

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



Easter 2017

Dear Parents,

'Self-trust is the essence of heroism' Ralph Waldo Emerson.

In my report for the extended Blackrock College community, I described the performance of our J.C.T. in the final against St. Michael's (7-7) as **"Heroic"**. The replay (17-31) – congratulations to St. Michael's – was no less heroic, and in terms of performance, endeavour and courage, also satisfied Emerson's characterisation. However, are we sometimes swayed by the outcome more than by the input? We need to consider this.

Self-trust allows us not to succumb to expedience; it gives the confidence to align thought and actions in the best interest of the cause. Heroism is transformational, enhancing the lives of others as we put ourselves at their service. It is about doing the right thing and, of course, this goes way beyond the rugby pitch.

Former President of the College, Father Malachy Kilbride used to quote **J.C Watts "character is doing the right thing when no one is looking"**. Acts of heroism occur at Blackrock day by day. They are the simple acts of caring that ultimately underpin community. It is our acceptance of one another, a realisation that while each one of us is exceptional, we are also flawed. In the words of **John W. Gardner, "Life is tumultuous, an endless losing and regaining of balance, a continuous struggle, never an assured victory"**. But self-trust must not be blind and uncritical. Father Malachy continuously pointed to Christ as our mentor. As Christians, we find encouragement, inspiration indeed, in the Easter story which is the essence of heroism. The great gift of Easter is optimism as the passion, death and resurrection confirm that we are valued by God and that no matter what the challenge, the set-back, the hardship, the rejection, the despair, we can overcome it because we are not alone. Jesus challenges us to let truth and justice drive all that we do. We are encouraged to make a difference in the lives of others no matter how near or how far, to be heroic.

At the launch of our 5K 4Kenya, Conal Regan (Transition Year) quoted **Mother Teresa – "I alone cannot change the world but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples"** - as he called for each one of us to make a difference in the lives of his fellow Spiritan students whom he had met in Kenya over the February mid-term. Being an influence for good in the lives of others transforms us, unleashes a capacity to discern, to care, to risk, to reach out and through this to discover a capacity for love.

This term we lost a great 'Rockman in **Father Joe Gough C.S.Sp** who gave exceptional service as a Spiritan Missionary in the Gambia and latterly as Chaplain, Teacher and Games Administrator at Blackrock. Father Joe loved all sports and he certainly came to mind again last week as Father Nash blessed our new boat – **'Fides'** – before a delighted audience of our oarsmen and their parents. Father Nash led us in the Rowers' prayer: **"but most of all there are the three overriding Ts - teamwork, timing and technique. A trinity so to speak. Three, as if one, components without which there would be no success in crew"**.

This trinity applies to all that we do – our **technique** is to 'Be Caring, There, Truthful and Grateful'; our **timing** is always and our **team** is all of us. In our Addition and Environment Awareness weeks, Seachtain na Gaeilge, State Orals and Practical exams, our Liturgies and Pastoral placements, classroom and extra-curricular activities overseas and at home, may we all, Staff, Parents, Spiritan Community, Pupils Past and Present continue to pool our resources and contribute to that ripple effect and be an influence for good.

I close with the words of Father Ross Jones S.J, Rector at Riverview, Sydney, Australia: **"May the Easter Christ cast out all our timidities, our inclinations to nail things down too safely, too securely, too predictably. Let us rest and be content with mystery. And let God's Risen Word be a liberating call to us all"**.

Another extraordinary term comes to a close, thank you.

Be well, safe and together over Easter.

Yours sincerely,

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) Niall Comerford and Cameron O'Neill (both TY) competing in the 5K4Kenya
- b) Blackrock (TY) V Sultan Hamud in Machakas 2017



Second Year



Application Cards

Our Second Year group has now completed another term in the College and how each boy has progressed can in good measure be judged by the Application Cards that he has returned to his parents on a weekly basis. More than half the year group have been on the Principal's List repeatedly, and compliments to those who have achieved this. All other boys should reflect on those areas, academic and otherwise, that have been highlighted on the Cards as areas for improvement. If an area of concern is still showing up at this stage of the year then a significant effort needs to be put into the final term. Parents should accompany their sons on this path of improvement. It is often too difficult for a boy to improve in some areas of school life without the encouragement and direction of his parents and guardians.

Parents' Events

The Second Year Parents' Committee began the half-term with two seminars, the first given by Dr John Sharry, who published the book **Parenting Teenagers** and the second by Owen Connolly, who published the book **On the Shoulders of Giants**. Both talks were well received and very well attended. The Committee also organised the Second Year Parents' Dinner Dance that was held in Elm Park Golf Club. It was an excellent night and we are all grateful to the members of the Committee for their preparation of these events and for their service throughout the year.



Dr John Sharry



Owen Connolly

Intra-curricular Activities

Ash Wednesday fell during the first week back after mid-term and all the boys had the opportunity to attend a service in the College Chapel. We also celebrated Environment Awareness Week, with a focus on Biodiversity, linked with the theme of Catholic Schools Week in January, 'Caring for our Common Home'. The reptile show 'Dave's Jungle' was organised by the Science Department and was a real hit with the boys, if not with the Dean. Addiction Awareness was held with two excellent speakers giving presentations in Second Year, Professor Michael Keane and Professor Pdraig Walsh.



'Dave's Jungle'

House Competitions

The winner of the House Cross Country was James Crowley with Eoin Kelly in second place. The final term will see points won for each House in the Soccer Blitz, the Gold Medal Debate and on Sports & Family Day. The Inter-House Barry Shield will be presented to the overall winning House at the final Assembly of the year. Duff House is currently in a strong position to win but it is still all to play for.

Extra-curricular

Well done to our 2nd Year Basketball Team that reached the East Leinster League Quarter Final. Congratulations to the U16 8-Man Coxed Crew that included Theo Boland, who competed so well in the 'Erne Head of the River 6km Event'. Our own Stephen O'Neill won the U14 Leinster Tennis Match-play Championship. The Father Fullen Cup in golf was held this term, with Alex Bolger winning the prize for the Best Gross score.



Alex Bolger with Mr MacGinty

The Wesley Musical Festival was held and Second Year sparked again. The band Paradox, consisting of Alex Kelly, Sam Loscher, Robbie Gallagher, Sean Probert, Oscar Bourke-Mullaney and Robert Byrne, won the U15 Rock Band category, with Oscar winning the U15 Solo Singing 'Popular' and Sam the U15 Drum Kit category. Alex Kelly performed well in the U16 Piano Solo and of course our Corless Choir and Jazz band were amongst the 1st Class Honours. However we could not end the term without a 'three cheers' to our Junior Cup Team that included five Second Year boys. Suffice to say their heroic efforts in the campaign and in the two Finals were a product of, and contributed to, the wonderful spirit in our school. What a term, and what a year group. Well done.

Dates for your Diary

27th April, 4th, 9th & 11th May: Days of Reflection
28th April: Reminder – School closed
 30th April: Willow Wheelers 100 Mile Cycle
 5th May: Progress Reports
 9th-12th May: 2nd & 4th Year Musical
 14th May: Sports & Family Day
 27th May: Academic Prize Giving
 31st May-2nd June: Summer Tests

Third Year



A Parents' Conference, at which it is expected that each boy will be represented will take place on Wednesday May 8th in the Lecture Hall at 7.30 pm. The evening will be given over to the choice of academic subjects the boys will have in Transition Year. This should hopefully facilitate them in making informed decisions in May 2018 about their subjects for the Leaving Certificate.

