



# SACA NEWSLETTER

March 2016

## Mr Peter Fraser Retires as St. Andrew's Headmaster

The SACA President, Mr Moayyad Kamali was informed last month of Mr Peter Fraser's decision to retire as Headmaster of the College, on the basis of medical advice.

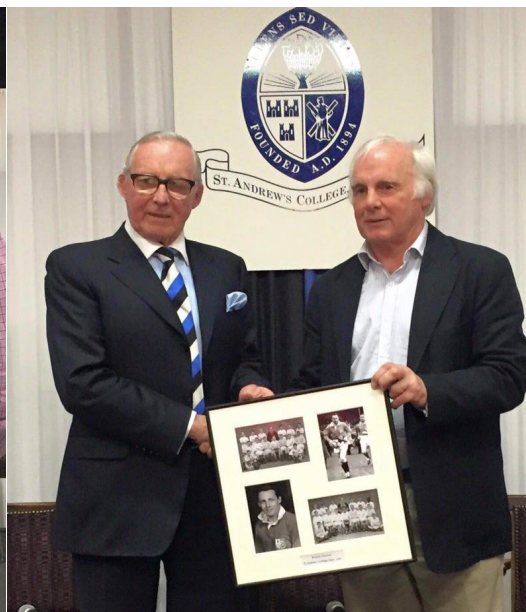
Along with the Board of Governors, SACA wish to thank Peter for his service to the school and trust that in time he will be restored to full health. SACA wishes both Peter and his wife Sara the very best in the future.

Mrs Joan Kirby has been appointed to act as Headmistress of the College, with immediate effect.



## SACA Rugby Lunch

An incredible day for SACA and the rugby programme at St Andrew's College last month. SACA ran a sold out event to honour our Irish internationals Ronnie Dawson, Michael Gibson and Felix Jones hosted by Sunday Times rugby correspondent Peter O'Reilly. They all spoke to a packed house about Lions tours, Irish and interprovincial rugby, some very personal reflections on rugby and some hilarious stories. The afternoon extended to the evening and some adjourned to Donnybrook to watch Andrew Porter play well for the Ireland U-20's at Donnybrook. Well done to all involved!



## Dates for your Diary

“Old Boys” from Clyde Road and St Stephen’s Green Lunch  
Friday 15th April at 12:30pm at the Royal St George Yacht Club

The annual lunch for ‘Old Boys’ who attended St Andrew’s College in St Stephen’s Green and Clyde Road takes place on Friday 15 April at 12.30pm in the Royal St George Yacht Club in Dun Laoghaire. The cost of the lunch is €36 per person. The lunch has become one of the most popular events of SACA’s calendar and, judging from the numbers that attend each year, is an eagerly awaited opportunity to catch up with fellow past pupils who attended a much smaller St Andrew’s in its two former premises. To book in to this event please call Sally Walker in the College on 01 288 2785 or click [here](#) to download a booking form.



### 5th Year Career Interviews - 25th and 26th April

The 5th Year Career Interviews will take place at the College on Monday and Tuesday 25 and 26 April from 6pm. These interviews are run by SACA in conjunction with the Guidance Department and provide an opportunity for SAC Alumni to give something back in a way that brings them into direct contact with current students.

We are looking for alumni working in all areas to come back on either of the two evenings to carry out a 15 minute interview with four or five students. The students have been tasked with writing a personal statement for a course area of their choice which you will be given, together with a CV. Feedback from previous years has shown that this is a very enjoyable activity both from the interview and interviewee’s points of view. We always need to cover a wide array of careers as the interests and intended career paths of our students are diverse. Whilst we always need doctors, vets, journalists, architects, engineers, lawyers, teachers, scientists, musicians, actors etc., etc., we have needed a magician, dancer and couturier or two in the past. Diversity is key at St Andrew’s!

If helping out with the Career Interviews is something that would appeal to you please get in touch with Sally Walker in St Andrew’s on [swalker@st-andrews.ie](mailto:swalker@st-andrews.ie) or by calling her on 01 288 2785.

## SACA Profile - Keith Lowe

### CEO of DNG (Class of 1984)



I left school in 1984 and in looking back I think of my time in St. Andrews in very positive terms. It was where I made some of my most lasting friendships, learned enduring life lessons which have stood to me through the years but there were also issues for me, no different to any student either now or then.

