

BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Issue 02 June/July 2011



**Ard Scoil Mhuire Students
Help Seniors**



**Interview with
Town's New Senator**



**Summerfest/An tSuca Fiáin
11th to 17th July**



Ballinasloe - Gateway To The West



Gullane's Hotel
& CONFERENCE CENTRE



GULLANE'S FAMILY RUN HOTEL Main Street, Ballinasloe.

- Food Served All Day
- 2 Superb Function Rooms to cater for Weddings, Christenings, Graduations, Communions & Confirmations, Family Re-Unions, Sports & All Social Events.
- Superior Accommodation
- Spacious Car Parking
- Friendly Atmosphere



**FOR SERVICE WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH
YOU SHOULD CALL TO GULLANE'S HOTEL.**

Main Street, Ballinasloe, Co Galway
Tel: 090 96 42220 Fax: 090 96 44395
Email: info@gullaneshotel.com

BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Issue 02 April/May 2011

RÉAMHRÁ



A few momentous weeks since our last outing in print and a lot of history has been made on our island, a lot of positive coverage secured with the visits of both the British monarch and the U.S. President. Interesting to see the media make much of the significance of it all and comment on how we may reappraise somewhat our messy and entwined relationship as "John Bull's other island".

What possibilities might this normalising of state relationships – and, indeed, of revisiting our combined histories- offer to our town and its links to the crown? Under the Queen's predecessor we were the last garrisoned town west of the Shannon, the castle in River Street marking the end of her fortified dominion.

How might we as a community try and make amends for the neglect to the memory of countless citizens who joined the Connacht Rangers and fought as Irishmen in Crown Wars? How many of us know where their Great War memorials lie hidden from view today? The moving scenes in the Memorial Gardens could be undertaken in most West of Ireland towns; such was the scale of recruitment that took place. This legion of townspeople, brewery, estate and psychiatric hospital workers that left for the front in 1914 – how might we mark their sacrifice in the centenaries that are fast approaching?

And how to harness some of the U.S bounce from the Presidential visit? How do we make available our records to those seeking their roots? Are all our graveyards and church records digitally recorded? Do we have data on who worked in the canal terminus, the railway, the hospital, the Clancarty Estate? Most other historical locations trying to catch the visitor's eye and harness some of this renewed international goodwill, do. Perhaps there is some or lots of work to be done over the coming seasons, in gearing up for the "Bounce"... Let's hope that the weather will be kind to all of us visiting and living here for the first two months of official summer.

*Le gach Dea Ghuí
Colm Croffy, Editor*



*Thank you for your constructive comments on our first edition; we hope our variety of features will continue to be of interest to you. We're delighted with the amount of positive articles received, so please continue to send them to this email address
info@ballinasloeenterprisecentre.ie*

We're part of a vibrant, centrally located community that offers attractive amenities as well professional services to meet all needs, from community groups to young businesses.

While The Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre is nearing full occupancy, we in the Company are continuing to look for ways of expanding our support to existing and start up business in Ballinasloe and we will continue to develop further initiatives.

Please feel free to drop in to Helen Kelly our Company Manager in The Ballinasloe Enterprise in Creagh or contact myself directly if you require support for your business or new business idea. We must strive to work together for the betterment of our community.

*Seamus Duffy, Chairman
Ballinasloe Area Community Development Ltd.*

WHAT'S INSIDE

04 Interview with New Senator

BUSINESS

- 06 Young Entrepreneurs
- 08 Polish Weekend School
- 09 Retired Nurses at Arás an Uachtaran
- 10 Ballinasloe Life Launch

COMMUNITY

- 11 RAPID Programme
- 12 Local Chess Champions
- 14 10k Irish Cancer Society Fun Run
- 15 Drive Safely with the Kids
- 16 Local Special Olympians
- 17 Family Fun Day
- 18 End of an Era for St. Mary's Pre-School

CULTURE

- 19 Summerfest/An tSuca Fiáin
- 21 Out and About in Ballinasloe
- 22 Michaelian Ensemble Triumphs
- 23 Keeping The Flame Alive
- 26 Lively Sean Nós Steps
- 27 Relays Drama Group
- 28 Defective Products

SPORTS

- 29 Kayaking for The Summer
- 30 Gaels Celebrate London Exiles
- 31 Past GAA Veterans Pilot Programme
- 32 Ballinasloe Golf
- 34 GAA Camps Prepare
- 35 Soccer Stalwarts
- 36 Ballinasloe Billiards Club

SCHOOLS

- 37 Ard Scoil Mhuire
- 39 Aughrim Glebe National School

TOURISM

- 40 What to Do in Ballinasloe?
- 42 King and Queen of The Fair
- 43 Credit Union Factor Talent Competition
- 44 Mapping the Transition in Our Travel Tastes

CREDITS

Editor: Colm Croffy Deputy Editor: Ruairi Moore and various contributors.
Graphic Design: David Cunniffe (KPW Print). Print: KPW Print, Ballinasloe.
Photography: Robert Riddell - www.robertriddell.com; J & S Photos - jskodakexpress@gmail.com, Jordans - www.liamjordanphoto.com, Stronges - www.stronges.ie



Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre,
Creagh, Ballinasloe. Co. Galway
T: 090 9646516 F: 090 9646517
E: info@ballinasloeenterprisecentre.ie
www.ballinasloeenterprisecentre.ie



Ballinasloe's First Elected Oireachtas Member Since 1957

Writes Colm Croffy

A full time public representative, Woodlawn born Michael Mullins saw a complete reversal in his political fortunes in less than 3 short months this year.

Defeated at the Dáil constituency convention in early February this year, the county councillor fought a tenacious campaign to have his name added to the Fine Gael ticket by party headquarters. However, it was Senator Ciarán Cannon who got the nod from party leaders and went on to be elected as a TD, subsequently becoming a junior minister.

Cleaghmore resident Mullins then staged a huge political fightback on the Cultural and Educational panel, travelling over ten thousand miles seeking support from local authority colleagues to become Ballinasloe town's first elected Oireachtas member since 1957.

Michael, a lifetime Fine Gael member, was first elected to the county council in 1985 and has served the interests of the Ballinasloe electoral area since then. Formerly the Personnel Manager with a manufacturing giant on the local scene, the Square D Company. After the plant closed in 2003 he concentrated on a career as a full-time public representative.

Michael is married to Mary Lyne, and counts all sports, a little walking, a little golf, and traditional music among his interests. An original committee member of the Mummer's Festival in New Inn, he still retains an active role in producing the annual community event as Festival Chairman. He is also first cousin of NUI Senator Ronan Mullen, who also returned to the Senate

Speaking exclusively to Ballinasloe Life after his election (he was the second elected Fine Gael Senator in the country after Deirdre Clune of Cork), he hopes to advocate from his new position for new jobs and training opportunities for Ballinasloe, the safeguarding of our healthcare infrastructure, the future development of Portiuncula Hospital and the revitalisation of the town centre in Ballinasloe.

"It is clear to me from my hours on the local doors at election time that people here, more than anything, want to see employment opportunities, particularly to stop the immigration of young people from our villages and towns."



He believes that a lot of good foundation work has been laid by the partnership of interests - local and state - in improving the facilities and amenities of the town in the past few years. "I would be keen to see much more focus on local initiatives and encouragement by this government of small enterprise. We have to expand our horizons from the former manufacturing hub we were, to a commuter, heritage and commercially attractive location."

"I will push for continued investment in the town's cultural, sporting, and educational facilities, so that we can maximise our potential in these fields."

Over the coming months, Michael will be announcing to locals and to his constituents details of how he hopes to prioritise immediate actions that he and his other Oireachtas colleagues - TD's Paul Connaughton, Colm Keaveney, Minister Cannon and Mícheál Kitt - hope

to put in place for job creation and growth. Speaking of his constituents, Michael has been overwhelmed with the amount of goodwill and good wishes that he has received to date from supporters and the people of Ballinasloe.

"It's my intention to use the Senate effectively to highlight the issues and concerns of the town."

Michael also intends to maximise his close-working relationship with the Fine Gael leader and Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD, who has remained a close political confidante for the past twenty-five years. "I am very confident that the range and calibre of talent and experience in the new Seanad will assist our country in rebuilding trust and a spirit of "Is Feidir Linn".

For those wishing to contact Senator Michael Mullins, forward all queries to his Email address: michael.mullins@oireachtas.ie or call 087 260 7405.

FAIR & MURTAGH

SOLICITORS

www.fair-murtagh.ie

PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS - LITIGATION
PROPERTY SALES & PURCHASES
COURT WORK - WILLS - PROBATE
TAXATION, COMPANY, COMMERCIAL
FINANCE ADVICE - FAMILY LAW

Paul Connellan • Gearoid Geraghty • Winifred Raftery • Aoife Cadden • Fiona Wynne
Aoife O'Brien • John Griffin • Ciara Macklin • Mary Jennings • Joe Fahey • Lisa Barrett

Northgate Street,
Athlone Co. Westmeath
athlone@fair-murtagh.ie
Tel: 090 648 0700

Main Street, Moate,
Co. Westmeath
moate@fair-murtagh.ie
Tel: 090 648 1120

Society Street,
Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
ballinasloe@fair-murtagh.ie
Tel: 090 965 0000

Ballygar Road,
Mountbellew, Co. Galway
mountbellew@fair-murtagh.ie
Tel: 090 967 9680

CREATE YOUR HOLIDAY FOR THE RIGHT PRICE!

Design your own Summer Sun holiday

- Any Duration
- Daily Departures
- Wide choice of destinations and accommodation
- Cheaper than most traditional package holidays
- Open everyday, 24/7



Keller Travel Worldchoice,
5 Main Street, Ballinasloe.
Tel: 090 9642131
Email: info@kellertravel.ie

Book Online 24/7 www.rightpriceholidays.ie or call 090 9642131 (Mon/Sat)

Young Entrepreneurs Hold the Key to Revival

Writes Ruairi Moore

In an economic environment promising little but uncertainty for the future, one of the most topical concerns dominating the political debate today is the future of our younger generation.

With more and more college graduates departing our shores each year, it has become clear that a huge part of the nation's recovery will lie in developing new ways to boost the employment of our youth.

During an awards ceremony at the Carlton Shearwater Hotel last month, crowds gathered to celebrate the fruit of one such local endeavour: the Ballinasloe Entrepreneurial Skills Tournament. Better known as the BEST Awards, the competition received over eighty entries this year saw the thirteen finalists from both Ard Scoil Mhuire and Garbally College showcase their business ideas before a large gathering of friends, family and local entrepreneurs. All thirteen stalls were aligned around one of the Carlton's ballrooms to allow guests to view them at their leisure. Amongst some of the impressive and truly original business ideas on display was a non-invasive monitoring system for the elderly who live alone, an umbrella designed to withstand high winds, a board game designed to teach children how to read. The finalists represented a largely even split between each participating school, said judges Mary Molloy, Chris Armstrong and John Power.

MC for the night as well as judge, local businessman John Power, opened the ceremony by inviting chairman of BACD Ltd (Ballinasloe Area Community Development) Seamus Duffy to speak.

"In the current economic climate, we must take every opportunity to promote entrepreneurship and local indigenous business, especially amongst our youth. The BEST competition is in its third year, it has proved to be an excellent addition to the curriculum over at both schools." He went on to commend the quality of this year's entries, which encompassed a huge variation of different markets from fashion, farming and health to environmental and internet-based projects. Delegates from the programmes main sponsors were also invited to speak; Breda Fox of Galway County Enterprise Board urged the promotion of entrepreneurship as a "viable career choice" as well as commending the number of female finalists, while Noel Madden of Ballinasloe Credit Union stated that he was "gobsmacked" by the range of ideas put forward and expressed his confidence in the knowledge that "the future of Ireland depends on the youth in this room".

The formalities dispensed with, MC John Power called on his fellow judges to reveal the winners of 2011's BEST Awards. Each finalist received a prize in various categories such as group and individual projects all entries were commended for high quality of research and presentation, as well as good use of prototypes. Among the prize recipients were Daniel Walsh and Paddy Connolly

for their "Barter Or Bust" magazine, Jacob Walshe for his guitar-teaching aid Nicola Kelly for her innovative electric-fence monitoring system, which alerts owners by text message if a fence is down or losing power. And the winner?

"The standard of entries this year's competition was very high," said judge John Power. "After a considerable amount of deliberation, we decided to announce joint winners with two exceptional projects."

The projects deemed worthy to split the honours of first place (as well as a cash prize of €1500) consisted of a line of sports balls which glow in the dark and a tracking system for supermarket purchases. The judges felt that the former, developed by Ard Scoil Mhuire students Emily Brewer, Aisling Kelly and Rachel Kelly, was a simple yet original idea, well-researched and capable of mass-production to a potentially global market.

"We all play sports and we had been training when it was dark," said Emily when asked about the genesis of the idea. "We went to our own clubs first and they were very interested, though we'll have to perfect the prototype first. We definitely want to keep going with it experiment a bit more with the idea."

The second winner was an individual project from Jake Curley of Garbally College. A tracking system for supermarket purchases, Jake came up with the idea while shopping one day. "I was shopping with my dad before Christmas though we were trying to keep track of our budget, as the amount grew



Joint winner Jake Curley with BACD CEO Seamus Duffy, GCEB CEO Breda Fox and Manager of Ballinasloe Credit Union, Noel Madden



Joint Winners Emily Brewer, Aisling Kelly and Rachel Kelly with BACD CEO Seamus Duffy, GCEB CEO Breda Fox and Manager of Ballinasloe Credit Union, Noel Madden


bigger the harder it got we eventually lost track. I approached some supermarket managers and suppliers and got some really positive feedback, so I'd hope to pursue it in future."

Not only the students were honoured on the night, however. John Power also commended the diligence of the staff of both schools, particularly Mr. Burke of Garbally and Ms. Finnerty of Ard Scoil Mhuire, both of home co-ordinated the efforts of their respective schools. After

the ceremony, Mr. Burke offered some insight into why he feels the project has seen such growth these past years.

"I suppose at heart it's simply because of the way things are. The fact that we're caught in the situation we are as a country we need to innovate most of the strongest companies are born out of the recession. We promoted the competition very strongly hopefully some of the things they learned will be of use. The attention to detail that some

of the projects showed is something else. I think that it will really stand to them down the road."

All in all the awards ceremony and the BEST competition itself, provide more than a positive exception to the depressing economic rule. The competition and the various initiatives behind it demonstrate not only an attitude of hopefulness and innovation locally, but a promising determination to weather the hard times, even among our youth. 

SUPPORTING BUSINESS IN BALLINASLOE

**Talk to our SME Team in AIB Ballinasloe today.
Drop in or call 090 9642271.**



Weekend School for Polish Kids at Enterprise Centre

Writes Ruairi Moore

Any parent can attest to the difficulty inherent with dragging their children out of bed and getting them into school on a weekday, let alone repeating the process on weekends. But one school in Ballinasloe is doing just that and, for once, the kids don't seem to mind.

Ballinasloe's very own private Polish school was founded in September 2009 with the goal of addressing the increasing number of young Polish citizens growing up in Ireland without any knowledge of their heritage back home. Through interpreter Anolry Oholya, Ballinasloe Life was lucky enough to be able to speak to the couple behind the initiative, Magdalena and Bartosz Ciastko.

"There is a considerable group of Polish residents in Ireland who have decided to return to their homeland. I would like to facilitate their children's acclimatisation into their new Polish schools. Bearing in mind families who have decided to stay in Ireland, I would like to make them aware of their ancestry. They should never forget where they come from and who they are hence they should have unlimited access to information about their country of origin. Our foremost aim is to provide them with that knowledge."

"We have six teachers overall, all with full qualifications," says Bartosz, as Anolry echoes through English. Considering the enrolment of the school is at over 70, extra funds are not easy to come by. While the school receives a minor bursary



Magdalena Ciastko (far right) with kids from her Polish School

from the Polish Embassy, the bulk of support comes from parents and donations. Local schools have also been kind, allowing classrooms for use on weekends, until the facilities were flooded during the winter. This is what brought the school to the Enterprise Centre.

"We hope we can stay here permanently. The standard of facilities is much higher. It's very well-situated Helen is very good to us," the couple enthuse, referring to centre manager Helen Kelly. It's not just the kid they facilitate; plans to offer lessons in the Polish language to all interested are set in motion for next September.

