



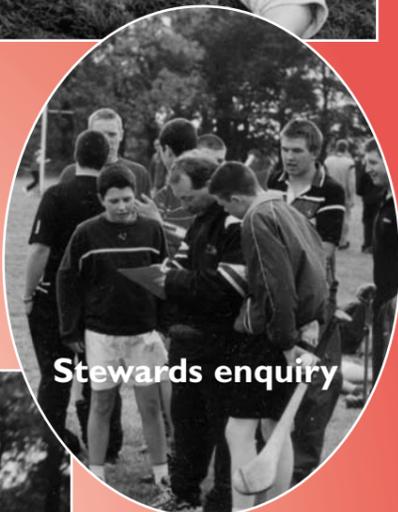
Happy Sportsmen



Down and out!



Ready for action



Stewards enquiry



Encouraging classmates



Chariots of fire



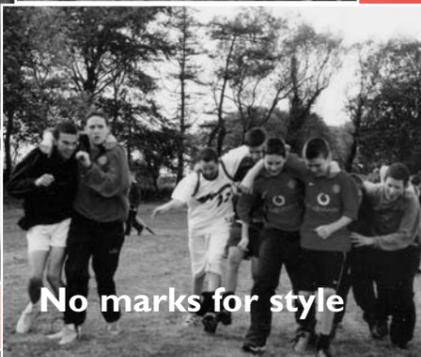
Fallers at the first



Coiled springs



Must hang up now!



No marks for style



A fine body of men



6th Years working hard for a change



ROCO REPORT



ISSUE NO. 3

Nollaig Faoi Sheán agus Faoi Shonas do Chách

CHRISTMAS 2003

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Cúpla Focal ón bPríomhoide

I dtosach ba mhian liom Beannachtaí na Féile a sheoladh chuig gach duine idir scoilairí agus tuismitheoirí, iar-scoilairí agus bord riartha an choláiste. Traoslaím go hiondúil le chuile dhuine a bhí páirteach sa foilsíúchán seo.

"Time and tide wait for no man" - a rather appropriate way of describing the events of recent months in the college! In June, the time arrived for our Leaving and Junior Certificate students to sit down and be counted as they undertook the arduous task of state exams. Happily, they rose to the challenge and credit is due to them on their achievements and also to their teachers who prepared them so well.

As knowledge poured onto reams of paper and left the college on a daily basis the school pond began to empty itself of over thirty years of deposits from the hinterland. At first we thought that this was a manageable job, capable of being dealt with by in-house expertise! Not so! Eventually, we succumbed and realising that still waters do indeed run deep, we called in the professionals who, with the aid of a giant Hoover, sucked up tons of silt and sludge to reveal a depth which could have secured the next Olympic high board diving competition! Safety therefore dictated that we backfill with stone to a depth of approximately three feet of water all around the pond. It is still a work in progress and we hope to enhance the fountain with new pumps. At present, the pond, complete with new lighting is proving a huge success and many people have commented on how well it looks. Special thanks to Patrick Meade, Danny and Timmy Twomey, Fr. Bryan, Fr. Paul and Barry

Flynn. Two of these gentlemen almost disappeared into the pond in the process of the work but there is no need to mention names!

In July, the work of replacing more windows began. Blessed as we were with fine weather work proceeded with amazing speed and soon the building resembled a mouth of extracted teeth being refilled with shiny new dentures. Organised panic saw the job over run slightly but we were ready for business on September 1st. At the same time tiling and painting was also progressing at a furious rate by our D.I.Y. expert, Trevor.

September saw the arrival of 52 first years and in no time they had settled in. Since the beginning of the year there has been an amazing amount of extra-curricular activities ranging from hurling and gaelic football to golf and soccer, badminton, debating, chess, music and quizzes, to mention just some. Well done to all pupils and teachers involved.

The Past Pupils Union ran a very successful fundraising raffle at the beginning of term and we appreciate their ongoing support of the college, not only in fiscal terms but also in their willingness to offer whatever help and advice they can to the present cohort of students. Our Chaplain, Fr. Bryan officiated at the wedding of past pupil John Kelly (Munster and Ireland rugby player) in Austria late in the summer. Having rubbed shoulders with several other international players he is now training for the next World Cup!!!!

