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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 6 Issue 4: Oct '16 - Nov '16

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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 6 Issue 4: Oct '16 - Nov '16

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REAMHRÁ

The smell of horse flesh is in the air, the evenings draw in and we gird ourselves for another non hairshirt Budget.

One never heard or saw so much commotion about a pre Fair Week build up since the Year of Foot and Mouth when the "Will it be on, won't it be on" game was played up to the week before. Irrespective of the rights and wrongs of why opening weekend Equestrian, Show and Festival Events had to be cancelled for the welfare of the volunteers who

man these operations our town has lost its second ever Show (outside of the foot and mouth) and great deal of damage has been done.

Peoples and Organisations bona fides have been questioned. Four weeks out from the Opening weekend was no time for Statutory agencies to be coming up with procedures and plans and conveying them to voluntary organisations, of which both the Show and Fair & Festival are.

Does anyone for a moment think that Offaly County Council would have taken the same approach to the organisers of the National Ploughing Championships with less than four weeks to go? Would Clare County Council have dropped an insurance clanger on the Ennis Fleadh Organisers the month of the opening weekend? Was everyone in Galway County Council so busy since the last Fair with the City and County of Culture Bid that they had no focus on the most significant Cultural event for the farmers of the county, the townspeople, the horse set, our international visitors and yes our travellers?

Huge tradition has been handed down since time prior to charter and long before Town Commissioners ever existed. The lack of Town Council was never more apparent in the past few weeks and signs are on with some of the issues being discussed at Municipal District Level then having to be voted on a County level – such as the provision of social housing! We have started in this Edition and will continue online to REPORT honestly on the doings of the local authority, its officials and elected representatives in an effort to collectively raise all our game!

Enjoy the Read,

Le Gach De Ghui
COLM CROFFY, Editor



If you were to take 5 mins out and write down what you did with your time over the past week, how would it look? There would be a lot of common overlaps ie sleep, work, school runs, housework, TV etc. Would you look back and say you spent some time doing something for the Community in general, something which gives you a sense of civic pride about your area?

Unfortunately many can not do that and all organisations are crying out for more volunteers and help, even if it was only for an hour a week. That hour you could make time for would help spread the workload and assist in making life more fulfilling for everyone.

As it stands there are over 150 clubs and organisations in our catchment area and there are huge number of people involved in making these a success, however none of them would say No to a little help.

Without new members organisations become stagnant and lose opportunity to move forward, so my ask of you as the evenings get darker is to offer help to some group that you have an interest in. You will reap personal benefits, some of which include a sense of personal achievement, creating an increased circle of friends, a possible new social outlet etc.

We in Ballinasloe Life try to assist and promote all the good things that are happening and have no doubt that there is a wealth of talent out there already working hard but we are also acutely aware there are many unsung heroes out there who have potential to be unleashed.

From a commercial perspective it is great to report that we are experiencing increased interest in vacant space in our Enterprise Centre in Creagh which we hope will bring some badly needed jobs to our area. If you are in need of new office space you can contact Lyn on 090 9646516.

SEAMUS DUFFY, Chairman,
Chairman Ballinasloe Area Community Development Limited.

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MICHAEL CONNOLLY - NEW MAYOR OF COUNTY GALWAY

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



A native of Moylough, Fianna Fáil party member Michael Connolly is the Mayor of County Galway for the coming year. Michael is married to Bridie and they have four children, Brian, Anne-Marie, Patrick and Ashling. He received his secondary education at Holy Rosary College, Mountbellew. He was first elected to Galway County Council in June 1999 and has now been elected four times.

For many years, Michael worked as a refrigeration engineer and training consultant for Thermo King, a transport temperature control company. He has gained a lot of experience prior to his move into politics with seven years of experience in the sales division also. Politics requires a lot of dedication and so "when I was elected a second time, I left my job to concentrate on local politics", says Michael.



During his time as Mayor of County Galway, Michael said, "I want to reach out to each community in the County and make Co Galway a better place for all". When asked how Ballinasloe town can build for the future, he stated that there is an urgent need for a new advanced factory to be built to increase employment and make the area more attractive to investors. "Businesses don't want to bother with the nitty and gritty they want one ready to go", he continues. He believes that if there is one ready for them then the companies will come.

Michael also hopes for further investment into Portiuncula University Hospital with at least 50 extra beds to become available for the hospital as soon as possible. "We need to put pressure on the HSE as a matter of urgency. The hospital needs investment to uphold its excellent services", he adds.

He believes that the biggest challenge that is facing the town is employment. It is essential that there are further employment opportunities created for the area as schools will struggle. "Not many young families, especially in the rural area, are settling in the town due to the lack of employment issue", says Michael. He states that there is no reason why the town cannot have more employment. "There is a new motorway with two exits. We have rail and bus

connections. The town is literally in the middle of the country", he adds.

Michael is passionate about helping those who have disabilities and this will be a major focus of his over the coming year. He strongly believes that councils should be given greater discretion to help families affected by disability. Michael speaks of a family with a disabled child who need to improve their new home for their needs. "A grant aid is available to modify an old house but there is none available for them as theirs is a new house", continues Michael. He is campaigning for the family and in contact with Tuam native - Finian McGrath TD, Minister for Disability Issues, in hopes of resolving the issue in the near future.

In light of Galway's recent successful bid for European Capital of Culture 2020, Michael welcomed the opportunity for the entire County saying, "it's the Capital of Culture not just the city of culture". He is sure that it will be a great opportunity for the town to showcase itself. The town has four good hotels - Shearwater Hotel, Hayden's Hotel, Gullane's Hotel and Moycarn Lodge - where people are able to stay if the town was to host any festivals or events as part of the celebrations of Galway 2020. There are also facilities available to host events such as the Town Hall Theatre and the Fair Green. He believes that smaller towns should and will be able to host their own events.

In praise of the town, Michael said that the people of Ballinasloe have much to be proud of. "They should be upbeat about the area, it's a lovely town and close to the marina", adds Michael. There are many sports teams and various clubs in the town with voluntary teams who work tirelessly for the community. He further explained that the town has impressive facilities for a small town, including swimming pools, gyms and sporting grounds.

For those who wish to contact Michael Connolly, you can ring (090) 967 9465 or (087) 682 9049 or email mconnolly@cllr.galwaycoco.ie.



ATHLETICS TRACK REPAIRS NEEDED

Cllr Donal Burke, with the support of Cllr Dermot Connolly, raised the issue of the repairs that need to be undertaken on the Ballinasloe athletic track, at a meeting of the Municipal District Council. The primary issue at hand has been the amount of time the track has been out of use as it has been a number of months.

Cllr Burke stated "certain sections, 50 metres or so, of the track needs to be repaired. The water springs need to be fixed."

Cllr Dermot Connolly was in agreement

with Cllr Burke as the winter season is fast approaching and it is necessary for the track to be repaired for the safety of the members of the Athletic Club.

"A lot of these groups like to come into a safe, supervised environment. It's a fantastic facility and it's a shame it's out of action as the evenings are getting shorter for exercise, fitness and for health. It's one of the best facilities we have in this Municipal District area", stated Cllr Dermot Connolly.

"The Municipal District itself is ready to

go except we are waiting for approval of funding from the Council" added Donal.

It was agreed by all 6 Councillors that the situation needs to be resolved as quickly as possible.

"My proposal to the Municipal District is to put pressure on the Council the urgency of the matter" he continued. A suitable contractor has been identified to do the works but they are now waiting for the response from Galway County Council on funding to get the green light to proceed with the repairs.



MAYOR CONNOLLY DERIDES NEW RENEWAL SCHEME



BY LAURA SHEEHAN

Cathaoirleach for Galway County, Cllr. Michael Connolly, believes that the newly announced scheme is an insult. He highlighted how Council funding is being decreased constantly. He added "we're facing a situation this year where we have to either reduce services or increase property tax and schemes like this are an insult. If this is the government's response to rural Ireland then it's an insult" said Cllr Michael.

At the recent monthly meeting of the Municipal District Council - he stated that Local Councils are getting less and less money each year, leaving them with little money at their discretion. A few years ago, Local Authorities had money at discretion but not in the current economic climate.

"Members of the Oireachtas and TDs tell Local Authorities that they should raise money locally in their towns. If they want this to be done it will have to be done through an increase in the Local Property Tax" said the Cathaoirleach.

"The prospects for 2017 are stark and they want to give us €380,000 saying come out and let's process this, let's go through all the red tape and then spend it. It's an insult" continued Cllr Connolly.

The Scheme offers to give €380,000 per county to eight villages with the aim of increasing the attractiveness of towns/villages, enhancing the environment and promoting the potential for tourism for the area. Galway County Council are selecting the projects & villages without a public call for submissions due to the deadlines as they need to have the money spent by the end of this year.

Cllr Dermot Connolly added "They give you until the end of the year and you are supposed to have it miraculously spent". The time scale for expenditure is not realistic. He continued by saying that "we should call a spade a spade and tell the government not to be coddling us".

A presentation was made to the Municipal District Council on the Town and Village Scheme by Economic Development Officer Kieran Coyne.

LIFE VOLUME PUBLICATION DATES

XMAS EDITION		SUBMISSION DEADLINE	
DECEMBER/JANUARY:	Nov. 25th	DECEMBER/JANUARY:	Nov. 10th
FEBRUARY/MARCH:	Feb. 3rd	FEBRUARY/MARCH:	Jan. 10th

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NEW SOCIAL HOUSING PROPOSED AT GARBALLY DRIVE

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



Planning permission for ten to twelve houses is being sought from Galway County Council.

Cllr Michael Finnerty raised the topic during the Municipal meeting as clarity was needed for the councillors. Some of the questions that were to be raised at a public forum prior to the report being lodged were about traffic issues and the risk of flooding in the area.

The vote will fall on Galway County Council entirely, as to whether the development goes ahead or not. The proposal is being made under the Part 8 Scheme, which is when a project is being progressed by the Local Authority. It is a reserved function which means it is a Council matter and not a planning application which is an executive function.

Cllr Finnerty questioned whether there is a time scale on when this development would begin if it were passed but the proposal is only due to be brought in front of the Council in the coming weeks for a vote. It has only been brought to public attention in recent weeks.

Cllr Finnerty asked Officials "what can we promise or not promise residents" as their councillors, in relation to questions being asked by the public about the new housing development.

"The main thing would be to exercise caution because at the end of the day it is the full members of Galway County Council who will adjudicate and decide on this planning application based on a report that will be provided by the executive and a recommendation" said Catherine McConnell, Acting Director of Services for Planning, Community, Enterprise and Economic Development.

The report will be provided to the Council and it was stated that each member must either accept or reject the proposed building of the new social houses.



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START YOUR OWN BUSINESS COURSE

John Power and Associates in conjunction with the Enterprise Centre are running a Start Your Own Business Course commencing Monday October 10th. The course is suitable for anyone who is considering setting up their own business or who is currently in the early stages of their own project.



The course will take you through everything you need to know to get started and will prepare you for all challenges you might face in your first year trading. The cost of the course is €60 per person and will be on from 6.30 pm to 9.30 pm every Monday for six weeks.

There are 10 modules in the course; introduction and personal assessment, business plan and problem solving, company structures and crash course in finance, sales, marketing, raising finance, e-business, VAT, PAYE and bookkeeping, general issues – employment and health and safety, recap, review of business plans. The course will be delivered by John Power.

To reserve your place or for further information, contact Lyn Donnelley at the Enterprise Centre on (090) 964 6516 or email info@ballinasloenterprisecentre.ie.

MARKETING YOUR BUSINESS PRESENCE



As everyone knows – the Web is the new high street and reports are indicating that some 40 % of consumer retailing will be done online by 2020.

Already some 30% of consumer choices or information is coming from on line ie. Web, Facebook, Twitter, Wordpress or even Google maps. Some 60% of international visitors to these shores are using Trip Advisor to make more than 50% of their recommendations for services, food, accommodation and activities.

The LIFE Mag team are trying to bring online value to our business supporters by content managing on regular basis – 1 - the [Ballinasloe.ie](http://ballinasloe.ie) Website which has growing traffic share, 2 - the Facebook page which has almost 3,000 friends but depending on the issue being flagged can get reaches of 25,000 people and have some of the LIFE Youtube clips that we produce, shoot and edit on a regular basis, 3 - the Weekly events guide.

All this online activity and engagement with customers and potential customers has a huge upside for the Town but when the online visitor moves to the business or organisations web page or facebook

profile – huge problems occur.

On an August Survey of the Business Directory of town – less than 10% are on Google Maps, less than 50% have updated facebook pages (ie refreshed in the last 10 days), more than 60% have no connectivity of web to shop window. We are the lowest town in the midlands with mentions on Trip Advisor and even looking at some of the advertising around us - website, twitter or facebook pages are rarely mentioned!

This is the material that feeds into an APP. The Town Team and LIFE are in preparatory stages for a Town APP which will need all the relevant businesses up and running with their online infrastructure first and foremost and then links to the APP.

The LIFE Marketing Team will over the next three months be providing Social Media Online Coaching (to include getting your Google Flag, Re designing your Facebook page, refreshing your web presence and getting you a Trip Advisor / Wikipedia listing. This service will be FREE to current subscribers and subsequent site visits will be charged at €65 per hour. Further details and registrations to Lyn at the Enterprise Centre.



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M6 MOTORS CELEBRATE FIVE YEARS IN BUSINESS!

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



M6 Motors celebrated five years in business this September and to mark the occasion they held a huge stock clearance sale to make room for new arrivals. With nearly 50 cars included in the promotion, it was a huge success and

allowed room for many new motors to be brought in from both Ireland and the UK.

Alan Naughton set up the M6 Motors after completing his Business Studies degree in the University of Limerick and they are now the number one car sourcing company in Ireland and stock up to 50 used cars on their forecourt in the town with five full time employees. Their target market is the whole of Ireland as they are quite accessible as the M6 motorway passes their doorstep.

M6 Motors have enjoyed many successes since opening their doors in 2011. Speaking to Life, Alan said, "we started the business in 2011 in the middle of the recession, the first two years were very tough but they started to improve in our third year. In the last 12 months it is like people have forgotten about the recession". Car finance is more readily available for most and people are now beginning to spend more money on things like cars that they had to cut back on during the recession.

"We try to put ourselves in the customer's shoes all the time, we know how tiring trying to find your next car can be so we take all the hard work out of it and make the car buying experience as enjoyable as possible. If none of the cars in stock suit exactly what you're looking

for we'll source your ideal car in Ireland or from the UK. We look after registration, NCT, warranty, history checks and servicing so you don't have to. You just tell us what you want and we do the rest!", Alan said.

Alan believes that the businesses of the town need to keep up-to-date with what's happening in similar towns. They need to look at what they can do to keep people carrying out their errands in the town rather than traveling to nearby towns and cities.

M6 Motors put their success to date down to customer loyalty and customer referrals. Due to the huge interest generated during the September promotions they will be holding more in the coming months as a thank you to all their customers.



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Earlier this year Ballinasloe was declared as Galway's fittest town – but how financially fit are we?

Similar to a medical health check-up, you need to check on your financial fitness on a regular basis. When seeking financial advice from a professional they will always start in the present to evaluate your protection needs – that's income, life, mortgage and business insurance – and then they'll look at your future plans – that's retirement planning.

FINANCIAL PROTECTION

We insure our home, our car, our holidays and sometimes our family pets but the very thing we often overlook to insure is the most important of all, ourselves and our families. Many people do not realise the financial impact that an unexpected serious illness, injury or premature death can have on a family.

The unfortunate reality is that Irish families are struck by these events every day and the financial impact can be significant and long lasting. Good financial advice means evaluating your risk exposure and addressing your protection needs to ensure any bumps in the road don't derail your financial stability.

RETIREMENT PLANNING

Equally important as protecting yourselves today, retirement planning is about planning for the future you desire. Currently there are over 670,000 pensioners over the age of 66 drawing €233.30 per week through the state pension. For every person who retired five years ago, there were six workers. By 2050, there will only be two workers per retiree, but our pensionable population will have grown to 1.8 million by then. The "pension time-bomb" is therefore an important reason for every individual to look after their own retirement planning.

There are three common factors which should motivate your retirement plans – your desired retirement lifestyle, the uncertainty of a state pension and the longer lives we enjoy today. However, you'll need to consider a number of retirement planning complexities – between personal and state pensions, tax relief ceilings and a wide range of funds available - it's not as straight forward as you'd hope. Professional financial advice will help you navigate those complexities and find a solution to meet your needs now & into the future.

When it comes to financial fitness, few can afford to live carefree but with professional advice and planning, you can have the same peace of mind that you get with a clear health check-up.

Seamus Duffy is a tied agent of New Ireland Assurance. He lives in Ballinasloe and has worked in financial services for 35 years. Seamus can provide advice regarding your financial planning needs, whatever your age (over 18) or financial circumstances. If you are looking for financial advice, contact Seamus on 087 2506431. New Ireland Assurance Company plc is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. A member of Bank of Ireland Group.

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DR MAX FAIRCLOUGH 6 DECADES OF OPTOMETRY



BY LAURA SHEEHAN

American, Dr Max Fairclough, retired to Kilconnell following a successful career as an optometrist. His career spanned nearly 60 years between the States, England and Ireland. "I started in the [US] Air Force as an optometry officer testing eyes, working at the Air Force base on the Mexican border and another one in Missouri".

Max then returned to Kansas where he opened up his own practice in 1957. In the early 1980s, he decided to move to the Isle Of Man in England with the intent to retire. However, once he got there he continued to practice optometry for another 20 years.

