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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 11 Issue 3: Aug '21 - Sept '21



Photo by Robert Riddell

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REAMHRA

Welcome to Volume 11 issue 3

Welcome to the 8th consecutive edition with no events guide and a country that is enjoying the Azores high, praying for a breeze or a drop of rain and an end to the speculative strain of the fourth COVID wave with the Delta Strain!

As I type, we had a very historic morning here at the Enterprise Centre with the official hosting of our first ever Táiniste's visit. We are used to welcoming Government Ministers (we still have not a Taoiseach yet) but last month we had not just one but two – as the Minister Josepha Madigan Junior Minister Special Education and Inclusion called.

Leo's visit acknowledged the successes and flightpath we, as a Community Development Company are on, with the support of the Western Development Commission, the Just Transition Fund and being part of the national roll out of towns and communities to make "Remote Work" through Connected Hubs.ie

As Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, he was very much at home and energised by being out and about with business types and seemed very encouraging about how the Pandemic which has brutally disrupted our lives for the past 17 months has just torn up the rule book when it comes to employers and employees determining how they can work smarter not harder – remotely.

IF this Government Policy takes root – allied of course to the National Broadband Strategy – then the ability of highly skilled workers and entrepreneurs to settle West will become a reality.

Senator Aishling Dolan also cheekily reminded the Táiniste that when

he comes to town next – it will be as Taoiseach and he might be able to cycle into town if the Govt. gives the green light to the cycle way!

He commended the work, the strategy of the agencies that we partner and stressed the need for more of it to illuminate our way of thinking.

The past is a different country, we so often hear – the WDC invite list in these pandemic times was very slim. There were no lorry loads of cheering supporters and well wishers at the gates. There were no babies to be kissed! A photo call was announced – the Táiniste wanted his photo taken with the Cathoileach of the County Peter Keaveney (FG) and Senator Dolan (FG). Cllr. Micheal Connolly (FF) marched in and announced that he assumed the Táiniste meant all public Representatives of the Government parties. There were nervous chuckles all round!

I had forgotten as this three legged coalition was formed in a pandemic and kept socially distant from each other and us – we are not used to physically seeing representatives of our Government parties sharing the podiums and plaudits locally. It will take some getting used to by none and all.

Enjoy the read and our Autumn.

Le Gach De Ghui,
COLM CROFFY,
Editor.



I had the unfortunate experience of trying to ring two service providers in recent times to be left holding for 46 & 36 minutes respectively and been told by both they were experiencing an unprecedented volume of calls. My gut feeling is telling me they are receiving the same number of calls but have halved the number of staff to deal directly with customers enquires. Of course, if you opted for the sales button you were dealt with promptly.

I can confidently say, you will not get this poor level of aftercare service if you are ringing a 090 96.... number.

The level of service you get is far more important than price in most scenarios and that is one of the main reasons for us to make a greater effort to support our local Businesses as they come through a very difficult 18 months.

The town enhancement scheme has the Town looking extremely well and the additional spend by the vast majority of premises owners supported by Galway Co. Cl. has made a tremendous difference to the

streetscape and is eye-catching to visitors to the town.

Through BACD we are increasing our office / remote working space availability as a result of the purchase of a property on Society Street with spaces to come on stream in 2022. Currently we have limited space in the Enterprise Centre but encourage individuals and Business to add their name to our waiting list if interested in relocating to Ballinasloe.

Congratulations to the Shop Ballinasloe.ie team who recently won a National Award ahead of Westport, Youghal & Fermoy who were also on the shortlist. Further details in the Magazine.

Enjoy the rest of the Summer and stay safe.

SEAMUS DUFFY,
Chairman Ballinasloe Area Community Development Limited.



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The proposed bus stop, funded under the Active Travel Scheme, on the R446 adjacent to the Marina in Ballinasloe is progressing. The Section Eight planning motion was proposed by Councillor Michael Connolly and seconded by Councillor Evelyn Parsons at a recent meeting of the MDC and Chair Dermot Connolly welcomed the decision.

The Marina has achieved near unanimity as an ideal location and easy access, making it ideal for national and local bus routes and will replace the temporary facilities in place on Dunlo Hill.

The proposed work will seek development on both sides of the R446 to serve national and local bus routes. The bus stop will require the construction of infrastructure and facilities for each bus lay-by.

The focus on the design of the bus stop is to ensure that the bus stop is people friendly and is safe and accessible, equipped with an all-accessible wheelchair lift platform, newly constructed footpaths, and the construction of a traffic signalled controlled permanent pedestrian crossing to replace the existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing on the road and the relocation and addition of new public lighting ensuring that the bus stop are remains well lit.

It will also include brand new bicycle parking platforms and the installation of bicycle stands. As well as the construction of a hardstanding area that will allow continued access to the marina maintenance works.

Additional works to the bus stop include the installation of brand-new street signs, installation of litter bins, the relocation of pre-existing signs, light stands and the removal of the height restriction barrier that is currently present. The removal of pre-existing vegetation and the relocation of some trees will also occur.

The works proposed for the reconstruction of the east lay-by will consist of a newly configured section of road, requiring the setting back of a small section car park edge to facilitate the same.

Stringent planning requirements relating to the treatment of water from the site and non interference of bird and wildlife habitats will ensure that only certain type of works can occur at certain times probably mean the project taking 18 months to final completion.



Following the conclusion of the second public consultation, it was noted that the Athlone to Ballinasloe Greenway Campaign handed in a submission containing 2,179 signatures along with many more individual submissions.

Senator Aisling Dolan stated: "I welcome the second public consultation Cycleway report, and that 11,600 submissions were submitted, 95% of which were incredibly supportive of the Cycleway. The Green Route Number One and Blue Route Number Three through Ballinasloe received a lot of positive comments."

The Greenway Project Team are currently undergoing talks with engineers, environmental assessments, and landowner engagement, with all assessments being undertaken in the design process in identifying the preferred corridor route.

Cllr Evelyn Parsons commented: "Landowner engagement is ongoing at present and will continue over the next three to four months. Following which a preferred route corridor will be selected, where the Project Team can be confident that a route can be delivered with the consent and agreement of the majority of landowners.

"It really is a once in a lifetime development to make our towns and villages alive and we are in with a strong chance. Ballinasloe has welcomed generations travelling East to West from crisscrossing the River Suck to fast railways, motorways and now imagine a potential world-class cycleway for families and the next generation" Senator Aisling Dolan states.

Consensus is key and landowner consultation is still taking place so do link in with Engineer Michael Conroy in the Cycleway Project Office in town who is specifically looking at the area around Ballinasloe. Contact info@galwaytoathlonecycleway.com or call (091) 509 267.

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Having first been elected as a Sinn Féin Councillor in 2004, since his first run at the Dáil in 1992, and having served as County Deputy Mayor in 2009, the Nutfield-Cross farmer was unanimously elected Chair of the Ballinasloe Electoral Area District recently.

Married to Katja with three small children – Grellan (8), Fiadh (5) and Aibhe (2). Dermot has been farming full-time the family holding since his Grandmother's people moved to the site from Derrada Wood – the last townland in the parish of Creagh/Kilclooney.

Dermot can recall been infused with the spirit of Wolf Tone in his teens and remembers the black flags of support for the hunger strikers, Bodenstown commemorations and lots of football in his youth.

Not uniquely, for a public representative, he has participated in Gaelic Games as a player, a referee, a coach, and an administrator down through the years: "I especially remember as a teenager the late Mattie Ganly, a huge Republican supporter and great personal mentor to me, ran the McGovern Cup – I was the captain of the Derrymullen team and we won the final which was played in the Duggan with Patsy Geraghty referring in 1982", states Dermot.

For Dermot casting his mind back-the loss of the Town Council is the one huge standout moment for him. "From a local point of view Phil Hogan's shameless abolishing of all local democratically elected councils allied with the centralisation or privatisation of services like water, waste has been a savage set back to us here locally; I and other councillors have to witness the legacy those decisions left us to cope with" states Dermot.

He can recall when in 2009 Galway County's annual budget was €190 million and a decade later was reduced by National Governments to €109 million." We have to get more from the central Government to provide staff, infrastructure and essential services to people on the ground who urgently need them," he exclaims.

As well as securing just funding his other priorities are to ensure that Ballinasloe maintains its county town status in the new County Development Plan and that suitable policies are put in place for the town development across employment, infrastructure and recreational sectors.

"We have all gotten distracted a bit with the dragged out town streetscape / enhancement programme- the inner relief road behind Salmons to the new Scoil Chroi Naofa School opening up the lanes and rear of Main St – giving the town a blue way and new River park needs to be put back on the priority agenda and I have asked the planners for a detailed status report on the plan for an early Autumn meeting of Council" states Dermot.



Left: Councillor Dermot Connolly Outside Sinn Féin Office Ballinasloe. Right: Dermot Farming



"I remain very encouraged by the quality of the staff we have in all sections of the Council and their willingness to go the extra mile for people – during the pandemic, huge asks were made of people in all grades and we are short staffed especially in our area but we have good news that New Senior Engineer and Area Engineer Posts have been approved, and I intend to push hard for more staff and more resources to be expended on them" he notes.

He is also wise enough to know that the weather extremes we are having will not be confined to summer alone, and is looking for an early meeting with the Project Team on the Flood Alleviation works so locals can enjoy a less stressful winter "My Sinn Féin colleague Claire Kerrane TD has been really helpful in this area and sponsored a bill for a one agency management of the Shannon system and we will get results on this matter," he declared.

The BMW region losing its deprived

continued on next page...

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status under European Regional funding is something he is working alongside MEP Chris MacManus.

Dermot is looking forward to his year in office: "We promised if elected to the Dáil the Sinn Féin Party would honour that mandate to the people with a full time office and Caoimhghin Caufield as Claire's Constituency Co-Ordinator in our new offices aside the building where one of my hero's Tone Slept when he visited town is proof of that" explains Dermot.

"I just want to express my thanks to people from all viewpoints who took the time to wish me well in my new role-I and my family have been appreciative of that and I will work very hard for everyone" stated our new Chairperson.

TOWN'S POLLINATION ZONES UNDERWAY

By Jack Treacy



Cllr Evelyn Parsons happy to see Wild Pyramidal Orchids and Oxeye Daisies flourishing in Poolboy.

Councillor Evelyn Parsons has called for more zones to be designated as pollination zones locally to promote biodiversity. She also called for grass-cutting contracts to be looked at in the Municipal Area concerning frequency and timing of cuts, and for grass verges and grassy banks to be sensitively managed to promote pollination while ensuring appropriate playing areas, public safety, and road visibility at all times.

Cllr Parsons stated: "We are in the middle of an alarming biodiversity crisis and these measures are crucial to providing essential feeding and nesting areas for our bees, other insects and wildlife."

"Our future, our children's future, our wildlife's future and our economy depend on addressing

this issue urgently now. It is over 10 years since a pollination plan specific to Ballinasloe was formulated. I believe we all have a responsibility to take steps now and I am keen to help develop a practical up to date plan which engages all. Our Council has signed up to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and I would like to see more actions in the Municipal District arising from that and indeed throughout the county" explained the Councillor.

Areas within the town are already being managed for wildlife-for example the elevated greenery of the Fair green, the central area of Dunlo Track and roundabouts throughout the town. This includes the prolonged growth (re-wilding) of the grass and the timed cutting that will aid the pollination plan. Galway heritage office distributed leaflets on pollinator pots, providing free

seeds from the library and online courses on the Biodiversity of East Galway - so the message is getting out.

Cllr Evelyn Parsons stated: "There is a great pride of place evident in our East Galway settlements with fabulous floral displays of colour and pollinator planting pots. I am so pleased that some members of resident's associations have been in touch to identify small acceptable actions they can take in consultation with their communities."

"Ballinasloe's Old Town Council originally laid out many dedicated planting zones and their forward-thinking has proved invaluable in providing essential biodiverse urban corridors for our insects and wildlife. I have been liaising with the Galway County Council Heritage department on awareness-raising measures and educational resources. We can even start in our own backyard or front door with something as individually manageable as a pollinator pot. Small actions and deliberately managed inactions, such as these will allow nature to flourish through the combined steps we take as a local authority, as a community, in our schools, businesses. I am pleased to have received great support at our municipal meeting for action on pollination and biodiversity promotion to move forward on a phased basis" Cllr Parsons added.

For more information on the pollination plan visit: <https://biodiversity.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/new-contributions/planning-for-pollinators>

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David Keighery Spearheads
Town Enhancement

Following the funding of €200,000 from Galway County Council as part of the Business Facade Enhancement Scheme for the transformation of the Ballinasloe's streetscapes, the work is transforming drab streets into bright multi coloured fronts.

A variety of local painting contractors including David Keighery and his crew rolling and cleaning the town's shopfronts, brightening up the locale. A total of 79 businesses were successful in securing grant aid for their works through the Scheme.

Denis Naughten T.D. stated: "This funding will allow businesses to make a real difference to the appearance of the town and its potential to attract not just shoppers but also new businesses. The investment will help to encourage families and potential investors to choose our town rather than continuing to

struggle daily in Dublin and will, in the long run, increase the rate base and income for the Council to invest in other local projects."

The new colour scheme was strategically evolved by the talented duo of Bríd Mulvihill Kelly and Helen Curtain to display the shopfronts in a way that stands out and catches the eye of passers-by. Galway County Council's Architect then signed off and approved the design and scheme for each premises. The owners were free to use any paint manufacturer and was also free to select which supplier to leave the business with. Many of the local painting stockists - Colohans, Chadwick, Barretts, Kellers and indeed Hogartys all saw some added trade from the scheme.

Local Painter Decorator, David Keighery commented: "There are plenty of businesses giving us work around town, we have a number of them painted already. It is great to see how such a nice lift to the town it is, people have been coming and they are commenting on the various colours and the distinct colour schemes that they have, and I think it will be a great attraction for visitors coming into the town as well."



David Keighery and
Roy Campbell get to work
on Town's Shopfronts

David added: "Local people will hopefully make a few quid out of it themselves. We are available for people who are not involved in the scheme, and we have done work for business owners over the years and hopefully when they see this lovely colour scheme going through the streets they will come and pick up their phone and ask us to give them a quote."

David and his team are still available, although they have a few more jobs they will continue to bedeck the community in an array of colours. You can get in touch at (087) 211 7269. By Autumn they have guaranteed that the new look town will be most eye catching and to quote of the town's most famous characters "Our Streets will be looking very salubrious" according to Davey.

KPW HELP OUT NEW AUTHORS

"The printed word is history forever" said a wise old man. And with the recent surge of budding writers in the area it was predictable they would like to record their chronicles for posterity.

James Coughlan, a past student of Garbally College, who lives in Portumna decided it was high time to pay tribute to Leonard McGrath, a former Ballinasloe and Galway man, who is the only man to win All-Ireland medals in both Football & Hurling with his publication "A Forgotten Gael." The 96-page book is a must for football fans all over the country.

Dr. Lisa Geraghty from Ahascragh, produced her first novel "More than a Match" which is a 400-page masterpiece, on her first attempt into the "writer's world." Pádraig Lyons from Creggane has hit the stands with a 48-page colourful and informative guidebook of the area entitled "Rediscover Ballinasloe and Surrounds."

Caltra's former schoolteacher Mattie Kilroy decided to record his villagers' involvement in the 1916-1921 Revolution with a splendid 132-page publication, illustrated with a wonderful selection of previously unseen photos of local volunteers and famous landmarks. "Caltra's Connections to Ireland's Revolution 1916-1921" is a historical record of the men and women from the parish and surrounding areas who took part in "The Troubles."

In the last few months all of the above authors decided to get their writings printed locally in KPW Print in Poolboy, some in hardback and others perfect-bound. Brendan Kelly, MD of KPW said they were delighted to facilitate the authors with design, layout and printing, all of which was done in house and overseen by the customers when need arose.

The authors were delighted with the high quality of the photos produced particularly and paid tribute to the friendliness, professionalism and co-operation of the design and print team at KPW.

Brendan Kelly said "We have been printing books of all types for over 70 years but we are delighted to have helped new authors with their first book in print. All the publications are available in local shops and I hope the community support our latest scribes."



Contact Diane for further information - diane@kpw.ie | 090 9631848

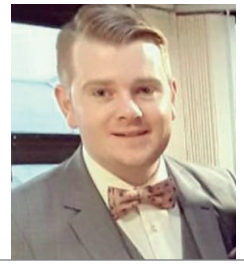
Meadow & Green has officially opened, to some acclaim, at the Ballinasloe Golf Club. The Clubhouse catering operation, after tender and shortlisting, is run by the trio of Ashley Weilly, Gary Rigney and Head Chef Chris Christians.



Head Chef
Chris Christians



Co-Proprietor
Ashley Weilly



Co-Proprietor
Gary Rigney

Ashley was born and raised locally. His parents have a small nursery in Mackney-“Wiley’s Nursery.” They produce their own plants and flowers giving inspiration to ‘Meadow & Green.’

Earlier in his career, he had also made quite the name for himself in restaurant management starting his career in Ballynahinch Castle in Connemara, running the restaurant alongside Michelin star chef Olton Cook. From there he moved to Carton House in Leixlip, running the clubhouse there as well as food and beverage in other various restaurants throughout the resort.

The Wineport was where Ashley met Chris and Gary and he took on a Deputy General Manager role working there for two and a half years before securing a post with Trump’s Doonbeg, acting as Lodge Manager overseeing most of the restaurants in the resort.