The Parents' Association continue to work hard on behalf of the general parent body and are deserving of your support in their efforts in organising various activities and events.

On a personal note I would like to thank most sincerely all of you who give me support throughout the year - Teachers, Board, Trustees, Parents and Past Pupils and, particularly, Mr. Groeger, the Deputy Principal and Ms. Higgins, the school secretary. We all wish Mr. O'Flaherty a full and speedy recovery, and to Ms. Foley, who edited this issue, we convey our sincere thanks.

Nollaig faoi sheán 'is faoi shonas.

Diarmuid Ó Mathúna.



THE POND - BEFORE...



...AND AFTER!



Eolas

CHESS CLUB

The Chess League was restarted this year during the middle of October by Mr. Buckley. The contestants meet up in his room every Thursday afternoon at lunch time. So far, the chess league has been met with huge success in a competition filled with upsets and classical performances.

In the beginning thirty two contestants signed up to participate in the event. It was decided that there would be eight groups of four. There was a draw out of a hat whereby each participant was matched up to a group. The top two qualify out of each group and progress to the knock-out stages.

The final eight contestants will be separated into teams and entered into an inter-schools competition. First of all they will play local schools and if they manage to win that competition they will be entered into an All-Ireland tournament.



There have been many upsets in the competition so far such as first years triumphing over sixth years and things going wrong all over the place. In my personal opinion I think that the main contenders for the title would be Oisín Boland of sixth year, Stephen Walter of first year, Derek Murray (teacher), and David Humphries of third year.

The chess league is specifically designed to encourage pupils to explore their mental capabilities much further than just their normal everyday classes while still maintaining a certain aspect of leisure and enjoyment. It will help students and teachers alike to broaden their minds in a classic game of skill. We look forward to many highs and lows and to a breath-taking competition.

By James McCarthy - Second Year

QUIZ NIGHT

On Tuesday 25th of November, a team of four students represented Rochestown College in the Thomas Crosbie Holdings All-Ireland Secondary Schools Quiz.

The quiz was run along University Challenge lines, with 10 rounds of eight questions each (one to every member of both teams). The questions were General Knowledge and covered a wide subject area including Sport, History, Music, Literature and Geography. Rochestown faced down St. Peter's School, Passage West and took an early lead, holding level points all the way to the end, where we were beaten by just four points!

All is not lost however, because we have another chance to qualify in January and are confident we can progress. We would like to thank Mr. Hipwell and Mr. Hennessy for organising our participation in the event.

Team: Sean Conway, Cathal Malone (2nd year), Tomas Cotter, Oisín Boland (6th year).

By Cathal Malone - Second Year



MUSIC TRIP

On Tuesday, 25th of November 4th and 6th year music classes went up to Dublin. This was so that we could see a concert in the National Concert Hall relating to Leaving Cert Music.

It was an early morning start for all of us. We had to get the train to Dublin and we had to be in the station for 6:45. Miraculously we all managed to be on time.

We arrived in Dublin at 10:00 and had just enough time to get a small breakfast. The concert started at 11:00 and it was very enjoyable. The pieces played by the orchestra were; Mozart's piano concerto no. 23, and Berlioz's Waltz and March to the Scaffold, which was conducted by James Cavanagh. These were very well presented which gave us a better understanding of the pieces. The concert appealed to me and I left the concert hall having felt I'd heard something unique.

As the train home was not leaving until 5:00pm we spent some time around Dublin. This was very enjoyable and it added to an already great day. It was a superb day and many thanks must go to our music teacher Ms. Leen who organised this great day.

Richard Barry & Kevin O'Byrne

Down Memory Lane at St. Francis College

My first recollection of a Capuchin Father goes back a long way to childhood days in the early 1920's, when a brown robed, long bearded priest spent periodic holidays with a neighbouring family in Kilcolgan near Tarbert in North Kerry. To us children, his appearance was always a curiosity. His name, still clear over the years, was Fr. Matthew, a Capuchin from Cork.

Forming a link with older Capuchins on 22nd May 2003, I attended a very pleasant and friendly Prize Giving Function at St. Francis College Rochestown, bringing back many memories for me, over 60 years ago. I brought my young brother Jack O'Connor all the way from Tarbert as a 12 year old to Rochestown College. His time there began a family tradition stretching over two further generations.