Even now, Max still hasn't retired fully as he continues to work on his neuro-invention, Astro Optics, which he has a patent for. The aim of Astro Optics is to put an end to having to get your glasses adjusted and have no more nose pain. "Well as an optometrist I was quite good at adjusting glasses and I see people coming in needing their nose pads adjusted and a few days later they'd be back again. So for years and years it was a problem. Everyday people came in with glasses slipping and sliding and falling down and having to push them up so I thought it would be nice to make some glasses where they wouldn't slip, wouldn't fall down, wouldn't leave marks on the nose", adds Max.

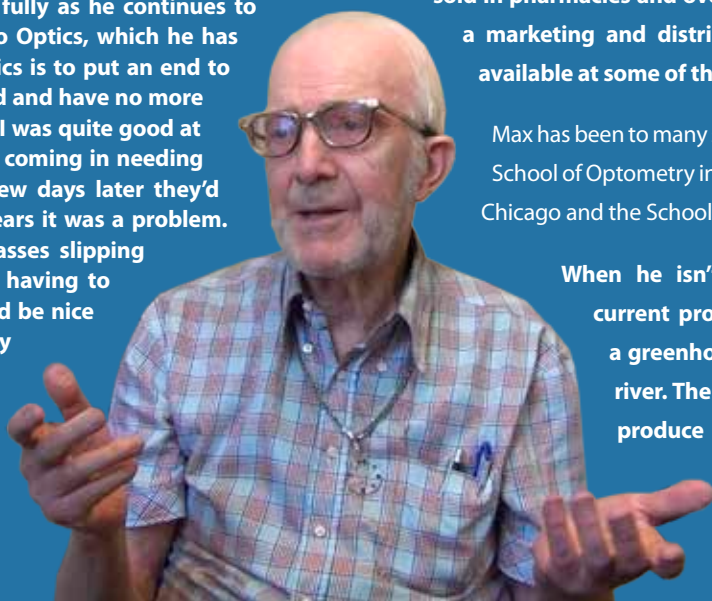
It is important that continuous amounts of pressure are not placed on your nose as it can cause

sinus trouble. By balancing ordinary glasses, the weight at the front can be limited by pushing the weight to the middle of the head. While this may seem like a simple concept, it has proved to be very popular. As Max says, "the complicated things we can do but the simple things are so obvious that we don't realise it".

"Well I came here to retire, I didn't come here to work. But in order to follow through in making these neuro-inventions I've had to do some work on getting some printing done, some prototypes. The first bunch of sales manufacturing has been done with a company in the town", continues Max. Max hopes that Astro Optics will be sold in pharmacies and over the internet and is actively seeking a marketing and distribution partner. Astro optics will be available at some of the local pharmacies.

Max has been to many schools as part of his career including the School of Optometry in London and the School of Optometry in Chicago and the School of Aviation Medicine.

When he isn't putting the final touches on his current product, Max grows fruit trees and has a greenhouse on a few acres of land on a small river. The new greenhouse will be able to grow produce during the winter season without running expensive heating bills. It also uses rain water as its water supply.



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ACCESSIBILITY BALLINASLOE LAUNCHES INCLUSION WEEK



BY LAURA SHEEHAN

The Accessibility Ballinasloe Team are hosting this year's launch of Galway's Social Inclusion Week. Social Inclusion Week is a national initiative, the purpose of which is to increase awareness and understanding of inclusion and diversity.

The launch will take place on Monday evening October 17th @ 6.30pm in the new Church Gallery of the Ballinasloe Library and the Team are inviting all members of the community to come along and join in this celebratory occasion.

The proceedings will be formally opened by Cathaoirleach of County Galway, Councillor Michael Connolly, followed by a line up of entertainment from talented local singers, dancers and musicians. The evening will also see the unveiling of Accessibility Ballinasloe's photo exhibition 'Begin, Become, Belong'. The exhibition has been photographed through the lens of local photographer Evelyn Donnellan and captures the excellent work that is taking place in Ballinasloe within the area of social inclusion.

There will be a number of events taking place around the county throughout the week and Accessibility Ballinasloe has partnered with NUI Galway and Galway Sports Partnership to provide training to both businesses and sporting clubs and organisations within the town.

They are offering all local catering and hospitality businesses the opportunity to undertake the newly developed CAP training programme (Communications Awareness Programme). The CAP training module will be facilitated by the CAP Speech and Language Team (Student, Staff and Community Collaboration at NUI Galway) and will take place on Monday 17th October 10.00 am in the Ballinasloe Library. The programme is targeted at catering staff and aims to enhance their ability to interact with individuals with communication and speech difficulties. This training will directly help management and staff to learn and apply strategies and tools to engage effectively with people with communication and speech impairments.

Also as part of their ongoing awareness and education campaign they have scheduled a Disability Awareness in Sport Workshop for all sporting clubs and organisations interested in making their club more inclusive to people with disabilities. The overall aim is to build awareness around people with disabilities and gives clubs the opportunity to reflect and evaluate practices around inclusion. The workshop takes place on Tuesday 18th October 7 pm, again in the new Library. To book a place on either of the training sessions please email directly at accessibilitybsloe@gmail.com.

Aside from the events scheduled around inclusion week the Team are actively engaging with all community groups to develop an overall action plan for Ballinasloe. They have recently completed a Walkability Audit of Ballinasloe town centre and the findings will be presented to the local Town Engineering Team with a view to incorporating recommendations into the upcoming works as part of the Town Enhancement plan.

As part of the schools awareness stream they are currently working with the town school Scoil an Chroí Naofa to pilot the National Buddy Bench Project. As the overall theme of the Buddy Bench centres around mental health they are collaborating with Ballinasloes Mens Shed who have kindly agreed to handcraft the buddy benches for participating schools. The Team are also very grateful to the Brothers of Charity service users at Viewpoint who have kindly agreed to work on decorating the first Buddy Bench for Ballinasloe. The pilot will launch as part of Social Inclusion Week.

They continue to engage with local and regional community groups, businesses and schools to work towards developing the town as one of Ireland's most accessible and inclusive places. "We'd like to once again thank everyone who has helped in anyway in the work to date. New ideas are always welcome so if you would like to connect with the Accessibility Team please get in touch by emailing us at accessibilitybsloe@gmail.com stated spokesperson Marion Ruane. For further information and updates please follow us on facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/accessibilitybsloe/>.



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Carmel Dooley grew up in Duggan Avenue, Ballinasloe. She attended Ardscoil Mhuire secondary school before continuing her education in Trinity College Dublin where she studied Music. Her dad Paul was a prominent publican and her mother Maura, is retired locally living in the family home in Duneeda.

Following her graduation, Carmel began a career as a music teacher in St Louis' Community School in Kiltimagh. She then decided to return to college to study PR and Marketing. "Upon completion of the diploma in PR, I got a job in Leinster House working as a Parliamentary Assistant to Denis Naughten. This was fantastic experience covering everything from researching issues to writing speeches and press releases" adds Carmel.

In 2008, Carmel decided to open her own PR company, PRWORKS. Carmel had worked in design and marketing and realised that there was a need for a PR and Event Management Services company in Galway. "I started PRWORKS in 2008 to provide public relations, marketing and event management services to companies and organisations based in the West of Ireland" she continues.

She admits that opening up your own business is a big step but is both terrifying and empowering in equal measures. Carmel shares with us the best piece of advice she has received. Pdraig O Ceidigh of Aer Arann once told her to 'leap and the net will appear', meaning if you take a chance on something that you really believe in, it will work out in the end.

In recent years, social media has played a prominent part in PR

companies and businesses alike. "While traditional media is still important, businesses today need to have a sound social media strategy. This requires insight into the networks that their audience prefers, the topics that get their interest and the trends in behaviour", Carmel adds. Sometimes businesses get too caught up in social media and they forget the basic principles of communication. She finds that people get very caught up in the 'how to do it' that the first steps are forgotten.

She believes that the ever-changing world of media, is both exciting and challenging. "It is exciting because it brings new opportunities for businesses and organisations to communicate and interact with their customers and audience and challenging because the speed of change can sometimes be a bit overwhelming," says Carmel.

One of the highlights of Carmel's career was being asked to manage the PR for the 2012 Volvo Ocean Race – Final Stage. "The Docks were thronged with people, journalists and television crews cheering on the international sailors and I had to pinch myself to really believe I was there too!" says Carmel.

The nature of being self-employed means you always have to look ahead to what's going to happen next, whether it's an event or a

project. "I love the variety in my work from developing PR strategies to running national conferences" she continues. Her plans for the future of PRWORKS are simple – to keep doing what she loves for as long as she still enjoys it.

Carmel has always been able to lend a hand to various community activities in her town whether it was the Fair and Festival Media, the Flooding Crisis or in her recent role as one of the adjudicators in the BACD organised Junior Business Entrepreneurial Skills Tournament.



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ROSEWOOD PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES MOVE TO BALLINASLOE



BY LAURA SHEEHAN

Rosewood Psychological Services was founded by husband and wife, Janet and Don Corrington recently. The service is located at Cullen's Yard just off the Main Street after they moved here from Portumna. Janet is originally from Devon, England while Don is from Arizona.

We spoke to Don and Janet about their reasoning behind relocating to Ballinasloe. "The location. It's serviced by bus and train and also access to the M6", added Don, stating that the town is easy for people to reach. "We're excited to be here. It's very welcoming and the people around here are very nice" he continued.

The couple have many years of experience working in this area. Prior to opening their counselling services, the couple ran a treatment home for five years for children who had been affected.

"We just kind of fell into it. We fostered some children and we took some courses to become therapeutic foster parents" stated Don. This allowed them to care for children who had been affected by trauma in their early lives. Janet also worked in a classroom with autistic children aged six and seven.

They offer a range of services including therapy, counselling, parenting classes, to teach parents how to deal with children who have suffered some form of trauma through cognitive behavioural therapy.

"What we do here is very positive. Everything we do here is proactive.

The client comes in and participates in the healing process as opposed to coming and sitting down on the couch and talking for an hour and then going. The CBT and the grief and loss counselling, we go directly to the problem", added Janet.

One area that Janet and Don are involved in is neurofeedback which measures brain waves to produce a signal that can be used as feedback to teach self-regulation of brain function. They like to call it 'brain training'. "Neurofeedback lets your brain be the best it can be. It optimises all the things it can be so you can get better at all sorts of things. If you're having problems sleeping it'll help you sleep better. It's like taking your brain to the gym", says Don.

A form of psychotherapy, Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR), is available at Rosewood Psychological Services. EMDR enables patients to resolve negative memories that have led them to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety disorders.

"The type of counselling that we do is not the analytic type where you go back to your childhood and dredge it all up. We deal with the here and now. It's not long term, our counselling doesn't last for years and years. It's very effective", Don assured.

A range of podcasts are available on their website, www.rosewood.ie, covering areas such as suicide. The couple also hope to hold seminars in the near future to educate the public on mental well-being.



Don & Janet Corrington

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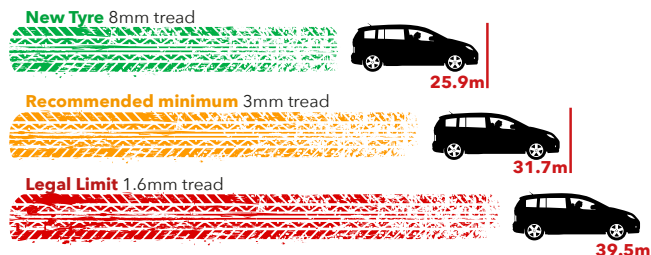
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ANN BREEN - FOUNDER OF WILLIAMS SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

BY KEN KELLY



Almost thirty years ago a Ballinasloe woman decided to set up a support group for parents whose children were diagnosed with Williams Syndrome, after her own daughter was diagnosed. For Ann Breen and her husband Paschal it was a traumatic experience when they were told that their daughter, Karen, born in 1983, had Williams Syndrome.

At that time very little was known about Williams Syndrome in Ireland and having made contact with Kathleen Giles in Leixlip, whose son was similarly affected, Ann Breen decided to look outside this country for help and support. Employed at the time in the Square D factory in Ballinasloe, Ann sought assistance from the parent company in Lexington, Kentucky to pursue information and medical advice on Williams Syndrome. They helped by getting contact details for Dr. Bryan Hall, a Professor in Paediatrics in the University of Kentucky, USA who was very familiar with Williams Syndrome. Ann proceeded to write to him giving him a case history on Karen's life up to that time. He replied quickly and offered to meet with the 2 families from Ireland in London later that year.

Ann and her family travelled to London to meet Prof. Hall in September 1987. He confirmed the diagnosis of Williams Syndrome for Karen and provided invaluable help and advice. In particular he suggested that a parent support group should be established in Ireland, as was the case in the USA. He provided contact details for the US association and Ann made contact with them. They, in turn, provided contact



Ann Breen and her late husband Paschal with their daughter Karen.

details for a support group in UK, with whom she also made contact.

Following these important communications, Ann decided to form the Williams Syndrome Association of Ireland (WSAI). With the help of Kathleen Giles, the Right Honourable Desmond Guinness of Leixlip Castle, Co. Kildare was approached and he agreed to become Patron of the Association. He has been very supportive ever since as has Prof. Hall, who travelled to Ballinasloe in 1990 to give a talk on WS. This talk was attended by over 50 people comprised of family members and teaching and medical professionals. The association became a registered charity in November 1991.

It is estimated that one in 20,000 children in this country can be affected by WS which is characterised by a learning disability as well as many physical and medical problems. It is a condition that lasts for life. At this stage, in county Galway alone, Ann is aware of at least

five people with Williams Syndrome. However, she believes that there are probably many more out there that have never been diagnosed, particularly older adults! Since the formation of the Williams Syndrome Association of Ireland in 1987 more people are being diagnosed and they are being diagnosed at an earlier age. There is much more awareness of the condition nowadays which makes it a little easier to get support and to fund-raise to support the work of the association.

In 1993, WSAI held its first ever weekend outing where families came together in a social setting to get to know other members and share information and experiences of living with WS. "As our Williams children are great mixers, these events have provided a great outlet for Williams Syndrome people to get to know each other and each other's families. That first outing took place in Trabolgan, Co. Cork and since then there have been many weekend outings to places like Killarney, Galway, New Ross, Westport, Athlone, etc. An outing is held each year and these outings have proved very successful and beneficial for members" said Ann. "Thanks to our fund-raising efforts, we have been able to subsidise these events to enable as many families as possible to attend and benefit from these gatherings" she added.

Fundraising started in 1993 with the launch of WSAI Christmas cards which contained a little information on WS. People all around Ireland very generously supported this effort and this helped to generate some awareness and publicity for the group. In 1994, WSAI began to invite speakers to address their AGM where they highlighted the key areas relevant to WS.



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	Focus ST 2.0 TDCi 180ps 5dr	€33,500		Renault Megane 1.5 DCi TomTom ED 85 ps	€9,500		Galaxy DSL 7 Seater	€6,300
	Mondeo 2.0 DSL Titanium 5dr	€34,300		Renault Clio 1.5 DCi Royale 85 ps	€7,000		Toyota Avensis 20DSL 4dr	€5,250
2015	Fiesta 1.25 Zetec 5dr	€15,250		Mondeo 1.8 Zetec 4dr DSL	€8,500	2005	BMW X3	€6,800
	Eco Sport 1.5 TDCi Titanium DSL 5dr	€19,400		Focus Style DSL 4dr (choice)	€10,000		Opel Vectra 1.9 DSL Life	€2,900
	Mondeo 1.6 Zetec DSL 5dr	€23,900		Opel Corsa DSL 5dr	€8,500		Honda HRV Si 4 WD 6 Seater	€4,500
2014	Kuga AWD Zetec DSL	€28,500	2009	Focus Ghia DSL 5dr	€10,900		Focus GHIA 4dr	€2,750
	Kuga 2WD Zetec DSL	€24,900		Fiesta 1.25 Style 5dr	€9,000		C. Max Steel 5dr	€2,800
	Kuga 2WD Zetec DSL	€26,500		Nissan Qashqai 1.5 DSL	€11,900		Peugeot 407 DSL 4dr	€2,600
	VW Golf 1.6 TDI 105 PH 5dr	€19,000		Opel Vectra 1.6 Club 4dr	€5,900		Landrover Freelander 2.0 Wagon	€4,900
	Focus 2.0 DSL Titanium Automatic 4dr	€21,500	2008	Focus 1.4 LX 5dr	€6,800	Commercial Prices include VAT		
	Focus 1.6 DSL Edition 5dr	€17,900		Toyota Avensis 1.6 Aura 4dr	€5,000	2016	Transit 270 SWB delivery mileage	from €23,700
2013	Seat Ibiza 1.25 Style	€12,900		Toyota Auris 1.4 5dr	€7,500		Transit Custom	from €24,500
	Kia Ceed 1.4 CRDi EX Estate DSL	€17,000		Peugeot 207 1.4 HDi SE 70 ps	€5,950	2015	Transit 270 SWB Custom Van	€19,800
	Kuga Zetec TDCi 4WD 140ps DSL	€20,000		Mondeo 1.8 TDCi Estate DSL 100 ps	€6,950		VW Caddy 1.6 75 ps Van	€12,950
	Focus Edge DSL 5dr (choice)	€16,500		Focus 1.6 Zetec TDCi 109 ps 5dr DSL (choice)	€7,500	2013	Transit 260 SWB FWD 100 ps	€15,500
	Toyota Auris 1.3 5dr	€14,900		Citroen C4 Grand Picasso 7 Seater DSL	€11,000	2011	Transit 350 LWB Van	€11,950
	Renault Fluence 1.5 DSL	€14,800		Galaxy DSL 7 Seater	€8,500		Transit 260 SWB 115 ps m/roof	€11,000
	Focus DSL Zetec 5dr	€16,500		Citroen C4 DSL Grand Picasso 7 Seater	€11,700	2009	Transit 280 LWB 100 ps Fridge unit	€10,900
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2012	Focus Zetec DSL 5dr	€14,900		Focus 1.4 Style 5dr	€6,800	2004	Transit Pick-up Flat Body	€2,500
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	Focus Edge 4dr	€12,400		S Max 7 Seater DSL	€7,000			
2011	Focus 1.6 TDCi Style DSL 5dr	€11,500		Audi A4 1.9 TDI Sport	€6,500			
	Kuga 4WD Zetec DSL	€18,500		Focus 1.4 Connection 5dr	€6,500			
	Fiesta 1.4 Style DSL 5dr	€10,900	2006	Focus Ghia 4dr	€3,300			
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This helped to develop much better knowledge of WS within the association and also help improve awareness within the wider medical community and educational services.

