



Peter Long

26 March 1958-26 December 2021
Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dilis.



We were deeply saddened to hear of the passing of our friend and former colleague and Principal Peter Long one month ago on December 26th, 2021.

Peter taught in Scoil Íde for 11 years from 1981-1992. He was appointed principal in August 1992, a position he held until his retirement in August of 2018. Peter was an incredibly influential figure in the development of Scoil Íde. He oversaw three full school cycles in Scoil Íde as principal. Three cycles of children starting in Junior Infants and finishing in 6th class were lucky enough to attend the school under his direction. He welcomed his last Junior Infants into Scoil Íde in September of 2017. These children are now in 3rd class. Children who attended Scoil Íde in Peter's early days as principal now have children of their own attending the school.

Peter was a pioneering force in education. He was passionate about pushing the boundaries and giving the children in Scoil Íde the best opportunities to develop their skills and talents. The structures we now take for granted in Scoil Íde were developed by Peter and the people he worked with in the school. We are so lucky to be building on the solid foundations he laid. He also believed in educating teachers in school and promoted the notion of *Ancora Imparo* (I am always learning). Peter was the soul of discretion, an invaluable quality and one that was appreciated greatly by those he worked with. He was unashamedly progressive but only ever asked people to try their best. Scoil Íde celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2014 and this was the perfect opportunity to showcase to the wider community the great work being done throughout the school.

Peter was also one of the founding members of the Irish Primary Principal Network (IPPN) in 1999. It is now recognised by the Minister for Education as an official Education Partner. Indeed, this time last year Peter was working with the IPPN offering advice to principals (including myself) as they negotiated a second COVID enforced school closure.

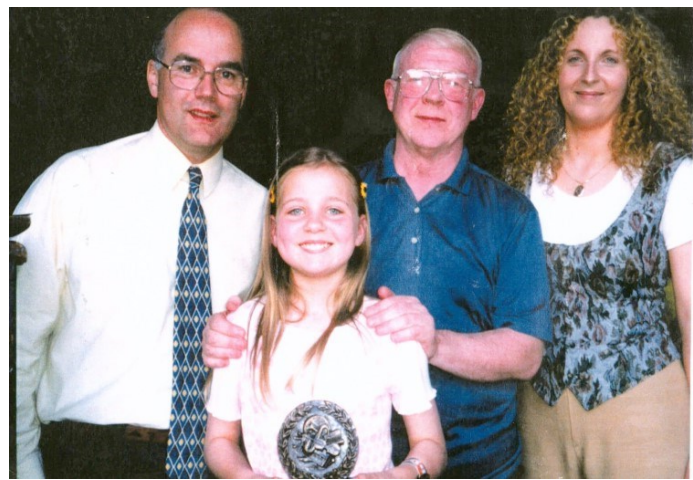
He was a confident, assured and measured school leader but this was underpinned by an inherent kindness. The number of people who said on learning of Peter's illness that "He was always very good to me" was striking. When I was appointed as principal in January just gone, he gave me one piece of advice. *"People will rarely remember what you say but they will always remember how you made them feel"*.

Peter grew up in Tuam, County Galway. As a proud Galway man, he followed the county team closely. He also supported Munster Rugby and was a familiar face in the East stand of Thomond Park, whether it was for league games against the minnows or for big European nights. Growing up in Tuam he attended the cinema whenever he could and had a love for tv and movies. He enjoyed a good concert and would often come into work on a Friday having been in Dublin the night before to see Dylan, Cohen or Springsteen.

Peter had a passion for English and History. The classrooms in the Senior building were all named after poets. Heaney was a particular favourite of his and he quoted the following line of Heaney's to me when we spoke about the challenges of COVID-19 and the school closure of last January. "If we winter this one out, we can summer anywhere."

It is hard to accept that Peter could not winter his illness out and enjoy more of the summer of his retirement. He deserved more but I met Peter in August and he was remarkably philosophical about the hand he had been dealt. He was grateful for the life he had lived.

Many of you will have memories of Peter- some of him as a teacher, most of him as a principal while others will know that the man outside the suit was first and foremost a family man. He loved his family and was fiercely proud of them. We think of his wife Siobhán and his children Ruth and James in particular at this time.



