

Strathearn News

Royal Visit Careers Round-up



On Wednesday, 25 February 2015, the new school build at Strathearn School was officially opened by HRH the Earl of Wessex. The occasion was made memorable by the warmth and interest Prince Edward showed in the many people he met and in his response to the activities and events he saw. The humour Prince Edward brought to the unveiling of the commemorative plaque made the moment a real highlight, and the many pictures you can view in the galleries and the video, which is also on our website, convey something of the atmosphere at this key moment in Strathearn's history!

Lots of events have been taking place in the Careers Department in the second half of this term. We have had presentations from the following universities – Southampton, Queen's, University of Ulster, the Scottish Universities Tour (Edinburgh, Glasgow, Strathclyde, Heriot Watt, Aberdeen, Dundee and Stirling) Liverpool John Moores, Harper Adams and Scotland's Modern Universities Tour (Abertay Dundee, Edinburgh Napier, Queen Margaret University and the University of the West of Scotland). All girls in the Lower Sixth attended a Higher Education Convention at the King's Hall Pavilions in Belfast which was organised by UCAS. This gave our girls the opportunity to attend a range of seminars on courses and careers and speak to many university representatives from NI, the rest of the UK and Ireland. Pupils also attended a presentation on personal statements in school.

Girls in Form 3 have been choosing their GCSE subjects and have been having additional question and answer sessions with Mrs Hearst. The series of talks from guest speakers has continued for Form 5 and we have had presentations on Psychology, Finance, the PSNI and Physiotherapy. Dr Hareesh Manyar from Queen's gave a presentation on Chemical Engineering and we hosted a Robotics Road Show for Form 1 where they learned to programme their own autonomous vehicle to carry out a range of tasks, which they really enjoyed. We also welcomed a speaker to talk to the girls about opportunities within the creative and cultural sector – specifically in technical production such as lighting and sound. All girls in Upper Sixth attended a talk on Student Finance to help make them aware of the financial implications of going on to higher education.

Girls in Lower Sixth have attended careers events on Clinical Psychology at Queen's, seven girls attended the Oxbridge Conference at the Lagan Valley Centre and eight girls attended a Law Conference at Methodist College, where they learned about the profession and heard presentations from students, solicitors, barristers and judges.

The Spring Concert



The Spring Concert was held on the evening of Thursday, 19 March. A large and appreciative audience listened to performances by the orchestra, three choirs, recorder consort, traditional group and the excellent sixth form soloists (Katie Gallagher, Poppy Gribben, Keziah Mercer, Megan O'Callaghan and Kate Umphray) The Music Department would like to say a big thank you to all the students and staff who worked so hard to make this such a successful occasion.

IngeNlous Award

After hearing about the IngeNlous Female Student Award which was open to all female Year 12 and 13 students in Northern Ireland, I decided to enter. I focused my 200-word essay on Leena Gade who was the first ever female race engineer to win the 24 Hours Le Mans. Mr Atkinson also had to provide information on my subject choices and predicted grades. Several weeks later I was delighted to hear I had been shortlisted in the top five in Northern Ireland. I was invited to the *Night of Ambition* at St George's Market where I was announced as runner-up. Due to my success, I have been offered a week's work experience with *Intel* in June. I can't wait to take advantage of this opportunity as I'm very keen to pursue a career in engineering. *Gemma Burnside*



Individual Successes!

congratulations to...

Erin Stewart, 2A, who has achieved a Gold French Ski Award.

Hannah Hornsby, 2A, who has been awarded a scholarship to the Abby Lee Dance Company, Pittsburg, Pensilvania which will take place in the summer. Hannah also performed with the Northern National Ballet Company in *The Nutcracker*.

Mia Wheatley and Rose Templeton, 3H, who will be taking part in *Grease* at the Grand Opera House.

Jessica Arbuckle, 3S, who has passed her Grade Four Piano and Grade Five Violin Examinations.

Aimee Stitt, 2R, who was placed first in a Northern Ireland Flute Band Competition.

Scarlett Reid, 2R, who was placed first in an acted scene, second in the Shakespearean Monologue and third in the Monologue at the Belfast Festival.

Lauren Clarke, 4H, who won the Northern Ireland Championships of Irish Dancing.

