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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 5 Issue 3: Aug '15 - Sep '15

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BALLINASLOELIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 5 Issue 3: Aug-Sep 2015

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REAMHRÁ

Well what started off as a 38 page journey has become a 56 page cavalcade! Welcome to our new look 56 page mag – our thanks to the business community of the town and its hinterland and indeed the Directors of BACD for helping to underpin the continued expansion – it will hopefully allow us to grow the space allocated to photos which we encourage more and more of you in the readership to submit!

As some of you may know I was involved as an outreach officer for the community rollout of the EIRCODEs for East Galway over the past few months which involved

serious traversing of the East County Galway territories .

To say that rural Ireland has taken a hammering is to hugely underestimate the real damage that can only be witnessed by driving through towns and villages, once vibrant hubs of community and commercial centres.

The devastation of a place that has neither shop, tavern or temple open in the middle of the day is a cruel sight – but obviously one that politicians and policy makers are content to witness as long as the magical national computation of the figures that is the new way of totting GDP and GNP suggests we are on the UP ! The Cities of the island and the 1.3 million of the M50 Greater Liffey Metro Area may be technically out of recession, with demands on house prices and wages back in vogue again but the rest of the island is still deeply gouged of people, capital and services.

The places however that have the wind in their limited sails in East Galway are the ones who are animated by people who do care, selfless, tireless volunteers and community activists who do the meals on wheels, look after our elderly, our young, our environment , our faiths , our places.

Too often we criticise , carp , slag , complain or question the motives of those who give. A good community needs its activists and also needs to teach next generations that legacy of facilities, services and sense of place was never orchestrated by a State on behalf of its people, but by people sometimes with the help but more often the indifference of the State.

Happy to see that our development company is reviving the idea of People of the Year Awards this Autumn – we need to pause , look around and acknowledge that without the volunteers who make things happen – we would never really have a community.

Le Gach De Ghui
Colm Croffy, Editor



The Town Team is up and running and are launching a few initiatives over the coming months, details of which are included in this current edition. In the main the initiatives are aimed at bringing people into the town to increase the vibrancy of same.

The Retail sub group organised a Mid-Summer BBQ for a business get together to share ideas and same was well attended. However if this sector is to move forward a more coordinated, cohesive approach needs to be taken. This requires a total mind set change /challenge for all similar market towns. Individuals need to look outside their own business and treat the Town centre as one large shopping centre and need to be aware of what is on offer by others and be prepared to refer business even if means doing so to a competitor. Towns which are prepared to move along this track will give themselves a better chance of a sustainable and profitable future.

The report launched in 2014 by the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas has 34 recommendations one of which is the setting up of Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) and Ballinasloe is the in the centre of these Zones. The Department of the Environment is Piloting this initiative in 18 REDZ and we are actively working on being one of the pilot areas with the support of Galway County Council.

On a very positive note we are expanding the number of pages in the Magazine to 56 in order to accommodate the volume of material coming through. Keep on sending in your articles to ballinasloelife@hotmail.com.

Thank you for your continued feedback and support to this very successful publication.

Seamus Duffy, Chairman,
Ballinasloe Area Community Development.

Disclaimer: The opinions and views in this publication are those of the contributors. In the compilation of this publication, every care is taken to ensure accuracy. Any errors or omissions should be brought to the attention of the Editor. Ballinasloe Life does not accept any liability to any person for loss or damage arising from anything contained in this publication or for any error or omission in it. All material is copyright.

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MICHAEL FINNERTY – PROFILE

BY ZARA HILL



Newly appointed to Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District, Fine Gael Councillor Michael Finnerty talks about his new role and how he intends to make sure the town remains open for business.

Tobergrellan native Michael Finnerty joins five Town Councillors; Dónal Burke (FF), Tim Broderick (Ind), Dermot Connolly (SF), Michael Connolly (FF), and Aidan Donoghue (FG), who are responsible for representing the town and wider area.

Councillor Finnerty was proposed by outgoing Chairperson of the Municipal District, Cllr Michael Connolly at the District AGM on June 10 and since has commended Michael Connolly on his work as the first Chairman.

“Michael was the first Chairman of the District and a new Chairman will be elected every year for the next five years. Michael Connolly did a very good job. Everyone had their say and that’s the way it will continue.”

Among immediate actions Michael wants to initiate is the abolishment of paid parking in the town centre and a campaign to get the message across that the town is open for business while works on the town’s new sewerage system are underway.

“I was Chairman of the Urban Council back in 1990, 25 years ago, and one of my first functions was to cut the tape on the sewerage treatment plant in Poolboy. 25 years ago we had a state of the art sewerage treatment plant but now that all has to be changed.”

In a message to the town’s business owners he remarked;



“it’s going to be a slow pace and it’s going to be painful for businesses and shoppers alike, so it’s important that we get out the message that we remain open for business and we will facilitate our shopkeepers as best as we can.”

Estimating the best part of a year before completion of the big dig, Cllr Finnerty reveals “work hasn’t been going as quick as we’d hoped but we have to steer it through and hopefully at the end we will see the benefits of improved road surfaces, footpaths and services.”

In relation to paid parking, Michael stated “my colleagues at Council level and I are looking at paid parking all over the county. This paid parking has hugely penalised the shopkeepers in town. It’s a hassle, it’s inconvenient.”

The Council successfully abolished paid parking in the town centre for the month of December 2014 and Michael believes this made a big difference to business during the Christmas period and encouraged people to shop locally. The proposal to abolish paid parking is currently being worked on at Council level, but first needs to be passed through the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC).

Following the abolishment of the Town Council, Michael noticed concerns of the townspeople as to whether or not this would affect elements such as the Fair or St. Patrick’s Day Parade.

In response to this, Michael declared “none of this has been affected and there will be a continuity of the work of the previous Town Council.”

Speaking of his relationship with the other five Councillors Michael reveals; “I have to say, the six Councillors work very well. There’s always a division between

Executives and Councillors but actually they work well together. The Executives have their agenda and we’re here to represent the people. We’re not keeping our promises as quick as people want, but we’re getting there.”

Michael, who was a member of the Urban Council for 19 years is looking forward to the opening of the new Library which he hopes can become a focal point in the town once again.

“I am biased because my mother read the library twice in her lifetime and I’m books based, as is my daughter Emma who is studying English Literature in Trinity. However, people say that with the Internet and Kindle and everything that libraries are gone. Far from it. Libraries are an integral part of a town.”

Michael attended a 1914-18 commemoration in June hosted by the World War One Heritage Group, to which he brought his Granduncle’s death penny.

“He died in the 1914-18 war and his brother (my grandfather) got a death penny; an old English bronze penny with his name on it. I was proud to bring it on the night and it made me think, this stuff needs a home. The Library is the perfect place for this.”

Michael is passionate about many things in town, particularly the Fair and believes, “there are places in Ireland who would give their front teeth to have a Fair like ours, but we need to build on it.”



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"In the 1950's, a group came here from Tralee. They were thinking of running a festival and wanted to see how a festival was run. They were calling it the Rose of Tralee", remarked Michael.

"The Fair will continue but needs to be looked at. People in the town see the Annual October Event as a hassle, an inconvenience, but I see it from the other side. As a youngster growing up, everything revolved around the Fair, it was a unit of measurement for people. Things were measured before and after the Fair".

"People with stalls think they are being charged too much, but there are two sides to this. We have to be fair to the businesses who are here all year paying the rates. We need to charge them a reasonable amount so that people will embrace it a little bit more."

In a bid to encourage people to shop local, Finnerty remarked, "when you buy online, you're affecting someone in town. Businesses are struggling and need our support."

"We are lucky to have great, vibrant hotels such as Hayden's, Gullanes and the Shearwater and fantastic schools. My three children went through the system and you can't get any better. Ballinasloe is a great place to live and work and have your children well educated and well minded. Look at our sports facilities, don't be telling me there's nothing to do in town."

He added, "we can talk about our weaknesses, but our strengths are there and we need to build on them".

Michael got his first job in Portiuncula in 1978 after finishing his Leaving Certificate and has now been working in Patient Accounts for 27 years.

The father of three remarked; "I'm privileged in the place I work and we need to do everything we can to look after our Hospital. We need to make sure our 50 to 60 patients every day are dealt with. It doesn't make any sense whatsoever to bring the entire population of this town into an already overcrowded hospital in Galway. If Portiuncula closes or is downgraded in any way, that will be bad news for the town, so it won't be allowed to happen."

Among other objectives, Michael wants the Town Council to be more proactive when it comes to facilities such as the Marina.

"That Marina is open for business and needs to be looked after. By all means enjoy the facility, but people need to clean up after themselves."

Michael hopes that people can support local and make the home of the horse great once again.

LOCAL MUSICIAN TO BE HONOURED



Local Ballinasloe fiddle player Tom Quinn has been selected by the Ardcomhairle of Comhaltas to receive the Bardic Award at the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil in Sligo this August.

Born on February 24, 1919 in Athenry, Tom's love for Irish music and culture developed while attending the Rosmuc Irish College in Connemara. He started playing the fiddle in 1930 and performed in many venues throughout the world as a member of the Dorothy Dunne Band from 1940 to 1950.

He successfully competed in several Comhaltas competitions and with the assistance of Aidan Judge and Tom Boyle, he co-produced three All-Ireland winning Scoraiocht Productions with; the Homecoming, the Battle of Aughrim and the Bonfire Night.

He was also successful in Scór competitions as well as the All Ireland Pioneer Talent Competition and various Mimmers Festivals. A skilled gardener, Tom won the All-Ireland competition in Tullamore for his tomatoes last year at the age of ninety five!

In 2007, Tom received the Galway County Arts award for his contribution to music. As the President of the local Comhaltas Branch as well as one of its founding members in 1954, Tom can be seen playing every week at the local Comhaltas session in the Emerald on Fridays!!

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CIVIL DEFENCE CALL OUT FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

BY ZARA HILL

For over 25 years, volunteers of the Ballinasloe Civil Defence have been there when it counted to aid the emergency services in times of need. From the flooding of 2009, the freeze of 2010 and the countless missing persons searches on land or water, the volunteers have been there to lend their time and experience to aid the community.

The Ballinasloe Civil Defence is presently made up of 50 volunteers who dedicate their free time to learning and developing key skills in areas such as medical first aid, search and recovery, welfare and communications, so that when called upon they can respond to the task.

Tom Connaughton is the Unit Commander and currently Padraig Glynn is the Officer in Charge of the Ballinasloe Civil Defence Unit, a role he describes as dynamic and enjoyable.

"Our volunteers are trained in various disciplines and get a huge amount of training in areas such as first aid, search and rescue. We play several roles within the community such as water search and rescue, assisting with searches and assisting in major incidents", added the town native.

Medical training is one of the key aspects members undertake and can be seen putting their training to use during events such as the October Fair, charity runs and cycles and many local sporting events. Members can complete courses ranging from Cardiac First Responder to Emergency Medical Technician.

Missing persons search technique is another aspect that members can be trained in. According to Padraig, these searches are unfortunately becoming more and more frequent.

"The theory of how to conduct and coordinate searches has become more scientific over the years and to meet this need, the Civil Defence has trained some members in Search Management to work closely with An Garda Síochána. Searching bodies of water for missing persons is sadly another aspect the members do undertake."

As well as learning to search on water, members are required to train and be competent in swift water rescue, power boats and kayaking. During the flood of November 2009 the Ballinasloe Civil Defence members were appointed with the rescue of members of the public who were trapped from their homes.

Volunteers vary in age and background, with careers varying from Paramedics, Fire-fighters, Nurses, Guards, Electricians, Teachers, Shop Workers and students. Members of the Civil Defence develop life skills such as communication, teamwork, responsibility and leadership.

With a big Recruitment Drive taking place in September, Padraig hopes to expand the unit membership.

"We are looking for anyone over 18 who will give of their free time for the community. Joining the Civil Defence is a great opportunity for anyone who wants to be a part of a very dynamic and social organisation. For those who have an interest in boating or kayaking, it is also a great opportunity to assist in search and rescue missions."

Padraig believes the future of the Civil Defence is a busy one and has noticed that they are starting to cover more and more local events as well as becoming more involved in water events.

The volunteers and officers meet at the Fire Station every Friday night from 8-10 pm.

If you would like to know more about Civil Defence or if you are interested in joining the Ballinasloe Civil Defence email ballinasloecivildefence@gmail.com

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TOPE RESOURCE CENTRE (Brothers of Charity Services Ballinasloe) held a coffee morning in aid of those in Nepal who had suffered so much after the Earthquake had struck their Country.

The Service users in the Centre helped by baking cakes and laying out a feast for those who came to visit the Centre. The event as always, was very well supported by locals and due to their kindness and charitable spirit the service users in Tope raised over €300 for the OXFAM Nepal Charity overseas.

Once again, the Brothers of Charity services Galway thanked their service users for thinking of others in their time of need and to locals for their continuous support to them over the years.



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BALLINASLOE ACCESS PROGRAMME TO UNIVERSITY

BY ZARA HILL

An information evening on the NUIG Ballinasloe Access Programme took place recently for those considering a return to third level education.

The Access Programme is aimed towards those who have an ambition to achieve a third level degree, but fear the opportunity may have passed them by.

Former Access Student, Anthony Lawless remarked, "I can fully vouch for the excellence of the course and the opportunities it offers and I believe there are many in Ballinasloe and its hinterland who may be interested in this opportunity".

The Ballinasloe Access Programme offered by the National University of Ireland Galway was devised to assist those who, for various reasons, missed out on the opportunity to enter third level education in the past.

The Programme is open to school leavers over the age of 17 and mature students, (those over the age of 22 on the first of January this year) regardless of previous qualifications in state exams.

Since 2008, a total of 112 students have successfully completed the Access course in Ballinasloe, with most of those progressing on to higher education.



Graduates of NUIG Access Programme 2013/2014

The eight month course is divided into eight subject modules. Four core modules undertaken by all students, and four modules, (two per semester) tailored to give students an introduction to the course they intend to undertake in university. These subjects are drawn from four colleges within the university.

- The College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies
- The College of Science
- The College of Engineering & Informatics
- The College of Business, Public Policy and Law

The core modules are structured to facilitate students returning to education and provide an excellent foundation as preparation for college life. These modules are:

- Educational Guidance
- Applied Writing
- Information Technology and
- Study Skill

The core modules are monitored by continuous assessment with the academic subjects appraised by end of term exams. Successful completion is also determined by regular attendance.

Aside from the academic nature of the course, the Access Programme is also a great opportunity to meet new people sharing a common purpose, according to Programme Co-ordinator, Jane Ennis.

"The importance of the social element cannot be underestimated as the friendships made in Ballinasloe will continue on campus over the coming years."

The course is funded by NUI Galway and runs from September to May with two evenings a week in Ballinasloe and one Saturday per month on campus. Transport to and from the college is provided.

For application details contact Imelda Byrne on 091 493553. Email access@nuigalway.ie or visit the website: www.nuigalway.ie/access. The Final closing date for applications is August 31.

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HOSPITAL WATCH

BY ZARA HILL

Portiuncula Hospital is retaining 13th place in the overall ratings of public hospitals in the country, while University College Hospital Galway remains in 49th place, according to the patient run website Ratemyhospital.ie

Further comparisons with UCHG show that the Gynaecology Unit in Portiuncula has a 70% rating, while UCHG has a 66% rating, the Cardiology Unit has a 74% rating, compared to UCHG's 58% rating. The Portiuncula Maternity Unit has decreased 80% rating over the past six months - while UCHG remains at a rating of 62%.

Following its monthly survey, the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation found that over 7,775 people, although admitted to hospital, found themselves on trolleys in hospitals during the month of June 2015, a 51% increase on June 2014.

In Portiuncula, figures show a positive reduction from last year's June and July figures, which peaked at a total of ten people on trolleys in the two months.

Figures showed that Galway University Hospital was "the most overcrowded hospital in the country", with 45 patients on trolleys in the Galway facility at the time. The Galway Hospital has endured a marked increase in the level of overcrowding with 670, up 59% from June 2014.

The report confirms that actions put forward by the Emergency Department in April, have not had any impact and much more investment by government is required to address this growing crisis.

Speaking on July 22, INMO General Secretary Liam Doran said: "the level of deterioration and excessive workloads on nursing staff contained in these figures, is truly shocking. This is the worst June,

in terms of overcrowding, since the INMO began counting trolleys in 2004."

Meanwhile, over 200 people waiting longer than 18 months for treatment at Roscommon and Portiuncula hospitals have been offered treatment in private hospitals, a recent Saolta report confirmed.

The HSE's Saolta University Hospital Group has made the offer to 6,000 patients; including 200 people at Roscommon, 2,370 in Galway University Hospital and 770 at Sligo Regional with only 22 from Portiuncula waiting lists!



