



THE ABBEY *Way*

THE ABBEY CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

This is the final issue of Slí na Mainistreach/ The Abbey Way that will be published from the Courtenay Hill site. On Monday 7th December 2009 the Abbey Staff and a number of pupils will report for work at the new, state-of-the-art Ashgrove site, home of the New Abbey. As well as

the usual mix of school news and events, this issue of Slí na Mainistreach will look back at the beginning of the 'Abbey' in the 1950s right up to the present day through the eyes of the staff who have sat on both sides of the classroom as the entire Abbey community bid...



...Farewell to Courtenay Hill

Oisín McGuinness (RIP)

1993 - 2009



Oisín McGuinness, second from the left, pictured with his friends, Shane Finnegan, Rory Keenan, Sean McCaffey and Conor Donnelly

On the 14th March 2009, the entire Abbey Community was shocked to learn of the death of one of its most popular students, Oisín Mc Guinness. Oisín was a fifth year pupil of S2C. The grief and sense of loss expressed in the days following Oisín's death, illustrated the esteem in which Oisín was held among his fellow students and staff alike. Seán Mc Caffery, also a fifth year student, pays a very personal tribute to his great friend. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam usual.

My Friend Oisín

I have known Oisín all of my life. We were the best of friends and our families are very close. In many ways Oisín was more like a brother to me, and that's the way I will always think of him. I loved him, even though he was better than me at everything we did together. He was always more skilful, stronger and faster than me. Once on holidays my dad and I tried for two hours in 40 degrees heat to beat the McGuinnesses at tennis but we couldn't get the ball past Oisín – and John (his father) wasn't bad either. So eventually the McCafferys had to admit defeat. Oisín and his dad loved that game and slagged us for the rest of the two weeks.

Oisín was even better than me at getting the girls (I know it's hard to believe). One year at the Gaelteacht he kissed all the girls in the same house – and there were about 15 of them! He never even had to try! He was so cool and the girls loved him. The rest of us could get the leftovers!! Oisín was always busy – always wanting to do new things; he would join every club going – as long as it didn't include studying. You needed plenty of energy to keep up with Oisín.

Apart from his family and sport Oisín loved two other things dearly. Food and the Abbey. He was always hungry. His mum made him a packed lunch everyday and he had his dinner in school. He could eat for Ireland. We always stopped for more food on our way home. No matter where the lads went Oisín wanted food.

Oisín was always in good form, even in the mornings going to school he was happy. He would slag the head of his Mum. Joan would always laugh. Oisín loved this place. He loved the craic with the boys. He had all the best slags. He could mess and make us laugh better than anyone else. Oisín was the man. He's a lige.

I hope I will always hear Oisín's voice in my head and feel his hand on my back, pushing me on and saying: "Go on McCaff!" We are all so lucky to have known Oisín and so privileged to be able call him our friend. We all have our own memories of him and they are priceless. We will never, ever forget him.

Ian McKeown (RIP)

1989 - 2009



Memories of Ian

The Abbey Way was further shocked this year to learn of the death of a recent past pupil, Ian McKeown. Ian's PE Teacher, Mr Jim McCartan, shares his memories of the popular student:

"After being in Ian's company you left with a smile on your face. Whether it was 5-a-side in the yard, class leagues, indeed any sporting activity, Ian played with a smile on his face. On leaving his company you felt richer for having been present, Ian brightened your day. He was one of the most pleasant, cheerful, genuine people to have ever stepped through our door in the Abbey. We feel a great sense of loss and bewilderment at his untimely death, and robbed of the company of a loyal friend."
May He Rest in Peace.

School Choir Visit Rome

It was over a year in planning; bag packing to carol singing, auditions to rehearsals, feisna to concerts. Eventually the day of departure arrived - 1.00pm from the Abbey yard on the ever reliable Rooney coaches. There was much excitement and expectation; for some it was their first time away without their family and for others it was a return visit to Rome and the Palazzola.

As we arrived late in the evening, it was not until breakfast the next day that the boys witnessed one of the most spectacular views (bellissima vista), light reflecting from the azure volcanic lake and the mist lifting off a silhouetted Castel Gandolfo, all consumed from the high walled courtyard. Our first full day consisted of a long morning's rehearsal with all the groups: choir, traditional group, strings quartet, brass ensemble, and after a three course Italian lunch, siesta was not an option but activities included; football (soccer!), touch rugby, frisbee throwing, a hike down the mountain to the lake (and back up again!) and all this in beautiful, warm, almost hot, Mediterranean sunshine, there was an afternoon's activity to build friendship in and between year groups of a great mix of Abbey boys and adults, as well as to build up a thirst and hunger for another three course meal.

The next day was a busy one for some of the group. We all visited St. Peter's, walking from Castel San Angelo so that Bellini's incredible artistry and colonnades gradually came into view. Some of the group decided to take the trip up to the top of the dome and after much queuing and over a 1,000 steps, were rewarded with a breath-taking panorama of the Eternal City. Others had more ambassadorial roles to complete as the Irish traditional musicians walked to the Christian Brothers' HQ in Rome. There they played to the small community and were rewarded with a home cooked meal. The rest of us squeezed into a local pizzeria for authentic pizza and chips followed by more gelati. An emotional trip was taken (up yet many more steps) to visit the tombs of the O'Neils (the last Earls of

Ireland) enhanced by a haunting lament played by Miss Mullan. We then ventured beyond this church to be welcomed into the Irish Embassy to the Holy See by Noel Fahy (Irish Ambassador). Here we played more music and were rewarded with tea and cakes. Our coach then rushed us back, (imagine Hill Street, Newry at 100 km/h) with lots of heated honking of horns and queezy and sweaty feeling passengers, to the Palazzola for the first opening of the outdoor pool of this season. Nearly everyone jumped into the inviting water and then jumped out even more quickly! The contrast in temperature (air to water) was quite extreme.

The next day was a trip not into Rome but to see various sites surrounding the Alban Hills. One of Rome's most spectacular ancient ruins is Hadrian's Villa, a massive and well preserved complex showing how the ancient emperors lived in great luxury and style; to them building large towns was not a problem- least of all walls. (This was the Hadrian that built the wall the separated England and Scotland). From here we travelled to Tivoli, to the amazing baroque architecture of the Villa D'Este and the Gardens and Fountains of Tivoli. With Mr McKeever's linguistic skills and translated student list on official paper in hand, we all jumped the long queue and had fun exploring the vast array of fountains, statues and gargoyles. We then travelled on to Frascati where the adults wanted to test the waters, for which it is famous, and the ragazzi to do more shopping (times have changed greatly since I was a boy!) The grapes were perfect but, unfortunately, we had forgotten about the continental siesta and so most of the shops were shut (well at least you can always go on-line now if you are desperate for retail therapy!). We returned to the Palazzola for more fun.

Sunday was not going to be a day of rest but one of hard work - a sung Mass and a concert all in one day! After all that, was why we were here - wasn't it? The Irish College made us very welcome, including a young seminarian from our diocese. The chapel has recently been reordered and tastefully decorated. With our choir and musicians taking up a third of the seats and a packed congregation, not to mention the 30 odd priests on the sanctuary, there was not much room to wave arms and conduct. Even



so, the Mass was a great and up-lifting experience for all. A Newry parishioner, who was out in Rome at the time and at this Mass, recently spoke to me saying that the priests were dancing down the aisles to our rousing version of "Lord of the Dance". We were again rewarded with tea, coffee and cakes for our efforts. (Singing for your supper is not a bad way to live!) A brief visit was made to the Colosseum on our way to the Pantheon. After lunch and a very brief acoustic rehearsal, we launched into our main concert in the beautiful baroque church of San Eustachio. Our publicity had worked, as we had an audience of around a hundred who seemed to greatly appreciate the standard and variety of music we performed. One American lady tourist was so moved by the young boys she gave us two hundred euros to purchase an ice-cream for all of us! The concert was tinged with some sadness as it would be the last time that we in this group would ever perform together. As always happens in school, boys grow up and move on. There was extra poignancy as the current 7th year leavers were the first ones to join the Abbey Choir when it was formed in 2002 and have been instrumental in its success. (Thanks and good luck to Fergal, Daniel, Donal, Niall, Niall, Chris, David and Keith). Even though we all move on; most threw their coins into the Trevi Fountain whilst eating their gelati, in the hope of returning again.

