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# BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 5 Issue 4: Oct '15 - Nov '15

**FREE**



Photo by Robert Riddell

**FIONA McLOUGHLIN FROM NURSE  
TO PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE**

**WILLE DEVLIN,  
A LIFETIME OF FOOTBALL**

**FAIR WEEK HIGHLIGHTS**



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## REAMHRÁ

Well it's definitely Autumn when the Annual invasion of the horse and horsey folk arrive. And Welcome they all are too and as Barry Lally writes in this edition the very origins of this settlement are indeed rooted in trade and markets. We should salute the volunteers of both the Fair and Festival and Show groups who do so much unsung work in keeping their programmes going and ensuring an age old tradition survives. We wish all in attendance a safe and enjoyable week.

The late summer season is often referred to as the "Silly Season" in journalistic circles – when the Dail, Courts, County Councils all head to the beach and hard news dries up. All Media outlets starve of copy. One doesn't try and understand our politicians and the fourth estate any more in the run into a General Election but recent local prominent press reportage trumpeting the demise of our town centre has caused a huge amount of upset here and where our Ballinasloe Folk are scattered. The online community was outraged!

Yes trading conditions are difficult, yes there are a number of vacant retail and other commercial premises, yes indeed the Big Dig is having a huge negative impact on the businesses most closely associated and yes there are still issues with parking but we are a long way off the "Tumbleweed Town impression" that was portrayed.

Where are the front page headlines for the two new businesses now locating into some of the very stores that were photographed? Where might the prominence be to the first Irish Town that has been recently benchmarked with its competitors and drafted an Action Plan supported by Galway County Council, the State Agencies and no less than the Minister of Rural Affairs Ann Phelan herself? Can you recall the swarm of Galway centric media interest on our events and developments in the last 36 months – the new Library, the Floodlight Duggan Park, the huge investment in all our sports facilities, the renovation of the Town Hall Theatre?

There is no such thing as bad publicity the old adage goes but a bit of balance never goes amiss either. Plenty of evidence within the covers of our Magazine showing a community not on its knees but struggling like many others to survive.

Le Gach De Ghui  
Colm Croffy, Editor



"Together we're better" is the motto of the Town Teams rolling five year action plan. The plan is about building on the town's many strengths, changing current perceptions and bringing measurable improvements in the town centre economy and its wider social value.

The plan is coordinated by BACD and the Town Team supported by Galway County Council and Ballinasloe Credit Union. Full details are available on [www.ballinasloe.ie](http://www.ballinasloe.ie)

Some of the upcoming events organised include Fashion show, Ballinasloe People of the year awards, Zombie walk at Halloween, Christmas festivities, Business networking events, shop front improvement, collective marketing for Christmas shopping, promoting Ballinasloe as a sports hub and the further development of Ballinasloe.ie.

You will be able read about all of these initiatives and more over the coming editions of *Ballinasloe Life*.

We are looking for full community involvement and if you wish to help in one or more of these projects please contact any member of the town team.

Congratulations to the organisers of the "Larry Reynolds" and the "Ballinasloe 1915 reimagined" weekends recently, they were both a tremendous success.

We can now look forward to the Show, Fair & Festival and the opening of our new library in October, so there is no shortage of something for everyone to do over the coming weeks and months in this vibrant community of ours.

Seamus Duffy, Chairman,  
Ballinasloe Area Community Development.

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For submission of articles, please email [ballinasloelife@hotmail.com](mailto:ballinasloelife@hotmail.com). Deadline 18th Nov.

**BEC**

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# FIONA McLOUGHLIN – PROFILE

BY CIARA BERESFORD



**Fiona McLoughlin-Healy, Fine Gael candidate for South Kildare, talks about growing up in Ballinasloe, her astonishing credentials and career paths, her life-changing experiences and the great success and knowledge she has gained over the years.**

She initially trained as a nurse in University College Hospital, Galway. From here, she left to volunteer in an orphanage in Romania, an experience she says fanned the flames of her interest in issues of equality and justice and its impact on children and their ability to succeed. She returned to NUIG to complete a degree in Law and Politics graduating top of her class with a double first-class honours degree. She continued her studies achieving top marks again for her MSc in PR, communication and advertising, Ulster University.

Fiona McLoughlin-Healy, through her property sales website Privateseller.ie was shortlisted for a Golden Spider. Fiona McLoughlin-Healy herself has been a finalist in the Network Ireland Entrepreneur of The Year Awards and a shortlisted nominee for the IAA's Net Visionary awards. Her newest venture, GiftEncounters.com, is a celebrity booking service where people can book celebrities, sporting heroes or time with people who are simply the best at what they do.

Fiona grew up in Castlereagh, Roscommon and moved to Ballinasloe to live with her parents when she returned to college in NUIG to study Law and Politics, "the train station looms large in memories as I commuted from Ballinasloe to college for three years. I remember lots of waiting!" she added.

**"I remember my Grandfather Josie Fahy bringing me to the Horse Fair when I was very little. I still remember getting a leather bracelet with my name hammered into it – I remember the excitement and the buzz", mentioned Fiona.**

One of Fiona's fondest memories from Ballinasloe is of her wedding which was held in Hayden's Hotel, the same place her parents, Maura Fahy and John McLoughlin got married, "I had just finished my college finals 2 months before and it felt like a whole new world was opening up," added Fiona. Married to local GP Bernard, they now have 3 children Ryan, Erin and Freya.

Fiona's parents and Aunt Patricia Hurley had all trained as Psychiatric nurses in Ballinasloe. "I think there is a significant correlation between parental careers and their children's choice of career. I didn't know what I wanted to be at 18 so I really defaulted into nursing" said Fiona as she revealed her parents' careers most definitely influenced her career choice.

After qualifying as a nurse, Fiona practised for four years which is when she began to develop the utmost respect for nurses, "it is such a varied profession with different levels of skillsets required" she added. "I absolutely loved the nursing care, the talking to and caring for the patients. I was much less comfortable with the hierarchy in the hospital environment and if I'm being honest with the quality of the tutors at that time. It has changed hugely now," revealed Fiona.

Fiona's parents were involved in what was known as the Mentally

Handicapped Association at the time, in founding Castlereagh Credit union and cared for an older neighbour who they treated like their own mother. "Children with special needs and from minority communities were all welcome in our home. Their sense of active citizenship and their work ethic has influenced me hugely" she added.

Her older sister Orla McLoughlin is still a practicing nurse in Kilkenny – Orla was with a dying woman in her home when Fiona tried to contact her about the great news of how she was a candidate for the next General Election. "What a privilege to care for someone in their final days and hours. And still she will get up today and manage a household of five busy boys – 6 if you include her husband Billy! Nurses are amazing!" stated Fiona.

Fiona was head nurse in an orphanage in Nergu Voda of approximately 300 children with very little medication and many of the children having extreme disabilities and deformities. "The experience was life-changing in terms



Fiona McLoughlin Healy with her father, John McLoughlin

of realising how privileged I was to have grown up healthy, with a family who loved, in a community where physical or intellectual disabilities were not something of which to be ashamed," she revealed.

Fiona described politics as an arena hugely dominated by males, therefore she was grateful for the support of her father, John and husband, Bernard. "They are two amazingly strong men in my life who are not afraid of a strong woman and are absolutely unflinching in their support. On the difficult days where you start thinking – is it me? It's great to have two men you admire in your corner."

**Among Fiona's success was establishing the first nationwide online business, dedicated to homeowners selling their homes privately. Privateseller.ie was a huge success for Fiona, "I learned so much about business from setting up this business which started literally from a desk in my bedroom," she said.**

"Prime Time Investigates" did a report on estate agents in 2009 including privateseller.ie as an alternative to paying huge commission fees. This type of publicity brought about a huge amount of online traffic, resulting in the website crashing which was a significant milestone in the growth of the business.

Fiona and her team invested heavily in a customised website which was unfortunately hacked two weeks after she was elected to the County Council in 2014. "It was a huge blow. And it was the beginning of my political career which I have thrown myself into. For a long time, I couldn't even deal with the reality of the website being hacked." Fiona admitted.

**Fiona owes her fantastic success to her parents, "how can you not? Everything you become as a person is shaped and moulded by your formative years and experiences and the role models in your life," she stated.**

When asked what is on the cards for 2015/2016, Fiona replied "A lot of worn shoe leather."

## WATER WORKS



The contractor has continued working on Brackernagh along the old N6 and is currently past Portiuncula Hospital heading towards Garbally gates. Traffic management plan will be in place as the works continue along this road. The contractor has completed a letter drop to all dwellings affected by the works along Brackernagh. The Contractor has supplied an emergency contact No (086) 0267035 to be contacted in the event of issues with the traffic management plan. Works will be off the road from 25th September until the 13th

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# NEW BEAUTY SALON OPEN FOR BUSINESS

BY CIARA BERESFORD



Andrea doing nails on her mother, Kathleen.

Pictured are a few Ballinasloe locals, supporting Andrea at The Front Room's official open night.

Andrea and her husband, Cathal celebrating the new opening.

Not only does Andrea Duffy have plenty on her hands with raising three young children and running a blog but she has now opened her own Beauty Therapy business on Society Street called 'The Front Room.'

Andrea grew up in Ballinasloe, attended school in Scoil Mhuire and worked as a Legal Secretary with Jack Duncan & Co. Solicitors while studying Beauty Therapy part time. She now lives in Creagh with her husband and three young boys which is where her beauticians business originally began.

In 2006, Andrea received ITEC and CIBTAC Diplomas in Beauty Therapy while studying in Georgina Price College of Beauty Therapy in Galway and very recently became a certified Waxpert. Andrea has also attended master classes, short term courses and training days.

Andrea admits she chose Ballinasloe to open her business as she is a native and having worked locally for years she has gotten to know a lot of people, "I love when people come into the salon and say "Oh it's you!" and they look pleased to recognise who will be dealing with them. In my opinion, a salon is kind of a sacred place where stories are shared and things are worked out over a cuppa and a polish. I want people to feel comfortable coming into The Front Room. In my opinion, the salon just would not work anywhere else."

The Front Room offers a vast range of services from make-up to waxing, nails to facials, spray tans and much more. Andrea expresses she is a firm

believer in using natural products "I am a lover of all things natural! My salon offers natural, Irish products that are dedicated to providing the highest quality, chemical free skin creams and spa treatments."

Andrea emphasises how important it is to maintain a high standard of safety and hygiene within the beauty therapy business, "Yes it costs me that little bit extra to perform the treatments but it is worth every penny to know my clients will return to the salon having had a safe, hygienic and pleasant treatment" she stated.

Andrea first began blogging as a hobby when she was at home full time with her children. "It's mainly about the trials and tribulations of the mummy gig and I will warn you, if you have an aversion to reality I would avert your eyes... I am way too honest!" she mentioned. Andrea's blog can be found at [42andbrandnew.wordpress.com](http://42andbrandnew.wordpress.com) or on Facebook @four2andbrandnew.

At the moment Andrea will be spending a lot of time concentrating on the salon and learning new things along the journey. The beauty industry is constantly evolving with new products and techniques being introduced, therefore Andrea is hoping to invest in something new for The Front Room at the Professional Beauty Show in the RDS in Dublin next month.

Details of all services, products and pricing can be found on the Facebook page @TheFrontRoom or for any other queries contact the salon at 090-9646893.

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## BRIDGE CLUB

The Ballinasloe Bridge Club, consisting of over 130 members, recently held their annual AGM where they delegated a number of new faces to run the club. Ms Eileen Morrisroe was elected as president, Mr Pat Hughes for vice-president, treasurer went to Mrs Bernie Flynn and Ms Rosaleen Cahill was chosen as secretary.

The Bridge Club has its own premises since 1969 and is located beside Barretts Hardware. The venue provides comfortable, tea making facilities with a chair lift available to those with disabilities. The annual calendar includes the Christmas Dinner and Party and also the Main President's Prize, which generally takes place in April.

Bridge is played every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday night at 8pm. Beginners lessons will commence on Monday, October 12th at 8pm in a friendly environment. Members pay an annual subscription fee of €35 and a nightly rate of €3 to €5 depending on the night in question.

The club warmly welcomes new members, either experienced or beginners. Visitors to the town are also welcome to join in any night and partners will be provided by the club.



Pictured is Eileen Morrisroe receiving the Bridge Club President title from former president, Jeanne Naughten

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# NEW DELI AND ICE-CREAM PARLOUR TO OPEN

BY CIARA BERESFORD

**Maresa Dolan, Ballinasloe native, is opening a deli and ice-cream parlour, called Missy's on the corner of Society Street, where Hills once graced the streetscape. Maresa is delighted to be adding to the list of new business' opening in the town and hopes to officially open in time for the Annual Horse Fair.**

Maresa, better known to her friends and family as Missy, enjoys this line of work as she is passionate about good food. She originally had a similar business in England called McHugh's after her mother's maiden name. Maresa bought the building which was over 200 years old and changed its use to accommodate the business. Her business ended up being very successful and she really enjoyed it.

In 2009, Maresa sold the business and returned home to Ballinasloe with her children Paraic, aged six and Ciara, aged nine as she felt it was time to come home.

Before Maresa had a catering business she was and still is a Building Surveyor, where she builds property portfolios for clients. She also added to her studies at the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, when she returned home. "Some people from Ballinasloe may have met me when I took a job helping customers at the AIB Bank in Ballinasloe during the summer months. I loved meeting people and helping them in that role", added Maresa.

Her most recent job was for Winters Property

management in Galway, where she was project manager for all of their developments. "Project managing is an all-consuming role and I felt that a 12 hour day working with engineers and contractors was not what I had returned home to do. I had hoped to spend more time with my husband, Brendan and our children. I wanted to have a job that I would really enjoy", admitted Maresa.

**"When Hills Shop came up for rent it brought back fond memories of my childhood in Ballinasloe, of the ice-cream parlour that was there for many years", mentioned Maresa. Her parents Michael and Mary Dolan also had a shop and filling station in Cleaghmore or better known as the Ashtree, therefore ice-cream and sweets were always in Maresa's life.**

Maresa hopes to bring good quality food to the people of Ballinasloe and at the same time support local suppliers where she can. Missy's will offer a wonderful range of fresh foods, ice-cream, old style sweets, great coffee, teas and all of the usual great products you would find in a deli. She emphasises that the products used in Missy's have been sourced locally where possible.

**Maresa will also be catering for outside events such as parties and weddings, provide cakes for occasions and also prepare picnic baskets for special lunches.**

In the near future, Maresa hopes to have a cafe set up in the shop. "I would have hoped to have this in place at our opening but planning

permission is required and this takes time. We hope to have this in place as soon as we can so customers can sit down and enjoy a coffee and children can have a milkshake or a nickerbokerglory and make more happy memories together", added Maresa.



Maresa & Brendan

Celebrating 5 years in business in Ballinasloe

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## BALLINASLOE TYRE CENTRE CELEBRATING 16 YEARS IN BUSINESS

BY CIARA BERESFORD



Thom Fox, John Shields, Derek Ekiert, Damien Leonard

The Ballinasloe Tyre Centre was established in November 1999 by Thom Fox, formally from Lyons Garage, Kilconnell. Thom Fox and his members of staff are celebrating 16 successful years in business.

In 2005, John Daly from Ashtree stores joined the business which is now a busy three bay tyre centre with four members of

staff and ATA certified tyre fitters. "We endeavour to provide a high standard of service at all times", added Thom.

The centre is the only Tyre Centre in Galway to be a Michelin certified tyre fitting centre which allows them to give free roadside assistance to their customers.

