

Portmarnock Community School Newsletter Nuachtlítir na Scoile

www.portmarnockcommunityschool.ie

Issue 1, April 2009

Can Portmarnock Community School make a difference in South Africa?

When the first greeting you receive, having travelled 16,000 kms and half way around the world is 'Céad Mile Fáilte Romhat' from a sixteen year old South African boy, you realise, three years on, the world has become a smaller place.

They say of Africa- 'Africa she smiles' Africa not only smiles, she sings, she dances and



is there a lesson there for us as the credit crunch bites? The African people are an extraordinary people and are so resilient in the face of some of the worst poverty in the world.

This year we met some remarkable people, mainly women, whose stories would take your breath away. They still make time to sing and dance, despite the poverty.

In Lusikisiki on The Eastern Cape three generations of women, living in two rooms, with 11 children and not knowing how they will survive tomorrow, but somehow you know they will because their communities are kind and Christian.



IT Lab, Sacret Heart School, Flagstaff.

A sixteen year old boy, no mother or father, now head of the household looks after his 14, 11 and 8 year old brothers. Each day they are dressed for school, in near perfect uniforms, and lead off there by their eldest brother.

In contrast, the young teenager in Capetown whose mother poured acid into his mouth so he would be more affective while begging on the streets. Now he receives the help of Fr. Pat Naughton from Spiddal in the Saleisan Youth Out Reach Centre in Capetown.

Real People, Real Stories

When you meet real people and hear their stories and see their realities, at first hand you begin to understand how poverty requires a generosity not just financial but an education and a friendship that inspires the world and its people to make real changes, within their lives, so as to make the world more equitable.

Three years on and the **Friends In Ireland** project goes from strength to strength.

It is a wonderful sight to see the little orphans and so many of them being cared for at the now many feeding centers. The project is feeding over 500 children twice a day.

There were wonderful celebrations, this year, surrounding our visit with his Excellency Colin Rafter, the Irish Ambassador, travelling from Pretoria to The Eastern Cape to greet us along with many of the local chiefs and The King and Queen of Pondo Land. The project has twice being acknowledged in The South African Parliament. It is one of the leading projects in the area for the support and care of AIDS orphans.

Traveling to Kokstad where some 500 families live off the local dump we meet two remarkable people Neil Hopkins from Donegal and a German nun who feeds the many destitute families from the back of her car each morning.

Neil Hopkins is trying to house some of the families from the settler camp and works with Respond. Again Irish people are continuing the work of missionaries which has been so vital to these people for centuries.



Feeding centre, under construction, in Franklin.

Orphan House

With respect to our own endeavours on the construction front, we built another orphan house and renovated a house for pediatric care. The design and work scheduled was lead by Fran Whelan from Whelan Corcoran and Smith.

On the medical front they worked extremely hard with Dr. Michael Colclough seeing up to 300 patients a day. The dental team led by Martin Tier was kept very busy.

Laptop Initiative

In education an IT lab was setup in Sacred Heart Secondary School with 25 new laptops installed. This was carried out by Ms. Bolger from PCS. Mr. O’Riordan and Ms. Deeney conducted studies in History and English respectively and Ms O’Dea in Science.

Brendan Murran and John Molloy took out a rotting floor from the local convent and began installing a new floor which will be completed by the locals. This was greatly appreciated by Sr. Gertrude.

Irish Dance

The students carried out an extensive programme in Irish dance, Hip Hop, tinwhistle and song. The concluding concert was spectacular. Bishop Slattery attended and spoke most affectionately about the people of Portmarnock and their kind generosity. A feast was prepared.

The skillet pots were taken out, a large fire was fired up under the pots and a feast for a king was prepared in celebration of our time together.

In Child Care a number of workshops were delivered by Yvonne Bowyers and Margaret Richardson Play Therapist from Temple Street Hospital. These workshops were particularly successful in the context of caring for AIDS orphans.

Crèche

Students decorated a crèche with a mural celebrating the distinctive cultures of South Africa and Ireland.

Another amazing two weeks of hard work and endeavour brought happiness and good cheer to so many lives.