Ashley broke away from all that in hope of completing his dream of successfully running his own restaurant.

Gary Rigney from Ferbane holds a bachelor’s degree in Hotel and Leisure Management and spent six years working in the Wineport in Athlone. He had worked with Ashley for two years and was more than willing to start up Meadow & Green

Hailing originally from Johannesburg, Chris is a well-renowned Chef with a goal of bringing his unique cuisine to Ireland and indeed the people of the locality. Chris spoke of his emigration to Ireland where he sees more of chance of growth in this country and a place where he can cement his name as an expert in fine dining. Chris’s model of taking typical clubhouse foods

and adding his restaurant twist to it has resulted in an eating experience that has not been experienced by Clubhouse users before.

M&G grow and produce their herbs for the restaurant here adding to the exquisite menu complementing its freshness. Their menu consists of a range of different options including Tasty Thai Chicken Salads, Crunchy Rainbow wraps, Porter Pot Pies, Burger Sliders and great seafood and dessert options that are going down well.

The restaurant operates Monday to Sunday with current hours of service being 1 pm to 9 pm. Now with outdoor dining allowed they will be serving Sunday lunches with a variety of appetisers and desserts.

“It has been really good for us

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these last few week. We have only had one miserable enough day and we have a temporary little marquee there now to help with that. But once we go inside the hours will stay much the same and once, then we will start taking reservations as well,” explained Ashley. They also hope to cater for small parties.

“I suppose the current times that we are living in I think now more than ever people want to get out and about and we are happy to be able to facilitate that. I mean we want not just you know the golfers coming up here but a group of girlfriends gathering for cocktails, mum and their daughter coming up for coffee, or gathering of mums coming for coffee you must drop the kids to school, or you know it is endless. Whoever wants to come up to the club can come up we are always happy to look after them” Ashley states.

You can get in touch with Meadow & Green on Instagram @ meadowandgreenofficial or contact 083 019 2688.



Eimear Loughnane & Co.
SOLICITORS



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FAIR & FESTIVAL CANCELLED

9



A recent statement released by the coordinating confirmed what many had suspected - that the 2021 Fair & Festival would not be taking place this year.

Following its two other sister twined fairs - Lammass in Ballycastle and Puck in Killorglin, the three oldest in Ireland; it too falls foul of the pandemic for a second season in a row.

Chairman of Ballinasloe Fair & Festival Mal Croffy, acknowledged the disappointment felt by many as a result of the cancellation. “Unfortunately we remain in the grip of this global pandemic and it is not feasible for the fair to go ahead this year, from a social & economic point of view it's a huge loss to Ballinasloe, the fair is part of the fabric of town at this point all we can do is regroup and redouble our efforts to ensuring the 2022 fair, our 300th edition is bigger and better than ever” he said. The full statement issued by Galway County Council who operate and regulate the Fair reads -

The Ballinasloe Fair Coordinating Group have made the decision in the interests of public health and safety to officially cancel this year's events on health and safety grounds. The overall Coordinating Group plan to meet at the end of the year to make plans for 2022 and celebrate the 300th anniversary.

After consultation with HSE, Public Health the HSE and the Coordination committee were advised that it is unlikely that assurances could be given that that we will have a return to normality with the removal of all Covid restrictions for public and outdoor gatherings by October 2021.

The Co-ordinating Committee would like to thank the local community, sponsors, and all associations involved for their ongoing commitment and support.

We look forward to welcoming all participants and visitors to Ballinasloe Fair and Festival in 2022 for the 300th anniversary.

By Jack Treacy

BUSINESS

When you go for a new home, you gather and budget every single cost that is coming your way but for those interested in technology there can be many varied factors in choosing the right location for your new home. Crucial factors include 5G broadband coverage, access to electric chargers as the electric car continues its rise in popularity, and of course perhaps most importantly job prospects in the technological sector.

Switcher.ie have researched many locations from across the country and have placed Ballinasloe number four in the 'Top 10 Towns and Cities for Tech Lovers'.

Surrounding property prices compared to various parts of the nation is low and we are home to many electric vehicle chargers ready and available for your vehicle, as well as recently availing of the countrywide €500M Fibre Broadband Installation Plan delivering 10Gbps to homes and businesses.

Switcher is a free, impartial price comparison and switching service for electricity, broadband, gas, mobile phone plans and digital TV. They manage your switch by switching from your standard tariff to your cheapest deal on the market. All suppliers use the same pipes and cables to provide energy to your home, so you do not even have to fear about a drop in quality service.



Visual Map of Towns and Cities

Managing Director Eoin Clarke from Switcher.ie said: "Ballinasloe has taken fourth place in our study as the best place to live as a tech lover in Ireland. The town offers great access to electric chargers, cheap housing and a pretty good chance of having a 5G connection."

Impressively Ballinasloe had the highest number of Electric Vehicle Chargers on the list with 0.9

The Best Towns and Cities for Tech Lovers in Ireland

RANK	TOWN/CITY	COUNTY	TOTAL SCORE	CHARGERS PER 1000	TECH STARTUPS PER 1000	AVG HOUSE PRICE	5G	TECH JOBS PER 1000 PEOPLE
1	Kildare	Kildare	3.07	0.46	4.29	€250,500	2	6.37
2	Kells	Meath	2.88	0.65	1.47	€174,523	3	0.16
3	Carrick-on-Shannon	Leitrim	2.83	0.74	1.23	€110,582	2	1.23
4	Ballinasloe	Galway	2.67	0.9	0.45	€145,409	2	0
5	Roscommon	Roscommon	2.59	0.68	1.02	€143,568	2	0.51
6	Sligo	Sligo	2.55	0.52	1.09	€141,404	2	2.92
7	Longford	Longford	2.50	0.5	0.8	€114,545	2	2.1
8	Castlebar	Mayo	2.44	0.33	0.75	€156,227	3	0.5
9	Galway	Galway	2.40	0.1	2.23	€275,118	3	5.37
10	Ballina	Mayo	2.37	0.59	0.1	€130,245	2	1.87

Top 10 List of Towns and Cities for Tech Lovers

chargers per 1000 people, this was followed by 1.02 tech start-ups per 1000 people, with an overall rating of 2.67, it is hoped that the town can accommodate tech firms to the area and establish the area as a serious housing option for tech lovers.

Over the past 20 months, people have been away from the office instead of

working from home, connecting online with their loved ones, and continuing their nine to five despite the pandemic. Tech now more than ever has become more important not just for leisure but, to keep connected to family and friends and to continue making a living. To do that people need a home that can reflect the lifestyle they want to live and one that can meet their technological needs.

It is hoped that this ranking coupled with the ongoing work by the Town Team on the Sustainable Town project will continue to attract new workers, families and retirees to our area.

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SURMODICS

Surmodics, Inc, a Minnesota-based multinational, is a leading provider of medical device and in vitro diagnostic technologies to the health care industry. Over the past five years, Surmodics has made significant investments in its Ballinasloe facility. The site now has full vertical integration including, precision extrusion, balloon forming, catheter assembly, braiding, hydrophilic coating and drug delivery capability.

In recent news, Surmodics is pleased to announce the acquisition of Vetex Medical Limited, located in Galway. This acquisition demonstrates our commitment to the expansion of our thrombectomy platform.

This is an exciting time for Surmodics! Be part of an organizations that leverages your passion to improve patient lives through your career. Surmodics offers

exceptional benefits, encourages employees to gain experience across our entire product & process range. Would you like to work for a global organisation that is committed to the highest standards of scientific excellence and integrity? Does our culture of collaboration and excellence appeal to you? If so, we invite you to visit our careers portal to view current vacancies: <http://www.surmodics.com/careers/careers-overview/>

Irish Celtic Salt Caves was founded by Ballinasloe native John Bracken, a fourth generation healer, who runs a sister company called Irish Celtic Healing, which is an already established business in Croffy's Yard.

Through his work as a healer, John has come across so many people who suffer from respiratory difficulties. As there was a lack of facilities in town and hinterland, he came up with the idea to establish Halo Therapy Salt Caves and Gift Shop.

The Salt caves are newly built and boasts six Himalayan salt therapy rooms, all different sizes to cater for private groups, families and individuals. They have been designed to enhance well-being in a relaxing environment, ambient music and loungers and chairs allowing for people to enjoy the salt therapy session, which lasts for 40 minutes.

The therapeutic surroundings leave customers rejuvenated and refreshed. The salt caves also have a specially designed Children's Salt Cave allowing for everyone to avail of the benefits of these caves.

Salt Therapy reduces the symptoms of upper and lower respiratory conditions, made entirely of mineral-rich Himalayan salt which purifies the air to promote health and wellness. The salt caves also use a halo generator to disperse medical grade salt particles in the air throughout the room, which is a powerful, natural treatment to treat conditions such as asthma and respiratory difficulties. The salt also has an anti-inflammatory action when inhaled, the salt absorbs pollutants and allergens. Inhaling the particles opens the airway to reduce inflammation and improves the ability to live well.

Currently there is one full time member of staff Receptionist Threse Reynolds, and Frankie Kyne - Staff member who runs the Irish Celtic Salt Caves with the



Salt Therapy Room
Frankie Kyne and
Theresa Reynolds

intention of creating more local employment, with the increasing possibility of two more positions as the business grows.

Ballinasloe Salt Therapy is natural and effective for numerous ailments such as allergies, skin health, respiratory health, COPD and for relief of stress and anxiety. The caves are for all ages, adults and children benefit greatly from salt therapy and respond quickly to its natural healing benefits.

Centrally located, the centre is very accessible for those who are local to this Yard with ample free parking for those who wish to travel from neighbouring counties within a 20 mile plus radius to the newest and largest salt caves in the East Midlands and West region.

The Salt Caves have an adjoining gift shop on the premises, with a wide range of connected products available, Himalayan salt lamps, handmade Himalayan and wild Irish seaweed bath salts and Himalayan hand and foot scrub. The stores are open seven days a week and are also wheelchair accessible.

Irish Celtic Salt Caves are present on social media on Facebook and INSTAGRAM through their handles

<https://www.facebook.com/Irishcelticsaltcaves> @irishcelticsaltcaves

They can also be contacted by email for enquiries or by email, phone and WhatsApp. TEL: (087) 468 2146 / (090) 964 5582 Email: irishcelticsaltcaves@gmail.com



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- Cashflow forecast for finance restructuring
- Tax advice on Wage Subsidy Scheme
- Revenue issues arising due to Covid-19 crisis.



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Chanelle Pharma have confirmed creation of 60 new jobs in town as part of a five-year plan consisting of a five-million-euro investment.

Chanelle Pharma started from humble beginnings in 1985 with just two members of staff when the company's founder and MD, Michael Burke, a veterinary surgeon, recognised the need for a professional, rapid, and competitive international veterinary distribution service.

Since its inception, the Garbally educated man and his family firm has grown organically through several strategic business shifts to become a leading provider of human and animal health generic pharmaceuticals worldwide.

Chanelle Pharma is privately owned by the Burke family, and they remain the country's largest manufacturer of simple medicines for human and animal health reaching sales over €149 million, increasing 11% every year since its founding.

Currently employing 570 people at their Loughrea headquarters, they currently house offices and warehouses in Oranmore also. They will transfer their pet medicine distribution business from their headquarters in Loughrea to the IDA Ireland's Business and Technology Park in the old APTAR plant. Work is now well underway on warehousing and new manufacturing operations at the 65,000 sqft site.

In 2018, the company announced an €85 million investment, the single largest investment by an Irish owned company, to double manufacturing capacity, to launch 96 new products and grow its workforce to 850 people over five years.

Denis Naughten TD pointed out: "This investment by Chanelle not only helps to replace jobs lost last year because of the closure of APTAR but in a major vote of confidence in Ballinasloe which I believe will lead to other announcements that are currently under consideration. Michael Burke, the Managing Director of Chanelle, has always had a strong affinity with the area and this decision will be transformative for industrial investment in the town."

Senator Aisling Dolan stated: "Thanks to IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in the West, I have had the chance to meet these agencies over the past few months and to work closely with the Tánaiste's office and officials from the department of enterprise, Trade and Employment to showcase our town. All of our community and local businesses are working together to attract investment and BACD, Town Team, The Pulse Club and ShopBallinasloe.ie are crucial to bringing this achievement to the community."

Senator Eugene Murphy commented: "I have long highlighted the fact that Ballinasloe has lacked serious investment and employment over the years and the area has suffered so much- The town has so much potential, and Chanelle Pharma has sounded a terrific vote of confidence in the community with this fantastic announcement."



Old APTAR Plant

A breakdown of the company's most recent returned revenues show that it generated revenues of €31 million in the

Republic, €24.1 million in Europe and €4.6 million in 'rest of world'.

Pre-tax profits at Chanelle Pharmaceuticals last year increased by 39% to €6.8 million in spite of the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

New accounts filed show that Chanelle Pharmaceuticals Manufacturing Ltd enjoyed the rise in profits as revenues increased by 16.5% from €51.47 million to €59.9 million in the 12 months to the end of April last.

On the Covid-19 impact, the directors state that following lockdowns in March 2020 "we saw a softening of demand in some markets for veterinary products but we have seen demand recover in most markets as lockdown restrictions are eased".

The directors state that the operational impact of Covid-19 on the business to date "has not been material and we have increased our key stock items to ensure that we have continuity of supply where possible".

The directors add that "whilst the virus has had a significant impact on how we conduct our day to day activities, we have continued to operate successfully throughout the pandemic in all of our locations".

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Large Town
Award 2021



WINNER €9,000

Ballinasloe

The town's on line shopping project has been named winner of the Large Town category at the inaugural .IE Digital Town Awards, beating towns like Westport and Trim into runner-up slots!

The result was announced in a virtual ceremony attend by Minister Damien English. The group has received €9,000 from

Galway County Council. From the outset, we have received huge support from local groups and businesses, and we would like to praise the businesses who embraced our digital technology from the start. We would also like to congratulate the other winners and runners up who did tremendous work presenting other innovative digital initiatives for their town and community”.

ShopBallinasloe.ie can be described as a digital hub for the town with all businesses listed in one place. They were the catalyst to get 90% of businesses in the town who had no e-commerce presence, selling online at a time when most doors were closed.

An onboarding strategy provides full support to get set up online with ongoing training sessions, plus marketing support via Facebook Business Group and WhatsApp. Over €60k of town vouchers were sold and there are plans to add local clubs to allow them to take online payments.

To see more on Shop Local visit their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ShopBallinasloe> or visit their website at www.shopballinasloe.ie.

By Jack Treacy



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Pat Ward Owner-Manager
Western Automation

Sales of Electric Vehicles (EV) were slow to take off but have started to increase in 2021. The slow start was due to range anxiety, a fear that the EV would not be able to make a return trip without needing a recharge.

Range anxiety was justified based on limited battery capacity and the fact that there were very few charging stations available in most countries. However, EV battery performance has improved, and more EV charging stations are being installed globally. This role out is referred to as Electrical vehicular infrastructure, and as the role out accelerates, more and more charging stations will be installed in garages, car parks and on streets.

All EV charging stations require electronic technology to control the rate of charging to a safe level and to provide electric shock protection in case of a fault in the charging station, the charging cable, or the vehicle itself. This is in fact lifesaving technology!

For many at this stage, it would be difficult to name an Irish company that provides this technology to manufacturers of EV charging stations, most would be hard-pressed to name one. However, such a company has been operating in Ballinasloe since 1985, and it has been supplying this technology to companies all over the world for the last five years. The company is Western Automation Research & Development (WA), based in Poolboy, Ballinasloe, and the technology was developed by its engineers in town. To date, WA has supplied over two million units of such technology to companies in numerous countries in Europe, the Middle East, India, China, Taiwan, Korea, and the USA.

Within Ireland, and even within Ballinasloe, Western Automation is unknown, an invisible entity, but it is widely recognised around the world as a key provider of technology for use in charging stations. WA has been ramping up production of EV charging technology in each of the last three years to meet growing demand, so there is a fair chance that one day soon if you are driving an EV in Ireland or Europe and pull up at a charging station, you will be able to look at it and think proudly to yourself: "WA inside."

Pat Ward is owner-manager of WA and left Square D Co in January 1985 to start his new project to provide Residual Current Device (RCD) technology

for electric shock protection to switchgear companies.

To date, they have supplied over 60 million RCD units to companies globally. Western Automation continues to supply RCD technology, but the main area of growth currently is EV Charging Technology. Pat hopes that within this decade, he will have supplied technology for over 10 million charging stations globally.

Now they are currently developing their range of EV charging units for use in the home, and these are likely to come on stream in early 2022. These will be fitted on an external wall at home for home charging and will overcome the need to go searching for an EV charging station.

With its headquarters in Poolboy, and due to continued growth in demand and the need to develop next-generation technology, Western Automation plans to recruit more electronic engineers, so if you know a family member or a friend who would like to join an exciting company, albeit an anonymous one, you could point them in their direction by contacting (090) 964 3359 or email info@westernautomation.com

By Jack Treacy

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(L-R) Jack (Owner), Mike Mulvey, Marina Downey, Will (Chef), Kim (Owner and Chef), and Tom (Chef)

Kawa Asian and Street Food Bar has just opened their doors on Society Street, trading in the old Downey's Bar and Restaurant premises.

