INSIDE THIS EDITION

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- Politics
- Pupils Visit Stormont
- Trips
- Students selected for Zambia Immersion Project
- Sport
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WEST SIDE STORY is the talk of the town!
Update from Management on the New School

Over the coming issues Slí na Mainistreach will keep you informed of development with the new school building. The next edition will publish photographs of the work as it happens; until then here’s the latest:

New School Project

The need for a new school for the pupils of the Abbey Christian Brothers’ Grammar School was identified within a very short period of the opening of the present school in 1966. By the late 1990s an economic appraisal had determined that the current site was no longer suitable and a new site on the Ashgrove Road was selected.

Early in 2000 this site was purchased and in February 2000 the Department of Education announced a grant funding of £2.2 million for the building of a new school. Throughout the period the School Management had advanced this project with a series of crucial decisions. Promised and detailed discussions had taken place with various groups in the Department of Education to establish the enrolment figures of the new school. A schedule of accommodation, the type of procurement to be applied and extra allocation of facilities which the management considered necessary to obtain the best school for their pupils.

Architects had been appointed in January 2003 and immediately commenced a process of drawing up a quality building. This process has continued to the present day and the team of architects, in consultation with the school management, the heads of departments and the teachers of the school, have produced a final design. That design will, within the next month, go to tender for six selected building firms and the new school will finally see the completion of the building contract – the selection of the building contractor and the commencement of work on site.

PHSE ROUND UP

Pupils hear first hand accounts of the dangers of Alcohol abuse

On Tuesday 28th of November 3 members of the Cuan Mhure centre visited to talk to the year group about their experiences of alcohol and how it took them into the state of alcoholism which is a disease. They spoke about how the addiction becomes worse and worse and how we should be careful in our experiences with alcohol. They also spoke about the services that are available for alcoholics such as the Cuan Mhure centre. There are six of these in Ireland which are currently helping a large number of alcoholics get through the disease along with AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) which helps deal with alcohol related problems on a daily basis. Questions on the subject were taken at the end of the talk which were helpful in our understanding of the subject.

Anti social behaviour highlighted to 4th Years

On Monday 13th November members of S1A went to a talk on anti-social behaviour and drink driving in the Aylesforte in Warrenpoint. The talk was held by members of the local council and the Downtown Baptist Church.

The day involved question and answer sessions and we had to vote for our opinion involving the subject involved. Whenever the votes were all taken the group discussed the results and members of the floor had the opportunity to ask the members of the DPP present about things concerning them.

The day was very helpful as it filled us in on anything we didn’t know relating to that subject and it also helped us express our views on drinking anti-social behaviour and ways to improve or prevent these things from happening.

A-LEVEL RESULTS ARE THE BEST EVER!

The Abbey Christian Brothers’ Grammar School, Newry is celebrating yet another exceptional set of A-level results. 104 boys received their superb results in Mid August.

Previous records were broken as academic standards continue to rise each year. The most significant statistic from these results is that more pupils at the Abbey are obtaining the top grades. An unbelievable 55% of all results were grade A, 77% grades A or B and 95% grades A-C.

Again the number of pupils at the Abbey achieving top grades in their 3, 4 or even 5 subjects continues to rise. A total of 28 boys achieved 3 or more A grades.

Top pupil Stephen Begley, from Dromintee achieved 5 A grades and shall be studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge University. Twelve boys achieved 4 A grades and another 15 boys achieved 3 A grades. Three of this group shall be studying at Oxford University- Sean Mc Clory – (Law), Philip Knox (English Language and Literature) and Kevin Mc Manus (Mathematics and Statistics).

This really is the ‘icing on the cake’ for The Abbey Grammar at the end of what has proved to be a historic year following numerous extra curricular successes in Irish, Drama, Science, Technology, Music and Sport including MacRory Cup and Hogan Cup success.

With preparations well under way for the new school, and an increase in the number of subjects in lower sixth to include English Language, Accounting and Vocational courses, including ICT and Construction, demand for places continues to rise.