Having established the association and put it on a sound footing, it was now time to broaden the horizons to see what additional ways WS people could be helped. In the early 1990s Ann became aware of the musicality of people with WS and of the special musical gift that some of them possess. In 1998, Ann, with her late husband Paschal and daughter Karen, travelled to the US to a special music camp devoted to Williams Syndrome people. Ann was very impressed with what she saw there and, on their return home, she began work on providing a similar opportunity for WS people in Ireland. The first-ever week-long WSAI Music/Activity Camp was launched in July 2001 in the Share Holiday Village in Lisnaskea, Co. Fermanagh. The model for the venture borrowed heavily from the USA model with some Irish elements added for good measure. It provided daily music and drama classes for all WS people as well as theatre workshops culminating in a musical theatre performance at the end of the week. The camp is still held annually and this year was its 16th staging.

In 1999/2000, the Irish association was one of four European WS associations instrumental in setting up a European Federation of Williams Syndrome associations known as FEWS (Federation European de Williams Syndrome). This federation now has 18 member associations from 17 countries and Ann has worked as its Treasurer since its foundation. They help the European WS community by organising international participation in national events. The Norwegian WS association hosted the first European Youth Exchange project in 2005 and other countries hosted it in the following years. This major event was hosted in Ireland this year for the first time. It took place in the

University of Limerick from 3rd to 10th July and had approx. 75 participants from 11 countries.

Ann Breen is now the Honorary President of the WSAI which she founded almost thirty years ago. During these years she has attended many meetings and conferences in the UK as well as in Italy and Hungary in order to spread awareness of Williams Syndrome. She has made presentations on WS, the Irish Music/Activity camp and the WSAI at many events over the years. The most recent of these was a talk on WS that she gave at a St Patrick's Day fundraising ball in Madrid which was organised by the Spanish Irish Business Network there. The audience of over 300 people included Minister Paschal Donohoe and the Irish ambassador to Spain, Mr David Cooney.

Ann's daughter, Karen, who is now 33 years old, is an accomplished swimmer having won gold and silver medals at the Special Olympics European Games in Holland in 2000. She has won numerous national titles as well as local competitions in the sport. She is also a gifted musician on piano and keyboard. She attends the Brothers of Charity Day Centre in Ballinasloe and is very popular both at the centre and in her home town. Having lost her dad, Paschal, in 2008, Karen lives with her mother in Kilgarve Park, Ballinasloe.

"Back in 1987 when Karen was diagnosed, very little was known about WS and many of our members will tell you how they struggled to care for their WS child, not knowing what the underlying problem was? Most of the support services available at that time were equally baffled by the condition. The association has worked continuously to promote awareness of WS, particularly within the medical and educational community. Today the medical profession is much more aware of WS and some children are diagnosed by a specific blood test shortly after birth" explained Ann.

In 2003 the members of the association felt it would be a good idea to publish their individual stories in book form to get the WS message to the widest possible audience and to help newly diagnosed families. They also felt the book sales could generate some much needed funds. It was called "Angels of our Table" and was launched Dr. Bryan Hall at the 20th anniversary celebrations in Oct. 2007. Compiled by Ann herself, the second edition was published five years later in 2012 and a third edition is now being considered.

Without the fund raising efforts of its members, sponsorship and some Government grants (for the annual music/activity camp), the association could not continue. "It takes a lot of money to run the events we run during the year and we are indebted to so many people and organisations for their help. Our numbers continue to grow and consequently so do our expenses! We need all the support we can get" said Ann.

Further information can be obtained from the founder Ann Breen at Williams Syndrome Association of Ireland, (which is a registered charity), 13 Kilgarve Park, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. The book, compiled by Ann, "Angels at our Table" is also available from the same address.

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Karen Breen with her Olympic Medals which she won in Holland in 2000.

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HOSPITAL WATCH

BY LAURA SHEEHAN

2,294 patients were treated in the Oncology day unit at Portiuncula Hospital last year. Portiuncula University Hospital has a long established nurse-led Oncology unit. Around 620 patients attended medical oncology clinics over a nine month period in 2015/2016, while a further 120 patients attended radiotherapy clinics over a six month period in 2015/2016.

The Critical Care Outreach Team was recently launched at Portiuncula University Hospital. This is a nurse-led service staffed by ICU/CCU nurses who identify patients at risk of deterioration on the ward as well as patients with high early warning scores.

Trolley Watch shows that the number of those on trolleys in Portiuncula University Hospital has decreased 36% from 63 people this time last year to 40 this year. University Hospital Galway had 308 patients on trolleys according to recent reports, which is up 12% from the 275 patients the same time last year.

According to ratemyhospital.ie, Portiuncula remains the same as last month and is the 30th highest ranked hospital in the country, while the University Hospital Galway still remains as the third worst ranked hospital at 67th.

Portiuncula University Hospital's X-ray Department was shortlisted for the 2016 MEDRAY Award. The Award is given to a radiographer/radiation therapist/radiology department that has dealt with many difficult and challenging tasks while in practice. This is a great acknowledgement for the Radiology Department.

Planning permission has been granted for an expansion of the hospital which will consist of a new 50 bed ward over two floors. Cllr Aidan Donohue welcomed the news at the monthly Municipal District meeting.

At the most recent Municipal District meeting, Cllr Michael Finnerty read out a letter from Minister for Health Simon Harris in relation to the rumoured downgrading of the hospital. "I'm happy to confirm there are no changes planned with respect to the status of Portiuncula Hospital Accident and Emergency Department", the letter read. In a second letter written to the Council members, Minister Harris assured them that second Emergency Department Consultant has been recruited for the unit at Portiuncula Hospital and admitted that the HSE are no longer concerned over the safety of staffing levels at the hospital.

The 20 minute turnaround target for ambulances is continually being missed recent reports released have shown. According to Fianna Fáil TD Deputy Eugene Murphy, Portiuncula University Hospital only had a 15% success rate. 389 ambulance calls were made to the hospital and 92 percent of those took up to one hour to be cleared.



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TOUR D'SHAMS CYCLE FOR ST TERESA'S SPECIAL SCHOOL

BY LAURA SHEEHAN

Ballinasloe Cycling Club set out on their second annual charity cycle which was nicknamed the 'Tour D'Shams 2016' towards the end of the summer.

This year's cycle was in aid of St Teresa's Special School which caters for children with physical or intellectual disabilities. The Club believe that as they are a local club it is important to support a local charity and St Teresa's was the chosen one this year, through a text vote by the public.

There were two cycling options: one was a 50 kilometre cycle and the other was a 100 kilometre cycle. The cycle began at St Teresa's Special School in the Enterprise Centre, returning there to finish up also.

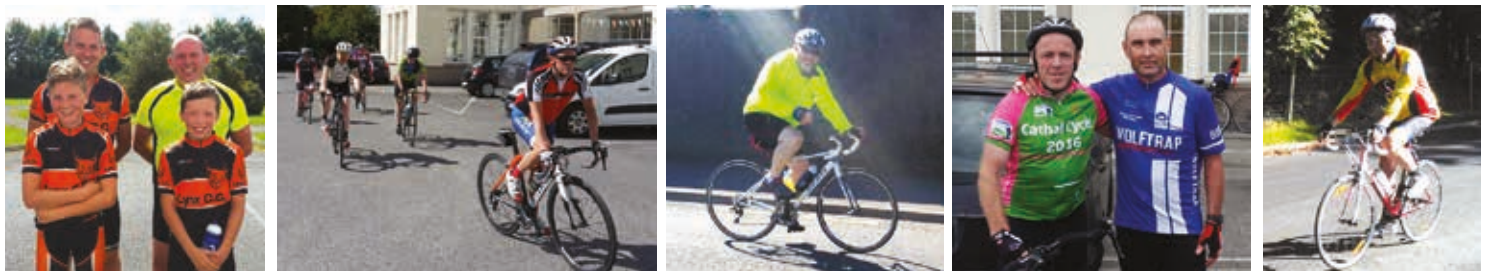
John Donnelly of the Cycling Club praised the efforts of the locals in

the run up to the event. "We had every baker and bread maker busy in Ballinasloe and I am proud to say as a Ballinasloe born and bred, when you ask for help for a good local cause they deliver 120%", says John.

On the day, there was a great number of cyclists from all ages and many cyclists from the clubs in the surrounding areas turned out to show their support for St Teresa's Special School as well as the Cycling Club.

The Cycling Club is less than two years old and has 100 paid up members. Johns states that the aim of the Cycling Club hasn't changed. "We want to get the people of Ballinasloe on their bikes, getting fit and healthy, meeting new friends and enjoying themselves", he adds.

The Charity Cycle raised €3,600 for St Teresa's Special School.



BALLINASLOE'S MODERN MEDIA SELL OUT THE VAPORS REUNION GIG IN LONDON

Sean Fletcher and Modern Media have sold out their Concert with 80's band The Vapors in Central London for this November. The Vapors had an international hit with "Turning Japanese" in 1980. Sean Fletcher is also promoting their gigs in Liverpool, Wolverhampton and Dublin.

In 2017 Sean will be their promoter for a Spanish tour starting with VALENCIA.

For further information, log on to www.modernmedia.ie or ticketweb.co.uk.

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NEW GYM FOR CANCER PATIENTS OPENS IN BRACKERNAGH

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



The East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre had Galway Hurler Joe Canning open a new gym specifically for cancer patients. It is the first of its kind in the country. The gym has a physical activity programme that was created especially for the patients and is trained by Ailish Ryan, personal trainer.

"Research has proven that the fitter an individual is, who has had a cancer diagnosis, they have a reduced recurrence rate of 50-90%", says Jacqueline Daly, the Centre Manager.

The programme consists of a cardio section, which is made up of a walking programme, and a resistance programme which is a workout for both your upper and lower body muscles.

"Strong evidence highlights that exercise is not only safe and feasible during cancer treatment, it can also improve physical functioning, fatigue, multiple post-treatment adverse effects on bone health, muscle strength and multiple aspects of quality of life", adds Jacqueline.

The gym facilities at the Centre are only allowed to be used by patients if they have been signed off by their doctor.

As well as the gym, the Centre also opened their polytunnel. This was opened by 97-year old local man Tom Quinn. The aim of the polytunnel is to ensure that a cancer patient isn't left isolated, it allows them to

work alongside someone and gives them company while keeping busy. "To be able to tend to and nurture plants has a soothing and calming effect", continues Jacqueline.

There is also a new walking circle in the garden for patients. It is a short distance with benches around it to ensure that if a patient gets tired or weak they have a place on hand to rest. As a patient gets stronger, there is a bigger path around as well so they can build up their activity level.

Another great facility on offer at the Centre is their Darkroom which allows patients to come in at a time that suits them to develop old negative films they may have to create a memory book. Other services available include a meditation room, counselling room and two treatment rooms. All the centre's facilities are wheelchair accessible.

Up to 60 people are already using the facility and it is still early days showing its success in the town and the surrounding area, the site purchase and development were partially funded by Boston Scientific with huge local fundraising support from a variety of initiatives.

The Centre is run by a group of volunteers who give their time for free and it is not funded so they rely on community support.

For anyone interesting in donating to the East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre you can do so at any Bank of Ireland branch. The details are: IBAN IE76 BOFI 9036 8069 1678 02 and BIC BOFIE2D



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CLONTUSKERT PRIEST FOLLOWS HIS UNCLE'S FOOTSTEPS IN AFRICA

BY KEN KELLY

Clontuskert-born Fr. Anthony Kelly has returned to the African Mission fields to continue where his late uncle, Bishop P.J. Kelly ministered for almost half a century. Both joined the SMA after their ordinations and choose Africa as their mission fields. By a remarkable coincidence the studies of both men were interrupted by deaths in their families, both were struck down with malaria while working in Africa and each one worked in a Northern Ireland seminary while recuperating.

Anthony Kelly from Tristane, Clontuskert entered Maynooth Seminary in 1969 following his early education in Clontuskert NS and Colaiste Mhuire, Ballygar. The sudden deaths of his father and uncle meant that he had to leave the seminary for six months to help out on the family farm, just like his late uncle had to do in the 1900's. Both later returned to continue their studies with Bishop Kelly being ordained in 1921 and he in turn, now as Bishop of Benin City, Nigeria, ordained Anthony to the priesthood in June 1977, in St. Augustine's Church, Clontuskert, where both men had also been baptised.

Winning county intermediate medals with Kiltormer hurlers in 1975 and senior medals in 1976 and 1977, Anthony wore the county senior jersey when playing Limerick in 1976 but his priestly duties abroad deprived him of sharing in Kiltormer's All-Ireland club successes subsequently. Even though almost forty years in Africa, Fr. Anthony keeps in touch with the progress of his former club and follows the exploits of his county teams on Sky Sports TV, which he can access abroad. "It's great to be able to see our national games on TV so far from home. It can be very exciting and often emotional" he said.

Choosing Ghana as his overseas mission, the young priest was struck with malaria after thirteen years there, just like his uncle was in 1925 when he first went to Africa. Anthony returned to Ireland to recuperate and was appointed Vocations Director in the SMA house in Dromatine in Co. Down-coincidentally where his uncle taught Moral Theology in 1926. In 1998 he set up the "Friends of Africa" who were young people that were not anxious to commit to religious life but wanted to be volunteer workers to help the less well off. The first group of Irish workers headed off

a year later and helped many local communities in education, construction and farming.

Returning to Africa in 2000, Fr. Anthony became chaplain at two 3rd level colleges in Kitwe, Zambia and six years later was appointed Leader of the SMA in Zambia, where he was to spend fifteen years of his mission life. Re-uniting with the "Friends of Africa" team he had established in Co. Down, they embarked on an ambitious project to help local people build their own houses. "Thanks to the generosity of people in Clontuskert, Kiltormer, Lawrencetown and Aughtmoe especially, as well as Clonbur and Cornamona in West Galway, who organised fund-raising events for our project, we got started. They were very generous and the support was amazing" he said.



"The idea was based on the model 'Habitat for Humanity' which was to take kids off the streets, help women with HIV Aids and others by building two-bedroom houses. We bought a block-making machine and made 76 hydro-form blocks from soil mixed with each bag of cement. We had about forty locals, mostly women, helping each day and in four years we built sixty-six dwellings. The pay-back is the equivalent of one bag of cement each month and the people are so delighted with the scheme that three more facilities are to be built-a Pre-School, an Adult Education Centre and a Toggling-out area" explained Fr. Anthony.

Leaving Zambia in 2014, the Missionary Priest is currently Spiritual Director of the SMA House in Nairobi, Kenya where an average of thirty-five young men study for the priesthood each year.

His late uncle, Bishop P. J. Kelly, who spent nearly half a century ministering in Nigeria, is still spoken fondly of in the

SMA. Anthony met many of those when a book, commemorating the life of Bishop Kelly, was launched in Benin City, Nigeria in 2006 and were delighted to meet a second generation Kelly who was devoting his life to missionary work.

Before returning to Nigeria, Fr. Anthony said "I enjoyed the few weeks break, especially working on the family farm which the Bishop always looked forward to when he returned home".



Fr. Anthony and his workers who helped build the 66 houses in Kitwe, Zambia.



The “Clancarty Arms Hotel, Ballinasloe” didn’t ring a bell. Nor did the name “Edward Steacie”, also imprinted on the stoneware bottle, sound in any way familiar.

Corbett’s, Hogan’s and Cuffe’s were historical hotels in the town that I was aware of. But Steacie’s and the Clancarty Arms? I was determined to find out more. The bottle didn’t have a message inside it, but I thought there must a message about it.

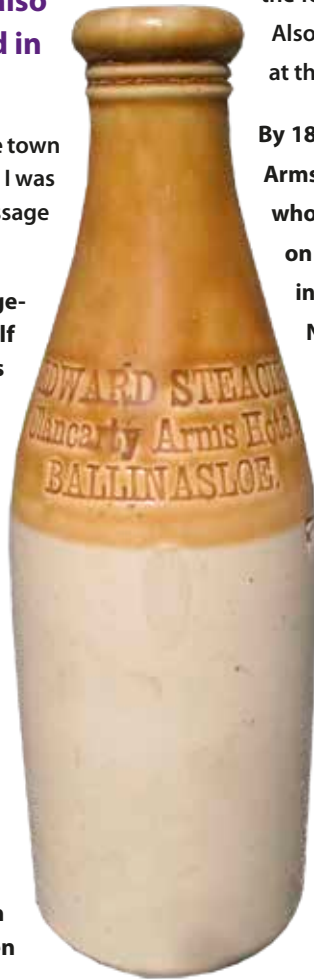
So, I took a few snaps of the two-tone, cream and beige-coloured vessel, which I’d spotted sitting on a shelf alongside an array of bottles as I was leaving Ganly’s house on Dunlo Hill, which I visited on a recent trip home. Conor Ganly is sure his late father, Mattie, found it on the Fair Green “years ago after a fair day”.

A quick search on Google revealed that the Clancarty Arms was located “close to the railway station” – obviously it’s the building that I’d always known as the Railway Hotel. In more recent times, it served as the headquarters for the local FCA company.

