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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 6 Issue 2: June '16 - July '16

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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 6 Issue 2: June '16 - July '16

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REAMHRÁ

And so it has come pass that we have in the 32nd Dail, Fine Gael in Government and Fianna Fail in Power! or so it seems. If the arrangement can last it should bode well for the Community with a junior Minister for OPW and Flooding in Sean Canney, and our first Senior Minister in Cabinet from our Constituency in a long time, in Drum native Denis Naughten.

We congratulate both, their families and supporters as well as to Maura Hopkins our newest elected

Senator and Ronan Mullins who was returned as University Panel Senator. It was good to see the emphasis on Regional and Rural development being focused on - let us all hope with the Rural Independent Alliance in the heart of decision making that Ireland's provincial and rural will get real impact from plans and policies over the coming months.

On the local scene - some new stores opening on the principle streets and the welcome County Council scheme of Rates Rebates for small indigenous business taking over vacant shops in our town centre, the Library official opening, the winning of the Fit Town Scheme - all good news. The movement of one of the silent successes of the Enterprise Centre from Creagh to Loughrea with loss of almost 100 jobs is worrisome in policy terms.

We can incubate start ups but the privately owned industrial units of our manufacturing glory days are not what is required for modern companies, when fresh customised building makes no economic sense either. The IDA and Enterprise Ireland have no advance units in our locality. The State owns 250 acres and over 120,000 square foot of buildings from various eras, falling into further disrepair. Galway city and Athlone have supply issues for light industrial and new business space.

If the State and its newest custodians are real about their policies - let the HSE and Dept of Health give a 100 year lease on St. Brigids and all its empty units to either the Dept. of Education or Enterprise Ireland for an IT/Software Hub. - 45 minutes from the Wild Atlantic Way and 110 minutes from the Spire?

Local efforts alone will not solve employment and enterprise development!

Le Gach De Ghui
COLM CROFFY, Editor



This is the 32nd edition of Ballinasloe Life and during that time we have covered many different aspects of life in our catchment area.

If you ask the question "has life improved or disimproved during that time" it will bring different views depending on who you are talking to.

At least we have a local TD at the cabinet table of the 32nd Dail and our new Library facility was officially opened and informed sources tell us the footfall there is substantially up in the new premises.

The introduction of rent rebates for new Business in Town Centres going into premises that have been vacant for over 12 months is welcome news.

A newly elected Minister for Rural Affairs will bring a bigger focus on Towns like Ballinasloe but results will ultimately depend on local entrepreneurs and loyalty from you, the customer base in the catchment area to support existing Business and the new ventures as they open.

Congratulations also to our Fit Town Team on their success; this venture brought a huge number of organisations together with tremendous results.

The biggest success story we have had in the Enterprise Centre is MEIC / Glan Agua who have grown from 3 employees to over 100 are moving on from our incubation space and we wish them every success, you can read more about them in an article in the Magazine.

This leaves us with 5,000 sq ft of space for new Business in our Centre in Creagh and we encourage you to spread the word to locate with us. You can contact Lyn Donnelly on 0909646516 or email to info@ballinasloeenterprise.ie

SEAMUS DUFFY, Chairman,
Ballinasloe Area Community Development.

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For submission of articles, please email ballinasloelife@hotmail.com. Deadline 15th July.



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NEW MINISTER MAKES HISTORIC FIRST VISIT

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

The new Minister for Communications, Climate Change and Natural Resources, Denis Naughten, had a historic homecoming to the town of his birth within hours of him receiving his seal of office from Taoiseach Enda Kenny and President Michael D. Higgins.

Whilst the evening was inclement it did not dampen enthusiasm for those supporters and well wishers who met his cavalcade in St. Michaels Square on Saturday night 14th of May.

Speaking to the crowd he thanked the people of Ballinasloe and its hinterland who supported him in the last election in a very big way. "I intend to return that trust to you all in everything I can do as a Government Minister and can guarantee that towns like Ballinasloe will be getting a huge focus from this new Government and Cabinet".

He has said that he secured "97 per cent" of what he wanted to be included in the new programme for government.

The Independent Roscommon-Galway TD, who is a member of the Rural Alliance, believed that if the programme is implemented, "every provincial and rural town in Ireland will see significant improvements" during the lifetime of the new government.

He believed that the provisions set out in the long-negotiated programme would make the future of local Portiuncula Hospital more secure.

"There is an ongoing problem with senior management in the HSE who, despite the best efforts of the Minister and

the department, published various reviews which reflected negatively on Portiuncula and damaged its reputation.

"There will of course be reviews and they are necessary but it is specifically written in the programme for government that in any review that will take place – geography must be taken into account", said Minister Naughten.

He explained that the job of protecting services is made more difficult when it is claimed that patients will only have to travel 40 minutes from Portiuncula to UCG – not taking into account that there are patients already travelling for well over an hour to reach the Ballinasloe Hospital.

The Minister said he was hopeful that with this new sway at cabinet, he will be able work to secure capital funding and investment in the health services locally.

Rural broadband will not be under the remit of the Minister for Communications. However, Minister Naughten said he will work closely with Heather Humphreys to ensure that the rollout of the programme will take place as soon as possible.

"I have made clear to the Secretary General, and the Assistant Secretary General, that my number one priority in communications is rural broadband – and my number two priority is rural broadband, and my three priority is rural broadband," he stated..

"I want to see all of rural Ireland develop," he said. "All I have ever asked for is that we get our fair share of what we should have been getting up to now".



Minister Denis Naughten and Gerry Devlin.

Local businessmen Walter Reynolds, The Bread Basket and Tomás Gullane, Gullane's Hotel came out to congratulate Minister Naughten on his new appointment.

Minister Denis Naughten, Rural Alliance, arriving in Ballinasloe.

Michael Dolan, Dolans Service Station, Kilgorrive and Minister Denis Naughten.

Seamus Duffy, BACD, Minister Denis Naughten and Jacinta Divilly.

OFFICIALLY GALWAY'S FITTEST TOWN!

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

It's Official – Ballinasloe has been awarded the Title of "Galways Fittest Town 2016" (towns and urban areas over 2000 population) at this years Fit Town awards.

The Fit Town project which saw over 50 events run over a 6 week period with people of all ages and abilities from every corner of the community "Get Up, Get Out and Get Active!"

Along with the newly acquired title the project scooped €5,000 in prize money as part of Galway Sports Partnerships Fit Town initiative. The Fit Town Team will be regrouping over the coming weeks to explore areas where this money could be best invested and utilised to benefit the entire community. They will be inviting all groups who took part in the event to submit their ideas for consideration over the coming weeks.

The coordinators have been attributing the success of the project largely to "the level of support and participation from each and every individual, group, organisation, school and business." This concept was based around a community model where all groups were invited to get involved and work together, being able to take ownership of their individual projects/events from initiation stage all the way through to planning, promoting and running the event.

Aside from the obvious

health and wellbeing benefits that physical activity brings, the project has brought many more positive side effects. One of the team members, Marion Rune has stated "At an individual level it is not an exaggeration to say the project changed the lives of many people – becoming a member of a new group within the community, forging new friendships, learning new skills, setting goals and getting the opportunity to realise them in a supportive setting."

There has been obvious benefits at a community level as well. The project has created an awareness of the range of activities and facilities that are accessible to in the area, many at minimal cost.

Marion has further stated "on a wider scale the project has raised the profile of Ballinasloe not only within the local hinterland but also across the counties of Galway Roscommon and Westmeath."

The entirety of the Fit town team extended their thanks to Mick Curley and Jason Craughwell, Galway Sports Partnership, for giving them the opportunity to participate in the competition.

Marion Ruane, Noel Mannion, Lyn Donnelly, Eoin Hurley, Laura Finn all had this message for the town "Finally but most importantly we would like to thank each and every member of the community who got behind the project with such incredible enthusiasm and made it the success it turned out to be - let's hope we can keep recreating this magic."



Fit Town Awards Eoin Hurley, Garbally College Student Rep, Mick Curley, Galway Sports Partnership, Marion Ruane, Fit Town Lead, Lyn Donnelly, Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre, Joe O'Neill, GSP Steering Group, Cllr. Declan McDonnell, Chairperson Galway Sports Partnership and Jason Craughwell Galway Sports Partnership.



Lyn Donnelly, Marion Ruane and Eoin Hurley



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CRAFTERS' CORNER FOR LOCAL ARTISANS UNVEILED ON SOCIETY STREET

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



A group of local artisans have come together to form Crafters' Corner on Society Street in the town centre. The shop is being run co-operatively by themselves, and offers a wide selection handmade arts and crafts direct from local artisans!

The idea came about from a number of passionate crafters, Martin Colleran, Anne Byrnes, Mary Egan, Carrol Behan, Margaret O'Gorman, Valerie Sharpe and Ann Marie Griffin, who were involved in the Country Market and longing to open a store like this for some time.

This core group have been passionately part of the Country Market for 4 years and have worked together to get the space, which is located at

Society Street's pedestrian crossing, an excellent area to showcase the work of all members. Speaking to them they stated that they are excited for the future and expect their business to "be wildly successful!"

The goods produced are of high quality and have great prices, it is an ideal place to pick up a gift or even a treat yourself for one. There will be a wide range of produce on offer including: paintings, photography,

handmade soaps, jewellery, fascinators, hand painted silk scarves, designer knitwear, hand-knits, patchwork quilts, bunting, seasonal decorations, personalised prints, cards, pottery, ceramics, felted creations, wood-turning, crocheted and knitted characters, quilting, and more!

This group went on to say that "Crafters' Corner will Boast a unique collection of affordable Arts and Crafts" which are all handmade! It will be a speciality gifts and apparel boutique that excels in one - of - a - kind merchandise not commonly found in the larger retail market.

"We aim to establish a loyal customer following by providing a visibly inviting and comfortable shopping environment. Provide customised arts and crafts that are 'tailor-made' to each customer's personal style."

To see some of their wonderful products visit their website at crafterscorner.org or follow them on Facebook at Crafters Corner.



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TOWN TEAM TO EXAMINE FEASIBILITY FOR NEW APP

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI 

With the world and its wants changing as quickly as it is, to maintain a successful presence in the locality has become more of a challenge than it has ever been before.

This has been a growing issue for many of the businesses within the town and surrounding area. To attract the consumer while being able to show off their products has been a constant struggle. A possible answer to this showed up recently, at a Town Team Business Networking seminar in Gullanes Hotel.

At this meeting, Terry Young of TownApps, showed off an innovative mobile, tablet and desktop app. The principle idea is for Ballinasloe to have its own app, which would contain all the local businesses, community groups and sport clubs within the locale.

Then each business owner or PRO would have its own admin login and would be able to constantly update their own page within the app, with special offers and/or events. This app once started would be free to download and would provide up to date information on a daily, weekly basis to the community and for any tourists who happen to pass through.

It is effectively a weekly newsletter on your phone available at any time. This app concept is already successfully in use in Ireland in towns such as Athlone and Dundalk.

The promising idea was well received at a broad representative meeting with a view towards tapping into the over 2.1 million people using apps. The majority of this group are between the ages of 15-55, the key demographic for many organisations and clubs. It is a huge market pool to dip into and it is crucial that the community makes use of these services in the future, especially when its APPs and social media that is now taking the place of maps and motor way signs for most passing motorists on the M6.

Critically the meeting was briefed on some of the social media landscape facts for our online community – for instance some 40% of businesses here, still have not gone live with the listings on Ballinasloe.ie. A service set up by the Town Team - a year and a

half ago which promoted the businesses and gave them an online presence for FREE. Equally concerning is some 65% of all commercial organisations or facilities have no presence on Trip Advisor, 75% are not on Google Maps and 80% have not been updating or refreshing their information on social media sites within 10 days.

These figures are in stark comparison to the community groups and clubs who are examples of good utilisation of social media.

Needing a minimum of 80 socially engaged businesses, All Club PROs and community organisations will have to frequently update their own pages - the possibility for this app to be effectively used will take some more ground work.

The Town Team, the LIFE Marketing Team and Ballinasloe.ie Webmaster Sinead Collieran are examining the feasibility of a pre launch rollout campaign for the Autumn – early winter period to ensure that within 12 months that the business community will be app ready.

The enjoyable and successful networking evening hosted in Gullanes Hotel concluded with refreshments and questions and answers from all present.



BALLINDERRY NURSING HOME RATED HIGHLY BY HIQA

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

The Health watchdog HIQA has recently published its latest inspection report on this Local Nursing Home and the premises received fantastic results!

Ballinderry Nursing Home, Kilconnell opened in 1998 and since then the organisation has worked and cared for their patients to the highest standard over the years and this has been recognised by many.

On behalf of Ballinderry Nursing Home Ltd., Ms. Mary Noone welcomed the positive HIQA findings and paid tribute to the dedicated and professional staff who the inspectorate "found to be to be committed to providing a good standard of care to the residents".

The workers are all highly trained individuals ensuring that the residents will be well looked after and cared for! Comprising of general staff, intellectual disability, psychiatric nurses, CQI level 5 care assistants, Chefs, Household staff, maintenance, physiotherapist, Activities coordinators, and an occupational Therapist.

The Inspectorate found that recognised assessment tools were used to evaluate residents' progress, assess their needs and develop care plans. There was good standard of personal and nursing care and on admission a detailed nursing assessment, relevant risk assessments and care plans that fully outline the residents' needs were completed.



Adrian Ahern, Operations Manager

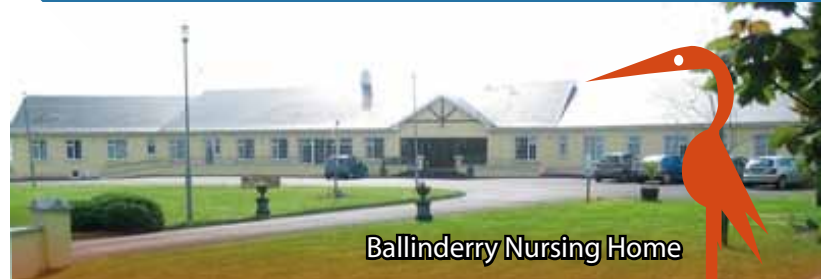
This is made even more impressive due to the wide range of conditions they care for, including dementia, long term, respite, palliative and post-surgery care. Furthermore the Home has had personnel trained in the "Imagination Gym" programme, SONAS, which it offers to its dementia residents and has impacted very positively on their activities.

Adrian Ahern the recently appointed "Person in Charge" also welcomed the report, which followed an unannounced inspection and said he was very happy and said "all involved in the Nursing Home are constantly striving to improve the life experience of the residents and looking at innovative ways of delivering high quality care to the residents and their families, whether as long term residents or those availing of respite or post-operative recuperation".

Ballinderry currently has 52 staff members and is able to house and cater for 44 individuals and all their needs. They are able to facilitate early discharge from acute hospitals by providing "step down" facilities and by providing services to those residents for whom "Home Care" is no longer suitable as well as to cater for those with the conditions mentioned previously.

With a bed capacity of 44, with 14 single bed rooms and 15 double rooms, and as the majority are en suite not only do they fully meet the requirements of HIQA and Health Acts and that they are recognised by VHI, this also ensures that you will be very comfortable during your stay at the home!

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BECOMING A MORE ACCESSIBLE TOWN



BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

A new and exciting initiative to develop the municipality as an accessible, inclusive environment has been recently launched.

The focus for the project is to develop the town and hinterland as an area which welcomes and supports everyone to live an independent and healthy life regardless of their age or any disability. Many representatives from all Clubs, Groups, Organisations, Businesses and Schools attended the event in Gullanes Hotel, enforcing the message that **together we can** identify what changes we can make and how we can make them happen!