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PROPERTY MARKET BACK TO HEALTHY LEVELS

 **BY PADDY KEANE**

Approaching the second half of 2015, Paddy Keane Auctioneer reviews a most successful first 6 months of trading in Ballinasloe and its hinterland in conjunction with Connacht Property Auctions.

Recent sales have been successfully concluded in areas such as Newbridge, Ballinasloe for an exceptional five bedroom Dormer Bungalow together with houses in Hymany Park, Curragh Park and Garbally Oaks. A number of other properties are at an advanced stage of negotiation and pending finalisation.

In partnership with the Connacht Property Auction, property owners in the Ballinasloe area can sell their property quickly at a fair market value and whatsmore there are no costs to enter a property in the Auction.

Claire Moran, Property Surveyor of the Connacht Property Auction outlines that each property is first marketed on a 45 day online Auction and advertised locally with Paddy Keane Auctioneers while also being advertised both nationally and internationally with the Connacht Auction. This ensures maximum exposure is given to each property and gives the property the best chance of selling. Interested parties visit the property as normal and can bid on the property at any point during the 45 day online auction period. All bids are visible on the online auction website www.connachtpropertyauction.ie and bids are put forward to the owner. The owner can decide to accept the highest bid on the online auction or put the property forward to the public auction event held in the Menlo Park Hotel, Galway City.



Claire Moran of The Connacht Property Auction and Paddy Keane of Paddy Keane Auctioneers.

The public auctions have proved a huge success in 2014 with 4 public auctions being held, each offering between 20 and 30 properties for sale at the event. The overall success rate for the year was 88% sold, making the auctions an extremely strong option for anyone looking to sell their property in 2015.

Auctioneer Paddy Keane, who is a member of the institute of Professional Auctioneers and Valuers (IPAV) who adheres to their code of practice and endeavours to exceed its expectations and is also a qualified Tegova valuer (The European Valuers Association) stated "the Auction has been very successful in 2014 and we have effectively sold several properties in the local area. The auctions are suited to anyone looking to sell and we will agree a fair reserve price with the owner, which the property cannot be sold below. Our auctions are used primarily by normal property owners looking to sell their asset at a fair price and receive maximum exposure for their property. As the only auction in Ireland offering a no sale, no fee auction service, it's a win win position for the owner".

The Connacht Property Auction have hosted three public auction events to date in 2015 with a further two auctions scheduled for September 17th and November 19th of the current year. They are keen to speak to property owners looking to sell at either of those auctions in order to begin marketing the property.

Claire Moran can be contacted on 091 882121 or Paddy Keane on 090 9642339.

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HEALY'S PHARMACY

BY ZARA HILL

Back: Ethel Crehan, Claire Healy, Carmel Connelly
Front: Chris Keegan, Mary Doyle, Sarah Geraghty.

Claire Healy bought her Society Street, Ballinasloe Pharmacy in June 1998 and has since developed a loyal clientele.

Having grown up on a farm in Roscrea, Co. Tipperary with her three sisters, Claire went on to get her Pharmacy Degree from Trinity College Dublin and moved to Athlone where she began working in McGorisks Pharmacy.

"I got lots of experience working there and eventually decided I wanted to buy my own place. The opportunity then came up to buy Brendan Walsh's Pharmacy."

A big Tipperary GAA supporter, Claire served as Secretary for the Chamber of Commerce here for three years and during this time became accustomed to the town and its people.

"The people are this town's greatest asset. They were very friendly and welcoming to me coming here as an outsider."

"We are an independent community pharmacy and I think that it's really important that people build up a relationship with their pharmacist and be able to rely on them for professional advice and information."

"I was very lucky that lots of the people that were coming here to Brendan Walsh continued coming. They gave me a chance and I really appreciate that."

The Pharmacy offers a number of services including a full prescription service, blister packing, collection and delivery service for prescriptions, blood pressure measurements, veterinary medicines, first aid supplies, ear piercing and advice on all health matters.

One of eight Pharmacies in town, business is a challenge however, Claire has noticed a slight improvement on business thanks to the support of the local community. However, paid parking is an ongoing issue for Healy's, like many other businesses in town.

"It's not that we want to abolish paid parking, but to give customers 15 free minutes would be a huge benefit both to the businesses in the town and the customers", suggested counter assistant Ethel.

With the town enhancement project underway since March, Claire and her staff are worriedly anticipating the start of the works on Society Street and how this may effect business.

"We are dreading the works however, in preparation for what we expect will be a difficult time for business, our plan is to collect and deliver and we'll be informing our customers of this in the coming weeks."

She added, "the timeline is very important for us because if this is happening in the winter, it's going to be particularly difficult and dangerous for our older customers."

Claire employs five staff members, all of whom specialise in different areas of expertise; Sarah Gerraghty, Mary Doyle, Carmel Connelly, Ethel Crehan and Chris Keegan.

Carmel who has been working with Claire for six years enjoys the social aspect of her job and knowing exactly what customers want.

"We are over the counter assistants and we absolutely love our jobs and we're proud of what we do. Our working environment is relaxed, professional, friendly and helpful and we all work as a team."

She added; "Claire is very knowledgeable in her field and keeps up to date with what's happening by attending continual education courses every autumn and spring".

Healy's is the exclusive agency for Nuxe products – the largest selling skin care range in France. They also supply Isadora and Rimmel cosmetics, the Seavite range of seaweed bath and shower products, Brooke and Shoals candles, Sona Vitamins and Minerals and a large range of fragrances and perfumes.

As part of a promotion, Claire will give anyone who brings this article from Ballinasloe Life Magazine into the store, a free sample of Nuxe Products.

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Backrow left to right: James Coyle, Jack Broderick, Paul Kilkenny, Teresa Deeley, Maura Coyle. Front row left to right: Laura Gordon, George Coyle, Mary Hannon.

GEORGE M. COYLE CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

BY ZARA HILL

"The last few years have seen the opening of the motorway which will be a great benefit to the town in the long term as it brings Ballinasloe closer economically to the rest of Ireland", remarked Mr. Coyle.

training and qualifying as an accountant in Dublin, George's son James has recently joined the practice and describes his work as, "challenging but exciting."

Throughout the last 30 years, George has been fortunate to have a number of long standing and loyal clients.

"It is very satisfying to watch a client grow their business and realise their ambition. A big part of the accountancy industry now is providing clients with the right advice and support to allow them to develop their business and minimise their tax exposure", explained Mr. Coyle.

As the country now moves into a stage of economic growth, George acknowledges that businesses and individuals are faced with a constantly evolving tax regime and new companies legislation.

"I believe the practice is well equipped to provide the expert advice and solutions to businesses, whether they are a sole trader or medium to large company. The practice specialises in areas such as succession planning, Revenue queries, business planning and accounting solutions."

George is very optimistic about the future prospects of the town and acknowledges the great work being done at the moment by the likes of BACD and the local enterprise office in promoting businesses in the town.

"Hopefully the Government will implement some much needed tax reform to ease the burden on taxpayers in the next budget and stimulate growth. I also hope that Government increases its efforts to entice some large industry and investment to the town."

Originally from Athleague, Co. Roscommon, George Coyle first established his accountancy practice on Society Street in 1985. Having studied accountancy in NUIG for three years and trained with Oliver Freaney & Co. in Galway, George moved to Dysart and worked hard to grow the practice.

The 1980's was a very difficult time economically in Ireland according to George. It was a time when high unemployment and large scale emigration were the two biggest problems the country faced.

"The country wasn't in great shape and the legacy of high tax rates was still being felt by small businesses and workers", explained Mr. Coyle.

While the closure of AT Cross, Square D and the downsizing of St Brigid's Hospital had a devastating effect on the town and surrounding region, George recalls "the resilience and hard work of businesses and people to keep going despite the difficulties they faced."

The economic growth of the early 2000's brought with it great benefits although George felt the Celtic Tiger never fully roared in the town.

Celebrating 30 years in business this year, the practice has grown to a team of eight since its establishment in 1985. The practice currently employs two part-time and six full-time staff, all from the local region.

George remarked; "the growth since I opened can be attributed to the hard work and dedication of my staff, one of whom has been with the practice for 27 years."

Mary Hannon from Tuam has been with the practice since 1988 and in her 27 years working with the practice, has witnessed many changes, particularly the advancements in technology.

"When I first started here, there were calculators and typewriters", remarked Mary before adding, "the introduction of the computer and development of the internet has significantly changed the way we operate."

George added, "more importantly, advances in technology over the years has led to significant changes in dealing with the Revenue Commission and Companies Registration Office. Increased regulation and tighter deadlines has resulted in more pressure on accountancy practices."

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NATIONAL TO BIG SCHOOL MEMORIES

BY ZARA HILL



Christina O' Flynn, a member of the local Active Retirement Group looks back on her change from National School to Secondary School.

"The day I left my local National School in the little village of Newtown, Nenagh was a sad day for me. For the previous eight years, I had walked happily the one mile to school with my four sisters, neighbours and friends".

"The teacher was my father's best friend and so he had a special interest in our future and welfare. Everyone knew everyone and we all looked out for one another. I was very happy there and the thought of starting in Secondary in Nenagh the following September filled me with fear and anxiety".

"Purchasing the Navy-blue hardwearing, heavily pleated uniform – which was not very flattering on a growing teenager – blue blouse, black heavy stockings and sturdy shoes were all part of the preparations. The schoolbag was made of heavy leather, made to last the full five years of Secondary school. The one saving grace was the excitement of owning my very first black Raleigh bike, which cost the princely sum of £12".

"In the early fifties, I was unaware then that Secondary School Education was only for the privileged few. On my first day, as I set off on the 12 mile round trip to Nenagh town, we were joined at the cross-roads by a member of only five other families from the Parish attending school."

"There was a lot to get used to at first; there was a large classroom of complete strangers and many new subjects on the agenda. I remember thinking it was such a relief to escape at lunch time down town to a restaurant to buy a cup of tea and eat our sandwiches or brown bread and butter which we had brought with us from home."



"Looking back, I now appreciate the sacrifices our parents had to make in order to send me and my four sisters to Secondary School. We got a wonderful education and I have some lovely memories of my school days."

Former Primary School teacher Bridie Loughman from Cloonliffen, Co. Mayo also remembers her school days in Cloonliffen National School in the early forties before transferring to the Mercy Convent Secondary School in the town of Ballinrobe.

"Transferring from primary to secondary school was a major event in one's life then, as it is today. At that time, we did a Primary Certificate exam as well just before we finished and I think that was possibly a good thing".

"I definitely was very excited about leaving our old country school and moving to our Convent secondary school in town, just two or three miles away. I looked forward to new friends, new teachers and of course a new uniform"

"At that time not everyone went to secondary school and we did not have a vocational or technical school in our area. I remember being told that secondary was a privilege not open to everyone. This, I remember, put a certain amount of pressure on us and encouraged us to work even harder."

Bridie was a teacher here in Ballinasloe in the Convent Primary School for over 25 years until her retirement in 1996.



NEW HEALING GARDEN OPEN FOR EAST GALWAY & MIDLANDS CANCER SUPPORT

BY ZARA HILL

East Galway & Midlands Cancer Support plays a major role in the lives of many people living in this community.

With its new centre up and running in Brackernagh since 2012 and most recently, the completion of a new Healing Garden, the centre hopes to continue providing much needed support for the 50-60 clients who walk through its doors every week.

Originally a private residence, the Cancer Support Centre reaches out to many people every day, through the provision of Support Groups, Professional Counselling Services and a wide range of Clinical Therapies.

Renovations began on the Support Centre in 2012 when Manager Jacqueline Daly noticed the lack of Support Services in the area and indeed the country for Cancer patients and their families.

She remarked; **“having spent many years training with the Men’s Mental Health Forum, it’s frightening how lacking we are in men’s health services”.**

“A woman with Cancer is treated very differently to a man with Cancer and this is what we’re trying to change here by creating new spaces, such as the garden, for men to come and socialise in a safe and non-judgmental environment”.

The Centre is run by six committed volunteers and offers a number of free services for clients including; Energy Healing, Counselling, Reflexology, Reiki, Chiroprody and Acupuncture. Most recently, the Centre has introduced Bioenergy and Indian Head Massage Therapies.

There are also a number of clubs available to clients such as Baking, Fitness, Art Therapy, Choir, Mindfulness and Massage.

The Centre hosts various support groups every Tuesday including; Family, Bowel, Breast and Prostate Cancer Support Groups.

All treatments are arranged through appointment only and are provided by a number of locally based therapists who give their time for free.

Jacqueline is very grateful for the local support saying; **“without our volunteers and therapists, our doors would close.”**

One of just three services in the country affiliated under the HSE, the local Support Centre is nationally recognised for its services availed by people from as far as Connemara and Dublin. A unique aspect of the Centre is the availability of support services not only for those with Cancer but also for their families.

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one person who is affected, the whole family is affected”, she explained.

“We are very mindful of people coming up to exams, who may be affected by Cancer through a parent or family member. We would look after them and make sure they have some form of treatment.”

The two newest volunteers at the centre are Michelle Riskova and Lukasz Podjacki, who represent the Lithuanian and Polish communities. Michelle and Lukasz are available when needed to facilitate those who may need translation during therapy or consultation.

Jacqueline is delighted to have Michelle and Lukasz on board saying; “it is so important that we can help everyone who comes into the centre and so if there is a language barrier we can now cater for this, which is just fantastic”.

Town native Angela Flaherty is also on board at the centre to facilitate members of the deaf community, through sign language.

This wide range of services extends to an entire team of Therapists, Councillors and Specialists, as well as a Social Worker who visits the centre every Thursday from 11 - 1 pm to provide financial advice and support.

The Centre also works closely with the Bethany Bereavement Support Group who meet on the third Wednesday of the month in the Family Resource Centre.

The new Healing Garden, a €100,000 project funded by Boston Scientific, is a peaceful, relaxing area used for meditation and exercise, an important aspect of the recovery process.

Local contractor Brian Whyte from Radharc Landscaping Services in Moycullen designed and landscaped the garden suitably for the needs of the 50-60 clients who come through the centre every week.

“We are delighted with the final look of the garden and are very proud of the fact that Brian is local. He came back with the perfect idea for our garden”, said Jacqueline.

An eco-friendly lawnmower was donated by Brian Hyland, which is proving to be “invaluable”, according to Eileen Finneran, who began volunteering at the centre after retiring from the Oncology Unit at Portiuncula.

“It means an awful lot to have a centre like this”, remarked Eileen. “This centre is particularly important for men because our men are not educated about Cancer. They are coming here to be educated and this to me is hugely important”.

Teresa Reynolds has been a volunteer at the centre for three years and loves meeting different people every day and helping out in any way she can.

“It doesn’t cost us anything to smile and say hello and ask people how they’re feeling, but it could mean a great deal to that person. We’re all in this together and that is never forgotten here”.



Back Row: Una Spain, Angela Flaherty. Front Row: Teresa Reynolds, Jacqueline Daly, Eileen Finneran and Sinéad Clogher.

The centre is the result of a mass community and voluntary effort and the volunteers would like to thank everyone who gave so generously of their time in bringing this great project to the forefront.

There are many more plans for the garden project in the coming months including the build of a poly tunnel, a gym and a dark room, which will be run by local Artist Una Spain. Her idea is to collect old negatives and teach people how to print them and use them on the town’s new website.

In recognition of her contribution to Cancer patients and their families from near and far, Jacqueline Daly was nominated and shortlisted for the ‘Heart of Ireland’ Award earlier in the year.

A colleague and friend, Eileen remarked, “there is no one more deserving of this award than our manager Jacqueline”.

The nine people shortlisted for the award from Ireland and England received a weekend stay at Bloomfield House in Mullingar in July.

A Fundraising Céili is taking place in Pdraig Pearses Clubhouse on August 8, from 9.30 – 12.30 pm, with music from the Long Note Céili Band. Tickets are €10.

To get in contact with the centre, call 090 9642088 or visit www.EastGalwayCancerSupport.com.

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Participants of Junior Entrepreneur Competition, Attyrory NS.

Pupils from Attyrory N.S. were recently awarded with the Junior Entrepreneur Flag for their participation in the Junior Entrepreneur Programme since January this year.

This programme was created to allow every primary school pupil in Ireland the opportunity to embrace entrepreneurship as part of their formative education.

As part of the programme, pupils were asked to use their creativity to come up with individual business ideas, then come together as a class to choose one idea and then work to turn this idea into reality over a 10 week period, explained Attyrory Principal Yvonne Walsh.

“They had to do a lot of hard work, researching what customers really want, working out their costs and how much to charge for their product. This programme helped them figure out what they’re good at and try to use those skills to play their part in a team. All along the way, they had the support of their classmates, teachers and family”, added Mrs Walsh.