In 2014, Thom's centre was the first in Ireland to be issued with a license to fit tyres from the Irish Tyre Industry.

The centre also provides a number of other services including NCT

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and repairs on car vans and 4x4 vehicles. Truck and agricultural tyres are also available.

"We have come through good and bad times and are still here providing our services to our very loyal customers who come back to us year after year", stated Thom.

The business also tries its best to support as many voluntary associations and clubs as possible every year.

"Thank you again for all your support over the last 16 years. It's been a pleasure to serve the people of the Ballinasloe area", says Thom.

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## J&S PHOTOS CELEBRATING 5 YEARS IN BUSINESS

BY CIARA BERESFORD

J&S Photos, owned by Jackie Dolan and Sean Ward open on Society Street, Ballinasloe are celebrating five successful years in business. It is a family run business where the customer is made to feel welcome and valued and no job is too small.

J&S Photos is licensed by the Kodak Digital Solutions group and offer a large range of services including photo printing and framing. They also provide a personalized gift service offering mugs, t-shirts, jigsaws, frames, mouse mats, keyrings and magnets with a photo and caption at very competitive prices.

Photo restoration is another service available at J&S Photos where old and damaged photographs can be enhanced and reprinted in various sizes including canvases which are a keen favourite. Recently Jackie and Sean teamed up with Happy Ireland Productions to offer Video and Audio transfer services where old tapes and old cine reels can be transferred to disc.

'Kodak Kiosk Connect' is a free app which allows the customer to upload photos from their mobile phones or tablets to the kiosks in store and select what they would like to print. Images can also be sent to the shop via email to [jskodakexpress@gmail.com](mailto:jskodakexpress@gmail.com) for printing and collection at the customer's convenience.

Jackie and Sean are always happy to help their customers with any queries they may have regarding digital photography. They understand that not everybody is comfortable with the new technology and they will help the customers through the process of printing from all types of media.

Jackie and Sean are very grateful to their loyal customers who have supported them during very difficult times. They feel that business is starting to improve and believe the recession is starting to lift. "Ballinasloe has a lot to offer in terms of community spirit which was definitely evident



in the lead up to the All-Ireland final when the town was decorated by the locals and a fantastic civil reception was held for the teams return home to Galway following the match", mentioned Jackie.

Jackie and Sean are also available for event photography for all types of occasions from christenings to special birthday parties, anniversaries and reunions.

The Shop is open six days a week from 9.30am to 6pm and is open through lunch time.



Jackie Dolan



**BELIEVE IN BETTER WITH SKY AT  
FLETCHERS EXPERT** BY CIARA BERESFORD

Fletchers Expert have been in business for over 55 years and are the sole agents for Sky in Ballinasloe. It is one of the very few leading stores in Ireland that have been appointed by Sky retail. The store are currently advertising a range of bundles and packages at very reasonable pricing.

Sky have chosen Fletchers because of their long history in the television business in Ballinasloe. Customers can sign up to Sky in store at Fletchers Expert, Society Street. They are currently offering Sky Broadband and Sky television viewing packages with the first three months of viewing half price and broadband is also available at half price.

Fletchers provide free nationwide standard installation of the Sky box and dish by a team of dedicated installers. All of the staff in store have also been fully trained in Sky courses.

"Our store has a unique display for Sky where customers can try before they buy", says Sean Fletcher. This service allows customers to test out Sky in store at Fletchers by interacting with the Sky remote control and box before they commit to purchasing the product. Sky 3D and 2D is also available in store. Fletchers also have the largest range of flat screen televisions in Ballinasloe.

Fletchers Expert are also the main sponsors for prizes on the Rick O'Shea show which headlines 2fm and have signed up for another 12 months. For more information contact Sean at 090 9642147 or visit their website at [fletchers.ie](http://fletchers.ie).



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## NEW LOOK BALLINASLOE TOWN TEAM FASHION SHOW FOR FAIR WEEK

The Ballinasloe Town Team is hosting the prestigious October Fair Week Fashion Show taking place in Hayden's Hotel, on Wednesday, October 7th at 8pm.

This is a special event where local shops get to showcase their autumn and winter collections by local models. There will also be fun raffles and a few surprises in store. The Town Team have also organised some local exhibitions displaying makeup, jewellery and flowers, in the foyer to

mention a few.

The event is being held in aid of the Ballinasloe Town Team Projects. Tickets can be purchased at Image, Utah, Kathleen's, Wards, Noel Mannions and Hayden's Hotel at a price of €15 with student concessions also available.

In years past it was one of the highlights of Fair Week and its hoped that the night will return to the annual calendar of entertainment.

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## DRESS TO IMPRESS AT UTAH'S DRESS BAR

BY CIARA BERESFORD

UTAH has been in business on Society Street for over 7 years. The Shop consists of three floors with retail ranging from kids wear, ladies and men's fashion, curtain and blinds, bedding and giftware.

UTAH strive for success in all areas of business, from producing the latest trends to providing a high standard of service. UTAH have a fashion consultant instore at all times and employ a staff team of seven members who are always on hand for advice. Owner, Beagh native Val Colleran has been working in retail for over 25 years and has paid visit to a number of fashion shows all over Europe.

Due to huge success in recent years and a customer demand for higher end fashion at affordable prices, UTAH have created a Dress Bar. This includes a new addition of five different London and Italian brands to the Ladies Fashion Department.

The new brands include Little Mistress, Closet London, Hybrid, Paper Dolls and Rinascimento. Little Mistress is a brand of beautiful feminine clothing. It is young, fresh and always with a nod towards the latest fashion trends. Closet London make contemporary dresses that tell a story. This particular brand are loved for their elegant shapes and stunning prints. Hybrid are renowned for creating glamorous statement pieces with a classic twist. Paper Dolls cover your daily style; expect gorgeous dresses with stunning detail. Paper Dolls pieces are designed with the sophisticated woman in mind with a collection of beautifully cut pieces, tailored to enhance and sculpt the female form. Rinascimento is a complete Italian phenomenon. It is a brand dedicated to those with a passion for beautiful designs that are made with a careful and loving hand.

The new additions are perfect for any special occasion from weddings to parties. There is no need for any more travelling miles for local discerning shoppers for the latest fashion or occasional wear with the Dress Bar at your feet. The store also take deposits on pieces when required.

UTAH will also be a part of the BACD Fashion Show on October 7th being held in Hayden's Hotel. Val encourages customers to check out their new arrivals on their Facebook page at Utah Ballinasloe.



The staff of Utah, Back- Tammie Kells, Bridget Spain and owner Val Colleran. Sitting- Cathy Mc Grath

## CAPPA STUD MAKE HISTORY IN IRISH DRAUGHT STALLION CLASS

BY CIARA BERESFORD

Cappa Stud in Annaghdown, owned by Ballinasloe natives Jimmy and Edel Quinn completed a memorable win at the Irish Draught Stallion Class recently in the RDS by not only winning Champion Stallion but also picking up Reserve Champion Stallion, making history as Champion and Reserve have never been won by the same stud before!

Cappa Stud were represented by four stallions in the 15 horse line up. Eight year old stallion, 'Cappa Cassanova' landed the Supreme Champion Irish Draught Stallion title for the third time in four years, having also taken the title in 2012 and 2013. Another of the Galway based Stud's stallions, 'Cappa Aristocrat', slotted into second place securing Reserve Champion Irish Draught Stallion which came as a surprise to Jimmy and Edel saying, "We knew it would be hard to beat Cassanova and we are over the moon with Aristocrat as he is still only four".

Jimmy and Edel set up Cappa Stud in 2008 with the hope of saving some of the old bloodlines of the Irish Draughts and broadening the gene pool, "I suppose that since we set up here eight years back, Ireland went through a severe recession that impacted greatly on the horse industry but things have picked up and especially so this year". Now the RDS results have shown the success of their dedication to the project, "We had a lot of faith in the quality of Irish Draught that we could produce and we really have been blown away with our success at the RDS" said Edel Quinn.

Another great boost for the Galway Stud was the prestigious Three Year Old Potential Event Horse Class won by 'Noble Class' who was sired by 'Cappa Cassanova', "Noble Class was the only horse bred by an Irish Draught out of 17 finalists, so to win this class is truly great news for Irish breeding and provides a real evidence of the quality of offspring" said Jimmy Quinn.

Cappa Stud have also been pursuing the Chinese market for the Irish Draughts and are excited about the possibilities of setting up an equestrian centre in Shanghai. Jimmy mentioned "Ireland is known as the land of the horse and the Chinese are very anxious that the professional expertise of Irish breeders is to the fore with this project."

Jimmy and Edel admitted they are "completely overwhelmed" with their success in the past three years and are excited for what the future holds for Cappa Stud.

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Cappa Cassanova on the left Champion Irish Draught Stallion, shown by Seamus Sloyan, Jimmy Quinn & Edel Burke Quinn, Cappa Aristocrat on the right, Reserve Champion Irish Draught Stallion, shown by John Keane.

*Draught Horse Show 2015*

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# WHERE ARE THEY NOW? EIMEAR NOONE

BY KEN KELLY

**Last April, a Kilconnell musical family staged the world's first-ever festival of orchestral Video Game Music at the Convention Centre, Dublin. The Dublin International Game Music Festival will have its second outing in late April 2016, and is a Twelve O'Clock Arts production - the producing nome de plume of Eimear Noone, with support from her husband Craig Stuart Garfinkle and music producer brother, Eamonn Noone.**

Eimear, who is the eldest daughter of Mary and the late Padraig Noone, Ballinderry, Kilconnell is currently in the middle of a whirlwind world tour, conducting orchestral concerts of Video Game Music at venues such as Gamescom in Germany and some of China's most prestigious concert halls. She is now heading off to continue her tour in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Brazil and Malaysia.

As a five-year-old attending St. Gabriel's NS, Kilconnell, Eimear's talent for music was recognised by her late teacher, Margaret Blehene, when she played the tin whistle during class. Mrs. Blehene was so insistent on her musical education that she recruited her daughter Maeve to give Eimear her first piano lessons! As a secondary school student at Scoil Mhuire in Ballinasloe, Eimear studied piano with Marie Power, someone she describes as "an extraordinarily musical person" who had a "major influence" on her future and while there Sr.Vianney gave her the opportunity to conduct an orchestra for the first time.

The Kilconnell lass even wrote the school anthem to mark the 75th anniversary of her school.

**As a child she jumped at any opportunity to participate musically and enjoyed many a performance-and musical camaraderie-in Noel Madden's town band whilst studying flute with Athlone's Michael Whelan. At the age of 14 got her first paid job in music playing flute in the pit orchestra for The Ballinasloe Musical Society, where inspirational musical director, Noel Henry, later created the role of Assistant Musical Director for a 15-year-old Eimear!**

On two consecutive years she was also the youngest participant of the renowned Ennis IMRO Composition Summer School and had her music broadcast on RTE by the National Chamber Choir of Ireland,



Eimear conducting

whilst still in transition year at Scoil Mhuire. After studying music in Trinity College and at the DIT Conservatory of Music in Dublin, Eimear

emigrated to Los Angeles in 2004 where she graduated from the ASCAP Filmmaking Workshop, taught conducting for UCLA Extension and got her first assignment conducting the orchestra for the Los Angeles Ballet.

"This really opened the door for me and over the past ten years I been in the most exotic places and conducted orchestras in such places as the Sydney Opera House, Madison Square Garden in New York, The Greek Theatre in LA, Taipei Arena in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Germany, China and many more" she recalled.

Eimear has also recorded with orchestras at some of the world's most renowned recording studios, such as Abbey Road and Skywalker Ranch, and Capitol Records in Hollywood. "It has been a huge honour to conduct world-famous orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Pittsburgh Symphony, The Sydney Symphony and the National Symphony Orchestra of the United States".

She has shared a stage with some legendary artists such as Gladys

Knight, EDM legend, BT, and actors Pierce Brosnan and Roma Downey.

**"I've studied with several conductors but my most influential teacher was Gerhard Markson, the former principal conductor of the RTE National Symphony Orchestra. My background is classical music but, being from Kilconnell-the home of traditional Irish music legend, Paddy Fahy-I definitely hold a special place in my heart for great trad music" she added.**

Eimear - who now spends half of the year in Los Angeles - is one of the composer/conductors for Blizzard Entertainment, including on their infamous "World of WarCraft" video game series and has also worked with other video game producing companies such as Sony and Nintendo.

Her husband, who is an Emmy nominated composer, is a great support and the couple collaborate on various projects. "We are looking forward to the Festival in Dublin next year, where Craig (my husband) is conceptualizing the festival events and getting top artistes to perform with us, while my brother Eamonn has also come on board as part of the team. We collaborate regularly at his studio here in Kilconnell-and via the internet- to produce music for albums, games, film and television shows in the USA. I'm a big fan of Eamonn's songs and his musical aesthetic, so working together makes complete sense and there's a sort of creative short-hand that comes from growing up in the same house" proclaimed Eimear.

"I miss home a lot but I am grateful for the backing my parents gave me to pursue a career that I really love. I'm proud to have come from Kilconnell and to be Irish to the core, no matter where in the world I perform" said the world-famous conductor.



Eimear's husband Craig

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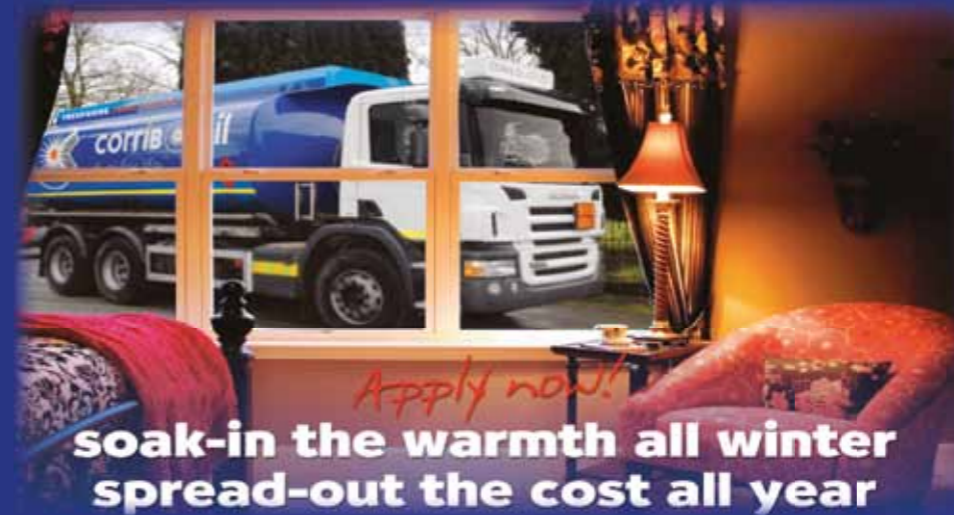
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**SHEEP FARMER OF THE YEAR: CHRIS BOURNS**

BY CIARA BERESFORD



Chris Bourns and his wife Sarah being presented with the Zurich Farmer of the Year Award.



Sarah Bourns holding a few of their many lambs.

Chris Bourns and his wife Sarah run a 1500 acre sheep, dairy and tillage farm situated in Eyrecourt, Ballinasloe. They have gained huge success over the years from expanding their farm even further, to recently receiving Zurich Sheep Farmer of the Year Award.

Chris admits his interest in farming first started the day he could walk, "Many times I disappeared from home to make my way to the farmyard from a very young age often getting lost on the way!" Getting Chris to school was difficult as he would frequently find 'work to be done' on the farm.