What next? Who knows! All I know is that this was the best group and easiest bunch of young people I have had the pleasure of organising and taking on a trip. Outstanding ambassadors for the Abbey!

DW

First Year Trip to Liverpool

My trip to Liverpool began on a cold Thursday morning in April.....

"Caolán.....Caolán..... it is four o'clock and time to get up." My mum and dad were trying to wake me up. "Five more hours....." I said.

I eventually managed to drag myself out of my very warm bed and after getting dressed and grabbing my bag my dad dropped me at the Abbey.

At about 5:05am I got on the bus and took my seat. About five minutes later my friend, Caolan McCaul, got on and sat beside me. The teachers (Mr O'Neill, Mrs Simpson, Mr McCullough, Mrs Hughes and Mrs Burns) arrived along with the rest of the boys and off we went.

We arrived at Dublin port and boarded the Stena Adventurer. The boat trip was long but there was a games room and lots to do so it was dead on. We arrived in Holyhead and passed Bangor- not the one in Co Down and headed for the English border. After a few hours we arrived at the World Museum in Liverpool.

The Museum had an exhibition on the history of football and of music as well as Dinosaurs (and I don't mean the teachers!), Egyptian Mummies and an Aquarium.

Our hotel was just around the corner and we got time there before having our dinner and heading back out for the Shiverpool Ghost Tour!

Our Tour Guides were ghosts!- or so they claimed! They took us round the parts of Liverpool with a gruesome history and ended by scaring the living daylights out of us at a graveyard. All done, we went back to the Hotel to settle our nerves, have a bit of craic and hit the hay.

Next morning we were up at the crack of dawn-breakfast gorged and we were ready for a jam packed day in Alton Towers. It was fantastic; there was so much to do and so little time. We got on lots of rides and won at lots of the stalls. It was a really great day for all, even the teachers got brave and went on some of the rides- in the baby park!

We headed back to the hotel, had a good dinner and walked to the cinema to see Fast and Furious. Another late night - we had to pack our bags and get ready for leaving the next morning.

Next Day up and on the coach and away to Anfield for a Tour of the grounds and Museum. We got into the changing rooms and even got to touch the players' tops with Gerrard's being the favourite. Lots

of money was spent here on jerseys and other Liverpool things - many empty pockets when we were leaving!

Back on the coach we set off for Cheshire Oaks Shopping Complex to spend whatever money we had left and then we headed for home. Once in Wales we stopped at a weird place called Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch. Try pronouncing that! Then onwards to the boat.

The journey home was rough and a few people felt sick but, thankfully, I was not one of them. We had plenty of craic on both the boat and the bus and it was no time until we were sitting on Courtenay Hill and then a quick journey home and back to that warm bed.

I really enjoyed the trip and would recommend it to everyone wanting to have a good fun break from school, parents, any annoying brothers/sisters and teachers!!

Thanks to all the teachers for taking us and especially to Mr O'Neill who deserves an A+ for organising it. Can't wait until the next trip!

Around the School

Debating:

Daniel Sutherland is Crowned Brother McFarland Debating Champion

Thursday 2nd April saw one of the most tightly contested Br McFarland senior debating finals in recent years. All three adjudicators agreed that the standard of the eight finalists was extremely high and they had trouble in their deliberation over how to rank the top three candidates. This is excellent news for Abbey debating as the 2009 final saw a number of newcomers to the competition getting through the preliminary rounds in style to make it to trophy night. Indeed this year's preliminaries showcased many talented and budding debaters who will no doubt become regular contenders at future finals.

We were honoured to receive Mr Brendan McAllister (Victims Commissioner) as guest speaker who was a member of the debating team himself as an Abbey past pupil. In fact Chairman, Mr Pat Mooney, commented on the early skill shown by Mr McAllister in junior school debating where he won a medal as a second year student! Mr McAllister expressed his pleasure at not only returning to the Abbey for such an occasion but also at the well established working relationships amongst staff and students involved and at how the tradition of debating is being carried on with enthusiasm and commitment.

Local solicitor, Mr Rory McShane, was also in attendance as sponsor of the competition and adjudicator. Mr McShane praised the competitive nature and spirit of debating that is so evident in the

Abbey and so clearly demonstrated by the finalists.

Mr Daniel Sutherland claimed the trophy for the first time having come close on two previous occasions as a finalist, while Mr Killian Feehan and Mr Niall O'Donnell ran very close second and third. The eight finalists represented each senior school year group: Ben Sutherland (Yr11), Michael Haddad (Yr11), Graeme Rice (Yr12), James Dickson (Yr12), Mr Killian Feehan (Yr13), Donal Daly (Yr14), Mr Daniel Sutherland (Yr14) and Mr Niall O'Donnell (Yr14). Well done to all competitors from the preliminaries to the final.

Ms A Reynolds
Abbey CBS
Teacher in Charge of Debating



Denny All-Ireland Debating Competition 2009

The All-Ireland Denny sponsored debate began again in earnest this Spring with the opening rounds held in Belfast. Six Abbey students competed in the semi-final heats held in Friends' School, Lisburn on Friday 20th March, where in Heat 1, Daniel Sutherland and Niall O'Donnell opposed the motion: This House Would Criminalise Parents Who Slap Their Children. Christopher Cunningham and Donal Daly also opposed this motion in Heat 2 while Killian Feehan and Patrick Gallogly proposed the motion in the same debate.

This competition was, as ever, of an excellent standard of research and skill and all competitors must be congratulated on a lengthy and, at times, entertaining, well-fought campaign. In particular Niall O'Donnell must be commended for gaining a finalist's place in the Northern Ireland Schools' Final. An excellent achievement.

Quizzing



Daire McAteer, and Sean Rooney part of the successful Senior Challenge Quiz Team

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Daire McAteer 11TF

Chess Club



John Johnson and James McDermot enjoy a game of chess

Our Chess club began one week after the start of school on September. We have two teachers who lead the club – Mr Gamble and Mr R McMahon. We play every Wednesday after school in the Main Geography room on the top floor. Each session lasts from 3.20 to 4.30 and in this time we play games and improve our techniques by learning new openings and tactics. The majority of pupils who participate come from junior school but it is open to all year groups.

This year we have played a number of competitive games against schools across Northern Ireland. My two favourite games were against St. Joseph's High School in Belfast and St. Malachy's in Castletown. We won both these matches convincingly! Chess club is a lot of fun and all newcomers are welcome – so why not come along?

Dominic Krynicki Cv2

National Youth Parliament 2009

The National Youth Parliament DVD for Westminster competition was run for the first time this year and as part of the process students met local MP and Minister, Conor Murphy, who kindly gave his time to attend a 'questions and answers' session in school.

The competition asks students to select a motion that could be debated in the House of Commons and to set up their own mock parliament debate accordingly, choosing a leader of the government and a leader of the opposition as well as a speaker for the House. Although this was initially a challenging task, students were impressive in their ability to naturally argue their points in the formal style of Members of Parliament. It bodes well for the future of Northern Ireland politics!

The competition will begin earlier next year with selection in December 2009. Well done to all participants.

A Reynolds
Debating

Telescope Donated

The Abbey has recently been provided with a 50 mm refracting telescope by the Society for Popular Astronomy, as part of the International Year of Astronomy 2009. We hope to inspire a new generation of boys to observe the awe inspiring beauty of the cosmos. From a spectacular view of a full moon, to a look at Jupiter's four largest moons- a sight which inspired Galileo to support the heliocentric model of the solar system. Or a view into deep space to see the famous M31 Andromeda Galaxy, our pupils will not be short of inspirational views of the universe around us.

THE 'FOUNDING' FIFTIES

The 50's was a unique innovation period for the Abbey in many ways setting the school's academic, sporting and social standards for the next fifty years. The pervious decade had seen the development of the belief that innate intelligence could be tested and measured by a specialised exam. This led to the setting up of a "scholarship examination" taken, if so desired, at 11 years of age. In addition to this new test, a few years previously in 1948, the Stormont administration, perhaps surprisingly given its inward looking nature, had passed legislation which entitled all young people to a free secondary education.

