



SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE NEWSLETTER 2015



SEASONS GREETINGS

Season's Greetings to all of you.

Please take the time to read our action packed newsletter. It is full of the wonderful activities and achievements our school has been involved in this term. Congratulations to all.

It is also fantastic to see that our school will finally get the extension we have been looking for since 2000. We will have a full size gym, a new science lab and demonstration room, a new woodwork room, new classrooms, staff room and offices as well as new basketball courts and playing areas. Part of the old school will be demolished and the part built in the 1970's will be updated to match the new wing. It will be carried out on a phased basis and at present the tender process is taking place. It's very exciting times for us and for the community and it will generate employment too. We also have our all weather pitch in fabulous condition. Visiting teams and referees have complimented us on it. In fact students prefer it to the astro pitch.

Finally I take this opportunity to thank the entire school community for the work, dedication and commitment to the holistic education of our students.

Wishing you all a peaceful and happy Christmas.

Pauline Moran

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Check out our website for all updated information and events

www.sanctamaria.ie

SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE DEVELOPMENTS



Our new all weather pitch



New DCG Room opened September 2015



IMAGE OF NEW BUILDING STARTING 2016

DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL BUILDING HAVE FINALLY RECEIVED THE GREEN LIGHT

WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

We welcome all our new first years to Sancta Maria College.

We hope your years at Sancta Maria College are both rewarding and enjoyable.



First years enjoyed a motivational talk from Paul O'Brien on Wellness and Healthy Lifestyle



First year Surfing Outing on Carramore Beach as part of first year induction week.



A big thank you to our senior students who act as mentors for our new first years throughout the year

GREEN SCHOOLS NEWS

The Green schools committee have been busy undertaking many initiatives to date -

Park and Stride and Cycle to school organised by Transition Year green travel committee encourages students to walk to school on given days (rewarded by tea/coffee and toast)

Battery Collection—all used batteries are currently being collected

Flash Mob supporting Westport Smarter Travel

Global Warming Awareness



Our Green Schools committee decided to help raise awareness for global warming. The United Nations Climate Change Conference is taking place in Paris over the next two weeks and our school wanted to help take action against global warming.

We learned about “350.Org” from Laura Dixon, Greener Travel. “350.Org” is an organisation that is trying to raise awareness about CO₂ emissions and encourage people to think green. 350 parts per million is the highest amount of carbon dioxide that we can sustain in order for the world to be stable and not damage itself. Currently the world is at 400 parts per million and rising. If this continues at the rate it is growing, we will soon run out of time to make a change. This is a really important message that we wanted to communicate.

“Let’s help make a difference and think about how we can reduce our carbon emissions.”

In order to promote 350.org’s work we, the members of the Green Schools committee, decided to organise a photograph with the transition year students that would get people talking. As we needed to capture the picture from a height we asked Christy Lawless to take it for us using a pole. We chose to take the picture at Carrowmore Beach because it is our local beach and has been severely affected by climate change. The dunes have been halved by powerful storms during the winters in the last two years and the car park has been torn up by the water crashing in on it. It is sad to see such beauty being destroyed by something that could have been prevented if we had done something before it was too late.

Let’s help make a difference and think about how we can reduce our carbon emissions.



By: Jake Kilcoyne
Kellegher
and Dylan Neuhaus

SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE SAYS GOODBYE TO THE MERCY SISTERS

On the 31st August 2014 Sr. Marie King retired from the teaching staff of Sancta Maria College Louisburgh. She was the last Mercy Sister to work there. To mark this significant occasion, the Board of Management, the Principal, Pauline Moran and the staff hosted a gathering in the school on the 9th October 2015 to remember and to thank all of the Sisters who worked there down through the years since 1919.

About 10 Sisters came as well as some of the retired teachers who taught in the school. As we arrived, the staff gave us a Cead Mile Fáilte. Mass was celebrated in the library and the readings, prayers of the faithful and a beautiful choir added greatly to the celebration.

Fr. Mattie Long P.P was the chief celebrant assisted by Fr.