A word of appreciation to the young people of PCS who demonstrated a hope for the future and who I am certain have been touched in a way that they will inspire them to be men and women for others in their adult and professional lives and to their parents who supported them in bringing together an effort that will save lives well into the future.

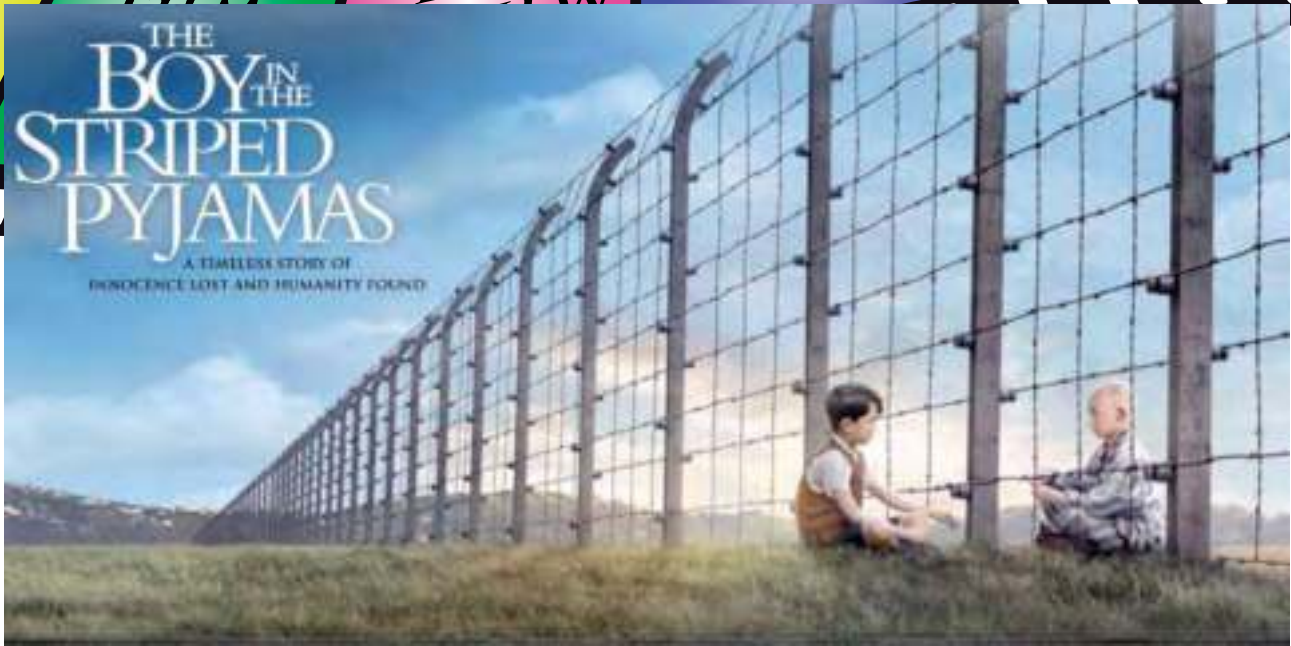
A Song for Africa

Can we encourage people to download the PCS students’ song: ‘A Song for Africa’ on www.all-celticmusic.com The song is currently number one on this site and we are hoping to get it into the charts.

Niall Fitzgerald



Feeding centre in Muzangana, Eastern Cape.

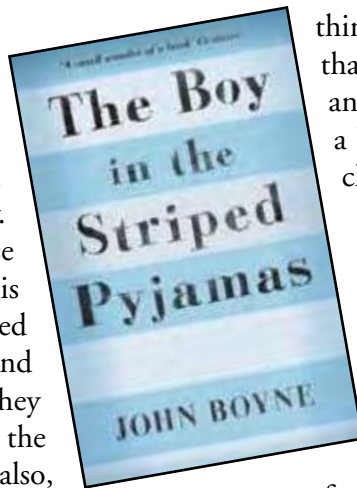


After reading the book 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' by John Boyne, children from 2OM went to the cinema, with other second year classes, to compare book and film. They were asked to give their opinions about the film.

The film is about an eight-year old boy, Bruno, living in Nazi Germany. He and his family are moving house to Poland (Auschwitz) because of his father's promotion. There, he is bored and unhappy, so he goes exploring and finds a boy called Shmuel. Together, they make a forbidden friendship, despite the political lines that divide them and also, the barbed-wire fence.