On our return after Easter there are 21 class days remaining. In order to derive a tangible benefit out of this short window we appeal to parents to insist on receiving each of the remaining Application Cards. This includes Principal List Cards which unfortunately are often left in the boys' lockers. It is the expectation of the school that all Third Year boys will be in attendance in class up to and including Wednesday May 31st.

Addiction Awareness Week

Mr Shane Murphy SC powerfully reiterated a message that the boys have no doubt previously heard. Teenage organs are not fully developed, the pancreas is particularly vulnerable to assault from alcohol. Alcohol makes you more defenceless, you become completely and totally vulnerable. The boys were urged to take control of their own lives and not to let the Drinks' industry or peers control their lives, as Shane put it "you need to be you" "who is in charge you or somebody else" and "free yourself". He cited examples of where one moment of madness ruined lives, the anguish of parents looking on in bewilderment as their sons' were sentenced. Drugs and Alcohol were involved in most of the cases cited and to suggest that there were gateway drugs that were safe was ludicrous.

Pdraig Walsh (Behaviour Analyst), emphasised the importance of Habit and that bad habits can be replaced. He discussed the 3 Rs of Habit formation namely Reminder, Routine and Reward. Bad habits can be ignored, changed or replaced. By finding a new routine, what he called Addiction Inoculation is possible. Understanding happiness is key to all this, the 5 elements of which are Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaningfulness and Achievement all of which were discussed with the boys. He concluded with 4 Take home messages: 1) Become aware of habits that exist in your life today. 2) Identify helpful routines / habits that can replace unhelpful routines. 3) Change one key habit that will have a positive impact on your life. 4) Write down the things that make you happy, and identify habits and routines that will help you flourish.

The junior squad raised our spirits with a tremendous performance in the two finals against St. Michael's. The total commitment, tenacity, courage and skills displayed will live in the memory of many. While the replay did not go our way we have nothing but the greatest admiration for the efforts of the whole junior squad this year and of course we congratulate our sister college St. Michael's on their fine victory. As we go to print the Junior 2nds, 3rd and 4ths are still in competition and we wish them well. Fifteen Third Year

boys represented the College in the Wesley Music Festival. The rowers, who recently took delivery of a new boat, have competed in a number of regattas and the table tennis season is heading to the All-Ireland stages as we approach Easter. We wish Rowan Cowhey well with the Senior Golf Team in the All-Ireland's after Easter and congratulate Will and Archie Ryan on coming first and second respectively in the National Cyclecross Championships. Mentioning cycling, we urge all cyclists to lock their bikes securely in the designated area and to take note of the serial number of the bike in case of theft, of which we've had one recently and another attempted one. A short term beckons, we urge boys to get involved in the extra-curricular programme and to get the balance right in the run up to the Junior Certificate in June.

John Campbell, Charlie O'Carroll, Adam Dixon, Adam Simpson (3rd Year)
JCT Final V St. Michael's

Dates for your Diary

Reminder: School closed Friday April 28th
 3rd Year Parents' Conference Monday May 8th
 Re. Transition Year 2017/2018 (7.30p.m.)
 Sports and Family Day Sunday 14th May 2.00 – 4.30p.m.
 Academic Prize Giving Saturday May 27th 10.30 a.m.

Transition Year



Another hectic term in Transition Year draws to a close and it is great to see the group has maintained their commitment to the programme and generosity of spirit. We returned after midterm to a combined environmental and addiction awareness. Students attended a talk by Stuart Wilson who gave them insight into the world of neuroscience and what happens to the brain with regards to addiction. Students are constantly told about things being bad for them – it was great to be given a scientific explanation of why. The talk was very well received by the student body. There was a huge amount of work done by the Green Schools' Committee headed by Mr Copeland for this year's Environmental Awareness Week. Mr Copeland has been very complimentary of the terrific work put in by TY. Highlights of the week included a reptile show, a poster display by the Development Education group and the lunch time debate.

Faith Friends

We had 27 students involved in *The Lighthouse Programme* preparing Willow Park students for their Confirmation which took place on the 11th of March. This programme involves a lot of commitment from the students who attend a number of workshops to offer leadership and spiritual guidance as the Willow students prepare for the sacrament. This year is the first group to have come through *The Lighthouse Programme* so it was a great opportunity for Transition Years to see it from the other side. Well done to all those involved.

Dragons' Den

Dragons' Den 2017 was launched on Monday 6th March in front of a full TY Assembly. Paul McGowan, Chairperson of Rock Dragons' Den and President of the Union, Brian O'Neill were present and as ever are incredibly supportive of this exciting initiative, for which we are very grateful. Paul gave a hugely informative and engaging presentation to the boys about what is involved and what the initiative hopes to achieve. Record numbers of students have since submitted their initial business ideas and have been taking part in the workshops which have since happened. All of Transition Year attended an Idea Generation Workshop kindly facilitated by Joseph Keating from the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Enterprise Office along with our own internal workshops; a Business Plan Workshop facilitated by Mr Frank O'Sullivan and an Idea Development and Financial Planning Workshop facilitated by Mr Patrick O'Neill. The summer term will be a busy one with business plans being developed, mentoring sessions with the Dragons, shortlisting of finalists and then the Dragons' Den Final itself on Monday 22nd of May.

AIB Build a Bank Competition

Congratulations to our Build a Bank team of: Zach Donnelly, Tom Dwan, Tadhg Egan, Oisín Ellison, Ben Murphy and Adam O'Sullivan who have qualified for the All-Ireland finals of the competition which takes place in the RDS after the Easter holidays. The group has been working tirelessly and impressed the judges with their online presence and digital innovation. We wish them well in the finals.



Adam O'Sullivan, Oisín Ellison, Ben Murphy, Tadhg Egan, Tom Dwan and Zach Donnelly of Blackrock Build a Bank Team with RTE presenter Blathnaid Treacy



Rob Jordan, Harry Keyes and Harry Cullen at the Father Fullen Cup golf outing

Father Fullen Cup

24 Transition Years took part in the annual Father Fullen Cup at the Castle Golf Course on the 27th of March. The weather was glorious as Harry Cullen posted a score of 38 points to win the competition. Congratulations also to Alex Carroll who with a score of 36 points finished 2nd.

Development Education Day

Dylan Hutchinson, Michael McDonald, Drummond McGinn, Max McKenna, Ruairi Moore, Adam O'Sullivan, Andrew Ryan and Michael Ryan travelled to Templeogue College on the 24th of March to take part in the Spiritan

Development Education Day and made a presentation on their project "Climate Change – Are We Bothered?" The group under the guidance of Ms Payne have actively engaged the entire school community and are currently preparing for a day of action in May.

Clough Jordan Cookery School

In preparation for the Master Chef competition in the final term, a group of Transition Year chefs travelled to Clough Jordan Cookery School where they learned about appreciating the food they eat and really tasting it, knowing where it comes from, being aware of waste and building a foundation for thinking about cooking and looking after themselves nutritionally when they leave school. I look forward to sampling what they prepare during the Master Chef Competition!