Lisbeg Farm is managed over three areas as follows; tillage, grassland and managed forestry and finished 1500 head of beef and runs a 1500 breeding flock of Ewes. Chris also looks after the arable operation of growing crops such as Wheat, Barley, Oat, Fodder Beet and Maize. He sows and harvests the crops along with producing high quality silage and haylage which is used to feed the cattle and sheep.

Ballinasloe provides many practical and financial services for Chris. He uses Domac Plant Hire in relation to running the machinery and repairs.

Chris was nominated by Keenan System for the Zurich Sheep Farmer of the year Competition 2015. In order to advance to the winning stages he had to compile a comprehensive report on the sheep enterprise using

information and figures from the previous three years.

Following on from this The Bourns had an on farm visit from three judges; Michael Godstein Teagasc sheep advisor, Tommy Boland Lecturer-School of Agriculture and Science UCD and Joe Healy Livestock editor for the Farming Independent. "To be honest it was great to have such knowledgeable professionals visit the farm and to get great advice from them." added Chris.

He admitted the competition was extremely stiff with many other excellent sheep farmers participating, "It's an honour and privilege to be nominated for such an award but to win was just amazing. It's like a big extra thank you for the long hours and hard work that goes into making Lisbeg Farm what it is today. I am very proud of the farm and the work we do."

Chris and Sarah are always busy on the farm. However when peak times hit such as lambing in March, they take on Vet or Agricultural students who are enthusiastic, hardworking and dedicated for a few weeks to help out. "Running such a large flock allows for the students to get practical hands on experience and encounter a multitude of different issues throughout the lambing period" mentioned Chris.

"I'm not sure what the future holds however I can't see myself having a career change, especially now my wife Sarah is crazy into farming also! I have recently taken over the lease of a near 160 acre farm which I hope to use for producing crops, my motto is Grow or Go!" stated Chris.

**HUGE SUCCESS FOR PADRAIG PEARSES GAA RECORD ATTEMPT** BY CIARA BERESFORD

Padraig Pearses GAA Club in South Roscommon recently attempted to enter the Guinness Book of Records by holding the largest GAA training session ever. The current record is 1204 held by Roche Emmetts in Louth.

"While we were hoping to break that, our expectations were far exceeded when 1500 eager participants took to the field in an inspiring show of local and family support", added Paddy Seale, Chairman. "With participants of all ages, from two to 92, the atmosphere was electric and the weather was also very kind."

The record is yet to be verified by the Guinness Book of Records with confirmation hopefully being received shortly. The objective was to build a real spirit in the club and bring all ages together. This was certainly achieved with the 1500 people on the pitch. The event was introduced by Pearses own Cathal Costelloe and Today FM New Presenter - Fergal Darcy as MC.

After the World Record attempt there was plenty of entertainment for the children to enjoy. Later that night, there was a panel discussion with well-known GAA commentator Marty Morrissey facilitating events. The panel included Benny Dunne, Tipperary Hurler, Michael Meehan, Galway, Pearse's Manager Shane Curran and Pearse's stalwarts, John Whyte, Tomas Seale and Jennifer Downey. Following the session there was singing and dancing late into the night with the Kings of Connacht. "It's a day which will live long in the memory", mentioned Paddy.

The Club have expressed its sincere gratitude to the organising committee, independent stewards from local clubs, trainers, field and parking stewards. "Also a sincere thank you to all our sponsors and everyone who supported us and who turned up on the day", stated Paddy.



Vinnie Dunne, Tipperary; Shane Curran, Padraig Pearses; Michael Meehan, Galway; Jennifer Downey, Roscommon Ladies Football; John White, Padraig Pearses; Tomás Seale Padraig Pearses and Marty Morrissey MC on the night at Padraig Pearses World Record Attempt.



Fr. John Killian, joins in with the training for the world record attempt at Padraig Pearse's Club.



Niamh Ryan, Padraig Pearses Football and Camogie Player takes part.



Padraig Pearses GAA grounds saw huge crowds participating for the world record attempt.

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# STORYTELLER LIAM FARRELL PAYS A VISIT TO TAUGHMACONNELL NATIONAL SCHOOL



BY SHANE COSTELLO AND FIONN KELLY, 6<sup>TH</sup> CLASS STUDENTS FROM TAUGHMACONNELL N.S.

Recently, Taughmaconnell National School had a very unusual visitor. "There was a loud knock on the door and a huge wolf came in. He had a long, brown tailcoat with a checkered shirt and a goofy, colourful bowtie. He had a funny wolf face with great sharp ears, a pointy snout and large, green eyes. His long, black tail swayed behind him as he walked in".

The wolf was in fact children's author and storyteller, Liam Farrell. Liam's books 'The True Story of The Three Little Pigs and The Big Bad Wolf' and 'Goldilocks the Babysitter from Hell' are sold successfully nationwide.

Dressed as the wolf, Liam told his story about the big, good wolf. The children laughed and laughed as he hopped around, jumped up on tables and crashed into the door on his imaginary bike and wiped his tears and nose on the school principal's jumper! All of the pupils enjoyed his antics.

Liam Farrell also went through the steps of how to write and publish a story with the fourth and sixth class pupils and told the students about his new book which is still in progress.

It was a very exciting day for the whole school including the staff and the pupils.

Taughmaconnell Community Centre are organizing a fundraising concert on November 28th. The evening will begin with a wine and food reception



Author and storyteller, Liam Farrell entertains Junior and Senior Infants in Taughmaconnell NS.



Liam as The Big Bad Wolf with 1st and 2nd class pupils in Taughmaconnell NS.

from 7pm to 8pm followed by music from the Country Comfort Band. The stage will then welcome a performance from Dickie Rock at 10pm. Tickets are available from Taughmaconnell National School at a price of €30 or for more information contact the school on 089 4497540. All of the proceeds are in aid of Music Matters and Taughmaconnell NS.



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# BALLINASLOE WELCOMES REV. JOHN GODFREY TO THE UNION OF PARISHES

BY CIARA BERESFORD

St. John's Church, Ballinasloe saw a large gathering for the Institution of the new Rector, Reverend John Godfrey to the Aughrim and Creagh Unions of Parishes. Under the auspices of the Diocese of Limerick and Killaloe, the Parishes cover six churches in Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Aughrim, Woodlawn, Clontuskert and Ardahan.

Reverend John Godfrey is originally from Wolverhampton in the UK. After reading French and English at the University of Leeds, he moved to Ireland in 1998 where he undertook a postgraduate course in DCU, completing a masters in film and television studies. John went on to spend 10 years working in RTE television sales.

After receiving a master's degree in theology from the Church of Ireland Theological Institute in Dublin, Reverend John was ordained as a Deacon in 2011 serving in Greystones Patrick, Wicklow. In 2012 John and his family moved to Galway where he was ordained as a Priest and served for three years as a curate in Galway Parish.

Parishioners, dignitaries, clergy and invited guests were all present as Bishop Kenneth Kearon warmly welcomed Reverend John into his first Parish as Rector.

An entertaining sermon followed by The Venerable Gary Hastings, Rector of

Galway, giving guidance to Reverend John on what he should expect from his new role as a Rector.

The choir from St Nicholas's Church, Galway and organist, Ronan De Burca, provided the musical accompaniment for the service in which representatives from all six parishes participated.

After the institution came to a close, Reverend John, his wife Shirley Anne and their two young daughters joined guests in Gullanes Hotel. John Joseph from St John's Church presented Shirley Anne with a bouquet of flowers on behalf of the parishioners. John and Shirley Anne's children, Anneliese and Frances Rose were also presented with welcome gifts by Meaghan Shiels and Adam Newton on behalf of the Ardahan and St John's Sunday school children.

Reverend John is now based in the Rectory in Aughrim and is very excited about his new appointment as Rector. He and his family have been overwhelmed by the warmth of the welcome they have received from the community of Ballinasloe, "I am very much looking forward to working with the wonderful people of these Parishes and to strengthening links with the wider community," added John.

Reverend John will also be taking up a Chaplaincy role in Portiuncula Hospital as part of his wider pastoral care duties.



Rev. John Godfrey with Rev. Fr. Dan O'Donovan, Rev. Fr. Colm Allman and Rev. Fr. Bernie Costello following his Institution.



Reverend John Godfrey during his Institution at St John's Church, Ballinasloe.



Reverend John Godfrey being congratulated by Bishop Kenneth Kearon following his Institution in St John's Church.

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# WILLIE DEVLIN – A LIFETIME OF GAELIC FOOTBALL

BY EAMON DEVLIN

**Willie Devlin, former county football goalkeeper, St. Grellans stalwart and Portiuncula Hospital Porter looks back on his early life and where his love of football originally came from.**

Willie was born in Brackernagh, he is married to Maureen and together they have five children Jason, Trevor, Russel, Nigel and Rebecca, along with seven grandchildren. Willie, now retired, worked for 33 years in Portiuncula Hospital. But there's more to Mr. Devlin than just working in Portiuncula. For a start, there is Football.

Willie's love of football came about in St Grellans primary school; back when "that Foreign Game" and 'The Ban' and 'The Exclusion Rule' were in full force. Lifelong friend of Willie's, Mattie Ganley organised the St. Grellan's School Leagues which were usually played on the last day of school before the summer holidays.

Like most other schoolboys, Willie went on to play in the Ballinasloe Street Leagues. He was a natural goalkeeper and played in this position with Ballinasloe town in the late 60's. His parents Michael and Verdun presented the Ballinasloe Club with an under 10's perpetual tournament trophy in 1980.



The 1971 St Grellan's final team. Back L-R: J Coughlin, F Leonard, J Kenny, W Devlin, P O'Neill, E Devlin, M Staunton, L O'Neill. Front L-R: C Dunne, J Kilcommins, J Kenny, K Blehein, S King, J Costello, M Meade.

Back L-R; M S Kelly, Jackie Maloney, Johnnie Keighery, Michael McDonnell, Willie Devlin, Billy Maloney, Jimmy McDonagh, Michael Lloyd. Front L-R; Eamonn Devlin, Joe Kelly, John Dowd, Johnny Farrell, Padraig O'Neill, Peadar Ryan, Frankie Walsh, Anthony Farrell

Willie played for the St. Grellans team; 'Da Hill' in the Street League. Five sets of brothers played for the side at that time including the Dowds, Dempseys, Hodgins, Grehans and the Devlin brothers, Eamonn and Willie.



Soccer 1969. Back L-R: Johnny Riddell, Joe Murray, Brian Darcy, Willie Devlin, Mattie Curley, Dermot Maloney, Tony Coyne Front L-R. Jacko Keighery, Joseph Murphy, John Coyne Michael McDonnell, Padraig Maloney Gerry Broderick, Paul Riddell.

In 1972, Da Hill and Jubilee joined forces to play St. Brigid's Hospital in the Ballinasloe Town Senior Final. St. Brigid's, managed by Jimmy Murphy, was called "the League of Nations" because their players came

from almost every parish in Ireland. The match was described in local papers as a "tension packed game", refereed by the busiest man on the pitch, Peter Walsh who threatened to call off the heated duel midway through the second half due to teams playing unfairly. However, tempers were calmed and the game was finished with the Jubilee-Hill team winning 2-8 to 1-7.

Willie went on to play minor and junior football with St. Grellan's football club. He played in the left half forward position until an injury to the goal keeper, Micheal O'Connor required Willie to take over. He recalls playing against Ballygar and the "Big man Mattie McDonagh".



In 1971, St Grellan's, under the management of Michael Walsh met Milltown in the County Final, "a wild and rainy Sunday, a day you wouldn't put a dog out", described Willie. St Grellan's lost to Milltown; 0-5 to 0-4.



Senior Co Champions 1980/81; Back L-R; W Goode, T Philips, S Brennan, P Keighery, B Dolan, K Barrett, J Manton, K Flannagan, W Devlin, B Brennan, M Cunningham, J Cawley, K Mitchell, P.B. Ryan, J Whelan. Front L-R: G Gibbons, G Salmon, J Whelan, J Colbert, J Coughlan, P Mc Gettigan, J Kelly (capt) S Riddell, T Devlin (Mascot), N Jennings, J Boswell, P Cunningham, C Loftus.

In 1979/80, St. Grellan's, then managed by the late PB Ryan, promised "they will win a county final... and go all the way to an All-Ireland Club final." Many thought PB was crazy but St Grellan,s reached the County Final and bet Dunmore in a replay. St Grellan,s also became the first Galway team to reach an All-Ireland Club final but were unfortunately beaten 3-9 to 0-8 by St Finbar's of Cork. "The 70's were the best years of my playing career, I was really in my prime", states Willie.

At 35, most players would consider retirement but a strange twist of faith managed to secure Willie a place on the Galway team. Gay Mitchell, goal keeper for Galway received an injury while playing for Dunmore against St Grellan's which opened the opportunity for Willie to play for his county in his beloved position. He played in the National League against Kerry, Dublin, Cork, Offaly and Kildare. "Only one goal passed me in five games", adds Willie with pride.

He recalls a time when he finished night work in Portiuncula Hospital and travelled to Dublin to play with the Galway team before returning after the match to work that evening. Due to his work commitments, Willie was unable to keep up with training sessions which resulted in him reluctantly submitting his resignation to the Galway Football Board.

In 1990, Willie took a year's leave from Portiuncula Hospital where he worked since the 60s as a Porter – one of the first to be employed at such a grade and worked in London. At the age of 44, he played his final football game with St Gabriel's, a London team. Although this was the end of Willie's playing career, he went on to share his great knowledge of football by managing and helping to train many of Ballinasloe's young budding players.



Dublin Marathon; Martin Deeley, Willie Devlin, Tom Treanor.

During retirement Willie wanted to maintain his fitness, therefore he decided to start jogging which led him to complete six different marathons, many of which were held as fundraisers for various charities. With a lot of encouragement from his sons, Willie ran his very last marathon in 2010 for Ballinasloe's "Relay for Life."



Maureen and Willie Devlin.

Willie has since slowed down a little and enjoys life with his family. He has also found other enjoyments such as walking and singing. He sings with St Michael's folk choir and can also be heard each month singing with the Singers Circle in the Dunlo Tavern.

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# WESTERN ALZHEIMERS CHARITY LOCAL DRAG HUNT

BY CIARA BERESFORD

Western Alzheimers are organising a number of fundraising events on Saturday, October 18th. The day will kick off at 11am with a Drag Hunt organised by Paul and Annette Lynch, owners of the Countryside Drag Hunt along with local committee members.

The events will then take the supporters and organisers to the Birchgrove Bar for a Tea Day and Bake Sale. Live music will commence at 6pm and continue throughout the night. A raffle and auction will also be kicking off at 8.30pm to bring the night to a close.

Western Alzheimers is a locally based charity providing a complete service of care to families affected by Alzheimers disease and dementia in the west of Ireland. The range of services the organisation has to offer includes In-Home Support, Residential Respite Care, Day Care, and Long-Term Residential Care.

They provide an extensive In-Home Support Service where trained carers attend the homes of people who are looking after loved ones, in order to give them a break on a weekly basis.

The Respite Care Service offers residential respite breaks to families, and currently supports approximately fifty families almost every month.

The long-term facility in Athenry is a 22 bed unit, which has a small number of Respite beds and also caters for a small number of Day-Care patients.

Western Alzheimer's also provides a very important Counselling and Information Service to families and carers. Finance is generated through their own fundraising activities, complimented by both State and philanthropic contributions. The facilities in Galway and Roscommon currently lead the way with further developments planned for the near future.

