

GRAPEVINE

ISSUE 74 / AUTUMN / WINTER 2020



School
During Covid

Mrs Kirby
Retires

2020
In Review

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GRAPEVINE

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◀ EDITORIAL ▶

Welcome back everybody!

Firstly, we would like to introduce ourselves; **Varshika Mecheri and Fabiola Grimmeisen**, the new co-editors of Grapevine. We are TY students and although many trips have been put on the backburner for obvious reasons, we are greatly enjoying everything else this year has to offer. Although we have been robbed of a lot of our normal school activities and experiences, we feel that the school have really done their best to make our school life as involving as possible. Ranging from online MUN and mask competitions and the up-and-coming TY radio, to supporting sports practices and even introducing girls' rugby for TYs.

With Covid-19 preventing us from seeing family and friends, shops and restaurants closed and staying 2 metres apart from everyone, it can seem hard to get into the Christmas spirit. Additionally, as winter creeps in and our days get busier it can feel almost impossible to stop and be aware of the present moment. We hope that that is exactly what you are able to gain from this Winter Edition of the Grapevine Magazine. Read through the works of students and teachers, take a step back and look through the eyes of all these people who have something to say. We've all heard the phrase 'unprecedented times' on more occasions than we can count, and I don't mean to sound sentimental, but we are truly living a major part of history. From adjusting to Covid 19 regulations, to the way it has affected us all, this edition is distinctly different than those of previous years.

Speaking of distinctly different, maybe you'd like to read about sports during Covid or how the different years are coping? Staying in our bubbles can seem isolating, I know, so I'm curious as to what goes on in other year groups! Or maybe you would like to read about some controversial opinions, or you want to know which is better, art or science? Either way, there's something for everyone. We get to say goodbye to Mrs Kirby and remember all the teachers who retired in 2019. Then, we get to know our new headmistress, Ms Marshall, who kindly gave us an interview for the magazine.

Contributing to the magazine has been a great privilege and an exciting adventure that has only just begun. We have without a doubt enjoyed the entire process and everything that goes into being co-editors of Grapevine. From communicating to members of the team to organising articles and editing pieces, there isn't a second to spare. We're very lucky to have Ms Mockler to guide us. She has been incredibly encouraging and has made us feel as though we aren't in over our heads. She plays a huge role in the overall process and we hope to learn as much as we can from her. Now, as for introductions we were both a bit squeamish at the thought of writing about ourselves and were at a loss, so we thought, what better than writing introductions for each other?

Fabiola: To be honest, when I first met Varshika I was slightly intimidated by her, because she seemed so confident (and was a lot taller than me back in first year). But as I got to know her, I found that she's a very generous and affable person. I learned that she's enthusiastic and dedicated about anything she encounters and is always ready to listen. I know these qualities will make her a great editor. I'm very excited to work with her on future editions of Grapevine!

Varshika: I got to know Fabiola in first year 2017, the way you'd know anyone in the same year group as you. Only in 2019 did I get to know what she was really like. I have found her to be extremely courageous and open-minded, which in my opinion are two of the most important traits an editor can have. I've been inspired by her creative spirit and how she doesn't fail to acknowledge everyone in the room. We are just beginning to settle in, and we've found that this is a safe space. I encourage anyone who has thought about contributing to Grapevine to take the step. We promise you won't regret it. That's all for now, Enjoy!

JOAN KIRBY

Headmistress of St. Andrew's College: 2016-2020



'She'll soon forget.'

'Caddy,' said Saffron impatiently, 'she is headmistress of the private school! She's probably never forgotten anything in her whole life!' (Hilary McKay)

There can't be many ships in which a crew member becomes a helmsman and then the first female captain. But in the life of St. Andrew's College Joan Kirby is such a person. She arrived in 1977, a newly qualified teacher of general science, chemistry and maths. Could she have ever dreamt that one day she would lead St Andrew's College?

As a crew member, her time as a form teacher from 1978 until 1994 served her well. At the core of Joan's belief was the central idea that each student had a right to be happy and a right to learn. Such guiding principles helped her become a key creator of the form teacher/ year head structure that still exists within the college. It's a pastoral system based on the core relationship of student and form teacher, overseen by year head and deputy principal. It is this that helps the student to feel like they belong. Their form becomes their family and often, their friends for life. It is what causes the friendly atmosphere that visitors to the school comment on. A simple trawl through Facebook and the various reunion events show the success – students from 20, 30 even 40 years ago still regard the college fondly and have good memories of their time there. This doesn't happen by accident. It was a key plank in the school's architecture, overseen by Joan. The College's care for its students extends beyond the classroom door.

Joan's care also extended to the staff, in particular new teachers embarking on their teaching career. The Irish Times quoted her on April 3rd 1999, where she discussed the 'open door policy... a whole school approach ... friendly faces in the staffroom...' This was how she had described the college's innovative induction programme for new staff. According to Joan, it was 'evolving all the time. We have quite a good programme, and we have it on paper at this stage.'

In her time at the College, Joan co-ordinated the merit system. Students received merits and de-merits according to their behaviour, those who did well 'merited' a half day as a reward. This was a scheme that proved immensely popular among the student body. She was also involved in organising ski trips, senior school swimming, the MUN, and badminton.

Of course, no school would exist without its students. When Joan became deputy principal in 1994, she continued to foster close connections with the student body. As time went on, she took time over new admissions, visiting feeder primary schools and taking a keen interest in new students arriving to the college. By this stage she often recalled the incoming students' parents, not just their names but their personalities when she had taught them. She was also instrumental in the creation of the original Support for Learning model and ensuring that St. Andrew's College, although an academic school was open to everyone.



Every ship needs a safe pair of hands. Those hands will direct and guide it through choppy waters as well as smooth ones. There are the lines in the old hymn that talk about our need for an anchor; ‘steadfast and sure as the billows roll’ is a line from it. By becoming Acting Principal twice in 2013 and 2015 some of Joan’s greatest challenges were yet to come. When she became Headmistress in her own right in 2020, Joan’s careful management of the school was clear. The structures she had initiated, along with the staff body, many of whom she had interviewed for their positions ensured that the system worked seamlessly.

Even as Headmistress, Joan embodied her idea to be a ‘friendly face in the staffroom.’ She had her break (brown bread, jam and tea) sitting down amongst her staff; she chatted to them and learned about their personal lives, she celebrated and commiserated in equal measures. No small feat for a woman in charge of one of the foremost schools in Dublin.

One of her initiatives was training the whole staff and student body in CPR. Joan’s niece Michelle, alive thanks to CPR, addressed the secondary department before the training. The continuous refresher courses organised by the PE department will be among Joan’s longest lasting legacies to St. Andrew’s.

Feeling like you belong in St. Andrew’s has always been central to Joan’s ethos. She has always done so. Staff recall seeing her on her way home on a Friday evening being greeted by a parent in the car park and talking for well over half an hour. Joan recognised the need to be visible and accessible. Another staff member recalls her turning up at an MUN event clearly unwell but there was no way she was going to miss it. At Christmas parties, Joan was one of the first on the dance floor! Another former colleague described the horrendous snow storms of the 1980s when Joan trudged into school on foot all the way from Rathfarnham only to be given out to for wearing trousers!

‘Friendly, kind and unflappable,’ a student said. ‘You always knew where you stood,’ another added. ‘Mrs Kirby, thank you.’

Ms A Talbot

welcome

Ms Marshall

*Fabiola and Varshika
interview
our Headmistress*

Hello, Ms Marshall and thank you for meeting with us! Firstly, where did you grow up?