This was of particular advantage to Catholics as hitherto secondary school fees had to be privately funded. Entrance to the Abbey was therefore down to a combination of parental affordability and the charitable largesse of the Christian Brothers following the founding principles of Brother Edmund Rice to provide free education to young Irish Catholic boys. Those who could not afford the cost of continuing this education often saw their academic potential peter out in the black waters of primary schools until they reached the age of 14.

Then they left to seek manual employment locally or, more likely, opted to emigrate. Northern Ireland was haemorrhaging the intellectual talents of much of its youth.

The two pivotal changes referred to, changed education dramatically. Now, if a student entered and passed the "Scholarship Examination", he/she would not only be accepted into, but just as importantly could also afford to attend, a Grammar School. "Secondary Modern" schools such as St Joseph's and St Mary's had not yet been established. The Abbey as a result, could not



allow for a more academic education. Men such as Bro. Newell (also known as Tarzan despite his diminutive status), Bro. O'Lagee, the gentle giant from Kerry, and Bro 'The Moon' Mullins had the foresight to see the future possibilities for educated young Catholics and shaped their teaching accordingly.

Success in the area of education quickly followed with a large number of students sitting the "Senior Certificate" examination after five years. This exam opened the door to either continuing to pursue study to 'Advanced Senior' or leaving with a qualification sufficient to gain entry into The Civil Service or Clerical work in the many areas of industry and commerce.

Sufficient marks gained in the 'Advanced Senior' exam meant not only entry into university but the payment of university tuition fees and financial maintenance support- a prerequisite of fundamentally vital importance to this new generation of less 'well off' Catholic Students.

The Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School rapidly gained an enviable reputation for producing students of the highest intellectual quality who became leaders in the academic, political, judicial and commercial world of the 50's and 60's. Art Cosgrove became Professor and late Chancellor of U.C.D; Denis Donohue went from the Abbey to Professor of English at U.C.D and later Harvard in the U.S.A; Seamus Mallon, after attending university became a founding member of the S.D.L.P, then Member of Parliament at Westminster and member of the European Parliament; Turlough O'Donnell went from eminent barrister to Judge of the High Court and Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland. Accountancy firms such as Kearney and Fitzpatrick had Abbey students as founders and are still among the most reputable and esteemed firms in Northern Ireland. The list of eminent ex-students could go on for many pages.

Amidst all this pursuit of academic excellence, sport, particularly football was never neglected. They Abbey Sports Day, held on a Sunday, attracted, a huge

entry from all over Northern Ireland because of the excellence of the competition. Spectators packed the field to enjoy some of the best young sporting talent in Northern Ireland. In 1954 the Holy Grail of football - The McRory Cup- was brought home to the Abbey for the first time. The team was coached by one of Ireland's finest ever coaches- the late Gerry Brown, and Bro Rehill from Cavan. Seamus Mallon featured on this team as did Gerry Butterfield whose skill level is often likened to that of the legendary Mick O'Connell from Kerry. Unfortunately, for Down in particular and the G.A.A in general, Gerry, like so many of his era emigrated to America. However, this new well of sporting talent was continuing to supply the best in football as was confirmed by a second McRory Cup in 1959. Many, including Gerry Brown, considered the 1956 McMahon Corn na nog and later Rannafast and McRory winning team to be one of the best ever to represent the Abbey. Captaining this side was a well liked young boy who went on to become one of Gaelic football's greatest ever players - Sean O'Neill, a man who was later chosen at Centre Half Forward on the GAA's Team of the Millennium.

And so the 50's, a decade of fundamental change and new beginnings, laid the foundations for much development and success accrued over the best 50 years. It is to be hoped that the new beginning we are witnessing in 2009 will be seen in 2059 as having been as praiseworthy as that begun in the 1950's.

Killian Higgins.
(1952-1959)
(1966-Present)



receive a larger influx of talented young students from all walks of life. It quickly became known as 'The People's School' catering for the educational advancement of the 'ordinary' people of Newry and district. A uniform, probably unaffordable anyway, was not considered an important prerequisite, simply ability.

The Abbey management which consisted of a sequence of outstanding 'Superiors', as they were then known, reacted by changing the School curriculum to



Every boy from the age of eleven to eighteen who plays football wants to eventually play for the school and show the pride he has in wearing the school colours.

The 1950s was a glorious time for the Abbey, winning Mac Rory Cup titles. In 1959 the Abbey won the Mac Rory Cup for the second time. In 1960, six of the previous year's winning team returned to play for on the 1960 team but, unfortunately, they failed to produce their true form and several of the players that year were only sixteen. They were defeated by St. Pat's, Cavan, in the Abbey grounds and made an early exit.

In September 1961 the players assembled in the 'Old Gym' with Brother O Doherty and Gerry Brown to form a panel for the coming season. This team became one of the smallest ever to play in the Mac Rory Cup.

Being the master coach that Gerry Brown was, he turned the 'five-foot-fives' into a footballing machine. Another unique feature of this team was that there were only nineteen players on the panel. The bulk of the team came from the double winners of the 1958 Corn na nóg and Mc Mahon Cup teams. Fr. Tom 'Bluey' Mc Ateer, was the centre full back and Sean Mc Guigan was centre full forward. It would be fair to say that their jerseys were far too big for them. Nobody gave much hope to this team of small "men".

1962 was the first year that the Mac Rory Cup was played on a league basis. The Abbey won the first game against St. Eunan's, Letterkenny, with Sean Mc Guigan scoring four goals and two points. This gave the team confidence. The Abbey eventually finished top of the league, winning an epic struggle against the giants of colleges football- St. Pat's, Cavan, in the Abbey with Gerry O Rourke, playing his best ever game in an Abbey jersey. He was marking the brilliant Cavan All Star, Ray Carolan, and managed to score one goal and five points.

Another unique aspect of this game was that for the first time the public had to pay in to a school's game at the Abbey, and from memory, the last. The

Mac Rory Final was played in early April 1962, and it was the new 'Mac Rory Cup' that was up for grabs, the same trophy as is contested today.

This 1962 final was incident packed. At the end of the first half, the Abbey was leading by 4 points but the referee kept playing on and on. Eventually a spectator ran on to the field and informed him that he had already played four minutes over the normal time. During these four minutes St. Pat's, Cavan, scored a goal and two points. Their goal was scored by the late Joe Dolan, who went on to become a famous singer. The brave Abbey team was eventually defeated and Ray Carolan received the 'New Mac Rory Cup'.

Unfortunately the 'wee' Abbey team met the best St. Pat's team in their history. It is amazing to think that five of that Cavan team were picking up Mac Rory medals in April and Ulster Senior Championship medals in Casement Park in July, when the Cavan senior team beat the historic Double All-Ireland Winning Down team in the Ulster Final.

The big question on several peoples' minds was: "How could a wee team from the Abbey match these College giants?" It was due to the pure genius of Mr. Gerry Brown (RIP).

In 1964 the Abbey team once again, were the underdogs as they entered the new Mac Rory Cup campaign. They started with a convincing win over the Maorists, Dundalk, and proceeded with further victories before meeting St. Pat's Cavan and St. Columb's, Derry. On the 8th March, 1964, the Abbey once again faced St. Pat's Cavan in the final and the two mentors, Gerry Brown and Br. Mc Farland feared that history would repeat itself. The Abbey was in exactly the same position as they had been two years previously, heavily beaten by St. Pat's and now facing them in a final. With nine of the last year's team on view, including the vastly experienced Val Kane and Chris Loughran, the Abbey team was in no mood to allow St. Pat's to repeat history and promptly defeated them by 3-8 to 2-5 to bring the Mac Rory back to Courtenay Hill for only the 3rd time. This victory represented a great team effort.

The Abbey now faced St. Mel's, Longford, in the

Hogan semi-final in Clones on the 22nd March. By now the worth of Val Kane as a motivation had reached the ears of the opposition and tactics were set to try and curtail his activities on the field. In order to try and hoodwink St. Mel's to some extent, the shrewd Br. Mc Farland changed jerseys between Val and Chris Loughran – it worked to some extent as Val got an early goal but the opposition soon discovered the deception and had to fight hard to overcome a very gallant Abbey side who were narrowly beaten.

This brought to an end any great run in the sixties: other great sides narrowly failed to achieve the ultimate prize in the Mac Rory Cup. We had success at under-age levels but, unfortunately, were never able to win another Mac Rory for several years.

