

Strathearn News



CAROL SERVICE



This year the Carol Service took place on 17 December in Stormont Presbyterian Church. The soloists, the Penrhyn Choir and the Strathearn Junior, Senior and Chamber Choirs delighted the congregation. We would like to thank the Music and Religious Studies Departments and Penrhyn for once again bringing us an inspiring blend of music, which complemented the beautifully delivered readings and gave us a fresh appreciation of the Christmas story. Everyone who participated in the service deserves our thanks for leading us in a memorable evening of praise and worship. The retiring collection of £1134 was dedicated to Child Sponsorship in Uganda and we would like to warmly thank all of you who contributed so generously to this.



DAISY PULLS IT OFF CAREERS ROUND-UP

Strathearn's school production this year was *Daisy Pulls it Off*, by Denise Deegan. *Daisy Pulls it Off* is a comedy that follows Daisy Meredith as she encounters the snobbish new world of a private school in the 1920s. The plot follows Daisy through many 'jolly scrapes'. With experienced principals such as Katy Anderson, Jill Fergie and Molly Fairclough, the audience was in very safe hands. The chorus also played a massive role in ensuring the success of this show, with their constant presence on stage providing much of the humour. The show was energetic across the two hours of its duration and the audience's laughter inspired the cast to produce an outstanding evening's entertainment. Congratulations to Miss Ferris and all involved.



As always we have been very busy in the Careers Department during this part of the term. Many girls in U6 are getting ready for university interviews and so we held our annual Mock Interview Evening on 23 November which enabled our pupils to have the opportunity to have some interview practice. This was a very successful evening and we are indebted to all the interviewers who took time from their busy schedules to help our girls. All the pupils benefited from the expertise and advice given on the night. Girls applying to Oxford and Cambridge got an additional interview, and Mrs Hearst has also been carrying out extra one-to-one practice interviews.



Mrs Hearst has also organised a series of interview workshops on medicine, nursing and teaching. As always we have a number of girls who are interested in STEM careers. One pupil in U6 attended a careers event at Montupet which covered various aspects of engineering. Dr Ross took a group of five girls from Form Five to a careers event at Schlumberger, where they learned about the company and the sorts of jobs that engineers carry out on a day-to-day basis. In addition, a STEM ambassador spoke with them about the shortage of female engineers in the workforce, highlighting the need to address the imbalance in the male to female ratio. Like last year, we were delighted to have a speaker from Trinity College Dublin talk about opportunities at that institution, and many girls attended another presentation on applying to a range of universities in the Republic of Ireland. A representative from Queen's and our careers adviser from the Department for Employment and Learning both spoke to Form Three about choosing GCSE subjects. Mrs Hearst has also had Form Three classes visit the careers suite for question and answer sessions about subject choices. Several girls from Form Four upwards attended a talk on careers within sport given by a representative from David Campbell Soccer which covered coaching, business opportunities and public relations. One girl from L6 attended an Occupational Therapy Open Day at the Royal Victoria Hospital where she had the opportunity to talk to students and staff to learn more about the profession, while another pupil attended a Law Insight event at Pinsent Masons. With L6 work experience coming up shortly after Christmas, L6 attended a session on the importance of health and safety delivered by the Health and Safety Executive for NI, and another on 'Experiences of Work' in which they learned about job opportunities in Northern Ireland with a special focus on the IT sector. Several former pupils also came into school to talk to the sixth form about their experiences at university, and we also had an information session with a junior doctor. Some U6 girls have already had conditional offers from UK universities and others can look forward to more offers in the New Year. As always, details of all our careers events can be found on the careers section of the school website.

Joseph

Congratulations to all of our pupils who acted in and contributed to this year's joint production with Campbell College. The production ran over three nights from 2 - 4 December, and provided great entertainment to everyone who attended.



INDIVIDUAL'S SUCCESSES

Congratulations to...



Maia Simmons, 1H, who won the 2015 Irish National Youth Cycling Championships in Westport, and who won the 2015 U14 Ulster Cyclecross event. Maia also passed her Grade Three Saxophone exam.

Catherine Welsh, 1T, who performed Highland dancing at the Belfast Tattoo.

Charlotte Keers, 2T, who achieved third place in the individual section of the Inter-Schools' Derby Showjumping competition, and was a member of the overall winning team. Charlotte also achieved first place in the Ardnacashel Equestrian Open 133cm Working Hunter event.

Felicity Johnston, 2T, who was a member of the winning team in the Inter-Schools' Derby Showjumping competition. Felicity also won the Gransha Equestrian Centre Open 133cm Working Hunter event.

Emma McGugan, 3H, who won the Ulster U15 Open in Squash, and who also achieved 5th place in the Irish Junior Squash Open Championships.

