



INDEPENDENT BOARDING & DAY SCHOOL | BOYS & GIRLS | 3-18 YEARS

NEWSLETTER

Newsletter no 4 / Winter Term / 23rd September 2016



September	TIME	EVENT
Mon 26th		European Day of Language
Tue 27th		R14 Mourne Mountains (Sports Pupils)
Wed 28th		R8 Share Centre Trip (return: Fri 30th)
Fri 30 <sup>th</sup>	9.00-10.00	Macmillan Coffee Morning, Jackson Hall
October		
Sat 1st	10.30-12.00	Rockport Open Morning

## Headmaster's Headlines

**Paddling Our Own Canoe:** Not quite, but at least in our own back yard, as the kayaking club kicked off (?) this week. It is really pleasing to me that we are once again utilising the great resource that is Belfast Lough and this club is a direct spin-off from the *MORE Adventure Day* held in school last term. Ballyholme Yacht Club was also buzzing as the R5s and 6s took to the water on their RYA training, our golfers continued to improve and impress at Blackwood and Balmoral, and a group of senior pupils were put through their paces by the Royal Marines at Palace Barracks. Add to this the R7 visit to the Hollywood WW1 event yesterday and you get a snapshot of just another week at Rockport.

**Singin' in the Rain:** Many thanks to our PTA volunteers who battled on manfully to create the *Jazz on the Lawn* event on Sunday and to those of you who braved the elements to come along. Well done also to OR **Taylor Lally** who stepped in at short notice to provide the music. She may just have secured the gig for future years (although I'm not sure we will be able to afford her when she hits the big

time). It was especially pleasing to see some of our newest Rockport families in attendance.

**Man and Superman:** Another OR covered himself in glory last weekend when **Josh Reynolds** won a silver medal in the British Masters 60-65 age group (I know, he must have a picture in the attic!) 100m hurdles in Birmingham. Well done!

**Bonsai!** From the ridiculous to the sublime. As well as gracing the athletics track at the weekend Josh also managed to win the 'Best in Show' prize at the Bonsai Society's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary show in Botanic. He clearly has too much time on his hands.

**Mercy Bing:** Sadder news of another OR as we learned this week of the passing of **Mercy Heatley (née Bing)** on 5 September, aged 94. Mercy was the daughter of Founder Geoffrey Bing and one of the first girls to enrol at Rockport in the 1920s. It was while studying Medicine at Somerville College, Oxford that she met her future husband, Dr **Norman Heatley** (of penicillin fame - the school is still in proud possession of a 'Heatley Vessel'), after whom one of our science labs is named. A fuller tribute from her family will be posted on the ORC section of the school website soon, but I wrote to Mercy two year ago and was pleased to receive the following reply which current Rockportians may find interesting:

*19<sup>th</sup> July 2014*

*Dear Mr Vance*

*Thank you for your letter. I was very interested to hear that you are the present Headmaster of Rockport and that it has 200 pupils. I wonder if it's possible to keep the classes small? I was in the classes myself as a child from 6 to 13, when classes were never more than 13. I went to a girls' boarding school in Wales at 13 and found myself with a big vocabulary in Latin, of which my fellow pupils knew not a word. They knew quite a lot of Science of which I knew very little.*

*Best Wishes,*

*Mercy Heatley*

**George Vance**  
**Headmaster**

## GENERAL

### **R8 Share Centre Trip**

R8 Pupils will be visiting the Share Centre next week, leaving Rockport on Wednesday morning and returning by the end of the school day on Friday afternoon. Please ensure your child is provided with the following kit:

- Spare pair of footwear for water activities (and spare socks for keeping feet warm)
- Swimwear
- Some changes of clothes (including 2-3 pairs of tracksuit bottoms, fleece, t-shirts)
- Casual clothes for disco
- Light jacket for wearing over a wetsuit
- Black bin bag for muddy/wet clothes
- Towel
- Toiletries/Medicines/Inhalers

Due to a change of itinerary, pupils now only need to bring a small amount of money, **in coins, in a wallet or purse that they will be responsible for. Mobile phones and other electronic devices are not permitted.** Pupils should come to school in their **Rockport tracksuit** – green hoodie, white polo shirt and Canterbury tracksuit bottoms – for travelling in. Medical forms have issued which need to be completed and returned by Monday please.

Please email [dhamilton@rockportschool.com](mailto:dhamilton@rockportschool.com) if you have any queries or have further information about dietary/medical requirements your child may have.

