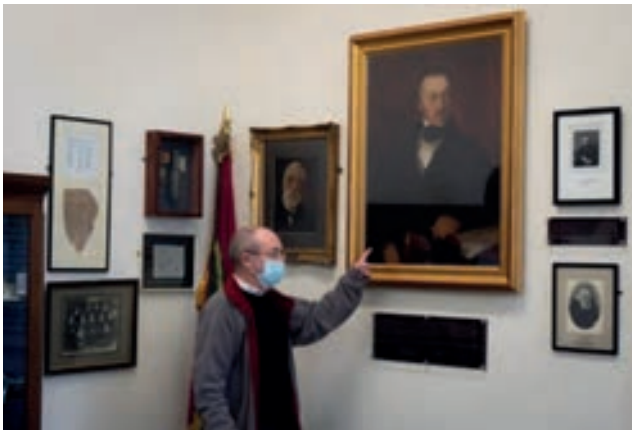
Staff at BRA



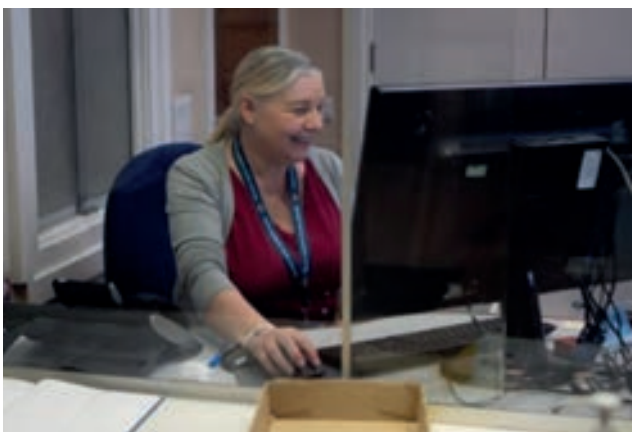








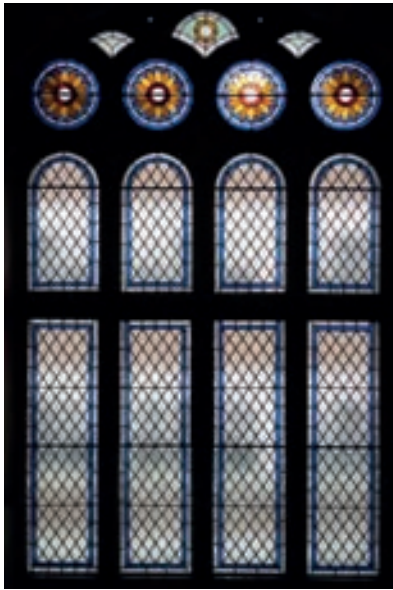
Computers





Crombie and School Buildings





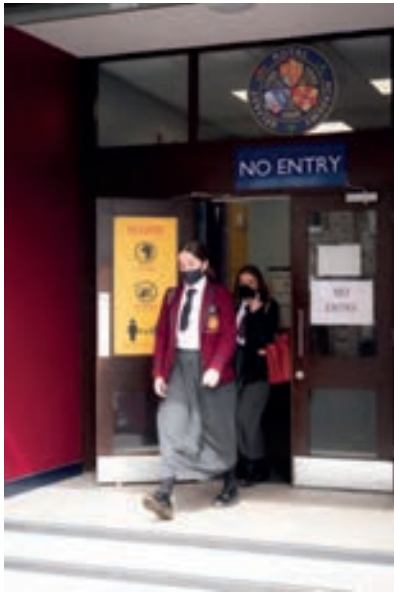


Canteen



Covid





Drama





First year playground





Girdwood



History



Languages





Playground











Music



Roughfort (Games)





Technology





Dr Olly Mort

Then

Wingfield



Now





Distribution of Prizes

The Annual Distribution of Prizes took place this year on Friday 22nd October at The Spire's Centre. The Warden, Dr. K.M. Bill, reflected on the impact of the pandemic and the resilience pupils had demonstrated. Mrs H. Woods introduced the Guest of Honour, Mr Tony Danker, to the prize-giving ceremony.

In his speech, Tony Danker considered the lessons we should all learn from the COVID-19 pandemic. He advised pupils that they should aim to 'squeeze out the juice,' ultimately seizing all opportunities presented to them throughout their school careers.

The Guest of Honour outlined how he, himself, had approached his own school career in Belfast Royal Academy in this manner. He humorously reflected on his involvement in a range of activities as a pupil, including his memorable performance in the school play and his victory in the annual Battle of the Bands competition.

Mr Danker then detailed how this attitude has afforded him many exciting opportunities in his own career, allowing him to work in several countries and meet many prominent figures. He specified that subjects such as Mathematics and Geography have been relevant and valuable in his understanding of everyday issues.

In closing, Tony Danker assured the pupils that 'BRA is a safe place to try everything,' and extended his congratulations to prize-winners.

The Senior Orchestra gave an engaging virtual performance of 'Rondeau' from H. Purcell's Abdelazer Suite, while the Chamber Choir gave an uplifting performance of 'A Clare Benediction' by J.Rutter. A rousing rendition of 'High-Towered Academy' was also given virtually by the School Choir.

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

THE PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

Good afternoon Warden, Professor Taylor, ladies and gentlemen, pupils, staff, Governors and our distinguished guest, Tony Danker.

I present my report on this my fifth year as principal of this great school, although in COVID years it feels like my 55th year! We are delighted to welcome prize winners, staff, Governors to this venue and also to our parents who are joining us via a link downstairs. This return to some normality is so welcome and most importantly, to recognise the achievements of our prize winners.

When studying the Shakespearean tragedies, one may be asked to write an essay on the title "Character is Destiny – discuss." Shakespearean tragedy presents the hero in terms of flaws in their character. Shakespeare himself lays emphasis on this fact: "the fault, dear Brutus, lies in ourselves and not in our stars," However, we also know that one's strength of character can be a powerful force for good, leading to revolutionary changes in human society. We place considerable emphasis on developing character in BRA because we know the impact that this will have in one's future working life and on the lives of others. Let us consider how Tony Danker's character has helped propel him from being a pupil in Belfast Royal Academy to becoming the Director General of the Confederation of British Industry – the UK's leading business organisation – and informing politicians on national and international issues. I am informed by my predecessor Moore Dickson that Tony was a popular, able and good humoured pupil at school. Amusing and responsible, he was one of the leaders of the form. He was a good actor taking a lead role in the play "Our Town" by Thornton Wilder and he also sang in the Senior Choir. When in L6, Tony's altruism was ably demonstrated in his role as Chairman of the Save the Children Fund Committee. Throughout this year and alongside his peers, Tony organised



activities such as Mr Poseur, Blind Date and Valentine Postal Services in order to raise a very creditable £2,500. That was 34 years ago so is now worth over £7000. It is important for a leader to be tenacious – when Tony was studying A Level History he discovered that he was not timetabled to be in Mr McCamley’s class. This was a problem. Not because Mr McCamley was the Head of History but because a certain young lady who Tony had taken a fancy to was in Mr McCamley’s class. Undeterred, Tony was so keen to spend time with the object of his affection that he simply turned up, bold as brass in Mr McCamley’s class from whence he was subsequently ejected. This is Mr McCamley’s claim to fame – not even Boris Johnson would have the gall to order the head of the CBI to leave the room! We can read about Tony’s successes in the world of business in the pen portrait contained within today’s programme. He also worked for a time as a personal assistant to the late Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks who was probably the best loved and most respected religious leader in the UK and I suspect Tony’s personal values mirrored those of his former boss. Rabbi Sacks said this about kindness “Acts of kindness never die. They linger in the memory, giving life to other acts in return.” Given the tumultuous years that British industry has endured recently following the Brexit debacle and the devastating impact on the economy of the COVID pandemic, we know how difficult it must be as CEO of British industry to demonstrate a mind to be kind but also how crucial it is to be a level-headed, pragmatic, determined leader and we are so proud that we can call Tony one of BRA’s finest! Tony, we are delighted that you have taken time out of your hectic schedule to speak to us this afternoon and we are looking forward very much to hear what you have to say to our prize winners. A warm welcome also to your mother, Mrs Danker who is present this afternoon.

The 20 – 21 academic year marked an extraordinary period in the School’s history. When the M6 pupils left in March 2020 at the beginning of the first lockdown, following much more muted end of school celebrations than normally experienced by the Leavers’ cohort, we felt that their experience was pioneering and cheered ourselves with the story that it would be unique. However, the trajectory of the pandemic

demonstrated that, at times, Mother Nature is much more powerful than the will of man and all year groups endured another period of full lockdown from January to Easter 2021 and, for the second year running, schools and colleges across the United Kingdom saw the cancellation of the public examinations.

The 18 months since the School closed for the first time on 23 March 2020 have been extremely challenging for all members of the BRA community including Ben Madigan Preparatory Department. We have faced difficulties that have been collective, individual frustrations over missed opportunities, experienced personal setbacks, disappointments and faced adversity in ways we could not previously have imagined. I would like to take this opportunity to thank every single member of the School community pupils, parents, Governors, teaching and support staff for the efforts that have been made to continue to have learning and pastoral care at the heart of everything that we do.

The beginning of the academic year in September 2020 heralded the introduction of some extreme measures designed to keep the school community safe. Our Health and Safety Committee worked tirelessly to put in place strategies to mitigate against the risks of Covid and, as was well documented in the media, made the decision to make the wearing of face masks compulsory for all pupils. We implemented a one-way system, cleaned classrooms every evening with a fogging machine (there’s a phrase that has probably never been included in a Prize Distribution report), created a 2m exclusion zone for each teacher at the front of the classroom and devised means of continuing with assemblies and lunch arrangements whilst retaining year group bubbles – not easy on a cramped site with 1450 pupils and over 150 staff! However, credit must go to all the pupils and staff who responded admirably to these restrictions and simply got on with things.

The 2020 autumn term began with minimal disruption in terms of pupils who tested positive with Covid, however, that all changed in mid-October with our first pupil case. Senior staff had to go round classrooms with our 2m stick, seating plans in hand and identify those pupils who were within the infection zone. Many parents came to



dread the 'phone call of doom' – your child has been identified as a close contact and now must isolate for 14 days. However, we still only had 5 cases in all of the autumn term last year and therefore it was a shock to us when the Minister for Education announced in early January that all public examinations would be cancelled.

Aside from examinations, there have been many other aspects of school life that have taken a massive hit as a result of the pandemic. For example, many of our extra-curricular activities have been curtailed and throughout the year, the rugby and hockey season all but disappeared with no competitive fixtures. For the first time ever, Prize Day was cancelled as was the Carol Service and the Spring Concert. The M6 leavers were denied the traditional Leavers' Ball and the Form 1 induction event had to take place virtually. It is only when these key events disappear from the School calendar that it becomes patently clear that Belfast Royal Academy is so much more than a building – it is a living, breathing community that needs these public events to bind us all to the ethos and values of this great School and to strengthen relationships between all members of our community.

By the time of the second lockdown that was announced over the Christmas holidays in December 2020, we were much better prepared. All teaching moved to online teaching from 4 January and all lessons were live using Google Meet. We held all of our parents' meetings virtually using a platform called Parent Cloud that enabled parents to book a 5-minute slot with their child's teacher – and for the pupils who were present for this exchange, that could have been an agonisingly long 5 minutes! All of our staff meetings, departmental meetings and Governor meetings have been conducted virtually and whilst we are grateful for the advances in ICT that enable us to continue to operate the school as effectively as possible, we are all heartily fed up of staring at a screen for more hours a day that are good for us and have heard the phrases "you're on mute" and "is your hand up or is that a legacy hand" ad nauseum. Remote learning was particularly challenging for the younger members of our school in Ben Madigan and the Castle Grounds were particularly desolate without the sound of laughter and chatter and the energy of our Prep 1 – Prep 7 pupils. Throughout

this period of remote learning, pupils continued to benefit from opportunities for stretch and challenge by achieving highly in various competitions such as the Top of the Bench Chemistry competition, the Mathematics and Physics Olympiad, Barnardo's Leading Change programme and the Seamus Heaney Award for Poetry Achievement. Pupils created a virtual dance display and a virtual art exhibition in lieu of our traditional live exhibitions.

Our pupils' achievement in the Arts was recognised at the beginning of the summer when we were informed that 3 former pupils, Aaron Ferguson, Joanna McClurg and Zara Meadows had been selected for the '21 Artists for the 21st Century' cultural initiative. BRA was one of only two schools to have 3 former pupils selected for this programme – a reflection of the encouragement and motivation and desire for lifelong learning instilled by the English and Drama staff in our pupils.

On their return to school at Easter, pupils threw themselves back into school life with vengeance. Junior pupils raised £1600 for the NI Children's hospice whilst Sixth Form pupils undertook fundraising for the mental health charity AwareNI by completing a sponsored walk and raising over £1000. The Evans trophy had not been presented at the end of the 2019-20 academic year and the point tally for each house was carried over to the 2020 – 21 academic year. We were able to have some house competitions in the summer term including Sports Day and therefore were able to present the Evans trophy to Currie House – the second time in two years for previous underdogs Currie to be crowned victorious. We are so lucky to have such an active and vibrant house system but this is only possible due to the enthusiasm and commitment of so many staff who understand what this area of school life contributes to both the enjoyment for pupils and also to developing their character.

All GCSE, AS and A level pupils received a centre determined grade in Summer 2021 for each subject on the basis of evidence completed during the course of the year. Alongside their teaching and pastoral duties, staff were also required to take on the role of the examination boards by devising assessments on the basis of the specification, writing mark schemes, confirming access arrangements and special circumstances, marking papers and then completing the standardisation and



moderation stage of the grading process. Subject Leaders and class teachers reviewed all of the evidence available to them alongside the subject grade descriptors for the appropriate level GCSE/AS/A2 and did so with great integrity, exercising care and consideration in allocating grades and reviewing each pupil's progress on an individual basis. However, we very much hope that pupils will sit public examinations in Summer 2022 and that grading will be as fair as possible for this cohort.

This summer marked the departure of a number of members of staff:

Dr Geoff Brown, Curriculum Vice Principal, Mrs Pat Donnelly (formerly Kerr), Subject Leader of Art and Design, Mrs Geraldine McCadden, Teacher of Art and Design, Mrs Helen Miller, Teacher of Geography and Mrs Deborah Nicholl, Teacher of Geography all retired from the School. We thank them for everything that they have contributed to the success of the school over the years. We wish them health and happiness in their retirement and hope that they will maintain their connection with School in the future.

We continue to remember our Office Manager Patricia Ferguson who passed away on 10 June this year after a brief illness. She was the epitome of our School ethos – caring, professional and a friend to us all. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her and we extend our condolences to her family.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the leadership role played by the Prefect and Senior Prefect Teams, ably led by Head Girl Erin McQuiston, Head Boy Cameron McKee, Deputy Head Girls Olivia Snoddy and Rhiana Young and Deputy Head Boys Jude Moorehead and Jordan McNeill. The manner in which they succeeded in creating an esprit de corps amongst their peers through the most difficult of circumstances, manage the prefect rotas and represented the school at various virtual events alongside their studies is a testament to their tenacity, loyalty and cheerful optimism that better things are ahead.

To our Middle Sixth leavers – Belfast Royal Academy has played a hugely significant role in shaping your minds and attitudes for the future and I suspect that, for most of you, the ATID sentiment

has lodged in a part of your soul. We are proud of the manner in which you conducted yourself over the past very difficult 18 months. Equally, we know that you will face various challenges in the immediate future as you navigate the next stage of your education or career and different ways of working and we wish you much success and happiness in the future. Rabbi Sacks said “We achieve greatness by handing our values onto the next generation and empowering them to go and build the future.” You are our bright future, the product of our values and beliefs and I hope that you will always be proud to say that you attended Belfast Royal Academy

Our world has changed so much since the beginning of 2020, often amid deep uncertainty and anxiety. However, I have been greatly encouraged by the strength of character shown by pupils, staff and parents in making the best of a very difficult situation. I would like to pay tribute to the guidance and support that the current Warden, Dr Bill and previous Warden, Ms Dillon and all Governors have provided to me and the staff – we are indebted to them for the time and energy they invest in the effective management and governance of the school.

My final quote from Rabbi Sacks (Tony – it's just as well you didn't work as an intern for Nigel Farage) – “We are as great as the challenges we have the courage to undertake.” We will face the challenges that are undoubtedly around the corner as we have throughout this pandemic, and indeed throughout the School's history – with courage and together as a strong and supportive community.

Warden, this concludes my report for the 2020 – 21 academic year.





2021 PRIZE LIST

Form I

Armstrong, Mya	Maitland, Daniel J
Black, Jonah G	Marron, Charlotte E
Bryan, Finn K	McCarthy, Roisin M
Callaghan, Leah	McCullough, Vincent
Crowe, Elizabeth G	Murphy, Eleanor E
Dalzell-McGhee, Rebekah A	O’Kane, Aoife T
Duffy, Zara A Press,	Hannah R
Foley, Ethan A	Raghuram, Keshav
Hanif, Hannah	Raju, Heaven
Knott, Aaron A	Rossal, Nadia E
Kyle, Lucas M	Stevenson, Lucy G
Laverty, Ciaran M B	Toal, Elizabeth R
Lockhart, Samuel J R	

HONOURABLE MENTION

Adam, Ella J	McVeigh, Sophie R
Aidaroos, Shimous	Miskimmin-Young, Austen
Burns, Harry M	Nicholson, Aaron
Curley, Bethany R	O’Brien, Erin S
Derezinski, Antoni	O’Conallain, Conor Patrick
Eyjolfsson, Michael S	Ross, Holly
Gallagher, Adam	Scott, Alexander C
Lane, Timothy J A	Simpson, Zachary M
McAuley, Keon S	Tate, Eimear I A
McKeown, Rebecca L	Walsh, Ethan J
McMullan, Alicia	Wilkinson, Oliver
McNevison, Leah G	Woloszyn, Michal L
McVeigh, Lucy E	

Form II

Akmad, Aliyah N	McCullough, Lauren S
Baird, Finlay J	McKeown, Eve G H
Campbell, Maya M	McLaughlin, Jacob R
Chen, Sean	Moreland, Grace S
Clements, Ruby I	Moreland, Lily V
Craig, Chloe A	Morrison, James R
Crossan, Eva R	O’Hanlon, Patrick J
Cummings, Toby A	Scott, Ines A J
Daniels, Hope	Staworzynski, Olivier P
Januszevska, Wiktoria	Strong, Beth S
Johnston, Samuel	Torrens, Ethan E
Kearney, Clodagh	Wallace, Malachy P
Kulig, Oliver	



HONOURABLE MENTION

Beacom, Jake
 Blayney, Lydia L
 Cahill, Grace E
 Carter, Aaron J
 Donaldson, Rosa J
 French, T Alex
 Gray, Erin S
 Hipolito, Samuel G
 Kirkpatrick, Rebecca C
 Laughlin, Maya
 Mallon, Maria
 McCollam, Hugo
 McCurley, Toby

McQueen, Alex N
 Moan, Odhran J
 O'Carroll, Ella R
 O'Hara, Christopher T
 Patterson-Wilson, George W
 Pollock, Lucca
 Seymour, Mya J
 Shibu, Jerin
 Smyth, Lucy K
 Taylor, Finn L
 Teague, Sarah
 Woods, Rosie A

Form III

Anderson, Rachael A
 Blaskett, Niall I
 Chambers, Lucy H
 Finnegan, Eva E M
 Gastar, Kian F Saneesh
 Graham, Daniel S
 Horkan, Katie E
 Lane, Jessica S
 McCall, Jenna R
 McCarney, Katie E
 McLean, Sarah J
 O'Brien, Adam T
 O'Dowd, Anna J

Pandiaraj, Madhumitha
 Rea-Lavery, Sofia L
 Robinson, E Grace
 Rossal, Nathan C
 Krishna, Aditi
 Schilling, Clara E
 Toal, Annabelle C
 Vacchiero, Nicole
 Walsh, Clara E
 Warnock, Emily S
 Whiteside, Matthew
 Wilson, Jamie T

