

# The Wesley Update



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## Michael Longley Visits

On 16 January, the distinguished poet, Michael Longley, gave a Reading in Wesley. Longley has won many honours including the Queen's Medal for Poetry and is currently the Ireland Professor of Poetry. He spoke of his writing life which he described as 'an inner adventure' and recounted some wonderful stories, including a visit to Buckingham Palace to receive the Gold Medal.

Longley read 'Wounds', 'Carrigskeewaun', 'Wreaths', 'Last Requests' and 'Ceasefire', powerful and evocative poems on the Leaving Certificate course, and offered marvellous commentaries on each one. He also delivered a recent poem about his grandson and answered questions from the audience. His warm and humorous talk captivated the young listeners. Kate Willis and Ben Healy thanked him for a wonderful visit and presented him with a gift on behalf of everyone lucky enough to have been there.



*Michael Longley with Kate Willis*

## RTÉ Christmas Service



*The Senior Choir performing in the RTÉ Christmas Service.*

At the kind invitation of Dr John Stephens and The Methodist Church in Ireland, Wesley College was afforded the amazing and challenging opportunity of leading Christmas Day worship on RTÉ television. The school's Senior Choir, conducted by Ms Helen Doyle, along with Rev Nigel Mackey and Mr Christopher Woods had a long afternoon of filming in the studios of Montrose at the end of November, having put in many hours of rehearsal and careful preparation over the winter term. Ben Healy and Aoife Cassidy, as well as Wesley Shaw, Lisa Delacy and Mr Woods recounted the story of Christmas and Rev Mackey delivered a thought-provoking sermon which was illuminated by carols such as *Oíche Chiún*, *Ukrainian Bell Carol* and *The First Noel*. Many thanks to our accompanist Ms Paula Dowzard and to each member of the Senior Choir, all of whom worked with great dedication and commitment in the run-up to this engagement and who represented Wesley so well.

## University Honours

Congratulations to Ivan Sliouniaev who received a UCD High Achiever Award in recognition of his exceptional academic accomplishment in the Leaving Certificate. Sarah Lewis received an Entrance Exhibition Award in Trinity College for her achievements in the same exam. We wish them both continued success in their college careers.

## Poetry Aloud



Mr Ken Dover with Poetry Aloud winner Natasha Waugh

## Greased Lightning

Wesley's budding actors proved their worth once again this year in an exciting and imaginative production of *Grease* in November. The large cast was led by Peter Duffy as Danny and Helen Tempany as Sandy, with Michael Naude and Eva O'Connor in supporting roles as Kenickie and Rizzo. The packed audiences in the Myles Hall were treated to marvellous renditions of much loved songs and one could not easily forget the colourful and comedic T-Birds and Pink Ladies in a play full of energy and humour. The entire cast and crew deserve the praise lavished upon them for their performances. The success of the production is also a testament to the unfailing enthusiasm of Ms Spicer, Ms Lynas and Ms Hiney.

## St Ann's Carol Service

The Senior Choir performed in St Ann's Church, Dawson Street as guests of the Salvation Army on December 6. St Ann's is a wonderful venue with an amazing acoustic and the choir's high standards of musicianship ensured a very special evening. Festive decorations set the scene and the service was full of glad tidings and unlifting messages for the season. Pizza in Little Caesars beforehand had the choir full of energy and they gave polished performances of a number of Christmas songs and carols. Soloists Neil Dexter, Danielle Maguire, Lauren Martin, Claire Nuding, Vicky Sargeant, Peter Duffy and Nicola McConnell made a wonderful contribution to the night and the choir themselves enthralled their audience. Over two thousand euros was raised for the Salvation Army to help them in their wonderful work.

## Composition Prize

All 6th Years were given the opportunity to practise their essay writing skills for the Leaving Certificate in a specially designed exam in December. Shelley White was awarded the overall Composition Prize for her short story about a criminal family.

The final of Poetry Aloud took place on 13 November in the GB Shaw Auditorium. This year the standard was extraordinarily high and the fifteen pupils who took part gave remarkably fine performances. Katie Hastings was named winner of the Junior Category, Louisa Harland, the Intermediate and Natasha Waugh claimed the Senior award. There was also a special prize this year, a signed copy of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, which was awarded to Carin Hunt for her impressive performance. The judges, Kim Achari, Malachy Friel and past-pupil and former winner of Poetry Aloud, Toni Anderson, had the unenviable task of choosing a winner. Ken Dover of the Parents Association presented the Perpetual Trophy to the overall winner, Natasha Waugh, at the end of a very enjoyable and enriching evening.

