



Bish E-Zine Easter 2021

WELCOME TO OUR E-ZINE

Dear Friends of Bish,

When our last e-zine was published back in December 2020 we were looking forward to a new term in January with all pupils in the school building. We had just celebrated a very busy but positive term in the school building. Then a decision was made, just after Christmas, that some pupils would return for a limited number of days. At the last minute the Government announced that all school buildings would remain closed and that remote teaching and learning would begin.



John Madden - Principal.

Here in the Bish, staff and students responded magnificently. Over 100 school laptops were distributed to pupils who needed a device to access remote learning. Classes continued as per our timetable, which was a significant change from last year when school buildings were closed. I was very proud of the way teachers and families were able to juggle their new reality - it was not easy.

Over the last 4 weeks we have seen a small piece of normality in the school building with the return of our 6th and 5th years as well as our ASD class. It was really encouraging to hear the sound of pupils and teachers back in the school building. I want to pay tribute to all members of the Bish community for the way that they have respectfully engaged in all of the Covid-19 restrictions around the school.



Our 6th years have received some certainty in the last few weeks about the Leaving Certificate Exam and the parallel process of Accredited Grades. There were further clarifications this week on a subject by subject basis. From talking to both teachers and 6th years, they appear to be fair changes and people are relatively happy with the arrangement. Our 6th years start their oral exams on Saturday 27th March and we wish them well. They will always be remembered in the Bish for a number of reasons, not least for having to complete their Leaving Certificate during a pandemic. They will also be the 6th Years who completed their studies in the Presentation Road Building.

Over this term we have engaged in meetings with parents, teachers and pupils and sought their feedback. Similar themes emerged from all 3 groups during the remote teaching and learning phase the academics, in general, were well catered for. There are instances where a small number of pupils were not able to engage for various reasons.

What was and is missed, is the general life and energy of the other 2 Pillars of “Ethos” and “Extra Curricular” activities. There were a number of exciting initiatives; Creative Engagement, Digital Story Telling, Bish Brownie Competition, Photo Competitions, Headstrong Wellbeing Initiatives etc. Many thanks to all of those teachers and pupils who engaged with these. However it has been difficult to cater for and get engagement from as many people as would normally be involved.

We are currently planning for the arrival back on site of all the remaining students. We do realise that the Covid numbers are remaining stubbornly high. I would ask all of our Bish students to continue to follow our motto of “Love God, Work Hard and Take Care of one Another” in helping to combat Covid. I am so proud of the teenagers and young adults in the Bish for the way in which they have engaged with us in a positive and respectful manner. They have missed out on so much over the last year. Hopefully the programme for vaccine rollout will help drive down the numbers and we can all get back to some more normality.

While all this has been going on, we are still preparing to complete this school year and also start planning for next year. We received word this week that we are being allowed introduce a new subject for Leaving Certificate 2023; Computer Science. That will make 3 new Leaving Certificate subjects (Computer Science, Leaving Cert P.E and Politics and Society) we will have introduced in the last 2 years, over 20% of an expansion in subjects offered. It is an exciting step for the school and one which will benefit a large number of our students.

I would like to thank all of the staff in the Bish, teachers and support staff, for their commitment and effort during these very different times, and indeed at all times. Without them the school would not be the same.

Many thanks for all of your support over the past weeks and months, please enjoy our e-zine. It gives a snapshot of the 3 Pillars of the Bish, "Academics, Ethos and Extra Curricular", over the last 3 months.

I shared John O' Donoghue's piece below with our 6th year parents and pupils last week, I think it is an appropriate sentiment for the times we are in:

Happy Easter and stay safe,
John.



John O'Donoghue 2 hrs · @

This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes.

Try, as best you can, not to let
The wire brush of doubt
Scrape from your heart
All sense of yourself
And your hesitant light.

If you remain generous,
Time will come good;
And you will find your feet
Again on fresh pastures of promise,
Where the air will be kind
And blushed with beginning.

JOHN O'DONOHUE

EUGENE DUNLEAVY RIP

The Bish lost yet another of its great characters when Eugene Dunleavy died after a short illness in NUIG hospital surrounded by the love of his life Mary and his two daughters Carol and Valerie. Eugene was born in Mayo in 1934 but moved with his family to Galway where they opened the famous Sacre Coeur Hotel in Salthill. Eugene had his secondary education in St. Mary's College and then went on to receive a degree from NUI Maynooth.

