

Strathearn News

PRIZE DAY

This year, Prize Night took place on 6 October in the Sports Hall. An excellent programme of music by the Orchestra opened the proceedings, and then our Head Girl, Rachel Cowan, welcomed everyone to the event. Mrs Stewart, Chair of the Board of Governors, then spoke of the great pleasure it was to be able to celebrate another successful year for the school. She also expressed her appreciation of the roles played by the Board of Governors, the parents, the Principal and the staff in nurturing the Strathearn community.

The format of this year's introductory comments was, however, different from that which we have come to expect. This being our current Principal's last Prize Night, Mr Forde from the Board of Governors was invited to pay tribute to the contribution Mr Manning has made to the school. His love of teaching, his involvement in Strathearn's work in Uganda, and his dedication to the goal of the new school build were all mentioned. This tribute was followed by a presentation and a standing ovation from the audience. Mr Manning then moved on to deliver his report on the school year. In this, he referred to the school's academic, sporting, musical and dramatic successes. He praised the pupils, and thanked the staff for the direction and support they provide for the girls. Mr Manning then invited two pupils, Kate Farrelly and Katherine Hunter, up to the stage to chat about their experiences over the last academic year – Kate in her role as Games Captain and Katherine in relation to her involvement in the History and Languages trip to Belgium and France.

The Chair of the Board then introduced our Guest of Honour, Dr Judy Brown, a former Strathearn pupil who now works for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Dublin. Dr Brown presented the prizes and awards, congratulating the prize winners in her subsequent speech. Dr Brown also reminded the audience that there are very many valuable activities in life that do not lead to awards and prizes. She also urged the girls not to lose heart if they experience disappointment, advising that this simply means that they have to take a different route to their desired destination. After a presentation to our Guest of Honour by the Deputy Head Girls, Sarah Brown and Kerry Hepworth, the Chamber Choir brought the evening to a close with beautiful performances of 'Over the rainbow' and 'Nothin' gonna stumble my feet'.



U6 Prize Distribution

The Class of 2016 returned to Strathearn on 8 September to receive certificates, prizes and awards at an informal ceremony in the Assembly Hall. Refreshments were served in the Sixth Form common room. It was a pleasure to congratulate the girls in person and to wish them well as they move on to the next stage of their lives. We hope to keep in touch with the Class of 2016 at other school events.



HOUSE PLAYS

The House Plays were presented to the Junior School on 25 October and to the Senior School on 26 October. Barbour House produced *The Declassified School Survival Guide* which was based on *The Ten Best/Worst Things about High School* by M G Davidson. Boucher House produced *Prankster* written by Carley Magee Tollerton. McCaughey House produced *Murder on the Island of Fernando* written by Molly Fairclough. Watts House produced *12 Reasons Not To Be In A House Play*, which was adapted from the play by Alan Haehnel.

Once again, we welcomed Ms Emily DeDakis, the Director of Accidental Theatre Company, as our adjudicator this year. The results of the competition were as follows: the Frances Mulley Rose Bowl for Best Actress was awarded to Molly Longstaff in McCaughey House; the levers Shield for Best Cameo Performance went jointly to Zoe Hepworth and Joanne Carson in Watts House; the McNeill Cup for Directing was awarded to Rhia Prentice in Boucher House; the McMinn Cup for Best Supporting Actress went to Aife Sansom in Barbour House; the Gillian Douglas Drama Award was awarded to Boucher House for the Best Technical Performance of *Prankster*, and the coveted Inter-House Drama Award went to McCaughey House for *Murder on the Island of Fernando*.



INDIVIDUAL SUCCESSSES

congratulations to...

