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AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Issue 04 Oct/Nov 2011



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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

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RÉAMHRÁ



There is nothing quite like the gear change that is summer to autumn than the evenings drawing in or a spray of golds, coppers and russet on the verdant landscape. New England has the fall but this locality has the Great October Fair to mark in a truly unique way the ending of harvest and the arrival of the winter. Once the last of the Tofts amusement lights are extinguished, the last of the mares and foals taken to their new homes, a few short days takes us through to Halloween and then it's preparation for the Festive madness of Yuletide.

What is extraordinary, as we as a community face into quarter four of unprecedented economic woes and challenges; is that the Horse Fair as an event has provided a touchstone of certainty throughout the Napoleonic Wars, the Famine, the Land War, the Crimean War, the War of Independence, World War 1, The Depression, the Annuities War with Britain, World War 2 and all the swings and roundabouts of the last six decades you care to conjure up. It is an amazing legacy of the first settlers of the locality the Ui Maine tribe who traded on the ford of the Suck - the smaller sure footed ponies for travelling into the West's interior, later patented by Lord Clancarty, that the activity of trading horseflesh under the "Caveat Emptor" rules still continues.

The Horse Fair and Festival Week is synonymous with the town and while it discommodes a significant number of the locals, it has a few vocal detractors as well as a great many supporters. Most towns, cities in Europe are busy spending fortunes re-enacting events like these - half museum, half Disneyland experience - the Fair here is the original rough cut diamond - without all the milled and polished edges, it is a living widow to the past. For a great many not buying or selling, it has become like its sister event (now only remembered in song - the Donnybrook Fair) - a huge meeting and gathering point to renew old acquaintances, return to the town for a few days and catch up. Our gratitude should be extended to all those who toil under the different uniforms to keep the flame alive, wear the town jersey for the week and provide a safe and managed environment for all the attendees and visitors to come and sample a little bit of our lost island. Enjoy.

*Le gach Dea Ghuí.
Colm Croffy, Editor*



Since our 3rd edition we have met with our founding subscribers and have received constructive feedback. Some have seen a positive impact on their Business while others see the promotion of our town in a positive light a major plus. The Magazine has been used by the local Council and Hotels to promote Ballinasloe as a location to do Business in.

The demand for the magazine to date exceeds the 4,500 free copies we produce, some of which have made their way to the four corners of the Earth. In order to increase the circulation in Volume 2 we will need an increase in the number of Advertisers and ask you to contact Helen in the Enterprise Centre for details. We continue to encourage you to send in articles to info@ballinasloeenterprise.ie

The primary aim of our not for profit company is to promote and encourage new and indigenous businesses in our community and we have the facilities and support available at the Enterprise Centre to do this. We are not just limited to supporting businesses on site but are available to meet anyone looking to get their business off the ground or even to give some constructive feedback for those already up and running. Finally don't forget that all editions of this magazine are available on the Ballinasloe Enterprise website: www.ballinasloeenterprise.ie

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

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CREDITS

Editor: Colm Croffy Deputy Editor: Caitriona Ni Chadhain and various contributors.
Graphic Design: David Cunniffe (KPW Print). Print: KPW Print, Ballinasloe.
Photography: Robert Riddell - www.robertriddell.com; J & S Photos - jskodakexpress@gmail.com, Jordans - www.liamjordanphoto.com, Stronges - www.stronges.ie, Brendan Loughnane and Alex Zardov - www.alexzardov.com.

BEC

Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre
An Initiative of Ballinasloe Area Community

Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre,
Creagh, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
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E: info@ballinasloeenterprise.ie
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Finnerty Back on County Council

Writes Pat Johnston

Michael Finnerty makes a triumphant return to the Galway County Council representing Ballinasloe Electoral Area in place of the newly-elected Senator Michael Mullins. Following a vigorous campaign in which he claims to have canvassed practically all of the 400 delegates in a constituency that ran from the bridge at Banagher to the bridge at Mount Talbot and over to Monivea.

Finnerty polled 136 first preferences and his main rival Sean Ryan got 63 votes. Finnerty picked up 11 votes from Jarlath Loughnane in the second count to bring him over the quota in the co-option convention in June.

A past pupil of Garbally, where one of his teachers was the now retired Fine Gael TD, Ulick Burke, Michael Finnerty has been a member of Fine Gael since 1980. Garrett Fitzgerald, as new leader, had set about modernising the party and his leadership saw a big increase in support and popularity among young voters.

Known as a formidable tactician and statistician, Finnerty was one of those who devised the 'railway line' strategy which saw the party take two seats in the General Election of 1997. But he is himself no stranger to the vicissitudes of politics. He was elected to the Ballinasloe Urban Council in 1985 and served two periods as chairman in 1990-1 and 1998-9. He ran in the general election of 1989 'at an hour's notice', polling 2,800 first preferences. In 1991 he won a County Council seat and was chairman in 1997-8.

In 1999 Finnerty lost his council seat but was elected to the town council where he served until 2004. Having retired temporarily from politics in 2004 when he had a young family, he was co-opted to the County Council in 2008 but lost his seat in 2009 when the party ran four candidates but held only two seats. He thinks he may be the first candidate to be co-opted twice onto a County Council.

When Paul Connaughton won a Dáil seat in March this year his Council seat went to Moylough's Kevin Ryan but when Michael Mullins was elected to the Senate in April Finnerty was ready for the contest which culminated in his victory last June at the convention in Gullane's Hotel.

In 1998, on a trip to Chicago, Michael met a young Afro- American lawyer who

was running a seminar on immigration. He spotted then that charismatic quality which would lead to that lawyer, Barack Obama, becoming President of the United States. Michael does not discuss his own future political plans but is keenly interested in the upcoming Presidential Election here at home.

Michael Finnerty has been associated with Portiuncula Hospital since he got work experience there during his transition year and for the following two years. He later had to choose between a job in the hospital and one in AT Cross, which was then a thriving employer in the town. His father's prescient advice was that he should stay in the hospital and he

has now been there for thirty three years, during which time he has never missed a day off work. He intends to continue to support the hospital in his political capacity and does not hide his interest in a place on the Council Health Committee because he believes that information is power. He says that the motorway runs two ways and proposes that underused theatres in Ballinasloe could supplement the overused facilities in Galway city.

Married to Mary, Michael has two daughters, Sara and Emma and one son Michael C., who all share his interest in politics. He lives in Tobbergrellan near the Finnerty homeplace where he was born and reared.



Michael Finnerty on the hustings with Garret Fitzgerald and Cllr. John Joe Grenham from Moore in Ballinasloe 1982. Noel Treacy F.F. took the seat in that By-Election. This was the last time a Government party won a By-Election.

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Ballinasloe's New Strength and Conditioning Gym

Writes Caitriona Ni Chadhain

One of the misconceptions about fitness and sport preparation is that one gets in shape just by playing or taking part in their chosen sport.

This is not the case. If your priority is efficiency, consistent improvement, and balanced abilities, you must be prepared to participate in year round conditioning programs. All Core Sports is a new training facility in Ballinasloe that can help identify, program, monitor and motivate individuals and groups to achieve their goals.

"Activities for daily living and sport demand the use of multiple muscle groups that can move and work in multi-directional patterns. So by developing programs, using the simple training principles of progression and variation, using slow to fast, simple to complex, static to dynamic and unloaded to loaded, we can cater for any individual, no matter what age, male or female or for those who are physically challenged, and who want



to try something different," said Michael Horan, owner of ACS and head strength and conditioning Coach.

Having worked for 10 years in sport, and having witnessed sport worldwide evolving significantly, both at amateur and professional level, he believes that personal skill and ability are no longer enough to stay in the game. "Athletes now need to be better conditioned for their specific sport, and by combining outdoor with indoor training, and offering a fully supervised training facility with specific training programs that allows you to attain maximum results and remain injury free, All Core Sports was born." Michael has worked with the IRFU Connacht Rugby team as strength and conditioning coach and with schools, clubs and development squads in the province both male and female.

ACS believes with proper planning (periodization), assessment, training, monitoring and continuous testing, whether one aspires to be a champion of their sport, or just able to fulfil their everyday activities effectively; functional training programs will help deliver this for all. At ACS the athlete is central to an individualised program. Whether they are a beginner, intermediate or mature athlete, they are coached in a manner that recognises and works with the individual. Through regular assessment and monitoring they evaluate whether or not programs are actually working. Volume and intensity of sessions are monitored, giving a balanced, interactive session between participant and coach.

Overtraining and burnout are minimised and athletes remain injury free and on the pitch competing.

Establishing a strong functional base allows continual progression, improving steadily without having to take the shortcuts which can unfortunately fail miserably. All Core Sports is hoping to develop an integrated management approach between all sports that will allow all participants to train and play.

We live in a society that has become complacent about its health. It is now time to address those sedentary lifestyles, and the ever-growing problem of obesity and diabetes. Through exercise and nutritional monitoring, ACS can help alleviate some of the risks associated with these problems.

ACS also offers integrated circuit programs designed for people from all walks of life that can be adapted to suit each individual. By using own body weight exercises, the use of external resistance is gradually progressed over the term of the program, and areas such as flexibility, cardiorespiratory exercise, balance, coordination, speed and strength and muscle toning are targeted.

At All Core Sports located in the old Animal Crackers Building on the Sarsfield Road. You will with commitment and motivation combined, learn something new about yourself.

Call Michael on 087 9322267 for an introduction to All Core Sports, and see what All Core Sports can offer you.



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YWI Relaunch New Centre

Writes Caitriona Ni Chadhain

Youth Work Ireland based in Ballinasloe was badly affected last year when their resource centre was flooded. They have struggled on regardless and recently re-launched their centre coinciding with the Youth Work Ireland AGM. Youth Work Ireland Galway is a voluntary organisation committed to delivering quality youth services within local communities, to empower young people to identify and realise their own potential in a safe and supportive environment.

Their Youth Cafe in Ballinasloe is a haven for young people after school. Here they can use computers, play games in a safe environment and help young people with the challenges they may face including drugs, alcohol, suicide and unemployment. According to Olive O'Shaughnessy, "We are so grateful for the help we are getting from the Let's Colour Project, it has been a very hard year has been since the flooding and Dulux has given us all such a lift. The interior décor of the café has been chosen by our local Youth Committee with the support of Athlone IT Students, being able to do up the outside was, we thought, beyond our reach."

The Junction Project was established as a partnership of Ballinasloe Gardaí, Youth Work Ireland, and a local interagency committee in October 1999. A strong focus for Youth Justice Workers is to support young people in identifying issues surrounding their offending behaviour and the need for



behavioural change. They ensure that each young person feels listened to and heard. Social and educational programmes are an important aspect of the Junction project. They provide small group work programmes which include various aspects of Personal Development, Drug and Alcohol Awareness, Communication, Bullying and The Justice System to name but a few. This summer the Junction Project liaised with the Tidy Towns in cleaning up the area around D'Cube building and the project offices. Three young people gave of their time to cut down shrubs, trees and to give the area a general tidy up, this served to support and encourage their civic responsibilities to their town.

The Youth Information Service provides a free, confidential information service to young people and those who work with them (parents, teachers, youth leaders) on a wide range of issues. As well as this YWI work with schools to tackle issues such as bullying and host specialised services such as Teen Between which help teenagers to cope with their parent's separation or divorce. Teen Between can also help young adults who have experienced their parents' separation during their teenage years.

Getting Started with JobBridge

Writes Caitriona Ni Chadhain

Getting a foot on the employment ladder is a cherished opportunity for many these days. Latest figures show 2737 people on the live register here in Ballinasloe. In an effort to curb this figure Ballinasloe Job Club has recently become involved in a new government initiative called 'JobBridge'. JobBridge is a new National Internship Scheme that will provide work experience placements for interns for a 6 or 9 month period.

Gerry Schouler of Ballinasloe Job Club said "We have already approximately 30 potential employers. Employers are the key. We've had great interest, great feedback and are expecting approximately 10 placements. We have a problem with unemployment here in Ballinasloe, this is offering people with no work experience a chance to build up their CV."

The aim of the National Internship Scheme is to assist in breaking the cycle where jobseekers are unable to get a job without experience, either as new entrants to the labour market after education or training or as unemployed workers wishing to learn new skills. The scheme will also give people a real opportunity to gain valuable experience to bridge the gap between study and the beginning of their working lives.

The scheme will provide for up to 5,000 work experience



placements in the private, public and voluntary sectors. This will be a time-limited scheme. Interns will receive an allowance of €50 per week on top of their existing social welfare entitlement. This will be payable for the period of the internship.

What are the benefits of taking on an intern?

