

IN-FORM



SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION
SEPTEMBER 2001



*Ballyclare Secondary School
40th Anniversary*

From the editor

Ballyclare Secondary School has established itself firmly in the Community over the past 40 years. When we celebrated our Silver Jubilee back in 1986, we thought we were well advanced in planning, development and technology. The past 15 years, however, have brought about monumental changes in all aspects of school life. As Mr Stirling said then "The pace of change may quicken, indeed it is almost bound to do so" Never a truer word!

This Special Anniversary Edition of IN-FORM makes reference to aspects of school life 40 years ago, but is dedicated more to the past 15 years, when major changes have been in evidence.

A time capsule was placed in the wall of the entrance hall at the beginning of the new millennium. Who knows, when it is eventually opened, what further changes there may have been.

Mr Stirling (Headmaster 1961 - 1982)

It began in May 1961. The large, new building on the Doagh Road, Ballyclare, took its first step to becoming a school, literally a new place of learning for the boys and girls of secondary school age in Ballyclare and district. My appointment was on the 26 May, so there was no time to waste; we were to open in September. Fortunately, several teachers from the contributory Primary schools were transferring into the new school. This helped with the organisation of the new classes and year groups; all children of eleven years and over who were still in the Primary schools were due to transfer.

On the administrative side, school transport had to be organised, school uniform designed and got ready for the new term, equipment for all departments had to be ordered. So much work was carried out by all members of staff. The appointment of staff was completed at the end of June and all worked willingly towards an exciting adventure in September. Yes, there were problems. We even had some unwanted publicity regarding the provision of uniform. But a very well attended meeting of parents prior to the opening got us off to a good start.

My recollection of the first days, weeks and months was the total appreciation shown by the pupils of the new facilities available to them. Art and Craft rooms, Home Economics spaces, Science and Geography rooms and Gymnasias - all of these were a new experience for most of our pupils. These boys and girls came from some sixteen primary schools where the facilities were very limited.

From the beginning we prepared pupils for the then Junior Certificate, Junior Technical Certificate and Royal Society of Arts examinations. Our first Head Girl, Elizabeth Kenny, set the standard by winning a bronze medal in R.S.A. Arithmetic in the first year. It is gratifying to know that the results in Ballyclare Secondary are still of the highest standard and the development of each and every pupil still the aim.

Forty years of Secondary education on the Doagh Road, Ballyclare is worthy of celebration.

Mr McCrea (Headmaster 1982 - present)

To each of you reading this special edition of IN-FORM and who are former members of this school community, I extend the greetings and best wishes of those presently associated with the school.

For each pupil who has attended this school during the past forty years, there has been a unique range of experiences, in and out of the classroom, providing memories of people, places and events. The relationships individuals have formed with their peers and teachers have been significant.

Anniversaries afford all of us an opportunity to be involved in such a school as Ballyclare Secondary. Yes, it has had its exciting moments! One thinks of the (new) extension back in the 1990s, the growth in pupil numbers attending the school, the tremendous success of students in public examinations and the sporting achievements of teams and individuals. All of these are worthy of celebration.

The outstanding feature of this school, for me, however, is not its excellent facilities for learning, important and impressive as they are, but rather the care and compassion for young people which has been central to its ethos. I was impressed twenty years ago when I first joined the staff, with the family atmosphere which pervaded the school. Changes have been, and will continue to be experienced in the field of education, but I hope that the vision of care, of treating children as the most precious of God's creations, of doing everything possible to ensure a wholesome educational environment and of wanting the very best for each child may never diminish.

I am sure that parents, pupils and staff, both past and present, wish continued health and happiness to the school's first Principal, Mr W Stirling, to whom so much is owed.

I look forward personally to renewing friendships and recalling very many happy memories in this special year for the school. I hope that the school will continue to make a difference in a very positive way to the lives of and the opportunities given to the young people it serves.



Mr Metcalfe (1961 - 1999)

Memories of a Sexagenarian (almost)



Mr Metcalfe was a member of staff of this school from its opening in 1961 until his recent retirement. He was Vice Principal for 11 years. Here he writes about his memories of the school and the changes he experienced over the years.

Fifteen years ago, in 1986, I remember writing an article for the Silver Jubilee Magazine in which I recalled some of the changes which had taken place over the first twenty five years of the school's history. Now, here we are in the new millennium, celebrating the fortieth anniversary, and I am thinking of the changes which have occurred in the last fifteen years.

Although many changes took place in the early life of the school, it is only during the last fifteen years that major developments in the school curriculum and the long awaited extension and refurbishment of the original buildings were achieved.

As the school expanded from its original four hundred pupils and approximately twenty two staff, we were offered temporary mobile classrooms which were "temporary" for about twenty years, and indeed, five of these are still in use, despite the building of the new extension. The school population has now more than doubled and sixty five staff teach approximately 950 pupils.

My sympathies go out to all the pupils who were at school during the building of the extension in the early nineties, as they were moved from room to room and had to endure pile driving, builders' machinery and constant hammering while trying to revise for GCSE. Although it was also difficult for staff, they realised that the disruption would be worth it in the end. The new facilities were first class and many staff had some input into the design and layout of the new facilities as well as the equipment they required.

During the eighties, computers were introduced into schools and we wondered if they would ever catch on in the classroom. Some members of staff are still not convinced about the necessity for computers, but I'm sure that by the Golden Jubilee Edition of this production, they will either be experts or will have retired!

Although the curriculum changes are seen as improvements, many teachers feel that their subject choices are limited and subject matter much too restrictive. Back in the sixties, teachers had much more autonomy to diverge from the syllabus and introduce topics which they thought would be more interesting and relevant to pupils. Today, however, with more and more pressure to achieve top results, we cannot afford the time to delve into interesting topics which are not prescribed in the syllabi. This is unfortunate. On-going debate is suggesting a more diverse approach to the curriculum, making it more relevant both for the pupils and employers.

Many more pupils are now achieving excellent examination results which widen their career opportunities to go directly into a job or to further their education at either college or university. This has been encouraged in Ballyclare Secondary School with the introduction of a range of GNVQs, AS and A Levels over the past fifteen years. A number of past pupils have achieved the highest academic awards at university and this should encourage present pupils to aim for higher goals. Recently I met Dr Timothy Campbell, who is now director of the new three million pound high tech. St Patrick's Centre in Downpatrick and who is doing a good job in organising and developing it. Some staff will remember Tim as an excellent Fagan in one of the early productions of Oliver.

Poor behaviour, persistent late-coming, punctuality to class and not meeting deadlines for work have always been a problem in school, and that's only the staff! I am often asked if I have noticed any changes in the attitudes and behaviour of pupils during my teaching career. My response must be that, overall, the majority of pupils are well behaved and have a positive attitude towards their work, but there was always a minority who were not motivated enough and therefore could be disruptive. (Some things don't change with time!) In the early days, the threat of corporal punishment was enough to quell bad behaviour, but after the withdrawal of this sanction, it became more difficult to control and today the subject is still being debated.

The most important thing which has not changed over the life of the school is the vision of leadership, initially with Mr Stirling, who established the ethos and standards for the future, and later Mr McCrea and his senior team. Together with the total commitment of the staff in both their academic and pastoral roles, a progressive educational institution has been established which should be proud of all that it has achieved for all its pupils. Only when pupils leave school do they realise how much they were helped in achieving their goals.



If the next ten years leading to the fiftieth anniversary are as successful and eventful as the past fifteen, then I'm sure the school will go from strength to strength. I wish the school every success for the future and hope I'm still around to read the Golden Edition as a septuagenarian. (or to contribute another article - Ed!)

Best wishes, D Metcalfe

P.S. I'm saving this on computer disc for future reference in case of libel action!