I grew up in Drumbo, near Lisburn in Northern Ireland and went to school in Belfast.

Have you always worked in schools?

As a student, I had many summer and part-time jobs, including administrative work at a car franchise and a librarian while I was at University.

What subjects did you teach in the past?

I began teaching at an English boarding school, where I taught accounting, business and economics. I was also the IB Coordinator for a period of time. In Ireland, I was the Deputy Principal in The King's Hospital School.

What did you want to be when you were younger and what inspired you to go into teaching?

Whilst at University, I was undecided on a career and was considering working in finance in London, becoming an army officer or teaching. I decided to go into teaching after really enjoying a teaching placement at Belfast Royal Academy during my final year at University. My intention was to teach for a year and then decide on a career, but at the end of the first year I still really enjoyed teaching so had no intention of switching career. I still enjoy working with students, seeing them

develop new skills and take on new challenges during their time at school.

Do you have any pets?

I had two dogs growing up, but currently I don't have any.

What are your favourite pastimes?

I really enjoy rock climbing. All my holidays include mountains in some form. In winter, I go skiing and, in the summer, I usually go rock climbing. I also enjoy ballroom dancing and used to take part in triathlons (swimming, cycling, and running).

What are you most looking forward to during this academic year?

I am looking forward to seeing the school operating under normal circumstances soon. I am especially looking forward to seeing students move freely across school when everyone is not confined to their bubble areas.

Do you prefer working online or in person?

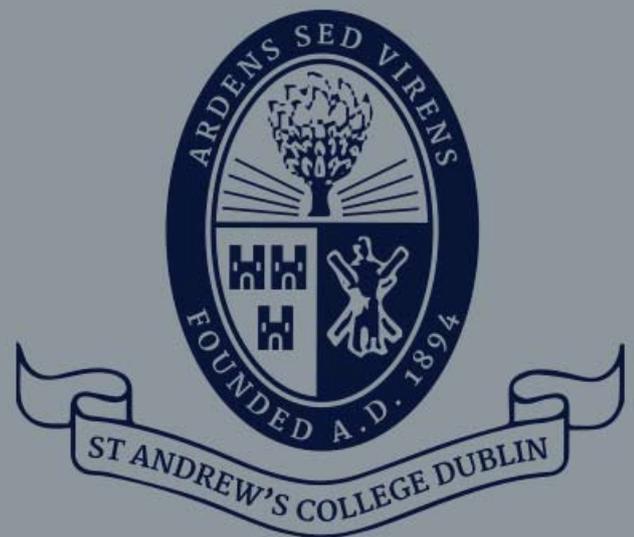
Like most people, I prefer to work in person, as I like having those personal interactions with people. It is often more difficult to have natural conversations during online meetings and with a limited number of screens displayed. On a Teams or a Zoom call you cannot see everyone attending online meetings.



“I really enjoy rock climbing. All my holidays include mountains in some form.”

How are you finding St. Andrew’s College and what is your favourite thing about it?

I am really enjoying working at the college. I love working with the staff and I have found the atmosphere very welcoming and respectful amongst staff and students. I find St Andrew’s a lovely place to work and I am looking forward to what the future holds.



TY Tour Krakow



The Transition Year tour to Poland was both fascinating and moving in equal measures. Here Izzy Forrest and Kellie Deasy describe the experiences had at Krakow, the Salt Mines and Auschwitz.

On our first morning in Krakow, we had an early start at 6am. At 7am we departed to Auschwitz by coach. The journey was long and everyone was extremely tired from all the travelling, however the bus journey was calm and peaceful and everyone really enjoyed seeing the scenery of Poland. We began our walking tour around the camp, with the infamous 'Arbeit Macht Frei' motto above the gate. We had an excellent guide who we felt had an outstanding knowledge of the history, but was only able to share with us a small glimpse of what life was truly like as a prisoner at the camp during those dreadful times. The cold Polish weather made the atmosphere even more poignant.

The tour included walking through exhibitions in the original blocks where there were dozens of photos - some of which were horrifying - of women, children and men who were all prisoners at the camp. We saw all the different belongings of the prisoners such as their suitcases, clothes, shoes, glasses and even their hair, all piled up on top of each other behind glass windows. It almost didn't feel real, yet the hairs on your neck stand on end at the sight and you feel an unexplainable sense of sadness throughout.

After that tour we then moved on to Auschwitz-Birkenau. I remember being a few metres away from the entrance, standing right in the centre of the train tracks where the trains used to come from towns all over Europe dropping thousands of innocent people right to the door of their death. I was staring at an image I'd seen so



many times in history books and then there it was; I was right in front of it, seeing it through my own eyes. It was a surreal feeling. Unfortunately, a lot of the camp had been destroyed by bombs from the Nazis when they tried to cover up evidence of what they did. We got to see one of the blocks where the prisoners slept, we saw how horrible and cruel the living conditions were and it was so terrifying to actually think that these people were made live like this. They were given just about the bare minimum to survive, they were tortured daily, forced to work long hours of hard labour out in the freezing cold weather of Poland. They worked in the snow and freezing temperatures wearing just a cheap, thin pair of pants and a T-shirt with no shoes or gloves or hats; they didn't even have their own hair to protect them and keep their heads warm. To walk along the gravel of the camp and to think that those people walked in the exact same place is just so overwhelming and surreal.

Saltmines

On the second day in Krakow, we went to the Salt Mines. They were crazy. We were 135 metres underground and our ears were popping. We had to go down 150 flights of stairs to get to the first level. They showed us how salt was made, the conditions of the workers and masterpieces made by salt. There were hundreds of statues and three churches that people still actually get married in. The main church/hall was massive and had a salt chandelier. There were even shops and restaurants underground. I bought presents for my mum.

Jewish Quarters

On the last day, we had a tour of the Jewish Quarters in Krakow. It was a very long walking tour, but really interesting. We visited many synagogues and learned all about the history of them. We saw two Irish pubs as well! Our legs were so sore by the end, but it was a very nice and relaxing last day.

Many thanks to the teachers who accompanied us on the tour: Mr Hehir, Mr Fairbairn, Mr Mallon, Ms Buckley, Ms Crotty and O'Reilly.



MUN 2020



When the pandemic hit and schools closed, an opportunity for MUN seemed unlikely, but Mr Hehir took the initiative and found a way for us all to debate on-line. Mr Hehir created a Microsoft Team and scheduled a meeting for 8pm every Tuesday. For many of us it was our first time participating in MUN and as time went on the numbers grew and people gained confidence speaking. These meetings were a great opportunity to connect with people amidst the pandemic.

Unfortunately, due to restrictions there was no conferences and therefore the sixth years lost out on the unique SAIMUN experience, so it was extra important for them that MUN continued online. At the end of the year, we had an MUN end-of-year ceremony, where some of the sixth years made speeches about their MUN experience. This was a great opportunity to recognise the impact they had made on MUN in St Andrew's College.

In the summer, we then got a great surprise when conference participation certificates arrived in the post. This was a great way to end the year.

Even though in-person conferences can't take place at the moment, we are all very happy that the online MUN experience is continuing and we extend our thanks to Mr Hehir for facilitating this.

Martha McCutcheon, Lucy Simpson, Sofia Herranz Harmen

Music News

The TY Music classes got together to perform Don't Look Back in Anger for the 25th Anniversary of the Oasis album, Morning Glory. The TY chamber choir arranged beautiful harmonies to this very famous track while the musicians practised to create a fabulous accompaniment for the singers to sing along to.

