



# Parent Association Newsletter



Dear Parents,

Writing this piece for the Christmas newsletter affords me an annual opportunity to reflect on the events of the first term and to take stock of just how much change has taken place within a short space of time.

The new Board of Management has been appointed and has assumed its responsibilities with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> December. I would like to wish all of the members of the Board well in their stewardship of the school over the next four years, with a particular word of welcome to the new members. I would also like to sincerely thank the outgoing members of the Board, Geraldine Holland, Una Lyons and Shay Hiney, for their diligent and selfless service over the last eight years. Their commitment and hard work over that period are greatly appreciated.

With the adoption of the revised Parent Association Constitution at October's AGM, we now have an enlarged Parents' Committee comprising of 30 members. The new committee is chaired by Carol Whelan and I would like to wish Carol, her officers and all the members of the committee well for the coming year and I look forward to working closely with them on behalf of the school community. I must also acknowledge the huge debt of thanks owed to the outgoing Chairperson, Tracey Byrne and her fellow officers, Marie-Therese Canavan and Sandra Fitzgerald. They worked tirelessly on behalf of the Association during their two year term of office and you'll be glad to know that, while they've retired from officership, they haven't managed to escape the clutches of the Committee.

The summer also brought the retirement of one of our longest serving members of staff, Mrs. Mary Nolan and I would like to pay tribute to her wonderful service to the school community and the children of St. Patrick's during her career. Many of you will know that Mrs. Nolan was immersed in all things musical in St. Patrick's and it's fair to say that the children gave her a right good musical send off before Hallowe'en.

I am acutely aware that, as a school, we have added to the financial pressure on parents with the request for parental support through voluntary contributions in October and our recent Art Exhibition fundraiser in November following so soon after the initial back to school expenses you incur in September. The purpose of this fundraising was to offset the significant expected shortfall between the grant income received from the Department of Education and Skills and the expenditure required to meet the running costs of the school. While that shortfall is still a reality, a grant that was in doubt has now been received which alleviates some of the financial pressure on the school.

Suffice to say that we really appreciate your support and that we do not take it for granted. It is also important to note that the financial support sought and received is to ensure that we can offer the best in the way of resources and learning experiences for your children. Despite whatever challenges may arise in the coming weeks and months in the way of cuts in the education sector, may we reassure you of our absolute commitment to your children and we look forward to continuing to work with you in their best interests in the New Year.

I hope to see many of you in the coming weeks, whether it be at Nativity plays, Carol Evenings, etc. As I said last year, it is a very special time in the lives of children and it is a privilege for us to share in their joy and excitement. With every good wish for a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year,

Yours sincerely,  
Brian O'Doherty  
Principal

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**CHRISTMAS  
TRIVIA:**

*If you received all  
of the gifts in the  
song  
"The Twelve Days  
of Christmas,"  
you would receive  
364 gifts*



## Family Christmas Carol Evening



Join us on **Thursday 15th December at 7 pm** in the grounds of St Patricks for an evening of festive fun.

*Sing-A-Long to your favourite Christmas carols and songs.  
Post Sing-A-Long tea/coffee, soft drinks and biscuits in the school hall.*

### Chairpersons Address

Dear Parents/Guardians

The new school year started on August 30<sup>th</sup> last, it seems so long ago now and there have been a few changes along the way. In September members of the outgoing committee were on hand with tea and tissues for the parents of our new Junior Infants as they started the next phase of their little lives. Welcome to all.

At the beginning of October the A.G.M. of our Parent Association was held and we had the brilliant Shane Martin as our guest who spoke to us about positive psychology and encouraging our children as much as we can in our every day lives. The one little gem of advice I got from the presentation was, before the children go to bed, in a quiet moment, get them to talk about three nice and happy things that happened to them during their day. Shane was right, the answers were really surprising but more importantly the children went to bed with a smile and a happy disposition. Also as a result of the A.G.M. we now have a new Parent Association Constitution and one of the big results of this new constitution is that there are 30 members of the Parent Association Committee. I would like to welcome all the new members and look forward to working with them.