The Final 6th Class Assembly of any given year was a particularly important event in the school calendar. 6th class would go on their school tour the day after this Assembly and they would then conclude their time with us in Scoil Íde. As such, the final assembly was a poignant and significant day for the school and one that Peter cherished. In most cases children were with us for eight years at that stage. In his final words to 6th class, Peter would quote from *Station Island, Part XI* by Seamus Heaney.

'Let go, let fly, forget
You've listened long enough
Now strike your note,
It's time to swim out on your own'



Peter's Month's Mind Mass will take place on Saturday, February 5th in St Nicholas' Church at 12:30pm

Peter chose the following two songs to conclude the final 6th Class Assembly that he presided over as principal of Scoil Íde. He asked the children to take note of the lyrics and to try their best to follow the advice contained within. We should all try to do the same.

Forever Young

May God bless and keep you always
May your wishes all come true
May you always do for others
And let others do for you
May you build a ladder to the stars
And climb on every rung
May you stay forever young
May you stay forever young

May you grow up to be righteous
May you grow up to be true
May you always know the truth
And see the light surrounding you
May you always be courageous
Stand upright and be strong
May you stay forever young
May you stay forever young

May your hands always be busy
May your feet always be swift
May you have a strong foundation
When the winds of changes shift
May your heart always be joyful
May your song always be sung
And may you stay forever young
May you stay forever young

Bob Dylan

I Hope You Dance

I hope you never lose your sense of wonder,
You get your fill to eat but always keep that hunger,
May you never take one single breath for granted,
God forbid love ever leave you empty handed,
I hope you still feel small when you stand beside the ocean,
Whenever one door closes I hope one more opens,
Promise me that you'll give faith a fighting chance,
And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance.

I hope you dance... I hope you dance...

I hope you never fear those mountains in the distance,
Never settle for the path of least resistance,
Livin' might mean takin' chances, but they're worth takin',
Lovin' might be a mistake, but it's worth makin',
Don't let some Hell bent heart leave you bitter,
When you come close to sellin' out reconsider,
Give the heavens above more than just a passing glance,
And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance

I hope you dance... I hope you dance...

Leanne Womack

CALENDAR 2021-2022

February 2022 Mid-term Break: Closed Monday 21st February 2022 to Friday 25th February 2022

Closed Thursday & Friday, 17th & 18th March 2022- Public Holiday.

Easter 2022: School closing Friday, 8th April 2022 at 12.15 p.m. and reopening Monday, 25th April 2022.

Closed Monday, 2nd May 2022-Public Holiday.

Closed Friday, 3rd June 2022

Closed Monday, 6th June 2022-Public Holiday.

Closing Thursday, 30th June 2022 at 12.15 p.m.

Internet Awareness & Safety Seminar

We have organised an Internet Awareness and Safety Seminar for parents and guardians of children in 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes on Tuesday, February 8th at 19:00. This seminar is hosted by Zeeko, a company that specialise in the promotion of internet safety and awareness amongst young people. February 8th is Internet Safety Day so we thought this was a fitting time to hold this seminar

The purpose of the parents & guardians seminar is to understand the issues and opportunities that children face over the internet. Parents can expect to learn ways to resolve these issues and help children stay safe online. It is not intended that children attend this seminar. It is for parents and guardians only. Further details have been emailed to parents & guardians.

As a principal who deals with issues related to inappropriate internet use from time to time I would strongly recommend that you make the time to attend this seminar.

WELL DONE

ACE awards are given to pupils who excel in school life through Attainment, Community Spirit or Effort.

Well done to our January ACEs.

VI: Nolan: Zoe McEnery

VI: Heaney: Sasha Tihonova

VI: Boland: Finn Cusack

Safer Routes to Schools

The programme will give our school the opportunity to:

- ♦ Improve safety at the school gates by providing 'front of school' treatments to alleviate congestion and improve access;
- ♦ Improve access routes to school by improving walking and cycling infrastructure; and
- ♦ Increase the number of students who cycle to school by expanding the provision of cycle parking.

While we are awaiting the plans for how we will achieve this I ask all parents and guardians who drop / collect children by car to be mindful of the way they behave. The current situation in the mornings and evenings is dangerous and cannot continue in the medium-long term. I have asked for the plan for works at the front of the school to be forwarded as a matter of urgency. Best practice across Europe suggests that the front / back of schools should be exclusion zones for cars.