Ava Inman, 1S, who was in the team which won the Teamgym Competition at the Rathgael Gymnastics and Tumbling Club.
 Emma Lowey, 1S, who has been selected for the U13 Irish Gymnastics squad.
 Lucy Hutchinson, 1S, who passed her Grade Three Violin Examination.
 Anna Kirk, 1S, who passed her Grade Four Percussion Examination.
 Catherine Welsh, 2H, who performed Highland Dancing in the Belfast Tattoo.
 Eden Byrne, 2A, who won gold and bronze medals in the Scottish Taekwondo Championships.
 Lois Gillan, 2A, who came second in the U18 competition at Lisburn Golf Club.
 Rebecca Moore, 2A, who passed her Grade Three Piano Examination.
 Alexandra Coetzee, 2A, who passed her Grade Four Piano Examination with Distinction.
 Erin McConnell, 2A, who passed her Grade Four Violin Examination.
 Natalya Ricketts, 2A, who passed her Acting Examination with Distinction.
 Mia Davison, 2S, who was selected for the Ulster High Performance Squad in Swimming.
 Sarah Catherall, 2S, who passed her Grade Five Piano Examinations with Distinction.
 Hannah Stanfield, 2S, who passed her Grade Four Singing and Drama Examination with Merit.
 Ella Keane, 2S, who passed her Grade Five Saxophone Examination with Merit.
 Hannah McCartney, 2S, who passed her Grade Three Ballet Examination with Distinction.
 Ellie Patton, 2S, who passed her Grade Three Drama Examination with Honours.
 Grace Thompson, 3T, who achieved her Red Belt in Taekwondo.
 Amy Bole, 4R, who passed her Grade Six Flute Examination with Merit.
 Sophie Neale, 5S, who represented Northern Ireland at U19 level in Trampolining in the Regional Team Finals in Birmingham.
 Abigail Bester, 5T, who had her poem 'To Belong' published in the anthology *On The Grass When I Arrive*.
 Erin J McConnell, 5A, who competed at the UK School Games in Swimming.
 Sophie Lewis, U6A, who passed her Grade Six Speech Examination with Distinction, and her Grade Five Piano Examination.
 Jessica Winton, 3A, who came 8th in the RYANI Youth Championships on 24 and 25 September at Strangford Lough Yacht Club.



CAREERS UPDATE

Greenhill Trip

The new term got underway for the Careers Department with the UCAS Parents' Information evening on 1 September. This gave U6 parents the opportunity to learn more about the UCAS application process, and have the chance to talk to staff afterwards to get any queries or issues addressed. Parents also heard about the careers programmes for Forms 4 to U6 which ran throughout September.

All of U6 attended the Queen's Open Day and the Methodist College Options XXIV careers event which allowed our girls to get many last-minute questions answered before submitting their UCAS forms. Several pupils attended the Ulster University Open Days at Jordanstown, Coleraine and Magee.

We welcomed a range of speakers during this part of the autumn term. PwC staff talked to our girls about their programmes for school leavers and graduates, and the RAF talked to girls from Form 5 upwards about the fifty different careers opportunities within their area of the armed forces. Representatives from the University of Dundee and Lancaster University talked to U6 and L6 pupils about courses and opportunities at those institutions. Lecturers from Stranmillis University College and Queen's School of Nursing & Midwifery talked to girls in the senior school about teaching and nursing/midwifery respectively. We were also delighted to host a presentation by a former pupil who talked to girls from Form 5 upwards about gap years on behalf of an organisation called Project Trust. Form 5 also had talks on law, medicine and engineering all delivered by former pupils. Careers guidance interviews are already underway for this year group and are conducted by Jill Lemon, our careers adviser from the Department of the Economy.

Some girls have attended careers sessions outside school. One girl attended a Deloitte Open Morning while thirteen U6 girls attended a QUB Medicine, Health & Life Sciences session at W5 where they gained insight into the world of research, careers and education in those areas and the girls attended a range of practical workshops. In addition, two girls from U6 attended a 'Meet the Marines' careers event where they developed team-building and leadership skills and gained insight into this elite corps. Mrs Hearst has been delivering a series of sessions on providing advice on personal statements for particular courses. Most U6 girls have now submitted their UCAS forms and will be starting to prepare for their Mock Interview Evening after Halloween.



The whole of Form Two went on an outdoor pursuits day to Greenhill YMCA in Newcastle on 22 September. The weather was kind with glorious sunshine all day. Activities included canoeing, raft-building, a climbing tower, bouldering, ropes courses and archery. Girls were in groups of mixed form classes which allowed them to get to know a wider range of pupils in the year group. A number of team-building exercises helped pupils identify their own strengths and those of others, with many surprised by their own bravery when it came to activities like the zip-line or high ropes course. Many thanks to Mr Smith and his team for organising such a good event.



minnesota trip

Best wishes to the seventeen Sixth Form students who will be heading off to St Paul, Minnesota on 28 October as part of our ongoing student exchange with Cretin-Derham Hall High School. The girls will be staying with host families for just over a week, during which they will attend school and visit local sights. We wish them well and look forward to hearing about their experiences when they return.