While he completed his higher diploma in education in the Bish in 1957 and taught in Banada Secondary school and Rochestown Secondary School in Cork. His strong belief in the benefits of Sport and Physical Education for young people propelled him to be one of the first Irish people to train as a physical education teacher in Strawberry Hill in London. He returned to take up the position as a PE teacher in the Bish in 1967, a position he held until he retired in 1999.

From his earliest days in the Bish, Eugene encouraged every student to get involved in some sport. His philosophy, like that of the Olympic founders, was that in sport, the joy was not just the winning but the competing. He could be passionate about any sport be it Soccer, Athletics, Rugby, Rowing, Tennis or even his beloved GAA (as long as a Bish boy was playing!). He was so committed to his school that he often said were he to be cut, he would bleed the 'Blues of the Bish'. A man of many parts Eugene also taught business studies, Latin and religious education. The thousands of boys he taught over his 40 years in education are indeed forever in his debt for few teachers will ever hope to influence so many boys in such a positive way. For a man who never owned a smart phone the outpouring of both sadness and praise on the school social media sites has been overwhelming with many amazing stories from former colleagues and students and the positive influence he had on their lives.

After he retired in 1999 Eugene regularly returned to the school to driving the school busses and refereeing school matches and even taking an occasional class if needed.



Eugene was a committed and talented golfer and a long-time member of Galway golf club. He was also a lifetime member of Fr. Griffins GAA club. His many friends in both clubs will miss him greatly. Up until its closure, Eugene was one of the great ambassadors of the Sacre Coeur Hotel. He was always there with a friendly word for everyone who patronised it. His warm personable nature, welcoming disposition and good sense of humour made everyone feel welcome.

At his requiem mass his daughter Carol wrote a moving tribute to her father, which was wonderfully delivered by his other daughter Valerie. In it, we got a wonderful insight into Eugene Dunleavy, the family man, a devoted father, husband, grandfather and a caring, friendly neighbour.

His faith underpinned everything he did and he told his students he prayed for them every day. When asked by one student what was his greatest ambition, Eugene replied "*When I die it's to go to heaven*". He is certainly there now in reunion with his departed family members. And I am sure, that in heaven, if a bus needs to be driven, a class to be taken, a match to be refereed or a round of golf to be played, Eugene is on the job. His philosophy on living, ***Amor Vincit Omnia***, Love Conquers All, is a fitting epithet to this wonderful person. We are the wealthier for having known him and the poorer for his passing. May he rest in peace.

Seamus Cahalan – Deputy Principal



BRO. CORMAC RIP

It was with great sadness that we heard of the sudden death of Br Cormac Commons of the Patrician Brothers at his home in Newbridge, on Dec 22nd last, one day short of his 81st birthday. Br Cormac was born in Rosshill in Galway on December 23rd 1939. He attended the Bish in Nuns' Island as a student. He joined the Patrician Brothers and was first professed as a brother on August 15th, 1956.

He attended UCG and studied for an Arts degree. Following his degree in UCG, Br Cormac taught in The Bish. He moved from there to Mount St Joseph, Tullow in Carlow (1963-1967); the Patrician College Ballyfin in Laois and Patrician College, Finglas in Dublin where he was principal for a number of years.

Br Cormac was a leading light in educational circles, and he made a significant contribution to the development of secondary education in Ireland. He served on the Executive of the Joint Managerial Body for voluntary secondary schools and was a founding member of Le Chéile School Trust.

Br Cormac was a keen sportsman. In his early years he was known as a stylish hurler with Castlegar hurling club. He also played Gaelic football with Éire Óg GAA Club in Galway City.

Br Cormac was a loyal Galwegian; every week he got a copy of The Connacht Tribune sent to his home in Newbridge. A regular visitor to Galway, he visited his Patrician colleagues and friends in Kingston, Taylors Hill. He also called to his beloved Bish on Nuns' Island.

Br Cormac is survived by his brother, John and sister in law Maureen in Rosshill; sister Margaret (Garvey) and brother in law Pat in Co Clare; nephews and nieces, relatives and a wide circle of friends.

The Patrician Family in Nuns' Island and Kingston along with his family and his Castlegar colleagues will mourn the passing of such an inspirational figure.

