



# Rockport School



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

NEWSLETTER

## Newsletter no 10 / Winter Term / 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016



| NOVEMBER             | Time                               | Event  |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>ALL WEEK</b>      | <b>ALL DAY</b>                     | <b>ASSESSMENT PERIOD (ends 25<sup>th</sup> November)</b>   |
| Mon 14 <sup>th</sup> | 16.00-18.00                        | R12-14 Parents' Meeting with subject teachers, Sports Hall   |
| Tue 15 <sup>th</sup> | 14.45 depart                       | Minor A & Minor B Netball Teams v Dominican College (A)<br><i>Return: 17.00</i><br>AGenda afternoon, Queen's Leisure Complex   |
| Wed 16 <sup>th</sup> | 10.00-14.00                        | R12 Individual Career Interviews begin<br>R10 Entrepreneur Masterclass , Signal Centre, Bangor   |
| Thu 17 <sup>th</sup> | 13.30-14.30<br>15.00 start<br>9.15 | R4 Visit to Major's Parlour<br>Minor A Netball Team v Belfast Royal Academy, Aurora<br><i>Pick up at Aurora approx. 16.30</i><br>R11-14 Business Studies Pupils to Randox, Crumlin |
| Fri 18 <sup>th</sup> | 16.00                              | New York Trip Info Meeting for Parents, Centenary Building   |
| Sat 19 <sup>th</sup> | 9.00-13.00                         | U15 Netball Trials, Ashfield High School<br>GL Test 1  |

**A Day to Remember:** There is an old saying in the military that the Queen thinks that the world smells of fresh paint and boot polish. As I write, there is a faint buzz of activity in the room above me and the unmistakable smell of Kiwi shoe polish is wafting down the stairs as the children (and the Houseparent) make some vital last minute adjustments for our annual Service of Remembrance in Holy Trinity Church in Glencraig later this morning.

Below in Notes of Former Pupils I have reprinted some information on **OR William Wilson McBride** who was the subject of our school assembly on Monday but I am reminded today that every OR (save one) old enough to go volunteered for service in the First World War, and many also volunteered during World War II. Subsequently in both wars 23 Rockportians would lose their lives: a great rate of attrition in a school which had rarely more than 40 pupils. The school fallen are also remembered in the **McBride Room** dedicated by his parents in 1918, and in the front hall on a memorial plaque.

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## Notes of Former Pupils:

William Wilson McBride was the eldest son of a linen merchant and came from Malone in Belfast. In the summer of 1909 he came to Rockport to board. He quickly established himself by winning a prize in his first term for gardening. Throughout his time at Rockport he excelled at Music and Drama, often playing a piano solo or singing in the school concert, or playing the lead part in the RDS production.



WW McBride at Rockport, 1910

By the time Wilson left Rockport he was a Captain, and had colours for cricket, hockey and shooting. He was described by Mr Bing as having 'simplicity, kindness and generosity' and of having 'a great influence of good .... over others'.

From 1912 until 1914, he attended the Tonbridge School in Kent. When War was declared the McBride family were holidaying in Switzerland and had a very 'anxious time' getting home through France, where they saw evidence of the 'terrible results of war'. On his return Wilson took up a position in the family business, where, in addition to their regular trade of manufacturing linen, the Belfast factory was heavily engaged in the war effort making hand grenades.

As soon as he was 19 he enlisted in the Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA) at Carrickfergus and after only 5 months of military training was sent to the Western Front. 'There, he took part in much of the heavy fighting of the Spring and Summer of 1917, at Arras, Ypres and elsewhere.' He received a shrapnel wound in the arm, was further injured in a gas attack and was recommended for bravery by his commanding officer on no less than three occasions. He was also recommended for promotion to Captain.

In December 1917 his battery were ordered to the Italian Front, and they travelled to Treviso near Venice. This was considered by many of the men to be a much safer posting, and they could expect to see much less action than in northern France and Belgium. But soon after their arrival, Wilson McBride went missing whilst visiting his men in the forward positions. At first, his colleagues were not unduly concerned because he was known to spend time visiting the men but when he did not return that night his CO sent messages to the neighbouring batteries.



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It was not until the next day that they discovered his fate. A stray shell had landed beside both him and his Signals Bombardier; the signaller had been killed and Wilson McBride, who was 'badly wounded but conscious', had been taken to a field hospital. He died of his wounds within an hour of being admitted. He was buried next day in the churchyard of a neighbouring village of Giavera, in the province of Arcade.



2Lt WW McBride RGA

2nd Lieutenant R. C. de Morgan, who was with Wilson at school at Tonbridge and in the Battery, wrote:

"The fact that we were both at Tonbridge, though a good many years apart, formed an additional bond of attachment between us, and I feel that I have lost one whose friendship I had hoped to enjoy for many years and for whose utter fearlessness and great strength of character I had the highest admiration."