5K4Kenya

The main focus of this term was of course the 5K4Kenya charity run in Leopardstown Racecourse on the 26th March. The run organised by the Transition Years was in aid of the Holy Ghost Mission School in Sultan Hamud Kenya. I cannot praise enough all students involved who worked so hard and gave up so much of their time to plan and host this event in under seven weeks. This charity event really is what Transition Year is all about. This was driven by students



Tom Moreland, Tom Dwan, Will Stacey, Stephen Dunne and Ethan Murray ready to register competitors for the 5K4Kenya



First day in school in Machakos and time for a quick photo before class

from the off once we had the initial meeting in Leopardstown back in February. From there students were involved in all elements of planning and organising the race, getting experience in events' management, problem solving, engaging with sponsors and media with national renown. Thankfully all their efforts were reflected on the day, as the race went off without a glitch. The weather was fantastic and the atmosphere in Leopardstown even better. Well done to all involved. They have given so much, hopefully learned so much and most importantly raised substantial funds for such a worthy cause.



Transition Year students are welcomed to the Enkereyan Primary School in Kajaiido County



A warm welcome for the Blackrock students at Nado Enterit Primary School

Dates for your Diary

28th April – Reminder school closed

2nd – 5th May – Music Art and Drama Week

9th – 12th May – 2nd and 4th Year Musical

14th May – Sports and Family Day

15th – 19th May – Work Experience

29th and 30th May – Portfolio Assessment and Interview



Spirasi Fast

Immediately before the February mid-term break, over 80 5th Year students participated in the twenty three hour sponsored fast for Spirasi, the Spiritan NGO working with asylum seekers and victims of torture in Ireland. For their sacrifice, the students raised over €3,000 for the organisation, which was presented to Spirasi at the 5th Year family mass on Sunday, April 2nd. We commend and thank all those involved and all those who generously supported the fasters. The funds will facilitate Spirasi to continue to offer essential care for victims of torture as well as educational services for refugees and asylum seekers.

Family Mass

On Sunday, April 2nd, Father Brendan Carr was chief celebrant at the 5th Year family mass. The 5th Year students were very active in their mass; serving on the altar, reading the liturgies, singing in the choir, providing beautiful music and much more, successfully generating a wonderful atmosphere of community and celebration. Amongst the many

families in attendance we were delighted to welcome back members of Spirasi who were proudly presented with the proceeds of the 5th Year Fast. They spoke to the congregation with heartfelt gratitude and appreciation of their efforts.

Senior Soccer

A very exciting match played on the front lawn on a beautiful sunny day brought the Senior Soccer team's season to a close. We sympathise with Captain Jack Reilly (6th Year) and his squad on a very narrow loss.



5th Year Family Mass. Oisine, Tim, Rionagh, Art (5th Year), Richelle, Muireann and Lasara Lynch

Fifth Year Cont'd



A number of 5th Years also travelled to Manchester to play against two of St Bede's teams, which Blackrock College won. The boys also enjoyed a trip to Old Trafford and enjoyed the experience immensely.

I congratulate all 5th Year players and squad members, and thank coaches Mr Evan O'Brien and Dylan O'Reilly (Class of 2013), Brian Horgan (2014) and Sean O'Dowd (2015).

5K4Kenya

In glorious sunshine, 500 walkers, joggers and runners lined up for the start of our 5K at Leopardstown Racecourse on Sunday, 26th March. First home was Christian McKenna (Class of 2016) followed by Conor Halpin (5th Year) with Ross McCann (6th Year) in 3rd Place. The Ladies race was won by Emma Flynn followed by Luda Bulich in 2nd and Patricia Forde in 3rd Place. It was a fantastic occasion with spot prizes provided for over 50 contestants as well as t-shirts, Jaffa cakes, Bank of Ireland keyrings and pens, water and fruit juice freely available for both participants and spectators. A great day – with substantial funds raised for the Holy Ghost Mission School in Sultan Hamud, Kenya.

CAT testing – Careers Guidance

As part of the Career Guidance Programme 5th Year students will take a Cognitive Abilities Test in the second and third term. These tests facilitate the College to further identify students' needs and strengths so that they can be further guided in realising their full potential. Students are reminded that Career Guidance appointments are available by request.

Environment Awareness Week

The Green Schools' Committee were very happy to have the opportunity to continue their work in promoting an appreciation of the biodiversity in our campus and beyond. The nature walks held during the Catholic Schools' Week whose theme 'Caring for our common home' provided an ideal lead-in to this term's Environmental Awareness Week. This week also involved a significant cross curricular element with events organised by the Biology and Development Education Departments.

Many thanks to the Biology Department, Development Education and the Green Schools' Committee and in particular the TY members, for their invaluable help in organising the week. A special word of thanks to Mr Cathal Copeland, Ms Marie Kelly and Ms Anne Payne for their support in facilitating the week's events.

Addiction Awareness Week

As part of Addiction Awareness Week students were encouraged to make wise choices in their lives in order to avoid the potentially devastating harm that can be caused by dependency. Students' attitudes to and awareness of the devastating effects of gambling and drug taking were challenged by the testimony of recovering addicts generating much meaningful thought and discussion. Special thanks goes to Mr Sean Walsh and the Addiction Awareness Committee for their organisation of the speakers.

Past V Present Debate

Congratulations to 5th Year's Stephen Ryan who won Best Speaker for the "present side", as he rejected the motion that "In the light of recent events, it would be in Ireland's best interests to leave the EU".

Rugby

The House Fourths and Fifts have had a disappointing end to their seasons, but all players enjoyed the games and benefited from the commitment and advice of their coaches. The House Thirds enjoyed a great season with victories over Clongowes and St Conleth's in the Cup, but were knocked out recently by a stronger St Michael's team. The House Seconds remain on course and will meet a strong Castle team in the semi-final of the Cup.

Fifth Year members of this year's Senior Squad were disappointed to lose out to Belvedere

in their thrilling final in the RDS. All are continuing to train and are already looking forward to next year. They were delighted with, and wholeheartedly appreciate, the support and encouragement they received from their peers, parents and family.

Fifth Year Parents' Association

A wonderful evening was had by all at the parents' social evening held in Elm Park Golf Club in late February. Many thanks to Committee Chairperson Mr. Dominic Hickey and the Fifth Year Parents Committee, and in particular the Social Committee, for their organisation of this memorable event.

Wesley Music Festival

We congratulate both the Libermann and the 16 Choir on winning their respective competitions. The Libermann Choir has now won the 'Frank Hughes Cup' four years in a row. 'Govinda' (Alex Quinlan, Fionn Byrne, Mark Crowley and Avi Shandilya - all 5th Year) won the over 15's Rock Band category. The College Orchestra finished 2nd as did Cian Hasson and Stephen Ryan in their respective categories.

We congratulate all involved and thank the Music Department for their work and dedication.

Lourdes

A number of 5th Years applied to be student volunteers on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in 6th Year. They are commended for their quality of application and interview where they all presented themselves as talented, honest and articulate young men. We wish those who have been selected; Stephen Ryan, Josh Slevin, Harry Kearns, Ross Phelan, and Rory Gallagher all the best with their preparations for the Pilgrimage next September.

