

THE LORETO TIMES

DECEMBER 2022

Rooted, Responsive, Relevant

Pastoral Theme 2022/23

Star-Stronger Together, Always Resilient

In September, our new Pastoral Theme was launched for the Academic Year 2022-2023.

Loreto STAR: Stronger Together, Always Resilient. This theme has been interweaved across all departments and subject areas. The theme reminds us that we are all so much stronger with the help and support of others.

Alone we can only do so much; together, we are unstoppable!



Cara, in Year 10 created our wonderful Pastoral Theme for this Year and Siobhan Devine (CA) created our mesmerising Pastoral Display.



September

Star-Stronger Together, Always
Resilient



INTRODUCING



LORETO GRAMMAR
SCHOOL

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM
2022-2023





LORETO ART



ART

DEPARTMENT

YEAR 8

STARS



September – October 2022

Friends Programme



The long established Loreto Year 12 Friendship programme returned in Term 1. Each Year 8 Student was assigned a Year 12 Friend to help them navigate the transition to Post Primary School.



Our Year 12 Students excelled in their positions of responsibility and many went above and beyond for their Year 8 Friend. ***'Truly great friends are hard to find, difficult to leave, and impossible to forget.'*** – Selena Gomez Gomez



Year 8 Testimonials

"I am so thankful for my Year 12 friend, I have truly found a friend for life"

"My year 12 friend helped to make the move to Loreto so much easier"

"I really looked forward to my Year 12 visiting every week"

"My year 12 friend helped me to find my way"

September 2022

European Language Day Celebrations at Loreto

Every year, since 2001, the 26th September has been designated as “European Day of Languages.” Here at Loreto, all year groups took time in their languages lessons to do something fun to mark this special day of celebration. A new activity this year was the entire Year 8 and Year 9 student body coming together to sing, in canon, a traditional French song called “Vent Frais”. The performance of this sweet and simple song in the school assembly hall, by candlelight, was so very special and tuneful. Pupils lifted their beautiful voices in song, and we hope that a lovely lifelong memory was made for all participating pupils that day.

Below you can see a few snap shots of this spine- tingling performance.



KS3 Students Singing 'Vent Frais'

October 2022



'Sarah, Year 14, shares her experience of playing the leading lady role in our most recent school production, Sister Act.'



On the 5th of October 2022 we as a cast, took to the stage for the first of six shows to showcase our wonderful production of Sister Act. In preparation for this moment were five months of intense rehearsals, and when I stepped onto the stage to perform my first song, it was worth it. For Five months we acted, sang, and danced our way through the script bringing to life some of the most exciting characters who were full of humour and wit.

That first moment as the curtains opened was breath-taking. The sounds of the band, the warm beam of the lights hitting our face made every ounce of hard work feel worth it and the show hadn't even started yet!

The crowds were phenomenal as they laughed their way through the show, which helped us feel more comfortable as we knew we were entertaining them. The six shows came in fast and as the final night approached there was a mixture of emotions. The final time the curtains opened we knew it was the last time each line would be said, and each note would be hit so we made it count. It was emotional to say goodbye to Sister Act when the final curtain fell, but we are very grateful for the wonderful opportunity it gave us to not only meet other people in our school but also the other schools in Omagh. We have now made friends and memories that we will cherish for the rest of our lives!



**SISTER
ACT**

October 2022



Year 8 Students attended the Matinee Performance on Wednesday



Year 14 Students were superb in their role as part of the Front of House Team.



Backstage fun and stage decoration team.



Sister Act- October 2022

W O M E N I N S T E M

Nuffield Research Programmer

Congratulations to our Year 14 student, Joyce, who completed a study on the impact of Virtual and Remote Laboratories in STEM Education. Her research paper was produced as part of a placement with the Nuffield Research Programme at the Ulster University, Jordanstown. Joyce writes about her experience below.