However, the Abbey continued to be very successful in the Christian Brothers sports competitions. In 1963 the Abbey won every cup in all levels of Minor, Intermediate, and Senior and this was one of the most memorable occasions in the history of athletics in the school. The Abbey had athletes who were specialists in their events. Gerry O Rourke broke several schools and inter-schools record in the Hop-Step-and-Jump, and long jump, whilst M. Mc Ateer, T. Markey, V. Kane, M. Mc Evoy, Louis and Jimmy Boyle and Colm Mc Cann all were all successful in their track and field events.

One of the most memorable occasions for me was in 1966 when, as a proud sixth year, I marched up Courtenay Hill with my peers into the 'New Abbey School', a truly momentous occasion. It was an unbelievable experience and now as a teacher 43 years later I look forward to moving yet again into the new State-of-the-Art school in Ashgrove. I am just as excited about this completely new experience and look forward especially to the new playing pitches and hope that they will help to mature our boys into being one of the best school teams in Ulster and Ireland!

**A. J. O Rourke.
(1960-1968)
(1970- Present)**

THE ABBEY DURING THE EARLY YEARS OF THE TROUBLES

Memories of the
70's

Looking forward to starting in the Abbey in September 1972, I had already heard so much about the 'characters' on the teaching staff from my older brothers. It was almost as if I knew Br. Byrne for instance before I even crossed the door of the school. And walking up the hill at the time I used to look down longingly on the new Abbey pitch that we were not allowed to play on until the grass took root. It was trumpeted as a work of wonder - wonderfully uneven as it turned out in later years. We soon had a sense that the Abbey was a truly unique place. What other school in the country, after all, had so many pupils whose Christian name was 'Sonny'? At least that is what a well known and much loved Maths teacher called everybody. But then again we called him 'Bob', even though we later learned his Christian name was 'Seamus'.

At the Abbey it was the Brothers who set the tone of approachability and friendliness which permeated the school. Even the stern Br. Nolan redeemed himself in later years at a Corn na n-Óg match when he gave a point for the Abbey from a shot that was blatantly wide. And I should know - it was yet another wayward effort on my part, an inability to put the ball over the bar which later prompted Mr Brown to instruct me at a team talk

that, 'whatever you do, don't shoot'. Many contemporaries will remember Br. Dargan who taught History (among other subjects) expertly; a former member of the Luftwaffe. On one never-to-be-forgotten occasion he showed us his war medals - they happened to be British war medals which had been taken in by a pupil from another class! And there was Br. Hynes who we were saddened to learn later drowned in Zambia. Br. Hynes taught us Latin and ran the tuck shop. Rote learning was a speciality. 'Amo, amas, amat' has stuck with me ever since. And I'll never forget the time we were taken up around the monastery where we were proudly shown the grounds and the ducks in the Brothers' pond that has disappeared long since and has been replaced by the mobile classrooms in the Outer Hebrides at the top of the school. From a professional point of view, it was Br. O'Hara, a real gentleman, who inspired me to study History, giving me full marks for an 'O' Level mock exam. I reckoned then I must have been fairly good at the subject.

Life at the Abbey in the 70s was set against the backdrop of the Troubles. The father of a first year classmate was shot dead and we rallied round our friend as best we could. Regularly, we heard the bombs going off in the town as Newry gained the unenviable reputation at one point of being the 'most bombed town in N. Ireland'. Naturally, it was with great regret that we got so many half days because of bomb alerts at the school. Then there was Br. Dargan, sporting his customary black beret, challenging soldiers who were searching the grounds of the Park. Among other 'historic' memories of the period, I used to spend many a break-time and lunch-time watching coal boats in the Albert Basin. I can still smell the freshly baking bread at McCann's Bakery that had us ravenous by the end of a long training session in the field.

Besides the Brothers there were numerous lay members of the Abbey Staff, teaching and non-teaching, who made life so memorable 'back in the day'. Having played a lot of football at the school it should come as no surprise that I particularly admired and appreciated the work of Mr Gerry Brown. While there were few female members of staff at the time, one of my earliest memories was of the formidable lady, Mrs Fitzsimons, with her imposing black gown. And there were the two lovely sisters, affectionately known as 'Pinky and Perky'. Above all, though, there was the looming presence of Br. Byrne whose work for the 'Black Babies' was symptomatic of his caring nature. This was conveyed to students at all times- one occasion standing out for me on a personal level. During the 70s 'parallels' were all the rage, trousers which many cut up short to meet the top of fashionable Dr Martin boots. My brother having been bought a new pair of black 'parallels' for his uniform, promptly had a friend in the neighbourhood take up the parallels in customary fashion, much to my mother's horror. Arriving in school with a pair of brand new trousers, I will never forget Br. Byrne taking me to one side and telling me that he fully understood that things must have been tough for my parents bringing up a large family but did my mother not think that my elder brother had grown out of his school uniform trousers. It is with great pride that I consider the involvement of so many teachers and pupils in the Zambian Immersion project today. It is a testament to, and living legacy of, the work of Br. Byrne.

Dr J McCavitt
(1972-1979)
(1992-Present)



The 1974 McMahon Cup Team



The 1977 McMahon Cup Team pictured on the steps of the "Handball Alley"



The Pond: now the new extension, provided the venue for many nature walks

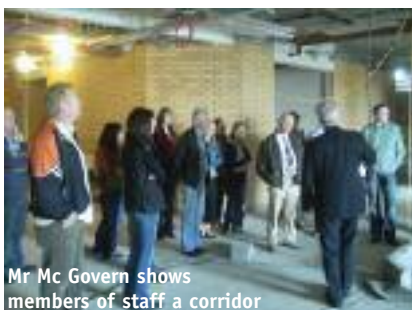
'NEW ABBEY'



Work Continues



The canteen



Mr McGovern shows members of staff a corridor



The courtyard



The courtyard



A view from the canteen

It has been confirmed that Monday 7th December 2009 will be a significant day in the history of the Abbey Grammar School. When staff arrive at work that day, they will leave behind the fabled corridors of Courtenay Hill and head in the direction of the Castleowen Site, the home of the New Abbey. Niall Burns, Donard 3, gives us a bird's-eye-view of what we can expect when the dream finally becomes a reality. Slí na Mainistreach is delighted to show case the very latest images of the New Building.



The Library



A general teaching room

TAKES SHAPE



The Home Economics Suite



The Fitness Suite



A view overlooking the front entrance



The courtyard



Staff mingling in the foyer



A science lab



The Sports Hall



The library from the outside

Memories of the 80's

SCHOOL SPIRIT TO THE FORE IN THE EIGHTIES

The mainstay of the Abbey spirit in the 80's still remains a central aspect of school life today: the relationships between pupils and staff. This was created by the Brothers who worked tirelessly to care for and help all Abbey students and was embodied best in two legendary brothers: Br Beausang and Br Byrne. Br Beausang's gift of making each individual seem important was accompanied by a cheerfulness which pervaded the Abbey for many years. Br Byrne's tireless work for the Missions inspired many pupils to sacrifice so that those in great need could have basic life essentials.

The values of the Brothers have also been strongly carried on by the lay staff of the school. There was a great sense of care in a school where everybody was encouraged to give of their best in order to achieve whatever they wished in life. I had the privilege to be taught by many great Abbey staff whose impact on me is still felt. Two of those men are still on the staff of the school: Aidan O'Rourke and Killian Higgins, men of talent and inspiration who still contribute to new generations of students. My own subject choices in school also allowed me to be taught by people who went on to have highly successful careers in education in other schools: Oliver Mooney (Principal, St Paul's), Oonagh Brown (Vice Principal, Sacred Heart) and Aine McParland (Vice Principal, Lagan College). They were inspiring figures whose enthusiasm for their subject and for teaching was infectious. The staff at that time also saw the beginnings of an expanding female staff including women who have contributed many years to the school: Mildred Rooney, Teri Donnegan, Oonagh Byrne and her sister Eithne (RIP). Of course, it wasn't just the teaching staff that were crucial to the life of the school; the support staff played a



The late Brother Beausang (RIP)



The late Brother Byrne (RIP)

crucial role too, notably Mary, Tess and Geraldine.

