

Mount Sion celebrates The Gathering



Billy McLoughlin, Pat Hayes, Greg Scanlon and Joe McLoughlin.

Over 200 former students and teachers returned to Mount Sion CBS Secondary School on Barrack St in Waterford on Tuesday for a special event as part of The Gathering celebrations which have continued across the country through the year.

Those who attended included one of the oldest living former students – 94-year-old Michael Heffernan who went to Mount Sion in the mid-1930s and has the unusual distinction of having won county hurling medals with clubs in Waterford, Kilkenny and Wexford.

Mr Heffernan was met at the school by Sam Roche, one of the youngest of the current first years at Mount Sion. Others to attend included city councillors Dick Roche and Cha O'Neill along with former city councillors Sean Dower and Pat Hayes. All those returning were welcomed by Pat McEvoy, a former student who now chairs the school's board of management.

A performance by the school choir and a display of old school photos, an introduction to the student-designed school flag as well as tours of the secondary school made it a nostalgia-filled night as former students ranging in age from their 20s and 30s to their 80s and 90s were reunited with classmates and some of those who taught at the school since the 1960s.

Speaking afterwards, John McArdle, principal, Mount Sion CBS Secondary School, said: "It really was a very special night in the life of our school and the great affinity that those who came to school here have for Mount Sion was very evident by the number of them who came back on the night and the huge interest they showed – not only in reminiscing but also in hearing about what the school community is like today.

"We were also delighted to welcome back former teaching colleagues to the school and their presence really helped to bring the occasion to life for the former students so that it wasn't just a building they were coming back to that they'd spent time in as teenagers."