In Summer 2022, I took part in the Nuffield Research Placement which is funded by the Nuffield Foundation and delivered by STEM Learning. The placement I chose was a 2-week, in person placement, at Ulster University, hosted by Professor James Uhoimbhi. Upon starting the placement, we were encouraged to interact with people all over Northern Ireland and were split into teams for two assignments. Our first assignment served as a practice for our final project as we were asked to research our dream job and utilize skills we were taught that will be necessary in future university assignments. Assignment two was a group project where we got to experiment using facilities provided by the UU. My topic focus was virtual and remote labs and my team was given access to the virtual laboratory where we could carry out a wide variety of experiments. We had to write an evaluation on 20 different experiments, including information and results we obtained and what new theories we came up with during the experiments.

The most exciting part of this assignment was that we could view how the earth's orbit would change if certain planets grew bigger or smaller through simulations. Once we handed in our second assignment and received feedback from the Professor, we began our final project. The final project topic was given to us by the Placement Providers and took over a week of researching, drafting, and gathering statistics. I sent off my research, "The impact of virtual and remote laboratories on STEM education" to apply for the CREST Awards and later on received a Gold award for my project. On the final day of the placement, we were encouraged to relax and was treated to free drinks and snacks from the Professor as a celebration of completing the placement. A couple months later, I was invited to take part in and speak at the official celebration event for NRF held in Stormont. The event provided us with an opportunity to network and display our projects in front of professionals.



*Joyce has also reached the
MOS UK & Ireland
Championship Final 2022*

Maths Week Ireland

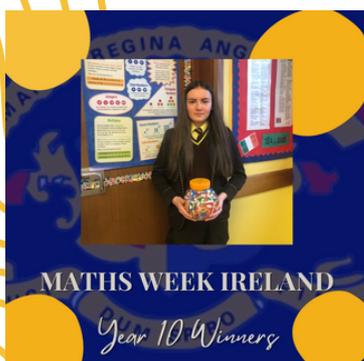


Maths Week Ireland

Maths Week Ireland took place on the 16-24th October 2022. The Mathematics Department organised a week of lunchtime activities including a murder mystery, treasure hunt, puzzles and quizzes for all KS3 Students.

The turn out was superb and a lot of fun was had alongside the students polishing up on their logical thinking and problem solving skills.

Competition Winners



Year 14 History Trip to Dublin



Year 14 History student, Zara, shares her experience of the recent excursion to Dublin, organised by the History Department.

Studying History at A-Level has afforded me the opportunity to enhance my understanding and knowledge of how events in the past impacted the way they are today, both socially, culturally and politically. In October, I had the opportunity to expand my knowledge in my recent studies of the Partition of Ireland 1900-1925, in a class trip to Glasnevin Cemetery and Kilmainham Gaol. During our first visit to Glasnevin Cemetery, we received a tour around the cemetery which was conducted with respect and dignity, as it is still a functioning cemetery.

We visited important Irish graves that we had been previously learning about in our studies these included, Charles Stewart Parnell, Éamon de Valera, Michael Collins, and Constance Markievicz who are buried there. Seeing these graves in real life, brought my study of history alive. At each grave, we received background information on each individual and their cause in the history of Ireland. Furthermore, we visited Daniel O'Connell's Tower- who was the cemetery's founder. We saw his ornate crypt in which he was laid to rest. Next on our trip we visited Kilmainham Gaol in which we were taken on a journey through Irish History. While in the gaol, we learned about tragic and heroic events, the agony and death of illustrious martyrs who fought for Irish freedom, as well as the unique tales of those imprisoned here. During the tour we were taken to the chapel in which Joseph Plunkett and Grace Gillford got married, and we were informed this was the inspiration for the famous song 'Grace'.

As we continued, we observed numerous gaol areas, the conditions of the inmates' cells and the cells of illustrious leaders. This facility held the political prisoners including Robert Emmet, Anne Devlin, Charles Stewart Parnell, Constance Markievicz and the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising, 14 of whom were executed by firing squad in the Stonebreaker's yard in which we seen. Overall, I would highly recommend visiting these famous attractions as it sparks a catalyst in people's imagination and is important to uphold the history of this country and allow everyone to have the chance to experience this.

