

# The Classroom Chronicle

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## Film Stars in the Making

*Christmas Play produces talent galore*

### School Play

The Annual Christmas play took place in the School hall on the Tuesday before Christmas and was an outstanding success with a great variety of entertainment for the many parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, grannies and granddads that attended.

Each classroom put on a performance and every pupil in the school took to the stage. Miss Fogarty's room performed "The Three Little Pigs" Mr. Meaghers room did "The Story of Cú Chulainne" and Mr. Fogarty's room gave their version of "Cinderella". Each room also performed a sample of the Ceilí dancing that they have been learning now for some time. The individual performances by the children were outstanding and it is amazing how children so young have the confidence and ability to stand in front of an audience and play their parts with such confidence.

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## Santa Could Not Make It!

*Santa failed to turn up at Christmas Party*

### No Santa

The pupils at Firoda School were treated to a Christmas party on the last day of term. They were expecting Santa to turn up but he never arrived. However! There was no panic as good old Father Christmas did not forget his little friends in Firoda. He was up to his eyes in the workshop making toys for Christmas Eve and could not travel. Instead, he sent one of his Elves "Noddy" to Firoda and he had a big sack of presents with him - something for everybody- even the big lads. It was a great party with loads of grub and plenty of singing.

## Wellington Race 2000

The 20<sup>th</sup>. Annual Wellington Race and fancy dress parade took place in Castlecomer on the first day



### Stone Wellington at Clohogue Bridge

of the New Millennium. The weather was favorable and this helped in no small way to make the event one of the best to date. An

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Many weeks hard work goes into the preparation for the play and the Gaeilge & Maths are cast aside somewhat for those weeks. However, the children enjoy the challenge and an education of a different type is achieved. Mr. Gordon Bradley from Stradbally provided the sound system, an essential part of the event and past pupils rallied to the call in helping with the make up, manning the door and organizing the raffle. Thanks are extended to all.

### **Thank You Friends !**

The school management would like to sincerely thank you all for joining the Friends of Firoda for the current year. Due to circumstances beyond our control we were slow to get it up and running this year and as such were a little behind. The project runs from Sept. to June to tie in with the school year and so to keep ourselves up to date we held 4 draws on the one evening in December. (September, October, November and December draws) The next draw will be held on Friday 28<sup>th</sup>. January in the school at 2.45p.m.

As you know the Friends of Firoda is the schools main source of income for the year so without your support we would find it very difficult to operate. Approximately £3500 is received from the Department each year as a Capitation grant. About another £5000 has to be found to keep the show on the road. A local Contribution of approx. £600 is made by the parish (£10 per pupil to all primary schools in the parish) so the rest has to be fundraised.

*See Results on Last Page*

### **The Last Dance!**

All good things come to an end! Unfortunately this is the position with the Céilí dancing lessons that have been taking place in the school for the past number of years. Dancing Teacher Mr. Francis McDonald who has been passing on his skills to many schools for the

past 15 years is taking up new employment and as such will be unable to continue the lessons.

We wish Francis all the best in his new job and are very sad to lose him. He has given many of our pupils, past and present a talent and skill that should add to their enjoyment and entertainment as they go through life.

***Thank you Francis!***

### **Going! Going! Gone!**



The commitment and dedication of parents and locals to the school came to light again just before Christmas when a dedicated group organized an **Auction** in aid of school funds. The event, which was held in conjunction with a cabaret in Ballinakill, was an outstanding success. Everything from a needle to a haystack was sold by up and coming Auctioneer -Patrick McDonald who not only sold, but also entertained the punters. He actually succeeded in selling a £20 voucher for £68....not bad going for a young entrepreneur! What would he get for a £50,000 house at that rate?

Many local people donated items for the auction of gave services and £2000 was raised for the school. Thank you to all who helped organize the event, to those who contributed items to it and last but not least to those who put their hand in their pocket and purchased items (even if they did not need them

### **Down Under!**

Among a group of adventurous young people who recently headed for Sydney Australia

were past pupils Donal Dunne and Martin Owens. Others that traveled were Shay Bollard and Shay Kennedy. They are in constant email contact with us and we are expecting some interesting articles for the Friends of Firoda during the year.