The situation in the film gets worse when Bruno's mother becomes unhappy about Bruno and his sister Gretel growing up in such a horrid place and she starts to become depressed.

I thought the film was full of suspense and showed the true colours of the Holocaust of World War II. It had one of the most amazingly effective endings that I have ever seen in a film, which made me think about for ages when I left the cinema.



What I did not like about the film was the differences with the book. However, these differences were replaced by other scenes that I am sure John Boyne would have included in the book if he had thought about them. Another thing that I was unimpressed about was that Bruno was skinnier than Shmuel and that the English accents came like a bit of a shock, although they had no choice.

I thought the characters were portrayed excellently and were certainly the right choice. Vera Famgro, who played Mother, interpreted her with perfection. Some changes were made to her personality but I think they were for the better.

Overall, this film is chilling but proves that even in the darkest of times, room for happiness and laughter can always be found. It gives a crystal-clear message about the true colours of war and once again reminds us of the horrific circumstances of the Holocaust.

I would rate this movie five stars. ★★★★★

Daniel Rea 2OM

Shylock: Victim or Villain?

Some critics say Shylock is a villain, others state that he is a victim. What is your opinion about this controversial character in Shakespeare's famous play? Do you think Shylock is a victim or a villain? Class 2OM give some opinions.

I think he is a villain because he isn't giving Antonio extra time to pay back his debt and he is looking for revenge on his own daughter. *Niall Murphy*

I think he is a villain because he lends money but gets back high interest and he wants to take a pound of Antonio's flesh as Antonio can't repay. *Karl Kiernan*

I think that Shylock is a victim because he is always being insulted by Antonio and when his daughter ran away from him, Salerio and Solanio

were mocking him. He is being insulted just because he is a Jew. *Robert Fox*

I think he is a victim because he gets mocked for his religion and he lost his daughter, jewels and money. *Gavin Johnston*

I think he is a victim. Shylock and other Jewish people were badly treated in those times. "I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes?" *Rachael Conroy*

I think that he is both. He acts as a villain with the bond and to Christians. But he is a victim when Jessica leaves and steals his money. *Fiona Peppard*

I think Shylock is a victim because he has lost his daughter, his money and is getting mocked because of it. I think Shylock is also a villain because it is his own fault they are gone in the first place as he was mean. *Emma KIELTY*

Fields of Athenry

Fields of Athenry letter. Working on *'point of view'*, imagine you are Mary, from the song *'The Fields of Athenry'*, write a love letter to your beloved who is in prison in Australia.

Letter by Emma KIELTY 2OM

The Fields of Athenry
Co. Galway
September 22nd 1948

Dear Michael,
I hope that you are all right and I do hope you are getting enough to eat. We are doing O.K although we are still low on food. I had to sell my dear Grandmother's old locket in order to afford a loaf of bread. I pray to God every day for you and for our son. I fear that our little Peter is going to become ill as he is so weak and pale.

Poor old Maggie down the road has a terrible fever and we're not sure if she'll live until the end of the week. I feel so sorry for her children as their father has already died from the famine fever. The poor children will probably be taken away to the work-houses.

I feel that I will have to sell our house and possessions in order to afford the fare for the boat to America. My sister Anne lives in New York and she wrote to me saying that Peter and I can go and live with her. Once the famine is over, we might be able to come back home.

We will be together again, my love, when these troubled times are over. We will once again be happy and as free as the birds.

I will write to you again soon and I will try to always keep in touch.
From your loving wife and darling son
Mary and Peter

xxxxxxxxxx

Oideachas - an uirlis is tábhachtaí atá againn leis an domhain a athrú

Ba san Afraic Theas i 2008 a cuireadh na síolta a thug muid ar an turas fada seo. Ba ansin a bhuaileamar le daoine spridiúla spreagúla d'ainneoin a gcruatáin ná a mbochtanais Tháinig muid ar ais agus dearcadh nua againn. Tocht inár gcroí agus fearg inár nglór. Agus ónár bhfrustrachas a tháinig an Cóiste ar son an Chirt – The Justice Committee, le chéile, grúpa daltaí agus aidhm amháin againn: sprioc a bhaint amach.