Mr Dermot Mc Govern, Headmaster, congratulated this exceptional group of pupils on their results. He indicated that virtually every boy achieved his first choice university place. He paid tribute to his hard working staff and thanked them for all their efforts and dedication to the welfare of their students. He acknowledged the strong school-parental links that also helped the boys to achieve their best.

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THE GORDIAN KNOT
Poor Tony had to endure a lot over the past two months. The unrestricted media access to his every move has turned the Labour Party’s office into a laboratory for the attempted Brownite coup last month, and, of course, having to put up with Cherie’s opinions, pseudo-intellectual cries of “you’re better than this” every waking day and night it was difficult to watch.

It all began for Tony and Gordon in June 1983, the year that, for the first time, the tartan-tainted duo entered the Commons as two up-and-coming backbench MPs. They shared an ambition to establish a new kind of politics, one that would challenge the accepted wisdom of the day. They promised to change the Labour Party for the better and were so full of ambition that Gordon was even able to venture a smile from time to time.

Even at this early stage Tony was being hailed as the charismatic ex-hippy with a talent for seducing the lens, whilst Gordon was just... Gordon.

SIBLEY GRANT!!
Skip forward eleven years and you arrive in May 1994 John Smith, the man hailed as Labour’s Messiah, the man who was to take the Party out of the electoral wilderness, passed away.

But, nonetheless, I feel a certain degree of pity for the man. It’s not as though his gravitation toward neo-conservatism was malicious or deliberate, perhaps he just lost his way. Whatever the reason, Gordon it seems, will be the one who reaps the rewards.

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GCSE CLASS OF 2006:
Play their part in the academic success during the Summer

EXCELLENT GCSE RESULTS AT ABBEY CHRISTIAN BROTHERS’ GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The class of 2006 continued the good work of their predecessors by chalkling up yet more impressive GCSE results in August. The class of 2006 continued the good work of their predecessors by chalkling up yet more impressive GCSE results in August. Top of the class was Damian Mc Parland from Newry who achieved a new school record with 12 A* grades. He had scooped Irish and Mathematics A* last year and exceeded this year in Additional Maths, English Language, English Literature, French, History, RE, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Spanish. Another 7 pupils obtained 11 A* grades. These were Stephen Campbell, Martin Davidson, Fergal Mc Alinden, Ronan Mc Donald, John Paul O’Hare, Homesh Fayal and Conor Sweeney. Other top performers were Philip Mc Clery and Adrian Mc Namara with 10 A* grades. Michael Boyle, Conor Mc Gaugan, Aidan Murphy and Vincent O’Rourke with 9 A* grades. Conor Bell, Kevin Holgrove, Michael Lynch and Ruan Williamson with 8 A* grades. A delighted Haedmaster, Mr Dermot Mc Govern, thanked staff and parents and congratulated all the pupils who received GCSE results – not only the boys who had done exceptionally well but also the boys who had done as well as they possibly could. He believes that a number of factors have combined to help with this year’s success, including a very dedicated, committed and highly professional staff who got the best out of this year’s group. The most valuable gift any teacher can give a pupil is their own time and this was given in abundance. Support from parents was another area highlighted by Mr Mc Govern that facilitated these results, working in harmony with the Abbey by attending parent/teacher meetings and helping to implement recommendations that were agreed at ‘Progress Meetings’ that were set up to support pupils.

NON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS CELEBRATED

Pupils were recognised for achieving individual success either inside or outside school at the Abbey Grammar Achievement Prize giving ceremony. Included with Mr Raymond Cassidy Guest Speaker and Mr Dermot Mc Govern, Headmaster are: Conor Mc Cormick (Rugby); Michael Mc Cann (Sailing); Ryan Walsh; Gavin Donnelly and Seán Donnelly (Kickboxing); Colum Macley (Freestyle Fighting); Dan Madden (Irish Dancing); Adam May (Art); Niall Burke (Fundraising) and Laurence Mc Govern (Special Award).

Mr Raymond Cassidy congratulates last year’s winners of the Year 8 five a side football league. Slemish were the eventual winners of the annual competition.

