

Old Portora News 2010.



At the Official Launch of "The School on the Hill" were Sam Morrow (OP and Vice- chairman of the Board of Governors), Neill Morton (Headmaster), Mr. B. Kerr (Fermanagh District Council), Robert Northridge (President OPU), Bishop Michael Jackson (OP and Chairman of the Board of Governors), Wynne Anderson (London OPU President), Ian Burn (Production team of "The School on the Hill").



Headmaster's letter



I am writing this on the penultimate day of the Easter term. You will not be surprised to read that it is raining outside and even from this elevated site, Enniskillen looks grey and miserable.

The weather does not reflect the school. The energy and commitment of our students and teachers render the weather superfluous. Year 13 students are on the first day of their Work Experience and we have young Portorans, dressed in their best, working among the solicitors, accountants, journalists and business men throughout the county as well as Belfast and Dublin. In the Steele Hall a Free Jazz piano workshop is in progress with students from all schools throughout the county represented. The hall has resonated with all sorts of music during the past weeks as the annual Fermanagh Feis has taken occupation. Our choirs, ensembles and instrumentalists have all played their parts with most taking home prizes.

On Friday, the Senior Choir led Assembly with one of their prize winning a capella songs. Later that afternoon Year 8 House Rugby was held with Connacht victorious (in all of the matches to date,

Ulster has said No!) and the Scripture Union held an Easter Special (Beat Boxing, would you believe). The school is full of life and positive energy and we look forward to a summer term in which the rich broadening experiences we seek to offer will have to take second place to the harsher demands of public examinations.

Outside the school, challenges loom. The falling population in Fermanagh and the aspirations of a Minister of Education pursuing a particularly difficult agenda have presented our Board of Governors with hard choices.

I offered the following paper at the OPU (London branch) Dinner on March 19th. I hope it helps to more fully explain some of the issues which beset us.

Education in Fermanagh

There are too many post primary schools in Fermanagh. Small schools are incapable of offering a broad and balanced curriculum. By 2013 all school in the North will be required by statute to offer their students access to 24 subjects at GCSE (17 at present) and 27 at post 16 (20 at present).



The Future Of Portora Royal School

The Western Education and Library Board in January 2010 submitted an economic appraisal to the Department of Education recommending that there should be three new schools built in Enniskillen:

- o Two schools on a newly acquired site on the Tempo Road for Devenish College. This would be non-selective, 11-19, offering largely Applied/vocational courses alongside which would be built a new school resulting from the amalgamation of Erne and Elmbrook schools (catering for children with learning difficulties)
- o One new school on the Portora site to accommodate an amalgamation of schools formerly known as Portora and Collegiate. This would offer a predominantly academic/general curriculum (in other words, retain a grammar school ethos). There would be close collaboration between the two schools to ensure an appropriate fit between a pupil's ability and his or her educational experience and opportunities.

If DENI approve, WELB will move to consultation and publish a development plan.

All schools in these plans support them, with the exception of the Collegiate

Girls' Grammar School. In a process of consultation which has lasted three years and involved many hours of meetings, the Board of Governors of Collegiate have been unremitting in their opposition to an amalgamation between the Collegiate and Portora. During the final stages of consultation, the Chair and principal of the Collegiate declared that the Collegiate Board would consider moving the school to coeducational status but not with Portora. They proposed that the Collegiate be awarded a new building on the Tempo Road which would become a coeducational grammar school. Devenish could then move to Portora Hill and join with Portora in becoming an all-ability non-selective school.

The Commission for Catholic Education has launched a public consultation for post-primary education in which it is proposed that all post-primary education in Fermanagh be centred in Enniskillen (with the possibility of 4-14/16 provision in Lisnaskea) on three campuses. There would be no academic selection at 11.



Transfer and Academic Selection

There continues to be conflict between those with aspirations to see an education system in NI without academic selection and those who see academic selection at 11 as a prerequisite for excellence. On one side are ranged Sinn Fein and the Catholic Church, on the other the DUP and the UU. The Protestant churches veer in and out of the argument which is predicated on an Equality agenda but many increasingly see as an assault on the establishment.

The Minister's dictates carry no legal weight and legislation is required to abolish academic selection. Legislation is dependent on cross party support in the Assembly. Grammar schools continue to test. There are two tests being offered: one developed by a body called AQE, which consists of three tests over three Saturdays in November/December. The other, produced by GL Assessment, requires children to sit two short tests on one Saturday in November. There are 68 grammar schools: half offer AQE, the other half offer GL. Portora offers GL along with St Michael's and Mount Lourdes. The Collegiate Grammar school offers the AQE experience.

There are discussions being held to agree a single test for all children. That is unlikely to happen this year.

An interesting and welcome development of the new arrangements forced on us is that a significant number of children from maintained – or Catholic - primary schools have applied to Portora Royal

School as second preference candidates with St Michael's as their (expected) first preference.

Neill Morton

Old Portora Union Events



OPU Funding the School.

Robert Northridge (President OPU) recently handed over cheques to Damian Dempster and Derek Holland to support the Rugby and Rowing Clubs in the School. Each club received a cheque for £2000 to go towards coaching and, in addition, the Rowing Club received £5000 which has paid part of the new £25,000 slipway at the boathouse. The next new boat bought by the Club will be named "The Old Portoran" to commemorate this gift. Last year the Rugby Club received £5000 which was used to purchase a storage facility at the Rugby Fields.



1989 year Group Reunion

In November 2009 Jonathan Rowe and Cecil Hetherington with many of their friends organised a very successful reunion in Enniskillen. The day began with a tour of the school at lunchtime and ended (I am told) at about 5am the next day in the bar of the Westville Hotel. Over 70 attended the dinner in the evening including OPs, their partners,

and staff from 1989. A huge amount of work had gone in to making the evening light-hearted and fun with Powerpoint presentations of pictures from bygone days and even a DVD showing a raft race at the Forum. Below are pictures of the staff and Old Portorians who attended. How many can you recognise?