The JEP, as it is known, is embedded in the principles of the Primary school curriculum and uses an integrated teaching and project-based approach. This innovative programme helps participating pupils to develop a number of skills including presentation, literacy, writing, drawing, technology, financial skills, consumer awareness, storytelling, listening skills, creative thinking, problem-solving, collaborative skills and teamwork.

The Senior Class from Attyrory N.S. designed and made Terrific T-Shirts and sold them to family and friends. They donated the proceeds of sales to the Tanzania Confirmation Fund to build a new classroom in a partner school in Africa. The pupils were awarded with the Junior Entrepreneur Flag for Attyrory N.S. on awards day in Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone in June.

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Padraig Pearses World Record Attempt

Padraig Pearses GAA Club will soon attempt to break the World Record for holding the biggest Gaelic football training session – all with the hope of appearing in the Guinness World Book of Records.

In association with Hogarty’s flooring and DIY in Birchgrove, the event taking place at Pearses Club Grounds in Woodmount on Saturday August 22 at 5pm, will be both a major social event for the community as a family fun day as well as fundraiser for the club.

The current record for holding the largest training session is held by the Roche Emmetts club in Co. Louth with a world record of 1,204 participants. This is the number Padraig Pearses GAA must beat on the day.

Padraig Pearses Club PRO, Tara Flynn wants to get the message out that this world record attempt is open to everyone in the community, not just club members, regardless of age or fitness ability.

“Participants do not have to be part of Padraig Pearses or any other GAA club to take part and do not need to have previous experience of training with or playing with a GAA Team as this is a fun session to be enjoyed by all in the community. There will be no strenuous activities involved”, added Tara.

Tara and the entire club is encouraging the whole community to get behind the event on August 22. She remarked, “the next time you are reading the Guinness World Records you could be reading about you, your friends and your neighbors, so make sure you are ready and on the pitch on August 22 at 5pm.”

Cost is €5 per child, and €10 per adult. Tickets are available in the Club every night from 8pm, or from Club members or players in your area. Entertainment on the day includes music from the Kings of Connaught, fun and games for all the family, refreshments AND a star appearance from Galway hurling legend, Joe Canning.

For more information or if you have any queries, contact Mike on (087) 2240227 or visit www.padraigpearses.ie.

Pictured at the launch is L to R: Paul Carey, Tomas Seale, Micheal Donoghue, Sarah Dolan, Heather Payne, Patty Ward, Aine Galvin, Padraig Dooley, Aoibheann Reilly, Emmett Kelly, Niall Carty.



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KILTORMER ANNUAL HURLING FESTIVAL

BY ZARA HILL

Kiltormer GAA and Camogie Clubs will hold their annual Hurling Festival this month to commemorate Seán Cormican and Eamon Óg Lally.

Taking place on the weekend of August 22 and 23 in Kiltormer GAA Pitch, the Festival will commence with the tenth Annual commemorative hurling tournaments.

This year the Seán Cormican tournament will be a 7 a-side Senior competition featuring eight local East Galway clubs - Mullagh, Portumna, Cappatagle, Sarsfields, Meelick/Eyrecourt, Killimor, Ahascragh/Fohenagh and Kiltormer.

There will be two groups of four teams and the top two teams in each group will qualify for the semi-finals. Group games will commence at 2pm on Saturday with one group playing in Clontuskert and the other based in Kiltormer. The knockout stages will then take place in Kiltormer.

The Eamon Óg Lally Minor final is due to take place at 6.15pm in Kiltormer on Saturday 22 and will be between Kiltormer and reigning champions Killimor. On Sunday the juvenile hurling and camogie teams from U8's up to the U16's will play against other local clubs.

The festival has expanded this year with numerous activities taking place throughout the weekend including; a full BBQ over the two days, "Kiltormers

Got Talent" on Saturday night which will feature local musical and novelty acts, a Kiddies Disco and Traditional Irish Music session on Sunday evening. There will also be face painting along with Tug of War, Sumo Wrestling and lot of other fun and games.

The organising committee would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone in the locality and surrounding area to come and enjoy the games and festivities. There is no entrance fee for any of the events and refreshments will be provided in the complex during the course of the weekend. There will be a full bar provided and all televised Inter-county games will be shown live in the Ink Bottle Bar.

Chairman Tony Kilkenny is looking forward to the tenth anniversary of the hurling tournaments that were set up to honour two great servants of the club, Seán Cormican and Eamon Óg Lally.

"We decided to freshen up the format this year and also wanted to incorporate our youngsters more in the weekend. Sunday will be dedicated to our up and coming hurlers and camogie players. The aim of the weekend is to create a great fun and sport filled weekend for the community and surrounding areas."

Full details and updates are available on www.kiltormercamogie.ie or check out the Kiltormer GAA Facebook Page. Alternatively, contact Kiltormer GAA Chairman Tony Kilkenny 087 2660442 for further information.



CLONTUSKERT SCHOOL-FIRST IN IRELAND

BY KEN KELLY



Kate Murray, Principal; Kevin Marshall Head of Education Microsoft Ireland with pupils Harry Campbell and Aoife McDonagh.

The school year in St. Augustine's NS in Clontuskert finished with several accolades being showered on the teachers and the 38 pupils. The Head of Microsoft Ireland and Microsoft Corporation, Dr. Kevin Marshall, praised the school for becoming the first in Ireland to create Chekhov eBooks in Irish and congratulated the principal Kate Murray on being awarded the inaugural Microsoft Innovative Expert Educator Fellow Award for the Republic of Ireland.

In an open schools' competition, St. Augustine's came out on top from 24 local schools who were invited to submit a history and presentation on World War 1 by the organising Heritage Group. They won the plaudits of the three judges and staged their presentation at an open night in Gullane's Hotel.

To round off a hectic year's activities, the Clontuskert school hosted thirty students and teachers from France, Spain and England, culminating in a Community celebration night in the school hall, where the local students performed a concert to celebrate the two year partnership of the Comenius project.

At a "Red Letter Day" in the school, Microsoft's Dr. Kevin Marshall said St. Augustine's had "led

the way in primary school one to one technology integration in Ireland" while TD and former school principal, Mary Mitchell O'Connor said she was "blown away by the wonderful, innovative work of the pupils and I congratulate St. Augustine's on being a school of excellence." Microsoft had presented each student with a Surface Device, which is a hybrid tablet with keyboard and pen that gives the pupils an outlet to write, code and create.

As part of the celebrations the children presented their work on Chekhov Story author and the Literacy for Life Initiative. They are now the first school in Ireland to create Chekhov eBooks in Irish while Principal Kate Murray is one of twelve Expert Educators from around the world who have worked and designed new models of learning that better prepare learners for life in the 21st century.

In a separate function, there was "standing room only" in the school hall where teachers and students from schools in the UK, France and Spain were entertained to mark the end of a two year Comenius project. In recent years students and teachers from the Clontuskert school travelled to each of the above countries to learn more about their cultures and education. The visitors were also treated to a walking tour of Ballinasloe town as well as visiting places of historical interest in the locality.

Under the guidance of principal Kate Murray, fellow teachers Emil Scott, Nicola Egan and Colette Baynes are basking in the glory of the school's unique successes during the last year.

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NEW SUPERINTENDENT – GERARD MURPHY

BY ZARA HILL

Following in the footsteps of his Grandfather as a longstanding member of An Garda Síochána, new Superintendent Gerard Murphy describes his latest appointment as his greatest career achievement to date.

Originally from Co. Meath, Gerard Murphy has come to Ballinasloe on transfer from the Dublin Metropolitan Region, following his promotion to the rank of Superintendent earlier in the year.

Superintendent Murphy joined An Garda Síochána in 1990, having developed an interest in becoming a member from an early age. He has since been stationed in Store Street, Bridewell, Community Relations, Garda Headquarters, Kevin Street, Pearse Street, Harcourt Terrace and Harcourt Square.

According to Gerard, the interest came from the influences of his Grandfather, who was a member of An Garda Síochána and was stationed in Nobber, Co. Meath and also a cousin who was a Policeman in St. Louis, Missouri.

Gerard remarked; "I have always wanted a career where every day has the potential to be different and one which presents challenges, together with the wide and varied career paths that come with the job. An Garda Síochána certainly fulfils this role".

Like most, Gerard attended the Garda College in Templemore as part of the revised training programme which emanated from the Walsh Report on Garda Training.

His training involved an initial period of 22 weeks in the Garda College in Templemore, followed by a further 22 weeks of on the job training in Pearse Street Garda Station as a Student Garda.

After this, Gerard spent 12 weeks back in the Garda College to apply his practical training to theory before being allocated to Fitzgibbon Street as a Probationer Garda, a role he describes as a very "challenging and enjoyable initial allocation."

"As a keen follower of the GAA, being stationed in a District which was responsible for the policing of Croke Park was also a huge bonus."

Gerard describes An Garda Síochána as an "excellent career", with varied opportunities.

"It is a very challenging and worthwhile profession. It is a job where no two days are the same and I would have no hesitation in recommending An Garda Síochána to any person wishing to have a very fulfilling career."

Taking up his position as Superintendent and District Officer in Ballinasloe on March 9 this year, one of Gerard's first main interactions with the town was being invited to sit on the viewing stand for the St. Patrick's Day Parade in March.

"This was a very enjoyable experience to meet so many people and to also view the young people of Ballinasloe involved in the Parade and the various clubs and organisations."

Speaking of his first impressions of the town, Murphy observed; "like most towns in rural Ireland, there are ongoing policing issues. I have found the people most welcoming and having attended the St. Patrick's Day Parade, I see that there is a strong community bond and I enjoyed the fact that the Parade displayed the town's various and diverse social make up."

"During difficult economic times, towns like this struggle, but with the strong community bond that exists, I believe we will meet these challenges", added the Meath man.

An Garda Síochána plays an important role within the community according to Gerard, who endeavours to continue working for and with the community in his role as Superintendent for the District.

"I would like to ensure that our engagement with the community is as professional and committed as it should be. I will place the victim at the centre of the service that we provide, ensuring that we are respectful, reassuring, responsive and reliable in addressing the needs and expectations of the community."

As recruitment has commenced within An Garda Síochána in recent months - with three intakes of 100 people to the Garda College Templemore since September 2014 - the Galway Division has been allocated five members from the initial intake and Garda personnel will continue being deployed throughout the Country explained the new Superintendent.

Gerard wants to emphasise the importance of the partnership of An Garda Síochána with the community in preventing and detecting crime and maintaining a safe environment.

"I hope to focus on the core functions of policing and the delivery of an effective community policing service. I would also like to build on the efforts of the local Gardaí and communities to make this District a safer place to live and work in."



WHERE ARE THEY NOW? VINCENT LYONS

BY KEN KELLY

A 29-year-old Ballinasloe man who fell in love with horses as a child is now one of the most sought after "horse breakers" in Australia. Vincent (Uinseann) Lyons from Cleaghmore, Ballinasloe, the youngest son of James and the late Cait Lyons, is now the Head Breaker and Pre-trainer at the Grandview Stud Farm in Brisbane.

Growing up in Ballinasloe, Uinseann always had an interest in horses from an early age before getting involved at his sister's equestrian centre in Ballygar when he was only eleven. Following his schooling at St. Grellan's NS and Garbally College, he got his first real job working for a year at Susan Macken's yard in Kells breaking in showjumpers. Then he spent over two years in Berkshire working for top trainers Nicky Henderson, Noel Chance and Charlie Mann befriending top jockeys such as Ryan Moore, A. P. McCoy, Gordon Elliott, Barry Geraghty, Mick Fitzgerald and Noel Fiey along the way.

In 2007 Uinseann returned to Ireland, got his jockey licence, but unfortunately broke his pelvis when a horse fell on him, in Navan. He later saddled horses at point-to-points around the country and achieved every jockey's dream when he rode at the Galway Races in 2008. "I will never forget the roar of the crowd as I came up the hill to that finishing line in Ballybrit. It was unreal" he said.



Photo shows the \$30million horse "All Too Hard" with Uinseann in the saddle.

In 2010 he decided to emigrate to Australia and secured employment in North Queensland on a 1.2million acre cattle station as a "Jackaroo", mustering (herding) cattle on horseback on twelve hour shifts. "It was tough and the hours were long. I never imagined a farm of that size but I stuck it for three months. It certainly was an experience" he said.

Uinseann's greatest moment came when he obtained employment at Patinack Racing Farm near Brisbane as a track rider, preparing yearlings for racing. There he was allowed to ride the \$30million "All Too Hard" a half brother to world sprint champion "Black Caviar" the most expensive horse ever ridden. After one year there he decided to move on to Grandview Stud Farm where over 150 yearlings are sent by Australia's top owners to break in as gallopers for the flat. "They come as yearlings, we break them in for two-year-old flat races all over Australia. Some day we hope to see one of them win The Melbourne Cup. We only deal with the best bloodstock in the country, so we are hoping for a big win" explained Uinseann.

Mr. Lyons says he loves the profession he has chosen and hopes some day to have his own Stud Farm and settle down in Australia. "Naturally I miss home but I have a few friends here from around the Ballinasloe area that I meet fairly often and socialise with. We keep in touch" he added.

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COMMUNITY AWARDS

The Inaugural People of The Year Awards, in recognition of the outstanding work carried out by countless individuals and organisations in a wide sector of roles across the community is being launched this September as part of one of the Town Team Actions.

The inaugural awards will take place every two years and the Team are actively seeking a sponsor over the coming months.

The first award category is in The **'Social and Community Support'** category, which covers a broad spectrum of activity, from work with target groups such as people with disabilities, and efforts made to support and integrate the elderly into the community. The award is dedicated to individuals and groups who contribute significantly to the fabric of the community.

The **'Arts, Culture and Heritage'** category recognises the contribution of individuals, schools and groups to the continuing development of the Arts, Culture, Heritage and Environment in the community.

The **'Community Group Special Recognition Award'** recognises individuals and groups that have made a special contribution to life in Ballinasloe and its catchment area, through the works which they have undertaken which may be deemed to go above and beyond the normal call of duty. Also in the line-up is the 'Sports and Recreation Award', which recognises individuals or groups who give of their time to support and to participate in sport and other recreation activities.

The **'Youth Award'** recognises the contribution that young people make in the community, through work with a variety of groups from youth organisations to support groups to representative bodies.

The **'Civic Pride Award'** will recognise individuals, groups and residents associations that have shown a sense of civic pride within their community to undertake a wide range of activities in their local area and continue to work towards making it a better place to live.



And finally, the **'Hall of Fame Award'** recognises individuals born in Ballinasloe whom have excelled nationally or globally.

If you know someone who deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the community under any of the above categories, have your say. Nomination forms will be available online from September 1, Entries will close on the 8th of Oct and the actual Ceremony will be on the 12th of November in the Shearwater Hotel.

REPORTERS HANDOVER

So it must be near Autumn as we rotate our Reporters from the UL Co – operative Education programme – after seven months we say Slán to the wonderful **Zara Hill** who is heading on Erasmus to Prague. Zara will miss the great set-dancing and traditional music scene of West Clare, and hopes to take some of the great tips she got from Martina and her talented bunch of dancers at Club Damhsa as a Sean Nós along the way! She also enjoyed showcasing her set dancing and brush dancing skills and accordian playing on the trad scene in town. We say a huge mile Buiochas to Zara who delivered a wonderful 4 editions .

Fresh to the AOIFE and Ballinasloe Life team is 20 year old Ciara Beresford from Dungarvan, Co. Waterford. Ciara is an undergraduate student from the University of Limerick studying Digital Media Design who will be taking up the roll of Reporter for LIFE magazine. Ciara can be contacted at ballinasloelife@hotmail.com. We wish her well as she starts her stint on the next 3 editions!





DREAMER OR DREAM MAKER.?!

BY MAUREEN CAHALAN

Walt Disney famously said; "All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them."

John Lennon imagined all people living in peace and that he himself was not the only dreamer but his hope was that someday the world will be as one. Both of these men were big dreamers, both left their individual legacies to us and both men will never be forgotten because they were very good dreamers.....!

As a school's retreat facilitator and bereavement counsellor I often ask participants what kind of hope do they see for themselves. Their replies are limited because for many; hope is far too distanced. However when I ask "if they could dream what would they dream

of? " Answers cover everything from happiness and health to healing and personal satisfaction. The point being that hope and dreams are very similar and we need both in our lives. Some years ago I dreamed of being in Antwerp and having a large selection of Diamonds whereby I could pick and choose for my customers. Six months later, I signed an agreement to have diamonds direct from Antwerp for my customers in Ballinasloe. This was a mammoth achievement for a woman in business against a male dominant industry. Sometime ask yourself a motivating question: are you a dreamer or a dream maker? Remember Big Minds think ideas, Average Minds thing events and small minds talk about people. Dreaming is good for the mind; body and soul....enjoy your day...!