By taking part in the JobBridge scheme, your organisation will:

- Give an unemployed person the opportunity to gain relevant work experience
- Access potential future employees
- Enhance the performance of your organisation by offering an internship to motivated individuals with enthusiasm and a passion for developing their careers
- Bring in fresh talent, fresh ideas and new thinking
- Access newly trained interns with recent skills sets or skilled workers that add real value to your organisation

If you are interested in this scheme and would like more information log onto the JobBridge website: www.jobbridge.ie for further information or contact Ballinasloe Job Club 090 9643057 or jobsclubbsloe@eircom.net



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Community and Networking Evening Celebrating Diversity

Writes Dan Dowling

As part of Galway Social Inclusion week the Meadow Cross Cultural Association (MCCA) will be launching www.ballinasloecommunity.com and hosting a free Community Open evening and Networking Event in the Carlton Shearwater Hotel on the 19th October 2011 from 6.30pm to 8.30pm. The website is a portal for Community cohesion and administrators are being sought from key groups within the community to update the site with events and articles of interest. Youth Work Ireland, Tidy Towns and Polish ambassadors have been given administrative access. Members of the public and businesses can also register to add events or articles.

The launch event will also provide an opportunity for all our Community groups to network and allow them to communicate to the public what it is that they do and how volunteers can get involved. The event is being funded by RAPID who will also be encouraging future Community and Agency Participation. Representatives of all community groups within Ballinasloe are invited to host a display stand and all members of the Community are invited to come along and see what's on their doorstep.

The MCCA are a not for profit Community Group from Ballinasloe that promote events and initiatives to celebrate the diversity of people and to seek solutions for social isolation and injustice. According to Ms Siobhan Byrne, a founding member, "While the MCCA will continue to host fun events celebrating



different cultures we recognise that, there are many other directions we can take as regards integration. For example, eight different nationalities took part in Ballinasloe Musical Society's last production of "South Pacific". Our latest initiative and launch evening will afford all our community groups an opportunity to come together in community cohesion and encourage the social inclusion and participation of all members of our community. From Active Retirement to Zumba there is something for everyone in Ballinasloe".

For further information on Meadow Cross Cultural Association or to register your display contact Siobhan on 0872055475 or Magdalena on 0879395751 or Email mcca_ballinasloe@yahoo.ie



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Meetwest 2011

Writes Caitriona Ni Chadhain

Support and partnership are more important than ever in times of economic difficulties. Sharing expertise and experience becomes more pivotal and truly appreciated in helping to sustain ones business. Any opportunity to meet with others in the business sector can help to develop your business. MeetWest 2011 is a two-day national business networking forum taking place at the Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill, Galway on November 21 and 22 2011. The object of MeetWest 2011 is to promote business in the West of Ireland and the programme has been arranged to offer new and innovative networking opportunities for attendees in a variety of formats.

It is anticipated that up to 400 delegates will participate during the event making it an essential addition to every business diary. The two-day event will kick-off with a half day conference 'Growing your Business' on the afternoon of Monday November 21, featuring an opening address by Minister for Small Businesses John Perry TD. The Conference will be addressed by business leaders who have shown how to grow their businesses into national and international names. This will be followed by a series of workshops.

The evening of Day 1 will feature a Networking Dinner with a guest speaker. Day 2 will bring a new concept in Networking to the West of Ireland. In conjunction with Event Software Manager Futurallia, delegates will have up to ten pre arranged meetings with other companies which whom they have been specifically matched in terms of doing business. MeetWest 2011 is an ideal opportunity to meet and do business with



other mutually compatible companies.

Expected attendees include:

- Companies from all sectors - agri-food & beverage industry, pharmaceutical & health, construction, engineering, craft & textiles, IT, energy supply, alternative energies, manufacturing, printing & design, services to SMEs, research & education, tourism, hospitality, transport and logistics.
- Representatives of Business Networks
- Irish Public Sector Buyers
- Micro-enterprises, Small and Medium-sized Companies
- Large Companies, Multinationals

Partners organising MeetWest 2011 are: Galway City Council, Galway County Council, Roscommon County Council, Mayo County Council, Galway County and City Enterprise Board, Roscommon County Enterprise Board, Mayo County Enterprise Board, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Enterprise Ireland.

For further information or assistance with your application contact Helen Kelly at info@ballinasloeenterprisecentre.ie or 090 9646516 or visit the MeetWest website: www.meetwest.ie

Electrical Mechanical Controls (EMC) Business Profile

Writes Caitriona Ní Chadhain

A time consuming part of many engineering businesses is spent searching for spare parts. Electrical Mechanical Controls Ltd has established a company that supply engineering spares from leading global manufacturers at competitive prices. EMC were founded by Martin Curran in 2001 and have operated from Ballinasloe's Enterprise Centre for nine years now.

EMC limited target industries with secure long-term futures such as the Medical Device, Pharmaceutical, Plastics and the Food and Beverage sectors. As a result they supply spare parts and instrumentation to the likes of Boston Scientific, Abbotts, Elan, Covidien, and the Kerry Group.

Their customers are primarily based in Ireland but EMC also supply to the UK, Italy and the Czech Republic.

Managing Director and founder of EMC Martin Curran cited the main reason for locating in Ballinasloe was its central location which allows them to service customers and deliver to all parts of the country effectively. He also spoke of facilities and the support services which are good in the area and its competitive costs.

EMC employ eight members of staff, between engineers, administrators and accountants, their personnel have vast experience in the fields of instrumentation, control and temperature equipment. Kevin Carty the other company's director had 7 years experience in the medical device industry

prior to joining EMC Ltd. EMC Energy is another branch of the company which is dedicated to supplying energy solutions to different sectors throughout the country including retail, commercial buildings, government agencies, hotels as well as industrial clients. EMC energy provides proven solutions that reduce energy consumption for heating, lighting, power as well as improving a building's overall efficiency.



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Tidy Towns Wins – Nationally and in Best Kept Estates



Overall Tidy Towns Winner Alan Russell of Creagh with Mayor Mike Kelly.



Robert and Finola Riddell with Darren and Emily, Winner Best Large Garden with Mayor Mike Kelly.



Mayor Mike Kelly, Patrick Finnerty of An Táin (Best Shopfront) and Eddie Kelly of Supervalu Sponsor of Best Shopfront Competition.



Tidy Towns Tony Deely Winner best hanging baskets with Mayor Mike Kelly.

Writes Caitriona Ní Chadhain

The pride of the people of Ballinasloe can be seen in the flowers they choose to adorn their town with. Delicate splashes of colour throughout the town show a community intent on making the area enjoyable for the people who inhabit it and those who pass through. Every year the National Tidy Towns Competition celebrates areas that take pride in their community and pull together to make the best of their towns. The recent report from the National Tidy Towns Committee shows an impressive increase of five marks for Ballinasloe on last year's report.

The competition is judged in ten categories, Ballinasloe gained marks in a number of categories, and the remainder of the categories remained at the same mark as last year. The town gained one point in the landscaping, litter control and tidiness categories and went up two points in the wildlife and natural amenities category. Speaking of the wildlife and natural amenities category, the adjudicator commented: "Your committee has gone to great lengths to get a better understanding of all aspects of the wildlife and biodiversity of Ballinasloe.. There are many walks in Ballinasloe to go and identify some of this wildlife as outlined in the Ballinasloe nature trail."

"St Michael Square is beautiful and I loved the sculpture of the man holding the horse, this is an excellent presentation. Down at the bottom I admired St Michaels Church and it looked supreme with splendid shrubs, trees and flowers surrounded by an impressive railing, well done to all connected with the upkeep of this church."

When speaking of waste minimisation the adjudicator commented, "It is great to find the children involved in the green flag initiatives as this fosters an awareness of the best way of protecting the local environment."

And then went on to speak of Ballinasloe's Residential areas, "All around Ballinasloe there are splendid houses that were presented in great style and added to your landscaping to make the town appear at its best. Hugh Dolan's house in Bridge Street is a beauty."

Ballinasloe's local Tidy Towns award took place on the 7th of September. A number of awards were presented for the Best Gardens. The overall winner went to Alan Russell of Creagh. Best Residential Area went to Árd Mhuire and Best Shopfront / Business Workplace went to An Táin. The Mayor congratulated all the participants in the competitions and stated that while some people were receiving awards it was important to recognise everyone that took part.

Councillor Carmel Greally, Chairperson of Ballinasloe Tidy Towns Committee, said that "the positive result achieved this year are a result of a strong partnership approach and we acknowledge the efforts of the Tidy Towns Committee, Ballinasloe Town Council, FÁS and the residents associations." Town Clerk, Mark O'Donnell paid tribute to all those who took part in this year's competition. "The standard has been great and the increase in points in the national competition is an excellent result for the town," he added.

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

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Thoughts of Hospital Chaplain

Ruairi Moore talks to Fr. Bernie Costelloe

Could you tell us a little about the history of the pastoral care department in Portiuncula?

The chaplaincy department in Portiuncula, one of the first in Ireland, was set up in 1985 by Sisters of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood. I joined the department back in 1995 with, it must be admitted, a certain amount of anxiety. Thankfully this was unfounded as I experienced a warm welcome and found great support both from the Sisters and the staff of the hospital. In Portiuncula, I work with Sisters Mercedes and Chad and in St. Brigid's with Sister Regina; Rev. George Flynn from Aughrim parish is the Church of Ireland Chaplain who works with us.

What exactly does your role as Portiuncula Chaplain entail?

When I first came to work in Portiuncula, my role was very clear cut - I said Mass, I did a Communion Round every morning on all the sick and maternity wards, anointed the sick, heard confession, answered numerous night calls, as well as doing many funeral services in the mortuary. Now working with the team, we provide pastoral and spiritual care regardless of religion, gender, sexual orientation, race or ethnic background. In other words, our aim is the holistic care of each person, with all that it involves.

Has the role changed over the years?

When I took on the chaplaincy of St. Brigid's Hospital a short time later, it added a different dimension to my work



Back (L-R): Fr. Bernie Costelloe and Rev. George Flynn. Front (L-R): Sr Chad & Sr Mercedes.

- there were 650 patients and many staff. At this time there was also a big move to help patients live a little more normally in houses in the community. I found this to be a whole new experience, but very quickly found myself at home. Most of my time here would be spent visiting the wards, bringing communion to the patients and saying Ward Masses. My memories of this time are of meeting so many different people who brought with them their humanity and their different ways of looking at life; they talked of their experiences and life stories, many of which were very sad, others had humour and showed the character of each one.

No two days are ever the same in hospital work because situations can change very quickly from day to day. I have enjoyed meeting the challenges of every day life in the hospital and this has given me

a broader perspective and take on life. My understanding of chaplaincy has changed, and I now see the great value and advantage of working as part of a team - I have gained insight which has helped me to deal with many situations. Sharing the work in the team brings different gifts and strengths, e.g. dealing with miscarriages, stillbirths, trauma etc.

Do you think the role of hospital chaplain is as relevant today as it used to be?

I am very aware that in the Ireland of today much has changed in relation to Faith and Church, yet I still find the vast majority of people are searching for truth and healing for themselves and their families. Long gone are the days when simply hearing Confession would solve the problem. Today, there is a need to be with people where they are, to try and help them make sense of their life and situation, knowing that I often struggle with the answers myself. I find it very rewarding and it's the challenge of trying to find God in the mystery of life and pain and death.

Whatever the future may bring, I am convinced there will always be a need for chaplaincy services in our hospitals when people are at their most vulnerable and need support.

Thanks for taking the time to talk to Ballinasloe Life!

I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to share some of my thoughts and reflections on what it means to me to work as a chaplain in a busy hospital setting in Ireland today.



Chernobyl Children Enjoy Their Annual Ballinasloe Visit With Aughrim Based Charity



Chernobyl Children at Ballinasloe Fire Station.

Writes Declan Manning

There were smiles and welcomes all around this summer as the people of Ballinasloe once again opened their hearts to a very special group of 23 Chernobyl children who were taken to Ireland by local based charity,

The Sunflowers Chernobyl Appeal. The charity, which is based in Aughrim, has been taking Chernobyl children to Ireland for the past 12 years to stay with voluntary host families in Ballinasloe and the surrounding communities. The children are taken from their radiation contaminated homeland of Belarus to Galway for one month as part of the charity's Rest & Recuperation programme and have the chance to eat good food, drink clean water and breathe our clean healthy air.

The children, who were accompanied to Ireland by their teachers, were special guests at several events held in their honour by many local groups, individuals and organisations. The staff

of Ballinasloe Fire Station hosted the children for an afternoon of fun and games which included a BBQ and trips in the fire engines. Belarusian girls also took part in the knitting club in Gullanes Hotel with the Ballinasloe Active Retirement group. This group regularly donate many of their creations to the Sunflowers, which are taken to Belarus and delivered to Bogushevsk and Luninets Orphanages for special needs children. During the children's stay in Ballinasloe they enjoyed several swimming sessions at The Shearwater Hotel and Ballinasloe Swimming Pool, courtesy of the management and staff.