For further information on the school and its curriculum, you call Magdalena Ciastko on 085 108 4377 or Email szkolaballinasloe@interia.eu

George M. Coyle & Company

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS - REGISTERED AUDITORS

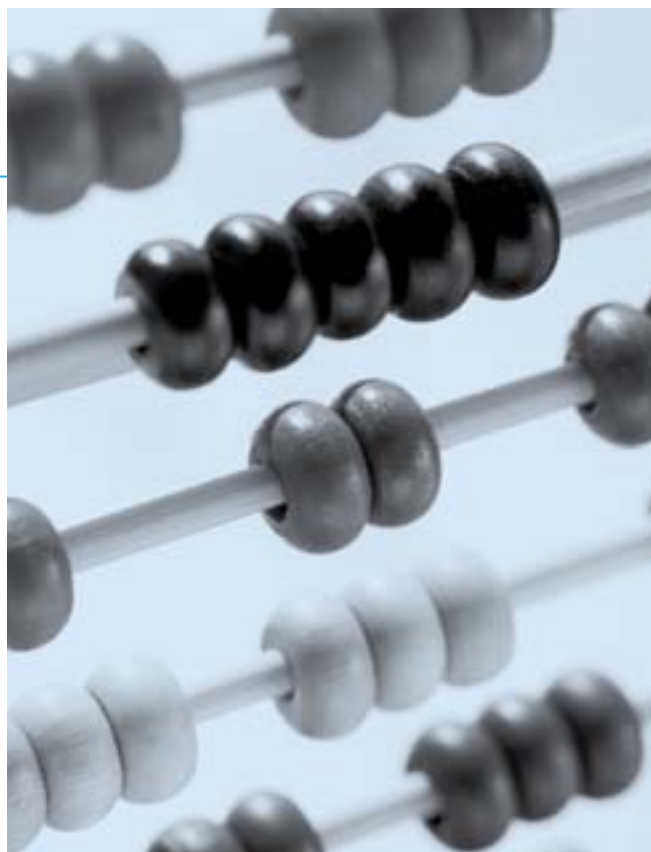
George M. Coyle & Co. has been established in Society Street, Ballinasloe since 1985. The practice has developed a comprehensive service for its clients, which helps them understand and meet the demands of modern business.

Our main services include:

- Company Audit
- Accounts Preparation
- Taxation
- Management Consultancy
- Company Secretarial



Authorised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland to carry out Audit Work & Investment Business.



George M. Coyle & Co.,
Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors
Society Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

Phone: 090 964 2995
Fax: 090 964 2995
Email: coylegm@eircom.net

**15%
OFF**

WEDDING STATIONERY



100 Wedding Invitations
50 Evening Invitations
100 Thank You Cards

€295

- MEMORIAL CARDS
- BOOKMARKS,
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENT CARDS

**15%
OFF**



Terms and conditions apply

KPWPrint



Design & Print Specialists

FOR ALL YOUR PRINTING NEEDS

Visit us at Poolboy Ind. Estate, Ballinasloe

Tel: 090 9642297 Email: office@kpw.ie

Retired Nurses at Áras Reception

Writes Katherine Croffy

It is heartening to know that during a period of royal visits and presidential root-seeking, the President of Ireland can still make time for local community groups.

The Ballinasloe Branch of the Retired Nurses Association travelled to Áras an Uachtarán in April last, to be greeted warmly by President Mary McAleese and her household. The visit came at the president's own kind invitation. On arrival the delegation from the association was attended by the president's aide in the

reception room before the president herself arrived. President McAleese initially greeted the group warmly en masse, but later made time to speak to each member individually. The local branch members were then given a guided tour of the Áras, complete with the building narrative of the Vice Regal Lodge; that has become home to our Presidents, since Roscommon man Douglas Hyde. Refreshments were served at the end of the visit, at which point the President reappeared once more to join her guests for tea. The fact that the president's term expires in

September only heightens the sense of privilege felt by the association at the president's invitation.

"Our members were thrilled with the whole event and the opportunity to meet Mary McAleese, who spoke very warmly of our role as professionals in the Health sector and the caring legacy we can still deploy for our communities" said Branch Committee member Catherine Croffy.

She wished the Branch well in its hosting of the Annual Retired Nurses Association Conference in Ballinasloe in May at the Carlton Shearwater Hotel.



Ballinasloe Life Launch

(L-R): Michael Kitt TD, Colm Keaveney TD, Mayor Pat O'Sullivan, Seamus Duffy (Chairman BACD) and Paul Hargadon (BACD).



Back (L-R): Seamus Duffy, Mayor Pat O'Sullivan, Paul Hargadon, Kevin Whyte (Chamber of Commerce), John Flynn (Fair & Festival).
Front: Nicola Hampson (BACD), Phil Whyte (Ballinasloe Ceoltas).



Back (L-R): Brendan Kelly (KPW Print), Seamus Duffy, Pat O'Sullivan, Paul Hargadon, Kevin Whyte. Front (L-R): Ruairi Moore (Asst. Editor), Martine Schmidt (AOIFE), Nicola Hampson, Colm Croffy (Editor).



Back (L-R): Brendan Kelly, Michael Kelly & Teresa Kilmartin (Fred Kilmartins), Fergal Dunne (Supervalu), Seamus Duffy.
Front: Ger Fahey (MEIC), Niall Clarke (Stanley Clarke & Sons).



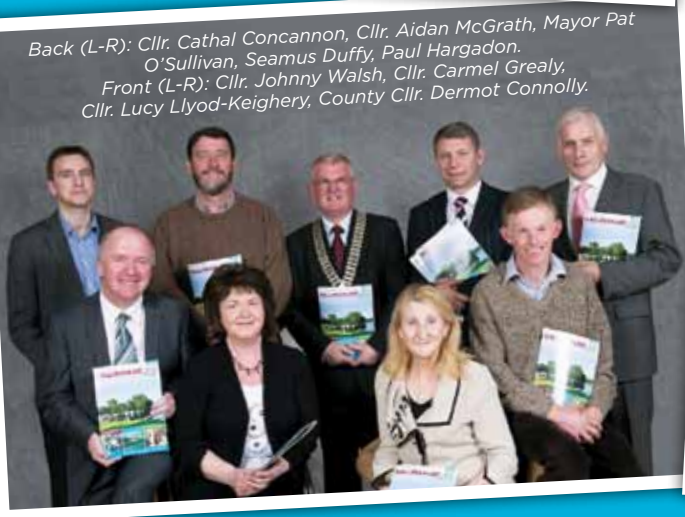
Back (L-R): Billy Ward (Director B'sloe Training for Employment), Seamus Duffy, Cllr. Cathal Concannon, Terry Noone (B'sloe Tidy Towns).
Front: Cllr. Carmel Grealy (Chair B'sloe Tidy Towns), Fergal Dunne.



Back (L-R): Brendan Kelly, Tom Lucas (Ballinasloe Credit Union), Marian Brady (BCU), Seamus Duffy, John Power (BCU). Front: Sean O'Hagan (BCU), Noel Madden (Manager BCU).



Back (L-R): Cllr. Cathal Concannon, Cllr. Aidan McGrath, Mayor Pat O'Sullivan, Seamus Duffy, Paul Hargadon.
Front (L-R): Cllr. Johnny Walsh, Cllr. Carmel Grealy, Cllr. Lucy Llyod-Keighery, County Cllr. Dermot Connolly.



Back (L-R): Seamus Duffy, Frances Leahy (Chair Musical Society), Mayor Pat O'Sullivan, Jacintha Naughton (General Manager Carlton Shearwater), Tomás Gullane (Proprietor Gullanes Hotel).
Front: Brendan Kelly, Pearse Keller (Keller Travel).



Sponsored by the Carlton Shearwater Hotel
Photography at Launch Courtesy of Liam Jordan Photography

Ballinasloe RAPID Programme



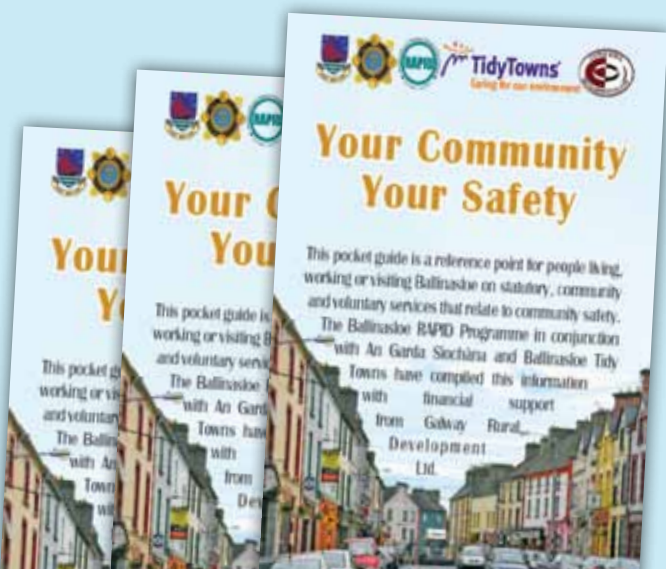
The RAPID Programme is a focused Government initiative to target the 51 most disadvantaged areas in the country. Ballinasloe is one of two designated RAPID areas in County Galway.

The programme is built around 7 areas:

- Community Safety & Anti-Social Behaviour
- Health
- Family Support
- Physical Environment
- Education
- Youth Support
- Employment & Training

Ballinasloe Safety Booklet

'Your Community Your Safety' is a pocket guide with information on community safety for Ballinasloe town. It was a joint effort between Ballinasloe RAPID Programme, An Garda Síochána and Ballinasloe Tidy Towns with funding from Galway Rural Development.



Ballinasloe Employment & Training Initiative

'Your Community Your Safety' is a pocket guide with information on community safety for Ballinasloe town. It was a joint effort between Ballinasloe RAPID Programme, An Garda Síochána and Ballinasloe Tidy Towns with funding from Galway Rural Development.

Ballinasloe RAPID programme in conjunction with Ballinasloe Jobs Club are looking to devise a voluntary placement programme for the Ballinasloe area. In a nutshell we are looking for local businesses to consider employing people (with no pay) registered with the Ballinasloe Jobs Club. Ballinasloe Jobs Club (based on the 1st floor of the Emerald Ballroom) have a database of people who have/are undergoing various levels of training (primarily FETAC levels). These people are typically on Jobseekers Benefit or job seekers allowance. The skill level would vary but ranges from practical to theoretical courses in addition to personal development. Ballinasloe Jobs Club is funded by FÁS but do offer supports through initiatives such as this employment and training one we are designing under the auspices of the Ballinasloe RAPID programme.

The Benefits to the Participant:

- Current Reference on their CV
- Work experience and on the job experience
- Confidence building
- Gives participants a valuable sense of employers expectations
- Opens doors to possible job outcomes

The Benefits to the Employer:

- Extra pair of hands to help at no additional cost.
- Giving back to your communities as employers are contributing to their corporate social responsibility.
- Employers are not asked to pay a wage as participants continue to retain their social welfare payments.
- There's no obligation on employers to continue beyond the placement. Should a position arise, the employer can employ the participant at no recruitment cost and will have had an opportunity to 'trial before you buy'.



Contact Details

**Kieran Coyne, Ballinasloe
RAPID Coordinator**

Tel: 091 476 507

Mobile: 087 952 0999

Email: kcoyne@galwaycoco.ie

Ballinasloe Chess Champions Young Masterminds

Community Games Under 16 team after winning Connacht Community Games 2011. (L-R) Daniel McMorro, Luke Moran, Ruairi McKenna Carroll (Captain), Shane Bleahene, Billy McKenna, Jack McKenna, Conor Kelly.



Headstones Ballinasloe

**Natural Stone Memorials
Headstones and Monuments
Grave Cleaning and Restoration**

Servicing all cemeteries in
Ballinasloe and surrounding areas

Call us for a Brochure
on (090) 964 4433 or Call
Mark Forde on 087 991 2671
Darren Raftery on 087 223 4453

View our extensive range
of Headstones on
www.liffeymemorials.ie

Writes John McKenna

Though best-known for the establishment of the present club in 2002, a little known fact is that Ballinasloe has long had a strong association with chess; in fact, the first historical mention of a chess club outside of Dublin was in Ballinasloe in 1839, attended by none other than the then Lord Clancarty.


The story of the founding of the present club, while not quite as auspicious, is no less interesting. Established when five ten-year-olds head-hunted local chess player Darren Kelly as their coach in order to enter the Community Games Under 12 chess competition, the club has been running since 2002. Darren quickly got to work with them and one year later they had won the Galway and Connacht competitions, as well as having qualified for their first Community Games national final in Mosney, an event at which they came second. This proved to be a big boost for junior chess in Ballinasloe and in the following year the club entered an Under 16 team in the Community Games for the first time.

Galway is one of the strongest areas in the country for junior chess and as such it took a huge amount of work and training to compete at established competitions. But true to form, more success came again in 2006 with the under 12 team again reaching the national

finals, an affair at which Ballinasloe came agonizingly close to winning, but returned a close second once more.

The real breakthrough came the following year, when both under 12 and under 16 teams won the national finals; a feat which they repeated in 2008 and 2009 to make it a "double" three-in-row national titles. This string of successes was no fluke, as the youths of the club proved once more in 2010, winning again at under 16 to make it four-in-a-row. In fact, the youths are in action again soon, travelling to the national finals this year in their "the drive for five!"

While largely a junior organisation with ninety percent of members under 18, the club entered the adult chess leagues in 2009; lacking a Connacht League, members went on and promptly won the O'Connell and Bodley Cups in the Leinster League instead and then repeated the success in both Cups in 2011. Ballinasloe's Club then proved key to the initiative which saw a Connacht League launched in 2011.

The success of the club has not just been localised. Ballinasloe juniors have also made a big impression on the Connacht and Irish junior chess teams; in 2011, no fewer than five out of six members of the Connacht under 16 team were Ballinasloe players, while the club has also provided players for the Irish junior chess teams every year since 2007. 

YOU ENJOY TODAY WE LOOK AFTER TOMORROW



NEW IRELAND
ASSURANCE

TALK TO US AT NEW IRELAND FOR

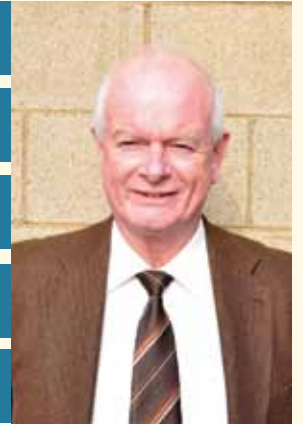
RETIREMENT PLANNING

INCOME PROTECTION

LIFE AND SERIOUS ILLNESS COVER

PLANNING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

LUMP SUM INVESTMENTS



Call John Flynn today on **087 226 3062**
alternatively, email john.flynn@newireland.ie

New Ireland Assurance Company plc is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland and is a member of the Bank of Ireland Group.



WITH OUR SECURE SAVINGS
AND COMPETITIVE LOANS

**Can you afford not
to be a member?**



Ballinasloe Credit Union
SAFE, STRONG, SECURE

Tel: 090 964 3179 Fax: 090 964 3511

Email: info@ballinasloecreditunion.ie www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie

Credit Unions in Ireland are regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland

Ballinasloe 10k Fun Run in aid of The Irish Cancer Society

Writes Eveanna Ryan

In excess of 300 participants, including 3 ladies pushing buggies and one dog, participated in the second annual 10k Fun Run for the Irish Cancer Society.

After gathering at the hotel to collect their race numbers, they were treated to a swift safety briefing before being taken to the starting point where the sun had made an unexpected appearance, shining down on a large crowd as the race was officially started by Mayor Pat O'Sullivan at noon sharp. The participants toured the local bog and emerged onto the Portumna road, continuing through Kellysgrove and Beechlawn to finish the race in Poolboy.

The Fun Run, held on the 17th of April couldn't have been made possible without the help of volunteer marshals, Gardai from both the locality and the Tuam traffic corps, as well as the Civil Defence, volunteers manning the water stations and, of course, the Local Community

that came out and supported everyone taking part. Prizes were awarded back at the Carlton Shearwater Hotel for both runners and walkers, with the overall winner Wayne Reid completing the run in just over 34 mins, followed closely by Stephen McKeigue at 35 mins and Niall Kelly in 3rd with 40 mins.