The project was born out of a recognition that although much progress has been made to date, there are still many shortcomings and this is at a stage which requires continuous development and adaptation to meet the needs of everyone in our community.

Accessibility Ballinasloe are taking a holistic approach which will be cognisant all life stages from parents with babies and young children to older adults. Another key aspect of the project will focus on empowering persons with disabilities – sensory, physical and intellectual. Considerable work is currently taking place within this area both nationally and regionally and there will be many opportunities to form effective and helpful collaborations with groups throughout the country who have already made inroads in developing more supportive communities.

Many businesses are also taking the initiative to provide a more inclusive service with Supervalu Monksland and Clonakilty leading

the way providing sensory friendly shopping which is of particular benefit to those with autism as well as other special needs! At set times during the day all music and in-store announcements are turned off and lighting is dimmed to create a calmer environment with less sensory stimulation. These businesses have taken a lead in this area in the hope that many others including the large chains will follow suit.

The Project will be driven by a Team represented by Deborah Brady, Ken Campbell, Marion Ruane and Teresa Coughlan who each bring with them a wealth of experience and knowledge within this area. They however stress that the overall model for the project “will be

Community based with all sectors contributing to the development and implementation of our Accessibility Ballinasloe Action Plan. There is ample opportunity for all groups and clubs to work together in identifying creative ways of improving the lives of people in our community.” This was very much a key element of the success of the recent Fit Town project where we saw groups with a common interest (such as the Brothers of Charity and Ballinasloe Rugby Club, Ballinasloe Eagles and East Galway Hunt) join forces to support each other!



Team photo includes; Marion Ruane Fit Town Lead, Ken Campbell Miles for Emma - Equality for Children with Special Needs, Teresa Coughlan Manager Society Services Centre, Deborah Brady Social Care Lead, Brothers of Charity..

There are a number of priority projects that they are interested in pursuing over the coming year including; working towards universal design to ensure our public areas are accessible to all, awareness and education campaigns, national Buddy Bench project with local schools network, outdoor fitness equipment fit out, working with the business community to identify areas for improvement – physical layouts, service area, awareness/training, visual picture menus.

For further information and updates check out Accessibility Ballinasloes Facebook page @ <https://www.facebook.com/accessibilitybsloe/>

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HIDDEN HEARING NEW CLINIC AT MARINA HOUSE

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

Over the past 25 years, Hidden Hearing has become one of Ireland's premier professional provider of hearing healthcare in the private sector, maintain a network of over 75 clinics across the country. Recently the company has announced the installation of one of their facilities in the Marina House Medical Centre in town!

The new clinic offers the best professional hearing care available, with help and advice in a supportive environment, and the latest digital technology both to diagnose and treat your problems. To celebrate their opening and to promote better hearing health, they are offering free one-to-one hearing consultations to all!



Our new local Hearing Aid Audiologist Daniela Hudson has said: "We are delighted to open our centre of excellence for hearing health in Ballinasloe, bringing expert hearing care and assistance to anyone wanting to improve their hearing. Hearing loss is often ignored by many and with one in six people in Ireland suffering from the condition, it is a serious issue here. Regular hearing checks should be part of everyone's healthcare plan and we would encourage people to take action on hearing loss as soon as you notice a problem

because the longer you delay the worse the problem will become. Hidden Hearing has invested significantly to ensure that our clinics have the very latest technology available worldwide and the local clinic is equipped to deal with hearing loss of any kind".

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So make sure to book your free hearing consultation by calling 1800 882 884 or visiting them at www.hiddenhearing.ie

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MEIC GLAN AGUA – POWERS AHEAD FOR EAST GALWAY

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



After some eight years of being a key tenant in the Enterprise Centre, Creagh, the time has now arrived to see the once fledgling enterprise spread its wings and move its greatly expanded operation to a new premises.

Founder and Finance Director Gerry Fahy is philosophical about the move but looks back with pride on the phenomenal growth from effectively a two man operation to a 100 employee holding that now has both an Irish Headquarters and a London office!

Gerry and Tom O'Connor were two ex-Coffey Construction directors, who came to the Enterprise Centre with a business idea, and a requirement for 800 square feet of space – aiming to deliver specialist services to the civil construction sector as MEIC.

Within a few short months they were quickly accommodated with new larger offices and their operations developed through a partnership with a Portuguese company Mota-Engil.

“We found it tough to get on on tender lists for certain types of projects and we found through a JV Venture in Kilkenny that partnering with Mota-Engil for technical expertise and scale was the way to go”.

Since the turn of the decade the firm now needs 25,000 square feet of space and additional fleet and machinery requirements, has nearly 100 employees and is managing a range of 60 projects per annum from €20,000 to €37 million.

Reflecting on the achievements to date Gerry muses “it’s that old adage – the harder I work the luckier I get”. He cites the hard work of his co-founder Tom and the staff of the firm in very difficult recessionary times – as one of the main reasons for the success.

“In fairness we were very well looked after here at the Centre by Lyn the Manager and the Board - they were always supportive of us and were very flexible in accommodating our growing needs – like any good incubation space”.

Gerry suggests that the location of the centre, the broad band, the connectivity to other businesses in the locale, the engagement with the agencies all helped their fledgling business grow.

“We could take clients from Dublin Airport and have them here at our offices in less than two hours and later that evening they could be cycling a greenway,

golfing or having a swim in one of two well maintained leisure centres before we entertain them for dinner – in any of the fine establishments that we used regularly” states Gerry.

Having had his business operation headquartered in the Enterprise Park he would best describe the advantages for new starts ups as centrality of location, quality of accommodation for employees, quality of hotel, hospitality and leisure amenities, quick access to the Wild Atlantic Way for employees or guests and a development team who are pro-business.

“We have been very impressed with the quiet way that this town has been found to be attractive to our workers, clients and visiting consultants. We have brilliant business relationships and will continue with them even though we are moving a few miles West – firms like the Kilmartin Family who look after our Fleet, Stronges who do our client site photography, Barry’s Cycles who has looked after our pedal fleet and all the Hoteliers and caterers”.

On the downside – he too was critical of the parking regime “So many of our staff here would just drive to Dolans Centra Shop in Kilgarve, rather than head into the town and deal with meters – there is 100 lunches here, another 80 in Aptar and possibly another 45 in Creagh

Medical Devices before you look at the schools or HSE firms out on the Creagh side of town - that won’t waste a lunch break looking for a parking spot”

His staff have also been very impressed with the quality and affordability of rental accommodation in the town.

The company enjoys strong connections with the Galway/ Sligo / Athlone I.T’s NUIG and is developing a Graduate Programme in Business/Engineering with them – “We have found it tough in the latter few years to find skilled personnel for our posts and this is reflected throughout the construction sector”.

Whilst the company is in the wrong sector for Enterprise Ireland or IDA support, they did find the IDA very useful to them in assisting them with the set up last year to open their London Office in St. Albans to make inroads in the Civil/M&E Sector there – worth €15 billion a year!

When asked if the move to Loughrea leaves a sour note after enjoying 8 years in town, Gerry is very quick to point out that every avenue was fully explored before they decided on the move “I want to assure the community that there was no stone left unturned by us, the Development Company, or the agencies in trying to find us a suitable premises in this town, the Enterprise Centre is for start-ups – we have moved beyond that phase – our needs were best met by an existing building not a new build, so we have to move; but as a Ballinakill man I personally happy that we are still making a contribution to the East Galway Economy and keeping jobs local”.





NEW RATES REBATE SCHEME LAUNCHED FOR VACANT PREMISES

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

After much discussion and debate at County level – Galway County Council has decided to pilot a new Rates Rebate Scheme to primarily assist small indigenous businesses and to regenerate the vacant commercial premises in the town centres.

With empty shop fronts and premises in so many of our streets in the county's towns and a falling rateable base – the council are piloting this scheme - (the first of its type in the country) to encourage and support new businesses and commercial activities in town centres - that choose to locate in a vacant commercial premises.

The scheme shall operate as a payment of a grant by Galway County Council to the qualifying applicants in respect of rates struck for the premises which have been paid to the Authority in accordance with normal payment criteria.

The scheme shall apply in the total extent of area zoned for "Town Centre" purpose in any current or new Local Area Plan only.

The scheme shall apply to businesses which have a total Rates bill not exceeding €3,000 in a calendar year/rates year. This is to ensure that small business benefit are the principle beneficiaries.

The scheme shall apply to any new businesses that choose to establish in commercial premises in the qualifying area that have been vacant for a period of 12 months immediately prior to opening (as identified in the rates vacancy list held by Galway County council)

The scheme shall also apply to businesses that seek to expand into commercial premises immediately adjacent to their current location.



Businesses that choose to establish or expand into upper floors of properties in the Town Centre zones in towns which are subject to a local plan shall also be eligible.

Where it appears that the scheme is contributing to the displacement of any existing businesses to the detriment of the overall wellbeing of the local economy, the local Authority may deem a proposal that would otherwise be eligible to be ineligible. Certain types of businesses cannot be considered for the scheme like Takeaways and Betting Shops.

The application must be accompanied by a lease agreement whereby the parties agree to a minimum 3 year lease period, reviewable and renewed each year.

Failure to remain current on any charges will result in the immediate cessation of the scheme and removal of supports.

All Applications for the scheme must be made through the Local Enterprise Officer. Director of Services Catherine Mc Connell insisted that while the scheme will pilot to a review at the end of 6 months with a June 1st start date, consideration would be given on a case by case basis to businesses that opened in May.

Welcoming the new decision Town Team Member and local Councillor Aiden O'Donohue believes that it is a progressive move in trying to revitalise footfall back into the town centre. "This is another positive step in tackling the vacant business premises in the town centre and a strong signal from the County that we are serious about supporting local retailers and small entrepreneurs as opposed to the larger operations"

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MISCHIEF MEDIA BUSINESS

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



Mischief Media is a new business set up by Ciara Loughnane and Mike Lennon, who both specialise in Social Media Marketing. Using various methods to boost the online presence of businesses, their aim is to increase their client's profits and customer interaction through their deep understanding of social trends, technology and marketing.

Ciara is a native, born and raised behind Loughnane's shop counter in Mackney. Her background in marketing began with a degree in Media Production Management from DCU and a diploma in Digital Marketing from the Digital Marketing Institute. Since then she has spent over 5 years working in this field, from start-ups to marketing agencies to an eCommerce site.

Her colleague Mike gained a degree in Film & Television from Aberystwyth University and has since worked as a photographer and in various roles within the film and television world both in the UK and Ireland. Working as one, their expertise is the perfect match for creating outstanding content for your social media channels and to help expand your target demographic!

Their service range comprises from a full takeover of social media activities to delivering training and consultancy. They are also able to provide high quality photography and amazing video services to be used on social media channels and websites for any organisation or firm.



Mike Lennon and Ciara Loughnane

Together they are keen to keep the local businesses up to speed in this fast-growing digital world. If you would like to see how Mischief Media can help your business, you can get in touch for a free one hour consultation. Chatting over a coffee is their favourite and as Ciara said "No job is too little or too big for us! We love to chat all things social, all the time!"

They emphasise that an organisation needs a social media strategy. "To be a successful business, you need to figure out who your target audience is and where they're hanging out on the internet - is it Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or some other online nook you're not yet aware of?" And thankfully Mischief Media are here to help!

You can find Mischief Media online at www.mischiefmedia.ie or you can shoot them an email at hello@mischiefmedia.ie

HOSPITAL WATCH BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



New Minister for Communications and Climate Change Denis Naughten TD has stated that the limiting of the hours in the emergency department of Portiuncula hospital was a red line issue for him during negotiations with independent TD's while creating support for the Fine Gael led minority government.

A leaked draft HSE report had strongly suggested that the ER Department be curtailed to a 8.am to a 8.00 pm service!

The HSE has apologised recently for delays in a review of Portiuncula Hospital. According to RTE the HSE has apologised to families for lengthy delays in publishing a review into the care provided to women at the Maternity Unit at Galway's Portiuncula Hospital. This review of 18 cases - which was commissioned after a number of serious incidents during childbirth at the hospital last year - is now expected to be completed later this summer.

According to RateMyHospital.ie Portiuncula is now the 26th best hospital, in the field of the 69 public and private, in the country. They have moved up 4 places in recent months from 30th! In comparison University Hospital Galway is still rated as the third worst at 67th.

The Hospital has received an increase in staff numbers recently. According to Saolta 1 extra ED consultant and 4 new medical consultants have been hired. There are several new staff about to begin working there as well. One Consultant General Physician and 1 Consultant in Obstetrics

and Gynaecology are in their final stages of clearance and they are due to begin in the near future. Two Consultant Radiologists posts are in clearance and 1 Consultant Cardiologist is set to begin in October. Interviews will also be taking place in September in an attempt to fill the role of Consultant Respiratory Physician. This increase in the amount of filled posts is great for the facility and the community and promises to provide more well-rounded and indepth medical treatment.

Latest figures (March 2016) from Trolley and Ward Watch indicate an unusual spike in numbers. There were 86 people recorded to be on trolleys throughout the hospital. This is a significant increase from the 13 the previous month, though it should be noted that this is down from last year's figure at the same time of 99.

For the University Hospital of Galway the latest data from Trolley and Ward Watch is still quite high. There were 539 individuals on trolleys throughout the building. These numbers are down from last year's 634, suggesting some improvement.

Meanwhile the newly formed Friends of Portiuncula Hospital held a fundraising event for patient comforts. This event was the 'Women's Health Awareness Evening' which invited people to attend a dinner and information evening at the Shearwater hotel to help raise funds. Key note speakers on the night were Dr Gordon Pate, Dr Michael O Dowd, Niamh Flynn, and writer Michael Harding.



THINGS TO DO AND SEE THIS SUMMER



BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

A continual summer whinge seems to centre on the lack of things to do in our community for local and visitor alike during the summer months. We have been trawling through what's on offer.

Below is just a flavour of some of the things one can do and places one can visit, each week on Ballinasloe.ie and on Ballinasloe LIFE Facebook page we will be updating our readership and visitors on what's on – like the fun festivals in the nearby villages of Shannonbridge, Aughrim and Ahascragh. IF you have something special on – please let us know !!

Inexpensive camps for the younger ones – with excellent presenters and content are a plenty kicking off with - The Summer Art Workshops are being run by Tosnu Arts and Craft. Consisting of a plethora of fun

activities from painting to origami to clay modelling to name but a few. There will be 4 weeks available, Week One: 4th - 8th July, Week Two: 11th—15th July, Week Three: 18th—22nd July and Week Four: 25th—29th July. The fee is €100 for the week and a deposit of €30 is required.

For more information contact Joyce Little at 090 964 2608.

CÚL CAMP

This summer's football Kellogs GAA Cúl camp will be taking place on the 18th to 22nd of July. At the Ballinasloe GAA grounds, kids will be taught the basics of football in a fun and friendly environment and through a system of drills and challenges. Price for 1 child is €55, and if registering 2 the price for the 2nd child is €45 and if registering a 3rd or 4th the price for those children is €40.

For more information or to book your place go www.kelloggsculcamps.gaa.ie

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

The Ballinasloe Library will be running a Summer Reading Challenge, which will set the task of having junior members read 10 books between the start of July and August. You can register for this at the library and after each book read you will get a card stamped.

For more information contact the library at 090 964 3464.

CORAL LEISURE SUMMER CAMP

Coral Leisure facility are now taking bookings for their summer camps, multiple Activity Camps and Summer Swim camps.

Activity Camps are taking place the 4th - 8th July, 18th - 22nd July and 1st - 5th August from 10am to 3 pm. The Cost for members will be €50 and for non-members €60.

The Summer Swim Camps will be taking place on the 11th - 15th July, 25th - 29th July and the 8th - 12th August from 10am to 11am. Cost for members will be €40, and for non-members €50.