Feis Ceoil

Congratulations to Stephen Ryan, who placed 2nd (and received a Very Highly Commended award from the adjudicator) in the Paul Deegan Cup in the Feis Ceoil. This was a national competition for the U19 male voices where two songs of contrasting character are performed. Many thanks to his teacher Eunan MacDonald who prepared him for this event.

Tear Up The Ground

Tear up the Ground recently won Best Play, Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor and the Adjudicator's Award for best writing, execution and overall production at the St Andrew's One Act Drama Festival.

It was written by Eoghan Cleary and Cathal Maher and starred Cian Hasson, Hugh Kelly, Harry Kearns, Louis Keyes and Roy Geary.

It was a huge success and a testament to the theatrical efforts of the college.

Fifth Year students are commended for their courteous and cooperative nature, together with their positive contribution to and involvement in extra-curricular activities and their continuing academic focus. As we head towards our final term of six weeks, we remind all of the value of the weekly Application Cards to monitor effort and to measure the effectiveness of students' goal setting and time management. As we begin on the final term of this first leg of the marathon to the Leaving Certificate, all students and parents are encouraged to view and discuss the weekly cards to both affirm good practice and offer direction where needed.

Dates for your Diary

3rd-7th April: Seachtain na Gaeilge
3rd-7th April: Leaving Certificate Oral Exams
27th April: Extra-Curricular photographs for the Annual
28th April: Reminder – school closed
30th April: Willow Wheelers 100-Mile Cycle
14th May: Sports Day



David McWilliams (Class of 1985) Rossa Fanning (Class of 1981) Rob MacCarthy (Class of 2010) James Cronin (Class of 2016) Stephen Ryan (5th Year)

The Arts



Tear up the Ground

Tear up the Ground, a new play written and directed by Mr Maher and Mr Cleary and starring Roy Geary (6th Year), Cian Hasson, Harry Kearns, Hugh Kelly and Louis Keyes (5th Year), won Best Play at the St. Andrew's One Act Drama Festival in February this year. It was also awarded Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor and the Adjudicator's Award for Best Writing, Execution and Overall Production.

This phenomenal achievement was followed up by a 'homecoming tour' of the show in the college, seeing the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre transformed into an intimate and atmospheric theatre space. Here, the accomplished cast played to two full

houses, each night receiving a standing ovation in recognition of the remarkable standard of ensemble acting and professional performance achieved. Special thanks to Stephen Ryan (5th Year), Sean Hannon (4th Year) and Mark Landers (3rd Year) who ensured the production went off without a hitch each night and to Lorraine Hoffman and Gavin Coll, without whom the production would not have been the same.



The cast, crew, writers and directors of *Tear up the Ground*.

The Arts Cont'd



Conor Bowler (3rd Year)



Charles Cullen (3rd Year)

Debating

The Senior Debating Society performed strongly in the L&H annual UCD/Trinity Senior Schools competition. 4 Rock teams entered: Stephen Ryan (5th Year) and Ben Heapes (5th Year); Max McKenna (TY) and Mark Heavey (6th Year); Oisín Ryan (5th Year) and Michael Ryan (TY); and Scott Donohoe (6th Year) and John Heavey (6th Year); Michael and Oisín, and Scott and John progressed to the quarter finals, Scott and John, however, were successful in reaching the semi-finals, only narrowly missing out on making it through to the final.

The annual Past V Present Debate is always a highlight in the school's calendar, and this year the lecture hall was packed to the brim on Thursday 9th February. The present pupils successfully opposed the motion that 'This House Believes that Ireland's Best Interests Would Be Best Served By Leaving the EU' to a past team young and old. Rossa was named best speaker of the night. Eoin Martin (class of 2008) chaired.

Michael Ryan and Oisín Ryan are semi-finalists in the Aoife Bailey competition held in Maynooth. We wish them luck.



Mr Alan MacGinty, James Cronin (Class of 2016) Scott Donohoe (6th Year) David McWilliams (Class of 1985) Michael Ryan (TY), Brian O'Neill (President of the Union) Stephen Ryan (5th Year), Rossa Fanning (Class of 1981) John Heavey (6th Year) Rob MacCarthy (Class of 2010) Past V Present Debate

Junior Debating

John Cawley (2nd Year) proved to be an outstanding speaker in advancing to the final of the Junior L&H Competition.

English Department

Following trips to The Abbey and The Mill Theatre earlier in the year, the English Department organised an evening at the Bord Gais Theatre for a wonderful production of Blood Brothers. The ninety Second Years and ten Transition Year students who attended, accompanied with six teachers, experienced a memorable production of Willy Russell's popular musical.

Blackrock win multiple awards at the Wesley Music Festival

The Music Department achieved our best results to date at the Wesley Feis. The Wesley Music Festival is the equivalent of the Schools' Cup for Music. It was an opportunity for our boys to compete with their peers in other schools on a team and individual basis. We had 38 entries overall, winning 27 awards – six 1st places, eight 2nd places, six 1st Class Honours and seven Highly Commended. Outstanding results!

We congratulate both the Libermann and the Sixteen Choir on winning their respective competitions. The Libermann Choir has now won the 'Frank Hughes Cup' four years in a row.

2nd Year band *Paradox* (Alex Kelly, Sam Loscher, Robbie Gallagher, Sean Probert, Oscar Bourke-Mullaney and Robert Byrne) won the U15 Rock Band Category. Oscar also won the U15 – Solo Singing, and Sam the U15 Drum Kit category.

The College Orchestra finished 2nd as did Mark Landers (Solo Singing U15), Colm Hogan (Brass U15), Daniel Beatty (Classical Acoustic Guitar U15), Alex Kelly (Piano Solo U16), Gavin Jones (Classical Acoustic Guitar U15), Cian Hasson and Stephen Ryan (U15 Duet) and *Square One* (Mark Heavey, John Heavey, Jack Browne, Oisín McEnroe, Sean Byrne and Patrick Haugh, (all 6th Year). Our Corless Choir and Jazz Band were amongst six 1st Class Honours (3rd places).

Feis Ceoil 2017

Congratulations to our Libermann Choir who received a highly commended 3rd place, behind Ursuline Secondary School, Thurles and Wesley College who came first in the Feis Ceoil senior choir competition held at the R.D.S. on Tuesday last, 28th March 2017. This was their second appearance at the Feis Ceoil and we are delighted with such a strong performance.

Congratulations also to the College Orchestra who competed in the post primary Orchestral Competition and gave a stunning performance. This was the first appearance for the College Orchestra at the Feis Ceoil - receiving a well-deserved 85%.

Congratulations to Stephen Ryan (5th Year) who received 2nd place in the U18, Solo Singing Competition. Stunning Performance!

Harry Kearns (5th Year) also gave a wonderful performance in the U17 Solo Piano Competition. This was Harry's first time competing in this category and he thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Congratulations to all!

Battle of the Bands

Govinda, 5th Year band, consisting of Fionn Byrne, Alex Quinlan, Mark Crowley and Avi Shandilya was formed in the summer of 2015. They've had a fantastic term which saw them win the over 15s Rock Band competition in the Wesley Feis performing their own song Aisle. Following their great win, they went on to participate in the Battle of the Bands in Oatlands which provided a great platform for the boys to perform their own songs. They went to battle again playing in The Academy which saw them play their biggest set list to date. Govinda are looking forward to many more performances in the future, but for now, if you hear these boys warming up along the corridors of the college take a minute to have a listen – you won't be disappointed! Well done boys!