"The Stargazer Lily Team were delighted to be able to present a cheque of €1000 to the Irish Cancer Society as one of the teams in Relay for Life, Ballinasloe. We cannot thank the local community enough for coming out and supporting us with this event," said Foundation Chairperson Annette McDevitt. Every one received a participant medal and the Stargazer Lily Foundation Team were there to congratulate each and every walker and runner that crossed the finishing line.

The Stargazer Lily Foundation Team hope all who participated enjoyed the day and would like to thank everyone who took part as well as sponsors and J & S Photos without the help of whom the event could not have been successful. 🐛



Wayne Reid taking the final stretch during the Ballinasloe 10K Fun Run

MILLRACE

RETIREMENT VILLAGE

Bridge Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway



SERVICES

- 24 Hour emergency nursing cover
- Ample secure free parking
- Village manager assistance
- Garden and grounds maintained
- Public areas and day centre cleaning
- Home minding service while away
- On site caretaker
- Refuse collection

SPECIFICATIONS

- Professionally designed Apartments include fitted kitchens and ensuite facilities
- Wooden and carpeted floors throughout the apartment
- Smoke alarm - CCTV
- Energy efficient heating
- Wheelchair access
- Elevator access
- Balconies / terraces with all apartments
- 24 Hour response system
- All apartments are fully furnished

Two bedroom apartments offering independent living.
An ideal environment in which to maintain and active and independent lifestyle.
Especially designed to meet the needs of retired residents.

Tel: **090 964 6120** Mob: **087 777 3271**



Drive Safely with the Kids This Summer

Writes Niall Clarke of Clarkes Nursery Store

With summer upon us, many of us will be packing up the car and heading off around the country with the kids in tow.

With this increase in traffic on our roads, it is important that everyone in your car is carried in safety – especially children. Making sure you use a child restraint may be the most important thing you do for your child. However, when it comes to the use of these child restraints, the statistics do not make for comfortable reading. 80% of child seats are incorrectly fitted or are not compatible with the vehicle they are fitted in, the main reasons for which are online sales, catalogue sales (where no checks are carried out) and some stores where a trained car seat installer did not fit the car seat. EU child safety protection laws make it compulsory for all children to travel in the correct child seat, booster seat or booster cushion. It is mandatory for children up to 1.5 metres tall (about 11 to 12 years of age) to be appropriately restrained while travelling in a car.

Choosing The Right Seat for your Child and Car

When it comes to choosing a child car seat there are two main factors to consider: firstly the seat you use is compatible with the vehicle and secondly the car seat is the correct “group” for the child. Car seats are structured into groups based on the child’s weight, which is the most important factor when choosing a seat. Age should only be used as a guide. There are 6 car seat groups ranging in weight from birth to 36 KG. Always ensure that the seat is right for the child’s weight and height.

Installing it Correctly

The main issues affecting child seat compatibility and correct installation with your vehicle include:

- Seatbelt issues, i.e. 2 point belts / 3 point belts
- Buckle crunch: this is a very critical issue the number one reason why car seats are incorrectly fitted. There is a common misconception that any car seat will fit any car. If buckle crunch occurs in your car with your car seat, there is a major risk that upon an impact/collision that the buckle can spring or break open.
- Airbags: issues here included car seats fitted where there is an active bag in line with the seat either in the front or on the side door, or airbag curtain rail.

Car-Seat Checklist

If you have child passengers in your car, make sure you follow this checklist:

- Only buy children’s car seats from reputable retailers.
- Before buying a seat always check that it is suitable for the age and weight of the child that it fits the car. If unsure, ask an expert.
- Check that assembly and installation instructions are included with the seat.
- Double check to ensure that you have followed all instructions and that the seat is fitted correctly.

** Ensuring a child is properly restrained in a child car seat reduce injuries by a factor of 90 – 95% for rear facing seats and 60% for forward facing seats. **AA Motoring Trust.***

Local Special Olympians Compete in Athens Olympics

Writes Kitty Tierney

In the 32 years since its foundation, Special Olympics Ireland has added many and more essential dates for our calendars, not least the summer of 2003 which saw Dublin hold the World Summer Games for the first time.

The summer of 2011 will see the torch pass to Athens, the ancestral home of the games, in a much anticipated event that promises to be spectacular, spanning from the 25th of June to July 4th. Meet the five athletes who will travel to Athens in June to represent country, county and town.

Emma Finneran is a member of Creagh Training Centre and is currently busy preparing for the football competition at the Olympics with her trainers Johanna Lahart and Philip O'Connor. Over an Olympics career spanning six years, she has competed at the 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games in Limerick where she won gold; at the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai where she won bronze; and at the 2006 Special Olympics Ireland Games in

Belfast where she won gold. When not training Emma enjoys socialising, watching Eastenders, listening to The Script; her favourite sporting hero is Katy Taylor.

Christine Kelly: July won't mark the first time that Christine from Ahascragh, has represented Ireland on the international sporting stage. She was captain of the five-a-side ladies soccer team that travelled to 2007 Special Olympics World Games in China and while there won a bronze medal. Christine also participated in and won 2 gold medals at the 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games in Limerick. When not busy playing soccer, Christine enjoys bowling with Roscommon Special Olympics Club and listening to Westlife. Her sporting hero is David Beckham and her fondest memory is the fireworks display at the Olympic ceremony in China.

Fionnuala Treacy also attends Creagh Training Centre under Johanna Lahart and Philip O'Connor and has been involved with Special Olympics since 2008. She travelled to Poland to participate at the 2010 Special Olympics European Games and won a 4th place ribbon in ladies 5-a-side football in Poland. Among many achievements

with the Special Olympics, Fionnuala lists winning the National Plate Competition in 2009 and winning a gold medal at the 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games held in Limerick after a penalty shoot-out. Fionnuala's hobbies include reading and horse riding and she is a big fan of the jockey Ruby Walsh.

John Loughnane has been competing in the Special Olympics equestrian competitions for 10 years. He is a member of the Ballinasloe Eagles Club and trains twice a week at Creagh Equestrian Centre near Ballinasloe under the tutelage of coaches Damien Carey and Teresa Kelly. John has previously competed at the 2006 Special Olympics Ireland Games in Belfast and he won gold and silver medals at the 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games in Limerick. This is John's first time representing Ireland on the international sporting stage and he is very proud to be part of Team Ireland.

Jonathan Griffin is from Woodlawn, Ballinasloe and is currently busy training to compete in the bowling competition. He is a member of the Corrib Bowling Club in City Limits Oranmore, Co. Galway. He took part in the 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games in Limerick and won

2 gold medals. This will be his first time representing Ireland on the international sporting stage. The Games will also mark Jonathan's first time to fly, so the trip will be a great experience for him. In Jonathan's spare time he likes to watch television, sing, play the guitar, play computer games his sporting hero is Packie Bonner. Each and every one of the athletes involved cites their participation in games as one of the fondest memories of their lives as well as a proud event for the town June 2011 promises to be no different!

The Best of luck to Emma, Christine, Fionnuala, John and Jonathan and everybody travelling with them.



Emma Finneran



Christine Kelly



John Loughnane



Fionnuala Treacy

Ballinasloe Family Fun Day

Writes Kevin Whyte

Originally founded by Leo Kiernan of Taughmaconnell and a committee of friends, the Ballinasloe Family Fun Day acts as a local fundraiser for various UNICEF projects as well as the Children's Ward in Portiuncula Hospital, Brackernagh.

Scarcely had the inaugural day's proceedings launched back in 2007 when it became clear that this would have to become an annual event. The committee resolved to hold a Fun Day each June, the aim being to provide an activity-laden day out for the young of Ballinasloe and their families as well as a chance to raise much needed funds for a local and a national charity. Four years on the Ballinasloe Family Fun Day has grown to be one of the most successful events of its kind in Ireland.

Due to take place in the Moycarn Lodge on June 12th - the venue provided free of charge by owners Joe and Fiona Melody - this year's event will benefit various causes such as the Share a Dream Foundation, the Ballinasloe Branch of the Special Olympics, as well as the Youth Work Ireland East Galway Project. These are just a few listed amongst the various charities to have benefitted from the day in the past, the rest being UNICEF, the Ballinasloe Social Services and the Ballinasloe Youth Club, to which over €25,000 has been collectively donated in the past three years.

As ever, the committee is indebted to local businesses and retailers in Athlone as well as Ballinasloe for their continued sponsorship, not to mention the public



Anthony Coyle acting the monkey at Ballinasloe Family Fun Day

of both towns for the ever-generous donations to the annual duck race, without which the Fun Day could not proceed.

As well as the general public, there are many and more various organisations without whom the day would not be possible. Both the Garda Síochána and the army consistently take part, the Garda allowing the use of their helicopter while the army give some very ill children the chance to realise their dreams of being a soldier for a day. The Civil Defence also provides emergency cover for the event.

This year saw the Fun Day enter the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Ballinasloe and scoop the first prize in the Community

category for their excellent float, which featured various examples of the activities available during past events.

June 2011 will prove no different, as the Fun Day offers their usual array of attractions such as bouncing castles, bull-riding, wall-climbing, raft and duck racing, the dog show, as well as hot air balloon and helicopter rides.

The Fun Day Committee are: Leo Kiernan, Joyce O'Grady, Nora Clogherty, Geoffrey Casey, Kevin McMorrow, Dave Healy, Dave McEnroe and Kevin Whyte.

For further information, we can be found on Facebook by searching "Ballinasloe Fun-Day" or Email: ballinasloefamilyfunday@gmail.com

Parkmore Electrical

Now Open for all your industrial and domestic electrical accessories

- Great deals on energy saving bulbs & light fittings interior and exterior.
- Lanterns, lighting for all your gardening needs. Re: Lighting for decking.
- Also available we have safety work wear, Plugs, Sockets, Fuses, wide range of electrical materials in stock.
- All Industrial Maintenance and Electrical products now in Stock
- Stock Profile on Request.
- We also cater for engraved labeling designs for everyone's need.



Clients are welcome to call in to our premises at **Creagh, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.**
Contact us: **T: 09096 44030 F: 09096 44114 E: mflood@parkmoreswitchgear.com**

Mainstreaming by Dept. - End of Era for St. Mary's Pre-School



Final class of St. Mary's Pre-School, Ballinasloe: Front Row (L-R): Martin Ward, Cassie Ward, Martin Ward, Hannah Cawley, Anthony Ward, Amy Ward, Jessica Cawley. Back (L-R): Cllr. Dermot Connolly, Principal Maureen Waters, Eileen Casey, Chloe McDonagh, Jack Ward, Joe Ward, Teachers Ronnie Connolly and Tricia Cawley

Writes Ruairi Moore

Though the month of June and the beginning of the school holidays is a time of year which routinely spurs a sigh of relief from the children of the town, this year marks a much more bittersweet occasion for one local school.

St. Mary's Preschool, established in 1984, will close its doors for the final time in June 2011, as part of a government programme designed to abolish traveller-only preschools and integrate them into more mainstream education.

"The Department has decided on a new approach, so traveller-only preschools are coming to an end all over the country. We're nearly one of the last left, and that was due to our dedicated Board of Management as well as the parents, who were very involved down through the years," says Cllr. Dermot Connolly, Chairman of the committee responsible for the co-ordination of the school.

The school was founded as a community initiative to raise educational standards among the marginalised community in the Ballinasloe area. Early intervention in promoting education has always been the main aim of the Preschool, which this year catered for 14 pupils between the ages of 3-5 years.

"The main driving forces behind the school were Sister Helena and Maureen here," says Dermot, indicating teacher Maureen Waters across a table in the

small office of the parochial hall in which the school is based. Maureen has resided over the school for every one of its twenty-seven years, having been sent young children to teach; only to see them grow up and send their own children in turn.

"The trust between the parents and the teachers is fantastic, it's definitely been one of the highlights for me," she says, smiling fondly at the memory.

Some of the various subjects touched upon in the schools programme include early mathematical ideas, aesthetic awareness and expression, physical development and environment education. The programme also encourages the development of social skills, as well as a bilingual slant implemented by Maureen, a native Connemara Irish speaker.

Such a varied programme would not be possible to fund on the support of the parents alone. Government funding from the Department of Education and the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme, as well as grant assistance from the local groups such as Social Services, St. Vincent de Paul and the Credit Union have all combined to support the running costs of the Preschool.


"It's been various strands of funding that have kept us going as long as we did," explains Dermot. "It wouldn't have been possible with just one source." He attributes the quality of the school to the resourcefulness of Maureen and her staff in finding and accessing these various sources. This staff has included many over the years; currently assisting

Maureen are locals Patricia Cawley and Veronica Connolly, as well as Mary Hillary, Department of Education visiting teacher and various others. Past placements have also been provided for students working in speech and language therapy, as well as local transition years.

Though the dissolution of traveller-only preschools is a huge step forward in terms of integration, does Councillor Connolly think it will benefit the children in the long run?

"Time will tell that. Until we see how the children will be facilitated we can't know for sure, but some of the officials who are implementing this initiative are the same people who have been very helpful in keeping the school going in the past, so there is that. I suppose there will be adjustments to be made, but a lot of children here will be moving on to the national school, so no great amount of them will be too disjointed."

The legion of names to which Dermot and Maureen expressed a heartfelt gratitude for their support over the years proved far too long for these pages, but perhaps fittingly conveyed in Dermot's simple statement. "A lot of people have been very good to us."

While the closure of a place which has provided fond memories for so many is indeed saddening, it can be hoped that as St. Mary's preschool closes its doors for the final time, this new integration initiative implemented by the government might open another to a better future for the children who leave, as well as the education system as a whole. 

Summerfest Set To Return

Writes Ruairi Moore

Following on from the great success of last year's event, this summer will see local vintners, vendors, business people, town council and volunteers come together once more to organise the second annual Summerfest; but this time, with a twist.

"The idea behind last year's Summerfest was to put something back into the town, to create a bit of an economic boost," says Town Councillor Cathal Concannon, one of the driving forces behind the inaugural event which took place in July of last year. "It had been a devastating couple of months for the town with the floods and everything else, so we just wanted to give people something to look forward to."

And for the twist?

"While the festival was success considering it was its first time out, this year we decided that we'd continue, but that we'd amalgamate with another well-known event on the town's calendar, An tSuca Fiáin."

An tSuca Fiáin, translating as "The Wild Suck", is an annual river and arts-based festival aimed at children, during the course of which local kids attend camps run by the Ballinasloe Community Arts Group. Over the course of the week the kids make costumes and learn instruments, before their efforts culminate in a march down through town to the marina. Once there, the kids perform for the gathering crowds the night is rounded off with live music and a fire display.

But this year, the festivities won't stop there. "Basically the Summerfest events will take over from there. There'll be

river-based activities down by the marina such as kayaking, zorbing tours down the Suck. It's basically about using the great facilities and amenities we have."

The weekend will also feature a summer market in the town, as well as live music in the pubs and on Sunday the ever-famous tractor-pulling race returns, as well as the regional heat of the tractor-building competition. "In short we're trying run a festival which promotes the use of the river, promotes the amenities we have in the town also brings back a sense of community spirit," concludes Cathal.

The River and Arts Summer Festival will take place from Monday the 11th of July to Sunday the 17th. To enrol your child in the An tSuca Fiáin Summer camp, call Michael Breathnach at (087) 278 8402. For any further information, contact Cathal Concannon on (087) 798 0828.



Local teams compete in last years tractor-pulling race.



BRODERICKS PHARMACY

SOCIETY STREET, BALLINASLOE

Prescriptions • Healthcare • Cosmetics • Baby Care • Fragrances

FOR ALL YOUR PRESCRIPTION & HEALTHCARE REQUIREMENTS

Anne & Kevin Broderick B.Sc. (Hons) Pharm. MPSI

**Drug Payment Scheme • Medical Card • Long Term Illness
High Tech Products • Hospital Emergencies**

Opening Hours: Monday-Saturday including lunch hours 9.15am-6.00pm

Tel: (090) 964 2161 **Email:** broderick@ireland.com

Stanley Clarke Cycles

For A Better Choice at Better Prices

City, Sport, Children, Mountain & Electric Bicycles.
Maintenance and Repair and Rentals.

