

German students hope to initiate project at Glencree



Students from the Eichendorffschule school in Wolfsburg with teachers Christian Luebke and Susanne Wolf in the Glencree War cemetery last week.

A group of German students and their teachers visited the German Military cemetery at Glencree last Monday to carry out maintenance work in the graveyard where German soldiers are buried.

The six 9th grade students from Eichendorffschule school in Wolfsburg were recipients of the Sara-Frenkel-Prize donated by Volkswagen and decided to use the money to visit the Glencree cemetery.

Their aim is to start a project, in conjunction with local schools, where regular visits are carried out to the graveyard and necessary work is carried out.

The Sara Frenkel Prize is for Respect, Tolerance and Civil Courage, and was named after Sara Polish forced laborer at the Volkswagen plant in Wolfsburg from 1943 to 1945. All her life she's been committed to the values of respect, tolerance and moral courage that are close to her heart and against forgetting. She calls for an active attitude: "I appeal to the younger generation: Be vigilant, look closely, don't ignore. Stand together and open your mouth when people are rushing again about people who think differently, people of different colors and people of different faiths. The suffering of that time must not be repeated." The 99-year-old now lives in Antwerp in Belgium.

The Eichendorffschule school was one of three schools to be awarded the prize this year, and were awarded for their video project on Wolfsburg's memorials.

Schools, groups and clubs from all over Wolfsburg and the surrounding area had applied for the Sara Frenkel Prize this year, and the prize was €3,000.

The competition is organised by the youth and trainee representatives and the vocational training



The Wolfsburg students at the Celtic Cross in Glencree cemetery

department at Volkswagen in Wolfsburg.

The war cemetery at Glencree, one of many German war cemeteries in Western Europe, serves as a stark reminder of the devastation of the First and Second World Wars. 134 German military servicemen and civilians are buried there, many of them Luftwaffe pilots who flew off course while flying over England, or crashed as a result of damage to their aircraft or fuel loss.

The Glencree website states: "Interred here also are a number of regular naval personnel (Kriegsmarine) whose bodies washed up, sometimes in remote coastal locations. Of the eighty-one air and

naval servicemen buried in Glencree, the identities of twenty-eight remain unknown.

"Those who engaged in the 'secret side of war' are also buried here. Dr. Hermann Gortz, who took his own life to avoid arrest as a spy, has the only individual memorial - a finely carved stone relief - in the cemetery.

"Six soldiers of the First World War are also interred. These soldiers died while in a British prisoner of war camp based in Ireland from 1915-1918.

"The cemetery is also the final resting place of forty-six German civilians who were being transported from England to Canada in July 1940. Their

ship 'The Arandora Star' was torpedoed by the German submarine off the coast of Donegal.

"Just inside the wrought iron gated entrance, a poem by Professor Stan O'Brien, a dedicated supporter of the Irish-German Society, set in polished stone, captures the poignancy of this quiet resting ground.

"A pathway leads to the 'Hall of Honour', a place of reflection and prayer. Just beyond the Hall the grave-stones are laid out in eight gently curved arcs, while a mosaic Pieta, designed by Berlz, the Munich born painter, adorns the interior wall. Seton a height above the cemetery is a fine Celtic cross."