Peace Trail 1999

In September 1996, Ballyclare Secondary School became involved in the European Studies project, an Anglo-Irish initiative of well over ten years standing. The project was developed to help us communicate with each other in a European context, promoting the ideas of tolerance and understanding, but not in a heavy-handed way. Ballyclare Secondary's cluster group contained schools in Sweden, Denmark and two schools in the Republic of Ireland, namely St Joseph's Christian Brothers in Drogheda and St Louis' Secondary in Dundalk.

Ballyclare's relationship with St Joseph's C.B.S. has become particularly strong and this was reflected in the residential venture at Carlingford in May 1998 and the "Peace Trail 1999" initiative, a year later.

"Peace Trail 1999" involved 26 young people, thirteen

from each school, visiting Ballyclare, Drogheda and London, journeying and learning together on a trail that would provide opportunities for meeting with leading people committed to the Good Friday Agreement, coupled with occasions that would allow for a dramatic presentation, aimed at exploring the themes of justice and lasting peace.

The number of dignitaries that the young people had the privilege of meeting on their travels are too many to mention, but the attendance of the leaders of the four main churches in Ireland and Cardinal Cahal Daly at the Ballyclare performance will remain forever in the memory, as will the photocall with the Deputy First Minister, Seamus Mallon, at Stormont, as well as the very special meeting with Dr Marjorie 'Mo' Mowlam at the House of Commons in London.

Mr Morton (European Studies Co-ordinator)



Church of Ireland Archbishop Robin Eames, Catholic Archbishop Sean Brady, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church Dr John Dixon, Methodist Church President the Reverend David Kerr, Cardinal Cahal Daly and Chairman of the Board of school's Board of Governors Rev Harold MacConnell

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Mrs J McCormick (Vice Principal 1983-present)

Ballyclare Secondary School has always been very fortunate in having a flourishing P.T.A. When I arrived in the school in 1983, I was immediately made to feel welcome by the parents who made up the committee. Over the years, the idea of the committee has been dropped and **all** parents are invited to **every** meeting.

Each year there are many, varying events, but the three school discos continue to be extremely popular, providing money for the school as well as enjoyment for the pupils, not to mention the headaches suffered by the staff who have been subjected to the loud music all evening! Informative evenings such as 'Drug Awareness', are important parts of the programme and the parents who attend ask thought-provoking questions.

If you have not, up to now, attended the P.T.A. meetings, please come along this year. You will find good companionship and learn more about your child's school. The Charity Quiz Night has been a recent innovation and has raised money for various charities. Mr Adams puts together some challenging questions (including those on Star Trek!)

Some of the parents in the present P.T.A. are former pupils of our school and will have seen many changes since they sat behind their desks in the old building!

THANK YOU

This Special Edition of IN-FORM includes departmental articles from HODs, contributions from past pupils and various members of the teaching staff, as well as our two Principals, past and present, and two Vice Principals, past and present. Thank you to them, and to those whose help and advice was invaluable. Thanks also to our sponsors for their support.

Open All Hours!

On 27 February 2001 there occurred a unique event in the history of Ballyclare Secondary School - THE SCHOOL WAS CLOSED!

Even during the heavy snows of the 60s, every effort was made to keep the school open, with stories of staff, pupils and even the Headmaster, Mr Stirling, walking thigh-high through snowdrifts to reach the building.

The 70s saw the Ulster Workers Council strike and still pupils and staff managed to attend school, BUT on this unforgettable day, the snow combined with high winds, resulting in a power cut, which defeated even the most determined of us!

As I was standing in my drive-way that morning, I was wondering how I would ever get my car on to the road, when the phone rang. It was to inform me that the school was closed. Such a relief! I did not want to be unable to reach Ballyclare if others had succeeded in making the journey!

The school has a saying, "Open All Hours", after the television programme of the same name. Now, we can still say it - but with one exception!

Mrs McCormick



In 1961 when the school first opened, there were two art rooms - one on the top floor, which is now a Maths room and one on the middle floor, which is now the Library.

In the early days there was one Art teacher, Mrs Carson. Miss Millar (now Mrs Martin) first came to the school as a student teacher and was appointed to the staff in 1963. In 1964, Mrs Carson left and Miss Harson (now Mrs Love) joined the staff as Head of Department. Five years later, Mrs Martin left to take up a teaching position as Head of Art in the then new Cullybackey Secondary School. Mr Gingles was appointed to take over Mrs Martin's position.

In 1973 Mrs Martin, who was now Head of Art in Graymount Secondary School, returned to Ballyclare to teach Art part-time and was later appointed to the full time staff again.

Mrs Love, Mr Gingles and Mrs Martin continued working in the Art Department as a team for many years. In 1976, the Department moved into much better accommodation in the new extension. However, this was still not adequate, as Mr Gingles still had to continue to teach in his mobile.

It was with sadness that Mr Gingles and Mrs Martin said goodbye to Mrs Love who decided to take early retirement. Ms Huey, who had been teaching in Ballee High School, Ballymena, joined the staff and Mrs Martin became Head of Department. This was the start of an exciting and challenging period as the Department had been redesigned and refurbished and at last, Mr Gingles had an Art room inside school! The new curriculum for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 was being introduced and the staff of the Art department were able to meet the challenges of the new programme of study with the help of the excellent facilities now available.

During the early years many outstanding pupils passed through the department and went on to gain high qualifications in their Art studies. More recently many pupils have gone to Art College and Colleges of Further Education and are now working as graphic designers, architects, art teachers and carpet and fashion designers. One of these pupils was Robert Logan, who was recently awarded the Royal Society of Ulster Architects Medal for final year Queen's University Student of Architecture. In June 2000, the Art Department staff were very proud of Chris Heaney, one of our 'A' level pupils who received recognition as the top 'A' level art student in Northern Ireland. Chris is now at art college, and we are quite sure we shall be hearing more about his achievements in the future.

The staff in the department are delighted that so many of our former pupils continue to visit us, to have a chat, ask for advice and to give us an update on how they are getting on. Mr Gingles often refers to this as our 'After Care'!

There have been many changes in the curriculum and in the examination system over the past years and it looks as though this mode is set to continue. Let's hope that a period of stability with fewer changes will eventually take place so that the high standards achieved by our pupils in G.C.S.E. and 'A' level Art may continue.



Christopher Heaney (1994-2001)

Business Studies

Mr Mark Hunter (who retired in 1969) and Mr Jim Platt were the original members of the Commerce Department in the 1960s. In those days it was a small department, specialising in commercial subjects. Both teachers had a thorough knowledge of their subject area and were enthusiastic and hard working. It is fair to state that they built a proud reputation based on hard work, high standards and good results.

However, it was during the 1970s that the Department developed rapidly. The school leaving age had been raised to 16 and with the encouragement, support and guidance of Mr Stirling, the number of staff increased to four. It was during this period that Miss Pat Scott, Mr Cecil Holmes and Mr Jack Waldron joined the new Head of Department, Mr Jim Platt. Miss Scott remained in post for five years before deciding to leave teaching. Her replacement was Miss Liz Davison (Mrs Alexander) - a very welcome addition to the Department.

There were more staff changes in the 80s and 90s. Mr Platt, the inspirational Head of Department, joined the teaching staff at the University of Ulster and the dynamic and enthusiastic Mr Holmes joined the Northern Ireland Curriculum Council. Miss Ruth Creighton (Mrs Boles) and Miss Arlene Saunderson replaced those who had left. However, the latter, after two years in Ballyclare, returned to live in her native County Fermanagh. Miss Helen Kelso (Mrs Porte) was then appointed as her replacement.