Is é an príomhrud a dhéanann muid ná eolas a scaipeadh faoin éagóir timpeall an domhain chomh maith le smaoineamh faoi réiteach na faidhbe. Táimid ag iarraidh díospóireacht a spreagadh faoin obair atá á déanamh faoi láthair ar son na ndaoine is boichte agus na constaicí atá rompu.

Táimid ag iarraidh go mbeadh na déagóirí timpeall orainn coinsiasach faoin saol mór, tuisceanach faoinár gcuid pribhléidí agus faoin dualgas atá orainn ár gcuid guthanna a úsáid le difríocht a dhéanamh, go mbeadh suim acu i gcúrsaí reatha agus go mbeadh trócaire acu.

Tá obair déanta againn cheana féin faoi AIDS, Seachtain MDG agus Lá Uilíoch Uisce. Conas a chraolann muid ár dteachtaireacht? Aon chaoi ar féidir linn. Greamaítear pictiúirí agus postaeir i ngach áit. Labhraíonn muid go poiblí ós comhair ár gcomhscoláirí faoi cheisteanna forbartha, úsáidimid meán na healaíne, eagraímid achainí agus bíonn muid le cloisteáil go rialta ar intercom na scoile.

Tá sé ar intinn againn anois díriú isteach ar ábhair níos áitiúla, go háirithe an easpa dídine in Éirinn.

Tá a fhios againn go bhfuil clú na teicneolaíochta agus an idirlín ar dhaoine óga an lae inniu. Nach mbeadh sé iontach dá mbeadh clú orainn mar ghlúin a sheas suas i gcoinne bochtanais, ar son na ndaoine is soghonta, ar son an 1,000,000,000 duine atá ag maireachtáil ar níos lú ná \$1 gach lá. Nach mbeadh sé iontach dá mbeadh clú orainn mar ghlúin a sheas ar son an chirt.

Catherine Healy

Trad Group

Uair sa tseachtain tagann ceoltóirí traidisiúnta na scoile le chéile chun píosa ceoil a chasadh. Foghlaimímid foinn nua, agus cuirimid an podchraoladh iceoil le chéile i gcomhair suíomh idirlín na scoile agus d'itunes. Seinneann an grúpa ag ocáidí difriúla, cosúil le Carúil na Nollag agus searmanas fágála na scoile. Tá fáilte roimh gach éinne teacht-múinteoirí agus scoláirí, fiú amháin muna bhfuil mórán taithí agat a bheith ag seinnt. Is ag a haon a chlog, gach

Déardaoin, i B3 a thagaimid le chéile. Bígí linn.

Podcast Nua

'Ceol sport is chuile shórt' an t-ainm atá ar phodchraoladh nua faoi imeachtaí difriúla na scoile. Is podchraoladh dátheangach é seo le ranna éagsúla. Beidh agallaimh le grúpaí sa scoil le cloisteáil agus beidh eolas againn ar conas mar atá cúrsaí sa Afraic Theas tar éis an turas i mbliana. Labhróidh daltaí san idirbhliain linn faoi ha himeachtaí atá ar siúl acu. Féachfaidh daltaí sa chúigiú bliain ar na dánta agus scéalta atá ar an gcúrsa don Ardeist, le dearcadh éagsúil agus beidh ceol nua-chumtha á chanadh agus á sheinnt ag scoláirí chomh maith.

Tugann an podchraoladh seo deis daoibhse, eolas a fháil ar ceard atá ar siúl in bhur scoil. Má tá smaointe agaibh don phodchraoladh, tar chugam. Bígí ag éisteacht agus scaipigí an scéal.

Niamh Cronin



Senior Gaelic Football

The senior team had a mixed year of fortunes over their intense playing season. They were entered in two competitions; the Dublin A championship and the Leinster A championship.

The Dublin championship involved playing four preliminary games against all other teams in the competition, in order to eliminate one team and sort out rankings for the semi-finals. The team's first outing was against local rivals Malahide Community School. A comprehensive victory was recorded on home ground. A promising year seemed on the cards.