Govinda - Academy "Battle of the Bands"

Father Dowling Festival Concert

The Father Dowling Festival Concert was held last Thursday night, March 30th, in the Willow Park Sports' Hall. It was a fitting tribute to the legendary Father Jarlath who inspired generations of Willow boys to sing, to play, to entertain.



Father Dowling Concert

The College's Libermann Choir was in fine voice as they performed *My Soul's been Anchored in the Lord* and joined the Willow 1st Year Choir in singing *Who Wants to Live Forever*. It was great to see the senior boys performing alongside our 1st Years. It was a fantastic night's entertainment. We look forward to the Willow boys arriving in the College and participating in the music programme.

The Black Swan Music Programme

This term, as part of the first *Cross-Class Youth Development Programme* to be established in Dublin, Peter Coyle, Tom Dwan, Tadhg Egan, Gavin Jones, Rob Jordan, Thomas McCormack and Ruairi Moore all performed in the Five Lamps Arts Festival, as part of the Blackrock Swan Music Programme.

This weekly programme sees the seven TY students, along with their inner city counterparts, explore issues of class and its effects on young people growing up in Ireland today, through the medium of music and song writing. Singing and playing from a barge on the canal, the various cross-class bands performed songs throughout the evening of April 1st, creating a wonderful atmosphere on Charleville Mall which had been closed to traffic and turned into an inner city street festival for the occasion.



The Black Swan Music Programme

This ground breaking social initiative has proved a hugely positive experience for all involved, due in no small part to the commitment and dedication shown by the participating TY students. Ni neart go cur le chéile.



Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2017



Conal Regan, Ben Murphy, George Hook, Conor O'Neill and Ruairi O'Moore (all TY)



Matthew Farrell (TY) House 2nds V Argentinian visitors



Final - House 2nds V St. Michael's.
Harry Donnelly (5th Year)



Adam Dixon and Harry Donnelly (5th Years)
House 2nds V St. Michael's Final



Peter Spellman (3rd Year)



Blackrock Swan Youth Development Programme
performing on a barge in the canal as part of the Five
Lamps Arts' Festival



Libermann Choir (winners of the choir
competitions at the Wesley Feis)



George Hook, Patrick O'Connell (TY),
Ben Murphy (TY), Julie Hamilton



Conal Regan and Ruairi Moore (TY) at Who Wants to
be a Thousandaire



Liam Turner (5th Year) V Argentinian visitors



Joseph Tierney (3rd Year)

Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2017



Killian McQuaid (TY), Frank Byrne (5th Year), Daniel Foley (5th Year)



Josh Slevin (5th Year) Coleg Morgyn V House 2nds



Sean O'Brien (TY) and Harry Angulo (5th Year) Coleg Morgyn V House 2nds



Charlie O'Carroll (3rd Year) JCTV Belvedere



Andrew O'Doherty (6th Year) House 2nds
V Castle 2nds Semi-final



Christian McKenna (Class of 2016) Conor Halpin
(5th Year) Ross McCann (6th Year) at 5K4Kenya



Blackrock College supporters



Neil Holohan and Harry Kearns at the
5th Year Family Mass with their mothers



James Kelly, Dominique and Chris Aylward (6th
Years) at the 5K4Kenya



Eoin Kelly (2nd Year) 5K4Kenya

News from the Past



A Hundred Years Ago.



A. CONDRON E. MOONEY J. DORR W. FINN J. BIRMINGHAM T. GLYNN
J. CLEARY D. CUSSEN M. ROSS T. O'CARROLL (Capt) J. CLAVIN M. O'MAHONEY D. LISTON
L. O'DONOGHUE A. O'DEERT

The SCT and JCT both met Belvedere in their finals. The seniors won but the juniors lost to Belvedere whose team included 15-year old Kevin Barry, hanged in Dublin three years later by the British for his part in the War of Independence as a member of the IRA and remembered in the song named after him as "just a lad of eighteen summers".



15 year-old Kevin Barry playing for his school, Belvedere College, in the 1917 Leinster Schools' Junior Cup

Meanwhile the political scene still divided opinion and many past students, some barely out of school, were fighting in the British Army and this is reflected in a news cutting saved in the Community Journal.

Meanwhile other alumni were still involved in the cause of Irish freedom. In early 1917 Éamon de Valera was still in jail in England for his part in the Rising with permission to write home every fortnight and some of these letters to his wife, Sinéad, included paragraphs to be passed on to his old schoolfriend and best man at his wedding, Frank Hughes. Writing to Frank, Sinéad says "I wonder when will my bridegroom return". The MacNeill boys, Brian and Turlough, were students at the College and they too were waiting to see when their father, Eoin MacNeill, who had been Chief of Staff of the Irish Volunteers, might be released.

THE YOUNGEST MAJOR IN BRITISH ARMY A TUAM MAN.

So far as we know the youngest Major in the British Army is Major Frank Glynn, eldest son of Sir Joseph Glynn, Insurance Commissioner, of St. Jarlath's, Aylesbury Road, Dublin, and formerly of this town, where his wife's mother resides. Barely eighteen months ago Frank Glynn got a Commission in the Royal Field Artillery as Second Lieutenant and after the usual training went to the front. He soon showed capacity for his work and got a senior lieutenancy and in a short time a captaincy. He had some thrilling experiences in the trenches in France but came well out of all the dangers, and they were many, that surrounded him. To their artillery and their splendidly effective work the British Army owe their advance and wonderful success. Last week the battery in which Captain Glynn was engaged had the chief part of the fierce fighting at Arras and since for their part, and well they performed the task, covering themselves with honour. They are still pegging away deluging the soil of France with a continual hail of lead fired incessantly and fired with great precision and accuracy. In the engagement last week the battery in which Captain Glynn served lost its superior officers and he was at once put in charge as Major and remains as such. It is marvellously rapid advancement in the brief period of two years at farthest and reflects credit on the gallant recipient.

Others were still at their third level studies in the Castle which was by then used as a hostel for students attending UCD. The College authorities had hoped that the Castle could become a constituent college of UCD when it was founded in 1908 but this was not to be so, ever resourceful, they used the building for the accommodation needs of students attending the new university in Earlsfort Terrace.



Brian MacNeill and his father, Eoin



Elegant Castle students

Fifty Years Ago

The SCT was led to victory by Tony Forte in the final with St Mary's. As Father Walter Finn, himself a member of two cup-winning teams – 1916 and 1917 – and later newspaper rugby pundit with the Irish Independent under the pen-name "Alickadoo", said in his report on the match in the Blackrock College Annual "The 1967 'Rock SCT accomplished its mission – it brought back the Cup".



Tony Forte receiving the SCT cup from his mother

Two changes marked the 1967 cup match season, the first being that new cup match songs were introduced. The tunes of Gilbert and Sullivan had had their day, already having been supplanted by "From the halls of Blackrock College to the fields of Donnybrook" ("From the halls of Montezuma..." the official hymn of the US Marines). Now in 1967 the Dave Clark Five 1964 hit "Glad All Over" had become "Rock All Over". The other change was announced by the College President as he was presented with the cup – the College flag that had led victorious teams along the Rock Road from 1943 was replaced by a new one, the gift of the Past Students' Union.