What should pupils learn? What should schools teach? These are two deceptively simple questions but there are no simple answers! However, over the years, the department has tried to adapt its curriculum to suit all pupils and to suit a changing society. Some of the traditional subjects such as Shorthand, Typing and Commerce have been 'dropped' and have been replaced by others such as Business Studies, Word Processing and Office Applications. It is for this reason that the 'Commerce' department changed its name to the more accurate Business Studies Department - business studies being a more all-embracing term.

We would contend that the past 40 years have proved that business related subjects have a major part to play in any school curriculum. The dedicated staff have adapted to change and have consistently helped pupils to achieve their full potential. Results in 'A' Level, AS, GNVQ, GCSE, OCR and Pitman examinations have ranged from excellent to very good throughout the years. Although the department has changed considerably since those early days, it is hoped that the old fashioned compliments of high standards, hard work and conscientiousness will still be attributed to all connected to the Business Studies Department.

The English Department is one of the largest departments in the school and has nine members of staff who are all English specialists. These are Miss C Roberts, who is Head of Department, Mr J Graham, Mrs J McCormick, Mrs A Dummigan, Mrs G Oliver, Mrs I Taylor, Mrs I Weatherup, Mrs E Gawne and Mrs C Nicholl.

ENGLISH

Two members of staff who have left within the last fifteen years are Mrs McNally and Mrs Dennis. Mrs Dennis, who retired from her position as Head of Special Needs, will always be remembered for her expertise, her special approach to her students and her great professionalism. There have been changes in the Literacy Programme to include writing Special Educational Plans and a whole school approach to literacy.

Major changes in the curriculum include the new GCSE exam in 1988. This replaced the GCE and CSE exams. The new GCSE introduced the element of oral and written coursework which helps students achieve marks before taking the final exams. More recently, Key Stage 3 Assessment has been introduced for Year 10 students in English, as well as Maths and Science. This year (2000/01) saw the innovation of the new AS levels and English Literature students sat the exams in June 2001, at the end of their lower sixth year. Students will go on to complete the A2 level exam at the end of their upper sixth year.

The English Department has actively encouraged students to become involved in the Arts through public speaking and festival work, as well as participation in school dramatic and musical productions. The school library continues to be a focus of school life as a central and valuable resource area for the whole school. It now includes up to date computer access to information via CD-Roms and the Internet.

The Department has achieved, and continues to achieve, high academic successes and provides an excellent all round education in both written and oral communication skills.



(R.I.P.). G.C.S.E. and AS/A2 exams are now taken by our students in Years 12, 13 and 14 respectively.

Many History students have distinguished themselves over the years. Harry Wright was our first ever successful O level candidate in 1965 and Ballyclare Secondary School's first pupil to gain a university degree. Harry began a trend which has seen a number of History students progress to degree level and beyond, foremost among whom have been George and Olivia Buckley, Margaret McCullough, Sonia Johnston, Paul Johnston, Gareth Fenning, David McClean, Deborah Rodgers, Gavin Graham and James McCrea.

GEOGRAPHY

In the early days of the school, Geography was part of the Social Studies Department and 'older' readers will no doubt fondly remember the late Tommy Gilmour. Many pupils at that time sat Junior Certificate. Gordon Ward soon joined the department and brought many innovations and much enthusiasm. He worked closely with Miss Allen (who later became Mrs Ferguson). Together they pioneered residential field trips and many of the 'home-made' instruments they produced at that time are still in operation today, over 30 years later! O level and A level were both taught, though classes were smaller than today.

In the 1970s, the Geography Department included Miss Harvey, Miss Neill, Miss Rankin and Miss Roberts, all of whom are on the staff today. Later, Mrs McConnell and another Miss Neill joined. Mrs McConnell now teaches in England. The school leaving age was raised and C.S.E. was introduced. The number of pupils taking Geography increased and the school grew. It was decided, in 1978, we would no longer offer A level and this was the case until it was reinstated in 1998. In the early 80s, Mrs Agnew joined the Geography Department and Mrs Campbell, who did her teaching practice here in 1994, joined in 1996, when A level was reintroduced.

Mr Ward left the Department to become principal of Coleraine Boys' Secondary School. His place was taken by Mrs McQuoid, who left to go to Cullybackey Secondary School. Mrs Davison has been Head of Department since 1975. The current teaching line up is Mrs Davison, Mrs Agnew, Mrs Campbell, Mrs Doherty, Mrs Moore, Mrs Beattie and Mr McGuigan. Over the years, there have been many changes. Exam papers may, on the face of it, look easier, but the 'pass mark' is a lot higher. Regional Geography has been replaced by Thematic Geography. Understanding is considered more important than remembering, and computers now take the pain out of number-crunching for coursework.

The History Department has had the advantage of remarkably little staff turnover since 1961. There have been only three Heads of Department - Mrs Spears (1965-70), Mrs Ferguson (1970-76) and Mr Todd. The next two will be Mr Manson (2003-2015) and Mr Adams (2015-2038)!

Over the years, History has reinvented itself, with the result that it is in many ways unrecognisable from the subject first offered to pupils way back in 1961. This is reflected in the gradual disappearance of examinations such as Junior Certificate, O level, C.S.E. and, most recently, A level

HOME ECONOMICS

In 1961, when the school was just about to open, two newly appointed Domestic Science teachers, Mrs F Montgomery and Miss N Dougan, met for the first time in a kitchen supply shop to buy yellow baking bowls. The first classes which they taught were all girls - boys did not do the subject until approximately 1984, by which time it was known as Home Economics. Among these first pupils were girls such as Henrietta Millar, Beryl Bigger, Anne Colhoun and Jessie Milliken.

Soon after this, the teaching staff of the Department extended to include Miss J Smith, Mrs A Houston and Miss L Sherrard. Miss Dougan became Mrs McKnight when she married Conor McKnight from the CDT Department across the corridor! Since that time, a number of other staff have been in the Department - Miss E Skelly, Miss S Witherspoon and Mrs B Johnston. When the subject was known as Domestic Science, it covered Cookery, Needlework, Craftwork and Household Management, and a lot of girls who did these subjects look back with enjoyment at the practical skills they learned then.

Today's Home Economics Department reflects changes brought about by the demands of the curriculum, examinations and society. All junior school pupils take Home Economics for three years and then make a subject choice at that stage. Needlework and Craftwork no longer belong to the subject area - instead they are covered in Art and Design. Child Development has been offered in the Department for approximately 20 years and is taken at GCSE level. The increase in 6th Form in school has led to the development of A level Home Economics and a more recent subject, Advanced level Health and Social Care. In the Summer term of 2001, at the end of a two year GNVQ Advanced level Health and Social Care course, 12 pupils achieved Distinctions. This is equivalent to two A levels at Grade A/B. This is a first for Ballyclare Secondary! There are now five teachers in the Department, supported by our Technician, H Cameron - the same H Millar who was one of our first pupils in 1961.



Advanced Level GNVQ Health & Social Care students who achieved Distinctions in June 2001, with their teachers. Back row L-R: L A Gilchrist, C Mitchell, E Neilly, E McDonald, K Gamble, C Hanna, G Culbert, A Turkington. Front row: R Theis, R Irwin, Miss Hutchinson, Miss Smith, Miss Scott, Mrs Cunningham, C Beattie, C Weatherup.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The ICT Department was born in September 1993 when the new Stirling Building was opened. This was indeed an exciting time, as the facilities were state-of-the-art and the accommodation mirrored the working environment. The rooms were spacious, there was carpet on the floors and the furniture was new and modern.