"All funds raised from the Charity Drag Hunt will support our In Home, Information and Respite services locally. The fundraiser will also help reduce waiting lists and expand our ability to meet current demands and requests for assistance. All support is greatly appreciated for this fantastic event", added Patricia Kenny, Chairperson.



Last years charity drag hunt



Western Alzheimers Hunt Committee. Back L-R: Michael Scott, Cathal Johnston, Brendan Craig, PJ O'Connor, Paul Lynch and Gerry Greene. Front L-R Carmel Scott, Annette Lynch, Patricia Kenny, Anne Craig.

Western Alzheimers also hold a weekly fundraiser which plays a huge part in the communities' efforts. They are delighted to announce that because of their partnership with Localotto.ie, people can now play the lotto online at their website. The jackpot is now at a staggering €4,950.

For further information or to make a donation please contact Western Alzheimers on 090 9364900 or visit the website at [www.westernalzheimers.ie](http://www.westernalzheimers.ie).

# EAST GALWAY HUNT – NEW KENNEL OPENING

BY CIARA BERESFORD

The East Galway Hunt officially opened their new and improved kennels in Lispeasty, Eyrecourt. The Kennels serve as a base for East Galway Hunt and a home for their hounds who are looked after, fed, groomed and exercised daily.

The new kennels were built as a replacement for the old ones on Redmount Hill where the hounds had been housed since 1970. The project took a number of years from identifying a suitable site and procuring land to planning and building.

The official opening saw Tom Fahy, Chairman of the hunt for the last 31 years, cut the tape after blessings were given from Rev Patrick Towers and Fr Declan McInerney, "It was always a dream of mine to change our kennels but thought it would never happen – without Joe Cavanagh's drive and generosity, this project would not have been possible" said Tom.

The official opening continued with a barbeque which fed 250 guests including local farmers, hunt members, visiting hunts, neighbours and ex pats who returned to wish the hunt well. Michael Higgins, a former East Galway Huntsman, who helped revive the hunt in 1969 after a 12 year absence was also present along with ex joint masters John Flynn, Vincent Shields and Brian Siggins.

Rupert McCawley, Chairman of the Irish Masters of the Foxhounds, complimented the East Galway Hunt on the wonderful new kennels and wished them many years of good hunting. Dr Pat Wall, Chairman of the Irish Horse Board also complimented the hunt and emphasised the importance of the hunting field for bringing on young horses and noted that people on horseback get a unique prospective of rural Ireland. Also thanked were those who contributed for over 45 years to the old kennels in Redmount Hill.

The fantastic new premises will help secure the future of the East Galway Hunt for a long time to come. The hunting season runs from October to February and the East Galway Hunt meet twice a week on Tuesdays and Saturdays. For any enquiries contact 087 2457137 or on Facebook @EastGalwayHuntEGH



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# PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR WINTER

BY PAUL FLYNN

Now that winter is on its way, here are a few tips to make sure that you don't have any avoidable damage caused to your home.

## Interior of the home

- If you have an open fire or stove, get the chimney swept and checked.
- Get your boiler serviced.
- Make sure your pipes and tanks are properly insulated.
- Be aware of the location of your mains water stop clock in case of a burst pipe.
- Check that your smoke alarms are working.
- To prevent pipes bursting in winter: If you are leaving your home for a length of time this winter – turn off water at the mains and ensure the pipes are drained.
- If your home is going to be left vacant for any length of time make sure that the heating is set to come on if the temperature drops.
- Keep a torch and spare batteries in an easy to reach location.

## Exterior of the home

- Check that no roof tiles, slates or ridge tiles have become dislodged.
- Check that any aerials or satellite dishes are properly secured.
- Check gutters, downpipes and gully traps. Remove debris from the gutter.
- Remove any trees which are overhanging your property that could damage your property in stormy weather.
- Check your external lights are working.
- Make sure external locks and padlocks have been serviced.

If you are unlucky to have suffered a loss due to damage to your property for these or any other reason, you should contact Rosgal Loss assessors in Ballinasloe on 087 9975048. Paul Flynn will be happy to advise you on what you need to do and to help you with any claim you may have to make.



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# CU FACTOR TALENT COMPETITION FOR TOWN HALL THEATRE BY CIARA BERESFORD



The Ballinasloe final for the CU Factor Talent Competition is taking place on Saturday, October 17th in the Town Hall Theatre. The competition requires the youths of Ballinasloe to showcase their talents in the hope of winning the national title.

The competition is open for entrants between the ages of 12 and 19 and talents can range between music, song, dance and comedy. Auditions will take place in Gullanes Hotel on Tuesday, October 6th at 5.30pm. This year's auditions can also be submitted online by emailing a YouTube video link of the act to niall@ballinasloecreditunion.ie.

The winning contestants from the local and regional competitions will then progress to secure their place in the CU Factor National Final, which is scheduled to take place in the Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre on Saturday, November 7th. Twelve acts from all over the country will battle it out over the course of the evening in the hope of retaining the CU Factor Competition 2015 title and claim the winning prize of €750.

Speaking at the launch was William Duthie, Chairman of the Ballinasloe

Credit Union, who thanked the Town Hall committee in Ballinasloe for hosting the National Final in November. The fact that the local, regional and national finals are taking place in Ballinasloe should be a great incentive for local young people to get involved this year. Potentially someone from the locality could be crowned CU Factor National Winner 2015 without even leaving Ballinasloe.



Last year's winners Buttons and Bows

The competition is designed to showcase the talents of the youth in Ballinasloe and its hinterland. "We have some very talented musicians, singers and dancers in Ballinasloe and the CU factor gives the individuals the opportunity to showcase their talent on the local stage. I would encourage the youth of Ballinasloe to get involved this year" added Niall Clarke Marketing Officer with B.C.U.

Anyone interested in taking part in the CU Factor can

log onto their website where the application form can be downloaded. The application form is also available from the counter in the Ballinasloe Credit Union.

For more details visit their website at [www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie](http://www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie) or follow them on Facebook at Ballinasloe Credit Union.

## LARRY REYNOLDS IRISH MUSIC, HERITAGE AND CULTURE WEEKEND SUCCESS



The weekend kicked off with the Larry Reynolds Memorial Concert in the Town Hall Theatre on the Friday. The concert showcased some of the finest exponents of Irish Music including members of Larry's extended Family, The Matt Cunningham Band and

Citizen Keane – Sean, Matt, Noel & Pat Keane, members of the famous Keane Family from Caherlistrane, Co. Galway were also present.

Saturday held the traditional Irish Craft Exhibition, including Basket Weaving and Blacksmithing. There was also a historical walking tour of Ballinasloe. Throughout the day there was workshops by the finest of tutors, in a number of traditional musical instruments as well as Sean Nos Dance workshops.

This year also saw the first ever Larry Reynolds Lecture Series, which detailed Larry's life, his music, his style of play and his influences on the Irish American traditional music scene. Sunday afternoon provided supporters with the chance to take part in a monster Ceili in Gullanes Hotel with dancing to the Salamanca Ceili band. It is hoped to have the programme again in September next year!



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## RESPONSE GROUP ANNUAL PUBLIC ADDRESS

BY CIARA BERESFORD

For the past five years, the Ballinasloe Response Group has supported local people in a positive manner with alcohol, drugs and gambling problems. To celebrate their fifth anniversary, the group has invited Oisín McConville as main speaker at their annual Public Address.

The Ballinasloe Response Group was established in 2010 with the aim of developing and delivering a community response to substance misuse issues in the local area. The group, which is completely voluntary, has been meeting regularly since then and has been involved in raising awareness, providing information, support and advocacy and encouraging positive alternatives.

The current objectives of the group are to:

- Provide guidance for those who contact the group seeking help with drug, alcohol or gambling issues.
- Run the annual public awareness event.
- Run the candlelight vigil annually.
- Support local school communities.
- Advocate for those affected by drug and alcohol use and lobby for changes in legislation.

Some examples of events the Ballinasloe Response Group have organised include:

- Public Address by Fr. Peter McVerry.
- Public Address by John Lonergan – "Empowering the Community".

- Public Address by Conor Cusack.
- The 'Living with Someone's Drug and Alcohol Use' education course.
- The annual "Candles of Hope" vigil every November.
- The "Men at Work" Family Support Play.
- Information stands at the October Fair.
- Providing a Family Support and Drop-In Service.

This year the group have organised for Oisín McConville to come and deliver the annual Public Address, talking about recovery and hope and also cast some light on the extent of problem gambling in our society.

Oisín is an All-Ireland medallist for Armagh in Gaelic Football, who unfortunately struggled with a gambling addiction for over 16 years. Oisín's addiction was in full swing at the tender age of 18. He worked part-time through school and full-time when he left school which meant he always had money to bet.

Oisín admits, "If I had a good win, I wouldn't treat myself to a new shirt or a holiday, instead I would say, "Now I have serious money to gamble with." Over time his addiction landed him dangerously in debt, "I felt as if the walls were closing in on me and I became suicidal!" To this day, Oisín has confronted his demons with the support of his family and is enjoying life again.

Since his recovery he has supported many people through this insidious disease and urges anyone with an addiction of whatever kind to seek help now, "accept you are powerless over your addiction and wave that white flag."

He will be speaking for the annual Public Address in Hayden's Hotel on November 11th at 7.30pm. All are welcome to hear this inspirational speaker share his experience and thoughts on addiction through the theme of Recovery and Hope. "It's great to have such a high quality speaker in Ballinasloe and I expect it to be an inspirational evening. I encourage everyone to come along to Hayden's to learn more about this silent and dangerous disease", added Pádraig Lyons, Chairman of the Ballinasloe Response Group.

The group will also be holding its annual Candlelit Vigil the previous Friday, November 6th which will commence at 6.30pm in St Michaels Square in support of people living with addictions.

For more information on the event contact: 087 6629953. For help or advice on gambling contact Gamblers Anonymous Galway on a confidential line: 086 3494450.



# OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



Large crowds turn out to welcome home the Galway Minor & Senior Hurling Teams following the All Ireland Hurling Finals.



Conor Dowd, Kai Keighery and Daire Cunningham welcome the Galway hurling teams at Ballinasloe.



Maureen Cahalan secretary of Community Hearts saluting Ballinasloe's Superintendent Gerry Roche who recently transferred to Galway City. The occasion marked Gerry's trojan work with Community Hearts. Many people in Ballinasloe and in the surrounding area will miss Gerry's presence in the town.



MARTINS all the way! 93-year-old Val Martin, Ard Mhuire, Ballinasloe with his son Declan Martin, grandsons Conor and Dara Martin, and his twin great-grandsons Jacob and Charlie Martin. Val, who was born in Portumna, attended his first All-Ireland hurling final in Croke Park in 1939 and played minor hurling for Galway the following year.



Tara Lynch, Chairperson of Boston Comhaltas on stage at Town Hall Theatre with members of the Reynolds Family during the Larry Reynolds Tribute Weekend.



FROM THE 70's: Ballinasloe's international singing star Lee Lynch (back left), with some of his friends Bernie Hyland, Mikie Gavin, Frank McGrath and Tommy McDonnell.



Midland Language School Spanish Student group in Athlone, Roscommon and Ballinasloe enjoying their end of month disco in Gullane's Hotel.

# OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



Garbally JC grads: The full Garbally College Junior Cert class with Mr. Stephen Reilly, Principal and Mr. Dan Burke and Mr. Brian Derrane, Year Heads.



Presentation to Gerry Kelly, Golf Club President, of the Andy Cahalan Memorial Cup and prizes which are sponsored annually by Maureen Cahalan Jewellers in memory of Andy.



Ballinasloe Eagles: Photographed is the presentation of €1,000 to the Ballinasloe Eagles on behalf of the Ballinasloe Golf Club.



Betty Flynn, Woodmount with her seven sons at a recent family function. Back L-R: Michael, Brendan, Tomás, Dermot & Kevin. Front L-R: Declan, Betty and Paul.



Ness Kelly gave a pottery workshop for children at Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre during Culture Night.



Tom Joe Kelly, Captain of the Ballinasloe Millennium Golf Society, presents his prize to the winner, Mike Barrett, at the outing in Glasson Golf Club.



Val Martin presents his President's prize to Tony Dolphin, winner of the Ballinasloe Millennium GS Presiden't Day in Portumna Golf Club.



Photo from the Lily Kelly Art Studio Exhibition on Culture Night September, 18th at the Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre. L-R: Nuala Murray, Frances McManus, Evelyn Donellan, Art Tutor Lily Kelly and Lyn Donnelly



A family affair! Shane, Geraldine and Michael Kelly receives the Michael Fitzpatrick Memorial Trophy from Mary Fitzpatrick following their victory in the Michael Fitzpatrick Annual Ballinasloe Rugby Golf Classic.



## CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS



Queen of the Fair Committee L-R: Caroline Gullane, Tomas Gullane, Queen of the Fair Rachel Walker, Mary Phelan and Adrian Ahern.



Members of the Ballinasloe Musical Society pictured with their representative & winner Rachel Walker



Photographed is a group of Ard Scoil Mhuire students who attended their Graduation in Gullanes Hotel.



Sarah O'Connor from St. Michael's Place and Darren Kearns from Athlone who were married on August 8th in St Michael's Church. The reception was held in the Shearwater Hotel



Talented local musician Vera Craughwell with John Halligan, Blessington, Co. Wicklow on their wedding day. The reception was held in the Shearwater Hotel.



Pictured at the Ballinasloe Indoor Bowls Clubs Annual Social Night in Gullanes Hotel were the winners of the clubs singles competition L-r Frank Dolan (runner up), Eugene Shields (winner "A" Final), Cyril Dunne (winner "B" Final), William Duthie (runner up) and Sean Craughwell (Club Chairman).



Colm Shine celebrated his 70th birthday at a party in Ballinasloe golf club pictured playing a few tunes with his brother Brendan to entertain his guests.

## BALLINASLOE TOWN TEAM SHARED MISSION

BY COLM CROFFY

The Town Team launched their comprehensive mission statement and plan this month. The plan aims to provide focus and clarity about what the team are seeking to do and how.

The vision is to revitalize the town and its hinterland, enabling it to achieve its true potential, by creating awareness of all the positive assets they currently have in the townland. They also aim to identify new initiatives that will enhance and expand on what the town already has.

"We would like to encourage positive suggestions and interaction from all local groups and agencies by progressing ideas and actions together and working in co-operation with one another" said Jacinta Divilly, Co-ordinator, Town Action Team.

They plan to prioritise attainable objectives that will rejuvenate our town and help it achieve its true potential, to make Ballinasloe a better place to live and raise families - and foster a friendly competitive sustainable town to do business in and visit.

The current goals of the town teams work are, in summary;

A livelier and surprising local town that draws in people to socialise and spend more often, including distinctive comparison retail offer.

An activity town - ready to achieve now if activities are organised as market has cash but is less discerning for food and drink.

A heritage town - dependent on town and building enhancements, more heritage attractions open in town and surrounding area and greater variety of higher quality hospitality. Distinctive comparison retail part of offer too.



L-R: Jacinta Divilly, Seamus Duffy, Mike O'Brien & Lyn Donnelly

Their immediate priority is to make Ballinasloe into a better local town, including widening its appeal to families and young people - the town's future customers who are readily drawn elsewhere. This involves improving the town centre experience, retail offer, local services and events. The belief is that if they get this right, the benefits in terms of spend, jobs and wider wellbeing will follow.