HONOURABLE MENTION

Adams, Claudia K
 Agnew, Robyn E
 Barsalini, Oisín R
 Cleland, Joel
 Curran, Anna
 Dabrowski, Jakub J
 Gallagher, Ellie
 Gibson, Gabrielle
 Gribbon, Rosa
 Guy, Ben S
 Hetherington, Leah
 Hillis, Faith C
 Mallon, Amber C

McCorry, Savannah K P
 McKean, Kalee M
 McKittrick, Max
 McVicker, Luan
 Meekin, Emily
 Nemeth, Benjamin
 Orr, Mia
 Philip, Fiona
 Place, Zoe K
 Saji, Diana
 Stewart, Beth A
 Webb, Jack W P



DEPARTMENTAL PRIZES

Form IV

Adam, Beth M	Physical Education, Religious Studies
Akmad, Aoife M	General Excellence
Allen, Matthew J	Spanish
Bell, Ellie R	Food and Nutrition, Geography, Spanish
Boone, Charlotte L	Economics
Cairns, Jack D R	Drama
Callaghan, Beth	Business Studies, Religious Studies
Canning-Ward, Rosa E C	Science
Choi, Etta	Food and Nutrition, Physical Education
Cleland, Andrew S	Economics
Craig, Kara A	Biology
Crawford, Georgia M	Spanish
Dalzell, Tara A	Physical Education
Dillon-Wright, Haydn A	Geography, German
Donaldson, Daisie B	Chemistry, History, Physics
Gilmour, Jack S	Computer Science
Golden, Joseph L	Biology, Mathematics, Religious Studies, Technology
Gueye-Dorval, Carla-Lina	Art and Design, French
Haddock, Jackson	General Excellence
Hill, Oscar T	Computer Science, Latin, Technology
Joseph, Alana	English, History, Latin
Kirk, Harrison S	Biology, Chemistry, French, Mathematics, Music, Physics
McCord, Leah C	Art and Design
McLaughlin, Matthew R E	Business Studies
McNeilly, Thomas R	Digital Technology
Millard, Riona J	Technology
Mirfield, Jasmine K	Business Studies, Drama
Morwood, Madeleine R	English
Murugaperumal, Gopi G	Digital Technology
Nibu, Siona	Chemistry, German
Nicholson, Harry	English, History, French
Ogilby, Grace	Art and Design, English, Mathematics
Pearce, Oliver P D	Biology, Chemistry, English, History, Latin, Mathematics
Rankin, Matthew A	Music
Reilly-Stewart, Hugo J	Music
Sittlington, Mia	Digital Technology, Geography
Sterritt, Brianna M	Drama
Woods, Harry R	German

HONOURABLE MENTION

Form IV

Adam, Beth M	Business Studies
--------------	------------------



Akmad, Aoife M	Chemistry, Physics, Spanish
Allen, Matthew J	Physics
Beck, Johnathon W S	Physical Education
Brogan, Sarah E	Spanish
Burns, Sophie E	Physical Education
Callaghan, Beth	Biology, Geography
Choi, Etta	Business Studies
Crawford, Georgia M	Biology, History
Dalzell, Tara A	Business Studies
Dillon-Wright, Haydn A	Physics, Technology
Donaldson, Louise M	Science
Eneh, Iruoma B	Computer Science
Ferguson, Andrew J	Economics
Gilmore, Jay S	Computer Science
Gilmour, Jack S	German, Technology
Golden, Joseph L	Chemistry
Hadden, Olivia A	Food and Nutrition, History
Haddock, Jackson	German, History, Music
Harold, Joshua C	Economics, German
Harvey, Emma A	Religious Studies
Hill, Oscar T	Mathematics
Hobson, Samuel J	Digital Technology
Jackson, Matthew J M	Geography
Jennings, Ben C	Science
Joseph, Alana	Biology
Kelly, Shannen L	Art and Design
Kirk, Harrison S	Religious Studies
Logan, Alice R	English
McArdle, Mya C	Food and Nutrition
Mirfield, Jasmine K	Art and Design
Montgomery, Sasha	Drama, French
Moore, Tom S	Drama
Morwood, Madeleine R	French, Latin
Mulholland, Alex L E	German
Nibu, Siona	Biology, English, Mathematics, Religious Studies, Technology
Nicholson, Harry	Latin
O'Hara, Alessandro R	Computer Science, French
O'Hara, Philip A	Science
O'Kane, Hannah J	Drama
O'Kane, Joe M	Music
O'Reilly, Ryan P	Physics
Pearce, Oliver P D	Physics
Robinson, Ciara A	Biology, Spanish
Scott, Aoife M G	Physical Education
Simon, Alex N	Art and Design, Music
Sittlington, Mia	Biology, English
Topping, Anna	History
Walker, Aoife R	Drama
Williamson, Matthew D	Geography



DEPARTMENTAL PRIZES

Form V

Anderson, Ben M	General Excellence
Armstrong, Archie H	General Excellence
Balgos, Jericho A D	Physical Education
Baxter, Scott E	History, Technology
Beattie-Logan, Charlotte E	Food and Nutrition
Beattie, Olivia E	Physical Education
Black, Eleanor P	English Language, English Literature, Latin, Music
Boyd, Jessica R	General Excellence
Braniff, Abbie A	Physical Education
Carroll, Rebecca H	Technology
Chow, Tiffany T	Digital Technology
Coburn, Isabelle E	General Excellence
Del Castillo, Lorena	Spanish
Duncan, Rachel E	German
Elliott, Ellyn C	General Excellence
Enriquez, Robert	Digital Technology
Ferguson, Ryan C	Further Mathematics, German, Physics
Gamble, Hannah M	Business Studies
Ghosh, Soham J	Computer Science
Gilchrist, Noah J	General Excellence
Glendinning, William R	Computer Science
Green, Eleanor E	General Excellence
Greer, Regan	Food and Nutrition, Religious Studies
Hasan, Noah D	General Excellence
Hayward, Theo P	Geography, Music
Hoogelander, Ebony M	Drama, French
Hooks, Holly K	Art and Design
Joseph, Alby	General Excellence
Kane, David G	General Excellence
Lennon, Lara S D	General Excellence
Loane, Ellen B	General Excellence
Logan, Sasha G	General Excellence
Loat, Sarah C	Latin
Mack, Joshua D R	Religious Studies
Majury, Abi E	History
Mallon, Sophia M	French
Marshall, Helen S	Art and Design
Martinovs, Edgars	Digital Technology
McCarney, Sarah P R	Chemistry, English Language, Mathematics, Physics, Spanish
McDaid, Connie	General Excellence
McGowan, Will H	Science
McGrath, Cara J	Spanish, Exceptional Performance
McIvor, Ellie F	Drama
McKendry, Calum	English Literature, Geography
McKnight, Abbie M	Latin



Morrow, Robbie J	English Literature
Mullan, Matthew H	Drama
Nazareth, EJ	Chemistry, Further Mathematics, German, Mathematics
Newton, Natasha H	Technology, Exceptional Performance
Raghuram, Riya	Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, English Language, French, Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Physics, Religious Studies, Exceptional Performance
Ramalho-McCourt, Sofia	Economics
Scott, Isabella C	General Excellence
Scott, Katie	Biology, Business Studies
Scott, H. Oliver	General Excellence
Shephard, Leah M	Art and Design, History
Spence, Charlotte B	Biology
Thompson, Hannah E	Geography
Toal, Kaitlyn H	Art and Design
Todd, Naomi E	General Excellence
Vasilache, Gabriela	General Excellence
Whiteside, Callum S	Music
Willey, Ethan J	Economics
Wylie, Max R	Business Studies
Zboralska, Emilia	General Excellence

HONOURABLE MENTION

Form V

Anderson, Ben M	Geography
Beattie, Olivia E	Business Studies, Food and Nutrition
Bingham, Ben G M	Science
Boyd, Jessica R	Further Mathematics
Calwell, Luke	Technology
Coburn, Izzy E	Biology
Coleman, Ross	Geography
Del Castillo, Lorena	Biology
Doran, Sophie	Physical Education
Drummond, Faith M	Business Studies, Food and Nutrition
Ferguson, Ryan C	Music
Gilchrist, Noah J	Chemistry, Drama
Gillam, Connor M	Economics
Green, Eleanor E	English Literature
Greer, Regan	History
Hayward, Theo P	History, Latin
Kandel, Anjana	Latin
Khosla, Aryan	Digital Technology
Laird, Ryan A	Digital Technology
Lennon, Lara S D	Geography, History
Loat, Sarah C	English Language
Mack, Joshua D R	Computer Science, German



Mallon, Sophia M	Technology
Marshall, Helen S	Food and Nutrition
McCarney, Sarah P R	Biology, Further Mathematics
McGrath, Cara J	Drama, Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Physics
McIvor, Ellie F	Music, Religious Studies
McKnight, Lucy	Physical Education
McLaughlin, Sarah E	Art and Design
Millar, Piaras	Science
Miller, JP G L R	Mathematics
Morrow, Robbie J	Computer Science
Mullan, Matthew H	Economics
Nazareth, EJ	French, Physics
Newton, Natasha H	Business Studies, Chemistry, Mathematics, Religious Studies
Pina Semedo, Ash	Spanish
Raghuram, Riya	English Literature
Ramalho-McCourt, Sofia	Technology
Rutherford, Sophie C M	German
Saunders, Anna	Physical Education
Scott, Katie	Chemistry
Spence, Charlotte B	Computer Science, English Language, English Literature
Thompson, Hannah E	Religious Studies, Spanish
Toal, Kaitlyn H	English Language, French, Physics
Trombino, Sasha A	Art and Design
Upritchard, Grace S	Drama
Vasilache, Gabriela	Spanish
Watson, Lucy-Beth	German
Watt, Cassie	Food and Nutrition
Wilson, Anna E	Music
Withers, Cameron M	Science
Zboralska, Emilia	Biology, French, Latin

DEPARTMENTAL PRIZES

Form LVI

Agbonkpolor, Timothy O	Religious Studies
Ahmed, Adrib	Mathematics, Physics
Baine, Siobhan M C	Physical Education
Beattie, Hannah N	General Excellence
Briggs, Mark D	Chemistry, Technology
Brolly, Shannon L	General Excellence
Buckley, Anna M	English Language
Cairns, Ella L	General Excellence
Carson, Kerrie P	History
Carter, Ethan L	Drama and Theatre Studies
Clarke, Eva J	English Literature, German, Latin
Cole, Eve L N	General Excellence
Craig, Katie M	Biology, Geography



Crawford, Hannah J	General Excellence
Dickinson, Jack A	Software Systems Development
Dillon, Ethan C A	Software Systems Development
Don Joseph, Alvin	Life and Health Sciences
Donaghy, Caitlin M	General Excellence
Donnelly, Ben C	Digital Technology
Duffy, Ethan J	Government and Politics
Elliott, Neil C	English Literature, History
Erwin, Maia	General Excellence
Gaspar, Denise Q	Spanish
Gergett, Sabriel L	Economics, Physics
Gillespie, Jack A	General Excellence
Golden, Ben E	Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics
Haken Keery, Emma	General Excellence
Hamilton, Sophie L	Sociology
Handcock, Lucy X	General Excellence
Harvey, Georgia R	Health and Social Care, Nutrition and Food Science
Hawela, Nada	Biology, Chemistry, Religious Studies, Technology
Hennessy, Caitlin	Physical Education
Hillis, Beth M	Business Studies
Irvine, Emma G	Sociology
Johnston, Alex R	Geography
Kennedy, Jayne H	Drama and Theatre Studies
Kerr, Susie M	Business Studies
Kirkpatrick, Molly E	General Excellence
Linton, Ella	French, Music, Spanish
Lough, Becky	General Excellence
Mahood, Thomas J	Government and Politics, History
Malone, Kathleen M	Art and Design
Martin, Ben E J	Spanish
McBride, Shannon R	Drama and Theatre Studies
McGoldrick Mathers, Eva	General Excellence
McGrath, Rachael E	Religious Studies
McGuigan, Joseph P	Mathematics
McHenry, Abbie	General Excellence
McIlroy, Grace J	Geography
McMahon, Ella E	English Language
McRoberts, Mia C	Art and Design
Misiunas, Domas	Technology
Murugaperumal, Veda M K	General Excellence
O'Neill, Abbie M E	Physical Education
O'Neill, Emma C	General Excellence
Ramsey, Rachel A	Health and Social Care
Reilly-Stewart, Maya R	French, Music
Seawright, Daniel J	Software Systems Development
Scott, Alex K	General Excellence
Shevlin, Mason L	Art and Design, English Language
Simpson, Alex C	Business Studies, French
Sloan, Jordan R N	Digital Technology
Thompson, Eve K	English Literature, Sociology



Wallace, Finn J	General Excellence
Warnock, Christina A	General Excellence
Wilson, Evan	General Excellence
Zilionis, David	Economics

HONOURABLE MENTION

Form LVI

Agbonkpolor, Timothy O	Biology, Chemistry
Allen, Giulia N	Physical Education
Askin, Ruby J	English Language
Beattie, Hannah N	Religious Studies
Beattie, Lauren A A	English Literature
Boersma, Sorchia C M	Government and Politics
Briggs, Mark D	Physics
Brolly, Shannon L	Art and Design
Burns, Catelyn J	Physical Education
Carleton, James L	Technology
Carter, Ethan L	Sociology
Cole, Eve L N	Business Studies, Geography
Crawford, Áine I G	Art and Design
Crawford, Hannah J	History
Cromie, Charlize	Life and Health Sciences
Dillon, Ethan C A	Mathematics
Dwyer, Rebecca N	Nutrition and Food Science
Elliott, Neil C	Latin
Garvin, Zoe A M	English Language
Hamilton, Sophie L	Business Studies
Handcock, Lucy X	Chemistry
Hillis, Beth M	Religious Studies
Irvine, Emma G	Drama and Theatre Studies, English Literature, History
Johnston, Maria C	French
Kerr, Susie M	Health and Social Care
Kirkpatrick, Molly E	History
Landa, Jessie K	Economics
Leavey, Nina P	Latin
Lough, Becky	Technology
Mahood, Thomas J	Geography
Malone, Kathleen M	Drama and Theatre Studies, English Literature
Martin, Ben E J	Biology, Chemistry
Mawhinney, Logan M R	Software Systems Development
McAllister, Harriett	French
McAuley, Sacha	Life and Health Sciences
McBride, Shannon R	Religious Studies
McGoldrick, Caleb R	Life and Health Sciences
McGrath, Rachael E	English Language, Health and Social Care
McGrath, Rebecca A	Government and Politics
McHenry, Abbie	Art and Design



Moore, Cullan H	French
O'Neill, Abbie M E	Biology, Mathematics
O'Neill, Emma C	Health and Social Care, Nutrition and Food Science
Osman, Lila A E O	Sociology
Peters, Gosha L N	Software Systems Development
Rooney, Martha-Rose D	Economics
Scott, Alex K	Physics
Scott, Matthew	Digital Technology
Simpson, Alex C	Spanish
Smith, Harry	Drama and Theatre Studies
Stronge, Charlotte J	Technology
Tharun, Jaana	Geography
Urbanczyk, Martyna N	Spanish
Varghese, Fabin	Business Studies
Wallace, Finn J	Physics
Warnock, Christina A	Spanish
Wilson, Carter W	Digital Technology
Zilionis, David	Software Systems Development

DEPARTMENTAL PRIZES

Form MVI

Adams, Louis T	General Excellence
Ali, Sarah N	Life and Health Sciences
Armstrong, Aoife M	Chemistry
Bell, Corey J	Computer Science
Bell, Jessica	General Excellence
Bloomer, Martha R	General Excellence
Bloomfield, Megan	General Excellence
Browne, Laura C	Drama and Theatre Studies, English Literature
Burton, Zach D	Computer Science
Cheung, Sinead Y	Art and Design
Corry, Aoife C	General Excellence
Crawford, Bryan J	General Excellence
Davidson, Jessica J A	Religious Studies
Davidson, Nathan J	Economics, Government and Politics, Exceptional Performance
Del Castillo, Monica	Physical Education
Dixon, Ciaran N	General Excellence
Doran, Leah	Physical Education
Dorman, Louise C	Art and Design, English Literature, Exceptional Performance
Enriquez Jr, Roosevelt	Software Systems Development
Gibson, John S W	Mathematics
Gossrau, Richard R	German
Graham, Yolanda D	Business Studies, Drama and Theatre Studies, Exceptional Performance
Harpur, Amy C	Spanish
Harvey, Ella J	General Excellence



Harvey, Michael A	Physics
Henderson, Eve	Drama and Theatre Studies, History, Exceptional Performance
Hetherington, Lauren	French, Spanish
Hughes, Eoghan	Art and Design
Hunter, Bethany J	Biology
Johnston, Amy S	Sociology
Lindsay, Kyle W	General Excellence
Marro, Giulia	Music
Massey, Katie-Rose	Biology, History
McCarter, Leah A	Technology
McClean, Nicole C	Physical Education
McClelland, Sam F	General Excellence
McCluskey, Jodie A	General Excellence
McConnell, Sam G	General Excellence
McCoubrey, Eden	Geography
McDowell, Amy	English Language, French, Government and Politics, Exceptional Performance
McFarland, Naomi S	Exceptional Performance
McIlroy, Daniel J	Latin, Software Systems Development
McIvor, Niamh E	General Excellence
McKee, Cameron J	French, Further Mathematics, Exceptional Performance
McMahon, Erin B	General Excellence
McMahon-Beattie, Lucy E	General Excellence
McQuiston, Erin K	Business Studies, Health and Social Care
Meadows, Zara M A	English Literature
Moore, Rowan T	Sociology
Moorehead, Jude C	Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Physics, Exceptional Performance
Noble, Molly D	Religious Studies
O’Kane, Anna E	Economics, Mathematics, Exceptional Performance
O’Neill, Joel A	English Language
O’Reilly, Jonathan D	English Language, Software Systems Development
Patterson-Wilson, Eve E	Music
Plackett, Rebecca E	Technology
Poots, Ronan D	Chemistry, Physics, Exceptional Performance
Quinn, Ceri L	General Excellence
Rea, Stuart J	Business Studies, History, Religious Studies, Exceptional Performance
Reid, Hermione K	General Excellence
Simpson, Ryan A	General Excellence
Skillen, Ben P	General Excellence
Smallwood, Amber	Technology
Taylor, Oran J	Spanish
Thompson, Aidan M	General Excellence
Thompson, Olivia G	General Excellence
Uprichard, Kerry	Health and Social Care
Wallace, Cain G	Geography, Sociology
Warke, Megan R	General Excellence



Watson, Ellie	General Excellence
Woods, Charlotte J	Life and Health Sciences
Wylie, Archie R	General Excellence
Worthington, Rees I	Geography
Young, Rhia E	General Excellence
Zhang, Mandy Y E	Biology, Exceptional Performance

HONOURABLE MENTION

Form MVI

Adams, Louis T	Chemistry
Armstrong, Aoife M	Physics
Baxter, Abbie L	Business Studies
Bloomfield, Megan	French, Geography
Boyd, Joshua A L	Software Systems Development
Bunting, Nathan	Life and Health Sciences
Carter, Cameron J	Sociology
Corry, Aoife C	Religious Studies
Crawford, Bryan J	Biology, Business Studies
Crowe, Olivia E	Nutrition and Food Science
Davidson, Jessica J A	Business Studies
Dobbin, Emma J	Drama and Theatre Studies
Gibson, John S W	Further Mathematics, Physics
Harvey, Ella J	Biology
Henderson, Eve	Government and Politics
Hunter, Bethany J	Spanish
Ingram, Harry W	Physical Education
Lindsay, Kyle W	Geography, Sociology
Marro, Giulia	Drama and Theatre Studies
McAuley, Cuann Sean S	Art and Design
McCarter, Leah A	Mathematics
McClelland, Sam F	Art and Design
McCoubrey, Eden	English Literature
McFarland, Naomi S	Chemistry
McGrath, Oliver A	Economics
McGrotty, Aaron C	English Language
McKee, Cameron J	Mathematics, Physics
McMahon, Erin B	Health and Social Care
McNeill, Jordan R	English Language
McQuiston, Erin K	French
Meadows, Zara M A	History, Spanish
Moore, Rowan T	English Literature, Government and Politics
Mulholland, Amy R	German
Murray, Ellie L	Geography
Noble, Molly D	English Language
O'Kane, Anna E	Biology
Poots, Ronan D	Further Mathematics
Quinn, Ceri L	Technology
Reid, Hermione K	English Literature, History



Robinson, Evan E
Seawright, Shannon R
Sheerin, Zoe
Skillen, Ben P
Snoddy, Olivia J
Taylor, Oran J
Thompson, Aidan M
Todd, Matthew J S
Wallace, Cain G
Warke, Megan R
Watson, Ellie
Wylie, Archie R
Young, Rhia E
Zhang, Mandy Y E

Nutrition and Food Science
Sociology
Drama and Theatre Studies
Religious Studies, Technology
Religious Studies
French
Health and Social Care, Life and Health Sciences
Physical Education
History
Life and Health Sciences
Technology
Economics
Spanish
Chemistry, Mathematics

SPECIAL PRIZES

ANNE BARRON PRIZE

(Ben Madigan)

Amelia E Manley

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON PRIZE

(English Literature)

Zara M A Meadows

FREDERICK WHITE MEMORIAL PRIZE

(For the top performance at G.C.S.E.)