## Speak Week

The 1st Years participated in the annual public speaking competition for the coveted OAR award in February. Every student had to deliver a speech as an English assignment and two people from each class were then selected to present a topic to a packed auditorium of their peers. Ms Glenfield had a difficult task adjudicating the competition and after careful deliberation awarded first prize to Laoise Murray who spoke with great poise about the importance of friendship. Emma Colcannon came second with her piece on the dangers of bullying, followed by Ruan McGuinness and Liam Reidy who were third and fourth respectively. Well done to all those who took part and made it such a stimulating occasion.



Mr Christopher Woods with Laoise Murray.

## Theatre Trip

A number of 5th Year English classes attended a modern version of JM Synge's classic work *The Playboy of the Western World* in the Abbey Theatre in January. Roddy Doyle's reworking of the original text brought the play, which is a component of their Leaving Cert course, to life.

# SCIENCE UPDATE

## Science Week

One of the highlights of this year's Science Week in November was the surprise visit of the distinguished scientist Galileo Galilei. The great man spoke to 1st and 2nd Years about the inspiration behind his famous discoveries which caused consternation among the authorities of the 1600s. He also demonstrated his experiments in such a convincing way that his audience felt they were witnessing the drama for themselves. Galileo had time to congratulate the winners of the SciFact competition. Meanwhile, in conjunction with Science Week a number of classes enjoyed a visit to the Mobile Farm from Agri-Aware.

Researcher Jennifer Jones from Trinity College Dublin visited the school in December to talk to 2nd Year pupils about her work on the Imagen project. It is part of a European collaboration investigating aspects of behaviour and brain development among teenagers aged 14 to 18. She gave a presentation on the history of scientific study of the brain and explained how the Imagen project is using a combination of brain scans, questionnaires and tests to carry out this research. After a similar visit last year, a number of Wesley students volunteered to take part in this innovative study. Pupils were afforded the same opportunity and took home information packs about the requirements for participation.



*Preps Christopher Roche and Max Byers enjoying the mobile farm*

## BT Young Scientists

Wesley was represented by two teams in the BT Young Scientists exhibition this year. Their projects were selected from over 1600 entries to compete against the 500 final projects in the RDS. A 2nd Year team comprising Spencer Christie, Alastair Greene and Kate Reidy entered their project 'Too Bright, Low light or Just Right', which studied lighting levels around the school and in their homes. Abigail Slazenger and Maire Sexton-Torres in 3rd Year investigated 'Olfactory Learning and Memory', comparing the abilities of different age and gender groups to distinguish and remember different perfume scents. It was a notable achievement to be among such a high calibre of scientific study and they had a great experience over the four days of the exhibition. Hopefully they will work alongside many more Wesley students in the competition next year.



*Maire Sexton-Torres and Abigail Slazenger.*

## Science Snaps



*Daisy Maloney, Jennifer Kelly, Cormac Benn and Alastair Greene in the Science Gallery*

Congratulations to Alastair Greene in 2nd Year for winning 3rd prize in the Junior section of the National Science Snaps Competition during Science Week. His photo entitled 'Homemade Crystals' captured crystals of copper sulphate that he had grown himself. Alastair was awarded his prize at a ceremony in the Science Gallery of Trinity College. Three other students, Daisy Maloney, Jennifer Kelly and Cormac Benn were highly commended in the competition. Their photos were on display alongside Alastair's in Trinity College and the Cork City Hall during Science Week.

# The Big Sing



All of Transition Year joined with 600,000 students across the country, to sing *You Gotta Be* by Desiree in an attempt to break the current world record for the greatest number of people singing simultaneously. Each student donated money to Special Olympics Ireland and the ISPCC Childline service. The amount raised through the BIG SING will help them to expand their programmes throughout Ireland. They are currently awaiting ratification of their record-breaking achievement. The year were accompanied by Carl Pullen on drums and Ms Hiney on piano.

## Student Enterprise Competition

Congratulations to all who participated in the Student Enterprise Competition this year. The competition started in September with over 90 students setting up businesses, producing a wide range of products. The excitement built up as the Adjudication/Market Day approached on December 18. The Market Day itself was well attended and a big thank you is due to all the parents and friends who came in to support the students. The adjudicators commented on the high standard of entrepreneurial endeavour on display. The following businesses now go forward to represent Wesley at the County Final on March 26 in Dun Laoghaire:

### Junior Section

- 1st: *The Calendar Co.*  
Conor Brady and Nicholas Stratford
- 2nd: *Badge 'R' Us*  
Amber Kinlan and Ruth Court
- 3rd: *The Key to Success*  
Aaron McDonnell

### Intermediate Section

- 1st: *Wicked Wicks*  
Nathan Walsh and Yvonne Corcoran
- Joint 2nd: *Funky Fimo*  
Lucy Gaynor and Scott Ringland
- Catch Em Flies* Cher McCrave  
*Pure Comic* Glen Byrne

### Green Prize

- 1st: *Patchworks*  
Daisy Maloney, Emer Haughton and Alison Arlow
- 2nd: *Wicked Wicks*  
Nathan Walsh and Yvonne Corcoran
- 3rd: *Bake 'N' Make*  
Shauna O'Reilly and Hannah Misstear

**Special prize:** Preps

## Fundraising Efforts

Wesley students are to be commended for their fundraising efforts over the last term. They have participated in a variety of activities from selling bracelets during Bullying Awareness Week for the ISPCC to a mini-marathon for Tri to Beat Cancer. Dr David Fennelly from St Vincent's Hospital took time from his busy oncology schedule to personally collect a cheque for €9,715 in assembly. Meanwhile, 184 pupils, the largest number ever, took part in the sponsored fast for Concern before Christmas.