Sixth Year



Easter is upon us and the class of 2017 have just sat their final house exams in preparation for the Leaving Certificate. A brief outline of the major events since February are outlined below.

Sport

We congratulate Cian Reilly and the members of the SCT who represented the school with distinction in their loss to Belvedere in the Senior Cup Final. The game was played in great spirit but on the day things didn't go our way and we congratulate Belvedere College on their win. Our boys should be very proud of their achievements and I have no doubt that we'll hear a lot about them on the rugby pitch in the future.



Tom Roche (6th Year) V Belvedere Senior Cup Final

The Castle Seconds lost to the House Seconds on the SCT pitch in what was a fantastic game. We wish the House Team well in the final against St Michael's. The Castle Thirds bowed out during the group stages of their competition having lost narrowly to St Mary's.



House 2nds V Castle 2nds

The 5K4Kenya was a huge success and on a sunny Sunday Ross McCann finished a very commendable third. Well done to all the organisers and participants.

On the front lawn the Senior Soccer Team played Belvedere College in the final of the Joe McGrath Cup. Having finished 2-2 after extra time the teams settled down for penalties; unfortunately we came out on wrong side of the penalty shootout.

Maths

Congratulations to Mark Heavey, Oisín McEnroe, Lorcan Brophy and Mark Dignam on finishing second to CBC Cork in the All Ireland Schools' Maths Quiz.

Orals

Just after midterm we were very fortunate to have Ms Bhreathnach organise our mock language orals for Irish, Spanish, French and German. It was a very worthwhile experience for the boys and a great opportunity for the boys in the lead up to the LC Orals.

Tear Up the Ground

Congratulations to Roy Geary (6th Year) and all the other actors in the highly acclaimed *Tear up the Ground*. The production swept the boards at the St Andrew's Drama Festival and a huge thanks goes out to Mr Cleary and Mr Maher for all their efforts.

Linguistics Olympiad

Well done to Mark Heavey who represented the College in the Linguistics Olympiad recently. Mark finished 44th out of 1300 students.

Lectures

We were again very fortunate to have two visiting speakers for Addiction Awareness Day. Professor Cathal Walsh spoke about "*Lies, damn lies, and probabilities - why you don't beat the bookie*" while Professor Ian Robertson spoke on "*It's chemical! Addictions and addictive habits, and what it's doing to your brain.*" Both speakers were well received and I'd like to thank Hugh Byrne and Aisling Mullen (Parents) and Mr Sean Walsh for their organisation of the day.

Sixth Year Pool Competition

The 6th Year pool tournament was won by Ronan Mullen. We congratulate Ronan in what is one of the most eagerly contested competitions of the year!



Ronan Mullen (6th Year)

Who Wants to be a Thousandaire.

The parents are invited to attend this fundraising event on April 27th in the Tablot Hotel, Stillorgan. It promises to be a great night with plenty of spot prizes and you could walk away with €1000 in your pocket!

Tickets are available at Reception in the College, €20 each or 4 for €60. We'd love to see you there.

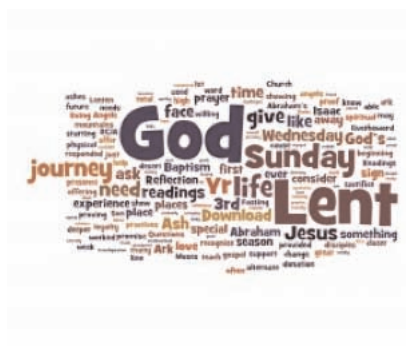
All proceeds to the College's Outreach Project in Machakos.

Dates for your Diary

Easter Study Times	Tuesday 18th April to Friday 21st April 9:30 am to 12:30pm 1:30pm to 4:30pm
Thousandaire	Thursday 27th April
Reminder School Closed May	Friday 28th April and Monday 1st May
6th Year Parents' Conference	Tuesday 2nd May
Progress Cards	Friday 5th May
Sports and Family Day	Sunday 1st May
Graduation Day	Sunday 21st May
Prize Day	Saturday 27th May

Please note that 6th Year teachers will continue to teach class up and until Wednesday 31st May.

Pastoral Programme



Lent 2017

Lent began on March 1st this year and Ash Wednesday was marked in Blackrock by offering each student the opportunity to attend a prayer service in our chapel and be signed with ash on their forehead. All ten prayer services were led by lay members of the R.E. department and many other colleagues volunteered to assist in the distribution of ashes.

During the first week of Lent, from March 6th to 10th each of our 3rd, TY and 5th Year students were also offered the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Once again, these services were led by members of the RE Department and Chaplaincy Team, who were supported by members of the Spiritan community and priests of the Dublin diocese who generously gave of their time to hear individual confessions. We thank all who ministered during the course of what was a very prayerful week in the life of the College.

It is planned that the rest of the student body will celebrate this sacrament during Term 3 as part of their respective Days of Reflection (2nd Year) and Graduation Preparation (6th Year).

Pilgrimage 2017

The word 'pilgrimage' has featured very prominently on Transition Year and 5th Year notice boards since mid-term...

In Fifth Year, we congratulate Rory Gallagher, Harry Kearns, Ross Phelan, Stephen Ryan and Josh Slevin who were chosen through an application and interview process, to represent the Class of 2018 on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes next September. Preparations for this pilgrimage have begun and our five pilgrims are busy getting their Garda Vetting paperwork sorted ahead of their meeting with fellow second-level pilgrims from the other twenty four schools on April 5th. We wish our students well with this undertaking and thank Mr MacGinty, Mr Sullivan, Mr Goan and Father Damian Farnan of the Dublin Diocese for their support of this project.

In Transition Year, preparations for this year's Camino are also gathering momentum. The first practice walk saw the group walk from Greystones to Bray in pleasant sunshine on March 8th. The students will be accompanied to Spain by Father Marc Whelan C.S.Sp, who is travelling as chaplain with the group, Mr Patrick O'Neill the leader of the pilgrimage, Ms Sinead Nolan and Mr Tom Ryan. Further group hikes in Glendalough (April 5th) and to St. James's Church (April 23rd), await the group before they depart from Dublin on April 29th.



Practice for The Camino – Bray to Greystones

Staff Retreat

On March 11th, 16 members of the Blackrock College Staff attended a retreat in the beautiful surroundings of the Margaret Aylward Centre in the grounds of St Mary's Holy Faith Convent in Glasnevin. The morning was devoted to a workshop on the theory and practice of Centering Prayer, a form of Contemplation which has been practiced by Christians for many centuries and which is enjoying something of a resurgence in our time. The workshop was given by two presenters from Contemplative Outreach Ireland, Siobhan Semple and Eileen Foley both of whom, as it happened, had sons who had attended Blackrock College. The morning was prayerful, relaxed and very informative and all the participants really appreciated the opportunity to experience this type of prayer and felt greatly encouraged to make it a part of their routine.

5th Year Family Mass & SPIRASI

On Sunday April 2nd, the fifth Sunday of Lent, the Fifth Year Family Mass was celebrated in the College. Father Brendan Carr C.S.Sp., a member of the Provincial Leadership team of the Spiritan Congregation in Ireland was Principal Celebrant. Father Brendan has served in Angola and in Sierra Leone and is presently chair of the Board of SPIRASI, the Spiritan Asylum Services Initiative which assists in the welfare of asylum seekers, torture victims and refugees in Ireland. In his homily Father Brendan made very insightful connections between Jesus 'unbinding' Lazarus and 'setting him free' and the work performed by those involved in Ministry, Education, Parenting and Spirasi.

