



St Peters College PPU Christmas Newsletter 2023

Welcome to the 2023 edition of the Past Pupils Union Christmas Newsletter.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Our committee of volunteers is here to facilitate communication between the past pupils themselves and the college they once attended while striving to improve facilities for current and future students at the College.



We are constantly seeking new members and included in our 2024 plans is a new website which will make joining and staying in touch much easier but for now if you wish to join or contact us for any other reason please email John Greene ppu@stpeterscollege.ie My own memories of Christmas at St Peters revolve around the school opera which was performed by the students in the school concert hall. In my first year (1968) it was Gilbert and Sullivan's "Patience" and looking back I guess "patience" of another kind was badly needed by our Directors Mr Ned Power and Fr John O'Brien and indeed by the audience who had to sit through it, but happily things have moved on and it's now a school musical in collaboration with Loreto Convent held over 4 nights in The National Opera House. To keep you informed of changes like this and update you on all the past years activity we have the following contributions in this edition.

The School This Year by Willie White, Deputy Principal

Returning to St Peters College after 50 years by Andy Doyle who helped to organise two very successful reunions in 2023. One for our 1973 All-Ireland winning team and one for the class of 1973.

Outgoing Presidents Address by Declan Cloney Incoming Presidents Address by Joe Bishop

Golf Fundraiser by Gary Quinn. Many thanks to Gary who puts in a huge amount of effort to provide a major source of funds for the PPU and ensure an enjoyable day out for those who take part.

Outgoing Secretary's Report by Dick Bates

Treasurers Report by Martin Breen

Annual General Meeting and Mass for Deceased Past Pupils and Staff by David Power PRO of the PPU

The School this year by Willie White Deputy Principal

As the calendar year draws to a close, it brings me great pleasure to share some of the achievements and exciting developments that have taken place in the College over the past year. Our school continues to thrive, thanks to the unwavering support and contributions from our esteemed past pupils. In the realm of infrastructure, we've added to our facilities with the inauguration of a new science lab and a new art room. These spaces are not just physical additions but spaces where creativity blossoms and scientific curiosity is nurtured, providing our students with enhanced learning opportunities. To give you a flavour of just some of our recent extra-curricular endeavours, our collaboration with Loreto for the school musical culminated in three incredibly successful nights at the National Opera House in December. It was a showcase of talent, dedication, and teamwork that captivated all who attended. Our strong tradition of involvement in science competitions continues with our senior science team winning the regional ISTA quiz and going on to represent us nationally. Sport too, as always, plays a large part in College life and our U16 basketballers recently won the South east regional final and play in the National series in January. In addition, both our senior hurling and senior football team have qualified for their respective Leinster A quarterfinals. We take immense pride in being the only school in Leinster represented in both categories, a testament to the hard work and skill of our students and coaches. A momentous occasion for us was the official opening of the much-anticipated astro turf pitch in May. This state-of-the-art facility has been a hub of activity since January, providing our students with a platform to hone their skills and foster a sense of camaraderie through various sports. Witnessing many of our past pupils at the opening was truly heartwarming and a testament to the enduring spirit of our school community. Thanks to Ruth Kelly and her team the 2023 issue of Spectrum (formerly Petrus) is full of interesting articles by pupils, staff and past pupils. Throughout the year, several class reunions have taken place that have rekindled cherished memories and strengthened the bonds that were forged within the walls of the school. As always, we extend a warm welcome to all future reunions and look forward to the opportunity they provide to reconnect and reminisce with past pupils. As we approach the festive season, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all past pupils whose generous contributions made these achievements and developments possible. Your continued support fuels our endeavours to provide an enriching educational experience for current and future students.



Senior footballer's vs Knockbeg College



A selection of the cast from the school musical
- The Musicman

Rioch Kinsella, Fionn O'Neill and Kacper Slenzak
- Senior Science Quiz Team

Returning to St Peters College after 50 years by Andy Doyle.