WHAT'S INNOVATIVE ABOUT THIS APPROACH? What's innovative and unique to this development approach is the involvement of:

Evidence based work

- Co-ordinated Partners
- Integrated Actions
- Measurable Monitoring and Change
- Transferable Techniques

The action team are currently working on a REDZ submission, a sports marketing initiative, business networking events, a fashion show, people of the year awards, the Halloween zombie walk and a revitalised Christmas lights campaign as short term projects.

SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE?

As a single image, success will be symbolised by busier streets on a mid-week morning. Behind this image, the team have a suite of key performance indicators (KPIs) that we will measure to see how the town centre's performance is improving.

These include:

- Footfall at different times
- Business vacancy rates
- Business confidence
- Public perceptions

Ballinasloe Town Team: Val Colleran, Colm Croffy, Jacinta Divilly, Lyn Donnelly, Aidan Donohue, Seamus Duffy, Tara Galvin Carmel Grealy, Paula Harley, Kate Murray, Mike O'Brien, Pádraig O Ceithearnaigh & Ger Tully

You can read a the full action plan and make suggestions at [www.ballinasloe.ie](http://www.ballinasloe.ie)

## MILES FOR EMMA – CROAGH PATRICK CLIMB

BY CIARA BERESFORD



The Miles for Emma four peak challenge was the second event to promote equality and awareness for children with Special Needs. The event asked people to challenge themselves by climbing Croagh Patrick four times in one day.

The event required an early start of 4.45am, to be on the road for 5.30am. Ken Campbell admitted, "The drive from Ballinasloe to Westport was filled with a host of emotions from anticipation and nerves to determination and pride."

The group arrived at the foot of the mountain at 7.30am and even at that early hour they had a strong contingent of over 24 climbers, three of which were already on the mountain having started at 6am and were soon to be followed by the official first wave at 8am.

The first ascent was an enjoyable experience. With such a beautiful morning, spirits were high and excitement was in the air with a group of first time climbers in tow. "Even though there is nothing easy about climbing Croagh Patrick, we all reached the summit in good time and good form where even a bit of Hurling was enjoyed with a sliotar or two been driven off the mountain", added Ken.

The first descent landed the group back just in time to welcome the latest arrivals which included a group from the Ballinasloe Cycling Club. The club had just completed a 130km cycle from Ballinasloe to climb the mountain and had to cycle home to Ballinasloe on completion of their climb. The next arrivals included the first bus load from Ballinasloe



which was organised by Tommie Costello of Cuckoo Hill. At that stage, the numbers were starting to swell and a sea of Purple was beginning to emerge at the foot of the mountain.

After a 30 minute break and a few photos, the team started their second ascent which included both adults and children climbing side by side, decked out in their 'Miles for Emma' purple t-shirts. "I have to say seeing all of the T-Shirts on the mountain made me feel so proud and with the reaction of genuine interest from fellow climbers, proved we had in some way got our message of Equality and Awareness for Children with Special needs out there", admitted Ken.

On their second descent they met another bus load on their way up. The Scariff Foroige group who had travelled the whole way from Co. Clare to support Miles for Emma along with many other supporters.

As the group entered the car park for the second time the task in hand was beginning to take its toll. For some the adventure had come to an end, having completed the climb either once or twice, which was an unbelievable achievement in its own right. For other climbers, it was time to prep for a third time. "As I sat in my car refuelling my body for what I believed would be my last ascent, I felt a real sense of achievement, not at what I had done thus far but of the event as a whole", stated Ken.

Over 140 Miles for Emma Supporters climbed Croagh Patrick that day. Of that total, six completed the climb four times, four completed three climbs and nine completed the climb twice. They also had a host of individuals who climbed the mountain for the first time.





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- All sports events shown on big screen at our new sports bar "CrossBar"



## BLUE SKIES TRUST RAISING SUMS FOR CHILDREN'S CHARITIES

BY CIARA BERESFORD

Sean returning to the ground under canopy. At just 14 years old Sean was a very brave young man to partake in this charity event for Crumlin.



Ballinasloe in aid of the Special Care Baby Unit in Portiuncula raising over €500.

Yet another tandem skydive was held in Abbeyshrule, in aid of Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin which raise over €2000. This event saw their youngest ever skydiver, Sean Whyte aged 14 years from Craughwell who is the son of John Whyte, formally of Garbally Ballinasloe and Breda Byrne of New Inn. Sean jumped out of a plane at 10,000ft strapped to a tandem master, freefall for 5,000 ft., and returned to the ground under canopy.

Blue Skies Trust have organised Family Days in Moycarn, Ballinasloe and fundraised for Share a Dream, Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland, and the Irish Cancer Society. They have also assisted Share a Dream Foundation in creating dreams for children.

Leo Kiernan is a Garda based in Galway, living in Taughmaconnell, and a native of Athlone who has been working with children's charities both locally and nationally for years.

In 2010, Leo along with some friends had a vision, to set up a group which would fundraise for children's charities. He had seen friends and families having to attend paediatric units of various hospitals and was impressed by the hard work that the medical staff performed despite such hard economic times. In turn, Blue Skies Trust was established and has been striving with a number of events raising thousands for children's charities.

Blue Skies Trust is an organisation which brings a number of very ill children's fantasy experiences to life. The organisation hosts a variety of events including skydiving, church gate collections and charity walks to support various children's charities such as; AADI, Aoibheann's Pink Tie and Laura Lynn foundation to name but a few.

The first official charity tandem skydive was held in Abbeyshrule, Co. Longford in July 2014. The event was held in aid of Aoibheann's Pink Tie and the Laura Lynn Foundation which raised over €9,000.

Last Christmas Blue Skies Trust held a carol singing fundraiser in Tesco

The Blue Skies Team consists of: Leo Kiernan, Taughmaconnell, Finola Kiernan, Taughmaconnell, Shane La Comber, Ballinasloe, Dave Healy, Ballygar, David McEnroe, Athlone, Aoife Mac Caffery, Athlone.

The Blue Skies Team will be organising various fundraisers for children's charities including events for four special children in the coming weeks, and some more carol singing for SCBU Portiuncula.

For more information you can visit their Facebook page or website at [www.blueskies.ie](http://www.blueskies.ie)



Sean Whyte, aged 14 at the time, embarking on his tandem skydive for Crumlin. In the picture is his tandem master (the guy he's strapped too) Damien Cahill. Damien has completed over 2000 tandem jumps, and more recently you may be seen him on the TV as he was involved with the Rose of Tralee's skydive.

## PEOPLE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

BY CIARA BERESFORD

The 2015 People of the Year Awards acknowledge outstanding people and organisations who, through their commitment to participating in community and voluntary activities, have had a positive and significant impact on the quality of life of their communities in Ballinasloe.

"Many voluntary groups and individuals make invaluable contributions to our community. Our wish is that such people are formally recognised so that we can efforts and achievements," stated Jacinta Divilly TownTeam Facilitator. A huge "Thank you to our main sponsor, Ballinasloe Credit Union, and also the Shearwater Hotel and the town team."

The awards recognise and celebrate the voluntary work that individuals, groups, organisations and schools contribute to their community. There are seven award categories in total.

1. **Social & Community Support Award** – This category covers a broad spectrum of activity from voluntary groups and individuals who work with specific groups such as people with disabilities, the elderly and people less fortunate than others.
2. **Arts, Culture and Heritage Award** – This award recognises the contribution of individuals, schools and groups to the contributing development of the Arts, Culture & Heritage in Ballinasloe.

3. **Sports and Recreation Award** – This category recognises individuals or groups who give their time voluntarily to support and encourage participation in sport and other recreation activities. The award also includes specific teams and individuals who have excelled in their chosen sport and represented their town with distinction.

4. **Young Person Award** – This category recognises the contribution that young people make in our community, through their work within different community groups. It also acknowledges the achievements of individuals or groups who proudly represent Ballinasloe in sporting, cultural or community events.

5. **Civic Pride Award** – This award recognises voluntary individuals, resident associations and other groups in the area that have shown a sense of civic pride within their community by undertaking a wide range of local activities that have made a difference and who continue to work towards making Ballinasloe a better place to live.

6. **Community Group Special Recognition Award** – This category recognises voluntary groups and individuals that have made a special contribution to life in Ballinasloe through the works they have undertaken which may be deemed to go above and beyond normal call of duty.

7. **Hall of Fame Award** – This award recognised individuals who have achieved excellence and are successful in the field of either sporting,

professional, business, entrepreneurial or artistic endeavours.

To nominate, download the nomination form @ [www.ballinasloe.ie](http://www.ballinasloe.ie) specify the category of choice and answer the questions. Once completed the form can be either emailed or posted back.. Closing date for receipt of nomination forms is Friday, October 9th at 5pm.

The awards will be independently assessed after the closing date and winners will be chosen. All shortlisted nominees will be invited to The People of the Year Awards Ceremony on the evening of November 12th in the Shearwater Hotel, where the winners will be announced and presented with their awards.

All shortlisted nominees from each category will be presented with a Scroll of Achievement and each category winner will be presented with a specially commissioned prestigious award.

For further enquiries please contact Lyn on 090 96646516 or email at [info@ballinasloeenterprise.ie](mailto:info@ballinasloeenterprise.ie)



Ballinasloe Town Team members L-R: Padraig O'Ceithearnaigh, Mike O'Brien, Jacinta Divilly, Noel Madden (BCU Manager), Lyn Donnelly & Seamus Duffy.

## GARBALLY COLLEGE SPECIAL NEEDS CLASS GRADUATION

BY CIARA BERESFORD

Garbally College recently saw their first graduation of eight Special Needs students. Class coordinator, Sinead Costello explains the class caters for students with moderate to severe learning disabilities and students under the Autism Spectrum.

Seamus O'Brien once had an idea to start a Special Class in Garbally College. The class started with a single student and has since expanded to accommodating 16 students this year. Sinead defines a 'Special Class' as "A group of students who put effort into every task put in front of them, who make you laugh when you may feel like crying, who teach you how to appreciate the small things in life that you may never have noticed and end up helping you become a better person."

The curriculum followed in the class is based on life skills and includes essential modules such as computer skills, communications, work experience and many more. The purpose of this curriculum is to ensure that the students leave Garbally College with the skills essential for interacting independently both in work and social environments. This year, the graduates have completed FETAC Level 3 which is the equivalent of Junior Certificate level on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Another aspect which is part of the class curriculum is work experience. Many local businesses including the Shearwater Gym, Kingfisher, Costcutter, Karibas, Spar, Corrib Oil, Ollie Colohans and Euroshop have allowed students to complete their work experience with them. "Feedback from these businesses showed that although they were wary at first of this new venture, they found that the capabilities of these students and the effort they put into tasks opened their eyes and increased their awareness in this area", stated Sinead.

Each year the class hugely rely on interaction with mainstream students. "It amazes me how the Transition Year students become part of our class group and close friends with our students through inclusion activities. It enhances learning for all involved as students learn from their peers", added Sinead.

This year the students at Garbally also took part in film making with Bryan Minton and Conor coming to the school and filming in class to fully capture the essence. They edited the footage into a five minute clip which can be seen on the school website and Facebook under 'The Boys'.

"These students have exceeded my expectations in what they have achieved both academically and personally. It has been the greatest privilege watching the boys grow into men", admitted Sinead as she wishes them all the best in the next stage of their lives.



L-R: Stephen Mitchell, Stephen Ryan, John Joseph, Kieran Willmore, Nathan Hall, Adam Clogher

# HOSPITAL WATCH

BY CIARA BERESFORD



In Ireland, one to two babies in every 1,000 are born with a hearing loss in one or both ears. Over 4,181 babies have been screened since August 2013 in the Portiuncula Hospital.

The service began on a phased basis in 2011 but is now available free of charge in all maternity hospitals and aims to identify moderate, severe and profound hearing impairment in new born babies.

**In other good news, Portiuncula Hospital, Ballinasloe and Mayo General Hospital, Castlebar have taken delivery of potentially life-saving telemedicine stroke machines.**

Telemedicine is the use of telecommunication and information technologies in order to provide clinical health care at a distance.

It is understood that staff are being trained and the machines will then be linked up with Galway University Hospital's stroke team, meaning Ballinasloe and Castlebar will have 24 hour a day, seven days a week emergency stroke services.

**Currently patients who suffer a stroke have to be brought to other centres with these machines, including Galway, Mullingar and Cavan.**

**The new Teledoc (TRASNA) stroke machines are two of seven which until recently were in storage, waiting to be rolled out.**

**The news is being welcomed by Local Independent TD Denis Naughten, who says as well as saving lives, "these machines can also significantly improve the quality of life of a person who has suffered a stroke."**

**Head of the HSE National Incident Management and Learning Team, Cora McCaughan announced she had left the review team. With many speculations whether Ms McCaughan would be replaced or not the HSE have confirmed that she is not being replaced, but says the HSE's National Quality Assurance and Verification Division has provided two experienced investigators to the Saolta Group to support the review process.**

The investigation commenced in March is reviewing the care of a number of babies born in the hospital and will also include a review of maternity care. The review was expected to be completed by September but Saolta recently confirmed it won't be finished until the end of the year at the earliest.

On a brighter note for the maternity unit, almost 200,000 babies born in hospitals nationwide are being screened for hearing impairments. The tests have been carried out under the HSE's universal new born hearing screening programme, which is delivered on behalf of the HSE by Northgate Public Services.



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## NEW LIBRARY UPDATE

BY CIARA BERESFORD

**New €4.5 million Library set to officially open in the last week of October. Pictured is the inside of the Library waiting to be stocked. Also pictured is the back of the building with a beautiful seating area.**



## BALLINASLOE - A SPORTING DESTINATION

BY CIARA BERESFORD

**The 4 hotels in Ballinasloe namely, Shearwater, Gullanes, Moycarn & Haydens have formed an alliance to promote and market Ballinasloe as a venue for sporting teams nationwide, to use the Town as a training hub for a couple of nights away from their base.**

The initiative comes from the recent Town Benchmarking report where several key priority areas were highlighted to establish Ballinasloe as a better local Town – the huge injection of over €25 million in the areas sports facilities – public and private in the past decade needs to be capitalised.

It is estimated that there are over 15,000 senior sporting squads of one form of athletics and sports in all codes who have different training needs through their year. Many coaches and trainers use bonding and training weekends away from their main base as a means of consolidating their panels strength and tactical prowess.

The town's central location in the heart of Ireland, within 2 hours car journey from most locations, on the main train line and serviced every 30 minutes by Buses connected all over Ireland; is a key attribute in allowing the alliance to gain a footing in this very lucrative but competitive market.

**"We have more all year round facilities to offer than any town in the country and added to that money received from the now disbanded UDC was used wisely by organisations so that the key players now all have floodlit facilities which makes them particularly attractive for teams to visit during the period September to April given the shorter days" said working party member BACD Chair Seamus Duffy.**

Floodlit facilities include GAA, Rugby, Soccer, Equestrian & 400m Running Track. They are now asking organisations with more leisurely activities

to make their facilities available for a fee to visiting teams as part of an overall package and invite them to send on the following details to info@ballinalsoeenterprise.ie - email address, contact name, contact phone no & hourly rate per person for use of facilities. They also propose having available strength and conditioning coaches, nutritional advice and what ever add on would be required by the visiting group.

