

STRAATFOOD

COLLEGE

TV MAGAZINE

2009



Editor's Letter



Four man tobogganing, frozen clothes, controversial quote books and weird showers. Just some of the activities that 2009's transition year group took part in.

From Delphi to Norway to the trip to Lahinch that never happened transition year has been the most spontaneous and unexpected year ever, and we hope our articles show that.

Enjoy reading this magazine as much as we enjoyed creating it!

Aoife Scally, Killian Mc Loughlin and Vincent Murray

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Matrix Training

Ever wondered how many 'D's there are in a 'W'? Or whether strawberry liquorice is liquorice at all.?

These are questions that everyone has pondered at some point in their lives, but they seem to be ignored in the school curriculum. Transition year is the time to explore all of the topics that never seem important at any other time in our lives, and Matrix training is the perfect example of this.

Students in Stratford who were tired of the boring and monotonous work leading up to the Junior Cert exam were relieved when, on the 5th day of fourth year, we had a day devoted to different ways of thinking. On 3

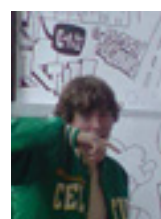
September 2008, "Matrix", a.k.a. Malcolm Rowe, came into the school to teach us that the path to success consists in breaking the established rules to create something new and individual.

The Matrix training course was a whole day aimed at helping us to develop our imaginations. It included exploring our sixth sense, creating our future-files, going mad for a short time and doing mind-expanding puzzles. At the end of the day we had a no-holes-barred discussion on subjects chosen by the students. I found this particularly interesting because every idea, no matter how strange or unusual, was encouraged, and we were given an opportunity to

discuss subjects rarely touched upon in school.

Matrix training is only available to Fourth Year students and is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to discover the "sixth sense". I would recommend it to any school as part of a transition year program, and having it at the very start of the academic year was especially helpful as it helped broaden our minds to the experiences and adventures that transition year had in store for us.

David Parfrey



Wii Competition

The best thing to happen to lunchtimes since the X-Box Competition, The Lads Ltd. Wii Competition took lunchtimes by storm. 3 classrooms, 5 games and 30 players (including some young-at-heart teachers) had classrooms full-to-bursting at lunch. Even Ms Gordon dropped in to investigate.



With Mario Kart attracting the most numbers and Super Smash Bros. providing lively competition, it was no wonder that other lunch time activities were being decimated due to lack of numbers but it was the ever popular Wii Sports that hosted fierce battles of composure, wit and sheer luck due to dodgy controllers, providing a wide base of such household games as Wii Tennis, Wii Bowling and the brow-wiping Wii Boxing.

With allegations of fixing due to one of the owners of

the company reaching the final of every single tournament and subsequently winning each one by strange margins, some disgruntled punters enquired for their money back but to no avail.

And some reports suggest that there were bets being taken on the side but these proved to be false.

Ben Ingoldsby



Battle Of The Bands

The Strobe lights were on along with a fog machine and it was time for Battle of the Bands 2009 to begin!



It was time for the first act to start; "Liam and Sean", a very amateur act, that was almost inaudible! So as a member of Chocolate Rain ltd that was a bad act to start off with. The second band up were "The Secondies", who actually blew an amp! So we moved on to Bored of cereal; they were very original and very energetic! They were great performers and got the crowd going. The very kind hosts decided to give the "Secondies" a second chance after they bagged us for one. Next we took a short intermission. We had a very original act on and their props included a television and a wii console, they were playing rock band! The crowd were off there seats for them, but as time went on we had to cut them short.

The following act after the intermission was the "Matthew Halpin Experience", a jazz act that was very energetic and once again they got the crowd

going. Matthew Halpin himself got a scholarship for his amazing talent. "The Cassettes" were up next and they were amazing. "Razor stilettos" were next; a very good band with some amazing talent. "The Ass Assassins", (a very original name for a band), they had very good guitarist.

The main event was next, it was time for "DJ Poo Tang" (a.k.a. Jack Clearly) who has some incredible talent and always seems to get his own way. What I mean by that is that we were running over time and we said to him before he went on that he has ten minuets but of course Poo Tang being Poo Tang he was on for about 20minints before we had a chance to cut him off!

Now it was time too announce the winners; "The Cassettes"! This incredible band had won the Stratford College Battle of the Bands 2009 hosted by Chocolate Rain ltd.