There were many school days that stand out in the 1980's: the wonderful 1st yr trip to London and annual trips to England to see football matches. The MacRory Cup Final in 1987 was also a highlight in which we beat St Colman's after a fantastic 2nd half performance. I will never forget the atmosphere in the school building up to that final or the buses streaming back up Courtenay Hill full of Abbey pupils thrilled with the result and standing on the steps of the school to welcome home the team with the trophy. It was a day bettered by the rekindling of that atmosphere in the Spring of 2006 with a MacRory and Hogan double.

The building itself was very different from how it looks today as we prepare to leave. There was no 1st year yard, no orchard and no extensions beyond the current Technology Block. The steps to the field were just a dirt track that we careered down like mad men to try to get to the field (it still had the slope then

too!). We used to visit the park and the pond (currently where the Maths Dept is) in order, to draw in the springtime. The canteen was an old style dining hall and the weights room was the music room.

So as this chapter of the Abbey's life draws to a close, what should we bring with us to our new building? The staff - pupil relationships, the sense of generosity inspired by the Brothers, the sense of care created by all staff and the deep motivation and inspiration of wonderful teachers. Sometimes it's only when we look back that we remember what is important. However we can only look back to learn from the past; we cannot live in it. The seeds sown over the years must continue to bring a bright new future, an Abbey future cherishing the memory of the past but making our own history in the years to come.

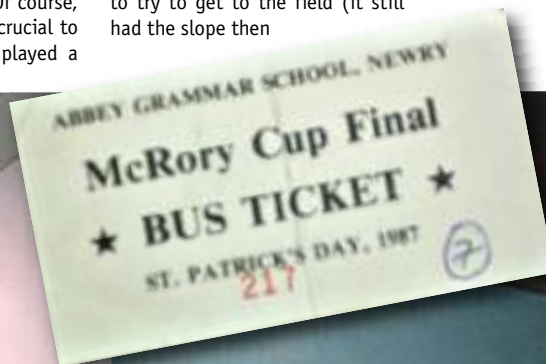
Ronan Ruddy

(1982 – 1989)

(1996-Present)



Mr K. Higgins, Head of Modern Languages



Mr B. Bradley, Geography

A DECADE OF CHANGE ON COURTENAY HILL

Memories of the
90's



The 1990 Ben Dearg Shield winners



The 1991 Corn na nóg winners. Included are five players who went on to win All-Ireland medals with Armagh in 2002: John McEntee, his twin brother, Tony McEntee, Barry Duffy, Enda McNulty and, pictured with the cup, Aidan O'Rourke



An aerial view of the current site in the early 90's

Leaving the Abbey Primary School in June of 1988, there was only one place that I wished to go to further my education. For me the step of transferring from the Abbey Primary to the Abbey Grammar was as logical as night following day. When I began on the first of September 1988, I immediately felt as though I had come 'home'- such was the atmosphere generated by the staff and pupils. When I finished my A Levels in 1995 the Abbey had gone through massive changes, which in my view were for the better. There is one anticipated change, however, that did not occur, despite very strong rumours- I did not get to become one of the first group of Sixth Year students to move to a touted New Abbey building!

When I arrived Brother Kelly was the Headmaster and Brother Beausang, the legendary Irish teacher from Cork, was the Vice Principal. I was lucky to be taught by many men and women whose names have become the stuff of legend on Courtenay Hill. In M2 I was enthralled by Pat Mooney (who was known as 'Big Jed'), I remember hanging on every line, as he read 'Flight of the Doves' to us on a Friday, I remember in equal measure the weekly dread of him asking me to read the part of any character aloud. In M11, Tommy Keane (the man whom rumour had it had some involvement in Civil Rights in Newry which gave him a mysterious edge) was my French

teacher. He brainwashed us with French verbs that, to this day, I can still repeat. Chris Coffey taught me Geography and Religion in a classroom now furnished with work benches as part of a Technology Block. In 1988 the notion that the Abbey would ever have a Technology Block was fanciful to say the least. As for History, we were taught about Vikings by Jackie Rocks, who used to base your potential to be a Mc Rory footballer on your ability, or otherwise, to catch your history exercise book as it was flung from the teacher's desk. The unmistakable Brother Nannery (Nano) who held a diary in his jacket pocket where he recorded the punishment work dished out to 'the next one who speaks...' - if memory serves me correctly he went through around four diaries per year.

There are of course dozens of other teachers who passed through the gates of the Abbey in the nineties and each will have played their part in creating memories for the hundreds of pupils who attended the school.

My memories of being a pupil in the Abbey in the very early nineties are of older pupils with bleached blonde hair; á la George Michael in Wham; the permitted smoking area for students; the tuck shop- that resembled a stampede in the Serengeti at break and lunch each day. Whilst the school uniform that today's pupils wear hasn't changed much on paper, in reality the uniform was seen back then as more of a guideline than a rule. Denim jackets, ice-white trainers and ear rings were everywhere to be seen.

As far as I was concerned as a pupil the monumental change in the direction of the Abbey Grammar School came in 1993 with the appointment, as principal, of Brother J Mc Donald. Gone were the white 'moon boots'; in came an insistence on black shoes and black socks. In a single year, the school went from having a laid

back approach, to regular spot checks on the colour of pupils' socks. It was a shock to the system for us as pupils and evidently for some of the staff, as the school experienced, in the following years, a very high turn over of personnel. Changes swept through every aspect of life in the Abbey: the senior common room, for years decorated with unwanted chairs and desks from the canteen, got a make over that made it the envy of every pupil in the school. When Sky TV was installed in the common room in 1994, pupils were given the biggest sign yet that they might not be in a new Abbey building but they were now attending a different Abbey. New subjects appeared from nowhere: Technology, Computer Science and PE Studies. Rookie's 'Road Traffic Studies' mope head' was finally binned!

To my mind, I am proud to reflect that I witnessed, at first hand, the Abbey change for the better. The Courtenay Hill site has provided me, and so many others who passed through the Abbey with me, with such a wealth of good memories that if I were to sit down and rewrite this article afresh, I could do so naming entirely different memories, entirely different legends. The challenge for us, as the current custodians of this unique school, is to transfer the atmosphere synonymous with this site and recreate it in our 'state-of -the-art' new building. That is a challenge for another day, for now, farewell to Courtenay Hill from the pupils of the nineties; and to the residents near by, enjoy the peace and quiet!

Sean Gallagher
(1988-1995)
(2001-Present)



As the gates of Courtenay Hill close to Abbey students for the last time in December, Slí Na Mainistreach remembers some of our recent past pupils and their wonderful contribution to the history of the Abbey this decade.



FOURTH ZAMBIAN IMMERSION PROJECT SEES CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT IN LIVINGSTONE

Touching Down again in Zambia this March for the 2009 Zambia Immersion project it was interesting to see how the town of Livingstone had changed since my first visit in May 2008. There were a lot more shops and offices and you definitely got a sense that this was a town on the rise. The people seemed to have a new found confidence about them and this was evident as we made our way up the main street on our first full day.

Once the Abbey Boys had been allocated to their schools and given the timetable for the week and their day-care visits, it was off to work. What I found hadn't changed was the poverty in the area



The 2009 Zambia Immersion Team

surrounding Livingstone – the huge compounds still remain, and within these the people still suffer great hardships. In compounds such as the saw Mills (Livingstone's oldest compound), there is no running water; sewage collects out on the street and you still have most people living in extremely poor conditions – one roomed huts are the usual order of the day, with as many as 12 people crammed into a single room - which also doubles up as the cooking and sleeping area. However, the people in these areas still go about their daily business with a smile on their faces.

On the positive side, the work of Sr Mary Courtney and the St Francis Day Care Centre is going from strength to strength and that is due in no small part to the contributions of the Abbey community. Their Health Education programme has expanded, providing AIDS awareness education and also drugs to even more of those who need it most. It is certainly helping to remove the stigma that is attached to those with AIDS and is helping them to understand the importance of taking their medication as well as informing them of how to prevent the spread of HIV / AIDS.

Sr Sheila also took us up to her latest 'project', up at the quarry. Conditions up there are quite simply awful. Women, of all ages, do most of the work there, sitting from dawn to dusk breaking up stones to put into wheelbarrows. Each wheelbarrow earns them around 70p; it is backbreaking work and an almost thankless task. Children also help them either after school, or by not going to school at all. What really stood out up there was the poverty of the place. Nearly all of the children (who were of all ages it has to be said), had bloated stomachs because they had worms and their faces were

covered in dust, and their nostrils were virtually closed because of the dust from the area. Fortunately Sr Sheila has taken it upon herself to try and help the impoverished people at the quarry – indeed the Abbey has agreed to send out the required funds for a bore hole up at the quarry area to provide clean water for its inhabitants. Add to this the fact that she has been closely involved with the Japanese government in getting a school building constructed beside the quarry; it could be said that things are looking up – though there is still a long way to go with the school construction.