It was extra special as the Junior School choir sang with us. They really enjoyed the opportunity to sing with Senior students. It showed that music can be made in these difficult times. It did help that the sun was shining for the recordings!!!

It was recorded by Hotpress and Jason and Jody from One Sound Music. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dY8UTmmTPSI>

As the TY classes cannot go to the residential homes to entertain them this year, we have found other ways to get involved in the community, both for St. Andrew's College and outside.



Congratulations to Sixth Year student, Hannah Schmidt, who won third place in a Global Youth Songwriting Competition, 'Songs against Silence', dedicated to raising awareness for important social issues on mental health.



Congratulations to Caoimhe Higgins, second year, on winning the Environmental Protection Agency's nationwide competition "The Story of your Stuff" for her video telling the story of soap. Caoimhe is an avid filmmaker and we look forward to watching more of her productions in the near future!

Remembrance Day 2020

The annual Remembrance Service was held online on Wednesday, 11 November 2020. The Headmistress, Ms Louise Marshall and Chair of the Board, Mrs Hilary McCowen Rabbette introduced the event. Ms Nikki Carter (co-ordinator of History) organised the ceremony which commemorates all those who lost their lives in both World



Wars and, in particular, St Andrew's College students who made the ultimate sacrifice. Wreaths were laid at the war memorial by the Headmistress, Ms Louise Marshall, Ms Dara McClatchie, President of SACA, Tilly King (Head Girl) and Matthew McCrea (Deputy Head Boy). The Rolls of Honour were read by Tilly and Matthew. The 5IB history class read poems and letters and Ms Carter delivered an address on Remembrance Day and told the story of John Hemingway, a 101 year alumnae and veteran of the Battle of Britain. The ceremony had music from fifth and sixth years and The Last Post was played by 5IB student Haojang Jiang. Ms Carter spoke at all other assemblies during the week to highlight the importance of Remembrance Day.



Third Year Quiz



On the Friday before midterm, Third Year had their annual general knowledge quiz. Due to COVID our teams were our form classes. Mr. Quinn was the quiz master and did a great job.

The spot prizes were especially fun, as you had to find the answer and get to Ms Keddy's office before any of the other forms. It was enjoyable, as well as very competitive. Well done to 3SN who won the competition. Thank you to our form teachers too.

Christopher Lane

Mask Competition

On Friday 24 October, before the midterm break, the Whole School Council decided to give students an opportunity to be creative and festive for Halloween during these Covid times. First, Second and Transition Years were invited to design a mask for Halloween. The mask template was provided for everyone thanks to Mr Walshe. Students brought in their own markers and colouring pencils. Every student in each year group was given a double class to complete their design. There were many excellent and creative masks produced. The student officers, Adam, Tilly, Helen, Matthew, Stephen and I, were the judges. It was very difficult to choose the winning mask in each year group as there were so many wonderful designs. The winning form received a trick or treat packet of sweets.

Congratulations to Zahra Nassiri (1ON), Ellie Walsh (2MK), Holly Fletcher (4RN)

Sophie Rice



Celebrating 10 years

In challenging times, we congratulate all students and their supportive parents and teachers for their hard work and dedication.

We are proud to have reached ten years of SciFest@school.



This year marks ten years of SciFest at St. Andrew's College. The 2020 SciFest@School competition was very different this year in line with Covid-19 guidelines. There was no SciFest School Fair in the Senior Hall as in previous years. Instead, the 2nd Year science teachers marked their own students and then worked together to narrow down 168 students to a 'Top 5'.

On Friday, 13 November, our 'Top 5' were quizzed by two SciFest judges via a Zoom call. Mrs. Sheila Porter (CEO and Founder of SciFest) commented that: "The projects from St Andrew's were of a very high standard. Congratulations to the five finalists. The projects all had excellent scientific methodology and the students and teachers should be rightly proud of their work". We thank Mrs Porter for awarding prizes for first and second place along with rosettes for a further nine projects. We also thank Ms Krysia Lynch for organising prizes for each of the 'Top 5' projects from the PTA.

1st place: 'The impact of transition to electric vehicles' by Dearbhla Fewer

2nd place (Runner up): 'Memory recall in different ages' by Elliot Tiernan

Highly Commended:

'Which soap is the most effective?' by Chloe O'Sullivan

'Investigating the effect of fertilisers on water quality.' by Alice Pollastri McLysaght

'What acts more efficiently as a fertiliser; peat or seaweed?' by Lucille O'Mahony

All students were praised for showing confidence and ownership of their projects. The quality of their work in such difficult times was highlighted.

Along with the 'Top 5' projects, there are a further nine projects that received special awards:

Society of Irish Foresters award: Ellie Walsh, Michelle Crofton and Alexander Trickett

Bristol Myers Squibb 'Passion for STEM' award: Aylin Ustuner, Olivia Priestly and Conor McFadyen

AbbVie 'Young Innovator Award': Weichen Huang, Rachel Conolly and Fiala Ni Mhurchu, Jerome Beck

Mr Ryan

Be Upstanding



We started this year on an incredible journey to promote a new culture of Upstanding in the school. This is a culture change which will take some time, but it involves educating and encouraging each other to stand up for behaviour that is not nice and is unacceptable.

The video of past pupils, who are now staff members, reminiscing on times when they did upstand and times when they did not was a powerful way to remind us all of how important this programme is.

We ran Stand-Up Week from 16–20 November. This was to highlight and promote inclusivity for members of the LG-BTQI+ community. During this week we had an assembly with a beautiful piece of music performed by Ms. Noone's TY chamber choir called 'At This Table'.

This week ended with 'Be an Ally' day where students were invited to wear socks, tights, face masks, hair accessories, ties or headscarves in their years' colours. Students and teachers from the anti-bullying committee decorated the school.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the amazing staff and students on the anti-bullying committee for their great work and for promoting the culture of Upstanding in the College.

"It is nice to be important, but it is more important to be nice."

Ms Sloan

Drop Everything Be Aware

Our 6th Year Prefects and Student Council launched a 'Drop Everything and Be Aware' initiative on Friday 20 November.

This initiative was aimed at reinforcing awareness around the various Covid-19 safety measures we all need to follow.

Prefects Matthew McCrea and Olivia McKeivitt talked over the intercom for a few moments, about the importance of wearing facemasks.

Les Joutes Oratoires

Congratulations to Captain Astrid O'Toole, First speaker; Grace McFadyen, Second speaker; Tilly King, Third speaker; Natalie Holman and substitute speaker; Sophie Kulkarni, who won the first round of Les Joutes Ora-toires (debating in the French language) organised by the Alliance Française.

The debate took place online on Wednesday, 4 November. The subject for the debate was "Toutes les écoles devraient être mixtes" (All schools should be mixed). Holy Child Killiney argued for the debate and we argued against.

Well done to Grace McFadyen who won Best Speaker.