A most successful fundraising dance which raised over €3,400 was held in Fohenagh Community Centre in July by the Fohenagh, Killgerril and Killure communities who also held a most enjoyable fun day for the children later in the month. Ballinasloe Garda Station hosted the children for a wonderful afternoon of fun which included a party, trips in the Garda cars and jeeps with the traffic corps, a motorcycle display, and gifts presented by Supt. Clíona Richardson, who also presented the children with special medals courtesy of the members and staff.

Local doctors, dentists and opticians all kindly donated their services to the children for which Sunflowers chairperson Pat Dillon is most grateful. Once again this year Dubarry Shoes treated all the children to new shoes and trainers thanks to the kindness of Seán Óg Hurley and his staff. Pat Dillon also added "we wish to thank Enda Hughes and his family in Mackney for their kind use of the

family home for the month of July to accommodate the teachers and some of the children."

The Cappataggle GAA Club held a special junior boys hurling match between Cappataggle and Ahascragh. It was a very special hurling match because it included two Belarusian boys who took part in the game. The boys played their hearts out and received great praise from the management of both teams. It was indeed a great achievement for the boys, given the language barrier, and the fact that they had never taken part in a hurling match before.

The children also enjoyed a local history lesson when they visited the Aughrim Interpretative Centre where they re-lived the famous Battle of Aughrim in 1691.



Chernobyl Children at Ballinasloe Garda Station



Two of the Chernobyl Children kitted out in Cappataggle GAA Gear.

The Centre's curator, Julie Wakefield-Cruise also treated the children to a wonderful party and showed them Russian cartoons on the Centre's four large screen televisions, which they really enjoyed.

The Sunflowers chairperson, Pat Dillon, thanked all those who helped to make the children's month in Ireland possible through fundraising, donations, and providing facilities and various services. It was indeed a huge community effort across counties Galway and Roscommon. "We'd also like to thank the voluntary host families for taking such wonderful care of the children during their visit, because without the kindness and generosity of the host families, the Recuperation programme simply would not be possible," said Pat.

This is the 12th year that the Sunflowers have taken children from Belarus where the charity works tirelessly to improve the lives of special needs, abandoned, neglected and abused children, providing better living conditions in orphanages and in the community. The Aughrim based charity also provides on-going long-term support for special needs children through their Day Care Centres in Belarus. The Sunflowers volunteers have just recently completed the building of 2 Homes for Independent Living for



The Chernobyl/Cappataggle Hurling Team.

special needs Orphans in north eastern Belarus and are preparing a similar project where for the first time in that region, children will leave the orphanage and be given the chance to live with dignity and respect in the community.

The Chernobyl children have now returned to a most uncertain future as their country is now its worst turmoil since the break-up of the Soviet Union. While the current situation here in Ireland is bad, it is infinitely better than Belarus where the economic and political situation grows worse on an almost daily basis. The Sunflowers are entirely voluntary with no paid staff and are finding it increasingly difficult to help the children who rely on them now more than ever. They are appealing for any

support, no matter how small to help them to continue their work in Belarus. It is only because of the kindness of local people over the past 12 years that the charity has been able to change the lives of the sick and special needs children, who have no one else to turn to for help.

It is a sad fact that special needs children in Belarus are not afforded the same dignity and respect as the children here in Ireland, and the Sunflowers are actively involved in redressing this situation in the areas where they work.

If you would like to support the Sunflowers Charity, or if you would like to become a host family, you can do so by contacting Pat Dillon on 087 4172307 or 090 9673832. You can also visit the Sunflowers Chernobyl Appeal website on www.chernobylchildren.ie for more information.

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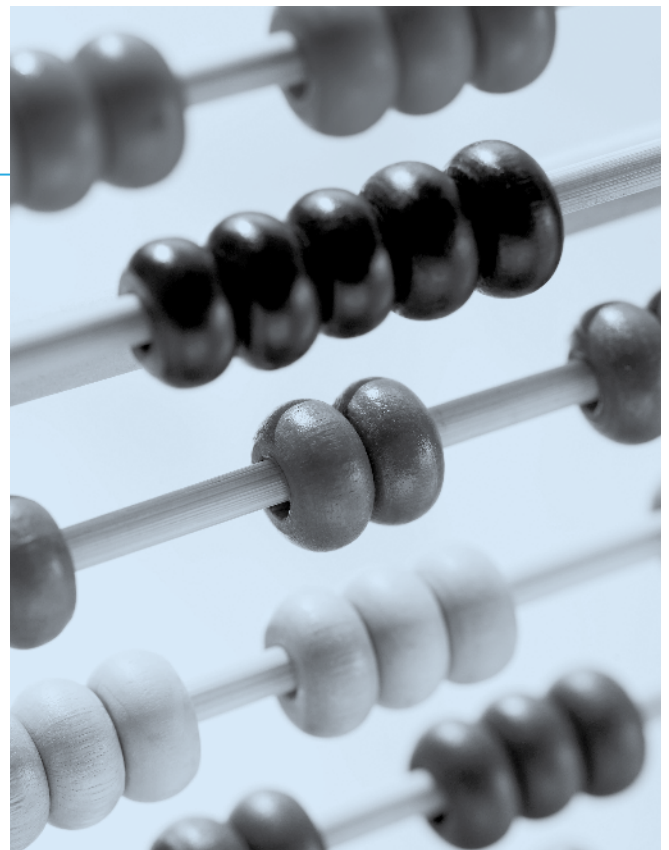
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Relay For Life Raises Huge Awareness and Hope for Cancer Patients and Families

Writes Ruairi Moore

A disease of unpredictable and impossible variety, the facts tell us that cancer will affect one in three people throughout their lifetime. With no definite hope of a future cure in sight and the number of cases climbing each year, it often seems far too easy to lose hope; but the people of Ballinasloe aren't willing to allow the cancer of the body to damage the mind or sicken the soul, if the staggering response to the town's inaugural Relay for Life is any indication.

The concept behind *Relay for Life's* mantra "Celebrate, Remember, Fight Back", as featured in Issue 3 of *Ballinasloe Life*, is a twenty-four hour event designed to bring the community together in celebration of cancer survivors, remembrance of the dead, and defiance of the disease which plagues our race.

Ballinasloe's disused Tesco building found itself temporarily transformed into a custom-built circuit track on the weekend of August 13th, where Relayers flocked to set up stalls and banners dedicated to the various forms of cancer as well as promoting prevention and early detection. The Relay began with a poignant survivors lap, at which more than 117 cancer survivors both local and further afield were present. Then followed the caregivers, dressed in t-shirts of yellow to mark them as close family or friends to someone battling the disease. White t-shirts were reserved for the dozens of team members who manned the track for the rest of the night.

A total of thirty-five Relay teams drawn from clubs, businesses, and societies throughout the town ringed stands all the way around the track, while hundreds of townspeople emerged to show their support over the course of the event. Relayers walked, ran, danced and sang their way through the twenty-four hours, the energy and enthusiasm of MC Nigel Sammon and the efforts of the organising committee doing more than enough to keep spirits buoyed throughout the early hours. Adding to the atmosphere of infectious goodwill were various performances from local groups such as Still Slopin' and The Suite, while regular

fresh influxes of spectators from outside ensured the mood never turned stale.

One moment of particular poignancy which will no doubt remain in the memories of relayers for years to come was the *Candle of Hope* Ceremony at sundown, which saw hundreds of tiny flames dedicated to the memories of loved ones lost as members of the Relay committee spoke a few quiet words to the candlelit procession.

"We may not be winning the war against cancer just yet," said member John Boland," but we're winning the battle tonight."

As well as purchasing a *Candle of Hope*, visitors could contribute to the cause in a variety of novelty ways, from playing games at the stalls to paying for a quick tune-up from a physiotherapist. Local woman Anne Marie Curley even went to the lengths of having her head shaved for the cause, to tumults of applause from the gathered crowd.

"We originally set a target of €30,000," said committee member Annette McDevitt in the aftermath of the event. "We ended up reaching €65,000, and we're not even finished counting yet!"

"We just can't even express how grateful we are to everyone involved. The response was so much more than we could have hoped for, and we'd just like to take the chance to thank the committee, the musicians, caterers, the public, everyone who helped to make this happen."

But the fight against cancer is never over, warned the Relay committee as a line of purple-garbed survivors led the entire crowd around and outside the building to bring the event to a climactic close. When asked about the plans for next year's *Relay for Life* Ballinasloe, Annette gives a strangled laugh. "We're still reeling from this one! But given the response we've received, the absolute goodwill from the public, I can definitely say there'll be a *Relay for Life* 2012!"



Relay For Life Memories

Candle of Hope Ceremony



Survivor's Lap launches Ballinasloe Relay for Life.



Professional facepainting at Relay for Life.



Relayers still going strong in the early hours of the morning.



Survivor Brian Derrane circles the track with his wife Carol.



Anne Marie Curley has her head shaved for charity as MC Nigel Sammon looks on.



Fee-fi-fo fum!

Writes Caitriona Ní Chadhain

Trying your luck and trading a cow for some magic beans mightn't seem like such a bad idea in the current economy, but bear in mind it doesn't always work out so well. Or so we learn from the cherished folktale *Jack and the Beanstalk* which B'Sloe Panto will be bringing to the stage in the town this December. All the glitz and glamour of the big stage will be brought to your doorstep as Ballinasloe Panto are set to bring the Town Hall Theatre's stage to life for the third year in a row. B'Sloe Panto boasted runaway successes with *Cinderella* in 2010 and *Aladdin* in 2009, and now they're getting set to do it all again with their production of *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

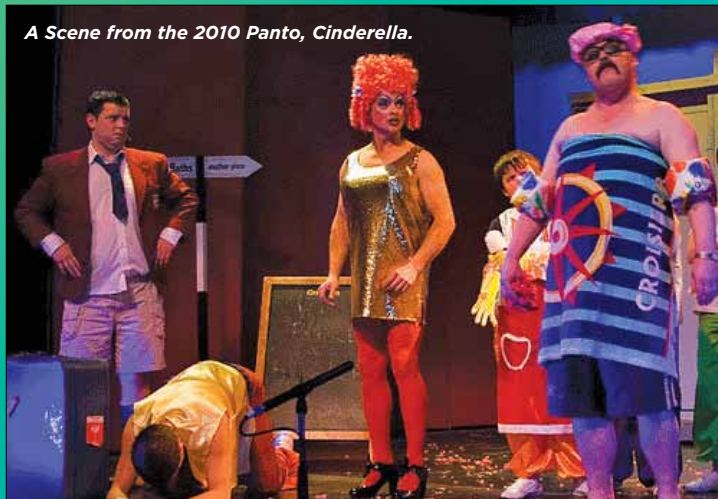
Jack and the Beanstalk tells the story of a boy who gets more than he bargained for when he is coerced into trading his family's only cow for 'magic' beans. After the magic beans are thrown out the window by Jack's angry mother they grow into a huge beanstalk. Jack, unable to fight his curiosity climbs the beanstalk up into the clouds to find the home of a giant, getting himself into all sorts of trouble.

Last year's *Cinderella* will always be remembered for its spectacular stage display and was voted amongst the top 5 pantos to visit in Ireland by the *Star* newspaper. Eoin Croffy and his award winning production team of Musical Director John Roe and Choreographer Olwyn Cronin are set to impress audiences again this year with quality cast and production. The show will run from the 12th to the 18th of December. More information will be available on the Ballinasloe Panto website www.ballinasloepanto.com in the run up to the show.

A Scene from the 2009 Panto, *Aladdin*.



A Scene from the 2010 Panto, *Cinderella*.



Acorn Production *Unforgiven*

Writes Caitriona Ni Chadhain

This November will see local theatre company Acorn take to the stage with their production of 'Unforgiven', a story which revolves with great humour around the ever-declining fate of its protagonists. 'Unforgiven' is inspired by the Clint Eastwood western of the same name and has been described author as "a mad play about mad people who are content with their own madness." The play was very well received by sell out audiences in many Irish venues and also had a very successful run in the U.K.

Acorn are currently busy in rehearsal for the show which will take place in The Town Hall Theatre from Wednesday November 2nd to Saturday November 5th.