To place a booking or to get more information contact 090 964 5755.

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For those who like to take to the water or indeed those who want to learn how – Up River is again providing a range of Kayaking weeks with July 18th and July 25th scheduled for the two big activity weeks , with the Kayaking Assesment week in June 20th. The Up River Team are also available throughout the summer for Team Building days, Adult lessons, Canoe hire, Birthday excursions, family trips or even just larking about on one of Ireland’s most unspoilt natural waterways. For more information call 085 8607825

There are a plethora of other Camps & summer activities in different sports – Tennis, Soccer, Pony Riding, Cycling – keep an eye on their facebook pages and LIFE’s for further updates.

The Town has many fabulous outdoor playgrounds in Portnick, Behind the Coral Leisure Centre and across from the new Running Track in Brackernagh –to name just three and are free for youngsters !

If you are a visitor or wish to cycle or take a picnic outside of the town there are some choice places to see and visit - like Aughrim.

The Battle of Aughrim is one of Europe’s most historic battles that changed the course of Irish history. Discover how three rival European Kings- William of Orange, James II, and Louis XIV- took hold of Ireland in their struggle for power with over 45,000 soldiers gathering at Aughrim in 1691 in a bloody encounter, in what proved to be the defining battle of the Williamite War in Ireland.

On the 16th-17th of July 2016 Aughrim village will come alive with the sights sounds and smell of history as the Battle of Aughrim is remembered on its 325th Anniversary. With a living history camp, men (in the Green).

Clonmacnoise is an ancient monastic site near Shannonbridge, and a top visitor attraction in Ireland. Founded by St Ciaran in the mid-6th century, it became a great centre of religion and learning, visited by scholars from all over the world. Many historical manuscripts, including the 11th century Annals of Tighernach and the 12th century Book of the Dun Cow, were written here.

The visitor centre is Open from 9:00am-6.30 pm and admission prices are: Adult: €6.00 | Senior/group: €4.00 | Child/student: €2.00 | Family: €14.00

The standing remains of the Clontuskert Abbey are of the Augustinian Priory of St. Mary, founded in the twelfth century by Turlough O’Conor King of Connacht, in a graveyard surrounded by a stone wall. The original Augustinian Priory was burnt about 1413 and the standing remains are mostly of the fifteenth century



reconstruction. Located on the Portumna Road about 4 km from the rugby club.

A Franciscan friary in Kilconnell founded in 1353, by William O’Kelly, Lord of Ui Maine. The remaining building which are in good condition, consist of a church with nave, choir, south transept and aisle, as well as some domestic buildings. The windows in the church probably date from the early 15th century. The church was in use until the 17th century, and was beseigned by Cromwellian Forces in 1650. The friars finally left the abbey in the early 1690s. It is open to all in Kilconnell.

Turoe Pet Farm first opened in May 1993. This family-run enterprise is situated in a rural setting near a village called Bullaun, 4km off the M6 main Galway/Dublin route. They have many facilities and these can be viewed in the ‘Amenity Section’ on their website www.turoepetfarm.com. Opening hours are 10am to 7 pm.

Local walks in the Garbally Estate, the Sli na Slainte, the Canal Banks and Poolboy/Hyman-Way are all easily accessabile.



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SHARING HAPPINESS 40 YEARS ON

BY MAUREEN CAHALAN

Local flagship business, Cahalan Jewellers are celebrating their 40th year of serving superior crafts to their customers. It's a remarkable achievements under the stewardship of Maureen Cahalan and her staff, who were all so happy and moved to have such amazing support from the local community over such a period of time!

In honour of this phenomenal loyalty, the store had a massive 'Thank You' by the way of a big sale which saw monumental discounts off many of their stunning products, in fact all of the jewels and on the top floor of their popular shop saw a cut in price!

This was planned, as part of their 40th Anniversary for the beginning of the year, but owing to the flood water taking up much of the space in everybody's mind and homes it was re organised for later.

This event proved to be hugely successful! Not only showing off the fantastic backing that the locality gives to a business but also to a wonderful and appreciative organisation who in acknowledgement of this loyalty offered genuine bargains on their Customers who sent good wishes through the support of Galway Bay FM contributed greatly to the festivities.

And don't worry to all those who missed that grand sale, there are plans for another two more ONE DAY FLASH promotional sales planned in the near future. "It's all part of sharing the Happiness!" according to Maureen!

"The gratitude and kindness that is in the Community is beyond belief", commented Maureen. "Regardless of the flooding or downturns we as a community always pick ourselves up and work in harmony together to reclaim our desire to succeed. While there is negative and positive in every community Ballinasloe certainly has much more positivity and spirit than most".

The staff, Paddy, Kathleen, Christine & Elaine, also wished to extend their gratitude to all who supported them in the business over the



years.

If you wish to contact or enquire about any of their fantastic jewellery you can call them at (090) 964 2513 or visit their page at cahalanjewellers.com.

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OVER 1,000 BRAVE THE DAWN ...



For countless years many in our country have suffered the horrors of depression and other mental health issues silently, believing there was no help for them and ultimately resorting to taking their own lives. In recent times the destructive nature of these issues such as depression, anxiety and suicide and its hold on many in Ireland is being slowly dragged to the forefront of society with many organisations taking a stand against this beast.

Pieta House is one such place which has had enough of turning a blind eye to this creeping epidemic. An institution created to helping victims of mental illness and their families, they have been a selfless and dedicated group for any and all who needs them.

While those who volunteer work tirelessly, to keep their progress going they need support from communities across the island. In recent years they have held an annual fundraiser known as 'Darkness Into Light'. This event invites everyone to join in a 5k walk or run starting just before dawn so the participants will walk into the bright

light of the sun after being in the darkness of night.

Recently the town held its second ever walk in association with Pieta. Last year's numbers were an amazing success story in itself, with the organisers Ber Coughaln and Arthur Carr saying that " We only anticipated 300 people to register and show up for the walk, so we were amazed when over 1000 attended the event!". This year they matched these numbers once again and have stated that they "will definitely exceed last year's figure of €20,130 raised between Registration and Donations!"

It was an emotional dawn for many and several people gave us their opinions on the event.

"As I watched people flooding back into the hall after the walk, I was overcome with a huge sense of pride for our little community of Ballinasloe and its outskirts that got up and showed up to support such a meaningful cause. Everyone had a smile on their face, it was quite emotional." – Jennifer Coughlan, Ballinasloe.

"We are from Athlone but this is our second time participating in the Ballinasloe Darkness into Light. We came back again this year because the route this walk takes in Ballinasloe is so perfect. The atmosphere as you walk through the grounds in Garbally is something else! We particularly

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loved the HOPE sign that you can see glowing as you come up the last hill, it just motivates you to keep going and is so inspirational. We will be back next year for sure!" Claire Eagan & Anne Hoey, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

"You really feel like you are part of the wider community on a night like this when everyone comes together. It was a truly special event that ran very smoothly thanks to the organisers." Helena Coughlan, Ballinasloe

"To support the cause. We are extremely fortunate to have the good health and legs to come out and walk when so many people sadly do not have the opportunity." – Mary Kelly.

"My cousin suffers from mental health issues so I wanted to support this fantastic cause." – Ranal Kelly, Taughmaconnell.

"Mental health illness has touched my own family and a close family member has availed of Pieta Houses' services. Because of this I am only more than happy to give something back to Pieta House for their hard work and timeless efforts." – Jen Coughlan, Creagh, Ballinasloe.

"Last year I walked it and it was a fantastic and well organised night for an extremely worthy cause. I was looking forward to participating again this year." – Marie Lally, Kilconnell.

"We are participating in Darkness into Light this year for the community spirit, to all come together and show support for the rising mental health issues." – Jennifer Hyde and Elaine Cooper.

"So many people are affected by suicide or know someone affected by it and it is so unfortunately current now." Sarah Dolan and Paula Kelly.



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NEW SOROPTIMISTS PRESIDENT BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

The new President of local Ballinasloe Chapter of Soroptimists International for 2016/17 is Mary Courtney.

She comes to office with a wealth of managerial experience. Being a Nurse/Midwife and holding an MSc degree in Advanced Organisational Consultancy and Development, she is a former Director of Nursing and Midwifery at Portiuncula before heading up Nursing & Midwifery Planning & Development Services for HSE West. Mary has also served as President of the Irish Matrons Association for two years.

Mary is keen to acknowledge the huge efforts and volunteerism of the members over the years: "it is a special honour to act as President for the club's twenty first year" she said "and it is humbling to see all the hard work and great effort put in by the members since our inception, raising funds for so many local projects as well as national and international ones and it bears testimony to the dedication and commitment of our mission and values that nine of our original members are still involved today" she added.

The Ballinasloe Chapter of Soroptimists International (Great Britain and Ireland) celebrates twenty one years of its existence this year. The brainchild of a few local women back in 1995, who following a general chat on women's affairs, decided to set up a local branch of Soroptimist International. The late Cepta Connolly was its inaugural President with thirty two registered members.

Back then not many would have been familiar with the concept of Soroptimist International but the emerging branch wasted no time in spreading the message of women supporting women and girls to achieve their potential. In brief, the mission is that of a global volunteer movement committed to transforming the lives of women and girls. Its network has members

in 132 countries worldwide.

Among the many values it pursues are: human rights for all, global peace, advancing women's' potential and volunteering. While adhering to the Soroptimists strong code of moral ethics, the local club lost little time in establishing itself as one of the foremost in the country. It would have been difficult to envisage back in March of '95 the strides it has made in the intervening period. They have to date supported and made contributions to over 40 projects including Ballinasloe Social Services and Flood Appeal, Mental Health Assoc., Suicide Prevention, Irish Society for Autism and notably a University Education Bursary for a local girl.

As well as the fantastic work they do for local funds and charities, Ballinasloe Soroptimist have a great social scene! With meetings monthly in Gullanes Hotel, they are presently putting together a programme of a number of different events for the summer so make sure to get involved!

They also have had wonderful outings with visits to Prague, Krakow, the Hunt Museum, the Titanic Experience in Belfast, Farmleigh House in Dublin, a garden party at Aras an Uachtaran in 2013 as well as various theatre and musical trips.

And all the while the chapter is encouraging new members to come forward. Mary Courtney says "any women out there who feel that they might have a contribution to make to the betterment of women both at home and abroad or wish to be involved in social activities while helping those in need might find that the Soroptimist forum is what they are seeking."

If you wish to get involved with the Soroptimist group or if you are curious about any upcoming events email them at siballinasloe21@gmail.com!



Mary Courtney, new Ballinasloe Soroptimist President

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SEAN NÓS BALLINASLOE BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



From left - Blanaid Fenton, Isabelle Carrick, Geraldine Delaney, Ronan Ó Conghaile, Marion Ruane, Lauren Ruane, Odharna Raftery, Martina Flanagan, Eva Ruane, Brendan Seoige, Sarah Jane Ruane.



With Ger Carrick Delaney, Marion Ruane, Joan Madden, John O'Halloran, Claire Gibbons, Helena Coughlan, Bridie Ruane, Marie Dunne, Emma O'Sullivan and Martina Flanagan.



Eabha McCann and Marion Ruane

Another proud day for Martina Flanagan and Bridie Ruane when dancers from their small club, Club Damhsa an Sean Nós Ballinasloe, found great success at the Galway County Fleadh competition recently. Their members had a triumphant display and brought home two County titles and a heap of medals to the town.

Their victorious dancers this time around are County Champion Eabha McCann who won the Under 12 competition and County Champion Marion Ruane who won the Over 18 competition in which she was runner up last year. Other medal winners and qualifiers were Lucy Kenny, Isabelle Carrick, Eva Ruane, Lauren Ruane, Eabha McDonagh, and Odharna Raftery.

With this silverware in tow, they will be travelling to Strokestown in the near future to test their abilities in the Connacht Fleadh championship with dancers competing in the Under 12, Under 15, Under 18 and Over 18 competitions. Martina and Bridie are looking forward to this, expecting great performances as always.

For those unfamiliar, Sean Nós dancing is a style that appeals to people of all ages and abilities as it represents the richness of the Irish heritage and culture. Because of its Irish heritage and cultural nature, Martina and Bridie, along with some of their dancers were "honoured" to have been asked to represent their Club and hinterland at two 1916 Centenary Events and to showcase their style dancing.

Firstly there was the 'Mortas Muintire' a reception for Galway relatives of the 1916 rising hosted by the Galway County Council in the Shearwater Hotel which took place just a short time ago.

After that there is 'Farming and County Life 1916' the biggest National Farming and Country Life Centenary event to be held in Ireland in June. It is expected that over 50,000 visitors will attend this event in Athenry over two days, the 10th and 11th. They are delighted to be alongside the other invited performers, World renowned Sean Nós dancer Seosamh Ó Neachtain from An Spidéal, Emma O'Sullivan from Connemara and the Heron family from Carna.

Further information of this free event is available at www.teagasc.ie/1916. Make sure to come and support these local dancers showing off their abilities!



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AUGHRIM'S "YOUNG AT HEART" GROUP

BY KEN KELLY

Just back from a tour of the French Riviera, the Aughrim Active Retirement Group are already drawing up a list of exotic places to visit later this year. Founded in 2007, the group have already toured parts of Spain, Italy, Portugal, France and the UK as well as a Caribbean Cruise and several places in Ireland.

Secretary Helen Mannion says the group of thirty are "all young at heart and enjoy the trips both at home and abroad. We get on like one happy family and on our recent trip to Nice we took in a tour of Monaco and visited the Royal Palace there" she said. Adding that new members are always welcome to come along, Helen said they were now planning a visit to the GPO and Kilmainham Jail later this month and hoping to go on a Shannon Boat trip in July. "We were delighted to take part in the first ever St. Patrick's Day parade in our own village of Aughrim as well as in the recent Bealtaine Festival here in Aughrim with a very enjoyable Afternoon Tea Dance."

Anybody wishing to join the Retirement Group can contact Helen Mannion at 086 8893262 for information and dates of meetings.



Some members of the Aughrim Active Retirement Group pictured outside the Royal Palace in Monaco, during their recent trip to the French Riviera.

FREE HOME INSULATION SCHEME

Since 2008 Midland Warmer Homes (MWH) has been delivering the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme in conjunction with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland to home holders in Roscommon, East Galway and Offaly.

This scheme to ensure that people would be able to have a more environmental friendly home as well as a comfortable one is available to home owners whose residences were built before 2006, the applicant owns the house and the applicant is in receipt of ONE of the following: Fuel Allowance; or Family Income Supplement; or Jobseekers Allowance

(for more than 6 months with a child under 7); of One Parent Family Payment.

If eligible, all work to be carried out on the house is FREE!

The insulation works which can be delivered includes Attic Insulation, cold water tank insulation, pipe insulation, attic walk board, Cavity Wall Insulation, Ventilation, and Building Energy Ratings.

Please contact info@midlandwarmerhomes.ie, Tel: 090-6488292 or Paul at 086-7706399 for more information or if you wish to avail of the scheme.

Paddy Keane I.P.A.V.

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GLAN AGUA/MEIC CYCLISTS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR JACK AND JILL

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

Glan Agua/MEIC have organised a charity fundraising cycle which will take a group of approximately 20 employees, friends and family from our most Northern Operational WTP at Boyle, Co Roscommon, to our newest Water Treatment Plant Construction Project at Killarney, Co Kerry, covering a distance of just under 300 Km. They are undertaking this journey over 2 days on the 1st & 2nd of July, with the intention of raising as much funds as possible for the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation.

The staff are aware of the great work that is carried out by Jack and Jill providing direct funding, to families of children with brain damage up to the age of 4 enabling them to purchase home respite care. They also provide end of life care to all children up to the age of 4 years. Many of the employees have a keen interest in Cycling and thus the Charity Cycling Fundraising event was born. Glan Agua/MEIC see this as a great opportunity to give something back to the community and support

such a worthy charity, whilst having some fun along the way.