1989 year Group Reunion





Dublin Lunch 5 December 2009

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A very successful lunch was held in the Conrad Hotel in Dublin on 5 December 2009 for 30 Old Portorans and wives. The current President of the OPU, Robert Northridge, welcomed everyone and thanked Ian Crawford for organising the event. Unfortunately was unable to attend the lunch due to a family bereavement. Robert went on to express the sadness of all connected with Portora at the recent sad deaths of Bill and Anne Barbour.

The pictures below tell their own story of the party. It is hoped to hold a similar function on the first Saturday of December in 2010. If you think that you might like to attend the 2010 function, email Robert Northridge at robhannort@aol.com.



Jean and George Briscoe, and Malcolm Graham



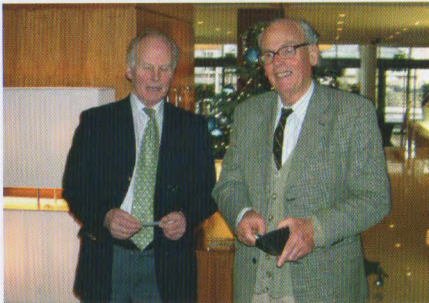
Mary and David Orr, Tom and Fred Jackson



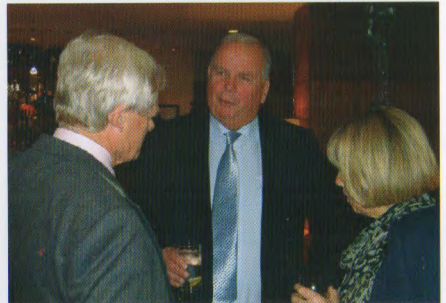
Nicola Wallace (Stewart), Trevor Hull, Denzil Balfour, Jason McChesney, Richard Bennett



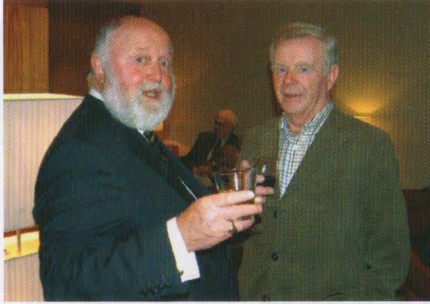
Henry Jack and Bishop Sam Poyntz.



Robert Pocock and Tom Molyneux



David Kingston, David Andrews and his wife



David Cope and David Judge



Lunch begins!

Belfast Lunch 5 March 2010.

Sixty one Old Portorans and partners attended a very successful lunch in the Ulster Reform Club in Belfast on Friday 5 March 2010. The Headmaster spoke briefly on current happenings in school and Robert Northridge said a few words on the OPU. The attendance was enhanced by members alerting other OPs to the event using email. Thanks are due to Timothy Quin for gaining us access to the Reform Club and to Tony Hart for sorting out the details of the day with the management of the Reform Club.

London OP Dinner 19 March 2010

Forty six OPs and their guests attended the annual dinner of the London Branch of the OPU. The President of the London Branch, Wynne Anderson, proposed the toast of the School and the Headmaster responded. The Head Boy, James Houston, then gave the guests a summary of the activities which had taken place in School over the last year.



Launch of Portora: the School on the Hill 1608-2008

On a beautiful summer evening on 6 June 2009 about 70 guests assembled in the Seale Room for the launch of Portora: the School on the Hill 1608-2008. This magnificent volume had been written and published by the London Branch of the Old Portora Union. Of the three authors Myles Henry, Ian Scales and Ian Burn, only Ian Burn was able to be present and unfortunately Hubert Schaafsma, the other driving force behind the project was unable to attend as he was abroad. However, Wynne Anderson, the current President of the London Branch of the Old Portora Union attended. Robert Northridge, the President of the OPU welcomed the guests and thanked

and congratulated the London Branch on their achievement and reminded everyone that the London Old Portorans had financed the book themselves so all the proceeds from the sales went to the School.

The Chairman of the Board, Bishop Michael Jackson, commented on the magnificence of the history and Ian Burn told some stories concerning the discussions on some of the topics covered in the book such as "sex at Portora" and the difficulty in choosing a title. The Headmaster looked forward to future volumes covering the next centuries in the history of "The School on the Hill".



*Mr. B. Kerr (Fermanagh District Council), , Robert Northridge (President OPU), Bishop Michael Jackson (OP and Chairman of the Board of Governors), Neill Morton (Headmaster), Ian Burn (Production team of "The School on the Hill")
Sam Morrow (OP and Vice- chairman of the Board of Governors), Wynne Anderson (London OPU President),*



Obituaries

Bill and Anne Barbour (S 1952-83)



*Bill and Anne Barbour
(Photo courtesy of the Impartial Reporter)*

Bill and Anne Barbour died tragically in late November 2009. In January 2010, a thanksgiving for their lives was held in the Erne Integrated College which Bill had had a part in founding. It was attended by almost 200 people who had travelled from all over Ireland, including Cork. Pieces of reflective music were interspersed with memories of the Barbours and their contribution to community from Tom Noble (OP), Head of the Erne Integrated College, Billy Dickson of the Royal British Legion, Eric Bullick of the Alliance Party, John Maxwell (OP) of the Integrated Education Movement, and Robert Northridge who spoke on Bill and Anne's contribution to Portora over the four decades that they worked at the School.

Tributes to the couple poured in to the school from Old Portorans and some are attached below.

Patrick McAfee (L 1951-58): I was greatly saddened to learn this morning of the tragic loss of Bill and his wife - what a desperate end. I know that you were a very good friend to them both,

so you will be much affected. Although I speak of well over 50 years ago, I remember Bill well - without doubt, a lovely man in every sense. I can't pretend that everyone who taught me at Portora has left me with a lasting and positive memory, but Bill was certainly one who did. He had an infectious enthusiasm for everything he undertook and I wouldn't have the slightest doubt that all those who came across him will remember him with great fondness.