His Commanding Officer wrote:

*"His loss has been a terrible blow to us, as, after what we have been through during the past few months, we scarcely considered ourselves at war down here until this cruel awakening. The men, especially the signallers who were directly under him, are naturally very gloomy. As an officer I have lost in him one of the best I have ever met, always keen and absolutely reliable. As a friend, he has left a gap in our ranks that will never be filled. He was "Mac" to us, and his name will remain with us as a remembrance of the cleanest, nicest and most cheery of boys."*

**George Vance**  
Headmaster



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## GENERAL

### **New York Trip – Parent and Guardian Meeting**

There will be a meeting for all parents and guardians of students going on the Arts trip to New York this **Friday 18th November at 4pm** in the Centenary Arts building. This is to provide some important information in advance of the trip and to allow an opportunity for questions.

Please note the arrangements for travel:

- We meet at school at **5.30am on Tuesday 29th November** to travel to Dublin Airport for a 11.15am flight to New York (JFK) (Flight DL405).
- We will arrive back at Dublin Airport at approximately 8.40am on Saturday 3rd December (Flight DL404). We will return to Rockport School by coach at approximately 11.30am.

### **Visual Arts Programme**

We are thrilled to have launched our new arts initiative in partnership with [Standard Utilities Ltd](#). On Monday afternoon GCSE and A Level art students were treated to a seminar with professional artist Jane Butler. Jane will be returning to Rockport in the coming weeks to mentor students as they work towards an exciting opportunity to exhibit their work at the Crescent Arts Centre later in the year.

We are grateful to Rockport parent Mr Brian Nixon and Old Rockportian Chris Fetherston, Directors of Standard Utilities, for their support in this endeavour. Participating students are reminded that the next session will be next **Monday 21st November** with artist Susan MacWilliam.



**Paul Lutton**  
Head of Arts Faculty

### **Hollywood Festival**

To all singers taking part in the Hollywood festival next week, please make sure that you have looked at your dates and times and be there ready WITH MUSIC FILES containing ALL the music 15 minutes beforehand. Each child has been given a copy of their timetable. Good luck to all!

**Katherine Hunter**  
Singing Tutor



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## Parent-Teacher Interviews for pupils in R12 and 6th Form

These will take place on Monday 14th November from 4-6pm in the Sports' Hall. We strongly recommend that all parents and pupils attend, as this is a very useful opportunity for teachers to feedback to parents and pupils together.

**Mrs Rhonda D. Palmer**  
Deputy Head

## R10 Entrepreneurship Master class

On Wednesday 16th November all of Year 10 will take part in an Entrepreneurship Masterclass in Signal Centre of Business Excellence, Bangor. This year the theme is around Food & Drink. Pupils will depart Rockport at 10 am and will be back in school by approximately 2 pm.

## R11 – R14 Business Studies Pupils

On Thursday 17th November those pupils studying Business Studies will be involved in a group tour of Randox, Crumlin. The group most interested are R12 for their controlled assessment task and must attend this visit. The group will depart Rockport at 9.15 am, returning for lunch.

I would appreciate if parents could sign and return the consent forms. There may be a small amount added to your bill to cover transport expenses.

**Heather McBride**  
Teacher of Business Studies

## Skills NI

Years 10 /11 / 12 attended an interactive careers exhibition at the Titanic Exhibition Centre on Tues 8<sup>th</sup> November. It was very informative and all of the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It has certainly given them new ideas for future career paths.



## Ski Trip

All pupils going on the ski-trip must have all the relevant documentation to Mr McIlveen by Monday 14th November, 2016.

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



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## SPORTS

### **Inter House Swimming Gala**

Once again the Inter House Swimming Gala was keenly contested on Thursday 10th November at Bangor Aurora Leisure Complex. All pupils performed to their best and the support for each other by the swimmers was fantastic.



For the first time in a few years the Greens were victorious - Mr McIlveen was so ecstatic he almost ended up in the pool having dropped the trophy! All in all, a great day! Many thanks to all of the staff who helped make the event run so smoothly.

**Gail Holland**

**Head of PE & Personal Development Faculty**

## EARLY YEARS

### **It's cold outside...**

Please ensure your child comes to school with weather appropriate clothing so we can continue enjoying the great outdoors! A reminder that all children from Reception to R4 must wear school regulation coats, hats, gloves and scarves, all of which are available from Mrs Calvert.