Kieran Waldron who taught in the school for 16 years before moving on to parish work in 1986. In his homily, Fr. Waldron recalled the coming of the Sisters from Tuam on the 7th October 1919. These 4 Sisters left Tuam by train to Westport and then travelled to Louisburgh by horse and sidecar. One of these Sisters was Sr. Columba Waldron, a first cousin of Fr. Kieran's father.

The four Sisters took up residence in McDermot's Hotel and the following September opened a Secondary Top for girls and boys of the area. That was the first Coeducational secondary school in the country and it was a brave step at that time. It provided secondary education for the young people of the area, at first just to Inter Cert and later to Leaving Cert. The pupils who cycled in long distances to school were provided with hot drink before going into the first class.

In 1924 the Convent was built and the school was moved from the hotel to two rooms in the convent. Interested local girls availed of classes in lace and knitting in a small adjoining building.

From 1926 the Sisters provided Primary education for the girls in the area. The Sancta Maria two storey building was opened in 1960 with classrooms downstairs and bedrooms upstairs for Sisters holidaying there during the summer from the inland Convents' Fr. Kieran reminded us that all of that development was done without any help from the Department of Education- just by the hard work and sacrifices of the Sisters. In 1986 a large extension was added to the school and this was the first time a grant of 90% was given by the Department. The remaining 10% was made up by parents' contributions and a contribution from the Mercy Sisters.



At the end of Mass Pauline Moran thanked the Sisters for all their commitment to Sancta Maria over the years. Sr. Caitlin Conneely spoke too and said although saying goodbye to Louisburgh was a sad occasion, we have much to be grateful for especially that the school we started so many years ago together with its ethos and values, continues to flourish in the hands of a dedicated and caring staff.

After Mass we were shown a lovely Mercy Crest placed on the grounds of the school outside the Staff Room window. It will be there as a reminder to all who pass by, that the Mercy Sisters started and developed this school for many years.

The afternoon concluded with many photographs and refreshments in the circulating area.

As we moved away that evening, all of us including myself who spent all of 28 years there, had our cherished memories of our time in Sancta Maria and in Louisburgh.

(Sr. Ann Feighney)

COLM “THE GOOCH” COOPER OPENS THE SCHOOL BANK AT SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE



The opening of the School Bank in Sancta Maria College took place on Thursday 12th of November. Six students, Ela Kohen Murray, Shauna Cave, Archie Hadden, Peter Carty, John Greenan and Rachel Reed are in charge of the day to day operations of the school bank, “The Piggy Bank”. To launch the bank, they invited Colm “The Gooch” Cooper to cut the ribbon and officially open the bank for business.



Colm spoke to the students regarding the bank and the importance of participating in school activities. Sancta Maria College has a large cohort of student involved in GAA and football and were delighted to meet Colm and ask his advice on sportsmanship and training. The silence and attention given as he spoke was a reflection of the respect students have for Colm as a determined and skilful player.



Before leaving, Colm received a token of appreciation from the students to thank him for visiting Sancta Maria College and supporting the Launch of “The Piggy Bank”. The event was a huge success.

LCVP VISIT FROM DEBORAH BENNETT

Leaving cert students invited Deborah to a talk on volunteering in the community and in particular, her role in the Order of Malta. The students will write a report on this which is part of the LCVP Portfolio.

Thanks to Deborah—a past student of SMC for her help and all her work in our local community.

Jennifer Prendergast on behalf of her class presenting Deborah with a token of their appreciation.



SIX NATIONS TROPHY

Sancta Maria College had the great privilege of welcoming Wendy Hickey (Women’s Rugby Development Connacht) and Liz Brady (Westport Rugby Club) with the Women’s Six Nations Trophy.

TRANSITION YEAR ACTIVITIES

This year's TY group went to **PURE SKILL** in Galway on Tuesday the 13th of October with Mr Caulfield and Mr McCarthy.

Following induction we formed groups of four and went to the cage of our choice each offering different sporting challenge, such as Gaelic, Soccer, Rugby, Cricket, Golf chipping, Golf putting, Basketball, Baseball, Hurling and Tennis.

Everyone was very competitive on the day which made it fun and exciting. I was very surprised that most people found Baseball the easiest because it's not usually played in Ireland. Basketball was the hardest because the hoop was very high and I honestly feel the basketballs didn't fit in the actual hoop!