Peter Adams (L 1970-74): I am very sorry to be reading on line the emerging news concerning Bill and Ann Barbour. He was a very intelligent and kind man. This is very sad indeed. They will be in the thoughts of a great number of Old Portorans at this time.

Philip Tyack (S 1968-74): I was very sorry to hear about the Barbours. I joined the staff at Portora as Director of Music in 1968 and was incredibly green and inexperienced. I remember Bill's gentle way with colleagues of all ages, and the boys. His sane attitude to it all was summed up by his usual punishment for boys in detention: "Boy, you will draw me a picture of a great big red bus." Lovely.

W.J. (Billy) McBride (C 1958-65, S 1972-06): I recall an English class of Bill's, when, in a grammar lesson, the following was said in Bill's inimitable voice.

"The imperfect tense is a sad tense: Agricola used to farm the fields, but does so no longer."



Obituaries

Jeremy J.C. Henderson (L 1964-69) died on 28 April 2009 following the diagnosis of a brain tumour. After Portora he studied art at the University of Ulster and then at Kingston University. He completed a masters degree at Chelsea College of Art and Design. As an artist he had exhibitions in London, Dublin, Belfast, New York and Enniskillen. He presented one of his paintings to the school. He leaves his wife Patricia and his daughters Bella-Lucia and Emerald.

Patrick Dennis Warren (C1935-41) died in 19 May 2009. After a career in both the Indian Army and British Army as a signals officer, he retired to restore antique furniture using skills he developed in the workshops of Portora. He leaves a widow, Joy, and a son Nigel (OP)

Major John Anthony Gregg RA. MBE (C 1933-37), passed away peacefully on 4 May 2009, aged 90 yrs. He served in the British Army from 1938 to 1952 and, having served in the Korean War, he retired. He married Heather in Sydney in 1953 and became a grazier on sheep and cattle property in Northern NSW.

Patrick Corkey (U 1939-44) died on 13 June 2009, aged 83. He boarded at Portora when Ian Stuart was Headmaster. He was in Leinster House

under Major Butler. In those wartime years the school had only 170 pupils, of whom a hundred were boarders. PWIC did not excel academically or on the sports field, but is remembered for his integrity and honesty, characteristics which remained with him all his life. He was head boy in his last year. On leaving Portora, Patrick studied engineering at Cambridge University, graduating with a MA degree in 1948. He joined the family firm of William Ewart and Son Ltd. The decline in the linen industry as a result of competition from man-made fibres led to the eventual closure of the firm in the 1970s. He then joined the Order of St John as its Secretary. Although the appointment was initially intended to be temporary, PWIC stayed 22 years, retiring in 1998. In recognition of his long and distinguished contribution to the Order, he was created a Knight of Grace in 2000.

Patrick married Dr Betty Williamson, by whom he has two children, Jonathon and Julia. In his last years he fought a long and brave battle against cancer. A Service of thanksgiving was held in Inch Parish Church. JWH

Professor John Connor PhD (L, 1948-52) John died in October 2008, whilst visiting his native home in Perth, Scotland, on holiday from his permanent residence in Nova Scotia, Canada.



John had made his Canadian home in Wolfstown during the many years he was Professor of Economics at Acadia University.

John was born in Cooper Angus, Perthshire during 1934 and attended Portora because of former family connections with the Silverhill area of Fermanagh. At Portora John became well known for his acting ability and always took a major part in both School and House plays; he was also auditioned for a series of short radio plays staged by BBC Northern Ireland during his senior years at Portora. On the sporting side, John was in the Boat Club and earned his colours as cox of the first 1st VIII. John coxed the first Irish Schools eight when Portora went to the Henley Royal Regatta in 1951; his account of this landmark event appears in the School's Quatercentenary History, 'The School on the Hill'.

Shortly before he died, John attended the Dinner and Ball held at The Lough Erne Golf Resort during mid-September weekend in 2008 celebrating the School's Quatercentenary.

T. Randal Sadlier (L 1938-41) died on 11 August 2009 at the age of 85. After Portora he did his first year examinations at Trinity College Dublin before sailing to England where he joined the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. During the war he

served in Somaliland, Abyssinia and finally India. After the war he joined the Colonial Service and served with distinction in East Africa. After independence in Tanganyika he served in the new Tanzanian government's Ministry of Co-operatives and community. His wife died in 1991 and he leaves two children, Lucy Fisher and Gerald Sadleir.

James Richard Geoghan Sealy (U 1928-33) died on 27 August 2009.

Timothy J.B Webb (L 1948-52) died on 10 October 2009.

Tan Sun Ann of Singapore died on 14th April 2007.

Richard A.D. Keatinge (C 1960-65) died on 29 February 2008.

Jean Clarke (Headmaster's Secretary 1961-81) has died in England.

John Desmond Gray (U 1946-55) passed away peacefully on 29 January 2010 at the very young age of 72 after a long illness. Des was a prominent member of QUBBC in the late 50s and coxed the 1958 senior crew which represented Northern Ireland at the Commonwealth Games in Cardiff in that year.



Other News of Old Portorans

Rev. Canon Adrian Empey (C 1955-60). Having retired as Head of the Church of Ireland Theological College, Adrian has now taken on a part-time role as the Chaplaincy Coordinator and Development Officer for The Mission to Seafarers Ireland. Adrian will be involved with ship visiting in Dublin to provide pastoral care and support for visiting seafarers, and with developing the ship to shore connection with the Flying Angel Centre in Dublin Port.

D.Chillingworth (L1962-67): Bishop David Chillingworth, Bishop of St. Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane, has been elected primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church. His father, D.A.R.C.Chillingworth was an OP who taught history at Portora for many years.