Kids Bikes from €69.95

Adult Bikes from €129



Dunlo Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway - Tel 090 9642417

New & Second Hand Bicycles. Trade ins accepted. / Cycle to work on a Tax Free Bike



Dr. AIDAN McGRATH & Dr. MARY ROTHWELL

& ASSOCIATES - DENTAL SURGEONS



7 Dunlo St,
Ballinasloe, Co Galway
Tel: 090 964 3644

9 Society St,
Ballinasloe, Co Galway
Tel: 090 964 2295

Dominick St,
Portumna, Co Galway
Tel: 090 974 1142

www.drrothwellandmcgrath.ie

FAMILY DENTAL PRACTICE

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Friday, 9am-5.45pm - All Practices
Saturday 9am-3pm - Dunlo Street practice only

Out and About in Ballinasloe

Bill and Rose Colleran (Birchgrove) celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary with their 10 sons and daughters at Gullanes Hotel, Ballinasloe.



Maria Corcoran Ballinasloe Comhaltas who came first place in Ladies Solo English category in Roscommon Fleadh in Elphin.



At the Retired Nurses Association Conference in The Carlton Shearwater Hotel (L-R): Angela Pender, Angela Donoghue, Sheila Kelly and Maureen McAvinia.



Participants in the Ard Scoil Mhuire transition year programme Log-on and Learn



The Fair & Festival, Tug-o-war Committee presented a cheque for €1,000 to Jacqueline Daly P.R.O. and Fergus Curran chairman of the Ballinasloe Cancer Support Group. (L-R) Kealan Clarke, Fair & Festival, Jacqueline Daly, P.R.O., BCSG, John Flynn, Fair & Festival, Fergus Curran Chairman of BCSG and Niall Clarke Fair & Festival.



East Galway Arts Activist Mary O'Connell with Sen. Michael Mullins, Minister for State Ciaran Cannon T.D. and Paul Connaughton T.D. during the NCFA East Galway politician Meet & Greet in the Town Hall Theatre.



Pictured at the presentation of awards at Ballinasloe Rugby Club Annual Dinner Dance in Gullane's Hotel were: Front Row (L-R): John Flynn (President) presenting the "Clubman of the Year Award" to Declan Quinn. Back Row (L-R): Shane Dempsey (U19 Player of the Year), Paddy Birch on behalf of Aaron Maloney (2nd Team Player of the Year), Andy O'Hara (Captain Senior Team), Harry Reynolds (1st Team Player of the Year) and John Kelly (Coach).



Helen Holohan, Credit Union Members car draw winner, presented with the keys of a Ford Mondeo by Jude Kilmartin, Kilmartin's Garage with Shane McNeill, Asst. Manager of Ballinasloe Credit Union.

Michaellian Ensemble Triumph



Writes Ruairi Moore

If the fifth Sunday of Lent saw the parishioners gnashing their teeth at the deprivation of the usual luxuries, then St. Michael's Church in Ballinasloe was where they needed to be as the choral and orchestral abilities of the Michaellian Ensemble proved enough to soothe any amount of ragged nerves.

A local choir group in only its second year, the ensemble followed up last year's acclaimed debut performance of John Stainer's "Crucifixion" with a rendition of "The Passion and the Glory of the Risen Christ", a piece written only a few short years ago by American reverend and composer Jack Schrader. Not only was the choice fitting given the time of year, but the night also marked the premiere performance of Schrader's work anywhere outside the States.

"I communicated with him by e-mail and he was very supportive," said composer Michael McCullagh after the night's fantastic performance, which had been eight months in the work. The event's programme even contained a personal letter from the composer, praying that "the conductors, singers, players and narrators audience alike will be freshly inspired

by the truth of this greatest story of human history." The interpretation featured various hymns with dramatic narration interspersed throughout the set; particularly impressive was the acapella rendition of "Tis Midnight". When asked which sectors of the community were drawn on to assemble such an impressive array of talent, Mr. McCullagh was emphatic about the support he received.

"We advertised it locally. We just sent out the word, they all came in and we held onto them. We were lucky to get the group that we did, because everyone's talent is important; tenors, bassists, pianists, everyone."

The ensemble was supported by members of local music school Music Matters, as well as the Fire Brigade Brass Band. Given the momentous success of the event, which only built on last year's performance, will this become an annual event?

"Well, we'll see. We can make it an annual thing provided we can get a work to suit the ensemble. Because it was a European premiere, we went all out and got a very high quality orchestra, so we'll have to see if we can assemble this kind of thing every year."



**Premier Proteins
wishes Ballinasloe Life
Magazine all the best
for now and the future**

**Premier Proteins,
Ballinasloe, Co. Galway**

Tel: 090 964 2305

Fax: 090 964 2738

Premier Proteins 2000 Ltd.
is part of the **one51** Group

OLLIE COLOHAN & SONS LTD.



**Wide Range of
Hardware & D.I.Y.**

Doors & Wooden Floors • Heating • Plumbing
Bathroom Suites • Garden Seeds & Sprays • Moss Peat
Electrical Goods • Lighting Fittings • Paint & Wallpaper
Shallow & Deep Well Pumps • Floor & Wall Tiles

PERSONAL ATTENTION ALWAYS GUARANTEED!

General Hardware and all D.I.Y. requirements
Town Parks, Ballinasloe (Back of Gullane's Hotel)
Tel: 090 9643667 Fax: 090 9644440
Email: ollie@colohanhardware.ie

Keeping the Flame Alive

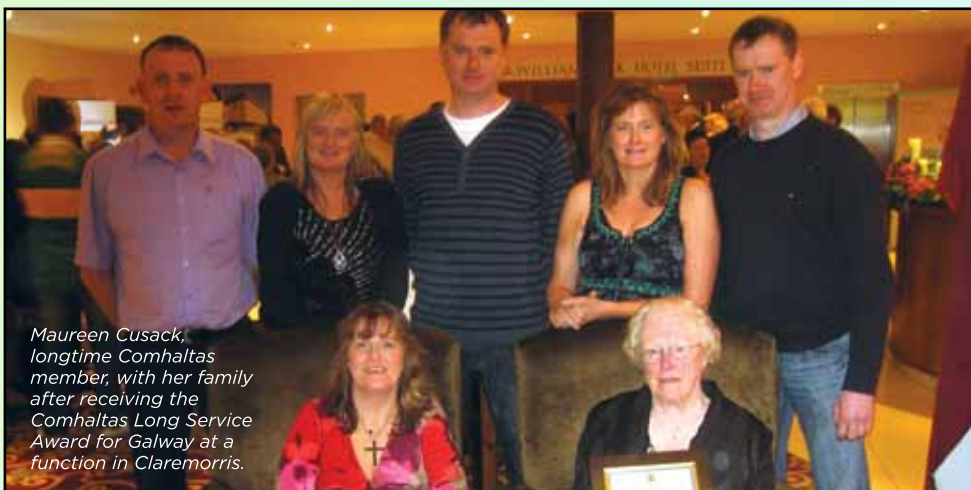
Writes Thomas Corcoran

Founded in 1954, the Ballinasloe branch of Comhaltas suffered various lapses and setbacks until 1964, when it finally gained momentum and established itself as a popular local club which has over the years since hosted many County and Connacht Fleadhs.

Though some of the old blood still take part - founding member Tom Quinn still plays music every Friday night in the Emerald Bar, today's committee consists of chairman Thomas Corcoran, secretary Mary Egan and treasurer Micheal Cusack.

Having celebrated the Golden Jubilee of its foundation in 2004, the branch marked the occasion by launching a CD to mark 50 years of activity in Ballinasloe, which has encompassed many competitions over the years, such as Scoriocht winning three All-Irelands in a row in the late sixties.

The present chairman, Thomas Corcoran, is responsible for a number of new developments within the club. Firstly, the founding of the Junior Music Sessions in 2003, a programme designed for the young members of the branch to



Maureen Cusack, longtime Comhaltas member, with her family after receiving the Comhaltas Long Service Award for Galway at a function in Claremorris.

promote music and singing in the area one which has proved a great success to date. Held monthly in town from June to September; the sessions cycle from venue to venue, having grown so large it is difficult to find somewhere big enough to hold them!

Following on the heels of this, 2005 saw the establishment of the Comhaltas Singers Circle, held on the 2nd Thursday of each month from June to September, an event which sees singers from near and far pack the Dunlo Tavern. The

branch also hosts various Fleadhs, having last held the County Fleadh in 2009 the Connacht Fleadh in 2004.

Despite an uncertain start, over fifty years on Ballinasloe Comhaltas is still going strong with the current vibrant committee at the helm it looks on track to providing local and visitors with traditional entertainment for years to come.

For more information on Comhaltas please contact thomascorcoran62hotmail.com

Events Guide - JUNE & JULY

Thursday, 2nd JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Arthritis Support Group Meeting	8.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 3rd JUNE		
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Claymore	10.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Country Comfort	8pm
Maud Millar's	Kind Paddy	10pm
Saturday, 4th JUNE		
An Táin	KGM (Band)	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Keith (Dáil Bar)	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Tir na Nog	10.30pm
East Nightclub	DJ Justy	12am
Haydens Hotel	Night Owls	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Skint	10.30pm
Maud Millar's	Hickory Wind	10pm
Sunday, 5th JUNE		
An Táin	Live Band/ Upstairs Bar	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ The Coyles	
Carlton S'water Hotel	The Shannon Jazz Trio	10.30pm
East Nightclub	DJ Ozz G	12am
Haydens Hotel	One to One	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Claymore	9pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm
Monday, 6th JUNE		
An Táin	Pink Panther Jazz Band	6pm
Blakes Bar	Bar Music	8.30pm
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 7th JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9.30pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Wednesday, 8th JUNE		
An Táin	Trad Music	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Flower & Garden Club Demo	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Paudge Bennett	9.30pm
Thursday, 9th JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Fine Gael Co-option Convention	7pm
Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 10th JUNE		
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Paschal Brennan	10.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Shanna Golden	8pm
Maud Millar's	Streetwise	10pm
Saturday, 11th JUNE		
An Táin	Live Band/Upstairs Bar	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ The Coyles	
Carlton S'water Hotel	David Maguire	10.30pm
East Nightclub	Dirty Electro Night w/ Steven	12am
Haydens Hotel	Last Man Standing	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Tom Flynn	10.30pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm
Sunday, 12th JUNE		
Blakes Bar	Live Music	8pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Country: Dancing - Mike Denver	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Pete Jones	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Kevin Carroll	9pm
Moycairn Lodge	Family Fun Day	9am
Monday, 13th JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 14th JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9.30pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Wednesday, 15th JUNE		
An Táin	Trad Music	10pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	The PB Show	9.30pm
Thursday, 16th JUNE		
Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 17th JUNE		
An Táin	DJ Lee	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Michael Regan	10.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Night Owls	8pm
Maud Millar's	Jukebox Gypsy	10pm
Saturday, 18th JUNE		
An Táin	KGM	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Kieran Sheerin	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Something Different	10.30pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Rose of Tralee Escort Boot Camp	
East Nightclub	The HiJackers	12am
Haydens Hotel	Buzz the Agent	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	The Essentials	10.30pm
Maud Millar's	Mike Carty	10pm

Sunday, 19th JUNE		
An Táin	Trad Irish Music	10pm
Blakes Bar	Live Music	8.30pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Country: Dancing - Declan Nerney	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Rose of Tralee Escort Boot Camp	
Haydens Hotel	David McGuire & Ceile Tom McCarthy	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Time Out	9pm
Maud Millar's	The Skillet Pot	9pm
Monday, 20th JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 21st JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9.30pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Wednesday, 22nd JUNE		
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Paudge Bennett	9.30pm
Thursday, 23rd JUNE		
Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Joxer (9.30pm)/Midsummer Festival	All Day
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 24th JUNE		
An Táin	Still Slopin' (Band)	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Hypnotisit Michael Coy	8.30pm
Downys Bar	Tir na Nog	10.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Shanna Golden	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Cormac Doyle/ Midsummer Fest	
Maud Millar's	Hickory Wind	10pm
Instep Stage School	The Weird and Wonderful Show	
Saturday, 25th JUNE		
An Táin	Band - Johnny Zero	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ The Coyle	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Stephanie and Top Note	10.30pm
East Nightclub	DJ Byrno	12am
Haydens Hotel	Pete Jones	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night/Midsummer Fest	
Maud Millar's	Helium	9pm
Instep Stage School	The Weird and Wonderful Show	
Sunday, 26th JUNE		
Blakes Bar	Live Music	8.30pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Country: Dancing - Robert Mizzell	10.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Buzz the Agent	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Coyle Family/Midsummer Fest	
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	9pm
Instep Stage School	The Weird and Wonderful Show	
Monday, 27th JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 28th JUNE		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9.30pm
Wednesday, 29th JUNE		
An Táin	Trad Irish Music	10pm
Thursday, 30th JUNE		
Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 1st JULY		
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Frankie McDonald	10.30pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	'Take Me Out' in Aid of Barnardos	8.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Last Man Standing	8pm
Maud Millar's	Chillout	10pm
Saturday, 2nd JULY		
An Táin	Oxegen Fest with DJ Lee	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Backstage	8.30pm
East Nightclub	Oxegen 2011 party DJ Justy	12am
Gullane's Hotel	Kilconnell Water Group Function	All Day
Haydens Hotel	Shanna Golden	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Joxer	10.30pm
Maud Millar's	Streetwise	10pm
Sunday, 3rd JULY		
Blakes Bar	Live Music	8.30pm
Haydens Hotel	One to One	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Last Man	9pm
Maud Millar's	Skillet Pot	10pm
Monday, 4th JULY		
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 5th JULY		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9.30pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Wednesday, 6th JULY		
An Táin	Trad Irish Music	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Irish Blood Transfusion Clinic	All Day
Killeen's (S'bridge)	The PB Show	9.30pm
Thursday, 7th JULY		
Gullane's Hotel	Irish Blood Transfusion Clinic	All Day
Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm

Events Guide - JUNE & JULY

Friday, 8th JULY

Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Country Comfort	8pm
Maud Millar's	Joxer	10pm

Saturday, 9th JULY

An Táin	Live Band/Upstairs Bar	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Macey South	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Ozz G	12am
Haydens Hotel	Night Owls	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Bojangle	10.30pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm

Sunday, 10th JULY

Blakes Bar	Live Music	8.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Pete Jones	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	The Backstage	9pm
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	9pm

Monday, 11th JULY

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Marina	Summerfest	All Day

Tuesday, 12th JULY

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9.30pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	9pm
Marina	Summerfest	All Day

Wednesday, 13th JULY

An Táin	Trad Irish Music	10pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Paudge Bennett	9.30pm
Marina	Summerfest	All Day

Thursday, 14th JULY

Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Marina	Summerfest	All Day

Friday, 15th JULY

Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Eammon O' Neill	10.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Shanna Golden	8pm
Maud Millar's	2 2's	10pm
Marina	Summerfest	All Day

Saturday, 16th JULY

An Táin	Live Band/Upstairs Bar	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Chillout	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	The Fureys and Davey Arthur	8.30pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	David Maguire	10.30pm
East Nightclub	DJ Byrno	12am
Haydens Hotel	Last Man Standing	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Claymore	10.30pm
Maud Millar's	Al O' Connor	10pm
Marina	Summerfest	All Day

Sunday, 17th JULY

Blakes Bar	Live Music	8.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Night Owls	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Tony Kearney	9pm
Maud Millar's	Skillet Pot	10pm
Marina	Summerfest	All Day

Monday, 18th JULY

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
-----------------	--------------	-----

Tuesday, 19th JULY

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9.30pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm

Wednesday, 20th JULY

An Táin	Trad Irish Music	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	G.I.Y (Grow it Yourself)	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Paudge Bennett	9.30pm

Thursday, 21st JULY

Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm

Friday, 22nd JULY

Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Shanna Golden	8pm
Maud Millar's	The Converse Allstars	10pm

Saturday, 23rd JULY

An Táin	Live Band/Upstairs Bar	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar with AL o' Connor	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Kevin Carroll	10.30pm
East Nightclub	Internation DJ Orla Feeney	12am
Haydens Hotel	Pete Jones	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Just in Time	10.30pm
Maud Millar's	Helium	10pm
Showgrounds	Free Showjumping	All Day

Sunday, 24th JULY

An Táin	Tony Mac	10pm
Blakes Bar	Live Music	8.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Night Owls	8pm
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	9pm
Showgrounds	Free Grand Prix	All Day

Monday, 25th JULY

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
-----------------	--------------	-----

Tuesday, 26th JULY

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9.30pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm

Wednesday, 27th JULY

An Táin	Trad Irish Music	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Pioneers Meeting	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Paudge Bennett	9.30pm

Thursday, 28th JULY

Haydens Hotel	Kevin Rohan and Friends	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Trad Night	9.30pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm

Friday, 29th JULY

An Táin	Band - Still Slopin'	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Frankie McDonald	10.30pm
Haydens Hotel	Last Man Standing	8pm
Maud Millar's	Hickory Wind	10pm

Saturday, 30th JULY

An Táin	Live Band/Upstairs Bar	10pm
Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Backstage	10pm
East Nightclub	Customer Party	12am
Haydens Hotel	Country Comfort	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	Coyle Family	9.30pm
Maud Millar's	Chillout	10pm

Sunday, 31st JULY

Blakes Bar	Late Bar w/ Chillout	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Justy	12am
Haydens Hotel	Night Owls	8pm
Killeen's (S'bridge)	The Essentials	9pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm



Clockwise from Top

Photo 1: At the Retired Nurses Association Conference in The Carlton Shearwater Hotel (L-R): Maureen Hession, Eileen Egan and Catherine Croffy.
Photo 2: (L-R): Sean Martin, Pat Lally, Rosemary Carty and Dermot Donoghue. **Photo 3:** Outgoing President Dor Scannell hands over the chain of office to the new President of Ballinasloe and District Soroptimists Jane Mooney-Enright.
Photo 4: Ballinasloe Tractor Assembly Winners

To advertise your event here, Contact: ballinasloelife@hotmail.com or info@ballinasloeenterprisecentre.ie

Lively Sean Nós Steps in Ballinasloe



Writes Martina Flanagan

Traditional music and dance has always had a strong presence in Ballinasloe and still does in many venues around the town. No more so than in the Pillar House where you would be forgiven for thinking a “Céilí Mór” takes place every Tuesday night.