After we totalled up our scores, the girls and boys with the top score and the second highest score got a voucher of eighteen euro for Pure Skill. The girl winners on the day were Sarah Walsh, Dee McNally, and the boys Sean Bourke and Damien O'Malley. Overall it was a day our TY year will always remember.

By Dee McNally, Sinead O'Reilly and Kathleen McNally.

TRIP TO KILLARY ADVENTURE

CENTRE In early September, Transition Year students travel to Killary Adventure Centre for a team-building bonding session. The students participate in a variety of activities organised over the two days. The students were accompanied on the trip by Mr. McGreal and Ms. Moyles



All Transition Years participated in the Public Access to Law (P.A.L) Programme with Barrister Ronan Moogan in October.

The course gives an understanding of how law works and of the legal system in general. All students were involved in a mock trial after the day. This course concludes with a visit to the Four Courts next term



PEER 4 PEER YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Peer education is an innovative method for working with young people. The aim of this programme is to introduce a peer education model based on shared practise as an instrument for working with young people in need of support, or so says the website. Basically 20 Ty students will go around to the local national schools for an hour a week for 4 weeks where we will advise the 6th class students in big decisions they will have to make in life.

So far the 20 TY students have been chosen and we have completed 2 days of training. We have studied the 4 modules (communication, friendship, decision making and smoking & alcohol) which we will be discussing with the 6th class students.

By Aoife Duffy TY

FIRST AID COURSE

All TY students took part in a very beneficial first aid course last term. We learned a lot about how to treat people who have serious injuries such as burns, heart attacks, broken bones and sprains. I would now feel a lot more confident in a serious situation and it was a very enjoyable day.

By Emily Gavin TY

Public Speaking Team



ART PROJECTS



LS HAIR PARLOUR COURSE

A group of twelve TY students got the amazing opportunity to learn new hairdressing and make-up skills at LS hair parlour on The Mall, Westport, Co. Mayo.

The twelve of us were split into two groups of six. One group went and learned hairdressing basics for three weeks with Siobhan Moran. This was such a wonderful experience as Siobhan has been a hairdresser for over 23 years and now successfully owns two hair salons in Westport. The other group went to learn make-up with Hayley Coleman, a



make-up artist who has worked for MAC in Galway. We also had Lisa Ralph, a qualified beauty therapist and make-up artist, for a few weeks. After the three weeks were up we swapped over groups

While doing the hairdressing we learned how to wash hair correctly; blow dry; curl with a curling iron and a flat iron, how hair is divided on the scalp, and how to see if hair is healthy or not. On our last day doing the hairdressing we learned a basic up style. In the make-up we learned an everyday makeup look, a brown/pink smoky eye; how to test for our foundation shade; how to wash our make-up brushes/sponges; how to apply false lashes correctly; how to contour and highlight, we found out some of the best foundations for our skin type and how to apply them correctly. On our very last day we learned a going out look with full contouring and highlight with a smoky eye look.

Every one of the girls who went to LS really enjoyed the experience but wished it didn't have to end so soon. Thanks to Siobhan, Hayley, Lisa, Mary and Lauren for this amazing experience!

Written by Keira Maloney

TY TRADE FAIR

As part of the TY programme students are given the opportunity to set up and run their own business. They draw up business plans and compete in "Moyvalley Young Entrepreneurs" competition. On the 8th of December the School held a Trade Fair allowing students in the school survey the mini companies and make Christmas purchases. The event was a great success and proved enjoyable for the students who took part.



Visit to the Dail December 2015



NEWS AND EVENTS

William McNamara Award

Congratulation to Saoirse Lally on winning the William McNamara Memorial Award for receiving top marks at Sancta Maria College in the 2015 Leaving Certificate examination.

Saoirse, daughter of Ann and James Lally from Louisburgh is now studying Speech and Language at NUIG. She was presented with her award by Ann McNamara, wife of the late Mr. William McNamara.

We wish Saoirse every success in her studies and future career and congratulate all the Leaving and Junior Cert students on their outstanding achievements.



Student of the Month

Congratulations to all students who were nominated as Student of the Month this term.