Eden Lamb, 4H, who won a 200 hours Millennium Volunteering Award.

Jordan Spence, 4H, who was placed first in both the *Individual Novice Girl* and the *Team Novice St John* Competitions.

School Choir of the Year

On 14 March the Chamber Choir travelled to Nottingham to take part in the *Songs of Praise School Choir of the Year* competition semi-final. The girls had worked hard preparing two pieces, *My Song is Love Unknown* and *Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho*. As well as having the opportunity to perform in front of three celebrity judges they also got to meet other school choirs. The girls were supportive and encouraging to the other choirs and were a credit to Strathearn. The programme will be televised on 3 May, when you can find out if the choir reached the final!



Biology Field Trip

The study of ecology is a vital part of the AS-level curriculum, and to develop a greater understanding of this topic the AS-level biologists braved the changeable weather of February and March to undertake a practical fieldwork trip to Delamont Outdoor Centre.

The purpose of study on the trip was to investigate how certain organisms are adapted to their particular habitat. Delamont is situated in an ideal location to allow us to carry out investigations at Murlough and Strangford. We were very fortunate to get a beautiful, sunny afternoon to carry out our sand dune study at Murlough, so instead of needing our waterproofs and wellies, we needed our sunglasses! During our hard work in recording the plant species we found at each area, we enjoyed a break to have a picnic and admire the crashing waves that were eroding the very dunes we were sitting on!

The weather on our second day was not quite as pleasant, as we investigated the sheltered shore at Strangford village to illustrate zonation. Using a belt transect, we investigated the change in organisms present as the tide level dropped. Despite not wanting to linger too long in the wind and rain, there was great excitement among many groups when a starfish or crab was found.

After spending each day working in groups to gather our own original data, we used the classroom facilities at the centre in the evenings to analyse and interpret our findings to produce the final reports. After the initial surprise of a couple of hours of work after tea time, writing the reports allowed us to work with new people and make huge progress in our knowledge of ecology. The field trip was extremely beneficial in letting us see the adaptations of organisms we had learnt about in class and understand the importance of these adaptations for each organism's survival. Nothing quite illustrates the importance of a plant's ability to withstand exposure and strong winds as experiencing the struggle yourself.

We are extremely lucky to have access to such diverse environments so close to Belfast and the field trip really allowed us to investigate, admire and develop an understanding of them. *Dakota Armour, L6A*



ITALY TRIP

Buon Viaggio ...to all of the staff and pupils who are leaving for Italy on 25 March!

Library News

Craft Fayre: A Craft Fayre organised by the library assistants took place on 26 and 27 February, where lots of handmade crafts were on sale for the pupils. This included origami bookmarks, Harry Potter bookmarks and coasters, book hedgehogs, greetings cards, button and felt brooches and much more. The Fayre raised a total of £424.73 which will be used to support the Royal Belfast Children's Hospital. This total, combined with the Staff Coffee Morning, amounts to just over £700 to be given to the hospital. So, well done to all the girls who took part in these events and to everyone who supported them!

World Book Day – 5 March: The book swap, which took place in the Library on World Book Day, was a great success, and the pupils enjoyed bringing in their old books and exchanging them for different ones. Many of the books were in mint condition, so it was just like getting a new book without having to spend any money!

The competitions, for staff and pupils, involved having to guess book titles from their first lines, some more difficult than others. The winner of the pupil competition was Martha McCamley, 3H, and runners up were Philippa Sha, 3H, and Anna Kirkwood, 2H. The staff competition winner was Mrs Shaw from the Science Department.

NI Book Award: Seven girls accompanied Mrs Collins to the launch of the Northern Ireland Book Award on 18 March at Aquinas Grammar School, where the six shortlisted books were announced. Reviews of the books can be entered on the Award website at this address: <http://www.nibookaward.org.uk>. For more details please see Mrs Collins in the library. In the meantime, if anyone is interested in reading the shortlisted books, it would be advisable to get up to the Library soon before they are all taken out!

2S Charity Form Effort



A big thank you to everyone who purchased tickets for 2S's Form Effort in aid of funds for the Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for Children. A staggering sum of £1,041 was raised!