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FR. P. J. RETURNS TO NEW ORLEANS AS PP

BY KEN KELLY

Ballinasloe born Fr. P. J. Madden has been appointed Parish Priest of Houma City-the parish seat of Terrebonne Parish in Louisiana, New Orleans, United States which has a population of 34,000. He has been invited back to the city he was ordained in and where he worked as a diocesan priest for five years, by Bishop Shelton Fabre, having ministered for the last six years in the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin as a CC.

This diocese in the Deep South has held mixed memories for the former union official, nurse, lay missionary and priest over the past thirty years. He was ordained there in 2004 after he had resumed his priesthood studies following the death of his wife and a year later had to cope with the terrible human tragedy caused by the hurricane that saw the deaths of over 3,000 people. "It had a devastating effect on the whole community and it was a miracle that many hundreds more were not lost" said Fr. PJ.

Born in Brackernagh, Ballinasloe in 1946, the second eldest in a family of ten, to Tom and Gertie Madden, PJ received his early education in the local Convent School before moving to St. Grellan's Boys' School where he says the principal, the late Pat Carney had a profound impact on his life.



During his secondary education in Garbally College PJ took to the stage in a one-act Irish play "Aoibhinn Beata an Scolairi" which was produced by the then Fr. Joe Cassidy in 1961. After winning the Regional finals in Athlone, where he won the Best Actor, it then captured the All-Ireland title in the Gaeity Theatre in Dublin where the trophy was presented by the late Eamon De Valera.

Following his Inter Cert, PJ moved to the SMA College in Ballinacorney, Co. Sligo where, on completion of his Leaving Cert in 1963, he commenced his studies for the priesthood in the SMA Novitiate, Kilcolgan. A year later he took up employment in St. Brigid's Hospital, Ballinasloe and during his term there met his future wife, Mary Mitchell from Moylough, who was employed as a clerk. He then trained as a psychiatric nurse in St. Brendan's, Grangegorman and qualified in 1968-winning first place in Ireland in his finals.

In 1970 PJ married Mary Mitchell and two years later joined the Medical Union as an Administrator. However in 1975 the couple decided to embark on a five year stint as Lay Missionaries in New Orleans, something that gave both of them immense satisfaction.



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Back in Ireland in 1980, PJ became Industrial Relations Officer for the LGSNB, representing all public authorities and where he negotiated for Co. Managers throughout the country. Three years later he became General Secretary of the Psychiatric Nurses Association of Ireland where the national chairman was Ballinasloe man, the late Brian Kelly. PJ also managed to be Assistant General Sec. of the LGPSU, a union representing Co. Councils and Health Boards nationwide.

Appointed General Secretary of the Irish Nurses' Organisation in 1987, PJ oversaw it being recognised as an official Trade Union and becoming the biggest women's union in the country, increasing its membership from 6,000 to 28,000 during his twelve year tenure in charge. Shortly after his appointment in 1999 as Assistant Chief Executive of the LGMSB (which represented all Co. Councils in the country), PJ's beloved wife Mary tragically passed away following a serious illness.

Coping with the loss of a loved one was not easy and in 2001 PJ Madden decided to return to New Orleans and spent three-and-half years studying for the priesthood. He was ordained in May 2004 as a Diocesan Priest for the City of Houma, where he ministered for five years. During that period he had to deal with the devastation caused by the Hurricane in 2005 where nearly 3,000 people lost their lives. "It was an unbelievable tragedy-the loss of life and property, the devastation, the turmoil it caused was unprecedented" said Fr. PJ.

Returning to Ireland in 2009, the much travelled priest joined the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin and for the past three years has been CC of the combined parish of Naas, Sallins and Twomilehouse in Co. Kildare. Now he has been invited back to Houma as Parish Priest by Bishop Shelton Fabre and is looking forward to the challenge.

"Since my wife Mary died, she has guarded my every step, so I have no concern where I'm based as long as I can do good. The greatest people that had an influence on my life, after my wife Mary, were my mother Gertie and Pat Carney, the principal of St. Grellan's National School" said the departing priest.



Mary and PJ Madden celebrate their 25th Wedding Anniversary

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OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



Lady Captain Teresa Coughlan, Prize Winner Pauline Flynn receiving her prize and Lady Vice-Captain Bernie Lally



L-r Margaret O Connell, Lucy Wallace, Alice Lally, Sylvia Black, Jackie Eastwood, Mary Concannon, Marie Smith, Leona Kelly, Kaye Faulk. members of the Aughrim Coach House Art Group in the newly constructed Sensory Garden at the East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre in Ballinasloe



Harpists from Blossom Harps on stage at Moore Hall during the Traditional Irish Concert



Outgoing Mayor of County Galway, Cllr Mary Hoade presenting school Principal, Kate Murray and the children from Clontuskert NS, with 1st prize in the Ballinasloe WW1 Heritage Group Schools Competition. Photo Theo Hanley



Back L-R: Colman Shaughnessy, Loughrea Memorial Group, Declan Kelly, Frank Kelly, Douglas Rafter, Brendan Donelan, Oliver Donellan & Dr Brian Casey, all Ballinasloe WW1 Heritage Group and Kieran Shaughnessy, Manager Ballinasloe Library. Front L-R: Micheal Kitt TD., Evelyn Donellan, Ballinasloe WW1 Heritage Group, Outgoing Chairperson of Ballinasloe Municipal District, Cllr Michael Connolly, outgoing Mayor of County Galway, Cllr Mary Hoade, Chairperson of Ballinasloe WW1 Heritage Group, Stephen Connell, Cllr Michael Finnerty and Joe Loughnane, Loughrea Memorial Group. Photo Theo Hanley

OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



At Duggan Park in Ballinasloe a plaque in memory of the late Michael Boland of Tulrush is unveiled by County Chairman Noel Treacy.



Brian Derrane, David Carr, Christy Smyth, Arthur Carr
Front: Avril Smyth, Tom McEvoy (Pieta House) and Maura Canning at the presentation of the €20,130 proceeds from the Dawn Run to Pieta House.



Well know artist from the TV show Irish Paint Magic David Willis with local artists Jeanne Naughton, Margaret Dooley Burnell, Jackie Eastwood and Lily O'Brien.



Transition year students from Ard Scoil Mhuire 2014/15 pictured presenting Rainbow Services, Brothers of Charity with €200 after holding a Transition year ball and donating a percentage. Students from the school attend Rainbow services on Fridays as part of their social action work experience



Maureen Cahalan of Cahalan Jewellers celebrating forty years in business with President of Ballinasloe Lions Club, Brian Derrane.



Betty Devlin, Ballinasloe organiser of the fund raising event for her grand nephew, one year old Theo, who requires surgery to help him hear for the first time due to a rare form of deafness, with Maureen Devlin and Mary Connaughton, Ballinasloe.



Former colleagues from All Saint's Hospital, Birmingham at their annual reunion in Gullane's Hotel.

AUGUST EVENTS GUIDE

August 1st			Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm
Inter Sports Club Competition	Golf Club	All Day	The Suspects	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Amy Brennan	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm	JJ Galway	Valerie's of Aughrim	10.30pm
The Blaggards	Auld Sod Bar	9pm	August 16th		
Kevin Herm Connolly	Egans (The Living Room)	9pm	Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm	Camogie Club Race Night	Maud Millars Bar	8pm
The Blaggards	Killeens Bar	10pm	The Nudie Suits	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm
The Fanzines	Maud Millars Bar	10pm	Anything Goes	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm
Dj John	Haydens Hotel	10pm	Live Music	An Táin	9pm
Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm	The Outlaws (Featuring Big Tom's	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm
Chris & Tara	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm	Son, Dermot McBride)		
Chris Dallet	Valerie's of Aughrim	10.30pm	Sweet Sensations	Killeens Bar	10pm
Dj Lee Johnston	Auld Sod, East Nightclub	11.30pm	Live Music	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
August 2nd			Session with Davy & The Boys	Valerie's of Aughrim	10pm
Mens 18 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day	August 17th		
All-Ireland Draft Show	Showgrounds	All Day	Pilates	Croffys Yard	8pm - 9pm
Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm	August 18th		
Toxic Twins	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm	Ladies 18 Hole Stroke Stableford GOY 8	Golf Club	All Day
Shane Moore	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm	Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
Gerry Guthrie	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm	Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30pm
Live Music	An Táin	9pm	Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Catch 22	Killeens Bar	10pm	August 19th		
Sway	Auld Sod Bar	10pm	Joe Moore, Seniors Captain's Prize	Golf Club	All Day
The Chillbillies	Pillar House	10pm	Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Session with Davy & The Boys	Valerie's of Aughrim	10pm	Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
Dj John	Haydens Hotel	10pm	August 20th		
Elvis Show	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm	Open Music Session.		
Eamon Noone	Auld Sod, East Nightclub	11.30pm	Singers/Musicians Welcome	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
August 2nd			Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Charity Day - Lions Club	Golf Club	All Day	August 21st		
Children's Tennis Training	Ballinasloe Tennis Club	6pm - 7pm	Open Ladies & Gents 18 Hole Stroke	Golf Club	All Day
Pilates	Croffys Yard	8pm - 9pm	Stableford		
Nite Owls	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm	Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 1.30pm
August 4th			Anything Goes	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Ladies 18 Hole Stroke V-par.	Golf Club	All Day	Transsessún	An Táin	9.30pm
GUI Connacht Shield - Bslloe Vs. Loughrea	Golf Club	All Day	Damsets	Killeens Bar	10pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm	Loose Rooster	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Haydens Hotel	8.30pm	Dj Johnny F	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm	Paul Watchorn	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
August 5th			August 22nd		
Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm	18 Hole Stroke GOY 6 (22nd - 23rd)	Golf Club	All Day
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm	Kiltormer Hurling Festival Weekend	Kiltormer GAA Grounds	All Day
Paudge Bennett	Killeens Bar	10pm	(22nd - 23rd)		
August 6th			Guinness World Record Attempt	Padraig Pierce's GAA Club	5pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	9.30pm	Tunnel Tigers	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Trad Session	Killeens Bar	10pm	Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm
Open Music Session. Singers/ Musicians Welcome	Maud Millars Bar	10pm	Legacy	Killeens Bar	10pm
Bobby Kilkeny, Frank Hession & Friends Trad Session	An Táin	10pm	Toxic Twins	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
August 7th			Shane Moore	Haydens Hotel	10pm
Open Ladies & Gents 18 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day	The Jordans	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Ken & Steve	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm	The Legends	Valerie's of Aughrim	10.30pm
Transsessún	An Táin	9.30pm	Too Tall Paul	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 1.30pm	Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm
Surprise 5 Piece Band	Killeens Bar	10pm	August 23rd		
Live Music	Maud Millars	10pm	Family Fun Day	Haydens Hotel	See Facebook
Dj Johnny F	Auld Sod Bar	10pm	Charity Cycle (In Aid of the Cancer	Ballinasloe Cycling Club	9am
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm	Support Centre)		
August 8th			Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
18 Hole Stroke GOY 5 (8th - 9th)	Golf Club	All Day	Imposter	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm
Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm	Black Shadow	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm
The Happy Bar Stars	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm	Live Music	An Táin	9pm
Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm	Shane Owens	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm
Céilí Fundraiser (In Aid of the Cancer	Padraig Pearse's GAA Club	9.30pm - 12.30pm	Chequers	Killeens Bar	10pm
Support Centre)			Session with Davy & The Boys	Valerie's of Aughrim	10pm
Red Tape	Maud Millars Bar	10pm	Sauce Mechanics	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
G2	Pillar House	10pm	August 24th		
Tradstone	Auld Sod Bar	10pm	Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Streetwise	Killeens Bar	10pm	Pilates	Croffys Yard	8pm - 9pm
Seán Brennan	Haydens Hotel	10pm	August 25th		
The Livewires	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm	Ladies 18 Hole Stroke Medal 6	Golf Club	All Day
Anything Goes	Valerie's of Aughrim	10.30pm	Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm	Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30pm
August 9th			Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Beggars Velvet	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm	August 26th		
Derek Ryan	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm	Seniors - Timmy Creavin Memorial Fourball	Golf Club	All Day
Live Music	An Táin	9pm	Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Cronin Fundraiser for Beaumont Hosp.	Valerie's of Aughrim	10pm	Irish Blood Transfusion Service	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
Lyrical	Killeens Bar	10pm	Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
Liam's Country Road Show	Auld Sod Bar	10pm	Paudge Bennett	Killeens Bar	10pm
August 10th			August 27th		
Starcamp Summer Camp (10th - 14th)	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 2.30pm	Capt./Pres. Mixed Am-Am (27th - 30th)	Golf Club	All Day
Pilates	Croffys Yard	8pm - 9pm	Irish Blood Transfusion Service	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
August 11th			Open Music Session. Singers/ Musicians Welcome	Gullanes Hotel	10pm
Ladies 18 Hole Stroke GOY 7	Golf Club	All Day	Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm	Trad Session	Killeens Bar	10pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30pm	August 28th		
Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm	Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 1.30pm
August 12th			Open Ladies & Gents 18 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day
Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm	Angie Bannon	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm	Transsessún	An Táin	9.30pm
Paudge Bennett	Killeens Bar	10pm	Live Music	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
August 13th			John Molloy	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Bruno Groening - Circle of Friends	Gullanes Hotel	7pm	August 29th		
Open Music Session. Singers/ Musicians Welcome	Maud Millars Bar	10pm	G2	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Bobby Kilkeny, Frank Hession & Friends Trad Session	An Táin	10pm	Clogher School of Dancing Fundraiser	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm	Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm
Trad Session	Killeens Bar	10pm	The Coyle Family	Killeens Bar	10pm
August 14th			The Hush	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Open Ladies & Gents 18 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day	Live Music	Pillar House	10pm
The High Reel	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm	Dj John	Haydens Hotel	10pm
Transsessún	An Táin	9.30pm	Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 1.30pm	Kensey 3	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Kieran Goss	Pillar House	10pm	Simply Divine	Valerie's of Aughrim	10.30pm
Live Music	Auld Sod Bar	10pm	August 30th		
Hoppy Bar Stars	Maud Millars Bar	10pm	Charity Climb (In Aid of Miles for Emma)	Croagh Patrick	8am
Eamon O'Neill	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm	Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
August 15th			The Bluff	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm
Mens 18 Hole Stableford	Golf Club	All Day	Jonathan Canavan	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm
The Music Man	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm	Live Music	An Táin	9pm
The Bluff	Auld Sod Bar	10pm	Jimmy Buckley	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm
Last Man Standing	Haydens Hotel	10pm	Lyn Em Up	Killeens Bar	10pm
Fortunate Sons	Killeens Bar	10pm	Session with Davy & The Boys	Valerie's of Aughrim	10pm
The Wheeler Johnsons	Maud Millars Bar	10pm	August 31st		
Geagan Pagans	Pillar House	10pm	Back to School		
Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm	Charity Cycle	Charity Cycle	TBC
			Line Dancing	Line Dancing	8pm
			Pilates	Pilates	8pm - 9pm

SEPTEMBER EVENTS GUIDE

September 1st		
Active Retirement Meeting	Golf Club	All Day
Trad Session	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
September 2nd		
Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
September 3rd		
ILGU Senior Ladies	Golf Club	All Day
Bruno Groening - Circle of Friends	Gullanes Hotel	7pm
Open Music Session.	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Bobby Kilkenny, Frank Hession & Friends Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
September 4th		
Open Ladies & Gents 18 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 1.30pm
Ken and Steve	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Daithí Rua	Pillar House	9pm
Transessún	An Táin	9.30pm
Strung Out	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Live Music	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Majella Flanagan Theatre School	Town Hall Theatre	TBC
September 5th		
Mens 18 Hole Stroke GOY 7 (5th - 6th)	Golf Club	All Day
Charity Cycle (Féileacáin)	Burkes Bar	12pm
Tunnel Tigers	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm
No Bodder	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Streetwise	Killeens Bar	10pm
Decades of Youth	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Live Music	Pillar House	10pm
Dj John	Haydens Hotel	10pm
Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm
Chris & Tara	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
September 6th		
Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
Anchormen	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm
Sweet Sensations - Dessie Egan	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm
Live Music	An Táin	9pm
Robert Mizzell	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm
Nial Fennessy	Killeens Bar	10pm
Sway	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
September 7th		
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Pilates	Croffys Yard	8pm - 9pm
September 8th		
Ladies 18 Hole Stroke Stableford GOY 9	Golf Club	All Day
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
September 9th		
Open Seniors	Golf Club	All Day
Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Ballinasloe Glower & Garden Club	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Paudge Bennett	Killeens Bar	10pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
September 10th		
Open Mixed Foursomes	Golf Club	All Day
Trad Session	Killeens Bar	10pm
Open Music Session	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Bobby Kilkenny, Frank Hession & Friends Singers Circle	An Táin	10pm
	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
September 11th		
Mens/Ladies Open 18 Hole Stroke Stblf	Golf Club	All Day
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 1.30pm
The High Reel	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Charity Night with Dj John	Haydens Hotel	9pm
Transessún	An Táin	9.30pm
Beggars Velvet	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Larry Reynolds Irish Music Wknd - Trad	Pillar House	10pm
Dj Johnny F	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Buzz The Agent	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
September 12th		
Open 4 Person Scramble & BBQ	Golf Club	All Day
Traditional Music Sessions, Craft Exh	Pillar House	2pm
Happy Bar Stars	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm
Macy South	Killeens Bar	10pm
Red Rape	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Dj John	Haydens Hotel	10pm
Hush	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm
Lynum Up	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Christy Sheannon & The Breakaways	Valerie's of Aughrim	10.30pm
September 13th		
Traditional Music Sessions	Pillar House	2pm
Ceili Mór with Salamanca Céili Band	Pillar House	2.30pm - 5.30pm
The Nudie Suits	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm
Outback	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm
Michael English	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm
Live Music	An Táin	9pm
Liam's Country Road Show	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Sweet Sensations	Killeens Bar	10pm
Session with Davy & The Boys	Valerie's of Aughrim	10pm
September 14th		
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Pilates	Croffys Yard	8pm - 9pm