**"This evolving initiative has the potential to bring new visitors to our town especially in the off season and we ask your particular sporting organisation to support us in whatever way you can", states Seamus.**



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## NEW PLAY TO PREMIERE IN MOORE BY BALLINASLOE PLAYWRIGHT BY CIARA BERESFORD

**Ballinasloe native, Xandra Kilduff who has a master's degree in playwrightin and is a published poet and historian, was chosen by the prestigious Moore History Group to research and write a historical play 'Mathers of Falty' based on events which occurred in 1916, for the centenary of the famous Cattle Drive of Falty, Ballydangan, on the estate of James Daniel Arres-Mather.**

The play covers a number of years including 1852, when Daniel Mather, a native of Hallrule in Scotland, purchased sections of the St. George Estate from the Encumbered Estates, through to 1920, when his grandnephew James Daniel, sold to a local committee. The play encompasses the evictions, the rise of political land movements, the 1916 rebellion, and its direct link with the agrarian uprising in Falty.

**The Cattle Drive in 1916 was an act of courage by a local community rising against an unjust landlord and an armed constabulary. Heroism by local women, was of a level rarely experienced outside of Dublin in 1916, and the event was brought to the notice of newspapers across the world with questions even being raised in the House of Commons.**

The Moore History Community Project was formed under the umbrella of the Moore History Group, with a cast of over 30. The cast is drawn from the local community, including the very talented Moore Drama Group, the Red Salamander Theatre Company, the ICA and the Moore and Clonfad Choirs. Taking part in the dramatic production, are several actors and actresses who have the honour of playing family members who lived through the era.

The play is produced by Ballinasloe author Xandra Kilduff, who is at present

writing a book on the Mathers family. In the past, Xandra has produced with many groups including Relays Drama Group, The Oat Gallery Players, and the award winning Red Salamander Theatre Company.

**The premiere will be held in Moore Hall at 8 pm on Friday, November 27th and will run for three nights until November 29th. For further information or bookings please contact 086 1608451.**

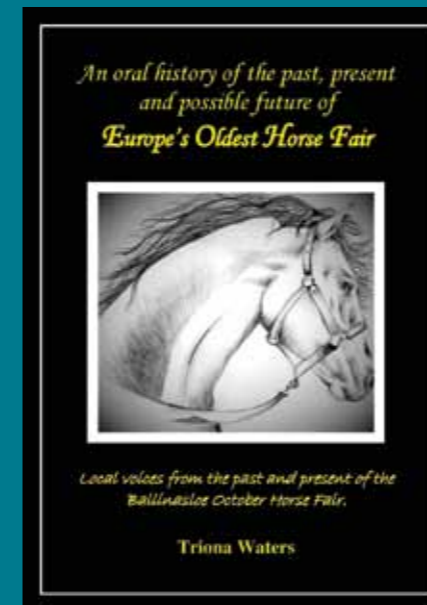


Daniel Mather

## BALLINASLOE HORSE FAIR BOOK LAUNCH

BY CIARA BERESFORD

**Triona Waters, a music teacher from Creagh, Ballinasloe is publishing her first ever book, based on the history, highlights and memories of the Ballinasloe Horse Fair.**



Triona is currently studying a PhD in Medical History in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Having previously conducted research on St. Brigid's Psychiatric Hospital, she is now assessing the archives of St. Joseph's in Limerick and the Irish Lunatic Asylum System. However, one of her previous thesis' was based on the Ballinasloe Horse Fair and is now being published as her first book.

**Through the use of oral history methodology, local people who were involved in the Fair through the years were interviewed by Triona. This process helped her gain more in-depth knowledge of the Fair's history as research. Although the original focus of the Fair was the economic effect it played on the town's prosperity, it was the oral history testimonies that brought about the sentimental significance the event had on the natives.**

Such interviewees included local town guru Mattie Ganley and Mary-Ann Clogher – both of whom have since passed. Both Mattie and Mary-Ann helped elaborate on their fondest memories of growing up with the Fair in the early 1900's. Other interviewees included members of the public who had extensive knowledge of the fair's history including Pat O'Sullivan, Michael Staunton, Christopher Waters, Sean Kerrigan, John Harney, members of the Travelling Community and many more.

Through this research, both the economic effect and the fondest memories of the Ballinasloe October Horse Fair is discussed whilst the interviewees are quoted extensively throughout. The book will bring some new knowledge to the history of the town in relation to the age of the Fair, the age of the Clancarty's and their influence on the mapping of the town. It will also include graphs of livestock sold in the 1800's and 1900's, fond trips down memory lane regarding Country Fair Day, shows and competitions, the amusements, entrepreneurship, an assessment of the possible future the fair may behold and much more.

**Triona's book titled; 'An oral history of the past, present and possible future of Europe's Oldest Horse Fair – Local voices from the past and present of the Ballinasloe October Horse Fair.' Is available at a price of €10 in local shops and business' around town including Salmon's, CH computers, Stronges, Hayden's, Dolans and many more.**



Triona

## ST BRIGID'S HERITAGE GROUP BY CIARA BERESFORD



### Turning the Clock Back to 1915

**Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre recently hosted a free family event, with a difference. St Brigid's Heritage Group invited people to join them as they transported back in time to Ireland 1915.**

The event began with a Culture Night Concert on Friday which featured Club Damhsa An Sean Nós, Béal Átha na Sluaigne, members of the Blossom Harp Ensemble and All-Ireland Champion Dancers, the Behan sisters. The event also included local musicians, Liam Loughrey, Alan Coulihan, Johnny Johnston, Seamus Feerick and introducing singer Ciara Lawless.

**There was an exhibition of local East Galway news which showcased the local papers and photographs from the period around 1915. From the exhibition it was evident the people of Ballinasloe were fond of dancing, with dances being organised every week in the Town Hall or the Wigan Hall. There was also news on marriages and deaths, as well as a running commentary on the Great War or World War 1.**

Activities commenced at 12 noon on Saturday with a camogie match between Pearses, South Roscommon and Ballinasloe camogie for The Ada English Cup. It was an intense battle which saw Ballinasloe retrieve the title.

Local actors re-created the atmosphere of the period by dressing up and re-enacting scenes from the fascinating time in our local history. The afternoon programme offered a children's corner, puppet show, vintage display, World War 1 Exhibition, a society wedding, local characters and important visitors, along with political movements, music, dancing and street ballads.

There was also a prize for the best period costume, a family fun quiz and the weekend concluded with the Gullanes Hotel Session on Saturday night.

# COUNTRY MUSIC STAR TO OPEN 2015 FAIR



BY NIAL CLARKE

**Ballinasloe Fair and Festival have finalised their programme of events, an Eight-day extravaganza of all things equestrian, with entertainment, music and great family fun.**

Country music star Mike Denver will officially open the Fair @ 3pm on Sunday 4th October. Crowds in excess of 80,000 are expected to visit Ballinasloe over the eight-day festival, with the equine events being held over both weekends. The festival is worth in the region of €8 million to the local economy.

Events organised by the Fair & Festival committee this year include the Queen of Fair, Tug of War, Food & Craft Market, Dog Show,

Fireworks, Equestrian events such as Horse / Pony / Cob of the Fair Competitions. The F&F committee also run the Art / Craft / Baking competitions as well as newer events such as Soapbox Derby and sheaf throwing. To avoid confusion its must be pointed out that the fair & festival committee do not organise any of the events in the Ballinasloe show grounds.

**New for 2015 the F&F committee have organised a family event to coincide with the Fireworks display on Friday the 9th October. This family event will start at 7.30pm in the car park adjacent to St Michaels Church and includes music on the festival soundstage, face painting and a few surprises and will conclude with the monster fireworks display @ 8.30pm.**

The Soapbox Derby will take place on Wednesday the 7th October at 8pm on Dunlo street. This was one of the more popular events

in 2014 and the F&F committee are delighted to be hosting it again this year.

Speaking on behalf of the F&F committee Adrian Ahern acknowledged that planning the Fair takes time but financing our events is difficult. Contrary to public belief we do not receive any of the money from the stalls on the streets, traders on the Fair Green, fun-fair, nor do we receive any gate receipts. The Fair & Festival committee has no direct source of income. We depend solely on the generosity of our sponsors and are very grateful to all the local businesses that support and sponsor our beloved Fair. Without their support we could not put a programme of events together. It's that simple. I would ask you to support all our sponsors in any way you can.

The Credit Union Horse of the Fair Lunging Competition takes place on the Sunday the 4th October. The All Ireland Pony and Cob lunging

Competitions take place on the Monday 5th. Saturday the 10th will see the Country Fair and the Mare and Foal In-Hand Classes in the Fairgreen lunging Arena.

**Throughout Sunday and Monday there will be live entertainment on the festival soundstage. Midweek will also see the Gullanes Hotel tug of war which will take place on Society Street on Tuesday 6th and Friday 9th. The singing pub competition will also take place during the week. The Ballinasloe Town Team will host a Fashion Show on Wednesday 7th.**

On Sunday 11th October the Bakery, Art and Craft competitions will take place. 2015 Queen of the Fair Rachel Walker will be on hand to present the prizes for all of the aforementioned competitions that will be held on St Michael's Sq at the Festival Tent. Entry to all the Bakery, Art and Craft and competitions for both kids and adults is free and prices will be in kind. For

further information contact Ciara 087 655 5631 or Caroline 085 769 5200. See our website and posters for full details. The festival Open Dog Show as well as the popular Food and Craft Fair will also take place in St Michael's Square. The Ballinasloe Vintage club will host a static display on Main Street.

Chairman of the festival committee, Adrian Aherne felt it was important that the community of Ballinasloe were aware that the F&F committee is just one of the stake holders of the October Fair. "Our events are primarily festival activities. Galway County Council organise the Horse Fair. Galway County Council also officiate and collect the fees from the street stalls, the traders on the fair green, and the funfair. Ballinasloe Show host a one day show in the show grounds. Ballinasloe Fair & Festival host a variety of events and activities over an eight day period, all free events, and all for the benefit of the economy and people of

Ballinasloe. I would like to thank in particular Galway County council and An Gardaí Síochána for the support that they give our committee, without it the festival element of the fair could not take place. Thanks also to the Civil Defence, ISPCA and Vets, Ballinasloe vintage club and Ballinasloe Musical Society for their help with the Soundstage and Singing-Pub competition."

"Finally I would like to acknowledge the support of the people of the town and apologise for any inconvenience, I hope you enjoy Ballinasloe Fair & Festival 2015 and look forward to seeing you out and about in Ballinasloe during the week."

**The Fair runs from Sunday 4th October until the Sunday 11th. The Festival Office is now open on Society Street (formerly Keanes) for more details check out the festival website [www.ballinasloeoctoberfair.com](http://www.ballinasloeoctoberfair.com) or check out our facebook page Ballinasloe Fair, Phone number 0874421561 / 0874421560.**



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# LAUNCH OF HORSE & AGRICULTURAL SHOW

BY CIARA BERESFORD



Photos: Gerry Stronge

Back Row: John Kelly Kilconnell, Tomas Gullane Sponsor, John Harney Sec. and Cllr Aidan Donohue. Front Row: Denis Naughton TD, Carmel Kenny, Downeys Bar & Restaurant Sponsor, Marina Downey Sponsor, & Caroline Gullane Sponsor.

At the launch Back Row: Sen. Michael Mullins, Michael Kelly Fred Kilmartin Ltd, Cathal Gibbons Director, Teresa Kilmartin Sponsor and John Harney Sponsor.

At the launch in Gullane's Hotel Ballinasloe: Back Row (l-r) Padraic Ryan Asst Sec. Philip Gilligan Gain Horse Feeds Sponsor. Front: Cllr Michael Finnerty Chairman Ballinasloe Municipal Council, Valerie Johnston Director, John Harney Sponsor.

**Ballinasloe horse and agricultural show launched their 176th Annual Programme recently in Gullanes Hotel, Ballinasloe.**

This year, the entries are bigger than ever for the show which is held in the Ballinasloe Showground's on Saturday, October 3rd 2015. Classes include In Hand and Ridden Horses and Ponies, Cattle and Sheep Poultry, Art and Vegetables. "Entries were already coming in at a fast rate and we expected it to be one of Ballinasloe's biggest shows ever", said John Harney, Secretary.

**This year, there will be 6 All Irelands:**

- All-Ireland Final Connemara, Filly & Mare of the Future
- The Irish Draft Colt Foal Championship Final
- The Irish Draught Filly Foal Championship Final
- All Ireland Champion Donkey Final
- All Ireland Gain Feeds Colt Foal Final
- National Irish Draught Mare & Foal Championship

Speaking at the launch, Fr Christy McCormack mentioned, "It has been a very exciting year for Ballinasloe Horse & Agricultural show with a huge amount of events going on in the showground's. Special thanks must be given to The Equestrian Committee who managed to get

various groups to hold their show in Ballinasloe including the 30th National Breed show by the Irish Draught Horse Society."

He went on to thank the Directors and the sponsors that turned up to the launch and thanked them for their continued support. A delighted Fr Christy added, "Something very exciting is going to be held in the showground's next year, which will bring a huge amount of visitors and business to the Ballinasloe area and would be a welcome boost to the town." The final details are being put together at the moment and he looks forward to a major launch early next year.

**Financial director Peter O'Connor gave special thanks to the Assistant Secretary, Padraic Ryan who has been opening the grounds for schooling all year. This is a major income for the grounds, who are receiving bookings weeks in advance.**

Arena Maintenance Director, Cathal Gibbons also announced there are going to be two leagues ran in the next few months The Ballinasloe Horse and Agricultural Show Winter League which is starting Saturday, October 17th and The Ballinasloe Horse and Agricultural Show Spring League which is starting Saturday, January 30th 2016.

Ballinasloe GIY group are inviting gardeners to enter the Ballinasloe Show Vegetable Growing Competition for 2015. The event will be held on

October 3rd in the showgrounds, with entries being accepted that morning from 9.30am to 12.00 noon and the presentation of prizes will be held at 3.00pm.

There are six categories, and all entries will be judged solely by weight. The categories are heaviest potato, carrot, beetroot, tomato, vegetable, marrow and two pumpkin classes. For pumpkin growers there will be an open competition and a separate pumpkin class especially for school children. Entry is free and the event has been sponsored by The Ballinasloe Show Society and Ballinasloe Garden Centre.

With a lot of entries so far Padraic Ryan advised people to come early on the morning of the show where parking is available on the Fair Green opposite the showground's. Gates will be open at 7.30am. Rumbles will have their onsite catering units at the grounds for the duration of the show.

**On Sunday 4th, Monday 5th and Saturday 10th parking for trucks, jeeps, trailers and other vehicles will be available in the showground's area in the town centre. Gates will open at 6am. There will also be trade stands in the showground's for the duration of the weekend and on Saturday 10th.**

For more information on entries contact Padraic Ryan on 085 8005577 or John Harney, Main Street Ballinasloe.

# SEVENTH PANTO SEASON RETURNS !!

BY CIARA BERESFORD

It's hard to believe it but it's nearly that time of the year again, yes ladies and gentlemen, Panto season is almost upon us again in Ballinasloe! This year B'sloe Panto have decided to bring something that will suit all of those with a sweet tooth to the stage! Their production of "Hansel and Gertie" is set to run from the 7th to the 13th of December in the Town Hall Theatre Ballinasloe.

This will be B'sloe Panto's seventh production but there are no signs of weariness from the production crew. "Once the auditions are held at the end of September then the real work starts" says Director Eoin Croffy. It takes a lot of work to bring the show from an idea to the stage. There are costumes to source, sets to design and build, special effects to be ordered

and brought in from London, routines to be choreographed, the list goes on and on, and that's all on top of countless rehearsals.

