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Christian Education . . . alive and well in Kilskeery!



Prize winners at the Annual prize-giving of Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Sabbath school, children's meeting and Christian day school

On January 17th, the 23rd annual prize-giving of Kilskeery Independent Christian School took place in conjunction with the prize-giving of Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church Sabbath School and Children's Meeting. The church was filled to capacity with pupils, parents and friends of the school. The meeting was chaired by Rev Ivan Foster, minister and school administrator. In

welcoming the people to the gathering, he recalled how that 25 years previously, in January 1978, the first tentative steps were taken in the formation of the

school which opened its doors in September 1979. The congregation, only six months constituted at the time, had taken on the debt involved in building a manse for him and his family after his installation as minister in February 1978. Now it took on also the burden of extending its premises to accommodate the fledgling school. There were no government grants available nor had any been sought, but rather a step of faith was taken and the Lord was trusted for the success of the little school. "Since that time," Mr. Foster said, "there hath not failed one word of all his good promise' (1 Kings 8:56) upon which we trusted at that time. Amongst the pupils attending our school are the children of some of our first pupils. For this token of mercy and blessing we do praise the Lord." The annual report of the school's progress was given by the Principal, Mrs. Ann Foster BA. It was a time of bitter-sweet memories, for the tragic death of a former pupil, Miss Melanie Scott, was recalled. In her report, Mrs. Foster paid tribute to Melanie.



Miss Melanie Scott

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Principal's Report

"Our enrolment has remained steady this year at 56 pupils, as one pupil left the school and one pupil entered year 1. Our staff is also unchanged and we thank God for the stability of our staffing arrangements and the benefits which this brings to our school. Mr. Selwyn Daly has entered our teacher training scheme, after teaching in a temporary capacity last year, and has presently completed four years of Open University study. Mrs. Ruth Daly completed her training and obtained a Second Class Honours Degree in Early Childhood Studies from Queen's University, Belfast. Mrs. Bernice Dane has obtained her Master of Arts in Education. We congratulate them all on their success. We also thank all the staff for their continued hard work and



The Melanie Scott Memorial Cup



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

commitment to the school. The parents are also to be commended for their support as are the pupils for their diligence and success.

School outings continued throughout the year with field trips in Geography and a most profitable visit to the Lisburn Linen Centre.

Examination results were particularly good this year in General Certificate of Secondary Education. Faith Dane, the winner of the best GCSE Candidate Award, achieved one A*, 6As and 2Bs and Ruby Irvine, the first winner of the Melanie Scott Memorial Cup, achieved 2 A*, 5As and 1 B.

These awards along with other prizes and certificates will be presented later by Rev. Richard Monteith who is our guest preacher tonight. We would like to thank him for taking part in our special service.

Work experience remains a valuable part of our school life. Pupils spent days in a variety of locations including the Erne hospital (optometry, radiography and surgical departments), Erne Special School, Burrendale Nursery, Elmbrooke School, Enniskillen museum, McFarland's Engineering, Milligan Bros and McMurray & Blampied joinery firms.

God has continued to maintain the work financially. We had some contributions from Orange Lodges and Apprentice Boys' Club Branches who passed on their annual church service offerings. School covenanters contributed in the region of £9000 as they do faithfully each year. One of our dear covenanters, Mrs. J Ferguson, passed away at the beginning of January 2002 and the donations to our school in lieu of flowers at her funeral amounted to £452.50. Some of the ladies put their baking skills to good use and sold their wares in Enniskillen and raised a total of £1680. The school magazine, compiled and edited by Mr. Daly, raised a total of £124.



The Scott family and friends with the first winner of the Melanie Scott Memorial Cup. Left to right — Miss Gillian Cowan, Stephen Scott, David Foy, Ruby Irvine, Gillian Scott, Mrs. June Scott and Mr. Geoffrey Scott.

Our school staff continue to maintain links with some homeschoolers on the mainland in Rhwiderin and Tavistock and it is good to have the Monteith children from Rhwiderin with us tonight. A group of our pupils continues to visit Coolaness Nursing Home on alternate Thursdays and sing hymns to the elderly residents. We appreciate the work done by Mrs. Eileen Wilson in rehearsing them and by Mrs. Arlene Gray who brings a message from God's Word to the old folks. We also wish to thank the parents who help by providing transport for the pupils.

Loss

However, the past school year will be chiefly remembered because of the tragic loss of one of our former pupils, Miss Melanie Scott, in a car accident. Like Abel of old, Melanie "being dead yet speaketh", and like him she has a message for us all. Her message, like Abel's, is her testimony.

Melanie spent eight years in our school. She was an exemplary pupil for she worked hard and was exceedingly teachable. She will best be remembered for her enthusiasm and ea-



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gerness to learn. She showed an interest in all her classes and achieved several “A” grades in GCSE. She went on to complete her “A” levels at the Enniskillen Collegiate, again achieving good results, and proceeded to study accountancy at Queen’s University, Belfast. After completing her degree, she obtained employment in a highly reputable firm: Pricewaterhouse Coopers. However, all these marks of outward success would have meant nothing if Melanie had not been saved. Melanie sought Christ while she was young. Realising she was a sinner and that Christ alone could save, she called on Him while still a child. She was ready when the call came. Her message tonight is: “Be ye also ready.” Melanie went on to gain a good knowledge of the Scriptures. She was always ready to answer questions in our school assembly and in the Scripture classes. She had followed on to know the Lord. Her message to us is: “Search the Scriptures, seek to know the Book of God for it alone is eternal truth.”

Worship

Melanie diligently attended church services. When the Bethel church in Enniskillen met to worship, to pray or for Bible study, she was there. It was not an option for Melanie to attend God’s house. It is not an option for us, for God has commanded it in His Word. Her clear message is: “Be diligent in your attendance at God’s house.” Melanie chose out Christian companionship. Her friends were Christians. Her fiance was a son of Zion. She esteemed God’s precepts in these matters to be right. What is her message? It is: “Stand with the people of God. Cast in your lot with them.” Melanie seized opportunities for service. She assisted in the worship in Bethel Free Presbyterian Church by playing the piano. She voluntarily organised our school library, a service the benefits of which we still enjoy. Her message is: “Serve God with all of your heart and whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might.” Melanie was early in Christ and early in heaven. She speaks to us of the brevity of life and the uncertainty of tomorrow. We must not boast of tomorrow for we know not what a day will bring forth. We may be soon called out to stand before God. We must be prepared as she was prepared. She has called our attention to these matters. Hear her message tonight.



Miss Faith Dane,
winner of the best
GCSE candidate shield.

Melanie will always be part of our school family, as she will be of her natural family. God has only one family in heaven and in earth and she is part of that family. Death has not diminished her but has enlarged the boundaries of her life. The Lord gave. We rejoice in what He gave us in Melanie and the precious memories we have of her. In the school we wished to do something in her memory. Gifts totalling £4290 were given by request in lieu of funeral flowers. With that money, we have purchased eight new computers and refitted the computer room. We are grateful to Messrs. Marcus Somerville and Richard Foster for their work on this project. The room will be known as the Melanie Scott Computer Room. Tonight, we present the Melanie Scott Memorial Cup for Maths, donated by Melanie’s bother, Stephen. It is awarded for Maths as Melanie particularly excelled in that subject. We thank Stephen for this loving gesture and pray God’s blessing on the whole family.”