A 50-year reunion – a daunting task but incredibly rewarding. Unfortunately, it has been 50 years since an incredible hurling team last brought home the Croke Cup to St Peters College. As captain of that team, it had been on my mind for the past 25 years that it was my responsibility to try to organise a reunion as many of us had never met since. Also, as several of the team were final years at the time, that class of 1973 was also due a reunion. So, we were looking at potentially two separate reunions in 2023. The process was spurred into action by a small initial gathering, so the ball was about to be thrown in. The job of tracking down two different groups felt like a huge task at the beginning but once the decision was made to do it, the process got underway. Getting the names and contacts became easier as we progressed, as every team or classmate helped with others. The most important thing was to have a few people dedicated to the cause and a few others to help lighten the load. It did take time and a lot of organisation but we managed to pull both groups together for two separate reunions - the hurling team of 1973 and the class of 1973. We all shared the same initial worry, who would we recognise and who would not recognise us. It had been 50 years since many of us met but the class of '73 did have a 25-year gathering. Two things stood out from both reunions.

1. People had changed but they could be recognised when they smiled.
2. We all shared the same nostalgia when we walked into the classrooms, we had attended so often in the five years and in particular the dormitories which had been home for that chapter of our lives.

We could but admire the very many new facilities that had been put in place since our time and the great legacy of the Past Pupils Union in helping to make them happen. The hurling reunion coincided with the opening of the new Astro pitch facility which was not even in our dreams as we made the almost daily trek to Coolcotts to puck or kick. But they were still great times. Perhaps the best thing about both reunions was the opportunity to meet and share the very many memories, funny incidences and reminisce on the many broken rulers and straps that were administered for reasons that are now seen as ranging from semi-justified to totally wrong. The best part of both days was the tour of the college facilities, both old and new, and the stories that were reignited as we walked around every corner. For the class reunion we even organised to have food served in the refectory where we all agreed that we were badly fed for much of five years but then we were growing lads and perhaps our parents may have had difficulty keeping us fed during that same period of rapid growth which was fuelled by hormonal activity. - Andy Doyle. Leaving Cert 1973

Fantastic memories!!!

Class of 1973 return to the refectory
50 years on.



Back in the attic after 50 years

1973 All Ireland Winners with trainer
Fr Martin Casey at the Astro Pitch opening.



Outgoing Presidents Address by Declan Cloney

After 3 years of fundraising and planning the Astro pitch was finally finished and opened to the students in early December of '22 I am sure everyone is delighted that the fundraising has come to an end!

I would just like to say thank you to all the committee for the hard work and perseverance over the last couple of years, from concerts to tickets and plaques on the wall it was all worth it in the end. The official opening and unveiling of the plaque were held in mid-May of this year and was a fantastic evening with our guests of honour the All-Ireland winning team of 1973. In January we held our careers night, On the night we had 60 careers represented along with some companies who were actively recruiting and SETU were also in attendance on the night. Senior cycle students were invited to attend and approx. 80-200 students attended. Thanks to Niall for the massive effort put into this to make it the success that it is. May say our now annual golf classic in action and again a very well attended event with well over 30 teams and lots of tee sponsors. This is the main fundraising event for the PPU. Thanks to Gary Quinn for organizing it. September saw a welcome return to class reunions and the class of 1973 were the first to get the ball rolling again.

The event was held in the college with Fr Jim Finn saying mass in the church and then a tour of the college from former Principal Pat Quigley and the current Principal John Banville. This was then followed by a meal and drinks in the ref and by all accounts a good night was had. The class of 1999 are currently in the process of organising their 25-year reunion for September 2024. I think that's it from me, I just want to say thank you to a few people firstly to Michael Breen our previous president or the help and guidance he gave me when I first took over the position. To Sean Foley who originally came up with the idea for the astro and then made the concert on the lawn such a success. Willie White had big shoes to fill when he took over and he didn't disappoint. Willie took up his position on the PPU and again nothing was a problem, Willie has been a great asset to the PPU and will be over the years to come. John Banville and the school are always willing to help in any way possible and were instrumental in getting the astro project over the line. Finally, the committee, we would not have been able to achieve all the things we did over the last number of years without the commitment and dedication of this group of people so again thank you very much.



Astro Pitch officially opened.

Fr Odhran Furlong, Declan Cloney
and School Principal John Banville



Incoming Presidents Address by Joe Bishop

For almost 70 years now the past pupil's union of St Peters College have been an integral part of the life of the school, on the sporting field, in business, in the local community, as parents of current pupils and many of the teaching staff. In the age of social media finding former classmates and keeping in touch has never been easier.