Having fulfilled their two year term of office, Tracey Byrne (Chair), Marie-Therese Canavan (Vice Chair) and Sandra Fitzgerald (Treasurer) stepped down. I would like to thank the ladies most sincerely on behalf of the Parent Association for all the great work, time and effort they gave on behalf of the Association, and I am glad to say that they are remaining on the committee.

So who am I!!! My name is Carol Whelan and I am the new Chairperson of the Parent Association. I look forward to continuing the hard work of my predecessor Tracey Byrne. I know I have big shoes to fill, but I will do my best. The new vice Chair is Suresh Mariyappa, the Treasurer is Eileen Hannon and Ellen O'Callaghan is still our Secretary for another year.

In November we had our first fundraiser with the Art Exhibition and Sale of the fabulous creations by the pupils of the school. While the final figures have not been tallied yet, it looks like we made over €4,000 for the school which is a fantastic success.

The next event coming up is our Family Christmas Carol Evening on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December. Unfortunately last year we had to cancel due to all the snow. This is a short evening of fun where we gather in the front of the school and sing all the popular carols. After all the singing everybody is invited into the P.E. Hall for Tea/Coffee and biscuits for the Adults and drinks and lots of sweets for the children. The evening starts at 7pm to cater for the little ones and only lasts an hour or so in total. Looking forward to seeing everyone on the night.

Every year the committee put together hampers that are raffled, one for each class group from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class and two for both the Junior and Senior Infant classes as there are so many of them. The proceeds in the past have gone to a local charity, but this year the committee have decided to donate the proceeds of the raffle to the Loreto Mission in South Sudan where the order have set up a secondary school and are about to set up a primary school to educate children who would otherwise receive no formal education. We are also putting together a bumper hamper which is being donated to the local branch of the Society of St Vincent De Paul. The draw for the hampers will take place on 21<sup>st</sup> December, the same day that Santa Claus and the elves will be coming in to see the children and give them a little treat.

I think I have said enough for my first article. All that is left for me to do is to wish each and every one of you a happy, peaceful and joyous Christmas and a prosperous 2012 on behalf of all the members of the Parents' Committee.

Yours sincerely  
Carol Whelan

## Christmas

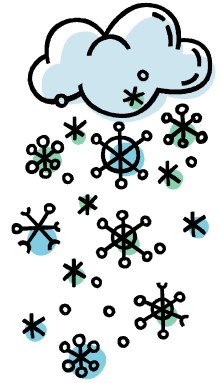
Candy canes,  
Happy Christmas!  
Resting at the fire,  
I love my family giving presents.  
Santa is special,  
Things on the tree,  
Me and my friends 1,2,3,  
A big surprise party, yippee!!  
So enchanting, I love Christmas!



By Kaci Carter-Flanagan

## Christmas

Chilly  
Happy  
Really cool!  
I love it!  
Special  
Takes time  
Magical  
Again every year  
Snow everywhere!



By Sophie O' Sullivan



## *First Class Poems*



## Winter

Winter is cold,  
Ice is slippery to hold,  
The snow is fun,  
Even if there is no sun!

We can build snowmen,  
We get up really early,  
Making white snowballs,  
To have lots of fun!



By Ellen O' Doherty

## Christmas

Cool!  
Happy  
Really red!  
I like Santa  
Singing people  
The stable  
Mary and Joseph  
About Jesus  
So special!



By Lucy Hickson

## CHRISTMAS TRIVIA:

St. Francis of Assisi is credited with a number of Christmas Firsts. He placed a Crèche in a hermitage and this became the Christmas Crib. He also encouraged the singing of carols, something previously restricted to church officials, and the tradition of carolling through the streets stems from these changes in 1223.