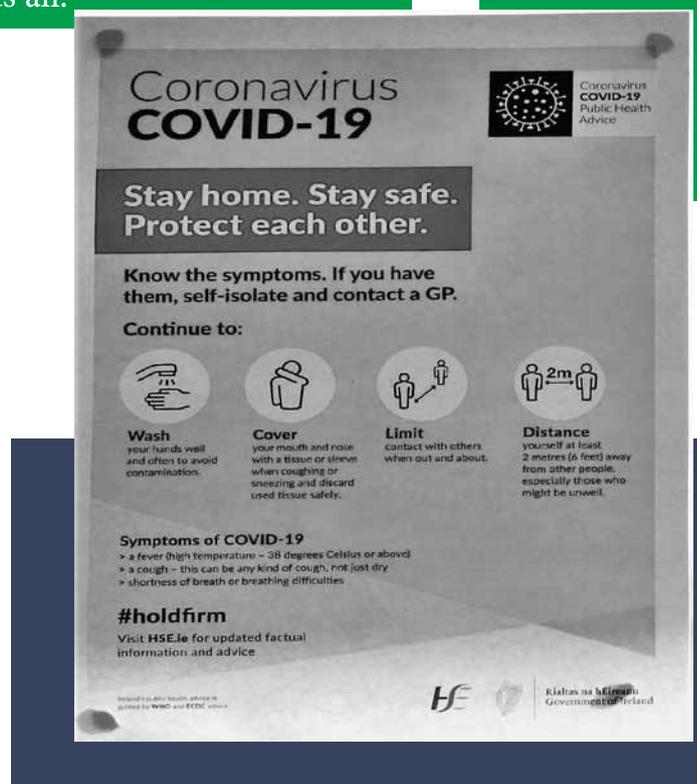


2020 Remembered

March 2020, Luke Keenan is preparing for his Leaving Cert. September 2020, Isla Kerr starts at St Andrew's College. Their experiences bookend an unforgettable year for us all.

An article about pure isolation and spending all day doing nothing, how can I make this interesting? Well, I suppose I could bring you all back to the day it started. I was packing books into my locker on Thursday 12 March when, all of a sudden, I heard a bunch of third year girls squealing. I overheard them talking about the school being shut down due to the coronavirus. Leaving my locker opened, a cardinal sin in Andrew's, I rushed to the sixth-year centre. I saw Mr Hehir proclaiming that the school would be shutting down today. The gates would shut at six o'clock and that would be our last chance to bring home schoolbooks. The atmosphere was confused to say the least and the chatter was ripe with query. What would happen to our language orals? Would the exams be deferred? Would we even have a graduation ceremony?

I was experiencing a mix of emotions. No matter the circumstances, there is still some childish pleasure in missing out on school. I believe that much is obvious. But I was also upset by the fact that I wouldn't see my friends for weeks. There would be no parties and no get-togethers. We were all forced to become inmates in our own homes, not being able to physically contact the outside world. At the end of the day, I piled all of my books into my bag and literally dragged it to reception, where my father was waiting with the car. All I could do was go home and wait out the storm.



Since then, my germaphobe mother has adopted a strict regime. My parents and I moved into my grandmother's farmhouse in Kildare. It's a large house so we are able to effectively isolate from each other in different quarters of the building. This gives us much more space than we had in Dublin. Groceries only get to the house through delivery and every item is cleaned with bleach before it is put in the fridge. Letters are surgically removed from envelopes using tongs and we have cancelled our subscription to The Irish Times in favour of online news. We don't leave the house unless it is to

take the dogs for a walk around the fields. Yes, it may seem extreme, but it minimises the risk that we are exposed to. I highly doubt that any of us will contract the virus and I have my mother to thank for that. Her iron grip is a force to be reckoned with.

All in all, I am not really bothered by the isolation. That may seem surprising for a Leaving Certificate student. I have always been able to effectively study from home and maintain a high level of concentration. That was a primary concern among my peers and I can only hope that they have reached some resolution. Online classes are quite strange. It's almost like a normal lesson until one of your classmate's shouts at his mother to turn off the Hoover. But it gets the job done. Teachers can still show their students presentations, answer questions and provide assignments. It is not exactly ideal, but it's all that we have.

I wish I could sell the hysterical, neurotic, frenzied student, who deeply fears for their LC results but alas, I am indifferent. I just have to accept that what will be will be. All I can hope for are the days where life will go back to normal. I pine for the days when I can return to school, see my friends and converse with them, face to face.

Luke Keenan

It was right after French class when I heard the news. I was stopping by my locker and noticed the increase of chatter in the halls. After 6pm school would be closed, and this was the last day to get our books and anything else we needed. At first, I was taken aback. How could my life, the one that was so organised and sometimes monotonous be so abruptly changed? I was absolutely sure that we would be back within a few weeks and I'd be back in class before the Junior Cert. You might say that was quite naive of me and I'd have to agree. The only reason I believed it, because I never entertained the idea of change at that point in time.

Not being in school has placed a halt on life in more ways than I can count. For one, my routine. Waking up every morning and knowing exactly what the day would hold had its perks. Without that organisation and push, would I be able to cope? I would have to take initiative myself. It is scientifically proven that we need a certain amount of mental stimulation to feel satisfied. With its socially buzzing environment and creative outlet, school is suited for growth.

“Well, I suppose I could bring you all back to the day it started.”



The circumstance that has presented itself has allowed me to grow in a way I didn't think possible. The gift I have been given is perspective. Perspective on how the world affects us and how we affect each other. There is bound to be a change in society due to this epidemic. Whether that be because we have learnt to be grateful or that we have all bonded through shared experience.

The way in which we have adapted to the situation shows the level of development present in our community. Although we are not physically connected, the internet has allowed us to connect and feel stability in these uncertain times. I am grateful for this and to everyone who makes this adjustment easier. After a few weeks, most of us have familiarised ourselves with our new routine. I have learnt that there is strength in the ability to accept and adapt. Change is always looming, better be prepared.

Varshika Mecheri

Can You Hear Me Major Tom?

March 13th last was a Friday, it was also the first day of remote teaching (and learning). Now, I always tell my Theory of Knowledge students not to make any assumptions about correlation and causation, but as I sat at my computer like Indiana Jones trying to guess the weight of the idol, I was struck by the inauspicious coincidence. Indeed, after staring at the screen for a few minutes thinking how the 13.7 billion years since the Big Bang had conspired to bring me, and only me, to this awful situation, I pushed my chair away from the table and decided to engage with technology I knew I could make work.

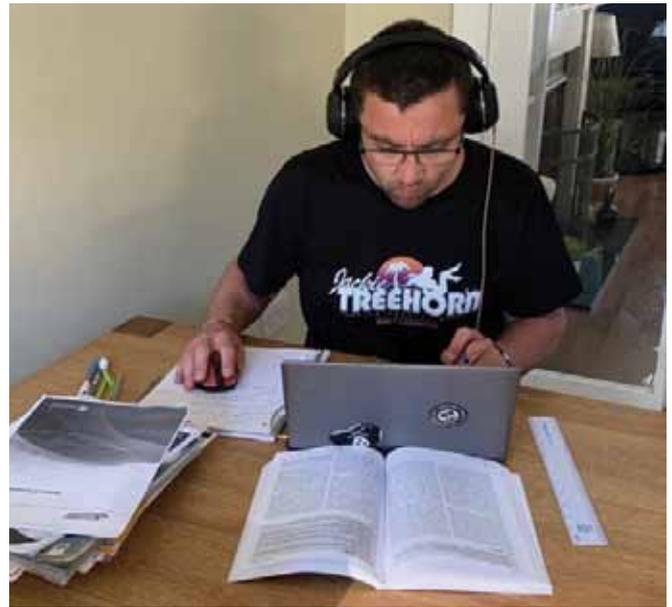
A short time later, with coffee in hand I decided to muster a second assault on trying to teach through a screen.

