

Newspaper article Ciar a Quigley

Tuesday September 27th proved to be a busy day for the transition year students of St. Louis secondary School. We celebrated Grandparent's day by inviting the elderly in our community to come and spend a day in our school. This was in association with National Positive Ageing week. My Nanny came with me and as my mother works in the school, there were three generations of my family in the school that day! Everyone met in the Chapel Hall at nine o'clock. Tea and coffee were served and everyone helped themselves to some of the goodies we made at home and in Home Economics. The group was addressed by Mrs. Quigley, Deputy Principal, and the day began with a chance to interview our guests about their life and experiences. This was an invaluable insight into the way of life in the past and some of the changes that have occurred in society are really quite unimaginable! As part of a project for the Friends of the Elderly, it is required that students write an essay about life in Ireland when their guest was young. We had also designed friendship cards which we presented to our guests as part of the assignment.

Then, for us, it was off to Art while other classes attended Guidance, Maths, Enterprise and Home Economics. For the first class, we were in the computer room. We were finishing off the written section of our art projects. During the class, I showed my nanny how to use Microsoft PowerPoint. She was fascinated by the effects and backgrounds available and I showed her how to attach pictures and video clips. I showed her the school email system and the school website. Seeing the reactions of the guests really gave us an idea as to how advanced technology has become, and that some of the things we take for granted weren't around in our grandparent's day. (Yes, not even Facebook. Cue gasps of horror!) For the second class, we went to the art room. We were drawing still lifes and our guests helped us to colour them in. It was lovely to sit with our guests and to work on something together. Everyone returned to the Chapel Hall for more tea and something sweet, which was much appreciated!

We had P.E. in the Chapel Hall after the break, which was interesting to say the least! Others enjoyed double Computers. We were dancing with our grandparents to Grease, Michael Jackson, Johnny Cash, Elvis and many more!! We were brought through Waltzes and Jives, to name but a few, and by the time we were finished everyone was more than a little red in the face! It really gave us an appreciation for what styles of dance and music were around in our grandparent's time and how they had dances instead of discos. It was a really unforgettable and worthwhile experience for all involved.

Everyone had worked up an appetite and it was time for lunch. The canteen had kindly provided salads and rolls. Everyone loved them and was very grateful to the canteen staff. Lunch was followed by apple tart, which we made in home economics. It went down well and we all let out a sigh of relief! Each class had prepared some entertainment. 4L sang Raglan road and Valerie, 4O sang Galway Girl and did the Macarena and we, 4U sang When I was single and Ain't no Mountain High Enough. Emily Crilly and Éabha Taggart also played a duet on the violin. At the end we got a huge round of applause. All the guests enjoyed the show.

We had a science quiz after lunch. We could certainly use the help of our guests more often! There were some interesting questions and even more interesting answers!! We were given crocus bulbs to present to our guests. Our last class of the day was geography. Music and Irish rounded the day off for the other classes. We discussed the various changes that have taken place in Ireland, particularly Dundalk, in the past forty years. Our guests really were a wealth of knowledge and I learned piles of interesting facts. We also watched a clip of Reeling in the Years on 1970.

There was a mass in the Chapel Hall at half past two. We all sat beside our guests. Fr. Paddy Rush said the mass and there was a PowerPoint that we could follow showing all the new responses. We sang all the hymns and Ms. Killoran accompanied us on the piano. After communion, there was a lovely reflection. It was accompanied by music and was very well chosen. At the end of mass, we brought the house down with our rendition of Lean on Me. The school Principal, Mrs. Greer said a few words and a presentation was made to Éabha Taggart's nanny, Ms. Wheelan, as it was sixty years since she had first started in St. Louis. Then it was time for our guests to depart. A great day was had by all and we really enjoyed getting to know our grandparents better and vice versa. Many want to come back next year and I think that is an excellent idea as it was a really enjoyable day!