A small Tudor-Gothic building, it was built around 1863, more than a decade after the railway came to Ballinasloe in 1851. Visible on the half dormer window above the door, the arms of the Earls of Clancarty, the local landlords based in Garbally, inspired the name that the hotel would take. In 1864, some months after the hotel opened, the dozens of casualties from a train derailment that cost two people their lives were taken there for medical attention.

In 1870, a newspaper report identifies Edward Steacie (also spelled Stacie) as the hotel’s proprietor. Ironically, he appeared at the petty sessions (with the actual Lord Clancarty in the chair), where he was charged for serving non-travellers drink on a Sunday.

In 1860, Steacie, whose origins I have not been able to establish, married a local woman, Anne Galbraith, a schoolmistress and daughter of John Galbraith, a farmer. The couple seemingly spent a few years in Co Longford (their first child, Mary, was born in Newtownforbes in 1861) before moving back to Ballinasloe. Five more children would follow: John, Edward, Richard, Kathleen and Anne.



In 1864 Steacie became Clerk to the Ballinasloe Town Commissioners, the forerunner of the late and much lamented Town Council. Also clerk of the local gas company, he ran the hotel business at the same time.

By 1882, Steacie was no longer involved with the Clancarty Arms, which was being run by Julien Gauthier, a Frenchman who had been chef for Lord Clancarty for 30 years. He lived on Dunlo Hill and decided to enter the hotel business after inheriting “money and property to the value of £15,000”. In November 1882 he married a Clancarty servant, Margaret Kearns from Killoran. However, a few days later, “he rose at six o’clock and shot himself with a revolver”. As the Pall Mall Gazette recorded, “by the marriage settlement the wife is comfortably provided for”.

The nature of Gauthier’s death is almost certainly the source of the local belief that the building is haunted.

But back to the Steacie family. By the late 1880s, Anne and most of her children had emigrated to Canada, where she died in 1888, while her husband remained in Ballinasloe, continuing as Town Clerk until his death in a Galway hospital at the age of 58 in 1897.

Of their children’s fates, Richard’s is the most fascinating. On the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, he lied about his age – he was too old at 46 – to join the military.

He became a captain in the 14th Battalion (Royal Montreal Regiment) of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

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CREW CHANGES AT LIFE



Laura Sheehan



Brian Ciepierski



Tomas Wall

Wexford man to grace our crew. Currently studying Digital Media Design at University of Limerick he is on Co-operative Education at the Town Hall till January. Tomas is responsible for all the wonderful videos and online social media development of all our LIFE projects and will be helping with the preparation work on the Town App with small businesses and organisations between now and Xmas.

We'd like to say a huge thank you to Mr. Brian Ciepierski the Life Reporter from Castlegregory (via Allentown U.S.) who was with us from January to August end. His contribution to the work of LIFE, our online presence and a variety of Rose of Tralee and AOIFE activities was outstanding and his tall commanding presence will be missed – by all, but especially what is left of the Editor.

We wish him well with his Erasmus Studies in Holland and look forward to him Graduating from U.L. in the fullness of time.

We'd like to welcome Laura Sheehan, a 22-year-old Journalism and New Media student at the University of Limerick. Originally from Mallow, Co. Cork, she now splits her time between Galway/Limerick/Cork. She is the eldest of two girls. She is interested in writing and has worked with us on the last two editions of LIFE and will be here until January as LIFE Reporter and Press and Communications Assistant to AOIFE.

We'd also like to welcome to the team our Multi Media Assistant Tomas Wall, this 20-year-old New Ross native is out first ever

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CHLOE CARRIC

RECEIVES 615 POINTS IN LC

Local girl, Chloe Carrick had many reasons to smile when she opened her Leaving Cert results in Ardscoil Mhuire on Wednesday the 17th of August. 615 reasons, to be exact. The talented local scholar scored a well-deserved 615 points in this year's Leaving Cert exams. Principal, Ms. Patricia Kilgallen praised Chloe's dedication to her studies and her positive approach to school life throughout her time in Ardscoil Mhuire. Chloe will be attending the University of Limerick where she will be studying her first choice, a degree in Psychology. The Ardscoil Mhuire class of 2016 had good reason to celebrate with exceptional results overall and an impressive 50% scoring over 400 points.

Chloe Carrick, Ardscoil Mhuire who achieved an impressive 615 points in her Leaving Cert exam.



Allie Glennon and Genevieve Duncan celebrating their results with Principal Patricia Kilgallen.



Some of the Leaving Cert students from Ardscoil Mhuire, celebrating their fantastic results with their principal Ms. Patricia Kilgallen.



Ardscoil Mhuire Ladies Football Team wearing their new Lidl sponsored jerseys.

SOLD

Michael McCullagh
AUCTIONEER & ESTATE AGENT

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Murphy

Roscommon - Galway



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Dáil Éireann, Leinster House,
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NOW OPEN



Angel Cunningham and Mary Cuddy celebrating their Junior Cert. results in Ardscoil Mhuire



St Killian's 1st year Business students with their certs for the AIB Future Me Programme



4th, 5th and 6th class students at Scoil Chroi Naofa receive certs for recorder exams



Congratulations to Saoirse Ni Thuairisg, Ardscoil Mhuire who achieved 11 As in this year's Junior Cert. exam



Aoife Dudgeon and Deirdre Egan, delighted with their Junior Cert. results



Aoibheann O'Reilly and Meabh Glennon, Ardscoil Mhuire celebrating their Junior Cert. Results



Alison Kenny Coyne and Eva Sinclair celebrating their Junior Cert. results in Ardscoil Mhuire

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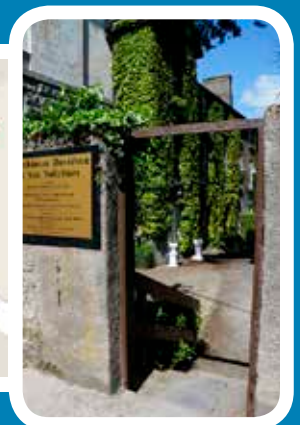
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Alan Barrett and David Mannion were the joint top achievers at Garbally College on Leaving Cert results day.



Alan Barrett who is now studying Quantative Data in UCD.



Conor Harewood is now studing Polymer Engineering in Athlone IT.



Aodán Connaughton who is now studying Architecture in UL.



David Mannion is doing Actuary in UCD.



Conor Riddell is studying Business and Law in Maynooth and Danny Hyland is studying Engineering in DCU.



L-R: Frank Hopkins, David Kenny, Diarmuid Claffey, Micheál O Neill, Cathal Goode, Paul Regan, Lónán Broderick and Kelvin Kelly.



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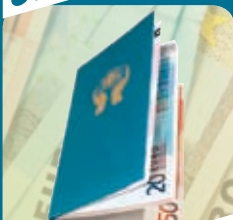
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OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



Glen Campbell who was the winner of the Presidents (Joe Molloy) Prize at Ballinasloe Golf Club

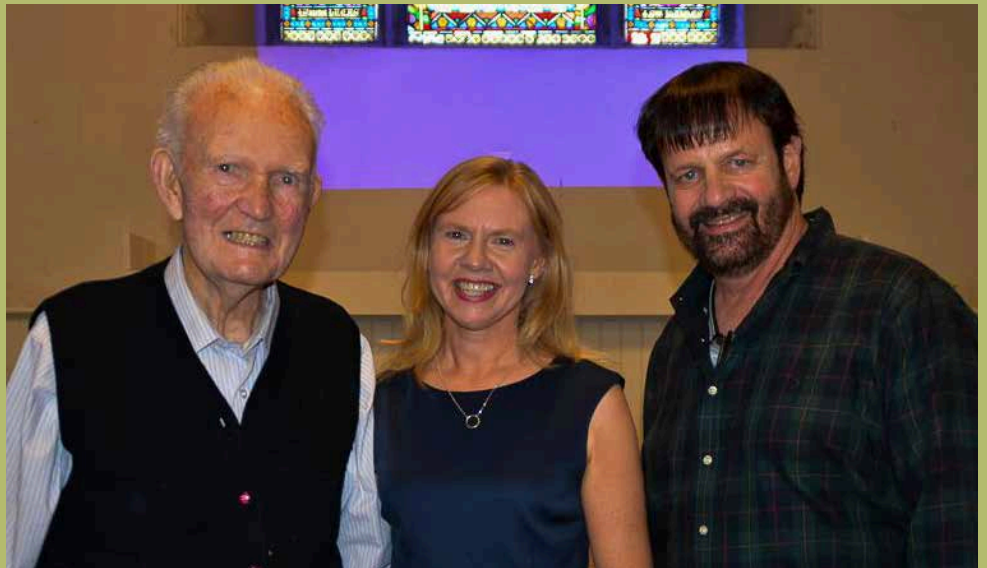


Representatives of East Galway Hunt recently presented Ballinasloe Social Services with a cheque for €3,650 as a result of its charity ride and auction last Spring. Gratitude was expressed for the raising of this fantastic sum of money for such a worthwhile charity:

Photo. L-r Kathleen Ward, Sec. East Galway Hunt; Marie Dunne, Asst Treas. East Galway Hunt; Annette Lynagh, Chairperson Ballinasloe Social Services; Teresa Coughlan, Manager Ballinasloe Social Services and Regina Power, Social Services.



Larry Reynolds Junior, Winner Senan Moran and Runner-up Blaithín Kennedy - Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds Under 18 All-Ireland Fiddle Competition



Tom Quinn, Vera Craughwell and Larry Reynolds Jr at the Library



Johnny Johnston Singer's Circle during the Larry Reynolds Festival



Ahascragh Soccer Club have entered the Roscommon U18 League and have been sponsored by Top Oil Fuel, Concannon's Top Oil Ahascragh, and Jimmy Hannon, local Top Oil Delivery Driver. The U18 Team have already played three matches and are second in the league table. The Club also plan to set up new teams at U16, U14 and U12. Anyone interested in getting involved should contact Padraic Concannon on 087 6993470.

OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



*Caltra GAA Club receive a cheque from Ballinasloe Credit Union.
L to R: Shane McNeill & Noel Ward with Aidan Murray & Sean O'Ceallaigh*



Geraldine Ward Ballinasloe Credit Union with Nigel, Cillian & Evan Brooks of Skyvalley Rovers.



The Dowd family from Ballinasloe recently held a Golf Classic at Ballinasloe Golf club in memory of their late brother Dan and have presented the proceeds totaling €1250 to the Oncology Unit in Portiuncula Hospital.

Pictured here at the presentation are Left to Right.

Anne Madden-Finnegan, Oncology Nurse, Mary Madden, Ballinasloe Golf Club, Caitriona Duggan Oncology Nurse, Sally Carey, Oncology Nurse, Kathleen Maloney, John Dowd, Bridget Scates, Denis Minton, Portiuncula Hospital, William Duthie Golf Club Sec.



Bernie Lally, Lady captain of Ballinasloe Golf Club and Nora Callagy (Secretary) making a presentation of €500 to Edith Ward on behalf of East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre in Ballinasloe.

This was the charity of choice for the Lady Captains Day at Ballinasloe Golf Club recently.



Brave and Battling Ballinasloe overcome a strong / Tynagh-Abbey Duniry challenge in U-12 Hurling Decider

Front Row: Ryan Dowd, Sean Power, Thomas Mullen, David Khaliman, Conor Dowd, Joseph Tierney, Jason Cunningham, Adam Coyne (Captain), Godfrey Gibbons, Darragh Carty, Mikey Coyne, Tommy Cannon, Conor O'Grady, Ryan Lucas. **Middle Row:** Shane Fitzpatrick, Alan Brooks, Evan Stynes, Charlie Naughton, Shahed Abir, Eoin Carroll, Conor Madden.

Back Row: Liam Cunningham, Kevin Tierney, Ian Power (Manager), Andrew Coyne, Dylan Curley.

OCTOBER EVENTS GUIDE

October 1st Saturday			Pillar House Trad Session	The Pillar House	6 pm	October 21st Friday		
Library Crochet Exhibition	Library	all day	Live Music	An Táin	7 pm	Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9 am-1 pm
Happy Bar Stars	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	The Nudie suits	Maud Millars	8 pm	Ken & Steve	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
October music box	Killeen's	9 pm	Hickory Wind	The Pillar House	9 pm	Eleanor Shanley	The Pillar House	9 pm
Colin Galligan	Downey's	9 pm	Live Entertainment	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	The Reel Deal	An Táin	10 pm
Live Music	The Pillar House	9 pm	Colin Galligan	Downey's	9 pm	Loose Rooster	Maud Millars	10 pm
Small Deal	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Martina Flattery	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Dj Johnny F	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm
Simon Brady	An Táin	10 pm	Sean Crehan	Killeen's	9.30 pm	Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm
Dj	An Táin	10.30 pm	Split	The Dunlo Tavern	10 pm	October 22nd Saturday		
The Suspects	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	Liam's Country Road	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm	Tunnel Tigers	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
No Bodder	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	October 10th Monday			Live Music	Downey's	9 pm
October 2nd Sunday			Library Crochet Exhibition	Library	all day	Lyn em up	Killeen's	10.30 pm
Library Crochet Exhibition	Library	all day	Time to move seminar	Library	9.45 am	Toxic Twins	Maud Millars	10 pm
Cuppa & C fundraiser	Town Hall Theatre	11- 4 pm	Yoga	Gullane's	6.30 pm	Too Tall Paul	The Pillar House	9 pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	5.30 pm	Line Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm	Wexfrod Laggio	Hayden's	9 pm
Live Music	An Táin	7 pm	Live music	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Simon Brady	An Táin	10 pm
Anchormen	Maud Millars	8 pm	Supermac's Fireworks	The Marina	10.30 pm	Annmarie McLoughlin	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm
Live Entertainment	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	October 11th Tuesday			Pcifica	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm
Library Crochet Exhibition	Downey's	9 pm	Unslim	Gullane's	5.45-6.45pm	October 23rd Sunday		
Nial Rutledge	Killeen's	9 pm	October Social Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm	Pillar House Trad Session	The Pillar House	6 pm
Shane Moore	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	October 13th Thursday			Live Music	An Táin	7 pm
Too Tall Paul	The Pillar House	10 pm	Author Dave Rudden	Library	all day	Imposter	Maud Millars	8 pm
The Livewires	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	Bobby Kilkenny & Friends	An Táin	10 pm	Nial Fennessy	Killeen's	9 pm
The Kings of Connacht	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	Open Acoustic session	Maud Millars	10 pm	Live Music	Downey's	9 pm
October 3rd Monday			Singers Circle	The Dunlo Tavern	10 pm	Live Entertainment	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
Library Crochet Exhibition	Library	all day	Kevin Rohan	Hayden's	10 pm	Geggar Pagans	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm
Yoga	Gullane's	6.30 pm	October 14th Friday			The Kings of Connacht	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm
Eamon O'Neill	The Dunlo Tavern	8.30 pm	Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9 am- 1 pm	October 24th Monday		
Line Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm	Amy Brennan	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Yoga	Gullane's	6.30 pm
October 4th Tuesday			The Happy Bar Stars	Maud Millars	10 pm	Line Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm
Library Crochet Exhibition	Library	all day	The Reel Deal	An Táin	10 pm	Blue Tax Band	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm
Unslim	Gullane's	5.45- 6.45	Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	October 25th Tuesday		
Heritage presentation	Library	6 pm	Evan Blake	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	Unslim	Gullane's	5.45- 6.45
October Social Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm	October 15th Saturday			October Social Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm
October 5th Wednesday			Seminar	Library	10.30 am	October 26th Wednesday		
Bobby Kilkenny & Friends	An Táin	10 pm	The High Reel	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Bobby Kilkenny & Friends	An Táin	10 pm
Tug of War	Society Street	8.30 pm	Small Deal	Killeen's	9 pm	October 27th Thursday		
Library Crochet Exhibition	Library	all day	Night Owls	Downey's	9 pm	Author Terry McDonagh	Library	all day
October 6th Thursday			Live Music	The Pillar House	9 pm	Open Acoustic session	Maud Millars	10 pm
Library Crochet Exhibition	Library	all day	Beggars Velvet	Maud Millars	10 pm	Kevin Rohan	Hayden's	10 pm
Soapbox Derby	Dunlo St. & St Michael's Sq	8 pm	Last Man Standing	Hayden's	10 pm	October 28th Friday		
The High Reel	The Dunlo Tavern	10 pm	Eoin Maher	An Táin	10 pm	Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9am-1pm
Open Acoustic session	Maud Millars	10 pm	DJ	An Táin	10.30 pm	Anything goes	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
Kevin Rohan	Hayden's	10 pm	Too tall Paul	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	Live Music	Maud Millars	10 pm
October 7th Friday			Finnegans Fury	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	The Reel Deal	An Táin	10 pm
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9-1 pm	October 16th Sunday			Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm
Library Crochet Exhibition	Library	all day	5/10km Fun Run	The Birch Grove	10 am	Evan Blake	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm
Monster Fireworks	Marina	8.30 pm	Junior Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	5-7 pm	October 29th Saturday		
Tug-o-war Finals	Gullanes Car Park	9 pm	Live Music	An Táin	7 pm	Zombie Walk	Garbally Grounds	6 - 8 pm
Live Music	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Pillar House Trad Session	The Pillar House	6 pm	The High Reel	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
John Molloy	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	The No Showband	Maud Millars	8 pm	Take Time	Killeen's	9 pm
3 Legged Dog	Maud Millars	10 pm	Live Entertainment	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Maggie Dunne	The Pillar House	9 pm
Geagens Pagans	The Pillar House	10 pm	Shane Moore	Downey's	9 pm	Emerald Dave	Downey's	9 pm
The Reel Deal	An Táin	10pm	Sweet Sensations	Killeen's	9 pm	End Cassidy	Hayden's	9 pm
Dollar Daly	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	Buzz the Agent	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	The Fanzines	Maud Millars	10 pm
Dj Johnny F	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	Pcifica	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm	Trebblemakers	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm
October 8th Saturday			October 17th Monday			Martin Cunningham	An Táin	10 pm
Live Music	Soundstage - Square	2-5pm	CAP Training	Library	10 am	Jigers of Erin	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm
Cuppa & C Fundraiser	Town Hall Theatre	11am-4 pm	Co. Cl. Social Inc. Week	Church Gallery Library	6 pm	October 30th Sunday		
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	5.30 pm	Yoga	Gullane's	6.30 pm	Zombie Walk	Garbally Grounds	6 - 8 pm
The Ledgents	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Line Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm	Anchormen	Maud Millars	8 pm
Joe McCaul	Killeen's	9 pm	Dj Johnny F	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Bumble Bee Honey	Killeen's	9 pm
Shane Moore	Downey's	9 pm	October 18th Tuesday			Steve Reilly	Downey's	9 pm
The Gamblers	The Pillar House	10 pm	Unslim	Gullane's	5.45-6.45pm	Paul Burns	The Dunlo Tavern	9 pm
Red Tape	Maud Millars	10 pm	Galway Sports Disability	Library	6 pm	Hallow'e'en Fancy Dress	The Pillar House	9 pm
Rob Irwin	An Táin	10 pm	October Social Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm	Live Music	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
DJ	An Táin	10.30 pm	October 19th Wednesday			Nite Owls	Hayden's	9 pm
Buzz the agent	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	October Social Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm	Live Music	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm
Nightowls	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	Bobby Kilkenny & Friends	An Táin	10 pm	Tradstone	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm
October 9th Sunday			October 20th Thursday			October 31st Monday		
Dog Show/ Craft Market	St Michael's square	1 pm	Open Acoustic session	Maud Millars	10 pm	Yoga	Gullane's	6.30 pm
			Kevin Rohan	Hayden's	10 pm	Line Dancing	Gullane's	8.30 pm
						Live music	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm

