



## Seachtain na Gaeilge 14ú - 18ú Márta, 2005

Tá seachtain na Gaeilge buailte linn arís. Beimis ag labhairt ár dteanga féin. Tá imeachtaí íontacha ar súil le linn na seachtaine. Tá roinnt dena ranganna ag insint scéalta agus ag déanamh aithris filíochta.

Tá Jim Lockhart ball den bhanda cailiúil 'Horslips', ag teacht isteach sa scoil chun insint dúinn faoin bhanda craiceáilte seo.

Tá banda cheoil tráidisiúnach ag teacht isteach chomh maith. Beidh sport agus spraoí as cuimhse again. Beidh scannáin Ghaeilge again freisin agus tráth na gceist sna ranganna.

Tá an idirbhliain (T.Y.) ag dul amach go dtí An Causey Farm i gcondae na Mí. Is iontach an rud é bheith ag céiliúradh ár dteanga féin. Smaoinighí ar an seanfhocal;

"Tír gan teanga, tír gan ainm"

*Neil Dunne, Cúigiú bliain.*

## T.Y. & 5<sup>th</sup> Year trip to New York

On our first evening in New York we spent time on the 86th floor observatory of the Empire State Building, amazed that we had at last made it to the city that dwells, for most of us, in dreams, films and songs. We gazed out at the many lights trying to work out where the Statue of Liberty and our hostel were. Despite the fact that it was Superbowl evening there was a palpable sense that this truly is the city that never sleeps.

We crawled into our beds that night, after singing a healthy dose of YMCA (for that was the name of our accommodation), exhausted. We wondered how New York was so warm when we had all packed the warmest things imaginable convinced that we were all going to suffer from hypothermia. We were blessed that we had a very mild interlude of weather between the Arctic conditions of late January and the

expected deterioration in the weather forecast for later that week.

The week passed by in a flurry of activity. There was Ellis Island, an "isle of hopes and tears", a truly breathtaking experience from an Irish perspective. Ground Zero elicited peculiar sensations. The memories of September 11th, 2001 are still vivid for all of us but there is an abiding sense of the "can do" spirit of New Yorkers. On the face of it it's just a building site but one of our guides told us that the plan is to build a structure 1776 feet high, surpassing the towers of the World Trade Center.

There were many museums on our itinerary; the Natural History Museum which is home to the only actual fully rebuilt Tyrannosaurus Rex in the world, the Guggenheim which is an architecturally spectacular building where we saw an exhibit on the Aztec civilisation and the Metropolitan Museum which houses a reconstructed Egyptian temple. The Jewish Museum chronicled the history of the Jewish communities all over the world from their very beginnings to the present day. There was one particularly moving exhibit - a marble memorial smuggled out of Danzig (the modern Gdansk in Poland) in honour of Jewish soldiers who had fought in the German armies in World War 1. The Intrepid Air, Sea and Space Museum had actual fighter planes and is situated on the *USS Intrepid* - a former aircraft carrier in the Hudson River.

With all this going on it is amazing that we fitted in as much shopping as we did. We went to Macy's (twice for the really insatiable), Century 21, Abercrombie and Fitch, the Rockefeller Center, Times Square and other stops along the way!

Then there were the impromptu appearances like appearing on the Good Morning Show for CBS and on TRL for MTV. All in all, everyone agreed that it was an absolutely fantastic trip with so many different experiences and with the added bonus that nobody got lost.

*Megan Smith, 5th Year.*

## From the Principal's Desk

I am sure many of you are struggling to keep up with some of the new terminology that has crept into education recently so the following is an explanation of some of the terms used.

### ***The Education Welfare Board (EWB)***

The Education Welfare Board has been set up to monitor the attendance of students in school. Officers (EWO) have been appointed to each school to monitor that school's student attendance and to intervene in the case of any student being absent for 20 days or more.

### ***The National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS)***

NEPS has separated the work of state educational psychologists from the Department of Education and Science (DES). A NEPS psychologist is appointed to each school for the purposes of assessment, guidance and support as appropriate subject to availability.