Alex Armstrong, 3T, who achieved her Level One Paddle Power Passport at the Belfast Kayak Academy.

Erin McConnell, 4A, who became the Ulster Junior Champion in the 200m Butterfly. Erin was also placed 2nd in the 800m Front Crawl and 3rd in the 400m Front Crawl in the Ulster Open Swimming Championships.

Sophie Neale, 4S, who won the U19 Novice competition at the Regional Schools' Trampoline Championships and was also awarded the Best Novice Set score.

Yuan Chen, 4T, who achieved an A* in her GCSE Chinese.

Lauren Clarke, 5H, who won the U16 Girls' Irish Dancing Championship.

Lucy Robinson, U6R, who got through to the final of the Dawson's Singer-Songwriter competition.

Sorcha Corbett, 2S, who achieved a Distinction in her Grade Three Music Theory.

Lauren Lawther, 1T, who won the Girl Talk competition to design an anti-bullying slogan. Lauren won an iPad, which arrived on her birthday!



PUBLIC SPEAKING Young Enterprise

Five pupils from Strathearn participated in the local heat of the Soroptimist Public Speaking competition in Bangor on 25 November. Mehika Sood considered the topic of global warming, Rachel Cowan spoke on striving for perfection, Amanda Scott looked at the potential of introducing E-voting as the future method of ballot boxes and both Rebecca Murphy and Naivasha Pratt-Jarvis argued that the NHS needs to limit what it pays for. The girls presented their arguments in front of the Soroptimist members as well as competitors from Glenlola Collegiate and St Columbanus, Bangor. All of the girls delivered strong speeches but special congratulations should go to Mehika, who came 2nd and Rachel Cowan, who came 3rd.

On 24 November, Form Two took part in a Young Enterprise session called 'Exploring Enterprise'. It was a great opportunity for the girls to work in groups and explore the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs in the 21st century. The pupils were given the challenge of developing their own board game and presenting it as a viable business venture. It was a great event, exploring innovation and developing creativity skills. We are very grateful to Barbara from Young Enterprise for facilitating such an exciting and worthwhile programme, and we look forward to other interactive sessions with this organisation in the months ahead.



Road Safety Road Show

On Thursday 1 October 2015, a selection of girls from Lower Sixth attended the PSNI Road Safe Road Show, held at Belfast City Hall. This event was led by the PSNI, the emergency services and Cool FM, and its aim was to teach young people about the consequences of reckless driving. It is no exaggeration to say that everyone was left speechless by the hard-hitting stories from emergency service members and victims themselves; the event definitely spoke to the girls in a highly impactful way.



Community Service Party

The Community Service Party was held on 9 December. 1R and 2T hosted this year's event, welcoming guests from a variety of Day Care centres, Church groups and homes in the local area. A beautiful Christmas dinner was provided by the canteen staff, which the guests really enjoyed. The guests were then treated to displays of dancing and musical performances which were thoroughly enjoyed by all. A special thank you should go to Miss Gibson for continuing to organise this lovely event.



Debate Society

The Strathearn debating season is now well underway, with junior and senior pupils joining together to discuss a wide range of interesting issues. The first topic under consideration was "This House Believes That Single-Sex Schools Are Good For Education", with Nadia Mowlood speaking for the motion, and Naivasha Pratt-Jarvis speaking against. After a lively debate with many excellent contributions, the motion was defeated. The next debate was "This House Believes That The Internet Has Made The World A Worse Place", with Alex Ross speaking for the motion and Halah Irvine speaking against. The debate was very ably chaired by Amanda Scott, and the motion was narrowly passed. Special congratulations go to all speakers and contributors, and we look forward to a packed debating schedule next term.

Library News History Conference

Book Fair

The Scholastic Book Fair in November was a great success as usual, with a wide variety of new titles and old favourites on offer. Both staff and pupils enjoyed browsing and making purchases, the result of which has brought the Library an amazing £960 worth of books in commission. Thank you to all who bought books, both staff and pupils, and also to the parents for continuing to support the Fair so well. It is very much appreciated, and the girls are really excited about all the new books coming to the Library.

A literary crossword competition was held for Form One pupils, and a £5 book voucher was awarded to each of the following prize winners: Alex Coetzee, 1A; Natalya Ricketts, 1A; Faith Heyburn, 1R; Sophie Jordan, 1T; Mya Ruddock, 1T.



Pupil Librarians

The Library Assistant of the Month award went to Chloe McBurney, 2H, in October, and to Sorcha Corbett, 2S, in November, both of whom have worked especially hard during their break times. The Student Librarian of the Month has been given jointly to Gemma Burnside, L6T, and Antonia Gray, L6A, for the months of September and October, and to Rebecca Mannus, 5H, for November, for their consistent help throughout these months. Well done to the award winners and to all the pupil librarians, who continue to work hard to keep the Library running smoothly.