NOVEMBER EVENTS GUIDE

November 2nd Wednesday			Dj Johnny F	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm	Pacifica	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm
Bobby Kilkenny & Friends	An Táin	10pm	November 12th Saturday			November 20th Sunday		
November 3rd			Anything goes	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Pillar House Trad Session	The Pillar House	6 pm
Open Acoustic session	Maud Millars	10 pm	Maggie Dunne	Killeen's	9 pm	The Nudie Suits	Maud Millars	8 pm
Kevin Rohan	Hayden's	10 pm	Small Deal	Downey's	9 pm	Live Music	An Táin	7 pm
November 4th			Simon Brady	An Táin	10 pm	Night Owls	Downey's	9 pm
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9 am - 1 pm	Too Tall Paul	The Pillar House	9 pm	Live Entertainment	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
Artlink Collective Art Exh.	Library	6 pm	Gentleman John	Hayden's	9 pm	Live Music	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm
John Molloy	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Shane Moore	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Live Music	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm
The Reel Deal	An Táin	10 pm	Toxic Twins	Maud Millars	10 pm	November 22nd Tuesday		
Live Music	Maud Millars	10 pm	Night Owls	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm	Gables Art Exhibition	Library	6.30 pm
Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10 pm	Hickory Wind	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	November 23rd Wednesday		
Evan Blake	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	November 13th Sunday			Bobby Kilkenny & Friends An Táin 10pm		
November 5th Saturday			Live Music	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	November 24th Thursday		
The Happy Bar Stars	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Live music	An Táin	7 pm	Open Acoustic session	Maud Millars	10 pm
Jock & Davy	Killeen's	9 pm	Pillar House Trad Session	The Pillar House	6 pm	Kevin Rohan	Hayden's	10 pm
Live Music	Downey's	9 pm	Imposter	Maud Millars	8 pm	November 25th Friday		
Bimbo	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Black Shadow	Downey's	9 pm	Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9 am - 1 pm
Rob Irwin	An Táin	10pm	Live DJ	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Tunnel Tigers	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
On the Fence	The Pillar House	10 pm	Liam's Country Rd Show	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm	Loose Looster	Maud Millars	10 pm
Decades of youth	Maud Millars	10 pm	November 16th Wednesday			The Reel Deal	An Táin	10 pm
Last Man Standing	Hayden's	10 pm	Lecture by T. McIntyre	Library	3 pm	Buzz the agent	The Dunlo Tavern	10 pm
Chris & Tara	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	Bobby Kilkenny & Friends	An Táin	10 pm	Dj Johnny F	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm
Live Music	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	November 17th Thursday			November 26th Saturday		
November 6th Sunday			Open Acoustic session	Maud Millars	10 pm	The High Reel	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
Pillar House Trad Session	The Pillar House	6 pm	Kevin Rohan	Hayden's	10 pm	Sean Crehan	Killeen's	9 pm
Anchormen	Maud Millars	8 pm	November 18th Friday			Too Tall Paul	The Pillar House	9 pm
Live music	An Táin	7pm	Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9 am - 1 pm	Martin Cunningham	Downey's	9 pm
Live Gig	Downey's	9 pm	Ken & Steve	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Eoin Maher	An Táin	10 pm
Live Music	Joe's Bar	9 pm	Brian Kennedy	The Pillar House	9 pm	Donie O	Hayden's	9 pm
Live Music	The Pillar House	9.30 pm	The Reel Deal	An Táin	10 pm	Party Nite	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm
Shane Moore	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm	Happy Bar Stars	Maud Millars	10 pm	Anchormen	Maud Millars	10 pm
November 9th Wednesday			Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm	The Live Wires	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30 pm
Bobby Kilkenny & Friends	An Táin	10pm	Evan Blake	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm	Tradstone	Auld Sod Bar	10.30 pm
November 10th Thursday			November 19th Saturday			November 27th Sunday		
Singers Circle	The Dunlo Tavern	9.30 pm	The High Reel	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Xmas Tree Lighting Up	St Micheals Square	5.30 pm
Open Acoustic session	Maud Millars	10 pm	Checkers	Killeen's	9 pm	Pillar House Trad Session	The Pillar House	6 pm
Kevin Rohan	Hayden's	10 pm	Martin Cunningham	An Táin	10 pm	Live Music	An Táin	7 pm
November 11th Friday			Sarah O'Keane	Downey's	9 pm	The Knots	Maud Millars	8 pm
Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	9am - 1pm	Sean Brennan	Hayden's	9 pm	Live Music	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm
Amy Brennan	Canal Bar at Shearwater	9 pm	Small Deal	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm	Live Music	Downey's	9 pm
The Reel Deal	An Táin	10 pm	Live Music	Maud Millars	10 pm	Buzz the Agent	Joe's Bar	9.30 pm
Split	The Dunlo Tavern	10 pm	Joe Wynne	The Pillar House	10 pm	The King of Connacht	Auld Sod Bar	10 pm
Beggars Velvet	Maud Millars	10 pm	Too Tall Paul	The Dunlo Tavern	10 pm			



Christmas Season Plans For Town

Kerry Meakin from the Visual Merchandising Programme in Dublin Institute of Design has come back to run a Christmas window display workshop and to run a Christmas Window Competition for the town.

The theme chosen for this year is White Christmas (with a dash of colour!) with the use of paper, newspaper, cardboard. The competition is open to all businesses in the area with prizes up for grabs for the winning display. The date of the window launch is Thursday 17th November at 5 pm with the winner announced at the turning on of the Christmas lights ceremony on Sunday November 27th.

The Big Central European Tree and the Streetscape lights will be switched on by the man from the North Pole on Sunday evening with the Soundstage and members of School Choirs and various musical groups and a Panto Dame to assist in proceedings at 5.00 pm.

James Burke has again kindly agreed to co-ordinate the business subscriptions for the lights campaign. With the Galway County

subscriptions for the lights campaign. With the Galway County Council annual grant cut from €4,500 to €3,000, No REDZ money-the annual cost of the programme will be in the region of €17,500, the Town Team have agreed that subscription will be €150 per business-or roughly €30 per week for the five weeks they are on. Liam Loughrey is co-ordinating the Tree Build and the electrical installation has again gone out to tender.

All business are to have their subscriptions paid by the 9th of December and again similar to last year a full update on the project, its costs and those firms and businesses that paid will be listed in the Feb edition of LIFE.



CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS



Community Hearts' Annual Fish 'n' Chips night took place in Kariba's recently. There was €1,500 raised on the night with further donations still being made in the name of the event.

Each year the money raised is donated to local charities. At the moment this year's chosen charities are to be Cancer Care, the Lions Club for their Christmas hamper, a local youth project and St Vincent de Paul and one more that has yet to be confirmed.

A full round-up of the night and the donations made will be published in the next edition of Life.

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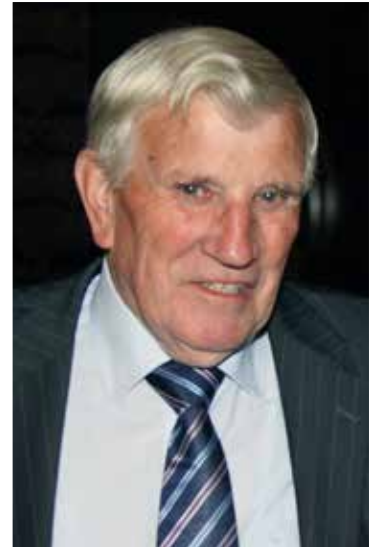
BY KEN KELLY

For over forty years former Garda Supt. John P. Burke has witnessed the staging of the Great October Fair Week in Ballinasloe, which includes the Horse and Agricultural Show, ever since he arrived in the town as a newly-promoted Garda Inspector. With such huge throngs in attendance, safety concerns were always on the mind of the Tipperary-born custodian because of his farming background.

On his retirement from the Gardai in 1999, John Burke was the first appointed Safety Officer of the Horse and Agricultural Show—a position he still holds. “Safety measures are vital where you have huge crowds attending any event but when animals are involved there is even a greater risk of injury. We, in the Show Society, have been fully aware of our commitments in safeguarding the public at our events and have taken the necessary steps to do so” said the officer who is also a director and vice-chairman of one of the country’s oldest agricultural shows.

Having joined the Garda in 1959, John Burke served in Cork and Monaghan before coming to Ballinasloe in 1977. Later promoted to Superintendent, he served in Swinford, Co. Mayo and subsequently returning to Ballinasloe as head of station until his retirement in 1999.

A hurling fanatic, born in the parish of Drom-Inch in North Tipperary, the former garda served as chairman of the Ballinasloe Hurling Club as well as the Duggan Park Development Committee and was president of the Ballinasloe GAA Club over the last decade. “I love hurling and farming and these hobbies have helped me get involved locally. I love to see our youth play sport of any kind while I thoroughly enjoy the outdoor life of farming since I retired” he explained. John now farms at Barnaboy, Lawrencetown where he concentrates on suckler cows and sheep.



Looking forward to the upcoming Horse and Agricultural Show, the Safety Officer said he hopes that all attending will have an enjoyable outing but urges the need to be careful when in the proximity of animals. “Parents should be extra vigilant when attending either the show or fair where there are large numbers of horses and other animals around” concluded Mr. Burke.

DOCTORATE FOR TAUGHMACONNELL MAN

BY KEN KELLY



Taughmaconnell-born Brendan Flynn has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Galway National University of Ireland for his work in arts and education. The Clifden Arts Festival, which was first held in 1977 and is the longest running community arts festival in Ireland, was the brainchild of Brendan, who has been living and teaching in Clifden for the past forty years.

The Community School still remains at the heart of Clifden Community Arts Week, where the vision for an arts-based education was nurtured by Brendan and became a reality, thanks to the support from within the school and from the wider community. All the artists who take part in the festival each year engage with the pupils in the school, continuing a tradition which began in 1977 and which has given an invaluable legacy to the students. This year the Festival celebrates its 40th anniversary and will take place from September 15th to 25th.

Brendan Flynn received his secondary education in Garbally College, where his late uncle Fr. Hugh Flynn was professor of English and later Parish Priest of Kiltormer and Lawrencetown. Brendan was a talented rugby player in Garbally before qualifying as a teacher and choosing Clifden as his adopted home. The modest Taughmaconnell man said he was “deeply honoured for the arts, the community and for the imagination” for the Honorary Doctorate bestowed on him by NUIG.

NEW VENUE FOR BALLINASLOE BOWLS CLUB

BY KEN KELLY



Ballinasloe Indoor Bowls Club has recently moved to its new venue the Emerald Ballroom. The club meet every Monday at 7.30pm and every Thursday at 10.30am for about two hours to play indoor bowls on special mats.

The club provides all the necessary bowls equipment and accessories necessary for its members to play the game. Membership for this facility is a mere €10 for the year and €3 each day you play.

New members are welcome and as an introduction to the game the club offer the first three sessions free to new members. Instruction is also available to new members.

Ballinasloe Indoor Bowls Club was founded in 1998 and the club has been operating successfully for the last eighteen years in St. Brigid's John Shea Hall. The club is affiliated to the Western Bowls Association and they have competed very successfully in a number of inter club competition in Connacht.



Bowls club members Cyril Dunne, Margaret Moran, Ita Rigney, Brendan Kelly, Frank Dolan, Dolores Fortune, Martin Lyons, William Duthie, Michael Kelly, Paddy Moran, Eugene Shields, Emmet Keoghan, Sean Craughwell and Hugh O'Neill.

Bowls is becoming a very popular sport/pastime in Ireland for people who want to compete in a social yet competitive atmosphere. There are several very active clubs in County Galway including Loughrea, Craughwell, Mountbellew, Portumna, Tuam, Turloghmore and Renmore, Knocknacarra & Salthill in Galway city.

Bowls is a sport that does not require much physical effort from the player. The aim of the game is to roll one or more of your bowls closer than your opponents bowls to a jack near the end of a 50ft mat. Bowls is therefore ideally suited to everyone, young and old, male and female, the person who is physically fit or those who cannot play in most sports because of medical problems, physical injuries, minor disabilities etc. No other sport can offer their facilities to such a wide spectrum of people in the community and

we hope that more people in the Ballinasloe area take up the sport.

For further information contact Ita Rigney (9643728) or Frank Dolan (9644324).

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HALLOWE'EN ZOMBIE WALK RETURNS

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



Arising from the success of last year's inaugural Hallowe'en Zombie Walk at Garbally Woods, the Town Team are re-running the walk again on Saturday October 29 and Sunday October 30 of the Bank Holiday weekend.

Last year, over 2,000 people of all ages descended on the woods and nature trails of Garbally Park for a 20 minutes scary stroll through the woods.

Set in the Parkland of the historic Clancarty Mansion, complete with its own resident ghost – the White Lady – the 3 km walk will be bedecked with a cast of over 50 witches, zombies, goblins, pixies and Garbally House staff of the 18th Century who had left their tombs to haunt the walk.

Organised as one of the actions by the Town Team Action Group and co-ordinated by Ballinasloe Area Community Development in response to the Town Benchmarking Plan – to incorporate more family activities into our annual calendar of events – the event was branded a huge success by attendees and organisers alike last year.

After parking in Ardscoil Mhuire, patrons will again go to the handball alleys to queue for their walk. Groups of 25 will be taken by zombie guides –

all past staff members of Lady Clancarty's Household.

The new route this year will go through the woods, come out by the boundary tree to the Zombie Training Compound and the Witches Coven before being treated to some refreshments, which will be provided by caterers on site.

The Zombie Walk is suitable for all ages from five to 105 but again organisers are recommending that children under 12 are accompanied by their parents/guardians.

The main organising partners, led by Seamus Duffy of the Ballinasloe Area Community Development, are Ballinasloe Musical Society, the Town Hall Theatre and Ballinasloe Panto.

"Last year we had over 40 stewards as well as 50 performers and this year we are appealing to other clubs and organisations to lend us their volunteers for a few hours on the build-up and on the nights", said Chairman Seamus Duffy. They should contact Manager Lyn at the Enterprise centre at 9646516.

This year tickets are priced at €5 per person. They will be on sale in advance and the plan is to be able to sell pre-allocated time slots to reduce the queue time. Parents are advised to keep an eye out on the Ballinasloe Life Facebook page and Ballinasloe.ie for full details.

"We are thrilled as a group that Fr Allman and the governors of Garbally are allowing us use the grounds and proceeds raised will be distributed to the local community groups involved" said Seamus.



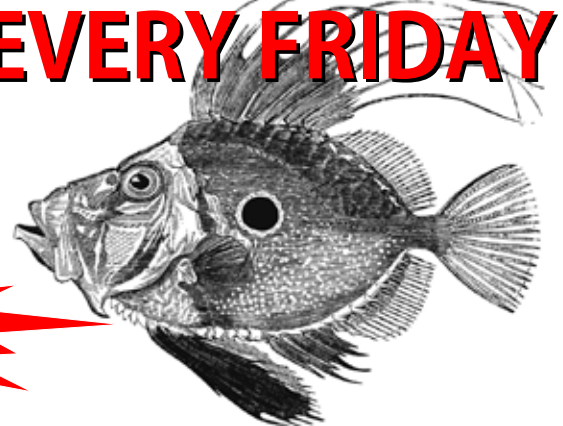
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STEPHEN CONNELL - "THE VOICE OF GRELLAN'S" NO MORE

BY KEN KELLY



Ballinasloe lost one of its most passionate community activists with the passing of Stephen Connell. For more than sixty years he was the voice for his beloved neighbours in St. Grellan's, demanding better housing conditions and improved facilities in the area.

On leaving school, Stephen secured employment in the nearby Top Quarries and was involved in the building of Galway Cathedral and the completion of the famous Celtic Cross which was erected in Aughrim in the early sixties, after lying on the roadside in Dunlo Hill for more than three decades. He was elected secretary of the local SIPTU branch, a job he took very seriously and which made him a committed Trade Unionist, often fighting the causes of the less well off.