**David Hamilton, R8H Form Teacher**  
**Helen McConaghy, R8M Form Teacher**

### **Note from St Colmcille's Parish Church**

I'm the Pastoral Worker at St Colmcille's Parish, Holywood. I would be most grateful if you would pls ask parents of any children in your school's P4 and P7 classes who attend our parish and who would like their children to be prepared for a Sacrament (First Confession, First Communion or Confirmation) in 2017 to please contact me on 078 4110 2376. I organise the sacramental preparation classes and our classes begin shortly.

**Joe McKeown**  
**Pastoral Worker at St Colmcille's Parish, Holywood**

## Re "Oliver" and RDS

Rehearsals: **FULL CAST** Monday and Wednesday, 4.15pm-7.00pm.



I am having a fabulous time directing your children during rehearsals for "Oliver". Drama and the arts have an ever increasing powerful effect in so many areas of life. Their confidence levels are increased. Their ability to study improves by the act of learning lines and retaining the information. The friendships built with all age groups are built on trust for example. "A child educated at school alone is a child uneducated" The children are working so very hard to make this a special production for you to come and enjoy. I really would appreciate your full support during the rehearsal process. It's very difficult to produce a great production if even one person is missing from the ensemble. I have no doubt that you will be amazed at what your children are able to produce. I hope you are hearing evidence of them practicing at home. If anyone has any questions at all or would like to speak with myself about anything at all please free to contact me at [james@jameshuish.co.uk](mailto:james@jameshuish.co.uk).

**James Huish, Director**



## European Day of Languages

Just a reminder, that on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September we will celebrate the European Day of Languages with a range of fun events across the school. We are looking forward to judge the European fancy dress competition on Monday morning for pupils in playgroup to R7 and to see what teachers embrace European fashion for the day.

Look out for our R11 and R12 linguists at break time, who will be handing out sweets to those who can respond to them in French or Spanish. They will be wearing language billboards so you will not miss them!

At lunchtime pupils from R8-R14 who have signed up for the 'Café des Langues' are invited to the Languages classroom at 1.15pm, to enjoy European music, cuisine and a Euro Quiz. Feel free to bring a beret, sombrero or any European themed accessory with you.

**Katie Megarry**

**French and Spanish Teacher**

### R13 Moving Image Training

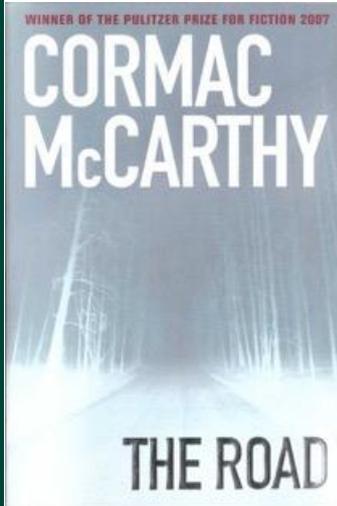


This week the R13 Moving Image Arts pupils had the chance to visit the Nerve Centre in Belfast to learn new skills in the exciting area of digital film editing. They were in excellent hands with trainer Danny, who had previously worked on the editing team responsible for putting

together the first three seasons of Game Of Thrones, and he provided a fascinating insight into just what goes into making a blockbusting show. Danny complimented the pupils on their attitude and was delighted with the promise the budding film-makers showed! Well done to all.

**David Hamilton**  
**Teacher of Art & Design**

### Sixth Form Book Group



This half term we will be reading the first in our series of dystopian novels, Cormac McCarthy's Pulitzer Prize winning novel about the battle for survival in a post-apocalyptic world, *The Road*. We will meet to discuss over coffee and cake in our (soon to be) newly refurbished Sixth Form Centre **at lunchtime on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October**. Members of staff are also welcome! Please speak to Mr Lutton if you need help getting your hands on a copy.

**Paul Lutton**  
**Head of Arts Faculty**

## EARLY YEARS

### **European Languages Day - Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

Don't forget that on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September, pupils from Playgroup to R4 should come to school dressed in clothes to represent their chosen country. R1-R4 will have Sport as usual in the afternoon and should bring appropriate footwear.

### **Macmillan Coffee Morning - Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016, Jackson Hall, 9am**

We would love to see you on Friday morning in the Jackson Hall for our Macmillan Coffee morning. This is the perfect chance to catch up over a coffee and something delicious for a great cause. See you there!

### **Open Morning, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October**

It's Open Day next Saturday and as usual we would love our Early Years pupils here. They should meet in the Jackson Building from 10.20am. Pick up from the Early Years building by 12pm.