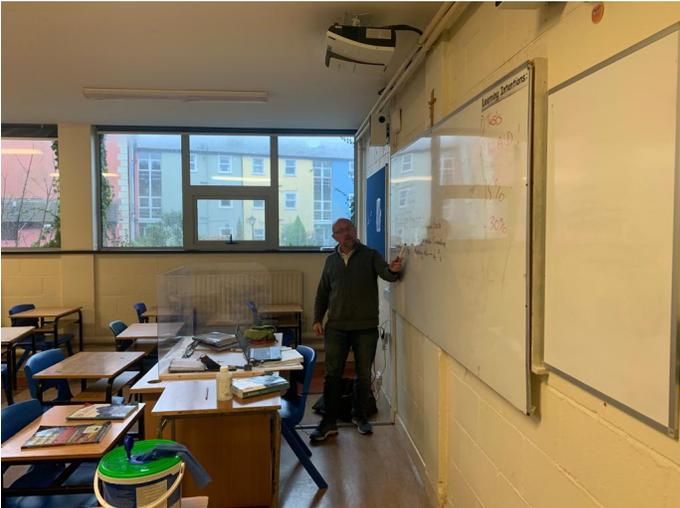
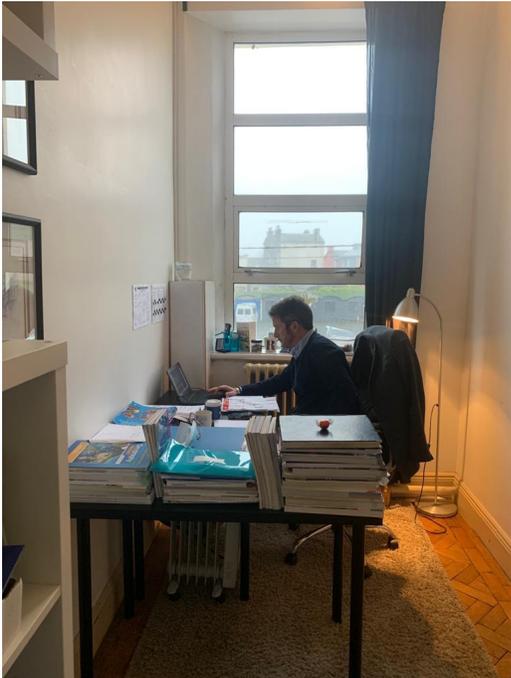
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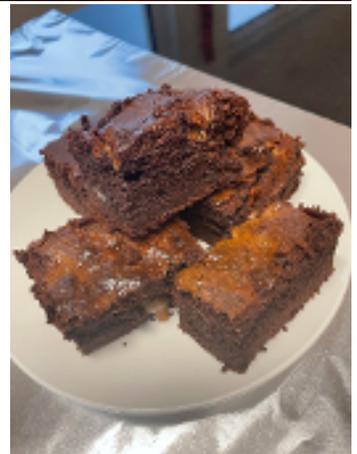
Myles McHugh.



REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING



LOCKDOWN BAKE-OFF



BISH GOES WILD/HEADSTRONG PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



The Headstrong Committee came up with the idea of encouraging people to get out and about within their 5km limit. The link between mental and physical health is of great importance and so the photography competition was introduced.

Students were tasked with taking a photo of their surroundings while getting out for some exercise.

We had some amazing entries from students of all year groups but the winner was Diarmaid McGrath from second year with his misty landscape.

Second prize went to 6th Year Mark Regan for his photograph from Kilrainey Woods and third prize went to first year student Tomás Spellacy.