Vincent Murray

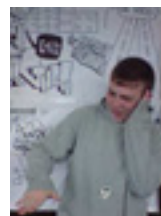


ECDL

One of the biggest challenges we faced this year was our 'European Computer Driving License' exams, which always either ended in a smile or a frown. Having to receive 75% to pass, we had a lot on our plate for computer classes throughout Fourth Year. When it came to the initial exam, the time constraint was the only thing that kept us on our toes since some modules were tough. As for next year's TY students, I'd recommend holding onto the ECDL CD with your life, since 'misplaced' CD's caused quite a stir this year! However, the sense of accomplishment after passing a module makes it all worth it and the course is enjoyable since it is one of the main goals of Transition year. As for the current Third Years, put a lot of effort into ECDL next year and you'll have quite an impressive CV!



Cal McGhee



Strictly Stratford

A sense of nervousness and excitement filled the air, the hustle and bustle of back-stage sent everyone into frenzy and there wasn't a moment to lose. The flicking of scripts and rushing feet behind the curtain soon became drowned out by the opening of 'Blue Danube Waltz', and our hearts began to pound as the production had begun. The curtain opened and the spotlight shone down on us like a blinding ray of sun, we got into our positions, waited for the cue, and then danced till the late hours in front of an amazed audience filled with familiar faces.

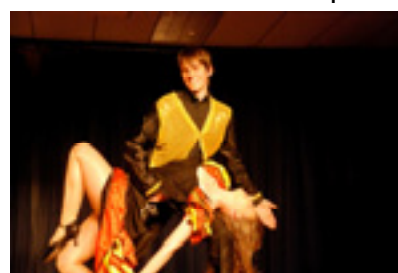


Being a minor character, I found enjoyment in watching my fellow cast-members

emulate the characters of Strictly Ballroom on-stage, and found every scene to be as filled with flamboyance and laughter as the last. Acting came so naturally to the majority of the cast, and included some excellent performances by talented actors such as Eoin Kearns' convincing role as the rebellious dancer Scott Hastings, Emma West's heart-warming role as his dance-partner Fran, and Adam Henderson's memorable and hilarious role as Barry Fife, among many brilliant others.

Strictly Ballroom is a fairy-tale-style classic that plays on clichés and stereotypes, as the insubordinate Scott Hastings shuns his parent's dreams of winning the Pan Pacific grand prix and tries to dance his own steps. He finds love with his new dance partner Fran, who blossoms throughout the course of the play and stands by him no matter what.

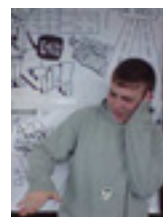
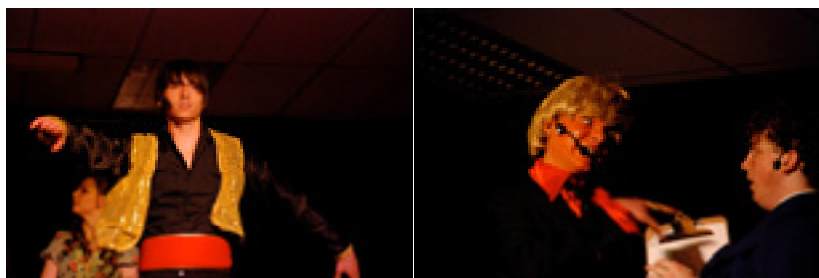
The climax is an exhilarating and fast-paced showdown in which both of them are victorious and show the world how to move to their own rhythm instead of following traditional ballroom steps.



Filled to the brim with over-the-top scenarios and vibrant performances, Strictly Ballroom managed to captivate and provide our audience with a night full of laughter. Providing we worked from the screenplay of the Baz Luhrmann movie, our efforts paid off so successfully and that it is something we are all so proud of.



Cal McGhee



Yoga

A path to enlightenment that winds back 5,000 years in its native India was introduced to the 4th years in Stratford College. The aim of yoga is to learn how to improve your physical and mental disciplines. This is something we weren't too familiar with. We began the course in late January and carried on until the end of February. During this time, our instructor taught us some fun ways to stay in shape using a special Yoga technique called Sun salutation. The yoga classes took up the last two hours of

every Thursday, we usually began with some warm-up exercises and for the last 20 minutes of the class (my personal favorite) we were given a chance to sleep, literally. We would leave school every Thursday feeling relaxed and more refreshed. This was a welcome change in comparison to the other Thursday T.Y activities we experienced. Yoga was an extremely enjoyable experience but was not as physical as our other activities. However, Yoga was the one activity that stuck with us long afterwards, we can

all still remember certain skills and positions like the 'cobra' and 'PLANK!' which were slightly uncomfortable yet hilarious to watch. Yoga was also one of the only activities we had in which most of us stayed completely silent, which is notable since we are the chattiest class in Stratford.

Jack Flannery



Song School

"If you Funk with us we'll Funk you up",

That was just one of many original lyrics written during this year's Song School Workshop that all of the 4th years took part in.



The objective of the Song School Workshop was to engage the creative and musical talents of us students by writing 3 original songs, and with the help of our instructors the Ronan Keating look alike Dave and Barry (aka Brick from Anchorman) record them.