Flash, my black and white cat lay at the back door in the morning light. He paused from his meticulous grooming and looked at me as if to say you're on your own mate, I'm just a cat, ask Pixel. Pixel is my tabby cat. She knows nothing about computers, except how to sit on them when you're trying to type or watch YouTube videos on how to use Microsoft Teams.

In short, day one was a disaster.

As teachers we are rarely in the dark. We are experienced and have textbooks and prep time and colleagues who can give us a quick crash course on things, and should none of that be available, there's plain old winging it, but we don't do that in SAC, ever. No, what struck me most about remote teaching was that I had become once more a learner and that, for the most part, I'd be teaching myself.

As a teacher one empathises with one's students, but it's from afar, professional distance dictates as much, but as a novice in a novel situation I could understand in a closer way how my students must feel from time to time. As the days went by and with the help of colleagues whose technological expertise is far greater than mine, I found my way through the quagmire of live classes and assignments and being able to deliver something akin to a real educational experience for my students. I spoke with teachers from other schools about their ups and downs with teaching from home and the general findings were younger and more tech savvy teachers fared better, but older teachers could get it with a bit of patience and a lot of coffee. I thought of my father and how my ten year old brother



helped him navigate the pitfalls of our first home computer in 1994. My father, at that time, was much the age I am now and I can remember the cacophony of expletives and mentions of blood pressure which emanated from the room in which the tutorial was taking place. He survived it and now can email and download stuff and all that. He still forgets to turn on the printer and will occasionally politely inquire of my brother as to why the machine won't work. He uses different words when he asks this though. They are not polite.

I am by no means completely comfortable with remote teaching. It's not the same as the classroom. It's somewhat clunky. It doesn't have the interactive zip of a class discussion in full sway, nor does it have the purposeful industry of a group hard at work, but it is what we have and until we're back in the classroom it'll have to do. On a plus side it has, in my view, given both teachers and learners a moment to press the pause button before reengaging. Talking with colleagues and teachers from other schools it seems to me that students are doing the one thing we knew they would, adapting, and therein lies the rub. We have no idea what the world will be like in five months let alone five years, and yet for all that uncertainty we know that people, and especially young people, adapt. Life and learning goes on. This is important for someone like me who doesn't like change and is often slow to move with it. Another thing to think about is that if the edifice of schools were to disappear overnight and all we were left with was a continuum of disembodied voices floating on the ether, we could still teach and still learn. If ever one needed proof that teachers were the lifeblood of a school, the truly essential workers, this is it.

Mr R McDermott



Hi, my name is Isla, and I am a First Year.

Last year when I was in Sixth Class, I was very excited to come to St. Andrew's and do everything that my older brothers had talked about. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, my First Year experience was a little different to what everyone was used to. On top of the massive shift to longer hours in school, different teachers and more homework, we also had to contend with all of the Covid restrictions.

Instead of getting to know the person that you would've shared a desk with, we were all one metre apart, and I didn't know what most of my classmates looked like until I'd been in school for about three weeks.

Before first year I already knew quite a few people in St. Andrew's, so I'd like to say that I had a good idea of what I was heading into. I was looking forward to joining some of the clubs, meeting people from many of the other forms, interacting with the older years, having a mentor and exploring the school grounds. Then we started lockdown and I didn't even know if I would be in school for September.

Once I started school, I saw the impacts that Covid-19 would have on everyday life. The selection of clubs was a lot smaller, and some of the ones I was looking forward to the most weren't even options. Most of the people I have talked to have been from my form or my options and language classes. I've barely met any of the older students and having mentors didn't really work out. (But I did get a very kind email from my one.) I've only been in four classrooms in my bubble area and one lab since the start of the year, and now I only go to three of them.

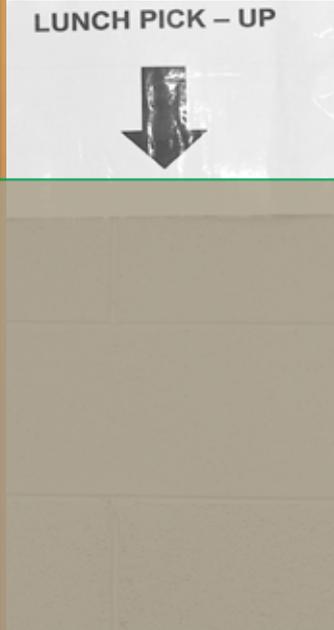
At the start of school, one of the most annoying things to deal with was wearing masks. It was an extra thing to remember in the mornings, and not being able to judge people's facial expressions made socialising strange. It made learning more difficult as well. Having teachers stand behind screens and not come over to help you was a weird change to get used to, especially in science. Not being able to do as many experiments or go to the labs was definitely a let-down. In some of the classrooms I've been to, and sometimes even in my own base-room, it hasn't been easy to hear what the teacher was saying. Thankfully, wearing a mask has become the new normal and a lot more comfortable now.

Another downfall about the masks is when I'm playing basketball. Even though the coaches have probably changed the drills quite a bit for us, the masks are certainly still a challenge to deal with. Also, I wear a cloth mask, so it gets very uncomfortable very quickly.

It's not all bad though. I've been able to talk to people in my form more than I think I would've if Covid-19 didn't exist. You can also tell how much work all the staff and teachers have been putting in to try and keep everyone safe and make these times more normal.

Even though mine and many other's first year experience is very unlike what would ordinarily happen, I'm still really enjoying everything that St. Andrew's has to offer.

Isla Kerr



What's a Controversial Opinion Anyway?

What is a controversial opinion? Is it something that one brings up in conversation to make it interesting? Well, according to the Oxford dictionary, that's basically what it is. "A public discussion and argument about something that many people strongly disagree about".

Controversial opinions aren't always as serious as the phrase makes them out to be. If someone proudly states that they love brussels sprouts, then yes, most people

would be horrified, but it is merely a point of controversy. Although, with social media, more serious topics are floating about. For example, the constant battle for marriage equality around the world.

The thing is, believing that same-sex marriage should be legal is not much of a controversial opinion in Ireland, but it may be a different story elsewhere. For example, in 2019 the majority of the Polish population believed that it should be illegal, so what was not a controversial opinion, is now controversial.

Generally, these opinions have a negative connotation to them, and if you shout one out to a room full of people, you are bound to get multiple angry glares. However, I remind you that the world would not be the same as it is now without these controversial thinkers.

For our knowledge to be where it is today, it only took a daring sailor to show that the Earth was round and a condemned scientist to propose that all planets revolved around the sun. This only proves that controversial opinions aren't always as false as we may think.

So, as those once 'controversial opinions' became more popular, they became less controversial. Now, to believe otherwise is a controversial opinion. How strange!

Think of all the controversy today, everyone is at each others' throats for saying something that maybe should not have been said. Yet perhaps this is how we progress, by questioning and looking for reliable answers.

Now that you've read the word 'controversial' eleven times in this article, I leave you with this final thought. Is it possible to have your own controversial opinions without being condemned for stating them? Whoops, I said it again!

Sofia Herranz Harmen

GROUND CONTROL....

TRAINING DURING COVID

As we all know, we are living in very weird times where we are wearing masks for up to eight hours a day, sanitising our hands every thirty minutes and keeping a metre apart from each other. Although we have been able to get back to the school academically, questions are still being asked about what is going to happen in terms of sport in the school. As of now, most of the sports in the school have re-started training: rugby, hockey and basketball. Yet, it is a little bit different, especially in my personal experience of basketball. I am on the U-19's basketball team and we have been training since the middle of August. There have been some changes to our training. For example, before every training, we have to fill out a form and tick boxes about how we are feeling, talking about if we have any symptoms and so on. Since we have to stay in our bubbles we are not allowed to train in our official U-19's team. The fourth years train with the fourth years, the fifth years train with the fifth years, and the sixth years train with the sixth years. The teams are not together, but we keep going.