September 15th		
Ladies 19 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
September 16th		
Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Paudge Bennett	Killeens Bar	10pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
September 17th		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Trad Night	Killeens Bar	10pm
Open Music Session.	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
September 18th		
Open Ladies/Gents 18 Hole Stroke Stblf	Golf Club	All Day
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 1.30pm
Galway Culture Night - Free Concert	Pillar House	8pm
Culture Night Concert	Town Hall Theatre	8pm
The Music Men	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Transessún	An Táin	9.30pm
Mercy South	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Live Music	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
September 19th		
Soroptomists MS Charity	Golf Club	All Day
Mens 18 Hole Stroke Stableford (19th - 20th)	Golf Club	All Day
Living History 1915 Enactment	Town Hall Theatre	Daytime
Queen of the Fair Selection	Gullanes Hotel	8.30pm
Marley Road	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm
The Fanzines	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Geagan Pagans	Pillar House	10pm
Last Man Standing	Haydens Hotel	10pm
Tradstone	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
The Blaggards	Killeens Bar	10pm
Shane Moore	Valerie's of Aughrim	10.30pm
Too Tall Paul	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm
September 20th		
Trad Sessions	Pillar House	6pm
Imposter	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm
Buzz The Agent	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm
Live Music	An Táin	9pm
Jim Devine	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm
NightOwls	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Paddy Buckley	Killeens Bar	10pm
Session with Davy & The Boys	Valerie's of Aughrim	10pm
September 21st		
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Pilates	Croffys Yard	8pm - 9pm
September 22nd		
Ladies 18 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
September 23rd		
Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
Paudge Bennett	Killeens Bar	10pm
September 24th		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Bruno Groening - Circle of Friends	Gullanes Hotel	7pm
Open Music Session.	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Trad Session	Killeens Bar	10pm
September 25th		
Open Ladies & Gents 18 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9.30am - 1.30pm
"Turning Mammy" Comedy	Town Hall Theatre	8.30pm
Anything Goes	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Transessún	An Táin	9.30pm
Dj Johnny F	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
The Toxic Twins	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
John Molloy	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
September 26th		
Mens 18 Hole Stroke Stableford (26th - 27th)	Golf Club	All Day
Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
The High Reel	Canal Bar, Shearwater	9pm
Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm
Fortunate Sons	Killeens Bar	10pm
The Wheeler Johnsons	Maud Millars Bar	10pm
On Rail	Pillar House	10pm
Shane Moore	Haydens Hotel	10pm
Live Music	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
Dj	An Táin (upstairs)	10.30pm
The Livewires	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Rodneys Glory	Valerie's of Aughrim	10.30pm
September 27th		
Loose Rooster	Maud Millars Bar	8.30pm
TBC	Downeys Bar	8.30pm - 10.30pm
Johnny Brady	Plaza Room, Shearwater	9pm
Live Music	An Táin	9pm
Sauce Mechanics	Auld Sod Bar	10pm
The Coyle Family	Killeens Bar	10pm
Session with Davy & The Boys	Valerie's of Aughrim	10pm
September 28th		
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Pilates	Croffys Yard	8pm - 9pm
September 29th		
Ladies 18 Hole Stroke Stableford	Golf Club	All Day
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
September 30th		
Active Retirement Meeting	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm

To advertise your events here, Contact:

ballinasloelife@hotmail.com or Call 090 964 3779 or 085 148 1911

CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS



Wedding photograph of Shane Donnellan son of Johnny and Noreen Donnellan, Ballygill, Ballinasloe and Heather Johnson, Ontario Canada who were married recently in the Clayton Hotel Galway.



Some of the children enjoying a day at Camp Broadway as they show off their colourful creation



Pat Finn, Aughrim and Barry & Conor O'Keefe braved the inclement weather during the charity event held in Aughrim in aid of East Galway & Midlands Cancer Support Centre and Portiuncula Oncology Ward.



Photographed is Sean and Mary Carrick who celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary with their family at the Shearwater Hotel last weekend.



The Tully family from Derrymullen held a family reunion last weekend with members of their family travelling from all over the world to be here.

SUMMER IN BALLINASLOE

BY IVAN SMYTH

During the course of the summer the young people of Ballinasloe have participated and will participate in various activities. In this article we look at some of the organisations that provide the fun.

The Golf Club, located on the Portumna Road, is open all day every day. Membership for the year costs €65. There is a Summer Camp which will run from Monday the 20th July to Wednesday the 22nd July. A PTA professional is coming to the club and will teach the members new skills and techniques. For more information contact Carmel on 0909642126.

The GAA club in Ballinasloe recently hosted the hurling and football Cúl Camps for kids aged five to twelve years of age. There was a big attendance at both the hurling and football camps. Fifty five people attended the hurling camp with roughly seventy people attending the football camp.

There are twenty eight GAA teams in Ballinasloe from U6 to Senior. There has been success at the club recently with the minor footballers winning a league title and the U14 ladies reaching the Division B final in the Feile competition. You can find the club on Facebook at Ballinasloe GAA Club.

Coral Leisure, formerly known as the Kingfisher Club, is open from Monday to Saturday. During the week the club opens from 7 am to 10pm. At weekends it opens from 9 am to 5.45 pm. There is a Swim Camp on the 10th-14th August, at a cost of €50 and takes place from 10am until 11am.

Coral also have a separate summer camp which runs from the 17th-21st August, at a cost of €60 and runs from 9.30am to 3.30pm. During the summer, membership for a student is €99. The membership gives full access to the swimming pool and gym.

Cuckoo Hill Boot Camp in Taughmaconnell, run by Tommie Costello works to provide a fresh approach to fitness. The boot camp focuses on speed, stamina, strength and team building. There was a Summer Camp on in July with another camp on the 10th-14th August. The camps are for children from the ages of 8 to 16. Children are asked to bring shorts, boots, water, lunch and a change of clothes. For more information contact



Tommie on 087 6411530 or you can find them on facebook under Cuckoo Hill Boot camp.

The Tennis Club, situated in the grounds of the rugby club, has a professional on hand to teach the kids new skills and techniques. Membership for students is €15 for the year. Members get weekly coaching sessions and compete in competitions against other clubs. The club has two courts, one with the use of floodlights.

Training for members is on Thursdays with the U13s training from 6.30pm to 7.30pm. Over 13s train from 7.30pm to 8.30pm on Thursdays as well. You can find the Tennis Club on Facebook under Ballinasloe & District Tennis Club.

Ballinasloe Soccer Club had a soccer camp which ran in July for kids aged 5-13 years of age. Last year, membership was €60 for a child with a family costing €90. The club have two astro turf pitches, which can be booked for birthday parties. The astro turf pitches can also be booked for soccer kickabouts. They must be booked one hour in advance. They cost €50 for one hour. To book the astro turf pitches contact Brendan on 0877936535. For more information about the club visit the clubs Facebook page. It is Ballinasloe Town AFC.

There are plenty of other activities for the summer in Ballinasloe, including a **Kayaking Camp**. For more information visit Upriver.ie. For the dancing enthusiasts, In **Step Stage School** provide summer camps in various locations during the month of July. The club is located in Society Street, Ballinasloe.

U16 HURLING COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS



Back Row L-R: M. Fogarty, R. Parker, R. Dolan, O. Reilly, D. Kenny, C. Fahy, J. Coughlan, S. Mannion, M. Fogarty, E. Hardiman, W. Ward
Front Row L-R: F. Donnellan, C. Coleman, J. Mitchell, C. Potter, D. Potter, S. Reynolds, J. Ward, S. Jennings, P. Sheehan, D. Larkin

STREETSCAPE MAKEOVER

BY ZARA HILL

Similar to many other small provincial towns such as Carrick-on-Shannon, Clonakilty and Kinsale, one of the key recommendations from the local Town Action Project launched by Chris Wade in the spring, was the enhancement of derelict and disused buildings in the town.

The Town Team were delighted to have local artist Lily Kelly on board recently to coordinate a Street Art Project, to celebrate the creativity within the locality through the transformation of some local buildings.

Based at the Enterprise Centre, Lily offered her expertise on picking suitable palettes and colour schemes to transform some of the more derelict buildings in the town centre precincts.

The painting was carried out by Youth Work Ireland Volunteers, under the management of Edel Kelly and with the consent of the owners of the buildings. Paint for the Street Art Project was generously sponsored by Barretts.

According to Lily, "feedback on the street from this project has been very positive. People are very happy to see all the empty premises come to life."

She remarked; "the town has an abundance of very creative people young and old as I have discovered over the last few months, who are all willing to give a hand or a valued opinion."

To celebrate the creativity within the locality, Lily is hosting an art exhibition at the Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre on Culture Night, September 18. This will be an exhibition of the work from the adults, teenagers and children who have taken art classes at her studio.

Lily is taking bookings for September classes and hopes to encourage young and old in the community to sign up.

For more information on classes, contact Lily on 087 2042979 or Lilytwinkelly@yahoo.com.

Going forward, the Town Team are open to suggestions that may enhance the community, in light of the Action Project initiated earlier in the year. Contact Town Team Facilitator Jacinta Divilly at 0909646516 or feehilyj@gmail.com.



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ENCOURAGING EVERYONE TO SUPPORT GALWAY 2020



BY ZARA HILL

Every year since 1985, the European Union designates one or more cities as a European Capital of Culture they and their regions are expected to present an innovative, year-long cultural programme that highlights the richness and diversity of cultures in Europe.

Community Outreach Officer, Nollaig McGuinness is strongly encouraging people to get in touch with the Galway 2020 Team if they are interested in getting involved.

"We are looking to work up ideas for the general engagement of local communities in Galway 2020 and for specific project ideas for Galway 2020 that involve local communities. We want to do this in collaboration with local communities as it is really about local communities becoming actively involved in this from the outset"

"Galway 2020 aims to improve access to culture and art locally, it should see at least one big artistic or cultural event in Ballinasloe that involves lots of people from the local community" states Nollaig.



He believes, "inclusion is already a strong theme coming through in the consultation process and we would hope the projects developed will have a focus on improved inclusion of marginalised and hard to reach groups such as local arts and cultural groups."

This Galway County and City initiative is being run jointly by the two local authorities and according to Nollaig, "several county councillors have attended the local Speak Outs and have shown a real interest in promoting Galway 2020."

"Schools and young people will be directly involved in the Capital of Culture process. We will be working with schools throughout the county when they return in September, looking at what scope exists for large projects that involve lots of schools and that can create links with schools in other European countries."

Nollaig urges the local performance and musical groups to get involved saying; "there is room for voluntary groups to get involved as we want to showcase and develop creativity in our communities. While the production of Galway 2020 projects will require professional cultural producers (local, national and international) we also want local artists to be part of the process."

Nollaig can be contacted at 087 7489280 or Nollaig@galway2020.ie



GELS THIRD ANNUAL CYCLE

BY ZARA HILL

Taking place recently, the GELS (Galway East Life Support) third Annual 3-Town Charity Cycle raised over €4,000 for the local charity, with over 200 cyclists taking part.

Event Coordinator Arthur Carr of GELS said; "to see this event still going strong and growing year on year is amazing. We started this annual event in 2013 with 70 cyclists, last year we had two routes with over 150 participants and this year we had three routes and over 200 participants. As well as this, the Cycling Club coming on board to help promote and marshal the event was truly fantastic to see."

The special guest on the day was The Nicky Rackard Cup, which was given to the organising team for the day by the Roscommon Hurling Team.

GELS Chairman Aiden Lonnergan remarked; "this is the third cycle we have held and it's the third year that The Birchgrove have invited us to use their premises for the event. PJ always delivers and each year he makes it even better. We could not have such a successful event without the help of him and all at The Birchgrove Bar."

Following a BBQ, the entertainment began with local band Pacifica, with vocals from local singer Rachel Goode and this was followed by DJ Mike Devine.

Steven McGuire of Pacifica expressed his delight at being involved in this year's event. "We were very fortunate to be involved last year, it was a fantastic experience and when we were approached to be involved again this year, there was no doubt about it, we all said yes straight away."

During the night there was a raffle with numerous prizes, the main one being a choice of either male or female bicycle + helmet + a years membership to Ballinasloe Cycling Club. This prize was sponsored by Barry Taylor of Taylors Cycles. The lucky winner was Maeve Roche.

GELS PRO, David Carr remarked; "yet again the people of Ballinasloe have come together for this event and have made it a huge success. We cannot wait for July 16, 2016 when we will do it again."

GELS would like to thank everybody who helped with this years' event.

COMMUNITY SCREENING OF 'BALLINASLOE OUR TOWN' A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE OF BALLINASLOE

BY ZARA HILL

A community screening of the short film entitled; *Ballinasloe: Our Town* was hosted recently by two local support services within The Brothers of Charity Services Galway - SUAS Services and the Let's Get to Work Project.

The film, developed and presented by five participants of the SUAS Services and Lets Get to Work Project; John, Wayne, Jonathon, Marion and Rachel and produced by GK Media describes the impact of the economic recession on the town and how the community have rallied together to promote the culture and economy of the town.

Located in 10 Church Hill, SUAS Services (Support, Advocate, Upskill and Socialise) supports many individuals in the community living with an Intellectual Disability and helps them live the lives they want to live in their community.

Speaking at the first local screening in June, Let's Get to Work Project Outreach Support Worker, Sarah Reynolds from Corofin expressed her delight at the end result and the capacity for hope in the community.

"The Let's Get to Work Project has been so successful in Ballinasloe and it has given so many people an opportunity to develop their own business and gain working experience in a wide variety of areas such as dog grooming and car valeting."

"Ultimately, we wanted to bring the film home to Ballinasloe so I am delighted today for this group of participants who have shown great



enthusiasm and commitment throughout the project".

The project began in September and ran over the course of ten weeks; film tutor Gary Kelly from GK Media met with the five committed participants every Tuesday for the ten weeks to produce the 20 minute film which features many local business people.

Funding for the production of the film was provided under the Disability Activation Project (DACT) which was co-funded by the European Union under the European Social Fund and the Irish Government through Pobail.

Anne Geraghty, Director of Services of the Brothers of Charity Services Galway said on the day of the screening; "This film represents an important snapshot of the challenges Ballinasloe as a typical town in rural Ireland has experienced over the last number of years. The unique perspective provided by the SUAS and the Let's Get to Work Project participants over the 20 minutes of film shows what communities themselves can do to address these economic, social and cultural challenges. The making of the film has also ensured that the voice of all sectors of the community is heard."

On his first official engagement as Cathaoirleach of County Galway, Peter Roche highly commended the five individuals on their successful production and said it was

Front Row left to right: Sarah Reynolds Lets Get to Work Project, John Turley Short Film-Maker, Jonathan Griffin Short Film-Maker, Rachel Lyons Short Film-Maker. **Back Row left to right:** Garry Kelly GK Media Film Tutor, Tracey Moriarty SUAS Services Team Leader, Clare Kelly SUAS Services, Cathaoirleach Peter Roche, Bridie Roche, Anne Geraghty Director of Services Brothers of Charity Services, Cllr. Michael Finnerty, Patricia Keogh SUAS Services.

"a privilege and honour" to be at the first community screening of the film.

"I am taken by the amount of engagement this film has with the community and I think it exhibits Ballinasloe very well. It highlights one of the things that Ballinasloe excels in and that is the wonderful businesses here. It gives us the nucleus of what it is that this town needs going forward."

Sarah Reynolds from the Let's Get to Work project said; "we are now looking to source funding to secure the future of the project.", while SUAS Services hopes to expand its team of volunteers according to Team Leader, Tracey Moriarty.

"Our volunteers are an invaluable resource and asset to our team. Through their hard work and dedication; we are better able to support individuals to achieve their personal goals."