M. Skuce (M 1973-78): Chief Superintendent Michael Skuce was appointed MBE in the 2009 Queen's Birthday Honours list. He was given the award for services to policing in Northern Ireland.

Graham Little (M 1989-96) and Simon Janes (L 1989-1996) were two members of a four man team who won the 1350km ultra-marathon cycle race round Ireland in September 2009. The winning time was 2 days, 19 hours and 17 minutes

and they beat the much-fancied "An Post" team by 1 hour 12 minutes.

David Monteith (U 1979-86) has been appointed Canon Chancellor of Leicester Cathedral. He was previously part of the Merton Priory Team Ministry in Wimbledon.

Michael G. Irvine (C 1961-66) has been elected President of the Dublin Catch Club. The Catch Club was founded in 1680 and is the oldest musical club of its kind in the world. Members meet four times a year for dinner and are then entertained musically by the Catch Singers at Sight, current or ex-Vicars Choral of St Patrick's or Christ Church Cathedrals. Mike's is a 3 year appointment.



University News from recent OP Graduates

Matthew Kinnear (1997-04) has graduated from the University of Glasgow.

Alastair Clarke (1998-05) received a first class masters honours degree in Chemical Engineering from Cambridge. He is now studying for a PhD.

Mark Baxter (1999-06) received a first class honours degree (General Medical Science) from Cambridge.

Alastair Ronald Graydon (1997-04) received an Upper Second Class honours degree (French-German) from the University of Aberdeen.

Alan Ovens (1998-05) received a first class honours degree in Economics from the University of Dundee. He has commenced work with Selex Galileo in Luton.

Daniel McBride (1997-04) graduated from the University of Newcastle in 2008 with first class honours in his MPhys degree. He was also awarded the Hindmarsh prize for the best student graduating in both physics and astronomy/astrophysics.

Alan Irvine (2001-08) Alan finished top of his year of over 200 students at Trinity College, Dublin, and was awarded the Marmaduke Backhouse prize.

Alastair Graydon (1997-04) has graduated with a Master of Arts (2:1) in French and German from Aberdeen University.

Glenn Phair (2007-9) was awarded a JPMcManus All-Ireland scholarship to support his three years of studies in Economics at Leeds University. Only twenty five of these scholarships were awarded to top performing students throughout Ireland.

Adam Fletcher (1998-05) was awarded a BSc (Hons) in Business and Accounting from the University of Ulster. He has commenced employment as an accountant with the Quinn Group.

Wayne Corrigan (1996-03) recently graduated from Writtle College with a degree in agriculture.

William Maginn (1996-03) has graduated from the University of Chester with a BSc (Hons) 2:1 degree in software engineering. He is currently employed by the University of Chester as a database administrator.



School Sport RUGBY

The 1ST XV had a productive season with some good results. It was a big side and the strength lay in the pack. Most of the results came from our forward dominance. The team were very unlucky to loose out to RBAI going down to a narrow defeat of 12 -3. The best result was the match against Sligo Grammar school before the Christmas period. Sligo came to Portora unbeaten having taken the scalp of Clongowes and Blackrock College. Portora were delighted to welcome back from injury the captain James Brady, the 6ft 7" second row who missed out on International honours because of injury. In a pulsating and physical encounter, Portora emerged victorious winning 19-14. This give the side great confidence going forward into the cup campaign.

The side was drawn in the second round to Carrick Grammar school and won 22-12. Another home draw saw the side take on Down High school. Without playing very well the team managed to hold onto a 17-15 win thus securing an away draw against Ballyclare High school. Unfortunately, the side lost in the last seconds of the game with a push over try to the heart break of all concerned – that close to yet another semi-final! Into the quarter-final of the Shield competition with an away draw against Limavady Grammar saw Portora hold on

for a 15 -15 all draw. The return match was a 17 -13 victory for the boys in black and a semi-final match against Campbell College at home. A brave display from the boys, playing three matches in seven days saw them loose 29 – 14. The majority of the squad are back next year, so there is excitement that this squad can achieve in the latter stages of the Cup.

The junior sides' fixtures were disrupted by the inclement weather before the Christmas period. However, the club and coaches are confident that there are some quality players coming through the system.

Rowing

Throughout the summer regatta season, the club picked up wins at all boat classes and age categories, from boys under 14 double to girls under 18 eight. However, by the business end of the season, the focus turned to the boys and girls First (J18) and J16 eights.

At Athlone Regatta the girls dominated with convincing wins in the J16 quad scull and J18 eight, while the boys J18 and J16 eights both narrowly lost out to St Josephs, Galway – the J16 crew by only one foot. Nevertheless, the boys J15 eight picked up the slack by beating St Josephs by six feet in their final.

As a reward for excellent performances during the season, including third at the London Schools Head of the River, the girls first eight travelled to Henley to compete in the Women's Regatta in June. Once there the girls excelled themselves. They won easily against Tabor Academy, USA in their first round, before drawing the fancied Lady Eleanor Holles School in the semi-final. LEH had beaten them in London in March,





Rowing

but after five minutes and two seconds (only one second behind the record) the Portora girls had a four length lead to put them into the final two hours later against Headington Girls School, the English National Schools Champions. Whilst Portora took an early lead, the Headington girls managed to push through and win by half a length. Despite this loss the girls showed they could compete against the best in the British Isles.

The Irish National Championships in July was the final race of the season, and what all the training was geared towards. On the first day, Friday, the girls J16 quad and boys J16 eight raced. The girls dominated both their head and the final, finishing 14 seconds ahead of the nearest competition. The boys, after too many second place finishes throughout the season, decided enough was enough and went out hard in the final and lead from the first stroke to the last, putting St Josephs and Colaiste lognaid in to silver and bronze.