In November, pupils studying History at A-level were given the opportunity to attend a conference on either Nationalism or Unionism at the Somme Heritage Centre in Newtownards. The speaker was the renowned historian Dr Russell Rees – the author of the A-level textbooks. This was Naomi Beckett's summary of the day: I attended the Unionist A-level History Conference on 24 November. It was extremely useful in developing our knowledge of the options we had made for our synoptic unit of study. Russell Rees was an excellent speaker; he was full of unique knowledge about the course and the format of the exam. This event was really enjoyable and informative.



school formal

This year's school formal took place on 13 November at the Clondeboye Lodge Hotel. Staff and pupils joined together in a glamorous evening of fine food, music and dancing. Thanks are due to the Formal Committee and everyone else who worked to make the occasion such a success. Photographs of the occasion can be viewed in the gallery on our website.

Autumn Musical Evening

The Autumn Musical Evening featured three pieces by the Orchestra, along with the Traditional Group playing an Irish air and two jigs. We also heard junior soloists Sophie Longstaff, Hannah Stanfield, Halah Irvine, Tori Jackson, Beth Strahan, Hannah Hornsby and Phoebe Spratt (all singers), Anna Hughes (clarinet), Anna Kenny (violin) and Amy Bole, singing and playing her own composition. Senior soloists were Hollie Croft (clarinet), Abby Sheridan (violin) and Georgia McCutcheon (voice). It was a most enjoyable evening and the Music Department would like to thank all the students who performed so well, and everyone who came to enjoy the evening's music.



HOUSE QUIZ RESULTS

The Inter-House Quiz took place on 25 November in the Assembly Hall. Mrs Gray provided a series of questions which tested the general knowledge of pupils and staff. Many thanks to Mrs Gray and to all of the participants, and congratulations to McCaughey who were the eventual winners. RESULTS: 1st McCaughey (15 points); 2nd Watts (14 points); 3rd Barbour (6.5 points) and 4th Boucher (4.5 points).



SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council has been working hard this term under the stewardship of Amy Gilpin and Rosalind Skillen (Chair and Vice-Chair). The council has met four times and a number of important issues have been discussed. In October and November, debates took place about the wearing of school scarves; in the aftermath of this Mrs Myers visited the council to provide some guidance on the issue. Ms Young has also used the School Council as a platform for reviewing House procedures in November and December. The representatives surveyed their classmates and provided some valuable feedback to Ms Young. We look forward to dealing with many more issues in the months ahead.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 4-8 January: Mock Examinations for Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth
- 4-15 January: Mock Examinations for Form Five
- 11-15: Lower Sixth Work Experience
- 15 January: School ends at 12.50
- 16 January: Open Morning
- 25-27 January: Lower Sixth Biology Field Trip
- 8 February: Form 4 Young Enterprise (9.05-12.50)
- 9 February: Parents' Consultation Evening for all of Sixth Form (7.00-9.00pm)
- 10-12 February: Lower Sixth Biology Field Trip
- 12 February: School Disco

SCHOOL RESUMES: 4 January at 8.40am



Swimming



SPORT IN SHORT

The Swim Ulster Schools' Cup and Championships took place on 17 and 18 October at the Aurora Aquatic and Leisure Complex in Bangor. The following results were the most notable:

Lara Whitten (Minor) – 4th place in the Back Crawl and 4th place in the Butterfly.

Faith Heyburn (Minor) – 5th place in the Butterfly.

Grace Ross (Minor) – 7th place in the Freestyle.

Rachel Childs (Minor) – 10th place in the Back Crawl.

Minor Relay Team of Lara Whitten, Faith Heyburn, Grace Ross and Rachel Childs – 1st place in the Freestyle Relay and 2nd place in the Medley Relay.

Amelia Kane (Junior) – 3rd place in the Intermediate Relay, 4th Place in the Butterfly and 4th place in the 400m Freestyle.

Mia Davison (Junior) – 3rd place in the Breast Stroke and 4th place in the Intermediate Medley.

Rebekah Burrows (Junior) – 7th in the Freestyle.

Junior Relay Team of Mia Davison, Amelia Kane, Eve McKibbin and Rebekah Burrows – 1st place in the Medley Relay and 3rd place in the Freestyle Relay.

Erin McConnell (Intermediate) – 1st place in the Butterfly, 1st place in the Intermediate Medley and 2nd in the 400m Freestyle.

Sam McCormick (Intermediate) – 5th place in the Breast Stroke and 10th place in the Butterfly.

Olivia Nelson (Intermediate) – 5th place in the Back Crawl and 10th place in the Freestyle.

Sophie Williams (Intermediate) – 7th place in the Intermediate Medley and 10th place in the Freestyle.

