



The Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland *News!etter*



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Big Dog brings big fun, big love & big cheque to St.Ita's !



Some pupils from St. Ita's Special School get friendly with Blauw the Irish Wolfhound during his visit to meet them.

Santa came early for the children and staff of St Ita's recently when members of the Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland, along with Representative from the Battle of the Boyne Visitors Centre, presented a cheque for €500 and a hamper full of Christmas treats.



Mayor of Drogheda, Pio Smith; Councillor Sharon Tolan, Chairperson Board of Management St. Oliver's Community College; Gerry Clarke, President IWCI; Lindsey Brady, OPW; Miceal Moley, Principal of St Ita's; Anna McKenna and Cathy McKeown with "Blauw" during the visit to St. Ita's special school

Proceeds of the Raffle from the IWCI Heritage Breeds Day in August at the Battle of the Boyne

The cheque was presented by Gerry Clarke President of the Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland and Lindsey Brady from OPW to the Principal of St. Ita's Miceal Moley.

The cheque was the proceeds of a raffle kindly sponsored by the OPW at the IWCI Heritage Day held at the Battle of the Boyne Centre in August. At the Heritage Day the nine native dog breeds of Ireland were presented to the public as part of the IWCI campaign for UNESCO World Heritage Status for our magnificent Irish breeds.

The highlight of the visit for the children was that they got the chance to pet Cathy Mc Keown's Irish Wolfhound ' Blauw '. This gentle giant is a fully qualified "Pets as Therapy" dog and is a regular visitor to schools and care-homes. The children adored him!

Mrs. Mary Potter of the Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland said she was delighted to visit St Ita's School along with other members of the IWCI, Gerry Clarke, President of IWCI who hails from Drogheda, Sean and Cathy McKeown, Armagh along with Anna McKenna co-ordinator of the visit.

Mary welcomed the attendance of the Mayor of Drogheda, Councillor Pio Smith and Councillor Sharon Tolan, Chairperson, St Oliver's Community College for giving of their time to attend and she sincerely thanked Miceal Moley, Principal of St Ita's and his staff and pupils for the great hospitality shown to them on their visit.



A fantastic fun visit for everyone at St. Ita's

Blauw- and Wolfhounds as Pets as Therapy dogs

Cathy McKeown

In recent years I have been blessed to have two wonderful Irish Wolfhounds. It is said that the Irish Wolfhound is the most gentle of all dogs, and this characteristic has certainly come to the fore in their therapy work. They seem to be highly intuitive and sensitive to the people with whom they interact, picking up on what is the appropriate behaviour. They visit care homes for elderly people and adults with disabilities, and recently they have been approved for visits with residents in a psychiatric long-stay home. Some of the adults they meet come from a farming background, where dogs were a constant presence throughout their lives; others have owned dogs as part of their family life, and some come from an environment where a dog might have been their only friend. The move to a care home means that they all lose that connection. The wolfhounds are often told stories about these dogs: the residents seem to love to share their memories. Indeed, staff members have commented that for some, their only communication has been with the wolfhounds. I recall a poignant occasion when an elderly gentleman who had difficulties with communication, and who very rarely spoke, had taken off his socks while seated in his chair. Blauw licked his toes and sat beside the chair with his head resting across the gentleman's toes. The two sat in a companionable silence for quite some time. When it was time to leave, the staff and I clearly heard the man say, 'See you soon.'

The hounds are a great favourite with children, and especially children who can't have a pet, or have learning difficulties, poor self-esteem, communication difficulties or a lack of confidence. They visit schools and libraries to help with reading; the children are invariably intrigued by the dogs' great size and seem to be comfortable and quite relaxed in their company. They become less self-conscious and so more confident as they are reading to the hounds; they don't seem to feel that they are being judged on their performance by teachers or peers. The teacher can later use our visit to further develop the children's thinking and communication skills, and to discuss animal care and welfare.

Little did I know when I was a child steeped in the myths and legends of the wolfhound, or when I got my first wolfhound all those years ago, that these magnificent, amiable and loving dogs could give so much joy to me and to others. The empathetic, non-judgemental and compassionate natures of therapy wolfhounds are clearly shown in the happiness they bring with them wherever they go.

OUR MR.DARCY WINS BEST IN SHOW !!



Darcy on duty at the Champ Show



A relaxed Darcy showing the public how wonderful Irish Wolfhounds are!



**Mr.Darcy, our club hound,
has triumphed at Pet Expo in Dublin.**

Against stiff opposition from many breeds including other Irish Wolfhounds Darcy, with handler Tracey Carroll, took top honours at his first ever show as a competitor!

Eddie & Gina have announced that Mr. Darcy has now decided to retire with a 100% unbeaten record !

DECEMBER OPEN SHOW 2017

The Open Show this year was a tremendous success with over 30 entries-

In particular it was great to see so many new members- some of them at their first show!