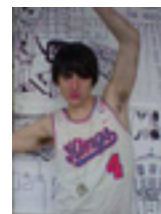
We were divided into 3 groups to write our songs and were told to give ourselves 'band names'. The 3 "bands" were; Vinnie the

Pooh and the Funky Acre Woods, New York B and B and The Humming. We then began our song writing process. First we came up with a music style and concept. V the P and the FAW 'surprisingly' decided to write a funk song about funk! The Humming Angels wrote a self described 'Soul' song about moving through life and New York B and B wrote an anti-love song about breaking up.

Then we moved on to the most time consuming part; the process of lyric writing which proved more difficult than expected, for my group at least. After writing the lyrics we then wrote the melodies with the help of our instructors.

The next day we began the new and fun experience of recording our songs! During the recording process we discovered some hidden musical talents in some people for example Anne Sweeney and Kelly Fagan; lead singers of The Humming Angels or Ben Ingoldsby's singing talents. At the end of the day we all listened to each others songs and all realised that the two days we spent writing our songs were well worth it.

Luke McGuinness



Eoin Kearns is
Strictly Ballroom

An interview with Eoin Kearns

By Eoin Kearns

So Eoin, you were the lead in this year's play; *Strictly Ballroom*, is that correct?

Yes I was indeed; I starred as the loveable, but misunderstood, Scott Hastings.

"I am quite fearful that if I do choose not to do the play no one would bother to go!"

You seem to have a great understanding of your character... Would you say you relate to him in any way?

Well, you really have to try in any possible way to relate to your character in order to give a good performance. I feel I share quite a few qualities with Scott, which made him quite easy to play, well besides the accent of course!

Eoin, we've seen you in quite a few of the school plays, what keeps making you come back to it?

Yes I've played a part in every play since I've entered the school. I cannot really imagine where the play would be without me at this stage! But in all seriousness . . . I'm amazing.

"I cannot really imagine where the play would be without me"

Ha-ha, too true, you raise some very good points. Will you continue on to do the play next year?

Well in all honesty, I am quite fearful that if I do choose not to do the play no one would bother to go! So I suppose I kind of have to do it. For the good of the school!

Do you think that your acting could change the world?

Well I've always considered myself to be a very modest person. I mean I challenge you to find someone who is better at being modest. But yeah I feel that my acting could in fact bring a small, but immense, change to the world.

"I've always considered myself to be a very modest person."

Eoin Kearns



An interview with athlete **Conor Scally**

How did you start boxing?

My dad told me to try boxing. He thought it would help with my confidence. I used to play football for Crumlin FC so I knew about the boxing club from that.

Was it hard to begin with?

Yes and no. Getting into the ring for

"Boxing is a very skilful sport."

the first time was the hardest. Training wasn't too bad. My stamina was at a high level from athletics. All I really had to do was learn the techniques of how to punch and stand.

What training would you do?

I would normally do an hour of bag work, skipping and sparring on Monday Wednesday and Friday. Every second Thursday there was friendly bouts with other clubs.

How were the "friendly bouts"?

They weren't bad at the beginning. My coach put me in easy fights to build my confidence and to get me used to fighting in the ring. I won my first bout by the way. Gradually as I improved I was given harder fights against guys that were older than me and even against heavier people.

Did you find it harder against the heavier or older opponents?

Heavier opponents weren't as bad. They were slow and I just had to keep my distance. Gradually they got tired

and they didn't have any stamina. The older opponents were more difficult. They were stronger, fitter and more experienced than me, though I still beat them with speed. In the end it's about points. My coach always told me that he put me in these fights because I was smarter than these guys, which was correct.

Who is your boxing idol?

I don't really have one. I've always liked Mohamed Ali for his psychology. He always psyched out his opponents, which is impressive because sports are all about psychology.

Is there anything about boxing that bothers you?

Yes. I hate when people think boxing is all about beating up the other guy. They think that boxing is just about knocking a guy out and making him bleed. A lot of people don't realise it is about scoring points. Boxing is a very skilful sport you have to be very fit to maintain stamina throughout each fight.

Getting into the ring for the first time was the hardest.

Todd Harrisson



Just Dance

At the start of 4th year we were given only 2 classes of business studies a week, in which we would then sort out and arrange to be put into mini companies. Once we were given our groups and chose what we were all arranging, everyone in the year planned their products/ assignments precisely.

Just Dance took a long time to prepare as it took a long time to decide what we were going to do. At the start we had it planned that we would sell foreign products from other countries and then sell them for a rea-

sonable price. However, once another member was added to our group there were too many people in it to make a reasonable profit so we decided to arrange a Ceili for Seachtain Gaeilge and raise money for the I.S.P.C.C.