Our mission is to continue to organise events, to provide a networking and social body for pupils of SPC past and present. Each year the PPU aims to facilitate class reunions, golf outings, participate in careers night, support the artistic and cultural life of the school. The recent musical at The National Opera House was a fantastic success. On behalf of myself and the Committee I would like to thank all members, college staff and sponsors for their assistance and support over the past year.

Wishing you all a happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Golf Fundraiser by Gary Quinn.

We held our 3rd annual golf classic in Wexford golf club last May. It was a great turnout with 40 teams and over 60 sponsors. It was great to meet with so many past pupils of all eras. We were lucky with the weather and had a very enjoyable day. Looking forward to next years.

Treasurers Report by Martin Breen

Martin reported a balance of €13,748 for the accounts' year ending 31 August 2023, up slightly from the same time in 2022. The May Golf Fundraiser raised €7,470. There were 139 paying members in the period in question, with 60 paying at the current rate introduced in 2008 or higher. Membership fee income amounted to €2,208. Five members were paying at the equivalent of £1 dating from the 1950s and 11 at the equivalent of £5. The largest cohort paid €12.70.

Outgoing Secretary's Report by Dick Bates

After a period of four years as Secretary I will be standing down and wish the Union well for the future. Seven meeting were held between the 2022 and 2023 AGMs. One each in November and December of last year, followed by one each in the months January to April. I edited the third edition of the Christmas Newsletter, which i circulated to the postal list in December. Frank Turner forwarded this to the email list. The successful Careers Night was held on 25th January in the College. The Astroturf pitch launch took place on 12 May. The following week a very successful Golf Classic was held at Wexford Golf Club The 39th Edition of Spectrum magazine, was once again edited by Ruth Kelly. The Committee met for a social dinner on 15 September and the final meeting took place on 17th October in the College. We held our 3rd annual golf classic in Wexford golf club last May. It was a great turnout with 40 teams and over 60 sponsors. It was great to meet with so many past pupils of all eras. We were lucky with the weather and had a very enjoyable day. Looking forward to next years.

Annual General Meeting and Mass for Deceased Past Pupils and Staff by David Power PRO of the PPU St Peter's College.

Past Pupils Union held their AGM at the college on November 16th. Elected President was Joe Bishop from the Leaving Cert class of 1993, who subsequently studied at GMIT and Napier University Edinburgh before returning to Wexford in 2014 where he is a practising Auctioneer with DNG McCormack Quinn in Wexford town. Joe takes over from outgoing President Declan Cloney, he thanked Declan and the committee for all their hard work over the last few years, particularly the development of the new Astro Pitch, which was officially opened in May of this year, also organising a very successful careers night for the students, golf outings and other events. President Joe Bishop said his main priorities for the coming year is the have a proactive approach encouraging more past pupils to become members, to organise a careers night for the students, to co-operate with and assist the College Authorities in meeting the educational, recreational, social and cultural needs of the students at the college and to promote social and cultural activities for its members and other activities.

The following officers were elected for the coming year:

President, Joe Bishop, Vice President Gary Quinn, Secretary, John Greene, Assistant Secretary, Simon Murphy, Treasurer, Martin Breen, Assistant Treasurer, Garry Quinn, PRO, David Power.

Immediately following the AGM, a mass was concelebrated in the College Chapel for deceased past pupils and staff. The mass was concelebrated by past pupils, Fr Jim Finn, Fr Jim Butler and Fr Frank Murphy and attended by a large gathering of family members of deceased former students and staff along with past pupils, staff members and friends. Fr.Finn drew the theme of the mass from the Book of Revelations 14:13 "Their good deeds go with them". The attendance at this event is growing each year and we would hope that someday it will fill the Chapel.

Everyone was invited to light candles for departed past pupils and staff in the centre aisle of the chapel during the mass with beautiful music played by past pupil Niel Foley from Ballymore. Afterwards, refreshments were served in the college, where the outgoing president of the past pupil's union, Declan Cloney thanked all the people for attending.

Once again on behalf of the Past Pupils Union
we hope you have a very enjoyable Christmas and in the New Year,
we encourage you to participate in the Past Pupils Union to re connect
with the College and your classmates.



You can renew old friendships and make new ones.