### ***The State Examinations Commission (SEC)***

SEC is the central body responsible for the running of the state examinations system. It has taken over this responsibility from the DES.

### ***The National Council for Special Education***

The National Council for Special Education was established in January of this year and is responsible for assessing and providing resources for children with special needs. Officers (SENO) have been appointed to each school.

**Patricia Gordon**  
*Principal*

## Debating

Congratulations to Niall Sherry of 6th Year who for the third year in succession has progressed as far as the quarter finals of the Leinster Schools debating competition. This is organised jointly by the Literary and Historical Society in U.C.D. (L & H) and the Hist. and Phil. Debating societies in Trinity College. Niall advanced as an individual speaker although he was ably assisted by Megan Smith of 5th Year in an earlier round in her maiden outing. Topics discussed were as diverse as the legitimacy of drugs in sport and the pros and cons of national I.D. cards.

Congratulations also to the team that entered the Concern Debates competition before Christmas. Unfortunately we were knocked out at the end of the league phase. The team deserves great credit for participating as many of them had not debated competitively before. They were: Colman Hanley, Joseph Keeling, Aoife Lavin and Kira Nelson (all T.Y.) and Mitchel Murray (5th Year). Hopefully this year's experiences have been useful and informative and will encourage them to participate again next year. It takes great courage as well as confidence and intelligence to speak publicly.

**Tom Giblin**, *Debating Co-ordinator.*

## Quiz Teams

**TCH All Ireland Schools Quiz**  
Congratulations also to the Stratford team and substitutes who participated in the Thomas Crosbie Holdings All-Ireland Schools Quiz. We narrowly lost



• Donagh McMahon and David Gilmartin, from Stratford College, Rathgar, Dublin, taking part in the TCH All-Ireland Schools Quiz

our first round by 2 points but the rules of the competition allowed us to come through the "back door" or supplementary round that we won narrowly. We got as far as the 3rd round of the national competition that was in effect the Dublin semi-final where we were beaten by Árd Scoil Rís. The team was as follows: Niall Sherry (6th Year), Simon Conheady (5th Year), Olwen Murphy (5th Year), Luke O'Riordan (5th Year), David Gilmartin (3rd Year) and Kilian Butler and Donagh Mac Mahon (both 2nd Year). Particular thanks to Olwen for helping out when some team members were otherwise engaged in New York. Hopefully this group of bright students will be able to perform even better in similar competitions in the years ahead.

### ***French Quizzes***

The senior team of Sunita Jaewon, Jenni Murphy, Niall Sherry (all 6th Year) and Olwen Murphy (5th Year) put in a remarkable performance in the quiz held in Loreto Crumlin in November coming second out of 25 schools. The Transition Year team of Lee Caplin, Colman Hanley, Ruth Hunter and Debbie Newman came 7th out of 25 schools in their competition.

In other French news the French theatre for schools entertained the seniors in January with the comedy "La Decision Dangereuse." In March the Junior classes watched another comedy "L'épreuve Terrifiante." Both were fantastic and it was wonderful for the students to enhance their French skills by exposure to such vibrant performances.

## Student Council News

As the former Student Council representatives step down from their positions we take this opportunity to thank them for their work over the last year. A new group of eight capable individuals have been elected by their respective classes to take on the mantle and represent the student body for the

forthcoming year. They are: Mandy Stein (1st Year), Matthew Halpin (2nd Year), Rebecca Edgeworth (3rd Year) and Lee Caplin (4th Year). The four senior prefects are Orly Huff (Chairperson), Paul Davidson (P.R.O.), Ivan Moriarty (Secretary), and Megan Smith (Treasurer and Green School committee). As we are all highly enthusiastic and as we all anticipate the challenges facing us over the next year, I am confident that we can match the work of our predecessors and continue the success of the Student Council in Stratford College.