The Restaurant is operated by Jack Xui and Kim Lin, both from the south coast of China. Jack and Kim travelled to Galway almost 20 years ago in hopes of gaining an education studying Business Studies in NUIG and

formed a business partnership and friendship that would lead to them establishing Kawa Thai.

Jack has previous experience in management currently owning Ms Greens, a healthy eating restaurant in Galway City, an Excel in Galway City and a Gala store in Donegal, all of which have been solid commercial success.

While Jack does not have much experience in Asian Cuisine, Kim has an extensive background in Thai food and Asian Cuisine with many years in the business and the duo have made a great partnership alongside Marina Downey who is helping them with her extensive knowledge of the Bar trade.

Kawa Thai aims to bring an authentic Asian street food bar menu and vibe at reasonable prices in a fresh, vibrant and bold atmosphere where people can feel at home. "In our own Society Street you can enjoy the foods that have been put together passionately by the team from Thailand, Indonesia, China and Malaya and to also experience Asian culture in a way that has not been experienced fully locally as of yet". Currently the restaurant/bar operation has four staff and its team will increase in the coming weeks.

Kim said: "We are very happy to welcome everyone to our new premises, we hope that in time we can establish ourselves as one of the town's most popular dining locations and form strong positive relationships with our customers."

This tasty menu will be available from 12.30 pm to 11pm everyday with the bar operating until 11 pm. As indoor dining is being reintroduced with social



distancing rules in place Kawa Thai have the capacity to hold 40 people indoors and have applied for parking and for additional space for 12 people outdoors.

12 people outdoors.

Co-owner Jack states: "Kawa Thai have a full license for our bar and have plentiful to offer with typical beverages such as Carlsberg, Heineken, Guinness, typical Asian drinks such as Tiger, Half Moon, and an array of cocktails for our customers to enjoy."

Kim said: "We are very happy to welcome everyone to our new store, we hope that in time we can establish ourselves as one of the town's most popular eating locations and form strong positive relationships with our customers."

Kawa Thai is available for sit-in dining, but also takeaway and delivery, they take cash, visa debit and credit card for their orders, to get in touch and to keep up to date with everything that they are promoting add them on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069518213814>

Or phone the restaurant at: (090) 964 3931.

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BUSINESS

A new chapter in the 54-year history of Ballinasloe Credit Union has commenced with the opening of its newly renovated building and offices on Main Street. Having relocated from River Street to its current location in 1996 the refurbishment work has allowed the credit union to create an atmosphere in which members can be relaxed and have privacy and comfortable surroundings as they conduct their business.

BCU Chairperson Marian Brady expressed her delight in opening the doors of the newly refurbished office which provides members with a much better experience when they are in the office. We are also very pleased with the positive feedback and compliments we have received from members.

Credit Union CEO, Grainne Murphy, acknowledged that completing this project amid a global pandemic certainly presented some challenges, but are grateful to everyone who helped make this happen. "We are really excited to share our new banking hall, which we believe is a visible symbol of our ongoing commitment to our members and the wider community in Ballinasloe."

The refurbishment works were over 2 years in planning with the majority of the works being carried out during the month of July. The ground floor has been transformed into a modern, inviting open space with three counter positions and a member self-services area which will include the Kiosk and a coin deposit machine as well as access to printing statements.

A key component of the refurbishment is the relocation of the member onboarding and lending department to the 2nd floor of the building. All new member applications and lending enquires including loan and mortgage applications will now be taken in this area. Access to the 2nd floor is via a newly installed lift which is located to the right-hand side of the main entrance.

Lending Manager at BCU John Heapes acknowledged that the newly refurbished lending department would make applying for a loan at BCU a lot more accessible and private, no matter what the reason might be. Whether its celebrating a high point in your life or just trying to cope with those daily bills, we are always there to assist.

The credit union has also recently launched its new home mortgage loan. Commenting on the new offering, Lending Manager John Heapes said: "We know our members trust us and we want them to know that we can now offer home mortgages. Whether it's a new house or renovations to an existing house, our home mortgage loans are designed to give members the finance to make their dreams come true."

He also advised that as well as having a modern spacious and private lending area the Credit Union would also be shortly launching a new digital lending platform allowing members to apply for and draw down their loans from the comfort of their own homes. As well as the online lending platform the Credit Union also

offers an online loan appointment service via Microsoft TEAMS for members who prefer to speak to a loans officer virtually. Booking is available via the credit



New Office. L-R Grainne Murphy CEO, Sarah Grenham Members services officer & Marian Brady Chairperson BCU.

union website.

To coincide with the opening of the refurbished office another significant milestone was achieved with the introduction of a new credit union debit card and current account. The MYCU Debit Mastercard® and Current Account is now available to all

new and existing members of Ballinasloe Credit Union.

The MYCU Debit Card and Current Account have been designed by credit unions, for credit union members. The debit card is part of the Mastercard network and can be used at millions of locations worldwide.

The account offers all the features and benefits people have come to expect from a current account but delivered with the same local, personal and trustworthy service of Ballinasloe Credit Union. The debit card allows members to access their account wherever, whenever, worldwide.

Chairperson Marian Brady said "The introduction of the MYCU Current Account offers members the opportunity to complete and manage all of their day-to-day financial transactions through the credit union and means that members now have choice and a real alternative to the traditional bank"

The MYCU Debit Card offers the flexibility to pay bills, withdraw cash at ATMs, make purchases at point of sale where the Mastercard acceptance mark is displayed or online from anywhere in the world. The card offers contactless capability and has 24/7 support for lost or stolen cards. The MYCU Current Account offers simple and transparent fees with no penalty charges applying.

The MYCU Debit Card will go live



Car Draw Presentation of Car to June Prize Draw Winner Marian Brady Chairperson BCU. Joseph Kelly Winner, John O'Connor Kilmartins & Teresa Kilmartins



across a number of credit unions nationwide over the rest of the summer and Ballinasloe are excited to be the first credit union in Ireland to offer this new service to members in the Ballinasloe area.'

Ballinasloe Credit Union are delighted to have worked with CUSOP (Credit Union Service Organisation for Payments) to bring the MYCU Debit Card and Current Account service to market. The card is visually striking, with a vibrant, modern and contemporary look. It is designed as a vertical card, so as you tap or insert it into payments machines, the card design and direction stays with you. The card also has an added feature, a semi-circular indent on one side to support members who may be visually impaired.

For more information on the new service or to apply for your current account online please visit our website www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie

A lot of exciting projects have been delivered by the Credit Union over the past year and we look forward to continuing to serve our members in our new offices, by phone or online....the choice is now yours!

Mastercard is a registered trademark, and the circles design is a trademark of Mastercard International Incorporated. The MYCU Debit Card is issued by UAB PayrNet pursuant to license by Mastercard International Inc. Terms and conditions apply. Ballinasloe Credit Union (Our Lady of Lourdes) Limited is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

Notes:

The MYCU Debit Card has been developed by CUSOP (Payments) DAC. CUSOP is the leading provider of payment services for credit unions across Ireland. CUSOP are a not-for-profit company, backed by the Irish League of Credit Unions.

NEW LOCAL NATIONAL BOARD MEMBER

By Jack Treacy



Joseph Burke,
Youth Advocate

Joseph Burke has been involved with Youth Work Ireland (YWI) for many years, being active in many different groups. Joseph has been involved in projects such as the Get Lippy group, Comharla na nÓg and has made the step up through studying social care and undergoing student placement culminating with his recent election to the European Councils with the National Youth Work Ireland Board of Management (NYWBM).

"The role of members of the Board of Directors is to ensure that Youth Work Ireland adheres to the highest standards of corporate governance. I look forward to my role of the Board and supporting the younger generation at a local, regional, and national level" states Joe.

Starting, Joseph found out about YWI many years ago in a time he felt very isolated and struggling to get out of the house. He was referred by his team to check out his local services and instantly became hooked partaking in many different groups.

Joseph stated: "I'm now on the highest board of management

but I'll be looking through all the policies and making the big decisions nationally and YWI is a federation so it has about 21 members of Youth Services throughout the county. So I'll be one of the group that is responsible for governing all of them."

There is a lot that Joseph can bring to the table in terms of his input for the NYWBM. He is urging to get back and support those who have struggled as a result of the multiple national lockdowns. A lot of work in the last 18 months has been online and virtual work but now Joseph is pushing for outdoor activities and meetings to aid those who feel isolated.

YWI Ballinasloe hope to follow these movements in increasing outdoor activity and hope to push for indoor meetings and securing funding for all the projects they have applied for.

An autumn programme will be released on their online on their Facebook page. August will allow for a well-deserved break but going into September kickstarts a new season. Re-branding to East Galway Youth Project (EGYP) the team will hold popular classes, lessons and activities including the popular Junior 'FunAtics' group aimed at pre-teens, The 'Get Lippy' committee targeted for those in their teens looking to push into leadership, and return of workshops including CV Building, Bike repair and maintenance and much more.

Volunteers do a lot of work for the organisation with a lot of one-on-one work being done, leadership training, counselling services and a whole variety of other services.

"My journey has been amazing and I have achieved so much and it hasn't even been 10 years since I started out. I have done everything with your local, your regional, and national youth groups even going on a European level as well but throughout this adventure, I would like to thank all the volunteers, family and anyone who has supported me throughout this journey. I think there is a lot more to come as I transform from a participant into a professional. Thank you everyone for all you've helped me with. My passion for youth work is what will drive me to do my best to develop the organisation I love so well" states Joe.

To find out what is on offer in your locality contact their Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Ballinasloeyouthproject> email them at eastgalway@youthworkgalway.ie or phone at: (087) 770 7775.



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LAWRENCETOWN MUM HELPING MUMS

Nicola Mullarkey is a Lawrencetown native now living out in Ahascragh with her husband Damien and son Rian. Nicola currently works as a Senior Clinician in Jigsaw Laois/Offaly supporting young people's mental health

Becoming a new mother, Nicola had questioned from the start how she had been left so unaware of the struggles of childcare and these struggles burdened her somewhat. Nicola had turned to the internet for answers, however, Google is not the most empathetic of search engines and failed to answer the questions of a postpartum mother.

Hearing and speaking about similar stories, she received validation but was disappointed at the difficulties she faced in searching for answers.

Nicola stated: "The older my baby gets the more strongly I feel about maternal mental health and how it should be talked about and supported. Being a mental health professional myself, it was something I took for granted, that information and support would be easily accessible."

She realised that there was a huge need for more mental health services for mothers and expectant mums to be.

She then established her MindMama Instagram page where information is readily available, a place for compassion, not criticism, space where those experiencing postpartum stress can feel safe and supported. This page highlights the good, bad and ugly of parenthood and the journey of pregnancy.



Nicola Glynn
@mindmama_irl

She is honoured to have this many people follow her page. If the page helps just one person, then it has worked. She exclaimed: "I have been so lucky with the following my 'Mind Mama' page has accrued.

There has been such positive feedback from people with regards my posts and stories. I keep a mix of informing material and personal

experiences to help people see that I am just a Mum, same as everyone else, trying to support others."

Currently, Nicola operates from Instagram @mindmama_irl. Her dreams for this page would be continued collaborations having participated in two podcasts on this topic previously. She has been given great opportunities to talk about issues with Derek Wheatley @wheatleytheweekly and Amanda Gurman @honest.as.a.mother on their podcasts.

"I would love to link in with other creators and really open this topic up in the creative way Instagram facilitates. I have a lot of subjects that I have yet to discuss so watch this space" said Nicola.

For more information on the Mind Mama page and regular updates follow Nicola's Page on Instagram @ Mindmama_irl



Nicola alongside
Son Rian

"I work very hard to provide informed, relevant and helpful supports for mothers and expectant mothers. The information I provide is both formal and informal. I feel strongly that there needs to be less judgement and stigma for Mums and parents. There is a strong belief that we are not meant to talk about the difficulties we experience in pregnancy and motherhood and that has to change" said Nicola.

She has fought hard to normalise the hard parts of pregnancy, to make communication easier and give courage to those who seek support. With a strong message that if parents are supported from conception to birth and beyond, they are empowered to create confident and competent children for the future.

Nicola possesses a modest following of over 500 people.

By Jack Treacy

Ballinderry Nursing Home



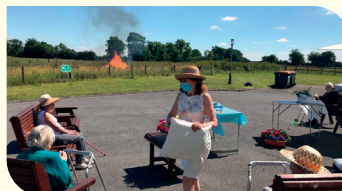
Enjoying the artists work.



John celebrating Father's Day.



Hughie Burke plays music every Friday



Bonfire day party.



Nonie and Bridie soaking the Sun



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Local man Dean O'Farrell tragically passed away on January 11, 2021, due to metastatic terminal oesophageal cancer in Portiuncula hospital.

Dean originally a native of Brackernagh was only 31, and his cancer diagnosis was described as extremely rare in someone so young and extremely aggressive. He only had a short five months from his diagnosis to his passing which he battled through with a smile. Through his family and friend's efforts, they have raised an amazing €12,565 with donations still being accepted until August 1.

Administrator Clare Finn commented: "It is such a privilege for us to be nominated for this amazing, kind and generous iDonate fundraiser at this sad and tragic time. Dean had spoken with his family about his wishes to set up a cancer support group for cancer patients if he won the battle."

Clare added: "We here at the Ballinasloe Cancer Support Centre, Main St offer emotional and practical supports to anyone with a cancer diagnosis. The services we provide include Counselling and Complementary therapies such as acupuncture, reflexology, Cancer Care massage and support groups."



Anita Cleare and Dean O'Farrell

It is hoped that Dean's memory will live on through helping others on their cancer journey. May Dean rest in peace and deepest condolences to all who knew and loved him.

Clare closed: "We would like to thank his family Anita, Fiona, Derek, Shauna, Katie, Jamie, Hollie and David and all the wonderful supporters who donated to his fundraiser."

Donate here at: https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/11396872_in-memory-of-dean-o-farrell.html

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Myles Carroll Photography

Parishioners at masses around mid-summers day were asked to remember specially in their prayers a milestone date for a servant of the Diocese of Clonfert, Garbally College, and indeed the parish for exactly 50 years.

Rev Fr. Colm Allman was ordained some 50 years ago in All Hallows College - June 20th 1970 and went immediately back to the Diocesan College - Garbally Park where he was Dean for over four decades before becoming President of the College.

As a past pupil, dean and priest, he now holds the record as the longest serving President of the College. For many past pupils his mentoring, support and encouragement of so many young people whom he saw potential in and nurtured it - on the track, in the debating chamber, stage, choir or even garden or farm - his generous legacy endures.

However for most Ballinasloe folks and perhaps many past pupils on visits home for happy or less happy times -

the gusto and energy he has invested in his parish ministry in latter years; has been a wonder. Whether it was bringing a new testament twist to his treatises and reflections on the Gospel or attempting pre COVID to get the congregation to enthusiastically sing the liturgy; meant being in Church with Fr. Allman is never dull.

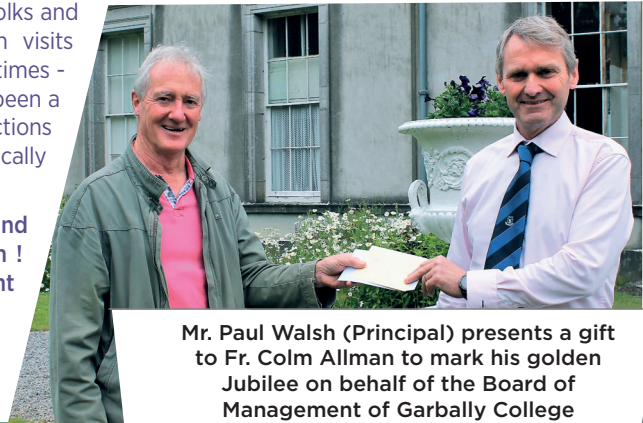
For many in the locale - they love just bumping into Wicklow's fondest and proudest son and he loves pointing out that there is not just one Aughrim ! Hating the limelight - he has insisted that the anniversary be a low key event - which we hope it was!

"On behalf of all of us in Ballinasloe/Creagh parish I congratulate Fr. Colm on the occasion of his golden Jubilee of his Ordination. I also wish to thank

him for the various ways in which he continues to offer his life in service to this community. Ad multos annos Fr. Colm" states Fr. John Garvey.

"All connected with Garbally College salute and congratulate Fr. Colm on his milestone achievement, we thank him for 55 years as a pupil, dean, teacher and president of our College - in all he has done and continues to do. He has been a great support to me personally and he always has the very best interests of the College at heart - we wish him well" states Paul Walshe, Principal Garbally College

From all the readers of LIFE and those of the Parish and not, we thank you for the huge contribution you have made and continue to make and we wish countless more healthy years ahead - whether in the leafy groves of Garbally, or his beloved Garden County ! (Ed.)



Mr. Paul Walsh (Principal) presents a gift to Fr. Colm Allman to mark his golden Jubilee on behalf of the Board of Management of Garbally College

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Long-time resident, Siobhan McGuinness, has just self-published her first book titled "Trusting - A Book of Poetry and Poetic Reflections"

A native of Meelick, Swinford growing up for 20 years in the company of her five brothers and one sister and her loving parents Margaret and Michael Gilmore. She then graduated from NUIG with a degree in Sociology and Politics and English in 1993 and a higher diploma in education in 1994. In 2004, Siobhan began her career as a teacher at St Aloysius College, now Coláiste Chiarán, and has lived and worked in Ballinasloe for the last 28 years.