About a year ago a group of men and women got together on a Tuesday night in the Gibbons Pillar House Bar, Ballinasloe to learn the traditional Sean Nós dance.

It was a chance to step back in time to learn an old tradition and all credit must go to Claire Gibbons, who was the first to bring Sean Nós ar ais go dtí Béal Átha na Slua. Many visitors to the town, including tourists from France and America, have been known to join in the atmosphere on a Tuesday night.

Sean Nós is an old style traditional form of dancing that originated in the Connemara region. This is a low to ground stepping, to traditional music, a style very relaxed and similar to tap dance. Sean Nós dancing has made a huge comeback following the success on “Ireland’s Got Talent” of the

Mulkerrins Brothers, Emma O’Sullivan, Fuaim Connemara, Cosa Beoga, and Sean Nós ar an tSionann. Blocks of eight weeks classes were given by Irene Cunningham of the famous “Fuaim Connemara” and Emma O’Sullivan, winner of All-Ireland Oireachtas 2009, Ireland’s Got Talent and Trad on the Prom to mention but a few. Having learned the steps and grown in confidence, the group put on a traditional night during the October Fair & Festival where they won “Best Overall Pub” and “Best Individual Entertainer” in the Pub Competition. Classes have now stopped for the summer but the group still meet once a week to practice their steps. A number of different events will be held during the summer with workshops from Gerard Butler and Gearoid Devaney, Oireachtas 2010 winner. The Pillar House Bar with the help of the Sean Nós crew already have plans underway in association with some famous names from Sean Nós dancing and Traditional Musicians to host a Traditional Sean Nós Weekend of music, dance and song in Ballinasloe. Enquiries can be made to Claire Gibbons on 087 9574582.

And Sean Nós dancing is not just the reserve of an older generation; if you are interested in having your children learn the tradition of Sean Nós dancing, then here’s a date for your diary.

Galway dance teacher Bridie Ruane of “Damhsóiri na Crossbóthair”, with the help of her sister Martina, will be starting up Club Damhsa An Sean Nós this September. This is a dance club for children where they will learn traditional Sean Nós dance, Brush Dance and Sets. Sean Nós dancing is a great way to further develop an ear for traditional music, timing and rhythm - not to mention the camaraderie and the health benefits. It will be open to children of all ages, boys and girls, and all levels of dance. There is no expensive outlay of costumes or wigs required; just a comfortable pair of shoes! Bridie has taught dancing for many years in Galway City and has travelled to Scotland, Lorient, Norway, and Germany dancing and teaching. She has had troupes of dancers representing Galway on programs for TG4, Welch National Television, The Travel Show and Cilla Blacks “Blind Date” to mention a few. She also teaches and co-ordinates dancing at corporate events in Galway City. Martina was a champion Irish Step and Set Dancer and has assisted Bridie in the past with her workshops. She re kindled her love for dancing after joining the Pillar House Sean Nós team and has attended workshops with Irene Cunningham, Emma O’Sullivan and Gearoid Devaney.

For further information and to register now please contact Martina on (087) 1446483 or contact clubseanos@gmail.com as soon as possible as classes will be arranged into age levels and numbers in advance.

Ballinasloe Relays Drama Group

Writes Ken Kelly

The washout of three unique athletic meetings in Ballinasloe, in the fifties, led to the establishment of the town's Relays Drama Group. The group was born when for three successive years, in the month of June, torrential rain destroyed the Ballinasloe Relays athletic event, leaving the organisers with huge financial debts.

In 1954 the famous Penn Relays were founded in Pennsylvania, USA, where all of the track events were relay events. Fr. Kevin Ryle, a professor of history in Garbally College a member of the World Athletic Coaches at the time, decided to introduce this new form of sports meetings to Ireland.

An emergency meeting of the athletic club was held after it became "financially embarrassed" because of the losses incurred annually. The Listowel born priest looked to his fellow members for ideas that would help raise the finances to pay off the debts. Fr. Ryle then came up with the solution. Being a townsman of John B. Keane, Fr. Ryle said that Keane had written a play called "Sive" in which the priest's sister, Nora Relihan, had a leading role. The play had been rejected by the Abbey Theatre but had got widespread publicity as a result and he believed it would be a success. He would be able to acquire the performing rights but he hadn't a cast to stage it.

A few people in Ballinasloe, who had stage experience, were approached. The late Dermot Connolly and Margaret Geraghty had appeared in several productions and with their help a group was formed to stage "Sive" in the Town Hall, for three nights in 1959. Fr. Ryle's sister from Listowel made a guest

appearance in the role of Mena Glavin for the opening nights in Ballinasloe. Little did the hastily-convened group realise then that they were to become an overnight success, leading to enquiries for them to stage the show in London and New York. Under the production of Fr. Ryle, the Keane play packed the Town Hall to the rafters with patrons coming from all over the country to see only the second group in the country to stage the block-buster.

Members of the original group included Dermot Connolly, Margaret Geraghty, Michael Cooke, Liam Keller, Patty and Joan McGuire, Liam Keller, Billy Vaughan, Paddy Corban, Martin Greally with a stage crew of Peter Weafer, Seamus Darcy, Jack Quinn, Michael Cullen, Ken Kelly and Declan Rankin. Fr. Ryle was the producer. It went on to subsequently pack the Town Hall for seven nights and then, in reply to public demand, staged the play in venues throughout the four provinces, including New Inn, Ennis, Tullamore, Killimor, Boyle, Cavan.

There well all sell-outs and when one considers that all these shows were staged in the middle of a petrol crisis, it highlights the pulling power of the Relays Drama Group. It was a very strong cast with an even more compelling story to tell and then the invitations to travel to London and New York started to come. Unfortunately the cast were all in local employment and could not forsake their future livelihoods to embark on such a venture.

The Ballinasloe Athletic Club were a happy lot as the monies rolled in and debts were paid off. The faces may have changed but the Relays Drama Group is still performing in Ballinasloe with plays by different authors, continuing a tradition set up over fifty years ago-all because of bad weather at athletic meetings. Would you ever wonder how it happened?



Pictured at a Reunion of the original Relays Drama Group in 1999 to mark their 40th anniversary, were: Front Row (L-R): Patrick Vaughan (representing his late father Billy), Margaret Geraghty (Horan), Fr. Kevin Ryle, Patty McGuire, Nora Relihan (Listowel), Joan McGuire (Nolan). Back Row, (L-R): Peter Weafer, Paddy Corban, Michael Cooke, Liam Keller and Ken Kelly.

Defective Products



**Writes Mike O'Reilly
Fair & Murtagh Solicitors**

If a person has been injured or suffered damage due to a faulty product they may be able to seek a remedy under the Liability for Defective Products Act 1991. This states that 'the producer shall be liable in damages in tort for damage caused wholly or partly by a defect in his product'.

This means that the issue of liability is not based on wrongful conduct by the producer, but on proof of the fact that a defect in the product caused damage to the claimant. A product is defined as including all moveable items. In general items which are fixed in place are excluded from the Act. For example the Act does not apply to a defective house which collapses. However, if a moveable object within the house causes it to collapse the Act will apply.

A product is considered to be defective if it fails to provide the safety which a person is entitled to expect. Certain circumstances should be taken into account, such as:

- The presentation of the product.
- The use to which it could reasonably be expected that the product would be put.
- The time when the product was put into circulation.

For example, a hammer would not be defective if it was used to fix a computer and caused damage, as a reasonable person would not have used a hammer. Similarly, machinery produced years ago which lacks certain safety measures may not be defective as the suitable technology to make it safer might not have been available at the time. The Act also notes that a product cannot be defective solely because a better product has since been produced. For example, Windows Vista cannot be considered defective just because Windows 7 is thought to be better.

A producer can be any of the following:

- The manufacturer or producer of a finished product.
- The manufacturer or producer of any raw material or component used in the final product.
- The person who carried out the initial processing on agricultural goods, fish etc, e.g. the farmer.
- Any person who puts his name, trademark or any other unique feature on the product, e.g. designer labels on clothes.
- Anyone who imports the product with intent to supply it to others.

It is not enough for a party to show that a product is defective and that a certain producer is responsible. They must also have suffered damage. This can be either:

- Death or personal injury.
- Loss of, damage to, or destruction of, any item of property other than the defective product itself; provided that the item of property:
 - Is of a type ordinarily intended for private use or consumption, and
 - Was used by the injured person mainly for his own private use or consumption.

It is vital that the damage was caused by the defective product and it is the plaintiff's responsibility to prove this.

Usually, a producer will not be liable for damage caused by a defective product if they did not put the product into circulation or if the defect did not exist when the product was put into circulation. There are other reasons as well. However, a producer may not try and avoid liability by including certain terms and conditions into a contract. Therefore an exclusion clause excusing the producer from any claims due to damage caused by a defective product would usually not be valid.

Once an injured party has proved that a product was defective, that it caused damage, and that a certain producer was responsible they may be able to make a successful claim so long as the producer has no defence.

However, as in other areas of law there is a limitation period in which claims must be made. In this instance the period is three years and starts from the date the damage occurred or the date when the plaintiff became aware of the damage, the defect and the identity of the producer. If action is not taken within ten years of the product being put into circulation, the injured person loses all rights under this Act. Therefore it is crucial that an injured party begins legal proceedings as soon as they discover the damage. See your Solicitor.

Every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this article, the facts and opinions stated are based on information and sources, while we believe them to be reliable, are not guaranteed to be so. The material contained in this article therefore, is for general information purposes only and does not constitute legal or other professional advice. Specific legal advice should be sought on any particular matter.

Any and all of this information is subject to change without notice. No liability can be accepted by Fair and Murtagh, it's partners, solicitors or employees, or by the makers or publishers of this article, for any loss occasioned to any person or entity acting or failing to act as a result of anything contained in or omitted from this article.

Kayak on The River Suck for The Summer

Writes Seamus Daly

Many summer camps in Ireland today concentrate on high numbers with simple, cheap activities – not so with UpRiver Kayactivity. With high activity and limited places, the Ballinasloe-based summer camp is about as far from a babysitting service as you can get.

Based on the River Suck, camps with Kayactivity are run through games, group activities and river exploration, all of which help increase water safety awareness as well as knowledge of the environment and local history. Running on three week-long camps spanning from the 18th to the 22nd July, the 25th to 29th July, and finally the 15th to the 19th August, Kayactivity's middle week is already near-booked out from returning customers alone.

Certified Level Three Kayaker Séamus Daly boasts a career of 6 years on the rivers of countries such as Ireland, Wales, Slovenia and Italy, and attributes this success to his time at the summer camp. "I owe all of this reckless fun to UpRiver kayaking camp. Kayaking is fun no matter what age you are, and I'd recommend it to anyone." And it is not Séamus alone that the camps have impressed – the instructors at the camp routinely cater to the Rose of Tralee Escorts as well as corporate parties, and have even been covered by several television stations such as RTE and TV3.



But it is not simply kayaking alone that UpRiver is known for – one of the most popular facilities the club has on offer is a craze which originated in New Zealand and has swept the country these past few years; Zorbing, which involves being harnessed inside a large, inflatable plastic ball and rolled around – by land, or water.

"Ours is the first zorbing site in Ireland," says instructor Eoin Croffy. "We have a 100% safety record and we've recently branched out into Hydro-Zorbing, which is zorbing on the water. It's definitely our most popular ride."

So for more information about getting out onto the river this summer, whether by boat or ball, contact Eoin Croffy at 087 9219 700 or visit www.upriver.ie

Dunnes of Ballinasloe

SuperValu

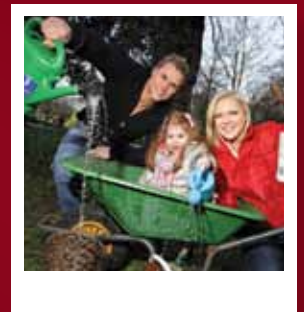
Real Food, Real People

We take great pride in being part of our local community. Whether it's through our sponsorship of Tidy Towns or supporting our GAA Football Championship, working with local organisations is close to our heart.

Local GAA



Tidy Towns



 **Tidy Towns**
Caring for our environment

Collect Real Rewards Points

And save 5% on a future shop





Galway Road, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
Newly Renovated and Extended Showrooms

NEW INDOOR & OUTDOOR LIGHTING DEPARTMENT
NEW BEDROOM DEPARTMENT
OVER 20,000 SQ. FT OF HOME FURNISHINGS
CURTAINS & BLINDS
CARPETING & TIMBER FLOORING
SITTING ROOM FURNITURE
DINING & KITCHEN FURNITURE.

Open Monday - Saturday. 9.30am - 6pm
Phone: 090 964 2364

Gaels Celebrate London Exiles

Writes John Molloy

Though the London GAA scene is one only reluctantly covered on our shores, given that this generation will see much of our youth spread out across the globe with helmets and hurleys in tow, it would do to remember those who have blazed the trail before.

In 1961 four young Irish men set up a new hurling club in a London that was teeming with athletic young men from hurling strongholds in Ireland. They were Martin Treacy, P. J. Noone (Cappataggle), Paddy Malone (Kilconnell) and Pakie Grealish (Carnmore), and the club they founded would become a dominant force in the London GAA scene, even now.

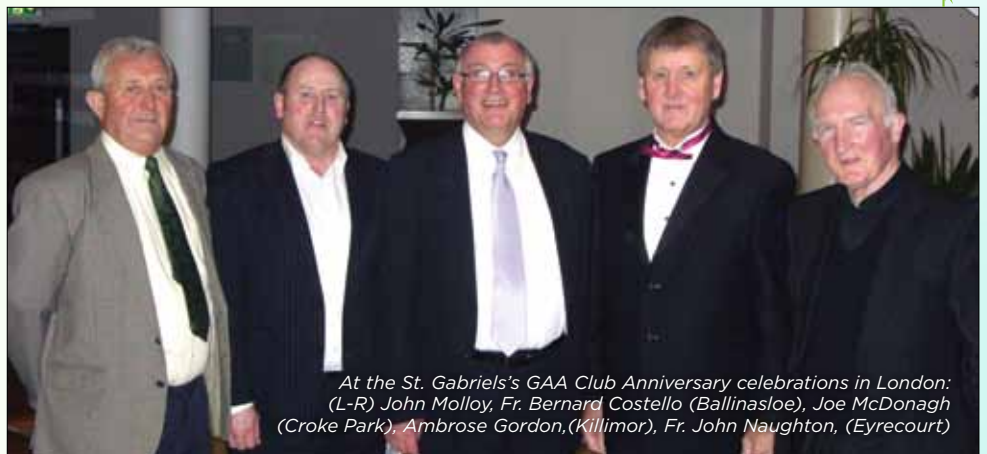
St. Gabriel's, named after a club in Kilconnell, bore club colours of blue and gold, and the fifteen pounds collected at the first meeting went towards a set of jerseys and socks. The majority of the then members were from the Ballinasloe area, who took to the field in the first match in Slough on 19th March 1961 against local team St. Mel's. By all accounts the local lads were a rough outfit, but they had no answer to the speed and skill of St. Gabriel's who

emphatically announced their arrival with a 2-9 to 0-3 victory. A series of further victories throughout the year confirmed that a powerful new force had entered the GAA scene in London.