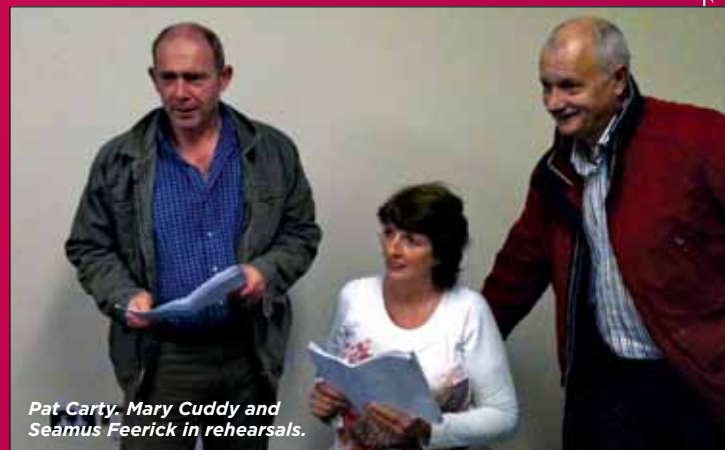
The play has been described as an "all-out comedy with a few serious moments." The story was written by John McDwyer for Beeznee Theatre Co. a semi professional touring company of which he is founder and artistic director.

'Unforgiven' explores many familiar Irish themes including family resentments, inheritance, and exile. However this circus of a play has a lightness of touch guaranteed to entertain as two brothers and their neighbour Mary seek to resolve long standing issues in what turns out to be an unexpected, hilarious and dramatic outcome.

Acorn Theatre Co. have had a growing number of successful productions. The most recent of which was Martin McDonagh's "The Cripple of Innismaan" The cast of this next production

includes John Boland and Seamus Feerick both of whom have delivered memorable performances in previous Acorn productions most notably "The Lonesome West". They are joined by Mary Cuddy who has also previously performed with distinction for Acorn in "The Cripple of Innismaan" The line up is completed by Pat Carty from Athlone, who previously enthralled audiences with his performance in Acorn's production of "The Kings of the Kilburn High Road".

"Unforgiven" is directed by Eamonn O'Donoghue who has had many successful stage productions to his credit both with Acorn and other theatre companies. For further information: Phone: 090 9643338 or Email: stageworks@eircom.net



Pat Carty, Mary Cuddy and Seamus Feerick in rehearsals.

A Helping Hand For A Second Chance



Writes Caitríona Ní Chadhain

The staff of Canal House can only be described as everyday heroes, they do all in their power, with understanding and compassion to assist their learners in finding a better path in life. Canal House is a training centre for young people who have come through the probation service or who may need some help in pointing their lives in the right direction.

The centre has a long history within Ballinasloe, it started off in an old church building in the town in 1977 and has since established its own premises. It was the first community project of its type in Ireland. "Like every organisation its had its ups and downs but a lot more ups than its had downs and it has survived the test of time," said Pádraig Lyons, co-ordinator of Canal House. Canal House currently facilitate 18 learners registered with FÁS and a number of part-time learners who come and go wishing to put their lives back on track or participate in classes.

"It's like a mini college with a homely atmosphere to it, I think that's important in terms of the whole ethos of the centre, its run on respect, we expect the learners to respect themselves and others. It's a great place of security and a place for people to build up their self esteem. Because if you don't have that friendly atmosphere as well as an educational atmosphere you won't have that personal development taking place, and the personal development is as important as the education," said Pádraig. "Prejudices

and attitude are a huge factor, how people perceive people from Canal House, and it's a shame because we're all human beings and we all have the same feelings and the same needs, maybe with different roles."

Canal House are involved in Ballinasloe's local community through initiatives such as the Tidy Towns and the Flood Relief. They play a part in making sure the marina and harbour area are kept tidy, they also painted the flood relief centre and have painted parts of the Town Hall. Tidy Towns have awarded the centre prizes for their garden on a number of occasions. Martin Gavin started teaching

building construction in Canal House in 1991; "If they're doing something in the community, that's how they'll respect it, that's something they'll always say when they go into that Town Hall, that they worked there one time doing up the dressing rooms, and that's the way I think it should be."

Canal House work off individual learning plans based on the learners' needs. Cookery, Hairdressing, Building Construction, Health and Beauty, Horticulture, work preparation, literacy, numeracy, and digital photography are just some of the courses the centre provides. Canal House is now a fully accredited FETAC centre which means it is part of the National Framework of Qualifications. This ensures that the awards achieved in Canal House are nationally and internationally recognised and can help learners to progress on to further their education or seek employment. A number of Canal House's learners have progressed on to third level education or employment. "The majority of our learners are exceptionally bright, exceptionally gifted with their hands as well as their minds. Some exceptionally gifted in football and sports, which is another kind of intelligence. There are many different kinds of intelligence and we as a society need to be open to that, that there is more to education than just the intellect," said Pádraig.

Canal House hosts nine part-time VEC staff, three full-time staff paid by the Dept. of Justice, two volunteers and a number of students on work experience. Dedication to their learners and the learners' welfare is immediately apparent and very admirable. Their patience and understanding are the paving stones on a path to a better life for the learners.



FETAC Charter Award is presented to Canal House by Sean Haughey TD, former Minister of State at the Dept. of Educational Skills with Special Responsibility for Life Long Learning.

Ballinasloe Town Hall Society Enjoy A Successful Inaugural Fundraising Evening

Writes Caitriona Ni Chadhain

With over 400 guests - the Cabaret with the Roses, topped off a wonderful East Galway day for the contestants but also saw almost €3,000 raised for the renovation work on the Town Hall, Thanks to the huge 400 plus crowd in attendance.

Beauty, the Beast and a whole host of other Disney characters descended on Ballinasloe's Carlton Hotel recently for a fundraiser in aid of Ballinasloe's Town Hall Theatre.

The girls unveiled the Share a Dream foundation's new Dream Machine in Dartfield before being chauffeured into Ballinasloe in a vintage car parade. They spent the day with Shannon, a young girl who is seriously ill and made her dream come true of being a Rose for a day. "We got all the girls to make some dreams come true today, they launched the dream machine for us and here we have a beautiful young girl, of 15 years of age from Roscommon and her dream was to feel like a princess and hang out with the Roses, so we got her hair done, make up, the whole lot, the dress and the shoes and now she's standing here with all the Roses," said Shay Kinsella, founder of the Share a Dream foundation.

The evening event was organised by Ballinasloe's Town Hall committee to raise funds for the maintenance and renovation of the Town Hall. Over 400 guests attended on the night; "the event's success highlights the town's good will towards the Town Hall which has always been much loved by the people of Ballinasloe," said Mary O'Connell, chairperson of the Town Hall. The building is currently used approximately 35-40 nights per year but the committee envisage using it a lot more in future to bring more entertainment & cultural life to the town.

From singers and actors, to musicians and sean-nós dancers. Ballinasloe showcased a range of its talented performers. All in all people were "impressed with the acts on the night," said Mary O'Connell. Performers included Paul Norton of Tullamore who sang 'If I were a rich man' from 'Fiddler on the Roof'. Séamus Feerick and Louise Colohan performed a duet from the Phantom of the Opera



Tara Talbot who went on to be crowned the Rose of Tralee with former escort and Magician William McGrath.

followed by rapturous applause. Trevor Moran got the crowd going with his version of the song 'Cabaret'. Declan Finn performed a monologue dressed as Prince Charming. After that Ronan Burke of the band 'Bug', who has recently released a new album performed his song 'Forks'. Kevin Cunniffe then entertained everyone with a lively brush dance. Followed by Eoin and Emily Donoghue who displayed their wonderful musical

talents. And finally two sets of sisters, Claire Gibbons, Joan Madden, Martina Flanagan and Bridie Ruane performed some sean-nós dancing.

Cllr Mike Kelly Mayor of Ballinasloe thanked the Carlton Hotel for their sponsorship and gave a huge Failte Fíor Ceallaigh to the Roses and Tralee Festival Committee. He singled out all the Roses with Roscommon and Galway connections and hoped that their stay in Ballinasloe would not be as boisterous as that of the escorts at their bootcamp, earlier in the summer. "I also want to pay tribute to the new group that have taken in hand the Town Hall, it has long been a proud cultural hub for our town and I wish them well in their endeavours to restore and develop it as a modern performing Arts facility for us all".

Michael Kearney Chair of Carlton Hotel Group praised the can do community spirit of the town "it's through events like these that we only begin to realise and appreciate fully the power of all us harnessing our endeavours together, to build a viable and sustainable community into the future".

Mary O'Connell Chairperson of the Town Hall Theatre Society on behalf of the new Society thanked the Shearwater Hotel for its sponsorship and collaboration in this event. She welcomed the fact that



Beauty the Beast and some onlookers keeping a watchful eye on Sleeping Beauty.

the locals and genuine supporters of the performing art tradition came out in such force to support of what, she half joked - would be many a fundraising night for the facility! She also thanked the Cabaret's producer Paul Norton, MC Darren Salmon and all the cast and crew who worked so hard to make the event and evening work so well.

She also thanked the following pharmacies, hairdressers and beauticians who provided beauty products for the for lovely hampers raffled on the night; Healthwise, Claire Healy, Panache, The Hair Gallery, Tranquility, Kathleen's, Jorena, Optimus, Kevin Leahy Pharmacy, Humphy's Pharmacy, Carisma.

In conclusion she reminded all those the present that the group would welcome support - personal, skills, or financial from anyone or group over the coming years and promised that the wonderful venue is hoped to bring life to the heart of the town and will showcase not only local talents and endeavours, but also national, international acts in all genres.

Ballinasloe got plenty of mentions from the Roses on the selection nights, a number of Roses spoke fondly of the hospitality and welcome they received while in town, the hotel and the warmth of the patrons they met at the Cabaret evening.



Fr. John Garvey and Fr. Dan Donovan meeting the Galway Rose.



A warm round of applause for Shannon of the Share a Dream foundation.



(L-R) Pat McGovern, Charlene Bloe, Michael McCullough, the New Zealand Rose, Mary O'Connell, Mayor Mike Kelly, New York Rose, Colm Croffy, Eveanna Ryan and Gerard Sweeney.



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Events Guide - OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

Saturday, 1st October

An Táin	Live DJ	10pm
Blakes Bar	Live Trad	4pm
	The Sheerins	10pm
Downeys Bar	Live DJ	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	Annemarie McLoughlin	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Trolly	
Gullane's Hotel	Music with Brendan Loughnane	9pm
	Zodiac Night Club	10pm
The Pillar House	Div and Killer	10pm
Showgrounds	172nd Agricultural Show	All Day
	Family Fun Day	2pm

Sunday, 2nd October

An Táin	Johnny Zero	10pm
Blakes Bar	Live Trad	4pm
	Cool Hand Dukes	10pm
Downeys Bar	One 2 One	9pm
East Nightclub	DJ Byrno	
Gullane's Hotel	Music with Brendan Loughnane	9pm
	Zodiac Night Club	10pm
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	10pm
The Pillar House	Screamin' Bluecats	10pm
Showgrounds	Official Opening of the Horse Fair & Festival by Niall Quinn	2.45pm

Monday, 3rd October

An Táin	The Mac	10pm
Blakes Bar	Al O'Connor	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
Maud Millar's	The Skillet Pot	10pm
The Pillar House	Ultan Conlon	7pm
Horse Fair and Festival	Horse Fair on Fair Green	All Day
	Market stalls on main streets	All Day

Tuesday, 4th October

Horse Fair & Festival	Domac Tug O'War 16th Anniversary in Carleton Carpark	7pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am

Wednesday, 5th October

Blakes Bar	Chill Out	10pm
Horse Fair & Festival	Domac Tug O'War 16th Anniversary on Dunlo Street	
	First heat of singing pub competition	

Thursday, 6th October

Blakes Bar	80's night	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Singing Pub / The High Reel	
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
	Show band in the ballroom	
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm

Friday, 7th October

An Táin	Live Music	10pm
Blakes Bar	Gavin O'Toole	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	One 2 One	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	Sons of Erin	10pm
Maud Millar's	Amber Moon	10pm
Ballinasloe Marina	Supermacs' Fireworks Display	10.30pm

Saturday, 8th October

An Táin	Trad Session and DJ	10pm
Blakes Bar	BackStage	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	Acting the Maggot	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	The Klientis	10pm
East Nightclub	Fergal D'Arcy	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm
The Pillar House	Skillet Pot	10pm
Horse Fair & Festival	Horse Fair on Fair Green	All Day
	Lá Gaelach	

Sunday, 9th October

Blakes Bar	Al O'Connor	10pm
Downeys Bar	Colin Galligan	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	Trevor Dixon & Friends	
Gullane's Hotel	Vintage Parade and Vintage Show	All Day
Maud Millar's	Joxer	10pm
The Pillar House	Div and Killer	8pm
Horse Fair & Festival	Premier Proteins Open Dog Show	1pm