Some of our members have already represented the school at the Jewish Congregation's recent ceremony to honour President Mary Mc Aleese's second term. It was a great privilege to hear the President's views concerning the Holocaust and the Dublin Jewish Community. It was a very memorable occasion held in the synagogue and the President took time to chat with many members of the community including myself.

Over the course of the coming year we plan to hold the annual walk as fundraiser. We also hope to raise money for Concern in relation to the serious problems being experienced in Darfur, Sudan. Before the school holidays in December a speaker from Concern addressed 1st to 5th Years about the humanitarian crisis in that region. Sadly but perhaps understandably this issue has faded from public consciousness in the aftermath of the tsunami.

**Paul Davidson**, *Public Relations Officer and Mentor Programme Co-ordinator.*

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## **The Annual Elaine Feldman Lecture**

Mr. Michael Gilbert introduced the Elaine Feldman lecture held in November last year by thanking both students and teachers for the role they played in making Stratford College's

Jubilee Year such a success. He then went on to introduce our speaker for the day Senator David Norris. Senator Norris is of course known for his involvement in politics as both a senator and a successful human and civil rights campaigner but he is also well known to the students of Stratford College as a Joycean scholar.

Senator Norris kept us fully enthralled as he read, sang and acted out a number of Joyce's works, the most interesting being Ulysses. The senator also explained the kinship Joyce felt with the Jewish people. Joyce admired the Jewish communities respect for life and humanity. Joyce was also amazed at the compassion and joy he experienced whenever he met or spoke to a member of the Jewish Community. It was Joyce's respect for the Jewish Community that made him centre the plot of what is his most well known work around the Jewish character of Leopold Bloom.

Senator Norris ended his terrifically entertaining talk, the highlight of course being when the senator broke into falsetto singing while reading Dubliners. But before he went Senator Norris told the assembly that it was a pity Joyce wasn't a young man today because the senator was sure that Joyce would have loved to have attended Stratford.

**Megan Smith**, *5th Year.*

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## **Commemorating the Holocaust**

January 27th has been designated the International Holocaust Memorial Day as it was on this date in 1945 that soldiers of the Red Army liberated the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz in Poland. As such 2005 is a special year as it commemorates the 60th anniversary of this event and is particularly poignant as many of the survivors of the Nazi death camps are now in the autumn of their lives. Every year on the Sunday nearest this date the Irish government holds our national

commemoration. This year's ceremony was held in City Hall on Sunday, January 30th with An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern as guest of honour. Members of the Student Council attended as well as a number of staff from the school particularly Ms. Kate Bateman (recently retired) and Ms. Kenny, both of whom have been influential in establishing the Holocaust Studies module in Transition Year. This was an extremely sombre and moving event. It has become something of a cliché but the scale of man's inhumanity to his fellow man highlighted by this ceremony was truly staggering. Naturally the sufferings of Europe's Jewish communities were uppermost in all our minds but other victims of Nazi persecution such as the Black community, the disabled, homosexuals, Gypsies, Slavs and other political dissidents were also remembered.

On the same theme the school itself held a special assembly on Monday, February 28th at which the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Yaakov Pearlman was the guest of honour. Contributions from both 4th and 5th Year students featured and the ceremony was interspersed with video clips from a recent BBC 2 series on the Holocaust. We remembered in a special way the only Irish victim of the Holocaust, Ettie Steinberg, as well as her husband and children. This was a dignified ceremony and it was fitting that a new generation was informed or reminded about the horrors of Auschwitz and other death camps. In the words of the German Lutheran pastor, Martin Niemuller:

*"In Germany they came first for the Communists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist*

*Then they came for the Jews and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.*

*Then they came for the trade unionists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant*