GALWAY HOSPICE ROWING FUNDRAISER

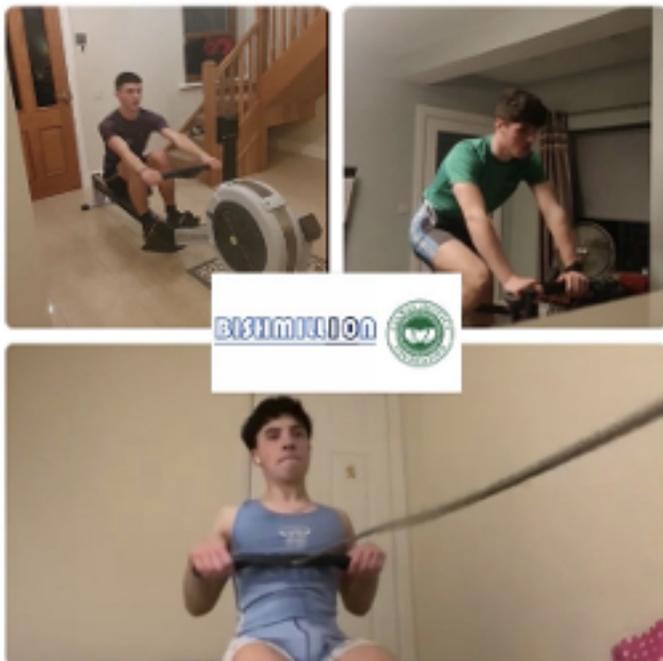


Absolutely incredible work from our oarsmen. During lockdown, the Junior 18 Crew completed a challenge of 10 Million Metres throughout the month of February in aid of Galway Hospice.

They raised over €5000 for this amazing cause.

Originally they set their target at €1500 but with the generosity of the Bish community, they smashed that target within the first three days and increased it further.

Well done to all involved and sincere thanks to everyone who donated so generously.



FOUNDATION DAY



It was lovely to see the statue of St. Joseph cleaned and adorned with flowers to mark Foundation Day. Well done and thanks to Frank, Piotr and Seamus Cahalan for all their hard work.

IN REMEMBRANCE



The Bish community took a moment to reflect on a full year since everything effectively shut down on March 12th 2020. Many lit candles to remember those who have been effected by Covid since the start of the pandemic. A beautiful tribute for all those that have been lost and those that we miss.

26 March 2021
Happy *Le Chéile Day* everyone.



Our *Le Chéile* family all over the country engaged in the *#DropEverythingAndPray* reflection event today.

The theme of the prayer event is *#unlocking*. We reflect on the heritage *Le Chéile* schools have received from founding Congregations.

The *Le Chéile* 'Drop Everything and Pray' event can be viewed at:
<https://vimeo.com/529214325>

DROP EVERYTHING AND PRAY

We were delighted to be a part of 'Drop Everything and Pray' which saw a coming together of all the *Le Chéile* schools to reflect on our ethos. Teachers and students took part in the event virtually on the 26th March which was an incredible celebration of our *Le Chéile* family.

STAFF STEP CHALLENGE



For a bit of fun and to get moving, our PME teachers launched the Bish February Steps Challenge.

Congratulations to Seamus Cahalan who was the overall individual winner of the Bish February Steps Challenge with a whopping 699,310 steps! He is pictured here with Darren Burke (representing Team 6 who won the Team challenge with 1,438,498 steps), John Madden, Michael Farrell and Andrew Browne, the organisers.

Congratulations to our top 3 individual winners of the Bish February Steps Challenge - Ríona Johnson, Seamus Cahalan and Sandra Collins. They are pictured here with two of the organisers-Andrew Browne and Michael Farrell.

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY ROCK YOUR SOCKS



THROWBACKS



While sports have been suspended due to the pandemic, we've used our social media platforms to celebrate days gone by. Each week, we bring you #ThrowbackThursday. The Bish has a rich sporting history and it is wonderful to be able to look back on past events. We will play again.

WELCOME BACK 6TH YEARS



The lads took very little time to settle back into their routine in The Pres. Lovely to see them back and engaging so well in their studies. Even the Presentation Sisters commented on how much they were missed.

It has been a difficult time for 6th Years given the fact they were faced with so much uncertainty until recent times. They have shown great resilience in how they have coped over the past few months.



Our Caretakers Piotr and Frank have spent many hours at The Pres trying to ensure that our 6th years have a nice area to sit and eat in. Since their return to school, the back of the Pres has been transformed with marquees and benches.

EASTER FUN



We wanted to acknowledge how brilliant our 5th and 6th years have been since their return to school so everyone received an Easter egg. A small random act of kindness which is very well deserved by them.



WELCOME BACK 5TH YEARS



It was great to be able to welcome 5th Years back to school with banners and flags flying. We are also delighted to have installed a marquee so that the lads can have their lunch outside. Teachers have also taken advantage of the good weather recently and used this seated area for classwork.