MEDIA STUDIES TRIP



Fifty-seven A-level Media Studies pupils attended an event as part of the Cinemagic Festival at the SSE Arena on 17 October. A talk was given by a representative of the British Board of Film Classification about how age ratings are allocated to films, and this was followed by a screening of the film *Sing Street*. This was a really useful and enjoyable day for the pupils. Thanks to Dr McBride, Mrs Ingram and Mr Scott for organising the event.

Drama News

On 18 October, thirteen Lower Sixth Drama A-Level students attended a performance of *Three Sisters* at the Lyric Theatre. The play is based on Chekhov's masterpiece from 1900 but has been reset in 1990s Belfast by award-winning novelist (and former Strathearn pupil), Lucy Caldwell. Mrs Ingram, Mrs Kernaghan and Ms Erskine also attended the performance which was a highly engaging piece of theatre. The pupils will use this performance to write a theatre review for their A-Level examinations, and it was great to be able to base this piece of work on a play produced by home-grown talent!



Junior Drama

BOO!



The Junior Drama Club will be starting again in the week after the Halloween break. Any pupils from Forms 1-3 who are interested in joining should give their names to Miss Christie, in Room G7, as soon as possible. The club will meet on Thursdays at 1pm in the Assembly Hall. Please note that no experience is necessary - just come along, get involved and enjoy the fun!



Dates for your Diary

7 November: School resumes at 8.40am

16-17 November: L6 Geography Field Trip

18 November: Exceptional Closure and School Formal

21 November: Form 2 Young Enterprise Event

22 November: U6 Mock Interview Evening

29 November: Form 1 Consultation Evening (7pm)

30 November: House Quiz for Forms 1-3 (12.50pm)

1 December: House Quiz for Forms 4-U6 and staff

5-9 December: Geography Coca-Cola Trip

14 December: House Netball

15 December: Carol Service

21 December: School ends at 12 noon



BUSINESS STUDIES

This year Mrs White chose IKEA Belfast as the local business on which to base the Business Studies GCSE Controlled Assessment. On 19 September, eighteen Form 5 Business Studies students visited IKEA in order to carry out primary research for their course. The students attended a presentation from the HR Manager, who provided an overview of key facts about the business and addressed the relevant topic areas required for the girls' research such as production, stakeholders, training and the impact of technology. After the presentation, the class was given a really interesting tour of the business. Many thanks to Mrs White for organising the trip!



FORM 1 ZOO VISIT

On 11 September, 110 of our Form One pupils visited Belfast Zoo. Unfortunately the weather was not as kind as it has been in previous years - it rained from the moment we stepped off the bus! All the girls, however, showed great spirit and really enjoyed themselves; there wasn't a moan all day! The mixed groups allowed the girls to get to know pupils they had not met before and make new friends. We were all delighted to see the baby Andean bear who was happy to show off to all the groups. I think the baby bear could have been brought home with us if he'd been able to be smuggled out! Many thanks to Miss Stewart and her team for organising this great trip.



Poetry in Motion

LIBRARY NEWS

This term the pupils of 1A are enjoying a series of poetry writing workshops as part of the *Poetry in Motion* scheme. Local performance poet, Alice McCullough, has been mentoring the girls as they write poetry on the theme of identity. This year Strathearn has been partnered by Ashfield Girls' High School. A professional sound crew will make recordings of the girls reading their poems after the half-term break, and selected work will be published in an anthology. The scheme will culminate with an event at the Ulster Hall in March 2017. We wish the girls well!



IPAD ROLLOUT

In September, we launched our Key Stage 3 1:1 iPad programme to enhance teaching and learning. This is part of a new digital technology initiative at Strathearn which will be rolling out over the next few years. KS3 students will use iPads in a 1:1 classroom environment, while pupils at KS4 and KS5 will have access to Chromebooks in School. All pupils in Forms 1 and 2 have been provided with an iPad Air for learning both in and outside of the classroom. Staff from iTeach set up and distributed the iPads, before providing the pupils with their first training session. In addition to the iPads, we have also invested in a number of apps which will help students with their learning, revision and school life. Teachers at Strathearn were issued their iPads in 2015, allowing time for training before beginning to use them in the classroom with students.



Duke of Edinburgh News



Congratulations to our Silver and Gold participants who completed their expeditions during July and August. The Canoe Teams visited Upper Lough Erne, the Royal Canal and the Shannon. The Hill-walking Teams went to the Galloway Hills in Scotland and the Mourne Mountains. This summer, sixty-four girls completed Bronze Awards, twenty-three completed Silver Awards, and sixteen have now completed Gold Awards. Congratulations to all of them!