Drama, Debating and Spelling were acknowledged at the Prize giving Ceremony. Conor McKeown was Best Supporting Actor at the Warrenpoint Drama Festival. He also had a lead role in the Ulster Youth Theatre. Conal O’Hare was Best Actor at the Warrenpoint festival. Philip McCluney won first place in the Senior School Debating Competition. Ryan Martin was third in the same competition. Paul Mallon, Niall O Donnell, Conor Fox and David McCracken participated in the Mental Health Awareness’ debating competition. Also, pictured are Abbey ‘Hard Spellers’ Garbhain Mc Kevitt, Conor Shields and Darren Marshall.
WEST SIDE STORY PLAYS
NEWRY CITY HALL...

... AND SELLS OUT
For some people, magic can only exist in the fairytales of their childhoods. These people will tell you that it is only suitable for places such as Disneyland, in story books or on the horrendous Christmas TV shows we are facing. For the less sceptical, and in all honesty, the more interesting among us, magic does exist indeed. One person may find it in a game of football when he scores the winning goal; another while-while another will find equal joy stirring or tooting on the instrument of their choice. However, for me, magic exists in one, and one place only. It sparkles away amidst the dust and despite the creaks, on the hallowed stage of Newry City Hall.

What can I say about the magnificent red brick structure that defines the centre of our young city? Well for a start, every Saturday it’s a landmark place for the inebriated to pass out. (Our Town bathers would be so proud!) However whatever it is that draws you to it is a very special place. It was there that I caught the acting bug, and they have yet to find a drug strong enough to get it out of my system. It’s an old building that, if given just a little chance, it could take for granted. Inside, the stage you may have been shoved into as a five-year-old to sing some song about a nice cow with your primary school “choir”. Whatever your experience of it, up until recently it was a living breathing building, with council meetings, shows and festivals all being located in, or centred around, the grand statement of Victoria’s civic pride.

The late, great Sean Hollywood was noted for saying “if you need two planks you have a passion,” but I must admit, the space, the technology, the facilities and the happy memories of my own, combine to make City Hall the perfect venue for a School Production. What better setting than Newry and Mourne’s great theatre to host our attempt at staging the world’s greatest musical?

**Lead Characters**
- Riff .............................................................. Killian Foy
- Tony .............................................................. Ciara O’Hanlon
- Anita .............................................................. Maxine Fitzgerald
- Baby John ..................................................... Richard Corcoran
- Bernardo ....................................................... Michael Corcoran
- Chino ............................................................ Gerard Becker
- Pepe .............................................................. Michael Corcoran

**Cast of Characters**

**The Jets**
- Conal O’Hare
- Ben Reynolds
- Michael Mc Alinden
- Gerard Beggley
- David Kirk

**The Sharks**
- Gerard Begley
- David Kirk

**The Adults**
- Scott Pafferty
- Joseph Madden

**The Roof may be gone but West Side lives on!**

The European Youth Parliament team, made up of the following members from last year’s sixth and fifth year, were an extremely competitive and driven group. Michael Corcoran, Sean Darling, Jason Kelly, Ken McCarthy, Conor McCann, Kevin O’Reilly, Conor McKeown, Philip McClary, Ronan McDonald and Damien McParland competed in Belfast on March 9th 2006 against 9 other schools, where they showed great skill and understanding of EU law and policy. Indeed they were very unfortunate not to go through to stage 3. Throughout the campaign they demonstrated a commitment to their team in active research and keen discussion of European policies and perhaps more importantly their magnanimity in being pipped at the post. This year I will be looking for ten more talented debaters from lower sixth to compete at the highest possible level in an attempt to secure stage 3 – any interested students contact Ms. Reynolds directly (M4).