Once we had to start wearing our masks our training became very different. At first, we were playing at a high tempo. The games were intense and competitive. Words would be exchanged, good and bad. Nowadays, we can only shoot the ball. There is not a lot of contact involved anymore, it is literally just the basics. It can be very irritating doing the same thing over and over again, but it's all part of the process. We are taking about two hundred to three hundred shots each training I'd say. A positive is that our shooting is getting better. It's weird for me because I sat out of basketball for a year and came back better which was odd, but I will take it.

I would say the hardest part for me personally, training the way we are, is just the non-contact, not being able to play full five on five basketball can be very hard. It is frustrating not being able to work on every aspect of our game and only being able to work on one or two parts of our game at a time. I think I could say the same for most of my teammates as they have expressed this in our trainings. The best parts of basketball come from full five-on-five games. The ankle breakers, the tough shots, the 'And 1's' (an expression used for scoring a basket while being fouled). The intensity is what I have been missing the most. Hopefully we will be able to build our way back up to those full contact five on five games sooner rather than later.

I reached out to some of the guys on my team about how

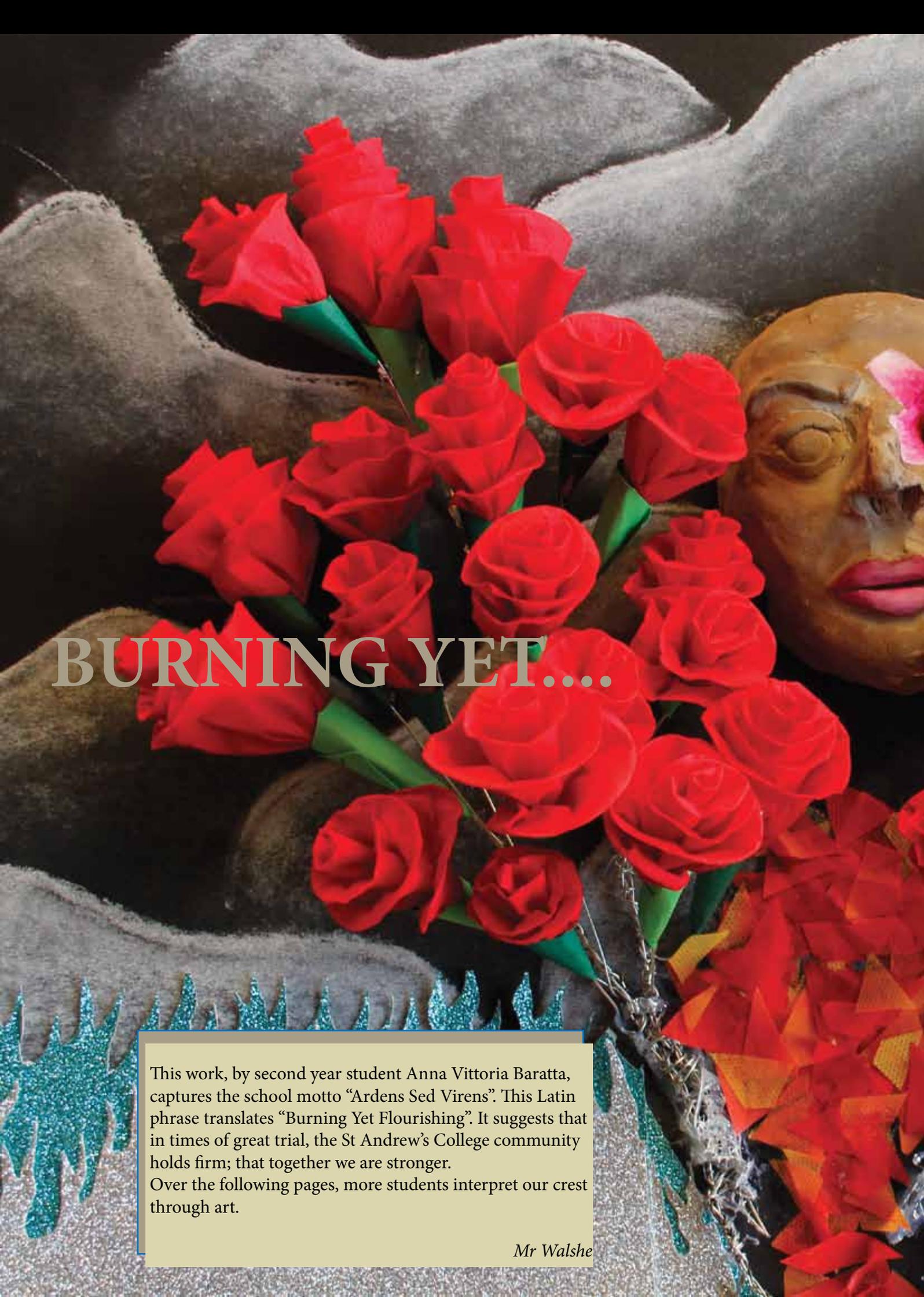
they feel about the Covid restrictions. Jake Justiniano said 'It's hard with the masks, but since we really enjoy sport and basketball it is hard to let it go'. Sam Lucas says 'with the masks, it can be difficult training as it can bring our energy down, but in the end it is all worth it.'

I also got a word with my coach Gareth O'Reilly about how all the years are coping. 'The biggest changes have occurred at Senior Level where we must train in our year bubbles rather than as one senior team which would have been made up of third, TY, fifth and sixth years. This, along with the fact that there will not be games in the near future, has been particularly challenging for our group of sixth years, as well as all our other players who used lockdown and the summer to improve their game. Elsewhere, all years have had to put up with seismic change with the introduction of masks and distancing to sessions, making it especially difficult for training to resemble any sort of normality. Hopefully the day when things go back to normal isn't that far off!'

As you can see, we're just trying to make the best out of the situation that we have. It's all that we can do for the time being. As Gareth said, it is tough for some of us who have been working since the summertime to improve our game. With no games coming up, it can be easy to lose that motivation. Though we all know it will be worth it in the end. We're aiming to be one of the best teams in the nation and that doesn't come easy. The team didn't become All-Ireland champions just by sitting around while we should be training. It is all about consistency and sticking to it. We're very lucky to still be able to train under the circumstances and I think after this experience, we will never take it for granted again. I am loving being back on the basketball team again.

As I said a little bit earlier. I sat out last year, because I wasn't enjoying it as much, but now that I am back, I am liking it more than ever and I couldn't be happier being back. Now hopefully, sometime soon, we will be back to normal in all sports and be representing the school with pride once again.

Sean Colfer



BURNING YET....

This work, by second year student Anna Vittoria Baratta, captures the school motto “Ardens Sed Virens”. This Latin phrase translates “Burning Yet Flourishing”. It suggests that in times of great trial, the St Andrew’s College community holds firm; that together we are stronger. Over the following pages, more students interpret our crest through art.

Mr Walsh



FLOURISHING



Orange Green Face
Iris Duignan



Leaves In Flames
Ellie Walsh



Lion Head
Sadhbh Sheehy

Sadhbh S.

ARTS V SCIENCE

“We live in a world where it has become the norm to split people into groups and sides, but in my opinion in order for society to function we need balance.”