I joined St Andrew's College in 5th class in the Junior School after attending St Philip's and St James's National School on Cross Avenue. As a student with dyslexia undoubtedly school was challenging for me. Unlike more recent times, dyslexia was not particularly well understood in the 70's or 80's in academic circles or for that matter in everyday life.. As a consequence, certain tasks in the early years of Junior School such as learning by rote were

especially difficult. I think I might have spent more time standing in the corner, for not being able to recout poetry or whatever else we were meant to learn, than any other student as no matter how hard I tried I could never retain the information. Thankfully now learning impediments are identified very early and more widely acknowledged and understood especially from an educational perspective.

However for me, it was Senior School before it was discovered that I had dyslexia. I then had to attend remedial classes each Saturday which as you can imagine was both painful and somewhat embarrassing for a young adolescent but it seemed to do the job. Languages, maths and learning anything off by heart were pretty hard for me but gradually I learnt skills to overcome some of these difficulties. Interestingly, today of these skills still stand to me with the exception of learning things off by heart which is still challenging but I have found ways of working around that too.

I started working part-time in DNG during the summers when I was in 5th year. I really enjoyed it, I had found something that suited my talents and abilities and very quickly decided that estate agency is what I wanted to do. I think work experience is one of the single most beneficial activities a young person can undertake and would have been delighted if Transition Year had been a part of my school years. Equally experiencing a business or industry and deciding it's not what you want to do could be as beneficial as finding your dream job. Last year I introduced a Transition Year Programme to DNG. We take in up to 20 TY students each year for an amazing week within our business and I note that some of this year's students have already decided that estate agency is the career path they want to take which is just brilliant. I also think that giving someone a chance (especially when they do not meet the job criteria) is one the best things you can do in life.

Having decided on a career path, my next academic challenge was to achieve two honours and three passes in the Leaving Cert the grades then required to enter the DIT course at the College of Commerce in Rathmines in order to qualify as an agent. Luckily by that time the Department of Education recognised dyslexia and this was taken into account in my Leaving Certificate results.

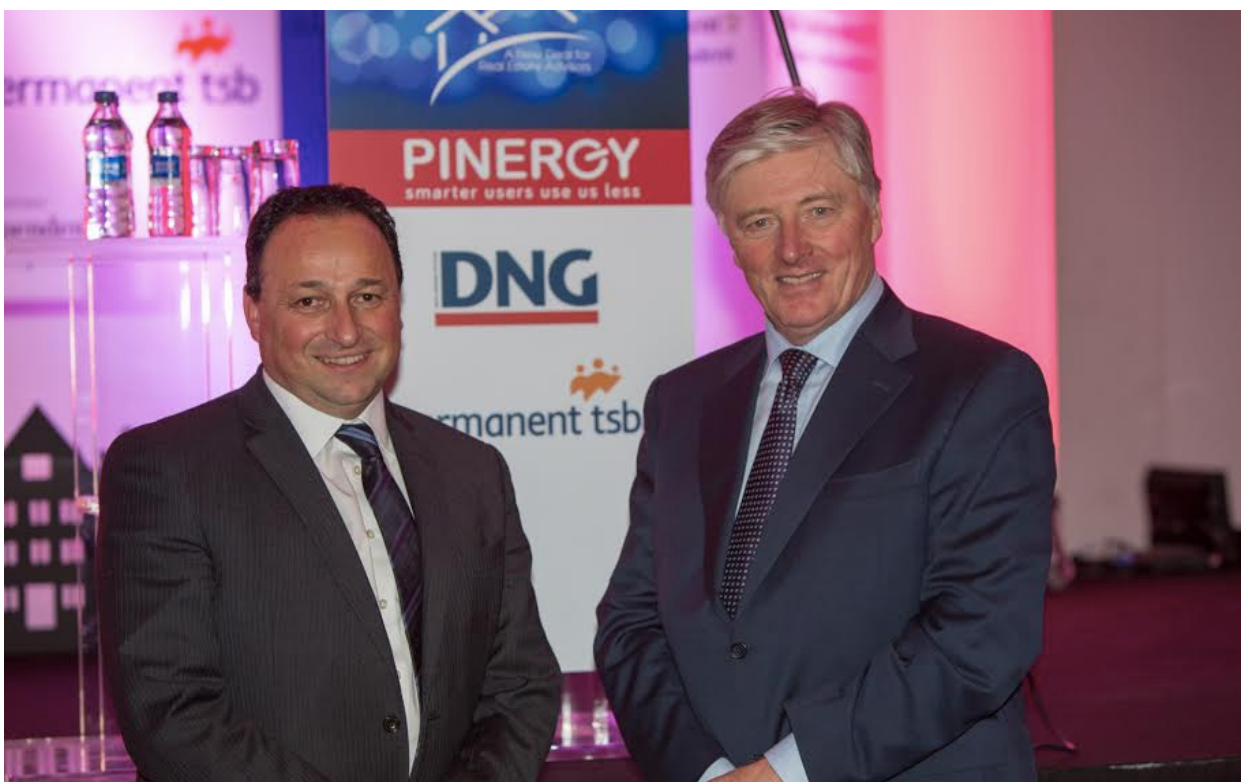
What did not help me in school was that I was a bit of a messer and invariably ended up in detention. The dyslexia definitely had knocked my confidence in term of academia but I also did very little study (the bare minimum) until the last 3 months before the Leaving Certificate when the penny finally dropped that I had to get the minimum two honours and three passes or it was all over for me! So I worked night and day for those three months and as a result I obtained the points I needed to enter college.