**The Roof may be gone but West Side lives on!**

For a start, every Saturday it’s a landmark place for the inebriated to pass out. (Our Town bathers would be so proud!) However whatever it is that draws you to it is a very special place. It was there that I caught the acting bug, and they have yet to find a drug strong enough to get it out of my system. It’s an old building that, if given just a little chance, it could take for granted. Inside, the stage you may have been shoved into as a five-year-old to sing some song about a nice cow with your primary school “choir”. Whatever your experience of it, up until recently it was a living breathing building, with council meetings, shows and festivals all being located in, or centred around, the grand statement of Victoria’s civic pride.

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In an ever changing world where the term ‘legend’ is all too often applied to a plethora of film / showbiz, TV and sports stars, none surely can be more deserving of this title than one Muhammad Ali. Ali changed the world of boxing but he also changed the world itself. He became the most recognised face on the planet - a dynamic figure in the racial battles that gripped America at this time. For millions of African Americans he was a symbol of defiance and resistance against a government that preached civil rights and equality but all too often failed to translate these into practice.

Ali’s career was in many ways a microcosm of the larger social and political struggles of his era. His rise from the streets of Louisville to world heavyweight champion in 1964 symbolised the struggle against a government that preached civil rights and equality but all too often failed to translate these into practice.

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King of The World, Muhammad Ali and the Rise of an American Hero.

Author: David Remnick

Muhammad Ali and the Rise of an American Hero. (Oráid a bhain comórtas abair.)

In June 2006 a group of third years went to Tanagh Outdoor Education Centre for a weekend. The weather was beautiful and the centre was previously used as a training ground for the Irish Army. It was previously used as a training ground for the Irish Army.

At Tanagh there was a Paris trip in September 2007 which is only open to those pupils who are studying French.

In April 2007 our first years are going to an ice skating centre in Dundonald.

On Friday 23rd of October, the first years were taken on a trip to Dundonald Ice Bowl. As I boarded the bus to school I felt a little nervous.

We did forest walks as well as kayaking after about two hours, we reluctantly headed off to our lanes and the fun continued.

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By Ross Flynn

My dad still snoring,
My cold breath plumes the air,
Feeling heavy and weak,
And the landscape looks so bleak.

There were three lines, depending on what we wanted to eat - burgers, sausages and nuggets. The meal was very tasty and it certainly filled us up, reviving us for going bowling!

A tissue of frost laces the ground,
I wake up in the early morning,
And everybody has a cold snout.

We had the choice of eating at the centre or heading off to a local cafe. On Friday 23rd of October, the first years were taken on a trip to Dundonald Ice Bowl.

The book is less interested in the classic boxing battles that Ali had with fighters such as Frazier. Instead, the author devotes his focus to examining Ali’s rise from humble beginnings in the racially segregated surroundings of Louisville Kentucky to becoming world heavyweight champion in 1964.

By Stephen Grant

The Mafia controlled every aspect from the betting on a fight right down to the actual boxers themselves. Sonny Liston (who Ali would defeat at the age of 12) would wake at 4 or 5 in the morning run several miles and then work out at the gym all afternoon.

My thoughts then turn to Christmas,
Surely this must have been the coldest day ever.
At midday everyone’s out,
At 8 o’clock it’s getting dark,
When my ears have turned back from red.

A blanket of ice layers the ground,
My cold breath plumes the air,
And they act so, so cool.

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The fundraising efforts for the project mean that the work for the group begins months before their journey to Zambia. The team’s key financial aim is to donate as much as possible. The Abbey has pledged to refurbish a school, providing teachers’ salaries and students’ fees for the foreseeable future.

On Friday 1st December, at 8.00pm, a Night at the Races in aid of the Zambian project took place in the Aylesfort House, Warrenpoint. Included on the evening was a 20th Anniversary Auction of Pictures and Collections. The proceeds of this auction enabled the students and teachers to realise their dream to make a difference.

During their two-and-a-half weeks’ work they stayed in the Northern Province of Zambia, a nation in southern Africa about nine times the size of Ireland, with around 11 million people. This year’s group will teach in the severely under-funded schools, in the Southern town of Livingstone, bringing valuable skills and hope to children and teachers alike.