"Seamus and I are the proud parents of Mike, Sean, Conor and Aoibhe, all of whom were instrumental in the publication of this book. I am very grateful for the huge support I had from Seamus and the kids. Also thanks to close friend and local artist Kate Madden for assistance in designing a front cover for the book" states Siobhan.

The book "Trusting", a compilation of poetry and poetic reflections, is the culmination of many years of reflecting, musing and writing. It is targeted at those who have or are experiencing the difficulties life throws at them. With additional light-hearted pieces the book holds a universal appeal.

Salmon's shop and Naughton's Shop are stocking the 62 page "Trusting": retailing now for €10, but it can also be sourced online from Amazon.



Siobhan McGuinness Self-Published Author of 'Trusting'

THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER....

By Kevin Kavanagh

CALTRA'S Mattie Kilroy has just published his latest book entitled "Caltra's Connections to Ireland's Revolution 1916-1921." The 130-page production is the sixth to be published by the former teachers and contains previously unpublished pictures and heroics of the parish's soldiers and volunteers of that period over 100 years ago.

BALLINASLOE native Delma O'Hanrahan, who has passed away in Dublin in her 92nd year, was a daughter of Martin and Bridie Lynch who operated the well-known Rourke's Bakery in the town for over forty years. Her late husband was a private secretary to President De Valera, when he was in office and both often stated with the Lynch family when they visited the West. Delma is predeceased by her husband and sister Brenda and is survived by her daughter, son and sister Bernadette.

FR. JOHN MAHONY is the new Parish Priest of Ahascragh/Caltra, succeeding Fr. John Cullen, who has returned to London to work with the Nazareth Sisters. He will continue with the interfaith project of outreach to the homeless in the capital. Fr. Mahony was Administrator of Ballintubber and Ballymoe.

BALLINASLOE Crime writer, Sheila Bugler has just completed her seventh novel and her first-alone thriller "The Lucky Eight." Now living in Sussex, in the UK, with her husband Sean and two children, Sheila is a graduate of UCG and has been writing crime fiction books for the past fifteen years.

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Helen Mannion,
Mary Hynes and
Theresa Loughrey
with the
Patchwork Quilt.



Three members of the Aughrim Active Retirement Group spent more than ninety hours making a multi-coloured Patchwork Quilt at the request of the National Organisation. They were one of 550 branches nationwide who rallied to the call to highlight the resilience

of its members during the period of lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Helen Mannion, Mary Hynes and Theresa Loughrey, on behalf of the Aughrim Group, spent almost six weeks, in the afternoons, working on the metre square quilt which features twenty-five different coloured panels on each side and is trimmed with the Galway colours, maroon and white. The quilt has now been collected by the Active Retirement Ireland head office where one big Quilt of Hope will be formed as an example of the resilient nature of older people during the lockdown periods of Covid-19.

Chairperson of the Aughrim Group, Helen Mannion, said it was a very challenging order. "We had to be so meticulous and patient in making it. It was very complex and Mary, Theresa and I took great care with it. We had just donated over €4,000 to the Jack and Jill Foundation for face masks we made when this challenge came along. Most afternoons in May and June were taken up doing the quilt and we are very proud of the finished article" said Helen, who also thanked Catherine and Gerry for supplying them with refreshments.

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One of Galway Bay FM's, most discerning voices and firm favourite with the thousands of music lover fans is Mackney's Valerie Hughes from Ballinasloe. She attended Ard Scoil Mhuire which was then located on Society Street in Ballinasloe

Valerie completed the Leaving Certificate in 1980 and emigrated to London, where she worked for an Accountancy firm and continued her studies graduating from an accountancy course.

On her return to Galway, Valerie worked for The Oasis and Castle Night Clubs as their Stock Controller. It was there she met with some members of Galway Bay FM staff. The Production Manager encouraged her into doing some voiceover work and that was the catalyst for her journey into radio.

There was always country music in Valerie's home growing up and quite often her late mother could be heard singing away in the kitchen as she cooked! Whenever relatives came to visit the evening would invariably finish with a singsong of all their old

favourites. Everyone would all happily join in.

Valerie started a country music show called the 'Hospital Requests Show' scheduled on Saturday mornings. Placing several request boxes in the hospitals and was surprised at the response. In no time at all they had built up quite a following, and Saturday mornings became one of the busiest shows on the station.

Over time the show grew from strength to strength, as well as the changing of the name of the Show to 'The Wagon Wheel', with the support from her loyal listeners was incredible.

Valerie commented: "I am and always will be, very grateful to the people who supported the show from the outset. I am particularly grateful to the people of East Galway who tuned in, without fail, every Saturday morning."



Valerie Hughes Presenter of Galway Bay FM's 'The Wagon Wheel' Show

Valerie in her broadcast studio

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Although many of the younger generations do not listen to the radio, instead, using different mediums such as Spotify to source their music, there is still a large contingent who tune in every day. Particularly, throughout the pandemic, there has been a big increase in requests with listenership figures going sky high.

Valerie now broadcasts three nights a week from eight pm to 10 pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights as well as the Saturday Morning show from 9 am to 12 noon.

Apart from Radio, Valerie is passionate about Bernese Mountain Dogs and has been involved with the breed since 1998. She breeds from time to time but mostly enjoys exhibiting. She has qualified as a Championship Show Judge of the breed. Throughout the years she has had great success and looks forward to returning to the show ring.

For those heading to third level this Autumn, Valerie advises: "Enjoy your school years and your friends, but study hard and often as you will reap the rewards many times over in the future."

We hope that Valerie will continue to entertain her loyal and appreciative Galway Bay Listeners over many seasons to come.



The Town Team Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) in association with Galway County Council recently completed a procurement and evaluation process to appoint an Energy Consultant to begin their ambitious journey in transitioning to a low-carbon community.

ORS is a prominent Irish multidisciplinary building consultancy offering design, planning and management advice that is supported by expert guidance in energy efficiency. They have a team of highly skilled designers, consulting engineers, planners, scientists, and surveyors. ORS were chosen to work with Ballinasloe SEC to deliver an Energy Master Plan.

ORS Team member Laurence O'Reilly stated: "Over the coming months our team will work closely with Ballinasloe SEC and the wider community to develop an Energy Master Plan. The aim of the study is to develop a simple, understandable, and strategic roadmap for the community of Ballinasloe to become more sustainable, improve energy efficiency, and to reduce carbon emissions. Our team of Darragh Prunty, Tracey Turner and myself, led by Brian Collentine, will analyse how the community is currently using energy, and through community engagement, data analysis, and site inspections, identify projects and initiatives that the town can implement to become greener and more self-sufficient".

This will include the identification of home and community retrofits, funding supports, highlight appropriate behavioural change programmes along with the identification of renewable energy technology potentials for the area.

Identifying energy savings is at the core of everything ORS do. They mentor and support SEC's to address their energy use seeking out energy saving opportunities.

Programme of Works	Phase 1 (Month 1-2)	Phase 2 (Month 2-3)	Phase 3 (Month 2-4)	Phase 4 (Month 4-5)
1. Preparation & Kick-off Meeting with the SEC Team				
2. Community Engagement Strategy				
3. Development & Implementation of Data Collection Strategy				
4. BER's Energy Analysis & Domestic Retro51 Options				
5. Evaluate Home Energy Analysis				
6. Complete Non-Domestic Energy Audits				
7. Design & Generate Energy Database				
8. Design & Generate Register of Opportunities				
9. Complete Final EMP Report				

Six Month Analysis Plan

Considering energy costs are forecast to rise by 25% by 2030 the timing of this collaboration could not be better. Energy consumers must be empowered to play a more active role in low carbon transition. Measurement and targeting of energy use can result in 10 - 15% savings without any capital input.

As a member of the EU, Ireland has committed to transitioning to a low carbon economy by the year 2050, and to becoming carbon-free by the year 2100. Globally there is a critical need to reduce carbon emissions to protect future generations.

The upcoming programme of works heralds a new era for the community which demonstrates a commitment to achieving a sustainable and energy efficient future.

If you would like to join or even just help the sustainable energy journey please contact Anita Killeen at ballinasloetownteam@gmail.com



The ORS Team Darragh Prunty, Brian Collentine, Laurence O'Reilly, and Tracey Turner

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Amy Croffey, a native of Killure and daughter of Maura and Gerry Croffey, has secured a dream role of Senior CNN Journalist and Producer in London. However, Covid-19 restrictions prevented her from travelling to the capital city offices.

Amy began her journalism career at the University of Limerick enrolling in a Bachelor of Arts Degree in New Media and English. After an internship with The Connacht Tribune, she completed a master's in journalism in Dublin City University. It was through her masters she got her start in RTE, reading and writing news bulletins for Radio One and 2FM, and working as a researcher on the News at One when Sean O'Rourke was at the helm.

Amy stated: "Experience is key when it comes to journalism. I have had the privilege of working with many newsrooms such as RTE, Newstalk, Today FM, TheJournal.ie, The Daily Mail Australia, The Sydney Morning Herald and most recently CNN all of which have provided invaluable experience to me. Pitch stories to your local outlets. Editors are looking for people who are not afraid to put themselves out there."

After six years living in Sydney working as a gossip columnist and celebrity and lifestyle reporter for The Sydney Morning Herald, interviewing the likes of Chris Hemsworth, Tom Cruise, Russell Crowe, Drew Barrymore, and Nicole Kidman on red carpets. Amy wanted to move closer to home, but around the same time as Amy was offered the role of senior journalist and producer at CNN in London before the pandemic, then the world began to shut down.

Initially, CNN asked her to work from home for a brief period which extended to almost 16 months.

Amy commented: "It was incredible to work on some of the biggest stories the world has ever seen, such as Covid-19, Black Lives Matter, US Election, and the US inauguration, all from home for one the biggest news organisations in the world. To do it from Killure Castle was something. There were no editors, no excitement in the newsroom, but it was all hands-on deck and you just had to jump in and do it."

Working away from the newsroom was an obvious challenge, isolated from all the excitement and action. Broadband connectivity issues meant she shared a Wi-Fi connection with her father's business, Gerry Croffey's Garden Machinery, all while her sister Kate used the same connection to complete her post-grad in business at NUIG.

Amy added: "Although it was not all part of the plan, it was

great to be home. It was nice to spend time at home with family and to catch up with friends for socially distanced walks and coffees around Garbally or Clonbrock. It was also great to see so many old school friends relocate back to the Ballinasloe area now that they can work from home."

Amy took her free time to join the Ballinasloe Road Runners group. Full of great people, who are always up for a laugh and a socially distanced coffee. She said "I would recommend anyone to join - running prowess is not an issue as all distances are catered for. They meet every Tuesday and Thursday at 7.30 pm from the running track, or on Saturday at eight am from Creagh Church."

Finally, Amy was able to take the opportunity to work from the CNN London offices after flying over recently. Surprisingly, Amy maintains that the tempo has not changed, despite now living in England's Capital, she still works to the same fast-paced and hectic schedule that enticed her into journalism in the first place.

"I will definitely miss home, my family, friends, my dogs Alfie and Teddy, Supermacs, and just the entire feeling of being home. I am however really excited for this new chapter in my life and await any challenges that I will face" concluded Amy.



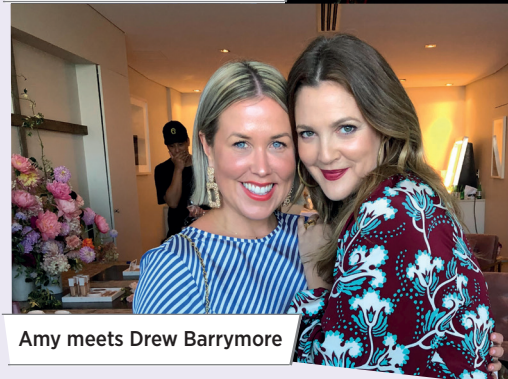
Amy Croffey Finally Reaches CNN London Offices



Amy Croffey and Chris Hemsworth



Amy Croffey, meets Tom Cruise and Russell Crowe



Amy meets Drew Barrymore



Amy Croffey's Hectic Set Up for US Election Day



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Sean Duignan worked for over forty years as a broadcaster on both Radio and Television for RTE, covering stories from all over the world. Born in Galway City, Sean commenced his Journalistic career with the "Connacht Tribune" before joining RTE. A former Government Press Secretary, he is an avid reader of Ballinasloe LIFE and a life-long supporter of Galway GAA teams.

Post-war Ballinasloe, about 1947, and my father was driving us to Roscommon for a big Connacht football game, and although I was just 10 years of age, I still remember him stopping at Hayden's Hotel and presenting me with a glass of red lemonade. Ever afterwards, Ballinasloe meant Hayden's to me which is why it came as such a shock when it closed down.

All my uncle Sonny's boys went to Garbally College, among them Frank Duignan, an outstanding hurler who played for Galway alongside the great 'Inky' Flaherty, Joe Salmon and Josie Gallagher in the late Forties and early Fifties. Frank went on to become the head of Radio na Gaeltachta.

His younger brother Danny is still remembered as probably the greatest scrum-half produced by Garbally, Tragically, as a young naval officer, still in his twenties, he was waylaid and murdered when walking back to his ship in a port near Cairo.

Incidentally, Inky Flaherty was actually a Galway city man who played for Liam Mellows before his work took him to Ballinasloe where he went on to become a hurling legend.

As a Galway city man myself, I only visited Ballinasloe twice between '47 and when I started as a junior reporter in the Connacht Tribune in 1955. After that, I was back and forth on a regular basis particularly on Horse Fair occasions. Our man in Ballinasloe was the affable Pat O'Donnell whose blameless career was disrupted every October as the Editor, Jack Fitzgerald, for whatever reason, always insisted on covering the Fair himself.

This was a total mystery because, other than that event, "Fitzy" never covered any other story, mainly confining himself to writing editorials. The only plausible explanation was put forward by the Tribune's legendary photographer, Jimmy Walsh, who maintained our esteemed editor wouldn't know a horse from a heifer, but that the attraction was that he was always wine and dined in Ballinasloe for the whole week. In fairness, he also always followed up with at least four pages of the next edition of the paper devoted to the Fair.

Jimmy enjoyed Ballinasloe - he seemed to know everyone there - and I was the one who always accompanied him in the Tribune's notorious blue van, which was only because nobody else on the staff would travel with him, The whole of Ballinasloe must have heard us coming as we screamed into the town centre in what someone described as

**that "jet propelled blue bucket".
Fág an Bealach!**

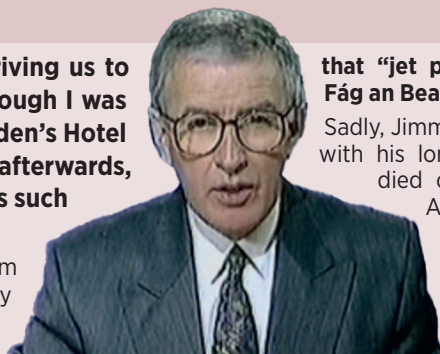
Sadly, Jimmy, holidaying in Portugal with his long suffering wife, Joan, died on a golf course there.

A few of us gathered at Dublin Airport to escort the remains home to Galway. As the cortege entered Ballinasloe, Joan signalled that she wanted to stop at Hayden's. The hearse

was parked around a corner, and we proceeded to the hotel bar where Joan insisted on standing us all a drink.

But then she decided to call another round. At that, the hearse driver intervened: "Ma'am we're running a bit late for St. Joseph's in Galway." Joan thought about that for a moment, then announced: "Jimmy kept me waiting outside a lot of pubs over the years so he'll just have to wait now!" We finished our second drinks, and we were still in good time for the church in Galway.

Hayden's closedown was a big loss. I got a text with the news from a Galway pal: "Ballinasloe banjaxed, Hayden's Hotel closed down!". Well, any casual perusal of almost any copy of Ballinasloe LIFE gives a comprehensive lie to that particular piece of doomsday rubbish. No problem.



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Recently St. Teresa's Special School received final confirmation that a site has been identified and secured for the school. The Department of Education confirmed the agreement with the HSE on a four-acre site at Parkmore Creagh, - adjacent to the Springfield facility for the permanent accommodation for the school.

Senator Dolan and Senator Murphy were great advocates behind St Teresa's, and both had raised the topic of capacity in Ballinasloe for children with special needs in the huge catchment area of South Roscommon / East Galway on numerous occasions in the Senate and with the Minister.

Senator Eugene Murphy stated: "I have long campaigned and highlighted the lack of space in St Teresa's Special School and it is fantastic that a permanent four-acre site has now been agreed for St Teresa's Special School - we now need to see a timely progression of the new building,"

Senator Aisling Dolan Stated: "This is phenomenal news especially after a 10-year wait and is a tribute to the commitment of everyone who has supported. It will mean a permanent special school in our area, and this is just the first step towards a new school over the next number of years."

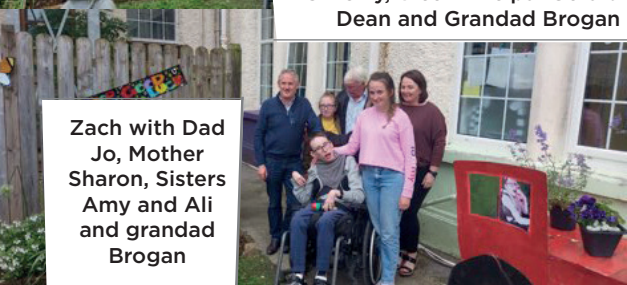
Minister Norma Foley and Minister Josepha Madigan had also provided great support. Minister Madigan had the opportunity to visit the school last month and meet children along with a tour of the school.