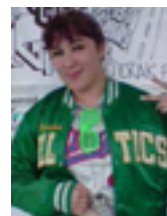
It came to the day and we had arranged that the students would pay at the door and the teachers too, even though there was an amount of people that didn't pay we raised a good 50 euro for the charity.

It started off with the teachers singing the Irish anthem

and then students singing which then led onto an hour of Ceili dancing. It was arranged that a few students that had been dancing for a number of years would teach the school on the day to dance.

We asked the 5th and 6th classes from the primary school to come too where they could all join and have great fun.

Chloe Harris



Fashion Show

High Stress, Smoke machines and 6,000-euro suits were all part of the hectic night that was our fashion show. The Morning of the Third of March was a frantic rush to get to collect clothes, shoes and accessories. With over 8,000 euro worth of clothes and bags full of shoes stuffed into a car with five members of our mini-company, the nerves of what was before us set in.

We stored the clothes in the penthouse and spent a tedious 3-4 hours taping the soles of shoes and a further 5 hours sorting out timetables, outfits, and models. On the day of the show we set up the stage collected the lights and smoke machine. We gathered the models for a run-through and the frustration began. By the end of the day only

half the models knew what they were doing and we realised that we didn't even have enough clothes to dress everyone.

The rest of the night was spent running around trying to organize everyone into their proper order but unfortunately all our efforts were in vain as after the first few outfits went out onto the runway, the chaos was backstage and people were sent to walk three or four times for no other reason other than they happened to be ready. The changing rooms however were much worse. Dresses were pulled off, zips were ripped, shoes scratched and Hugo boss suits were strewn across the floor all causing panic among our group.

Although it was absolutely manic backstage the sheer

energy of the models carried the show and it proved to be a very enjoyable, successful night.

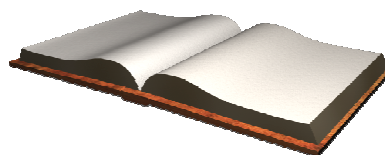


Anne Swenney



Stratford Writers

Stratford College has an unusually large community of prolific young writers, such as Joanna Geoghegan (1st year), Lucy Murphy and Alona Obarra (3rd year), and Niall Spain and Alan Keogh (6th year), as well as Cal McGhee and myself (T.Y.). The writing talent ranges from poetry and short stories to scripts and even full novels.



The following is an extract from the opening chapter of my new novel, **Hermitage**.

The man sat alone, staring out to sea, watching in silence as the waves rolled in, each one crashing against the cliff face before retreating, broken and weakened, as the next surge took its place. Over and over again the waves battered at the hard, unyielding rocks, and over and over again they broke and ebbed away only to try again and again until they would finally succeed in wearing away at the cliff. Nature is a relentless force, the man observed, now locating a small opening in the cliff face, where it curved off from the coast forming a headland; a thin jetty of rock and soil slicing through the sea, standing alone and solid amidst the roaring and unforgiving hammering of the waves. Eventually, the man knew, the sea would retreat far enough as to allow a narrow pathway to open up, which would afford direct access to the cave via a short spit, which the sea itself had deposited. That, however, would not be for a few hours yet.

The man sat for a short while longer; not moving; not speaking; not even thinking, but simply sitting and staring out at the constant movement of the sea. He used to frequently visit this spot, he reflected. Often with a picnic or a bucket, but never alone as he was now. A single tear formed in the corner of his left eye, but he ignored it, continuing to gaze out over the vast, turquoise sea, now flecked with hints of gold as the sun came to rest on the horizon. The “secret path” would not open until after the sunset. This had always been the case, and had been something of a fascination with the man when he had been younger.

To look at him you would think different, but the man was only yet in his twenties. The deception of his appearance came through his stubbly, unshaven cheeks and, even more so, through the aged, despairing look in his electric blue eyes. His shoulder-length hair was harsh and knotted and the dirt made it a darker brown than was its natural colour. His features were soft, but his demeanour gave a strangely harsh look to them, so to look at him, you might think him in his late thirties or even his early forties.

Gary Byrne



Delphi

Bleak cloudy skies, cold rainy weather, hostel style rooms, cafeteria food, no bed linen, Sound like an ideal holiday?



Surprisingly for me and every other Stratford T.Y who was lucky enough to go to Delphi it was brilliant. It was brilliant because not only did we do a huge array of different activities, but because it made everyone in our year grow so close. I speak for all when I say Delphi changed our year immensely. I spoke with everyone; no longer was there a great divide. I learned something new about everyone and it really opened my eyes. I learned that I shouldn't be so judgemental and that I am part of the nicest class.