BISH CREATIVE

The Bish have been extremely lucky to be one of the schools chosen to be part of The Creative Schools initiative that is being led by the Arts Council in partnership with the Departments of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media, Education & Skills and Children & Youth Affairs.

With the aid of this project and along side the introduction of Art and Music as new subjects being offered in the school, our aim is to give our students a voice and opportunity to experience creativity as an integral part of their education with the hope of placing the arts and creativity at the center of school life.

Student voice and enabling creative potential in each student is so important and is at the heart of what we are hoping to achieve with Creative Schools. We consult our students about the school environment, their experience of arts education and the way in which they learn. This is led by our student advisory group who work alongside their Creative Associate Phillida Eves.

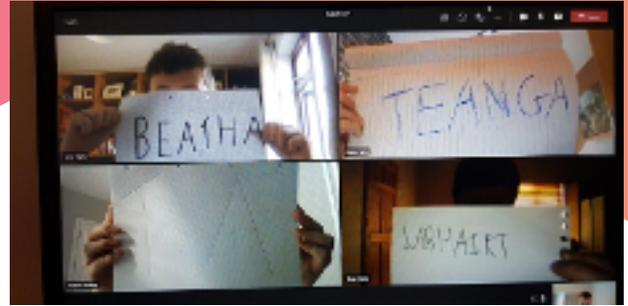
They've been busy coming up with ideas and projects to encourage the whole school community to become involved in creative projects. Since Christmas our students have organized an online digital story telling workshop for students from every year group and an online brownie baking challenge. This is an incredible achievement given the fact that it was all organized by our students who are engaging in this project from home due to Covid-19. We will also be undertaking a "Celebrating Creativity" week in May and hope to provide more creative opportunities to the school community.

We were also very lucky to take part in a Creative Schools Engagement project which was led by I.NicAoidh and artist Lara Luxardi where some of our student's work was showcased in the NAPD Creative Engagement National Exhibition.

Creative school coordinators I.NicAoidh and M.Connolly can be contacted by any parent with any creative skills who would like to and be willing to help develop and implement creativity in our school. Our email address is bishcreative@bish.ie. You can also follow us on Instagram @bish.creative



SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE



Dia daoibh a chairde go léir, tá áthas an domhain orainn i Roinn na Gaeilge i mbliana arís tar éis ceiliúrtha a dhéanamh de Sheachtain na Gaeilge le Energia 2021. Caithfear a rá go raibh coicís den scoth againn saite sa Ghaeilge. Ar an dea-uair, ghlac na céadta dalta agus múinteoir páirt sna himeachtaí a bhí ar siúl ar líne mar gheall ar an bpaindéim. Caithfimid buíochas a ghabh le Sarah Gleeson as a cuid oibre iontach ar na suíomhanna sóisialta chun an Ghaeilge a spreagadh ar líne (@stjosephsbish ar Twitter).

Feicimís anois ar roinnt de na himeachtaí a bhí ar siúl againn i mbliana: bhí seanfhocal an lae againn chuile lá. Cuireadh an seanfhocal seo ar líne agus tugadh nodanna do gach duine conas a úsáidtear an seanfhocal seo i mbun cainte. Bhí comórtas cócaireachta againn ar siúl sa scoil agus ghlac cuid mhór de na daltaí sa chomórtas seo 'Donnóg Sheacláide', bhí íomhánna den scoth againn. Anuas air sin, bhí 'Tráth na gCeist' ar siúl ag Roinn na Gaeilge i rith na ranganna ar líne le gach bliain ar fud na scoile. Baineadh an-sult as na ceisteanna seo trí Ghaeilge agus tugadh neart freagraí greannmhara dúinn chomh maith. Féach ar @stjosephsbish ar Twitter chun breathnú ar na híomhánna seo go léir.

Faoi dheireadh, ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabh le Roinn na Gaeilge, leis na daltaí agus leis na múinteoirí ar fad as ucht páirt a ghlacadh sa chéiliúradh na Gaeilge seo. Tá an Ghaeilge timpeall orainn mar theanga bheo agus ba chóir dúinn a bheith bródúil as ár dteanga dúchais. Leanfaidh muintir Naomh Sheosaimh ar aghaigh leis an nGaeilge sa saol laethúil. Táimid ag tnúth go mór le Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022 cheanna! #SnaG2021

Adrian Morrissey, Roinn na Gaeilge



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