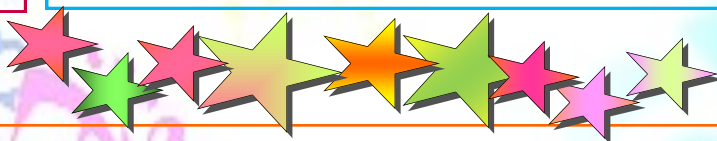
Sporting Successes congratulations to...

Erin J McConnell, 3H, who competed in the Dave McCullough Open Meet Gala in Bangor with PBs.

Clara Potts, 1S, who gained first place in show jumping in the Senior Pony Club Event.

Erin Vogan, 2R, who has been awarded a Bronze Badge in Gymnastics.

Dance Victory!



Dance – Intermediate Team Win NICMAC Title

This year, a team of thirteen very talented girls from Forms Two to Five were chosen to dance on the school's Intermediate Dance Team. On 7 March, the team competed at the annual Northern Ireland Creative Movement and Aerobic Competition (NICMAC) in Lisburn, performing a lyrical dance to a Bastille mash-up of *Pompeii* and *Things We Lost in the Fire*.

During the five months of rehearsals – which even included a visit from Prince Edward – the team always worked hard and were 100% committed. On the competition day they all went out as a team with smiles and wowed the audience with a touching and powerful performance. After competing against nine other schools in the Intermediate section, the Strathearn girls were deservedly placed first, taking home the winning medals for the third year in a row!

Congratulations to all the girls, especially Megan O'Callaghan, who choreographed the routine and coached the team to victory.

Junior Dance Team Win Silver

The Junior Team was also in action on the same day. The team consisted of eighteen girls selected by auditions from Forms One to Three, and they competed against seventeen strong teams from across Northern Ireland. The girls performed a brilliant three-minute routine to a medley of music themed around the jungle, choreographed by Shannon Armour and Clara Kerr in Upper Sixth. The team was placed in a highly commendable second place, a great reward after such hard work over the past five months. The day of the competition was filled with nerves and excitement and the whole team was thrilled to achieve the Silver medal. Congratulations everyone!

Dates for your Diary!

21 April: Panoramic School Photograph

4 May: Bank Holiday

13-19 May: School Examinations for Forms 1-3

13 May-22 May: School Examinations for Form 4

25 May: Exceptional Closure

11 June: Form Two Consultation (3-5pm)

17 June: Form 4 Consultation (1.45-5pm)

SCHOOL RETURNS on 13 APRIL AT 8.45AM



Hockey netball

The hockey season ended on a high note with the 2B XI reaching the semi-final of the Gibson Cup. The team played an in-form Sullivan Upper and an uncharacteristically poor start saw Strathearn concede an early goal and then a second from a penalty stroke midway through the first half. However, after half-time, Strathearn came out with much more aggression and determination and were very unlucky not to get back on level terms. The Sullivan defence stood firm against the Strathearn onslaught, and with a two goal advantage, were always able to dictate the play. Chasing the match was always going to be difficult for Strathearn and when Sullivan scored a third goal, against the run of play, Strathearn knew that final spot had gone. Perhaps there is some consolation in losing to the team who went on to win the Cup. Better luck next season girls!

The U12 hockey players were in action in the Annual Grosvenor Grammar School Tournament. The Squad played very well showing much-improved skills and tactical awareness and narrowly missed out on winning their section on goal difference. The signs are looking good for U13 team hockey next season.

Individual Hockey Successes

Congratulations to Maya Savage Newell on her selection for the U15 Belfast Area Team and also to Sarah Brown, Gabrielle Park and Kate Farrelly on their selection for the U17 Belfast Area Team. Well done!

The Year 8 Netball Team has been in action in the Belfast Year 8 League. With practices only starting in January, the girls performed very well but lacked the match experience of some of their opponents who had been working on their team netball since September. The team lost to Rathmore, Sullivan and Methody, but finished their fixture programme on a winning note with a win against St Dominic's in their last match.

Cross-country

Strathearn Win Minor Ulster and Junior Cross Country Titles

After the success of the Cross-country teams at the District Championships, we set off to the Ulster Championships with high expectations and the girls from Strathearn did not disappoint bringing home the Minor and Junior Ulster Titles and emerging as runners-up in the Mini competition.