Zara, Year 14

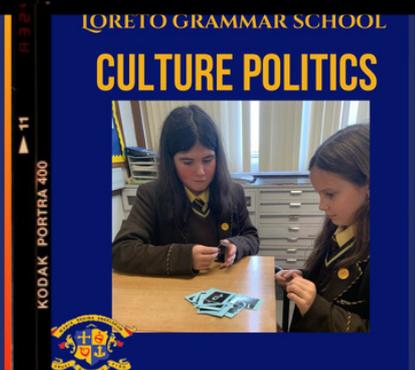
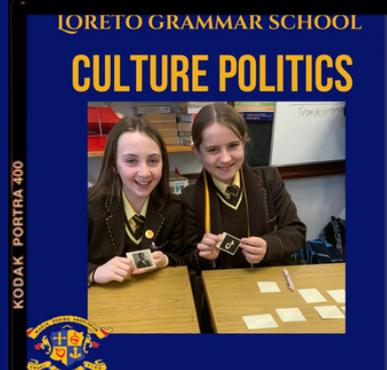
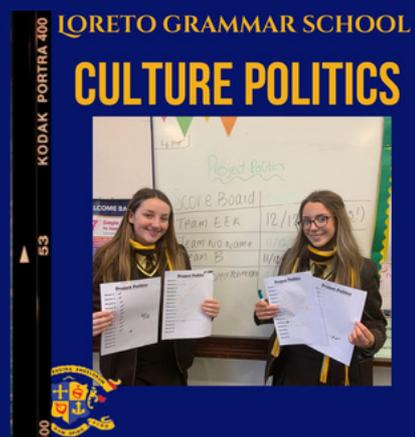
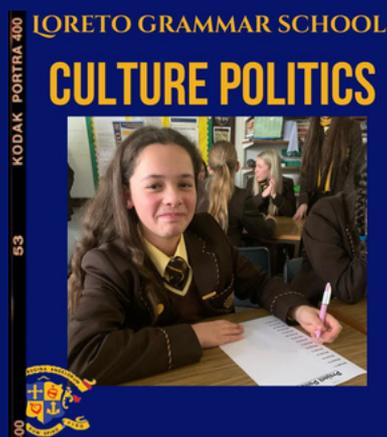


Year 13 Pupils organised a culture politics group for Year 8 Students

Year 8 Culture Politics Club

'To make a difference in the longer term, it is essential that young people are engaged in formal political processes and have a say in formulating today's and tomorrow's politics.' - **The ACE Project**

At Loreto, students are encouraged to become socially and politically involved in creating change in our society. Year 13 students, along with their Politics teacher, Ms Falls established a Culture Politics Club in order to ensure our young people are engaged, socially motivated and aware of political changes in our society at this time. The club was ran during Wednesday lunch times in Term 1 and was well attended by eager Year 8 students who are keen to get involved in understanding the political landscape across the world.





Loreto's Big Plantathon

Article written by
Martha, Year 9

This autumn, our school had a Plantathon, where many classes had the opportunity to plant new life around the school grounds. We collaborated with the Science Department to plant some tulip and daffodil bulbs in a secluded corner of the lawn, near the trees. It was very satisfying planting the bulbs, and has made me consider gardening as a new hobby to try. We had fun getting our hands dirty, and we found lots of worms in the plot, which meant we had very good fertile soil for our flowers to grow in. The activity slotted in perfectly with our current Science topic, which is Ecology. We were able to plant up to three or four bulbs each, and while we were gardening we learnt about how they, unlike seeds, can bloom many times in many Springs for years, so we will be able to enjoy watching them grow in our school grounds for the next of our next years at Loreto. I greatly enjoyed the Plantathon this year and I look forward to seeing the tulips and daffodils sprouting up in spring.

- Martha, Year 9



Loreto Piano Legacy Project...

One grand piano, one great story...

On Mr. Gerard Bradley's last teaching day as Head of Music in Loreto after 31 years, he took Gwawr McGirr (current Head of Music), his form class and the Year 11 Music GCSE pupils, down to the Convent building to show them where he had taught music for many years. In the Convent, everyone noticed the grand piano sitting forlornly and one pupil - Aine Rodgers - began to play it. All were curious as to why such a beautiful instrument was unused and unloved in the building, and so begins the journey of the Loreto Convent piano's restoration.