Glan Agua/MEIC and the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation would be most grateful for any donations great or small. If you wish to donate to this fundraising effort you can donate easily online by visiting the link to the online i-donate page below. There you will be able to make an online payment which goes directly to the charity.

www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/11258091_glan-agua-meic-charity-cycle-fundraiser-2016.html

Alternatively please feel free to meet with any member of the Glan Agua/MEIC staff to make a donation to this great cause. All donations received go direct to the Charity.



THE ART OF MAKING GOOD SPEECHES GREAT



Birchgrove native - Ger Collieran's company Talent Fusion provides personal development plans, management and leadership coaching interventions and career guidance to nurture people's talents and skills.

While his sister firm "Great Speech" based in Galway for over eight years has been helping people write and deliver tailored, personalised and memorable wedding speeches in a confidential manner.

Now one may wonder "why would people look for professional help on a wedding toast?". Surely their wonderful verbal prowess will allow them to wing it?

Sadly, unless you want the mother of the bride knocking down your door in a fit of rage its best to get help from those who know what they're doing. For example, they say that the three things people will remember about a wedding are: how well the Bride looked, the wedding venue and the speeches.

And it would be wise not to be a sour memory on the happiest day of a loving couple's life.

"For many trying to craft the perfect speech there are a lot of things going through their mind. They want to ensure that they deliver a great speech but have no idea what to say or have so much to say that they don't know how to say it and structure it for that matter. There are personal or sensitive issues they would like to say but are not too sure how best to word it or they simply want to know the funniest way to tell a joke. And speaking in front of a crowd is enough to leave some scared stiff." States Ger.

What the connection between the 2 businesses is. The ability to develop and improve oneself and to be confident in your own abilities at the same time is what they can provide to you. With nearly a decade of experience at the head of 2 successful businesses it is safe to say that if you wish to impress in either the social or professional field, Ger is a professional to turn to.

You can contact Great Speech (confidentially) at 091 388 000 or check out their website at www.greatspeech.ie or you can get in touch with Talent Fusion at 091 388 000 or on their website at www.talentfusion.ie



Deputy Eugene Murphy says Thank you to the people of the Ballinasloe region for their support in the recent General Election.

Constituency Office open soon in Ballinasloe. I will be making regular visits to the Ballinasloe region.

**CONSTITUENCY OFFICE CONTACT NUMBER
087-4353834**

CAROLINE FLED AUGHHRIM 100 YEARS AGO BECAUSE SHE FELT UNSAFE. BY KEN KELLY

The grand-daughter of a lady who was placed in the Aughrim Orphanage for six years and later driven out of the locality, one hundred years ago, has made a donation to the Church of Ireland community in the village where her ancestors are buried.

For 80-year-old Maureen Clark who now lives in East Anglia, it was a nostalgic visit to the Glebe Graveyard in Aughrim where many of her relations are interred. Her grandfather, Thomas Connell, whose family originally hailed from Kilclooney, outside Ballinasloe, was born in Portsmouth, England in 1842 where his father was in the Army but he returned to Ireland and joined the 91st Galway Regiment of the Militia at 14 years of age as a drummer. Subsequently he worked in Aughrim for the Wade family at Fairfield and also at the local orphanage.

Maureen Clark's grandmother, Caroline Campe was born on 1st January 1872 in Bombay, India, where her father was stationed in the Army. She had two older sisters, Catherine Isabella, born in Portsmouth in 1863 and Mary Jane, also born in Portsmouth in 1865 as well as two younger brothers. Their mother died at the age of 43 in 1880 and a year later their father passed away at the Renmore Military Hospital in Galway.

Caroline was sent to the Aughrim Orphanage and remained there until she was sixteen. She did not know the whereabouts of her brothers and sisters. Then she went to work with Mrs. Butson, looking after children before marrying Thomas Connell in The Holy Trinity Church, Aughrim on 2nd October 1890. Her first child was born at the Fairfield homestead on 8th August 1891 and was named Justin Harold. In 1893 Claude Stenson arrived and their third son, named Alan Campe (her maiden name) was born 1894. Four years later she had her only daughter, Madeline Florence.

In her diaries, Caroline said she "fled Ireland with her daughter Madeline Florence around 1916 when we felt unsafe due to the political unrest. Fairfield (the home house) had been raided four times and apart from the estate owner, Robert Rochford Wade, we had no men to protect us. Thomas had passed away



Aughrim 100 years ago



Maureen Clark with Rev. John Godfrey at the family headstone in Aughrim Churchyard

several years earlier and my sons had not returned from military service." Caroline lived to be 91 but was brought back to Aughrim, in 1963 and interred with the rest of her family.

It was the fifth time that Maureen Clarke had made the overseas journey to visit the graves in Aughrim. "There is a bond there that I can't explain. It's lovely coming to Aughrim, the people are so friendly and helpful. Even though it's 100 years since my grandmother and mother had to leave the area, I still enjoy going back as I have a special affinity for the area" explained the former nurse who had seen military service in many hospitals in the Far East, Cyprus and Europe.

Meeting the new Rector, Rev. John Godfrey for the first time, Maureen said the Glebe Cemetery was very dear to her heart and she wished to make a donation to the Church of Ireland community in Aughrim as a token of her appreciation for the kindness and hospitality afforded to her on each occasion she came over to visit.



NEW LOWER INTEREST RATES AT LOCAL CREDIT UNION

BY NIAL CLARKE

LOANS – INTEREST RATES REDUCED!!

The Credit Union has decided to reduce the loan interest rate to its borrowing members (terms and conditions apply). Also with a view to helping NEW members who may wish to borrow the prime interest rate is being reduced to 8.99%. A special car loan rate of 7.99% will be applied and secured loans will have an interest rate of 5.99% applied- as and from the 1st June 2016.

With a credit union car loan – you own the car on day one – unlike other lenders in this the car loan market. A €10,000 car loan repaid over 60 months will cost €12,047.96 – and the car is yours from the first day. The special car loan rate is available for all car purchases – old or new! (See advert below)

Contact Ballinasloe Credit Union for all your borrowing needs. In the past an interest rebate was made available to borrowers at year end – thus further reducing the interest paid by members. However a refund of interest can only be decided at year end at the AGM.

The credit union difference is encapsulated in the Credit Union motto: **Not for Profit, Not for Charity, BUT FOR SERVICE!**

SERVICES

BCU has provided a savings and loan facility for its members. Many members have availed of these facilities and at the end of the last quarter (31.03.2016) the credit union had nearly 18,000 active members

with €80 million in savings and it had reserves of €24 million. Loans to members at year end stood at €36 million.

Services include a share account, a deposit account, a current account, loan account, foreign exchange facility and we are also agents for Axa insurances – household, car etc. In this era of electronic access to accounts BCU has also made an online facility available to its members. CUonline allows access to your accounts - to transfer monies between financial institutions or to make electronic payments to service providers such as electricity, gas, telephone etc. Billpay is also a service provided for members' use. The utility bills that you want to pay can now be processed by the credit union for you at the counter – OR YOU CAN DO IT YOURSELF ONLINE. Paypath can also be used and you can have your pay, pension or social welfare payment credited to your account electronically - weekly, fortnightly or monthly. For the farming community annual grant aid can also be sent directly to your account by the Dept of Agriculture and Food.

Currently the credit union is making provision for the supply of a Debit Card to its members.

Ballinasloe Credit Unions' focus is to be "Of Service" to its members. It serves no other function in life. BCU is here to SERVE YOU!!



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ballinsloecreditunion.ie

OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



Bishop John Kirby officially blessed and opened Vincents Shop and Ozanam House which was funded by the Maureen O'Connell Fund and Ballinasloe Town Council.



St Michaels Conference members at the official opening of Vincents and Ozanam House are Joe Salmon, Margaret Moran, Kevin McMorrough, Nell Price, Mary Coughlan, Michael Healy, Fr Dan Donovan, Joan Hynes.



Frances Tolan and Maureen Cahalan following a seminar held at Gullanes Hotel, arranged by Maureen and given by Frances on Second Sight Personal and Workspace Wellness.



The Cheithearnaigh Cup was won by the Pillar House Pub, Society Street, Ballinasloe for Business and Culture through Irish. Pictured, Left to Right are: Matthew Tierney, Mairin Uí Thuairisg, Katryn Gibbons and Ruairi Ó hAnluain.



Ruairi Ó hAnluain, Margaret Colohan, Mairin Uí Thuairisg, Ann Broderick at the presentation of the Thomáis Ó Bhaill Award in recognition of their Shop Window display in the Conradh na Gaeilge Best Shop window competition for Seachtain Na Gaelige.



Mairin Uí Thuairisg, Jackie Dolan, Shauna Ward, Ruairi Ó hAnluain, at the presentation of the Tadhg Mac Lochlainn Award in recognition of their Shop Window display in the Conradh na Gaeilge Best Shop window competition for Seachtain Na Gaelige.

OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE

ST. BRIGID'S HERITAGE GROUP 1916 ADA ENGLISH COMMEMORATION



JUNE EVENTS GUIDE

June 1st Wednesday		
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3:00 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7.00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm

June 2nd Thursday		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00am
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7.00 pm
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Open music session	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10.00 pm

June 3rd Friday		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Buzz the Agent	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Pacifica	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Macey South	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
Tradstone	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

June 4th Saturday		
Mens GOY 2	Golf Club	All Day
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Shane Moore	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
The Suspects	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Treblemakers	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Live Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Donie O	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Buckeye	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
The Blaggards	Killeens	10:00 pm
Geagan Pagans	The Pillar House	10:00 pm
Happy Bar Stars	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

June 5th Sunday		
Mens GOY 2	Golf Club	All Day
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6:00 pm
Live Music	An Tain	7:00 pm
Session in the Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	7:00 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Anchormen	Maud Millars	8:00 pm
Pj Davis in the Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	9.30 pm
LIVE DJ PLAYING FROM 9.30	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Tradstone	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Shane Moore	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Buck Eye	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Toxic Twins	Killeens	10:00 pm
Hickory Wind	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

June 6th Monday		
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Sharon Turley	Downeys Bar	9:00 pm
DJ Till late	Downeys Bar	10:00 pm

June 7th Tuesday		
Regional Novena	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	12:15 pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5:30 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm

June 08th Wednesday		
Open week	Golf Club	All Day
Regional Novena	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	12:15 pm
Bloodbank	Gullanes Hotel	5-8:00 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm

June 9th Thursday		
Open week	Golf Club	All Day
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00am
Regional Novena	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	4:00 pm
Bloodbank	Gullanes Hotel	5-8:00 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10.00 pm
Singers Circle	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Open music session	Maud Millars	10:00 pm

June 10th Friday		
Open week	Golf Club	All Day
Regional Novena	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	12:15 pm
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Evan Blake	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Loose rooster	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
Amy Brennen	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

June 11th Saturday		
Open week	Golf Club	All Day
Regional Novena	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	12:15 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
LIVE DJ PLAYING	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Live Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Olivia Buckley	Killeens	10:00 pm
The Crime	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Enda Cassidy	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Red tape	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
G2	Canal Bar Shearwater	10:00 pm
Live Music	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

June 12th Sunday		
Open week	Golf Club	All Day
Regional Novena	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	7 am, 10 am, 8 pm
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6:00 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Live Music	An Tain	7:00 pm
Galway Cancer Fundraiser	Valerie's of Aughrim	7:00 pm
Imposter	Maud Millars	8:00 pm
Black Shadow	Downeys Bar	9:00 pm
Buzz the agent	Valerie's of Aughrim	9.30 pm
Bumblebee Honey	Killeens	10:00 pm
Liams Country Rd Show	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm

June 13th Monday		
Regional Novena	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	7:30 am, 10 am, 8 pm
Euro Finals ..Irl V Sweden	An Tain	5 pm-8 pm
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8:30 pm

June 14th Tuesday		
Regional Novena	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	7:30 am, 10 am, 8 pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5:30 pm
L. Kelly Exhibition	Ballinasloe Library	7:00 pm

June 15th Wednesday		
NOVENA	St. Michaels Ballinasloe	7:30 am, 10 am, 8 pm
Live in the Marquee	Valerie's of Aughrim	7:00 pm
Monster Ceili	Valerie's of Aughrim	9:30 pm
Trad Music	An Tain	10:00 pm

June 16th Thursday		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00am
J. Madden Concert	Valerie's of Aughrim	9:00 pm
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10.00 pm
Open music session	Maud Millars	10:00 pm

June 17th Friday		
Trad Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Evan Blake	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Dance with M. English	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Beggars velvet	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
Ken and Steve	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm
Folk Club - Freddie White	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

June 18th Saturday		
Summer BBQ Scramble	Golf Club	All Day
Book Launch- Sr. L. McLoughlin	Ballinasloe Library	2:00 pm
Euro Finals... Irl V Belgium	An Tain	2:00 pm
Waters Trouble Clefs	Town Hall Ballinasloe	6:30 pm
LIVE DJ	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Barracuda	Killeens	10:00 pm
NightOwls	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Chris Dallat	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
The Live Vires	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Sum craic	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
Gentleman John	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
High Reel	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm
Live Music	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

June 19th Sunday		
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6:00 pm
Live Music	An Tain	7:00 pm
Session in the front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	7:00 pm
The nudie suits	Maud Millars	8:00 pm
Buzz the agent & S. Moore	Valerie's of Aughrim	9:30 pm
Small Deal	Killeens	10:00 pm
Live Music TBC	Downeys Bar	10:00 pm
Billy Ward	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm

June 20th Monday		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8:30 pm

June 21st Tuesday		
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5:30 pm

June 22nd Wednesday		
Captains mixed	Golf Club	All Day
Euro Finals ..Irl V Italy	An Tain	8:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Live Music	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
Trad	An Tain	10:00 pm

June 23rd Thursday		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00am
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10.00 pm
Open music session	Maud Millars	10:00 pm

June 24th Friday		
Captains prize	Golf Club	All Day
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Trad Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Adrian Fox	Killeens	10:00 pm
Dj Johnny F	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Hoppy bar stars	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
Anything Goes	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

June 25th Saturday		
Captains prize	Golf Club	All Day
Live DJ	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Live Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
No Bodder	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Lourdes Fundraiser	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
Too Tall Paul	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Wexford Lagigo	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Live music	Maud Millars	10:00 pm
Tunnel Tiger	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm
Ultan Conlon	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

June 26th Sunday		
Live Music	An Tain	7:00 pm
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6:00 pm
Carosel in the Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	6:00 pm
The Knots	Maud Millars	8:00 pm
The Stone Throwers	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Session in the Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
Lyn Em Up	Killeens	10:00 pm
Shane Moore	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm

June 27th Monday		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8:30 pm

June 28th Tuesday		
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5:30 pm

June 29th Wednesday		
Connacht Rugby's Bsloe Summer Camp		9:30-2:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm

June 30th Thursday		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00am
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10.00 pm
Open music session	Maud Millars	10:00 pm

JULY EVENTS GUIDE

July 1st Friday

Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Trad Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Dj Johnny F	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
The Toxic Twins	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
John Molloy	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

July 2nd Saturday

Inter-pubs final	Golf Club	All Day
Treblemakers	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Mike & Christy in the Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
Kings of Connaught	Kileens	10:00 pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Last Man Standing	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
The Fanzines	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
Dun Aengus	The Pillar House	10:00 pm
Happy Bar Stars	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

July 3rd Sunday

Trad Session	The Pillar House	6:00 pm
Anchormen	Maud Millers	8:00 pm
The Chillbillies	Kileens	10:00 pm
Live music	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Session in the Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
Shane Moore	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
NIGHT OWLS	Downeys Bar	10:00 pm