Next to come was a cousin, Vincent Power of Rochestown Rose, Cork, who spent his entire secondary school years at Rochestown. Vincent went on to obtain a PhD from Cambridge University in Philosophy-Law, specialising in EU Competition, Regulatory and Transport Law. He is also the author and co-author of some five books.

At present, my young grandson, Kevin Cahill, has just completed his first year at St. Francis College. The happy atmosphere of the College is still evident. Congratulations to its Principal, Mr. Diarmuid Ó Mathúna and to the teaching staff. May the College continue its good work in the Christian formation and education of its students.

Jennie Cahill - August 2003

SPORTS DAYS VIEWS

A few weeks ago we had a sports day. It was on a Friday. It was a warm day. All the school went up to the G.A.A. field. When we got up all the pitch was lined with flags and bollards. Mr O'Murchu was running the sports day. He made a joke at the start saying it was cancelled, but everyone knew he was only joking. The races were the sprints. There was a 200 metre, 400 metre and 800 metre race. There was also a shot putt and long distant puck. At the end there were joke races, the piggy back race and three legged race. The week after the medals were given out in the main library. It was a brilliant sports day.

I was very impressed with the school's sports day. There were plenty of activities for everyone. There was long puck, flat races, shot putt, soccer, tug of war and hurling. Everybody got a chance to partake in all the events, even our vice principal was playing soccer with us. It was a very cold day, but we didn't take much notice of the cold, because we were so active. It was a lot better than the sports we had in primary school, as it was more competitive. There was a prize giving a few days later. There was a prize for the all rounder and medals for the rest of us. They were presented by Mr. Gregor and Mr. O'Murchu. I look forward to next year's event and hope I will win a few more medals.

The sport's day was good fun. I competed in all events, except the 800 metres, because I missed it. I didn't win any medal, but I was always 4th or 5th. We didn't have the shot putt or tug of war at my primary school sports day. I did well in the long puck, but did not win anything. I will try again next year. Eoghan Buckley won the most medals in first year. About a week later the prize giving was held, though I didn't win a prize, I got a plaque for being on the winning team at the soccer blitz. It was an enjoyable day.



Eoghan Buckley, Junior All Round Winner,
and Declan Kelleher, Senior All Round Winner,
with Mr. O Murchú

SPORTS DAY

This is my impression of sports day this year. It was a new experience since I am new to this school, being freshly imported from America. It was different from sports day in America because it was very organised, but yet it was very relaxed as far as competition. Basically it was a show of skill between classmates, but it was also for bragging rights. It's not to say that there wasn't competition between the classmates, for there was as much competition as a match for the World Cup. There was only one event that I entered and that was the 100m sprint. There were two heats of U-16, I was second in the qualifying heat and in the final I was 4th. Which isn't bad since I don't do track. I also was part of the piggyback race but I fell right at the beginning so Dominic MacHale had a very hard time getting us to our finishing position of 4th. I also tried my hand at the long-puck. Having not picked up a hurler in over 3 weeks probably didn't help my situation. I pucked it about 40m the first time and then I hit my other try out-of-bounds, but it was fun. The rest of the time I was messing around on the pitch hitting the sliotar and just having fun. I also was part of the 400m-relay team that came second. It consisted of Dominic MacHale, Darragh Kelleher, Alan Evans, and myself, Isaiah Wrobel. But over all the sports day was a huge success as well as a great day of healthy competition and sportsmanship.

Isaiah Wrobel, 4th Year

Green School Programme

The Green School programme is an international education programme which promotes environmental awareness among schools and the wider community.

The programme aims to reduce the amount of waste schools produce so that less waste goes to landfill sites. In recognition of their efforts to considerably reduce their waste output, can be awarded a 'Green Flag'. We at St. Francis College are working hard towards this end. The 'Green School' committee consists of representatives from management (Mr. Groeger), teaching staff (Ms Sexton and Ms Foley) and class representatives, with input from the Parents Association and auxiliary school staff.