Senator Aisling Dolan, Principal Anita O'Reilly and Minister of State Josepha Madigan



Zach Pictured With Principal Anita O'Reilly, Vice Principal Geraldine Dean and Grandad Brogan



Zach with Dad Jo, Mother Sharon, Sisters Amy and Ali and grandad Brogan

Madigan Stated: "I have been really impressed by St. Teresa's School and particularly Anita and the incredible work she has done as principal and the staff and the beautiful children that I met today. I particularly loved the garden and I know that Zach graduated and had a little party out there and it was just lovely to see all of that. So, it is just a lovely warm feeling in this space, and I know that they are under pressure in terms of space, so we hope to be able to rectify that soon."

An additional temporary accommodation of two poratakabin classrooms has also been recently approved which will mean space for 10 students in September at the Enterprise site. In total there will be 36 students starting this September a huge increase from the 11 students a decade ago.

"We came here to the Enterprise Centre in 2010, we had one section of the building for a long time and then about four years ago we got an extra classroom. Our board of management, staff, parents, and friends who have supported us will be so pleased with the announcement. We all need to press on now and make this school a reality", stated longtime campaigning Principal Anita O'Reilly.

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Mrs Geraldine Barrett has retired from Eyrecourt National School after 39 years of loyal service to education.

Fr Declan McNerney commented: "We wish Geraldine health, happiness, and peace this day and in the years ahead and many thanks from all in our Parish."



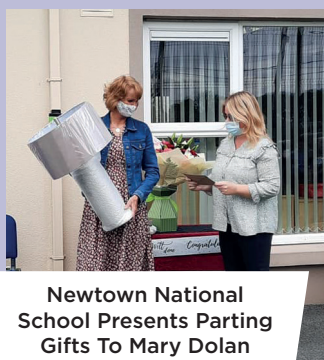
Eyrecourt National School Kids Bid Farewell to Mrs Geraldine Barrett on her Retirement



Fr Declan Gives Farewell Speech to Geraldine Barrett

MARY DOLAN'S RETIREMENT

Pupils, Staff, Members of the Board of Management, Parents Association and Family celebrated Mary Dolan's retirement from the staff of Newtown National School in Creagh this June. "Mary You will be missed by all who treasured your presence. Best wishes for a long and happy retirement." was the inscription on her parting gift!



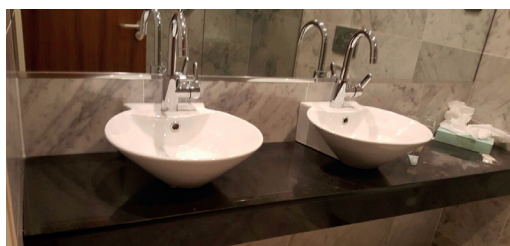
Newtown National School Presents Parting Gifts To Mary Dolan



Mary Dolan Retires From Newtown NS



Newtown Pupils Wish Goodbye To Mary



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Sixth Class Scoil an Chroi Naofa Class Celebrate Graduation from the National School

ST. JOSEPH'S GARBALLY DAY



LCVP 2021 Award:
Dylan Donnelly with Mr Thomas Burke



Marcus Scully Award 2021:
Eric Luwaga with Mrs Pauline Scully



Principals Award 2021:
Josh Bleahen with Principal Paul Walsh



Parents Association Award 2021:
Gerard Colleran with Mrs Catherine Devine



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During Joe Murphy's 28 years as caretaker of Creagh National School, he saw the number of teaching staff double, hundreds of kids file through the gates, laughed at their playful antics during break-time and was always on hand to repair some of the school equipment.

The town native retired from his post at the end of June and to honour his popularity the school decided to name the new Astro-turf pitch in his honour. Now known as the Joe Murphy Park, it is a monumental fitting to the esteem in which Joe was held by staff and students for more than quarter of a century.

At an emotional farewell party the school community was determined to share their appreciation for his many years of fabulous service to the school. Staff, past and present, recorded messages of thanks to Joe and these, along with messages from the pupils, were shared via a digital presentation. The Parents' Association and the Board of Management also contributed to the historic occasion.

Joe was praised for his skills as a craftsman, his admirable attention to detail, his 'can do' attitude and his problem solving ability. He was lauded as a caretaker with the emphasis on the word 'care' who would always be remembered for his kindly smile and ever helpful attitude, as well as his particular skills for rescuing balls from burning bushes and jumpstarting dead batteries.

Former school principal and life-long friend, Tony Broderick, shared some sporting memories of their earlier years together. They were on the Ballinasloe under-16 football team beaten in the county final by Tuam, by the narrowest of margins but in 1968 Joe went to London and started to play soccer. Two years later he returned home, joined up with Gentex of Athlone in the Leinster league before giving sterling service to Ballinasloe AFC as a centre back.

Looking back on his life in Creagh NS, Joe said "It's nice when past students meet me in the street and thank me for this, that or the other, when they were pupils. I have seen many boys and girls reach the top of the ladder when they moved on but I particularly remember Heather Payne, who went on to be a star soccer player for her country. The staff were always nice to me and I have many happy memories of my 28 years working in Creagh NS."

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Accessibility Cathaoirleach Award



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Far left: Elaine Presented Toy Packs in the Therapeutic Learning Centre Made Possible Through the Playday Grant from Galway County Council.

Left: Teresa Coughlan receives awards from Chairperson of PPN Secretariat Vincent Lyons

Accessibility Ballinasloe won the 'Galway County Cathaoirleach Community Award' recently for their response with different groups, especially those with disability in a process that empowers them, to Covid-19 in 2020.

They were presented with a fabulous piece of sculpture, a framed certificate, and a cheque for €500 from Vincent Lyons, Chairman of Public Participation Network Secretariat, in recognition of the Cathaoirleach Community Awards as winner of Covid-19 Community Response Award 2020.

Teresa Coughlan, Social Services Manager, stated: "Huge congratulations to those who were nominated, and those who won tonight. Great to see such a community spirit in response to a crisis. Big thanks as always to the different groups, businesses, individuals and organisations that support our work. Also huge thanks to our amazing committee Teresa Coughlan, Marion Ruane, Stephen Roche, Darragh Flynn, Shane McDermott and Deborah Brady."

Accessibility Ballinasloe is open to all in a 15 mile radius of Ballinasloe get in touch with Theresa at (087) 763 9881 or email Teresa@ballinasloesocialservices.ie



Marine celebrating her 70th birthday with family at Ballinderry Nursing Home.



Artist Eoin O'Connor with Parents Fergus and Helen at the Launch of his new Collection 'Mutz'

Aughrim Artist Launches Mutz Paintings.

Family, Friends and Art enthusiasts had a chance to view Aughrim Artist Eoin O'Connor's paintings at his studio in Gorey, which showcased 32 paintings of 32 different dog breeds. The paintings used an assortment of colours from the colour wheel to present a vibrant background. Eoin has been working on the paintings since last November. 10% of the money generated by the Mutz paintings will be donated to Dogs Trust Ireland and Ash Animal Rescue.

Senator **AISLING DOLAN**

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"I never had a desk job in my life before COVID, and for the past seven months I have been caught between residence, Dáil and desk – so thank you, Senator Dolan, Western Development Commission and BACD for giving me a glorious start to my first day out of the Capital and in the West this year."

Thus began our Tánaiste, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Leo Varadkar, at an early morning briefing in the Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre, bathed in blue sunshine.

All held socially distant and outdoors with the national media groupies, camera crew, and officials outnumbering the members of the Board who gave up a sunny morning to have a Karibas supplied breakfast briefing with the Deputy Head of Government.

In our summer finery and nervous, the front lawn and building looked

resplendent; all spruced up – like for the summer station awaiting the Garda escort.

Tomás Ó Síocháin, CEO of the Western Development Commission (WDC), a key supporter of towns like Ballinasloe and Community Enterprise Development Companies, Chair Seamus Duffy and Manager Lyn Donnelly, Gerry Finn, Chair of the Western Development Commission; were formally introduced to Leo and welcomed to town by Senator Aisling Dolan, who was bursting with pride and enthusiasm in equal measure.

He queried the use of the building, and Seamus Duffy and Gerry Finn gave him plenty of background on the site, the stones and modern-day uses. He announced: "It is really great to see what you have been able to do with such an old hospital building."

And with that he was off on the tour of the building, its firms, and employees – nodding, chatting, asking questions and most importantly of all – finding it seems fellow Dubs.

"It was really interesting to meet fellow Dubs in there, one from Clare Hall, the other Lucan, proving today at least that there is a movement of people West as well as East," he quipped.

Thirty minutes was allocated for a walkabout, the ice that Marian Canavan from Karibas had cloaked her cream, smoothies, and granola in was under pressure on the veranda. An hour later the Media mob were getting grumpy the podium was set up – OVAL Office like on the Rose lawn but there were no parasols!

Tomás from WDC got the official proceedings underway. Leo was visiting the West on a whistle-stop tour organised by the WDC and they and he chose Ballinasloe as it was one of the first new funded Hubs to be uploaded to the Connected Hubs Network, promoting flexible working.

As one of the WDC's and the North-western Regional Commission's nine Key Towns, Chairman Gerry was keen that his CEO explained to the Tánaiste the ongoing innovative work that the WDC was undertaking in moulding communities in the region to prepare the next influx of entrepreneurs and workers.

Leo was happy to witness the passion of the WDC team and indeed the tenants: "I wish to thank everybody associated with this, the voluntary Board, the Management, the funders of the Community Enterprise Company for the type of partnership and ambition shown to me today.

"To see how taxpayers' money, invested wisely is making a huge positive difference in people's lives and to see what more investment is needed and how we can support small micro-enterprises. It was great to meet the crew of EG Quest who have grown so big they are moving out to new premises in the town over the coming weeks" he added.

An Tánaiste had some significant things to say about his department's new policy of 'Making Remote Work,' in a post-pandemic world where workers would get a choice of remote, home or office-based contracts to blend a better balance to their lives and ease commuter congestion.

The National Press Pack were in no mood for his agenda – they had deadlines for the lunchtime news and there was no sign of regulations for indoor dining and weddings. You could hear the collective groan at Creagh Cemetery from all the non-hacks assembled. Scud after scud was lobbed at the man – he had neither note nor teleprompter – he quoted percentages, nuanced NPHET advices, the rows over the housing plan at cabinet, wedding advice, vaccination of teenagers, college return in Sept – it was a masterclass in detail and command of brief.



Breakfast with An Tánaiste were BACD Board Members: S. Kelly, M. Downey, S. Duffy, J Lyons, L. Varadkar Tánaiste TD, L. Donnelly, Cllr M. Connolly, K Broderick, D. Dowling

offer, and this is a town that has a lot to offer. As more people understand that and the message gets out, more interest and development will follow" he gushed.

Leo was adamant that there is a strong role for community development companies in helping with the 2040 Spatial Plan: "It can only be done through partnerships involving the local authorities, community development companies, and it involves the private sector as well - crucially."

With that, he headed for a smoothie, and we all got to enjoy the business brekkie with the Tánaiste in the sun before he sped further West with a spring in his step.

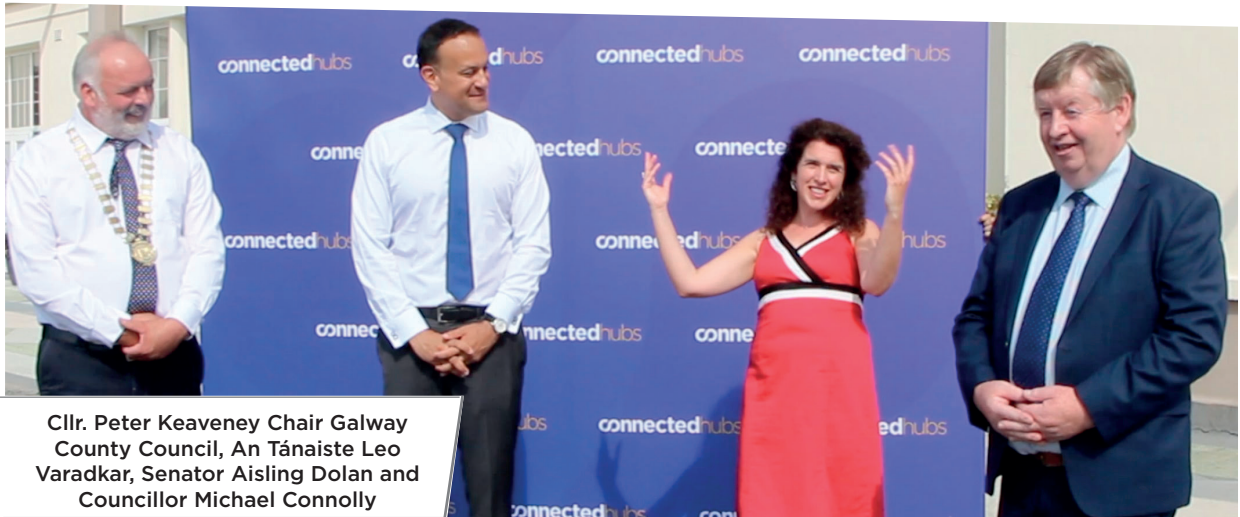
His personal secretary was bringing the curtain down on the scrum, he was late for the next stop; Jack Treacy ace reporter from this parish dived in with questions to do with the event. Leo smiled, suggesting he was worn out from pandemic punch ups. He waved his aides away, looked into the camera and calmly responded to why we all got up so early and had the bunting out.

"This town is so well and centrally connected, with Chanelle moving into the IDA park - which will herald more investment - something I am working with Sen Aishling Dolan on. I think anyone investing or west would do well to consider

consider Ballinasloe.

"I am impressed mostly by the people I met, I really mean it. It has just been amazing to see the diversity of different business types, people in different areas, sales, financial analysts to be in this medium-sized building and to have this diversity of businesses and I think it is a great place for people to start and develop"

As to BACD having a role in attracting workers and families away from congested urban areas; he was giving us top marks: "Ballinasloe is a really good example for other towns to follow around the country and that is becoming advocates for their town and making the town a better place and telling people what this town has to



Cllr. Peter Keaveney Chair Galway County Council, An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar, Senator Aisling Dolan and Councillor Michael Connolly

Senator Eugene

Murphy

Seanad Spokesperson on Community, Rural Affairs and the Islands

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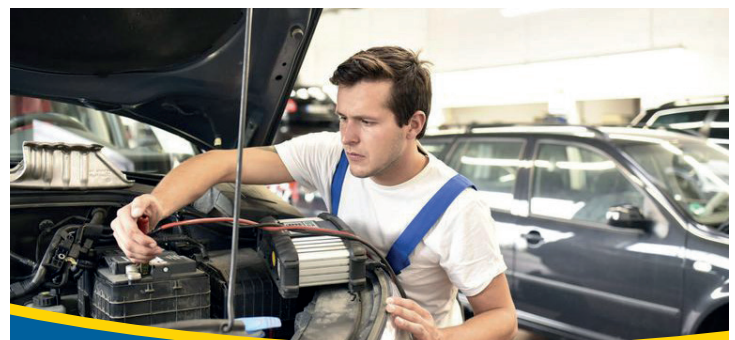
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Senator Eugene Murphy is pictured with Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue TD at the recent launch of the McAllister Irish Spirits Distillery in Ahascragh project which announced the creation of local employment in East Galway. Minister McConalogue and Minister for State, Anne Rabbitte TD, jointly laid the restoration stone to mark the beginning of this major restoration project. Anne Rabbitte TD



Jacqueline Daly, Director of Services, receives the Health and Wellbeing Award, of the Cathaoirleach Awards, on behalf of East Galway Midlands Cancer Support Centre. The cancer support centre received the award for the commencement of their Activator Pole Walking Programme and study being carried out in conjunction with AIT

Jacqueline Daly, Director of Services Stated:
"We are so very proud of the recognition that our centre is getting for our dedication to providing services to cancer patients and their families."



Past Garbally Student Conor Lohan has continued Garbally's successive streak of winners picking up a Connacht U20 Championship Medal recently.

The regular Pearse's Club footballer brought great joy to the Rossies and to his club and school followers.

Garbally Principal Paul Walsh commented: "Congratulations to past pupil Conor, A member of the Connacht U20 Championship winning Roscommon GAA squad who defeated Mayo on a scoreline of 2-11 : 1 - 7 , Well done Conor we are all very proud of your sporting achievement here in Garbally."



Pupils of Library summer camps from an Scoil An Chroí Naofa. who visited the library outside normal opening hours as they are part of a hub.

Malin to Mizen In Memory of Mum

Adrienne Colleran is running 580km from Ireland's most Southerly point Mizen Head to the most Northernly point Malin Head in aid of Galway Hospice.

Adrienne hopes to raise money for the Hospice, who so graciously looked after her late mother and made sure she had the best of comfort and support in her final days.

"It was 12 long days before Eileen would leave us and it became our new normal, a very surreal time. We had no place else we needed to be, we all stayed for the precious moments, and time; we will forever be grateful for and thankful to everyone in the Hospice who made it possible."