Members of SPIRASI, joined the fifth year community in this prayerful celebration of the Eucharist and at the end of Mass, Daniel Walpole handed over a cheque for €3,200 to assist the mission of Spirasi in Ireland. This was the proceeds of the recent 5th Year Fast undertaken by 80 fifth year students. Congrats and many thanks to all, particularly Mr Neville and the House Representatives for their leadership throughout this initiative.



At the end of a very busy term 2, you will read of a myriad of other 'pastoral' activities elsewhere in this newsletter. There are the wonderful successes achieved by our choirs and orchestra lead by our musical team of Ms O'Connor, Mr Grumley Traynor and Mr Kavanagh, all of whom add so much to our Family Masses and liturgical programme throughout the year. There is news of the extremely well received TY Development Education project on Climate Change led by Ms Payne and of a very busy series of events that marked Addiction Awareness week co-ordinated by Mr Walsh and Mr Menezes. In the midst of these events, Ms McMahon and her RE45 team visit the homeless each Wednesday and the Matthew 25 Programme continues in schools, day care centres and nursing homes throughout South County Dublin. So many good things happening and so many good people to guide our young men through them. We continue to be blessed by the unselfish generosity of teachers in the College.

A happy and holy Easter to all.



Daniel Walpole (5th Year) Miriam Omoro and Rory Halpin of SPIRASI



Curtis Winklemann, Art Lynch, Daniel Walpole at the 5th Year Family Mass with Rory Halpin, Miriam Omoro, Father Carr and Mr Neville

Development Education



The Spiritan Schools' Development Education Showcase Event took place in Templeogue College on Friday 24th March. At this event, now in its third year, the Spiritan schools come together to present their projects on global justice issues. The Blackrock project this year is called 'Climate Change – are we bothered?' It aims to raise awareness about climate change and its effects. It looks at how we as individuals, as a community and as a nation, must cast off our inertia and change our attitudes and behaviour if we are to stem the rapid rise in temperature and to prevent calamity. Transition Year students Dylan Hutchinson, Michael McDonald, Drummond McGinn, Max McKenna, Ruairi Moore, Adam O'Sullivan, Andrew Ryan and Michael Ryan, all members of the college Green Schools Committee prepared and presented the project. Their knowledge of their subject and their compelling and passionate delivery was highly commended on the day. Teacher Anne Payne and other members of the Blackrock College Development Education Committee helped the boys to prepare for the event.



Andrew Ryan, Ms Payne, Max McKenna, Michael Ryan, Adam O'Sullivan, Michael McDonald, Mr MacGinty, Ruairi Moore, Dylan Hutchinson and Drummond McGinn at the Spiritan Development Educational Day in Templeogue College

Green Schools



The application for the An Taisce Green Schools Biodiversity Flag has recently been submitted by the three schools who share our beautiful campus. This time of year provides a wonderful opportunity to observe the fascinating biodiversity on our doorstep. Why not enjoy the impressive sight of brent geese in their V formations just before they leave us in April to return to their breeding grounds in northern Canada or listen to the dawn chorus as our resident birds begin the nesting season. The world of nature is beginning the annual display which provides so many wonderful moments of biodiversity if we just take a little time to notice them. It is also appropriate to acknowledge the hard work of the Green Schools' Committee who have initiated and developed a wide range of projects across the campus. These include outdoor classroom,

biodiversity sites, nest box scheme, tree trail, bird feeding stations, holocaust memorial garden, brimstone butterfly project, bird survey, dendrochronology project and nature walks.



Observing Birdlife in the Campus



Tree Trail



Holocaust Memorial

Sport



Basketball

Coming back from midterm The Blackrock 2nd Years came up against Cellbridge CS in the East-Leinster Quarter Final. Cellbridge were an excellent side. Blackrock fought incredibly hard and showed great character to stay in the game, however Cellbridge ran out deserved winners. Fergal Keane (Captain) and his squad can be very proud of their efforts this season and look towards next season with real optimism.

Senior Soccer

The senior soccer team travelled over to Manchester in February for their annual soccer fixtures. The boys started the weekend with a tour of Old Trafford. Jack Tonge, Robert Young and Jack Reilly particularly enjoyed themselves!! On Saturday morning both 1st XI and 2nd XI teams played two extremely competitive fixtures. In the First's game St. Bedes started the stronger and took a 2-0 lead. Harry Norris got a goal back with an excellent finish from the edge of the box. In the 89th minute an Aran Horgan penalty levelled up the game and the game went to penalties. Jack Tonge, Peter Walsh, Harry Norris, Aran Horgan and Jack Reilly all scored their penalties and thanks to a Peter Quinlan save the firsts won 5-3. In the Seconds' game a free flowing game with chances at both ends saw the seconds, captained by Luke Powderly, win 5-4.

On their return from St. Bede's the team had a semi-final to play in the Joe Mc Grath Cup. A hard fought win against Rockbrook College set up a final versus Belvedere. The final was played here on the front lawn. It was an excellent match. Both teams playing some excellent football. 0-0 at half time and playing with 10 men for the majority of the second half the soccer team dug deep to lead 1-0 until Belvedere equalised in the last minute. The game went to extra time where Belvedere made the man advantage count, however that was not the end. A James Kelly header levelled the game and onto penalties the game went. Belvedere were the lucky ones on the day scoring 4 out of 5 penalties and won the Cup. It was a fantastic occasion and we look forward to next year's competition.

Badminton

This was the first year Blackrock competed in the Leinster Badminton finals. Held in Baldoyle Badminton Centre, the team who represented Blackrock were all 2nd Year pupils, comprising of Darragh Dempsey (captain), Alex Cronnelly, Stephen O' Nuallain and Andrew Ryan. The subs were John Dennison and Darragh Harrison.

Captain Darragh Dempsey led the way and Blackrock eased through their pool games undefeated to set up a final against St Kieran's of Kilkenny. The final was a gripping game with a number of games going down to the wire. The final score finishing 3-3, St Kieran's

were awarded the Championship based on count back of points' difference. We can look forward to next year with great optimism.

Cross Country

There were some really strong performances at the Leinster Cross Country Championships on Wednesday February 15th. However, the massive increase in standard from East Leinster's, meant that unfortunately none of the boys qualified for the All Irelands. Our junior team performed admirably coming in 6th place, our Intermediate team in 5th place, and the senior team came so close to qualification in 4th place (the top 3 qualify for All Irelands). The standard is on the rise across all age groups, this is the first time in a few years where all age groups qualified for the Leinster Championships. We greatly look forward to how the boys will fare in athletics later in the year and how they will fare next year in cross country.

Golf

On 27th March there was a fantastic turn out in the Castle Golf club Rathfarnham for the annual Father Fullen cup with 46 players competing. The first tee off was at 7.30 am just as the sun was rising. Unlike last year the weather was beautiful not a cloud in the sky, we had some great scores with the top score coming from Harry Cullen from 4th Year playing off a handicap of 14 having 38 points. In second place was Alex Carroll 4th Year playing off 17 with a score of 36 points, the gross prize went to Alex Bolger again 2nd Year playing off 8 with 29 gross points.