Monday, 10th October

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Haydens Hotel	Dialogue Meeting - World Mental Health Week	7pm

Tuesday, 11th October

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am

Wednesday, 12th October

Gullane's Hotel	Ballinasloe Flower & Garden Club	8pm
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Thursday, 13th October

Blakes Bar	80's night	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Singers Circle	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm

Friday, 14th October

An Táin	The Klientis	10pm
Blakes Bar	Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Dunlo Tavern	Trad Session with Still Slop'in'	10pm
Maud Millar's	Streetwise	10pm

Saturday, 15th October

Blakes Bar	Buzz the Agent	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	Live DJ	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	Gaegan Pagan	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Ozz	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
	Show band in the ballroom	10pm
Maud Millar's	Al O'Connor	10pm

Sunday, 16th October

Blakes Bar	Buggy & Kells	10pm
Downeys Bar	Tony Mac	9pm
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	10pm

Monday, 17th October

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
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Tuesday, 18th October

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am

Wednesday, 19th October

Carlton S'water Hotel	Free Community Open Evening and Networking Event	6.30pm
Gullane's Hotel	Grow it Yourself	8pm

Thursday, 20th October

Blakes Bar	80's night	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm

Friday, 21st October

An Táin	Live Music	10pm
Blakes Bar	Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Dunlo Tavern	Done & Dusted	10pm
Maud Millar's	Kiwi Paddy	10pm

Saturday, 22nd October

Blakes Bar	Macey South	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	Live DJ	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	Cajun Chicken	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live music in Lounge bar	10pm
	Show band in the Ballroom	10pm
Maud Millar's	Helium	10pm

Sunday, 23rd October

Blakes Bar	Dave Flynn	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Fashion Show in aid of the Irish Cancer Society	
Downeys Bar	Pascal Brennan	9pm
Maud Millar's	The Skillet Pot	10pm

Monday, 24th October

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
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Tuesday, 25th October

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am

Thursday, 27th October

Blakes Bar	80's night	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live music in Lounge Bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm

Friday, 28th October

An Táin	Live Music	10pm
Blakes Bar	Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Dunlo Tavern	The Ramblers	10pm
Maud Millar's	Hickory Wind	10pm

Saturday, 29th October

Blakes Bar	The Knockers	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	Live DJ	9pm
East Nightclub	East Party	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in Lounge Bar	10pm
	Live show band in Ballroom	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm

Sunday, 30th October		
Blakes Bar	Macey South	10pm
Downeys Bar	Shanaghalden	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	Buzz the Agent	10pm
East Nightclub	Halloween Party	10pm
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	10pm
Monday, 31st October		
An Táin	The Mac	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 1st November		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am
Thursday, 3rd November		
Haydens Hotel	Live music in lounge bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 4th November		
An Táin	Live Music	10pm
Blakes Bar	Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Dunlo Tavern	Trad Session with Still Slopín'	10pm
Maud Millar's	Kiwi Paddy	10pm
Saturday, 5th November		
Blakes Bar	Cool Hand Dukes	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	Live DJ	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	Acting the Maggot	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Byrno	
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
	Live show band in the ballroom	10pm
Maud Millar's	Streetwise	10pm
Sunday, 6th November		
Downeys Bar	Woodbine	9pm
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	10pm
Monday, 7th November		
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 8th November		
Carlton S'water Hotel	Health and Wellbeing Seminar and Expo	
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am
Wednesday, 9th November		
Gullane's Hotel	Ballinasloe Flower & Garden Club	8pm
Thursday, 10th November		
Carlton S'water Hotel	Business of Fun Festival and Events Conference	
Dunlo Tavern	Singers Circle	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live music in the lounge bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 11th November		
An Táin	The Klients	10pm
Blakes Bar	Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Business of Fun Festival and Events Conference	
	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Dunlo Tavern	Sons of Erin	10pm
Maud Millar's	Helium	10pm
Fred Kilmartin's	Open day	
Saturday, 12th November		
Blakes Bar	Buzz the Agent	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	Live DJ	9pm
Dunlo Tavern	Rip Roaring Mary's	10pm
East Nightclub	Fergal D'Arcy	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	
	Live show band in the ballroom	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm

Sunday, 13th November		
Carlton S'water Hotel	Holiday and Travel Fair	
Downeys Bar	Dollar Daly	9pm
Gullane's Hotel	Christmas Craft Fair	11.30am
Maud Millar's	The Skillet Pot	10pm
Monday, 14th November		
Gullane's Hotel	Mothers Union Table Quiz	8pm
	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 15th November		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am
Wednesday, 16th November		
Gullane's Hotel	Irish Blood Transfusion Clinic	8pm
	Grow it Yourself	
Thursday, 17th November		
Carlton S'water Hotel	The High Kings Concert	
Gullane's Hotel	Irish Blood Transfusion Clinic	
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 18th November		
An Táin	Live Music	10pm
Blakes Bar	Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Gullane's Hotel	Soroptomists Poker Classic	8pm
Maud Millar's	Joxer	10pm
Saturday, 19th November		
Blakes Bar	Macey South	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	Live DJ	9pm
East Nightclub	DJ Trolley	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
	Live Show Band in the Ballroom	10pm
Maud Millar's	Al O'Connor	10pm
Sunday, 20th November		
Downeys Bar	Pascal Brennan	9pm
Maud Millar's	Hoppy Bar Stars	10pm
Monday, 21st November		
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 22nd November		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am
Thursday, 24rd November		
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	Acoustic Session	10pm
Friday, 25th November		
An Táin	Live Music	10pm
Blakes Bar	Local DJ	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Maud Millar's	Hickory Wind	10pm
Saturday, 26th November		
Blakes Bar	Back Stage	10pm
Carlton S'water Hotel	Canal Bar - Music	10.30pm
Downeys Bar	Live DJ	9pm
East Nightclub	DJ Ozz G	10pm
Haydens Hotel	Live Music in the Lounge Bar	10pm
	Live show band in the ballroom	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm
Sunday, 27th November		
Downeys Bar	Acting the Maggot	9pm
Maud Millar's	The Skillet Pot	10pm
Monday, 28th November		
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Tuesday, 29th November		
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
B'sloe GAA Club	Sean Nós Dance Classes	6.30pm
	Adult Classes	7.30pm
Moycarn Lodge	Mother and Toddler Group	10.30am



Far Left: The Ballinasloe 20 Build team dismantled and reassembled their Massey Ferguson 20 Tractor in their best time ever of 6 minutes in their best time ever of 6 minutes (L-R): Shane Burns, Ian Donnellan, Niall Hurley, Niall Cunniffe, Mike Cunniffe.

Left: Sean Ward ploughing in the Vintage Class, at the All-Ireland Ploughing Championships, representing Co. Roscommon.



Writes Kieran Coyne

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

The programme is built around these seven areas:

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

Kieran Coyne,
Ballinasloe RAPID Coordinator
Tel: 091 476 507
Mobile: 087 952 0999
Email: kcoyne@galwaycoco.ie

Ballinasloe Community Support Budget

Under the Ballinasloe RAPID Programme there is a small amount of funding for the development and support of the community and voluntary sector in the Ballinasloe RAPID (Ballinasloe Town) area. Support here is in the areas of capacity building, community events, innovative community actions, and community public relations. Projects supported must be delivered in the current year. There is no formal application process but applicants are required to contact the RAPID Coordinator on prospective projects. If a project is eligible an applicant will then have to provide the following;

- Project outline
- Project cost
- Project timescale
- Target group(s) supported
- Projected local impact.

Ballinasloe Careers Fair

On Wednesday September 21st 2011 a Careers Fair took place in Hayden's Hotel Ballinasloe. The event opened by the Mayor of Ballinasloe Cllr Mike Kelly and brought to a culmination by Minister of State for Education and Skills Ciarán Cannon TD, highlighted career and educational opportunities for people in the Ballinasloe area who are currently unemployed or are looking at further training options. The initiative promoted by Galway Rural Development, Ballinasloe Jobs Club and Ballinasloe RAPID also provided an opportunity for attendees to meet with employers interested in signing up to Government interventions such as Job Bridge, service providers and career guidance personnel. A more comprehensive report will be compiled in due course and can be sourced through Ballinasloe Jobs Club.

Ballinasloe Pride of Place

In August 2011 Ballinasloe was visited by the National Pride of Place judges. Coordinated by Ballinasloe Tidy Towns the Ballinasloe entry was based on the theme of community safety. The diversity of community safety initiatives included work done by Creagh National School safety committee, Civil Defence, Neighbourhood watch, Care and Repair, the Junction Youth Diversion project and An Garda Síochána. Judging of the National Pride of Place competition will take place in Gorey, Co. Wexford in November 2011.



Pride of Place Competition Committee and Judges (L-R): Tom Dowling, Alison Dowling, Tom Madden, Mayor of Ballinasloe Mike Kelly and Shane O'hEithir.



Ard Mhuire Residents, Winner of Best Estate (Sponsored by RAPID). Back (L-R): John Cosgrove, Sen. Michael Mullins, Nancy Cregg, Cllr. Cathal Concannon, Cllr. Carmel Grealy, Cllr. Johnny Walsh, Cllr. Lucy Lloyd Keighery. Front (L-R): Martha Tierney, Mae Keighery, Mayor Mike Kelly, Kitty Henson, Betty Mitchell

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Out and About in Ballinasloe

Social Ard Scoil Mhuire students glammed up for Grad (L-R): Siobhan Carey, Aoife Curely, Rhona Madden, Jen Coughlan, Michaela Murphy, Shane Gavin, James Shaughnessy, Rob Dudgeon, Shane Dolan, Paul Hickey.



John and Peggy Desmond, Ard Mhuire, Ballinasloe celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary.



Paddy Coffey on his 100th Birthday at Ballinderry Nursing Home, Kilconnell on 31st August. Pictured here with Daughters Jeanette and Cecilia and Son P.J.



Social Ardscoil Mhuire Students (L-R): Sean Claffey, Ceallaigh Broderick, Stephen Cogavin, Ciara Hession, Darragh Burke and Emma Barrett.



Gullanes Staff outside the Hotel with Bride Rita Morrissey (Gullanes Staff member) and Groom Denis Killane before their reception.



Our Lady's Bower students before their Grad - Nessa Walsh, Ellen O'Beirn, Katie Connolly, Maeve Brassil, Caoimhe Walsh, Alison Duffy, Megan Connolly.



Pride of Place contestants from various organisations in Ballinasloe.



Galway County Councillor Dermot Connolly and his Bride Katja Klemmer who got married in Germany recently.



Sports Star is Crowned Queen of The Fair for 2011

Writes Kevin Murray

Cathriona Farrell was crowned the 2011 Carlton Shearwater Queen of The Fair at a gala night in the hotel just before the fair. Cathriona won representing 'The Dunlo Tavern', which is owned by her first cousin Damien Clarke.

The competition was keenly contested by the 15 participants, who were representing various clubs and businesses from around the Ballinasloe area. All the hopefuls were treated to a gala dinner by the hotel before the big event. This was the third year the competition was sponsored by the Carlton Shearwater, who put on a great evening's entertainment for an audience of over 300, free of charge.

The judges on the night were Marissa Murray, a former Westmeath Rose in the 'Rose of Tralee', Martin Daly, general manager of the Carlton Shearwater hotel, and Kathleen Croffy of the Fair and Festival committee.

On the night, the judges all agreed on Cathriona as the 2011 Queen. Cathriona is a native of Craughwell, Co. Galway. She is currently studying physical education and biology in Dublin City University. Cathriona also has a keen interest in sport, having represented Ireland in the high-jump at many international events, winning four gold medals. She also took to the field for Ireland at the European Youth Olympics in Helsinki, finishing fourth. Along with the coveted crown, Cathriona also won a cash prize, a weekend away from the Carlton Group, and a professional portrait from local photographer Liam Jordan.

As well as this, she is automatically entered as a participant in the Galway Rose for the 'Rose of Tralee 2012'. This take place in the Carlton Shearwater on 7th April 2012. All of Ballinasloe and Craughwell will be cheering her on the night.

Cathriona's first official engagement as Queen of the Fair is to give out the prize to the winner of the busking competition on Saturday October 1st.



172 Years of Agricultural Show

Writes Caitriona Ní Chadhain

Hailed as the oldest Agricultural Show in Ireland, Ballinasloe Agricultural Show has been on the go since 1839. Celebrating an age-old Irish tradition and showcasing the best in Irish livestock.

This year the show will take place on the 1st of October on Ballinasloe's newly developed Show Grounds in conjunction with the October Fair and Festival. "We're expecting a good turnout as we're hosting six all-Ireland finals this year from horses to cattle, hopefully the weather will improve," said John Harney Secretary of the show.