July 4th Monday

Activity Camps	Coral Leisure	10am-3pm
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8:30 pm
Anything Goes	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm

July 5th Tuesday

Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5:30 pm
Session in the Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm

July 6th Wednesday

Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
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July 7th Thursday

Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00Am
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Session in the front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Open Music Session	Maud Millers	10:00 pm

July 8th Friday

Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Dj Johnny F	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Macey South	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
Amy Brennan	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

July 9th Saturday

Live Dj	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Beggars Velvet	Kileens	10:00 pm
NightOwls	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
DJ	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Buckeye	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
TBC	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm
Pete Kennedy	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

July 10th Sunday

Trad Session	The Pillar House	6:00 pm
Trad Music	An Tain	7:00 pm
3 Legged Dog	Maud Millers	8:00 pm
Take Time	Kileens	10:00 pm
Liam's Country Rd Show	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
LIVE MUSIC TBC	Downeys Bar	10:00 pm

July 11th Monday

Swim Camps	Coral Leisure	10-11am
Theatriks	Town Hall Cinema	10am-3pm
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8:30 pm

July 12th Tuesday

Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5:30 pm
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July 13th Wednesday

Lady Captains Mixed	Golf Club	All Day
Trad Music	An Tain	10:00 pm

July 14th Thursday

Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00 am
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Open Music Session	Maud Millers	10:00 pm

July 15th Friday

Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Folk Club - Kieran Goss	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Dj Johnny F	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Loose Rooster	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
Ken and Steve	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

July 16th Saturday

Lady Captains prize	Golf Club	All Day
LIVE DJ	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Live Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Macy South	Kileens	10:00 pm
The Crime	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
The Suspects	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Gentleman John	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Red Tape	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
High Reel	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm
Joe Wynne	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

July 17th Sunday

Live music	An Tain	7:00 pm
The nudie suits	Maud Millers	8:00 pm
Lyn em up	Kileens	10:00 pm
Billy Ward	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Black Shadow Live	Downeys Bar	10:00 pm

July 18th Monday

Cul Camp	GAA pitch	All day
SUMMER KAYAKTIVITY WEEK 2	10:00am -2:00 pm	
Activity Camps	Coral Leisure	10am-3pm
Theatriks	Town Hall Cinema	10am-3pm
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8:30 pm

July 19 Tuesday

Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5:30 pm
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July 20th Wednesday

Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
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July 21st Thursday

Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00Am
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10:00 pm
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Open music session	Maud Millers	10:00 pm

July 22nd Friday

Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Evan Blake	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Beggars Velvet	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
Anything Goes	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

July 23rd Saturday

LIVE DJ	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Toxic twins	Kileens	10:00 pm
Live Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Finnegans Fury	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Music in the Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
Sean Brennan	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Decades of youth	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
TBC	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

July 24th Sunday

Live Music	An Tain	7:00 pm
Ceili	Gullanes Hotel	8:00 pm
Imposter	Maud Millers	8:00 pm
Shane Moore	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Session in the Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	10:00 pm
LIVE Music TBC	Downeys Bar	10:00 pm
Jock & Davy	Kileens	10:00 pm
Acoustic Jukebox	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

July 25th Monday

Swim Camps	Coral Leisure	10-11am
SUMMER KAYAKTIVITY WEEK 2	10:00am -2:00 pm	
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6:00 pm
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8:30 pm

July 26th Tuesday

Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5:30 pm
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July 27th Wednesday

Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
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July 28th Thursday

Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11:00Am
Kevin Rohan	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Open music session	Maud Millers	10:00 pm

July 29th Friday

Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6:30 pm
Session in the Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	7:00 pm
Trad Session	The Pillar House	9:00 pm
Seamas Moore	Valerie's of Aughrim	9:30 pm
Dj Johnny F	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Trad music	An Tain	10:00 pm
Hoppy bar stars	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
TBC	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm

July 30th Saturday

Inter Clubs classic	Golf Club	All Day
LIVE DJ	Downeys Bar	9:30 pm
Live Music	An Tain	10:00 pm
The Chillbillies	Kileens	10:00 pm
No Bodder	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
Nite Owls	Haydens Hotel	10:00 pm
Strung out	Maud Millers	10:00 pm
Tunnel Tigers	Canal Bar, Shearwater	10:00 pm
Ultan Conlon	The Pillar House	10:00 pm

July 31st Sunday

Ahascragh Festival	Ahascragh	All Day
Live Music	An Tain	7:00 pm
The NOSHOW Band	Maud Millers	8:00 pm
Bumble Bee Honey	Kileens	10:00 pm
Tradstone	The Auld Sod Bar	10:00 pm
BBQ with SHANE MOORE	Downeys Bar	10:00 pm
M. Keane & C. Naughton	The Pillar House	10:00 pm
DJ upstairs	An Tain	10:30 pm

CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS



Ballinasloe Comhaltas was founded 50 years ago in Ballinasloe and they celebrated their anniversary with a musical evening in Gullanes Hotel where musicians and dancers entertained the audience. Special awards were given to founder and long serving members.



Members who received awards are as follows (left to right):

Front Row.: Mrs M Farrell, Sr. Alacoque, Maureen Waters, Tom Quinn. Back Row.: Tommy Hardiman, Tomas Corcoran, Tom Forde, Eugene Hession, Hubert Hardiman, Olive O'Beirne, Mark Lydon, Maura Laverty, Paddy Monaghan, Bobby Kilkenny.



East Galway & Midlands Cancer Support Chairman Liam Loughrey accepts €1,000 sponsorship cheque from Noel Madden, Manager Ballinasloe Credit Union.



Car Draw: (left - right): Shane McNeill, Assistant Manager BCU presents keys to Margaret Moran, latest Members Car Draw Winner. Also pictured is Padraig Moran.



Aughrim village is a hub of activity all year around with a great hardworking community committee.

The Summer Village Festival was revived a few years ago and it has progressed well, to kick it all of this year they are hosting an East Galway Cancer massive fundraiser on 12th June, with 5 different routes for walkers, runners, cyclists, vintage cars and vintage tractors with music and refreshments afterwards.

This year the festival proper takes place on 18th - 19th June. On Saturday night 18th in the Marquee the Queen of the Festival Competition with a celebrity compere and music by Chris Dallat takes place. Then family fun day on the Sunday with our festival parade led by our newly crowned queen with all floats welcome. Street music, face painting, bouncing castles, line dancing and

music afterwards by Buzz The Agent and Shane Moore. The hand sheep shearing displays are back - which proved to be great fun for all last year.

Aughrim Show Jumping is now in its 6th year and it takes place in Ballinasloe Showgrounds on 6th and 7th of August. The Committee are delighted this year to host the final of the Connaught Show Jumping League series for horses on Saturday where the 1.5m Hygies, 1.25m Euro Homes and the Sunshine Windows.ie, 1.35m Connaught champions will be crowned.

LIFE VOLUME PUBLICATION DATES

JUNE/JULY:	May 27th
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER:	July 29th
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER:	Sept. 30th
XMAS EDITION	
DECEMBER/JANUARY:	Nov. 25th
FEBRUARY/MARCH:	Feb. 3rd

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BALLINASLOE FAIR AND FESTIVAL GETTING READY. 1ST – 9TH OCTOBER 2016. BY MARY PHELAN



Ballinasloe Fair and Festival Committee have begun the planning for this October's Programme of Events.

"We commence by conducting a thorough review of last year events - seeing what worked well, what didn't go so well and then plan accordingly" says Adrian Ahern Chairperson

Last year the Friday night was more family orientated with the Fireworks happening earlier than previous years and the introduction of face painting, music, fire eaters, stilt walkers etc., all adding to the feel good factor of relaxed free entertainment for all.

Ballinasloe Fair and Festival is a large undertaking for the small voluntary committee many of whom have been associated with the event for many years now. Pressures increase year on year, things like insurance, health and safety considerations, fund raising and arranging a varied programme to attract visitors to the area and raise the profile of the town.

Costs are increasing year on year and the committee relies mainly on the support of the towns businesses - they really appreciate all those who contribute so generously but unfortunately it is increasingly becoming more difficult to garner financial resources.

This year the programme may have to be reduced to reflect the budget available but it is hoped to continue and enhance the programme with favourites such as the craft market, the fireworks, dog show and related activities, the soap box derby and horse & pony lunging events continuing.

The organisation of the events involves co-operation from a number of groups statutory and non- statutory, e.g. Galway County Council, H.S.E., Ballinasloe Show Committee, Civil Defence, Gardai, Department of Agriculture, I.S.P.C.A., Ballinasloe Musical Society and a host of volunteers, businesses and people of the town and district.

Secretary, Mary Phelan said "our unique October Fair & Festival generates a wonderful interest from overseas journalists and T.V. crews. In 2014 we had a detailed article published in "Canadian Cowboy" magazine where the journalist was in Ireland for a few weeks attending various festivals. **She attended the first weekend for the magazine but returned again for our second weekend of family fun because of the enjoyment and welcome she got here. Last year we hosted media people from France, Australia, Scotland and Sweden. In the past week I have received the Swedish article and it makes me very proud to see our historic event make an impression in print round the world!"**

"I would urge local people who wish to give of some of their free time to come along and join us. We meet about twice a month on a Monday night @ 8.30p.m. in Gullane's Hotel to plan the event. If you cannot attend meetings on a regular basis – maybe you could volunteer to help out during the opening or closing weekend when committee are at their busiest" continues Mary.

"I have met wonderful people who visit Ballinasloe for part of or the duration of the Fair & Festival and they are astonished that this event is in existence since 1722.

Stand on the top of our Fair Green this year and tell me where in the world would you create the visual picture you will look at – the mix of people and the colour and number of animals can take your breath away. Not to mention the revenue it brings into our locality!" states the Organisation's longstanding Secretary.

Ciara Croffy, Treasurer and who also heads up the Equine sub-committee stated "that the quality of animal coming to the Fair has improved immensely over the past few years and the geographical spread of entries in our various equine competitions cover all Ireland. We are constantly implementing and updating Health & Safety laws and work hand in hand with the Dept. of Agriculture. Horses are sold on our Fair Green every year and transported all over Europe! This is continuing proof that Ballinasloe remains still a respected event in the equine calendar."

Further details: check out website www.ballinasloeoctoberfair.com or Tel (087) 2071869.

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PASSING OF MOSSIE DILLANE

BY KEN KELLY

Mossie Dillane, the former bank official and priest, who passed away recently was a native of Templeglantine, Co. Limerick. He worked as a teller in the Munster & Leinster Bank in Ballinasloe (now the AIB) more than fifty years ago before studying for the priesthood.

Born in 1931, Mossie attended the local national school where both his parents were teachers before receiving his secondary education in St. Munchin's College in Limerick. He then joined the old Munster & Leinster Bank in 1950 but after two years entered the Columban Missionary College in Dalgan Park to study for the priesthood. However he left there two years later and returned to his banking job for the following four years, some of which were spent in Ballinasloe where he hit up a rapport with some golfing friends and took a great interest in the game.

In 1958 Mossie entered St. Kieran's Seminary in Kilkenny and five years later was ordained a priest for a Texas Diocese in the USA, serving in many parishes. Returning to Ireland in 1970, Mossie served as curate in for two years in Ballinasloe town and a further two in Portumna.

He was very popular in both parishes, loved the people and "the craic" while spending his leisure time on the fairways of both golf clubs.

Returning to San Antonio, Texas in 1974, Mossie ministered in many parishes there for twenty years before returning to work in the parish of Killimor and later in the parish of Mullagh and Killoran. He later moved to the parish of Woodford and Looscaun but retired from the priesthood in 2006 following his personal life revelations. He had been a priest for over fifty years and his passing came after a long period of hospitalisation.

Mossie excelled as a golfer, playing at one time off a single figure handicap and winning one Captain's and two President's Prizes in his career. He also had the distinction of having three holes-in-one over the years as winning many other major trophies. He was a member of both Portumna and Ballinasloe clubs for many years, was elected President of the Ballinasloe Golf Club in 2005 where he proved to be extremely popular and hard-working during his term. Members of the Club formed a guard of honour at his funeral in Portumna where his remains were interred.

LAWRENCETOWN COMMUNITY CLEAN UP!

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

In response to the dumping epidemic Lawrencetown Community Development Group held a rubbish collection/ tidy up evening recently in conjunction with An Taisce National Spring Clean Initiative and Galway County Council.

It was massively encouraging to see a brilliant turnout of all ages from the village and hinterland. The whole community gathered in force and the event was deemed a huge success as the region was cleared of rubbish!

"We were thrilled with the enthusiasm and willingness of everyone who turned up on the night and put their shoulder to the wheel to clean approaching roadways to the village" stated group chairman Brian Kenny. Noting the amount of children who came and thanking the local National School for promoting the initiative by awarding all children who attended the clean-up with amazing volunteer certificates and treats!

The group also extended their thanks to Galway County Council who provided rubbish collection equipment and a skip to facilitate the event which was all put to great use. 'An abundance of rubbish was collected

by an immense group of volunteers who really did go above and beyond the call of duty."

The Lawrencetown Community Development Group's next step is to continue to work on initiatives and ideas recently identified by the community to make the village and surrounding area an even better place to live. Watch their Facebook page for the next meeting date as all are welcome to help improve their hinterland!

If anyone is interest in contacting/joining the group please do not hesitate to contact any of the committee members:

Chairperson: Brian Kenny 087-632 8793

Secretary: Ger Tully 086-380 7885

Treasurer: Loraine Treacy 087-7646530.

OR: e-mail: lcg@lawrencetown.com



REPRINT OF LOCAL BOOK

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



Celebrating the reprint of her book "A Note to Self" is local author, Maureen Cahalan in Salmon's Bookshop, Ballinasloe with Dermot Salmon.

Local author Maureen Cahalan has reason to celebrate with the reprint of her acclaimed book 'A Note to Self'.

She ventured into the publishing world to become a voice for the bereaved and retired people who often become the silent voices of our communities. Her book offers a unique and rare reflection on experiences shared by people who have been affected through bereavement and retirement "life does not end with change - rather it creates a new horizon which allows us the opportunity to understand ourselves better." 'A Note to Self' is supported by contributions from active retirement groups as well as people from around Ireland, England, U.S.A, and Australia and contains beautiful imagery of Connemara which provokes positive thinking.

'A Note to Self' is available in Salmon's Bookshop Ballinasloe and on Amazon so make sure to get yours soon!

A FOND FAREWELL TO DOR SCANNELL

BY KEN KELLY

There was a wide outpouring of grief at the passing of one of Ballinasloe's best-known business people and community activists Dorothy (Dor) Scannell, "Fort Rose," Cleaghmore. For over forty years she had been involved in all aspects of the business and community life of her adopted town where she was held in the highest esteem by all who knew her.

Dor, as she was affectionately known, was born and reared in Eyrecourt where her parents, Anna and Kieran Kenny had a business on the Main Street. They also operated a hackney business, which her late mother drove for over fifty years. Dor's first job took her to Ballina, Co. Mayo, working with Friends Providence Assurance before being transferred to Galway City, where she lived with her sister Pauline.

In 1970 Dor took up employment in Portiuncula Hospital, Ballinasloe and on her 21st birthday married Donal Scannell and joined him in the running of Cul na Greine Hotel on Dunlo Hill. This proved to be an outstanding business enterprise, enjoying a widespread reputation but in the summer of 1975 the couple decided to sell the business and move to live in Derrymullen. Well used to feeding the masses in Cuil na Greine Hotel, Dor went into the business of providing the catering at the Ballinasloe Livestock's Mart canteen for six years.

Now the mother of two sons (Donal and Mark) and a daughter (Susan), Dor and husband Donal purchased "Fort Rose" in Cleaghmore in 1981. It was Dor's "pride and joy" where its big red door became a symbol of her boundless generosity, where for the following 35 years of living there, she laid on a massive welcome to all that passed through. More recently her favourite visitors were her beloved grandchildren whom she doted on.