The two J18 eights had their turn on Saturday. The girls picked up another Gold for Portora with a strong race, beating Commercial, Dublin and Cork in the process. The boys were up against very strong competition in St Josephs and Bann Rowing Club, Coleraine. St Josephs were able to take an early lead and stay ahead of the rest, while Portora and Bann fought it out for Silver and Bronze. Unfortunately Bann were able to take the Silver medal on the line, leaving Portora in third.

The girls J16 eight finished off the event on Sunday with another convincing win, really showing off Portora's dominance in Junior Women's Rowing in 2009. Overall, four golds and a bronze was the club's best ever performance at the Champs capping off the boat club's most successful ever

season. This was testament to the hard work by both athletes and coaches during the year.

The 2009/10 season started badly due to the extreme weather conditions causing all races to be cancelled in October and November. In fact, from mid-November to mid-January, the club was unable to train on the water due to first flooding and then freezing conditions. 2010 started, with good wins at Shannon and Lagan Heads of the River. In March the club took the boys and girls first eights to London for this year's School Head of the River. The girls were able to take fourth place, again behind LEH and Headington, and the boys finished 19th in their category – a very credible result against the best private schools in England. Two days later Portora hosted the 53rd Erne Head of the River for almost 70 eights and fours, and for once had very good conditions for racing. The boys eight finished second, behind a very quick Bann crew, while the girls took the tankards for fastest women's crew on the day.

Two months without water time had set the Portora athletes back a bit on the competition for the winter season, but with 13 boys and girls invited to Final Trials in April for the Irish Team, the club has shown it has caught up and is well on its way to match the success of last year.





Historical Notes

Re-enactment of General Eisenhower's visit to Enniskillen in 1944.

On 12 May 2009, the American Consul in Belfast inspected "American troops" drawn up on the Lower Pitches. The Headmaster and the Head Boy are amongst the spectators. This re-enactment followed an article in last year's magazine describing the original visit of General Eisenhower to the Lower Fields towards the end of the Second World War..



Samuel Beckett Bridge over the River Liffey in Dublin.

The Samuel Beckett Bridge over the River Liffey in Dublin was declared open on 11 December 2009. It cost 60 million euros and was designed by internationally renowned architect Santiago Calatrava. The Editor is grateful to Jason McChesney for this picture.





Hockey at Portora Royal School in the early 1950s David Judge (L 1945-55)

Hockey may have been played at Portora prior to my time there (1949-54) but I am unaware if this was so. The excellent book "Portora – the School on the Hill" names several players from years prior to the fifties who had achieved fame as hockey players, but whether they had played it at Portora is not recorded. The book suggests it was almost by accident that hockey was played in my era - some boys with hockey sticks knocking a ball around one afternoon and seen by JV Tapley. My memory is that it was a conscious decision by JVT to round up a group of boys of all ages to participate in a sport that he had played and enjoyed. However, whatever the origins, it was another sport to challenge us boarders and I amongst others was happy to give it a go.

JVT at first tried to play hockey on the top pitch alongside the cricket pitch but it was too wet too often. So we moved onto the Parade Ground tarmacadamed in the cause of square bashing by we members of the Combined Cadet Force (OTC to older readers). The Parade Ground was also home to our informal Touch Rugby (a forerunner to modern Tag Rugby) and also doubled in summer as our Tennis Courts. Interestingly, as an aside and as an addendum to the section on Tennis in the above mentioned book, Portora won the Ulster Schools Tennis Cup in 1953 with the following team: John Jessop, Bill Flannery, Richard FitzSimon and myself (David Judge) under the direction of F.E. Rowlette.

Back to Hockey - those of us who took to the game, the more athletic of the rugby players and other co-ordinated

sports people, were initially organised by JVT into forwards and defenders. I remember being very disappointed during this process that JVT nominated me as a defender for, in my own mind, I had been a very good scoring forward at Avoca School prior to coming to Portora; however, there were older boys who had "bagged" the more forward positions. On reflection, after a long sporting life in hockey as a defender, I am indeed indebted to JVT for his decision that day.

JVT decided that the Parade ground surface was too smooth and to simulate the bumps of a grass pitch that we should play with a hurling ball (sliothar) with its raised figure of eight seams. Thus it was that we developed great skill in stopping and control that was to last us a sporting lifetime.

JVT obviously thought it wise to manage our development by first testing our competitive prowess against the girls Collegiate School from the far end of town. The match was set up, we changed at school and walked down to the pitch which had been set up in the Broad Meadow adjoining Lough Erne. Meadow it was and mud it was, Enniskillen not being renowned for its dry climate in February. Our first goal scored most ungentlemanly by blinding their goal-keeper with mud and water from the pool in front of the goal and then netting the ball. More goals were to be scored in like manner to the consequence that I don't remember any rematches of this fixture!

We were also pitted against the RUC recruits from the Training Barracks. This



match was played on their enclosed grass pitch also down in the Broad Meadow area. This was a more difficult assignment, no longer the lightweight girls but a meeting with six foot plus straplings. Skill did not win out and it was an uncomfortable afternoon ending in defeat and a bruised and battered walk back to the school on the hill.

In one's memory Time condenses and it was possibly another season when we played an army team, the Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG), based in Omagh. As I recall for all our away sporting fixtures we always walked through the town to the GNR station – past the familiar landmarks of the West Bridge, Whalley's Bakery, a glance at the Cathedral, the Town Hall, the War Memorial. It was then onto the train to Omagh and on arrival being transported by army lorry to the barracks. The QDG, as was the norm in British Army regiments, played hockey on a regular basis and had some very skilful players. The match was played on their Parade Ground and there we were given a lesson in the finer skills of the game. To this day I'm quite sure we would have been more than a match for them on the Broad Meadow!