Since then, the Loreto Order has kindly gifted the piano to the school, and Will Stevenson from Spa Wells piano has been working hard on restoring the piano so that it can be played and loved once again within our new Music Block building. The piano will then accompany us to the Strule Education Campus, providing a direct and physical link to our historic Convent building in the new school.

The restoration will cost £6,000 and we therefore ask you to consider making a donation - through any of the events and activities our pupils have planned - to this most worthwhile legacy project.

Loreto Legacy Piano Project



Loreto Piano Legacy Project...

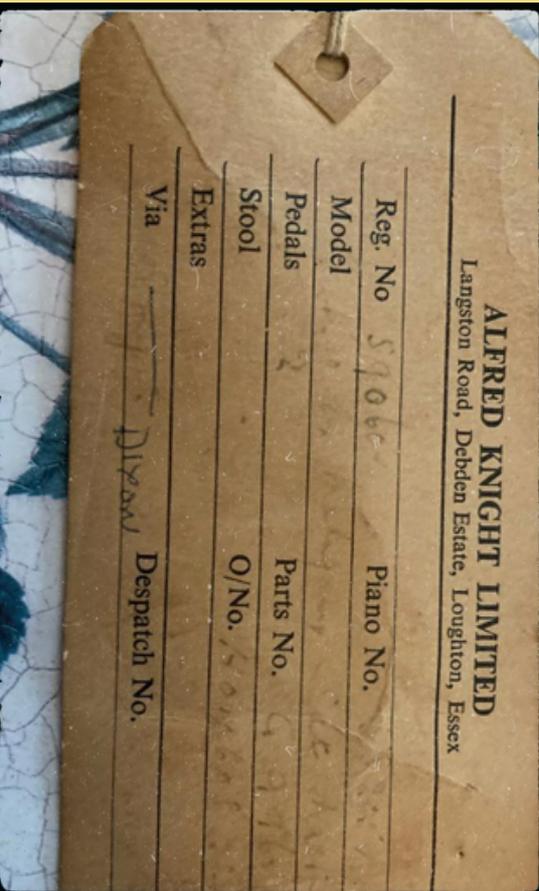
One grand piano, one great story...

The following work is being carried out on the piano:

- All strings removed
- Frame and soundboard cleaned, repaired and polished
- New bespoke bass strings and best quality treble strings and tuning pins fitted
- Action and keys removed, stripped and cleaned
- Hammers refaced and re-pinned
- All slip surfaces re-coated and polished
- Broken action parts replaced or repaired
- Damaged ivories replaced and keys scraped and polished
- Action reassembled
- Dampers removed, striped and cleaned
- New springs hand-made and fitted
- Felt cleaned and replaced where necessary
- Dampers reassembled, regulated and reinstalled in the piano
- Action re-installed
- Piano tuned to A440 pitch and regulated

Our fundraising will continue throughout the year, beginning with a 14 Hour 'Playathon' on Monday 19th December

Please support us in any way you can! See our social media pages for our 'gofundme' page if you would like to make a one-off donation to this historic project!



and written inscription dating our piano to 1846

Erard advertisement extolling the virtues of...



In the run-up to Christmas, staff in all three of Loreto's Languages departments came together to offer pupils a lunchtime Christmas Crafts Club. On the 2nd December it was the turn of the Spanish department. Combining their love of Spanish with their love of arts, crafts, glitter and pom poms, pupils came away with an adorable Christmas tree to give to their families. Feliz Navidad to all in our community.



POST 16 PUPIL PROFILE

Ashling- Year 14

Ashling is a Year 14 Pupil at Loreto. In this article, Ashling shares her experiences of her own Loreto journey. She reflects on her transfer to Loreto for Post 16 Study .


