



Headlines



April/May 2009

We were very privileged to have Wendy Houvenaghel, Silver Olympic Medallist and Gold Team World Champion Cyclist as our special guest at our Honours Easter Assembly. It was a delight to have the whole school assembled together as the talents of our pupils in Sport, Drama and Music were recognised and to be inspired by the words of our Special Guest.

As you read this our Upper Sixth pupils are nearing the end of their time at LGS. In a few days time they will be commencing study leave in preparation for their A2 examinations. Most of these young people will continue into higher education and many will go on to hold leading roles in society. Their characters have been shaped significantly by their time in Limavady Grammar School and I know that they value the real contribution their teachers have made in getting them to this point. I would take this opportunity to wish them well in their examinations and in their future plans. Having recently received an email from a former pupil of LGS from 1960s, now living in Brazil, I know that the class of 2009 will always have a special place in their hearts for "The Grammar". Most of our AS and GCSE pupils will be returning to school in September, but as they too commence study leave, I extend best wishes for successful outcomes.

Extra-curricular activities continue to flourish. The recent Spring Concert was an excellent showcase for the musical talent in our school, so ably fostered by the music staff. A large group of pupils took part in Walk for Schools Fundraising, to support work in Kenya. The Cricket season is well underway, and a group of Year 11 boys is developing their hurling skills as part of a RVLC Cuchulainn's squad which will compete in a cross-community province wide Tournament later this term. Pupils are practising hard for our own Limavady Has Got Talent on 15 May and the Hockey Fundraising Group stage a Gala Evening on 22 May. A team of Young Engineers impressed judges at The Sentinus Day at QUB. The hills are alive once again as large numbers of Duke of Edinburgh's Award participants undertake expedition training in the Antrim Hills and Donegal.

School Examinations commence on Monday 25 May 2009. Thursday and Friday 21 and 22 May are Staff Training Days and are given to pupils as study leave. I would encourage all parents to support your children in preparation for examinations.

R Wilson (Principal)

Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Ciara R.** (Year 9) who won the Livestock and Meat Commission's competition to create an original recipe using beef.

Ciara's inspiration came from an American concept of using dessert recipes to make savoury alternatives. Her winning entry consisted of alternate layers of minced beef and grated vegetables topped with a creamy horseradish sauce.

For winning, Ciara received two laptops, one for herself and one for the Home Economics department. Ciara's teacher is Mrs Hylands.



Emma D. was recently presented with her award for first place in GCSE Religious Studies – Short Course. Her teacher, Mrs Harvey, Mr Wilson and Emma's parents attended the presentation in Belfast.

Emma D. receiving her award from Mr Neil Anderson (Chief Executive of CCEA)

La Roche French Exchange – Return Visit



On Sunday 8 March at 6.45 pm, 20 students and 5 teachers, including the Headmaster and his wife, from Collège Richelieu in La Roche sur Yon, France arrived at Limavady Grammar School to spend one week with their host families to get a real taste of our culture.

This was an extremely exciting week that included visits to the Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle, The Ulster American Folk Park, The Mayor's Parlour and also a historical tour of Londonderry. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed their week and loved the experience of staying with the host families.

The students also had the opportunity to shadow their partners to a few different classes and sample life at our school, an experience which was greatly appreciated by both the students and the teachers. Colleagues and students alike have asked me to express thanks for the warm welcome, kindness and generous hospitality received, especially from the host families.

I would also like to say "mille fois merci" to all our pupils and their families for their wonderful contribution to this trip. It would not be possible without you and we sincerely hope that this partnership will continue for a very long time.

Miss M Doherty

Senior French Exchange



Hot on the heels of our visit to France at the start of the month, we were joined by fifteen pupils and two teachers from the *Lycée Charles Poncet* in Cluses for ten days between the 23rd of March and the 2nd of April. As well as giving us a chance to renew friendships, our French visitors joined their partners in some classes, baked wheaten bread with the Home Economics Department, enjoyed a traditional music and dance session and went on excursions to the North Coast, Londonderry and the Ulster American Folk Park.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents who hosted a French pupil during their visit. Without your goodwill and hospitality, such visits could not take place.

The French pupils really enjoyed their stay and here are a few comments from them to express their thanks (please excuse the language errors!)

Mr I Sampson

"Thank you for your welcome! I had a very good week with the Northern Ireland people, my new friends."

"Thank you for all! I met new friends and I lived wonderful moments. I don't want to come back in France. Ireland is my second country."

"Thank you for everythings. Irish people are very nice!"

'LGS Has Got Talent'

On 15 May this year, the junior school will host their very own talent show. There is a wealth of talent amongst our junior pupils and now they have their chance to show us all exactly what they are capable of!

This night promises to entertain, enthrall and amuse with a number of singing, dancing, instrumental and dramatic acts. Please come along - support your friends and have a great night's entertainment. **Tickets will be going on sale on Monday 11 May and will cost £3. I look forward to seeing you all there!**

Miss M O'Kane

LGS – Champions de l’Irlande du Nord

How would you feel about giving up two or three lunchtimes a week plus at least one practice after school for the next four or five months? You will be expected to do extra work at home. You will have to speak in public in front of your peers, teachers and independent judges and you risk being interrupted and heckled at any moment by your opponents who are trying to ridicule your arguments. Oh, and by the way – all of this will be in a foreign language!

This wasn’t exactly my selling pitch at the start of the year, but it has pretty much been the reality for four A-Level French students – Chris Donnell, Lisa McNeill, Matthew Haslett and Kirsten Wilson – whose dedication and hard work was rewarded on March 25 when they defeated Friends’ School, Lisburn, in a thrilling final at Queen’s University, to become Northern Ireland French Debating Champions for 2009.