The 'Green Programme' was initiated in December 2002. We are encouraging all students to recycle. We have introduced special bins for plastic bottles alongside regular bins, and we aim to have compost bins available for the New Year. The students led by Barry Hooper collected old coins and this helped to raise funds for 'Enable Ireland' in May 2003. We also held a Green Day where students from second year collected 16 bags of rubbish from around the school.

Much of our waste comes from the students lunch boxes and we are appealing for your help with this problem. We wish to encourage the reduction of packaging - for example sandwiches could be put into lunch boxes with no extra wrapping required. We urge students to use reusable drink containers.

We have always supported a policy of healthy eating and exercising at St. Francis College. In S.P.H.E and in P.E classes, we emphasise the importance of healthy living by eating a balanced diet and participating in sport and other activities.

We hope you will encourage your sons to become conscious of the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle, in order to develop a cleaner environment. We welcome any suggestions which you consider beneficial to our pupils.

JAMIE O'TOOLE

My Trip to Germany



On the 16th of October I went to Germany to compete in the World Age Group Games in Trampoline. The full Irish team went, 15 competitors and 6 coaches. We stayed in Hannover for 10 days. There were 44 other teams from round the world staying in the hotel as well. As you can imagine the atmosphere was great and I had the time of my life.

Everyday there was something new; usually there was one of the teammates competing in an event. There were 3 sections to the competition there was trampolining itself along with synchronised trampolining and D.M.T. Overall the Irish Team competed very well, out of 105 competitors I came 13th in synchronised trampolining, 25th in D.M.T and 41st in Trampoline. At the end of the competition the competitors were very happy along with the coaches.

I would also like to thank the school for their encouragement and generosity of giving me €500.00, as we had to pay for the full competition ourselves.

Jamie O'Toole

Words Worth

The Condor

It glides so smoothly
Like a summer breeze.

Going where it wishes,
So bold yet beautiful.

King of the great sky,
As it flies so high.

By Milchail Delpont
Second Year

Golf

I am a pretty good golfer,
I play it now and then
And when I hit the ball
It can go very tall.

I hit it down the fairway
Long, long, long
And I hit it into a ditch
Wrong, wrong, wrong!

At the eighteenth hole
I become very tense,
But if I concentrate hard enough
It might not hit the fence.

By Mark O'Flynn
Second Year

The Year 2020

The year 2020,
How will it be?
Only I will be around 30,
People will fly in rockets
and spend plastic money out of their pockets,
There will be life on Mars
just as advanced as ours,
The pollution will increase,
so the population will decrease,
Trips to Moon so often
and the prices will also soften,
All around there will be computers
and they will be our tutors,
Oh! The year 2020,
I can now imagine how
It would be.

Manav Ghai

School

I stood outside and looked at the school.
There it was beyond the pool.
As I looked, it was so big,
I just felt like a little twig.
But now I know my way around
I've got my feet back on the ground.

Robert McWhinney



Colas



Charity Soccer Blitz

This idea began when our L.C.V.P. class had to do our Leaving Cert. Enterprise Report. Ciarán Fitzpatrick suggested the idea of a Charity Soccer Blitz for Motor Neuron Disease. We then decided to include 1st to 3rd year so that we could have complete control over the classes. We received permission from the Principal in order to run this event during school hours, which he was only happy to agree to. After announcing the event to be run on Wednesday 8th October we collected €3 admission from each student participating. The winners would receive a plaque and the man of the match a trophy.

Each team had its own colour and there were ten teams of six. The regular soccer rules applied and there was no heading of the ball to avoid injury. Each team played two games and all performed well. The final was a huge success because it ended in penalties and created a great amount of tension.

The winner of the Soccer blitz was team I. The whole event was a huge success as Mr. O Murchú the P.E. teacher pointed out. We raised a total of €300.00.

The next project for the L.C.V.P. class is the non-uniform day, which we hope will be a great success, and raise even more money for Motor Neuron Disease research.

Mark Hands

EUROPEAN COMPUTER DRIVING LICENCE

The ECDL is a well-recognised qualification in computer skills. It includes examinations in Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Information Technology and the Internet. Many companies now expect their employees to be computer-literate and the ECDL has become an essential benchmark.