Stars of the day had to be the new baby puppies-

They were taken into the Best In Show ring- with patron Jim Behan showing his magic touch with the pups.



Ivan Gargan with Tadgh
Rebecca Smyth with Torin
Aoibhin Keegan with Finn
Patron Jim Behan

***Full report and photos from
the Open Show will follow
in our January
News!etter***

Dermot O'Byrne & Muireann
handling at his first show



Mary, Tony & Jim present "Nollaig
to Eddie & Gina for their work this year
for IWCI Rescue

WALK AT LIMAVADY

The club's second walk this year was in the beautiful and historic Roe Valley near Limavady.

Limavady: Léim an Mhadaidh "Leap of the Dog"

The Legend of the Dog Leap

Limavady derives its name from the Irish meaning "Leim an Mhadaidh" meaning Leap of the Dog, based on the story of a legendary leap over the River Roe which saved the O'Cahan castle from enemy attack. Under siege by their enemies, the O'Cahans sent for reinforcements across the River Roe via a faithful wolfhound who leapt across the swirling currents of the river to deliver the message.

The O'Cahans' stronghold was secured and their influence continued to thrive until the 17th century.

The last O'Cahan chief, Donal, implicated in the Tyrone rebellion was imprisoned for treason and died in the Tower of London in 1628.

Limavady Gaelic Athletic Club "The Wolfhounds"

The IWCI received a very warm welcome to the Roe Valley from the Chairman on the Limavady club Mr. Ronan Curley.

The club takes its name from Limavady's long association with our great hound of Ireland. We were delighted by the number of members who came to meet us and of course our wonderful hounds.



The magnificent contemporary Irish Wolfhound sculpture at the Dog Leap Centre by Maurice Harron

commemorating the "Leap of the Hound"





Peek-a-boo Velda!
with Bronagh



A family reunion between Juno & Meta



A new natural junior handler!





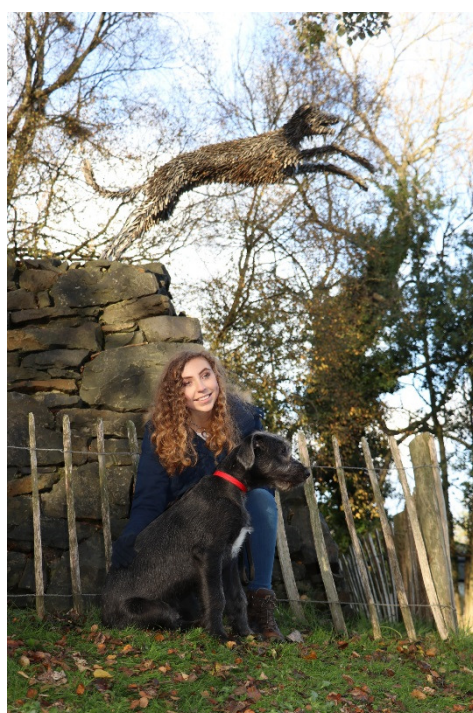
Cathy McKeown with Juno, Grace & Blauw

The origin of Danny Boy

Local tradition says that the original melody for Danny Boy- originally entitled O’Cahan’s Lament, and later re-titled “The Londonderry Air” was written by a chieftain of the O’Cahan clan known as “Rory Dall”. It was written to lament the confiscation of the O’Cahan lands- a tune of such pain and passion that it would eventually touch the hearts of people worldwide.



Limvady GAC Chairman Ronan Curley



Rebecca with Torin
by the sculpture

Limavady is a place with a very strong association to the Irish Wolfhound. The tremendous welcome we received from the Limavady GAC really was remarkable.

The Dog Leap sculpture marries so well a story of the past with hopes for the future as the hound leaps bravely forward.

The club has already been invited to return to Limavady in 2018. We will be back to build upon our new friendships and to enjoy this beautiful and historic place.



MAGEE AT CHRISTMAS

Heritage Brand meets Heritage Breed

Magee Tweed was established in 1886 and has grown to become one of the iconic brands of Ireland. Magee designs & manufactures high-end garments for discerning customers worldwide. It is now a 4th generation family business. The Irish Wolfhound is a key part of the company's logo.

*Lynn & Kieran
from Magee*



As part of Magee's 150th anniversary the brand was renewed and the wolfhound logo enhanced. The IWCI was invited to be a part of the Magee 2016 Christmas event.

This year- by popular demand (!!)
we were invited to return to Donegal Town and to once again welcome customers and visitors to "*Magee at Christmas.*"



A THANK YOU TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

The Committee & Officers would like to thank everyone for supporting us throughout this year.

Wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas,
and looking forward to a wonderful new year in 2018



IWCI Committee & Officers



Nollaig Shona Duit