Riya Raghuram

HAROLD RAINEY MEMORIAL PRIZE

(English)

Eleanor P Black

THE ANNE CAMPBELL CUP

(Nutrition and Food Science)

Olivia E Crowe
Evan E Robinson

J. J. KANE MEMORIAL PRIZE

(for contributions to 'The Owl')

Zara M A Meadows

THE MARK LONG POETRY PRIZE

Kathleen M Malone

T. R. COLLIER PRIZE

(Mathematics)

Jude C Moorehead

THE J. W. and EVELYN DARBYSHIRE AWARD

(Geography)

Eden McCoubrey

J. C. PICKEN MEMORIAL PRIZE

(Art and Design)

Sinead Y S Cheung

ANTHONY TAYLOR MEMORIAL PRIZE

(History)

Stuart J Rea



J. N. SHEARMAN MEMORIAL PRIZE (Classics)	Daniel J McIlroy
R. H. HARTE MEMORIAL PRIZE (Greek)	Oscar T Hill
G. B. TAYLOR MEMORIAL PRIZE (Mathematics)	Mandy Y E Zhang
TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN AWARD Sponsored by Envision Intelligent Solutions (GCSE Technology and Design)	Natasha H Newton
R. J. BRYCE MEMORIAL PRIZE (Irish Studies)	Neil C Elliott
THE W. L. CLEMENTS MEMORIAL PRIZE (Music)	Ronan D Poots
R. M. FANNIN MEMORIAL PRIZE (Music)	Matthew S Logan
McCORMICK PRIZE (English)	Katie E McCarney
ALLISON HERON PRIZE (Biology)	Mandy Y E Zhang
AMY DICKSON TROPHY and PRIZE (Art and Design)	Louise C Dorman
S. S. N. PIERCE MEMORIAL TROPHY (for outstanding endeavour at GCSE)	Holly E Strutt
TROPHY FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE PERFORMING ARTS (Presented by the Old Girls' Association)	Eve Henderson
MERVYN SEMPLE PRIZE (Chemistry)	Jude C Moorehead
R. S. J. H. MAGOWAN PRIZE (GCSE Geography)	Theo P Hayward
MARY A. HYNDMAN PRIZE (GCSE Home Economics)	Charlotte E Beattie-Logan
WALTER TATE PRIZES Economics Government and Politics	Anna E O'Kane Nathan J Davidson



Physics
Chemistry
Religious Studies
Sociology

Jude C Moorehead
Ronan D Poots
Stuart J Rea
Amy S Johnston

CLYDE PRIZE
(GCSE Religious Studies)

Regan Greer
Joshua D R Mack

McCLAY PRIZE
(Business Studies)

Erin K McQuiston

JACKSON PRIZE
(GCSE Science)

Riya Raghuram

KNOX PRIZE
(Physical Education) Leah Doran
Nicole C McClean

HAROLD HUTCHINSON PRIZE
(Religious Studies)

Nada Hawela

OWL TROPHY
(Presented by W. H. and J. Gray
for outstanding endeavour at Advanced Level)

Olivia E Crowe

SIR DONALD CURRIE SCHOLARSHIPS
(for the top overall performance in the Form)

Form I
Form II
Form III
Form IV
Form V

Keshav Raghuram
Malachy P Wallace
Katie E McCarney
Harrison S Kirk
Riya Raghuram

LEAVING SCHOLARSHIPS

SIR PAUL GIRVAN
J. M. CLEMENTS
SIR FRANCIS EVANS
WHITEHEAD
MAURICE JACKSON
HUGH GIRVAN
WALTER TATE
KNOX
ANTHONY TAYLOR
C. B. and A. M. MURRAY
McCLEERY
G. B. TAYLOR (Mathematics)
PICKEN

Rowan T Moore
Nathan J Davidson
Louise C Dorman
Cain G Wallace
Naomi S McFarland
Mandy Y E Zhang
Cameron J McKee
Yolanda D Graham
Jude C Moorehead
Anna E O'Kane
Ronan D Poots
John S W Gibson
Stuart J Rea



ARCHIBALD	Louis T Adams
BRUCE and PIM PRIZE	Niamh E McIvor
DR L.H. CAMPBELL (Chemistry)	Rhia E Young

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BURSARY

Amy McDowell

W. A. RAW BURSARY

(Modern Languages)

Lauren Hetherington

MacDERMOTT TRAVELLING BURSARY

(Modern Languages)

Amy McDowell

SHEARMAN TRAVELLING BURSARY

(Modern Languages)

Amy C Harpur

GLORIA SIDWELL (née KINKEAD) MEMORIAL BURSARY

(Art and Design)

Eoghan Hughes

J. S. LOUGHRIDGE BURSARY

(Geography)

Alex R Johnston

THE MONA McCONNELL CARES AWARD

Timothy O Agbonkpolor

TENNANT SALVER

(Chair of Sixth Form Centre Committee)

Jack T Sterrett

WALTER TATE ROSE BOWL

(Head Girl)

Erin K McQuiston

MARTIN PRIZE

(Deputy Head Girls)

Olivia J Snoddy

Rhia E Young

WHITEHEAD TROPHY

(Head Boy)

Cameron J McKee



ANNUAL PRIZE FOR BOYS

(Deputy Head Boys)

Jordan R McNeill

Jude C Moorhead

N. M. SAVAGE AWARD

(for the most impressive combination of academic attainment,
prowess in organized games and sense of corporate responsibility)

Megan R Warke

ULSTER UNIVERSITY ENDEAVOUR CUP

(for outstanding achievement throughout the year)

Ellie J Byrne

THE EVANS TROPHY

Currie

Captains:

Eva McGoldrick Mathers

Harry D Norton





**BELFAST ROYAL ACADEMY
SENIOR PREFECTS 2021/2022**

HEAD BOY : Finn J Wallace

HEAD GIRL : Eva McGoldrick Mathers

DEPUTY Adrib Ahmed
HEAD BOYS: Benjamin E Golden

DEPUTY Christina A Warnock
HEAD GIRLS: Ellie J Reid

BOYS

Ryan T Armstrong
Timothy O Agbonkolor
Jude S Black
Mark D Briggs
James L Carleton
Ethan L Carter
William B S Jones
Benjamin D Lonsdale
Logan M R Mawhinney
Harry D Norton
Daniel J Seawright
Harry Smith
Tristan L W Wallace

GIRLS

Siobhan M C Baine
Eva Bannon-Mutlu
Hannah N Beattie
Lauren A A Beattie
Sorcha C M Boersma
Anna M Buckley
Emma Connolly
Molly K Connolly
Hannah J Crawford
Rebecca N Dwyer
Maia Erwin
Denise Q Gaspar
Sabriel L Gergett
Emma Haken Keery
Lucy X Handcock
Georgia R Harvey
Nada Hawela
Caitlin Hennessey
Beth M Hillis
Emma G Irvine
Zoie Li
Kathleen M Malone
Rachael E McGrath
Kristie M A Monro
Veda M K Murugaperumal
Lila A E O Osman
Martha-Rose D Rooney
Rebecca Ross
Sarah M Saunders
Alex C Simpson
Jaana Tharun

School Societies

JUNIOR AND SENIOR MINI ART CLUB



Junior Mini Art Club took place each Tuesday lunchtime in the Art and Design department with monthly themed activities around adventure, magical worlds and monsters.



They also designed Artist Trading Cards and enjoyed exciting collaborative art projects. The success of this club was expanded this year to



include a Senior Mini Art Club each Thursday lunchtime to encourage those students interested in growing and developing their own personal art skills outside of the Art and Design subject curriculum. Senior students spent time improving their own art styles with encouragement and direction from the Technician, Laura as well as learning how to share and critique each other's artwork.

L.A.P.

JUNIOR SCRIPTURE UNION

This year has been challenging for all clubs and societies, however the Junior Scripture Union Committee and staff worked hard to ensure that pupils in Forms I to III were able to meet regularly and safely throughout the year and share the Word of God.

The year began slightly differently from previous years, as we moved venues to the Upper Floor of the Sixth Form Study Hall to ensure good social distancing between year groups. We studied the book of John, which allowed members of Junior SU to hear a variety of stories, some which they were familiar with and some of which they heard for the first time.

Committee members made use of the WordGo app which provides short devotionals focusing on specific books of the Bible. We followed the



course, focusing on John 1-6. This was a ten-week programme which included a daily passage of scripture, questions and a short explanation. WordGo allowed committee members to further understand the topics being discussed at SU the following Wednesday as we had all engaged with the passages throughout the week. This led to a strong correlation between the talks, games and overall the committee members felt more connected to both each other and to God.

The typical structure of Junior SU had to change as a result of the restrictions. We were unable to enjoy large scale games; instead the committee had to think of innovative ways to make everyone still feel connected within the Scripture Union family despite being socially distanced. The thirteen members of Junior SU committee took it in turns to lead a Wednesday lunchtime of SU. This typically consisted of two short talks led by members of committee, a fun game related to the topic or story and a memory verse which the pupils learnt.

Unfortunately, in the new year another lockdown resulted in our weekly Junior SU meetings being cancelled. However, the SU community showed strength and resilience by combining Junior and Senior Scripture Union into one big lunchtime Google Meet every Wednesday. These meetings allowed members of both Junior and Senior SU to come together virtually to hear the word of God during a time when many pupils felt isolated. As these lunchtime meetings were led by staff, the 2020-21 Junior and Senior SU committee members decided to create short videos and devotionals focusing on a variety of topics, including studies we had been working on, theology books we had read or worship songs we wanted to share with everyone. These videos and messages were then posted daily into the SU Google Classroom for pupils to watch and read. One pupil said, "I really



enjoyed watching the videos committee posted on Google Classroom. It was weird not seeing them standing at the front in the Study Hall, but it was really thought-provoking."

Around Easter time we were allowed to begin our 'in person' Junior SU meetings again in the Study Hall and all staff, committee and pupils were really excited to be back! We ended the year with a joint Junior and Senior SU barbecue in June at Ben Madigan grounds, which was a brilliant way to bring everyone together again and share the word of God. The day was a great end to a difficult year and despite the rain we managed to have an amazing time sharing faith, fellowship, food and lots of fun!

Natasha Newton (V)

SENIOR SCRIPTURE UNION OVER LOCKDOWN

When lockdown hit, most of the clubs and societies came to a standstill, including SU. Of course, this was devastating for all pupils, however, for the members of SU this meant losing out on learning about God. Subsequently, the Committee members and staff set out to ensure that the pupils remained proactive in their relationship with God. This started in June 2020 when the Committee members and SU staff got together over zoom and studied the book 'In the Grip of Grace' by Max Lucado. This involved weekly Zoom meetings with discussions about God, His grace and what it means for us. This was accompanied by the classic SU banter between the pupils and teachers that filled all the screens with smiles and laughter, which was amazing to be a part of during such trying times.

Moving into September, with restrictions still in place, SU was one of the very few clubs to start back within school. The Committee had to take a different approach to accommodate those who were isolating or those who would have to in the near future, meaning they would not be able to attend SU. The teachers introduced the app WordGo which is a Bible study app that allows you to read all books of the Bible and answer relevant questions on each chapter. The Committee decided to focus on the Gospel of John which illustrates Jesus' life and teaches us the miracles He



performed and what His teachings are; this app was used in both Junior and Senior SU. The Committee answered the questions of those who attended, and for those who were isolating, this format allowed them to still follow the readings for each week. Therefore, they didn't fall behind the others in school and were not missing out on learning more about Jesus. Alongside this, with the next lockdown, the teachers made a Google Classroom to keep SU alive and the pupils engaged with God even though we could not meet in person. The Committee took it in turns to upload a video each day with individual talks on what we had been learning in our personal Bible study.

During this time, we had online school, which meant we had online SU.

Every Wednesday lunchtime, like in school, we had a Google Meet which was led by the teachers. We also had a Zoom meeting with Ruth Dalzell from Scripture Union NI who taught us about the importance of a quiet time with God. This kept our tradition of bringing in speakers for SU.



Finally, the restrictions eased in June 2021 and SU were itching to get the chance to hold some type of event, as we had missed out on our 'Big SU Weekend'. We held an SU BBQ for present and

past pupils who had missed their chance at a last SU weekend. It was an afternoon filled with fun, games, burgers and of course a downpour of rain. We had speakers from Crown Jesus Ministries who talked about God's love for us and reminded us that He is with us even during all this confusion.



Overall, SU had a different and challenging year but nevertheless, we stayed strong in our faith and close to God. Proving that He never leaves us even when we feel lost. Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to bring you hope and a future."

Rachael McGrath (LVI)

JUNIOR BOOK CLUB GOES VIRTUAL

Junior Book Club did not stop when the lockdown began. Instead, the club began to run more frequently! Pupils met over 'Google Meet' to read online eBooks and discuss their thoughts on what they read. The book club encouraged critical thinking and debate around each text.

For book club members, reading has been a particularly powerful tool, enabling escapism and learning about different people, places and perspectives whilst living in a world filled with lockdown restrictions.

LIBRARY CLUB

At library club, pupils trained 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 included:

- 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

The pupil librarians gave up their free time before school, break, lunch and after school to fulfil their assigned duties.

E.M.

EXTRACURRICULAR MATHS

The school representatives continue to perform impressively in competitive, extracurricular Mathematics despite serious disruption due to COVID-19. The UKMT team competitions did not run but the Queen's competition did take place online. The senior team of John Gibson (MVI), Jude Moorehead (MVI), Ronan Poots (MVI) and Ben Golden (V) claimed an impressive second place finish.



Individual competitions moved online. This posed significant logistical challenges but was rewarded with strong results at all levels.

At Senior level, pupils achieved: 1 Gold, 7 silver and 14 bronze awards. In addition to his Gold Award, John Gibson (MVI) qualified for the British Mathematical Olympiad and earned a certificate of merit in this elite competition.



At Intermediate level, pupils achieved: 2 Gold, 5 Silver and 6 Bronze awards. In addition to their Gold awards, Riona Millard (IV) and Riya Raghuram (V) were selected to participate in the next round (the Pink Kangaroo) with Riya earning a certificate of merit for her performance.



At Junior level, pupils achieved: 1 Gold, 8 Silver and 3 Bronze awards. In addition to earning him his Gold award, Ryan Baird (II) qualified for the next round (the Junior Kangaroo).



Hopefully next year will afford more opportunities to engage with challenging Mathematics and represent the school at a national level as this is certainly a much missed aspect of school life.

S.C.S.

THE GREEK CLUB

This year, one Fourth Form pupil, Oscar Hill has been studying the first year of GCSE Ancient Greek, with a view to sitting the examination in June 2022.

Two other pupils worked hard to learn the Greek alphabet as part of their Bronze Award for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

The Classics Society was not held due to COVID-19 restrictions.

J.M.G

POLITICS SOCIETY

As many clubs and societies found, it was difficult to meet as we had before. But that did not deter a committed group of four LVI students from taking part in the Covid-proof Politics in Action group, a cross-community group of politically engaged young people from BRA, St. Malachy's and Dominican College. This year the meetings were held on Zoom and were once again very ably led by Ulster University lecturer and political commentator, David McCann.

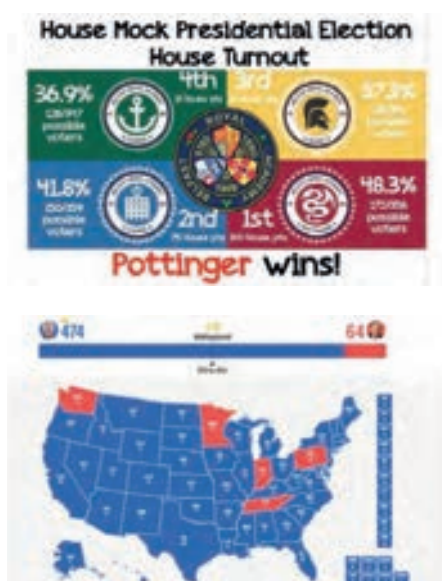
The focus of the group's work was about coming out of the pandemic and the impact it has had on mental health. During the course of the meetings,

held over several months, students contributed to group discussions, proposed ideas about help young people could receive from schools, youth organisations and politicians around the themes of mental health, sectarianism, equality and public services. They were also fortunate to have discussions with NI politicians. In our North Belfast cluster group, students questioned Robbie Butler and Nichola Mallon. Ruby Askin (LVI) made particularly challenging points to Robbie Butler. In the final presentation, made to Gerry Carroll, People Before Profit MLA for West Belfast and Nichola Mallon, Minister of Infrastructure and SDLP MLA for North Belfast, Sorchá Boersma led the discussion on public services, which was very well received.

The group were also treated to Zoom calls with various 'big names' of local, Irish and British politics, including deputy First Minister, Michelle O'Neill, Minister for Education, Peter Weir, former NI Secretary of State, Julian Smith and former Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar. These sessions were insightful, not least because through the Zoom call we got glimpses in their offices and homes; Michelle O'Neill's dog barking interrupted her on more than one occasion. Tara O'Neill (LVI) was also brave enough to put herself forward for Politics in Action TV, a YouTube broadcast in which she and another student gave their opinions on recent political events.



Finally, with it being a US election year, Politics Society was keen to allow students the opportunity to vote in the House Mock Presidential Election. As with 2016, each Tutor Group was given a state to represent and so we were able to follow the Electoral College system that the real presidential election uses (the election is not decided on popular vote).



Voting took place via Google Classroom, with students looking to exercise their (mock) democratic right digitally. With just Donald Trump and Joe Biden on the ballot, students could opt to spoil their ballot and still help their House win the House competition based on turnout.



The results were even more decisive than in 2016, with a resounding win for Biden, winning 474 electoral college votes to Trump's 64. The tutor group/state breakdown was also particularly interesting as it demonstrated, in both 2016 and 2020, that Form V boys are Trump supporters. Despite doing it online, the results information sent out to tutor groups presented the opportunity for discussion on whether the electoral college vote was fair, as Trump received just 12% of the electoral college votes compared to 18% of the popular vote.

In the House competition, which was based on turnout, Pottinger again took the glory with 48% turnout. Cairns beat Shaw to second place, with Currie bringing up the rear. Despite the challenges

this year, it was a great event and should serve to remind us again that our votes do indeed matter.

K.S.B.

KARTING

After an absence from the race track last year due to COVID-19 restrictions, it was with great excitement that Form I had their first taste of BRA Karting on Wednesday October 4th at Need4Speed, Doagh. The 16 pupils raced well and returned impressive lap timings. For many this was their first time in a kart, and they spoke of how it was a little scary at first but that the experience gave them courage. Many said that they enjoyed the competitive aspect of racing against each other and competing against the leader board timings.

We hope to run a house event so that all pupils can compete for house points and the 'Campbell Cup 4 Karting' which has been kindly donated by Dr. Louis Campbell who has supported the BRA Karting club for many years.

Congratulations to all who took part but especially to those who achieved the fastest lap times: (1st) Kady Graham (2nd) Dexter Thompson (3rd) Bryn Hewitt.

P.C.P.

SCHOOL COUNCIL REPORT 2020-2021

It was a busy but disrupted year for the School Council in 2020-2021. The School Council held its annual non-uniform day in October. The Pupil and School Council chose to split the money raised for this fund-raising activity between Jigsaw CCC, NI Children's Hospice, Lighthouse and TAMHI. Representatives from each of these organisations received cheques for £600 at whole-school Assemblies in December.