The agricultural show has been running for 172 years now and have received a large amount of entries this year.

The grounds will also be open on Sunday 2nd and Monday, 3rd of October where there will be a variety of Trade Stands and Catering available.

The Agricultural Show showcases the best in horses, ponies, cattle, sheep, donkeys and poultry amongst others.



Ballinasloe's Largest Event of The Year Has Arrived!

Writes Charlene Bloe

Known as the Oldest Horse Fair in Europe, the Ballinasloe Fair & Festival has continued to grow over the years despite changing times and economic difficulties. The event is run by a local voluntary committee of enthusiasts and it continues to grow and grow and each year.

With the event taking place from the 1st to the 9th October there is something to be enjoyed by all the family. The festival will start on Saturday 1st October with an array of family entertainment traversing the streets of Ballinasloe, this entertainment will include a pet farm and your favourite cartoon characters. Saturday 1st October will also see our busking competition making a comeback with a prize fund worth €500 - if you are a local band interested in taking part make sure to make contact with the Fair & Festival office. This event cannot forget its most important character - the

Una McDonagh of Supermacs (Sponsors of Fireworks display during Fair Week) with Fair & Festival Chairman Tim Broderick.



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horse and on Sunday 2nd & Monday 3rd October, Ballinasloe is home to thousands of horses. Still to be found on the Fair Green is traditional trading and haggling between prospective buyers and sellers.

Along with the traditional haggling several esteemed horse competitions will take place over the opening weekend beginning with the Ballinasloe Credit Union Horse of the Fair Competition on Sunday 2nd October. Open to all 3-year-olds, entries will be taken from the green Sunday morning. On Monday October 3rd the pre-qualified Jim Derwin International Horse Dealer All-Ireland Pony of the Fair and the Hayden's Hotel All-Ireland Cob Lunging Competition will take place. This event is open to all 3-4 year-olds 149cm - 158cm in height. Pre-qualifiers for the Monday's competitions have been held in recent weeks across the country.

On Sunday 2nd and Monday 3rd, as the main horse and pony events take place on the Fair Green, the streets of Ballinasloe are covered in an abundance of stalls. As well as this the East Nightclub and Venue Soundstage plays host to many talented musicians including the well-known Big Generator. The Official Opening of the 2011 Ballinasloe Fair & Festival will take place on Sunday 2nd at 2.45pm and will be performed by international football star Niall Quinn.

Midweek of the 2011 Ballinasloe Fair & Festival would not be the same without the 16th Domac Tug-O'-War Competition. An event which is continuing to grow from strength to strength attracting teams from near and far will be held from Tuesday 4th to Friday 7th throughout the town, including the opening night in the underground car park of the Carlton Shearwater Hotel. Locations for the Tug-O'-War competitions are Society Street on Wednesday 5th and Dunlo Street on Thursday 6th. The final of the Tug O'War



Caroline and Thomas Gullane of Gullanes Hotel (Sponsors of the Vintage Parade and Show) with Tim Broderick (Fair & Festival Chairman).



(L-R) Tim Broderick (Chairman) and Mary Phelan of The Fair & Festival Committee, with Noel Ryan of Premier Proteins (Dog Show Sponsor) and Stanley Clarke (Dog Show Organiser).

will take place on Main Street on Friday 7th October, followed by the Supermacs Monster Fireworks Display at the marina.

Ballinasloe's publicans host many talented musicians and singers throughout Fair Week and each are given their opportunity to be a part of the Singing Pubs Competition which takes place over 3 nights from Wednesday 5th to Friday 7th October.

AIB Country Fair Day, (Saturday, October 9th) is the day of the mare and foal competitions including the Foal of the Ballinasloe International Fair. As well as equestrian events the showgrounds will also host a free children's mobile farm, exotic birds of prey and fowl display, bouncing castle, free face painting and much more. On the day, the winners of the bakery competitions in association with Supervalu, will be announced. These competitions are open to all national schools.

The second weekend of the Fair will play host to the Gullanes Hotel Cultural Weekend with Irish traditional music on the soundstage on Saturday 8th and an International Artisan & Craft Market on Sunday 9th October. This year the Fair & Festival have opened the opportunity of taking part in the market to anyone who trades with fine food and crafts. Or on the day come tantalise your senses and taste buds by sampling some yummy crepes, corndogs, turkish delight or handmade chocolates. Shop till you drop with a wide array of Handcrafts, Jewellery and much, much more. If you would like to take part in our market on Sunday 9th October, please contact Orla on 087 6745123.

The Fair concludes with the very popular Vintage Parade & Static Display and the Premier Proteins Open Dog Show which takes place on Sunday 9th. This is the third year of the Vintage Day organised by Ballinasloe and District Vintage Club which sees an amazing vintage display traverse through the streets of Ballinasloe and create a static display in Gullanes Hotel Car Park. While this is happening the ever increasing Premier Proteins Open Dog Show will host 15 different classes in St. Michael's Square. So get your dog cleaned and enter it into the most prestigious dog event around.



Above: Seamus Doherty (Left) and Maurice Doherty (Right) of Domac Hire & Sales (Sponsors of the Tug-O'-war Event) with John Flynn of the Fair & Festival Committee.



Noel Madden Manager of Ballinasloe Credit Union (Sponsors of the Horse of the Fair Competition) with Tim Broderick, Chairman of the Fair & Festival Committee.

A WORD OF THANKS TO THOSE WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN

This fantastic programme of events would not be possible without the support and commitment of the sponsors of the Fair and Festival. In a tough economic environment, sponsors have dug deep into smaller pockets to ensure the local committee has the funds necessary to programme such a wide and diverse programme. Particular tribute is paid to main sponsors the Carlton Shearwater Hotel for their continued support of the Fair. Organisers are also very grateful to Ballinasloe Credit Union, Gullanes Hotel, Premier Proteins, Supermacs, Domac Plant & Tool Hire, Ballinasloe Vintners, East Night club and Venue, Jim Derwin International Horse Dealer, Haydens Hotel, AIB, KPW Print, Fletchers. Special thanks are due to Ballinasloe Town Council, RAPID, Galway County Council and Failte Ireland. We also appreciate the financial support of our vintners - Duck Inn, Dunlo Tavern, An Tain, Ryan's Bar, Downey's Bar, Pillar House, Grenham's Bar, Usual Bar, Egan's Bar, Maud Millar's, Finn's Bar, The Countryman, Melody's of Moycarn & The Birchgrove.

Ballinasloe Fair and Festival Office, Dunlo Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

Tel: 090 96 44793 Email: info@ballinasloeoctoberfair.com Web: www.ballinasloeoctoberfair.com

Beauty and The Beast

Writes Catherine McCormack

Beauty and the Beast is a tale treasured by young and old alike for many years. A story which follows Belle, a bright young woman who finds herself imprisoned in the castle of a mysterious beast. With the assistance of the castle's enchanted staff which include Mrs Potts the teapot and Lumière the candelabra, a delightful and tender romance develops between the two. Belle soon learns the most important lesson of all, that true beauty comes from within. This is a story of characters who will fill your heart and a magical adventure about finding beauty within. Following the huge success of the Ballinasloe Musical Society's 2011 show 'South Pacific' Ballinasloe Musical Society announces their production of Beauty and the Beast which will take place in Ballinasloe's Town Hall Theatre in February 2012

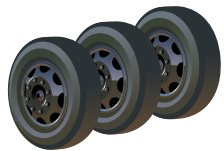
That means it's nearly time for the fun to begin! Ballinasloe Musical Society would love you to "Be our Guest" and come along to one of our upcoming events. Introduction Evenings, Auditions and then Rehearsals are all about to begin, venues and dates/times will be posted around the town. Director Paul Norton, Musical Director Shane Farrell, Choreographer Fiona O'Leary and the rest of the production team look forward to discovering more of Ballinasloe's talent! So please, come along and join in the fun, there is a place for everyone, onstage, backstage. Meet new friends or old ones! For further Information phone: 087 2220282.

Rosway Walkers Club

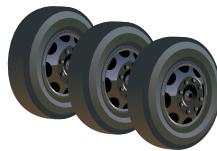
Writes Frances Leahy

Rosway Walking Club successfully completed the challenge of climbing the highest peaks in Ireland's 32 counties between them in one day recently in aid of Mountain Rescue Ireland. Two was the minimum amount of climbers on any mountain, but most teams had more. Ballinasloe Active Retirement got fully behind the challenge and travelled to and climbed the highest peak in Longford. The club were also delighted that Mountain Rescue was able to join them on many of the Mountains during the day including Galway and Wexford/Carlow and also joined in on the celebrations in the Shearwater afterwards.

Eugene Freyne, Pat Barratt, Vincent Greene and Carina Brady, members of the club at the summit of Benbaun, Co. Galway.



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Caitlin Compounds for The Count

Writes Ken Kelly

A Ballinasloe chemist who dispensed a prescription for the late Count John McCormack, over sixty years ago, still retains a great interest in the business each day, which was established one hundred years ago this year.

Now in her 93rd year, Caitlin Duane is one of the town's best-known chemists, having first arrived in Ballinasloe to work in 1946. Born in Mount Bernard in the parish of Cloonkeenkerrill, near Gurteen, Ballinasloe, Caitlin Breathnach's parents were both teachers. The eldest of four children, she lost her father, Sean Breatnach, at the tender age of 6 when he was one of the 48 people who perished in the Cinema fire in Dromcollogher, Co. Limerick, in 1926. She was educated by the St. Louis nuns in Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo "as Gaeilge" and today is extremely proud of her "cupla focal."

Afterwards she trained in Dublin as a pharmacist before qualifying in 1944. She stayed in employment there for another two years and during that reign there was a request for a prescription for a patient in the Mater Private Hospital nearby. "Can you imagine the shock I got when I learned the prescription was for the late Count John McCormack. I was an absolute fan of his and spent my youth playing his records on the old gramophone. I was thrilled to have the honour of making up the prescription-it was the highlight of my Dublin experiences" said Caitlin.

"That time we had to compound the prescriptions from scratch. We used get the raw materials in and pound them in a mortar and weigh them by troy weight before putting them in a pill machine" she explained.

Arriving in Ballinasloe in 1946, Caitlin was surprised there was an all-male staff in Duane's Pharmacy, in Main Street which was established in 1911 by the late P.J.Duane. "I had to learn all about veterinary medicines and make up bottles for sick calves or lambs. Most of our customers were of the farming community whereas we had none of them in Dublin" she explained. "I soon learned to adopt 'an Irish solution to an Irish problem'" she added.

"At that time there were only three chemists shops in Ballinasloe-Duane's, McAuley's Medical Hall and the Central in Society St. We all got a long fine and helped one another out. You must remember it was just after the War and a lot of shops were closed down. It was a huge market town, selling everything



from fowl, turf, vegetables, fish etc. on the open street and in the market" she told me at her home.

Continuing Caitlin said she was shocked when the October Fair came along, just a few months after arriving in the town. "I often heard that my late grandfather drove herds of cattle to the Ballinasloe October Fair, all the way from Ballymacward, but I never imagined the eight-day fair being so big. There were so many horses on the main streets of the town it would be easier walk on their backs to get to your destination than try and walk the streets. And the sheep fairs-well imagine opening your front door at 6 in the morning to discover a dozen sheep penned to your home. This was all over the place and the people never complained. It was accepted for the good of the community" she added.

"It brought business to the town and that's what counted. They came from all over Ireland to the October fair and special trains transported the livestock to the Midlands and East of the country while licensed premises, guesthouses and hotels looked forward to the annual bonanza" she said.

Romance soon blossomed for Caitlin and in 1948 she married Gerald Duane, son of the founder of the business. They both headed a great team in the pharmacy and in 1949 they were blessed with the arrival of twin boys-Joe and Gerard. Joe subsequently followed the path of his parents and in later years managed the Main St. business while Gerard emigrated to Australia and is now the owner of the Claddagh Nursing Home, in Bendigo, with his wife Nora (nee McEvilly) a native of Ballydangan who had also worked in the Ballinasloe pharmacy of Duane's.

Later on Caitlin had a son and a daughter. Des is a photographer in the town while Moira is a Scientist (M.Sc.) in Athlone.