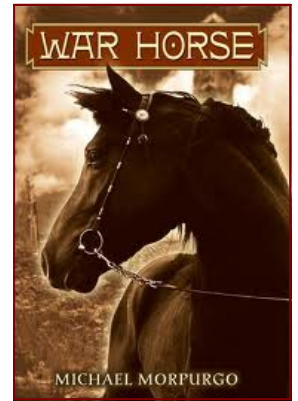




# Book Review

## War Horse

By Michael Morpurgo.



Before midterm break, our class read a book called *War Horse*. It is based on World War 1, a boy called Albert and a horse named Joey.

Albert lived on a farm with his mum and his dad. His dad bought two horses and Albert called them Joey and Zoey. Albert's dad was really mean to Joey and he sold Joey to the British army and this is where the name *War Horse* came from. Albert wanted to go into the army with Joey but he was too young.

The Germans and the English were fighting over Joey because they wanted him to be on their side but Joey could only be on one side so they flipped a coin and the Germans were heads and the English were tails. The coin landed on heads so the Germans got the horse but the Germans felt badly so they gave Joey back to the English.

Albert was upset about leaving Joey in the army so we thought it was nice when Emily's granddad sold Joey back to Albert and we thought it was really sad when Top thorn, Coco, another horse, and Emily died and when Joey got hurt and had to go to the veterinary hospital.

At the end Albert, Joey and Zoey were back at the farm and Albert's dad was nice to the horses and Albert had a new wife called Maisie.

Our class found the book very interesting but at times it was both sad and happy.

By Bethaney McLoughlin and Ava McCann.  
*Rang a Cúig*

### CHRISTMAS TRIVIA:

*The introduction of the Christmas tree as we know it today is a Victorian invention, inspired by and copied from Prince Albert's introduction to Queen Victoria of a German tradition.*

*However as far back as the Roman era evergreen trees were cut down as a part of the celebration of their mid December celebration called Saturnalia and the first decorated tree was recorded in Latvia in 1510.*

## 6th Class Retreat

On Friday the 25th of November the three sixth classes had a retreat in the P.E hall. The National Evangelical Team or NET came from America and Canada to talk to us about our Confirmation and about God.

The leader of our group was Jacob. He was from Canada and he was really nice. He told us where he was from and all about himself and about Confirmation. Jacob sang his National Anthem and he got up on the stage and sang a song for us. It was really catchy and we all sang along.

We also enjoyed getting into groups. There were eight groups and some boys and a girl from Saint Andrews joined us. We really enjoyed the plays that were performed and the games we participated in. At the end we got to go up one by one and prayed with our group leader and then we had a choice whether or not to take the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We hope to meet the NET team again in Secondary school.

We really enjoyed the day and we are all netters now!

by Ava Doyle and Caoimhe O'Keeffe  
*Mrs. Coyne's 6th Class*



### CHRISTMAS TRIVIA:

*Christmas crackers were invented by Thomas Smith. He had imported some French novelties to sell as Christmas gifts, but these were not popular until he wrapped them up and added a snapper .*



## The Storyteller: Eddie Lenihan

On Friday a story teller came into 4<sup>th</sup> class. His name was Eddie Lenihan.

He was the most amazing storyteller I have ever witnessed! His stories are very funny! I love that his stories seem so real, as if it's a movie being played in front of you.

Eddie is widely known across Ireland for his wonderful talent in storytelling. He travels across Ireland gathering stories from older people. This is rather like what the Brothers Grimm did! Eddie writes a large amount of poetry as well.

Eddie lives in Crusheen in County Clare though he is originally from Brosna County Kerry.

Eddie was most definitely the most captivating man I have ever met!



By Ellen Devlin  
*Ms. Travers' 4<sup>th</sup> Class*



On the 1<sup>st</sup> of December the Green School Committee went to the Recycling Centre in Bray. We learned all about how important it is to reduce, recycle and reuse. We got posters for our school to help encourage students to do so. We had a great time and we learned a lot!