A match that I well remember was a Burney Cup (Schools Hockey Cup) match against RBAI which we played in the Broad Meadow (RUC pitch). RBAI had had the experience of travelling to Enniskillen by GNR and having to walk through the town with their gear to arrive at the pitch, no easy-to-jump-on Belfast buses in Fermanagh!

The weather was cold in mid-January, there had been some icy showers earlier

in the day. The match started and we discovered we were evenly matched. Our early fears that we, as country cousins, would not have the skills to match them were dispelled. Half time arrived with the score at nil all. Then the snow came, almost blizzard like, the wind now blowing into our faces half blinding us as we repulsed their attacks and made counter plays. The pitch whitened, the match played on in crazy conditions, the white ball almost unseen and gathering a coating of snow. Maybe it was snow blindness by our defence but they scored, one nil down! We fought back, but sadly to no avail going out of the cup but knowing that we were as good as the Belfast boys. A long term aspect of this match is that on the Inst Team that day was one Dixon Rose with whom I later played International hockey. Dixon subsequently went on to become President of the Irish Hockey Association and when we meet we vividly recall the match that day some fifty eight years previously – regrettably on replay the score still stands at one to nil.

Of the players of those days in the early fifties, seven or so played senior Interprovincial hockey and four went on to play International hockey – Bruce Dowling, Richard FitzSimon, David Judge (myself) all for Ireland and Tony Boyd for Canada. Both Tony Boyd and David Judge played Olympic hockey, Tony for Canada and myself for Great Britain, meeting at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

To JVT – thank you, you made a difference.



Emily Frances Valentine: Female Rugby Pioneer

Emily Valentine, the daughter of the classics master at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, is the first female ever recorded as having played Rugby; she did this in 1888 at Portora. This is her story.

William John Valentine came to Portora Royal School, Enniskillen as classics master in 1876 when the school was under the Headship of Dr. W. Steele who had been Headmaster since 1857. William Valentine was probably born in 1837 (he was 74 in 1911). He came to Portora from Waterford and was married to Grace Dalton Smith.

Rugby was established as a sport at Portora from at least 1874, two years before the Valentine's arrival in Enniskillen, as, in the Belfast Newsletter of 23rd November 1874, there is a report of a match between Portora and Armagh Royal School; each side played with 12 men and Portora had two past pupils on their team.

When the Valentines arrived in Portora they had five children: William probably born in 1868 (he went to Trinity College Dublin in 1886), there was another boy and a girl whose names and dates are unknown, then John Archibald, born 1774, Marian Grace, probably born in 1875 (she was 36 in 1911), and their sixth child, Emily Frances Valentine was born in Enniskillen in 1878 when the family's address was

given as Willoughby Place, which is a row of Georgian houses outside the front gate of Portora. A seventh child, Robert Lepper, was born in 1890 when Emily was 12 years old.

The three eldest Valentine boys were educated at Portora, while Grace and the other girl who was older than Emily were sent to Waterford, to a school owned by their aunt. Emily was educated at home by her mother until she was thirteen when she went to the same school as her sisters. There was, unfortunately, no organised sport in the school in Waterford.

The number of pupils at Portora during the late 1880s was very small, perhaps as few as 20 at times with no boarders, and the Valentine boys practiced Rugby, watched by their sister, Emily. She writes about her experience of Rugby at Portora in her memoir, typed up in about 1951, and the following incident, written in her own words, probably occurred in 1888.

I loved rugby football, but seldom got a chance to do more than kick a place kick or drop goal, but I could run in spite of petticoats and thick undergarments, I could run. My great ambition was to play in a real rugby game and score a try. I used to stand on the touchline in the cold damp Enniskillen winter, watching every moment of play, furious when my side muffed a ball,



or went offside, bitterly disappointed when a goal was missed.

One day I got a chance. It was just a school scratch match and they were one "man" short. I was about ten years old. I plagued them to let me play, "Oh, all right. Come on then." Off went my overcoat and hat - I always wore boys' boots anyhow, so that was all right.

I knew the rules. At last my chance came. I got the ball - I can still feel the damp leather and the smell of it, and see the tag of lacing at the opening. I grasped it and ran dodging and darting, but I was so keen to score that try that I did not pass it, perhaps when I should; I still raced on, I could see the boy coming toward me; I dodged, yes I could and breathless, with my heart pumping, my knees shaking, I ran. Yes, I had done it; one last spurt and I touched down, right on the line. I lay flat on my face for a for a



moment everything went black. I scrambled up, gave a hasty rubdown to my knees. A ragged cheer went up from the spectators. I grinned at my brothers. It was all I hoped for. I knew I couldn't kick a goal, but that didn't worry or disappoint me; what I had wanted to do I had; the desperate run, the successful dodging, and the touchdown. On the way home, muddy and hot. "You didn't do badly, Em, but you should have..." and so on. Later on at tea my brothers grinned at me, passed me the jam politely, and kicked me under the table. My mother remarked that she hoped I hadn't felt cold watching the game. "I'm glad you won the match boys," she said. My brother raised his cup, looked at me, and drank then winked. "Good luck, wasn't it mum?"

During the latter half of the 1880s, the Valentine family moved into the main school building and William Valentine ran the school while the Headmaster was off the site being rector of Devenish parish at Monea, about six miles from Enniskillen. A new headmaster, William Lindsay arrived in 1891 and stayed till 1894 when Richard Biggs was appointed Headmaster. Dr. Biggs brought several staff and quite a few pupils from Galway Grammar School and William Valentine was retired in 1894 as his services were no longer required. He went to Dublin where he tutored in classics.