If you would like more information on becoming a volunteer with SUAS Services, please contact Tracey Moriarty, SUAS Services on 087 7675824.

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NEW LIBRARY BUILDING CLOSER TO OFFICIAL UNVEILING

BY ZARA HILL



With an expected opening date at the end of October, final works are being carried out on the new library, with the hope of returning the old Convent into a focal point in the community once again.

The new library will feature new state of the art facilities including an optional self-service system for loaning and returning books. Head Librarian Kieran Shaughnessy has been working at the current library for over a year and is looking forward to the opening of a newer and more modern library that can be used to its full potential.

"The new library will have a number of meeting rooms which will be available for booking and already various groups have booked these rooms for different projects next year", said Kieran.

Adding to the new look of the €3.5 million project, will be a number of extra Public desktops with full WiFi, Casual Seating Areas, Meeting Rooms and the current chapel is being transformed into a gallery.

This new space will function as an exhibition and performance area.

According to Kieran, "a substantial amount is being spent on new books for the library and more books will be bought depending on demand when the new library opens in October."

The current library located at the Fair Green employs two full time and one part time staff, however an initial request for more staff has been applied for; a request Kieran describes as being "out of our hands".

With the scaffolding down and the bright old stone gleaming and restored – with a very modern new glass walkway between the Kempster designed Chapel Cloister and Restored Residential Unit – it should add greatly to the street façade of Society Street.

Most locals have huge connections and great memories (some mixed perhaps) of their education and engagement with the Sisters of Mercy down through the years and it's opening will be warmly anticipated by most!

Former Convent Chapel will be part of the new Ballinasloe Library. It will serve as a gallery/exhibition area and will be used for recitals, talks and of course Europe Direct events.



ALL IRELAND GLORY FOR TAUGHMACONNELL SISTERS

BY ZARA HILL



Blaithín, Gráinne and Dairine Behan from Taughmaconnell recently competed in the All Ireland Dancing Championships in Limerick, where all three dancers were crowned All Ireland Champions, in what was a truly incredible day for the sisters, their proud parents and their school.

The youngest of the Behan sister trio Dairine won the Under 8 Premiership, while Gráinne and Blaithín won the Under 12 and Under 14 Primary Premierships respectively. The sisters are members of the Roscommon Academy of Irish Dance, under the guidance of their teacher Mary Dolan.

The Roscommon Academy of Irish Dance, which is registered with the World Irish Dance Association, is a thriving dance school dedicated to excellence in Irish Dance tuition. The school caters for children from three years of age and has had great success at local and national competitions. At the recent All Ireland Championships, the school won five premiership titles and placed in the 'top 5' in numerous solo competitions.

The Principal teacher at the Roscommon Academy, Mary Dolan has over 30 years of experience in the Irish Dancing scene and is a patient, enthusiastic and encouraging teacher, according to Carrol Behan.

"The children thrive under her instruction and each child is treated with the same respect and attention", remarked Carrol who is thrilled with the success of her three daughters.

Mary believes there is a place for every child in the Roscommon Academy and that dancers in the school grow in confidence and self-esteem through their participation in the dance classes. Mary has watched the Behan girls develop into talented dancers over the years and is delighted with their recent success at the All Ireland Championships.

"The girls have shown a natural talent for Irish dance from when they very first started lessons. They are three enthusiastic, hardworking and dedicated girls but most of all, they are happy and cheerful dancers with great personalities and a pleasure to have in the school. They have a very natural flair for Irish dancing and I think they have great potential for further successes in the future", added teacher Mary.



U8 All Ireland Champion, Dairine Behan.



U12 All-Ireland Champion Gráinne Behan and U14 Champion, Blaithín Behan.

CU FACTOR NATIONAL FINAL SET FOR BALLINASLOE



BY ZARA HILL

Buttons and bows, finished in 3rd place at the national final which took place in Ballinasloe in 2013



The National Final of the Credit Union Factor Final has been scheduled to take place locally in November, where a fantastic €3,000 is up for grabs for one lucky winner.

CU Factor is a singing and talent competition for 12-19 year olds, which is being run by credit unions across Ireland over the coming months. Twelve acts from around the country will battle it out in the National final being held at the Town Hall on November 7.

The local heat is scheduled to take place in October with the regional final also taking place here at the end of October.

Speaking at the launch, Chairman of the Ballinasloe Credit Union, William Duthie thanked the Town Hall committee for hosting the National Final in November.

"The fact that the both the national and regional finals are taking place in Ballinasloe should be a great incentive for local young people to get involved this year", remarked Mr Duthie.

Marketing Officer at Ballinasloe Credit Union, Niall Clarke recently said; "we have some very talented musicians, singers and dancers in this town and CU factor gives those individuals the opportunity to showcase their talent on a local Stage. I would encourage the local youth to get involved this year."

Visit www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie to download an application form. Forms are also available at the local Credit Union.

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16th: Shane Moore • 22nd: Dave Byrnes

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TOWN HALL THEATRE EVENTS PREVIEW

BY CIARA BERESFORD



Whilst the summer is a time of year most Theatres can get their annual make over done – the Society Street premises has had a busy June July and sees a varied and interesting programme for August – September this year.

The Starcamp summer camp is a nationwide drama, dance and singing school for kids which is returning to the Town Hall Theatre on the 10th - 14th of August. The camp offers endless opportunities in all aspects of performing which allows children to transform into the most confident and self-assured young people. Being Ireland's only Nationwide Performing Drama Summer Camp, it has been well recognised all over the country winning numerous awards and appearing on shows such as The Dragons Den, Ireland AM and The Late Late Toy Show. For further information check out their website at www.starcamp.ie. Majella Flanagan, an expert in performing arts both on stage and behind the scenes, invites young people to explore the world of theatre as her classes will also resume September 4th in the town hall. For further information regarding enrolment Majella may be contacted on 086 3824545 or through flanaganmajella@gmail.com.

September 18th will showcase Ballinasloe's very own Culture Night. The first half of the concert will display various artists commemorating a range of cultural and historical events. Following on to the second half of the show, we will be graced by the presence of John Wynne, one of the finest flute players of his time as he serenades the audience with tracks from his new album.

The grounds of the Town Hall will also display another culture filled experience on the 19th September when a 1915 Living History enactment will take place. The enactment is a daytime event which incorporates historical scenarios, musicians and other vendors performed by St. Brigid's Historical Society.

September 25th will bring the return of the BeezneeZ, a theatre company who have played to full houses and standing ovations all over Ireland. The BeezneeZ recently experienced their first night in Ballinasloe theatre, successfully displaying their hit comedy 'They will be done' which left the crowd chuckling in their seats. They will showcase their latest comedic play "Turning Mammy".

The country market also continues every Friday from 9.30am – 1.30pm in the town hall foyer. There is a wide range of fresh, home-made produce sold at the market. It boasts a fine array of local produce ranging from brown bread & fruit scones to free range eggs and seasonal vegetable which are reasonably priced and freshly made. Craft items, jewellery and handmade soap are also on display.

IF you would like to produce a show or book tickets please contact 087 68674890 or for additional events see www.ballinasloetownhall.com



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LOCAL PLAYWRIGHT EAMONN O'DONOGHUE



BY ZARA HILL

Returning to third level education has been a challenging yet worthwhile endeavour for local playwright Eamonn O'Donoghue. Having retired as Principal of St. Cuan's College in Castleblakeney in 2011, after 24 years of teaching, Eamonn is once again exhibiting his writing talents in his latest creation, 'Cherished Angels', a play based on the Tuam mother and baby home scandal.

Originally from Castleblakeney, Eamonn is no stranger to the acting scene in town and has appeared in and directed many local stage productions down through the years with the Relays Drama Group. Having established the Acorn Theatre Company in 2002, Eamonn continues to host shows with them locally.

Throughout his career, Eamonn has had many notable successes in the field of Directing. A stand out achievement for him was 'Conversations on a Homecoming', a Tom Murphy play which won an All-Ireland Final in 1987 and subsequently brought him and the Relays to the International Drama Festival in Dundalk.

Attending St. Jarlaths Secondary School in Tuam, Eamonn was always a great fan of the GAA and it was only when he moved to Ballinasloe after marrying his wife Freda that he got seriously involved in drama and theatre.

"Football was the big thing growing up where I lived. I played football and hurling in Secondary School at St. Jarlaths, a school that was renowned for its football."

Eamonn joined the local Relays Group at a time

when the late Dermot Connolly was "the big man on the scene".

"I got in touch with Dermot and John Boland and to make a long story short, we got a show up and running called 'Da', in which I played the role of Charlie." 'Da' was followed by the Arthur Millar play, 'All My Sons' and then, 'The Importance of Being Ernest', a play in which I performed opposite John Boland."

Eamonn describes 'The Last Burning', a play based on the true story of the burning of Brigid Cleary in her own fireplace in Tipperary in the 1980's as the "most smashing" thing he ever did.

"To do this play, I decided that we wouldn't do it on a stage, but we would do it in Hayden's Ballroom. We set up a raised stage which had a space underneath where we could light fires and have people enter the stage from underground. If you ask anyone who saw it, I think they would tell you that they have never forgotten it", remarked the local man.

Eamonn and the Relays were invited to travel abroad with 'The Last Burning' by the Amateur Drama League, an organisation with which Eamonn was heavily involved with over the years, both as its Chairman and Secretary.

The play travelled to the Theatre Festival Mondial in Monaco in 1989 where the play was presented at the Princess Grace Theatre.

In the 80's Eamonn was part of a cast who presented a half an hour drama called 'The Changeling', which was written and performed in Ballinasloe.

He also participated in the PJ O'Connor Drama Competition and won an award for Best Director for the radio play, 'Death of a Chopper'.

Eamonn became the Director of the Gormanston Drama Summer School in 1981, having attended the school for years. Taking place from August 2 - 8 this year in Co. Meath, the school offers adults a mix of courses in a variety of areas including; Acting, Directing and Voice. Eamonn is also a founding member of Stagewise - Ireland's leading residential performing arts camp ideal for young people aged 13-18, which was established in the early 1990's.



In 2013, Eamonn made the decision to return to third level education in NUIG and describes it as "one of the best things" he has ever done.

"I always wanted to go back to college, but never had the opportunity", remarked Eamonn who has recently completed four years in NUI Galway studying Drama and Theatre Studies.

"It's very empowering to go back and be alongside mainly young people who are full of ideas and idealisms. When you

get older you get cynical and stuck in your ways and feel there's no more to learn, but the more you learn, the more you know there is to learn."

At Present, Eamonn is kept busy with the Gormanston Drama Summer School, Stagewise Drama School, Acorn Theatre, writing plays and continues to be influenced by his wife Freda and sons Darrell and Rónan. As Eamonn so brilliantly puts it; "did I mention I'm retired?"

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LARRY REYNOLDS - A WEEKEND OF TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC

BY ZARA HILL

Following on from the huge success of the first Larry Reynolds Irish Music Weekend in September last year, plans are underway for a bigger and busier weekend this year according to local woman Kathryn Gibbons.



Matt Cunningham and Family

Taking place from the Friday 11 – Sunday 13 September 2015, the second Annual Larry Reynolds Irish Music Weekend promises to be “a weekend of remembrance, music, song, dance and craic, to commemorate all that Larry has done for the Irish music scene”, remarked Kathryn, who is a key member of the organising committee.

Kathryn and her family have a life-long relationship with the Reynolds family - a friendship that extends back to the opening night of Gibbons' Bar in 1958, which Kathryn celebrated in the presence of Larry's bother Séan Reynolds. This year, Kathryn hopes to get the whole community involved in what is a “massive” weekend for the community.

“The focus of this weekend is very much on meeting old friends, encouraging the youth to play and learn traditional music and most importantly, to commemorate a great musician, who gave so generously of his time, spirit and friendship.”

Larry Reynolds hailed from the townland of Shanboley, Ahascragh and was the second youngest of 10 children. When Larry was just 10 years of age, his eldest brother Harry bought him

his first fiddle, while his lessons with Mabel West were paid for by his sister Betty, both of which proved to be worthwhile investments.

Like so many more of his time, with his fiddle under his arm, Larry immigrated to Boston in 1953 where he settled and made his home. Over time he became a highly influential fiddle player, not only for his East Galway style of playing but also because of the contribution he made to Irish culture in Boston and all over North America.

Larry's musical achievements were many; in his lifetime he was founding member of the Boston Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann in 1975, a member of the Tara Ceilí Band and The Connaught Ceilí Band, a recording artist featured on many well known albums, listed in the Top 100 Irish Americans, an Irish music broadcaster on a Boston radio station, he played to two Irish Presidents, Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese and also played for some of America's political elite, Tip O'Neil and William Bulger.



Peggy, Seán, Phyllis, Harry and Tena - members of the Reynolds Family

As well as this, “Larry could be found every Monday night at the Green Briar, plying his craft as a musician and as a mentor to many other musicians”, added Kathryn.

In 1954, Larry married Phyllis and had seven children. Their home in Waltham operated as an open door policy for many young Irish and American musicians and throughout his life he led the way for generations of traditional Irish Musicians.

“The work he did for so many young Irish

emigrants is legendary and so many young people were directed to Larry as a man who would unselfishly give his time to help them get their first start”, remarked Kathryn.

The Larry Reynolds Memorial Concert takes place on Friday, September 11 at 8pm in the Town Hall and will showcase some of the finest exponents of Irish Music; featuring members of Larry's extended Family, The Matt Cunningham Band and Citizen Keane.

Saturday offers a number of traditional Irish craft exhibitions and traditional music workshops and Sean Nós Dance workshops.

“This year, there will be a guided historical walking tour of the town”, said Kathryn who is greatly looking forward to this year's celebrations.

A Ceilí is taking place in Gullanes Hotel on Sunday afternoon from 2.30 to 5.30 pm, with music provided by the Salamanca Ceilí band.

According to music enthusiast Kathryn, “there'll be no excuse not to get out on the floor. A rousing session of Irish music on Sunday night will bring about a conclusion of the weekends festivities. The perfect way to end a great weekend.”

Crystal Travel & Tours in Boston are running a group tour of Ireland to coincide with the festival and can work with anyone who wishes to be in Ballinasloe for the 2015 Larry Reynolds weekend. More details can be found on their website www.crystal-travel.com/reynolds/ or by calling 617.327.4242.

For enquiries and to book workshops please contact: Kathryn Gibbons: 087 9046140, kathryngibbons@iol.ie or John Wynne: 087 2239095, wynnejoh@eircom.net.



Larry Reynolds

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AIMS SUCCESS FOR MUSICAL SOCIETY

BY ZARA HILL



The Musical Society scooped up an impressive haul of awards at this year's National AIMS Awards for their production of *The Addams Family*. A number of star-quality performances and sell out shows back in March earned them second place in the Best Overall Show Category in the country.

More than 20 members of the local Musical Society travelled to the Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney in June, for what was an extravagant gathering and celebration of the finest Musical Directors, Producers, Singers, Musicians, Actors and Actresses in the country.

In addition to finishing second in the Best Overall Show, *The Addams Family* took home a number of Awards in the Sullivan Section including; Best Ensemble – awarded for a particular scene in the show - runners up in the Best Chorus Award and Paul Norton won Best Director.

Current Chairman of the Musical Society Gerard Sweeney commented; "it is great to see a fantastic production achieving the recognition it deserved. We had a fantastic weekend of fun and frolics, culminated with the fantastic achievement of being awarded second overall in Ireland for best musical production in the Sullivan category."

Outgoing Chairperson Francis Leahy was among those who attended the awards ceremony in Killarney. "Because the awards were for the categories Best Chorus, Best Ensemble, Best Director and Best Overall



Show, the Awards were a recognition for everyone involved, not any one individual. It's a testament to the team work of all the Society members on and off stage as well as the support we receive from our many Patrons and Sponsors without whom we could not stage an annual musical - our main sponsor this year being Ballinasloe Credit Union. Also we acknowledge the support we get from Thomas and Caroline Gullane for providing us with rehearsal facilities in the months coming up to the show. These awards are for everyone who help us to put the show on stage."

Following a successful season, the Society have already announced their decision for next year's production. The award winning cast will take to the Town Hall Theatre stage once again from March 1 - 4th 2016, with their production of "The Producers".



LARGE CROWDS EXPECTED TO ATTEND HORSE FAIR

BY NIAL CLARKE

Horse of The Fair 2014, Sue White, Steven Whitaker, William Duthie-Cahirman BCU, Colm McLoughlin, Adrian Ahern, Brendan O'Boyle

An excess of 80,000 visitors are expected to attend this year's October Fair and Festival, bringing with them and an estimated €8.5 million revenue for the local economy.

Fair and Festival Chairman, Adrian said: "Our Horse fair is the oldest in Europe, and the greatest celebration of the horse and equine culture in Ireland."