Donations are still open at: Adrienne's Go Fund me Page https://www.gofundme.com/f/myppw?fbclid=IwAR2V0hjye4E5_W6t57TYkXPPxGqpzuLTSghP2Z56NpU6Lv24graz0Yurflc





Amie Doherty First Woman Composer to Score a Dreamworks Animated Feature

Brackernagh's Amie Doherty recently made history becoming the first female composer to score a DreamWorks animated feature with her work on Spirit Untamed which hit the Irish Cinemas recently.

Amie is about as Ballinasloe as it comes. She was born in Portiuncula Hospital and grew up across the road in the same house on Brackernagh that her mother grew up in and generations of Maddens before her.

Attending primary school at Scoil an Chroí Naofa and Secondary School at Ard Scoil Mhuire. Amie has much of her mother's family living in and around the town, as well as many close friends that she stays connected with regularly.

"I am immensely proud to be from Ballinasloe and even prouder to be 'pure town' as we say, so much so that when I filed to start my own business in LA, I named it 'Pure Town Music LLC.' I admit it is hard to keep a straight face when I hear a banker say it or when it shows up on a contract" notes Amie.

Only two per cent of big, studio films are composed by women, so the significance has not been lost on her. "My hope is that seeing my name in the credits will inspire some other young woman or women to dream big, and hopefully someday soon, no one will bat an eyelid at seeing a woman's name under the 'Music by' credit, we need to normalize it by encouraging more women to pursue their musical dreams" states Amie.

Working on Spirit Untamed was nothing short of a dream come true. She had scored a DreamWorks short film back in 2019 called 'Marooned' and had met some of the DW crew on that project. The following year, the music team at Universal reached out about setting up a meeting with the Spirit Untamed directors and producers. The meeting went well, and Amie was hired to score the movie, which was incredibly exciting and terrifying at the same time, especially stepping into the shoes of Hans Zimmer, who had scored the first Spirit movie back in 2002.

Joining the project in May 2020, 10 months were spent working on it, never meeting the team in person until the final playback in April 2021. Writing the title song, 'Fearless,' and then teaching it to the actors, including Jake Gyllenhaal, Eiza Gonzalez, and Isabela Merced, and coaching their performances through the recording sessions (A month or so later, she would get a new cut of the film with their animated characters singing 'Fearless.'

"It was just a wild experience to see it all come to life. They recorded an 80-piece orchestra over nine days at Abbey Road Studios in London, with me producing via various technologies from my home studio in L.A", she explains.

With restrictions preventing an official premiere; Amie was able to celebrate via a private screening where she was able to invite her closest friends to celebrate.

"I had these great notions of feeling

so proud and overcome with emotion sitting in an actual cinema hearing my music in a DreamWorks film, but truth be told, I was a bag of nerves and spent the entire 90 minutes stress eating popcorn and M&Ms... I needed a strong drink afterwards, that's for sure" she reveals.

For those who look up to her, Amie had always felt strange being asked for advice, admitting sometimes she did not know how she got to where she is. But first, she urges anyone to just enjoy it. That is what music is for!

"I realised in my college years that I actually hated performing and it was not for me, but that did not mean I could not continue with something I was really passionate about. I loved film music more than any other genre, so I just followed that gut feeling. If you want to take it more seriously as a potential future career, there are some brilliant college courses in Ireland to kickstart the foundation. We are incredibly lucky to come from a country like Ireland with such a vibrant musical culture, I think it is in all of us. Oh, and join the Ballinasloe Town Band" she encourages.

"I have not been able to come home or see any family/friends since Christmas 2019, so I am missing home, but fingers crossed I will get there before the year is out! I just want to thank everyone from around town who has sent me such kind messages and comments on social media over the last few weeks. It really means the world to me" said Aime.



Spirit Untamed Movie Poster Scored by Amie Doherty



Amie Working in the Studio

Our library team and users were delighted to welcome a fresh staff member, Michelle Ruddy, joining from Westmeath Libraries and already has settled in so well it feels she has been there forever!

The library has been thrilled to have welcomed so many different hubs for library visits. During July the library came alive for the first time in many months with the sound of happy kids from Scoil an Chroí Naofa.

Many events and competitions are being planned for the library both virtually and outside in the courtyard so stay tuned.

Summer Stars – (a reading / activity programme for our younger children is underway) but there is still plenty of time to sign up in the library. Join up to get a bag, pencil, and membership card and if they complete the challenge, you will get a certificate and a prize.

Again this summer local young writers with a flair for prose are being wooed! This year Libraries Ireland is hosting a writing competition with some amazing prizes. The competition is open to 6 -18-year-olds with entrants split into three age groups. The winner of each category will win a tablet and a basket of books from O'Brien's Press. 15 finalists in each category will win a €50 voucher.

To enter, write a story (less than 500 words) using the following opening line: 'Of all the places in the world, I never thought I would be here...'

'As na háiteanna go léir ar domhan, níor cheap mé riamh go mbeinn anseo...'

There will be 15 finalists in each category and one national winner from each category.

All entries to be submitted in digital copy (e.g., Word, PDF) to summerstarsstory@lgma.ie by five pm on August 31.

That is a lot of great prizes and a lot of chances to win so let your imagination fly and start writing today!

You can get in touch with the library on their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BallinasloeEDIC>, email ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie or phone (090) 964 3464.

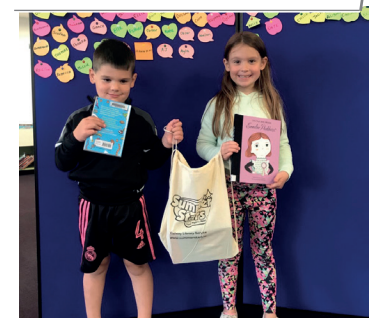
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Keith Kelly Conducts a Combined Senior and Junior Band Open Air Rehearsal on the Fair Green.

Stage five restrictions meant all band rehearsals were curtailed for many months. Band members were chomping at the bit to get back into live rehearsals and performing in public again. It was therefore appropriate that one of their recent rehearsals was

in the open air on the Fair Green and that their first public appearance was at the Man and Horse statue in St. Michael's Square.

It was a delight to witness musical seeds bearing fruit, as the young musical talent that was sown in the Ballinasloe Town Junior Band Nursery blossomed in the July sunshine at their first summer recital. The group of eight musicians fitted in seamlessly and confidently with the senior members, as they treated the passers-by to a varied collection of tunes ranging from Harry Potter themes to catchy Abba favourites. They had benefited from the nurturing tutelage of Junior Band Leader Keith Kelly and his team of mentors through online Zoom sessions and limited live rehearsal time.

Over the coming weeks, the Band intends to entertain the shopping public in the square. Additionally, they hope to repeat the successes of last year by also giving outdoor recitals at the local Nursing Homes and Hospital bringing some much-needed live entertainment to the service users, residents, patients, and staff.

Work on the Hall has recommenced after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. Internal fire doors were installed and three storage rooms within the building have been fireproofed. The front doors of the hall must now be replaced with a specially designed functioning fire door. It is anticipated that the works will be completed soon.

PRO Brian Derrane stated: "The band has been successful in receiving some grant aid to help with the renovations of the Hall and we are also extremely grateful to the local community who backed the Raise the Roof campaign by purchasing slates. We have been unable to raise any funds during the year to cover the annual maintenance and running costs due to the restrictions on activities. Ongoing annual fundraising will be needed to cover insurance, lighting, heating, instrument purchase and repair, and the purchase of sheet music as well as mortgage repayments. If you would like to support us, please contact any member of the Band. Send a message via our website or Facebook page."

Recently the Junior members of the Ballinasloe Town Band took part in a cross-culture exchange

with members from two Schools from Kuching City in Borneo, Malaysia. The Malaysian students are educated through English which meant that members on both sides of the world were able to communicate, learn about each other, and play games.

The exchange was organized and hosted by Malaysian director Wilson Matthew, who has worked with BTB youth director Keith Kelly on projects in the past. As well as musical performances, both Irish and Malaysian members presented history and information about their bands and their hometown. They finished the day off with some games and fun.



Junior Band Members Have a Cross-Cultural Exchange with Malaysian Schools



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Lisa Geraghty lives in Ahascragh with her son Donnacha, daughter Maeve Ann and Irish Wolfhound 'Mac and has just published her first novel "More than a Match".

Originally from Castleisland, Co. Kerry, and from a family of six children, she has always been proud of her roots and the opportunities that she was given over the years. Lisa, a veterinary surgeon by profession, works as a college lecturer in Athlone Institute of Technology, where she trains veterinary nurses and bio-veterinary scientists. She enjoys working with students and is an advocate for self-care, mental wellbeing and work-life balance in the veterinary profession. She regularly publishes articles on employment law and veterinary practice and is a co-author of the book *Veterinary Law and Practice in Ireland*. "More Than a Match" is Lisa's debut novel.

At the beginning of the first lockdown, Lisa began writing blogs. An avid fan of writing, she had only ever written scientifically. Publishing a few employment law articles, a peer reviewed paper on antimicrobial resistance and is the co-author of "Veterinary Law & Practice in Ireland." Her love for blogging had led her to delving into non-fiction articles that were published in local papers. Lisa had been suggested by a few friends to write novels and she had many themes in her head for a long time all they needed was a story.

She explained: "I knew I wanted to write a story about a strong woman, a character that could empower other women. The 'Me Too' movement was well underway at the time. The themes I wanted to encapsulate were that people are flawed, we all make mistakes and have to learn to live with the consequences, I wanted to address the theme of stress and mental illness and the message that it is possible to heal and be well and move on. I also wanted to include the theme of bullying and the destructive force that it can be in people's lives, especially when it happens behind closed doors."

"More than a Match" tells the story of Jennifer Burke – a successful lawyer with a husband who worships her and two beautiful, talented teenage daughters. Or at least that is what she has always told herself. However, as the years progress, somewhere inside of Jennifer the splinters begin to deepen. When her mental health is shattered

by a life-altering diagnosis she discovers how fragile her world has become.

Lisa stated: "This is a story of fear and loss, of desperation and pain, of hope and survival, The question is: when a woman's strength is tested to the limit, can she stand and fight for her life? Jennifer is a real woman, raw and flawed. Her story is one that, I hope, will resonate with all women at some point in their lives."

The book has been reviewed 21 times on Amazon and has gained an average rating of 4.8/5 stars. One reviewer identified as 'Domreads' stated: "I loved the book and cannot wait for future adventures of Jennifer Bourke. Lisa's style of writing allowed me to become totally engrossed in what Jennifer was going through and feeling. All this despite our realities being worlds apart. I also felt the way the issues with mental health were covered in the book as well as matters relating to treatment, coping strategies and simply living with mental illness will help to normalise and de-stigmatise the same."

It is available in Salmons Department store in town, having been locally printed by KPW. It is also available on Amazon for £11.21.



Author
Lisa Geraghty

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CULTURE



The Victorious U14 Girls and Management who had an Impressive 4-9 to 1-0 win in Their County Final Against Cappataggle Camogie Club

The Club's 50/50 Draw continues. Congratulations to June's winner Paul Finnegan who scooped €96 from a total jackpot of €196 and the month of July's winner, Frank Kennedy who won €100 from a jackpot of €200.



Ballinasloe U12 Camogie Girls Go Through to Connaught League Final after Defeating Kiltullagh

With competitive games back up and running all the teams are training hard. For girls who wish to try Camogie or previously played and are considering returning, are most welcome.

Training takes place on the Club pitch in Ard Scoil Mhuire. The club training

schedule for the teams are:

Tuesday:
18.00 - 19.00:
Under sixes to U10s

Tuesday
19.00 - 20.00:
U12s

Wednesday:
19.00 - 20.00:
U14s to Juniors

The Club also runs a highly successful nursery training session on Saturday mornings, in conjunction with Ballinasloe GAA Club. This is for girls under six, born in 2015/2016. This takes place in the GAA Club grounds behind SuperValu.

The U14 Camogie team were victorious recently in the Plate Final against Cappataggle on a score of 4-09 to 1-00.

The U12's team were runners-up to Sylane in their recent Connaught League game, missing out narrowly by two points.

Please contact any of their committee, coaches or message their Facebook page to join the monthly draw which is their only and vital fundraising now. Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/BallinasloeCamogie>

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Ahascragh Camogie are well on the ball, with the Under 14 and Under 16 Teams enjoying recent success

The U14 Girls recently were victorious in the Could Final against St Thomas winning 4 - 9 to 1- 7. The girls were mentored by Ann Jordan, Aileen Greene, Kevin Gavin and Bernie Power. It was the U14s first time ever winning this competition

The U16s were also enjoying recent success winning the County B Camogie Championship against Portumna winning by one goal. This was the second time that the Under 16s had won this competition winning it the first time in 2017. The team was managed and selected by Tommy Kane, Niall Murray, Claudine Higgins and Peter Madden.

Claudine Higgins PRO commented: "H u g e

Congratulations to our Under 16 Champions. We are all so proud of these girls. What a comeback."

Padraic and Cathal Mannion took part in a successful weekend at the Ahascragh GAA Grounds recently. The brothers held a successful coaching session that engaged the Ahascragh Players and focused on adding improvements to their game!

If you are interested in camogie and are living in or close to Ahascragh be sure to get in contact at secretary.ahascraghcaltra.galway@camogie.ie or message their Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/ahascragh.camogieclub.5/posts/4263554067009794>.



U14 Could Shield Champions



Ailbhe Mulry and Laura Noone Captains Ahascragh U14 Shield



U16 County B Camogie Champions

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In March 2021 the European Parliament declared the European Union an "LGBTIQ Freedom Zone"

The European Commission has outlined the following actions in 2020 – 2025 in its 1st ever strategy on LGBTIQ equality:

- Fighting discrimination
- Ensuring safety
- Protecting rights of rainbow families
- LGBTIQ equality around the world



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The Conneely family recently had the unique distinction of having 3 generations from the one family represent Ballinasloe Golf Club in Inter Club team matches while the youngest Niall also won the Irish Open Golf (Under 11) Championship.

Niall Conneely was the overall winner of the Irish Open Golf Championship (under 11 category), at Mount Wolseley Golf Course over two days. Niall, caddied by his dad Mark had a score of 75 on both days to win the event by two shots. As winner of the event Niall qualifies for the European Championship in Scotland and the U.S. Kids Golf Major Championship in the historic Pinehurst Course in North Carolina.

The event is part of The World Championships, organised by the US Kids Golf Foundation annually which hosts more than 2,300 players from more than 50 countries.

Shortly after Niall's success the Conneely golfing family had a busy week representing Ballinasloe Golf Club in GUI Inter Club Matchplay Competitions. Breda played on the Ladies "Challenge Cup" team and husband Brian was on the "National Fourball" team. Their son Mark played on the "Jimmy Bruen" & the "Junior Cup" teams and their grandson Niall featured on the "Fred Daly" team for the club. This year the club has entered over 20 Golfing Union of Ireland Competitions and is having a good success rate to date.



L-R: Brian, Niall and Mark



Mark Staunton, golf professional, from Ballinasloe on left with Niall Conneely, Issac Oliver, Liam Tully and Ben Bleahen on the newly open chipping and bunker practice area. Mark said that he is "delighted with the excellent progress in the club over the last few years. The chipping area is a great addition which most clubs would love to have, the course is in pristine condition, the clubhouse has been renovated and the club has an excellent programme for under age golfers and new members". Mark Staunton is available for golf lessons - Tel 087 9677390

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Members of the Whyte Family Clontuskert have received the Parker Cup on behalf of the late Liam Whyte for his contribution to Gaelic Football in the locale.

The Parker Cup has been awarded annually since 1994, in the memory of Frank Parker, to honour a Clontuskert sportsperson for their contribution to sporting life in the area. Liam's colleague and friend John Molloy was very delighted to be in Clontuskert National School recording a tribute about a good friend who was a distinguished past pupil of the school.

Liam was born in Ballymana, Ballinasloe to Furse and Agnes Whyte. He was a loving brother to both Oliver and Furse Junior and his sister Patricia. Liam came to Clontuskert National School, gaining a very good education and igniting a passion for both football and hurling.

Finishing his education in national school, Liam enrolled in St Jarlath's College in Tuam, in 1969. He was a terrific student there, excelling both academically and sporting wise. It was there Liam won two All-Ireland Medals, one in hurling and one in football with the college in 1974.

Before that Liam had accumulated quite a number of Connacht Titles in GAA sports. He was given extra responsibility by then-President Rev Michael Walsh, as he was a very genuine student and through that Liam contributed a lot to the life of other students in St. Jarlath's College.

In 1974 Liam entered Maynooth College, as a young Cleric. Again, Liam continued to excel both academically and sporting wise there. Earning his bachelor's degree in 1978, and while in attendance Liam won a Sigerson Cup in Football with his classmates.

Like a lot of students, Liam found that Priesthood was not for him so in 1979 Liam left Maynooth and returned to the family business in Ballymana. Getting back

into the sand and construction sector.

Unfortunately, tragedy was to strike in 1982, two years after returning home as Liam was electrocuted while on a construction site. Needless to say, the town was shocked and his family and all that knew him were heartbroken.

John said: "The area had lost one of its great young men, a man of character, loyalty, generosity and goodwill because Liam had established himself to the town as a great footballer."

Liam won every medal available in the 1970s, under 16 county titles, under 18 county titles, uncapped on the under 21 team to win the county title. Winning two senior medals with Ballinasloe and one Connacht Title.

John closed: "Liam was well known, he was seen as the rock of the team and he led the team with great energy and enthusiasm, and he was very popular with every one of the players because Liam was a genuine individual. We are so honoured to see that he is being remembered by St Augustine's National School here in Clontuskert. I want to thank the Principal Mrs Murray, the board of management and the other teachers for honouring such a great guy."