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



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## PTA

After a rather hectic half-term, (London trip, tooth extraction and a brace fitting) it was with a quiet relief that we started back to Rockport on Monday to finish the winter term. This relief was both temporary and foolish as I had appeared to forget that:

1. I was a member of the PTA
2. We are hurtling towards our busiest PTA events in our yearly schedule
3. The lovely Carol Thompson is relaxing in Barbados.

Thankfully Carol has left step-by-step instructions, contacts and directions in a folder entitled 'How to not mess up the PTA' so I think we are safe for now. Although I have been going through it VERY thoroughly and have yet to find the 'Drink a large glass of wine' set of notes. I'm currently turning the house upside down looking for a 'Greens' swimming cap for the Swimming Gala, so I'm sure both will turn up soon.

### **Thanksgiving Dinner, 24th November at 5.30 pm**

Writing this newsletter on the dawn of the American Presidential election, it is clear that America is utmost in everyone's thoughts this week. No matter what your politics are, everyone has some reason to be thankful and on this note, we would like to invite you the Rockport Annual Thanksgiving Dinner.

This is quite a special occasion for the entire family. Many of you know this event was started a number of years ago by the PTA to welcome our American families within the school. Over the years, it has come to represent all that the Rockport community are thankful for and as an encouragement for our children to express gratitude through art and written pieces. These will be displayed on the walls of the Dining Hall for the Thanksgiving Dinner.

Our wonderful kitchen staff cook the most delicious school dinner you have ever tasted. It will be my first Rockport Thanksgiving Dinner and in my head it will just be like the dining hall at Hogwarts. It will honestly be a real treat AND you don't have to cook that evening. #winning

### **Just Desserts**

Our Thanksgiving Dinner will never:

- Give you up
- Let you down
- Run around

But it will dessert you! The Great British Bake off might be over but we are pudding our faith in our Rockport star bakers in the hope they can cobbler together some fab desserts to serve at the event. From pumpkin tarts and pavlovas to banoffee and baklava we would be very grateful for them all. If you could please let the school office know you will be providing a dessert and simply bring it along on the night. We encourage all families to attend this event and be part of something special. It will be noisy and fun but a wonderful memory to have with your children at their school. Numbers are limited so please put your name down in the school office as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Adults            £15  
Children        £7  
Four and under Free



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## Rockport School Ladies Lunch, Friday 2nd December, 11am - Stuart Suite, Culloden Estate

We are delighted to announce our keynote speaker for this year's Ladies Lunch. We will be joined at the event by Olympic athlete, **Chris Tomlinson**, an Ambassador for the Healthy Happy Child campaign. Chris is a former Long Jump world record holder and Silver medalist, having competed in three Olympic games. Married to Lucia and dad to Raphael, Vincenzo and Valentina, Chris advocates a whole child approach to health. At a towering 6ft 6, blonde and eyes of blue, you definitely can't fail to spot him at the Ladies Lunch.

Joining Chris at the Rockport Ladies Lunch is Grammy-nominee musician, Alana Henderson. After spending 2014 establishing herself as an up-and-coming Irish solo artist at home and across Europe, Alana was invited by Irish star Hozier to join him on his worldwide tour throughout 2015 and 2016 as featured cellist, vocalist and support act. Described as 'One to watch' by Hot Press, we are delighted Alana will be performing for us at the Rockport Ladies Lunch.



As ever, your support for this event has been phenomenal. This is our biggest fundraiser for the school and also for local charities and we rely solely on your generosity. By purchasing tickets and supporting us through amazing donations, fantastic ballot prizes and merchandise, you make this event happen. Please contact us at [pta@rockportschool.com](mailto:pta@rockportschool.com) or pop into the office to reserve a ticket for what is sure to be a wonderful event.



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This year we are kindly sponsored by:



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FOR EXCLUSIVE OFFERS & COMPETITIONS "LIKE" US ON FACEBOOK

We are raising funds not only for our school but also for:

The Boom Foundation – a charity supporting patients with sarcoma

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

Reverse The Trend Foundation – a children’s charity addressing health which runs the Healthy Happy Child campaign

[www.reversethetrend.org.uk](http://www.reversethetrend.org.uk)



**Dates for your diary:**

Thanksgiving Dinner – Thursday 24th November

Rockport Ladies Lunch – Friday 2nd December

Santa Claus visit – Thursday 22nd December

Easter Bunny visit – Thursday 6th April

Dad's Day Out – Friday 28th April

Belfast Marathon – Monday 1st May

School Fete – Sunday 7th May

Speech Day – Friday 16th June

Thank you for your continued support for all our events. Together we raise much-needed and appreciated funds for our school which benefit each and every child. We so look forward to seeing you at our next event – Rockport's Thanksgiving Dinner.

**Cait Greene**  
**PTA Secretary**