The successes have rarely let up in the 50 years since - 14 senior titles, 13 times champions of Britain, 18 senior league titles, 8 intermediate titles, 11 intermediate league titles, and a host of other awards. In every one of these success stories were hurlers and administrators from the Ballinasloe hinterland; club legends like Ambrose Gordon, Pdraic Colohan,

Mick Nevin, Brendan O'Brien, and Timmy Byrnes. In recent years star-hurlers like Tony Frehill, Justin Campbell, Aidan Staunton and Mike Kenny, Owen, Michael and John Shaughnessy, Mick Headd, Francis Headd and John Headd, Dermot Murphy and Mick Kelly wore the jersey with distinction.

The 50th anniversary of the club's foundation was celebrated with a banquet in The Moran Hotel, Cricklewood. Attended by 400 patrons - among them many from Ballinasloe. The night was hailed as a wonderful event by all.



At the St. Gabriel's GAA Club Anniversary celebrations in London:
(L-R) John Molloy, Fr. Bernard Costello (Ballinasloe), Joe McDonagh (Croke Park), Ambrose Gordon, (Killimor), Fr. John Naughton, (Eyrecourt)

Past GAA Veterans to Engage in Pilot Programme

Writes Sean Tully

Efforts are being made to provide past members of clubs all over the country with more involvement and a greater social outlet, after President Mary McAleese established a forum to explore the reasons why some older men are, for various reasons, no longer participating in local community life.

By orienting the concept towards men in general and attracting men of all ages to become involved either as volunteers or participants, it is hoped this social outlet will prevent vulnerable men from lapsing into social isolation in the future.

The president urged the need for "a social life to give us fun, good memories, something to look forward to, opportunities to express ourselves and to develop ourselves and our interests", and Ballinalsoe Club have been chosen as one of the key clubs to deliver the pilot phase of the initiative.

Representatives from both town and county councils were in support at a launch meeting in Gullane's Hotel, as



(L-R) Frank Leonard, Peadar Ryan, Willie Ward, Gerry Coone and John Kilcommins

well as members of the local Active Retirement Club who offered their services in any capacity needed. Past players had the chance to share their own experiences, while various suggestions were made such a reunion of past teams, as well as a club visit to Croke Park. A full

and active programme of engagement will be created and announced over the coming weeks.

For any suggestions or more information on the initiative, club chairman Aidan McGrath can be reached at 090 9642127.

Garbally oil co.

Poolboy, Ballinasloe

SUPPLIERS OF HEATING, COMMERCIAL & AGRI FUELS

**Open 7 days for the keenest priced Petrol & Diesel in Ballinasloe
Stockist of Coal, Gas and Briquettes. Full Valet Service Available**

All Major Credit Cards Accepted

Tel: 090 96 44147 www.garballyoil.com

YOUR LOCAL OIL COMPANY



The Ballinasloe Golf Club Part of the Local Community

Writes Martin Kelly

The oldest club of its kind in Galway, Ballinasloe Golf Club is proud to have served the local community for over 100 years. Since its founding in 1894, the club has supported many local charitable causes and community projects, while on the sporting side the club provides an enjoyable all year round leisure experience for over 700 members from the Ballinasloe and the surrounding area, as well as 3,000 visitors annually.

Among the causes supported by the club were the relief efforts for last year's flood, when the club raised €5,500. The course facilities are also made available to special needs children on a weekly basis. The club has also played host to many fundraising days for various local charities.

The club is open to new members in all categories, visiting groups and societies are very welcome. The club offers very competitive rates for all categories of membership. There is no entry fee. The cost of membership for beginners is €350. This offer is open to ladies and gents of all ages who have never played golf, is a great way of meeting new friends and take part in a learn to play golf programme.

Club President Evelyn Flanagan is proud of the progress the club has made, stating that "a number of Club members have represented Ireland in international competitions down the years. Mary Madden and John Slattery gained Senior international honours. Shane O'Grady, Nigel Howley, James Barton, Mark Staunton and Michael McHugh have been on Ireland's youth teams. Shane, Nigel, Mark and Rory Dervan have progressed to the professional ranks - testimony to the work put in by the Club at juvenile and youth level". Mark Staunton PGA is currently available at the club to give golf lessons to both individuals and groups.

Some well known national and international golfers have enjoyed our facilities over the past 20 years, including David Mortimer - current Irish PGA champion- Wayne Westner - European tour winner on 7 occasions, Pdraig Harrington - 3 times major winner Ken Kearney - former West of Ireland champion. Even other sporting greats, such as snooker player Jimmy White, have enjoyed the course from time to time. Club captain Joe Curtin and



Fergus Curran admiring the putting skills of Junior members

Ladies team captain Cora Kenny weigh in on all that the club has to offer.

"There are weekly competitions and fun events for all members, including ladies competitions, Wednesday competition for seniors over 55, plus men's competitions at the weekend. There is also a fun competition on Thursdays for beginners. We especially urge all our members to support our sponsors, as club competitions would not be successful without their generous support".

The Clubs Pro-Am scheduled for May is a major golf event this year and 15 Professional golfers have been registered for the event. A fundraising team classic will be held over the June Bank Holiday weekend and visitors are especially welcome. Every Friday boasts a club Open Day where visitors can play for €15 and compete for a top golfing prize.

"The Club has a policy of continuous improvement to further enhance the clubhouse and course facilities for the benefit of members and visitor", said Tom Lucas, Club Chairman. "The course is recognised as having top quality greens and Course Superintendent, Damien McLaverty and his staff are working hard to maintain a top class course this year. Recently Damien was honoured by being elected to the position of President of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland".

The club recognises its important role in developing the sport for future generations and has a strong juvenile and

youth policy to encourage and support young people to enjoy and master the game. New juvenile and youth members are particularly welcome. The club has an active golfing and tuition programme involving juvenile members during the summer months. The Club caters for all age groups and Juvenile members can join at age 10.

Sean Kenny and Catherine Owens, Junior Conveners for boys and girls respectively, comment on the youth programme currently running. "The club has an active policy to attract junior members - both boys and girls. We work in conjunction with the national golf governing bodies and the local schools to promote the game and run golf classes and competitions during the summer, we hope to have up to 50 boys and girls playing golf this year". Junior members are taken out on the course with volunteer senior members who help out in regard to player safety and playing the game with courtesy and respect for fellow golfers.

After a long day on the course, players can unwind in the clubhouse and enjoy the hospitality of bar and catering manager Mike Coughlan. As well as these full bar and catering services, the club's various facilities include golf buggies, trolleys and golf clubs, practice putting and chipping areas lessons by appointment.

For more information on good value golf on a player friendly course with a welcoming Clubhouse, telephone Carmel or Edel at 090 - 9642126, email ballinasloegolfclub@hotmail.com or visit the Clubs website at www.ballinasloegolfclub.ie

Supermac's®



Ballinasloe Supermac's
Sarsfield Road - 090 9643814
Mac's Diner - 090 9643444
Dublin Road - 090 9642178
Main Street - 090 9643151
Shannonbridge - 090-9674929

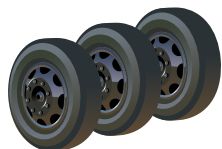


Better Ingredients.
Better Pizza.

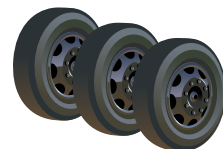
Available at Supermac's
Main Street
Delivery Service Available



www.supermacs.ie



DILLON'S TYRES LTD



Brackernagh, Ballinasloe

CAR WASH · TYRE BAY

3D V4 Wheel Alignment System

Supplier of all Leading Brands of Tyres & Batteries

Open 9am - 6pm Monday to Saturday

Emergency Call Out 24 hour 7 days - Call 087 6076599



Noel Dillon

AUCTIONEER

BALLINASLOE

Address: Moher, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

Tel/Fax: +353 (0)90 964 3537 Mob: +353 (0)87 678 6062

Email: info@noeldillonauctioneer.com

www.noeldillonauctioneer.com

GAA Camps Prepare for Season

Writes Cathal Croffy

Féile na nGael

As the season begins to wind up, the Ballinasloe Hurling Club find themselves busy in preparations to host visitors as part of the Under 14 hurling Féile na nGael, which will be held in Galway from Friday 24th June to Sunday 26th June. Ballinasloe will play host to the youths of Causeway Club in Kerry, and over the weekend the visiting players will stay with the families of their counterparts on the Ballinasloe team, while their parents and supporters populate local hotels and bed & breakfasts around the town.

Causeway will arrive on Friday the 24th to play their hosts at the Ballinasloe club pitch at 3pm. After some refreshments, both teams will travel to Loughrea for the Féile Parade, an event which will see over one hundred and fifty teams from around the country take to the streets.

The following Saturday morning, Duggan Park will see Ballinasloe and Causeway face off against Cappataggle and Carlow. The top team will qualify for the semi-final Saturday evening, and finals will be played in Pearse Stadium on Sunday. The team is managed by Fergus Cotton with Shane Dolan and Gerry Gavin.

The club would like to thank all the various sponsors of the event, as well as a group of parents who organised a very successful sponsored climb of Croagh Patrick and draw to raise funds towards the running of the Féile.



Some of the Football panel and management enjoying evening out in Bundoran. Back (L-R): Michael Colohan, Luke Tierney, Brian Kenny, Dan Moynihan, Barry Everett, Cathal Coleman. Front (L-R): Cathal Croffy, Eoin Fenton, Niall Hynes, Pat Cunningham, Brian McEniff, Sean Riddell, Damien Garvey

Senior Football

It is not the hurling side of the club alone which finds itself busy. Thirty-five players as well as their management team embarked on a team-bonding trip last month, staying at the Great Northern Hotel and Leisure Complex in Bundoran.

The trip proved to be anything but restful, however; the team took part in a table quiz on the night of their arrival, after which former Donegal All-Ireland-winning and International Rules Manager Brian McEniff popped in to have a chat. The team were greeted with an early start Saturday morning,

as they were shipped off to the local football field for a gruelling training session with Joe Canavan, brother of former Tyrone captain Peter Canavan. After a quick game amongst themselves, the lads returned sore to the hotel for another session with Mr. McEniff before bowling at the local alleys. The team were finally given the freedom of the town the evening, and returned to Ballinasloe the following morning. The entire team behaved themselves and bonded well as a group, the benefit of the weekend away evident in their late string of victories in the Intermediate League, all portents to a fruitful summer season ahead.



Ballinasloe U14 Féile na nGael Team

Ballinasloe Soccer Stalwarts



Member's of Original Committee: (L-R) Donal O'Donoghue (Former Assistant County Manager), Noel Kenny, Brendan McNally, Vincent Fennel, Dr. Harry Bugler, Sean Riddell, Cllr. Sean Óg Hurley, Brendan McGrath (Town Clerk), Tony Coyne, Pat Campbell, Johnny Welsh.

Writes Ruairi Moore

Despite some of the modern facilities now boasted by the Ballinasloe Soccer Club, the clubhouse is not quite state-of-the-art just yet.

The trophies are not stored in a lit glass cabinet and the only bar on offer is a tall fridge stuffed with soft drinks and the battered kettle standing on the countertop. But far from diminishing the atmosphere, the evident use the room has seen only serves to add to the sense of history granted by the gallery of framed photographs circling the walls. All the photos display a chronology of faces, members past and present, but none appear as frequently as those of Brendan McNelly and Pat Campbell. Though the hairstyles may have changed or gone to grey from photo to photo, the jerseys shifted sponsors and shape, the smiles are the same.

"Well personally, I suppose it's been about thirty-one years now," says Brendan, as he and Pat sort through the various photos spread across the table, an array of coloured and monochrome snapshots spanning decades of the club's history. He seems almost surprised by the figure. "Yeah, I came at the start of the eighties. At that time you had a few different teams - Dubarry had one, so did Creagh. Basically we hoped that if we could form a good committee we

would be able to amalgamate into one club, which we did. I'm delighted, too, because afterwards we had some great successes. Our share of failures, too, but still some great successes."

Having seen hundreds and dozens of teams come and go during their management partnership, the two find it difficult to single out one particular moment that brings back the fondest memories.

Well, we didn't have glory days like the United's and the Liverpool's," laughs Brendan. "We tasted our fair share of disappointments too in our time. It's all part and parcel."

"But I suppose our very first success would've been beating Sligo Rovers here 3-2 the first time we played them in the Senior Cup. And the junior cup in 2004 was obviously a highlight."

Pat, a member and coach of the club almost as long as Brendan, remembers a different occasion. "We were the first Non-League club in the country to have a professional team play on that pitch out there." It wasn't an isolated occurrence, either; last year marked the 10th anniversary of the day that saw the Manchester United Youths take to the pitch, where their hosts managed to hold them to a scoreless draw.

The club has also seen various other victories in recent years, with the senior team winning their league in 2004,

closely followed by the women's team taking home the Connacht Cup in 2006, the Under 18's following suit later in 2009. The senior team has also made steady progress in the FAI Junior Cup.

Pat's pride is evident. "We were in the final sixteen last year, the final thirty-two two years ago and the last sixty-four the year before that. I think we're tipping at the door of a big one - it's not that far away now."

Cup ambitions aside, the club's priority has always been to cultivate a youth team on the basis of playing as many games as possible and to nurture those teams through the various levels. Holding a photograph of the club's first Under 10 team from 1992, Brendan matches over ten faces to another picture of the club's last Senior Cup victory, some twelve years afterwards.

"That alone was huge for us, the return we're getting out of keeping the players."

The season lasts from August to April, a period of months over which each team play approximately twenty games.

"We're very happy with what we've contributed to the town," concludes Pat, as Brendan nods. "We've brought some famous teams here to play, as well as providing great facilities for the youth of the town. And I'll put it this way; I'd love them to be out here playing soccer, but once they're out doing anything at all, isn't that magic?"



SERVICES

- Domestic Refuse & Recycling Collection
- Construction / Demolition Waste Recycling
- Composting
- Bring Banks
- Skip Hire
- Waste Profiling Service
- Sludge & Sewage Disposal
- Commercial Bale Collection
- Cardboard / Paper / Plastic Recycling

CONTACT US

Barna Waste, Aughrim, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
 Phone: 1890 300 450 | Email: domestic@barnawaste.com

Barna Waste, Carrowbrowne, Headford Road, Galway
 Phone: 091 77 16 19 | Email: info@barnawaste.com

Ballaghaderreen Phone: 094 98 60 807 www.barnawaste.com

Waste Collection Permit: MO-08-0604-01. EPA Licence: WL0106-02.

Billiards Club - Still Supports the Youth of Ballinasloe

Writes Ruairi Moore

Though the worn walls of the Emerald Ballroom might not present the most inviting of facades today, for the past forty years they have housed one of the oldest and most prestigious clubs in the town's history.

Ballinasloe once boasted three separate snooker and billiards clubs, but today it is only the Ballinasloe Social Club that remains to provide a place for youths and veterans of the green baize alike to play.

"The club was founded back in 1924, but we moved here in 1961," says chairman Barry O'Connor, sitting in the snug clubhouse on the second floor of the Ballroom, its well-kept neatness entirely at odds with the rest of the building. "The place was a lot more derelict then; fusty from the smoke, with no tables, no carpet, no blinds, none of those new lockers on the walls. We've come a long way since then."

And so the club has, having installed €7000 worth of a heating system just last year. Though the club occasionally does receive aid from various initiatives, most funds are generally self-generated. "I took over as chairman here when I was just 21 all the committee gave me a great helping hand. It's a real community organization." The membership figures reflect the truth of this, with membership open to anyone over the age of 14 the oldest member of the club being former county

champion Johnny Riddell at 80 years of age. So why not get involved with one of the towns longest standing clubs for just €10 membership? "We probably wouldn't get as much publicity as other clubs, but we try to provide a place for some of the young people to come of an evening, to try and keep them off the streets and give them some sort of a social aspect as well. With the current situation in the country you find a lot of people out of work with time to fill, people are just trying to get out and socialise a bit more." For more information on the Club, please contact barryo19@hotmail.com.