The school has a new librarian, Dr Haire. If you're looking for something new to read, or need help with researching for a project, just call in during break or lunchtime for advice.

Many thanks to the dedicated pupils from across the school who have been making great efforts since the beginning of term to keep the library running smoothly. Plenty of students are continuing to work towards achieving their library awards and they make a great contribution to the atmosphere and productivity of the library.



The Library will be hosting the Scholastic Book Fair from 22-25 November, and there will be plenty of exciting books on offer. Each junior form class will have the opportunity to spend one period browsing and buying books, and the fair will also be open during

break and lunchtime for anyone else who would like to purchase anything. The Library earns commission on all the sales, which means we can buy more books for the pupils to read!

House Events

The term got off to a great start with Inter-House Dodgeball being the first event on the calendar. There was a great turn-out for this event. Boucher was the overall winner and have now taken 2nd place in the points race. Please see the House noticeboards for updates on all House events and points.

The second item up was the 6th form House debates which attracted audiences from Forms 1-U6 as the Houses debated whether or not tuck shops should be allowed in schools in the semi-final. Barbour and Boucher progressed to the final in which they debated whether it was better to live in the country or in the town. Emma Ferguson and Crystal Yuen put forward a very good argument for living in the town, but it was Naivasha Pratt-Jarvis and Emma Rowan from Barbour who were most convincing in their promotion of country life to earn Barbour some valuable points.

Next up will be the House Plays and Potted Sports in which lots of House points are at stake and the race to the top of the leader board is very much in people's minds!

ATHLETICS

Well done to the Strathearn athletes who competed at the Ulster Schools' Multi-Event Championships on 15 September at the Antrim Forum. The girls had to battle it out over five different events in the warm September sunshine - Hurdles, High Jump, Long Jump, Shot and 800m. In the Minors, Eve McKibbin finished 9th and Amelia Hopkins 10th. In the Juniors, Harriet Platt finished 4th, Murphy Miller was 7th and Aimee Stitt 9th. In the Intermediate competition Molly Longstaff took home the silver medal and Beth Crosbie was placed 4th.

trampolining

Good luck to the girls competing in the Schools' Trampolining competition in November. Results will follow in the Christmas issue.



hockey

The hockey season has got off to a good start. The 1st XI has been competing in the Ulster Schools' Super League and the results are as follows:

Portadown College: Drew 1-1, Belfast High School: Won 3-1, Belfast Royal Academy: Lost 1-3, and Royal School Armagh: Lost 1-4. All teams have been playing in our scheduled Saturday fixtures and preparing for Cup matches which will begin after half term. This season's Hockey Captains are as follows:

1st XI Captain – Sarah Brown; Vice-Captain – Bonnie Ramsay; 2A XI Captain – Victoria Hamilton; Vice-Captains – Francesca Lynn and Alanna McHugh; 2B XI Captain – Katie Caldwell; 3A XI Captain – Alex Reilly; U14A XI Captain – Francesca Park; U14B XI Captain – Tara Kerr; U13A XI Captain – Molly Elliott; Vice-Captain – Lara Whitten; U13B XI Captain – Gabriella Park; Vice-Captain – Alice Sloan.

Well done to the following girls who were nominated to attend the Talent Development Squad trials – Grace Hutchinson, Sarah Craig, Amelia Kane, Eve McKibbin, Anna Gillespie, Francesca Park, Alex Fawcett and Amelia Hopkins. Six of the girls have been selected to attend further trials. Good luck with those!

Here are some dates for the diary. The 1st XI play Regent House in the first round of the Belfast Telegraph Senior Schools' Cup on 12 November. The 2nd XI play Ballyclare High School in the first round of the McDowell Cup on 10 November. On 22 November the U14 Team are away to Royal and Prior for the first round of the Junior Cup. Congratulations to the 2B XI who won 1-0 against Omagh in the first round of the Gibson Cup. Here's to a successful season!

SWIMMING

The Swim Ulster Schools' Cup and Championships took place on 15 and 16 October at the Aurora Complex in Bangor. The following results were the most notable.