Dor treated Ballinasloe like she did her home village of Eyrecourt, making it her business to be acquainted with and helpful to all and sundry. Kindness was her currency and she never put herself first. She was deeply involved

with many charitable groups, particularly with the annual Daffodil Day, since its inception, where she manned the stall outside the AIB on collection days.

A founder member of the Soroptomists Association in Ballinasloe, she was honoured with the presidency and accompanied the group on the special visit to Arus an Uachtaran. Her colleagues formed a guard of honour as her remains made their final journey to Creagh Cemetery. Dor had a unique ability to make the world come to her. There were few people she wanted to meet and she usually wound up chatting to them in her adopted town, from Charlie Haughey to Michael D. Higgins.



Her absolute musical hero, Joe Dolan, visited her during one illness while Daniel O'Donnell also dropped in. One of the early mourners to pay their respects at her wake was Gay Byrne, as over 1,600 signed the books of condolences at the family home, where she reposed.

Dor's devotion to Our Lady of Clonfert was immeasurable. Every month of May she would join thousands of others in visiting Clonfert three times to ensure her prayers were answered. She always supported those affected by illness or personal problems by encouraging them to pray to Our Lady. Firmly believing "that to sing is to pray twice" Dor was a member of St. Michael's Choir for the last two decades but following a hip operation had to retire as negotiating the spiral stone steps to the choir was too challenging. Her fellow choristers, led by Michael McCullagh, did her proud with a magnificent performance at her requiem mass.

Despite being in ill health for the past two years, and initially given little chance of survival, Dor battled against the odds and was back to her buoyant best in the months preceding her sudden and unexpected death. At her graveside, singer and family friend Mundy, gave a rousing rendition of Joe Dolan's "Good Looking Woman" where he was enthusiastically joined in the chorus by all present. This ended a "great send off" for a very popular local lady.

The late Dor Scannell is survived by her husband Donal, sons Donal and Mark, daughter Susan, brother Joe, sisters Pauline and Anne, grandchildren and many other relatives and friends.



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Ballinasloe Regional Novena will be taking place between the 7th and 15th of June. The service will be conducted by Redemptorist Priests. In 1866 the Redemptorist Order was entrusted with the Icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and they have faithfully facilitated devotion in the intervening 150 years.

The Novena is a time to celebrate, explore and

deepen ones faith. On Thursday the 9th of June at 4p.m. the Sacrament of Anointing will be celebrated. The Blessing of children takes place at the 12.15p.m. Mass on Sunday, 12th June and the following day the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available at all three sessions: 7.30a.m. 10a.m. & 8p.m.

Even if you have not been part of the Novena in the past, feel assured of a warm welcome.

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COUCH TO 5K CHALLENGE FOR CHROI NAOFA

Students in Scoil Chroi Naofa recently undertook a 6 week couch to 5k challenge with the aim to encourage fitness in school. The task was met with great enthusiasm as the students carried out their 5k trek on the Dunlo Running Track. Three of these fit kids wrote about their thoughts on this exercise!

"My couch to 5k was a super experience. We had six weeks of training and we had a final day where we had to reach our target. There were three groups aiming for three different targets. The walkers group did 2k, the runners and walkers group did 3k and the runners group did 5k. I was in the runners group and I really enjoyed the training. We learned how to pace ourselves properly for long-distance. We did stretches every week so we didn't hurt the day after. My target was 5k, that is 12 and a half laps of the Dunlo running track. On the final day I exceeded my target by doing 18 laps which is over 7k. I was very proud of myself and my classmates. I really enjoyed the couch to 5k, it was great fun!"

By: Ksawery Wieczorek

"Fourth, fifth and the junior language class in Scoil an Chroi Naofa completed six weeks of training on the running track. We trained every Friday. There were three groups; the walking group, the walkers/runners group and the runners group. On the sixth week every group had their own goal to reach. Some people actually ran twenty laps in forty five minutes. We had so much fun with our friends and got loads of fresh air. We really enjoyed our trip to the running track. Each of us was very proud of their achievement."

By: Jakub Bednarczyk & Martin Ward

These small tasks are an entertaining way of promoting a healthy lifestyle to the youth in the local schools and it is always fantastic to see these academies of learning giving their students this opportunity.

Ardscoil Mhuire recorded a great result recently as their second year volleyball team secured silver medals in the National Shield competition held in University of Limerick.

The team steamed through their opponents in the early stages of the competition. In the quarter finals they beat St. Raphael's Loughrea and Portlaoise two sets to nil respectively. They then dispatched Santa Sabina, Sutton in an equally effective manner in the All-Ireland semi-finals with an impressive 25-7 and 25-8 in their winning sets which saw them through to the All-Ireland final against Patrician Presentation College, Fethard.

The final proved to be a close fought match with the Ardscoil Mhuire girls getting off to an impressive start, winning the first set 25-21. However the Tipperary girls proved the stronger of the two teams winning the second set 25-18 and the third set 25-18.



BUDDING RETAILERS IN SCOIL CROI NAOFA

The 5th and 6th class students of Scoil an Chroí Naofa showed a lot of local shops how it's done recently with the undertaking of their Junior Entrepreneur Project. This tested their ability to market a money making idea and to sell it to 3 judges.

"Our class recently participated in the Junior Entrepreneur Project (JEP). This a project which allowed us the opportunity to set up our own organisation. We were initially divided into 4 groups and each group came up with their own business idea. Each idea was presented to the "Dragons" in a Dragon's Den type scenario. Ms. Connor (our principal), Val Colleran (local businessman - owner of Utah,) and Fr. Garvey (Chairperson Board of Management) were the "Dragons". Their job was to decide on the idea which they believed could succeed and this would be the basis of our JEP.

Their choice was 'Cool Cases'. The idea was to decorate or personalise plain pencil cases which we could then sell for a small profit. Our target market was the school community.

We were divided into 5 teams – (1) Design and Production, (2) Finance, (3) Sales, (4) Marketing and (5) Storytelling. Each group had their own

specific responsibilities to help make our business a success.

Special mention to Val Colleran (Utah) who was a HUGE help to us in setting up our business. He sourced and ordered the pencil cases for us and delivered them to the classroom for us personally. We ordered the sticky letters and decorations online.

We then had a Showcase Day where we displayed and advertised our product for all the other classes and teachers, as well as for the parents. The prices per pencil case were €4 for 1, €7 for 2 or €10 for 3. We took almost 200 orders on that day alone!

Our next job was to design, produce and deliver the cases to our customers. When all was said and done we ended up making a profit of more than €450! This was after we had repaid our initial loan from the Board of Management and taken away the cost of our raw materials. We plan on spending our hard earned profits on a trip to Baysports in Athlone.

All in all the JEP was a very enjoyable and educational experience for all of us. Don't be surprised if you see some of us in the "Dragon's Den" for real sometime in the future with our own business ideas!

By Caolán Nott and Seán Ronaldson



Seán Ronaldson and Caolán Nott with sample "Cool Cases"



Meng Ou and Jakub Piskorski with sample "Cool Cases"



Cool Cases" display



Junior Entrepreneurs with "dragons"- Christine Connor, Val Colleran and Fr. John Garvey!

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A CHAT WITH JOE HIGGINS BY GERARD DEVLIN



Joe arrives by barge and waves to his subjects.



Phil and Joe's wedding 1953.



Joe is crowned "KING OF THE FAIR" 1956 by Andrew Jennings and Tadhg Mac Lochlainn.



Family photo Back Sadhbh, Searón, Saoirse, Fiacre, Owen, Rua, Joe, Phil.



Factory hand stitchers..Joe Higgins at back..front L-R..John Burke, Tommy Campbell, Linda Hickey, Anne Maloney (Carrig), Della Hickey, Martin Hickey; Onnie Darcy, Frances Darcy, Dean Reilly, Irene Crehan.

Joe Higgins was born in 1924 in Plaza Terrace now called Emmet Place. He went to school in rooms behind the Town Hall. Joe's class was of an all Ireland "Schools Collection" project in 1937/38. This project has been digitised and can be found @ www.duchas.ie/en/cbes/4566075

In 1939 Joe began working as a machine operator in Dubarry shoe factory. At the same time with a desire to further educate himself Joe attended classes four nights a week in the Ballinasloe Workhouse.

In Dubarry he worked his way up and was eventually responsible for the distribution of moccasins to hand stitching homes all over the midlands.

One of those hand stitchers recently, said "Joe was like Meals on Wheels - as the hand stitching money often put the dinner on the table." In 1984 after spending 45 years in Dubarry, he retired? And went on to manage various shoe shops locally.

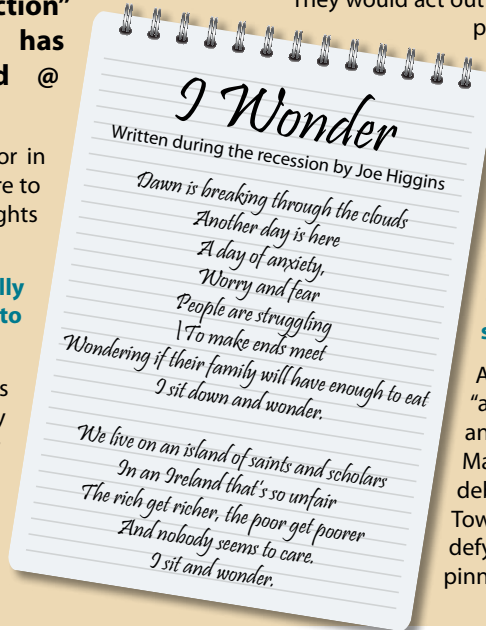
School plays gave Joe his love for grease paint and stage lights and he started to write short

funny sketches. Typically during Lent when dance halls closed and cinema projectionists got holidays, Joe and some friends would visit local village halls.

They would act out these sketches and follow with a bit of a dance played on an old tape recorder. Old Mother Riley will always be remembered as Joe's most famous character. Local charities or clubs usually benefitted from these shows. Christmas, entertainment in St Brigid's Hospital, old folk's parties and children's shows in the Parochial Hall were the norm.

"We never got paid but we were fed rhubarb tarts, cakes and buns. I suppose we worked for the food but really it was for the love and satisfaction of acting" remembers Joe

Assisted by John Gilligan his musical director and "a talented musician", Joe then wrote, directed and acted in his own shows in the Town Hall. Many a nervous Dubarry worker made their acting debut in one of Joe's packed out shows. Older Town Hall audiences still remember Joe's "death defying high-wire walk" in a tutu, with a large "L" pinned to his back and John Gilligan giving a drum



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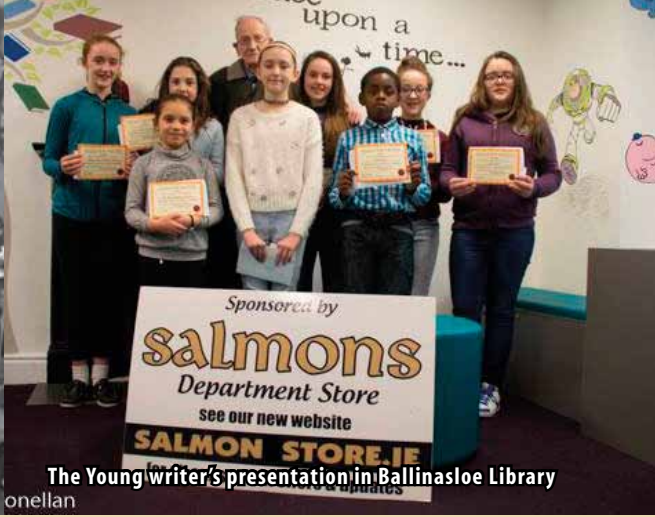
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In 1958. Joe and fellow workers celebrates Dubarry's 21 years in Ballinasloe. The Party was held in Hayden's hotel.



Ballinasloe 8th October 1956. Part of the crowd that met the Galway Team.



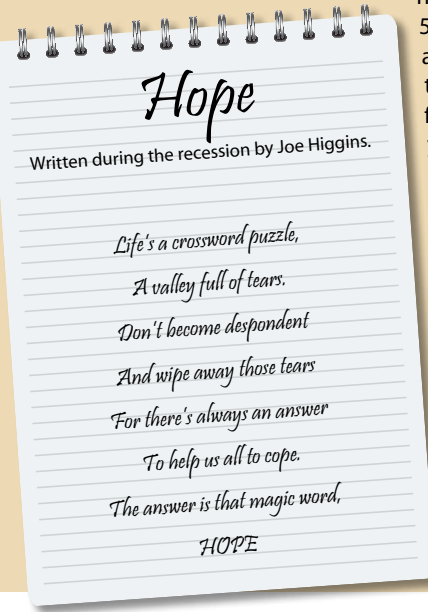
The Young writer's presentation in Ballinasloe Library

roll. It was really "two tall painter's ladders and a plank with a rope nailed to the edge", he tells me.

In 1953 Joe married Phil, daughter of a local postman Christy Regan. They've been living in St Joseph's Place for over 60 years. They have one daughter and four grandchildren.

In 1954 (the Marion Year) when the Dubarry workers contributed weekly and had a statue of Our Lady purchased and erected on the factory grounds Joe arranged with Fr Cummins and invited Bishop Philbin to celebrate the open air mass. He also organised an FCA colour party led by the late Oliver O'Grady to meet the Bishop.

One of Joe's greatest memories was coming down the canal on a Guinness barge, being crowned King of the Fair by Andrew Jennings and Tadhg Mac Lochlainn and then welcoming the victorious 1956 Galway team to Ballinasloe. Another was a Cabaret and Candlelight supper he organised in the Emerald Ballroom, in aid of the Ballinasloe Mentally Handicapped. Assisted by the late Peadar Burns (then chairman of Ballinasloe Mentally Handicapped Association), Dr O'Shea, Dr Browne, Bridie McKenna and



the St Brigid's hospital Matron over 1,000 people were dined and entertained by celebrity musician Dermot O'Brien, RTE's Brendan O'Reilly and locals Ancel O'Carroll and Dermot Cullen.

At 75 when Joe REALLY retired he still continued writing, but his passion now was for poems. He also started walking 3 to 5 miles every day. Until recently you could see him anywhere from Brackernagh to Creagh church. Due to the deterioration of his eyesight Joe had to put his feet up. He does so on a foot rest, presented to him years ago as a thank you, by the patients and staff in St Brigid's Hospital. Joe reminds me that, Phil and himself still do a brisk walk everyday, only now it's just to the bottom of Brackernagh.

Nearly 80 years since he did his "All Ireland Schools Collection Project" Joe and his family were guests of honour in the new library. Joe presented a group of young budding writers with their prizes and "Writing Competition Certificates". Maybe in this group there is another Joe in the making?

Older locals still say.... "There was no show like a Joe show" and the ain't referring to the late singer from Mullingar!

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FULL STEAM FOR NEW BOARD OF TOWN HALL THEATRE

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

The New team of volunteers charged with the managing of the town's largest performing arts facility met to review the workings of the venue for the previous 12 months and to chart some plans for the next 12.

The meeting in Gullanes Hotel observed a minutes silence for the late Director Brendan Tully and Architect Roddy Mannion who both died since the last AGM.

Outgoing Chairperson Mary O'Connell gave a detailed annual report to the Society's A.G.M. in which she detailed over 85 nights of performances, cinema, rehearsals, recitals, summer schools and events. She reminded the large audience in attendance that the whole project was dependent primarily on volunteers and that without the grateful assistance of Solas, and TUS a great deal more energy would have to be utilised. She thanked all the local performing groups, those who supported the fundraising, the events, Galway County Council, AOIFE and her fellow Directors and Officers of the Company that operates the venue on a long lease from the Diocesan Trustees.