The School Council decided to recognise Anti-Bullying week in November by organising a number of whole-school activities and various Assembly presentations. Representatives from the School Council also took the lead in devising and implementing an 'Inclusion, Diversity and Equality' pupil questionnaire. Results from this questionnaire were relayed to all pupils during various whole-school assemblies and also to Senior Management. The results will be used to formulate and plan future policies.

The School Council was inspired by the Netflix film 'Yes Day' and implemented its own version in May. All pupils were encouraged to collect as much money as they could for Marie Curie and NI Children's Hospice. Pupils were encouraged to get friends/family members to sponsor them; give up their pocket money; do extra chores around the house; help a neighbour/relative etc. Pupils who raised the most money were able to present their 'Yes Day' proposals to Mrs Woods and she had to say 'Yes'!!! Over £1700 was raised by this initiative. All pupils who participated were treated to ice cream with 5 of their friends. One lucky Form II pupil was also able to take 30 of his friends to the cinema.

Other issues discussed by the Pupil and School Councils throughout the year included the food provision in the canteen; ways to reduce litter

throughout the school site; recycling facilities; and the possibility of the installation of bike racks.

The Head Boy, Head Girl and their deputies addressed whole-school assemblies regarding these various issues in December.

T.H

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

The last school year has been one of the most challenging for our DofE participants. The pandemic had daily implications for us all, with online learning, working from home, testing and contact tracing all becoming the new normal, and with ever-changing rules and guidance from many different sources. Trying to keep some normality was a challenge at times, never mind taking on a new DofE challenge!

However, in the midst of this our membership remained strong with a whopping 370 pupils continuing to work on their DofE Awards - 173 of whom signed up in September 2020 when everything was very much uncertain.

Due to COVID-19 we were unable to run the vast majority of our expeditions, although, with a lot of perseverance, we were able to finally get a handful of the MVI Gold participants through their Qualifying section after a few false starts (and just as they were finishing their school career rather than the summer between sixth forms). The legacy of this year is going to be tough to overcome, with many participants unable to enjoy the challenge of their Expedition section at the normal time.

In recognition of a very difficult time since March 2020, and because expeditions were nearly impossible to run, DofE have been issuing Certificates of Achievement for anyone who completes the Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections of their Award. To achieve this, the participants have shown their determination to keep on going, to push themselves and in many cases, think outside the box in order to safely do their activities. They have also had to work with Assessors in a different way since face-to-face contact has been severely restricted, or even impossible at times. Some have arranged to chat on video calls with their Assessors or share fitness



tracker app screenshots to verify their progress.

Volunteering for your community was something many of us naturally progressed to, and our participants were no different; checking up on neighbours, gardening or doing shopping for those who were isolating, video calls to keep the loneliness at bay...Some industrious participants designed online quizzes with an extended network of family and friends, collected litter from their favourite walking haunts, did an Urban Conservation project or wrote letters to sick children and their siblings.

Potentially, the most easily completed section turned out to be Physical, with many of our participants tracking their daily walks or runs that had started as a way to get out of the house, some of which built up into challenges to raise money for charity.



Many of us naturally tried learning a new skill over lockdown, and our DofE participants were no different - including learning Yoruba (a West African language), sign language, cookery and an online sailing navigation course.

In the last school year, we have had 3 Bronze Awards, 11 Silver Awards and 3 Gold Awards successfully completed, alongside 14 Bronze, 6 Silver and 1 Gold Certificate of Achievement, which is a fantastic achievement in itself considering the difficult circumstances.

The total number of awards gained from 1984 to date are: Bronze – 1,457; Silver – 736; Gold – 480.

Congratulations must go to the past pupils who gained the Gold Award - Jennifer McCorry, Keeva Drummond and John Miller - and to Fabienne Cochrane who completed her Certificate of Achievement.

Our participants also managed to log 1,131 volunteering hours between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, a social value of £5,146!

We are indebted to the many people who were willing to give of their free time to make possible the huge undertaking of the Expedition section. We sincerely thank the following volunteer supervisors who generously gave their time and assistance whenever possible this school year:

- Matthew Blair
- Holly Grant
- Peter McArthur
- Maurice Miller
- Catherine Nelson
- Gary Nelson
- Dennis McArthur
- Shelley Wilson



Very special thanks must also go to the following people: Maurice Miller, Holly Grant and Shelley Wilson for their outstanding contribution in overseeing all aspects of the Expedition section; Shelley Wilson and Holly Grant for Award administration; and to Niall Mowbray and Margaret Mullan from the Education Authority for very valuable assistance with administration work.

Although the Volunteering, Physical, Skill and Residential Sections are primarily co-ordinated and supported by the DofE staff, we still have school staff members who run various activities enabling the participants to complete their sections. We would like to thank the staff of the P.E. and Music Departments for all their much appreciated help throughout the past year. Many thanks are due to the numerous members of staff who gave up their time to act as Skills Section Assessors.

Thanks must go to Maurice Miller for his help in looking after our finances.



We would like to say a huge thank you to the school office staff who have been fantastic, as always, helping us collect forms etc. and distributing participants' logs, projects and other important information.

In conclusion, 2020-21 was a highly unusual year for everyone, but one in which our participants have shown an even greater resilience, determination, initiative, drive, commitment and a sense of responsibility to others than what we would normally expect.

We are incredibly proud of those who are pursuing their Certificate of Achievement and remind them to keep in touch.

Finally, pride of place and congratulations must go to the following pupils and past pupils who gained awards during the past year:

	CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT:
BRONZE AWARD Jack Coyle (V) Emma Dobbin (MVI) Lucy White (LVI)	BRONZE Ryan Cowden (IV) Natasha Morrison (IV) Hannah Convery (IV) Darragh Quinn (III) Aimee Courtney (IV) Matthew Rankin (IV) Haydn Dillon-Wright (IV) Ieuan Mclean (IV) Alana Joseph (IV) Georgia Crawford (IV) Josh Manson (IV) Grace Ogilby (IV) Elyse Taylor (IV) Sophie Burns (IV)
SILVER AWARD Siobhan Baine (LVI) Hannah Beattie (-) Hannah Crawford (LVI) Emma Dobbin (MVI) Georgia Harvey (LVI) Alex Johnston (LVI) Abbie Mchenry (LVI) David Monahan (MVI) Sarah Saunders (LVI) Ally Shaw (-) Christina Warnock (LVI)	SILVER Alby Joseph (V) Benjamin Dewhurst (V) Kate Sturgess (V) Lara Lennon (V) Noah Hasan (V) Peter Richardson (V)
GOLD AWARD Keeva Drummond (-) Jennifer McCorry (-) John Miller (-)	GOLD Fabienne Cochrane (-)



GOLD EXPEDITION (MVI) PROJECT - DUKE OF EDINBURGH DURING THE PANDEMIC

Leah McCarter

This year's expedition was very different from my Bronze and silver awards, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. My DofE experience was just one of the many things affected by this over the past 18 months, from practices having to be repeated, to disappointment at expeditions being cancelled. Government guidelines were changing regularly and right up until days before our final expedition, we were unsure whether we would be allowed to camp. This meant we were effectively planning for two scenarios; one with camping and the other would have involved travelling home from the Mourne every evening. The process of completing the expedition section of the DofE was much more drawn out because of COVID-19 and unfortunately this meant that some teammates dropped out. Groups had to change, and numbers were greatly reduced. Our final expedition involved only 7 participants. To complete the expedition, we all had to be flexible and adapt to these changes. I am very glad to have been able to complete my gold expedition given these challenging circumstances.

Alongside the differences in how the expedition was run, we also made several observations while walking and camping. The first thing I noticed while on my expedition was the increase in numbers of people walking in the Mourne. Being inside for so long and having many activities closed has encouraged the public to turn to the Mourne for both exercise and entertainment from the long days at home. I hope this increased popularity will be continued and many people can continue to enjoy the beautiful Mourne Mountains. However, there are also some negatives to increased popularity. Throughout our expedition we noticed increased littering. I believe this is directly related to the public enjoying this space more often. As people are deciding to camp in the hills, they are bringing litter such as plastic wrappers as well as tents, barbeques etc. and discarding these after camping. If this continues, litter in the Mourne could become a major problem.

There were also some big changes to how we completed our expeditions. For our safety, we camped in separate tents. This made it necessary to carry extra clothing for warmth in case of cold nights as well as increasing the time taken to prepare for the night after a long day of walking. Because of this, we camped in the same location each night, being picked up at checkpoints which we would navigate our way to each day. This made the whole expedition feel less connected as we were unable to have one continuous route throughout the four days. Whilst on the bus, we wore masks to protect ourselves and others. This was not a big change as we have got very used to wearing our masks over the last year during this pandemic. Other things we did to ensure our safety included using hand sanitiser regularly and cleaning surfaces of equipment after using, for example, the Trangia.

Overall, this pandemic has changed so much in many people's lives, including activities like DofE. Making these small changes to how we completed our expedition was a small price to pay to allow us to complete our gold DofE.



Evan Robinson

When the first wave of COVID-19 hit we had already completed a training and practice weekend and had a date for our expedition. Lockdown resulted in the qualifying expedition being cancelled. Autumn of the next term in school and a provisional second qualifying date was set and we were told we must complete another training weekend. A few participants left as the dates didn't suit or they no longer wanted to take part. The training weekend was carried out in order to comply with the COVID-19 guidelines so this meant we had to abide by social distancing regulations. We were given one tent each and



instructed to stay 2 meters apart and wear masks at the campsite and on the bus. It was hard for some people to stay in a tent on their own. The weekend was hard mentally as we had done a training weekend already for Gold and knew all the map and compass skills.

As the date of the Qualifying drew closer, the number of cases was rising and, as a result, two weeks before we were due to go, the weekend expedition was cancelled again. We began to wonder if we would ever get a chance to do it. The rest of the year passed with yet another lockdown and it wasn't until around May 2021, just as we were finishing our exams, that we were asked if anyone was still interested. Most people didn't respond because they had forgotten about it, or given up, and some couldn't make the proposed qualifying dates. This left a mix of seven interested people from different groups, who came together to form a single group to head into the qualifying weekend.

Once again, we had to attend another training session, but this time it was just a refresher which made it a lot more bearable. Masks were worn on the bus and we only carried a day ruck. Right up to a couple of days before we were due to leave, we were worried that it wasn't going to happen again or that we might have to make our own way to and from the Mourne every day for four days. Then the Stormont Executive lifted the restrictions and our routes and plans were accepted.

We made sure to adhere to all the COVID-19 regulations, so this meant using hand sanitisers at all times, wearing masks on the bus and being in a tent on your own. These restrictions had to be followed if we wanted to get a chance at finally completing our Gold Award expedition. We all just wanted to get it finished, so the rules about social distancing and masks didn't annoy us that much. We camped in the same place every night so we didn't have to put up and take down our tent each day and carry it in our rucksacks on the hike. However, in case of an emergency, everyone carried their sleeping bag and we split two tents and a Tranja between the group. This did feel a bit pointless but in comparison to what we would have carried pre-COVID, we didn't complain. Being thrown together into a team made up of people from different friend groups was difficult at the

beginning but as the weekend went on we started to gel, work together and become more of a team.

Nathan Davidson

My Duke of Edinburgh Gold award began normally in Lower Sixth with classes, akin to those in Bronze and Silver. In addition, we had a training weekend in September 2019, in which everything was normal, where tents were shared. Obviously, there was no consideration of how that could possibly change.

Then everything changed in March 2020, when there was a lockdown; most of us probably believed that this would maybe last for a month or so. I wasn't tremendously worried about the DofE at this point, mainly due to the novelty of being at home and off school. It had caused our practice weekend to be cancelled, which was scheduled for April 2020. We most likely thought that we would get back to it, before entering Middle Sixth. However, that didn't happen.

This then meant that the leaders were anxious to get our Gold done quickly, as they had another year group waiting to do Gold now. Therefore, it was arranged that we would do another training day (as the last one had expired), the practice expedition and the Qualifying all in the space of two months, September, and October. The reality of COVID-19 had made its mark on the training day, as I recall Cuann having to join us via Zoom, as his sister was getting tested for coronavirus. Then a few weeks later, we had the practice expedition, the main differences being that we were rooted in a singular campsite at Torybush cottages, with everyone being in individual tents and the presence of mask-wearing of the minibus. Other than that, it was pretty normal, in my opinion.

Once we had finished the practice, we were preparing ourselves to have to do the real thing in the middle of October, however, nature intervened and DofE was once again cancelled. I didn't believe that it would resume for at least 4-5 months, since we were entering the winter months and that October was probably the latest it could take place before March, due to the cold temperatures. Then there was a national lockdown in January 2021, therefore putting the Qualifying into the long grass for at least three or four months, if the one in 2020 was anything to go by.



We then had confirmation from Holly in June, that the qualifying would indeed go ahead on the 10th-13th of July and that we would have to a third training day before the qualifying. This was definitely a relief, given that we could finally get it over and done with. However, the delay of over a year had meant that the cohort had dropped to a mere seven.

However, we still didn't know until a few days before the expedition whether we were going to be allowed to camp, as the DofE regulations hadn't changed to allow that. This would have meant getting picked up and dropped off every day, which would have been a further alteration of the Duke of Ed experience, even more than camping in a singular spot had already changed it from Bronze and Silver.

Overall, I am incredibly glad we were able to get Gold done; obviously it would have been preferable to do it when it is normally undertaken in the summer of LVI, however, beggars can't be choosers.

Ryan Creaney

The COVID-19 pandemic, which changed the world forever in so many ways, brought the planet to a complete halt for the better part of two years, and only recently have things began to return to a sense of normality. Among those areas that were affected by the pandemic, such as the cancellation of all international travel, schools and even basic socialising, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award too had to cease its operations in regard to safety of its assessors and participants.

At the beginning of 2019, our Gold award was just getting into full swing. The beginning of the year brought us back into the way of map and compass work, as well as general safety for being in the hills. This was done through refresher classes at our base of operations at Belfast Royal Academy. Not long after these classes we took to the hills for the first time since Silver Qualifying to complete a training weekend, putting our newly refreshed skills into practice again, whilst getting our fitness back into line and getting used to our tents once again. Little did we know that this would be our last outing with the award scheme for almost six months due to the first lockdown imposed by the government. During this time, it was personally

very difficult for me, as someone who enjoys working with others, playing sport and generally being around people, it was all taken away for a gruelling period of time. As previously mentioned, not only did our expeditions have to stop, but for most of us, our other sections within the programme such as volunteering etc. all ceased as well.

Much later in the year, certain restrictions were eased, and as what we needed to do was outdoors, we could once again resume our plans to carry out our qualifying expedition. As it had been so long, yet another training day was required before we were able to partake in an actual practice expedition. The practice would be held over a weekend, instead of an actual four days and three nights, with a few changes to how things worked. The two major areas came regarding transport and tents. Any time we were to be moved via minibus or entering a building, a face covering had to be worn at all times, which for me was no problem at all. The biggest change in my opinion was that, due to the social distancing measure, it was now a maximum of one person per tent, which honestly was, and still is, music to my ears, as I could enjoy my own personal space and not have someone snoring in my ear.

After being back out in the hills and being prepared and ready to finally attempt the qualifying expedition, a hint of déjà vu was given to us as a second nation-wide lockdown was imposed. For me, this time around it wasn't so mentally exhausting as we had online classes to take our mind off things, whilst also giving us a routine to stick to. At this point, in regard to DofE, nobody knew if the award would ever go ahead for our cohort. It did feel almost like defeat that we had given so much time and energy into something that would just simply fade away.

In the summer of 2021, around two years from the start of our Gold award, we were told that we had one opportunity only to complete the Qualifying in the month of July. Beforehand, we embarked on a final training day to tidy up our skills that we would need for our Qualifying. This day certainly proved to be 'third time lucky' as it was thankfully the last training day we had to complete. A few weeks after, the day had finally arrived to begin the four-day haul to finish this particular section. To



keep it brief, the four days were very challenging, at some points making me question if it was worth it. However, upon completion, there was a great sense of satisfaction and achievement among the group, and I could be proud that I persevered and got the job done.

To close, COVID-19 certainly took its toll on the Duke of Edinburgh Award, especially with our group, as you could never plan or know about an expedition. Overall, this expedition may have ended up meaning more to us than before, as not only did we complete a great achievement, but we also did so during one of the most difficult time periods our generation may ever have to face.

Ryan Simpson

My Gold Duke of Edinburgh began in Lower Sixth and started in the same way as Bronze and Silver. It began with the usual night training classes, with the training weekend in September 2019. Our expedition was set for Summer 2020 and was to be conducted in the Antrim Hills. Then in March of 2020 the COVID-19 lockdown hit with promises of a two-week lockdown. I assumed the award would take place as usual, in the summer, before we entered Middle Sixth.

This was not the case, now that another year group was registering for Gold, which put pressure on the leaders. They aimed to get our expedition over September and October of 2020. We then completed another training day, as the other one had expired, in preparation of our upcoming practice and Qualifying. The practice took place in September, but the way in which the expedition was carried out differed significantly. Now there was a need for face masks on the bus and single tents alongside one fixed campsite rather than camping in different locations throughout the 4 days. The expedition, apart from these changes, felt like any other DofE expedition and went very smoothly. With the practice over, it was time to prepare for the real thing in October. However, due to a spike in COVID-19 cases, new restrictions meant it could no longer go ahead. After the long lockdown from January to March, I thought the prospects of being able to complete the expedition were quite slim.

However, with exams to focus on, DofE went to the back of my mind until we received news from

our leader in June 2021 that it was being held from the 10-13th of July in the Mourne instead of the Antrim hills. This was the final chance to get it done and all fingers were crossed that it would go ahead. However, we were still unsure whether we could camp as restrictions were due to be lifted only days before the expedition. This would have meant being dropped down each morning and picked up each night. This would have meant a huge change to DofE when compared with my experiences of Bronze and Silver. The final expedition was confirmed to go ahead but with only one group as many had fallen by the wayside over the last year and a half.

Overall, I am glad we were able to get the expedition done. Obviously, it would have been preferable to be done in the correct year and to the previous specifications but completing a Gold award is still an achievement.

Cameron McKee

Before words such as COVID-19, pandemic and social distancing were commonplace in our everyday lives, I, along with forty-odd other classmates, started my Gold Duke of

Edinburgh's Award in September 2019. Everything went ahead the same as it had done for the countless years before us, the only difference for our year being a complete lack of candidates for the canoeing expedition. We had our several classes on Thursday nights, and afterwards, sat the standard test on the content of those classes - for which we were separated to different desks roughly two metres apart (but at this stage only to prevent cheating!) Eventually, we embarked on our first training day in October, where I sat beside my mates on the bus, slept in a tent with a person roughly half a metre away from me on either side, and shared a Trangia with 3 or 4 different people. By the end of the weekend I returned home, excited for the practice expedition that was to come and our qualifying expedition in Scotland that following summer. All that was to happen before then was the Bronze classes, where us Lower Sixth mixed freely with the Third Year pupils. Sadly, not all went to plan.

The first effect that COVID-19 had on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award was the cancellation of the Bronze practice and qualifying expeditions in the



Easter time which a few of us Gold Leaders were supposed to be helping out on. Initially, this struck me as convenient as it would mean that I would have more time to revise for exams. However, with the continued cancellation of expeditions such as our own Gold practice and qualifying, it started to become clear the impact that this pandemic was going to have on not only our Gold award, but on everyday life as we knew it.

Throughout the months from March to August, only a single message was sent into our group chat, simply explaining how each of our award sections could still be completed, even if in different ways to before. I, personally, have not changed my activities to be anything more pandemic-friendly as I am still determined to complete those which I started almost two years ago.

Finally, the summer-long silence was ended with an out-of-the-blue message from our Leader Holly, outlining the plans for a final push to get both of our expeditions completed in time for the new season of Duke of Edinburgh commencing that Autumn. For the first time, those who had only ever taken part in the awards scheme because it was convenient to them, were whittled away, with nearly 20 participants dropping out, more than halving our number to a remaining 18. An emergency tent sorting afternoon was held, and only a few weeks later, we now 3 teams found ourselves back in the Mourne.