The Stirling Building houses three purpose-built computer laboratories which are a whole school facility. There is also a well equipped ICT Resource Area where both teachers and Sixth Form students can use modern facilities. Prior to 1993, resources were limited so the only ICT courses on offer were Word Processing and Computer Studies. Not only are these facilities used by the students at Ballyclare Secondary, the community benefits as well. The North East Institute holds various ICT evening classes which are attended by many local people.

Since 1993, there has been an ICT 'explosion', and we have been constantly upgrading our facilities to keep abreast of the new technologies. All the departments in school now benefit from the use of ICT to deliver some aspects of their curriculum. The Internet is linked to almost all our computers, so that students and staff can access up-to-date information and carry out projects for research and assignments. Recently we have also established a video-conferencing link with Japan and this has proved to be very popular with and beneficial to the Sixth Form students.

We look forward with enthusiasm to the future. As technology advances, it is likely that we will see less 'chalk and talk' and more use of technology as an imaginative way to deliver our curriculum.

MATHS

Like all other departments, the Mathematics Department has seen many changes and innovations since the school opened in 1961. 'Junior' and 'Senior' Certificates were replaced by 'GCSE' and 'Key Stage 3' examinations. We have moved from imperial units like perches, roods and acres to the metric system which makes life much easier for both pupils and teachers. The old 'multidivisor' calculators used in the sixties have

been replaced by the most sophisticated electronic calculators and computers and, of course, there is a vast amount of help with mathematics available on the internet. Within the Mathematics Department we have endeavoured to cope with the many changes, whilst stressing that the children themselves are more important than the subject being taught.

The personnel within the Department has evolved over the years. There have been many new faces since the days of Tommy Mayne, the first Head of Department. Many of our staff have retired or moved on, but we have currently a Department of dedicated teachers of Mathematics who have been with us for many years. Mr Robinson, who took over from Mr Mayne as Head of Department in the sixties, retired in June 2001 and has been replaced by Mr Cosby. We wish him well in his new post. The current Maths team consists of Mrs Allen, Mrs Dixon, Mrs Fleck, Mrs Graham, Mrs Lowry, Mr McComb, Mrs Treon and Mr Younger, all of whom have many years of experience and are dedicated to improving the mathematical standards of our pupils within Ballyclare Secondary School.

We have much to be proud of in the Mathematics Department. Many of our past pupils have gone on to become mathematics graduates and, indeed, there are several practising teachers of Mathematics within their ranks. Our examination results have been second to none and we are proud of the progress made by all our pupils, including those who have found the subject difficult. We have had three inspections by the Department of Education since 1961, and in each we have received a glowing report - in fact the words 'very good', which are almost unheard of in an inspector's report, can be found within the mathematics section of the latest (1994) report.

The importance of Mathematics in modern society is absolutely vital, and we on the top floor of the main building look forward to providing a sound mathematical education for all our pupils for many years to come.

Media Studies

Media Studies was introduced into the curriculum in September 1988 and in the early days it was taught by a variety of teachers: Mrs Dummigan (who initiated it because she liked the subject and thought pupils would too!), Mrs Davison and Mrs V Beattie (who were brave enough to accept the challenge, in 1989).

The following year, Miss Roberts and Mrs Taylor replaced Mrs Davison and Mrs Beattie. The subject, which had benefited from all the new ideas and input from this variety of teachers, now really 'took off'. Originally offered as a GCSE subject, pupils expressed an interest in continuing to A Level. Therefore, in 1996, when AEB Media Studies A Level was introduced for the first time, A Level students undertook a brand new course, with Mrs Dummigan keeping (at least) two pages ahead at all times!

The first batch of pupils to do the new course are always at a slight disadvantage as they are the 'guinea pigs', but they have an advantage that they live long in the memory. This is certainly true of Ashley Brown, Robert McKenzie, Gavin Graham, Victoria McConnell and their fellow classmates who survived the experience of that first year of A Level and lived to tell the tale!

Victoria McConnell, who graduated in Media and Communication from Ulster University Coleraine and is now doing a Master of Arts Degree writes:

"When I originally picked the relatively new topic of Media Studies as one of my third year options, I had no idea what exactly it was and what a profound influence it would have on my future career aspirations. GCSE Media Studies led successfully on to A Level Media Studies where a combination of theory and practical work gave me a real taster for future work in Media.

I am now a Communication Studies graduate and am currently completing a Masters degree in Communication, Advertising and Public Relations. Media Studies set the foundations for my further education study and I have referred back to my old notes on a number of occasions. Areas such as semiotics, content analysis and the study of advertisements are all topics I have covered in my Masters degree which I had previous experience of during my Media Studies course.

My interest in the media has led to work as a trainee journalist with the Ballyclare Gazette, Public Relations Officer with Parkview Hockey Club and more recently, PR and Marketing assistant with the Belfast Film Festival.

My love for Media Studies was sparked by our teacher, Mrs Dummigan, whose knowledge was extensive and enthusiasm was great. For her advice and guidance through my GCSE and A Level Media Studies courses, I will always be indebted."

This year (2000-2001) A/S and A2 courses replaced the old A Level and yet another set of 'guinea pigs' was created. The current Year 13 have already experienced their first three modules, their first written and practical exams, so there has been no easy induction into the 'Sixth Form Experience' for them!

Over the years I have been very grateful to the people who have made Media a pleasure to teach and to learn. Trips to events at Cinemagic venues, media workshops, the cinema and educational visits to the Belfast Telegraph, of which there have been many, are some of the most memorable aspects of the Media course. It is a serious subject with an immediate relevance to everyday life and, as such, has been popular and successful.

Staff have made very valuable contributions and have worked hard to ensure good results. Credit must also be given to pupils who make their best effort to complete the work required and often have gone that extra mile to make the teaching experience very rewarding. To date the Media Studies results have always been surprisingly good (95% pass rate at GCSE in Year 2000). This is an indication of what the pupils can bring to the subject; their enthusiasm and hard work is reflected in their results.

Modern Languages



The Modern Languages Department in Ballyclare Secondary School has, in common with other departments, experienced many changes in 40 years. Indeed, the very name of the Department has changed (as the present HOD never tires of reminding people!) Originally called the French Department, the name change occurred in 1984 to reflect the inclusion of Spanish. Over the years, German has also been offered as a second language, and, more recently, basic Japanese has been introduced for post-16 pupils. The curriculum has also been transformed, with much greater emphasis on communication skills and spoken language, and the increasing size of technology (audio, video, ICT) to provide extended, enjoyable practice of language items. Department accommodation was greatly improved in 1992, when most members of staff were able to move into the newly refurbished building, facilitating the sharing of materials and equipment.

The one constant factor throughout most of these changes was the Head of Department, Mrs Bradley, who retired in 1997 after thirty three (and a third!) years' service in Ballyclare Secondary. During that time, she never lost her love for the subject, nor her determination that each and every pupil should achieve to the best of his or her ability. She was assisted over the years by many valued members of staff; Mrs McNally, Mrs Moore, Mrs Graham, Mrs Stark, Mrs Henry, Mrs McGowan, Mrs Vaughan and Mrs Morris. In November 1994, the Department was greatly saddened by the loss of Mrs McGowan, whose dedication to her job had continued during the course of her serious illness. She is still fondly remembered by both staff and former pupils for her humour and warmth.

Mrs Bradley introduced the Paris trips which continued over many years and provided pupils with a most rewarding and enjoyable first-hand experience of French language and culture. In 1995, the school established links with College Vauban in Strasbourg. This link produced three exchange visits, each with the aim of undertaking a joint project on subjects such as local arts and crafts, local history and the environment.