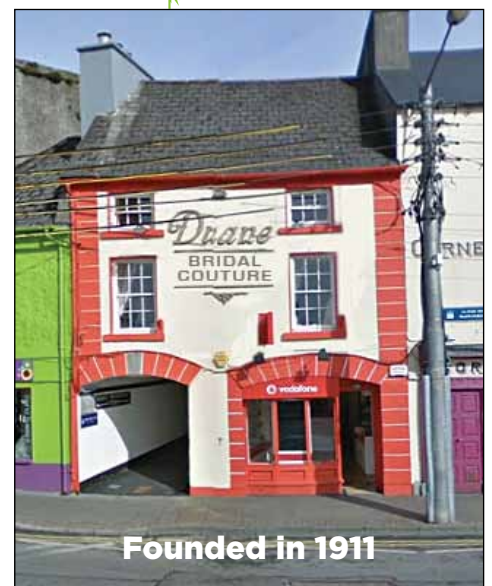
Gerald Duane passed away in 1977 and it was left to Caitlin to carry on the business. This she did with great courage and enthusiasm, overcoming the many obstacles in a male-dominated world as she strove to meet the needs of her

customers. "It was tough but I kept going. I had many loyal customers who stood by me and to this day I will never forget them. The staff were brilliant and were so supportive in everything I tried" she explained. "I was very fortunate to have the support of my son Joe, who had qualified in the early seventies and joined the firm a few years before his dad's death. We teamed up well together and I am proud today he is still running such a successful business" said the oldest business lady in town. Later they were joined by Joe's wife, Rita, in the Main Street pharmacy.

Mrs. Duane then told me about the heart-wrenching decision to move across the street into a newly-acquired building at the end of 1999. "It nearly broke my heart-I just hated leaving all the memories of the previous fifty years behind but I eventually accepted it. But look what they done to our town now. Paid parking has destroyed the business life of our town. People are getting it harder to stay in business and the one-stop-shops are taking over. The loyalty of our ancestors is fading rapidly and I dread to think of what's in store for the coming generations" she said.

When I asked her about her longevity, her good health and alertness, Caitlin said "I had an interest in my work and people all my life. That is why I still make a point of going down to the shop, nearly every day, to chat and meet the customers that have been my friends and supporters for many, many years. They are the salt of the earth-friends, advisers, neighbours, counsellors, confidants, customers, but most of all comrades and companions that helped me along the road of life since I arrived in this remarkable town in 1946."

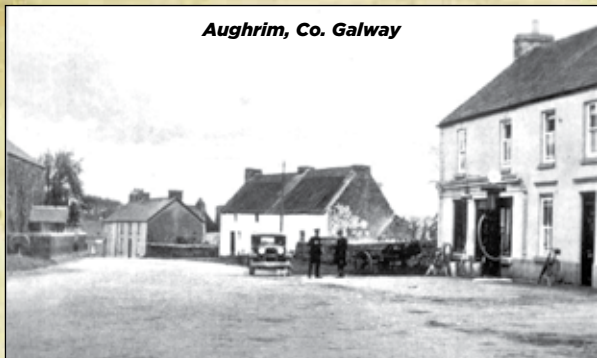
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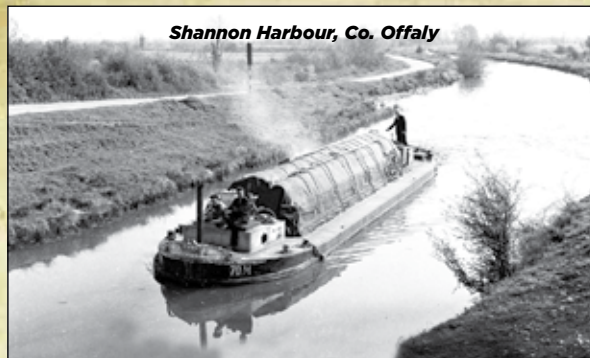
Saving the Hay, Co. Offaly



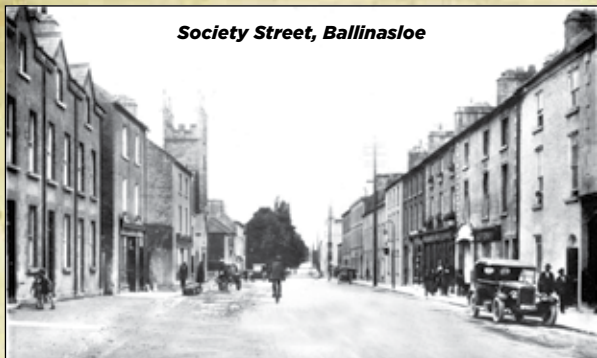
Ballinasloe Agricultural Show 1949



Shannon Harbour, Co. Offaly



Society Street, Ballinasloe



St. Michael's Square, Ballinasloe



St. Michael's Square, Ballinasloe



Ballinasloe October Fair



35 Years of Ballinasloe Karate

Some of the students from the Ballinasloe club with Sadaaki Sakagami during the karate seminar.



Writes Caitriona Ní Chadhain

Ballinasloe Karate has a long-standing tradition of international association and has used this important attribute to further the skills, ambitions and success of many of its students over its 35 years.

Itosu-kai Karatedo Ireland celebrated 35 years in Ballinasloe this year. The occasion was marked with an International Karate Seminar which was held here in August. The association hosted the Chief Instructor of Japan Karatedo Itosu-kai and the president of Itosu-ryu Karatedo International Federation (IKIF), Mr. Sadaaki Sakagami and two of his instructors in Ballinasloe. Ballinasloe Karate is just one of nine clubs in Itosu-kai Karatedo Ireland (IKKI). Leo Mulvany is the Chief Instructor of Itosu-kai in Ireland. He started karate in 1976 under Mr. Richard Hayes, in the Social Centre Gym, Society Street.

Also invited to the seminar were the European branches of IKIF with Scotland, Denmark, Sweden and Spain attending. The Seminar was held over two days with over 160 delegates attending, 80 from mainland Europe. All the countries chief instructors attended and the training session with Sakagami was the first time all were present at the same time. This was

an incredible opportunity and was open to all ages and levels of expertise. The black belt session taken by Sakagami boasted over 40 black belts from 1st to 6th Dan. At the Gala Dinner Mr. Mike Kelly, Mayor of Ballinasloe addressed the guests and presented Mr. Sakagami with a gift from the people of Ballinasloe. He also had a few words of Japanese in his address which went down a treat. Mr Sakagami stayed in Ballinasloe for a week along with many of the European attendees and was shown the sights near and far by the Irish association.

The IKKI has been very busy over the years. Its mission is to provide the best coaching practices to students, develop students to their full potential and to coach students to International and World Class competition level. Besides nurturing home clubs, the IKKI has taken part in over 20 internationals and three world championships with students of all ages since 2002. The association is heavily involved with the NGB for karate in Ireland (www.onakai.org) and many of our Instructors sit on committees at national level and also coach at national level. Our students have represented the island of Ireland at international competitions over the last few years with great success. For more info call (090) 9642932. Website coming: www.itosukaiireland.org

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Ballinasloe Player in Kennedy Shield Win

Writes Caitriona Ní Chadhain

Shane Kelly of Ballinasloe led the Athlone District Soccer League to victory in the Kennedy Shield recently. The annual Kennedy Cup tournament is a five-day football festival where 32 schoolboy leagues from around Ireland enter their under-13 representative teams into an inter-league competition. Two others from Ballinasloe were on the panel, Conor Payne and Mamood Giunaa. They beat Drogheda 2 - 1 in the final, Conor Payne

of Ballinasloe scored the winning goal. By winning the Shield, Athlone claimed 17th place overall of the 32 teams which competed in the annual Kennedy Cup competition. They had finished third in the Group 2 table, thereby entering the Shield competition which they went on to win. "We were delighted as we were expecting to be at least in the top 10 and we ended up being a goal away from topping the group," said the team captain Shane Kelly.



Have You Got News to Share?

Have News to share about your local club organisation, but can't see it listed anywhere? Fix it! Please forward any local club or society news for inclusion in the next edition to the email ballinasloelife@hotmail.com as soon as possible.

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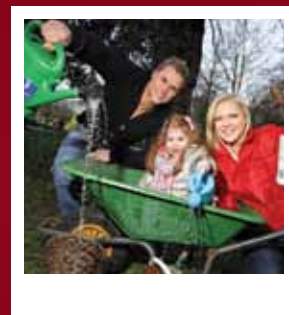
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Five Ballinasloe Players on Ted Webb Memorial Cup Team

Writes Cathal Croffy

Five Ballinasloe natives did the town proud when they togged out in maroon and white to win the final of the Ted Webb Memorial Cup recently. A proud day for the team as it was the first time in 15 years that Galway County won the final.

Galway beat Roscommon and Mayo South in their group to make it to the final against Mayo North. The final was held in Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo, where Galway went on to win with 1-10 to Mayo's 0-5. Brian Shaughnessy of Ballinasloe was the captain of the team. Jack Parsons and Eoin McCormack of Ballinasloe also played on the day, McCormack scoring two points. Cian Dooley and Eoin Moran of Ballinasloe were on the substitute panel.

"It is a great achievement to have five on the team as there was 85 players at the trials in Mountbellew before the panel was formed," said Cathal Croffy, local GAA coach.

This popular annual competition is named after a very talented young footballer of the 1970's whose life was tragically claimed in a car accident. The Ted Webb Memorial Cup is known to be a good opportunity to spot the talent likely to line up for the county minor team in the following years.

The Ballinasloe Players who on the Galway team for Webb Memorial Cup (L-R): Eoin McCormack, Jack Parsons, Eoin Moran, Brian Shaughnessy and Cian Dooley.



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St. Gabriels, Kilconnell Success



Writes Caitriona Ní Chadhain

St. Gabriels boys travelled home once again to blazing bonfires and a warm welcome recently to Kilconnell following their under-14 team's run of successes, having won two county finals in the space of a week. They won the division 1B under 14 county final on in late August and the under 14 division 2 county league final in early September. Both games were played in Pearse Stadium.

First up were St. Gabriels playing Oughterard in the championship final. Oughterard started the better team and were 11 points up at one stage before St. Gabriels made a remarkable comeback and finished the first half at St. Gabriels 3-3 to Oughterard 4-4. St. Gabriels upped their game in the second half and gave a great display of football, eventually

winning on a score line of St. Gabriels 7-3 to Oughterard 6-3. St. Gabriels' team captain Aidan Grenham was presented the cup by Larry Lohan PRO of Coiste Peil nÓg, amidst scenes of great joy. Darren Kenny received the Man of The Match award which was presented to him by Tadhg Connelly, Chairman of Coiste Peil nÓg.

The same St. Gabriels U14's played the division 2a county league final against Carna Caiseal/ Na Piarsaigh. St. Gabriels were the better team from the start of the match. With some great defending and some great scores the half time came with St. Gabriels 4-3 to Carna 1pt. It was a memorable week for this bunch of players. Afterwards Michael O'Rourke was presented with the plaque by Tadhg Connelly, chairman of Coiste Peil nÓg. Final score St. Gabriels 4-8 to Carna 1-5.

A Fighter By Trade

(L-R) Ken Campbell, Tom Lucas, Dolly Ward and Mike Lyons.



Writes Ken Campbell

The beautiful thing about Amateur boxing is you don't have to be able to box, you don't have to be able to fight, all you have to be able to do is listen, learn and train hard and you can accomplish anything.

Emerald A.B.C. as a club sets its standards high but the coaches are always there to help, teach, listen, but most importantly encourage all their young boxers to reach their full potential in the sport of boxing.

Emerald Boxing Club was opened on the 6th of January 2009 by Mike Lyons and Ken Campbell. Both these coaches have played a vital role in the refurbishment of Boxing in Ballinasloe and its surrounding areas. They encompass a passion for the sport of boxing and believe that Ballinasloe, a town once steeped in boxing history, can once again achieve glory at the highest level within the ring. Since opening the club has grown in strength and has had success at all levels from

county to All-Ireland and has produced a host of new referees, judges and coaches.

Someone once analysed sport as a reflection of the struggle between life and death, the winner lives and the loser dies. In the 21st century the need to identify life with victory is somewhat diluted or so the theory goes. But when it comes to boxing its heroes bleed, risk their health and in some cases even their lives in pursuit of success and recognition within their chosen sport. All boxers from amateur ranks to professional are some of the most ordinary and the most extraordinary of people, they understand the cost of their sport better than most, for a true boxer it's simply instinct.

From John L. Sullivan and Jack Dempsey, Evander Holyfield to Ricky Hatton and of course Manny Pacquiao, the greatest of the great fighters intrigue, entertain, infuriate and inspire but never bore us. Rough hard men who find themselves hopelessly exposed by the nature of their trade, they are both vulnerable and impervious, but most of all they are honest in their work.

Even world champions have to start somewhere and for 99% of Professional boxers it started by walking into their local boxing gym just like our own Club, Emerald A.B.C. Here they would have to box their way through the amateur ranks, having to sacrifice a lot along the way to fulfil that dream of becoming a boxer. Those who are successful share that one thing that no one can take away from them, "That moment in the Ring"

We watch them to see them win, lose, their rise to the top and in some cases their fall. Who else would be so ready to risk their dignity and welfare every time they enter the ring and compete with such passion? Who else sweats and bleeds whether the reward be a medal won in the Emerald Ballroom or a million dollar purse in Las Vegas, Answer; the Boxer, we watch because we are compelled to watch.