We stayed in Delphi from Monday until Thursday. Four days and three nights with the Wednesday being results day, a much anticipated night back in Dublin.

We got our results over lunch that day. The emotion that everyone felt was over-

whelming, as were the fights for space in the conservatory - it was the only place with any signal so everyone was almost on top of each other up there on the phone to their friends and families back in Dublin. Basically everyone cried that day which I think was responsible for part of the bonding. I will always remember running into the boys' room and hearing everyone compare results, the atmosphere was unreal.



While all our friends in Dublin were getting ready for Parker Browns and Wezz, we just got in from a bog walk and were greeted at the doors to our rooms by being hosed down- marvellous. And instead of short tight gypsy dresses and fake tan, all the girls were just happy to have a hot shower. That night a disco was held for all the students were everyone just relaxed, exhausted from the nerves of that day. It ended at eleven and then everyone was basically dragged to their rooms not wanting the night to end.

But the last day was the best because we were all anxious to embrace our families, and our beds. I thoroughly enjoyed Delphi and I think it was a super successful trip, it helped bond our year,



and it has carried through all this year, we're still so close. I had been dreading being there for junior night but all in all it was the best night I could have wished for.



Hannah Grainger



Filmmaking

"Dead kittens."

"Think of dead kittens" to be exact.

This was what I found myself saying encouragingly to some of Stratford's finest actors as the entire T.Y. class attempted to pull off three short films. The response, a cacophony of laughter followed by a smart comment made by Mrs. Twyford-Troy about Stephen Spielberg saying something similar while making one of his films. I'm not sure what was funnier, her saying it or me believing it.

Star of Kill Bill Daryl Hannah once insightfully remarked;

"Filmmaking is such a collaborative medium."

This was particularly true for us during our week long filmmaking workshop as the group I was writer and director for, worked ardently and strenuously to finish storyboards, call sheets, auditions, editing and not to mention filming itself!

Since the beginning of T.Y. we had been looking forward to making films but we became even more excited when we found out that we would be writing the screenplays. Our year voted for it's three favourite student scripts, mine; an ugly duckling story, Tadhg's; a black and white art house film and Sorcha's; a teen crush film.

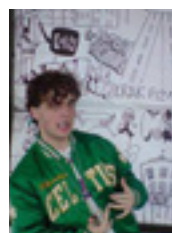
The writers were made directors and each was given

two days to film and a week to edit, unfortunately for our group a week wasn't nearly enough to edit, much to the annoyance of some teachers!

The films ended up being a resounding success and as such Miss Reynolds entered them into a youth film festival. Unfortunately our films didn't win, but they were shown on T.V.!

We won't soon forget it.

Killian Mc Loughlin



Photography Workshop

"Jayzus I don't know what kids nowadays are up to". This is what a man said to his friend upon seeing me hunching down to take a picture of a crack in the ground. This of course was for the T.Y. photography workshop which was designed to improve our skills and understanding of photography.

We were each given cameras and sent out into the big bad world to take pictures of our own. Some of them had to be mystery pictures so the other students could guess

what they were. After ninety minutes of compulsive picture taking we made our way back to the school to share our pictures with the instructor and the other students. Everyone was anxious to see what other students and of course Tim thought of their photos.

The next day was slightly less interesting when we looked at the composition of photographs e.g. different types of lines in pictures and what the best ways to take pictures are. That afternoon we looked at the pictures we

had all taken and were all pleasantly surprised by how good they were. The class chose every ones three best pictures to be kept.

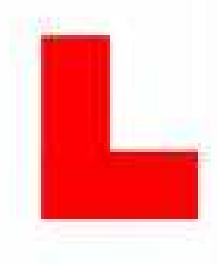
Overall we all learned a lot about the theory and technique and photography and had a lot of fun doing so.

Jack Cassidy



Driven For Success

So you'd like to know how to drive? We had the opportunity to learn on Tuesday, 21st April in Rosemary Smith's Think Awareness Driving Programme in Kildare.



As we sat on the early 7:30 bus, we eagerly awaited the day ahead. Some of us had driven before, but with little or no experience in this area, everyone was anxious to begin. The class was split into two groups, where the first was given the chance to start driving while the rest of us sat in the classroom surrounded by large, yellow diamond shaped road signs and began learning the rules of the road.

Time flew by when it was our turn to swap the classroom chairs for the front seat of a car. We were greeted by encouraging smiles and positive comments from the group of students who gone before us. They reassured us that it was a great experience but that it was harder than it looked. So in groups of three

plus an instructor, we bundled into the specially designed dual driver system cars. I found myself to be lucky enough to have the famous Rosemary Smith as my instructor for the day. The former dress designer-turned-rally driver made us feel welcome and calmed our nerves. We were introduced to the every day mechanics in a car like the handbrake, clutch and gear stick.



