



# MUCKROSS PARK PARENTS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

**Christmas 2017**

## Principal's Report

It seems a long time since we welcomed the 1st years to Muckross along with our additional Deputy Principal, Ms. McLoughlin. It has certainly been a busy term. Enjoy reading about the multitude of activities and achievements of the girls in this Newsletter.

Thank you to our staff for their work in the classroom and for their involvement in the extra-curricular activities they make possible for the girls to participate in. Special congratulations to the students from the class of 2017 who were awarded entrance scholarships - 14 by UCD, 5 by TCD and 2 by DCU.

The Christmas season in Muckross started with a very beautiful Advent Wreath service in our new Prayer Room. 1st Year students, teachers, Head Girl, Chaplain and Board of Management Chairperson gathered as we lit the first purple candle and learned about the symbolism of the Advent Wreath as a reminder that we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Our Advent preparations continued with a school Mass to celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and then the 'Carols by Candlelight' service in the convent chapel.

In December, we also had a very meaningful Muckross Mental Health and Mindfulness Day, planned and organised by the Head Girl and Deputy Head Girl. I am particularly proud of the work that our students have done in providing for those less well off than themselves - 193 Shoe Boxes, toy appeal for Temple Street Hospital and the hampers and raffle for St. Vincent de Paul.

I would like to thank the Parents Association and the Board of Management for the great work they do. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have been bereaved during the past year and for whom the Christmas season may prove particularly challenging.

I wish parents, students, staff, and the whole Muckross community a very happy and peaceful Christmas and a New Year of great blessings.

Anne Marie Mee, Principal

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## Chairperson's Report

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Muckross Parents' Association Committee would like to wish you, your families and the community of Dominican College Muckross Park, a merry Christmas and a very happy new year. We had a busy first term organising activities for parents and planning fund-raising activities. The PA committee began by organising a very informative talk on the CAO for 6th year parents given by Mr Core (October 26th). This was followed by an evening for parents of 1st year pupils (November 8th) when the youngest members of the Muckross community took centre stage, introducing the school to their parents, entertaining them with wonderful musical performances and giving them an update on their experience of life in secondary school thus far.

On November 22nd, we organised a talk by psychotherapist Dr Colman Noctor on the theme of helping young people to develop healthy relationships with technology. Parents in attendance found this to be extremely interesting and instructive. We ended the term by providing refreshments at the school's annual carol service.

Information on further talks in 2018 will be circulated by Year Reps via email and posted on the calendar in the PA's 'News and events' section on the school website. We urge you to check this regularly so as not to miss out on upcoming events, including the array of very enjoyable social gatherings organised for parents of individual year groups.

As readers will be aware from previous communications, the PA no longer charges parents a subscription to join. This decision was taken in the interest of encouraging greater involvement by the parent body and to ensure that the PA is an inclusive body, encompassing all parents and guardians of girls in the school. In practical terms, this will require the PA to devise other means of covering the costs of its activities and to this end it is very keen for parents to support its efforts by supporting, attending and participating in its activities whenever they can. On the theme of fund-raising, the PA is currently aiming to raise money to help the school purchase a retractable stage and seating. A sub-committee has been set up to work on a number of ideas and we hope to be able to share our plans with you in the New Year.

We end by thanking Ms Mee for taking the time to attend our regular PA meetings and for listening and responding to issues and queries raised by our parents and guardians. We thank all of you for your support to date and look forward to your continued support for the PA's activities in the coming year.

**Muckross Parents' Association**

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1<sup>st</sup> Year News

We, the first years, started our adventure in Muckcross with the vast majority of us participating in the 2 day Sports Camp. It was really good fun and a great way to meet everyone before school and classes started up.

On 29th September, the entire school went to Donnybrook Church for the Mass to celebrate the new school year. It felt great to join in with everybody and sing the Dominican Magnificat!

Halloween was a highlight for us – we all got to dress up on the last day before our midterm break. This year’s theme for 1st year was “Fantasy & Fic-

tion”. Everyone made a great effort and much fun was had!

On the 8th of November we had a very successful First Year Parents Evening. After bringing our parents for a tour of the school and library – we then performed for them in our choir groups. The first group sang “Empire State of Mind” and the second group sang “It’s Time”. Thanks to Ms Cunningham for making us sound decent!!

Jungle Dave paid us a visit in November. He and his team of exotic animals were captivating. He introduced us to Brian the albino snake, Charlotte the tarantula, an iguana, a lizard, a chame-

leon and more. We really enjoyed meeting them all.



Now that the Christmas exams are over, we are really looking forward to the build up to Christmas in Muckcross. Thanks to all our teachers, especially our form teachers – Ms Shine, Ms MacMathúna, Ms Durkan and Ms Keleghan, our prefects, fifth year buddies and our Year Head Ms Kelly for making us feel so welcome in this great school..

2<sup>nd</sup> Year News

The second years have really enjoyed their first term back at school. The Halloween dress up day competition was a great success with a Roald Dahl theme. Congratulations to Ree who succeeded Corrib as worthy champions with their ‘revolting schoolkids’ costumes and a great musical performance.