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IN JULY OF 2006 TWO STAFF MEMBERS, MRS OONAGH BYRNE AND MISS DEIRDRE MULGREW VISITED ZENYA AS PART OF THE KARIBOU 2006 PROGRAMME

KARIBOU 2006
AN INTERNATIONAL CROSS-CULTURAL PROGRAMME

July 2006 was going to be a very difficult time for me. I had just wound up a forty year teaching career (thirty eight of which were spent in the Abbey) and was suffering withdrawal symptoms. This was offered the opportunity of taking part in a Cross-Cultural Programme in Kenya! I jumped at the chance of doing something very different and very worthwhile but had some reservations. At my age I wondered if I could manage the programme and I was apprehensive about going to Africa. I was delighted when I heard that Miss Mulgrew was also going from the Abbey.

The programme allowed 34 participants to experience cross-cultural living and community service in Africa and to situate life and work in a global context. The month long residential programme was based in Nairobi and involved 8 Irish, 12 Australian, (one of which was an Aborigine), 4 African, 2 from the States, a young married couple from Canada, 4 Indians and 4 English.

We had lectures, with speakers being invited from the local Catholic University on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays we were out on Immersion work. We were divided into small groups and some were involved in Schools, Orphanages, Women’s Aid Centres and street lod centres, (most of which were in the slums and the conditions were horrendous). The abject poverty of the area presented a real cultural shock and it is hard to believe that there are places so very poor in the world in 2006. People lived in small tin shacks. The sewage was flowing down the middle of the narrow laneways and the smell was abominable. The people, however, were wonderful. They were so polite that we would come to their homes. They considered this an honour and asked us to tell the ‘outside world’ about their plight: they were inordinately in good form, always laughing and making the best of what they had. They were particularly delighted to talk to Irish people. We must have done something right in their country. There was one particular example of the Irish being singled out for special treatment for whatever reason! On one weekend the group travelled to Tanga to visit the Tarangara Safari Park. At the border the Nationalities with us (Australians, Americans, English and Canadians etc), had to queue for Visas while the Irish were issued through-no Visa required!

While we were on this particular visit to Tanzania we were invited to visit a local Masai chieftain we met his 9 wives and some of his 70 children. His children were educated by the Christian Brothers in Arusha and were doing particularly well and he was very grateful. There are a number of very good schools started by the brothers and they are really well run. In fact Edmund Rice is a very Big Name in both Tanzania and in Kenya. We were astounded on one occasion while walking in one of the very poorest slum areas to suddenly come across an Edmund Rice community centre! It was quite surreal! On another occasion I saw a sign for a Brother Beaunng Catholic Education Centre; I was amazed to find that this centre was named after ‘our’ Brother Beaunng.

My experience was truly wonderful and I really would like to set up some Market for the goods produced by the workers in a Woman’s Centre to which I was assigned. They prefer to get markets for their enterprises rather than depending on charities in any case I had loads of food for thought. I am so grateful for the experience. It is one I will never forget.

Oonagh Byrne
Cross Country Winners Celebrate

The Abbey’s outstanding athletes were honoured at this year’s Achievement Prizing giving. These include Mark Cox, Niall McCartan, Michael Clarke, Andrew Fitzsimons and Ryan Hudson who came first in the team event at the Down District Cross Country Championship.

Niall O’Flaherty came second in the All-Ireland ‘A’ Shot Putt and Peter O’Hare came second in the All-Ireland ‘B’ High Jump.

Iveagh Lift the First Year Title

Abbey Grammar First Year Blitz Final
Iveagh vs. Oriel

The Abbey playing fields hosted the first year final between Iveagh and Oriel. These two teams had dominated the league and deserved a place in the final. Weather conditions were ideal with little or no breeze.

Iveagh get off to a great start and found the net through a Michael Fitzpatrick penalty. Aiden Conlon steadied the ship, knocking over two points for Iveagh before Connaire Martin also scored a penalty giving Iveagh a point advantage. Mark Sands, the Iveagh goalkeeper, made a couple of fine saves but could not prevent Jack Maguire firing the ball home from close range. Conlon then tagged on a couple of points for their captain Conomar Martin.