Peter and Patricia O'Grady, Adeline and Furse Whyte, Fr. Michael Finneran. Front (L- R) Kate Murray, Principal Clontuskert NS, Nadine, Ava and Lydia Whyte, Ollie and Teresa Whyte.

Liam Whyte Photo from St Jarlath's College

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Two of Ballinasloe's rising Rugby stars were part of Ireland's Under 20 Rugby team playing in the Six Nations tournament in Cardiff. Shane Jennings and Oisín McCormack starred for Ireland with standout performances in the first two victories over Scotland and hosts Wales, before both suffering injuries in the loss to England and being rested for the game against Italy.

Both players are part of a record six Connacht players selected for Ireland with several others missing out due to injury and is an indication of the 'Grassroots to Green shirts' approach to developing the game throughout Connacht.

Ballinasloe RFC is rightly proud of the success of the two players who joined the Club as Under Eight's. Coached by Tom Finn, Derek Treacy and Gearóid Finneran, they were part of a remarkably successful team who went on to dominate Connacht in their age group up to U18s. They were also part of a golden generation of players in Garbally who completed a hat-trick of victories in the Connacht Schools Rugby Senior Cup, having previously experienced success at Junior Cup level.

Tom Finn said: "Oisín and Shane were part of a very driven team all the way up. They trained hard, killed each other in training, but became great friends and were great fun to coach. They were also blessed with the parents they had, who brought them to training and drove them to games all over Ireland and were hugely supportive of the Coaches and the Club."

Of course, their talents are not confined to rugby alone as both represented Galway at Minor level in 2018, with both playing in Croke Park Finals-with Shane Jennings, playing at full-back, winning an All-Ireland medal and man of the match award in Hurling, and Oisín playing Gaelic football and scoring a memorable goal in the semi-final. Both players are now part of the Connacht Academy joining two more former Ballinasloe RFC players Colm Reilly and Matthew Devine.



Shane Jennings and
Oisín McCormack

In a further indication of the quality of players graduating from the Club, the exciting young BRFC, Connacht, and Irish Senior International Women's player, Béibhinn Parsons, was recently named Connacht Women's Player of the Year, with Aoibheann Reilly and Méabh Deely also shining for the Irish Women's Sevens team.

Tom Waters, President of BRFC, stated: "The Club is enormously proud of the achievements of all

the players that came up through the ranks from Minis to Youths and who currently playing for Connacht and Ireland. It is a great testament to the quality of Coaches and management in Ballinasloe Rugby Club to help nurture that range of talent and make such a contribution to the development of the Women's and Men's game in Connacht and Ireland."

Tom added: "All Coaches are required to complete IRFU Child Welfare training, and every Coach has coaching qualifications, and this can be seen in the success and quality of players being produced by the Club."

Soon development plans for the Club include upgrading the pitch lights and the entrance to the grounds to improve safety, and the completion of an additional two dressing rooms and the construction of a storage shed.

Plans are underway for all teams to shortly resume training after Covid interruptions. The Senior team have returned to pre-season training in preparation for the new season kick-off in early August.

BRFC's monthly 50/50 Draw continues. You can contact Ballinasloerfcmmedia@gmail.com or any club official for any details.

 By Jack Treacy

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Nineteen-year-old Béibhinn Parsons was the recipient of yet another award, this time the flagship award, 2020/21 Connacht Rugby Awards in virtual event held last month.

Béibhinn secured her first Women's Player of the Year Award for her outstanding displays over the last year in Ireland's exquisite Six Nations performances.



Béibhinn Parsons
Vs Wales April 2021

The winger was nominated alongside her Connacht Teammates Nichola Fryday and Laura Feely, after all three played a big role in Connacht's success in the Women's Six Nations Campaign. During the campaign Béibhinn remarkably remained committed to her studies completing her leaving Cert prior to the six nations resumption.

"My confidence has grown and their confidence has grown in me. My age doesn't cross my mind as much anymore. I wear a green jersey the same as they do. It's not an issue anymore."

With Béibhinn still only 19 years of age she may well continue to dominate the field for many years to come.

LIAM COLLINS-MINOR PLAYER OF THE YEAR

By Jack Treacy

Cappataggle native and Garbally Student Liam Collins, son of Cathy and Brian Collins, has been named Electric Ireland's Minor Hurler Player of the Year, after his exhilarating performances in the semi-final and final of the minor All-Ireland, and repeated the actions of his older brother Niall by winning the All-Ireland at minor level cementing Galway's place as the first-ever county to win four in a row in that grade.

The young Cappataggle forward put on a man-of-the-match winning display for Galway hurlers with his performances, tallying two goals and seven points against Limerick and one goal and seven points against Kilkenny in the final to secure the win.

Liam added: "My parents and my family really kept me in the game, I am from a family of hurlers, and it has been ironed into me from a young age. To those who are thinking of giving up hurling, if you have a passion for it, stick to it. Put your mind to it and you will see it pay off."

A special mention must be given to fellow Cappataggle man Lewis Coughlan, son of Sean Coughlan and Yvonne Ward, who was also on the Panel for the Minor Squad.



Liam Collins Celebrates Goal
Against Limerick in Semi-Final



Liam Collins and Lewis Coughlan
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The first phase of Ballinasloe Tennis Club's new development above the running track in Brackernagh is finally due to open. The final additions on two courts are taking place now.

The Phase cost was over €80,000, €28,000 of which was funded by a Sports Capital Grant, memberships, extensive fundraising, as well as generous donations from councillor Dr Evelyn Parsons and Cllr Tim Broderick, Ballinasloe Credit Union and more local organisations and individuals. The club have still required a loan of over €20,000 to be required.

There has been a great deal of interest in tennis in recent months with many new members joining and new activities added. The latest to be introduced is Cardio Tennis, which has generated so much interest that two sessions have been held most nights and may need to be extended to three sessions.

As the club currently has only two courts at their new site, activities will be spread over the new site and their temporary home at Ard Scoil Mhuire. There are no scheduled activities seven days a week:

Monday and Friday - Open Club Nights 6.30pm-9pm

Tuesdays 6pm-8pm - Teen Sessions

Wednesday 6pm-8pm - Cardio Tennis Sessions

Saturday 11am-12 noon - Junior Sessions ages seven - eleven

Saturday noon - 1pm - Junior sessions ages 12-17

Sunday 10am-11am - Introductory session for inexperienced players

Sunday 11am -1pm - Open Club Sessions

Club members can also play anytime outside these sessions, subject to availability. Fresh players of all standards can attend a free introductory session or join the club for the extremely reasonable fees of only €30 for adults, €20 for Juniors and €50 for Families

The club is short of funds to complete this first phase and is currently fundraising. Their EuroMillions Lottery syndicate in August and there are still some tickets available for only €30 for four entries in every EuroMillions Plus draw for a full year! The club also ran Wimbledon Sweepstakes and continue to explore

The Two Newly Tarmacadmed Courts Nearly Ready for Action

other fundraising options and would be delighted to hear from any individuals or organisations that may be able to help in any way.

PRO Garry Zancanaro stated: "Sports Capital funding has been applied for the next phase of the development, a third court and artificial surfaces and lights for all three courts. Subject to this further grant, the next phase will be completed next year."

For further information see <https://www.facebook.com/bsloetennisclub> or email bsloetennis@gmail.com or call: Garry (085) 112 4197, Joe (087) 252 1424, Louise (087) 135 3751 or Sarah (087) 680 0598 (Junior queries).



Tennis Club launch of Lotto with Senator Aisling Dolan



Ballinasloe & District Tennis Club Committee Members with Cllr Evelyn Parsons Independent and Cllr Tim Broderick Independent who contributed joint monies from their Municipal Ministerial Allocation to help support development plans for New tennis courts and a Multipurpose Indoor Sports Facility at Brackernagh.

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Ballinasloe athletes were delighted to get the opportunity to complete in the Galway County outdoor Championships recently. The Club was well represented with many athletes competing in their first ever event.

Kate Kilkenny took home silver in the U12s 600m and Lisa Herity won bronze in the U12s 60m sprint.

The following athletes qualified for the Connaught Championships to be held in AIT this month;

Aoife Berrigan 60m Hurdles 600m and Shot Put.

Elle Donnelly Javelin.

Kate Kilkenny 600m.

Lisa Herity 60m and 60m hurdles



Under 12s: Elle Donnelly 60m Long Jump and Turbo Javelin, Kate Kilkenny 60m Sprint and silver in the 600m, Lisa Herity 60m Hurdles and bronze in the 60m Sprint, Carrie Stephenson 600m and the Long jump.



Laura Berrigan and Eirn Winters u 11's 500m and Long Jump



Laura Berrigan and Eirn Winters Under 11s 500m and Long Jump and Eoghan Downey under 11s Long Jump



Alice Moloney competed in the Under 9 60m and Long Jump



Caoimhe Carroll competed in U13 80m sprint and 60m hurdles



Esther Donnelly competed in Under 60m and Turbo Javelin



Under 13s: Aoife Berrigan 80m hurdles 600m and Shot Put, Carrie Stephenson 600m and the Long Jump, Lisa Herity 60m hurdles and bronze in the 60m sprint, Kate Kilkenny 60m sprint and silver in the 600m.

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Children from Clontuskert, Kiltormer and Lawrencetown recently took part in seven online competitions as part of the Community Games 2021.

Teresa Gately, Community Games Committee member commented: "A big congratulations to all the Area and County medal winners. There were over 4,000 entries in Co. Galway and the standards were extremely high."

The kids won six community games medals, a huge achievement. A medal presentation was recently held in Lawrencetown NS and Clontuskert NS to celebrate their success and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Teresa added: "We would like to thank both Clontuskert and Lawrencetown National Schools for their co-operation and we live in hope that we can run some more outdoor events such as athletics later in the year if government guidelines allow."

For those interested in getting involved, please message their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ClontuskertKiltormerLawrencetown> or email clonkila@gmail.com ClontuskertKiltormerLawrencetown or email clonkila@gmail.com

L-R: CKL Area Winners: U12 Art and 2nd in County Galway Fionn Kelly; U10 Art and 2nd in County Galway Oisín O'Fátharta; U10 Art/Handwriting and 3rd in U10 Art County Galway Kathryn Lynch



CKL Area Winner U16 Music and 3rd in County Galway Christine Gately



CKL Joint Area Winner U12 Art/Music Cara Ryder

CKL Joint Area Winner U12 Music and 2nd County Galway Ciara Gately

CKL Area Winner U8 Art Abby Ryder

CKL Joint Area Winner U12 Art and Joint 3rd U12 Art County Galway Emma Glynn

Presenting medal: Teresa Gately PRO CKL

By Jack Treacy

CKL Area Winner U16 Singing Méabh McCann



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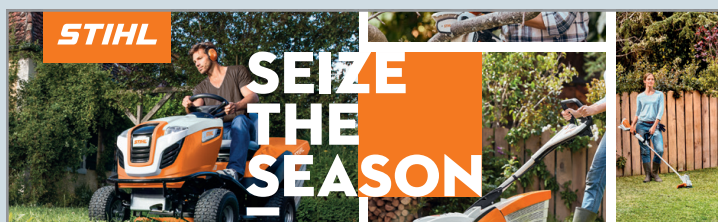
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The club's annual Summer Soccer Camp has once again proved to be a huge attraction to the youth of the community and is now fully booked out, running until Friday, August 6.

SuperValu Ballinasloe has also come on board and is supplying, free of charge, sufficient hand sanitiser to cater for all participants for the week. The camp was cancelled last year and in 2019 the Ballinasloe Summer Camp was the most successful camp in Ireland and this year's event looks set to be just as successful.

Former player Heather Payne recently joined up again with players at the Curragh Grounds for a training session and availed of the opportunity to present the club with one of her Irish International jerseys.

Coach Tony Coyne stated: "Ballinasloe Town are extremely proud of Heather's achievements on the International stage."

They recently initiated another positive community event organising a scrap metal collection throughout the town. Scrap metal was dropped to the Curragh Grounds while members also called on request to collect items and collected any scrap metal dumped in the area.

It proved also to be an exceptionally good fundraiser and the scrap metal collection raised a total of €4,514.14 for the club while also contributing in a positive way to the local environment. The money was used to buy defibrillator, and housing space for the equipment.

The club recently organised and hosted at the Curragh Grounds five weekly Friday soccer sessions for the local Brothers of Charity Services, organised by Chairperson Joby Kelly and personnel. The Brothers of Charity staff were on hand to assist with Ryan Burke for his valiant efforts each Friday.

Another successful weekly training session is the under-nines Soccer Academy whereby youth players receive top class coaching and an introduction to the sport. They recently concluded their season with a party evening, which was a fun-filled affair with refreshments/minerals/ice creams supplied by Town and bouncy castles/obstacle courses, provided free of charge by Hillside Inflatables. The academy kits were sponsored by Bluebird

Telco (Wayne Braithwaite), Gallagher Project Management (David Gallagher), Joe's Bar (Joby and Cáit Kelly) and the Shearwater Hotel.

The club committee is very hopeful for a positive outcome to their Sports Capital Grant application which is due to be announced soon.

Through the grant, there are intentions to upgrade the perimeter fencing/ball retention netting and pitch surfaces of their two AstroTurf pitches which are widely used by members and the public. The total cost of these works is €106,000 and they have a little over the required five per cent of this cost so are hoping to secure the maximum grant of €100,000. Contact has been made with local TDs, Senators and Councillors to make strong representations on behalf of the club to secure this grant.



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It has been a hectic two months for Ballinasloe GAA with all teams now back playing games, competitive for the U12 age group and upwards and Go Games for U11 and younger age groups.

Club players Odhrán Sheanon and Emma Mitchell, both of whom are playing U14 and Minor football respectively for Galway. Odhrán played with Galway North, and they beat Roscommon and Mayo selections with Odhrán contributing two goals and three points over the two games from his corner forward position.

Emma is a member of the Galway Minor Ladies panel and has had game time for their Connacht campaign against Roscommon and Sligo in half-back position, both games which Galway won. This is a great achievement for Emma as she is one of the younger members of the panel and will be eligible to play Minor football again next year.



Emma Mitchell,
Galway Minor Team

Mike Tully with
Odhrán Sheanon

PRO Kathryn Gibbons said: "This team will hopefully go on to play for a Connacht title later in the Summer. Ballinasloe GAA is very proud of the achievements of all its players on the pitch but to have these two young players represent their club at county level provides inspiration for their peers and proves that dedication and hard work pays off. These players represented their teams, their club and their families very well and have made all their connections very proud."

Recently, over 120 children attended the Football and Hurling Cúl Camps. For four hours each day, the children honed up their football and hurling skills under the tutelage of coaches, all from the local area. At the end of each week, the older age groups played out a league tournament which brought great excitement for the last couple of days. It was fantastic to see so many young people playing and enjoying the GAA's two main sports and so many volunteers giving of their time to make it happen.

Bingo continues online on Tuesday nights. The Bingo page on fbook has all the details, on how to buy books and how to log in. GAA Lotto is every Friday night and multiple draw tickets can be bought on the Ballinasloe GAA website. For more information get in contact at (087) 904 6140 or visit their website at <http://ballinasloe.gaa.ie>.



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Two goals in the dying minutes by the legendary “Inky” Flaherty gave Ballinasloe their first, and only, Galway senior hurling title seventy years ago. In a packed Duggan Park on Sunday 10th August 1951, the home side defeated Loughrea by 4-7 to 2-8 as Laois referee Willie Conroy kept a strict control on the final.



Inky Flaherty escapes the tackle of Loughrea's Bobby Gardiner

On the path to the decider Ballinasloe had defeated Tynagh (6-4 to 2-2) and Castlegar (4-9 to 2-10) while Loughrea ousted Corrib Sarsfields (3-8 to 2-7), Gort (9-3 to 1-2) and The Army (2-4 to 1-3).

Flaherty, who was a member of the victorious Connacht Railway Cup side of 1947, was trainer and captain of the Ballinasloe winning side who, at that time, wore red and white jerseys. Only five of the panel were not employees of St. Brigid's Hospital and the average age of the side was 24 with the oldest being Tommy Larkin (31) who played

minor hurling with Kilkenny.

Loughrea led by 2-4 to 1-4 at the interval but goals by Larkin and “Inky” gave the Sucksiders their first and only county senior title. “Staff” Ruane was rated Man of the Match while the herculean Kieran McNamee was the top scorer for Loughrea. The game was played in glorious sunshine following heavy showers in the curtain-raiser between Clarinbridge and Killimordaly. It was remembered as entertaining, the pace was furious but was very sporting.

Chairman of the Co. Board, Fr. Martin Walsh, in presenting the cup to “Inky” Flaherty, said that in his long experience of games he had not seen any played in such a clean and sportsmanlike manner. “Hard knocks were given and taken in a good sporting way and the hurling exhibition by both teams was one of the best I have seen in any county” said Fr. Walsh.

Martin Scott of Clonfad, who was sub goalie on the day for Ballinasloe recalls the game as being very historic, pointing out it was the town's one and only County senior hurling title. “It was a beautiful summer's day, there was a massive crowd but it was a great game, finally decided when Inky banged in two goals in the final minutes” explained the 91-year-old former psychiatric nurse.