In college, the lecturers were just brilliant and again they gave me dispensation on my exams and I sailed through the course. I went to college each day from 9 – 3 and went to work afterwards and worked Saturdays. I really had found my niche.

On the sports side in school I was useless at most sports but I was a good runner and I represented the school in the Leinsters. I became addicted to it and was running nearly every second night at one stage. Again, I became determined and because of that I became fairly good at it. Running a marathon was no bother to me in my late teens – I would not fancy trying it now mind you!

My career is completely addictive, it requires hard work, ridiculously long hours, savviness and the ability to sell. I do not believe that you can learn how to sell; you either have it or you do not. I am one of the lucky ones who have it. When I took over running the business back in 2009 I had to develop different skills but this was a challenge that I met head on and I have built up a great management team around me.

St Andrew's was good to me. I made good friends some who remain my closest friends today. I believe it produces well rounded individuals who are mannerly and appreciate the privilege they had in attending the college. I am always delighted when I see ex St Andrew's College pupils applying for jobs within our firm. In the last fortnight we hired two past pupils from the school. One has entered our Graduate Programme and the second joins us as an estate agent in one of our branches. I also work daily with our Director of New Homes who is also a graduate from our school and she is one of our finest agents; completely dedicated, hardworking and a great sales person so there must be something in the water in St Andrew's College that produces great estate agents!



# Muggings and rape threats will not stop me travelling - Natasha Murtagh (Class of 2010)

<http://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/muggings-and-rape-threats-will-not-stop-me-travelling-1.2558949>

A woman asked me recently about Antigua. "Is it safe to walk home alone here?"

"No unfortunately not," I said, "and even more unfortunately, I found out the hard way."

"What happened?" she asked.

So I started to tell her the story of how I left a bar in the centre of Antigua, where I live in Guatemala, at about 1.30am on a Thursday, and got attacked by two men on a motorbike who tried to rob me and do God knows what else.

Before I could tell the woman that a hotel security man who was watching the CCTV cameras as it happened came out and saved me, the woman interrupted to tell me it was my fault.

"Well, you deserve it if you're going to be so stupid as to walk home alone at that hour," she said.

She was right. It was stupid of me to try to walk home at that time of the night, anywhere, let alone in Antigua, which is an easy place to feel safe in the daytime, when it is full of music, tourists, colourful buildings and sunshine. But to tell me that I "deserved it" is why I am here sitting at my laptop writing this piece.

I was brought up by my parents to be a strong woman, to really go for what I wanted in life and to always do my best – to always try, to always participate. And to travel wherever I wanted.

I left Ireland on August 13th, 2014. I quit my jobs, closed my accounts, sold my car and said goodbye to the people I love. I will return when I return, I thought to myself, but I am doing this journey alone.

The first country I visited was Kenya, and I stayed there for three months before moving to Costa Rica, and then Panama, Colombia, El Salvador and Guatemala. I have had to have my wits about me, not just because I am a white, red-headed woman travelling alone, but because I am a tourist and a prime target for anybody out there with bad intentions.