St Francis College has now become an accredited ECDL Test Centre. Both Ms Foley and Mr McDonald are qualified ECDL trainers, which means that all students will now have the opportunity to study for and sit these exams. Fourth Year students sat their first exam in November and were very successful; we hope they will be the first of many.

THE CONCERN DEBATE SERIES

It is something that I will never forget. My first debate ever. I knew roughly what the idea of a debate was, but I never actually knew what went on at one. I soon found out, as I had to speak first. Strangely, I would prefer to be singing in front of a room full of people rather than speaking. We lost the debate, which wasn't too surprising as three out of the four members on our team were doing it for the first time. We read too quickly and didn't look up enough. We learned from the experience though and I believe we have improved. The judges told us we had the makings of a good team, which gave us all a bit of confidence. We would be better prepared for the next debate, definitely.

The next debate went a lot better for us. We were opposing the motion that '**GM foods are not necessary in the fight against world hunger**'. Again we got the better side of the argument and I felt we could win if we just improved slightly on the previous debate. We delivered our speeches confidently and slowly and stuck to the point of the debate. And most importantly, we took the legs out from under their argument. In the rebuttal, we countered their argument well and at the end we all had the slight feeling we had won. We were right. The judge said that the motion had been opposed. Huh!?! I had to think for a second. Did that mean we had won? After a few moments thought it dawned on me and I was pleased.

I have been debating for a few weeks only, but already I have seen some of the many benefits that come from taking part in debates. I learned how to really listen to what someone is saying, rather than just catching a word here and there as I usually do. It also helped remove a fear that millions of people suffer from all around the world: Public speaking. It teaches you to be confident in what you are saying and not to turn totally red when you are speaking in front of more than three or four people. All in all, I think that being on a debate team is a valuable experience and I am looking forward to our final debate on the topic of aids.

The debating team this year included: Dominic MacHale (Captain), Richard Barry, Mitchell Cuddihy, Alex O'Brien, Isaiah Wrobel and timekeeper Seán Murphy. I would also like to thank the teaching staff for their co-operation and help as well as management and other staff in their holding of debates.

SOUTH MUNSTER RUGBY

Since the start of September I have been going to U17 South Munster trials. At the first few training sessions the numbers were very high, everybody was trying their hardest to impress the coaches. After a few weeks the numbers were cut from 70 to 50. This is when the going got tough. Our fitness levels were being worked on. Our training sessions went from 2 hours to 4 hours. This was where the men were separated from the boys. The second cut was made from 50 to 30. I made the team and was delighted. We train even harder now, every Sunday for 4 hours. It is intensive

training but I love it, I have made a lot of friends and the team is starting to gel together.

As I am playing with South Munster, we will be playing North, West and East Munster. We are expected to win because South have never lost a match against North, West and East Munster. I am also playing club rugby with Sundays Well U18. We had good wins over such clubs as Cork Constitution, Bandon, Muskery and Cobh Pirates.

Paul Stuart
4th Year



THE SOCCER TEAM

It was a mixed feeling at the end of the game. There we were, annoyed after being beaten 3-2 in extra time, but on the other hand surprised that we played so well for most of the game.

All the 'experts' had said that St. Peter's were going to hammer us. It didn't feel that way before the game though. We were well prepared and we all felt that we would give them a good game. The team was quite relaxed going into the game as we were told to just go out and enjoy the game, but at the same time take it seriously.

We arrived at the pitch, which by the way was like a snooker table, and I personally forgot all about the stories I had heard about the other team. I just wanted to get out there and play. The team was picked and there were no real surprises. The game began and we all took a while to settle down as it was our first game together as a team, and the only game if we didn't win. We started by far the better of the two teams as Brian O'Donnell and Alan Evans launched several powerful attacks on the wing. After long spells of pressure, we finally cracked their defence with a good ball across the box from Ciaran Fitzpatrick. Adrian O'Shea calmly slotted it home. It wasn't surprising that we went in at half time one-nil up as we had dominated the whole first half.