"This year we have a huge number of activities planned, from the traditional equine elements to a wide range of activities to cater for families and tourists including; street entertainment, Equine Parade, Soap Box Derby, Tug-O-War, Street Theatre, a Food and Craft Market, Dog Show and great music in the local pubs," he added.

This year's event takes place from Saturday October 3 to Sunday October 11 with the Selection of the Queen of the Fair on Saturday September 19 in Gullanes Hotel.

Each year, the Queen is one of the guests of honour at the Fair and Festival and also goes

forward to the following year's Galway Regional Finals of the Rose of Tralee .

Last year's Queen, Avril Smith from Ahascragh will be there on the night to hand over her crown. It is still possible to apply by contacting Mary Phelan on 087 2071869 or email info@ballinasloeoctoberfair.com.

On Saturday October 3, visitors can enjoy an equine parade and music on the festival sound-stage, while on Sunday October 4, the horse fair gets into full swing on the town's Fair Green.

A great tourist attraction in its own right, the colour and characters on the Fair Green make for a uniquely Irish experience. The Green's lunging area also plays host to the 'Credit Union Horse of the Fair' lunging competition. Visitors will be treated to free music on the sound-stage in the town centre.

On Monday October 5, the Fair Green will again host two more lunging competitions; The 'Jim Derwin All Ireland Pony Lunging Competition' and the 'All-Ireland Cob Lunging Competition'.

Mid-week, the town plays host to Tarmac Tug-

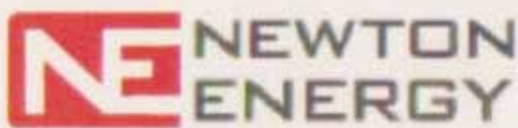
O-War on Wednesday 7 and Friday 9 on Society Street. There is entertainment and live music in the participating pubs each night.

On Thursday October 8, the Soap Box Derby will take place on Dunlo Street, while the Supermacs Monster Fireworks display at the marina will be the main attraction on Friday night.

Saturday October 10 is best known by Festival goers as, 'Country Fair Day'. The best of traditional Irish music will be played all day on the sound-stage. The Fair Green also plays host to the annual mare and foal competitions.

Sunday October 11 is the final day of the Fair and is jam packed with activities for all the family. The Open Dog Show takes place in the St. Michael's Square. The dog show has grown steadily in recent years, and is now the largest event of its type in the region. Also running all day will be the Craft and Food Market in St Michaels Square.

For more information log-on to <http://ballinasloeoctoberfair.com> or call the Fair HQ on 090 9644793.



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PASSING ON A LIVING TRADITION TO ANOTHER GENERATION

BY ZARA HILL



Coming from a traditional Irish and set dancing background, local sisters Martina Flanagan and Bridie Ruane are now four years teaching Sean Nós locally. Club Damhsa ar an Sean Nós has had many notable successes at competition level recently and this year will be represented in the All-Ireland Fleadh.

With numerous titles between them, Sean Nós dancing is second nature to Martina and Bridie who were "born and bred in Ballinasloe". The innovative pair set up Club Damhsa ar an Sean Nós in 2012, after seeing a demand locally to learn this free style of dance.

Martina describes Sean Nós dancing as an "old style dance that is very relaxed and free". For her, the two most important fundamentals of Sean Nós dancing are timing and rhythm and these are the main elements incorporated in their weekly classes at the GAA Clubhouse.

"When you hear the sound of a true Sean-Nós dancer's footwork, it has a timely rhythmic quality, trapping each note of music on the floor. A Sean Nós dancer's unique personal style is highly valued and the relationship between dancer and music is one", remarked the local woman.

Martina and Bridie have attended workshops with some of the greatest names associated with Sean Nós dancing from the Connemara region, such as; Padhraig Ó Hoibicin, The Cunningham Family, The Devane Brothers and Emma O'Sullivan.

Using their combined knowledge, experience and passion, together Martina and Bridie have developed their own Sean Nós steps which they now teach in their weekly classes.

The club recently travelled to compete in Sean Nós dance competitions at the Galway County



Fleadh, the Open All Ireland Fleadh Nua in Ennis and The Connacht Fleadh in Ballymote.

The club did exceptionally well, taking home three 1st, Four 2nd, Two 3rd, One 4th place and two recommended places. Marian Ruane will represent the club competing in the All-Ireland Fleadh in Sligo this month in the Over 18 competition.

The classes introduce children to the Sean Nós style of dance and Martina feels great pride in watching them develop an ear for traditional music.

"We help them to get to know the difference between a reel, a hornpipe or a jig, encourage improvisation, self-development, overcome shyness, make new friends, have fun and keep fit. Parents have seen all of these characteristics grow in their children since starting Sean Nós dance", remarked Martina.

The women also want to encourage more over 18's to join the club, describing it as a great social scene.

At present, there are two age categories in the club, Under 18 and Over 18 and there are three levels in the club, Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced. For those who want to enter competitions extra tuition is provided in workshops.

Now Martina and Bridie are hoping that an East Galway musician will write a new East Galway Reel and Hornpipe especially for dancers.

"We have come up with two great names which describe our club perfectly; "Have Shoes Will Travel" and "The Bucket List".

For more information on joining the club or on workshops in your area contact Martina on 087-9007036 or email clubseanos@gmail.com

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LOCAL SPORTS CLUBS DOING THEIR BIT FOR LOCAL ECONOMY

BY ZARA HILL

Many of the local sports clubs have a particular policy when it comes to the purchase of new jerseys, gear and equipment throughout the year to keep local suppliers and shopkeepers in business.

It's good to know that most of our local sporting organisations try where possible to leave their business local – when we are buying the lotto ticket or supporting the raffle!

GAA Club Secretary, Conor Ryan believes it is very important to support locally, not only when it comes to buying new gear, but also in the development of new clubhouses and facilities through the employment of local contractors.

“For any major contract work such as the construction of new clubhouses and pitches or new fencing on the club grounds, we would always try to use local contractors. We get all of our gear and supplies locally from the likes of Colohans and Barretts”, said Conor.

“For various events and parties that take place throughout the year, food is sourced locally from places such as the Breadbasket, Supervalu right next door to us, Downey's and Karibas, to name a few. We source other gear and equipment locally from Noel Mannion”.

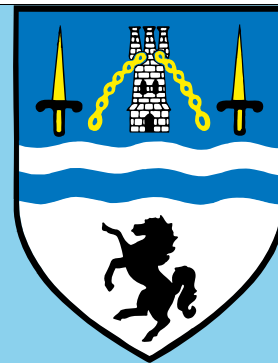
With regards to sponsorship, we are very lucky to have such local support and we try to give back as much as we can by buying our equipment and gear locally. For our cycle this year we had over 50 local sponsors which was extremely generous. However, by buying locally, we feel that what we take out of the community, we always give back through this” stated Conor.

Rugby Club PRO Declan Quinn remarked that the club has “no hesitation” when it comes to supporting local suppliers.

“When it comes to buying gear and supplies for the Rugby club, we have a very strict policy about buying local. It's very important to us that we give back to all of the local suppliers and businesses who help us down through the years through sponsorship and fundraising.

“Typically, we buy one or two sets of jerseys a year worth over €1,000 and we would always source them from the one local supplier. It's easy to go online and buy what you want and possibly at a cheaper margin, but as a club we would never dream about doing this.” states Declan.

“Our local distributors are very important to us as a club and we make it known to all of our players and parents coming through when we are being sponsored by a local organisation and that we are benefitting from local suppliers.



We also recognise that it is sometimes next to impossible for local businesses to offer sponsorship all of the time but it can often be hard for them to say no. All in all, we take our hats off to them as they have been very good, not only to the rugby club, but to all of the local sports clubs” says Declan.

“Where we can, we always shop local for supplies and gear throughout the year. This not only applies to gear but also extends to transport and any construction work that takes place on the club grounds. We source all of our transport and buses to games locally and as well as this, our new clubhouse was built by a local builder” states Johnny Walsh Chairman Town F.C.

“For games and events, we would also source minerals and refreshments from local suppliers. It is very important to support local as it gives us the chance to give back to all of the local businesses who contribute when we go looking for sponsorship. It's a circle and we have to play our part as a club and this is something we have always advocated among our players, mentors and parents. The club is delighted with the ongoing support from the town's businesses and suppliers and we will continue to give back in any way we can” said Johnny.



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1. Tara McKeon will now go on to represent Galway County in the U12 Girls Freestyle at the National Community Games Finals in August.

2. U13 Girls Gold medal winning Relay Team. L-R: Tara McKeon, Ava McKeon, Caoimhe Kennedy, Ailbhe Hanrahan, Ruth Dolan. They will now go on to represent Galway County in the National Community Games Finals in August.

3. Rowan Harley will now go on to represent Galway County in the U14 Boys Freestyle at the National Community Games Finals in August.

4. Boys U/13 Relay from Ballinasloe who came 3rd at the Galway Community Games Swimming Finals

5. Caoimhe Kennedy & Ruth Dolan

6. James Mooney will now go on to represent Galway County in the U12 Boys Breaststroke at the National Community Games Finals in August.

COMMUNITY GAMES FINALISTS

The Athletics and Swimming disciplines will be well represented at this year's Community Games National Finals, with a total of 16 participants taking part between the two clubs.

Kayla McKeon, Aoibheann Fitzpatrick, Clodagh Killeen, Charlie Naughton, Shane Fitzpatrick, Adam McGreal, Conor Harley, Godfrey Gibbons and Michael O'Grady are the nine local athletes who will travel to Athlone on August 22 and 23 to compete in the National Finals of the Community Games.

In addition, Ruth Dolan, Tara McKeon, James Mooney, Rowan Harley, Ava McKeon, Caoimhe Kennedy and Ailbhe Hanrahan will represent the

Swimming Club in the National Community Games which will be held in Athlone on August 15 and 16.

The aforementioned athletes did exceptionally well in the Galway Round of the Community Games held in May and June to qualify for the highly anticipated finals.

Kayla McKeon, Aoibheann Fitzpatrick and Clodagh Killeen will represent Ballinasloe & District Athletics club in the 100m, 200m and the 60m hurdles events respectively.

Former U8 Community Games Champion, Charlie Naughton will compete in the U12 competition and Shane Fitzpatrick will take part in the U11 600m event. Adam McGreal will compete in the Ball Throw after coming first in the Galway Finals.

The U12 Boys Relay Team also got through to the National Finals this month. Charlie Naughton, Shane Fitzpatrick, Conor Harley, Adam McGreal, Godfrey Gibbons and Michael O'Grady make up this winning team.

The Swimming Club would like to congratulate all of the swimmers who participated in the Galway Swimming Community Games which was held in Tuam in June.

Club PRO Monica McKeon stated " we wish All the 16 finalists the best of luck in the Community Games National Finals and hope they do us all proud".



Over 100 people attended a Family Fun Day and Barbeque at Egan's Bar in June to show their support for the local Tennis Club.

While the Wimbledon Tennis Final was being shown on the big screen, there was plenty of entertainment provided for all ages, including a children's disco and games throughout the day. A mini tennis court was set up by Club Coach Robert Johnson to give children an opportunity to practise their sport on the day.

A great day was had by all and the Tennis Club would like to thank chef Declan Egan and his staff for their support in hosting this very successful event.

In addition, this year's Tennis Camps have come to an end, after running for four weeks from July 6.

This year's camps were "very well attended" according to club spokesperson Garry Zancanaro.

"Over 40 children aged 5-17 attended each week and the feedback from both parents and children has been extremely positive", added the local man.

Joe Gibbons, aged 12 said; "I only started playing this year and have been coming to the junior sessions. This is my first time at the camps and Rob makes it great fun and you learn a lot. I'll definitely keep playing and come back to the camps next year."

Ten-year-old Tom Cafferky said; "I've been coming to the camps for 5 years and doing coaching with Rob and I'm now on the Connaught junior squad. I want to keep getting better and play in a lot more competitions against

better players. Playing tennis has also improved my hurling".

One of the Club's youngest members, five-year-old Fiona Zancanaro said; "I love playing tennis and Rob's a great coach. I want to play Serena Williams when I grow up."

Meanwhile, members of the Ballinasloe & District Tennis Club are regularly participating in Inter Club Competitions and also have a number of ongoing Intra Club Competitions taking place for the rest of the year.

The upcoming Club Activities for Members are as follows:

Tuesday 7pm: Ladies Night

Thursday 6.30 – 7.30pm: Juniors aged 5-12. Sessions run by adult members

Thursday 7.30 – 8.30pm: Juniors aged 13+. Sessions run by adult members

Wednesday and Friday Night from 7.30: Open Adult Mixed Sessions. All members welcome

Sundays 10 – 11.30am: Juniors aged 13+. Sessions run by adult members

Sundays 11.30-1.00pm: Juniors aged 5-12. Sessions run by adult members

Non Members are welcome to participate in any one of the above sessions but will expected to join the club to continue to participate.

Membership Fees per annum:

Adult €25, Junior/ Student €15, Family €40.

For more information call Garry: 085 112 4197, Joe: 087 252 1424, Kevin: 087 621 9905, Declan: 087 915 9771 or Louise: 087 135 3751. Alternatively, visit their Facebook Page.

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CAMOGIE SUCCESS



Joe Murray, Agricultural Supplies and Marina Downey, Downey's Bar presenting new jerseys to members of the Senior Camogie Team.

The local Camogie club is back on track this year with the underage teams doing very well at Championship level.

The U8's continue to train every Wednesday in the girls' school and have travelled to neighbouring clubs to participate in games. The U10's have had a very successful season, reaching the 'A' semi-final in the Championship where they lost out to Davitts. The U12's also reached their semi-final in the Championship.

The U14 were unlucky to lose out in their shield semi – final in the Championship. However, according to Club Chairperson Sinéad Kennedy, "they are still contesting the league and are set to do well in the north board league". Saoirse ní Tuairisg was a part of the Galway U14 squad that won the U14A Inter County blitz in Ennis recently.

The U16's have a new trainer and manager involved this year and are "full of drive having already secured a win in their first round of the championship", remarked Sinéad.

Meanwhile, the junior team recently got new jerseys, sponsored by Joe Murray Agricultural Supplies and Downey's Bar and have been doing well in their Championship to date.

Upcoming fundraisers include a Race Night, taking place in Maud Millars on Sunday August 16 and a Family Fun Day on Sunday August 23 in Haydens. The club lotto takes place every Saturday locally. Congratulations to student David Freeman who recently took home a lotto jackpot of €9250.

BRASSIL WINS IRELAND'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL GOLD

BY ZARA HILL



Accomplished athlete Sive Brassil from Mountpleasant, Ballinasloe recently enjoyed her first major success in International Competition as she finished first at the International Open Championships in Barcelona.

The 21-year-old UCD student first joined the East Galway Pony Club in 2005 as part of the first Pentathlon Ireland trip abroad to Portugal and has since worked her way up to her latest success at the International Open Championships which took place in Barcelona, Spain at the end of June.

Sive competed against 22 athletes from 12 different nations in a grueling women's Pentathlon Competition; a five phase Olympic sport consisting of Fencing, Swimming, Horse-riding, Shooting and Running. The Pentathlon is a sport often referred to as the "true Olympic sport" and the "sport that most accurately conveys the ideals of Olympism", according to Pony Club PRO, Ruth Waldron.

The competition began with the fencing event in which Sive fenced a personal best score of 268 points with 17 victories and four defeats, a result which placed her in first position going into the swim event.

Ruth Waldron explained; "Sive was the last athlete to do the jumping round and she had a lovely clear round, which increased her lead going into the combined event."

Sive went on to compete in the Senior World Championships in Berlin at the end of June where she and her teammate Kate Coleman Lenehan finished 12th in the Women's Team relay.

Sive first started modern pentathlon when she was 11 years old, according to Ruth who has watched her train hard to get to where she is today.

"She did tetrathlon with the East Galway Pony Club and that's how she found out about modern pentathlon. She now trains with the national pentathlon squad based in Blanchardstown in the National Sports Campus, as well as continuing her studies in UCD. I'm sure we'll see lots more from her in the future."



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SEVEN PLAYERS FROM THE LOCAL U14 TEAM HAVE MADE THE U14 COUNTY DEVELOPMENT SQUAD, AN ACHIEVEMENT TO BE PROUD OF, ACCORDING THE MANAGER AIDAN DOOLEY.

Back - L to R: Stuart Madden, Conor Coleman, Ódhrán Dooley, Mark Poland.

Front - L to R: Cian Reynolds, Shane Carrig, Zach Moloney, Oisín McCormack

All players are members of Ballinasloe GAA Club and have been picked to attend County Trials

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NATIONAL DRAUGHT HORSESHOW FOR SHOWGROUNDS

BY ZARA HILL



Left to Right: Sean Egan Ardahan, John Burke Athenry, Pauline Beckett Kilconnell, Sean Cooney Botannica N.I., Anne Loughane Cork, Marcus Donnellan Tuum.