We made a return trip to the hospice and it was great to see it was going from strength to strength. It is a new building, well conditioned and clean inside – an excellent facility for the patients and from talking to them you could tell that they felt as happy as they could be in these surroundings. Again Abbey contributions will make a difference here as we have now agreed whilst out there to give a monthly donation to the hospice.

Out at Libuyu community school it was again great to see money donated by the Abbey community being put to good use. Libuyu School now has classrooms partitioned off; there is a security wall and a range of educational resources. In addition teachers are now being regularly paid and we have plans put in place to increase salaries, a strategy to develop positive discipline in the school as well as to develop an education policy which will enhance teaching and learning for the children. To ensure this all is being done we have also employed a school inspector and it was great to meet with him and see first hand the excellent work that has

taken place since our last visit. Libuyu is clearly on the right path and whilst out there we turned our attention to another community school that some of the boys were teaching in – Linda. When we visited Linda last year, and again this year, it was clear that in comparison to Libuyu, Linda had virtually nothing. We therefore took the decision to erect a security wall around the school and help provide essential maintenance and resources for the schools. On a personal note this was very pleasing as again money donated by Abbey parents and students could be used in such a positive way to give a school, which has nothing, the chance to grow and prosper.

Overall whilst the poverty, disease, lack of health care and basic education still remain; there is no doubt in my mind that things are starting to change in Livingstone and its surrounding areas. Donations from the Abbey are clearly having a positive impact. We are not out there changing the world but we are making a difference for many Zambians.

U16 Best Public Speaker of Irish in Northern Ireland

The Abbey continued in its long history of producing Northern Ireland Public Speaking Champions when Ryan Walsh won the U16 section in Dungannon Council Offices yesterday afternoon. In an extremely competitive GCSE section Ryan set a very high standard when he opened the competition with a satirical speech describing the hypocrisy of the Hollywood Oscar Ceremony. Congratulations also to Daniel Smith in Year 12 who competed in the finals with a speech praising the arrival of 'no frills airline' Ryanair.

Tionscadal na Saimbia.

Tugadh deis iontach dom i mbliana seal a chaitheamh sa tSaimbia agus caithfidh mé a rá gurbh é sin an t-eispeireas is fearr i mo shaol go dtí seo. Bhí sé go hiontach.

Gach lá, theagasc muid páistí i bpobalscoil agus chuir sé eiteoga ar mo chroí le bheith ag múineadh na bpáistí seo. Bhí na páistí seo chomh buíoch as an scoiláocht a bhí curtha ar fáil dóibh agus bhí fonn mór orthu freastal ach an lá cé go mbíonn fadhbanna uafásacha ag cuid acu amhail galar, SEIF nó bás sa teaghlach – fiú an fhadhb a bhaineann le héadaí a chaitheamh chun freastal ar an scoil. Sa tír seo, bímid inár gcodladh ar an chluais sin go bhfuil an scoiláocht ann.

Chuidigh muid in ionaid cúram lae fosta agus d'oscail an méid a bhí le feiceáil iontu mo shúile dom. Ní raibh mé in ann a shamhlú an t-uafás a bhí le feiceáil – daoine ag fáil báis ó SEIF, galar a choinnigh bean sa leaba le trí bliana agus go leor fadhbanna uafásacha eile. Cuireann tinneas lena nglactar mar neamhní in Éirinn isteach go mór ar dhaoine sa tSaimbia, le torthaí marfacha i gcásanna áirithe. Thug muid cuairt ar chairéal lá amháin, áit ina raibh daoine idir 5-50 bliain d'aois ag obair 12 uair sa lá ag briseadh cloch lena lámha chun aon dollar in aghaidh an lae a fháil. Tá sé chomh míchothrom go bhfuil a leithéid d'éigear ann sa domhan. Ina dhiaidh sin is uile, chonaic mé torthaí an airgid a bhailítear in Éirinn ar an láthair.

Ach ta áilleacht sa tSaimbia fosta amhail Easa Victoria agus ní féidir liom an gliondar a cuireadh i mo chroí as an radharc sin a fheiceáil a chur i bhfocail. Dá mbeadh an seans agat cuairt a thabhairt ar an tír sin, glac an seans agus ní bheidh aiféala ort. Is tír fíor-álainn, fíor-iontach í an tSaimbia agus tá súil agam go bhfillfidh mé ar ais lá éigin.

Feargal Mac Murchaidh

Cúrsaí Gaeilge

Ulster Scoilríamáiocht Festival

The Abbey has a long tradition of participation and success in the Scoilríamáiocht Festival and reached the Ulster Festival in the Marketplace Theatre in Armagh in the middle of March. Having won their competition, the award for 'Best Senior Irish' and 'Best Actor' in the Newry Festival the senior Irish drama students took part in the Ulster Festival, against the best Dramas from Derry, Belfast and Donegal.

In a hugely entertaining and humorous sketch of an external Irish oral exam, the Abbey students captivated the large audience with their fine production of a comical script. Despite John-Benedict Farrell scooping the award for 'Best Actor', the drama failed to receive a nomination to the All-Ireland Festival. Other cast and crew members were: Mr Maurice McKevitt, Mr Desmond Tennyson, Sean Cunningham, Tony Fearon, Darren Loye, John McCaul, James Hasson, John-Benedict Farrell, Kevin Heagarty, Turlough Tinnelly, Michael McVerry, Michael Morgan, Cathal MacDhaibhéid, Oliver Hearty and Peter Rice.

Irish Week Art Competition Winners

Detailed below are the winners of the recent Art Competition during Irish Week in the Abbey. All Year 9 Abbey Students were invited to participate in an art competition depicting various Irish Proverbs through Art. Prize money for the competition was provided by Foras na Gaeilge, as part of the Irish Department's reward for being in the top ten schools in Ireland for promoting spoken Irish. Included in the picture with the winners is Ms Orla Hughes, Acting-Head of Art, and Mr Desmond Tennyson, Head of Irish.

Winner:
Second Place:
Runners Up:

Conal McAuley IV9
Diarmuid Murray D09
Aaron O'Reilly IV9
Cormac Begley IV9
Luke Bradley D09
Ryan Johnston SL9

Book Review



Book: Snakehead
Author: Anthony Horowitz

Snakehead is written by the British author, Anthony Horowitz. Anthony Horowitz is one of the most popular and creative children's writers working today. He is the creator of the hugely successful Alex Rider series that has sold over ten million copies worldwide and has won him many awards including the Bookseller Association/Nielsen Author of the year award 2007 and the Children's Book of the Year Award at the 2006 British Book Awards. The Alex Rider series consists of Stormbreaker, the first Alex Rider mission which was made into a movie blockbuster, Point Blanc, Skeleton Key, Eagle Strike Scorpia, Ark Angel and Snakehead.

The genre of this book is action and adventure. It is fiction although some of the places mentioned are real.

Walker Books published the book on the 31 October 2007. The paperback version of Snakehead was released on April 10, 2008. This edition has an extended chapter showing the scene where Ash kills John and Helen Rider. Ash's true name, Anthony Sean Howell, is also revealed.

The book opens with Alex Rider landing in the South Pacific after falling from outer space (which is the end of the last book) before being taken to a military compound in Perth, Western Australia, on an aircraft carrier called the Kitty Hawk.

There he meets Ethan Brooke, a blind worker of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), who asks him to work for them, but he refuses as he has had enough of working as a spy. Then his mind is changed when he is told he would be working with his godfather – a man he has never met. They meet for the first time and have dinner and discuss their mission, to infiltrate a snakehead 'people smuggling operation' between Bangkok and Australia.

At the same time a criminal organisation called Scorpia has been hired to murder a group of rich celebrities who have organized a make poverty history-type meeting on an island. Their plan is to create a tsunami by using a British bomb called Royal Blue that will engulf the island. Major Yu, who is also the leader of a Snakehead, heads the operation.