 BLOG

After having great success in my GCSE Studies, I had to say goodbye to the best five years spent at St. John's College Dromore and start my new journey as a post-16 student at Loreto. As my summer was drawing to a close the dreaded feeling of my first day was creeping up on me. I woke to the piercing sound of my alarm vibrating on my bedside table. Through my squinting eyes I could see warm beams of sunlight stretching into my dark room. I panicked as the sudden realisation had set in it was my first day at a new school. As I got off the cold and crammed bus, I was edging closer to the school gates. My heart was pounding in my chest. I took one last hesitant look behind me before entering the school. This is it. This is the start of my new and scary adventure as an A-level student.

When I was walking down the long and narrow corridor, I could feel droplets of sweat trickling down my face, I could hear voices echoing in the distant. A wave of relief set over me as I was greeted by warm and welcoming smiles. I suddenly felt at ease when I spotted a few familiar faces amongst the hustle and bustle of people. At this moment all the nerves and fear had evaporated from my body. My first day was as over as a quick as a flash and as weeks passed by, I felt myself being immersed within the Loreto community. It is safe to say I have settled in even though I got lost a few times along the way! I embraced every opportunity to get involved in school life starting by joining the U20 football team. I was overwhelmed with excitement as our season was about to take off. The feeling of pride pulsates through my body when we win games especially when representing my school

A year on and we are having an even more successful season than the last. Battling it out with opposing teams and edging our way towards claiming an Ulster title. In conclusion through football and my subjects I have met countless people and made life-long friends. Loreto has surrounded me with a comfort of support and guidance as I navigate my way through my final year as an A-level student. It felt like yesterday that I was standing before the entrance shaking with fear. Fear of the unknown path that lay ahead of me. Now as time has passed, I have enjoyed and cherished every memorable experience that Loreto has offered me. It has allowed me to grow and flourish into the independent individual that I am today.

With every laugh, tear, doubt or worry the Loreto community has stood strongly by my side preparing me for my next big leap into working world. It will be an amazing two years spent with the best people that will not be easily forgotten!

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THE HOME ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT PRESENTS