In the space of about three minutes Iveagh were in front through the in-form Aiden Conlon who scored a point from a free. Iveagh were now cruising, the influential Taighe McMurdo scoring a goal and a point followed by Connaire Martin who scored his second goal of the match. Oriel corner back Peter Donlan ended this period of Iveagh dominance by getting his foot to the ball in a goalmouth scramble and put Oriel one point ahead. This was before a scrappy period with both teams giving the ball away and fouling unnecessarily. As half time approached, full-forward Joe Byrne, finished off a fine Iveagh move by rounding the keeper and coolly slotting the ball into the net leaving the half time score: Iveagh 4-4 (16 points) to Oriel 4-2 (14 points).

Although this match was tightly contested in the first half, Iveagh began to pull away in the second. Connaire Martin got Iveagh off to a good start with a point early in the second half. Soon after centre half forward Cathal Fay hit his first point after he was played in by Cathal McKeown, his half forward partner Aiden Conlon then added to his tally with a well-taken goal to put Iveagh seven points up. Oriel came close on a couple of occasions through Brian Murphy and Jack Maguire but Rowan Cull opened the scoring for Oriel in the second half. They then added another point through Michael Fitzpatrick.

It was when Iveagh started to get a grip on the game again and Cathal Fay, this time put through by Cathal McNamee, fired the ball into the top corner of the net. Aiden Conlon hit yet another point and Connaire Molin set another goal. Iveagh then made their final substitution and brought on Donal Burns for Ryan McKelvey.

Iveagh's captain, Conomar Martin, then scored the goal of the match by hitting a fine shot into the top corner of the net from twenty one yards out. Aiden Conlon scored the last point of the game to bring his personal tally to 1-5 (8 points). Craig Murphy, Darren Mc Govern and Paul Hearty all had solid games for Iveagh in defence and Jonathan O’Hare also had a fine game in midfield. Michael Martin, Rowan Cull, Digan Jennings and Paddy Raw played well for Oriel.

Final Score: Iveagh 7-9 (30 points) to Oriel 6-3 (21 points)

Kick Boxing
Ryan Goes For Gold

Mark Miller, Slemish 3, talks to his classmate, Ryan Walsh, about his experiences representing Ireland at the World kickboxing Championships. Mark discovers that Ryan could possibly be world champion some day as he is already a success for the Irish team, picking up many medals including gold, silver and bronze, at various events.

Q: Well Ryan, how many years have you been involved in kickboxing?
A: I have been involved in kickboxing for six years now and I think it's great.

Q: Who inspired you to begin kickboxing?
A: My dad inspired me to begin kickboxing because he used to do it when he was younger.

Q: Have you recently been in a tournament outside the country? If so, where was it and what was it like?
A: Yes, I have been in a tournament recently. It was the world kickboxing championships in Croatia and it was the best trip I have ever had. It was a brilliant experience as we met loads of people from different places around the world, such as the USA, Canada, Portugal, England, Hungary and loads more.

Q: Did you pick up any medals at these tournaments?
A: Yes, I got third place at the world championships.

Q: Who all went with you to these tournaments?
A: My dad and my sister went with me along with the other qualified members of the Irish team. These people were from Sligo, Cork, Derry and all over.

Q: When do think you will have your next tournament?
A: My next tournament will be in Cork. It is on the third of December.

Q: Do you think we will see you competing as a professional in years to come?
A: I hope you will see me in years to come as I progress through my kickboxing career.

The Abbey Way wishes Ryan and our other Kick Boxing Champions, the Donnelly brothers, Gavin and Seán, every success in the future.

Hurling Gets a Kick Start

Hurling is the fastest field sport and here in the Abbey we are looking to set up a team. We are looking for as many people as possible and then hopefully go on to play other schools. It is a sport that I love playing and I'm sure that if you start playing it you will love it as well. There are many people in the school who play for clubs and are very good hurlers so if you come to the training you will learn to play hurling and make some friends.