It came to my turn at last and I got into the drivers seat. Scrambling my brain to remember what to do first, just as the students before me had done so perfectly. Seat-belt? Check. Handbrake off? Check. Mirrors and seat in the right position? Check. All I had to do then was start the engine, and before I knew it, I was driving! My indicators flashed occasionally, I slammed on the brakes not as smoothly as intended, and the 'no left turn' signs became increasingly more important.

With a past as interesting as Rosemary's, the drive never seemed boring. She recalled a very close and terrifying encounter with dangerous bandits in the Andes while en route to another rally in the region. She described her experiences with such a calm and normal approach as if to say that it was all part of her job at the time.

By the end of the day most people had accomplished how to do a three point turn, reverse backwards through a set of cones, and know the basics of driving and the rules of the road. The whole experience was definitely one of the many highlights of transition year. Everyone enjoyed themselves and felt they had accomplished something at the end of it.

Holly Furey



Sports Day

Every year, Stratford College organises an entire day for students and teachers in which they compete in athletic and fun competitions to win medals. It is held in the yard behind the Stratford national school, where a bouncy castle with an obstacle course is usually hired to put in the field, but unfortunately there are no prizes for completing it.

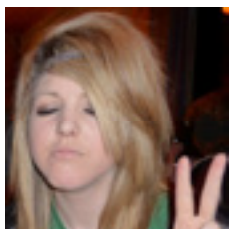
Stratford tries to hold sports day when there is good weather thus making the day more enjoyable, but sometimes results in many getting sun burnt!

The occasion consists of mostly races; the three-legged race, potato-spoon race, and the wheelbarrow race are some of the light-hearted events, with the running races, football matches and basketball matches being among the more competitive activities.

Generally, both students and teachers find sports day to be very enjoyable and eventful, or at the least, tolerable for the less outdoorsy people!

Unfortunately this year sports day was cancelled due to poor weather.

Ruby Murphy



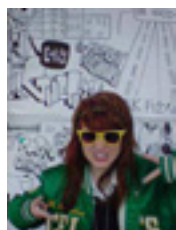
French Table Quiz

On the 28th of November 2008 the annual school French Table Quiz took place in Castleknock College at precisely 7.00pm. Four transition year students ferociously battled their way through the hoards of cheese-loving French students in a hurry to grab the best table.

The quiz started soon after everyone had taken their place and the hall quickly became silent except for the whispers of the teams. The questions varied between language, geography and general knowledge and it soon became clear that if we hadn't done any revision, it would have been a disaster! The school hosting the table quiz were very welcoming and had bought refreshments for the break.

When the questions began to be thrown at us again. We kept a steady third place for the first few rounds, but we found ourselves finishing in 7th place with Gonzaga College taking home 1st place. Although we didn't win, we were very proud of ourselves for coming in the top ten.

Sorcha Dunne



Reflections

Delphi was the first activity we did, the weather was terrible but I think that it made the experience all the more enjoyable.

The next activity we did was sailing out in Dun Laoighaire. The only one of us who had any real sailing experience was Anne but we took to it well. The first session involved learning about the parts of the boat, how to turn and how to avoid getting hit in the head with the mast.

A trip to Norway was planned so we got lessons every Thursday up in Kilternan, a lot of people took to it naturally and unfortunately others didn't.

Yoga was next on the cards, it hurt more than it relaxed you, and I don't think the general feedback was that positive except for when we could sleep at the end.

We are currently doing Self Defence and its great fun partly because we get to watch Eoin getting beaten up by the instructor.

In my opinion fourth year was a great success we have gotten so much closer as a group and we found out our strengths and weaknesses as individuals.

Niall Dunphy



Work Experience

Work experience was from the 1st to the 12th of December. Each Transition year student decided where they wanted to work based on what they wanted to be when they leave school.

The class worked in various jobs such as Banks, Primary schools, The Guards, Hospitals, Auctioneers, Fm104, Film Making and Crèches.

For the first week I worked in Presentation Primary School in Terenure where I dealt mostly with Junior Infants. I was working as an assistant teacher. I thoroughly enjoyed the week, and would recommend it to anyone who likes children.

For the second week I worked in Douglas Newman Good. I mostly worked in the commercial sector. I did various office jobs such as photocopying and laminating. It was a great experience.

Overall, work experience was great and a great way to see the job you would like to undergo in the future. I realised that I do not want an office job and that I would like a job more like a primary school teacher.

Niamh Delmar

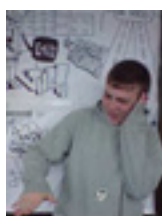


The Circus

Taking our year to see a performance of 'The Circus' at the Samuel Beckett Theatre couldn't have been more fitting for our year since we are a 'put-on-a-show' kind of group.