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By the mid 1960s the 'Agreed Syllabus' had been drawn up for use in secondary schools and it became obvious that an RE specialist was needed on the staff at Ballyclare. Mrs P Archbold was appointed as the first Head of Department in 1965 and it was during her incumbency that candidates were first entered for public examinations. Mrs Archbold was succeeded in 1968 by Rev W Brown, who was later to become RE Advisor to the South Eastern Education and Library Board. Rev Brown was succeeded by Mrs P MacDonald and then Mrs I Wallace. For a short time, Mr I McClelland, a Science teacher, looked after departmental affairs. Mr Atcheson, the current Head of Department took office in 1976.

The past forty years in Ballyclare Secondary School have seen significant development and change in Religious Education as in the secular disciplines. This change is reflected in the adjustment of its title to Religious Studies. It is no longer solely concerned with people from the past and distant lands, but it is greatly interested with living people and how to understand them. It hopes to help formulate responses to the many moral issues of modern life.

There have also been changes in Religious Studies examinations with the introduction of GCSE in the 1980s. City and Guilds provides an alternative qualification for some senior pupils. The latest examination development has been the new A/S level, taken in lower sixth form.

ROAD USER STUDIES

This subject was introduced to Ballyclare Secondary School by Miss Rankin (now Mrs Doherty) in the late 1970s. Mr Graham took over the controls in 1979-80, after attending a three day course in Craigavon, where approximately 40 teachers from all over the Province descended with their mopeds, much to the amazement of the locals! The now famous Gerry Kelly attended on the last day of the course to interview some of the participants, and Mr Graham was glimpsed that night on UTV doing Ballyclare Secondary proud as he showed off his newly acquired skills!

In the early days, Traffic Education, as it was known, was not an examination subject and was offered to some classes in 4th/5th forms in an attempt to give them some insight into the road safety issue. By the mid 1980s the subject was offered at the old G.C.E. level, where many famous old boys (and indeed girls!) of the school achieved some notable results. In the late 1980s, early 1990s, Mr Adrain joined Mr Graham as a teacher of the subject when it was being offered as an option subject. Road User Studies became Motor Vehicle and Road User Studies and elevation to a fully fledged GCSE subject in the early 1990s, meant that students taking the subject could now also achieve a recognised GCSE grade.

As part of the course has always involved the practical riding (and eventual testing) on a moped, many other teachers in the school frequently looked with dismay (and I'm sure a little admiration!!) at Mr Graham and Mr Adrain risking life and limb in the school playground. Passing P.E. staff were frequently heard saying "...Are those two completely mad?" On one occasion, Mr McCrea approached the playground to speak to Mr Graham on another matter and was confronted by a large, gangly pupil hurtling towards him, with Mr Adrain running behind shouting, "Close the throttle, close the throttle!"

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Modern Languages



The Modern Languages Department in Ballyclare Secondary School has, in common with other departments, experienced many changes in 40 years. Indeed, the very name of the Department has changed (as the present HOD never tires of reminding people!) Originally called the French Department, the name change occurred in 1984 to reflect the inclusion of Spanish. Over the years, German has also been offered as a second language, and, more recently, basic Japanese has been introduced for post-16 pupils. The curriculum has also been

transformed, with much greater emphasis on communication skills and spoken language, and the increasing size of technology (audio, video, ICT) to provide extended, enjoyable practice of language items. Department accommodation was greatly improved in 1992, when most members of staff were able to move into the newly refurbished building, facilitating the sharing of materials and equipment.

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Boys' PE



The Department provides experiences in physical education for between 90 and 100 pupils per year group. These pupils are drawn from an extensive catchment area comprising the town itself, with its mixture of housing executive and private housing estates and a rural hinterland made up of a number of small villages such as Doagh and Ballynure.

Over the years, the Department has developed valuable links with local sporting organisations such as hockey, basketball rugby, soccer, and athletics.

The philosophy of the Department is based on the belief that every child, regardless of intellectual ability or social background, should have a rewarding and meaningful experience in Physical Education. Consistent with this philosophy is the belief that in the teaching of Physical Education, staff will attempt to share and create values, rather than impose them.

The Department hasn't experienced a lot of change over the past 20 years. When Mr Roy Millar left in 1975 to embark on a career at the IFA, where he still works as Director of Coaching, his place was taken by Mr Blair. Mr Lyons was Head of Department at this time and retained that role until he went into 'semi retirement' in 1995. Mr Blair took over the mantle of HOD and his department was completed when Mr Trimble joined in 1995. Mr McGuigan, of course, has been a member of the Department since 1985. The only other member of the 'physical jerks brigade' over these past 20 years was Mr Bill McAllister, who moved to the primary sector where he now holds VP status.

Returning to the early years, Mr Blair often reflects on a story regarding 'Messers' Lyons and Millar. At this time, both teachers taught more than P.E. When, during an internal term exam, a certain pupil was absent to sit Mr Lyons' English paper, Mr Millar sat the exam on the boys behalf just for a bit of 'crack', you see! He got a bit of a 'gunk', however, when the boy in question returned to school only to be told by Mr Lyons that he needed to buck up his ideas, having only scored 48%!!

Forward wind, then, to more recent times and, before closing, mention must be made regarding certain outstanding achievements. Several individuals have gone on to represent their county and even country at International level. Eddie Hill played for Irish schools in 1992-93. However, the school performances of the 1st XV in 1995-96 in winning the Ulster High Schools' Rugby Cup at Ravenhill against Dromore High School by 18-13 and the equally impressive achievements of Mr Graham's 1st XI hockey teams who shared the Ulster High Schools' Taylor Cup in 1992, 1994 and again in 1996 against Ballycastle, Parkhall High and Rathfriland High schools respectively, were successes that will live long in the memory of all who witnessed them. From the 1996 hockey team, Gary McKee went on to play for Lisnagarvey, Ireland Under 19s and Ulster, while Dale McNeill achieved Ulster status.

Current indications are good for continued success in future years, for this year, our Under 12, Under 13 and Under 14 soccer sides all claimed silverware in the finals of the East Antrim competitions.

Nonetheless, our main priority is to see young people develop an interest in and a respect for their bodies and hopefully go on to enjoy sport in some capacity long after their time at Ballyclare Secondary School. Here's to the next 40 years and beyond.

MUSIC

The Music Department began its life on the top floor of the main building, sandwiched between a couple of Maths rooms. In those

early days, the 'sound proof' cork tiles on the floor were covered with wooden platforms in tiers and we had those lovely wooden chairs with fancy arms for writing on! Practical music-making consisted of class singing and recorder playing - do you remember the taste of the disinfectant combined with the wooden recorders?

While the musical noises were very pleasant most of the time, there were occasions when the patience of the Maths Department was somewhat tested. Lessons from visiting tutors took place in many odd locations including the store of Room 8 - did you ever have a flute lesson accompanied by the noise of a photocopier? If an extra piano was needed for school productions etc. it was manhandled down the flights of stairs - but in those days, men were men - boys were men as well!

Since the opening of the new extension, there are two purpose built classrooms each with 3 group rooms, all on the ground floor, miles from any other department - only the lockers and toilets to appreciate the music. But, you know, we miss the calming influence of the Maths Department and hey - can anybody out there move a piano?

Girls' PE



The Girls' PE Department has seen a few changes throughout the past 40 years. The first PE teacher to put girls through their paces was June Hunter. Following June, Jean Ross arrived, and if this name sounds familiar, it is because the girls still compete for the Jean Ross Cup in athletics every year. This trophy was donated by Jean when she left Ballyclare. Mrs D Caldwell then joined the ranks. Mrs Caldwell is still known to many of the pupils as she was one of the leading forces in starting Ballyclare ladies Hockey Club which has had a very successful record since its re-formation.