While in Bangkok, Alex encounters an MI6 base and is asked by Mrs Jones to help them find Royal Blue. Smithers, an inventor, gives Alex some gadgets: a watch (when the hands are moved to 11 o'clock, a signal is activated), a belt that conceals a knife, and a jungle survival kit, and three exploding coins.

The Snakehead smuggles a disguised Alex aboard a container ship and while on board he sees the stolen weapon. After escaping the boat he rings Ash and gets captured by Major Yu. He is then sent to a hospital in the Australian rainforest where he is to be used as a donor for illegal organ transplants. Before anything is

taken from him he escapes down a river.

Even though his watch has been set to eleven for a long period of time he had seen any sign of MI6 so he opens his watch to find the battery missing. He luckily replaces it with the battery from the tracking device in his shoe. Once rescued, he explains Yu's plan, and is sent with a bunch of other agents to the oilrig where Royal Blue is to be detonated.

Alex and Ben, another agent, find the control room and Ben shoots Yu's assistant before being shot himself by Yu. He finds out that the assistant is Ash, and that Ash was secretly working for Scorpia who had killed Alex's parents. Yu then escapes and Alex detonates the bomb early so it doesn't cause a tsunami. The shock waves reach Major Yu on his boat and because of his fragile bone structure he is killed.

Alex Rider is the main character of the book. He is a fourteen-year-old boy who lives in London. He is well built, with short fair hair and brown eyes. A few months after his birth, Alex's parents, John and Helen Rider, had been killed in a plane crash. Alex was then raised by his uncle Ian Rider. When his uncle died in a supposed car accident Jack Starbright took care of him and became his legal guardian. When he is not on missions he attends Brookland School.

Ash is another main character in this book although not much detail is given about him. He is Alex's godfather and was good friends with Alex's father. He worked alongside John Rider in MI6 but John was always better at him at everything. He had black curly hair and the beginnings of a rough beard and was dressed in full military gear when Alex first met him.

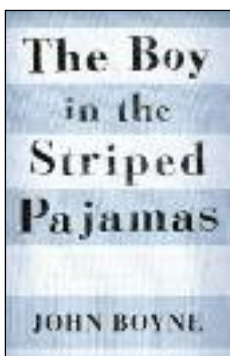
Major Winston Yu is one of the members of the executive board of Scorpia. He has a form of osteoporosis that he calls "Brittle Bone Disease," which makes his skeleton highly un-stable. He has an obsession with the British that began when his mother had an affair with a British businessman who told her beautiful things about England. When he was born, his mother named him after Winston Churchill.

I thought that this book was packed with action and excitement, which made it impossible to put down. I found that the most interesting part was when we discovered the truth behind Ash and that he was the culprit of Alex's parents' deaths. This was a very unexpected twist that made finishing the book all the more disappointing as there was nothing left to read.

Anyone who found James Bond interesting has to read this - especially if they are fourteen. If you enjoy a good adventure then reading this book will not disappoint. It would also appeal to anyone who likes a good mystery as it has a lot of twists and turns.

I would give this book nine out of ten because it was easy and enjoyable to read and wasn't too short that it didn't have a story. Although it was very pleasurable to read, it dragged on a bit in a few parts.

Which is Better: the book or the movie?



Book: The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas
Author: John Boyne

I loved this book. It was very well written. Bruno came alive! Based in World War Two, Bruno comes home from school to find his maid packing his bags. After a lot of questioning, Bruno discovers that he will be moving to Poland. Bruno moves to Poland because 'the Fury' has big things in mind for Bruno's father, who is a commandant.

Bruno moves to 'Out-With' and finds a fence and a boy- boy in striped pyjamas. He's called Shmuel. They talk for a year or so, then Bruno gets to go home. So Bruno and Shmuel make up an adventure to find Shmuel's father, who has been missing for

several days. Bruno crosses the fence and walks with Shmuel to the camp.

Suddenly, they are pushed into a room. Every-one in the room gasps. Bruno is never seen again.

I like the way the author shows the way they grow up i.e. Gretel throwing all her dolls away and replacing them with maps and Bruno being able to look right across Berlin without standing on his tiptoes.

I give this book a 9/10 because it is very good but two small criticisms I would make are: Bruno was extremely naïve and it's very repetitive at times!

By Conor Evans Oriel 3



Film: The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

Compared to the book, I thought that the film was slightly better but the film left out a lot of small details such as Father's office being 'Out Of Bounds At All Times And No Exceptions'. The film played

everything in order while the book had flashbacks. The film also added in aspects such as Bruno having to run through a forest to get to Shmuel and the part about the chimneys of the furnaces where the Nazis burned the Jews' bodies. The film was slightly too short and everyone had an English accent which sort of contradicted the fact that the film was about a German boy living near a concentration camp in Poland. The camp in the film was small while the camp in the book was vast with hundreds of huts.

The end of the film was brilliant as it was heart throbbing and the music was very high pitched. This added to the effect. Bruno eventually died in the gas chambers with Shmuel and I found this very sad.

All in all, I would give the film 8/10 as it was very good the whole way through with a brilliant ending that really made it special for me. I would advise you to read the book before watching the film as there are some parts that you may not understand and also, you can relate your views with the views of the director.

If you are looking for a sad exciting film, I would strongly recommend this film to you. A brilliant film that can be watched by anyone!

By Paul McKeever Oriel 3

Last year saw the return of competitive basketball to the school. Despite much hard work by pupils and coaches the first year team was the only team to have real success. Since September both the under 19 and 16 teams have been battling for places in two competitions the cup and the league.

Cup Competitions:

Unfortunately, the Under 19 team was beaten early on in the competition and exited in the 2nd round. The under 16 team fought well and made it to the All-Ireland quarter final where they were to meet their rivals from last year St Columb's, Derry. There were beaten by the better team on the day and while Derry moved on to the Semi-Final the Abbey turned their attentions to the league.

The Second Year boys' basketball team of the Abbey Grammar School meant business this year. They started their season off with wins over Newry High School, St Patrick's College, Armagh, and St Joseph's, Donaghmore to bring them to the top of their group. The team showed real fight and promise and had a 'never-give-in' attitude which saw them go to the Ulster finals and win against Loretto College, Coleraine to become Ulster champions, with Aaron Miller from 1st year being voted as MVP (Most Valuable Player).

Being undefeated regional winners in the Northern Ireland league, they faced the All Ireland playoffs in St Patrick's College, Navan. Under the guidance of their coach, Mrs Pauline McClean, the boys were set for a tough day of three matches.

The first match was a closely fought battle against Abbey College, Boyle. It was basket for basket right up until the last twenty seconds of the match when the Boyle men scored from a steal to snatch victory from the Abbey boys with two points. Score: Abbey College, Boyle 28 – 26 Abbey Grammar School. (P. McGrath, J O'Hare and A. Miller being top scorers for the Abbey).

Disappointed as they were, the Abbey Grammar boys went straight into the next game hungry for a win. They next played the team with the home advantage - St Pat's, Navan. This was another tightly fought game with each team battling for points. Every score was matched by another from the opposite team. On the day the Abbey wanted it that little bit more and went ahead in the game with big scores from Padraig McGrath, Aaron Miller and team captain, Peter O'Hagan.

Score: Abbey Grammar School 25 St Patrick's, Navan 22

Everything hinged on the last game against St Michael's, Ballsbridge. The Abbey came out fighting hard, outclassing the St Michael's team and winning the game with big scores from Sheagh Dobbin, Aaron Miller and Padraig McGrath.

Score: Abbey Grammar School 39 St Michael's, Ballsbridge 19

The boys of the Abbey then faced a trip to Limerick for the All-Ireland semi final against Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne, Kerry on the 30th of April. This meant an overnight stay for the boys involved.

League Competition:

The Under 19 team won only one of their games in the league this year with two others finishing on very close scores. All the players worked and trained hard, winning praise from coaches from other schools. The under 16 team was much more successful this year; being beaten only once gave them a place in the regional (Ulster) final. On Wednesday the 3rd of December, the team along with Mrs McClean, travelled to St Malachy's College in Belfast to play in the Ulster Final. The boys were to play a team who had already beaten them once: St Columb's, Derry. There was a great atmosphere at the match, with both teams determined on winning.