Congratulations to Esther Gavin, Joanne Pidlaoan and Chloe O'Malley winners in September, October and November respectively.

Student Council

Congratulation to the new student council members elected for the school year 2015-2016

Jose Silva, Odhran McCarney
Aoibhinn Needham, Brianna Bruton
Alfie Morrison, David Needham
Mike Dawson, Dylan Nicholson
Jack Pinder, Peter Carty
Robert Reaney, Alex Farrell
Kevin O Malley, Laura McCabe

International students We welcome all our international students. We hope you find your time at Sancta Maria both rewarding and enjoyable. We look forward to welcoming our Chinese students joining us next term.



Visiting Sancta Maria College was the best decision I've ever made! I have enjoyed great days full of different challenges, activities and trips. I have met many people who have made this an unforgettable experience and my host family were wonderful and made me feel at home. I know that I will miss everything here and I can't say anything more than thank you all for this three months. By Victoria Piseras

In November we remember...

The month of November can be a difficult time for many students and staff alike who have experienced the death of a loved one. November is a month when even Mother Nature appears to be touched by the cold hand of death. When we look around we find that the trees are gradually losing all their leaves and the evenings are becoming darker. A Remembrance Tree can act as an effective symbol for addressing the issue of personal grief. For this reason we placed a Remembrance Tree in the circulating area. Students and staff were invited to write the names of any loved ones that have passed on, onto a piece of paper and place them on the tree. We did this to encourage everyone to pray for these people and ensure they would never be forgotten and live on in our hearts.



We extend our condolences to families in our school community who have been bereaved this year and are experiencing sadness at this time. "Go raibh siochain na Nollag ina gcroithe."

Seven Brides for Seven Brothers Musical 2016

There has been great excitement around SMC since the announcement of “Seven Brides for Seven Brothers” as the choice of musical for 2016.

After last years’ hugely popular production of “Thank You For the Music”, this year’s TY group are looking forward to showcasing their talents and making “Seven Brides..” an even greater success.

The musical, set in 1850’s America follows the story of Milly, a pretty young cook who promptly marries Adam, an obnoxious woodsman, after a brief courtship. When the two return to Adam’s farm, Milly is shocked to meet his six ill-mannered brothers, all of whom live in his cabin. She promptly begins teaching the brothers proper behaviour, and most importantly, how to court a woman. But after the brothers kidnap six local girls during a town barn-raising, a group of indignant villagers tries to track them down.

Stage manager Eimear McDonnell, and assistant Shauna Cave were popular choices among their peers, and are sure to guide their year group in the production of a very successful show.

The songs of “Seven Brides...” such as ‘Bless your Beautiful Hide’ and ‘Sobbin’ Women’ have been hummed and sang around the corridors since the auditions took place.

Director Ms. Gill had a particularly tough job this year in picking the cast, as the usual vast amount of talent in SMC shone through; well done to all who auditioned and who gained roles.

The musical will take place from Thursday January 28th to Saturday January 30th in the Town Hall. This year’s talented cast are wished all the very best for a great show.



Literacy / Numeracy Strategies

As part of the National Strategy we continue to promote literacy and numeracy in all subjects and throughout the school.

Our school bank is in the capable hands of Transition years. Many enterprising students will hopefully count their profits through their involvement in Student Enterprise Awards. The use of graphic organisers is encouraged to develop ordered and logical thinking. Puzzles/competitions are a popular event throughout the school.

Key subject and exam terms are reinforced regularly. Congratulations to all our students participating in public speaking and debating events and to our quiz teams on their performances in the CIMA Business quiz and Credit Union table quiz.

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Win tickets to our Musical

We invite you to support our numeracy strategy and have a go at solving the sudoku puzzle. Perhaps your son or daughter could help — not that you will need it! Simply return it to Ms Foy by Jan 10th to be in with a chance. The winner will receive two tickets to our school musical. Just complete the puzzle, fill in the form and return

Good Luck!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Sancta Maria Sports

Congratulations to all our students on their participation in sporting activities and their many sporting achievements this term. Opportunities are available to take part in Gaelic, Soccer, Basketball, Spikeball/Volleyball, Futsal, Rugby, Camogie, Badminton and Cross Country/Athletics.