**Lynn Athanasiou**  
**Head of Early Years**

## SPORTS

### **Golf**



On Thursday our elite boys' golf team participated in an Ulster Schools Championship at Balmoral Golf Club with all performing reasonably well in difficult conditions. This should prove to be good preparation for the forthcoming U19 Ulster Schools Scratch Golf Championship to be held at Kirkistown Castle Golf Club on

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October. The boys will be also preparing on Tuesday mornings at Bangor Golf Club as our golf academy is now underway.

Letters will be issued next week to those pupils selected for the development groups and this will complete the groups.

**Gail Holland**  
**Head of PE & Personal Development Faculty**

### **A Day at the Marines**

Following a quick recruitment video our 16 'cadets' were combined with 3 other schools and divided into 4 groups. They rotated through four activities, 2 either side of lunch.

A fitness-test which culminated in a 2-team dash with supplies and casualty laden stretcher, a zip-line descent from a look-out tower, small arms weapons training (first person shooting range with 'real' weapons aimed at video targets) and laser-tag skirmishes in a forested area. The outdoor events included a good humoured warm-up, with a few falling foul of the 'no hands in pockets rule' & having to drop and push 10 (some several times – Bethany!). Everyone seemed to enjoy the experience, with several signing forms... for further information ("out of politeness" – Rob).

The final event of the day was a hand-to-hand combat exhibition given by four of the instructors. We were shown how to disable an oncoming attacker yielding a knife, gun & baseball bat. The grand finale was a 'king of the mat' bout between four of the instructors.

A fun day was had by all and the Rockport Home Guard is now ready!!!

**David Moody**  
**R12M Form Teacher**

## **MUSIC**

### **Singing/Instrumental Lessons Fee**

All fees for singing and instrument lessons must be paid in full. A terms notice is required should you wish to withdraw your child from lessons, otherwise fees already paid are non-refundable.

**Mel Carr**  
**Teacher in Charge of Music and Drama**

### **Soggy Sunday**

Last Sunday morning I really thought Jazz on the Lawn wouldn't happen. The rain clouds were gathering and our jazz band had cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. I arrived at school at 11am just as the rain started to fall, the bouncy castle hire company would only put a small castle for safety reasons and I had no clue what we were going to do for music. Could we cancel? New PTA-er Cait Greene's son Oli suggested Old Rockportian Taylor Lally, who has an amazing voice, might come and save the day. Oli and Cait got on the case and Taylor agreed to come - yippeeeee! Now for the rain to stop, but no, it got worse. We huddled under the gazebos honestly thinking no-one would turn up. But you did!! Mr Vance got a team together and got the big army tent up, Jo poured glasses of wine, Cait served hot chocolate, R5s manned stalls and Taylor and her friend James Reid sang and played and they were brilliant! Of course we didn't get the numbers we would usually have but thank you parents and staff for making the effort and not minding that you and your children got completely soaked through. **We raised £303.20 thank you!!**

### **Pub Quiz – Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October – Dining Hall - 7pm – Teams of 6-8**

I have heard that there may be a round on Brussel sprouts, I kid you not. Brains you may have in spades but nothing can prepare you for the questions that Mrs Neill is putting together for an evening of fun. You can get a team of 6-8 or join a table on the night. It really is laugh out loud funny and stupidly competitive.

Please pop your name on the list in the office for catering purposes and help us raise some money!! **Cost £10 per person for supper and a drink**

### **Children's Halloween Party – Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October**

Please bring pumpkins CARVED as we will be using these to light up the cricket pavilion for our fireworks display that night. Day-care spaces are limited so please pre-book to ensure your child has a spot if you wish them to stay in school until the firework display that evening.

### **Halloween Fireworks display – 5.30pm - Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October – BBQ**

£5 per family will be put onto your extras bill for the firework display. Please notify the bursar if you are not attending and want to remove the £5 charge. Thank you.

### **Thanksgiving Dinner – 24<sup>th</sup> November – 5.30pm**

## **Rockport Ladies Lunch – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December**

This year the Rockport Ladies Lunch is generously sponsored by Radox Health. We will be raising funds not only for our school but for two very worthy local charities.

This year we are supporting:



[www.caredni.org](http://www.caredni.org)

The Boom Foundation – a charity supporting patients with sarcoma.

[www.theboomfoundation.co.uk](http://www.theboomfoundation.co.uk)

**Santa Claus visit – Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December**

**Easter Bunny visit – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April**

**Dad's Day Out – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April**

**Belfast Marathon – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May**

**School Fete – Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May**

**Speech Day – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

Thank you all for your continued support for all our events. Together we raise much needed and appreciated funds for our school that benefit each and every child.

**Carol Thompson**

**PTA Chairperson**

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