Intermediate Relay Team of Olivia Nelson, Sam McCormick, Sophie Williams and Erin McConnell – 1st place in the Freestyle Relay and 2nd place in the Medley Relay.

Helen Navalli (Senior) – 8th place in the Back Crawl and 9th place in the Freestyle.

Victoria White (Senior) – 10th place in the Freestyle.

Senior Relay Team of Helen Navalli, Ferne Blackstock, Victoria White and Catie Williams – 6th place in the Freestyle Relay and 6th place in the Medley Relay.



Well done to all the players who have been participating in our weekly fixtures. It is also great to have the U12s now competing and showing a lot of promise.

Congratulations to the 1st XI who beat Larne Grammar 3-1 in the first round of the Senior Schools' Cup, and then Ballymena Academy 3-1 in the second round. The 1st XI then took on Sullivan in the third round of the Senior Cup on 12 December. The girls got off to a great start with captain Erin Larmour scoring a superb reverse-stick goal five minutes into the game. We had the upper hand in the early exchanges, but Sullivan equalised just before half time. The second half was well-contested but unfortunately with four minutes to go, Sullivan got a breakaway goal. This left us with little time to come back; the final score was 2-1 to Sullivan. The girls really did Strathearn proud and we wish them all the best for the rest of the season.

The 2A XI have also had a successful cup run, beating Omagh Academy 1-0 in the second round and then Carrickfergus Grammar School 3-1 in the third round. They will now face Ballyclare High School in the quarter finals of the McDowell Cup after Christmas.

In the Gibson Cup our 2B XI and 3A XI have played the round-robin section of the competition. The 2B XI beat Belfast High School 6-0 and got a walkover against Grosvenor. They won their section and have now qualified for the knockout stage of the competition. The 3A XI played some great hockey especially against other schools' 2B XI teams, drawing with Belfast Royal Academy and losing narrowly to Methody and Sullivan.

The U14A XI were drawn against a very strong Methody XI in the first round of the Junior Cup and unfortunately lost 3-0. They will play in the Junior Plate after Christmas.

Sixteen senior hockey players travelled to Dublin on 22 October where they played matches against St Columba's College, Corinthians LHC and Rathdown School. They stayed in Dublin for two nights and as well as playing hockey, there was time for some sight-seeing in the city centre, some shopping and a trip to Tayto Park. It was a very enjoyable and beneficial training trip for all.

Kayaking



Girls from Strathearn have been attending kayaking lessons with Belfast Kayak Academy since September, and have all achieved Level 1 of their Paddlepower Passport. They can now progress towards their Star Paddle sport award. Lessons will recommence in the New Year. If you are interested in this, contact the Belfast Kayak Academy directly via their website. (www.belfastkayakacademy.com).



Athletics

Sports Hall Athletics takes place on Mondays at lunchtime and on Thursday evenings. Speak to a PE teacher if you are interested in getting involved.

Self-Defence Club

Self-Defence Club takes place on Wednesdays after school and has proven to be very popular with girls in all year groups. For more information please speak to a PE teacher.

Squash

Hannah Craig has just returned as U17 Champion from the Swiss Junior Open - an event for European ranking points. This is an outstanding achievement and Hannah may be the only Ulster junior player to have won a tournament of this standard! Well done Hannah!

Ulster Squash Strathearn girls have been availing of squash lessons on a Friday afternoon at David Lloyds as part of an Ulster Squash initiative. These lessons will also continue in the New Year; if you are interested in getting involved please speak to a PE teacher.

Football

Football Club runs on Fridays at lunchtime for Forms One to Three. All girls are welcome to come along and join in the fun. Just bring your PE kit or your favourite team's kit if you have one!

Basketball

Basketball Club runs on Thursdays at lunchtime and is open to pupils from Forms 4 to U6. It is enjoyable so come along with your friends and give it a go. No experience is necessary!

Diving

Leah McClements competed in Dublin on 14 November in the Irish Open Diving Championships, coming 12th in the 14-18 age group. Well done!

Gymnastics

The Northern Ireland Schools' Milano Team Competition took place on 6 December in Ballysillan Leisure Centre. A Strathearn team consisting of Rosie Elwood, Anna McKinty, Penny Hood and Lucy Mashford finished 2nd in the U16 age group, with all girls performing a floor routine, vault and a group routine. Anna McKinty was placed 3rd individually in the vault. Well done girls!

Netball

Congratulations to Rachel Lemon, Molly Walker and Eve McKibbin, who are all through to the next stage of the U13 RDA Netball trials. Katie Wills and Grace Ruding got through to the second stage of the U15 RDA trials which took place last week. Well done to them both, and in particular to Katie who was selected for the squad.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Please note that all after-school sport will recommence on Monday 4 January