When watching the lads who do us so proud on the world stage remember one thing, you have not one but two Boxing Clubs in Ballinasloe Town and every time one of those Boxers dons the gloves and step in to a ring they're not just representing themselves, their representing their club, their town and of course you.

Support and be proud of your Local Club. If you believe you have what it takes to become a Boxer, why don't you come join Emerald A.B.C.

All a new boxer will need to join, is simply turn up at a training session in a tracksuit and trainers, the Club is open Every Tuesday and Thursday 7.30 - 9pm Admission €3.00.

If you have any Questions please feel free to contact us. Email: eabcboxing@gmail.com or find us on Facebook by searching Emerald Boxingclub Ballinasloe. www.wix.com/emeraldabc/boxing

Excellent Junior Cert Results

Writes Claire Dempsey

Nerves gave way to squeals of delight as envelopes were ripped open, friends were embraced and parents were rung as the long awaited results were revealed for Junior Cert students throughout the country mid-September.

In Ard Scoil Mhuire the recent success of the Leaving Cert class was replicated in the results of the schools Junior Cert students, many of them achieving multiple A grades in their exams. Caitlin McMahon from Derrymullen had particular reason to celebrate achieving an impressive tally of 10 A's overall.

School principal, Ms. Patricia Kilgallen praised the achievements of all the students, reiterating that each student should take pride in their wonderful results.



Above: Delighted Ard Scoil Mhuire Students with their Junior Cert Results. Right: Caitlin McMahon from Derrymullen who achieved 10 A's in her Junior Cert.



The Glebe NS in Aughrim Welcomes a New Principal

Writes Ruairi Moore

The Glebe National School warmly welcomes Lisa McKeigue as the new school principal. Lisa took up the appointment on September 1st 2011. A first class honours graduate of Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, she also holds a Research Masters in Special Education. She has been living in Cork for the last few years and has recently moved home to her native Kiltormer. The Glebe NS wishes to sincerely thank former Principal, Mrs. Marian Kelly, from Laurencetown, for her many years of dedicated service.

The Glebe NS is a small, co-educational, interdenominational primary school under the Patronage of the Church of Ireland. The school is located in the historic village of Aughrim, just 5km from Ballinasloe. Prior to 1988 the school operated as a Church of Ireland school offering a service to the local Church of Ireland community. However, for the past 23 years, the school has operated



as an interdenominational school while remaining under the Patronage of the Church of Ireland. Children of all denominations are accepted and

welcomed and religious instruction, specific to a faith or belief system, can be arranged.

The school is unique in that there is a very low pupil teacher ratio. This offers wonderful learning opportunities for children. The individual attention received every day results in high quality learning outcomes. Last year a new state of the art school building with large, spacious classrooms was completed. The school has high tech IT facilities including an interactive whiteboard, computers and laptops. Extra curricular activities including French, Cookery Skills and Gardening are offered. The school has a spacious yard with a large green area where they grow fruit and vegetables each spring. A bus service is available serving the areas of Aughrim, Ballinasloe and Clontuskert. The school is now enrolling all classes.

For further information or to arrange an appointment contact 090 9673650, or email info@theglebens.com or you can visit the school website at www.theglebens.com

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Is Beatha Teanga í a Labhairt

Writes Caitríona Ní Chadhain

Michael Dolan of Ballinasloe got first place in the under 13 Comhrá Gaeilge Competition (Irish Conversation) at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann recently. This is a wonderful achievement for a child coming from a non Irish-Speaking background or a Gaeltacht area. Michael has taken part in this competition for over four years and has achieved two 3rd places and one 2nd place previously. The Adjudicators in summing up said the competition this year was of an extremely high standard and one of the highest in their opinion. Michael beat Cliona ni Gallachoir from the Donegal Gaeltacht who came second and has won this competition for the last three years. She is a native Irish Speaker.

The Competitors are asked to recite a poem or story as part of the interview and are expected to have a good knowledge of the history of Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann and the GAA. Michael recited a poem by Antoine Ó Raifteirí called Baile Locha Riach (Loughrea) which impressed the Judges. Michael has just started in First Year in Garbally College having spent all his primary School life at Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh. Prior to the Competition, he spent a week in Cavan taking part in Scoil Éigse to which he obtained a Scholarship as part of his prize for qualifying at the Connaught Fleadh.

Hopefully his love of the Irish language will continue despite not attending an Irish speaking school or Irish being his first language. Many messages of congratulations have been sent to Michael since his win, including the local branch of Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann, Garbally College and Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh.

“A Bhaile Locha Riach, is fada ‘bheas trácht ort
ón lá úd a tharla mé ann,
Nó gur dhruid mé go dlúth leis na cárta
‘s gur thógadar ríl in mo cheann.”





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Leaving Cert Results Raise the bar in Ardscoil Mhuire

Writes Claire Dempsey

The 2011 Leaving Certificate class of Ardscoil Mhuire, had plenty of reasons to celebrate with an amazing 24% achieving over 500 points and 62% scoring over 400 points placing them well above the national average.

Claire Kelly from Moore and Ciara Hession from Kilmalaw shared the honour of achieving the highest grades overall. Both students have been invited back to school for the Mercy day celebrations on the 23rd of September where their achievements will be celebrated by the school and rewarded by a presentation from the Parent's council.

Principal, Patricia Kilgallon stated "We are so proud of all our students. The results were incredible. They were a fantastic group of girls and they deserve every success in the future."

Pictured are Ard Scoil Mhuire students Ciara Hession and Claire Kelly who achieved the highest grades in the Ard Scoil Mhuire Leaving Cert Class 2011.



Garbally Leaving Cert Results Well Above National Average

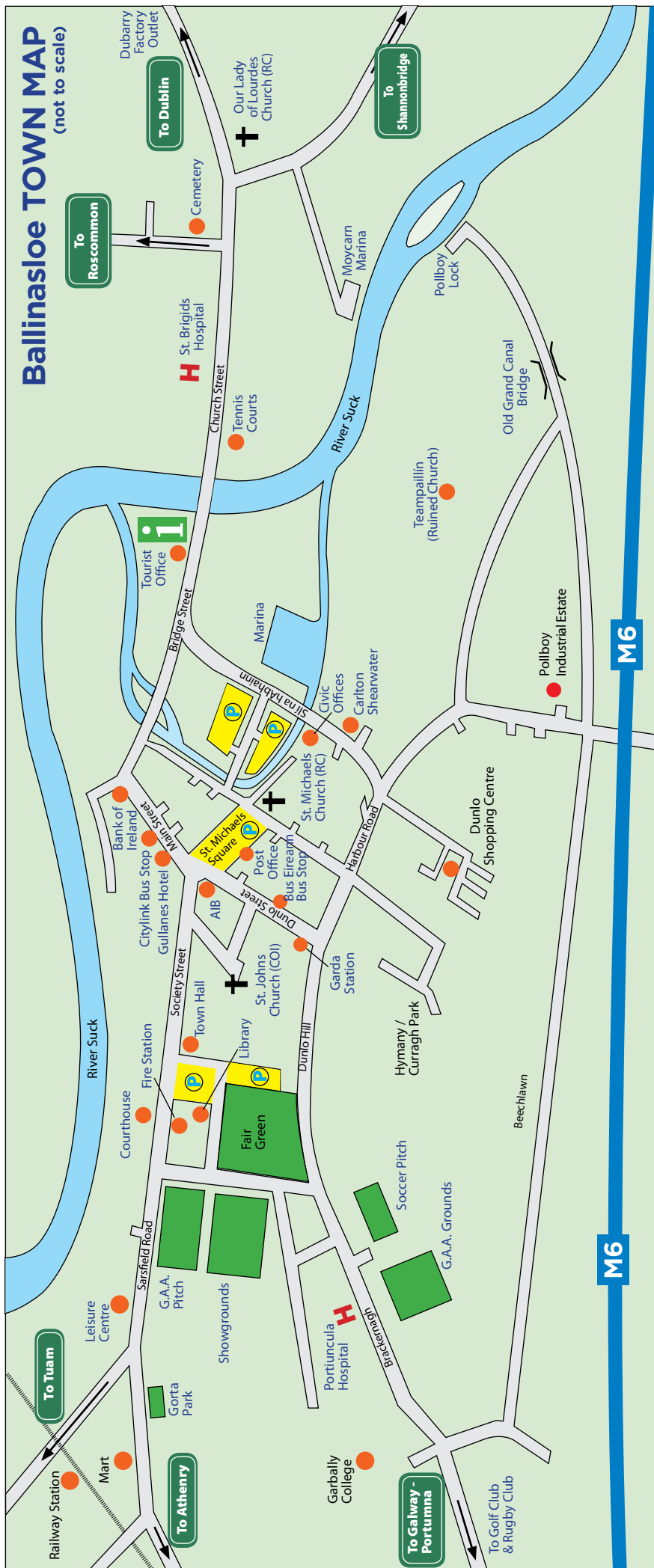
Writes Kathleen Kelly

Nerves were aflutter for 60,000 Leaving Cert students across the country until they opened that fateful envelope in mid-August. In Garbally College this year's results were bell-shaped. Over 40% of our students got in excess of 400 points. This is well above the national average. Patrick Kelly from Castlepark, Creagh was the top achiever. Andrew Phelan and Niall Stankard got points in the mid 500's. All the students were generally extremely happy. The Principal Mr. Seamus O'Brien praised the teaching staff for doing the heavy lifting over the previous six years. He also noted the emphasis on supervised evening, Saturday and Holiday study. The continuous assessment introduced by the College over the past three years was also very helpful. The students are now on their way to third level. Wishing them every success.

Top Left: Cormac Dolphin, Enda Kelly and Ciaran Kelly, delighted with their results. Left: Shane Harrington and Careers Teacher Ms. Jennifer Lenihan.



Garbally's Patrick Kelly expresses delight at the superb results he achieved.



Slí na Sláinte

The Slí na Sláinte route, mapped by the Irish Heart Foundation is seven kilometres in length from the start/end point opposite Dolan's Garage on the Dublin Road. From this point the route follows Bridge Street, passing the Dubarry factory, Our Lady of Lourdes Church and the ruins of Ballinasloe Castle. The route follows a circuit through the town up Main Street, Society Street, Harris Road, past the GAA ground and the Le Poer Trench Monument. It then goes down Dunlo Hill and Hymany Street, Slí na hAbhainn and away from the town along Bridge Street to end, back at Dolan's Garage.

Ballinasloe Line

A good walk for individuals interested in views of the Callows and of Ireland's extensive bog lands. The start of this walk is at Fanning's Lock the disused first lock of the Ballinasloe Canal. The Canal was abandoned in 1961. From Fanning's Lock proceed along the path of the disused canal. For most a walk of about two kilometers along the bank of the disused canal and the bog railway will provide ample opportunity to view the Callows and see aspects of how the turf is harvested from the bog. This walk is at its best on a bright fresh day in early summer when the wild flowers are in full bloom in the Callow meadows and the ground is dry underfoot. Approximately 4 kilometres in length Flowerhill Equestrian Centre. Situated in the village of Killimor roughly 20 miles outside town, Flowerhill has long been a haven for horse-lovers both local and visiting alike. The centre offers horseriding lessons as well as hunting, clay pigeon shooting, fly fishing and much more, all amongst the beautiful scenery of Killimor.

For more information on location, pricing and opening times, visit www.flowerhill.net or call +353 (0)9096 76112

Architectural Walking Tour

Ballinasloe's architectural walking tour devised by Galway East Tourism starts at The Man with the Horse statue and continues on up through Main street where people there are a number of Georgian style buildings and Diocletian windows can be admired. At the meeting point of Bridge Street and Main street there are a number of buildings of historical interest, a commercial premises which was once the Masonic Hall and a beautifully crafted 19th century stone house which is currently a guest house. Follow on to Bridge Street, then taking the pathway to the right which runs along the River Suck the several arches of the long stone bridge over the river can be admired, one of the town's most precious monuments. At the far end of the park here St Michael's Church' fine structure is to be admired, St. John's church which dominates the fair green is another admirable structure with a good deal of history behind it. The Courthouse on Society Street and Ballinasloe's Railway Station are two more stops along the way.



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Top: His 'n' hers Galway boots in Brown and Walnut
Left: Bracken tweed jacket in Connacht Meadow
Right: Shaw jacket in Mocha with Kirwan sweater in Stone
Centre Top: Bodkin jacket in Dark Olive
Centre Bottom: Kinsella jacket in Navy



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