Society and this year will feature a Dog Show, among many other events including a number of Show Classes, Ridden Classes and Performances taking place throughout the day.

The show will also give spectators and horse enthusiasts an opportunity to meet owners and breeders of these draught horses and share with them their knowledge and expertise.

At the launch of the Show at Gullanes Hotel in July, it was announced that Ballinasloe will facilitate the show for the next three years.

John Kelly believes this will be significant for the town and encourages everyone living locally to support the show on August 2 and for the next two years. Stables are available on the day. For further details, contact John Kelly at 087 2146341.

The 30th Annual Draught Show will be hosted by the Galway Branch of the Irish Draught Horse Society in the local Showgrounds in August. A great variety of classes and activities are planned for this significant anniversary National Show.

The one day National Show is taking place in Ballinasloe for the first time on August 2 and is expected to showcase over 200 draught horses, according to IDHS committee member John Kelly from Kilconnell.

"We are delighted that the Showgrounds have made the grounds available for us on the day and we are grateful to the local Councillors for facilitating free parking on the day also", remarked Mr Kelly.

"It is the first time the show has come to Ballinasloe and it will be a great day for the town and its businesses", added the local man.

The National Show is the premier event for the Irish Draught Horse

BALLINASLOE SHOW KEY DATES ANNOUNCED

Preparations are underway to "re-vamp" this year's October Show, the premier horse event on the calendar, according to Show Committee Member John Harney.

A Committee of 14 Directors and 15 Members have been working on this year's preparations to include lots of activity on the day of the Show, including a children's Art Competition.

This year's Show is taking place on October 3 and the grounds are available for practicing at a fee of €5 per horse. Parking is also available on the Showgrounds on the day of the show.

The catalogue including the prize schedule and application form for this year's show will be available from August 15 and the closing date for applications is September 25. For more information please contact the Show Secretary Pádraic Ryan on 085 8005577.

Senator MICHAEL MULLINS

For advice or assistance
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CONTINUED SUCCESS FOR ATHLETICS CLUB

BY ZARA HILL

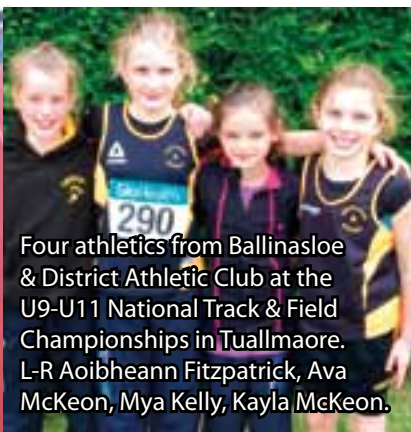


It's been a busy few months of tough competition for Ballinasloe & District Athletics Club who have proved very successful, with nine talented athletes through to the National Community Games Finals this month and a fourth National Title in the bag for Veronica Burke.

Beginning with The U9-11 National Track & Field Championships which were held in Tullamore in June, Aoibheann Fitzpatrick and Kayla McKeon represented the club in the U10 60m and 500m paired events and finished in sixth and eighth position respectively. Ava McKeon and Mya Kelly also ran in the U11 600m and finished in eighth position.



Veronica Burke wins her 4th National 3K Race Walk Title this year.



Four athletics from Ballinasloe & District Athletic Club at the U9-U11 National Track & Field Championships in Tuallmaore. L-R Aoibheann Fitzpatrick, Ava McKeon, Mya Kelly, Kayla McKeon.



Charlie Naughton & Shane Fitzpatrick from Ballinasloe & District Athletic Club at the National Juvenile T&F Championship.

faster than her previous time in the same event at the Irish Schools T&F Championships in May where she also won Gold. This title adds to her four win record this year alone, having won National Gold medals in the Junior Indoor T&F Championships in January and the Senior Indoor T&F Championships in February.

Monica McKeon remarked; "Well done to this outstanding athlete who continues to do Ballinasloe and District Athletic Club proud."

In further competition news, Shane Fitzpatrick finished fifth in the U12 Boys 600m race at the National Juvenile Track and Field Championships U12-19 in July.

According to Monica, "he had a brilliant run, knocking seven seconds off the time he ran the 600m in the Connacht Round."

Club PRO Monica McKeon remarked; "Mya had a great run, knocking nearly seven seconds off her previous personal best. Ava had an outstanding run and had the second fastest individual time in this event, finishing less than a second behind the fastest runner"

Meanwhile, Veronica Burke won her fourth National 3K Race Walk Title this year.

The local Athlete who finished her Leaving Certificate Examinations in June won Gold in the Junior Women's 3K Race Walk in July at the GloHealth National Junior & U23 Track & Field Championships.

She finished the competition at a time of 14.45.61, over ten seconds

On day two of the National Juvenile T&F Championships in July, Charlie Naughton and Shane were among only three runners who qualified out of Connacht to compete in the Nationals in the U12 Boys 60m event.

The All Ireland Schools Track & Field Championships were held in Tullamore in May, Veronica Burke came first in the Senior Girls 3000m race walk. Niamh Daly put in another "brilliant performance", which gave her fifth position in the Intermediate Girls 3000m. Brian Burke also finished in 11th place in the U16 Mile event.

Nine members of the Athletics club will compete in the National Community Games Finals in Athlone on August 22 and 23.

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NEW BALLINASLOE DRIFT CLUB

BY ZARA HILL

The Ballinasloe Charity Drift Day was established in September 2014 to raise funds for various local charities. Since then, the club has raised over €10,000 for charity and is now made up of 13 people aged between 18 and 24.

Drifting is a driving technique where the driver intentionally oversteers causing loss of traction in the rear wheels or all tyres, while maintaining control from entry to exit of a corner, it is quite popular with young drivers in the modified car sector and has its own codes within the motorsport world.

The first Charity Drift Day was a huge success, according to Club Chairperson Ian Gorman. Due to its success, two more events took place in the local Mart in January and May of this year.

"The events include drifting and a Show N' Shine, which involves parking up and polishing your car, both of which are all very popular in the modified car scene", explained Ian German.

"The event is open to anyone who has an interest in cars and there are lots of competitions on the day including King of the Cone and a prize for the best car in the Show N' Shine event".

In the four events held by the club since its initiation in September last year, over €10,000 has been raised for charities such as IINM Suicide Prevention, Beaumont Hospital, and locally for St. Theresa's Special School and the Children's Ward in Portiuncula Hospital.

Ian Gorman remarked; "the charity day has expanded a great deal, from just 100 people attending our first one, to over 400 at the last one. We hope to have another charity event as soon as possible and raise money for the wonderful Brothers of Charity Services here in town".

The new club has a policy of supporting local and ensures that all services provided at events are kept local. Although the club is still in the



early stages of initiation, Ian has noticed some negative reaction from townspeople regarding events held by the club.

"I have noticed that a number of the town's residents seem not to want to see such events going ahead. We hear the phrase, "there's nothing in this town", but yet when we try and bring something to it, who's behind us?"

Ian believes this is a great opportunity for businesses and people to get involved.

"It's a great day out for wonderful local charities and gives the businesses in the town a substantial day of trade. There is a huge following in this sport now and we know it could bring positive change to the town. We urge everyone to get behind it", added the local man.

The club is currently looking for a venue to rent out permanently for their drift days and hopes to hold an event in the coming weeks.

There is a fee of €10 for those who wish to join the club and this entitles members to entry to all events throughout the year plus a club hoodie.

For more information, contact Club Chairperson Ian Gorman on 086 4562697, email BallinasloeDrift.club@yahoo.ie or Find them on Facebook.

BROTHERS OF CHARITY "LET'S GET TO WORK" PROJECT AT AUGHRIM BATTLEFIELD

BY ZARA HILL



L- R: 1. Sarah, Michael and Julie at the Aughrim Visitors Centre. 2. Michael Smyth with his sister Lorraine and Julie Cruise in front of Large Wall Mural painted by Belarus children last summer. 3. Outreach Support Supervisor, Sarah Reynolds and Julie Cruise from the Aughrim Visitors Centre with the famous 17th Century "Mulvaney" print of "The Battle of Aughrim 1691".

Talented photographer, Michael Smyth, along with Ms. Sarah Reynolds, SUAS Outreach Support Supervisor, visited the Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre and took some beautiful photographs as part of the "Let's Get to Work Project".

Julie Cruise from the Aughrim Visitors Centre was delighted to welcome Sarah and Michael along with his sister Lorraine, for a great morning of photography. The weather was beautiful, which allowed for some great shots to be taken outside in the Memorial Park also.

Julie Coordinated the project for the famous 17th Century "Mulvaney" print of "The Battle of Aughrim 1691", which was revamped earlier in the year by Paper Conservation Specialist, Sue Corr and Julie invited Michael to be the first to photograph the important artefact to be showcased in this edition of Ballinasloe Life Magazine.

Galway County Council funded the conservation project and the Mulvaney Print is on display in the Visitor Centre in Aughrim throughout the summer.

Michael also captured shots of the large Wall Mural painted onto the front wall at The Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre. This beautiful painting was created by the Orphans from Belarus while they were staying in the area under the care of Pat Dillon and the Sunflowers Chernobyl Volunteers last summer, along with many local children from the local area. "Michael enjoys History and Heritage and his beautiful pictures are on sale in the Deli", remarked Julie.

Julie, along with several local volunteers held art workshops for the Belarus and local children at the Centre, many of whom had physical and learning disabilities.

"One boy in particular "Oleg", an orphan with no arms and only artificial legs, amazed us with his artistic talents", remarked Julie.

"If you visit the Centre in Aughrim you can see his wonderful contribution to the Mural. The contrast between Mulvaney's 17th century depiction of the battle and the Children's 21st century impression amalgamate as valuable illustrations which portrait a very important piece of local Irish history, Cath Eachdroime 1691."

For further information call Julie Cruise on 087 9264947.

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THE MILL AT KILBEGLY

BY BARRY LALLY

Prior to the construction of the new motorway, a discovery of immense significance was made by archaeologists in April 2007 in the townland of Kilbegly in the parish of Moore, two and a half miles east of Ballinasloe.

What they unearthed were the exceptionally well-preserved remains of the lower structure of a horizontal mill, dating from between the mid-seventh and the late eighth centuries. The site was about 300 yards south-west of Kilbegly churchyard which contains the ruins of a medieval church and is surrounded by a large, circular earth and stone bank, probably contemporaneous with the mill.

This type of corn mill was a Roman invention introduced into Ireland some 1,400 years ago, most likely from France or Spain. Nancy Edwards in *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland* writes: "The horizontal mill mechanism was housed in a two-storey wheelhouse which was usually constructed of wood. In the lower wheelhouse was the horizontal millwheel with its slightly dished wooden paddles. The water supply, which was usually diverted from a nearby stream, was conducted along a millrace which could be closed off with sluice gates when the mill was not in use. The water was then channelled along a wooden flume or chute and was directed onto the millwheel paddles with sufficient force to allow the wheel to turn."

"The turning of the wheel also turned the shaft attached to it which projected through the ceiling into the upper storey where the millstones were housed. The top of the shaft was attached to the upper millstone, which therefore turned when the millwheel turned, while the lower millstone remained stationary. The grain was ground by dropping it into a central hole in the upper millstone, possibly from a hopper, and the flour collected on the floor round the millstones."

Jerry O'Sullivan, archaeologist with the National Roads

Authority, has been quoted as saying that Kilbegly is one of only a handful of excavated mill sites in Ireland at present and is thought to be one of the best kept in Europe. He believes it to be virtually unique because the parts were in such an excellent state of preservation.

After the mill was abandoned it quickly became immersed in peat. This prevented the timber from being colonised by insects and fungi, thus arresting the normal decay process that would otherwise have destroyed the mill timbers within a few years. Post-and-wattle millraces, a millpond, the near complete remains of the lower floor, a flume and a large tailrace have all survived.

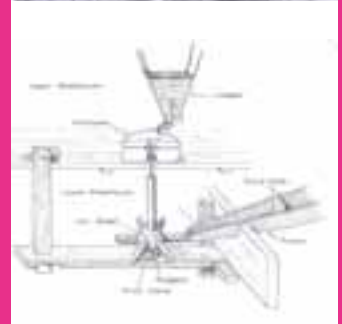
Mr O'Sullivan is convinced that the people who built and operated the mill were very sophisticated in their approach to generating water power. They had an excellent understanding of basic engineering that is reflected in their use of the terrain, the natural hydrology, and their skill with timber-built structures.

For example, the mill was certainly built by professional millwrights who could cut, shape and join large timbers to create a robust structure capable of withstanding all the pressures of a dynamic mechanical and hydraulic environment.

The main surviving element of the mill is the undercroft or basement level. This had to support the mill house overhead (this did not survive) and also withstand the pressure of water passing through it and the rotation of a heavy millwheel on its axle.

Historically, Kilbegly was on a very ancient route into Connacht and was part of the dispersed estate of Clonmacnoise. The mill, mainly used to process barley, was very likely worked by employees of the monastery.

In 2008 the mill timbers, which required constant watering during excavation once exposed to the air, were sent to York Archaeological Trust where they were scientifically conserved. They were returned to Ireland in 2012 and are currently in storage at the National Museum where they will be curated by the State until they can be put on display in a suitable public venue.



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Ballinasloe History Walk

1 – Start at the statue known as *The Man with the Horse*, where Main Street joins St. Michael's Square. From the crossing near the statue, continue by turning right onto Main Street. The prosperity of Ballinasloe in Georgian times can be seen in the scale and classical style of the buildings here. A fine group of four frontages stand across from the statue of The Man with the Horse. With shops and pubs on the ground floor for the most part, these Main Street premises have several floors above.

2 – Walking along Main Street, lift your eyes above the shop frontages for one of the town's characteristic sights. There are the Diocletian windows that grace several facades. They are from the years after 1805 when the 2nd Earl was in charge. A window of this sort is formed under a semi-circular arch with two upright divisions so that the whole opening is divided into three parts.

3 – As you stand at the meeting point of Bridge Street and Main Street, you will see the Victorian frontage of a commercial premises, originally the Masonic Hall. Next to it stands a classical looking, beautifully-crafted, early 19th century stone house, currently a guest house. Beside these is a tall, fine stone-fronted classical mansion, which is now the Bank of Ireland. It was originally the town mansion of the Lord of all of Ballinasloe, the Earl of Clancarty. A friend of king George IV, the Earl was one of the architects of the resistance to the emperor Napoleon. It could be said that he was the person to whom most credit is due for the layout, growth and architectural character of Ballinasloe as we see it today.

4 – At the end of Main Street, head along Bridge Street, then turn to the right to the pathway which runs to the riverscape where you can see channels flowing through the several arches of the long stone bridge over the river Suck, one of the town's most precious monuments. The Bridge has been in continuous use since the 16th century and its extension in 1754 prepared it structurally to carry even the heaviest juggernauts of today.

5 – Walk through to the far end of the park; you will approach St Michael's Church (1852-58) that stands in a commanding position over the Square. Its architect was J.J. McCarthy, a follower of Augustus Pugin (famed for other Neo-Gothic churches in Ireland) – and the design is said to have been revised by Pugin himself. Inside are many fine stained glass window. Of particular quality are those of St. Patrick and St. Rose of Lima, of 1925, by the renowned Dublin Stained glass artist, Harry Clarke and *The Raising of the daughter of Jairus* by Patrick Pollen, inserted in 1958.

6 – From St. Michael's Church now walk up St. Michael's Square back towards the Man with the Horse Statue. Take a left into Dunlo Street, an important street in the history of the town, which contains, together with other buildings of about the same date, the late-Georgian Garda Station. The Station is towards the far end of the street, on the right hand side. Also on this street, over Dolan's Electrical Shop, you can see another fine example of Diocletian windows.

7 – Halfway up Dunlo Street, turn right up Duggan Street, which will take you to St. John's Church (Church of Ireland, 1843). It dominates the vast Fair Green which becomes a hive of activity during one week every year when up to 100,000 people throng to the October fair. Look out over the Fair Green and admire one of the grandest freestanding classical monuments in the region. Dedicated to Charles Le Poer Trench, it was designed in the Neo-Greek style by the English architect George Papworth (1781-1855). A mile past this monument on the Main Galway road, South West of the town, the Earl of Clancarty's former country house is situated, where imposing gates mark the entrance to Garbally Court. It has been a school since 1923.

Walk down Church Hill onto Society Street and turn left, arriving at the Courthouse on the right. Society Street, like Main Street, was the 19th century location for the professional classes. As well as The Courthouse, it contains the former Bridewell (or gaol) from the 1840s. Further along this street, Ballinasloe Railway Station is a must. Constructed in 1851, it is a Neo-Gothic limestone tour-de-force and a fine example of the quality of rural Irish railway architecture in the mid-19th century.



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