Secretary Colm Croffy in his final report gave an overview of the last nine years of the project, it's successful fundraising and delivery of some €165,000 of investment in a new roof and capital refurbishment of the building. The meeting warmly thanked the outgoing Secretary for his efforts and commitment since the project committee was founded in 2005.

Treasurer Gerry Sweeney gave a detailed report on the Society's finances while Claire Curley the Company's Auditor was on hand to present in detail the audited figures for the previous year trading.



She was also able to assist with any questions that the meeting had on the turnover of the year of some €36,000 and expenditure of some €35,000.

The new members elected to serve on the Management Committee for the next twelve months were - Eoin Croffy, Dave Hardiman, Maura Hughes, Frances Leahy, Pat McGovern Mary O'Connell, Dave Rafter, Gerry Sweeney, Pat Vaughan.

Following the wonderful Barra singers concert on last month the Town Hall Theatre will play host to the wonderful Trouble Clefs choir on June 18th. They will be just back from their trip to Dublin and their ensemble singing with the Hopkins Choir so rest assured that their vocal chords will be well warmed up! Directed by Triona Waters they will be performing a number of pieces from many different plays, from Les Miserables to Matilda! This promises to be an enjoyable evening for all lovers of music!

Following this the Theatre will play host to 'Theatriks' summer camp. Run by Majella Flanagan Theatre Company, this curriculum will entail ten days of a fun-filled summer school exploring all things theatrical! Kids will be able to express themselves while learning and improving on their talents! Running from the 11th to the 22nd of July this programme has a fee of €200. You can contact Majella herself 0863824545 for bookings and for more information on the event.

The Theatre is still available for Cinema Screenings for groups, birthday parties by request and is trying to finalise its Autumn Schedule - if anyone wants to make a booking for a play show or event - please contact Ballinasloe Town Hall website page or call 090 9643779.



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BRIDGE CLUB BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

The Bridge club Presidents prize was held recently. The winners of this competition were:

1st: Meta Cunningham & Malcom McDermott
2nd: Tom McLoughlin & Martina Loughnane
Gross: Mary Bolands & P.J. Hill
3rd: Camilla Barrett & Michael Barrett
2nd Gross: Angela Connolly & Charlie Mullen
4th: Detta Power & Sally Kelly
5th: Mary Muldoon & Breege O'Doherty

1st Session: Dorrie Killeen & Mary Unicacke
2nd Session: Laura Naughton & Kathleen Delaney

The competition was held on 2 nights, the 14th and 21st of April.

Apologies:
Presentation cheque in last edition was €700 not €400 for East Galway Cancer Services. Ed.



President Eileen Morrisroe presents her prize to Mike Cunningham and Malcolm McDermott

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TROUBLE CLEFFS YOUNG ADULT CHOIR POISED FOR BUSY SUMMER

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



Children and Young Adult group Trouble Clefs Choir was set up in 2014 and since then between concerts, shows, national choral festivals, auditions, professional recordings, radio performances and a charity single it can be said they have done the locality proud with their amazing work and quality and have only been improving!

The group of 4-15 year-olds recently auditioned for Britain's Got Talent, in front of several talent scouts and in a huge acoustic hall, they sang their rendition of 'Dream', a song co-written by local 11 year old Eabha McCann who played the piano for the choir!

According to their director Triona Waters "they even made some of the scouts cry! This was a fantastic learning experience for the group, as they were praised for their quality by the judges and gained a greater understanding of the audition process, which will stand to these superstars!"

With this under their belt the choir are next performing alongside The Hopkins Choir on their world tour, which is a 350 year old tradition! They are highly prestigious in America so it is a huge honour and a recognition of their phenomenal skills that the kids were asked to perform three songs as the opening act of their concert. The concert will be held in the renowned St. Patricks' Cathedral in Dublin on 16 June 2016 at 1.00p.m this promises to be a milestone moment not just for the group.

The fun doesn't stop there as after this the Trouble Clefs will be performing their own show called 'Musical Madness' in the Town Hall on Saturday, 18 June 2016 at 7.00 p.m. It will feature an array of songs from various musicals ranging from Annie, Oliver, Matilda, Les

Miserables, Mary Poppins and much more. Tickets will be available on the night at the door.

When not auditioning and performing live the group has been raising funds for Mental Health awareness agencies. Having raised the guts of €900 from their charity single 'Dream' written by Eabha, her little sister Blaitthin and Megan Kelly. According to Triona "the song was inspired by



her friend Saidhbe Concanon's cousin Mark and his charity.' Ben Parker recorded it whilst Fletchers, Moycarn and the Emerald Boxing Club all provided the sponsorship for it to be put onto C.D. with only a few remaining in Salmons department store!

Their new single 'It's O.K.' will be professionally recorded for C.D. during the summer months where all proceeds will go to Mental Health awareness agencies also!



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CYCLING CLUB GEARED UP FOR A PEDALLING SUMMER

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

Ballinasloe cycling club was started up again after a near 30 year gap only 16 months ago. Support has been fantastic so far with nearly 100 members already! This year with the promise of good weather, their hopes are to exceed 100 as more and more are going out on their bikes to take advantage of sun and to have fun getting fit!

One of the major events recently was when the town played host to Cycle Against Suicide. This was a fantastic event for the club to get behind as not only did it promote a great cause but it advertised the club on the national level! Many of the members of the local organisation made huge efforts to help organise food and board to over 200 of the cyclists that came through the municipality on their epic journey around the country.

Also organised was a family/kids fun 6km cycle on the morning leading out over 300 cyclists. This was a phenomenal way of teaching children about mental health, as it got them involved in a fun way! Afterwards there was a carnival atmosphere for the kids with games and events set up for their return.

John Donnelly P.R.O. of the club singled out the Hosting crew - saying "it was the Ballinasloe homestay team that did most of the work for the weekend Aidan, Jacinta and Lyn and the cycle against suicide organisation, they were a well-oiled machine and ran everything like clockwork!".

They are now well into planning their annual charity cycle for later this summer. "Our chosen charity by members is St Teresa Special School here in town, they do great work and benefit so many kids!" So make sure to get your bikes dusted off and prepare to train for either the 50km or 100km Tour D'Shams Charity spin on Sunday the 28th of August!

In the meantime the club aims to get people out in groups, with the concept that cycling is much more enjoyable when out with a group, being an activity where you can chat along and make new friends. There are cycles midweek at 6:30 pm on Tuesday and Thursday's and also Sunday spins 8am and 10am! Assembly point – Barry Cycles on Sarsfield Road. Members have lots of little spins during the week, so if anyone is interested in joining to avail of coming out with a group and getting fit in an entertaining way make sure to get involved!

If you wish to learn more email them at ballinasloecyclingclub@gmail.com or find them on Facebook!



Kids from the family fun day on the day of the cycle against suicide day 2nd May



John Donnelly and 2 daughters Orla and Elle Donnelly and Colm Hayes from 2fm



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GAA LOTTO JACKPOT SCOOPED BY NEWLYWEDS!

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



Left - Right: Brendan Kelly Chairman Hurling Committee, Pat O'Sullivan Chairman Ballinasloe GAA, Eoin Hardimann, Joby & Cait Kelly, Sean Moclair Ladies' Football Club, Seamus Duffy Chairman Football Committee and Stephen Ruane Lotto Organiser.

The groom struck it lucky when his bride used their birthday dates to secure a €17,500 win.

It was 3rd time lucky for the families in the local GAA lotto as Cait's dad Brendan and Joby's sister Joanne jointly won both the Hurling and Football lottos in the past.

There was great excitement when news spread of the winners as both families are core supporters of the GAA in Ballinasloe.

As weekly buyers Cait and Joby always promote ticket sales to their punters in Joes Bar when the lotto team are on their Friday night pub sales.

The club has 8 lotto teams made up of club members who take turns to help fund the Clubs 28 Football, hurling and ladies teams.

Pat O'Sullivan Club chairman said "it was great to see such great supporters coming away with the jackpot"

The new jackpot currently stands at €11,900 and is increasing by €100 per week. Tickets are €2 each or 3 for €5.

Local GAA-mad couple Cait and Joby Kelly were married on a Friday and won the local GAA lotto on the Sunday. !!

Derrymullen appears to be a lucky hunting ground for lotto winners as Willie Devlin former Ballinasloe and Galway footballer followed in his father's footsteps who 20 years earlier also appeared on RTEs Winning Streak to win a few bob !!

Ballinasloe U16 Division 1B League Winners



UNDER 14 CAMOGIE SECURES COUNTY SHIELD

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

With the year coming into the summer months Cumann Camógaíochta Béal Átha na Slua are in full swing and there is no better way to show this off than with their major success recently at U14 level.

Recently the girls took on Kinvara in Killimordaly in the County Shield Final. The girls were successful in their battle with the strong Kinvara side, beating them on a score line of 4-00 to 1-03! Two of these U14 players also represented the club and town at county level in an U14 Inter-county blitz in Clare!

The club would like to take this time to congratulate the girls on their fantastic achievements for both club and county. In addition to this, the team wishes to extend their congratulations to Lisa O'Neill

who also represented them with the Galway Intermediate team in the league final.

There was great support and encouragement for the Annual Ada English Cup U12 game between Pearses Woodmount and Ballinasloe Camogie in St. Brigid's as the day turned out to be a great success thanks to the magnificent support!

The organisation also had a major impact on the Fit Towns initiative by providing a series of circuits every Tuesday night for six weeks. As many other activities that were initiated as part of the Fit Towns Initiative, the circuits were very successful motivating the women in the town to get out, get active and more importantly have a bit of fun!

Michele Jennings, Committee Member congratulated all associated with the club who took part in recent activities. "Well done to all who took part in the St. Patrick's Day parade. Thank you to all those who put a huge effort in to decorating the 1916 themed float for the day – it was very impressive and all the girls involved had a great day!"

Any wishing to take part in the club are welcome and any wishing to join the girls teams and help build on their recent success make sure to do so!



U14 county shield final winning team



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JUNIOR ATHLETICS HAUL MEDAL HAUL BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

The local Junior Athletics team competed in Dangan, Galway in the first Athletics Ireland Track and Field competition of the year. Many of the athletes were competing for the first time yet performed admirably under the pressure!

Four Ballinasloe Athletics teams took home medals and seven relay teams in the u-9s, u-11s and u-12s qualified for their respective finals.

Over 600 children took part in the event, and the following Ballinasloe teams were successful:

U-9 300m Hannah Clarke and Sinead Green won Silver

U-9 60m Cillian Ó Thuairisg and Brian Fitzpatrick won Bronze

U-11 500m Aoibheann Fitzpatrick and Kayla McKeon won Gold

U-11 60m Kayla McKeon and Caoimhe Kilkenny won Silver.

U 11 Girls Relay Silver - Leah Clarke, Aoibheann Fitzpatrick, Kayla McKeon, Clodagh Killeen, Caoimhe Kilkenny and Rebecca Bleahan.

According to the PRO of the club, Suzanne Naughton "All children ran superbly and made the Ballinasloe Athletics Club very proud."



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TENNIS CLUB SUMMER PROGRAMME

The tennis season is now in full swing with a busy programme of activities including:

Mondays: 5-6 pm junior coaching, 6-7 pm special needs coaching, 7-8 pm open/introductory session for potential and new members

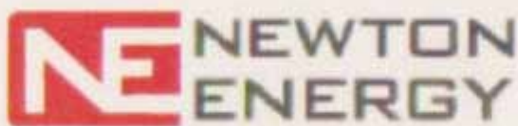
Wednesdays: 7-9 pm ladies night. **Thursdays:** 7-9 pm mixed singles/doubles. **Fridays:** 6-7 pm mixed teenagers coaching, 7-8 pm adult coaching, 7-9 pm men's singles/doubles. **Saturdays:** 5-6 pm open supervised junior sessions. **Sunday:** 12th June 1-4 pm – Tennis Ireland ROGY competition ages 6 to 17

Members are of course welcome to use the courts anytime outside these times subject to availability. Please note that due to high demand all coaching must now be booked in advance, call Louise Doherty on 087 135 3751 for full details.

Forthcoming - Summer Camps from 4-29 July.

The club is currently working on developing a new home in Brackernagh, including indoor courts that can be used for many other sports and activities for the benefit of the community as a whole.

For more information see www.facebook.com/bsloetennisclub/ or call Garry on 085 112 4197 or Louise on 087 135 3751.



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FROM SUCK SIDE TO CONNEMARA OUTDOOR INSTRUCTOR

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI



This season on the river sees a fond farewell for one local waterways man as he starts his first season with Killary adventure centre. After starting his first ever water adventure in a kayak in Ballinasloe over fifteen years ago with upriver.ie Portnick Resident Robert Mulvaney has been hooked ever since!

When the town marina was still just a drawing, Robert was learning how to negotiate the river Suck in a kayak. Since falling in love with the water way of life at a young age he has since completed his third year in adventure tourism management in Tralee and is now working full time in Connemara as an outdoor instructor.

"It's strange at times to see people travelling for something that's already on your doorstep, our local river Suck is one of the most beautiful around and can afford some fantastic scenery, wildlife and history. It can be hard at times to fully appreciate until you move away for a while" states Robert.

He started kayaking with upriver in primary school when the activity wasn't as popular as it is now. He remembers the river being dredged for the marina and even how strange it was seeing the first few cruisers making their way into town. He subsequently worked with upriver.ie

for the past three years as an instructor and loved to see young kids "getting out on the water for a paddle".

"It brought back a lot of fond memories of when I started, first time under the town bridge, the tiredness after a day on the river - there's simply nothing like it" it creates a great learning environment and makes instructing easy when kids are doing what they consider to be an adventure every day."

He knew after the first few trips that this always going to appeal to him. Remembering Eoin explaining how the river flows to its own tune and the science behind water safety, the feeling of being carried along with a group on the water is still a buzz!

Robert completed his level 1 and 2 kayak skills awards with Upriver and is now heading into the mountaineering skills awards area. "It was a great experience to pass this on over the last three years with upriver and the experience I gained at home as helped me take on greater tasks!

"It was tough at times watching most of my friends emigrate but the river seemed to have a hold on me!!" Robert stayed on with upriver.ie and hit for Tralee to complete his studies in adventure tourism. Ballinasloe and her river can produce opportunities for people in the strangest of ways!

UPRIVER KAYAKTIVITY BALLINASLOE CAMP DATES 2016

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Kayak Assessment week: Mon 20th June - 24th June 2016

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YOUTH RUGBY

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

As the season finishes for the Ballinasloe Youth Rugby club, it would be an understatement to say that their season was a success. The end came with a flurry of semi-final and final appearances and another fine haul of medals and cups residing in their trophy cabinet. Both boys and girls experienced phenomenal results as they pushed themselves to new heights!

The U15 lads' squad, coached by Derek Treacy, Gearoid Finneran and Tom Finn completed an extremely impressive Connacht double by beating both city clubs, Galwegians in the A League Final and Corinthians in the Cup Final. The U14's, coached by Mike Devine, Declan Murphy and Neville Kelly, pipped in the Cup Final by Monivea went out the following week in the League Final and overturned the same opposition to bring home the U14 A League trophy for the first time in 13 years! And the exciting U13's coached by Brendan Hayes and Liam Feehily, retained the U13 Cup in fine style, easily overcoming Buccaneers.