Not only did it feel good to start making progress towards completing our award, but it was refreshing to be back in the hills hiking again. Speaking for myself at least, barely, if any, hillwalking was done by me or many other teammates during the first lockdown. This was due to the fact that the Newcastle area was an illegally far journey for anyone to travel from the Belfast area for the purpose of exercise. Nevertheless, COVID-19 was far from a distant memory and its effect was still very much evident on our expedition. Most notably (and most enjoyably) there was to be no more sharing of tents. Therefore, rather than bringing six tents between us three teams, we instead brought 14 - one for each individual team member. This measure was taken in order to reduce our time in a confined space together. However, there still remained two long bus journeys there and back, as well as several

minibus journeys throughout the expedition and the organising of equipment back at the school. To help reduce risk on these occasions, masks were to be worn at all times when not outside (although I think we had all already grown very well versed in this practice by the time September 2020 rolled around). In addition, smaller measures were taken such as no sharing of food between team members and sanitising the containers of water given to us by the leaders before returning it to them. Even though these many things were influenced by the pandemic, the amount of walking set for us each day was not, and we still found ourselves with sore feet and in need of a bath by the end of it all.

Before leaving the school grounds on that September night, I remember our leader Maurice warning us that the positive COVID-19 cases in Northern Ireland and the UK were dramatically increasing and we would need to have the Qualifying expedition ASAP. With this being planned for only two and a half weeks after finishing our practice, we all thought that it would surely go ahead. Unfortunately, two days before we were meant to go out, we heard news for the second time that Duke of Ed had been cancelled. Spirits now low again, I, along with everyone else, started to doubt whether we would ever be able to complete our award. Another silence of over seven months fell on the groupchat as there was once again nothing to be done about it. Once again, we were locked in our homes, teaching went online, and the Mourne became too far outside of exercise zones.

Fast forward to exactly two days after we as a year group had finished school, and nearly a year after we had been meant to complete our Gold, it was announced that, with the same restrictions as our previous practice expedition, a qualifying date was looking possible. The only issue was that since it had now been well over a year since our training expedition, we were going to have to embark on a brief training day. When the dates were laid out for us, each participant's commitment to completing the award was put to the test as our numbers were one final time whittled down another 11, leaving our final team of 7. After a very chilled out training day, returning to the Mourne for the first time in nearly a year, all of our suspicions that only the best walkers remained were confirmed. With my previous team, there had been doubts as to



how we would complete the full four days of the Qualifying, but now, with this brand new team that COVID-19 had gifted us, there was no doubt in our minds that we would not only complete it, but enjoy it very much too. With masks on, our own personal bandicoots, and plenty of hand sanitiser to go around, we completed our four full days of walking, under these restrictions that now felt like second nature to us.

It has been a very challenging 16 months for everyone, myself included, but when it comes to Duke of Ed, I am very proud to be able to say that I was a part of the team that persevered and completed our award during the pandemic.



DOFE VOLUNTEERING: URBAN CONSERVATION – DARRAGH QUINN (III)

Location: At my home, at my extended family home within COVID-19 guidelines from 1st April until 30th June 2021, (three months).

Goals: As part of the conservation option, I hope to give nature a home: to support bees, butterflies and birds. I hope to provide a wildlife garden for the animals and insects that visit my garden while promoting biodiversity. I intend for example, to let the grass grow promoting insect life, make a compost heap, grow flowers and climbers that attract and feed certain insects, butterflies and birds, create a mini pond, build insect hotels and bird boxes.

Activity Log:

Since leaving my grass to grow we have created a wildlife haven and encouraged the growth of many flowers, whilst giving the ground time to recover

from the winter and frosts. I have also planted more flowers and shrubs and found that my garden is now home to many more bugs, insects and birds.

I have spent time making bird feeders to encourage the birds of all kinds to come into my garden using recycled and household materials.

Having left my grass to grow and planted particular plants, I have attracted some beautiful butterflies. insects and frogs to my garden. I even discovered some very bright green caterpillars. My wildflowers have started to spring up and my strawberries are now flowering for the 2nd stage of their growth.

I also spent a couple of hours in my local park searching for natural materials for my bug hotel, and photos have been uploaded showing each stage in making my Bug hotel. I have loads of visitors already for their staycation....:).

My strawberry plants have now grown their fruit. I grew some home strawberries, some for the fruit-eating birds, insects and caterpillars and of course some for me!

Photos have also been uploaded of insects at the bug hotel, my new plants, my overgrown grass and wildflowers in bloom which are encouraging all sorts of bugs, flies, bumblebees and now butterflies.

ART in nature:

I have drawn masks in Art class, designed by me, inspired by the wildlife in my garden and local park.

I thoroughly enjoyed this project as it gave me a great opportunity to play a small role in providing habitats and food for insects, birds and frogs while using rich variety of natural resources. With the rapid expansion of urbanisation and the depletion of green areas it was wonderful to create a project that helped nature thrive on my doorstep.

What my assessor thought:

“Darragh worked over a number of weeks to complete this task. He planned and created each task to ensure it was a success. and put a lot of thought into each section. His project has been a success and it has been lovely to see insects using the hotels and frogs and birds in the garden as a result of his efforts.



Darragh not only achieved his goal but gained additional skills during the project. He researched the project and gained knowledge in finding out the environmental importance of the project. He gained planning and research skills by planning each task and by researching how to create bird feeders, the pond and bug hotels. He sourced all materials used locally from reusable material. He used his skills from Technology class to create and build everything himself. He gained gardening skills by planting colourful plants to attract bees and birds and succeed in turning a small garden into an attractive place for bees, insects, butterflies and birds.

Well done Darragh on bringing wildlife into your garden. You put a lot of effort into this and the results are brilliant."



DOFE NEW SKILL: COOKERY - PETER RICHARDSON (IV)

During the first COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and restrictions, I decided to use the time to learn a new skill, cookery at home. This had a double benefit for me as I developed skills in cookery which would benefit me in life and I was also able to use this towards my DofE Silver award. I chose to try preparing, cooking and presenting dishes that I had never attempted before, as well as learning new skills such as using the barbecue and baking. I followed recipes to make the following:

- Scones
- Meringues
- Classic Tomato Spaghetti
- Pizza
- Chicken Chasseur
- Smoked Brisket
- Bacon Cheeseburger
- Spaghetti Carbonara
- Sizzling Steak Stir-Fry
- Poached Eggs on Toast
- Goopy White Chocolate Cookies
- New Potato Salad with shallots, parsley and vinaigrette
- The Perfect Steak
- Victoria Sponge Sandwich

What did I enjoy the most?

I enjoyed looking up the recipes and deciding what to try, then learning how to prepare and cook all of the above dishes and treats.

My personal favourite was the pizza, although it did not come out perfect the first time I tried it and was messy to make.

The family had two favourites, Spaghetti Carbonara and Classic Tomato Spaghetti, both of which were tasty and presented well when served. These two dishes are now regular meals I cook at home.

What dish did I enjoy preparing the least?

The dish I found the most time consuming to make was the Chicken Chasseur. I underestimated the amount of preparation work required.

What did I learn to do differently?

To present the food better when plated and some dishes needed to be tweaked to get the perfect dish.



The dish that I needed to tweak was grilling the steak on the barbecue, as it was a bit undercooked for me and my family first time around. I have now got the timings just right and the steak now comes off the barbecue grill- perfect and ready to eat.

What have I learned from this experience?

How enjoyable learning to cook meals from scratch is.

Would I say give it a go?

Yes, it is something that anyone can try and it is a useful life skill to have.





Music in School

MUSIC IN SCHOOL 2021/21

With COVID-19 restrictions in place, many rehearsals were unable to resume but a bunch of intrepid pupils in Chamber Choir, Senior Traditional Group and Senior Strings attempted to rehearse in a socially distanced manner. Rehearsals resumed every morning and Friday lunch-time and in no time at all we had learnt a couple of pieces for Prize Day. However, the country was soon plunged into an extended two-week Hallowe'en break and Prize Day was moved online, so we decided to save those pieces for a performance at a later date.

After Halloween we turned our attention to the forthcoming Carol Service in Belfast Cathedral. With no congregation being allowed to attend, we took the decision to record the service during the day and post it online at 7pm that evening (when the Carol Service would normally happen). Belfast Cathedral was a wonderful acoustic to perform in although it was incredibly weird performing to absolutely no one. The Chamber Choir sang the usual festive stalwarts with Stuart Knox (Form 2) opening the service with the first verse of Once in Royal David's City. Ms Maebh Martin and Callum Whiteside (V) were the organists for the occasion. The Senior Strings performed a Christmas Carol medley and the Senior Trad performed the Wexford Carol with Ronan Poots playing the uilleann pipes solo. Many thanks must go to Ronan who kept Senior Trad going throughout a very difficult year.

I naively assumed that there would be some form of online Spring Concert in March 2021, but with the announcement on 30th December that schools would not re-open after the Christmas break, I quickly realised that this would not happen. Once schools reopened in March 2021, we set about recording the GCSE, AS and A2 practicals, before the students sat their final track exams.

What a strange year that was! I missed music-making terribly and the banter in the Music

Department. After one week of lunch-times without any rehearsals, I started going slightly insane. I am especially sorry to miss the Spring Concert of this year's MVI – Eve H, Aoife O'H, Ronan, Matthew, Ellie, Megan, Ella, Erin McQ, Anna, Kate, Aoife A, Emma, Louise, Roan, Giulia, Eve P-W, Nicole, Rebecca and Cuann (apologies to anyone I've forgotten). It promised to be a fabulous concert. I will have fond memories of you all for a long time and I hope you continue to enjoy performing music in your chosen path.

M.M.M.



School Games

CRICKET



Despite the COVID restrictions, it was heartening to see some cricket being played. There were upwards of 75 Form I and II boys at practice every week. Competitions were run at junior, intermediate and senior level. It is a credit to both pupils and staff that these games were played. The 1st XI played four matches in the season with the highlight being the defeat of Ballyclare High. We travelled to Ballyclare, who, having won the toss, inserted us to bat first. We got off to the worst possible start as James Carleton was out bowled by the third ball of the match before we had progressed the scoreboard. Adrib Ahmed and Max Wylie steadied the ship, but they were a little too circumspect. When Max was run out on the first ball of the 6th over, we were reduced to 13-2. This brought Olly Scott to the crease who provided a bit of impetus to the innings, not through bludgeoning shots, but by energetic running between the wickets. Olly's 21 was to prove our top score (save the 25 extras Ballyclare presented us with) before his innings ended disappointingly as he chipped

a catch to extra-cover. Only Adrib (17), Ryan Armstrong (11) and Adam Gooderham (10*) of the others made it to double figures as we posted 102-8 in the 20 overs available.

Ballyclare's reply started well as Olly Scott's radar misfired and presented them with a few wides, helping them to 13-0 after 3 overs. Ryan

Armstrong then had 2 wickets in 3 balls, clean bowling McCallen and Wightman. When he added the wicket of McAllister in his next over we were in the ascendency, reducing our hosts to 17-3 after 6 overs. Then came easily the best batting of the match as Gillespie (60*) was supported by McIlrath (17) and helped by some very ordinary fielding by the BRA boys. The dropped catches could and should have cost us the match as this pair progressed to 71-3, needing 31 off 5 overs. Olly Scott returned, radar adjusted and clean bowled McIlrath and Scarlett 2 balls later. From there we did well to starve Gillespie of the strike and see it home by a margin of 7 runs; Armstrong (4-11) and Scott (2-9) by far the pick of the bowlers.

We lost to both Wallace High School and RBAI's 1st and 2nd XI. The Junior XI had a fine win against RBAI and lost to strong Wallace and Campbell sides. Our under 12XI played very well in their game against Wallace High School, despite their defeat. The Intermediate team lost narrowly to Strabane Academy in the Cup competition. My thanks go to Mr Harte, Mr McCarey, Mr Creighton, Mr Rowntree, Mr Warke, Mr Burton, Mr Hughes and Mr Stewart for their help throughout the season.

I.M.G.



NETBALL

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions, there was no competitive school netball this year. Players managed to do some outdoor training and availed of the newly marked outdoor practice court at school.



Nada Hawela and Catelyn Burns were identified as potential future International netballers. As part of this elite training, the girls were selected for Netball Northern Ireland's Emerging Warriors programme. This included not only developing their netball skills and tactics, but also undertaking a Strength and Conditioning Programme. The players thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity!

Both coaches and players hope to see netball return to school next year and look forward to getting back to competitive matches on court.

K.E.B.

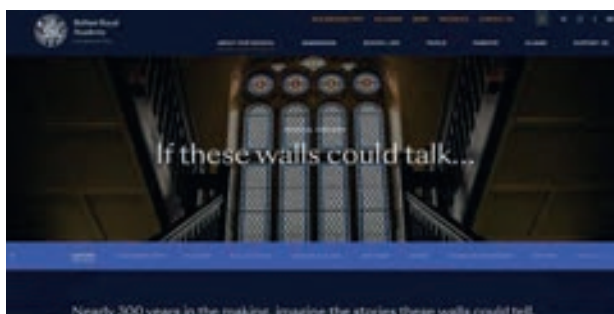


Trips and Events

LAUNCH OF NEW SCHOOL WEBSITE



We are very excited and proud to announce the launch of a complete redesign of the Belfast Royal Academy website. The website has been designed and built to provide a comprehensive overview of all aspects of day-to-day life at the School, as well as being more user-friendly with improved accessibility as well as providing a wide range of key information and resources for current and prospective parents and guardians and for our alumni. This major project has taken over six months to complete and was undertaken with the assistance of Belfast-based brand and web agency, Pale Blue Dot. In addition to a clean and easy-to-navigate design, key features of the site include new sections on transport links, term dates and the school calendar, up-to-date latest news and access to all our statutory documents and policies. The project also included the design of a new website for Ben Madigan Preparatory Department.



One aspect of the new website that we are particularly proud of is the stunning photography of pupils and the School estate that is featured throughout, in addition to a new school video. The aim of the website redesign was to communicate

the School's vision and values, improve communications with families, staff and the wider community, raise the profile of Belfast Royal Academy, as well as being a vital resource for current pupils and parents.

You can visit the new Belfast Royal Academy website at www.belfastroyalacademy.com

J.E.H.

WELLBEING WEEK 2020

Our annual Pupil Wellbeing Week 2020 was under the heading of 'Self-esteem'. Representatives from the local mental health charity TAMHI spoke to all pupils in Forms III, IV and V about this very important topic and gave useful advice on how pupils could build up their resilience.

During our Wellbeing Week, pupils were treated to a 'Staff Jukebox' each morning within their Class Tutor groups. Staff members nominated their favourite song. The song that received the most votes within a particular Class Tutor set was played. There was also the opportunity for pupils to receive House Points during their Tutorial period by guessing the member of staff by just their smile.

Form I and II pupils had the opportunity to win a £10 Victoria Square voucher by solving a clue to help them find Dr Springer dressed up as Wally in a 'Where's Wally?' challenge. Kate Emerson was the first pupil to solve the clue - 'Roll up, Roll up! Come see the striped man. In sight of building filled with words, And by the place where Form I go, Trek down the serpent path, And turn to find the hidden one. Roll up your sleeves, Come get involved! Find Handford's man, And claim the prize!', and therefore won the £10 voucher.

During the week, there was also a Form I Extra-curricular Fair organised by the Head Boy and Head Girl and their deputies, and the start of the ASPIRE programme for Form V pupils organised by external agencies YeHa and Streetbeat.



WHERE'S WALLY?

As part of Wellbeing Week 2020, the now annual 'Where's Wally?' competition returned. Forms I and II were issued a clue at the end of period three and then let loose over lunch to find me hidden around school dressed as the famously covert lover of red and white attire. The clue is below if you would like to see if you can solve it (some knowledge of the school's geography is required). The answer follows later.

Roll up, Roll up!

Come see the striped man

In sight of building filled with words,

And by the place where Form 1 go,

Trek down the serpent path

And turn to find the hidden one.

Roll up your sleeves—

Come get involved!

Find Handford's man

And claim the prize!

And if you solve this cryptic clue

Then I'm impressed and props to you.

There was the usual trepidation that I might not be found and had donned a ridiculous outfit just to sit alone in the dark for the duration of my lunchtime...feeling a Wally in every sense of the word. The solitude gave some time to reflect on the flaws of my poetic attempt and the unique aroma made eating lunch a challenge (a cat once made its way into this corner of BRA and its efforts to mark the territory have stood the test of time).

The final step in locating me required some initiative and many pupils could be heard outside realising they were in the correct vicinity but unable to locate the ridiculously attired maths teacher that was their quarry. I sat poised in the gloom with my iPad ready to capture a photo finish (in the event of any appeals as to who was first to set eyes on me). There is a disconcerting sense of nervous anticipation in being hunted down by 450 junior pupils as one cowers in a stripy jumper amongst old crockery, suitcases and a broken pram.

Finally, the shutter rolled up and Kate Emerson (I) and Ahmed Haridy (II) were the first sighted by me. They participated in a tie break (finding Wally on an A3 image) and Kate then won this stage to be

declared the victor, thus gaining house points for Cairns and an individual prize of a Victoria Square voucher.



Thanks to all the teachers who shared the clue, well done to all the pupils who took part and apologies to all subjected to my attempts at cryptic poetry.





Solution:

Roll up, Roll up! (*Encouragement to roll up the shutter*)

Come see the striped man (*My attire*)

In sight of building filled with words, (*Louis Lord building*)

And by the place where Form 1 go, (*Form 1 playground*)

Trek down the serpent path (*The long, winding ramp*)

And turn to find the hidden one.

Roll up your sleeves- (*Another roll reference to encourage the last step*)

Come get involved!

Find Handford's man (*Author is Martin Handford*)

And claim the prize!

And if you solve this cryptic clue

Then I'm impressed and props to you. (*It is the Props store*)

S.C.S.

FOTA EVENTS

UNIFORM SALE

Our summer uniform sale was held in July 2020, in the Jackson playground. Thankfully we had a dry and sunny day for this. Social distancing a dry and sunny day for this. Social distancing meant we were only able to let a certain number meant we were only able to let a certain number of people in at a time, with parents queuing in of people in at a time, with parents queuing in the frothe front car park. The sale was a great success nt car park. The sale was a great success and very appreciated by parents.and very appreciated by parents.

We normally hold a second uniform sale in old a second uniform sale in November. Unfortunately, we were unable to November. Unfortunately, we were unable to proceed with this this year due to low stock proceed with this this year due to low stock levels and the impracticality of an outside levels and the impracticality of an outside location at that time of year.location at that time of year.

The lack of a second uniform sale during the orm sale during the school yearschool year meant there was an even greater meant there was an even greater appetite for the sale, again held outside,

in July appetite for the sale, again held outside, in July 2021.2021.

Many thanks to everyone who assisted with the logistics of running these sales, particularly the gatekeepers who had the task of collecting gatekeepers who had the task of collecting details for Track & Trace purposes.details for Track & Trace purposes.

FORM I PARENTS' BREAKFAST



One of our most important events is the Form I Parents' breakfast, held at the end of August, to welcome the parents of new Form I pupils. Again, due to the pandemic, this could not be held in August 2020.



We did not forget about this though, and in June 2021, were able to hold a "Brown Paper Bag" breakfast. As with the uniform sale, this also took place in the Jackson playground, with the very gratefully received addition of a marquee. Despite the breakfast being 10 months later than normal, there was a strong turnout from parents who



appreciated the opportunity to meet with other parents.



A breakfast for the parents of new Form I pupils for the 2021/22 academic year was able to take place at the start of this school term. This also took the form of a “Brown Paper Bag” event and again was well received by parents.

Again, many thanks to all who assisted with these events.



Alison Monroe

FOTA FASHION SHOW



Having been involved in many fundraising events previously, I knew that a Fashion Show was always a hit, especially if the models were familiar faces to your audience. Where better to gather models

than from the school community, staff and pupils? So the idea was hatched! Myself and my husband attended school at the same time as Nicola Glass - then Creative Director of Kate Spade - I messaged her asking if she would be able to send FOTA a handbag for a raffle. Nicola replied promptly, asking more information and saying she could send some of her new Spring/Summer collection for us to show.