The competition, now in its tenth year, is open to all schools across the Province. Our adventure began last November with a demanding first round tie against Lumen Christi College.

Subsequent victories against St. Columb’s College and Thornhill College saw us through as the top team from the Northern section of the draw and having to pit our wits against Friends’, the winners of the Belfast section, in the showpiece final.

Whilst earlier rounds are held in small rooms in front of only a handful of spectators, the final is an entirely different affair. This was to be held in a large lecture theatre in front of an audience of nearly two hundred people and a panel of judges including two lecturers from Queen’s, a former Chief Inspector of Modern Languages and a member of the Alliance Française from Dublin. Earlier rounds had seen us debating whether our obsession with health is taking all pleasure out of life, whether women today have to become more masculine in order to succeed in the world of work and whether, with increased life expectancy, we should raise the retirement age to seventy. The motion for the final was challenging, to say the least – “*Le tourisme ne fait que renforcer le chauvinisme*” (Tourism only serves to reinforce chauvinism)!

Despite the tension of the occasion, the final lived up to all expectations and was afterwards judged by the chairman, Dr Nigel Harkness, from the School of Languages at Queen’s, to be probably the best final ever. Reasoned argument and debate were matched with moments of spontaneous humour and few of those present will forget what has become known as the “Matthew – Enya” moment, a prolonged exchange between Matthew Haslett and a member of the Friends’ team which probably lasted longer than Matthew’s actual speech and which included Matthew doing an impromptu dance and asking “*Do you like the way I move?*” to which his opponent replied “*Maybe you should show me later!*”

However, this was a real team effort, as it has been all year. It has been great to see the team working together during the year, growing in confidence and self-belief, each adding different qualities and supporting and encouraging each other when things got tough.

Mention must also be made of our two subs, Emma and Hannah, as well as Kristoffer and Laura, who also willingly gave of their time to help us prepare for the various debates and, of course, our French Assistant, Eve-Lyne, whose help throughout the year has been invaluable.

But the final word must go to our four orators themselves – Chris, Lisa, Matthew and Kirsten. Congratulations on your success and we now wish you well in your A-Level exams. Hopefully the French oral will hold no fears for you!

Mr I Sampson

How to Raise a Child Protection Concern

All Child Protection concerns should be referred to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mr C Little. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint you can appeal to the Principal, Mr R Wilson. If you are still not satisfied, you may raise your concerns with the Chairman of the Board of Governors. Thereafter, if you are still dissatisfied, you should address your concerns to the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Pupils with Significant Medical Conditions

If your child has a medical condition which could suddenly give cause for concern (eg severe asthma, diabetes, allergy, epilepsy, or cardiac problems) you are asked to consider supplying a Medical Alert bracelet which will clearly identify your child’s condition in an emergency.

Mr C Little

U19 and U16 Football

This time of year sees the conclusion of most football leagues and cup competitions. We have recently seen the mighty Liverpool be defeated at the hands of a very good Chelsea team, while Everton put Man United to the sword in the FA Cup Semi-Final (Shame).

Closer to home, our U19 and U16 teams made it through to finals in their respective competitions.



The U19's met Loreto in the Halifax Cup Final. This proved to be a very close encounter with our team being narrowly beaten 2-0. Both goals were scored in the first half in a period of five minutes. Loreto deserved the victory, with an impressive record of their defence being unbeaten throughout the tournament.

Despite the disappointing conclusion to their season there were many encouraging performances to take from the final.

Joe O'Hara and Peter Wilson played extremely well and restricted Stephen Dooley and James Peden, two Irish League and important Loreto players, from playing with

freedom. Matthew Haslett made some brilliant saves in goal and Captain Conor Kelly had a solid game in defence.

The U16 team met a similar fate in The Coleraine and District league Cup. They competed against a very competent Cookstown side in difficult conditions. During the first half our team had to defend against a strong wind and ended the half without conceding any goals. Chris Rodden and Captain Adam McClintock were instrumental in maintaining a solid back line and Jason Dixon was as reliable as ever in goal.

In the second half we threatened their goal with an onslaught of attacks in the first 15 minutes.

Paul McLoughlin and Ryan O'Kane linked well, yet failed to break down their resolute defence.



The game was finely poised when they scored a break away goal and despite the best efforts of our boys, we failed to eat into their lead. With a few minutes left we pushed forward for an equaliser when they scored a second. The game ended 2-0.

This was the first time this year that the U16 Team had been defeated in a competitive game.

Despite the disappointment felt by the boys, they never once gave less than their best and gave 100% all season. Well done to both teams.

Mr R Donnell

“Garden of Tranquility” in Enagh Cemetery



The five Post-primary schools in the Borough of Limavady took part in the planting of shrubbery in a “Garden of Tranquility” in Enagh Cemetery on Saturday 28th March. The garden has been funded by a grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Northern Ireland. Our school was ably represented by two of our Year 9 pupils, Ashleigh Brown and Nicole McGillion, who worked extremely hard to help create this special area. Ashleigh and Nicole will have their names displayed on a plaque in the garden. The garden has now been registered as a “Breathing Place” as seen on the BBC programmes and website. This is now the first registered Breathing Place in Limavady and it can be seen on the website: www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces

Dr L Mawhinney

Hockey

A big thank you goes to **Kathryn Blair (Year 9)** who has so thoughtfully donated all her birthday present money to the hockey and rugby tours. Kathryn hosted a huge birthday party and raised a total of £370. Many thanks to all those who attend Kathryn's party and contributed so generously.

A REMINDER to all those interested in attending the ‘**Summer Promenade**’ on **22 May** (7 for 7.30 pm) in Courtyard at LGS. Tickets are on sale at the school office – price to include a meal is £30.

Mrs J Higgins