## A terrifying boat trip

Through nearly all my travels, I have been lucky that nothing terrible has happened to me, although something did on my second last night living in Bocas del Toro, a group of Caribbean islands in Panama.

I was taking a water taxi back to the island from the mainland when the boatman cut the engine. Two kilometres from the island, he asked me for money, which I immediately gave him, but he wanted more.

When I realised he wanted to rape me, I jumped into the water and started to swim as fast as I could towards the glistening lights of Carenero island. It was the first time in my life I thought I was going to die. If he didn't do it, the water would; there was no way I was going to make it to the shore.

Then I heard the engine turn back on, followed by the noise of lapping water getting closer. He pulled me by the hair back into the boat, cutting my back in the process. I sat there crying and begging him to bring me home, where I could give him hundreds of dollars.

He laughed and told me that he wanted my body, not my money. I started thinking frantically: what can I say to keep myself safe?

At the time I had been working as a chef alongside a very respected 40-year-old Rastafarian family man, a father of two and king of Bastimentos island. There wasn't a person in Bocas who didn't know Miguel.

"If you touch me," I shouted at the boatman, "Rasta Miguel will find you and you will never drive another boat in your life."

With that, his face dropped, the engine went on and we headed towards my island. As he left me at the dock, he apologised and begged me to say nothing, that it was just a joke.

The next day Miguel and I found the man and brought him to the police, where his boat licence was taken and his wife told what he had done.

The next day I left Panama.

That night was one of the scariest of my life, but I was okay in the end. It didn't frighten me forever; it made me stronger but more cautious.

Watching that man standing there with his head hung low as his licence was taken from him outside his house, as his wife stood in the doorway holding their child, was a very empowering moment.

## Two attacks in Antigua

In the past nine months I have lived in Antigua. I have been attacked twice. The first attack was that time outside the bar. The second was a few months ago when three friends and I were walking home on a Saturday night. I was walking with my friend Audra and about 10m behind us were Rachel and our friend Chris, who is very tall.

The man on the motorbike who wanted to mug Audra and me wasn't aware of Rachel or Chris. I am sure he would not have attacked us had he known we were a group of four.

He pushed Audra and me to the ground. We screamed and kicked but he ripped the leather strap of my handbag and ran for his motorbike, with my house keys, money and phone, and parked in a lane, ready for his escape. Filled with fury, I ran after him. I jumped on his back as he sat on his bike. It didn't take much of a struggle before he threw my bag to the pavement and I pushed myself off him.

Not my smartest move, maybe, but I wasn't going to let him away with it. Since then I have never walked home, never been alone late at night and never gone out without a way to get home.

But here is my point: I will not allow these things to stop me from living my life or continuing my travels.

It is so hard being a woman sometimes. We are often thought of as weaker, not as capable, too emotional and sensitive and so on. I get stared at every single morning as I walk Randy, my dog. Men hiss at me. Men look at every inch of my body as they pass me on the street. Men have slapped my ass in a night club and pestered me at the bar as I try to order a drink. The harassment is endless.

But I will not stop going out at night with my friends. I will not stop wearing nice dresses during the day. I will not change out of my hiking shorts as I come off the mountains and walk home, and I shouldn't have to.

Just because I am a woman, do I have to think to myself, Hmmm, this summer dress is too sexy for the day?" No. Screw it. I will wear what I want (with modesty) and I will look how I want.

I know there are cultural differences and it is going to take years for that to change. But all I know is, it shouldn't be me to change, nor should I have to explain myself to any other person, especially not another woman, as to why I still go out and why I still wear dresses or shorts or skirts.

## I will not become weak

It is hard living in a place where women are not respected, where we are not equal to men and where we are expected to be and act in a certain way.

It is hard to be stared at every day like I am a piece of meat and to be told I shouldn't wear this and I shouldn't wear that. It is hard to walk down the street with your brother as every single man who passes in a pickup truck looks you up and down.

It is hard to deal with all of these things every single day, but if I let all of these things get to me, I will become exactly what these pigs think I am: weak.