By Niamh Byrne and Alana Donovan  
5<sup>th</sup> Class

**Mobile Phone Drive**  
Please bring in your old mobile phones and help buy equipment for our School and raise money for the Jack and Jill Foundation. The phone doesn't need to be working or have a battery/power cable. Just bring the phone into school where they will be counted and collected.



# GREEN SCHOOLS NEWS

On Thursday the 1<sup>st</sup> of December. The Green school Committee went to the Recycling Centre on a bus. We met a lady who showed us around the Recycling Centre. She told us that glass was the first item to be recycled as far back as four or five thousand years ago.

We went into the charity shop and the ladies in there talked to us. After this we went upstairs for another talk. We learned that approximately 500 people go to the Recycling Centre a week. At the end we were given posters and went back to school on the bus. It was a fun day.

By Caoimhe Hardiman  
[4<sup>th</sup> Class Mrs. Martin]

The Green School Committee went to the Recycling center in Bray. We are going to collect phones and give them to the Jack and Jill Foundation. If we collect enough phones we will get €1000 for our school tours. We will try to make our school a better place. If you get all of your old phones at home and give them to your GSC, people we can get this money for our school.

Róisín Moran and Ava O'Driscoll Moore  
2<sup>nd</sup> Class

**SUNSHINE POWER**  
The Green School Committee want your old batteries! WEEE Ireland are donating 1c per battery to the Children's Sunshine Home for all batteries collected before Christmas. It is a great opportunity to recycle old batteries and help a fantastic charity. So get rummaging and bring your batteries in to school.

**Did You Know?**

- You can recycle vegetable oil in the Recycling Centre. The oil is sold to a company in Kilcoole who use it to make industrial Soap.
- There are 102 types of plastic but in Ireland we can only recycle 6 of them! Look out for the green triangle symbols on the packaging. If it has numbers 1-5 then it can be recycled. For more information see [www.recyclenmore.ie](http://www.recyclenmore.ie)
- Tissues and Kitchen paper can go in the compost.
- Two cats live at the Recycling Centre in Bray who have the important job of keeping the Centre rat and mice free! Say hello to them next time you are there.
- By recycling Aluminium Cans (Drinks cans) and Polystyrene, you are supporting Irish Jobs as all aluminium cans are reprocessed here in Ireland.

Compiled with the help of Michelle Whelan and Alannah Conway.



## Sr. Kathleen's visit to our school

Sr. Kathleen came to our school hall on Wednesday the 30<sup>th</sup> November to tell us about all the different Loreto schools all over the world.

The country she mostly talked about was South Sudan in Africa. She said there had been war there for twenty one years and some of the classrooms in Sudan still had damage from the war.

In South Sudan, if a man wanted to get married to a girl he would ask her father and they would decide how many cows he would give her father. It might be a hundred to two hundred and the lowest amount would be fifty. Sometimes the father might say 'She is a very pretty girl' and therefore the man should give him more cows. This is called the dowry.

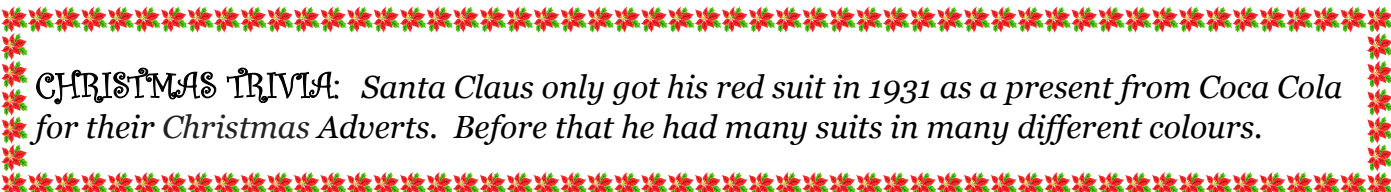
Cows are very important to them and they love them so usually their house would be right beside them. Mostly children under six drink the cow's milk but everyone can drink it if they want.