Billiards Club Chairman
 Barry O'Connor

Students Raise Needed Funds for Chernobyl Cot Campaign

Writes Claire Dempsey

The transition year students of Ard Scoil Mhuire have certainly long-graduated from their cots, but last month saw them reliving their childhoods as they raised funds in order to highlight the plight of some of their peers in Chernobyl orphanages. Chairperson of Sunflowers Chernobyl Appeal, Pat Dillon, urged the students to hold a fundraising event to mark the 25th anniversary of the disaster in Belarus when he visited the school in March.

"We were particularly moved by the stories of kids our own age who have to spend their days in unsuitable cots because there is no alternative," said T.Y. student Paula McGrath. "We really felt that we had to do something." The students agreed to do a silent sit-in to raise both awareness and money for the appeal. These efforts have resulted in the girls gathering an impressive €1000, which will go to help their contemporaries still suffering the effects of the Chernobyl disaster.



NOONAN & CUDDY

SOLICITORS

SPECIALISTS IN

Personal Injury Litigation & Medical/Surgical Injury

Employment Law,
Wills/Probate, Conveyancy
and All Legal Advice

CONTACT AMBROSE CUDDY

Free Phone: 1800 771 688 Phone: 090 964 2344

Fax: 090 964 2039 Email: info@noonancuddy.com

Society Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway, Ireland.



Ard Scoil Mhuire Hosts Writer

Writes Claire Dempsey

The success of local student Jennifer Kelly in the national Write-a-Poem competition last year afforded students from Ard Scoil Mhuire the opportunity to work with award winning storyteller, writer, and poet Rab C. Fulton.

Jennifer, from Moore, was placed second overall in the national competition run by the second level support service "Teaching English" magazine. Her poem "Though There Are Exams" was modelled on Michael Coady's work "Though there are Torturers ..", and was inspired by the young writer's study of war poets such as Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfrid Owen. As part of her prize the school was invited to take part in a writer in residence programme.

Rab C. Fulton, whose work has featured in many publications including Books Ireland, Chapman, Criterion, Cyphers, and Poetry Ireland Review, ran a day of workshops which consisted of a mixture of games, discussions, and writing exercises, as well as students offering reinterpretations of known stories from Little Red Riding Hood to MacBeth.



Ard Scoil Student Jennifer Kelly with writer Rab Swannock

Students Instruct Seniors

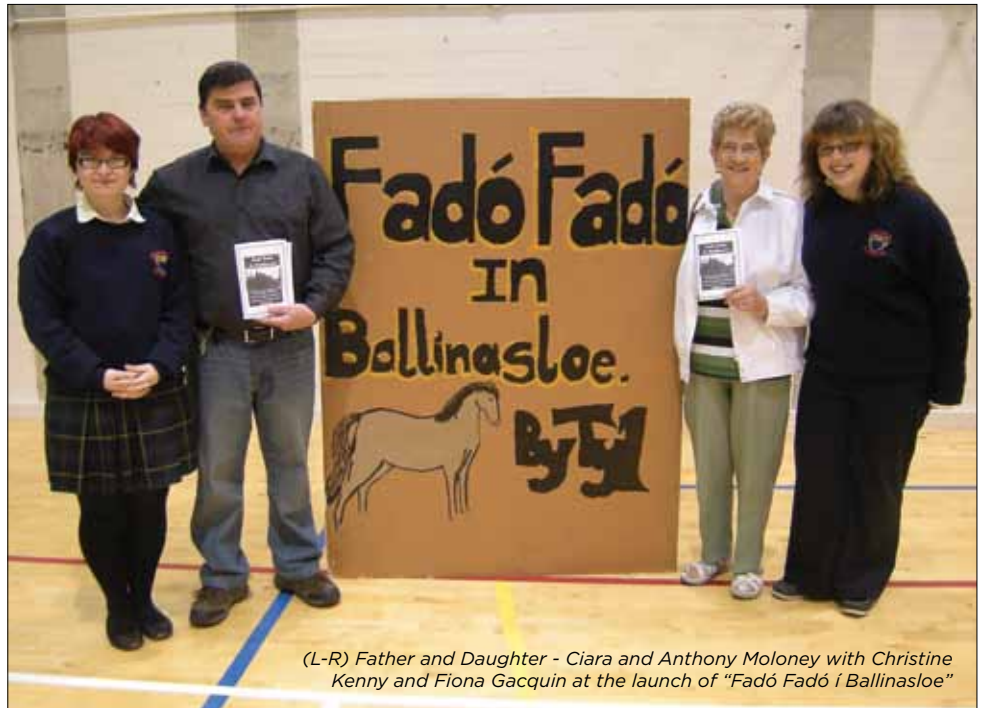
Writes Virginia Carolfi

Last month saw a joining of youth and experience at Ard Scoil Mhuire, Ballinasloe, as crowds gathered to celebrate the forgotten stories of the town's history while also admiring the fruit of the collaborations between local transition year students and active retirees.

Two projects featured heavily among the curriculum of the Ard Scoil Mhuire transition year students this term. The first, titled "Log-on and Learn", included an initiative which saw the students instruct anyone over the age of sixty-five in the basic use of a computer, from word-processing and printing to blogging and email. The classes, sponsored by Microsoft and An Post, were free and well-attended by 23 people, all of whom expressed confidence in their new-found abilities on receiving their certificates.

"The classes were excellent. The students were really helpful and kind," said Winifred Morrissey, while Agnes Finn added that that she can now send emails to her son in Peru, as well as search the internet with ease.

The ceremony involved a quick speech from principal Patricia Kilgallen, who praised both the students and in particular Ms. Karen Usher, the teacher



(L-R) Father and Daughter - Ciara and Anthony Moloney with Christine Kenny and Fiona Gacquin at the launch of "Fadó Fadó í Ballinasloe"

behind the project. The second half of the ceremony saw a reversal of roles, as older residents of the town shared snippets of family history and cherished memories with the transition year students. The fruit of these labours were collected and bound into a single volume fittingly titled "Fadó, Fadó in Ballinasloe". The ceremony concluded with two readings from the book; Holly Burdess read the memory of Kitty McEntee and her happy time in Carberry, Co. Kildare, while Ciara Moloney

instead told the memory of her father, Anthony Moloney, and his reminiscences of playing pranks at school. At the end of the ceremony everyone enjoyed the refreshments while the students' band played traditional music in the background.

"Fadó Fadó" is on sale in the school and in shops around the town at €2. All of the profits go to the Ballinasloe community to fund projects for people over 65 years of age.

Aughrim Glebe National School

Writes Anne Sinclair

Situated five kilometres from Ballinasloe in the historic village of Aughrim, the Glebe National School currently has 8 pupils on roll. Over the years this roll has taken on an essentially multi-denominational form, the school enrolling children from various religious backgrounds including Church of Ireland, Catholic, Baptist and Christian Fellowship. Though perhaps somewhat limited in funding and attendance, the school still boasts a main classroom, Principal's office, resource room music room, as well as a school programme packed with activities.

The children regularly attend swimming lessons in the local swimming pool a music teacher visits the school each week to instruct the children in playing the tin whistle; all of which and more is funded solely by the Parents' Association. Drama is also given a specific focus during the course of the year each Christmas time the school puts on a show for parents, grandparents and relations of the students, an event which has proved a happy tradition for many years.

Despite a smaller number of students, the school ensures that two class trips are offered each academic year. The senior tour has involved canoeing, abseiling and orienteering for the past number of years - an array of activities which has proven to be very popular with the pupils - while the junior tours have recently visited Dartfield Horse Museum, Atlantaquaria, Athenry Castle and Turroe Pet Farm.

Even though it is essentially a small school, this in no way inhibits participation in school related events. It ensures the children have the unique advantage of receiving almost one



to one tuition also means that children can progress at their own rate and any literacy problems may be identified at an early stage - issues that might not come to light were the child in a larger class.

"The school provides a fantastic, unique family atmosphere where the students genuinely look out for one another the teachers give every student personalised attention," says Secretary of Parent's Association Anne Sinclair.

Each and every past pupil has done extremely well after leaving, with a huge number going on to third level education and successful careers in later life. For information on enrolment or any other queries, please contact 090 96 73650.

All New **FordFocus**
Now Available



Tel: 090 96 30800
Web: www.fredkilmartinltd.ie

Fred
Kilmartin LTD.
Ballinasloe 

FordSelect
Finest Used Cars

OFFER
BEST VALUE

- * **12 Months AA FREE**
- * **12 Months Warranty**
- * **AA Approved**
101 Auto check
- * **FREE Vehicle History**
- * **Finance Available**
(subject to terms & conditions)

20% OFF
your next service
with this voucher
(Valid until 31st July 2011)

What to do in Ballinasloe?

Writes Ruairi Moore

Commonly known as “The Gateway to the West”, Ballinasloe is perfectly placed near a main national motorway, straddling the main tributary to the Shannon, the River Suck.

Despite its situation the town still manages to retain a perfect blend of the old and the new, boasting quality hospitality facilities coupled with a quiet sense of history, from the original limestone masonry of the buildings to the various castles and churches in the area. Whether on a weekend break or a lengthy stay, the town of Ballinasloe boasts plenty to see and do for any visitor.

Those inclined to stay near the water will not be disappointed, as the marina offers many river-based activities and is located right off the centre of town. The River Suck which surrounds Ballinasloe is famous as a Coarse Fishing venue, enjoying an abundance of pike and smaller fish. There are some angling centres along the river that accommodate any interested tourists and any level of experience.

For those who'd rather get out onto the water, there are kayaking- and water-safety-based camps available on the River Suck. The UpRiver Kayactivity Camps span three separate week-long periods, from Monday 18th July to 22nd July, Monday 25th to 29th July, and finally Monday 15th August to the 19th.

The marina is also the focal point of the new River and Arts Festival, which will take place from Monday 11th July to



Boating on the River Suck

Sunday the 17th. A collaboration between the local Community Arts Group and a committee of local vendors, vintners and volunteers, the festival will feature an artistic camp for kids during the week and a host of markets, water and vintage-based activities as well as live music in local bars that weekend.

There are plenty of walking routes for those hoping to get out and about; tourists are free to take a stroll around the grounds of the beautiful Garbally estate, while other walkways can be found down by the River Suck as well as through Poolboy Bog.

For a lazy weekend, the town boasts an 18 hole golf course situated two miles from the town centre, just off the M6 Motorway. For expeditions a little more active, any beleaguered parents will find the Turoe and Glendeer Pet Farms a perfect distraction for energetic children, while the tour through ancient Irish capital Rathcoghran provides more than enough history blended with activity.

For those wishing to take a step back in time, Ballinasloe has more than enough to keep even the hungriest of historians happy. Within the town itself there is the Famine Remembrance Park; completed in 1998, the park was donated to the people of Ballinasloe by the Trench family during the Famine as a burial ground for the hundreds who perished in the workhouse.

Further out is the Battle of Aughrim Interpretative Centre, which tells the story of the deadly battle fought there during 1689. Located very close to the N6, the centre is an ideal stop-off on a journey between Dublin and Galway.

Other museums and historical centres in the vicinity of the town include the Transport & Heritage Museum, Clonmacnoise, the Clonmacnoise

Monastic Settlement, the Claypipe Visitors Centre, Knockcroghery, as well as the Roscommon Museum and Larry's Old Time Village, a beautifully crafted model village located in Belmont, Offaly, which depicts Ireland from the early 1900s up to 1950.

There is also a host of ruins dotted around the town and its outlying areas, such as the abbeys at Kilconnell or Clontuskert, or the excellently preserved castle and cathedral in Athlone.

Famed for its annual Horse Fair, a visit to Ballinasloe would not be complete without sampling either the Creagh Equestrian Centre outside of town or the Flowerhill Equestrian Centres in Tynagh, both situated amongst some great scenery.

Ballinasloe is a town which drips culture and history from every stone, condensing all that is great about both the traditional and the contemporary West into one perfect tourist location.



Clonmacnoise



Horse Fair Sculpture
Ballinasloe Town Centre

duffydiscount.com

Ballydangan, Athlone, Co. Roscommon

Based between Athlone and Ballinasloe R446 (old N6)
(Junction 13 or 14 M6)

Householders & Landlords
ARE YOU PAYING TOO MUCH FOR
YOUR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES?



GRADED PRODUCTS, EXCELLENT VALUE. 6 Month Warranty.

Washing Machines from €150
Dishwashers from €150
Fridges from €130
Tumble Dryers from €120

Freezers from €120
Hobs & Ovens from €340
Hoovers from €50
Also TV's, Furniture etc.

Installation and Delivery
optional for your no hassle,
one-stop shop solution!!
Service and Repairs Available

Tel: 090 967 3261
Mob: 086 384 2267
info@duffydiscount.com
www.duffydiscount.com

Ballydangan, Athlone,
Co. Roscommon
Exit 13 or 14 on M6 on 446
(old N6 Road)



Dolans Service Station

Dublin Road, Ballinasloe

CENTRA



Full Off-Licence
Hot & Cold Deli

2 Car Washes
Mini Valets

Call & Collect:
090 964 3177

Tel: 090 964 2178

Email: dolanscentra@eircom.net

OPEN 24 HOURS, 7 DAYS

Serving the People of Ballinasloe for over 50 years

The King and Queen of the Fair



Writes Mary Phelan

The Queen of the Fair has long been a figure synonymous with the world-famous Ballinasloe October Fair and Festival and by extension, an important figure for the town itself.

For years the highlight of the festival's opening weekend has been the parade at which eager crowds would gather to catch a glimpse of the newly crowned candidate. The streets would be lined with locals and visitors alike, jostling for a look at the horse drawn carriage and all the pageantry of the ceremony which would introduce Ballinasloe to the girl who would represent them at all major events in the locality for the next year.

The contest is held each year in the run up to what has always been one of the most important events in the calendar of Ballinasloe and its hinterland. And, perhaps even beyond? Indeed, rumour has it that a committee in Tralee, who were visiting the town during Fair Week, took the idea back home with them... and the rest is history!

A word from Hannah Kelly, Carlton Shearwater Queen of the Fair 2010.

"Ballinasloe October Fair & Festival is the oldest horse fair in Europe. To be

part of that was an honour! I attended the fair every year as a young girl as I had a great interest in horses and always enjoyed walking around the green and spending my pocket money in the stalls which were located in the main streets of our town. I had a dream of becoming "Queen of the Fair" one day - little did I know that that dream would come true!

The build up before the competition was brilliant ...finding the right dress, researching the town's history for the interviewing process and rehearsing my song choice - all added to the excitement. Throughout the day I bonded with the other 15 contestants - all lovely girls and new friendships were made. That evening we got to chat and relax over a lovely meal provided by the main sponsor - Carlton Shearwater Hotel. The competition gave me great confidence and to be chosen as the 2010 "Queen of the Fair" was a huge compliment for my family and myself. When my name was announced the atmosphere was amazing as my friends and family cheered and the hall erupted with the sound of "Congratulations".

The Fair & Festival committee have worked endlessly throughout the year and have programmed events to entertain families, friends and visitors from all over the world - without them the event wouldn't happen. I would like

to thank Mary Phelan and Kathleen Croffy who went out of their way to support me during my time as Queen of the Fair.

The highlight of the year was entering the Galway Rose - which is part of a final for the Rose of Tralee. The process ran over three separate weekends and involved meeting new people from all over Ireland, interviews, good fun and lots of new dresses!!!

I was in competition with 23 fabulous girls and I am very grateful to have been given that opportunity to represent my town at that level. I would urge any girl to put their name forward as an opportunity like this is not to be missed!"

But it was not just Hannah who had the honour of being selected as Ballinasloe royalty.

Every Queen must have her King and this year saw local man Barry O'Conner donning the crown of King of the Fair.

"It was a great privilege and honour for me to be King of the Ballinasloe Horse Fair & Festival for 2011.

It was an experience that I will never forget and keep with me always for it was one of the best weeks of my life. Everywhere I went I was treated like a "King" and received good wishes from community and tourist alike. I saw another side of the Fair that I never would

have seen before and all the organisation of the various events that take place and the hard work given by a voluntary committee. I would recommend it to any person as a memorable experience, full of fun & craic! It is also a great source of fundraising for your charity/organisation.

I would like to thank Ballinasloe Town AFC for nominating me, the people who sponsored me & the Fair & Festival committee for their care & support over the past few months. I would recommend this experience to anyone."