Ruben O’Mahony debates the age-old question: reason v imagination...



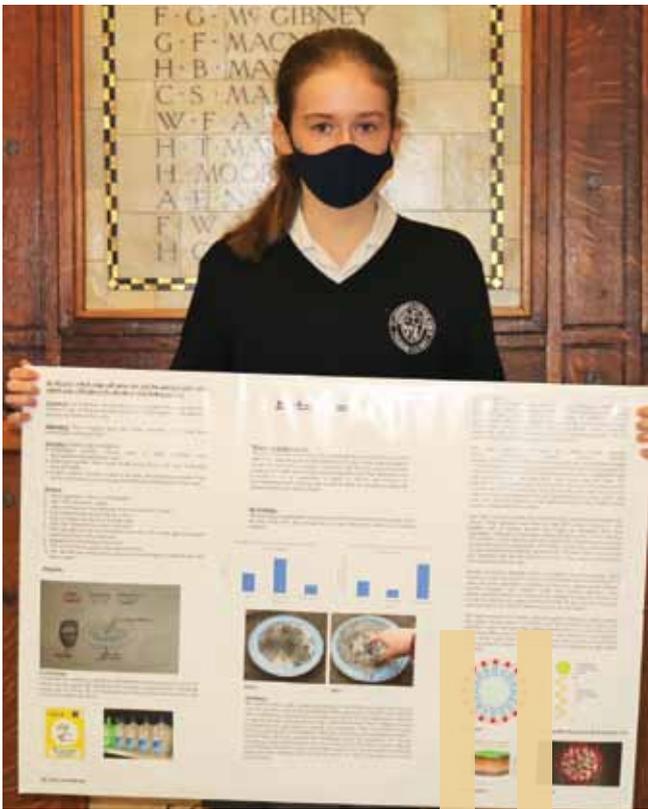


The debate between who contributes more to society, artists and writers or scientists, has been going on for thousands of years, all the way back to Plato. It is an argument no one has a definitive answer to as it all relies on the opinion of the questioned. This question splits society into two groups; the creative, mindful and expressive; and the analytical, rational and pragmatic. This is where I have trouble with this question. We live in a world where it has become the norm to split people into groups and sides, but in my opinion in order for society to function we need balance. I am going to argue that neither science nor art contributes more than the other as I feel this question reinforces a false dichotomy. This question pits two pivotal parts of society against each other but overlooks the importance of cross-pollination between the arts and sciences.

It is proven that balance is a key characteristic of life, we see this all around us. We know that one of the key problems we are facing in today's world is that we lack bio-diversity, which has a negative effect on our planet. The relationship between ladybirds and aphids is a great example of balance and reliance. Aphids are one of farming's most prevalent pests, they eat and damage crops and are very hard to get rid of. So, farmers decided to encourage the growth of ladybird communities as they eat the aphids and control the population. The balance between aphids and ladybirds allow for crops to grow while increasing bio-diversity. This correlates to the arts and sciences as science needs art in order to progress and vice versa. When art and science are paired alongside each other it can create incredible things, Leonardo Da Vinci is regarded as one of the most brilliant minds in human history due to his capacity to be innovative and for his advances for humanity. Da Vinci was an incredible artist, he spent years studying how to draw and how objects and people are formed, this meant he had a brilliant structural eye which aided him in his inventions of the scissors, helicopter, parachute and diving suit. By using his artistic eye and scientific mind, he managed to make huge

strides in both art and science, for example his painting of the 'Mona Lisa' is regarded as one of the best paintings ever created. By comparing art and science together it creates a mindset that a person can only align with one or the other. Da Vinci shows us that art and science need each other in order for both to excel. But Da Vinci is not the only renowned scientist or artist who believed in this. Many brilliant minds have expressed their belief in the balance between art and science. Albert Einstein once stated, "The greatest scientists are artists as well." This shows that the world of art and science rely on each other in order to innovate and create.

There are many examples of when art and science have been separated and have resulted in terrible outcomes. Imbalance has been the flaw of many leaders. When prioritising one aspect over another it can result in unrest and anger and this is seen in Margaret Thatcher's premiership. She was heavily criticised for pitting the economy against society, which meant even as the economy grew the people became outraged. By overlooking, under-appreciating or downright ignoring one thing in favour of another it causes a rift to form. This rift grows until eventually something that used to be whole is split into two separate ideals. In order for society to progress, we must re-evaluate this idea that art and science are things to be compared and are not the same. When art and science don't work alongside each other both fields stagnate. For example, the work of Andy Warhol and Pablo Picasso resulted in some of the most famous pieces of art of all time. These two artists are very different in style but they both have one comparable feature, their understanding of geometric shapes and colour pattern. These two artists studied shapes, patterns and colours for years in order to perfect their craft, but without their scientific understanding of these features, some of their work many have never existed. Once upon a time art and science went hand in hand,



it was very common for artists to be inventors and philosophers too, but at some point the two fields began to separate and we don't exactly know why. Many feel it is due to the idea of specialisation and this brings me to my last point.

As people are spending more and more time in education, they become specialists in specific fields and this results in knowledge becoming siloed. People become so expert in a certain field they become slightly unaware of other fields. This is a major problem in science today and it's one of the many reasons we need to see the sciences and arts combine. As people distance themselves from differing fields of study, it becomes harder and harder to work in their own field. Science and art mix and mash together constantly, there are parts of art that are heavily influenced by mathematics, like music or the work of Andy Warhol, then there are parts of science that rely on art. Steve Jobs along with being the founder of Apple was a designer and he prided himself on the look and style of the products he created, which is one of the many reasons why Apple products sell so well. Another example of science relying on the arts is the discovery of the quark; the quark is a tiny particle made up of protons and electrons, which was named after a word used in James Joyce's 'Finnegan's Wake'. In order for progression to be effective we must introduce more collaboration between the arts and the sciences, as this will allow for new creative and innovative ideas to emerge.



In conclusion, I feel this question reinforces a false dichotomy as it pits two things against together that shouldn't be compared, but should be working alongside each other. As M. C. Escher phrased it, "Science and art sometimes can touch one another, like two pieces of the jigsaw puzzle which is our human life, and that contact may be made across the borderline between the two respective domains."

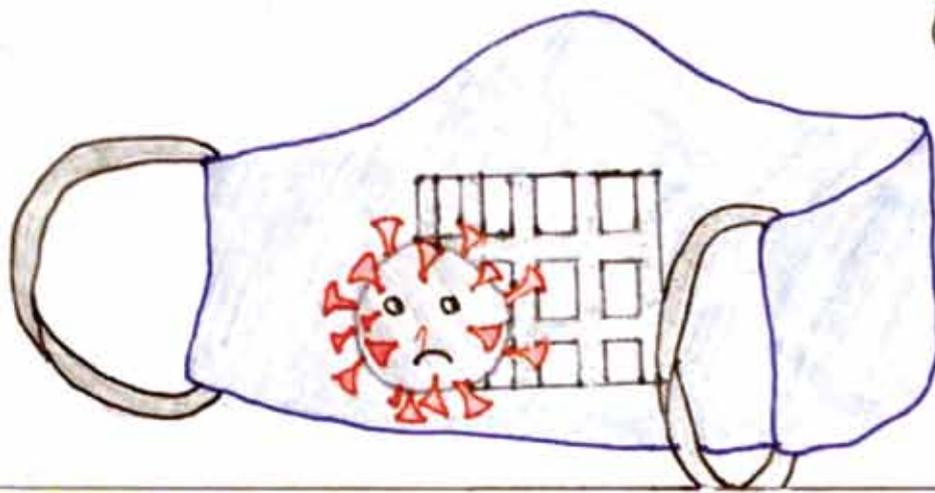
To the question of who contributes more to society: artists and writers or scientists, I say this is not the question to ask. We live in a world full of so much mystery and confusion it is unhelpful to create more divisions. So, I feel the better question to ask is, how can we reconnect science and art so that together they can create an even greater contribution to society and humanity as a whole?