The first quarter of the game finished on an even score, but the Abbey had conceded a lot of fouls. By the end of the 2nd quarter the Abbey were down by 6 baskets. In the 3rd quarter the Abbey were down by 26 points. After a quick 'time-out talk', the Abbey came out fighting in the 4th quarter and came back to within 8 points. Luck, however, was not on our side and Derry managed to score two 3 pointers in a row. The Abbey held on but lost the game 42-28. Adrian Fullerton, the regional development officer for basketball in Ulster, presented the boys with their silver medals. The players fought hard and have vowed to come back next year and take home gold.



Peter O'Hagan (captain), Padraig McGrath, Aaron Miller, Aaron O'Reilly, Conor O'Reilly, Joseph McShane, James O'Hare, Rory Waterson, Sheagh Dobbin, Michael Hasson, Cathal Donnelly, Niall Reel, Daniel Murdock, Jason Bagues, Ruairi Daly, Conor Cranny, Declan Hillen. Team Coach: Mrs Pauline McClean.

On the day of the semi-final the Abbey boys were set for a battle. They worked hard to get there and wanted to go to the final. Unfortunately, luck was not on their side and they were beaten on the day by the better team. Corca Duibhne came out fighting in the 1st quarter to score 12 points against the Abbey boys. The 12 point deficit was just too much for the boys to overcome but they fought to the end, losing 30 – 16. On the up side, however, the Abbey boys were awarded bronze medals for coming third in their division in Ireland and they look towards next year for a silver or perhaps an All Ireland gold medal.

All The Way To Cavan

After a year of losing to other teams in Northern Ireland we decided that in our second year together we'd do some winning of our own. We'd gotten all the way to the semi finals in the schools cup and to the regional finals in the league. The Abbey Basketball team had earned their place in the all Ireland play offs and the possibility of playing in the semi finals of the league, this would offer us another shot at our rivals and 'time-and-time-again' betters - St. Columb's, Derry. The play offs gave us a day out of school and a great day of basketball!

So all the way to Cavan we went. We had two games to play and if we won both we were through. Upon first glance our opponents didn't seem as if they were up to the challenge that we would offer - a thought that in hindsight was a tad stupid. Warmed up and ready, the game tipped off, straight away we knew we may have had slightly underestimated our opponents. Not to matter, although it was a close match we pulled through and won - we were half way to the semis!

After an athlete's lunch of sausage rolls and chicken nuggets we were back on the court trying to get warmed up again before our second match. This team was our competition as they, too, had won their first match; whoever won this one went through. If underestimation had been a problem in the previous match then it was a catastrophe in this one. Unlike the other team who had been better than we thought but still only average, this team were good and they proved this to us quickly by taking the lead in the first and second quarter. After some words of "encouragement" from Mrs McClean at half time we went out onto the court with a new drive and began to come back. At the end of the third quarter the match was the closest it had been but tragedy struck - our point guard's legs gave up on him and he had to 'sub off', our tactics changed but the team kept going. In the end, sadly, we lost. Maybe it was the heavy lunch; maybe it was the tiredness of two match in a row; or maybe it was just not our time but whatever it was - there's always next year.

Niall McArdle

Golf

Outing to the K Club

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly our visit to the K Club - one of Ireland's top golf courses. A number of schools from across the North were invited to attend on Mayday and the boys thoroughly enjoyed their day out. They got an insight into life on the tour as a professional golfer with access to the practice range, putting and chipping greens and an official starter!

The course was in excellent condition and a number of close matches were fought. In the top game, Mr. Gamble and Mr. Morgan were desperately unlucky to lose the final hole and halve their match. Gareth Rooney excelled under the pressure of battle and surely has a future in politics with his ability to claim he has a handicap of 18 and whilst keeping a straight face! No doubt he will argue he was merely abiding by the rules.

Abbey Beat Maghera To Win The Nannery Cup



Pictured with the victorious Nannery Cup team are: team manager, Mr J McCartan and his assistant, Mr Robbie Hanna

On Saturday, May 30th, the Abbey CBS played St. Patrick's, Maghera in the final of the Ulster Colleges Nannery Cup. The two sides had previously met in the group stages of the competition, where that game finished stalemate in Armagh.

Unlike the previous encounter, when the conditions didn't favour good football, the final took place on the hottest day of the year in Derrytresk, Tyrone.

As the match began, it was obvious that the Abbey team were suffering from nerves as Maghera took control of the match, scoring three goals in the first ten minutes without reply. The Abbey were shocked into action and began to dominate midfield with Conlaodh Quinn scoring a goal with a long

range effort. At this, Abbey players stepped up and began to put in great performances, with Declan Cranny collecting every loose ball in the defence and Jamie Cairns being rewarded for his many runs by picking up a crucial goal.

Going in at half time, the Abbey had clawed their way back into the match with the score at 3-2 to 2-3 in favour of Maghera. The other Abbey scores were converted by Ben Hughes, Michael Rogers and a Conor McCann free-kick.

At the beginning of the second half, the Abbey were playing with the wind and quickly took a one point lead following another Conlaodh Quinn goal. The Abbey resumed control of the game and never looked back from there. They continued to play admirably and pick up the important scores. A Keelan Murdock goal followed by two points from Ben Hughes virtually killed Maghera off. This was

cemented by another goal scored by Daniel Murdock making the score 5-5 to 3-2.

To everyone's surprise, Maghera staged a late rally, scoring two goals in quick succession which ensured the crowd were on the edge of their seats. Another Jamie Cairns score settled the Abbey before a brilliant save from goalkeeper Aidan Rushe denied Maghera a late goal.

After that attack, the referee blew the final whistle, calling an end to what had been a fantastic match. The Abbey's captain James McNulty lifted the Nannery Cup amid scenes of joy in the Abbey camp as well as scenes of disappointment among the team and supporters of Maghera.

This brought to an end a historic day as this was the first time the Nannery title has been taken back to the Abbey CBS.

By Conlaodh Quinn SL9

Abbey Under Eighteens Edge Out Shimna

What a venue for a game of sport! A pristine pitch on the slopes below the snow covered Sleive Donard, over looking a vast expanse of sea. Was the following game going to match the setting?

We were made very welcome by Shimna's captain and due to the later start we had time to warm up and run through a few moves. Unfortunately, the referee they had booked could not make it and their TiC was not a player. Our coach was hoping to analyse our play in preparation for the all schools & colleges competition later this month, but for the game to go ahead he had to reluctantly referee. They were one player short and in true Abbey spirit two of our players shared a half each for the opposition. We wanted a win 15 versus 15!

The whistle blew and what followed was 30 minutes of focused energy from both teams. Every tackle was crunched, every ruck fast and furious (as well as few cheating hands), and when the ball was

passed out to the backs the press defence was in the opposition faces. Most of the half was played in Shimna's territory; driving runs by Cathal McNally with three or four opposition players desperately trying to bring him down; Ryan Oozerally's outstanding courage in the rucks helping to win possession, solid scrummaging from all the forwards; Conor Fox's solid passing from the base of the scrum; Mark Rafferty's valiant leadership and control of the backs, and an almost flawless passing game from the backs. Despite all this the welcome half-time whistle found the game scoreless.

With a few tactical changes and squad rotation, the second half started with even more intensity. The game opened up more, with some play out to wings by both teams. Holes were punched through the middle by Shimna, but McNally and others were determined not to let anyone through. Their next passage of play left Shimna close to our try line, and just as the referee was about to blow up for a penalty against the opposition for lifting a man off his feet, one of our players swiped their offending player's legs away. Penalty to Shimna, 5 metres out. Yellow

Card to the Abbey and 14 men. Eventually the pressure took its toll with too many of our players sucked into a ruck as they desperately tried to stop each attack. Shimna drove over for a try. They didn't convert, leaving the score at 5 - 0. The Abbey had to dig deep and play the remaining ten minutes in the opposition half. This they did and with two minutes left they were awarded a scrum 5 metres out - who else, but McNally using his brains and muscle - a vital combination in rugby, picked up from the base of the scrum and in true No8 fashion drove and then dived for the line. Try scored. Jarlath McAteer, who had five minutes earlier narrowly missed a penalty attempt from the half-way line, confidently stroked the ball over. Shimna 5 Abbey 7 -and one minute left. The Abbey then won a scrum against the head and kicked for touch - game over!

An inspiring venue and a great game of rugby by all involved. Well done boys!

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