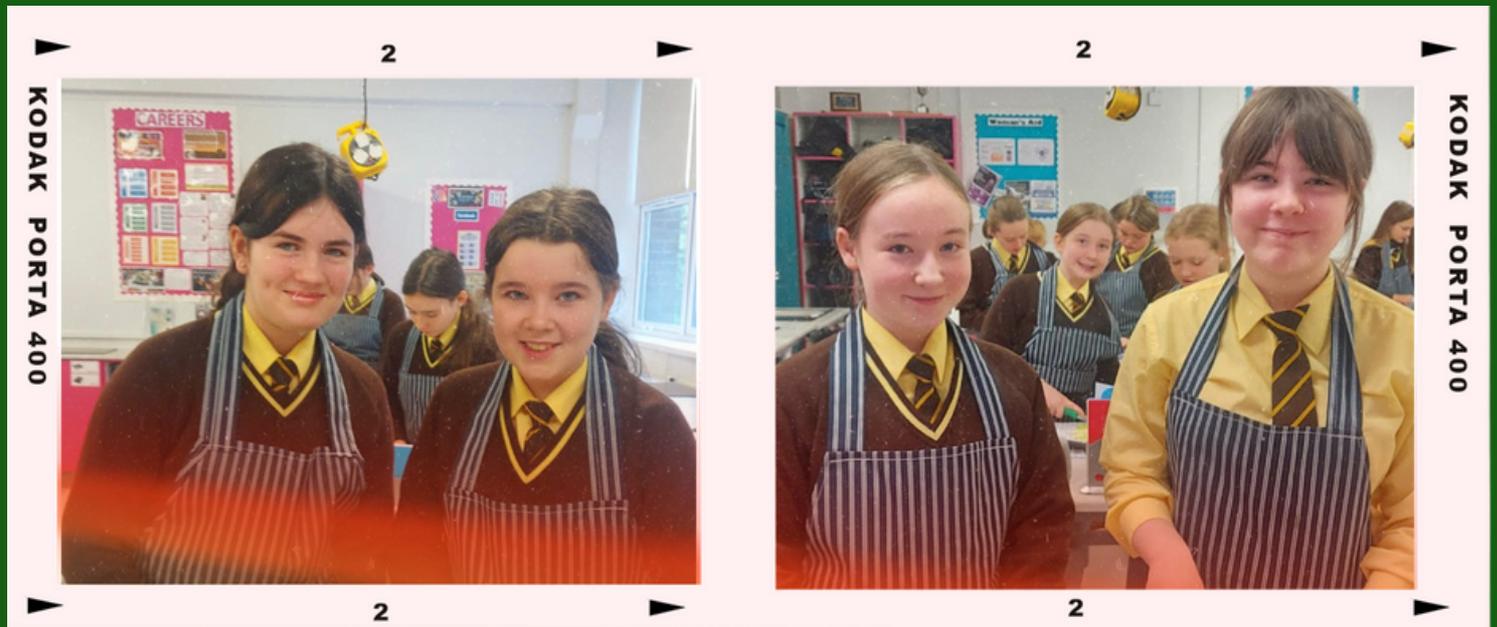
GCSE Practicals

THE LORETO TIMES DECEMBER 2022



THE HOME ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT PRESENTS

GCSE Practicals



Home Economics Year 8

Chocolate Truffles Recipe

Ingredients

100g Margarine
15 plain biscuits
2 tblsp of chopped fruit
2 dstsp of drinking
chocolate

100ml condensed milk
25g vermicelli
25g coconut

Method

1. Crush biscuits until fine using rolling pin. Add drinking chocolate.
2. Chop fruit finely and add to crushed biscuits with condensed milk.
3. Melt margarine and add to dry ingredients and mix well.
4. Leave in refrigerator for 20 minutes. Wash dishes and tidy table.
5. Spread vermicelli on one plate and coconut on another.
6. Lift one teaspoonful of mixture at a time and roll into and dip in vermicelli or coconut. Place carefully in petit four cases and refrigerate. Place in box.



Social Outreach Appeal

CONCERN
worldwide

Year 8 Concern Digital Fast

'Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very important that you do it.' - Mahatam Gandhi

Year 8's recently participated in a 24-hour Digital Fast to help transform the lives of those living in extreme poverty, tackling its root causes, and building resilience. Pictured handing over the cheque to Isabelle Brennan from Concern are Ciara, Isabella and Clodagh representing the Year group. Also included are Mrs Cullinan, Principal and Mrs McElroy, JPIC Coordinator.

Year 8 students raised an incredible £100.85.

Well done Year 8's in your role as agents of social change.



Deputy Head Girl Initiative in collaboration with **Cruse Bereavement Support**

Our Deputy Head Girl has initiated a "Grief in Common" group to support any young person experiencing loss. In conjunction with Linda and her team from Cruse Bereavement Support, we have hosted a series of workshops for young people who have been directly impacted by loss.

Miss Barbour and Year 9 students organised a sponsored walk to support an amazing cause. An incredible £1500 has been raised! Shauna speaks to The Loreto Times about the advent of this worthy initiative.

I joined Loreto in year 8 from All Saints Primary School in Tattysallagh. Coming from school with 100 pupils to a year group of around 130 was a huge adjustment but with the support, nurturing and encouragement of this school, I have grown a lot.

I understand the responsibilities I am required to accept and the passion I need as part of my new role so I picked a pastoral area very close to me, as part of my initiative this year. In October 2021, my dad suddenly passed away, it was a harrowing and painful time, but through the support of the school's pastoral team and my teachers, I am slowly beginning to heal. Faith is also a part of my healing process and an important part of this school community. Therefore, I will draw upon inspiration from a quote from South African poet Gift Gugu Mona: "Never underestimate the power of Faith because when nothing seems possible, Faith makes it possible."



I intend to show girls that faith is a personal journey which provides a strength to many and although they may not see it now or have been blessed to not need its comfort, someday it may be the very thing that saves them.