This exciting news started the momentum and it was decided the theme of the show would be local talent/designers/businesses. Old Girl and now with her own children attending the school, Claire McCollum was delighted to be asked to be our compere. I approached other companies and the final list of those taking part included Cercle Boutique, Joli, DV8, OutsideIn, Suitor Bros, Bluebird, Madlug and the finale of Kate Spade NY.





Kathryn Sturgess, OG and Mother of Rob and Kate Sturgess

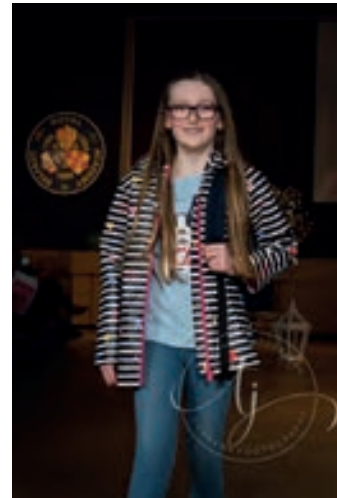
When Mrs Sturgess approached FOTA with her innovative idea for the Fashion Show, we were all delighted. When the Committee approved the idea, I was designated to recruit models from the Academy's pupil and staff cohort.



Many people, with some gentle persuasion from Mrs Burns, relished the idea of being a model for the evening. Staff members chose their outfits from fashionable boutiques whilst Academy students spent the morning in the Abbey Centre with myself. If anything has prepared me for



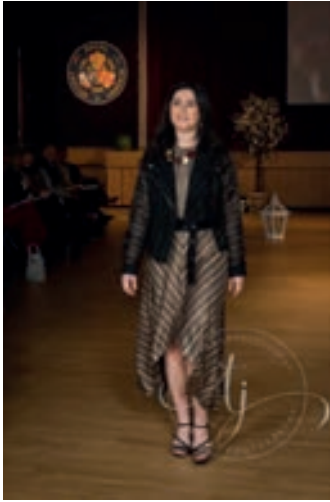
parenthood, it was that morning with twelve students, telling them what they could and could not wear to the fashion show.



The day before the show, we were very fortunate to get some catwalk training from the professionals- Tracy and Teresita from Style Academy. Some models were like ducks to water, whilst others were in dire need of further practice.



When the night finally arrived, the energy backstage was electric. Our guests were not only entertained by the talented dance team but were gifted with an array of items from our sponsors.





As models filed out to Mr Jamison's playlist, things started to get real. The furore was voltaic and definitely encouraged the nervous models waiting to go on. A memorable moment was when Dr Brown stepped onto the stage, leaned over the banister and waited for the crowd to compose themselves. Naturally, it took a while.

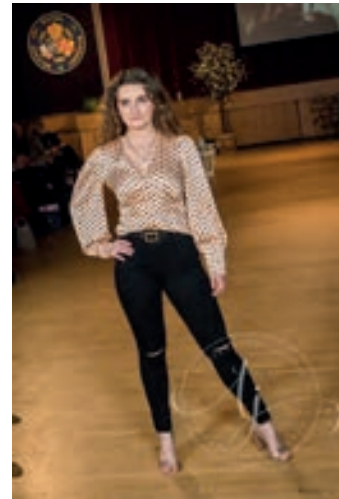


As a Kate Spade model, I was last to go on; there is no doubt that I was petrified. However, when I joined Miss Watson, Mrs Chambers, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Sheeran and Mrs Woods, I felt better.



From the applause, it was evident that the FOTA Fashion show was a very successful evening. Thanks to Mrs Sturgess' idea, a substantial amount of money was raised for such a worthwhile cause.

K.L.W.



MODEL LIST (IN RUNNING ORDER)

Joli

Orla Glenn
Naomi Watson
Amy Rea
Paula Hill
Sorcha Lavery
Nuala Loughran
Kim Tepe
Tanya Crozier
Helen Cathcart
Patricia Ferguson

Cercle

Sharon Ardis
Wynn Graham
Louise Patterson
Kristy McIntyre

**Bluebird**

Sophia Simon
 Marley Hammill
 Halle Sinnerton
 Eva Sinnerton
 Niamh McKenna Murray
 Dexter Thompson
 Charlotte Ingram
 Petra Keeling
 Bo Stewart
 Grace Cunningham

OutsideIn

Eva Hayward
 Lorca Convery
 Nik Kane
 David Russell
 Sophie Mills
 Olivia Quinn

DV8

Connor McVicker
 George Patterson Wilson
 María Morton
 Daniel Blayney
 Corey Mitchell

Bhuvanesh Venkatesan

Isabella Scott
 Kate Sturgess
 Timothy Agbonkolor
 Rhia Young
 Eve Patterson Wilson
 Amy Harpur
 Corey Mitchell

Suitor Bros

Paul Martin
 Olly Mort
 Geoff Brown
 DJ Creighton
 Ryan Patterson
 Ross Coulter

Kate Spade

Brenda McCracken
 Hilary Woods
 Robyn Chambers
 Mary Sheeran
 Hannah Watson
 Kayleigh Williams







THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a re-evaluation of library services and how they could be provided in a safe way. Planning the reopening of the school library in September 2020 involved reading CILIP guidance, liaising with senior leadership, reviewing risk assessments and putting measures in place for safety and cleaning procedures, involving quarantining library items.

The Librarians felt it was useful to view this situation as an opportunity to see what the library could do to keep staff and students reading and accessing quality resources to support their studies.

Even a pandemic didn't stop Accelerated Readers at the Academy! The Accelerated Reader programme continued to be successful for both Forms I and II. Although we weren't gathering for parties this year, to continue our best social distancing practices, pupils were still being rewarded often for their hard work with prizes sent home! We were not able to travel the world during the pandemic, but our staff and pupils "travelled" in the comfort of their own homes with good books!

Timetabled library lessons continued for pupils during lockdown. Our Accelerated Reader programme was made accessible from home. Our pupils were able to continue taking tests on the books they were reading. We even ended up with our highest performing pupil on the programme since its introduction to the school in September 2012. A massive well done to Heaven Raju on such a massive achievement!

ACCELERATED READER-MILLIONAIRE READERS

Despite the lockdown, twenty-four pupils from Forms I and II managed to become millionaire readers. Huge congratulations to all our top readers for the 2020/21 academic year.

Place	Pupil Name	Words Read
1	Raju, Heaven	8,001,689
2	Ward, Daniel	4,456,371
3	Campbell, Maya	3,603,420
4	Scott, Alexander	3,090,007
5	Suresh, Arjun	2,830,427
6	Murphy, Eleanor	2,077,536
7	Banasik, Luna	2,045,877
8	O'Kane, Finn	1,997,860
9	McCrea, Toby	1,977,089
10	Convery, Charlie	1,834,996
11	O'Kane, Aoife	1,688,119
12	Crooks, Katie	1,573,078
13	O'Kane, Matt	1,517,285
14	Kearney, Clodagh	1,500,794
15	Wilson, Mya	1,480,791
16	Ogilby, Daniel	1,318,268
17	Duffy, Zara	1,306,583
18	Lockhart, Samuel	1,243,721
19	McCullough, Vincent	1,229,993
20	Jones, Ema	1,126,671
21	Laverty, Ciaran	1,103,877
22	O'Carroll, Ella	1,085,037
23	McKeown, Eve	1,073,945
24	Gilmore, Madison	1,073,519

THE BIG DISNEY LOCKDOWN QUIZ

We can't deny it, we went absolutely quiz mad at the school library during the lockdown! Quizzes were a fabulous way of bringing pupils together remotely. COVID-19 has been a truly unprecedented crisis, beyond anything that any of us have ever faced before. At the Academy we've been adapting to this surreal and bizarre new way of life, as best as we could, with the help of some exciting Disney quizzes along the way.



Four big Disney lockdown quizzes took place during lockdown. The number of pupils participating in the quizzes from home was utterly outstanding. We had lots of fabulous prizes up for grabs. Canvas book bags of Disney characters were highly sought-after prizes. We also had beautiful die-cast metal collectors' figurines of popular Disney characters such as Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Kermit the frog, Buzz Lightyear and the Cheshire Cat, to name just a few.

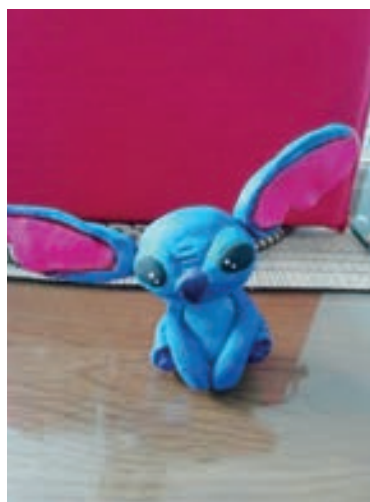


We also had our very own handmade Disney quiz mascot! The fabulous clay figurine of Stitch from Disney's 'Lilo and Stitch' was made by Madhu Pandiaraj from Form III.

Pupils received questions in many different formats. The most popular was our picture rounds and our cryptic clue rounds. The cryptic clues certainly provided a linguistic workout. Double-meanings and wordplay were taken to mind-bending new levels. Why not challenge yourself to

a sample of some of our Disney cryptic questions below? Each clue should lead you to the name of a Disney film. Good luck!

1. Mixed up scar
2. Not scared
3. Brick barrier and a vowel
4. Change just one letter of this Disney title and you're in a European city
5. Ship stealers from near Cuba
6. The existence of an arthropod invertebrate



Answers

1. Cars
2. Brave
3. Wall-e
4. Mulan
5. Pirates of the Caribbean
6. A Bug's Life

ACADEMY LIBRARY HOSTS LITERARY QUIZZES IN AID OF OUR NHS





The school library hosted its **BIG BUMPER BOOK QUIZZES** weekly since the return to school in September 2020. Junior pupils met weekly during lunch to take part in the fun literary quizzes. Pupils were quizzed on a wide range of topics and the pupils competed in groups of four. There were many exciting topics including:

- Potions in Harry Potter
- Name the Fairytale
- Shakespeare
- Complete the title
- Reading the Roald Dahl Menu
- Christmas in books
- Songs in books
- Disney
- Dads in books
- War
- Animals in books
- Classics

Individual spot questions were also asked at the end of the rounds. Some examples of spot questions were:

- Which Hogwarts student has a first name that has a significant association to a dragon?
- What birds are used instead of mallets when Alice is playing croquet with the Queen of Hearts in Alice and Wonderland?
- In Lemony Snicket's 'A series of Unfortunate events', what does Violet do to help her think?



The quizzes in the school library brought much joy to junior pupils, at a time when this was so very crucial. Special edition 'Love heart' Swizzels sweets were purchased as prizes for the quizzes. This is because all profits from these special edition bags go directly to the NHS.

The specially branded NHS Love Hearts sweets feature messages such as Thank You, My Hero, Be

Kind and Smile. The message is focused on sharing the love, and at a time when this sentiment is more important than ever. The funds will be donated to a dedicated Intensive Care Unit research fund, part of Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, and will contribute to the continued research into COVID-19.



We'd like to give a big thanks to all NHS staff, working tirelessly on the frontline to care for people in need, and to NHS support staff working behind the scenes, in the fight against COVID-19.



MAGICAL VIRTUAL WORLD BOOK DAY CELEBRATIONS!



Lockdown could not prevent the young wizards of BRA meeting to mark World Book Day 2021. Excited wizards from the school met virtually to participate in Harry Potter quizzes during lunchtime.



One day had simply not been enough to celebrate their huge love for reading. The school library hosted a week-long celebration of all things Harry Potter to celebrate.



Do you know how many staircases Hogwarts has? Do you know the maximum speed of a Firebolt broomstick or how many possible quidditch fouls there are? These are the types of challenging questions our pupils faced in the quizzes.

It was fantastic to see our pupils engaging remotely with one another and celebrating World Book Day and their love for reading. Free copies of special books published for World Book Day were posted out for pupils to enjoy and keep.

E.M.



Literary Contributions

FIRST DAY RAP

My first day was kinda great,
Cause I met Nelly at her gate.
We walked and talked about the school
And how the day was gonna rule.
We're both in Shaw, which is the best,
Because we never lose in a test.
My English teachers are real fun,
Cause they are as bright as the sun
When I got home to my surprise,
My parents were waiting with a surprise!

Rebecca McKeown (I)



LOCKDOWN HAIKUS

The gold sun rises;
Every day is always the same,
Drowning without death.

Hannah Hanif (I)

Watching the seconds...

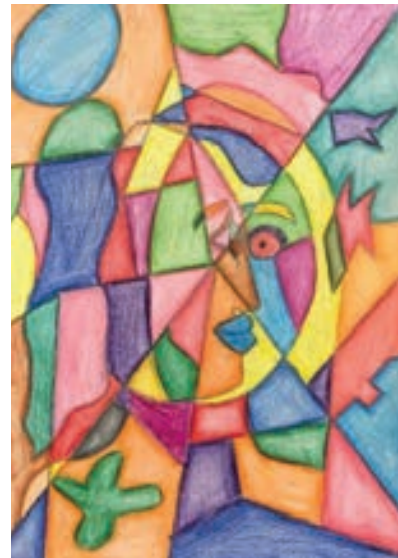
Slowly becoming minutes...

Then becoming hours....

Alexander Scott (I)

I did online school.
It wasn't really that cool,
But I made it work.

Oscar Hilditch (I)



Well done to Middle Sixth pupil, Zara Meadows, whose poem "Growth" was published in the 'Fighting Words' section of The Irish Times, a feature which celebrates young Irish and International writing.

GROWTH

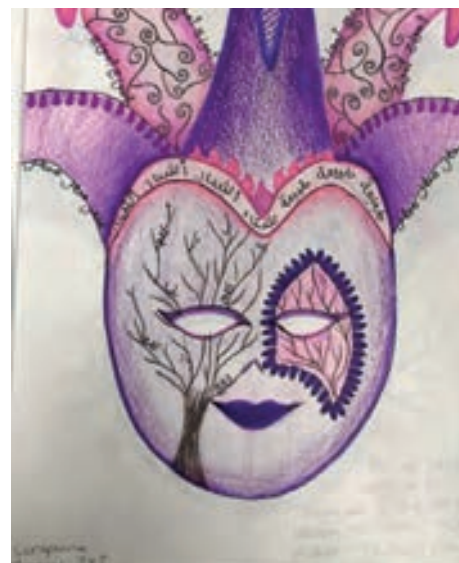
These words have ripened- I am aware
of their bursting around the edges, their
distinguished
outpouring of sweetness, polite assassinations
jouking round the juiced-up corners
of my imagination, apologetically
wrathful. Coming to write at all is coming to
sink your knuckles deep into rot, to



leave your stains behind in the blank spaces
between stanzas
to thumb out the letters that will fill them in.
It is to heave lungfuls of language and feel your
breath
blow open a thousand dictionaries, spit marks
on footnotes, sticky prints on page numbers, to
clutch
a question mark in your fist like a sword
in a stone. Tomorrow
I think I will dance in a full-stop field,
tongue a phantom protagonist, get wine-drunk
on a satisfying denouement. But now
it is helpful to know your way around
the black opening of a tonsilled alley, out of which
a million guttural hacks are phlegmed every day- it
will be these
that first define you. They will knot your eloquence
like a clumsy Boy Scout, hang you gagged
and yearning for a sentence. If your opened
wounds
are not peppered with salt once you've
saved the word document, all of it was nothing
but a few etchings of inky software, the clot-gluey
dregs
of a knife- scraped jam jar
You are responsible for this clarity, this
opening of yourself for leisurely auction-write only
on what the world will surely understand. In the
tradition
of a thousand poets before me, this was about
blackberries- but you had to know
at least one deep metaphor about fruit to really
'get it'.

Zara Meadows (MVI)

The poetry of several students was published in a special anthology entitled "Write to the Heart." A number of year groups took part in the Community Arts Partnership's "Poetry in Motion" initiative



earlier in the year. Lower Sixth Student, Kathleen Malone, went on to win the Seamus Heaney Award for Achievement for her poem, "Daniel's Piano." Form III student, Niall Blaskett was



'Highly Commended' for his poem, "Melodies of Memories." Congratulations to all students whose work was selected for this anthology.



DANIEL'S PIANO

There was always one note that never jived
On Daniel's old, faithful piano.
One weighted key that wasn't sharp enough
To unlock the doors of our troubled songs,
Or catch the thinning strings of our disquiet.
That key told us we lived in dissonance;
That our makeshift family lacked rhythm,
Always beating out of time, grasping for
Rhyme to lead us as we went. Truly we
Were making it up as we went along.
But sometimes there was birdsong, and we had
Made a sanctuary full of all music-
Even if my pseudo-brother couldn't
Sing like me or other boys led in choir,
Even then. With music we could aspire.
Even as we saw it fall apart and we
Searched for a melody in the wreck.
But all we found was that note. It was flat.
And this time it would cost too much to fix.
It would cost us the last shred of harmony.
The last line; the last note; the last

Pause left lying in our tablature.
So we broke apart and went a cappella,
Lamenting alone. Without accompaniment.
Left only with an arpeggio of the past.
Even Daniel's Piano couldn't make it last.

Kathleen Malone (LVI)



PAINTING SHIPS

Today's work left a blister.
A jutting, bloodshot tongue
Turning my words into a whisper.
Those words in water they seem to swim
In a liquid, thick, incarnadine.
It tells me I am sick, and I will die.
And try as I might to take a breath,
My depths they ache, my soul is tired,
The air I make is puss and bile.
There's a sickness in me, I know,
But I've no other place to go,
My life is labour, plumbous and stiff,
Always waiting on another shift,
Knuckles knotting, never stopping,
Enslaved by this flicking wrist.
My life itself seems to drip.
My blood is lead, flaked and thick,



The paint becomes my fingertips.
My memory is burning now.
I don't know my own face.
Only a muddy, leaden reflection.

Kathleen Malone (LVI)



MELODIES OF MEMORIES

The keys stand before me,
The notes fill my mind,
There's nowhere that I'd rather be
Than here, leaving doubt behind.
The music sits upon the stand,
Photocopied, dog-eared, well worn,
I channel the notes from eyes to hand,
Knowing this was why I was born.
The first note rings out, loud and clear,
Transferred to keys from stave,
And I know as the sound reaches my ear,
There's no path I'd rather pave.
For I am a musician at heart,
This piano, my soul, my life,
To me, there is no greater art
Then hearing sound cut silence like a knife.
The harmonies then start to build,
The melodies too, and then

All around, the air is filled,
As the notes ring out again.
The piece draws slowly to an end,
V-I, the chords resolve,
I stand up, take a bow, and send
Joy as the mystery of silence is solved.
For music is my love, my passion,
My light within the dark,
Never out of fashion,
In flooded tears, my Ark.
The ebony and ivory
Sit solemnly beside,
And deep within my heart, I see
That music never dies.

Niall Blaskett (III)



YOU REALLY GOT A HOLD ON ME

It soothes, delights and motivates
Whenever life gets me uptight
And in my sleep, I contemplate
To recall some lyrics throughout the night
Its aura seems to connect others
An aspiration for joyful lots
Still then, I'll think, in darkest hours
Of four Liverpool moptops

Zachary Gomito (I)



THE CREATURE

The creature's timid and soft nature,
Is feared by most people.
Its tiny little feet move swiftly throughout the halls.
It doesn't like to boast, one of its humble sort of features.
Its long pinkish tail, its tiny button nose
Its lengthy whiskers, its beady black eyes.
Its kind little face, to his family he goes,
In his hole his little baby lies.
The baby is awaiting her dinner as is his wife.
And he knows, so the first whiff of cheese draws him in.
He runs towards it and is about to take a bite,
SNAP! The trap goes down, the human has sinned.
The little creature lies on the floor,
Its family scared and alone, in their little house,
This poor creature, was
A mouse.

Beatrice Seath (I)



UNCONDITIONAL

We play together every day
We run and tumble in the hay
I throw her treats and make her bark
Being with her is such a lark.
With her brown and gracious eyes
She looks at me and gently sighs
And then I lightly stroke her head
And carry her up to my bed.
In the morning she wakes me up
My beautiful, loving chocolate pup
I adore my dachshund, my Coco bean
To me she is never, ever mean.
No need to shout it but it's true
The warmest heart of our crew
Her love needs no amplifier
Nor the help of a town crier!

César Spack (1)



HOW DO I WRITE THIS POEM?