On the projector she showed us pictures of the schools, most of them looked the size of our prefabs in St. Patricks. They did not have desks just benches. Sometimes the children would wait for the teacher but she might never come because the government does not have money to pay her to teach.

The Loreto sisters built a secondary school in Rumbek in south Sudan and the first group of Loreto girls graduated on Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> November. Some of the girls wanted to return to the school and teach. She said most of the children that receive education in Sudan are boys and the Loreto sisters want to change it so there are more girls going to school.

Sr. Kathleen would like us to help them to build a primary school by raising money to fund their building.

By Lily Rafferty and Sarah Myler  
*Rang a Cúig*



**CHRISTMAS TRIVIA:** *Santa Claus only got his red suit in 1931 as a present from Coca Cola for their Christmas Adverts. Before that he had many suits in many different colours.*

## The Vikings

In Ms. Travers' 4<sup>th</sup> class we're doing class projects on Vikings.

We were in groups and had different areas of Viking life to research- Food, cooking and homes; Myths, stories faiths and beliefs; Work, weapons, boats and conquests; Clothes, leisure and pastimes; Homelands origins, settlements and travels. Each subject was fascinating!

We learned interesting facts like Vikings travelled from Scandinavia, they raided monasteries, wanted to die bravely in battle to go to Valhalla, and founded the city of Dublin which they called Dubh Linn. With clay we made round towers, longboats, shields and lots more.

All in all it was a really fun project to work on!

By Tara Allen and Ellen Devlin



## Christmas Word Search – Junior Infant to Second Class

Look up, down, forwards backwards and diagonally for the list of Christmas words:

B	C	F	A	N	G	E	L	E	B	S	S
C	E	H	W	T	O	L	M	D	T	A	N
R	Z	J	S	A	N	T	A	N	U	H	O
A	W	N	S	T	U	R	K	I	R	P	W
C	H	S	T	R	A	T	S	P	K	I	P
K	P	A	O	M	I	Y	N	W	E	G	T
E	N	M	C	H	R	I	T	S	Y	X	J
R	O	T	R	T	S	T	A	N	D	K	N
S	G	S	J	M	U	L	D	O	H	A	C
Y	M	I	S	A	B	Y	E	P	Y	C	A
F	P	R	N	L	O	L	S	I	G	O	N
W	B	H	E	T	L	R	H	C	G	K	D
W	Q	C	K	A	Q	E	V	K	L	H	L
S	V	C	P	J	Z	A	B	M	O	R	E

Complete the following and place in the parents association post box (In the main corridor) by **December 20th at 2.30pm** to be in with a chance to win a prize!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

### FIND THESE WORDS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Santa</li> <li>2. Bells</li> <li>3. Turkey</li> <li>4. Sleigh</li> <li>5. Cracker</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Candle</li> <li>7. Angel</li> <li>8. Christmas</li> <li>9. Star</li> <li>10. Snow</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

## Christmas Film Crossword - 3<sup>rd</sup> Class – 6<sup>th</sup> Class

	1		2					3			
						4					
			5								
	6										
										7	
								8			
9											

### Across:

1. Complete the 2011 Christmas film title ' \_\_\_\_\_ Christmas' (7)
5. In 'A Christmas Carol' who uses the phrase Bah Humbug (7)
6. Complete the Film Title ' The \_\_\_\_ Express' (5)
8. In the Santa Clause film 'C is for \_\_\_\_' (4)
9. He is walking in the air (4,3)

### Down:

2. In the Santa Clause Film what decoration is used to free Santa ?(6)
3. What Green creature stole Christmas? (3, 6)
4. In A Christmas Carol what is Tiny Tim's fathers Christian name? (3)
6. In the Santa Clause film 'P is for \_\_\_\_\_' (7)
7. Complete the film title 'Deck the \_\_\_\_\_' (5)

Complete the following and place in the parents association post box (In the main corridor) by **December 20th at 2.30pm** to be in with a chance to win a prize!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_