Being a woman means being strong, fighting these things and standing up for yourself. I have always been surrounded by strong women. I was raised by a full-time mum who sacrificed her career for my brother and me. Every day as a child, I came home to a wonderful home-cooked meal. She would ask me about my day, ask me about school, ask me about my friends, boys, everything. She was always there for me, making sure I was growing up to be strong.

My godmother works harder than anyone I know, building her businesses and not letting tough times stop her.

My best friend graduated from university and followed her heart to the other side of the world to work for a position she really wanted.

My nana was loved deeply by her husband but neglected at times. She still made jokes and cooked amazing meals right up until the day she died.

My other beautiful grandmother played tennis and did gymnastics until she was in her 70s. She raised three great children and died still looking as beautiful as I ever remember her.

So, as a solo travelling woman who has seen a bit and been through some tough times but even more incredible times, I say we should keep travelling. The world is a scary place, yes, but that should not stop anyone from finding out how beautiful it is. There are more good people out there than bad; you just have to watch out for the bad ones.



# SACA Sports News

## Ireland Rugby

Andrew Porter and Greg Jones (Class of 2014) featured heavily for Ireland throughout the U-20's Six Nations tournament.

After tough losses to Wales and France, Ireland went on to record a stunning comeback win against England where Andrew got the all important winning try and a hard fought win against Italy.

Ireland continued their winning run with a 26-18 victory over Scotland to finish third in the group.

Also a big congratulations to Peter Bracken who played against England for the Ireland Legends team. Peter has an incredible pedigree having won a European cup with Wasps and represented Ireland, the Barbarians, Connacht and Harlequins.



A huge congratulations to current students, Jordan Larmour and Jonny Guy, who were both selected for the Ireland under-19's squad for their games against France.



## Ireland Cricket

One of the biggest sporting tournaments in the world kicked off this month and it's expected that 3 billion viewers will watch the T20 cricket World Cup in India.

On this massive stage our former pupil Andy Balbirnie and chairman of selectors Alan Lewis with the men's team and on the women's squad Andrew's girls Gaby and Robyn Lewis, Shauna Kavanagh and Lucy O'Reilly.

The men's team started off with a nailbiting defeat in the last over to Oman followed by a no result match against Bangladesh because of conditions. In their last match they lost out to the Netherlands by 12 runs.

The women's team started their tournament with a tough loss against New Zealand followed by a very close encounter with Sri Lanka which they only lost by 14 runs. Their final group game was a tough defeat against South Africa.





# SACA Sports News

## School's Hockey

It was a big month for school's hockey. The Senior boys won the Senior Cup 2 - 0 against Wesley with goals from Patrick Temperley and Ben Walker.

The Junior boys won the Leinster Junior Cup with a hard fought 2 - 1 win over High School and the Leinster Junior League beating Wesley on penalty strokes.

The U-13's boys team got to their final but lost on sudden death penalties. The girls Junior Cup team go to their final but lost narrowly to Holy Child 2 - 1.

Congratulations to all the players and coaches involved in another year of great performances by our hockey teams.



## Ireland Weightlifting

Congratulations to Sam Stewart from 6th year who won the U23 Mens -83kg weight class at the Irish Powerlifting Federation competition. Tremendous achievement up against a large and competitive field!



## Club Rugby

Wasps are currently riding high at the top end of the Aviva Premiership and are through to the Champions Cup quarter finals having topped Leinster's group but did you know that the owner and man with the vision that moved the club to the Midlands was Andrew's old boy Derek Richardson? We're proud of Derek and wish him and Wasps well in the Champions Cup and league!

## Provincial Chess

Congrats to the school Chess team who have qualified for their Leinster league finals at the first time of asking. Well done to Tom O'Gorman (1st Year), Ross Beatty (2nd Year), Alice O'Gorman (3rd Year), Sacha Bistany (2nd Year) and William Walsh-Dowd (2nd Year) on winning all four matches in their section.



Leinster Schools  
Chess Association



# SACA Sports News

## Ireland Hockey

Ben Bradley, John Guilfoyle, Guy Sarratt and Ben Walker our four current St. Andrew's students who represented Ireland Hockey under 18's in their 2-1 series victory over Scotland last week.

Also, current students, Nick Judge and Matteo Romoli features for the under 16's.



## Ireland Golf



Congratulations to Charlie Denvir who was selected to represent Ireland at U16 level in the annual Quadrangular match v Scotland, Wales and Netherlands.