Next up was a trip to the south side to face Colaiste Eoin. This proved to be a tricky encounter, but due to hard perserverence and some excellent score taking (most notably a left footed point from Michael Gibbs), the team emerged with a one point win.

St. Declan's were the next opposition. The team went into the game full of confidence, but never managed to click together on the day. Coupled with some bad wides and loosing vice captain Colm Fahy in the first two minutes, Portmarnock lost their first game of the season.

Just before Christmas, the first round of the Leinster A Championship began. Portmarnock were drawn against Franciscan College, Gormanstown, in the first round. This team have a huge history in the A competition and had a number of Meath minors in their ranks. This never unsettled the Portmarnock boys, and they were determined to stamp their authority on their home pitch. An excellent all round team performance with some tight defending and devastating attacking resulted in a three point win for the home side.

For the last game of the Dublin A preliminary round, Portmarnock travelled to St. Benildus College. A very under strength side let the opposition storm into a seven point lead. Although a much better second half performance raised spirits, Benildus managed to hang on for a win.

These results meant that portmarnock would face St. Declan's in the Dublin semi-final. Before this match was a small matter of the 2nd round

Leinster championship. As luck would have it, the draw meant that Portmarnock would face old rivals St. Benildus. The team were geared up for getting revenge after their first game against Benildus. This was not to be however, and St. Benildus ended up convincing winners. After regrouping and refocusing their training efforts, the team prepared for their Dublin A semi-final. The management tried a few positional changes and thing seemed to be improving. A late Friday evening "friendly" against a strong St. Vincent's minor team vindicated the changes and the team were looking in good shape ahead of their semi-final.

The game was held in perfect conditions in the DCU sportsgrounds. Nerves were on show as the team knew this was a do – or – die game. A good first half performance was slightly overshadowed by a few lapses in concentration meant that the team went in behind by three points. Unfortunately the injured Richard O Driscoll could not continue for the second half. St. Declan's got off to a great start by scoring a goal in the first minute. Portmarnock could not get a grip on the game and were playing from behind for the remainder of the game. So the hopes of retaining the Dublin A title disappeared in under half an hour.

The team should be hugely proud of their achievements over the year. They committed to a huge effort, both in terms of training and time spent working on the individual aspects of their game. They all became very well acquainted with the fit frame, and the sight of training poles, cones and ladders never dampened their enthusiasm towards seeking to improve their and the teams performance. The team all grew as players from being exposed to the high standard of football in the A level competitions. Although the team were hugely dissappointed with loosing the semi-final, they all were grateful for the opportunity to play as a team together. For the sixth year players, these competitions were a final opportunity to play together as a school team. They can now look forward to a bright future in gaelic football with their various clubs.

Michael McNeive

Les Misérables

Tá an ceoldráma cáiliúil Le Mis le feiceáil i bPobalscoil Phort Mearnóg i láthair na huaire. Tá sé bunaithe ar an urscéal Les Misérables le Victor Hugo. Is scéal casta é ach tá sé suite sa Fhrainc sa naoí haois déag agus baineann sé le Reabhlóid na Fraince.

Tá muid ag cleachtadh fána choinne ó mhí na Nollag agus tá na huaireanta crua oibre



curtha isteach againn faoi stiúir Ms Bury. Tá an-mholadh ag dul di mar thug spreagadh agus misneach dúinn ón gcéad lá. Tá mé cinnte go mbainfidh gach uile dhuine taitneamh as an léiriú s'againne.

Maria Coughlan

Portmarnock's Social Justice Group 'Stand Up and Take Action'

The school Social Justice Group was founded in October 2007. Our work in our first year of existence, involved talking to all first year CSPE classes about the one third of people in the world who live below the poverty line.

members and we hope to expand in the coming months.

Cíarán Stanley



This year we were actively involved in the worldwide 'Stand Up, Take Action' campaign for equality and held a petition in October as part of the campaign. We also held a special **World AIDS Day**, where we talked to students about the disease killing thousands of people all over the world, especially in Africa. Most recently we held a **Millenium Development Goals** week, to educate the school on the goals to significantly reduce poverty which politicians worldwide signed up to in the year 2000.