I am grateful for the support I received here at school, however, I found that I benefitted more from hearing stories from girls my own age. Unfortunately my situation is not unique in our school, so I would like to encourage students to share their own journeys in order to help others and to also help themselves. I have valued working alongside the Cruse Bereavement group to set up a support system for students dealing with loss. My ultimate goal is that my initiative will inspire conversations which some may deem too troubling for school life and result in our school becoming a more open and positive environment.



Creative Writing Cooney

REMBRANCE

Short Story Contribution- Elsa- Year 9

The rising sun casts a rosy hue across the morning sky. My scarf sits snug to my skin, soft and gentle, becoming a colourful flag in the autumn winds. I finally spot out the bench, my bench, that I come to everyday. I sink into my seat wishing I could sit here forever, drown in its warmth.

"Hello Pat, still waiting I see!" croaks a familiar voice, his words full of empathy. "Still waiting" I say letting out an exasperated sigh. He nods his head and his tender smile fades from his face, the spark in his eyes disappears as he remembers. Something that the whole town remembers that happened on this day, fifty-five years ago. The disappearance of Poppy Bellman.

"Come on!" chuckled Poppy as she dragged me through the unfamiliar forest. Trees that reached into the heavens, their canopies covering the sky leaving only shafts of sunlight streaming between the branches. The sky was now a blank canvas, each glowing star a drop of euphoria. It was night-time and I wanted to head home, but I couldn't say no to Poppy. Her eyes were like buttered chocolate, with darker rays fanning out around the bottomless pits of an iris. Swirled with caramel crescent moons and trapped behind a thick, hazy, black, limbal ring.

"Okay, fine but it is getting dark and I have to be home soon!" I announced sounding like a coward. Everything about being here in this ghostly, desolated place made me petrified and uncomfortable. Poppy just giggled and replied, "It's only a forest, a new adventure for us!" I smiled in return and felt reassured. There was a warmth her brown hair brought to her features, a simple frame for that smile and eyes that held more love that she would ever admit to. We continued to wade through the darkness. It felt like travelling through an endless tunnel of shadows, but the thing that made my stomach stir was the feeling that we were being watched. Fear was a vicious enemy, holding me hostage in an iron grip. Every gut instinct I had was screaming, yelling and shouting at me to turn back, to be back at home and wake up to the sun wrapped around me like a blanket of warmth, but I cared for Poppy too much.

Creative Writing Corner

REMBRANCE

Short Story Contribution- Elsa- Year 9

I loved her ever since I was a child. She was so determined and head strong, the complete opposite of me. Now that we are both fifteen, she is more head-strong than before. Thoughts whirled around my head, so distracted that I didn't realise I could only hear my footsteps. Frantically I called out for Poppy, but she wasn't there. "Pat!" She screamed with all the air in her lungs. I raced around the forest as if my life depended on it.

Visibility became very poor, so I switched on my torch. Have you ever experienced the feeling of your soul leaving your body? I looked up wearily, when my eyes met with a man. His eyes were stiff, devoid from emotion, a sinister smile creeping on his face. My breathing became shallow and there was an intense tightening in my chest, for this man had his long, pale hand wrapped firmly around Poppy's neck.

"Let her go!" I yelled, tears forming in my eyes.

Almost as if the clouds were mimicking me, it started to rain. A plateau of grey stuffing, suffocating the sun and draining the blue from the world above. My torch switched off. Darkness and silence followed. I hit the stupid torch over and over until my knuckles were raw and swollen. Eventually the light came on but all that was in front of me was a void of nothingness. Poppy Bellman was gone.

"Well Pat, I won't leave you any longer" the familiar voice murmured again as he pats my shoulder and leaves. I look up hesitantly and I'm back in the park. I take a deep breath in and continue my waiting, left with this everlasting feeling of guilt and sorrow. A shadow of loneliness following me wherever I go, even fifty-five years later. I was a coward. A tear trickles down my wrinkled cheek and I clutch my poppy flower close to my heart. "If you are out there Poppy, please come back," I whisper.

The End



MERRY CHRISTMAS

WISHING ALL OUR READERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A
PEACEFUL NEW YEAR



LORETO GRAMMAR SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

OPEN TO ALL
PARENTS AND
GUARDIANS