Mrs J Dickey was the next PE teacher to arrive and as the numbers grew, she was joined by Mrs W Campbell. Mrs Dickey and Mrs Campbell taught together until Mrs Dickey moved on and is now teaching in Jordanstown Schools. She was Head of Department when Miss A Whittock joined the Department. Despite Mrs Dickey and Mrs Campbell both having maternity leaves at the beginning of her appointment in 1979, she managed to survive her probationary year with the help of one of the 'old hands', Mrs Caldwell.

Mrs Campbell took up the HOD position on Mrs Dickey's departure, and the Department was further expanded by the arrival of Miss V Neill (now Mrs Beattie) in 1981, to teach geography and PE. She brought her netball skills with her and has been responsible for a very successful club throughout the school. Mrs Campbell left us in 1986 to live in England and was not immediately replaced. Miss A McLean, now Mrs McCullough, arrived as a student from UUJ and after eight weeks teaching practice here, applied for the vacant post when it was advertised at the end of the year in 1987.

These three, Miss Whittock, Mrs Beattie and Mrs McCullough, now make up the existing Department. Who knows who'll be here in another 40 years!



Way back in the early days, 40 years ago in fact, the subjects taught were Woodwork, Metalwork and Technical Drawing, otherwise known as Heavy Craft. Mr Crymble was Head of Woodwork and Technical Drawing and Mr Adrain was Head of the Metalwork Department. The emphasis then was on making and learning skills. Theory and Design were not stressed as being the most important, and most of the students' time was spent on the production of artifacts such as stools, coffee tables, cupboards and so on, in Woodwork and anything from a needle to an anchor in Metalwork - and several anchors were indeed made! We produced wrought iron brackets and gates using the forge, as well as various copper dishes and objects in beaten work. Fitting and lathe work allowed us to produce a range of useful tools.

The General Certificate of Education was the main exam in the early days. Boys in the Junior school could do Junior Certificate, which was a practical exam using tools and equipment. At that time very few girls did the subject and were not timetabled for it. It was much later that the subject was timetabled for both boys and girls.

There was not the same emphasis placed on exams. R.O.S.L.A. (Raising of School Leaving Age) gave us pupils who wanted to do practical work and this led to a variety of activities, the biggest being the project at Glenariff which was completed in the late seventies. Under Mr Crymble's excellent leadership, a log cabin look out shelter and fore-ground area was designed and constructed for visitors to sit and enjoy the tranquility of the park. This shelter remains in excellent condition and is used to this day. At this time, Mr Crymble was supported by an enthusiastic team which included Mr S Cross, Mr C McKnight, Mr I Boyd and Mr M Adrain. Mr A Horan succeeded the late Mr McKnight and after eleven years in this school, he went to Africa where he worked in education. The late Mr Boyd retired in 1995, but continued to teach in Africa for a further three years.

When Mr Crymble retired in 1990, Mr Clarke was appointed as Head of the new Technology Department. Woodwork, Metalwork and Tech Drawing were to go. In their place was an all-encompassing new subject - Technology & Design - which would include most of what was good from the former subjects but would also include Plastics, Problem Solving, Design, Electronics, Mechanisms and Computer Control. A revolution had begun and Technology was taking over. The changes in the subject required further new resources. The new purpose-built Technology Block would be the best of its kind, state of the art, a dream come true - well almost. The design of the building had several flaws and after much campaigning and suffering by teachers and students alike, major alterations were carried out and Technology Block Version II was completed in 1996. This has proved to be a much more workable and user friendly environment.

Today's team under the leadership of Mr Clarke includes Mr T Lewis who was a Science teacher until he discovered the joys of Technology. Mr K Hopper was with us for a year before going back to teach in his native Fermanagh and was succeeded by Mr G White. Now, children are no longer taught just the skills of making devices. They are taught how to identify and analyse the need for a product, how to investigate and design the product, how to make it, evaluate it and maybe, with a little luck, sell it!

The last fifteen years have brought about many changes in Ballyclare Secondary Science



Department in terms of teaching staff, accommodation and courses. Mrs Best left the staff in 1989 to devote more time to her family and was replaced by Mrs Kirby. Mrs Lynas joined the staff in 1991 and retired in 1999 to be replaced by Mr Beggs. Dr Larmour joined as an additional member of the Department in 1995 and congratulations are due to her on her promotion to Head of the Biology Department at Glenlola Collegiate in Bangor. Mr Metcalfe, after a really long innings - he was on the original staff when the school opened in 1961 - retired in 1999 to be replaced by Mrs Parr. September 2001 will see two new members of staff, Dr Flint and Miss Russell.

The increase in staffing reflects the increase in Science taught within the school, as a result of the introduction of Science for all and the increased number of pupils choosing Double Award Science and AS/A2 Biology.

After a long wait, the early nineties saw the construction of a completely new Science teaching block. No more tramping out to the garden to Science Mobile 5! The investment in building and resources has paid handsome dividends as the results in external exams bear witness to.

With all these changes, we can look forward to the future with real optimism.

Special Educational Needs

The Special Educational Needs Department has changed dramatically over the past few years with the introduction of the Code of Practice, which addresses the identification, assessment and provision of pupils with Special Educational Needs. The needs of most pupils will be met within mainstream schooling, having a broad, balanced education involving partnership among parents, schools, Boards and other agencies. Gone are the days when SEN pupils were educated in a Special Needs class taught by one or two teachers.

Today, all staff are involved in the education of SEN pupils. However, they are supported by various professionals, the Educational Psychologist, Outreach Guidance Team, Literacy Support Teaching Service, Occupational Therapists and Audiology Service, to name but a few!

Mrs Dennis retired in the summer of 1997, but her philosophy with regard to the education of children is as relevant today as it was during her teaching career. She believed and stated in the Silver Jubilee magazine, "a happy child learns more easily and a relaxed, friendly atmosphere is conducive to the educational process". She based her work on the individual learning needs and practical assistance in meeting these needs. These words are just as applicable today, with Mrs Weatherup as Special Needs Co-ordinator.

It is very encouraging for staff to note the interest and growth of membership and attendance at the Parent Support Group. This group was formed in 1997 and meets once a term, providing an opportunity for parents and staff to work in partnership, meeting the needs outlined in the Code of Practice. The group discusses problems, new educational developments and provides a support network for parents.

It is hoped, in the years ahead, that the young people we educate will continue to have the opportunities to develop their potential throughout their lives.

From Ballyclare to..... the Chalk Face!

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perceived as having achieved success, the immediate thought I had was that a considerable amount of that success was due to my time at Ballyclare Secondary. It was there that I was fortunate enough to receive an education which not only developed me academically, but also as a person.

I started Ballyclare Secondary in the early 1960s, having transferred from the High

School where I had been in the Prep Department and in 1st Form. My initial memory is of my first day when Mr Stirling greeted me with, "Good morning, Anne," as I arrived in the entrance hall. That welcome immediately evoked a sense of belonging in me and still, to this day, I feel grateful for having been part of that community.

Learning became interesting, thanks to the skill and dedication of the teachers. My fondest memories are of Mrs Montgomery and Miss Smith, who developed my love for Home Economics subjects and, Mr Ward, who struggled to teach me Geography. I remember Mr Astbury and Mr Hunter who taught me a wide range of subjects which I can apply within my present job. Then there was Mr Metcalfe, who frequently organised for groups of us to go Youth Hostelling, with memories of skating on frozen pools of water on top of the Antrim Plateau and the late nights singing by large fires and telling ghost stories!

I was fortunate to make some very special friends, and even though it is seldom that we meet, I still reflect on the experiences I shared with them. It was with regret that I left to follow my desire for catering. I obtained professional qualifications which enabled me to take up a position of managing a restaurant in the centre of Belfast, quite a challenge, as, in the early 70s, terrorist bombs were a daily occurrence.