The weather was not in our favour with snow showers throughout the day, but the teams did not let it affect them and all ran extremely well. Special mention goes to Amelia Kane who was second individually in the Mini race, Murphy Miller who was second individually in the Minor race and Olivia Nelson who stole the show with her superb run winning the Junior race.

The Minor Team were Ulster Champions in the Mini age group last year so they have two consecutive Ulster titles, which is a fantastic achievement, but the Juniors went one better to make this their third consecutive win in these Championships, which has never been done by a Strathearn team before. Olivia Nelson has also made Strathearn history with her second consecutive individual Gold medal.

The Minor and Junior Team qualified for the Irish Championships in Clongowes Wood College, Co Kildare which took place on Saturday. Unfortunately, some of the Junior Team had a swimming gala on the same day, so only Olivia travelled to Kildare with the Minor Team.

The girls performed against the best in Ireland and did us proud with Olivia finishing in Bronze medal position in the Junior race, and Murphy also winning individual Bronze in the Minor race and leading her team home to finish in third place in the team competition.

A very successful cross-country season girls. Well done!

Olivia Nelson Selected for Irish Team: Further congratulations to Olivia, who was selected for the Irish U15 Team which competed at the Schools' International competition on 21 March. She finished in tenth place and the Irish Team were Bronze medallists.

SWIMMING Acrobatic Championships

Ulster Grammar Schools' Swimming Championships

The Ulster Grammar Schools' Gala took place on 28 February in Ballymena. Once again Strathearn's Junior Relay Teams were in the hunt for medals and were successful in both the Freestyle and Medley events. Olivia Nelson, Sam McCormick, Sophie Williams and Erin McConnell swam their way to Gold in the 4 x 25m Medley and in the Freestyle won Gold again this time Sarah McTaggart coming into the team for Sophie Williams. Individually, Sam McCormick and Olivia Nelson won Silver and Bronze medals respectively.

Rebekah Burrows, Jess Winton, Jemimah Thomas and Georgia Gallen also competed very well on the day, but did not make it through to the finals of their events.

At Intermediate level, Ferne Blackstock, Helen Navalli, Kathryn Childs and Victoria White competed and performed well, while Jenny Drennan was the only Senior competitor for Strathearn. Well done to all our swimmers!

On 8 March, Hannah Eakin and Shannon Armour competed in the Northern Ireland Schools' Sports Acrobatic Championships in Banbridge. They were placed second in the U19 section, but after this controversial result, the decision has been made for them to represent Strathearn in the British Schools' Finals in May. Lucy Mashford was also successful, winning a Silver medal in the U14 Tumbling section and also qualifying for the British Finals. Good luck girls!

Squash

Both the U17 Team of Hannah Craig, Victoria White and Emma McGugan and the U19 Team of Jemma Gillan, Alex Gillan and Alex Reilly have qualified for the Irish Schools' Squash Championships in Dublin on 17 April. Good luck to both teams!

Congratulations to Hannah Craig on her selection as number 1 for the Irish U19 Squash Team. Hannah will be going to the European Championships in Prague before Easter.

INTER-HOUSE HOCKEY RESULTS MARCH 2015

| | BARBOUR | | BOUCHER | | MCCAUGHEY | | WATTS | |
|-----------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|
| | Place | Points | Place | Points | Place | Points | Place | Points |
| FORM 1 | 2 ND | 3 | 3 RD | 2 | 4 TH | 1 | 1 ST | 4 |
| FORM 2 | 3 RD | 2 | 1 ST | 4 | 2 ND | 3 | 4 TH | 1 |
| FORM 3 | 4 TH | 1 | 1 ST | 4 | 3 RD | 2 | 2 ND | 3 |
| FORM 4-U6 | 4 TH | 1 | 3 RD | 2 | 1 ST | 4 | 2 ND | 3 |
| OVERALL | 4 TH | 7 | 1 ST | 12 | 3 RD | 10 | 2 ND | 11 |

*Happy
Easter!*

The Inter-House cross-country took place on 19 March having been postponed due to bad weather back in November. The weather was glorious and 254 girls took part so again a very worthwhile event for all involved.