Alice Browne was 9th in Minor 50m Freestyle Final. The Minor Relay Team of Alice Browne, Martha Cupples, Niamh Hatfield and Lucinda Park were 7th in the 200m Medley Relay and 200m Freestyle Relay. Rebekah Burrows was 6th in the Junior 100m Backstroke and 8th in the 100m Freestyle Final. Rebecca Callaghan was 9th in the Junior 100m Backstroke. Mia Davison was 1st in the Junior 100m Breaststroke Final and 2nd in the 200m IM Final. Amelia Kane was 2nd in the Junior 100m Breaststroke and 3rd in the 200m IM Final. Eve McKibbin was 9th in the Junior 100m Butterfly Final. Rachel Childs was 11th in the Open 400m Freestyle. The Junior Relay team of Amelia Kane, Mia Davison, Eve McKibbin and Rebekah Burrows came 1st in the 200m Medley Relay, and in the 200m Freestyle Relay. They became Junior Ulster Champions and were presented with the Firth Cup by the very successful Paralympic swimmer, Bethany Firth. Sophie Williams was 4th in the Intermediate 100m Backstroke and 6th in the 100m Freestyle. Samantha McCormick was 5th in the Intermediate 100m Breaststroke, and 8th in the 200m IM. Erin McConnell was 2nd in the Open 400m Freestyle and 3rd in the Intermediate 100m Butterfly. The Intermediate Relay Team of Erin McConnell, Samantha McCormick, Sophie Williams and Olivia Nelson came 1st in the 200m Medley Relay and the 200m Freestyle Relay. The Senior Relay Team of Victoria White, Caitie Williams, Freya Axten and Rachel Childs came 8th in the 200m Medley Relay and the 200m Freestyle Relay. Erin McConnell, Mia Davison and Amelia Kane have been selected for the Interprovincial Team as a result of their performances at this gala.

Showjumping

The school Showjumping Team competed at the Inter-Schools' Showjumping competition on 1 October at Balmoral Park, Lisburn. In the Open Competition, the Senior Team of Charlotte De Montmorency Wright, Fionn Clarke, Orla Cummings and Freya Axten came second overall after an exciting jump-off against Down High. In the Open Individual 1m competition, Fionn Clarke finished 4th. In the Novice Competition, the Junior Team of Charlotte Keers, Felicity Johnston, Molly Cahoon and Katie Smith were unfortunate to miss the jump-off with a total of four faults. They did, however, win the Tack and Turnout trophy for the third successive year. In the Novice Individual 95cm competition, Zoe Martin came 6th overall. Well done girls!

squash

Well done to Hannah and Emma McGugan who competed at the Nordic Junior Open from 7-9 October. Hannah finished in 5th place in the Girls U13 category, and Emma finished 21st in the Girls U17 section. Hannah Craig competed at the 2016 Belfast Open, a PSA international tournament, and qualified for the main draw.

ORIENTEERING

An Orienteering Club has been set up this year by one of our Upper Sixth pupils, Sophie Pruzina. This has sparked an interest in the sport which caters for all as you are able to run, jog or walk the course.

Self-defence

Self-defence has been extremely popular this year with a coach coming in to teach the girls some basic moves which will not only help them to protect themselves, but also improve their fitness.

badminton

Our Badminton Club is proving to be very popular this year. Players practise on Fridays after school and anyone is welcome. The Senior Team have got their league campaign off to a good start with a win against Down High School on 14 October.

netball

Our Netball Club is up and running. If you're interested in getting involved, Form 1 practice is on Thursdays, Form 2 on Tuesdays, Form 3 on Mondays and Forms 4-6 on Wednesdays after school. Congratulations to Katie Wills who progressed to the final stage of the U17 Northern Ireland Netball trials in September. Good luck to Lauren Farmer, Issy Todd, Niamh Hanna and Leah Howe who have been nominated for the U13 Regional Development Trials on 22 October.

UK SCHOOL GAMES

The UK School Games is an annual multisport event attracting 1600 of the top young athletes across the UK. This year there were five girls from Strathearn selected to compete at this event. Keziah Beattie was 5th in the Foil Fencing competition, Olivia Nelson was 7th in 3000m, Amelia Kane was 6th in the 400m Individual Medley. Amelia's Medley Relay Team came 8th. Erin McConnell competed in the 100m Butterfly and 200m Butterfly finishing 8th in both and Katie Armstrong competed in cycling.

KAYAKING

Kayaking has proved popular with the adventurous pupils in Strathearn. Belfast Kayak Academy run these sessions which take place not far from school at Ormiston Park. Please check their website for any further details.

DANCE TEAMS

Our Dance Teams have held auditions to select teams for the annual NICMAC competition. Well done to all who auditioned. Everyone did really well, but unfortunately the numbers on the teams are limited. Special congratulations to those who were selected and good luck with all the practising that lies ahead.

Follow the Strathearn PE Department on twitter @sport_str for more sporting updates!