After leaving school at eighteen, Emily went to Dublin where she attended the School of Art for a few months, before moving to nursing posts in Belfast and Essex. Emily then became a nurse in Dublin and, in 1909, married Major William Rickards Galwey of the RAMC, a medical graduate of TCD. They went to India in 1910 and had two sons before her husband was called up, in 1914, to serve in the First World War. Major Galwey served in Salonica while his wife and children lived in Co. Wicklow, before moving to live near her brother Archibald near Southsea after her father died. At one time Emily's husband, her two doctor brothers, and the eldest son of William, were all serving in Salonica. After WW1, Major Galwey worked in Porton Down on Salisbury Plain. He was then moved to the War Office in London and died in 1932. During the Second World War, Emily gave lectures in nursing to the Red Cross and lived on after the war until 1967. She finishes her memoirs by advising the coming generations: "Whatever happens, be not afraid".

The other members of the William Valentine's family:

William studied medicine at TCD and served in WW1.

The second son went as a clerk to a bank but died from phthisis in about 1890, before Robert was born.

Marian went to TCD where she obtained

a teaching diploma; she worked in Germany, France and England, and in the 1920s owned her own private school in Southsea.

The next sister followed the eldest to TCD and, in 1912, married a cousin, a professor in Manchester University.

John Archibald was a Royal Scholar at the end of his time at Portora, had a brilliant career in classics and medicine at TCD and became a consulting ophthalmic surgeon in Portsmouth. He also served in WW1.

Robert Lepper was educated at Harcourt High School, went to TCD, worked for the Geological Survey of Ireland, and, having volunteered for service, was gassed at Loos in 1916.

The above information was gleaned from the archives at Portora, by searching the internet, and from Emily's memoir which is in the possession of her grand-daughter, Maureen Galwey.



Portora Silver Medal for best heifer



Both sides of the Portora Silver Medal presented by Rev E. G. Seale

The Rev Edward G. Seale, MA, was Headmaster of Portora Royal School from 1917 until 1936. He was credited with revitalising Portora as a successful Irish Public School. His interests and talents were not limited to the Classics, the classroom and the sports field. He kept a herd of dairy cows and was a member of the Monea and Springfield Cow Testing Association.

Cow Testing Associations, later referred to as Milk Recording Associations, were introduced by the Department of Agriculture in Dublin in 1906 to encourage improvement in dairy cattle.

Yields of milk and its compositional quality were recorded for individual cows. The main purpose was to identify the best milk producing cows for breeding replacement stock.

Rev Mr Seale was an active member of his local Association. In a competition for members in 1926, one of his cows obtained 4th place and he was awarded £1 prize money. In that year the Portora Silver Medal for the best heifer in the Association was awarded to a representative of the late Mr F. Meehan. Mr Seamus Meehan of Monea is in proud possession of the medal which was a gift from his grandfather. Both sides of the medal are shown below.

Sam Morrow (1949 – 1955)

Further success in the Milk Recording Association competitions came to Rev Mr Seale in March 1935 when he was awarded the prize for the best cow which produced a yield of 1,238 gallons during the lactation.



S. B. Morrow
Vice Chairman
Board of Governors



Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland

Old Portora Lodge 859



W Master: W Bro Robert Richmond

Hon Treasurer: W Bro Barry Ditty

Hon Secretary: W Bro Ian Crawford

The Lodge continues to prosper and attract new members under a very enthusiastic team of Officers.

The highlight of 2009 was the June Communication when the Lodge accepted an invitation to visit Harmony Lodge 228 in Gorey, Co Wexford. The Amber Springs Hotel proved an excellent location within walking distance of the Lodge Room for the 22 members and their guests.

We were entertained at a Coffee morning prepared by the Members of Harmony Lodge and their wives on the Saturday morning. The Secretary Rt W Bro Sidney Stephens assisted by the W Master Archie Reed gave a history of the Masonic Temple.

The Lodge communication was held at 6.00 pm and visitors included Rt W Bro Harvey Heavener, the Provincial Grand Master of Wicklow and Wexford, who is a nephew of the late Bishop Robert Heavener of Clogher, a former chairman of the Portora Board of Governors.

An Old Portoran plaque was presented to W Bro Archie Reed, WM of Harmony Lodge 228 by the WM of Old Porotra 859, W Bro Tom Wilson and was placed in a prominent position in the Lodge Room to commemorate the visit and joint communication.

The Festive Board was held in the Amber Springs Hotel where the members and guests were joined by their wives and partners. The weekend was thoroughly enjoyed by all and plans are in place for a visit to Tuckey Street in Cork for the June 2010 communication.

The autumn communication was held in Enniskillen on Saturday 14 November for the Election of Officers and approximately forty brethren enjoyed an excellent festive board in the Banqueting Hall.



Peace, Love & Harmony in Gorey, Co. Wexford

Old Portora Masonic Lodge



Members and wives of Old Portora 859 and Harmony 228 outside the Masonic Temple in Gorey Co Wexford;



Norman Humes, Basil Elliott and Ronnie Henry take a keen interest in the history of Harmony Lodge;



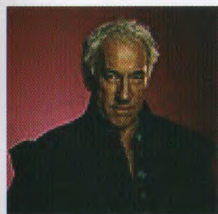
A very special event took place in Gorey when 2 members were presented with their 50-year Jewels and Certificates by the W Master Tom Wilson. W Bro Tom Conlin front left and W Bro Ronnie Henry front right



Maurice Walker demonstrates his culinary skills to Sidney Stephens Sec of Harmony Lodge;



Shakespeare - The Man From Stratford



On the 4th June, Portora will host the first performance of Simon Callow's new one-man play, "SHAKESPEARE - THE MAN FROM STRATFORD", a new comedy by Shakespeare scholar Jonathan Bate, which brings to life both the man and the unforgettable characters, who have since conquered the world's stages. The production will go on national tour and will include a four-week residency at the Assembly Hall during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

"SHAKESPEARE - THE MAN FROM STRATFORD" follows Callow's huge international success with "The Mystery of Charles Dickens" (West End and Broadway) and his recent sell-out hit "Dr Marigold & Mr Chops". Simon's many films include "A Room with a View", "Maurice" "Four Weddings and a Funeral", "Shakespeare in Love", and "Christmas Carol: The Movie", and television includes "Rome", as Charles Dickens in an episode of "Doctor Who" and Tom Chance in the series "Chance in a Million". Last year, he appeared on stage as Pozzo in the acclaimed West End production of "Waiting for Godot" (by Portoran Samuel Beckett). He has written biographies of Oscar Wilde, Charles Laughton and Orson Welles. Jonathan Bate is the pre-eminent Shakespeare biographer and editor of the Royal Shakespeare Company's Shakespeare: The Complete Works. He is also currently Professor of Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature at the University of Warwick and a Governor of the Royal Shakespeare Company. His book, *The Genius of Shakespeare* (1997), is widely held as the best modern book on Shakespeare, and his most recent book, *Soul of the Age: The Life, Mind and World of William Shakespeare*, was published last year.