The cast for this year's show is yet to be decided but the production crew is already hard at work. New to this year's line-up is the talented



Avril Smyth (former Queen of the Fair) who will be taking on the role of choreographer. "I'm so excited to be taking part this year, I can't wait

for rehearsals to start!" she enthusiastically says. She will be joined by Elizabeth Hartigan who, after her great success with the group last year, will again be encouraging and choreographing B'sloe Panto's youngest performers. The production crew is rounded off by the very talented musical direction of John Roe who is delighted to be working with the Panto crew once again.

**B'sloe Panto's production of "Hansel and Gertie" will be running from December 7th to 13th in the Town Hall Theatre, the show begins nightly at 7.30pm with two fancy dress matinees on December 12th and 13th at 2.30pm, where both children and adults alike are invited to come in outfits fit for the Panto stage with prizes for the best dressed. Tickets will be on sale soon from the booking office at J&S Photos on Society Street, drop in or call (09096) 31566 to get yours!**

## BALLINASLOE MUSICAL SOCIETY - PREPARATIONS FOR THE PRODUCERS

**Following the success of 'The Addams Family', Ballinasloe Musical Society are once again planning their next production.**

'The Producers' is a musical, adapted by Mel Brooks and Thomas Meehan from Brooks' 1968 film. In the film, the story concerns two theatrical producers who scheme for wealth by overselling interests in a Broadway flop. Complications arise when the show unexpectedly turns out to be successful. The humor of the show draws on ridiculous accents, caricatures and many show business in-jokes.

**Next years musical will take place between the dates of March 1st and March 5th. The Society welcomes anyone who would like to be part of this production.**

The fun starts on Thursday, November 5th with a meet and greet in Gullanes Hotel at 8pm. A workshop will then be held on Thursday 12th with auditions taking place on Sunday 15th in Gullanes Hotel.

This production promises to be a hilarious event from rehearsals right

through to show time in the Town Hall Theatre. For further information contact Gerard Sweeney, Chairman on 087 692 8236.

The society are also delighted and honoured for their fellow member, Rachel Walker who was chosen as this year's Queen of the Fair. "We wish Rachel the very best for the year ahead and we know she will be a wonderful ambassador for The Fair and Festival and Ballinasloe", added Gerard.



Pictured is the Musical Society's Production of 'The Addams Family'

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## TOWN HALL THEATRE EVENTS PREVIEW

BY CIARA BERESFORD

As the winter draws in and people tend to draw to the fire and hearth - the Town Hall Theatre are providing a line-up which is sure to keep you entertained. Having recently hosted the successful Larry Reynolds Irish Music, Heritage and Culture weekend along with the 1915 Living History Enactment, this season is guaranteed not to disappoint.

Saturday, October 10th brings about the Country Fair Day as part of the Ballinasloe October Horse Fair and Festival when the Town Hall foyer will cater to a second Country Market that week from 9.30am to 1.30pm, along with the regular Country Market on every Friday. 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 vegetables which are reasonably priced and freshly made. Craft items, jewellery and handmade soap are also on display.

The Ballinasloe Local Final for the CU Factor Talent Competition is taking place on Saturday, October 17th in the Town Hall Theatre with the Regional Final to follow on October 24th, both at 8pm. The competition is designed as an opportunity to showcase the talented musicians, singers, comedians and dancers of the youth in Ballinasloe. The CU Factor National Final is also being held in the theatre on Saturday, November 7th. Due to the local, regional and national finals taking place in Ballinasloe, it should be a great incentive for young, local people to get involved this year.

Friday, November 6th, will see the Sunday's Child Theatre Company perform their sold out piece, 'My Name is Saoirse' on the theatre stage. They are an Irish new writing theatre company, founded in 2009, who aim to create new and vibrant work that deals with issues that are often swept under the carpet. The company have produced and toured five plays across Ireland and the UK, recently winning a number of prestigious awards including Best Emerging Artist and Best Performer at the Edenborough and Dublin Fringe Festivals.

Last but not least, the theatre welcomes Ard Scoil Mhuire for their annual production. The school will present their play, 'Oliver' for four consecutive nights from Monday, November 23rd to Thursday 26th.

If you would like to produce a show or book tickets please contact 085 8079676. For additional events see [www.ballinasloetownhall.com](http://www.ballinasloetownhall.com) or visit the Facebook page at Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre.



Pictured are some of Ballinasloe's finest Trad musicians performing at a recent Country Market.



Siobhain Owen, who recently performed in the Town Hall Theatre, reunited with her cousin Eva Burgoyne.

## BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO AN OLD ART FORM

BY CIARA BERESFORD

**"The more skill a man hath of his weapon, the more gentle and courteous should he shewe himself"**  
**Vincentio Saviolo, 'His Practise', 1595**

Ashley O'Rourke, western martial arts extraordinaire, recently moved to Ballinasloe with his family as he loved the area, the friendly people and the music. Ashley is setting up his very own Martial Arts club in the hope of passing on some experience he has gained over the years.

Ashley grew up in Sussex, England and also lived a lot in Brighton. As a young boy, he did sports fencing and karate as pastimes. The more classes he attended the more interest he gained in Martial Arts. Ashley mentioned "It would have been my first choice of thing to do and what we were studying was so unique".

Ashley decided to open a club in town as he believes there is none of its kind in the area. To this day, he has clubs open in Milan, Brighton, London, Dublin and Letterkenny and also plans on expanding the club to Galway city. Ashley and his crew also host international martial arts events in Malta, Italy, Spain, Germany and France.

The club is taken from a 15th century Italian fencing manuscript written by fencing master, Vincentio Saviolo, who is said to have helped Shakespeare choreograph the iconic sword

fight in 'Romeo and Juliet'. The manuscript was passed down through generations until a fencing master managed to crack the old English language.



Beginner students start unarmed doing pugilism which is an Elizabethan form of boxing and savate, a French term for kick boxing. After a few weeks of mastering basics, the student moves onto bartitsu which essentially uses a

walking stick designed for fighting. Students can then choose to join the club by paying a membership fee and purchasing a uniform consisting of black fencing trousers, shin pads, knee pads and wooden wasters.

After about 6 months students can study much harder and more complicated techniques using sword, daggers and shields. Ashley stated "after a year the student can take an exam called a 'Free Scholar Exam' which means you're safe to use all weapon forms, trained in all essential parts of the Art and will be eligible to attend other clubs around the country and Europe showcasing fencing".

Ashley believes the club not only teaches art forms and sword work, but also helps students gain fitness, stamina, technique and confidence.

Ashley is adamant that all clubs are set up as a fraternity where no animosity or fighting within the Salles is tolerated. He stated "When in the cells you train together and always train to the lowest ability of the weakest member". Ashley feels by using this technique the clubs retain a real community and family atmosphere.

The club is for 18 years and over and will be opening the beginning of October. For more information visit the website at [www.the1595.com](http://www.the1595.com) or on Facebook at '1595 Martial Arts Club Ireland'.

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# ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE COMMUNITY GAMES

BY CIARA BERESFORD



The u11 Rugby Team from Ballinasloe represented Galway County at the Community Games National Finals. These exceptionally talented players won Gold for the second year in a row, a number of these players were also on the u11 Gold medal team in 2014. This was a magnificent achievement for these young players at National level.



Back row (L-R): Paul Fitzpatrick coach, Ciaran Clarke, Alex O'Leary, Conor O'Grady, Eoin O'Connell, Joseph Tierney, Charlie Mooney, Aaron Cunningham, Kevin Tierney coach.

Front row (L-R): Sean Power, Adam Coyne, Shane Fitzpatrick, Charlie Naughton, Conor Ryan, Miike O'Connell coach.

Community Games National Gold medal winning u12 boys relay team from Ballinasloe.



L-R Ballinasloe Athletics Coach Anne Fitzpatrick, Michael O'Grady, Godfrey Gibbons, Conor Harley, Charlie Naughton, Shane Fitzpatrick, Adam McGreal, Secretary of Ballinasloe Community Games Carmel Grealy, Ballinasloe Athletics Coach Paula Harley.

Nine young athletes from Ballinasloe represented Galway County in the Community Games National Athletics Final. The u12 boys relay team, made up of Charlie Naughton, Shane Fitzpatrick, Conor Harley, Adam McGreal,

Godfrey Gibbons and Michael O'Grady put in a spectacular performance. The team won their heat and semi-final with a strong lead and most importantly these talented runners all had a magnificent run in the final. Adam, Conor and Shane all led their section of the race with Charlie fighting hard in the final stretch to maintain their lead and crossed the finish line to win the National Gold u12 Boys relay event.



Charlie Naughton sprinting towards the finish line in the final length of the relay event to win the National Gold u12 title.

Both Charlie & Shane were also part of the u10 mixed relay team from Ballinasloe who claimed silver medals

in the Community Games National Finals last year along with Joseph Tierney, Ava McKeon, Mya Kelly & Caoimhe Ni Thuairisg.



Nine young athletes from Ballinasloe representing Galway county in the Community Games Nationals Finals.

Back row L-R Godfrey Gibbons, Conor Harley, Shane Fitzpatrick, Charlie Naughton, Adam McGreal, Michael O'Grady.

Front row L-R - Aoibheann Fitzpatrick, Kayla McKeon, Clodagh Killeen.

In the individual girls events, Kayla McKeon had two super runs in her 100m sprint where she got as far as the semi-final. Clodagh Killeen had a strong run in her 60m Hurdles & Aoibheann Fitzpatrick also performed well in her 200m run. Two members of the boys relay team also competed in the u12 individual events. Shane Fitzpatrick and Charlie Naughton performed outstanding in the heat, semi-finals and final qualifiers.



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## UNDERAGE GIRLS FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS

BY CIARA BERESFORD



U10s: Back Row (L-R): Niamh Kerr, Screeda Radhakrishnan, Alannah McKeigue, Lauren Ruane, Niamh Casey, Emily Gillespie  
Front Row (L-R): Leah Clarke, Lalita Geraghty, Jessica Tully, Bláithín McCann, Nicole Manning.



U8s: Back row (L-R): Vivienne Naughton, Adel Finnegan, Keisha Manning, Eabha Hardiman, Ruth Dudgeon, Ciara Power  
Front Row (L-R): Katie Gibbons, Maia Donellan, Ava Ruane, Evellina Zancanaro, Isabelle Ward.

As the outdoor football season draws to a close, Ballinasloe girls' u8 and u10 footballers had a very successful and enjoyable 2015 season.

The indoor training started earlier in the year in The Emerald Ballroom and ran for five weeks until it was moved outdoors to the club house grounds as the weather improved later in the year.

"Football is a very popular sport for girls, with our average attendance at each training session reaching at least 25 girls. This is a non competitive age group where the u8 and u10 teams do not compete in county competitions until they reach u12", mentioned Damien Clarke, coach.

During the year both the u8 and u10 teams participated in seven county development Blitz's including one which was held in the local club. On average, seven neighbouring clubs took part in each Blitz. "The Blitzes were great fun for the girls, with their competitive edges coming out especially against our neighbouring clubs. They got great experience from it", added Damien.

In early October, the u10's are competing in the County Blitz in Annaghdown, which is the only competitive Blitz of the year. "Last year our girls played great and were narrowly beaten by a point in extra time in the Shield Semi Final", stated Damien.

Also this year, the teams are hoping to continue training indoors through the winter season in a local sports hall, which will be confirmed over the next few weeks.

"Gaelic football is a fantastic sport for girls with many social and sporting benefits. It is great for general fitness, agility, hand-eye coordination and team participation. Girls Gaelic football is a minimal contact sport which means even if you're daughter has never played football before, it won't take her long to pick it up. It's never too late", added Damien.

In order to be part of the u8 or u10 team next year, girls must not have turned eight or ten before January, 1st 2016.

For further detail contact Damien Clarke 086 1704241, Mark Ward 086 3015746 or Stephen Kerr 087 2312273.

# DEVELOPMENT OF CLUB GROUNDS IN BRACKERNAGH

BY CIARA BERESFORD

Plans to further develop the Ballinasloe GAA club grounds in Brackernagh are underway. The plans include adding another pitch and a Ball Wall for added training and match space. Donal Fenton, public relations officer for Ballinasloe GAA said proudly, "The plans to develop our GAA club in Brackernagh is a huge development and a bold statement of trust in our great club."

Ballinasloe has always been a town rich in social capital, where the community have strived to act together to pursue shared objectives. Donal expressed his sincere gratitude to the local people who helped raise vital funds for the club in order to make those plans happen, "Our efforts to work together to raise money, plan new facilities, ensure the successful future of our club through development is testament to the solidarity shown by the people of Ballinasloe."

Being a GAA fan or more broadly a sports fan, Donal would place a huge emphasis on playing areas and facilities. He believes the plans to further identify the structural changes necessary will help create a sporting district of Ballinasloe.

The GAA club caters to over 30 teams with only one playing pitch and one training pitch which has brought about an increased strain on the limited resources over the years. "If you are to plan a match or training, there is a queue on the bulletin board where it's difficult to allocate training slots. I would also like to thank St. Brigid's Hospital and St. Joseph's College, Garbally for their efforts to facilitate us when possible", added Donal.

The plan to further develop is to ensure the Ballinasloe teams get an adequate amount of time to train and fully prepare for championships. Teams from under 6's all the way up to adults will benefit hugely from the development. "We have mapped out a "sporting area" of Ballinasloe, shared with Ballinasloe Athletic Track and Ballinasloe Soccer Club, we believe that this new area sends a message of intent, where sport will play an integral role in the development of Ballinasloe", stated Donal.



The new site on the right, athletic track in the background/center and our clubhouse on the right.



Main pitch, soccer club in background on the left and athletic track in background on the right



A picture of the new site.

# U12 FOOTBALL BALLINASLOE

BY CIARA BERESFORD



This year saw the first Walsh Cup tournament for U12 footballers. This tournament was organised by Ballinasloe GAA in honour of Michael "Knacker" Walsh from Ballinasloe who captained the first Galway All Ireland football winning team in 1925.

It involved 8 clubs from 3 counties. All clubs played against each other in a round robin basis with two 11 a-side games per fixture. Points were awarded for wins and draws then four (A, B, C, D) finals were played off in Ballinasloe over two nights based on the points standing. Each final also consisted of two games with the aggregate score deciding the winner.

Clann na nGael narrowly defeated Ballinasloe by one point in a superbly contested A final to win the Walsh Cup. Moate defeated Loughrea in the B final to take the Shield. The tournament overall was a huge success with over 260 kids taking part and clubs are already looking forward to next year's event.

After the tournament and a short break the U12s have had some very strong performances in recent challenge games against St Bridgets, Padraig Pearses, Loughrea, Athenry and Clann na Gael in preparation for the upcoming Galway Division 1A league. The team usually trains or plays matches on Monday and Thursday evenings and extra help is always welcome.



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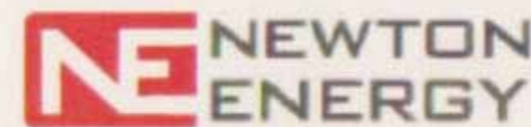
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## BALLINASLOE GIRLS RUGBY GIVE IT A TRY!

The Ballinasloe Girls Rugby Team have recently started a new season with a number of different age groups ranging from u12, u13, u15 and u18. The girl's mini rugby, including u12's, u13's and u15's hold training every Saturday from 11.45am to 12.45pm with the u18 team training every Tuesday from 6pm to 7.30pm. New players are always welcome with any level of experience. A small requirement of a gum shield is to be worn at both training sessions and matches. **For more information contact Patricia Tierney on 087 9176541 or Declan Murphy on 086 8548046.**



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## BALLINASLOE YOUTH GROUP VISIT GERMANY

BY CIARA BERESFORD

The Ballinasloe Youth Group recently took part in an International Soccer Tournament in Velen, Germany. The tournament involved a soccer team from Ballinasloe travelling to Germany to play against a number of different international teams.