Stephen Connell was synonymous with practically every development and facility in his beloved St. Grellan's. Learning his golfing skills in the lands adjoining, he went on to become a valued member of the Ballinasloe Golf Club for more than three decades, winning many trophies on the way. He led the campaign to have a community centre built close to Grellan's, which also turned out to be an invaluable school for many illiterate students as well as a varied recreational centre for all ages. He was the first to run Bingo sessions there and also found time to help out in Taughmaconnell at the weekly event.



As chairman of the St. Grellan's Residents' Association, Stephen was a prime mover in the Regeneration of the Estate and was the last resident to vacate "his old nest". He contested every Town Council election for thirty years, from 1979 to 2009, as a Labour candidate and was elected a member from 1985 to 1994, during which time he repeatedly fought

for better housing and recreational facilities in St. Grellan's. He was also very vociferous when elected on the Joint Policing Committee, expressing concern for the welfare of the youth as well as the elderly in our locality.

For more than twenty-two years Stephen Connell was Chairman of Ballinasloe Resources Ltd., having been a co-founder of the centre operating in the Ballinasloe Social Centre which provides training for the unemployed as well as several courses for youths and adults. He was also a founder member of the Credit Union, as well as a member of Galway Rural Development, the Social Services and BACD.

Stephen never drove a motor car but his passion and enthusiasm for improvements for the "common people" propelled him with boundless energy to attain his goal and was often the project's pilot. He availed of every opportunity to highlight the plights of those less well off, whether it be at local or national level. He was modest but a fighter and utterly committed to their wants. He will be sorely missed.

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TONY COLOHAN "A GIVER AND NOT A TAKER."

BY KEN KELLY

The contribution made to the commercial and social life of Ballinasloe by the late Tony Colohan was acknowledged by the hordes of mourners who lined up to pay their respects following his passing. Although born in Barnaboy, Lawrencetown, Tony was a herculean community worker in his adopted town of Ballinasloe and prided himself in assisting many organisations.

A highly skilled barman, who learned the trade in Dublin when he went there as a sixteen year old, to his gifted craftsmanship in stone masonry, Tony Colohan was known throughout East Galway for his jovial personality, sharp wit and a most generous disposition. Even when he was informed of his serious illness, three years ago, he accepted it in true Christian faith and said he would take every day as they came. A thorough gentleman, known for his bravery and generosity, he was ever ready to lend a hand when needed, especially to the Fair and Festival Committee, where he was a director.



Returning to Ballinasloe in 1980 following his stints in a number of well-known Dublin licensed premises, Tony opened his own pub in Dunlo Street, before later doing likewise in Lawrencetown and then on to the Shannon Oaks in Portumna as head barman.

In a moving eulogy at his funeral mass in St. Michael's Church, former owner of the Portumna Hotel, John Pardy, described Tony Colohan as the best barman he had ever seen. "He was highly skilled, regarded by all as decent, generous and competent. He was a giver and not a taker, but most of all a family man whose bravery and courage

were to be seen by all over the past three years as he battled through his illness" said Mr. Pardy. He added that Tony was one of the first sponsors of the Kiltormer Hurling Club, when the advertising of sponsor's names on the jerseys were not allowed. His love of the GAA was manifested in his support of both local and county teams over the years.

Tony decided in the early 2000's to take up stone masonry and in a short time he was in big demand, such was the quality of his craftsmanship in erecting walls, entrances and edifices. Some of these will be living monuments to his workmanship and dedication when many other landmarks throughout the locality will become obsolete or demolished.

The jovial and popular Tony Colohan will be missed throughout many parts of East Galway but none more so than by his beloved wife Mags, sons Derek and Rory, brothers Jim, P.J., Ollie and Michael; sisters Maureen, Ann and Phyllis as well as many more relatives and friends.

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YOUNG OPERATIC TALENT WOWS THE LIBRARY CROWD



BY LAURA SHEEHAN

Local Birchgrove woman, Rachel Goode, recently performed a lunch time opera recital at the Library on a break from her Opera Studies in Wales.

Her parents David and Caroline, who are from Ballinasloe, moved to the UK in search for employment but when Rachel was 13 they decided to move back home. "We used to come home every summer. I always classed this as home" says Rachel.

After singing along to her mother's CDs and singing games from a young age, Rachel began singing lessons with Marie Power when she returned to Ireland. Marie quickly noticed how talented the then young girl was. "It was Marie Power who advised my mum to send me to Dublin. She said this girl needs to go to Dublin and get some good singing because she's got great potential" adds Rachel.

Rachel auditioned for the Royal Irish Academy of Music when she was 15 years old. She received a scholarship which allowed her to study with Veronica Dunne. Following her Leaving Certificate at Ard Scoil Mhuire, Rachel took up a place at DIT's Conservatory of Music and Drama where she graduated with a First Class Honours degree in Music. Following college, Rachel "took a year out just to see where my voice was going and decide what I was going to do."

Rachel has now just completed a year studying a Postgraduate Diploma in Vocal Performance at the Royal Welsh College of Music but has decided to switch courses to a Masters in Opera which began in September. This is a huge achievement as there are only eight to 10 people accepted into the course each year. Rachel believes that the course will need all her focus for the next two years as it is going to be intense.

When asked does she find it difficult to study away from home, Rachel replied "It was definitely a big change because I went completely on my own. I think it was the best decision I could've made for my career". As she is an only child, Rachel found it hard to move away from her parents as she is very close to them.

"This opera training takes a lot of time and your voice takes a lot of time to develop so I kind of have to see where it is in two years but my plan is, hopefully, to go to an opera studio after my Masters. So either in London, Munich or Zurich", she continues.

A woman with a very bright career ahead of her, Rachel says that "I find myself pretty down-to-earth and I want to stay that way. Even if I made it quite big in opera, I don't know if I ever will, but I would say that I would still stay very grounded". One of the most important elements of her life are her family and friends who she loves spending time with.



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A native of Kilconnell, Tom Campbell is launching his FIRST CD in Gullane's Hotel on the 5th of Nov. He now lives in the village of Caltra with his wife Daniela and their son, Fionn. He attended Garbally College and went on to Athlone IT following his Leaving Cert.

Tom's love for music goes back to when he was a young boy, around the age of 12. "A music teacher attended my National School once a week and I was encouraged to play the banjo" said Tom, and his interest in music stemmed from there. He participated in music competitions and enjoyed good success in County and Connacht finals with traditional music groups.

In college Tom learnt how to play the guitar and began writing his own music. When he finished college in the late 80's, employment was difficult to find in Ireland. After working for five months in the US during one summer, Tom decided to move to London in the hope of finding work.

London was where Tom's music career really took off. "It took some time to get established but eventually an opportunity to set up a band

presented itself. Kieran was from New Zealand, Matt from Dublin and John was a Cork man. We called the band The NU Kelts", he continued. The band had reasonably good success while building a loyal following of New Zealanders, Irish and English. They recorded some of their own original material together.

Following his time in London, Tom was forced to move back to Ireland. It was here, in 2014, that he was listening to tapes of the original material he had recorded with The NU KELTS when he realised that the quality of the sound had degraded.

Tom wanted to restore the music before it was lost and so got back in contact with his former bandmate, Matt Hegarty. "Matt and I started doing a lot of work on new songs and as they developed a decision was taken that studio production was needed. We were very lucky in picking Sun Street Studios and Kenny Ralph. The project kept developing and the freelance musician Seamie O'Dowd completed the musical collaboration" added Tom. The project has now been two years in the making but is in its final stages.

The new album is titled OK Life and those involved in the making of it are called PULSE 160. The songs are all original material written by Tom himself. The album will include alternative music, some blues as well as some songs with an acoustic sound to them.. For further information and updates, check out their Facebook page, PULSE 160.



Tom Campbell

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FAIR AND FESTIVAL EVENTS PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



The Annual Ballinasloe Horse Fair opens this weekend and there are a host of events organised. The festival events that coincide with the Fair will continue throughout the week and into next weekend.

Aside from the traditional Equestrian events on the Green and pedestrianised streets of the town on the Sunday and Monday - A heritage presentation will take place on Tuesday October 4 in the Town Library's Church Gallery at 6.30pm. The theme of the presentation will focus on the traditional Hiring Fairs that were common in large towns like this one in the 18th and 19th Century. There will also be a short bilingual talk on Conamara Spailpiní in East Galway by RTÉ broadcaster, Máirtín Davy.

The Tarmac Tug of War will take place on Wednesday October 5 on Society Street at 8.30 p.m. The popular Soapbox Derby kicks off on Thursday October 6. at 8.00 p.m. from Dunlo St. into St. Michael's Square. On Wednesday and Thursday night the Singing Competitions in pubs and taverns occurs. These are sure to be two great nights featuring a host of local musicians, singers and dancers. Check out the festival Facebook page for details of the participating pubs and their start times.

Friday October 7 promises to be a special night of the Fair. The finals of the Tug of War will start at 9pm on Society Street. The Supermacs Fireworks Display will light up the skyline. The Fireworks are scheduled to take place at 8.30pm and are preceded by family entertainment in the car park adjacent to St Michael's Church starting at 7pm. One of the new events for this year is a Jiving Competition which will take place in the marquee in St Michael's Square after the Fireworks.

The Mare and Foal Fair Classes will take place on the Fair Green arena alongside the Horse Fair on Saturday October 8 also known as the Country Fair Day. Also on the Saturday, the Credit Union Festival Soundstage will host local musicians and dancers on Dunlo Street.

The Sunday is a Family Day in the town with an assortment of fun events, including the Dog Show, Food and Craft Market, Street and Vintage Parade, competitions for children in arts, crafts & bakery.

A new event taking place this year is the Junior Tractor Grand Prix. This event is open to four to eight-year old pedal tractor enthusiasts; entry is limited with great prizes on offer.

For more details on the festival events 2016 check out the festival website ballinasloeoctoberfair.com. or check out the festival Facebook page [Facebook/ballinasloeifair](https://www.facebook.com/ballinasloeifair)



William Duthie from Ballinasloe Credit Union with Charles Conlon, the winner of the BCU Horse Of The Fair 2015.



Winners of Soap-Box Challenge 2015, Omega 3, from Dunmore. Team of Greg Fallon, Damien Coleman & driver Robert Kenny, with Adrian Ahern (Ballinasloe Fair & Festival) with Cllr. Michael Finnerty.

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MIKE McKEIGUE OF KILTORMER - A TRIBUTE NIGHT

BY LAURA SHEEHAN

A Mike McKeigue Tribute Night takes place on Saturday November 12 at 8pm in Kiltormer Sports Complex. It is 40 years since the premature and untimely passing of Mike McKeigue, one of the most coveted and respected accordion players of his or any other era.

Mike was born in Coxtown, Kiltormer on March 7 1948, the second youngest in a family of nine, born to Tomas and Molly (nee Mitchell). His siblings were Peggy, Kitty, Johnny, Thady, Ina, Agnes, Patrick and Benny.

The first tune that Mike ever learned was "Bimbo" a number one hit for Jim Reeves in the mid 1950's. He learnt this on a concertina he got from Frank Mitchell, a family relative. His brother Johnny bought him his first accordion in 1957 in Ballinasloe for the sum of £10.00 which would be equivalent to a King's ransom at the time. In his earlier years he took part in and won various medals at Galway, Connacht and All Ireland Fleadh Cheoil.

He then proceeded to tour all over Ireland, England and Scotland with different groups including Aughrim Slopes, Ballinasloe Comhaltas Ceoltóirí, Leitrim Céili Band and Kiltormer Céili Band. Mike played full back for Kiltormer Minor Hurlers in 1965, 1966. He also loved farming with a special devotion to horses.

Proceedings on the Tribute Night will begin at 7pm with a Juvenile, Traditional Music section. The main act begins at 8pm sharp with MC for the night Kevin Rohan, who presents a Sunday morning Irish Traditional Music programme for Galway Bay FM radio.

Among the stars taking part are:

Joe Burke, Ann Conroy-Burke, Deirdre McSherry, Eileen O'Brien, Cein Sweeney, Daithí Gormley, Órlaith McAuliffe, Valerie Seale, Maureen Browne, Martin Connolly, Iomar Barrett, Eanna Mulchrone, Mary McMahan, plus many more.



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With a very successful one person play "Myra's Story" and an electric opening night concert for the Larry Reynolds Weekend with Alan Kelly & Eddi Reader Band recently behind the venue in September - the next few weeks have a few high points.

The Cinema screen will be back running in the Town Hall Theatre on Thursday October 3. There will be two films shown on the day. At 2.30pm, The Secret Life of Pets – an animation about a group of pets on a mission against the humans who have done them wrong - will be aired which is sure to be a hit with the younger generation in the area. As the screenings are on only a few days after Halloween, the Theatre will also be showing horror movie, The Conjuring 2, which is about a young girl who is possessed by a demon, at 7.30pm.

The tickets cost €3 for children, €5 for students and €7 for adults.

ArdSCOIL Mhuire will bring their production of "Oklahoma" to the stage of the Town Hall Theatre on November 22 to 24. The show will be performed by Transition Year students with auditions due to take place in the coming weeks. It will be directed by

local man, Eoin Croffy.

The Annual Panto has been cast and they too are in Rehearsals for this year production of "Little Red Riding Hood" which will have a weeks long run Dec – 13th - 20th.

Preparations are underway for Ballinasloe Musical Society's March production of "Oliver." Rehearsals begin with a meet and greet night and workshop with the Director Paul Norton. A date for this event has yet to be confirmed so be sure to keep an eye on the Town Hall Theatre Facebook page for updates. The show will be open to adults and children nine and over. Auditions are due to take place in October. The show will run from March 21 to 25 in the Town Hall Theatre.

December is Panto time and between Rehearsals and Show time see the building tied up from 7th to the 20th of Dec and the return of the " 'Twas the night before Christmas " Show takes place on the 21st of Dec.

If you or your group has any ideas for use of the venue for Performance, readings, viewings, or even just rehearsal please make contact with (0)90 964 3779 or info@ballinasloetownhall.com



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LEINSTER SCHOOL OF MUSIC AWARDS DAVID KENNEDY

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



Eyrecourt Songster David Kennedy has been given the special honour of being nominated for the Leinster School of Music and Drama National Excellence Awards following his exams in Musical Theatre with the Majella Flanagan Theatre Company.

Examiners nominated David as he was a student who excelled in the performance of his piece of Musical Theatre. He has gone on to compete at national level in these awards as a result.

The majority of students in the Theatre Company received First Class Honours in their National Examinations, the highest credit achievable. Students were awarded Certificates in Solo Acting, Speech and Drama and Musical Theatre. Six students achieved a minimum of 95 marks in their exams and were awarded gold medals for their achievement.

All of the students who completed their exams were recently presented with Leinster School of Music and Drama certificates at a special presentation ceremony held in St Mary's Hall, Athlone.

It is a new departure for the Majella Flanagan Theatre Company to have students completing these Examinations. To achieve such high marks for their performances is a great credit to them and an indicative of Majella's talent and teaching techniques.

In a different capacity, another student of the Theatre Company, local girl Jessica Mannion has made it through to the next round of the Junior Eurovision Song Contest.

Athlone native, Majella now resides in Co. Roscommon. She is a well-known award winning singer and actress. She has been teaching performing arts in the area for many years now. Her classes are held in the Town Hall Theatre. She has also directed many school shows in the town and surrounding area.

For further information on classes, contact Majella Flanagan on (086) 382 4545 or email flanaganmajella@gmail.com



Majella Flanagan Theatre Company Medal Winners and Excellence Award Nominees with their teacher Majella Flanagan

(L-R) David Kennedy, Mark Shanagher, Nicole Reaney, Sarah Mai Kavanagh, Emma Fahey, Niamh Glynn, Laoise Flanagan, Majella Flanagan



Majella Flanagan Theatre Company exam students receiving Leinster School of Music & Drama Certificates with their teacher Majella Flanagan

Front row (L-R) Mia Plunkett, Sophia Doorly, Sive O'Brien, Rachael Brooks, Lucy Allen, Holly Donohue
Second row (L-R) Keela Plunkett, Elsie Allen, Katie Clarke, Abbie Ganly, Chloe Mulryan, Nadine Whyte, Mariam Meladi

Third row (L-R) Majella Flanagan, David Gately, Shane Earley, Tara Kennedy, Katie Tomas, Marsha Neilan, Emily Carter, Aimee Plunkett, Niamh Curley, Jessica Mannion, Amy Kelly

Fourth row (L-R) Mark Shanagher, Nicole Reaney, Sarah Mai Kavanagh, Clodagh Kennedy, Emma Fahey
Back row (L-R) David Kennedy, Laoise Flanagan, Niamh Glynn



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LOCAL MAN JOINS CANADIAN TRIATHLON TEAM

BY LAURA SHEEHAN

Paddy Birch, originally from Ahascragh, recently qualified for the Canadian Triathlon team.

He joins the team as an 'Age Group Athlete' which means that he will be representing them for his age group – 25 to 29 years old.

Paddy could not find employment as a plumber here and hence emigrated to Canada a few years ago to seek employment and for many will be remembered as the happy bartender in Mauds in his younger apprentice days!

The qualifying process is tough - "In order to get picked for the team I had to take part in one of the five official qualifying races. I decided to race in the Canadian National Championships in Ottawa".

On the night before the race there was a heavy thunderstorm which led to the swim section of the Triathlon being cancelled as the conditions were not up to standard. Instead of the 1,500m swim there was a two kilometre run. "So instead of swim, bike, run, it was run, bike, run, in all honesty this suited me better. I'm a much better runner than swimmer" adds Paddy.

He finished 15th overall in the race and managed to win his age group category ensuring that he became the 25-29-year old Canadian National Champion for Olympic distance triathlon.