Our senior team have their upcoming semi-final in the Leinster league playing against Donabate Community School in Royal Curragh Golf Club Naas on Friday 7th April. We wish the team of James Cronin (Captain), Tom Dowdall, Paddy Sommers, Robert Abernethy and Ronan Cowhey the very best of luck.

The senior team are also in the Irish Schools' Senior Championship National semi-final playing Ulster on 25th April at 8am in Lucan Golf Club, again we wish the team the best of luck.



Cathal French, Shane Bresnan and Oisín Reid at the Father Fullen Cup golf outing

Sport



Rowing

The next regatta for the senior and junior team will be the Commercial Regatta and Neptune Regatta on the first weekend in April. With the racing season in full swing after that rowers will be competing almost every weekend. Over the Easter holidays Blackrock rowing club will be competing in the National Schools Regatta in Limerick which is one of our main events. Recently we purchased our first boat with the help of parents and the school. This is a great step for the development of rowing as a sport in the school.

Rugby

Senior

The second half of the winter term can be an exciting time around school as it brings the latter stages of the two main rugby cup competitions. The Senior Team, having defeated Kings' Hospital and Terenure in the first two rounds, met Gonzaga in what was their first ever Senior Cup semi-final - a wonderful achievement by an excellent side. A more clinical and dynamic performance from Blackrock was always going to be required to see off the constant threat and quality of our tough opponents. We achieved that and progressed into the final with a 34-8 score line. Leinster Senior Cups are never easy to win. The final, against last year's winners Belvedere, was going to be difficult. Friendly results count for nothing. The experience they brought from last year's cup win and even the defeat at the same stage the year before for a couple of their players, appeared to help them remain more composed at key times in the game. Small moments can win and lose matches and Belvedere came out on top in those. They are worthy champions. A 10-3 defeat was hugely disappointing for everyone involved, including of course our wonderful supporters led so well by the cheerleaders, and the parents who have given so much to their sons both this year and throughout their lives. We must however not let a sporting result negate what has been a hugely successful year and an educational success in every sense of the word. We are better people for the experiences we have shared and the school remain very proud of the SCT of 2017.



Transition Year development group in Ulster with Niall Malone and Craig Gilroy



James Moriarty and Patrick Patterson (6th Years), SCT Final

Junior

Heroic was the word used to describe the performance of the J.C.T against an extremely talented St. Michael's team in the final of the Leinster Schools' Junior Cup. Both teams gave their all and battled to the end. The game finished 7 all, with the J.C.T showing great courage, grit and determination throughout the match.

We salute the character and whole hearted endeavour that Hugo O'Malley and his Junior Cup Rugby Squad showed in the replay. They gave their all, as they have done throughout the year. Great team spirit, courage, determination and tenacity were in evidence in all facets of the game and although the result did not go our way with St Michaels running out winners (31-17) this Blackrock junior team lived up to the finest traditions of the College.



John Campbell, Ben Brownlee JCT Final V Michael's

Squash

The two squash courts, located behind the swimming pool, have been upgraded in recent weeks. Both courts have been painted, the floors of both courts have been sanded and air-handling units have been installed to heat the building in winter and cool the courts in the summer months. Upwards of 60 boys are playing squash on a weekly basis and we encourage more boys to enjoy the fabulous facilities we have within the squash building. Ms Naomi Keenan (nkeenan@blackrockcollege.com) is coordinating all squash activity for the boys. Please contact her with any enquiries relating to squash.

On Wednesday 29th March the school squash team consisting of Alex Byrne, Max Cosgrave, Ed Bourke Kennedy, Fred Hamilton, Eoin O'Sullivan and Ned Fitter (all 2nd year) and Sean Lardner, Daniel Cullen, Mike Hayes, Patrick Graham, Tom Hardiman, Cathal Ryan, Greg Cronin, Sam O'Carroll, Conall Walsh and Adam O'Sullivan (all 4th year) competed in a friendly tournament at St Fintan's in Sutton. This was the school's first squash fixture in a number of years. Squash will continue in the summer term and if anyone is interested in joining please contact Ms Keenan.



Squash team members from left to right: Sam O' Carroll, Daniel Cullen, Greg Cronin, Adam O'Sullivan, Conall Walsh, Cathal Ryan, Tom Hardiman, Christian Young and Patrick Graham

Table Tennis

A very busy term and successful term for table tennis sees most of the teams in a strong position going into the Leinster Cup Finals and All Ireland Finals. The A teams also completed the League treble, for only the 5th time ever, taking the Leinster Division 1 titles at Minor, Junior & Senior.



Tom Hardiman (4th Year) in full flight V St. Fintan's

Senior A have, for the 8th year in a row, won the Kemp Shield for Leinster League Division 1, equalling the record set by Blackrock from 1953-1960. Senior B have won Leinster League Division 2, and a playoff before Easter should see the Senior squad qualify for an 8th consecutive All Ireland Finals Day, seeking a 6th title in 7 years. Senior A are through to the Leinster Cup Semi Finals, with Senior B also in the Semi Final, in the bottom half of the draw.

Junior A have also won Leinster League Division 1, taking the Mahony Cup for the 7th year in a row, and also have a playoff to qualify for the All Irelands, as well as a Leinster Cup Semi Final to come. Junior B, despite a strong finish to the season, finished outside the league medals in Division 1, but are also in the Cup Semi Final, with another all Blackrock final a possibility. Junior 2A bowed out of the Cup at Quarter Final stage, but with a match remaining in Division 2 can still finish in the top 2, while Junior 2B have won Division 3.

Minor A have regained the Egan Cup for Leinster League Division 1, taking the Leinster title for the 5th time in 7 years, avoiding a playoff to qualify for the All Irelands as Willow A claimed Runners Up spot in Division 1, and the combined Blackrock Minor team will go to the All Irelands for only a 4th time ever, seeking a 3rd All Ireland Minor title. Blackrock A also have a tough Quarter Final to come, but with two Willow teams still in contention in the bottom half of the draw, there is a small hope of another all Blackrock final.

Water Polo

On Wednesday the 22nd of March the senior water polo team embarked from the school early in the morning to compete in the All-Ireland Senior Schools water polo Championship taking place in the National Aquatic Centre. Led out by Captain Rob Sheedy we played the first match of the group stage, which ended in a comfortable win 12-3 against St. David's of Beaumont. The second encounter was a much tougher affair against the skilful St. Malachy of Belfast, a tight game ending in a 1 point win to Blackrock (6-5) which saw qualification into the finals of the Championship. Blackrock were drawn against St. Joseph's College for the quarter final game, it was a tough encounter with the lead changing throughout, and Blackrock losing in the dying minutes 6-5 to a very competitive St Joseph's side who went on to then win the final.

Photos courtesy Rock Photography
www.rockphotography.ie

www.blackrockcollege.com

Reflection

WOW – Walk on Wednesday 24th May 2017

To draw attention to Climate Change and to how our overdependence on fossil fuels is contributing to it, we urge all of the Blackrock College Community to walk, cycle or to use public transport on

Wednesday 24th May.

Drivers of single-occupancy cars or cars containing a driver and just one passenger can expect to pay a carbon tax to be collected in the school yard. Taxes will be donated to the Blackrock College Soup Run. (Blackrock Dev Ed Committee).