I cannot keep delaying.
 Why am I so stressed about it?
 How do I write this poem? How do I lay it out?
 Do I use witty writing? Does it need to rhyme?
 I have begun my research
 And the panic won't go away.
 I only have a few days.
 Surely I will know what to write by then.
 YouTube wasn't much help!
 Turns out I'm too young for Seamus Heaney.
 The standard seems so high.
 Will I ever get this done?
 There are so many things to choose from.
 Life, Lockdown, Love or Loss.
 Why is this so hard!?
 Wait! I've got it! I know what to say.
 Now it's time to get started...

Evan Craig (I)



STRAY CAT

Stray cat, stray cat
 Wanders in the snow
 Little does she know, that

Predators are laying low.
 The fur creeps up her back
 As she peers around
 Someone creeps up behind with a sack
 And scoops Stray Cat off the ground.
 Stray cat, stray cat
 Meows so loud
 Where she's going, she knows that
 It isn't homeward-bound.
 Crunch, crunch, goes the snow
 And the 'predator' opens a door
 What to do, where to go
 Stray Cat doesn't know anymore.
 Vroom vroom, goes the car
 As it sets off at speed
 Stray Cat wonders where they are
 And the things that she might need.
 Soon the door is opened
 Stray Cat is taken into the warmth
 She doesn't know where she's going
 Until she sees her best friend, Morph!
 Stray Cat is greeted warmly
 And she isn't scared anymore.

Claire Fox (I)





Music is by your side,
Because music can be found anywhere,
From CD's to online.
And music proves everyone wrong,
By making them happy.
Nobody knows how important music is,
In today's living society.
So if you are feeling down,
Anxious, angry or depressed,
Go to music for help,
Because music just beats the rest.

Kian Gastar (III)



THE BEAUTIFUL NATURE OF MUSIC

When music is played,
It stops the decay of your heart, mind and soul.
It radiates a powerful light,
That shines through the darkest holes.
Music is a one of a kind thing,
That everyone needs in their life.
Music comes in countless shapes and sizes,
That can be played in many devices.
No matter where you go,



MY LOVE FOR LUNA

There is something almost magic,
About staying up all night,
The romantic glow of the earth,
Lit by only the moonlight.
The beauty of the constellations,
Stars filling the sky,
Realising how small I really am,
And how one day this earth will die.
So many things are possible,
Like life far away,



Out of all the thoughts that keep me up,
These ones can't be kept a bay.
But I really am not mad,
About being kept up late,
Maybe I'm an insomniac,
Or maybe it's my fate.
The beauty of this reality,
The amazing view,
Like how life will forever continue,
And somewhere stars are new.
The anomalies of the world,
The moon in each phase,
If I could touch the stars,
Oh how I'd be in craze.
Oh how I always wish,
That I can someday visit space,
The vast dark vacuum,
And the moon base.
It's funny how the stars aren't even here,
It would be amazing to travel all those light years,
And although people say the night is frightening,



The stars help me face my fears.
And yes there may be science,
That proves in sleep I need eight hours,
But maybe I'm an insomniac,
Or perhaps I have some powers.

Sophie-Jane Graham (III)



THIS LITTLE GIRL

The courage it took this little girl,
To overcome her biggest fear
Climbing higher
As fear tried to push her down again
She's fighting,
This little girl won't give up her battles
She's not going to quit
Not until day is done.

Zoe Piddington (III)



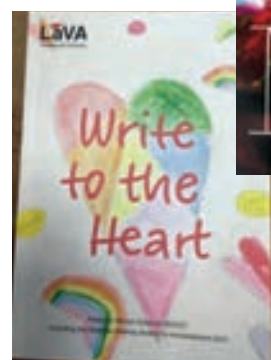


Daniel's Piano - Kathleen Malone (Belfast Royal Academy)
You Really Got a Hold on Me - Zachary Gornitz (Belfast Royal Academy)
The Creature - Beatrice South (Belfast Royal Academy)
Melodies of Memories - Niall Blunkett (Belfast Royal Academy)
How do I write this poem? - Evan Craig (Belfast Royal Academy)
Stray Cat - Claire Fox (Belfast Royal Academy)
Unconditional - César Spach (Belfast Royal Academy)
The beautiful nature of music - Kian Gattar (Belfast Royal Academy)
My Love for Luna - Sophie-Jane Graham (Belfast Royal Academy)
This little girl - Zoe Piddington (Belfast Royal Academy)
A Whisper - Kacper Przednowek (Belfast Royal Academy)
Painting Ships - Kathleen Malone (Belfast Royal Academy)

A WHISPER

A whisper on the wind calls its name,
 but it does not listen.
 It looks at the sky above,
 and watches the stars glisten.
 The whisper slashes at its skin,
 the scars will never fade.
 Yet it moves forward,
 impaled by the wind's blade.
 It walks for miles,
 far, far away.
 But the wind catches up,
 no matter where it goes, the whisper follows.
 It stops and holds its ground,
 and thinks of what to do.
 For now it knows the price to pay,
 to make the whisper go away.
 It considers, but doesn't cave in,
 it still strides.
 The whisper finally stops,
 and now it can do what it wants.

Kacper Przednowek (III)





Ben Madigan Preparatory School

SCHOOL DIARY 2020/21

SEPTEMBER 2020



Ben Madigan opened its doors to pupils on August 26th 2020. During the month of September pupils enjoyed getting to know their new teacher and classroom setting. It didn't take long to settle into the rhythm of a new academic term.



Prep 4 pupils adapting to using their brains on mental maths tasks again after summer!

Due to COVID restrictions, the annual MacMillan Coffee Morning was unable to operate as normal. Despite this, a tremendous total of £855.40 was raised by pupils, parents and staff.

OCTOBER 2020

During October Ben Madigan received a beautiful donation of flowers to brighten up the entrance to our main school building.



Later in the month pupils enjoyed a fabulous Halloween Party Day complete with fancy dress, dancing and games.



NOVEMBER 2020

After half term Ben Madigan held a Sponsored Run to raise money for Children in Need. This generated a fantastic total of £1250.92. The pupils had a thoroughly enjoyable day and the top fundraisers were presented with Pudsey Bears.



Prep One began their new topic, based upon classic children's book 'The Tiger Who Came to Tea'. At the end of their topic the pupils enjoyed a celebratory picnic event – thankfully no tigers came to visit!



Prep One pupils were very excited by the 'Tiger's Tea' picnic event.



Although not able to hold a traditional assembly, on Wednesday 11th November each class 'bubble' observed a one-minute silence in order to mark Remembrance Day.

DECEMBER 2020

Throughout December Ben Madigan was filled with the sound of singing as pupils prepared for the professional filming of a virtual Christmas carol service. This was then presented online alongside a virtual Christmas assembly led by Mr Coulter.



Charlotte Ingram's 'Pain Free Power Pad' design was the winning entry in her category for Northern Ireland in a Leaders' Award competition arranged by Primary Engineers. A fantastic achievement.



Pupils had fun eating their Christmas dinner at school while wearing festive jumpers. Donations collected on this day generated a total of £315.45 for Save the Children.



Due to a surge of Covid-19 cases, pupils once again returned to a stint of remote learning after Christmas time. Despite the challenges involved, Ben Madigan pupils remained engaged in learning throughout this period and produced many fabulous pieces of work.

JANUARY 2021

Alongside core numeracy and literacy, pupils began work on their new topics at home. We also challenged pupils to develop different life skills each week. These included setting the table,



washing the car, making the bed and tidying around the house. Parents were very glad of the help!



'Scientific Sue' delivered an interactive online lesson for pupils in Preps 3-7.



Prep 5 began studying birds as their topic.

FEBRUARY 2021



Remote learning continued throughout the month of February. Pupils joined lessons online via Zoom alongside interactive Seesaw activities and paper learning packs.



MARCH 2021





On 22 March Ben Madigan opened its doors to all pupils once again. To mark the occasion pupils were welcomed through a brilliant balloon archway before they later participated in a range of fun activities led by Activity NI. To top it all off a Morelli ice cream van arrived to deliver some delicious break-time treats. The return to school was a fun and joyous occasion, with pupils delighted to be reacquainted with their classmates again.



Upon the return to school pupils were able to receive praise and recognition for all their hard work throughout remote learning.



Four Prep 1 pupils reached the fantastic milestone of being able to recognise 300 High Frequency Words.

APRIL 2021

After the enforced break from school, pupils were delighted to enjoy the simple things at school such as time in the playground with their friends. The Spring term brought lots of sunny weather which meant pupils could enjoy learning and playing outdoors as much as possible.



Inside the classroom pupils quickly got back into the routine of learning and working. Prep 2 began celebrating new life through their butterfly topic. The children enjoyed the opportunity to use school art resources to create some beautiful artwork.



Prep 2 created these beautiful butterflies.





The Belfast Royal Academy's Old Girls' Association generously donated funds for a classroom set of high quality ukuleles. These were put into good use during the Spring term when Mr Rankin joined us for whole class lessons once a week. Pupils from Prep 3-7 really enjoyed these lessons and quite quickly displayed an aptitude for the instrument. Some teachers enjoyed joining in too!

MAY 2021

In early May Pre-Prep pupils went on a 'Shape Hunt' around Belfast Castle, where they looked out for as many shapes as possible around the Castle Grounds. They also made shapes using branches and other natural materials, displaying a great understanding at such an early age.





Throughout May and June, we held a planter competition in school. Each class was assigned a planter which they had to carefully plan out and prepare before bedding. The planters were then judged by Mr Gass and Mrs Clements, who decided that Prep 6 were the worthy winners.



Over the course of the year lots of pupils hit amazing targets on Accelerated Reader. Here a Prep 6 pupil celebrates reaching the word 'multimillionaire' status. Incredible!

JUNE 2021

After missing out on a Sports' Day event last year, pupils were thrilled to have an opportunity to compete once again. Despite the absence of a crowd the pupils gave their all, with lots of smiling, sweaty faces on display by the end of the day.



Our Prep 7 Leavers were treated to a fun day of activities at Ardnally Scout Centre with Pathfinders NI. Activities included mountain biking, shooting, a low ropes course, a bungee race and archery.



The weather was fantastic during the Prep 7 activity day, which was enjoyed by all.



At the end of June, the time had come to say goodbye to our wonderful Prep 7 Leavers. Unlike last year, we were able to hold an enjoyable albeit emotional Leavers' evening. Parents worked hard to arrange a memorable evening, complete with a BBQ, speeches, bouncy castles, videos and a



very special cake. We wish each member of this wonderful class all the very best as they progress on to the next stage of their educational journey.







History Corner

THE BARRING OUT, 1792

What came to be known as “The Barring Out” occurred in 1792 at a time of intellectual and revolutionary ferment across Europe and beyond. In August 1789 The Declaration of the Rights of Man had been published in France. Later that year the Bastille was stormed. 2 years later, Louis XVI and his queen, Marie Antoinette were captured trying to flee France. Both were to be executed. Also in 1791, Tom Paine wrote his highly influential treatise “The Rights of Man” in defence of the French Revolution.

Events in France did not go unnoticed in Ireland. Labouring under various disabilities, both Presbyterians and Roman Catholics were encouraged in their attempts to attain the rights enjoyed by their Anglican fellow countrymen. On 14th July 1791, a large demonstration took place in Belfast to celebrate the second anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. The same year, Wolfe Tone, whose younger brother was to attend Belfast Academy, founded the Society of the United Irishmen, the body responsible for instigating rebellion in Ireland in 1798.

Belfast Academy was founded and funded in 1785 by a number of prominent Belfast Presbyterians led by the Reverend Doctor James Crombie who was to become the new school’s first principal.

Crombie was to die in 1790 after a short illness and was succeeded by another Presbyterian minister, William Bruce, described as “a tall, handsome man of striking appearance.”

As is the case with most new school principals, Bruce quickly imposed his authority and made regulations governing the running of the school. Boys were to arrive in class with their hands and faces washed and their hair combed. Lying, swearing and fighting were strictly forbidden and pupils were not to have dogs or guns without the Principal’s permission! The final straw for many of the boys appears to have been the doing away with

the Easter holiday.

Inspired by the spirit of the times and fully imbued with the idealism of youth, a number of pupils decided that action must be taken so that their grievances might be addressed. At 6:30am on 12th April 1792, 7 boarders and 2 day pupils, one of whom was the son of James Crombie, the school’s first principal, determined to assert their rights by armed rebellion, took possession of the mathematical classroom which they renamed “Liberty Hall”. The only access to this room was through the writing room. The boys were well prepared, with 5 pistols, a large quantity of ammunition, 14 loaves and a sizeable amount of beef to sustain them. They lit a fire and made themselves comfortable and declared war on the Principal and Patrons of the school until such time as certain privileges were granted to them.

Bruce determined to crush the revolt. Accompanied by his wife, he demanded of the boys that they surrender. They refused and instead fired at the couple. Bruce then sent men on to the roof of the building to pour water down the chimney on to the fire. He also commissioned a group of blacksmiths to break down the door of the room. The rebels responded by opening fire on the men, who promptly fled refusing to return. Bruce himself then took a crowbar and, again accompanied by his wife, forced his way into the writing room and advanced towards the mathematical room, under fire from a hole in the door of that room. One bullet narrowly missed Mrs Bruce’s head. Bruce was still determined to smash his way into the mathematical room. However, his fearful and perhaps more sensible wife persuaded him to retreat.

As news of the revolt spread, the Sovereign, the chief executive officer of the town, who was also a magistrate, arrived at the school. He ordered the boys to lay down their arms and come out. The boys responded by threatening to part his wig with a bullet. Judiciously, he too fled.

In early evening, for reasons which aren’t clear,



the boys were persuaded to surrender. The school patrons decided that the rebels must be punished and what were described as “12 stripes” were administered to each boy. They were then brought to the Common Hall where, in front of a full school assembly, they were harangued by the Sovereign. The boys appear to have left the school shortly thereafter.

Not surprisingly, Bruce was badly affected by the events and tendered his resignation to the Patrons. They however, recognising Bruce’s qualities, refused to accept the resignation. The Patrons had shown considerable foresight. Despite his inauspicious start, Bruce proved to be one of the Academy’s greatest Principals. He continued to lead the school, which was popularly known as “Bruce’s Academy”, until retiring in 1822, aged 65. Evidence of his high standing are the 2 silver salvers, presented to him by his pupils upon his retirement. Both are now on display in the school’s Heritage Room.

Jim Carolan





Alumni News

ALUMNI – KEEP IN TOUCH!

We are incredibly proud of all our former pupils and the impact they have had and continue to have both in Northern Ireland and around the world. Linked by a common educational heritage, our alumni can benefit the school and themselves by staying in touch.

There are various ways to keep in touch with the school – by joining the Academy Alumni Association or through membership of the Old Boys' and Old Girls' Associations.

You can join the Alumni Association online in the Alumni section of our new website www.belfastroyalacademy.com or by emailing alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net

Membership is free and open to all past pupils and former staff. Alumni members will receive regular email updates and newsletters and be eligible to attend any alumni events. Your contributions and news are always welcome. Please keep your contacts up to date and let us know of any changes to your details.

THE 1785 FOUNDATION – OUR NEW ANNUAL FUND

The 1785 Foundation is a new and important way in which you can support Belfast Royal Academy on a regular basis. The Foundation, named after the year the school was founded, is the new principal means by which the entire Belfast Royal Academy community can support the School's programmes and activities. Your ongoing contributions, big or small, will allow the School to plan its finances predictably and successfully every year.

The support of generations of alumni, parents, staff and friends has provided the basis upon which the School has been able to provide a level of education, facilities and activities that have enriched the education of all our pupils –

something that would not have been possible based solely upon Government funding. The School has plans for a range of future development projects as well as academic and cultural programmes which will enhance the school experience of pupils for many years to come. The new 1785 foundation will play a major role in the fulfilment of these plans.

You can become a member of the 1785 Foundation by making a periodic contribution and all Foundation members will receive news and information about the school as well as recognition in the Foundation's membership review. Donors who contribute at higher levels will receive additional benefits including invitations to an annual reception and selected school events.

Plan	Contribution	Annual Total Contribution	Donation over 5 year period including gift aid
Bronze	£1.78 monthly	£21.42	£133.50
Silver	£1.78 weekly	£92.56	£587.50
Gold	£17.85 monthly		£1338.75
Platinum	£178.50 quarterly	£714	£4462.50



UK taxpayers can Gift Aid their donations and increase its value to the school by 25% at no extra cost to them. The school will claim the basic rate tax paid on the value of your donation from HMRC.

To find out more, visit the SUPPORT US section of the school website – www.belfastroyalacademy.com or contact the Development Office on 028 9074 0423 or email development@belfastroyalacademy.net

J.E.H.

AMANDA MCCABE

Amanda McCabe left Belfast Royal Academy in 1987, having been a school prefect and having obtained the prestigious Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award. She then attended Nottingham University to study Medicine. In 1997 she was Senior House Officer in Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham before taking up a research post in New York State University in Buffalo, New York.

Amanda was, for 13 years, a consultant paediatric surgeon in Ninewells Hospital, Dundee and the Royal Hospital for Children and Young Adults, Edinburgh. She is an examiner for MRCS (UK and Overseas) and FRCS (Paediatrics) and chairs their questions' writing group. Since 2018 she has been a member of the body which determines the SAC (Severity Assessment Code) rating for paediatric surgery to determine the prioritisation of clinical investigations for paediatric surgery.

In September 2021 Amanda was elected to The Royal College of Surgeons' Council in Edinburgh, to take up the position in November.

NIKITA MCCOUBREY

Nikita McCoubrey is a former member of the Northern Ireland Sea Cadet Corps. In 2013 she was appointed by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant to represent the City of Belfast in the position of Lord Lieutenant's Cadet. She officially received the honour from Dame Mary Peters at a reception in Hillsborough Castle.

Nikita graduated from Queen's University Belfast with a BA in English and then completed her PGCE, again at Queen's.

Nikita is now employed in The International School of Moscow, an English language school, where she teaches English and is Head of Year 8. Teachers in the school have recently established a Gaelic club, of which Nikita is a member. The club is named "The Seamus Heaney Gaelic Club", permission to use his name having been granted by the family of the late poet.

PAUL SEAWRIGHT

Paul Seawright is the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Ulster. He was formerly Head of Belfast School of Art and he had been Dean of Art, Media and Design at the University of Wales, Newport. He also sits on the advisory

boards of the Imperial War Museum and the British Council in London, having previously served as a board member of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. He is best known for his early work from his home city of Belfast, particularly the series *Sectarian Murder*, 1988. More recently, he has made photographic studies of Urban Africa and America.

Paul enjoys an international profile as an artist and researcher. His work is held in many museum collections, including the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the Tate, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the International Centre of Photography, New York and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome. In 2002, he was commissioned by the Imperial War Museum as War Artist for Afghanistan. His photographs of minefields and battle sites have been exhibited internationally and, in the same year, he was awarded the Irish Museum of Modern Art/Glen Dimplex award for a major contribution to Irish Art.

Paul has a first class honours degree in Photography, Film and Television and was awarded a PhD by the University of Wales in 2007. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Art and the Royal Photographic Society, History Fellow of Cardiff Metropolitan University and former Vice President of the Royal Ulster Academy of Art. He has also held Visiting Professorships at Sheffield Hallam, the University of South Wales and the University of Porto. He is the author of numerous publications and, in 2003, was the subject of a



BBC4 documentary by Fintan O'Toole.

Paul Seawright was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours for services to higher education and the arts.

PETER DICKSON

Peter Dickson was, more likely than not, the first BRA pupil to make a career as a voice-over artist. Certainly he was the most successful, becoming the voice for popular television programmes such as "The X Factor," "Britain's Got Talent," "The Price is Right" and "Family Fortunes."

After leaving the Academy, Peter was a student at Queen's University, Belfast, graduating with a BA Hons degree in Psychology. He then began a career in broadcasting as a reporter, journalist and later presenter with BBC Radio Ulster, becoming the BBC's youngest ever newsreader. However, he was to depart news journalism and moved into show business, disillusioned at reporting the murder and mayhem of the Northern Ireland Troubles.