The second half started the same as the first as both defences stayed quite tight and there weren't many scoring opportunities. I was having a fairly unexciting game up to then as I had quite a solid back four in front of me. The game was becoming a lot tenser towards the middle of the second half as St. Peter's began to pile on the pressure, to get back into the game. It was bound to happen sooner or later. They broke through the middle and I was beaten by a low shot into the corner. I was annoyed as I felt I could have saved it. We could have got more goals in the second half, as John Quirke was one on one with the keeper twice. Both times he was unlucky not to score. The final whistle went and extra time is what lay ahead of us. After a quick team talk we were back on the field. Two unanswered goals from them made the heads on our team drop. The game was not over yet though. Ciaran Fitzpatrick grabbed a goal back and we finished the stronger of the two teams. A Schmeichel-esk run by me up the field for a free kick proved to be ineffective. The referee's whistle signalled the end of the game and I felt sorry for the sixth years as this was their last chance.

All in all we played well and only some small concentration lapses cost us in the end. It was only on the bus home that I actually realised how well we had played. We put up a good fight and by no means disgraced ourselves as a team. To finish I would like to thank Mr. Murray and Mr. O'Murchú for all their time and help and hopefully we will have better luck in next year's competition.

Dominic MacHale

First Year Impressions 2003

When I first came to Rochestown it wasn't as strange as I thought it would be. We got our lockers and keys, which we would need for all our new books. When we came first it was just to see the school, the first full day of school was excellent, because we had P.E. We went to the sports hall, which is the biggest hall in Munster. We had loads of new subjects, such as music, art, C.S.P.E., S.P.H.E., Science and Computers. I am settling in very well and have lots of new friends and I am looking forward to see what happens after Christmas.

When I came here first I was feeling a bit nervous, but now after three months I have settled in. I know most of the teachers and I like my subjects. My favourite subject is P.E. I have it on a Thursday and it's a double. I really like this school, I am glad I didn't go to a different school. I have lots of friends here and it is fun. I play badminton after school on a Wednesday and we are supposed to be playing Carrigaline in badminton after Christmas. I can't wait!

I was very nervous when I came here at the start of September. That ceased when we were shown around the school and talked to. There were a lot of people from my primary school going here, which comforted me. There are some nice subjects which I was starting like Business, Science and C.S.P.E. The school is surrounded with trees and fields. My favourite subject is History and I know a lot about wars. I'm looking forward to Christmas, it's not that I don't like the school, but that it will be nice to have a break from those long school hours.

I really like school. You make loads of friends here. It is really peaceful here in Rochestown. There's no traffic driving past the school so the classes aren't disturbed. P.E. is really fun. We've already played soccer and gaelic football and we will start something else soon. I don't have a favourite class because I like them all the same, it would be impossible to pick. I have a really good class; we are all the best of friends.

When my classmates and I started here in Rochestown in September, we all felt nervous. Everything here is different to Primary School. Longer days, new classes, new teachers, new classmates and of course piles of homework.

We are doing some fun new subjects like art, science, music, business, SPHE, CSPE and French. Most of the teachers are very nice. Life here is great. We've all made new friends and after a while the teachers get to know our names. Every day we have nine classes, except on a Wednesday when we have six. We all can't wait for the future to see what happens next.

AN EVENING COURSE ON CORK'S FAMOUS WRITERS

Eight Wednesdays, beginning on Wednesday 21 January, 2004

TOPICS: FRANK O'CONNOR, SEÁN Ó FAOLÁIN AND DANIEL CORKERY

One of the world's best-ever short story writers, Frank O'Connor was born at 84 Douglas Street on Thursday 17th September 1903. In 1994 a plaque was erected on the wrong house. This would have amused Frank, who spent his life feuding with the authorities. So, this famous son of Cork was born at two addresses and known by two names. He was also torn between two languages, two Irish cities and two continents. And when it came to matrimony...

The course with slides, tapes and discussion will be facilitated by John Paul Cotter, M.Ed., a past pupil of Rochestown College, who has given several such courses and is well known as the co-ordinator of the annual CHILDREN'S ART COMPETITION organised by the Past Pupils' Union.

LOCATION: St. Francis College, Rochestown (ground floor)

DATES: Wed. 21 January to Wed. 10 March 2004 (incl.)

TIME: 7.30 to 9.30pm including break **FEE:** €50

BOOKING: Tel. 4552934 (evenings) or e-mail: shortstory@eircom.net

Places limited - early booking advisable