Our TY Group gathered outside the gates of Trinity College on the 2nd October 2008 and waited in anticipation for the play. With Tickets in tow, we entered the Samuel Beckett Theatre to enjoy the production. The show began, and captivated us within seconds. The actors before us performed death-defying stunts and presented us with stunning visual effects. The story itself was simple to follow. The two main characters Gubu and Harle run a circus act, but are one man down. They seduce a young girl to become part of their act. She is brought into the spotlight and pulled into an exhilarating and high-flying world. We watched in wonder and awe as the show unfolded in front of us. We made our way out of the Theatre after the spectacular performance, after completely escaping the real world for an hour and a half. Nevertheless, one thing the play taught us was that the show must go on.

Cal McGhee



Santry

During Transition Year, Stratford College competed in an Irish schools athletics competition. The school had a number of athletes competing from 1st to 6th year. Our school competed in both track and field events. Overall it was an enjoyable occasion.

Stratford's intermediate boys qualified for the final 400m relay and achieved 7th place overall. Well done to everyone that competed in Santry.

The events which our school competed in were the shot putt, long jump, high jump, discus, short sprints and long distance.

It was a bright morning and everyone on was tired. On our way up to Santry we got dropped off at the local centre near the stadium where there was a welcome breeze blowing and everyone was beginning to look forward to the occasion. Gradually the day got into a routine with each athlete preparing for his or her event warming up and stretching ready for the moment they had been waiting for. Santry this year was a success and everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Conor Scally



Self Defence

We were joined every Thursday after lunch by our beloved Master Yang. He took us through a 6 week crash course in women's self defence! Needless to say, we were expecting something good.



We cleared the hall every Thursday afternoon to allow space for our extreme training regime. This of course was enough of a warm-up for

us, so we jumped right into training!

We were amazed at how simple takedowns could be, especially if you know where the weak points are. Of course we also wanted to look cool, so we decided to learn some more complicated stuff. We learned hundreds of counter-moves, which would make any attacker look quite foolish. We had no idea how many ways you can force someone to the ground!

Master Yang, we learned, is a regular competitor in UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) tournaments. He is also a coach in "Raw Condition" gym, just over in Por-

tobello where he teaches various types of martial arts almost every day. All in all, he's not the kind of guy you'd want to mess with!

As I write this article we are preparing for our final week of self-defence, which unfortunately entails an exam! I'm not too sure how everyone will do in the exam, but I can safely say that we've all come out of this module having learnt something about kicking ass! And that's what it's really all about!

Eoin Kearns



Talking our way to the top

On the 18th of March 2009 Transition Year did a Speech and Drama exam. The exam consisted of creating a CV, letter of introduction and a speech on any topic that we wanted. We were given a month to prepare.

Some People spoke about the activities we did in 4th year or topics that they were interested in.

The day of the exam finally came and there were two examiners in different rooms. This was what all the hard work came down to. There were four different

things we had to do; a job interview, prepared speech, an impromptu speech and answer questions on public speaking.

When we got the results of the exams we discovered that everyone did really well, no one failed the exam and everyone got high marks around the 80's or 90's so everyone was really happy.



Aoife Gilleran



Different

Future Intentions

I came to Ireland last June. My reason for coming to Ireland was because it was one of the countries furthest away from Japan. I had to wait two years before I could come to Ireland. I never expected such differences. I had a distinctively imaginative way of thinking but I came back down to earth when I arrived in Ireland.

Sometimes I couldn't understand what my classmates and teachers were saying. Also I couldn't explain to them what was on my mind. That was stressful. I wanted to go back to Japan all the time. At first life in Ireland was tough. In the beginning I lost some confidence in my ability to manage on my own.

Then as part of Transition Year we had to go on work experience for two weeks. I worked in a nursery school. I wanted to work in the nursery because I was always interested in children. I was supervising children who had a special capacity that adults didn't have. Children aren't afraid of anything and they are interested in everything. So they could take me to their heart.

In school, I have to communicate and ask my classmates for help with a lot of different things. I was new and from a different country and people found it hard to communicate with me.

However, in the nursery school, I don't have to do that. I was nervous when I started there for two weeks during Work Experience. But the children were not nervous with me so I began to feel relaxed with them. Also the nursery school's teachers were very kind to me.

The last day in Work Experience, the teachers gave me a card.

When I said I would have Community Week later in the year the teacher said if

I wanted to work there that I would be welcome to come back. I was amazed at the kindness I received, this experience began to open my eyes to how helpful and nice people in Ireland are. When I was on the bus going home, I read the card from the teacher and I found a note. I cried at that moment.

My tears were not of sadness but tears of joy. It was the first time since I had come to Ireland that I felt content.