When I married in 1972, I decided a job with more respectable hours was needed and moved into school meals. Initially, I was employed in Silverstream Primary and then Victoria Primary, where I stayed for the next two years as cook supervisor. From there, I became a Peripatetic Supervisor, a position I held for two years. When the post of School Meals Organiser for the Newtownabbey area became available, I applied and was successful. Ballyclare Secondary became one of the kitchens for which I was responsible. I enjoyed visiting the kitchen where, not only did I meet old friends, but to be in the place where I had always enjoyed my meals, was a real treat.

In 1988, I took over responsibility for all the school meals provision in the NEELB when I became Senior Organiser. This was a real challenge with approximately 300 schools where meals are served, 1300 staff and customers, in excess of 30,000 meals daily and a budget of £5,000,000! I have always enjoyed my work and being involved in education, where demands are always changing is quite a task.

In 1998, I was awarded the H.C.I.M.A Janus Award for Professionalism in the Large Public Category. I know that any success I may have is due to the encouragement and guidance I received in Ballyclare Secondary and I feel privileged to be an ex-pupil and one of many who have benefited from their time in the school.

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After leaving Ballyclare Secondary School in 1992, I went to the University of Ulster at Coleraine to read History. I then went on to Queen's University in Belfast as a P.G.C.E. student and now I am a teacher at Bangor Grammar School. My years at Ballyclare Secondary School were very happy and formative ones. I remember well each teacher who taught me at Ballyclare and as a teacher myself, I admit now that I have massively 'borrowed' from them all. I can assure my old teachers and alma mater that my hair is now under strict control, though I have maintained and even developed my own eccentricity - a vital qualification for teaching History, as the staff at Ballyclare can attest!

I find it difficult to understand why some people remember their schooldays with a sense of ennui. From the moment I started to the moment I left, I always felt very comfortable at Ballyclare Secondary. I was always well and entertainingly taught and it engendered in me a respect and enthusiasm for scholarship and industry. I owe a huge debt to the History department which was simply marvellous and promoted in me a life-long love of the subject.

I was also very interested in Science at school and I was very fortunate to have wonderful teachers. The experiments, typically, did not always go to plan, but the anti-climax was often much more fun. I remember one student wound the clock forward in Science by 10 minutes. The teacher remarked how time had flown, but several students showed her their watches, assuring her that her watch was 'up the left'! The ruse worked wonderfully, - until the next lesson; the teacher realised she had been duped and kept us all in at break. (I suppose it could be called 'Time and Punishment'). Not a lady to be fooled easily - we all admired and respected her for it.

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IN CONTROL



Jackie Wright, son of our caretaker, attended Ballyclare Secondary from 1997 to 1982. While at school, his interests lay mostly in sporting activities, which comes as no surprise, since brother Tommy reached International status as goalkeeper! His chosen career in the retail industry started with Wellworth & Co and then on to John Henderson Ltd where he worked as a Store Engineer.

From 1992 to 1999, Jackie was retail controller with Andrew Millar & Co, who own Spar, VG and Vivo stores across the Province. Following internal promotion, he was given the responsibility of setting up a new pricing policy which involved co-ordinating and planning a complete refit of the largest store in the chain. In 1999 he was appointed Senior Retail Controller within the company and in this role he is responsible for co-ordinating the management of the company. He is responsible for 40 stores and a team of 5 area managers and 800 employees.

Jackie is now married and living in Ballyclare. He has two daughters and a son and lists among his interests football, running, cycling, cooking, gardening and entertaining - when does he ever get the time?

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David McClean

IN CONTROL



Jackie Wright, son of our caretaker, attended Ballyclare Secondary from 1997 to 1982. While at school, his interests lay mostly in sporting activities, which comes as no surprise, since brother Tommy reached International status as goalkeeper! His chosen career in the retail industry started with Wellworth & Co and then on to John Henderson Ltd where he worked as a Store Engineer.

From 1992 to 1999, Jackie was retail controller with Andrew Millar & Co, who own Spar, VG and Vivo stores across the Province. Following internal promotion, he was given the responsibility of setting up a new pricing policy which involved co-ordinating and planning a complete refit of the largest store in the chain. In 1999 he was appointed Senior Retail Controller within the company and in this role he is responsible for co-ordinating the management of the company. He is responsible for 40 stores and a team of 5 area managers and 800 employees.

Jackie is now married and living in Ballyclare. He has two daughters and a son and lists among his interests football, running, cycling, cooking, gardening and entertaining - when does he ever get the time?

Bye laws and Buildings



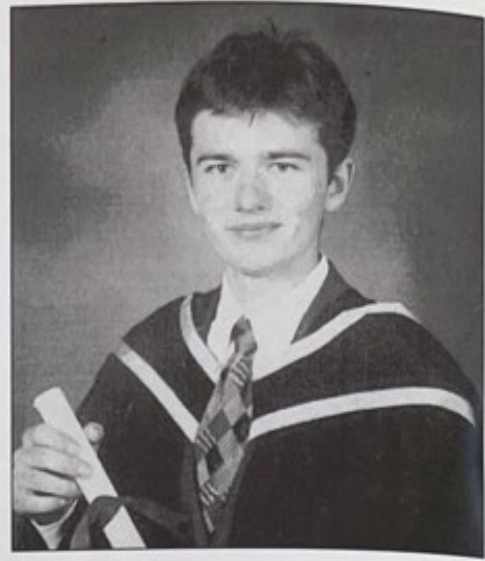
I started Ballyclare Secondary School in 1987 - a memorable time for me as *Dirty Dancing* hit the cinemas and *Bon Jovi* rocked the charts. Funnily enough, trigonometry and photosynthesis didn't have the same profound effect on me, but nonetheless, they all contributed to my school days at Ballyclare Secondary.

My first year, as with all years, whizzed past in a haze of residential, field trips and school discos (a particular favourite of mine). Somewhere in between, I was taught by some of the best teachers I have ever had. The support and encouragement that I received were second to none and provided me with the opportunity to take A levels and eventually study Law at Queen's University Belfast.

From there, I attended the Institute of Legal Studies and qualified as a solicitor in 1999. I have been working in Wilson Nesbitt Solicitors, the largest legal team in Northern Ireland, for four years and I am now Head of the Employment Law Unit.

My work, despite being specialised, is varied and involves a lot of people-contact. When I was standing in morning assembly in Ballyclare Secondary, law work never entered my mind. Pre-occupied with the latest hair trends and excuses for dodging PE, career prospects got pushed aside by the spiral perm and glossy lip balm! Yet it is these 'traumas' and the 'skills' I utilised in dealing with them that I continue to use on a daily basis; along with the present participle and the periodic table, my school days taught me it all and I only wish I could go back and do it all again.

Maxine Orr (nee Gault) (1987-1992)



My ambition was to be an architect. Although I did not pass the eleven plus, during my time at Ballyclare Secondary School, I never felt hindered in any way from reaching this goal.

During fifth year, I had the opportunity to have a one week period of work experience in an architect's practice, which confirmed for me that this was what I wanted to do. Although not everyone thought I could do it, I was encouraged by my teachers and family.

After GCSE examinations, I had the opportunity to study A levels. Instead, I decided to go to East Antrim Institute in Newtownabbey, where I undertook a BTEC National Diploma in Construction. At the outset, I was told that no-one had been accepted from the college to study Architecture at Queen's University. My tutors said it could be done and that is where I set my sights.

In 1993, I was accepted on to the BSc (Hons) Course in Architecture at Queen's. Six years later, after much hard work, I finished the post graduate BArch Course and was awarded the Royal Society of Ulster Architects President's Medal for the best student. Another student, who had followed a parallel course to myself by coming from a secondary school and going the BTEC route, finished second in the year.