*Then they came for me- and by that time there was no one left to speak up."*

## Past Pupils News

Many thanks to Mrs. Pat Newman for keeping us informed of Ruth's progress in Israel. Ruth completed her Leaving Cert. in 2004 and her younger sister Debbie is in 4th Year. She is currently on a gap year programme with BBYO and the Jewish Agency. Ruth was President of the Dublin BBYO a couple of years ago and is the only Irish girl on this programme but in her own inimitable way has made friends with people from the U.K., the U.S., South Africa and Australia to name a few countries. Ruth's experiences include a stint as a volunteer in the Fire Service in the coastal city of Ashdod. The volunteers assist not only at fires but also car accidents, terror attacks, and more mundane situations such as stuck elevators. Ruth is particularly appreciative of the welcome she has received and the discounts from local businesses e.g. the gym because the weight of fire equipment, "made us want to work more." Ruth has also taught primary school children in the north of Israel. All of us in Stratford wish Ruth continued success in her gap year and extend best wishes for next year when she commences college in the U.K.

Congratulations also to Hazel Ivers (Leaving Cert. 2003) who is studying Greek and Roman Civilisation and English as part of her B.A. in U.C.D. and will be spending next year on the Erasmus programme in the sunny climes of Cyprus. This will undoubtedly be a fantastic experience witnessing classical art and architecture as well as the modern Greek language at first hand.



• Ruth Newman (right) in training with the Fire Service

# Sports Roundup

## Silverware in Stratford!

There was great excitement in the first term in Stratford when Alan Matthews (father of Maryann in 1st Year), the manager of Longford Town F.C. came in with the F.A.I. Cup that Longford had won for the second year in a row as well as the League Cup. He toured all of the classes and was extremely well received as he explained the trials and tribulations of running a small and unfashionable club with great success. Students asked many questions and Alan dealt very capably with the "bearpit" atmosphere created by the numerous Shelbourne, Shamrock Rovers and even Bohemians supporters, one or two of whom have even dabbled in the scribal arts!



• Darragh Murphy (left) and Michael Flannery (right) holding the FAI and League Cups aloft during Alan Matthews visit to Stratford College

## Basketball

The 2nd Year Boys team have played two matches so far and won both of them. The highlight was undoubtedly their comprehensive defeat of the High School by 48-4. They showed tremendous team spirit and tenacity and coach John Cullen and P.E. teacher Ms. Ivers both expressed their justifiable pride in this performance. At the time of writing the team are due to play St. MacDaras on Monday 14th March in a semi final.

The Boys under 16 team emerged from their group before Christmas with a 100% record having completed home and away victories over St. Michael's,

St. Mary's and St. MacDaras. They were beaten in a regional semi final by Avondale Community College in the National Basketball Arena.

The 1st Year Girls team has played four matches so far and have one to play. While they have won one of their matches they have performed valiantly in defeat showing a great team spirit and unity of purpose. This augurs well for the future.

The Girls Cadet Team i.e. under 16s won three of their four matches progressing as far as a semi final. The Senior team i.e. under 18s won one of their four matches making it as far as a quarter final.

The above results clearly show the excellent strides being made by all the basketball players in this school and all involved can hold their heads high.

## Young Scientists Competition

I took part in the Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition 2005 sponsored by ESAT. My project was entitled "Studies on the production of Histamine in fish, with special reference to Histamine poisoning in humans." From September to January, I was researching and doing tests in a laboratory after my project had been accepted out of a record number of over 1000 applicants. I then had to process all my data and compile a report book. At the exhibition in the R.D.S. I was judged each day. The public was then allowed into the exhibition. At the Awards ceremony I was awarded 2nd prize in the Biological and Ecological Sciences Individual Category. I was also awarded a special prize from the

Marine Institute. It was a great experience and I would recommend it to anyone.

Lee Caplin, 4th Year.

## Science Week

Science Week was held during November. The 1st and 2nd Years went to a science demonstration in Tallaght I.T. and there was a very interactive presentation by Michael Moylan who has assisted us in the past with Arts Weeks called "Science Live." The 3rd Years visited the Zoo and attended a workshop there while 4th, 5th and 6th Years all attended a science demonstration in D.I.T., Kevin Street.

Ms. S. O'Hara, Science teacher.