It was not the money that made me happy, I was happy because of the teacher's kindness.

I went back to that nursery school during Community Week.

I was glad the children remembered me and I was happy that I had become close to them during work experience.

I taught them about Japan and Asia. I thought that was a good idea, because they could learn about another country in the world where I have lived since I was born. I think it is an important part of their education. They were especially interested in Origami - the art of making paper into shapes.

They looked happy so I was happy as well. I was much happier with myself when I was there with them. They always made me smile.

On my last day, some children said they were going to miss me and other nice things and hugged me. I didn't want to leave them. I promised them that I would come back to them in the summer for one month.

Mai N.



Outlooks

Ireland, a new experience!

Hello my name is Camille, I am fifteen years old and I'm from Paris.

One day my mother said;

"If you want, you can go to Ireland."

I still remember my reaction because I was so shocked. I came to Ireland to improve my English. I have been staying in Dublin for 11 months.

Before I came to Ireland, I lived in England for 6 months but I couldn't improve my English. This was because the friends I had were not from England, so we always stayed in a group with people of the same nationality.

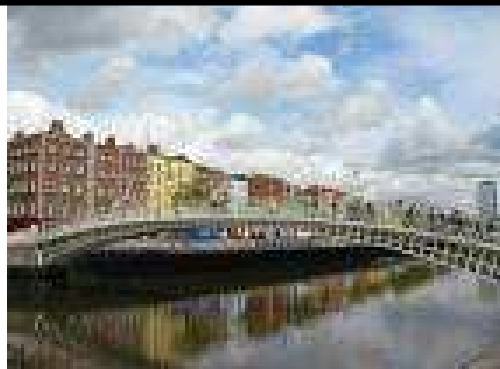
I arrived in Dublin on the 22nd of August 2008 early in the morning with my mother. On the plane I was really nervous, because I had never been to Ireland before. On my first day I arrived to see my host family; they were really welcoming and on the 27th of August, I arrived for the first time in Stratford College! My first day in school was very difficult, and I had trouble communicating. I did meet one really cool girl from Japan and a

really cool boy with crazy hair named Ben!

In Morocco, where I am from, the subjects in school are the same as those in Ireland. In Morocco school starts at 8 am, and finishes at 2 pm. Also in my old school lunch only lasted for 30 minutes and we had a canteen. In Stratford, lunch is longer and people don't make your lunch. We were not allowed to play sport during our lunch-break, but in Ireland you can! In Morocco we have more freedom; in Ireland it is stricter.

Finally I have a lot of friends; and my English is better. This experience is probably the best of my life. I'm really happy about this challenge, and I never want to forget this.

Camille B.



Holocaust Memorial Day 2009

On Sunday the 25th of January 2009 I attended the National Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration, which took place in the round room at the Mansion house, Dublin. I and two of my fellow pupils represented our school, Stratford college. During the commemoration we recited the names of just some of the lives lost in the Holocaust whom had connections with Ireland.



The commemoration was attended by our president Mary McAleese who said in her speech "never forgetting is our duty, it is our responsibility" to those who died as a result of the "wicked calculation" of killing in the concentration camps. The ceremony was also attended by various dignitaries including the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Cllr Eibhlín Byrne.

During the ceremony, the audience, of about 640 people, heard from survivors of the Holocaust, now living in Ireland. Tomi Reichental,

Suzi Diamond, Jan

Kaminski and Zoltan Zinn-Collis all spoke separately at intervals throughout the evening and each of them recited the words "I am here today not because of who I am but because of what I am. I am a survivor of the holocaust". Their words, short and bare were extremely moving.

Brief readings were given by the Minister for Integration Conor Lenihan, Olwyn Enright TD, Ruairí Quinn TD, former Minister for Equality and Law Reform Mervyn Taylor, former Equality Authority chief executive Niall Crowley, Ms Justice Catherine McGuinness, Raphael Siev, curator of the Jewish Museum, author Jennifer Johnston, poet Micheál Ó Siadhail, and others. Their speeches were very moving and informative.



Moya Brennan contributed some beautiful music which added to the somber mood of the night.

A candle-lighting ceremony-

commemorated all who died in the camps. The candles were lit by representatives of the Jewish, Travelling, Black and Christian communities.

I was honored to receive the chance to witness and take part in the ceremony, I learned a lot from the speeches given and was very moved by the whole evening. I think students should be involved in events like this and should be taught more about this bleak unforgivable period in our history so that such an event never takes place ever again.

Adam Henderson



Acknowledgements

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Also owed our thanks are Ms. Twyford-Troy, who gave up her art room to us countless times during the year and Ms. Finnegan for the activities she organised.

Lastly we thank Stratford itself for providing us with one of the greatest experiences of our academic lives.