Photo taken 2019, pre-Covid



How to Beat the Bug

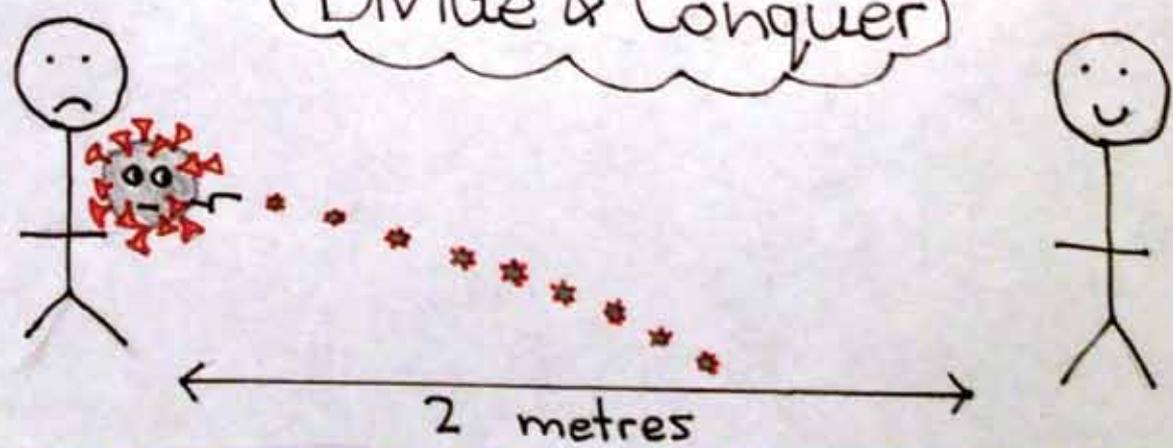
Imprison



Fight



Divide & Conquer





Ms Mary Devally will be remembered as a teacher who brought a distinctive combination of energy and imagination to her teaching. She communicated her enthusiasm and affection for classical studies and history through her work in the classroom and by organising a number of classical studies trips to Pompeii, Greece and The British Museum in London.

Every student who has spent time in one of her classes remembers her lessons with great fondness. Mary imparted not only a love of learning, but a love of classics and history. She will not just be remembered for her work in the classroom or the trips she arranged. At the heart of everything Mary did in the College was her care for the students and her belief that we teach the child first and the subject second.

In our early years of having Year Heads, Mary was appointed First Year Head. It was a role in which she excelled. Mary recognised early on that we, as teachers, make impressions outside the classroom that are as important and valuable as the influence we hold within the four walls.

Mr Conall Hamill joined the teaching staff in August 1982 and quickly established himself as an excellent teacher and administrator. He has been a highly successful teacher of English and French, an very effective and respected French co-ordinator and Form Teacher. He also worked as Accreditation Assistant to the late Mr Eamon Agnew. His gentle and caring nature was evident to the students who were lucky enough to have been in one of his classes over the years.

Mr Hamill was an enthusiastic promoter of extra-curricular activities. He organised debating for a number of years. With former colleague, Mark Jones, he established a school magazine, *Out of the Blue* as an outlet for student journalism. *Out of the Blue* eventually became *Grapevine*. As a team, we at *Grapevine* thank him for all his help and dedication.

Mr Hamill organised many school trips including the ski trips, many classical studies trips and school exchanges to France. In addition, he was one of the founders and organisers of the One-Act Drama festival. He directed the St Andrew's one-act play for a number of years and he was Stage Manager for several College musicals. He also co-ordinated our Academic Prize Distribution. In essence, Mr Hamill has used his many talents to serve St Andrew's College with great dignity and grace.

Ms Catherine Killeen came to St Andrew's in August 1991. Prior to that, she was a research assistant in University College Galway, a microbiologist in Abbot Ireland in Sligo and a toxicologist with the Institute of Industrial Research and Standards in Shannon. In St Andrew's, Ms Killeen taught biology and junior science. She engendered a genuine passion for biology in her students and her classroom was always full of life during practical classes.

She became Head of the Science Department and was always innovative in her teaching methodologies. Ms Killeen regenerated the school's participation in the Young Scientist exhibition and really enjoyed the role of Form Teacher, treating each and every one of her form as if they were her own children. She quickly got to know everything about the students in her care and developed an excellent rapport with each child and their family.

Catherine was loved by everyone. Her warm and welcoming personality combined with her caring and nurturing nature were used to great effect in her role as mentor for new staff. She took all the new teachers under her wing. No wonder they called her the 'St Andrew's College Mammy'.



Retirements



Ms Anne Corrigan's efficiency is the stuff of legend. Her secret weapon was her handwriting – part shorthand and part code – we think it was a well developed tool to add to the workings of all things administrative.

Ms Corrigan joined St Andrew's in 1998 having previously worked for 16 years as Executive Secretary at the Irish Women's Institute, better known to most of us as the ICA.

Many staff members comment that she had that special gift that characterizes the great adminis-

trator: she knew what you needed before you knew yourself. It often felt as if Anne could read your mind. When you approached her with an idea or a request, she seemed to instantly know what exactly you were looking for.

Thank you, Ms Corrigan, for the joy, kindness, professionalism and fun that you brought to St. Andrew's College.

Mr Gordon Laing has the distinction of being both a past pupil and a past teacher of the College. He also served his time as a boarding master. Only his unique use of descriptive language can conjure up the images of gale force winds whipping through the rooms upstairs (now the '90's) on a cold and frosty winter night.

When Mr Laing returned to St Andrew's College as a student teacher, he became fully immersed in the life of the College. Not only did he coach rugby several evenings a week, he also took the students down to Sandymount to introduce them to squash. As a teacher of German, which is how most people will remember him, Mr Laing was unique. He motivated his students by the simple roll of a dice or the promise of one of his fruit gum or sweet selections.

Initially, the numbers taking German were very low, but soon word spread about the excitement and enjoyable time that could be spent in Room 9.16.

When asked to describe him, his students used the words like encouraging, enthusiastic, caring, helpful, generous, kind, charismatic and inspiring. They loved his legendary phrases and his ability to teach in such an entertaining way. He is sorely missed.



What will we most remember about **Mr Jonathan Taylor** as our Bursar? The answer is many things, but mostly it will be his quiet assurance that requests will always be looked at and that issues or problems which arise are not insurmountable. His mantra of 'we can take a look at that' always imbued confidence that the matter would be taken care of, no drama, no fuss, just a solution.

Mr Taylor joined St Andrew's College in April 1996 as Bursar and Company Secretary. All three of his daughters are past pupils: Vicky, Suzanne and

Lesley, so during his time here, as a parent of the College, he has viewed St Andrew's from every angle.

He was a key member of a number of important school committees such as the Health and Safety committee, which he chaired and a number of Building Committees. In addition to acting as Secretary to the Board of Management, he also served time on the Finance and Bursary committees.

For all the work you did on our behalf Mr Taylor, we sincerely thank you.





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