Tom Cairns is a director, writer and designer who originates from Co Tyrone. For theatre, his work includes director and designer of "The Music Teacher" off-Broadway, director and designer of "Phaedra" at the Donmar Warehouse, and director of "All About My Mother" at the Old Vic, and "The Odyssey" and "Aristocrats" at the National. In opera, he has directed and designed for the English National Opera, Glyndebourne Opera, Opera North and directed the Olivier Award-winning "The Tempest" at the Royal Opera House. His work in film and television includes director and screenwriter of the film "Marie and Bruce" starring Julianne Moore and Matthew Broderick, and director of the award-winning TV mini-series "Amongst Women".

This is a remarkable coup for the school which is completing its third year as a Specialist School in the performing and visual arts. Tickets will be available from the school reception from the 17th May.



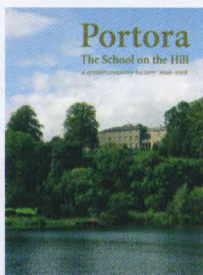
Become a Quatercentenary Patron of the OPU

Background

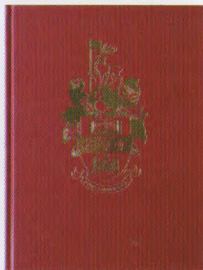
Current fees for membership of the Old Portora Union (OPU) are set at £20.00 per annum, preferably paid by Banker's Order. For this, members receive the annual OPU Newsletter and other publications in hard copy form by commercial mail to their currently registered address.

Developments

The Quatercentenary History of Portora Royal School (*Portora: The School on the Hill a Quatercentenary History 1608-2008*) was produced by the OPU (London branch) so that profits could benefit OPU funds and encourage sport and extra-curricula activities amongst future Portora students. The standard hardback edition of the book is £24.95, and a limited edition, comprising 1-99 individually numbered volumes, was produced for sale at £99.00 each.



Standard hardback edition



Deluxe leather bound edition

Promotional offer

A quantity of both the standard (blue cloth with slip cover) and limited editions (bound in red leather) has been released for sale by standing order to accompany two upgraded OPU Quatercentenary memberships. These new forms of Patron Memberships should interest discerning OPs, who may wish not only to contribute further to OPU funds, but also obtain a quality memento of their days at Portora Royal School.

Silver Patron Membership

A free copy of the hard-backed edition of *Portora: The School on the Hill a Quatercentenary History 1608-2008* (normal price: £24.95) will be sent to any Old Portoran who upgrades their annual subscription from £20.00 to £30.00, or to any new subscriber of £30.00 per annum.

Gold Patron Membership

A free copy of the deluxe limited, boxed edition of *Portora: The School on the Hill a Quatercentenary History 1608-2008* (normal price: £99.00) will be sent to any Old Portoran who upgrades their annual subscription from £20.00 to £50.00, or to any new subscriber of £50.00 per annum.

To upgrade your annual subscription and receive your free book, please complete the following form and post it to: Mrs Fiona Johnston, Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, BT74 7HA.

To (name of your bank) Sort Code

Address of your bank

Your account number

Please pay the sum of £ to the account of the Old Portora Union No. 65772022 at the First Trust Bank, 2-6 East Bridge Street, Enniskillen, BT74 7BT, (Sort Code 93-80-76), on 1 September 2010 and annually thereafter.

Signed Name Date

Address



Old Portora Union Income and Expenditure Account FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2009

Old Portora Union Income and Expenditure Account

	£		£
Bank balance @ 01-01-09	11967.95	Expenditure on Newsletter	2288.45
		Beckett Joyce - Prizes	175.00
Income from Subscriptions/ Donations	5638.05	Bank fees	205.75
		Portora Rugby Club - Jerseys	853.05
		Portora Rugby Club - Work to scrum compound	930.00
		Portora Boat Club - Purchase of equipment	5000.00
		Portora Boat Club - Contribution to Coaching staff	2000.00
		Portora Rugby Club - Contribution to Coaching Staff	2000.00
		Bank balance @ 31-12-09	4153.75
	£17,606.00		£17,606.00

Treasurer's Report

As you will note the OPU had quite a successful year financially. As noted above, there has been more than £10,000 contributed to school sport. This is a tremendous achievement and proves that the efforts over recent years are starting to bear fruit. It is worth noting, Portora Boat Club has named a boat "Old Portoran" in return.

The President and our Committee have stressed the urgency for more contributions at a minimum level of £20 per annum. All readers will fall into one of the following categories:-

- (i) Currently paying £20 per year - Thank you for your continued support.
- (ii) Non-contributors - Please complete the standing order as soon as possible and participate in benefiting Portora Royal School, past and present.

David G Hassard FCA - Honorary Treasurer OPU

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Old Portora Union will take place on Tuesday 15th January 2010 in the Seale Room at 8.00pm. All office bearers and members are requested to make a special effort to attend.



Portora Royal School est 1618

Headmaster: J. N. Morton, M.A., B.S.Sc., D.A.S.E.

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