Paddy's interest in Triathlons goes back a few years when he began running with the 'Running Against Cancer' group in Ballinasloe. He joined the Tri-Athlone and signed up for the Try A Tri, which is the shortest Triathlon distance. "After that race I felt it was something I would like to give a good go and see what I could do in it", adds Paddy.

He believes that if you love what you're doing and you're doing something that makes you happy then you won't feel like you have to make sacrifices. As he usually gets up around 5:30am to get his workouts done, Paddy states it was "the biggest change I made. I'm very lucky that my girlfriend, Elaine Barrett (from Ballinasloe) is very understanding and



knows that my Sunday four or five hour bike ride is needed".

When asked what are his upcoming plans as part of the Canadian Triathlon Team, Paddy replied by saying "The World Championships in Rotterdam is the big race next season and I'm going to go hard for that. I put in a hard few months and I'm taking a little break now to get few aches and pains sorted. I'm doing a couple of time trial bike races and I may do the Toronto Half Marathon in a couple of months".

Paddy has nothing but praise for the facilities here in the town. "The facilities that we have in Ballinasloe are great. Not many towns have two swimming pools and a running track. It's great to see everyone in Ballinasloe Cycling Club helping out new people get onto the bike. Hopefully we will see some children from the area getting into the sport in the future", continues Paddy.

Although Paddy now has Canadian Residency following his move there in 2013, he still has hopes for his home town and the surrounding area. "I'm the same as everyone at home and the main hope for the future is more jobs. In my home village of Ahascragh there is great work being done by the Ahascragh Development Association. It's really good to see so many people from the community getting together".

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HENRY LOUGHNANE - NEW TOWN AFC MANAGER



BY LAURA SHEEHAN



Henry Loughnane -
Ballinasloe Town AFC
Manager

Ballinasloe Town AFC's new manager Henry Loughnane is a former Ballinasloe Town and League of Ireland soccer player who played for Galway United and Athlone Town as well as Mervue United in the Connacht Senior League. He is hoping that all of this experience will stand to him as the new manager.

The 35 year old - met his wife Celine, a Special Needs Assistant in Ardscoil Mhuire when they were 18 and have been married some 17 years now. They have two children, Mia and Harry. Mia is 15 and is in Junior Cert in Ardscoil Mhuire and Harry is 11 and in 6th class in Scoil Ui Cheithearnaigh.

He has been working in Aldi's local store for the past two years and enjoys it very much as he says "it's a great company to work for and there is great comradery between management and staff. I'm also a member of Ballinasloe Golf Club. There is nothing like a game of golf to help you to relax and unwind."

"I am just going to try and rebuild the team after so many players left in the last three or four years, my goal is to regain the Connacht Cup and also to have a major run in the Irish Cup, but also try to develop new players in the club and get our second team to make an effort to get trophies this season" states the new Gaffer. The team are hoping to recruit new players in the coming weeks.

The Roscommon and District Football League is always a highly anticipated affair. For this year, "I think Castlereagh who are the holders will definitely be knocking on the door again, Moore United who are always at the business end come what may and Ballymoe who are improving all the time and are just after opening their new pitch lately all have great chances and of course ourselves", said Henry.

Henry believes that diet is key when playing sports and states that eating the right foods at the right times and drinking plenty of water is so important to any athlete.

His biggest fan and supporter since he became involved in soccer at the age of eight is his dad, Paddy. "He has travelled all over the country with me throughout my career and never missed a match unless he was under the weather. He is just gone 85 and still turns up to support me and the club whenever he is up to it".



Proud father Paddy Loughnane holds the Connacht Cup with son Henry (right) and Ballinasloe Town player Shane Treacy (left)



Henry Loughnane with his 2013 Connacht Cup winner's medal

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NEW SEASON COMES WITH NEW COMMITTEE FOR FOOTBALL CLUB

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



Ballinasloe Town Association Football Club are set for an exciting and hopefully fruitful new season in both the Roscommon and District Football League for its Senior A & B teams and the Athlone and District Schoolboys/Girls League for its Juveniles. A new committee is working to oversee preparations for the new 2016/17 soccer season.

Newly elected to the committee are the following - Chairperson Joby Kelly, Secretary Ciaran Keighrey, Treasurer Brendan Fahy, PRO Neil Evason and Child Welfare Officer Katie O'Connor.

The Club recently presented young local woman Heather Payne with an award for her recent achievement in being chosen as the FAI Under 16 Women's International Player of the Year.

The Senior A team are enjoying a successful start to the new season under new Manager Henry Loughnane. They defeated St John's Athletic 3-1 in Lecarrow with Mark Duffy, David Grehan and Shane Treacy scoring the goals. The Under 12's entertained Corofin United in the 1st Round of the S.F.A.I. Cup where they had a huge win of 5-0. Keleen Cawley scored two goals, while the other three were scored by Kai Keighery, Josh McCarthy and Eoin Connell.

The Under 13 Team also played in the S.F.A.I. Cup against Newtown FC but were defeated 2-0. The Under 11's South Squad travelled to Athlone IT to play A.C. Celtic and lost out in a 3-1 defeat.

The Club are looking for new players across all ages from seniors to juveniles, both boys and girls, who can join from under six through to under 14 age groups and across all standards of play to get involved, the ultimate goal is to get as many participants enjoying playing soccer as possible.

They are looking for more people to become involved in the coaching side of the club as

well, so if you feel you have something to offer, contact Joby Kelly at 087 631 7817. They provide excellent coaching, comfortable facilities and an enjoyable experience for the coaches and players, parents/guardians and supporters each season.

If you require more information or details such a registration costs, training times etc, you can contact the Club Chairperson Joby Kelly at 0876317817 or you can find further information on upcoming match fixtures on their new website www.ballinasloetownafc.com. The new site will be bringing all the official news of the club to the locals in an accessible way for everyone.



Ballinasloe Town's Tony Coyne presents Heather Payne with an award recognising her achievement for being called up by the FAI for the Irish U16 International team



Under 12 panel



Mark Duffy, Senior A Team, against St John's Athletics

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CLODAGH GLYNN YOU ARE AN IRONMAN

BY LAURA SHEEHAN

Kiltormer native Clodagh Glynn first moved to Australia in May 2010 following completion of her Postgrad Dip in Physical Education at the University of Limerick. With the economic crisis very few teachers were able to find posts in Ireland and were forced to venture further afield in hope of a job. Clodagh attended Kiltormer National School and Ard Scoil Mhuire.

Growing up Clodagh was a self-confessed 'sports obsessed' girl, she took part in any sport she could with camogie being top of the list. "I had never done the J1 to the USA like most of my friends and I regretted it. I was too committed to the Camogie club, but I made a pact to myself that if I helped get the team up to senior, then it would be the right time for me to travel" says Clodagh. That time came when her Kiltormer team reached senior level by beating Mountbellew Moylough in 2009 and following this, Clodagh decided to pack up and move to Perth.

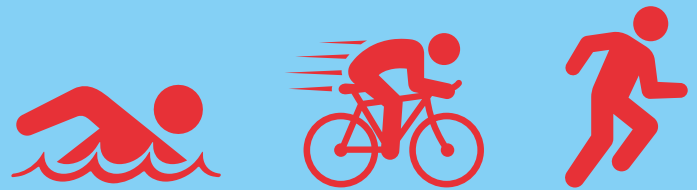
Clodagh proves that if at first you don't get what you hoped for there are ways around it. She barely missed out on PE teaching in the University of Limerick and so opted to take her second choice which was Sport and Exercise Science. Four years later, Clodagh successfully made it through to the Postgrad Diploma in Education which allowed her to become the PE teacher she had always wanted to be. "I was successful and graduated in 2010 with a distinction", adds Clodagh.

In December 2014, Clodagh decided to register for the Busselton Ironman. The Ironman challenge consists of a 3.8km swim, 180km cycle and a 42.2km run, which covers 226km from start to finish in one day. It is thought to be the hardest one-day endurance race in the whole world. She trains up to 20 hours a week as well as holding down a full-time teaching position.

"I competed in the Busso 2014 Ironman and came 2nd in my age group", continues Clodagh. It was at the finish of this race that Clodagh first heard about 'The Big Island' challenge in Kona, Hawaii. "Here I was having done my first Ironman, standing with my 2nd place trophy, over the moon. But... deep down inside there was a new challenge itching away at me. Ironman was done, next challenge, 'The Big Island'.

In hope of reaching 'The Big Island' challenge, the Ironman World Championships, Clodagh began training with triathletes and joined a swim team to improve. "There was evidence of improvement. My bike started to improve drastically as did my swim; the run, well that's a work in progress, but we are getting there", adds Clodagh. In the run up to a race, she trains twice a day on weekdays and then has longer combined sessions on the weekends.

It was in June in Cairns that Clodagh's dreams of reaching the Ironman World Championships became real. "This was my day. I finished in 2nd position in a time of 10:44:11, 'Clodagh Glynn You Are An Ironman', but I didn't know until 12pm the next day, 'I qualified for the 2016 Ironman World Championships in Kona, Hawaii', Clodagh says enthusiastically.



Clodagh realises that a lot of changes come with such an intense training regime. She values the importance of supportive friends and family. "Thanks to all the great people who support and understand the commitment and sacrifices in achieving this goal – I'm lucky to be surrounded by like-minded fantastic people and great friends. I could thank lots of people, but the people who have helped me out when I needed it most, know who they are and how truly grateful I am", reflects Clodagh.

"Dreams do come true, but by god do you have to work for them. I am off to the 'Big Island'. Cairns was a challenging day where I went through some dark patches, but I dug deep and got myself a spot to Kona", she adds.

Clodagh will take on the World Ironman Championships in Hawaii in early October. She will fly out ten days prior to the race taking place as she wants to acclimatise and prepare as much as possible.



KARATE ARRIVAL TO TOWN FOUR DECADES AGO

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



40 years have passed since Leo Mulvany climbed the stairs to the Social Centre Gym in Society Street to see what the local karate club was about. He liked what he saw so he joined the club and the rest is history.

At that time, Richard Hayes, a native of Portumna, was the Sensei in charge of Itosu-Kai karate in Ballinasloe (1976). Richard had worked in Toronto for a number of years and practised karate under Shihan Kei Tsumura, the Chief Instructor of Shito-Ryu Itosu-Kai Karate in Canada. Training in the early days was tough and strict and we were certainly fit. Leo remembers many of the members from 1976, Michael O'Hehir, Liam Jordan, Alo Quinn (RIP), Raphael McCormack, Noel Ryan, Barbara Hill to mention a few.

As more students began practising karate in the area (from local and neighbouring towns) it was inevitable after a time, that other Itosu-Kai karate clubs would open. This was orchestrated by the Ballinasloe headquarters (Hombu Dojo) under Richard, Leo and Tony Dolphin. The first clubs outside of the town were in Loughrea and Athlone.

In 1981, Leo and Tony travelled to Toronto, Canada, and trained under Shihan Kei Tsumura for a few weeks. Leo was ranked to 1st Dan degree black belt in Toronto and was Richard's first student to attain this rank. Tony followed suit in 1983 and ranked to 1st Dan. These were heady days indeed, karate was a relatively new phenomenon and together with training, teaching, travelling, demonstrating and competing, it was so exciting to be in karate and breaking new ground. Those who travelled to Dublin in 1977 to compete in the All-Ireland Karate Championships held in the Mansion House are unlikely to ever forget the experience!

Karate went from strength to strength over time. In the early eighties, Richard passed the instructorship to Leo who became the

chief instructor of Itosu-Kai Karatedo Ireland (IKKI). The association kept up its international links over the years by travelling to Canada to train with Tsumura Shihan in both karate and kobudo, the ancient art of weaponry and to take part in the Canadian Karate Championships. The Irish Association owes a debt of gratitude to the Canadian Association and Tsumura Shihan for his patience, inspiration and teaching over the past 40 years. Tsumura Shihan was no stranger to these shores as the Irish association hosted him and his instructors on at least 10 occasions since the late 70's.

The IKKI has evolved to a truly internationally recognised force in world karate. Attending national and international training seminars and competitions is vital in maintaining a world standard and to undergo peer review at that level. IKKI affiliation and involvement with both national and international organisations has proved essential and beneficial for the administration and governance of the association.

This takes huge effort and commitment from coaches, instructors, students and family. Student performances tends to be our showcase quite often and they show this in abundance.

However, our main priority is to provide a social outlet for everyone in our communities, male, female, young and not so young and to provide a safe and positive karate training experience for all.

There are 9 dojos in the IKKI association: Ballinasloe (Hombu Dojo), New Inn (Tony Dolphin), Galway City (Claire Harte), Kiltormer (Marie Dolphin), Loughrea (Kevin Casey), Eyrecourt (John Dolphin), Mountrath & Roscrea (Donal Monahan), Mountbellew (Jake Mulvany).

For a comprehensive review of IKKI activities browse our website: www.itosukaiireland.org



At the Itosu-Ryu Karate Championships, Los Angeles, July 2016. L-R: Jake Mulvany, John Dolphin, Marie Dolphin, Leo Mulvany (IKKI Chief Instructor), Tony Dolphin & Josh Judge.



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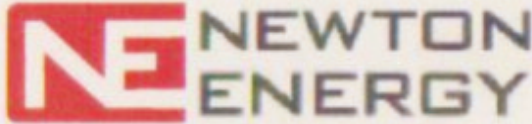
LOCAL GIRL WINS AT COMMUNITY GAMES

Local girl Ava McKeon represented the town and Galway County throughout this year's Community Games in Athletics. During the summer, Ava won a Gold medal at the County National Games in Ballinderreen which put her through to the National Community Games in Athlone.

Ava continued her success at Nationals and took first place in the Under 12, 600 metre run.

Earlier this year, Ava finished in the top five in the 600 metre run in both the Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

Ava McKeon National Community Games Champion



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BALLINASLOE AND DISTRICT ANGLERS CLUB FACE NEW SEASON



BY LAURA SHEEHAN

Active in the community for many years, Ballinasloe and District Anglers Club enjoy a long and fine tradition with the community, businesses and land owners alike.

Recently, the Club held its Annual General Meeting in the function room in Burke's Bar and thanked members and locals for their continued support of the Club.

As the locals have it - You know when the Horse Fair is on that the fishing season will soon commence. This year, the target is to begin on October 16 with another competition to be ran prior to the Barney Keogh Cup during the October Bank Holiday weekend. The Barney Keogh Cup is a two-day competition which is run over the Saturday and Sunday at two different prominent locations - sponsored by Joe's Bar on Society Street. This event is the main pike competition for the Anglers Club.



Raymond Casey RIP, John Connell, Aidan Monchler (Club Secretary) with the Barney Ceogh Cup

As always the location of each competition is chosen by a subcommittee of five members which is picked just days before the competition. Only at the gathering of anglers on the day of the event is the closely guarded secret location revealed and then it's down to the old saying 'may the best one win'. The day isn't only about winning but also about having fun. Not one person is left without a lift or a friend to talk to, have a laugh with which is testament to the character of anglers, as it is not just sport but a place to build friendships.

Operating out of Ballinasloe and the surrounding area, the Club mostly avail of the waters of the River Suck. Being over 100k/s in length the river boasts some of the finest pike waters any angler has had the pleasure to enjoy with its many species such as trout, bream, perch, pike, eel, roach and even salmon.

The abundance of opportunity to use the natural resource for all it has to offer, not least the fishing but the many walks, marinas and the

ability to enjoy these activities with several generations of family, it is no wonder so many have gained so much in wellbeing and health from being part of the Anglers Club.

Highlight for season 2016 was the addition of a Ladies Angling day - when all necessary equipment and instruction was provided for by Club members for new and current female anglers!

"Alas as we attended our AGM in September our esteemed colleague, confident and friend Raymond Casey known as Raver Casey sadly lost his battle with cancer. He will be sadly missed by his fellow anglers, family, friends and no doubt his colleagues in the County Council. Having served our community in both his professional career with the Council and young and old alike in his angling knowledge. The Town of Ballinasloe and County Galway has lost one of its most favourite sons. Laugh, live, love all to the full. These are the gifts he portrayed in all aspects of his life.

There are so many happy stories about Raymond the Raver Casey it is difficult to pick one. However, when the gathering of anglers occurred before we set out in competition, no matter how bad the weather, a yarn joke or the distinct charismatic smile would manage to brighten the mood of anyone.

"The Ballinasloe and District Anglers club would like to express our sadness and deepest sympathy with the family and friends of Raymond Casey (Raver). We would like to give the final message to the one and only Raver Casey. To our dear friend, now as our rivers only; you run free, with tight lines we will remember thee. Thank you", said Jason Smith PRO of the Club.

Further information on joining or forthcoming events - see their facebook page Ballinasloe and District Anglers Club or Sec. williampaulhickey@gmail.com

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TENNIS CLUB'S INNOVATIVE SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAMME SUCCESS

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



Ballinasloe Tennis Club has been leading the way in making sport accessible for everyone with a dedicated Special Needs Programme that has been running in recent weeks.

Every Monday night at 6pm up to 12 players from the Brothers of Charity Services have been participating in structured tennis sessions with club coach Robert Johnson, with the assistance of other club members and Brothers of Charity staff. This is the first time that some of the participants have had the opportunity to be involved in a sport of any kind, and they have all been greatly enjoying the experience.

Although players' abilities vary, some are certainly talented enough to be able to compete with other club members. The feedback has been so positive from everyone involved that the club is now making arrangements to allow players to use the courts during the day to play and further improve their skills. Tennis Ireland have also taken an interest in the club's success with the programme and have now provided some funding to allow the club to continue and expand the sessions.

One of the players, Triona Larkin, has also joined the Tennis Club Committee. "I am in the Tope Centre which is part of the Brothers of Charity Services Galway. We meet every Tuesday at my centre. I help with fundraising ideas and volunteering for their great days out like the Open Day.