This year's selection night for "Queen of the Fair 2011" will be held on Saturday, September 17th. There is no entry fee and nominations are open to females over 18 years. If you have a business, pub/hotel or think your daughter might benefit by taking part and representing her town as an ambassador - and maybe even reaching the Rose of Tralee!

For more information on the Queen of the Fair Competition: Contact Mary Phelan at Mobile: (087) 207 1869 or send your details to Email: info@ballinasloeoctoberfair.com.



Credit Union Factor Talent Event

Writes Niall Clarke

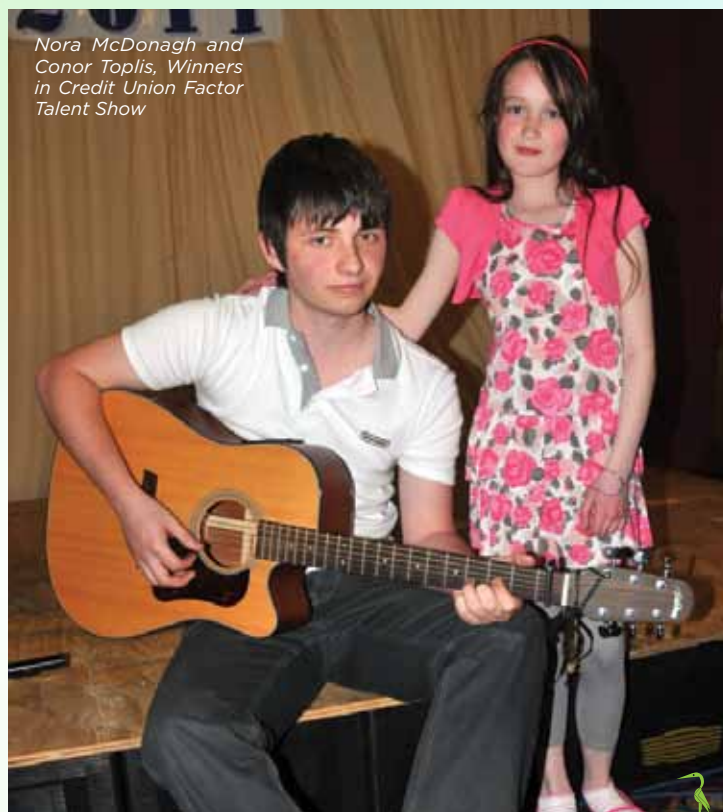
In the wake of the X-Factor, the Eurovision and the myriad of other extravagant talent shows staged on such a grand scale, it is easy to forget how rich in talent this town is at a more local level.

The Credit Union has sponsored a new initiative designed to allow the youth of towns across Ireland to showcase this talent. 13 performers ranging in age from 6 - 16 years of age qualified for the inaugural final of the Ballinasloe CU Factor talent competition. Auditions for the final show were held during the last week in April, when adjudicators Fiona O'Leary, Martina Doherty and Patrick Byrne musicians, singers, rappers, dancers and comedians, all of whom delivered great performances in front of a packed hall in Gullane's Hotel.

After much deliberation the adjudicators selected two acts to go onto the next stage; these were 11-year-old Creagh student Nora McDonagh, performing a song by Loretta Lynn (accompanied on guitar by Garbally student Conor Toplis) 16-year-old Ronan Adams who performed famous Tupac rap number "Changes".

The Galway final was held in the Town Hall Theatre Galway. In total 18 acts took part in this glittering occasion to compete for the title of County Galway CU Factor Winner 2011.

MC Declan Finn and Vice Chairman of Ballinasloe Credit Union were fulsome in their praise for all 13 contestants. Other price winner's on the night were 6-year-old Rachel Ward who sang "Caledonia" while being accompanied by Richard Moore on piano, Clare Callaghan who sang "The Lullaby of Broadway".



Nora McDonagh and Conor Toplis, Winners in Credit Union Factor Talent Show

For more information and photos on the CU Factor Talent show visit the credit union website www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie

Mapping the Transition in our Travel Tastes

Writes Pearse Keller

It is only less than 30 years since any kind of travel by air was far in excess of the average weekly wage. It was a luxury which most of us could not afford.

Travel to London generally featured a boat journey across the Irish Sea followed by the train down to Euston Station, whether one was to work over there for a short while or simply visiting friends or relatives. The pricing of airline tickets was high and overly-complex, with perhaps as many as twenty different fares applying to the same flight on the same date.

However, as time moved on, airlines which were once elitist national institutions were forced to become viable businesses the introduction of 'open sky' policies resulted in greater competition, leading to lower prices and better choice in air routes. This has led to what we now refer to as the "Low Cost Carriers", which has

brought affordable and frequent air travel to everyone in the entire country.

Keller Travel has tracked and taken part in all of these developments over the many years since its inception in 1959, when Liam and Michael Keller bought Cogavin's on Main Street; a building which, at the time, held an International Air Transportation Association licence, making it one of the oldest agencies in the country today.

The travel industry over the years has been one which has seen dramatic changes in this technology has played a huge role. Far from the days of sending posted flight requests to airlines themselves, the Keller's Travel of today is a place where your complete travel solutions can be arranged immediately.

"Between all the consultants here at Keller Travel, there are very few locations that one of them will not have been to, which means that they can share their first hand knowledge with our customers," says

Pearse Keller, current manager and son to founder Liam. Aside from the traditional travel experience, there is also Keller's sister company, which specialises in Mobile Home Holidays in France, Spain & Italy. Under the umbrella of Campotel, this part of the holiday business has likewise seen great evolution, to the point that on any given night the company boasts almost 2,000 people bedding down in their facilities.

Over the past few decades, the world has certainly become a smaller place. While trips to New York were once events in their own right, even long haul destinations have become more popular with South Africa, Thailand, Caribbean and Australia among the favourites at Keller Travel, as well as the explosion in trade within the cruise industry.

So whether by sea or air, to benefit from the experience of one of Ireland's oldest travel agents visit:

www.kellertravel.ie

The Buccaneers Sheikhs



Back (L-R): Sheikh Yerbuck, Sheikh Yermember, Sheikh Al Yerbucks, Sheikh Yertable, Sheikh'n Al Over, Sheikh Yermany, Sheikh Yerwheeliebin, Sheikh 'Nvac, Sheikh Yerorgans. **Front (L-R):** (Two Sheikhs): Sheikh Yerbuckeejit, Sheikh Ratlenroll. **(L-R):** Mark Kelly, John Flynn, Jimmy Screen, Charley Roper, Declan Egan, Gerry Stronge, Pat Sullivan, Sean Óg Hurley, Kevin Egan. **Centre (L-R):** Conor Ryan, Pearse Keller, Sean O'Brien.

SPAR



ALL YOU NEED, WHEN YOU NEED IT

CONCANNON'S SPAR, SOCIETY STREET, BALLINASLOE
Phone/Fax: 090 963 1627

HOT FOOD SPECIAL OFFERS
WINES, DELICATESSEN
BAKERY INSTORE
BEWLEYS COFFEE
LOTTO AGENT & FUEL

Free Delivery Service
Payzone Serviced by
Toll Payments
ESB Billpay
Worldwide Money

The Luxury Club & Pub Experience

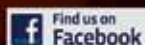
EAST NIGHTCLUB & BLAKES BAR

DUNLO STREET, BALLINASLOE

**LUXURIOUS VENUES, LATE BARS, EXCELLENT ENTERTAINMENT
WITH REGULAR NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL GUEST DJ'S & BANDS**

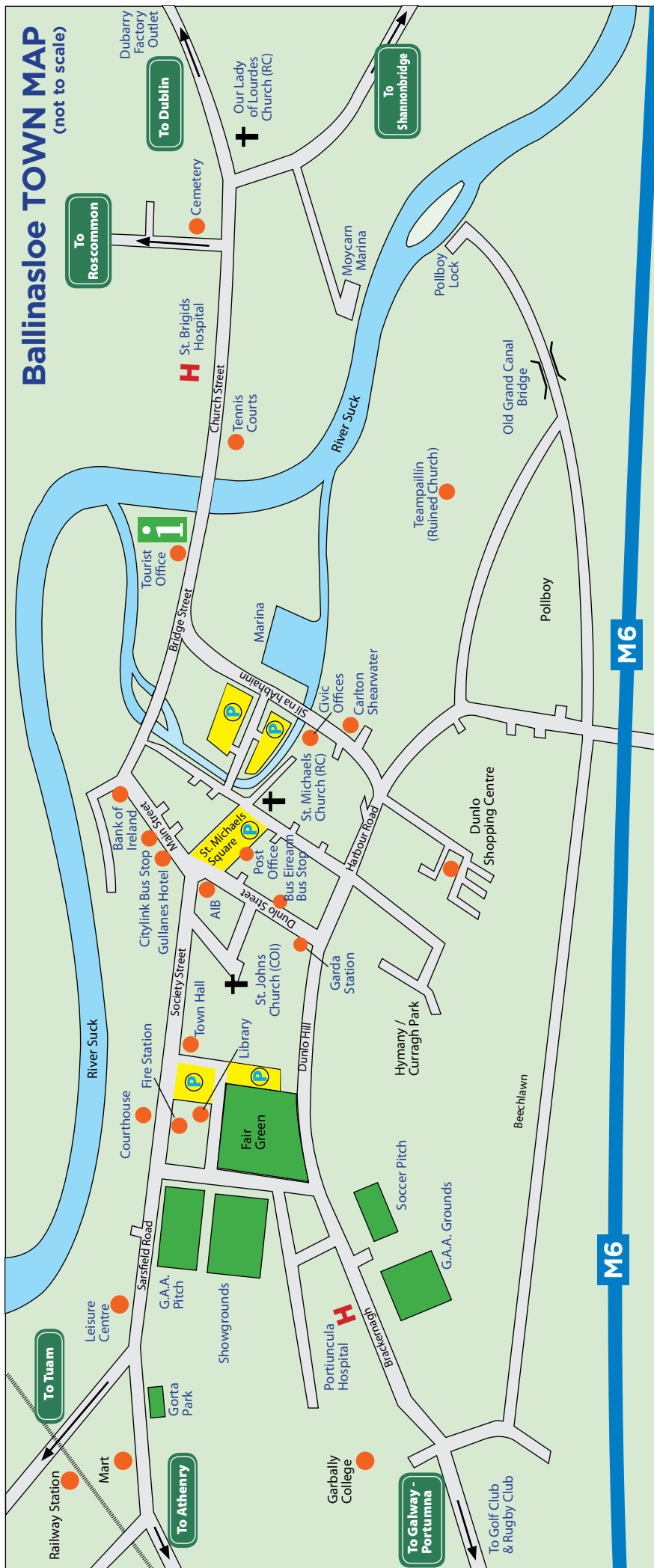
**PARTIES OF ALL SIZES CATERED FOR - FOR BOOKINGS CONTACT
JOHN ON (086) 0285830 OR PAULA ON (086) 0299544**

Blakes



WWW.EASTNIGHTCLUB.COM

east
nightclub + venue



Ballinasloe TOWN MAP

(not to scale)

Kilconnell Abbey

7miles/11km west of Ballinasloe on the R348 stand the ruins of the Franciscan Friary of Kilconnell Abbey. Founded in 1353, the church is a fine example of Gothic architecture, with its slender and graceful tower over the crossing. Around the church are conventional buildings with numerous masons' marks.

Clonfert Cathedral

On the road to Banagher about 12 miles from Ballinasloe, one can find one of the most highly developed examples of Irish Romanesque Architecture in the form of a magnificent doorway. Originally established by Saint Brendan in 563AD as part of a monastic community, the oldest part of the surviving structure dates from about 1180. None of the monastic buildings survive.

Aughrim Interpretative Centre

Situated within Aughrim Village on the old Dublin - Galway road, this award-winning centre commemorates a forgotten day of Irish history - the Battle of Aughrim, "Ireland's Gettysburg" which was fought on 12th July 1691, in the closing stages of a war that divides Ireland to this day. The site opens from 10am - 6pm daily.

Clonmacnoise Monastic Site

20km from Ballinasloe (signposted from the R357), Clonmacnoise was founded in 548 by St. Ciaran, the son of a master craftsman. The settlement soon became a major centre of religion, learning, trade, craftsmanship and politics benefited from the patronage of powerful provincial kings. It was designated a national monument in 1877.

Clontuskert Abbey

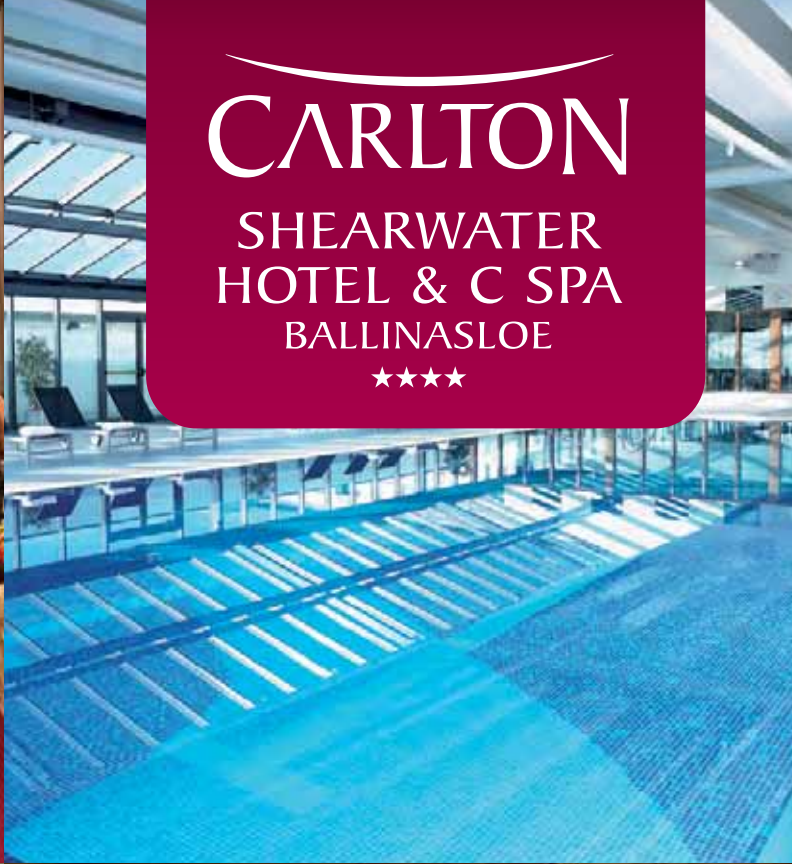
Lying 7km south of Ballinasloe on the R355, the Augustinian Priory of St. Mary in Clontuskert was reputedly built on the site of St. Baetan's earlier Celtic monastery. Built in the late 1100s, it survived as a monastic settlement until the early part of the 17th century, having undergone several reconstructions and additions during those years.

Can't See Your Club / Organisation / School?

News to share about your local club organisation , but can't see it listed anywhere? Fix it! Please forward any local club or society news for inclusion in the June/July addition to ballinasloelife@hotmail.com by 13th May.

Wish to Advertise Here?

Each Life edition will carry a number of additional new Advertisement pages and you can ensure your business/service is communicated to our 9,000 readers by emailing your copy and size to info@ballinasloeenterprise.ie or calling Manager Helen at 0909646516.



CARLTON
SHEARWATER
HOTEL & C SPA
 BALLINASLOE
 ★★★★★



The Carlton Shearwater Hotel & C Spa
The perfect choice for all
your Special Occasions!

For More Details Call 090 96 30400
 Email: reservations.shearwater@carlton.ie
www.carlton.ie/shearwater

★ **facebook** **twitter**

PART OF THE
CARLTON
 HOTEL GROUP
 ★★★★★



Left: *Carra* jacket in Red and *Chamomile* blouse in White
Right: *Skerrit* Jacket in Chocolate and *Kirwan* zip neck sweater in Stone
Centre Top: *Storm* crew jacket in Flag Red/Grey and Dubarry Cap in Dark Navy
Centre Middle: *Madeira* and *Menorca* deck shoes in assorted colours
Centre Bottom: Alpaca Socks in Sky and Baby Pink with *Galway* Boots in Brown and Walnut



Visit the
Dubarry Factory Shop

Open 11.00am – 6.00pm, Monday to Saturday

Glentaun, Ballinasloe, County Galway

T: 090 9642348 E: info@dubarry.com

dubarry  **com**

DUBARRY and DUBARRY & SHIELD DEVICE are registered trademarks of Dubarry Shoemakers Limited.



Where will you go in yours?