Sincere thanks to all our coaches who give of their time and expertise to ensure students have such opportunities.

Sancta Maria College D winners of the Colleran Cup.



First year girls Futsal

The first year girls travelled to Davitt College to take part in the Mayo Futsal finals. It's a five a side game and the girls competed against Davitt College, Kiltimagh, Ballinrobe and Swinford. The girls did really well and played some very good football.



Girls Gaelic

There are 4 Girls Gaelic teams in Sancta Maria this year..

First year girls had a very enjoyable blitz day back in September at Ballinrobe Community School, we entered 2 teams and some TY students were involved in the organising on the day. We hope to enter another blitz in the new year.

U14's, managed by Ms Moyles, and 3 TY students; Emily Morrison, Eimear McDonnell and Cora Staunton. They are having a great year so far winning two out of their 3 games to date. They have another game after Christmas and hopefully will qualify for the next stage of the competition.

U16's girls managed by Mr Caulfield, have also done well this year but unfortunately have not qualified for the next stage of their competition. Training will be continuing for the rest of the year.

Senior Girls, managed by Ms. McGing have just qualified for the All Ireland series with a comprehensive win over Our Lady's secondary school in Belmullet.. They will play Ballinamore from Leitrim in the next round which is due to be played in January.

Overall Girls Gaelic in Sancta Maria College is growing year on year.

First years Boys team



**The most important thing ...
is not to win but to take part,
just as the most important thing in life
is not the triumph but the struggle.
The essential thing
is not to have conquered
but to have fought well.**

- Pierre de Coubertin

MAYO BLITZ JUNIOR CAMOGIE SHIELD FINALISTS



Congratulations to our junior girls camogie team—who were narrowly defeated in the final game of the Mayo Blitz Junior Camogie Competition.

As camogie is a relatively new sport at Sancta Maria—the girls' efforts on their first outing is commendable and a team to watch out for in future competitions

SPIKE BALL—ALL IRELAND WINNERS

Congratulations to our second year girls team - National Winners in the schools all Ireland Final held in UCD on December 10th. With 300 teams initially competing for the title, the girls progressed through local and regional levels to reach the finals. Facing tough competition in the finals from, Coolock, Tralee, Kilkenny, Charlestown, Sutton, Newbridge and Roscommon—they emerged the National Winners. Congratulations to the team and to their coach Ms Claire McDermott on their achievement.



SENIOR BOYS GAELIC

The senior boys Gaelic team have made a strong start in their 2015-2016 campaign winning all of their games so far. They have qualified for a league semi final after a hard fought victory vs Leitrim team Carrigallen. The lads also won the Flanagan cup when victorious over Davitt college in October. They now look forward to the all Ireland series after Christmas hoping to go one better than last year's Connaught final victory.



Sancta Maria Staff 2015-2016



We welcome our new members of staff - Colm Caufield joining the DCG/Construction Department, Francesca Smith joining the Business/Maths Department and Noel Billington, our new school caretaker.

Message from our caretaker

Well, here I am four months into the new job and beginning to feel like part of the furniture, remembering a few names (two other Noels on the staff so no excuses there) and which classrooms they mostly frequent. Johnny's office - a generous description of the room as anyone who has visited will attest is now known as Noel's office as I endeavour to fill his well worn shoes. The warm, welcoming and friendly members of staff have assisted me enormously in settling in so quickly - all three of them! (just kidding, there are actually four). The students are a polite, well mannered and entertaining bunch who are a credit to themselves, their families and their school. Here's to a happy and healthy 2016. *Noel*

An Enrolment/Information evening for all sixth class students will be held in Sancta Maria College early in 2016

Check out our website for dates

Parents and students are invited to attend.

Sponsorship

The school wishes to thank all who have so generously contributed to all the activities throughout the school year. Your contribution is much appreciated.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Christmas newsletter. As you can see it has been a busy start to the school year with a wide variety of activities both academic and extra-curricular taking place. Thanks to staff and students who provide the energy and enthusiasm to take part in so many worthwhile activities.

Wishing you all a happy and peaceful Christmas season. *Pauline and Staff*