In December 2000 I finished my chartered exams and have decided to set up in private practice. I plan to open an office in the Ballyclare area later this summer. It seems so long ago, but I know that it was the encouragement and direction given to me by the teachers at Ballyclare Secondary School that first set me on the path to achieving my goal.

Robert Logan (1986-1991)



Stuart Flint attended Ballyclare Secondary School from 1988 to 1993. He received his Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award in May 1995 at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace. He completed his Bronze and Silver Awards while still at school.

WHEELS ON FIRE

I started Ballyclare Secondary School after attending Belfast High School Prep Department, Somerton House. When I first arrived, there were three 'streams' and I started and continued my education in the 'S' stream. My memories of school and Ballyclare are mostly good. I loved PE, Woodwork, Science, Art and English, but didn't do so well in Maths! Strangely, I found aspects of Physical Education quite difficult; long distance running or cross country were a strain, and I struggled to keep up, sometimes taking short cuts!

However, now I run regularly and do so at a moderate to high level as this is part of my training schedule. I loved football and rugby, although I wasn't much good at either, and even though I've continued to play football as a recreational sport, I'm not much better now, but I talk a good game! If I get the chance to compete at anything now, I'll have a go - tennis, squash, golf - all the 'normal' sports, or carting, motor car, motocross and Supermotard - all motor sports in which I am now invited to participate sort of 'perk of the job' you might say, but it is a good excuse for me to have a bit of fun and to compete.

I must have a competitive nature, as I can remember that all I wanted to do when I was in school was to ride and race motocross, which I did for a while after leaving. I progressed to short circuit racing soon after. Some of my school mates had motocross bikes back then and I was very envious. Stephen Mawhinney and David Rea talked non stop about racing at the weekends or riding after school. I dreamed about it and might have gone on to race motocross competitively but for the fact that my friends back home in Carnmoney had more interest in owning road-going motorbikes.

I got into racing when I was about 23, because I was then working for an electronic company specialising in CCTV. I had a very decent wage and needed a hobby sport. It was expensive, but great fun and it got serious when I started winning championships. I had to leave my job in CCTV when I was 29 to race full time and at that time I was in charge of the department, so today I am competing in Moto Grand Prix all round the world. The World Championship takes place in 11 different countries and has 16 rounds, with millions of spectators watching every round. In 1999, I rode for the QUB Team Optimum whose offices are based in Ballyclare. Now I ride for the Italian company, Aprilia. Last year I rode 500cc RSW and I'm currently riding a 250cc RSW for the factory. The Italians are so enthusiastic about their racing, and I love everything about them and the country. It literally costs millions of pounds to run a rider/team at this level, with all the back-up, support and development work that is required to compete at world level.

It is everyone's dream to have a job that involves his or her hobby, but the pressure is incredible. Airports are my biggest hate at the moment - a far cry from Ballyclare, but all my days in Ballyclare were good and today my boys, Jack and Zak, use the swimming pool facilities, so we visit often.

I travelled by bus from Newtownabbey, so I was always rushed in the mornings trying to get to the 'stop' on time. Things haven't changed now, and although I don't mean to be late, I rarely manage to be on time! I said that I liked Art - true; I loved it and still do. My Mum taught Art and my sister, Emma, is an Art teacher at Girls' Model, so I guess you could say it's in the family. I also loved anything that was 'hands on' - Woodwork, as it was called then, inspired me, and still does. Metalwork was another great subject, and when I moved into apprenticeship training, I spent a lot of time cutting, grinding and filing. I remember our English teacher, Mr Graham, (I still see him occasionally as he lives quite near). He was very cool, and I remember he looked like one of the Beatles and drove a Volvo!

Mr Stirling was then the Headmaster and was also very easy going. I only had to visit once or twice! The 'guys' who worried us taught the girls on the top floor, Mr Waldron and Mr Holmes. They struck fear into our hearts well into my fourth year. I suppose it was intended to keep us all in tow - it worked!

Something else that I don't often admit to is that I played a musical instrument, the cello. Not very well, but Mum sort of wanted me to and now I wish I had played something a little more hip - guitar or keyboard! Then again, if I was now playing with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, I'd be writing this with a different slant!



School was fun and I know I was too eager to get out into the big, wide world, but it worked out okay for me. I come home after each race, as Jack is in primary school and his education must come first. I also own my own motorcycle shop in Belfast called Racebase and this takes up all of my spare time.

Hello to all my teachers, wherever you are!

Jeremy McWilliams

STOP PRESS: We have just learned, as we go to press, that Jeremy has written himself into the history books by winning the Dutch Grand Prix, a World Championship event, at Assin - the first British rider to win a 250 Grand Prix in 18 years.

SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS



Dawn Gilliland came to Ballyclare Secondary School in 1994. She returned to Sixth Form in 2000, to study GNVQ Business Studies at Intermediate Level, gained a distinction and progressed to East Antrim Institute where she is currently studying for a Medical Secretary's Diploma. She did her Work Experience at Belfast City Hospital and is now applying for secretarial positions. She added a further distinction to her credits with the Audio Typing exam.

Dawn was always a keen participant in sports and games during her PE classes and it came as little surprise to teachers and peers when she was selected in May 1995 as a member of the Irish Athletics Youth Team. The team competed in Dublin where Dawn won 4 gold medals in a series of disciplines. Her next competition was the New York State Parks Games for the Physically Challenged and here she collected an amazing 5 gold medals in swimming, slalom, club throwing, precision throwing and track racing. All who had the privilege of knowing and working with Dawn while she was a pupil at Ballyclare Secondary wish her well as she embarks on her chosen career.

Victoria Elliot (1994-2001) A former Head Girl at Ballyclare Secondary, Victoria was selected for the Northern Ireland Under 17 Netball squad in 1998. Victoria has been captain of netball teams throughout her school career and is also a member of Ballyclare Netball Club.



Carol Bonnes (1989-1994) A former pupil of Ballyclare Secondary, Carol is a Northern Ireland Soccer International at both Under 21 and Senior level. On leaving school she followed an HND course in Sport and Leisure Studies. In 1998, Carol won a Peace and Reconciliation Scholarship to a Danish University to undertake further Coaching Education and experienced coaching at school and club level in Denmark.

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Winners of McDowell Cup
1997-1998**



Miss Whittock, L Armstrong, C Johnston, G Lyttle, C Houston, P Kane, K McTrusty, S Campbell, Mr McCrea, L Stewart, K Barr, K Barr, L Kane, V McKinty, T Haggan and C Morrow.

**IRISH SCHOOLS U 16 BADMINTON CHAMPIONS
ULSTER U 16 LEAGUE AND CUP WINNERS
1998-1999 & 1999-2000**



J Coulter, C Montgomery, Mrs Taylor, H McGookin, and C Campbell

**ULSTER HIGH SCHOOLS TROPHY AND POLLOCK CUP WINNERS
1995-1996**



P Alexander, D Montgomery, W Jamison, R Wilson
Mr Siberry, C Lynn, M Miller, B Lambe, A Coiley, D Heaney, S McCrum, N Craig, Mr McGuigan, Mr McCrea
R Farmer, N Reynolds, P Morrow, A Watson, J Barnett, S Robinson, I Walker, J Rea, W Patterson
ULSTER HONOURS: Jonathan Barnett, Barrie Lambe, Andrew Coiley, Walter Jamison, Darren
Montgomery, Neil Reynolds

**ULSTER HIGH SCHOOLS
TAYLOR CUP CHAMPIONS
1995-1996**



G McConnell, S Robinson, M Miller,
Mr Graham, R Munro, L Hutcheson, N Reynolds, P Morrow, Mr McCrea
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