The group aims to raise peoples' awareness of the inequality in today's world. The group currently has seven



Dissolving Boundaries

The Dissolving Boundaries Programme is designed to support schools in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland to engage in collaborative curricular projects using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Now in its eighth year of existence the Dissolving Boundaries community continues to provide opportunities for the development of mutual understanding through collaborative curricular work using virtual and real contact between children in the different school sectors in the north and south of Ireland. The project is jointly funded by the the Departments of Education in the North and in the South. The project is an ongoing research project supported by the the National University of Maynooth and the University of Ulster.

Portmarnock Community School has formed a partnership with St. Mary's in Limavady, Co Derry. Pupils in first year French in Portmarnock are collaborating with pupils in first year in St Mary's through Moodle forum discussions, Wikis, video-conferencing and face to face meetings to enhance their learning and understanding of French.



The aims of the project are:

- to increase the self-esteem and self-confidence of pupils
- to improve communication skills
- to enhance ICT skills
- to develop team-work skills
- to promote mutual understanding between pupils in the North and South
- to produce educationally viable collaborative work.

The following students, from Portmarnock, are involved in the project:

Gareth Brant, Jordan Briggs, Conor Browne, Nadine Cannon, Zoe Casey, Niamh Daly, Albinus Devassy, Shawn Donnelly, Vanessa Edokpa, Sarah Grouse, Shannon Gunning, Aoife Halpin, Susan Healy, Manish Herpersad, Emma Kelly, Kelly Jinks

Hannah Keelan, Lorna Lynam, Andrew Maguire, Jamie Mc Cluskey, Eoghan Mc Gowan, Leslee Muttathottil, Fintan O' Connor, Jordan Oglesby, Barry Sherman,, Sarah Tier, Eleanor Varley, Daniel Vickers and Ailbhe White.

www.dissolvingboundaries.org

First year Easter cake decoration winners

Overall Winner: **Timmy McDonnell.**

Winners: Aine Fagan IOG, Eleanor Varley IOC, Emma Kelly, Naoise Pepper, Naoise O'Shaughnessy IOM, Sarah Tier IOL, Emily Kremers IOH

Thanks to Ms. Maguire, Ms. Richardson and Sr. Geraldine.

Well done to all who entered.





Maths Olympiad

Based on their JC maths results 3 of our 4th year students Danielle James, Claire Lenihan & James Fagan were selected to attend Maths Enrichment classes for the Dublin Olympiad in UCD. After doing a very tough exam Claire and James are now through to training for the Irish Olympiad in May. We wish them the best of luck.

World Maths Day

Wed 4th March was World Maths Day. All our 1st years had the opportunity to participate in an on-line maths challenge during that day.

Shirley O'Brien

WANTED

Your photography, artwork, paintings, poetry, songs, short stories, or any other piece of creative work.

Deadline
Monday
27th April

REWARD
Publication in the School
Newsletter.
Eileen.Freeman@cs.tcd.ie

Message from the Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians

Food for thought can come in different guises – dressed up in the fun clothes of today's cake-decoration competition or in the more serious message of optimism so real to those of us who travelled to South Africa. A group of students, staff, and parents made that long journey to help in whatever way they could and returned immeasurably enriched themselves by the experience, heads full of thoughts that will provide food for a lifetime.

It has been a wonderful term and as always I am bowled over by the wealth of talent among our staff and students. *Les Misérables*, with the professionalism of its production and the exuberance of the performers both on stage and in the orchestra makes us all proud to be part of this school. Our website is a testament to other outstanding achievements academic and sporting. It makes great reading!

Our exam students will have a few days well earned rest after orals, practicals and projects. Then I hope they will be launching into the final revision season. It is never too late to start in earnest so if the 'mock' results were not exactly as they had hoped for, do encourage them to 'knuckle down'. Miracles really do happen!

Finally may I wish you and yours all the joy, peace and hope of the Easter season and...a little food for thought!

Easter is not a time for groping through dusty, musty tomes or tombs to disprove spontaneous generation or even to prove life eternal. It is a day to fan the ashes of dead hope, a day to banish doubts and seek the slopes where the sun is rising, to revel in the faith which transports us out of ourselves and the dead past into the vast and inviting unknown.

Mr. O' Riordan

Next deadline: Monday 27th April
Please send your news to:
newsletterpcs@gmail.com