Our U13 Girls coached by Gearoid Finneran reached the Connacht Blitz final in March. Our U15's girls, coached by Stephen Reilly, Noel Gavin and ably assisted by Fionnula Reilly, Anna Marie McGann and Ann Deely, once again went through the season unbeaten and retained the U15 Connacht League and Cup double for the 3rd year in a row! And our brave U18 girls coached by Richie Sheppard, Simon Hyde, Dermot Tierney, Marie Codyre & Trish Tierney competed in both the Connacht League and Cup finals but unfortunately came up against a very experienced Westport team, but if there was a cup for the most heroic and valiant performance of the year, they would have won it easily. A special message was saved for the girls by members of the committee saying "they have brought colour and vibrancy to the club over the last couple of years since their inception in 2013."

Of course, none of this youth success is achievable without the vibrant Broncos. The Mini Boys and Girls from U7 up to U12 trained and played every Saturday morning from early September to April. And one must take note of the army of coaches and help for training and match day blitzes is as impressive as any other club in Ireland.

There are many coaches across all the age groups that deserve a mention but the club sent their sincerest gratitude to Ciaran McGreal in the Mini Boys and Paul Russell and Mike Noone in the Mini girls for their tremendous work all season! As well as this they gave a big thank you to all the parents and families for all the generosity and encouragement throughout the year.



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Katie Naughton & Ailbhe Hanrahan achieved A times & many of the underage swimmers won medals and got PB's at the first Connacht Graded Gala held in Ballinasloe Coral Leisure lately.

SWIMMING



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CONNECTIONS TO THE REMEMBRANCE OF 1916

BY BRIAN CIEPIERSKI

Accepted by most that Ballinasloe did not have much of an impact during those fateful few days in 1916, it may be a surprise that there are a few interesting stories connected to the events of that time and the subsequent commemorations of it.

Recently the St Brigids Hospital Heritage Group held a 1916 Celebration, which included a march to the Ada English Grave in Creagh Cemetery, a camogie match, readings, and recitals in Gullanes Hotel. Significantly the April day's events included the proclamation being read by DCU Professor John Carroll.

Pádraig Ó Ceithearnaigh, local man and past teacher relates the story of the late Paddy Caroll, a court clerk and grandfather of the professor. In 1918 "he was the first person to read out the proclamation of independence in this town" - as part of the subsequent Easter Week celebrations by Sinn Fein. For this act he was arrested by the British forces there in August of 1918.

Following his arrest the Royal Irish Constabulary raided the Carroll home, which can still be found on Dunlo Hill. Looking for any 'incriminating' papers as evidence, they entered the home to find his wife, Greta, doing the ironing. Informing her of their planned actions they proceeded to turn the house upside down looking for anything that would be 'damaging' for Paddy. During this Greta continued to do the ironing and badgered them for the destruction being caused to the house. Though for all their efforts no papers were found.

As they left, the Cumman na mBan member, finished the ironing and pulled the would be 'suspicious' papers out of their hiding place- up her sleeves, where the RIC did not think to look.



Paddy Carroll in 1912 Ballinasloe band



His Grandson Professor John Carroll, DCU, reads the proclamation.

Not widely known but another connection to the town and the leaders of the 1916 Rising was the fact that Padraig Pearse's father was the Chief Marble Sculptor for both St. Michael's Church and St. Brendan's in Loughrea. A lot of the original marble work was designed and commissioned by the man who's son signed the instrument of surrender and was one of the first to be shot - May 100 years ago!

For the 1966 fifttieth commemoration, the Government decided to host a competition which would challenge artists to design a sword of light, which was taken from Padraig Pearse's newspaper 'An Claidheamh Soluis'.

The winner of this was Dublin born Una McDonnell who was married to local man Eugene Waters (Eoghan O Tuairisc). Her design was inspired

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by one of the stain glass windows in St. Michael's Church.

"When I was a boy in the 1960s, I recall entering the church and Father Peter Dunne came over and brought me to one of the windows. He told me that this is the window which inspired her winning design." recalls Pádraig.

At the same time her husband Eugene, a well-known writer and past teacher, published a book on the Rising called 'De Luain'. Considered to be one of his best works, of both English and Irish, and is archived in NUIG library for Research.

Sadly though, Una passed away suddenly in November of 1965 before she could see the fruit of her labour. Eugene passed away in the 1980s.



By far the most distinguished member of the Trench family of Garbally was Richard, who was born on 18th May 1767, the eldest surviving son amongst his father William's nineteen children. He was educated at Kimbolton School in England, St. John's College, Cambridge, and Lincoln's Inn, London. Called to the Irish Bar in 1793, he was elected MP for Newtown Limavady, Co. Derry, in 1796, and the same year he married Henrietta Staples, whose family was related to Lord Castlereagh, British Foreign Secretary between 1812 and 1822. Two years later Richard also represented Co. Galway in the Irish House of Parliament.



tormented and greatly amused us. He sat for three hours and a half, eyes fixed on his tome, examining the seals, the signatures, and the thread with which the whole thing was sewn, before he could resolve himself to sign his name. It got to the point where on repeated occasions a general laughter involuntarily erupted."

Richard was on terms of intimate friendship with King George IV. They exchanged correspondence, and the Earl commissioned the full-length portrait of the King that which which adorns the dining-room of Garbally House. He also had a throne constructed and installed in what is still known as "The Throne Room" in anticipation of a royal visit that never in fact took place. It had been expected that His Majesty would include Garbally in his itinerary during his 1821 trip to Ireland. George, however, was unable to tear himself away from Slane Castle, the home of Lady Conyngham, his latest girlfriend,

who was reputed to be as well-upholstered as his regal self. A contemporary balladeer commented in doggerel:

**'Tis pleasant at seasons to see how they sit,
First cracking their nuts, and then cracking their wit,
Then quaffing their claret – then mingling their lips,
Or tickling the fat about their broad hips.
Give the devil his due, she's a prime bit of stuff,**

The Trenches opposed the legislative union of Britain and Ireland when it was first proposed in 1799. However, after the intervention of Castlereagh, with whom Richard had struck up an enduring friendship, they were persuaded to support the measure. Another view is that Richard and his father decided to drop their opposition to the proposal on discovering that all the other landed families of Co. Galway were in favour of the Union. In any event, the Trenches ultimately voted in accordance with the wishes of the British government and were suitably rewarded after the Union had passed into law. William was created First Earl of Clancarty in 1803, while his son was launched on a dazzling career in British politics, eventually holding a constellation of top-ranking government posts.

Having inherited the Clancarty title on his father's death in 1805, Richard went on to secure a whole string of high-profile appointments such as Commissioner for the Affairs of India, Postmaster General, Representative Peer, Master of the Mint and President of the Board of Trade. When the Prince of Orange assumed the crown of Holland, he accompanied him there in 1813 and remained on as British Ambassador to The Hague until 1823. A series of letters he wrote to his wife at this period is extant.

The Congress of Vienna was convened in 1814 to redrawn the political boundaries of Europe following the defeat of Napoleon, and Clancarty attended as the second British plenipotentiary. He is portrayed in a comical light in the following extract from a letter to the Austrian foreign minister, Prince Metternich, from his secretary, dated 20th June 1815:

"Yesterday evening the originals of the final act of the Congress of Vienna were signed. This session, which was held in Your Grace's antechamber next to your office, could and ought to have been solemn and imposing; it failed to be so, however, since everyone was excessively preoccupied with his own copy, and since, in particular, Lord Clancarty, by his painstakingness and punctiliousness by turns

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And of curves in right places she has surely enough.

He'll never need pillows to keep up his head

Whilst himself and herself sleep and snore in one bed.

Sadly, the throne succumbed to an outbreak of republican fervour in the 1920s when St. Joseph's Diocesan Seminary re-located to Garbally. At the behest of the college president, the throne was dragged outside by a group of students and kicked to pieces.

Enoch Powell once remarked that all political careers end in failure, and so it was with Richard, who in 1823 was recalled

to London in disgrace after he had got drunk at an official reception in The Hague and insulted the mistress of a member of the Dutch Cabinet. Thereafter his abilities were exercised in the development of the town of Ballinasloe, where he earned the reputation of being an exemplary landlord. He landscaped his demesne and replaced the old house in Garbally, which had been gutted by fire in 1818, with a late Georgian mansion designed by Thomas Cundy, an English architect. After his death in Kinnegad on 24th November 1837, he was succeeded by his eldest son, William, as the Third Earl of Clancarty.

43 YEARS ON & STILL GOING

BY KEN KELLY

A branch of the Community Games was set up in Ballinasloe in 1973 and a few weeks later took part in the National Community Games Finals in Mosney, Co. Meath. Their under-11 rugby squad won Silver medals having been pipped in the final at their first attempt. Since then Ballinasloe have won a number of Gold, Silver and Bronze medals in a variety of sports at the Games

The Ballinasloe Community Games Rugby under-11 All-Ireland Silver Medalists of forty three years ago.

Back row, l to r: Alfie Walsh, Niall Ryan, Laurence Gavin, Noel Mannion, David Walsh and Alan Walsh. Front row, l to r: Gearoid Geraghty, Willie Burke, Paul Hickey, Paudie Brennan, Seamus Grealy, Pdraig Holohan.



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CLONFERT ANNUAL DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES

BY BISHOP JOHN KIRBY



Clonfert Diocese has been going on pilgrimage to Lourdes, France for twenty six years. Lourdes is a small town, located in the Pyrenees, South of France, where in 1858, Our Lady appeared to Bernadette Soubirous, a young girl who was born into poverty. Our Lady had told Bernadette to ask to have a chapel built on the site of the apparitions. While there was some scepticism as to the apparitions initially, there was acceptance that Bernadette did indeed see Our Lady. Since then, Lourdes, and the grotto where the apparitions took place, have been a place of worship for millions of people.

The formal pilgrimage ceremonies include the opening Mass, the anointing of the sick, a penitential service, the stations of the cross and the closing Mass. There are other ceremonies that take place every day within the sanctuary and members of the Clonfert pilgrimage participate in these on given days. The first of these is the Baths and Water Walk. The baths are filled with water that comes from the spring under the grotto and are a fascinating phenomenon. The Blessed Sacrament procession takes place every day at 5 pm and proceeds to the Underground Basilica of Pope St Pius X. After a series of prayers, and hymns, the exposed Blessed Sacrament is adored and there is then a blessing of the sick. The candlelight procession is the highlight of every evening in the sanctuary at Lourdes. From about

8.30 pm, thousands of pilgrims gather within the ground of the sanctuary. It is a wonderful spectacle to both view and participate in, as the pilgrims pay homage to Our Lady of Lourdes through song and prayer and for many pilgrims, it is the highlight of their trip to Lourdes.

In addition to the ceremonies and prayer, there is also a very relaxed atmosphere, with the possibility of a tour to an outside venue and there is a good social atmosphere as well with entertainment and a sing-song.

The pilgrimage runs from Tuesday 23rd August to Sunday 28th August 2016. Pilgrims travel by air from Knock Airport to Lourdes (Tarbes) Airport. The flying time is approximately 2 hours. Travel arrangements are being handled by Society Travel, Society Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway (090) 964 5350. All pilgrims must have a valid passport with an expiry date of no earlier than 31st December, 2016. If you do not have a passport you are advised to commence making application for one without delay. The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is also essential. You must possess this card which will enable you to receive medical treatment abroad under a reciprocal agreement between countries. EHIC application forms may be obtained from your local HSE Office or on line at – www.ehic.ie.

The cost of the pilgrimage is €695.00. A deposit of €200.00 should be forwarded to Society Travel. Applications for assisted pilgrims should be made to: The Secretary, Clonfert Diocesan Office, Coorheen, Loughrea, Co. Galway. Tel No: 091-841560.



Members of the Clonfert Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, with Bishop John Kirby.

MARK'S FRIENDS NOW HELPING OTHERS

BY KEN KELLY

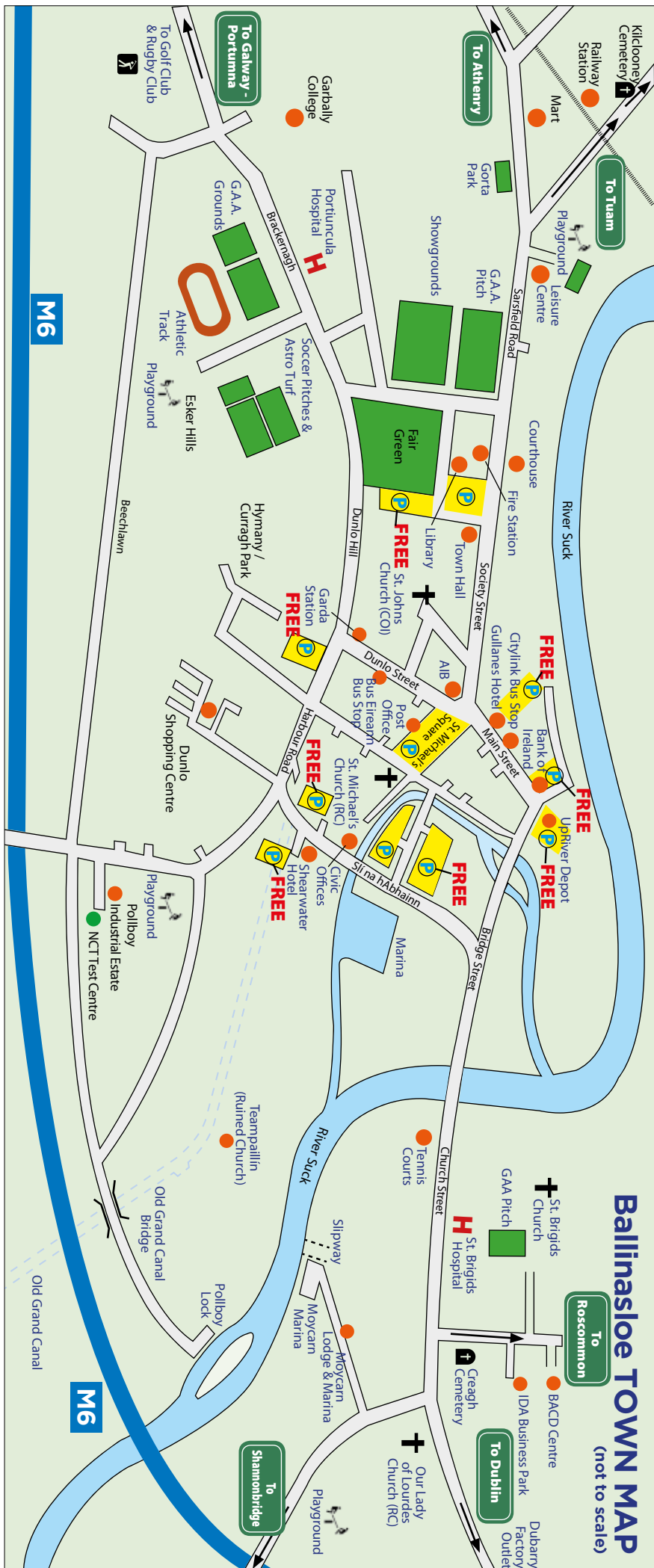


The achievement of a group of people in Ahascragh in helping to raise nearly a quarter of a million euro so that a four year old boy could walk, has inspired parents in other parts of the country to follow suit.

Just twelve months ago the group was formed to launch "MARK'S WISH TO WALK" and raised the money so that Mark Dolan could get the best medical treatment in St. Louis, Missouri to enable him to walk. The operation was a huge success and now the Ahascragh Group are helping families in Dublin and Kells, Co. Meath to fund-raise for children similarly affected.

At a recent meeting, Mark's parents Kevin and Fidelma reported on the huge strides their child had made in walking but was still receiving medical care. Mark's mother said "the confidence and lack of fear of standing and walking is just incredible." His doctor had told them that whilst it could be a long road, he had no doubt that Mark would be able to participate in sports.

Committee chairman Seamus Concannon said they had raised €238,923.44 during the campaign and were delighted that in the space of twelve months so much had been achieved in Mark's young life.



Ballinasloe History Walk

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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