The Youth Group consists of local boys between the ages of 16 and 19 who have been participating in the International Soccer Tournament for 12 years. The tournament occurs every year with the choice of venue constantly rotating. This was the Group's fourth visit to Germany.

The trip lasted from Friday to Monday. Friday saw the team take a tour of Schalke Football Club Stadium where the 2004 UEFA Champions League Final was held and also a number of matches in the 2006 FIFA World Cup. The Youth Group held many fundraisers which helped cover half of the travelling costs to Germany, the rest was covered by the players themselves.

The team got the honour of meeting the Mayor of Velen. The Group presented the Mayor and the home club, Tus Velen with a gift, sponsored by Timmy Broderick. All teams participating in the games attended a mass on Saturday morning as a



FC Schalke 04. Wir leben dich.



blessing and to signify the beginning of the tournament. The teams then marched in a parade around the town of Velen.

The International Tournament consists of ten teams from seven different countries including Germany, Poland, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Namibia and Ireland. The teams are split into two groups and play a number of games against one another. Ballinasloe came second in their group, being narrowly beaten in a semi-final against the favourites. The game ended with a draw of 0-0 which resulted in both teams battle for the winning title through penalties. The final score was 5-4.

**"The trip is an enjoyable, once in a life time opportunity was for many young people to interact with international players their own age and to visit a European Country" – stated Michael Riddell, President of the Youth Club. We have to thank Joes, Stephen Dent, Gavin Hardiman and the Credit Union for support and organising jerseys for the lads, without whose help the trip would not have been possible.**

## NEW SEASON DAWNS FOR BALLINASLOE RFC

BY CIARA BERESFORD



Ballinasloe Rugby Team who captured the Cawley Cup.



Ballinasloe Rugby Club is open for business as a busy 2015/16 season kicks off. The club will be fielding an unheralded number of teams this year, covering the spread from the under 8's right up to the adult sides as well as the growing number of women's teams. Up to seventeen teams in all

Such a burgeoning playing activity creates its own logistical issues but, nevertheless, one the club is happy to have. Last season's trophy haul will be difficult to replicate with the capturing of the Cawley Cup being the highlight of the season but the club will be as competitive as ever on all fronts throughout the coming months.

A number of the under-age players have been selected on Connacht age grade squads, with Micheal O'Neill (Connacht U18s), Donnchadh Reilly (Connacht U19s), ex youths Simon Keller, Peter Claffey and Jeff Alovera (Connacht U20s) receiving the honours for the boys. Meanwhile, Rachel Tierney, Ellen Grehan, Grainne Lohan, Sarah Dent and Georgia Codyre have been chosen on the Connacht ladies U18 squad. Further afield, former club players Martin Staunton and Ian Cullinan will captain senior clubs Buccaneers and the Donnybrook side, Bective Rangers, respectively for the coming season.

The club would like to say well done to the Ballinasloe rugby squad that took gold medals at this summer's Community Games finals.

Information and details pertaining to any particular playing category may be obtained from one of the following:

Minis (Ciaran McGreal @ 086 2607781),  
Youths (Seamus Lyons @ 085 7366825),  
Ladies Rugby (Declan Murphy @ 086 8548046),  
Adults (Noel Mannion @ 086 2528110).

## SNOOKER AND BILLIARDS NEW SEASON



Ballinasloe Social Club - Snooker and Billiards has now reopened for the new season with recently refurbished, brand new state of the art club. Membership for the new season is currently open for adults at €20 and juniors at €10. The club is open Monday to Friday from 5pm-9pm and Saturday and Sunday from 5pm-8pm.

Snooker and Billiards in Ballinasloe were the latest club to avail of the free snooker coaching session with the national, professional coach PJ Nolan. The event proved highly beneficial to both adult and junior members and the club are grateful to their partners at the Republic of Ireland Billiards and Snooker Association for organising the successful event.

Leading Ballinasloe snooker player and club captain Paul Keighery, who is also a RIBSA coach, along with his committee are working very hard developing junior snooker in the town with regular coaching within the club. "It was great having PJ, who is one of the world's top snooker coaches at the club as it will only encourage more juniors to take up the sport in the town", added Paul.

Paul Keighery is representing the Club in the upcoming Galway League and hopes are high to see him retain the Galway County title.

There is weekly junior coaching with club coach Paul Keighery and also competitions frequently held for both adults and juniors. The clubs AGM will take place on Wednesday October 14th. New members are always more than welcome.

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## CUMANN CAMOGAIOCHTA BEAL ATHA NA SLUA GEARING UP

BY CIARA BERESFORD

Cumann Camogaiochta Beal Atha na Slua is the local camogie club made up of different age groups ranging from u10's to u18's and Junior A. This season, the club are experiencing huge success in activities both on and off the pitch.

The u10's recently had huge success in winning the North Board League Shield Final. The u11's are also going from strength to strength in their championship and will hopefully go on to win it out. The u12's recently won the ADA English Tournament in an epic battle against Pearses. The u16's unfortunately lost out in the semi-final to a very strong Skehana side but are still contesting the North Board League.

In fundraising activities, the club recently held a Race Night in Maud Millar's which once again proved a fantastic success and a great evening's entertainment. Chairperson Sinead Kennedy thanked the Countrymen, Gerry Strong Photography, M6 Motors, Hayden's Hotel, Thee Place Nightclub, Dolans Centre, Gibbons Bar, Joe's Bar, The Bread Basket, Noel Mannion Sports and Al Hayes Motors for sponsoring races on the night. Aisling Brannelly PRO "also thanked all those who bought horses, acted as jockeys and bet on races".

Cumann Camogaiochta Beal Atha na Slua also held a family fun day in Hayden's Hotel. Although the day saw typical Irish weather, it didn't upset spirits as the club organised many indoor activities for the children to enjoy. The day proved to be a success and enjoyable for all who attended to support the event.



**Ballinasloe U10 NBL Shield Winners:**  
Back Row (L-R): Alannah McKeigue, Ellen Curran, Ava McKeown, Róisín Coleman, Zoe Tumulty, Clíodhna Ní h-Anluain, Emma Grenham, Niamh Kerr. Front Row (L-R): Kaylie Campbell, Maria Dolan, Molly Neasons, Ciara Power, Caoimhe Ní Thuairisg (C), Amy Leonard, Aoibheann Fitzpatrick.



**Ballinasloe Camogie U12 Ada English Cup Winners:**  
(L to R): Maeve Casey, Lisa Naessens, Clíodhna Ní h-Anluain, Emma Brody, Emma Keane, Stephanie Moclair, Avril Deeley, Aine Hall (Capt.), Emily Riddell, Ava McKeon, Róisín Fahy, Shauna Mitchell, Eilish Kerr, Emma Mitchell.

The club also provided a bus to Croke Park to support Galway in the All-Ireland Camogie Finals which acted as a great mixer for players of all ages from u8 up to u16.

Training is still underway for different age groups. For further details on how to join the club follow us on Facebook at Cumann Camogaiochta Beal Atha na Slua.

## BALLINASLOE TOWN U18'S CLUB ROSCOMMON & DISTRICT YOUTH PREMIER LEAGUE TITLE

BY CIARA BERESFORD

The club's U18 squad and management started their league campaign back in May of this year where they were set to compete for the Roscommon & District Premier Youth League title.

The club finished up last season as runners up in both the League and Cup Finals. However, this year the squad were more determined to progress even further and finish the season on a high note.

The year looked promising for the Ballinasloe club as they had travelled through the season unbeaten in every game, which led them to play CP Ajax in Castle Plunket. The U18 team needed a minimum score of a draw

in order to receive the required points to win the title. Upon the ninetieth minute, they found themselves a goal down and looking like they would need to claim the points lost in one of their three remaining games. In a complete turnaround, Jordan O'Leary scored twice in the dying minutes of the game for the three required points and the Roscommon & District Youth Premier League title.

A fantastic campaign for Manager, Enda Layng and Coaches John Keane along with Tony Coyne who assembled the squad together. The u18 team have a chance to retain a double victory, playing against St Johns in the Cup Final which should also be an excellent and exciting affair.



Photo was taken after Ballinasloe U18's beat Local Rivals Skyvalley Rovers 4-0 in Skyvalley. Squad - Mikey Lyons, Aaron Johnston, Dylan Johnston, Ruairi Doherty, Jordan O'Leary, Mark Richardson, James Lynch, Darragh Kildea, Aiden Grehnam, Ciaran Tumulaty, Shane Kelly, Cathal Sheilds, Mahmoud Guimma & Meido Founas

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# ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR

BY CIARA BERESFORD



The first accounts we have of Irish fairs date from the early medieval period (500 to 1200 A.D.). Ireland at the time was divided into a multiplicity of petty kingdoms (approximately 130 in all), each with its annual fair held at a location on its border.

As well as having a commercial aspect, these events were also the occasion for ceremonial gift-giving, in addition to attracting numerous musicians, singers, reciters and story-tellers. Later in the period the fairs increased in size and became virtually confined to the lands attached to the larger monasteries.

Why monastic lands, you might ask? For two reasons: first, in Gaelic Ireland you had no rights outside your own tuath or territory, whereas the monasteries were regarded as neutral ground where everybody was more or less on an equal footing; second, trade had to be conducted through barter because Gaelic Ireland was a society without coinage, and the monasteries acted as deposit banks of a sort where valuables were often left for safekeeping. So, if you went to a fair with gold collars and ornamental brooches in your bag to purchase livestock, the seller could entrust the precious objects to the care of the monks until it suited him to take them home or use them to buy something else. Attending fairs, however, could be a hazardous business when the Vikings were active, since these marauders specially targeted the events because of the opportunities they offered for capturing slaves and making off with other valuable booty.

The arrival in Ireland of the Anglo-Normans involved the introduction of coinage along with urban living, innovations that had hitherto been confirmed to the Norse enclaves on the east and south coasts. Facilitated by the circulation of currency, fairs were established in the newly-founded town and cities, and these fairs remained substantially unchanged down through the centuries, contributing significantly to the economic well-being of their locations until they died out in the 1960s.

Before the advent of supermarkets 50 years ago, a great deal of retail business in provincial Ireland was conducted on the basis of credit extended to individual customers. In these circumstances, it was in the interest of the shopkeeper that the farmer got a good price for his stock to enable the latter to clear his account. Prior to motor-car ownership becoming commonplace, fair days were among the preferred occasions for the purchase of clothing and household goods by rural families, while the public houses could expect to be well patronized by people with money in their pockets.

The Ballinasloe October Fair, like other fairs, was not concerned solely with commercial transactions. It brought people together from different backgrounds: town met country, farmer met trader, and the

influences of the wider world were introduced into the local culture. Forms of entertainment not available at other times of the year were an integral part of the Fair, such as street performers of all kinds and fair-ground amusements. Higher forms of culture were not neglected with concerts featured amongst the week's activities, the advertisements for which in the local press often carried the reassuring information that a large squad of policemen would attend each performance.

Proselytizing and temperance societies regularly targeted the Fair, and on one occasion a very young Augusta Persse – later to be Lady Gregory of Coole Park – helped staff a refreshment booth on the Green serving free cups of tea in a vain endeavour to dissuade people from frequenting the liquor tents. Four-legged animals were not the only living creatures to change hands during the Fair. Members of the landed gentry brought their nubile daughters to attend the various balls and dinners parties held around this time in the hope of their matches in the snugs of the town's 44 public houses on the County Fair Day.

Notwithstanding its great commercial and social importance, references in contemporary literature to the Fair are rare indeed. The Mayo-born writer George Moore included a fictional account of one of the more rumbustious Fair-Week balls in a novel published in 1886. It concluded as follows:

'And so ended the ball given by the spinsters of the county of Galway. But the real end? On this subject much curiosity was evinced. The secret was kept for some time, but eventually it was learned that, overcome by the recollections of still pleasanter evenings spent under the hospitable roof of the Mayo bachelor, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Lynch and Sir Charles had brought in the maid-servants, and that, with jigs for waltzes, and whiskey for champagne, the gaiety had not been allowed to die until the day was well begun. Bit by bit and fragment by fragment the story was pieced together, and, in the secrecy of their bedrooms, with little smothered fits of laughter, the young ladies told each other how Sir Charles had danced with the big housemaid, how every time he did the cross-over he had slapped her on the stomach: and then, with more laughter, they related how she had said: "Now don't, Sir Charles, I forbid you to take liberties". And it all became part of the story that, when they were tired even of such pleasures of these, the gentlemen had gone upstairs to where a poor man who had broken his leg at the ball was lying, and had, with whiskey and song, relieved his sufferings until the Galway train rolled into Ballinasloe'

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## BALLINASLOE TOWN HALL – 170 YEARS OLD

BY DECLAN KELLY

As Ballinasloe Town Hall celebrates its 170th anniversary this year, Declan Kelly reflects on some aspects of the history of this building which has been at various times an Agricultural Hall, a theatre, a schoolhouse and a cinema and which remains at the heart of the local cultural life.

On the 10th May 1844, many of Ballinasloe's movers and shakers met "for the purpose of adopting such measures as might secure for that town the exhibition of the Royal Agricultural Improvement Society for 1845". The Hon Robert le Poer Trench, Chairman, noted that a pivotal part of that proposal was the erection of suitable accommodation for banqueting. £2,000 for the building of this structure would be raised through the sale of £5 shares. Among the local luminaries present were coach-builder Thomas Cochrane, Joshua Gill (who opened Gill's, now Hayden's, Hotel in 1833) and Dr William Colohan. The foundation stone for the new hall was laid by Robert Dillon, third Baron Clonbrock on Monday 30th September 1844.

The hall was formally opened on 30th September 1845 for the annual cattle show and was, said the correspondent for The Nation newspaper, the "most striking feature of any within the enclosure". The banqueting hall (measuring 111 feet by 45 feet) ran almost the entire length of the building with "light, gracefully constructed galleries for ladies" which were said to be capable of holding up to 200 persons. There were five magnificent chandeliers with 27 burners and 80 gas lights. In addition it had two committee rooms, kitchens at the rear, pantries and a cellar. The

grand banquet was held the following evening with 600 guests among whom were the Duke of Leinster, Lord Clancarty, Lord Castlemaine and the Earl of Devon while the band of the 32nd Regiment provided musical entertainment. Lord Clancarty responded graciously to the praise lavished on him from all sides observing on his own activities that "the landlord who can bring about so happy a change, is not without reward". Those present were blithely oblivious to the fact that Ireland was on the brink of a national calamity and only three years later Clancarty would sell to the Board of Guardians the area now known as Bullies Acre as a burial ground for victims of the Famine.

By July 1888, Matt Harris MP was raising in the House of Commons the question of the provision of a suitable Town Hall for Ballinasloe and requesting that the Local Government Board assist the inhabitants in securing the Agricultural Hall for this purpose given that the occupying tenant, merchant Junius Horne, was amenable to such a proposal. It would not be until late 1912, however, that work began on converting it to a parochial hall under the watchful eye of parish administrator Fr Timothy Joyce. This renovation re-configured the interior of the hall for public concerts, adding meeting rooms for the Temperance Society. Ballinasloe Town Hall was opened on Monday 15th April 1913 with the bishop of Clonfert Dr Thomas Gilmartin declaring that its purpose was "to promote the temporal welfare and happiness of the social body".

As it perhaps does still in a way today!





## 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 windows. 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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