"We are very excited to be helping with the clubs plans for new indoor courts, so we can play tennis and lots of other activities even when it's raining. We sometimes have trips to Caltra to use their hall, but it will be great to have our own place in town. I feel great when I am at the meetings. Joe, our Chairman always listens to me. I love everyone on the Committee." states Triona.

She believes other sporting groups in the Community should ask people to join them especially people who want to live independently and be a part of the community.

"They could be surprised at how we can help. when I was a small girl I played tennis with Mr and Mrs Groake and now I play on Mondays at the special needs coaching sessions with our coach Rob, he makes the sessions all different and great fun. The Tennis Club are very good to ask us to join; as very few local Clubs invite us to join in and play their sports" says Triona.

In other news, adults are currently participating in the Midlands League Men's Doubles Competition. The Club has already hosted Birr at home and played away to Portumna, Roscrea and Templemore. The team have won three of the four matches played, and will now be competing in the semi-finals. The Club will also be competing in Ladies and Gent's Doubles Competition in Loughrea October 14-16, and are finalising details of a Junior interclub event. All other activities continue as normal in the Club, including Junior coaching Monday nights and youth and adult coaching Friday nights.

Anyone who wants to join, even if you are tiny, small or young or very grown up you can all have great fun playing tennis. You can email us about joining or helping out at bsloetennis@gmail.com.

For further update see
<https://www.facebook.com/bsloetennisclub>
email bsloetennis@gmail.com
or call Garry on (085) 112 4197



Patrick Staunton, Darragh Flynn, Shane McDermott, Bernard McDermott, Michelle Garvey



Triona Larkin, Evelyn Larkin, Patrick Staunton, Michelle Garvey, Declan Briscoe



Bernard McDermott, Shane McDermott, Anthony Mullen

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SIX BALLINASLOE RFC GIRLS MAKE CONNACHT SQUAD

BY LAURA SHEEHAN

And so another season starts for the Mini's, Under 13's, Under 15's and Under 18's girls' teams. Following on from a hugely successful season last year where the Under 15 girls retained the Connacht League and Cup and the Under 18 girls who were unfortunately defeated in both the League and Cup finals by a strong Westport team. The Rugby Club are hoping for another successful season this year.

The Club are delighted that six of their Under 18 team are playing representative rugby for the Under 18 Connacht team - Georgia Codyre, Aisling Murphy, Aoibheann Reilly, Niamh Kenny, Natasha Sheppard Walsh and Sarah Dent.

As well as that, Aoibheann Reilly and Sarah Dent were called up to the Provisional Irish Under 18's 7-a-side squad.

In Club news, the First team won their first game of the season against Buccaneers in Athlone with a final score of 33-10. There is a great support team around the girls with qualified coaches and mentors and a great group of parents whose interest and enthusiasm for the sport makes it all the more worthwhile.

The Club are always looking for new girls to join and give rugby a try, whatever age they are, so if anybody is interested you can contact any of the names below or check out the Facebook page www.facebook.com/BALLINASLOERUGBYCLUB/.

Minis / Under 13	Paul Russell	085 1729888
Mike Noone	087 4181938	
Under 15	Gearoid Finneran	089 2050403
Under 18	Declan Murphy	086 8548046



Ballinasloe girls wearing the green of Connacht

SWIMMING COMMUNITY GAMES NATIONALS AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY LAURA SHEEHAN

The Under 13 Girls Swimming Relay squad from Ballinasloe represented County Galway at the Swimming Community Games Nationals which was held in Athlone recently.

The relay team made up of - Ruth Dolan, Tara and Ava McKeon, Caoimhe Kennedy & Ailbhe Hanrahan, came second and won silver in a close final race with less than half a second between first and second place. This was the third national relay medal won by four members of this talented team. They also won gold in the medley relay and silver in the freestyle relay at the National Primary School National Championships back in February.

Swimmers also took part in the individual events in the Community Games. Ailbhe Hanrahan made it into the semi-final of the Under 14 girls Freestyle, Caoimhe Kennedy and Sheenagh Hanrahan both just missed out qualifying for the semi-final in the Under 14 Backstroke and the Under 12 Freestyle respectively, Vivienne Naughton swam well in the Under 10 Backstroke and Matilda Kelly had two strong swims in both the heat and semi-final of the Under Eight Girls Freestyle, she missed out qualifying for the final by a small margin. Daniel Mooney made it into the semi-final of the Under 10 Boys Freestyle and just missed out on qualifying for the final.

Members of the Swimming Club also took part in the Swimming National Championships. Ruth Dolan took part in the Division 1 Irish Age Group



L-R Tara McKeon, Caoimhe Kennedy, Ava McKeon, Ailbhe Hanrahan, Ruth Dolan.

Championship made it to the finals of the 100 metre Butterfly and 100 metre Breaststroke. She finished in 5th position in the 100 metre Breaststroke.

Caoimhe Kennedy and Ethan Moran competed in the Division 2 National Championships in Limerick. Ethan made it into the final of the 16-18 year-old 100 metre Backstroke where he finished in 5th position. He was on the younger side of the category and was the first 16 year-old to finish.

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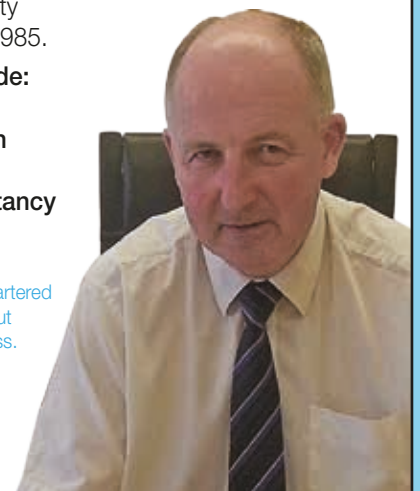
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Ballinasloe GAA LOTTO WINNER

At the Presentation of the Ballinasloe GAA Lotto Winning Cheque of €12,100 to the Winner Ruairí Ó hAnluain were

Left to Right: Stephen Ruane, Aisling Ní Chualáin, Aileen Rohan, Ruairí Ó hAnluain, Brendan Kelly, Pat O'Sullivan, Cathal, Clíodhna and Oscar Ó hAnluain, Seamus Duffy.



BALLINASLOE U16 SQUAD

Back Row L to R: Craig Potter, Ódhrán Dooley, Shane Jennings, John Coughlan, Oisín McCormack, Stuart Madden, Riain Dolan, Mark Poland, Adam O'Connor, Michael McDermott, Micilín Fogarty, Conor Coleman. Front Row L to R: Aaron Keighrey, Andy Naessens, Jack Mitchell, Shane Carrig, Cian Reynolds, Oisín Duffy, Josh Hanney, Fintan Donnellan, Niall Kelly, Naoise Murphy, Tom Fitzpatrick, Ronan Parker. Manager: Aidan Dooley Trainers: Des Jennings, Cathal Coleman, Pat Potter, John Mitchell

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BUYING LOCAL – AND NOT FORGETTING YOUR ROOTS

BY LAURA SHEEHAN



Almost two years ago the town had the great pleasure of having a local man – Colm McLoughlin accept an invitation by the Ballinasloe October Fair & Festival committee to officially open the event.

In the course of that weekend's visit to his home town Colm gave a fantastic interview to several hundred local and business people detailing his work experience and his career over the past four decades. Colm McLoughlin from Derrymullen is responsible for setting up Dubai Duty Free and growing it to be the largest Duty Free Airport in the world – with over 6,000 employees. What an achievement!

He is such a well-respected gentleman all over the world but let it be known that he was humbled and delighted to come back and officiate at the oldest Horse Fair & Festival in Europe.

During a recent visit to Dubai, Mary Phelan (Secretary of the Fair & Festival) met with Colm and his wife Breeda and was given a true "Cead Mile Failte" by them. She was taken on a tour of the Irish Village which was the brainchild of Colm and it employs mostly young Irish seeking experience and culture in the Middle East.

They all know Colm & Breeda by name as they take a personal interest in their staff. The highlight of her night was dinner outside the Ballinasloe Post Office. On the wall of the Village pub is a painting proudly depicting the Ballinasloe October Fair.

The pride that Colm has for his home town is enviable. The Asian Hurling Tournament took place on the Sept 23, 2015 - Dubai Duty Free is the main sponsor of the GAA Dubai Celts and with Ballinasloe in his mind he sponsored the sliotars for the competition – purchased from Cooper's – a Ballinasloe based company – the market leader in Hurling helmets!!

Advt.



Colm and his team presents Cooper Sliotars to the Dubai Celts for the Asian Games.

Dubai Duty Free officials headed by Colm McLoughlin, Executive Vice Chairman & CEO; Ramesh Cidambi, Chief Operating Officer; Sinead El Sibai, Vice President - Marketing and Sean Staunton, Vice President – Operations and President of Dubai Celts GAA, presenting the sliotars to Stephen Twomey, Chairman of Dubai Celts GAA and Michael Redmond, Vice Chairman.



Photo taken outside 'Ballinasloe Post Office' in the Irish Village, Dubai, another one of Colm's many initiatives.

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JAMES KEMPSTER'S GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER JOINS LIBRARY OPENING

BY JANE LESLIE



Jane Leslie, the great-granddaughter of James Kempster, the original architect of the Convent of Mercy Chapel in the 1800s, joined in celebrating the opening of the new Library. This is her account of the day.

Driving from Waterford to Ballinasloe recently, I thought back to great-grandpa's first journey there in the year 1837. Travelling from London by train (or maybe coach) then by boat to Dublin or maybe to Cork and then on, presumably, by coach – the train lines in Ireland were still a thing of the future – it must have been quite an eye-opener for the 21 year-old. He had been successful in the exams for County Surveyor in Ireland and was appointed to Galway – a position he held for 53 years. He married a local girl, Catherine Maher, in 1841 and they had nine children all born in the family home at Mount Pleasant including my grandfather, Frank.

My mother always said that the first thing she noticed when she arrived in Ballinasloe was the smell of turf smoke! I parked my car at the Shearwater Hotel and strolled to Society Street which was where, according to Slater's Directory of 1846, James Kempster had his office. I was early so I went up Mount Pleasant to look at the old Kempster home, around the Fair Green and then in to the library.

I feel very sure that if he could see the wonderful facility that is being provided at the new Library for the whole community, great grandpa would be really chuffed. And how my grandfather, Frank, would have loved to spend time there. He was a voracious reader and I think spent most of his money on books. He might have been rather bamboozled by the computer facilities, wi-fi and audio visual systems but not so today's library members who must be over the moon to have such up-to-date technology available.

I was given the very warmest of welcomes from the minute I arrived by Ann who knew exactly who I was and who took me to meet Peter, the Librarian, Peter, An Cathaoirleach, resplendent in his chain, and so many more, all of whom greeted me as if I was important. Great grandpa did the work, not I! Familiar faces were there – Marian Harkin, MEP and Senator

Ronan Mullen. I met a number of the Mercy Sisters who all had treasured memories of their time in the old Convent and of course in the Chapel.

After official photos were taken in front of the brightly painted yellow door on Society Street and the ribbon was cut by An Cathaoirleach, we were ushered upstairs to the Chapel itself where the sun lit up the stained glass windows.

Having spent years involved in amateur drama, I was impressed with the stage management of the speeches. Peter, the Librarian, acted as M.C., everyone had their words ready, no one spoke for too long, the contribution made by so many members of the town were deservedly acknowledged and a very interesting video played throughout the proceedings showing the different stages of the demolition and rebuilding.

I sat in the front row beside Paul Mannion, the architect responsible for the conversion and he said that, while the finished building may look deceptively simple, there were many, many problems to be overcome in the course of the work. Renovation and preservation always throw up one difficulty after another and he can be very proud of the final outcome of all his hard labour.

The Sisters that I spoke to all said that the Sisters of Mercy Order had been in situ since 1853 but the records state that the Chapel was built 1864. Well, if it was 1853, that was the year my grandfather was born, and if it was 1864, James Kempster had sadly been a widower for six years. I found a record recently which said that his wife, Catherine, died of consumption. Catherine's sister, my namesake, Jane, moved into the home to look after the children. James and his family continued to live in Ballinasloe, his parents came from London to live with him and they are all buried in the graveyard at St. Matthew's Church of Ireland at Glenloughan. James, himself, died in 1893, just a few months after my father, also called James, was born in Dublin. I'm very happy to say that I have a ten-year-old grandson, who carries on the tradition and is yet again called James!

Listening in to various conversations while we were being served refreshments, I learned that ten years had passed since the Convent had been bought initially by Galway County Council and that the road to completion of the library had been full of obstacles and pitfalls, stress and sleepless nights! Well, it was worth all the pain and suffering and to all of those people who were involved in the conversion, I offer, on behalf of my family, my heartiest congratulations and my sincerest thanks for including me in the happy occasion of the opening of the new Ballinasloe Library.



WHEN THE FIT-UPS CAME TO TOWN

BY BARRY LARRY



As a youngster back in the '50s I recall seeing a poster in a shop window announcing the imminent arrival at the Town Hall of Anew McMaster's celebrated troupe of players to present a week-long feast of theatrical delights for the delectation of the good citizens of Ballinasloe. McMaster's odd-sounding first name left me puzzled. Was he a newer version of an older McMaster? I wondered.

It was only many years later I learned that Anew was a childish mispronunciation of Andrew that the great man had kept as his stage name. Born in Birkenhead in 1891, he ran away from home as a teenager, eventually making a career for himself in the London theatrical world. To avoid conscription, in 1915 he joined a touring company in Ireland, returning after the war to the London stage where he went on to win critical and popular acclaim for his interpretations of the major Shakespearean roles.

In 1925 he formed his own company, touring Ireland almost annually for the rest of his life. Familiarly known as Mac, his company was regarded as the aristocracy of the fit-ups, small-scale enterprises whose performance patch was the villages and country towns. The fare Mac provided was predominantly Shakespearean, with a few thrillers thrown in as potboilers. Constraints of a tight budget meant that settings were minimalist, though the company was noted for their authentic costumes.

A larger-than-life character, Mac was an actor-manager of the old school who played the lead part in virtually all his own productions. He was tall (six foot three), strikingly handsome, and had a superb voice with a remarkable vocal range. It was said that on one occasion he had silenced a drunken, disruptive audience by the sheer power and magnetism he exuded in the role of Othello.

Nonetheless, in the judgement of contemporaries, he was an uneven actor, not above turning in a sub-standard performance at times. Never a great director, he was notorious for hiring cast members more on the basis of their willingness to work for less than the going rate than for their acting ability. Moreover, with advancing years his memory for lines began to fade, a difficulty he tried to overcome by having pages of the script unobtrusively attached to drapes and pieces of scenery.

Drama wasn't always confined to the stage of the Town Hall. In 1926 a fire at a makeshift cinema in Drumcollogher, Co. Limerick, resulted in 46 fatalities.

Shortly afterwards, during one of McMaster's presentations of "Macbeth" in Ballinasloe, as "the three weird sisters" cavorted round their bubbling cauldron, an electrical fault created an alarming visual effect. Whereupon a prankster in the auditorium shouted: "Drumcollogher!" A panic-stricken rush for the exits ensued. Fortunately, nobody was seriously hurt, although some ladies were reported to have lost their shoes in the stampede.



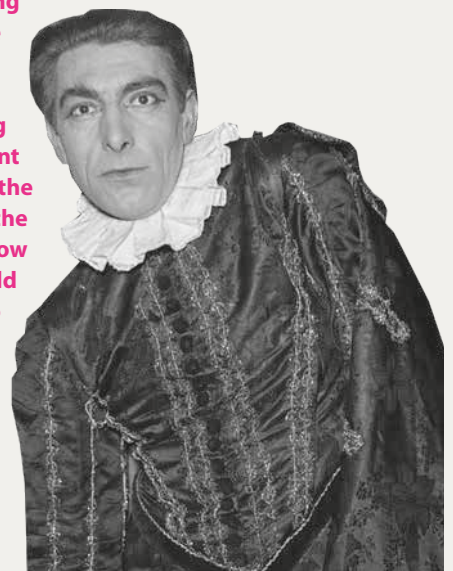
Karen Hurley - Stage Crew
Touching up the old Town Hall

An Englishman successfully masquerading as a Monaghan-born Irishman, McMaster was married to Marjorie Willmore, a sister of Micheál Mac Liammóir, co-founder of Dublin's Gate Theatre. When in Ballinasloe the couple always stayed at Hayden's Hotel, while their two children, Christopher and Mary Rose, as well as the rest of the company, had to make do with pretty basic digs elsewhere in town. Mac disbanded his company in 1959, but continued acting up to his death three years later.

The other fit-ups catered for less sophisticated tastes. Performances were generally in a tent on the Fair Green, sometimes in the Parochial Hall on Dunlo Hill, rarely in the Town Hall. A typical evening's entertainment would consist of a melodrama featuring stock characters, some stand-up comedy, a few sketches replete with broad humour and local references, and a couple of songs.

No "roadies" or stage hands were employed, so that the actors were required to do everything from publicising the show to erecting the performance tent. Versatility was evidently the name of the game, and the villain in the melodrama might appear later in the programme with a change of costume to give a rousing rendition of "A Nation Once Again". If they found themselves in a place without a cinema, it would not be unusual for members of the company to visit a nearby town to view a popular film and return to present an improvised stage adaptation for the locals.

Unable to compete with the novelty of television, the fit-ups went out of business over 50 years ago. In their day they performed a useful function in introducing and accustoming people to live theatre. It has been remarked that the absence of touring companies in recent decades has decimated the rural playgoers, with the result that anybody now setting out on tour would find it more difficult to attract an audience. The fit-ups had inherited the mantle of the strolling players of old, but left no successors. Provincial Ireland was the poorer for their passing.





Ballinasloe History Walk

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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