On 17 December, 4th Year students travelled to Smithfield on Ice for the annual tradition of festive ice skating and charity collecting. Following a fun-filled, and indeed largely injury free hour on the ice, students went to the ISPCC on Molesworth Street. They spent the remainder of the day canvassing their designated streets, resplendent in bright yellow bibs with boxes of Christmas holly pins. All deserve recognition for entering into the generous spirit of the season.



Yvonne Corcoran and Nathan Walsh - Winners of the Intermediate Section in the Student Enterprise Competition

# Wesley Sports

## Senior Girls Hockey

The 1st XI girls, captained by Amanda Walker, had a very good league campaign to reach the semi-finals. They won their first two group games very convincingly 6-0 and 6-1 against Loreto Dalkey and Holy Child Killiney. This was followed by a 0-0 draw against a very defensive Loreto Bray side. The girls topped their group and met King's Hospital in the quarter-final.

It was a competitive game but Wesley were on top for much of it. The only goal came as a result of a fast break from a defensive short corner. Wesley cleared the ball quickly up field to Hannah Clark who found Claire Godden in the circle. She calmly slotted the ball home first time.

Alexandra College were Wesley's opponents for the semi-final. They competed very well but went down 1-0 in the first half from a well taken short corner strike. While they worked very hard to carve out a number of chances in the second half, unfortunately they were not successful.

In addition to their school hockey, a number of the girls are also representing their clubs regularly at Senior level, notably Amanda Walker and Kate Willis for Corrinthian's 1st XI and Claire Fitzpatrick for 'Three Rock Ladies' 1st XI.

On a final note, the girls have progressed to the quarter-finals of the Senior Cup beating Sutton Park 3-0.

## Badminton

The badminton teams had great success in the Dublin and Leinster finals this year. In the Dublin finals, the U19A Girls beat Holy Faith Clontarf 4 – 2. The team, comprising Aislinn Holland (Capt), Megan Nally, Iona Patterson and Inga Dalzell, went on to come third in their section in the Leinster competition.

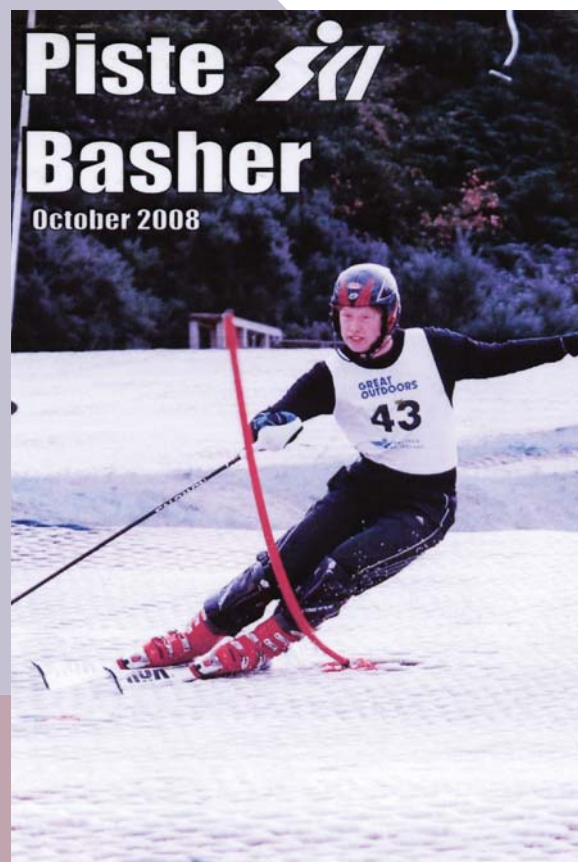
After fine performances from Sinead Brady (Capt), Melissa Roe-O'Leary, Hannah Clarke and Shola Ogundimu, the U19B Girls won the Dublin finals against Our Lady's Templeogue. They achieved the double when they took the Leinster trophy after victories over Our Lady's Templeogue and Scoil Airegail Ballyhale.

The U19B Boys, Colm Farrell (Capt), Mark Wright, Graeme Barrett and Karl Roe, had a difficult battle to take silver medals in the Dublin finals against Gormanston College.