In September the girls went with the History Department on a field trip to the National Heritage Park in Ferrycarrig. The highlight of the trip was getting to taste meat cooked on an old fashioned hot stone called “Fulacht Fiadh” Guides dressed in traditional Celtic costumes gave a fascinating tour

of the site. The day was rounded off with a short trip to Wexford town.



All years, including 2<sup>nd</sup> years, were delighted to welcome Irish Rugby coach, Joe Schmidt to the school where he gave a highly popular and most encouraging speech about never giving up and believing in oneself.

Science week in November was again a great success. For many, the highlight of the week was a trip to the W5 interactive museum in Belfast where experiments with liquid nitrogen and playing tunes on a musical stairs were particu-

larly memorable activities. The girls thoroughly enjoyed the day. However, another experiment that proved very popular was the making of ice cream during science class. No doubt this will help to encourage interest in STEM careers!

The girls continue to have success in their various sports at Muckcross including hockey, basketball, cross country and tennis. Now that the exams are over the girls are enjoying the build up to Christmas. The girls would like to thank all the teachers, staff, prefects and in particular their form teachers and year head Ms Stephenson.

3<sup>rd</sup> Year News

Third years returned in September kicking off with a study skills session, which included useful tools to help them for the months ahead towards the mocks and junior cert exams. In October Maths Week was a fun week of quizzes and challenges although it was delayed by a week due to storm Ophelia.

The annual Halloween dress up theme for third years this year was "music videos" which as usual they embraced and enjoyed preparing some well choreographed dance routines.. For a third

year running Markievicz took the honours!

In November, in conjunction with science week, the astrodome returned to the school. The girls enjoyed this interactive digital planetarium, which explored science and astronomy in a fun and interactive way.

Outside school, the girls continue to impress in other sporting activities and achievements Abbie Clarke trialed with the girls under 15/16 Football team and also competed with Leinster football; in Athletics Clodagh Cullen trained with the Leinster Athletic de-

velopment squad, in Golf Kate Sheridan competed in the ILGU under 21 Irish medal, there was also representation in swimming, sailing and Gymnastics.



### TY Year News

The 4th years are really enjoying Transition Year and to date have had a varied and interesting term. Their modules have included Russian, Interior design, Bridge and Herbology. Their option subjects include Avoca Home-cookery, International Cooking, Craft and Puppeteering. Every week there have been guest speakers on many wide & varied topics. The girls continue to work to achieve their Microsoft Office Suite Certificates and Gaisce awards.

The end of September saw the girls head to Recess in Connemara where they completed their 26km Gaisce hike. They also took part in many other outdoor activities including a 30km cycle along the Greenway, surfing on Achill beach, along with kayaking and orienteering in the local area.

In October, seven of the TY students were invited to attend the Junior Science Olympiad as high achievers in Junior Cert Maths and Science, which was held in UCD.

On the last day before Mid-Term, there was the annual Halloween "Dress up Day" run by the Student Council - their fundraising efforts going towards the school stage. The TY theme was "Yearbook Themes" and the winning class was Skellig with a prison theme.

Many of the girls participated in the Marian College production of "All Shook Up", a musical inspired by and featuring the songs of Elvis Presley. Rehearsals started before midterm with the show running for 3 very successful nights in November. Everyone involved had a great time.

In November the girls had their first work experience placements.

During Science week, the TY students set up projects in the PE hall that they had been preparing since the start of the year. Other year groups and Teachers came to look at their work. Following adjudication by the Teachers, 3rd place was awarded to a project on "Kinesiology and Herbal Remedies". 2nd place to a project on "The effects of Radiation on Plants" and 1st place to a project on an experiment to induce the "Dive Response".

There have been 2 fundraisers to date that some of the girls have participated in. The first fundraiser was for Autism Ireland's Annual Rose Campaign, which took place in October. The second fundraiser was with the Dublin Lions Club in Dunnes Stores, The Beacon, Sandymount on Friday 1st December which was day 1 of their Christmas Food Appeal to help inner city families in need.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Year News

Where did TY go? It went in a flash. The girls went straight back into work after a great transition year.

Fourteen girls were ordained as Ministers of the Eucharist at the Opening of the School Year Mass, after four weeks of training with Sr. Norah and the Religion teachers

During Science week, the Biology, Chemistry and Physics classes did lots of fun and interesting games, while the Maths classes had Maths games during Maths week.

There has already been a bake sale to raise money for the 6<sup>th</sup> year Pilgrimage to Lourdes in September 2018. The Lourdes Committee is continuing to come up with other ways to fundraise for the trip.

The French debaters won their way through two rounds of the French debating tournament in the Alliance Française in town but were sadly knocked out. Having stormed through two rounds of the debating competition organised by Gael Linn, the Irish debating team is looking forward to their next challenge.