Many 'comer exiles are in a home from home in Sydney and apparently there is never a day that you do not meet someone from home. They even organized their own Wellington Race on new year's day. We are awaiting a report on same but it is slow in coming! Maybe they were all locked up after it.

Anyway, Happy New Year to all you Exiles and remember even though you are away you can still become a Friend of Firoda - We have no trouble converting the Dollar to Punts!

estimated 10,000 people thronged the streets of Castlecomer. There were dozens of floats in the parade and hundreds of brave runners and walkers took to the wellies and tackled the three and a half-mile course. To take part in the actual race is no joke as the first mile is a grueling uphill battle. Wearing wellingtons does not make it any easier. However there is a spin-off for the local Chemists and various quacks in the following days as the weary athletes seek imbrocations and cures for their ailing joints.

The wellington race committee have erected a lovely stone wellington at the end of Chatsworth St. It can be viewed on the school web site as can other pictures of the current and past wellington races. The web address is <http://www.iol.ie/~mfogarty>

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### **Homeward Bound**

During the Summer Holidays one of our pupils from Castlecomer was away from home for a couple of weeks and was very anxious about having her precious cat "Puss" taken care of. The problem was solved when her dear Aunt from Crutt offered board and lodgings to Puss.

Everything was fine for a few days and the report on puss was very re-assuring. Then one morning, panic for Dear Auntie - puss was gone! What would she do- not puss but Auntie! Well, she said nothing for a few days, hoping for the best. She prayed hard but still no sign of puss. Around the same time Auntie had lost a new pair of shoes and they could not be found. As a last resort she went to Knock (Mayo not Spink) and prayed for lost causes. She asked the Lord that if it came down to a choice between the shoes and puss "would he please return puss."

Result: The little girl was informed that puss

had "gone rambling" and would surely be back! Back where? Though. When the little girl arrived home to Castlecomer who was waiting to greet her in the garden but Puss!!! having traveled the six miles through the fields and across the Clohogue river. An amazing feat for a little animal. Everyone was delighted especially Auntie.

*A True Story.....*

### **Tree Planting in Church Grounds**

A tree planting ceremony was recently held in the grounds of the Church of the Immaculate Conception Castlecomer to mark the Millennium. A number of Lime trees, similar to the beautiful trees in the Square were planted on both sides of the driveway to the Church. Many years ago there were trees there and it was nice to see them replaced. Each of the trees was dedicated to a different aspect of the Parish as follows:

<b>Dedicated to:</b>	<b>Planted By:</b>
The Church	Mrs. O' Neill
Voluntary Organizations	Mr. Nicholas Downey
Boys School	John Meally
Firoda N.S.	Patrick Cox
Convent N.S.	Martina Harding
Community School	Alan Gleeson
Community Health Care	Dr. Mc Eaney
Presentation Sisters	Sr. Oliver
Co-operation between Churches	Fr. Ryan Rev. Andrew Orr



## White Christmas

For the first time in many years Firoda actually had a white Christmas. There was enough snow in the schoolyard and field at 3.00p.m. on Christmas day to make a few snowmen and throw snowballs. The road also had a generous covering of snow. Three miles in, however in Castlecomer it could not really be claimed that it was a white Christmas. There were a few snowfalls

during the day but it did not stay. We wonder in Bookmakers terms, what constitutes a white Christmas. There must have been several disputes as our own experience shows that even within a few short miles there can be considerable climatic differences.

A few years ago, you might remember times when Firoda School was closed due to snow whereas there wasn't a sign of snow in 'Comer or Kilkenny.

<b>Friends of Firoda Draw Results</b>						
	1 <sup>st</sup> . Prize £50	2nd. Prize £20	3 <sup>rd</sup> . Prize £10	4th. Prize £10	5 <sup>th</sup> . Prize £5	6 <sup>th</sup> . Prize £5
Sept.	Alice Kennedy	John Wilson	George Kelly	Paddy Phelan	Michael Rowe	Noreen Dunne
Oct.	Donal Dunne	Mick Lawlor	Sean Doheny	Joe Coogan	McDermott & George	Tony Crennan
Nov.	Breda Jackman	Martin Walsh	Johnny Dunne	Michael Dunne	Cathy Brennan	J.P. O Mara
Dec.	Eugene Dillon	Marie Mahon	Seamus Walsh	Margaret O' Neill	Bernard Mansfield	John & Margaret Doyle