A superb performance against Salesian College saw the U19C Boys take the Dublin title. The team, made up of Adam Kinlan (Capt), Ethan Boyd, Aaron Barry and Niall Egan, were unfortunate to lose to a very strong Kilkenny side in the Leinster final.

The U16B Boys have just won their quarter-final 3 – 3 against Sutton Park and will now play Terenure College in the semis. However, the U16B Girls were unfortunate to lose narrowly to Mount Sackville in their quarter-final.

## Skiing



*Matthew Mitchell showing his skiing prowess*

Congratulations to Matthew Mitchell who has been selected by the Olympic Council of Ireland to represent Ireland at the European Youth Olympic Festival in Poland during February. He will compete as part of a mixed team in the Slalom and Giant Slalom ski racing. We wish him luck.

## Leinster Selections

The extent of hockey talent in Wesley was evident in the amount of players selected to represent Leinster at the Interprovincials in December. Of the girls, Amanda Walker and Suzanne Lett competed for the U18s, while Anna-May Whelan and Sarah Robinson ably represented the U16s. Robert Burke, Jonathan Lewis, Shane Madeley, Tom Samuel and David McCrea helped Leinster to victory in the U16 competition. In the U18s, Kyle Good, Daniel Gribben, Jamie Tobin, Luke Chadwick, Peter English, Robert Anderson, Conor Motyer and Neal Megarity lost to Ulster in the final game of the tournament to finish second overall. Congratulations to them all on their involvement at such a high level.

# Great Cup Run

The U-13 side has swept all before them as they prepare to make an assault on the Central League – a title Wesley hasn't won since 1996. A big, mobile pack is facilitated by a talented backline. It's unfair to pick out individuals, particularly when the entire squad - from Cs to As - have improved and been outstanding. Good wins over Gonzaga, Kilkenny and St Gerard's will stand them in good stead for the end of this season.

The U-14s have had a mixed year but good performances in recent games against Gonzaga and Blackrock augur well for their league campaign in the spring. The squad are looking forward to the possibility of spending a week's pre-season training in Biarritz, where the SCT launched their successful season last summer.

The Colts have had a promising year. Looking forward to their summer tour to South Africa, they are benefitting from the extra time they have spent in the gym. Many players are making their way onto the Senior 2nd and 3rd teams for their league campaigns. Nine of the side were nominated for South-East Leinster U-16 trials and we are delighted to report that Greg Hawe, Jonathan Rice, Conor de Courcy and Peter Tierney have been selected for the squad. The Senior seconds and thirds have endured a stop-start season thus far. Cold snaps in December and January, along with prolonged Cup campaigns have left them with limited opportunity to show their worth. Whenever they play, however, they do so with great flair and dedication – particularly the Second XV who recently gained a full measure of revenge over Terenure (who beat them in December) by winning 27-12 in mid-January. This is a good prelude to the league campaigns, which begin after half-term.



The Junior Cup team has been outstanding in the last two months. Two fine, cold days in January gave them all the invitation they needed to play their own adventurous, heads-up brand of rugby, putting St Gerard's (10-5) and High School (15-12) to the sword with dominant performances from Robbie Clarke, Aaron Campbell, Jonathan Lewis and try-scoring James Quinlan. Despite a disappointing league campaign in September and October, the team have prospered in the heat of Cup rugby. These successes, against the odds, have been among the proudest moments of recent years. The team will meet Kilkenny in their Fr Godfrey Cup semi-final but began the first round of the Junior Cup against a formidable Clongowes. The favourites proved too strong for the Wesley side who have already achieved so much this season.

The Senior team's sluggish league campaign meant entry into the Vinnie Murray Cup. They had a hard-fought 19-10 first round win over Newpark in appalling conditions. De La Salle waited in the second round, and nerves nearly got the better of the team who won 6-3 thanks to an injury-time penalty from Kenneth McLaughlin. The cup run had become a source of tremendous excitement within the College. This side has worked as hard as any to have worn the jersey down the years, and has reaped the benefit; never more so than in their Senior Cup first round victory – the school's first in 15 years – over Kilkenny in January. The victory appeared out of reach just after half-time, when an interception had left Wesley trailing 15-6. Three tries, however, from captain and Leinster prop Ivan Campbell, gave Wesley a memorable and thrilling 26-15 victory and a quarter-final against St Mary's.

The side went on to push the pre-cup favourites Mary's seriously close to defeat, leading 13 - 12 at the interval after a try from Andrew McCrann. The result was decided in injury time when Wesley were held up centimetres from their opponent's line. Mary's managed to escape to the other end of the pitch to score a last minute try. It was a gallant performance of which the squad, and the school, can be justly proud.



*Wesley's Seniors compete for the ball against St Mary's*