National television and radio producers quickly became aware of Peter's distinctive voice and versatility. In the 1980s and 90s he was to work alongside the popular disc jockey Steve Wright on his Radio 1 afternoon and morning shows. He later expanded his repertoire and had acting roles in the BBC's "Holby City" as well as writing the comedy series "Play Your Cards Right" for ITV. Since 1998 he has narrated over 250 documentaries for the Discovery Channel. His was to be the voice of over 200 TV series and the brand voice for something in excess of 60 TV channels. He was also the voiceover for many TV advertising campaigns for companies such as KFC and Schweppes.

Undoubtedly his success has had much to do with his versatility and adaptability. He is adept in the pronunciation of many accents and was able to adapt and capitalise on the development of new forms of popular entertainment. His voice has featured in over 30 computer game titles and many video games.

Peter went on to found Gravyforthebrain.com, the world's biggest online voiceover training school and mentoring resource for established and aspiring voice talent. In 2020 his book

"Voiceover Man" was published, an entertaining and well-received insight into the world of show business and into some of the famous characters he has met with.

OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

The BRA OBA Annual General Meeting was held on 13th April 2021, via a Zoom call due to the Covid19 pandemic. The Senior Vice-President, Mr Trevor Sturgess was elected President and thanked his predecessor, Moore Dickson, for remaining in office for a second year due to the pandemic. The Junior Vice-President, Mr Bobby Gray was elected Senior Vice-President and Mr Philip McKenna was elected Junior Vice-President.

The President's Letter provides an annual update of the BRA Old Boys' Association activities and is sent (by post or email) to all OBA members. However, many emails are rejected (possibly because a member had moved jobs), and quite a large number of records have no email address. As postage charges continue to rise, and we have no membership fees coming in, we really need to reduce the number of letters to be posted. Please update your email address to alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net. Thank you.



MONTHLY LUNCHEON CLUB

The monthly lunches attract between 40 and 50 members – mostly retired members of the Association. The attached photo is from the previous lunch at the Royal Belfast Golf Club. Robin Reid initiated and coordinated these lunches for many years, with the help of local hosts. The Old Boys' Association greatly appreciates Robin's efforts, and we are grateful to Robb Fletcher for stepping in to organise this programme. Due to



the pandemic, the lunches were suspended. These lunches have restarted with the summer lunch at Royal Portrush GC on 19th August, and the first monthly lunch was held at Bangor Golf Club on the 15th Sep, 2021.



THE BRA OBA ANNUAL DINNER

The BRA OBA Annual Dinner, held at The Europa Hotel, is our major annual function. Unfortunately, it had to be cancelled in 2020, but it is booked for Saturday 27th November 2021. It will be hosted by the BRA OBA President, Trevor Sturgess. If you have not previously attended and would like to be kept informed, please email Iain Knox at iainknox@cd-group.com or the Alumni Office at alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net.

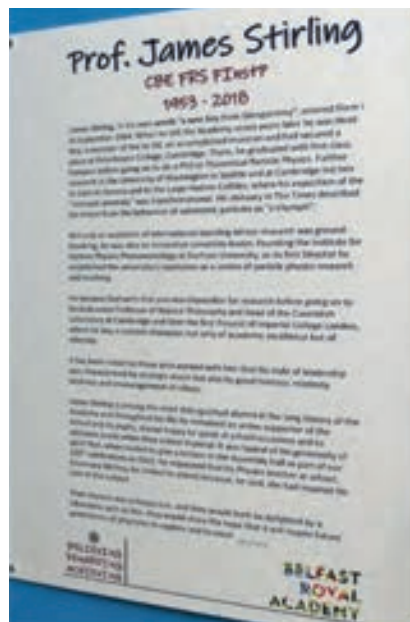
THE BRA FORMER PUPILS' LONDON & EDINBURGH DINNERS

The BRA Former Pupils' London Dinner was held at the R.A.F. Club on Friday 13th March 2020. Shortly after that Dinner, the first COVID-19 lockdown was implemented. The situation early in 2021 led to the 2021 London Dinner being cancelled. The London Dinner for 2022 is scheduled for Friday 11th, March 2022 and the Edinburgh Dinner is scheduled for 22nd April, 2022.

BUSINESS BREAKFASTS

These breakfasts are aimed at former pupils who are still working and who would like to widen their business contacts. Some current BRA pupils have also attended. These breakfasts have had between 20 and 50 attendees and are usually held

at the Ten Square Hotel. They are suspended due to COVID-19, but hopefully will be re-instated this year. Please email the Alumni Office at alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net if you would like to be added to the notification list.



DONATIONS

The President for 2019-2021, Moore Dickson, on behalf of the BRA Old Boys' Association, presented a cheque to the Principal for £4,250 for various items, which included physics apparatus to equip a laboratory to commemorate Professor James Stirling, part funding of the hockey video tower, moving the Honours Boards to the Cliftonville Road site and some frames for school drama posters. The apparatus in the James Stirling Physics Laboratory is now installed and operational.

BRA OBA NEWS

Congratulations to Professor Henry Halliday, Emeritus Professor of Neonatology, on being awarded the 2021 James Spence Medal.



The citation from Henry's presentation was as follows:

"Henry Halliday is an outstanding neonatologist who has made contributions to the care of new-born babies throughout the world. Following qualification in Belfast he trained there and in three US centres, returning to establish a network of neonatal care for Northern Ireland. He was a pioneer of surfactant therapy, helping to develop a natural product with colleagues in Stockholm. He designed and ran the clinical trials which proved its effectiveness and it is now the standard of treatment worldwide. He is a firm advocate of evidence based medicine and carried out his first randomised controlled trial in 1973. He has led and been involved in many Cochrane collaborations setting the standard of care for new-borns. His research interests have included acute neonatal respiratory disorders and surfactant replacement; postnatal steroids (inhaled and systemic) to prevent chronic lung disease (CLD); pathogenesis of CLD and inflammation; iron metabolism in the foetus and neonate and long term follow-up of survivors of CLD. He successfully coordinated two of the largest neonatal multicentre trials with 24-hour telephone randomisation in Belfast, has undertaken systematic reviews and was European co-ordinator of the Cochrane Neonatal Group.

Less obvious is his work on data monitoring of international trials and ethics research. He is an excellent, caring, innovative clinician and a true

clinician scientist. From his first paper in 1974 to 2019 he has published 438 full papers. 66 of his papers have been cited more than 100 times, 3 more than 1000 times and 1 more than 3000. He has an H index of 76 and i10 index of 216 which is outstanding for a clinician. His papers have been cited 28703 times. He remains highly regarded across Europe and the world for his outstanding research.

In 2004 he became joint founding editor of *Biology of the Neonate* (now *Neonatology*) and remains very active in this position. He is in huge demand for guest and named lectures on a regular and ongoing basis all over the world and as a grant reviewer for major charities and Government Departments. He is a member of many international societies and has been President of the European Society for Paediatric Research and the Irish and American Paediatric Society. He has inspired a younger generation who know that his work has been done solely to improve the care of babies and he has demonstrated that absolute scientific rigour and humanity can go together.

His international profile, awards and scientific achievements have not altered his modest, kindly and gentle affect. He led the transition from neonatal care being something of a novelty to being an established evidence-based discipline. There can be few international figures in neonatology who do not know of his contribution.

There has never been a James Spence medal winner from Northern Ireland.

Paul Terrington awarded CBE

Congratulations to Paul Terrington who was awarded a CBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours.

Michael Black awarded BEM

Congratulations Michael Black who was awarded a BEM in the Queen's New Year's Honours.

Paul Seawright appointed Deputy Vice Chancellor of the Ulster University

Congratulations to Paul Seawright on his appointment as Deputy Vice Chancellor of the Ulster University.

Stephen Baillie awarded BEM

Congratulations to Stephen Baillie who received his BEM on 14th September 2021 for services to education and the community during Covid19.



Barry McAuley awarded BEM

Congratulations to Barry McAuley who received his BEM on 14th September 2021 for services to disability sport in Northern Ireland.

Iain Henderson captain of Ireland & toured with the British & Irish Lions

Congratulations to Iain Henderson (pictured) on captaining Ireland during the 2021 Six Nations rugby tournament, and on his selection for his second tour with the British and Irish Lions – this time to South Africa. Iain had the honour of captaining the Lions in their match against the Sharks.



Tom McKibbin has commenced his career as a professional golfer

Congratulations to Tom McKibbin on his decision to become a professional golfer, and we look forward to hearing about his experiences in the future.



Duke of Edinburgh's Award

BRA has a proud history of participation and success in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and following the sad passing of the Duke of Edinburgh, John Reilly received many messages and reminiscences from former pupils.

OBITUARIES



IAN CAMPBELL

Denis Wilson Ian Campbell was born in Bangor, Co Down on 27th November 1925 and was educated at Belfast Royal Academy. Ian then followed in the footsteps of his older brother Noel, both of whom studied architecture at the Belfast College of Art and both were articled to John MacGeagh, architect of the much admired and timeless Whitla Hall.

He was made a fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1968, a fellow of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland in 1974 and was President of the Royal Society of Ulster Architects from 1971 to '73.

Ian was an Hon. Vice President of the BRA Old Boys' Association for some years.

(A more detailed summary was included in the Alumni Newsletter Jun/2021 available on the BRA OBA Website).

Christopher Campbell

ROGER MONCKTON DAVIES





Roger Monckton Davies (aka ‘Taffy’) died peacefully on 11th March 2021, aged 75 years, at his home in Pasadena, California, after a short illness.

Roger was born in Neath, Wales. Just after his first birthday, his parents, who were both teachers, moved to Belfast, Northern Ireland. Always full of adventure and daring, he had a happy childhood, and he was devoted to sport. He played rugby during his school days at Belfast Royal Academy, where his father, Harry, taught languages. Roger, ‘Taffy’ to those close to him, featured prominently for the BRA 1st XV in three tied Ulster Schools’ Cup Finals, and for the Ulster Schools’ XV. Roger played in various positions in the school pack and was best known as a formidable Senior League prop for the Academy Club in his later playing Career.

(A more detailed summary was included in the Alumni Newsletter Jun/2021 available on the BRA OBA Website).

Jimmy Marks

MEMORIES OF MY FATHER: FRANK E. DALZELL



My father, Frank Edgar Dalzell, attended Belfast Royal Academy from 1923 to 1928 and later served in the 8th Belfast Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment Royal Artillery (1940) (Supplementary Reserve) and the Belfast Auxiliary Fire Service during the German air-raids on Harland & Wolff in 1941.

The Firm of Dalzell & Company - 39/43 Donegall Street (1946 to 1990 - 44 years)

Following his service, Frank Dalzell started the firm of Dalzell & Company at 39/43 Donegall Street in 1946. My dad made Jack Darragh from Carrickfergus his manager and dad took charge of the salaries, wages, and clients’ accounts. Our business in Donegall Street was devastated by a car bomb in 1972 which killed six people and many were injured. That incident eventually caused the Belfast Office to be wound down.

My father was involved in other activities. Along with (for example) Jack Kyle, Walter Stirling, Matt Mulholland and Stanley Nash (School Captain) – they formed the Committee which started the Academy Rugby Club in 1945 and my father became President in 1955. My father was also Hon. Secretary of the Belfast Royal Academy Grammar School Old Boys’ Association for twenty-six years, which was advantageous to his business interests as well as social.

Later dad was elected as a Governor of the School and served on the Board for twenty-four years ((1965-89) and Warden in 1976. He helped to raise £80,000 for a new school swimming pool.

BRA 1949-1961 (A more detailed summary was included in the Alumni Newsletter Jun/2021 available on the BRA OBA Website).

David M. Dalzell

GOLF



The OB Golf Society plans to hold two golf outings each year. The first outing was played on Thursday 17th June 2021, at Malone Golf Club. There was a record turnout of 56 players who



enjoyed great weather, great course and a very pleasant meal and chat afterwards. The Picken Cup was presented by this year's captain, Paul Scoffield, to the 2021 winner, Ray McClelland.

The second outing was Paul Scoffield's Captain's Day, held at Royal Belfast Golf Club on Friday 10th September 2021. There was a strong turnout of 32 players who enjoyed a great day's golf (even with a shower mid-afternoon), and an excellent meal and catch-up afterwards Paul Scoffield presented the Captain's Prize to Andrew Magee for top score on the day, and the Ferguson Trophy to Gary Martin for best combined scores across the two outings. Any former pupil interested in playing in these competitions should contact Ken Knox at ken@cd-group.com.



Ken thanked Alan Andrews, who is this year's captain of Royal Belfast Golf Club, for playing on the day. Alan is the 6th BRA Old Boy to captain Royal Belfast GC in the last 30 years following Robert Pollin (1990), Roy Connolly (2000), Graham Crothers (2009), David Best (2012), and Norman Beggs (2017).



My thanks to Jim Carolan (Alumni Officer) for providing this background to the Royal Belfast

Golf Club – the oldest golf club in Ireland.

“BRA was strongly linked to the introduction of golf in Ireland. In 1881 Thomas Sinclair, who for many years was a member of the school's board of governors, called on Dr W. F Collier, a Scotsman, who was Principal of the Academy. Sinclair had recently returned from holiday at St Andrews and had been much taken with the game of golf. Collier in turn introduced Sinclair to Mr G. L. Bailie, another Scotsman, known as a skilled golfer and Head of the school's Commercial Department. They set about establishing the Belfast Golf Club, later the Royal Belfast Golf Club. Sinclair became the Club's first captain. The noted architect Robert Young, an Academy old boy, lent his support to the enterprise. He became club captain in 1904.”

CRICKET

The annual cricket match between the BRA Old Boys and the BRA 1st XI was not scheduled this year.

Promotion joy for Cliftonville Academy Cricket Club. Just three full league seasons since amalgamating, Cliftonville Academy Cricket Club are celebrating promotion to the Robinson Services Premier League after they were crowned Section One champions. Special praise to Max Burton who was leading run scorer.

BRA OBA WEBSITE



The BRA OBA website is at www.braoba.com which has had a major revision and provides news and archive documents.



FUTURE DATES

Annual Dinner: Saturday 27th November, 2021 at The Europa Hotel.

London Dinner: Friday 11th March, 2022.

Edinburgh Dinner: Friday 22nd April, 2022

Golf: Picken Cup Thursday 16th June, 2022 at Malone Golf Club.

Golf, Captain's Day: Friday 9th September, 2022 at Royal Belfast Golf Club.

CONTACTING THE BRA OBA

The Membership fee is currently suspended. New members are always welcome! Please notify the Alumni Office at alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net to register with the Association, or to notify changes to email address, or contact details. Notification of reunions is very welcome.

Please inform the Alumni Office at 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 interest to other Old Boys.

Michael McDowell promotes the Association on Social Media through the Old Boys' Twitter account [@TheBRAoldboys](https://twitter.com/TheBRAoldboys).

Jim Carolan is the Alumni Officer, and will liaise between the Association and the school.

Thank you.

Philip McKenna,
BRA OBA Hon. Secretary
philmac49@gmail.com

OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

Welcome to the 2020/21 update from the Old Girls' Association. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new Members, who we look forward to meeting at one of our future events.

The Old Girls' Association is open to all former female pupils and female staff. We have members from around the world, as well as many local ladies still living in Northern Ireland and other

parts of the UK and Ireland! We are always keen to welcome new members. Our aim is to support pupils of the Belfast Royal Academy with all aspects of school life. We also aim to provide an opportunity for our Members to network, socialise and help raise funds for the School.

Unfortunately, due to global pandemic we were unable to hold our normal events for this year. However, we are very much looking forward to -reconnecting with our Members at events in 2022.

These will include:

Annual Hockey Match

Autumn Afternoon tea

MVI Christmas Coffee Morning

CONNECTING WITH PUPILS



In December we gave the MVI girls a selection box each, just as a token to wish them a Merry Christmas, as we were unable to host the Christmas Coffee Morning.



The MVI girls were invited to a brief talk about the Old Girls' Association at the end of their term. We would like to wish all these girls all the very best in the next stages of their lives and look forward



to hearing all your exciting news and updates. We were delighted that the girls were keen to join and look forward to keeping in touch with the Class of 2021.

FUNDRAISING

This year we took orders for Christmas Wreaths as a fundraiser. The response was amazing, and we would like to thank all those who ordered and helped to raise funds for the School.



We also partnered with a very talented Old Girl to sell bespoke hand printed Christmas cards. The designs were beautiful!

In 2020 we launched our Wine Club, in association with a local company, Mill Girls' Cloud. We have created a 'Crombie 1880' wine box, which can be ordered at [Menu / Mill Girls Cloud \(storekit.com\)](https://storekit.com/menu/mill-girls-cloud). We hope you enjoy tasting the high-quality wines that have been selected.

Please get in touch if you have any ideas for future fundraising initiatives.



In May we held our third hanging basket and planter sale, which was another great success with over 100 items sold. Hanging baskets were once again provided by Dundonald Nurseries. Our thanks go again to all those who placed orders and supported this event.



The Old Girls' Association is also registered with Easyfundraising, which is an easy way to help us raise funds at no additional cost to you. The Association earns commissions from online purchases made by our members on popular shopping sites such as Amazon, Currys Marks and Spencer, amongst hundreds of others.



So when you are next shopping online simply click: : www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/braoldgirlsassoc/?q=bra&cat=cause-autosuggest then shop as normal. A donation will be made to The Old Girls' Association based on a percentage of what you spend online, at no extra cost to you!



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Old Girls' Association are delighted to report that we have funded a full class set of Ukulele's for Ben Madigan. This will support the development of music with the Preparatory Department.



We were also funded Chromebooks for the English Department. These will allow the department greater access to technology to support learning for all pupils.



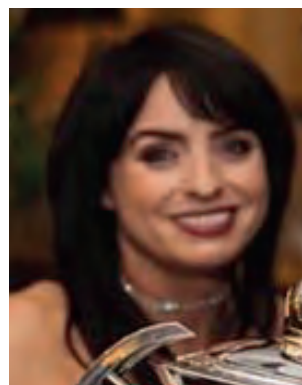
The Listening Service, which was provided by Old Girl Rebecca Burns, operated from November to June. We provided the funding to ensure this important service was available to pupils that needed support with a variety of issues.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Our AGM was held via Zoom on the 18th February 2021. Agenda items discussed included fundraising, membership, and events for the forthcoming year. We had a good turn out and it was lovely to welcome some new faces, including new members of staff.

Our committee remains as follows:



Nikki Johns
Chairperson



Caroline Dillon
Vice Chairperson



Johanna Richardson
Hon. Treasurer



Claire McGovern
Hon. Secretary

STAY CONNECTED

We love hearing from all our Old Girls, so please get in touch if you have some news to share. If you are not already a Member of the Old Girls' Association and would like to offer

your support, please do 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 give the School.

Get in touch:

email – 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, Deaths and Marriages

BIRTHS

MAGEE: 9th August 2021, to Suzanne (nee O'Neill) and Chris, a daughter Scarlett Elba
MURPHY: 10th February 2021, to Stuart and Kerry, a daughter Poppy Elizabeth
POTTS: 22nd September 2021, to Emma and Connor, a daughter Annie Amaya

DEATHS

CAMPBELL: 17th November 2021, Anne
CAMPBELL: 11th June 2020, Ian
DAVIES: 11th March 2021, Roger "Taffy"
GOODING: 20th November 2020, David Stanley Mulhern
GOODING: 9th May 2020, Roger Mulhern
GRAY: 30th July 2021, Peter Stanley
JOHNSTON: 29th March 2021, Alec
MCILWAINE: July 2021, David
MCKINSTRY: 9th September 2021, Tom
SKILLING: January 2021, Tommy
SOMERVILLE: January 2021, Dr William ("Billy")
THOMPSON: January 2021, Blain
TORRENS: June 2021, Bob
WALSH: 8th October 2021, Claire (nee Fitzsimmons)
WILSON: 7th August 2021, Graham ("J.G.")

MARRIAGES

GORMLEY-THORNTON: 7th August 2021, Emma Gormley and Johnny Thornton
McAVOY – SPENCE: 9th October 2020, Katie McAvoy and Conor Spence
MCCOMBE-CARSON: 14th July 2021, John McCombe and Vivienne Carson
McKINSTRY - WILSON: 8th July 2020, Hannah McKinstry and Ben Wilson
McKINSTRY - JOHNSTON: 7th July 2021, Rebecca McKinstry and Peter Johnston



[illegible]

[illegible]