About 40 girls are currently rehearsing for the Gonzaga musical 'My Fair Lady' which will take place in January 2018. The fifth years are now recovering from the shock of having to do Term One exams but are looking forward to a nice break at Christmas after a very busy term.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Year News

A highlight for the 6<sup>th</sup> year students this term was a trip to Glendalough as part of the annual Leaving Cert Retreat. During their two days in Wicklow the girls experienced a walk in silence, a tour of the historic graveyard, and a mass, followed by a night of games and a memorable talent show full of very gifted performances. They stayed overnight in a hostel and were accompanied by Mr McArdle, Ms Lawless, Ms Durkan and Ms O'Brien. It was a great weekend enjoyed by all.



Also in October, the two geography classes headed to the seaside to explore all that North Dublin beaches have to offer. Led by Ms Walsh and Mr Breslin, the 6<sup>th</sup> year students learned a great deal.

Meanwhile, the Biology students had another opportunity to go back to Glendalough to discover all of the woodland features that the Wicklow National Park entails. These trips were undertaken as part of the girls' Leaving Cert studies but they also provided enjoyable days outside of the classroom.

As part of the school's Halloween activities just before mid-term, the very talented 6<sup>th</sup> years performed a dance of a lifetime, taking first prize with their 'Drop Dead' scary performance. More recently, the girls had the opportunity of going to see a production of King Lear in Smock Alley Theatre. Throughout the term they have had a series of very helpful talks on college choices and future career options.

## Sports News

The sporting year began in traditional style in Muckross with the 1<sup>st</sup> year sports camp on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August and it was clear from the very start that this year's first years were a talented bunch full of enthusiasm. It wasn't long before they were into the routine of basketball, hockey and athletics training every week. The first year 8 a side hockey leagues began in November with all 8 teams now having played their first matches and looking forward to continued success.

An inspirational talk on September 6<sup>th</sup> from Irish Rugby Coach Joe Schmidt to the whole school set the tone for all our enthusiastic participants as we began the sporting year.

The athletes headed to Santry in early October for the annual Clonliffe Harriers invitation Cross Country with the 2<sup>nd</sup> year team returning with a silver medal. Hopefully they can maintain this standard going into the Leinster School's cross-country races in late January.

Meanwhile the Senior and U16 basketball teams blazed their way through the Dublin leagues and were in the Dublin league finals on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. The senior team led by Emer Muldoon faced Loreto St Stephen's Green while the U16s faced Coláiste Cois Life. Congratulations to the U16s who were victorious and hard luck to our seniors who finished valiant runners up. Fiona Clune and Fiona Quinn were part of the Eastern District U15 side, which won the All Ireland U15 Inter District Cup. They head on to Irish squad training. Both teams are also through to the semi-final of the All-Ireland Cups, which will take place in January. The U14s and 1<sup>st</sup> years continue to prepare for their competitions, which also begin in the New Year.

On the hockey front the leagues are underway at all levels and we will have to wait until the end of January to see if we are in a position to match the record number of leagues and cups won last year. But suffice to say that all teams are working hard and putting in some very strong performances. The senior 1 squad travelled to Crescent Comprehensive College, Limerick in September and won The Leahy Cup, an invitational senior schools competition.

The Junior A Cup is the first Cup competition of the year to be decided and the hard working Muckross side is into the final versus Alexandra College. This team is led by our two successful U16 Interprovincial players Lucy Crowe and Isabelle Maleady alongside our Leinster Soccer star Abbie Clarke and Dublin Ladies Gaelic star Aobha Walsh.

The Minor team beat St Gerard's Minor team in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Minor Cup and now face Loreto, St Stephen's Green in the Quarterfinal. The Senior Cup begins before the Christmas but Muckross were lucky enough to get a bye and will await the next round of the draw to see who they face in their efforts to retain this prestigious cup.

The annual match between the Muckross Park College Past Pupils and the current senior 1 squad was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> November with the school side retaining the cup after a very enjoyable and competitive game.



Congratulations to Sophie Maleady, Sarah Mc Auley, Clodagh Ferry and Lelia O Byrne on representing Muckross on the Leinster U18 Hockey Squad back in October and congratulations to our Sport's Captain Niamh Shaw on earning an Irish trial at this level.

Leah Rickard continues to excel on the sailing front. She competed in the Hague Cup in The Netherlands recently where she finished 5<sup>th</sup> overall and was the first girl in her age group. She is certainly a sailor of note and we are very proud of her continued success. Congratulations to Kate Fahy 1<sup>st</sup> Year who has been selected to represent Ireland in a sailing event in Spain in January. We wish her and her team the very best of luck. Kate Fahy and Leah also had a notable success in the ISA All Ireland Junior Helmsman Competition being the first girls across the line and finishing in 12<sup>th</sup> place overall.



Juliana Carton 2<sup>nd</sup> year is the topped ranked tennis player in her age group in the country and continues to improve and impress with some excellent performances this term. Grace O Reilly 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sofia Dervan 5<sup>th</sup> year are also competing and impressing in their respective age groups.

Our swimmers represented Muckross at the Inter School's Gala in November and the relay squad of Kate Burton Stafford, Arianna Francis, Hannah Inglis and Kate Moloney won a team silver medal. Congratulations to Ms Mc Auliffe and the team.

We are all looking forward to the start of 2018 when most competitions will reach the knock out stages and we wish every single participant an enjoyable and successful season representing Muckross!