BALLINASLOE CO. SENIOR HURLING CHAMPIONS 1951



Standing: Sean Kenny, Brendan Greaney, Paddy Manton, Jack Shaughnessy, Tom Moylan, Owen Kearns, Mansey Lynch, Dermot Minton, Pete Sweeney, Johnny Neill, Jack Gilchreest, John Joe Heagney.

Kneeling: Jack Creaven, Jimmy Creaven, Patsy Lynch, Martin Scott, M.J. “Inky” Flaherty (captain), Paddy Lally, Tom Boyle.

Sitting: Tommy Larkin, Henry Burke.



Dr Zita Fitzpatrick

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A LAST GOODBYE TO A KIND MOTHER

By Ken Kelly

An only son's poignant eulogy, relayed at the funeral of his 88-year-old mother from over 8,000 miles away, brought a few tears at Helen Lynch's mass in St. Michael's Church. The message was played to the limited congregation by David, who now lives in Asia and was unable to return for his mother's funeral because of the Covid restrictions.

Helen Lynch lived in St. Brendan's Terrace for most of her life. She lost her husband, Seamus, forty five years ago, leaving her to seek work and raise her son. In the recording relayed at the mass, the voice of David said she had a hard life and thanked her for his upbringing, which at times was not easy. "You always worried about me, while bringing me up and single-handedly keeping bread on the table.

"Your compassion for people didn't end at home, as I now reminisce you spent many evenings after supper visiting some of the elderly people in St. Brendan's. You always had time for the older generation, particularly those living alone. You never looked for anything in return, a pat on the back or even a thank you. It was just what you did. Your reputation as a carer of the elderly got you noticed by the good Sisters of the Mercy Convent, where you spent your happiest years working, taking care of the older sisters."

Thanking many people for making the relay of his message possible, David concluded, in a trembling voice, by saying "Sorry Mum, sorry for not being there. Sorry I didn't call you more often. Sorry for not telling you that I loved you. You were always there for me. I will



miss you. I regret not telling you these things while you were still with us."

The late Helen Lynch was a member of St. Michael's Folk Choir for over thirty years and her colleagues formed a guard of honour, singing "Nearer My God to Thee" as her cortege made its final journey to Creagh Cemetery. On the previous evening, Helen's remains were brought from the funeral parlour to her beloved St. Brendan's for the last time where residents turned out to recite a decade of the Rosary prior to her transfer to St. Michael's Church.

Helen Lynch is survived by her only son, David, his wife Meenoy, grandson Martin Seamus as well and her extended family, relatives, neighbours and friends.

Kathleen 'Kate' Shaughnessy, nee Larkin, was born on the 24th March 1932, the year of the Eucharistic Congress, to John Larkin and Annie Reynolds in Kilnahown, Aughrim, Ballinasloe. She was the youngest of five: three sisters, Mary Scott, Kiltormer, Emily Moylan, Ballinasloe, Bridget Larkin, Ballinasloe and one brother, Laurence Larkin, Kilnahown, Aughrim. Kathleen was the last member of her family to die.

She grew up in pre/post war rural East Galway on a farm. She recalled tales of the army helping with the harvest in 1944. She spoke with pride of her father, John, who organised hurling tournaments in the front field of their home. She told stories of dancing to traditional and jazz music in Aughrim Hall and other local dance halls. Her house was a card playing house where neighbouring card players were very welcome. She had many happy days of walking to school across the field to Aughrim and later on cycling into Ballinasloe, enjoying all the fun and companionship of her fellow students. She transitioned from a career in retail in Keary's of Aughrim to marrying the love of her life, Owen Shaughnessy, Oatfield in 1955. They moved to a new house in Garbally Demesne. They had a happy and eventful marriage for nine and a half years.

Tragedy struck in 1964 when Owen became ill and died the following year. She was widowed at the age of 33 with five children from the age of 13 months to 8 years old, namely Tomas, Mary, Anne, Emily and Breeda. Her faith in God and her strong loving personality enabled her to overcome her grief and she succeeded in creating a happy, caring and warm home for her five children. She delighted in the going ons and meanderings of her favourite five. She had an open house and open mind to all their friends. Kathleen loved her extended family, her neighbours and her many friends. She had genuine welcome for everyone who called to her door and nobody left her house hungry. She was a marvellous cook and enthusiastic and interested in new culinary trends making her the perfect host.

As her five birds flew the nest of Ballinasloe, Kathleen took on the role of caring daily for her four grandchildren in Ballinasloe, Joanne, Maria, Adrian and Anniemay. She looked forward to visits from all her other grandchildren and visited them often in their homes, Eva in Skerries, Kiaran, Harry and Maryanne in Kent, England and Owen, Niall and Catherine in New Jersey, USA.



Kathleen embraced herself into the community of Ballinasloe. She was a member of the Legion of Mary for several decades and continued to be auxiliary member up to her death. Up to Covid19 restrictions, Kathleen spent time in prayer in St Michael's Church on Wednesday afternoons during Adoration. She played Progressive 25 in the 1980's in the Rugby Club and continued to play cards organised by the GAA and up until the Covid19 restrictions, she played weekly in the Golf Club. She was always ready to go to a card game or host a card game in her home. She loved to play a

'Nine'. An astute player, she had a marvellous gift of presence and it manifested itself in making everyone she met feel important. Her cheerful disposition endeared herself to all.

Sadly, Kathleen got sick earlier this year. She passed away on the 4th May, 2021, in her own home, surrounded by her five children, her grandchildren and great grandchildren, sons-in-law and daughter-in-law.

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Tom Potter was born in Menlough, Co. Galway and studied agriculture in Warrenstown, Co. Meath. After finishing college, Tom went to work on a farm in Dunlavin, Co. Wicklow where he made some life-long friendships and won a county intermediate football medal with the Garden County club. Tom returned to Ballinasloe in 1961 where he succeeded the late Paddy Feeney as farm manager in St. Brigid's Hospital in Ballinasloe. He held that post right up to his retirement in 1997.

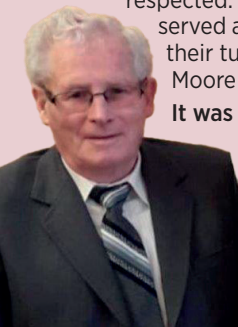
The parish of Moore and Clonfad lost one of its most popular community activists in his passing, just a year after the loss of his beloved wife, Kathleen, both of whom were highly respected. Tom was a founding member of Moore Community Council, in 1974 and served as its first chairman. The gratitude from the Moore Community was evident by their turnout at his funeral, along with the Guard of Honour provided by the present Moore Community Council.

It was while attending a staff dance in St. Brigid's Hospital that Tom and Kathleen first met. They married, purchased a house and settled in Clonfad. In his earlier days, Tom played football and hurling with Menlough and Skehana before joining up with St. Grellan's senior footballers in 1961 where he excelled for many years.

Tom Potter was instrumental in the setting up of the Credit Union in Ballinasloe and served as chairman of the Board of Directors in the mid 80's. He was a great supporter of the October Show Days in the 70's and 80's.

A gifted craftsman, he loved to carve from bog oak with many of his works now in the homes of friends, both in Ireland and overseas. His love of nature endeared him to a keen interest in gardening, daily walks in Correen Wood and watching TV documentaries on these. Both he and his late wife loved social dancing nights in many venues throughout East Galway and South Roscommon where they were extremely popular guests.

The late Tom Potter is survived by his son Pat and daughter-in-law Miriam (Cleaghmore), daughter Mary Glynn and son-in-law Tim (Fohenagh), grandchildren Daniel, Craig, Adam, Graham and Eve; brothers Pat, Eamon and Liam, uncle Mick (Chicago) and aunt Una (Achill) as well as many other relatives and a wide circle of friends.



NOTED JOURNALIST STARTED IN BALLINASLOE

Veteran journalist Des Mullan, who passed away at his home in Howth, Dublin, started his career as Ballinasloe correspondent for the "Midland Tribune" in Birr over sixty years ago. Although born in Skibbereen, Co. Cork, Des grew up in Ballinasloe where his father was stationed as a Garda sergeant in the Galway town.

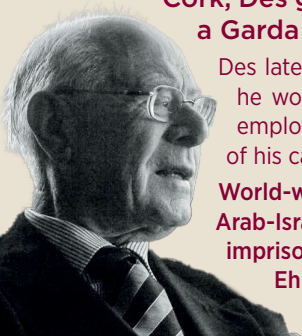
Des later joined the staff of the Offaly paper before moving to Dublin where he worked for most of the national papers. For over five decades he was employed by the "Irish Independent" and "Evening Herald" and at the height of his career he was one of the country's best-known newspaper writers.

World-wide, he covered the Second Vatican Council 1962-65, the Six Day Arab-Israeli War in 1967, the Biafran Famile in Nigeria in 1968, the wrongful imprisonment of Fr. Niall O'Brien in the Phillipines in 1983/84 and the Ethiopian Famine in 1984. He was a former Deputy Editor of the "Evening Herald" before going on to be Political Correspondent with the

paper up to his retirement in 1996.

In his teens, Des suffered from tuberculosis and was hospitalised for three years. He campaigned successfully for new treatments, which helped him and many others overcome the disease.

Des Mullan, who was in his 90th year, is predeceased by his wife Angela and brother Frank. He is survived by three sons, three daughters, brother Pat, sister Yvonne and Margaret, and a very large extended family. The funeral took place in Howth.



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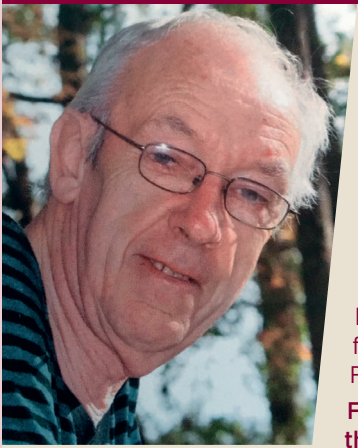
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Ballinasloe lost one of its most respected characters in the person of Eddie Moran, St. Michael's Place. The witty, generous and impish town native was one of its greatest community activists, caring for his neighbours, his friends and colleagues with compassion, dedication and understanding.

Born in Tea (Tay) Lane in 1943, the youngest in the family, Eddie later moved to St. Michael's Place where his concern for his fellow neighbours was paramount to his daily chores. In his early years he worked as a butcher with his friend, Noel Finnerty, before following in his late brother's Paddy's footsteps in joining the local Fire Brigade.

For over thirty years, Eddie was a dedicated member and amused the crew with his witty anecdotes and tales of locals and their escapades. It was fitting that his former colleagues should lead his mortal remains through the streets of the town as they made their way to Creagh Cemetery following the funeral mass in St. Michael's Church.

Eddie Moran was a light-hearted entertainer. He loved to laugh, play jokes and amuse.

As a member of the Social Club he was regarded as a "hurler" billiard player, often depending on Lady Luck as he scanned the six pockets to see a ball drop. When things weren't going well at the cards he produced his lucky omen-a rabbit's paw, which he always carried in his top pocket-hoping this would bring him good fortune.

He liked to socialise with his friends where he again revelled in his devilment, throwing beer mats in all directions, at friend and foe alike, to arouse the banter. But nobody took exception because that was Eddie, the man that everybody liked. He was highly popular.



Following his retirement from the Fire Brigade, Eddie took up the role of Sacristan in St. Michael's. Again he was a role model, opening and closing the Church, tending to the gardens, assisting in the liturgy and patiently waiting for worshippers to finish their visits before locking up.



Spending many a Christmas with his relations in England, Eddie also found time to travel to exotic parts of the world with them including Australia, South Africa, Florida and New York, to name a few. He had an infectious giggle, loved a good laugh and a joke, always had a smile and enjoyed music. He was loved, respected and admired by all ages.

"Over twenty five years ago Eddie Moran was asked if he might become involved in helping out around St Michael's Church. He readily agreed and in the intervening time gave generously and gladly of his time and energy. A most obliging and faithful man he routinely mowed the grass, assisted with the collecting and counting of monies, closed the Church each evening and was available and willing to assist in whatever task needed to be completed.

He went about with a smile on his face and a song in his heart and became friends with many people through his involvement in the life of the faith community. An engaging man Eddie has left many happy memories for the people who knew him. We are most grateful to him for his kindness and for his consistent support over such a length of time. Rest in peace." added Rev. John Garvey

The late Eddie Moran is predeceased by his brothers Paddy, Joe (Monty) and Danny and sister-in-law Mary. He will be sadly missed by his nephews, niece and other relatives as well as lifetime neighbours, the Finnerty, Kenny and Darcy families.

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Jack Keogh of Deerpark, Ballinasloe is a name synonymous with the War of Independence and Civil War eras in Ballinasloe and East Galway. He garnered a sort of escape artist reputation, evading capture for long periods and escaping from imprisonment, most notably when he was rescued from the Central Lunatic Asylum in Dundrum in May 1926.

My hunt for Jack Keogh began with the release of the 1911 census records online. I found my grandmother, Bridget Keogh, aged just 2, living with her family in Ballinasloe in 1911, and it wasn't long before I was reading various articles about her brother Jack, my grand-uncle.

There are a lot of stories about Jack's exploits and his pension file, released in May by the Military Archives, probably confirmed his reputation for good or for bad to those who knew of his exploits.

But there are other records. The National Archives hold Jack's Maryborough (now Portlaoise) prison records, and the police files of his escape from Dundrum, for example.

It was of interest to us as a family of avid readers to find that Jack had eight books among his belongings when he entered Maryborough. There is a record showing he requested a book about Owen Roe O'Neill, *The Call of The Wild* by Jack London, and a pamphlet on the life of Archbishop Daniel Mannix of Melbourne. He was declared insane during a punishment of six months solitary confinement which was a consequence of a row over a library book.

According to the police files in the National Archives, Jack's escape was instigated by Maud Gonne MacBride, planned by Frank Kerlin, IRA Director of Intelligence and carried out under the leadership of George Gilmore, who also got 19 men out of Mountjoy.

On 12 May 1926 a young woman visited Clery's department store on O'Connell St, Dublin and ordered rugs for delivery to a house. The next day the delivery

was hijacked and the van detoured to the Lunatic Asylum in Dundrum with a delivery for the head of the asylum. Once inside the security gate, the staff were held up. Some minutes later the van departed with Jack and another inmate.

He absconded to America via Canada. A letter from Jack to his father was found during a raid on the Keogh house after his escape. Jack describes meeting people in Boston and New York and generally having "a swank time". He settled in Chicago where he married Ellen Curley from Skehana. They had two children but was deported soon after the birth of his youngest.

Not long after his return he was in trouble again. He was sentenced to two years by a military tribunal for shooting into the house of a man over what appears to have been a turf-cutting rights dispute. The victim was an ex-Dublin Metropolitan Police sergeant named Michael Killeen.

Another little known but probably

Some of Jack Keogh's IRA exploits

Source: Keogh's pension file, Irish Military Archives.

1917

- Joined Irish Volunteers (later IRA)

1920

- Raided Customs and Excise office, Ballinasloe
- Fired on Dragoon Guards in Garbally
- Burned Carrowreagh RIC barracks, Taughmaconnell
- Cut woman's hair for 'keeping company' with crown forces
- 6 months' imprisonment for 'seditious literature'

1921

- Raided mail cars
- Burned tennis court pavilion, Mount Pleasant Ave

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With all the focus of Government sustainable energy policy on retro fitting homes and getting home owners to re-examine their BER number and quality of insulation, three canny locals with varied and distinguished careers in construction behind them have seized the initiative.

It is set up by three local men, Jonathan Dunne, Thomas Egan and Henry Lloyd. Thomas hails from Garbally Drive, where he had grown up alongside his sister Dolores, Yvonne and parents Betty and Paddy Egan. His genial father, Paddy, was well known town wide working for Guinness

delivering barrels to all the town's local public houses. Thomas attended St. Michael's Vocational School before a career in the building trade for over 25 years. He has plied his trade with Ballinasloe Stone, bricklaying, working with Niall Poland, and also five years of experience in modern wall insulation.

Henry Lloyd is a St. Brendan's Terrace native, son of Maura and Paul Lloyd. He is married to Vanessa Hickey, living in Aughrim with their five children. Henry has amassed over 20 years of experience as a plasterer working with Padraic Campbell Construction throughout most of his career. A life-long friend to Thomas, Henry has fully backed the plan to pursue a new Home insulation business.

Jonathan is a Tipp man, moved to the town many years ago. He is married to Yvonne, Thomas's sister. He is a member of the Ballinasloe Golf Club for over 10 years. Johnathan has spent the last seven years in M6 motors as a mechanic and finished up there to join; becoming the third leg of the new business venture.

EDL ECO Insulations take great pride in their work and hope to establish a strong customer base and positive professional relationship with their clients. Jonathan Dunne stated: "The business is up and running two months now and we are very busy. We have completed work to the highest standard in Tuam, Loughrea and Attymon. We are very happy with the progress of the business so far in such a very short time. We have taken on one employee and are looking to recruit more in the next few weeks."

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Photograph of Jack Keogh (photo kindly provided by Phil Bruce)

significant detail found in the archives of 1935 incident is that in the days before the shooting a man from the Land Commission was looking for Jack to discuss his application for a farm. His conviction probably ensured he didn't get that farm.

Other members of the Keogh family were active in the conflict at the time. Jack's younger brother James joined the IRA soon after Jack. He died in aged 18 – the victim of a shooting at an incident related to house possession near Loughrea.

Jack's father (also Jack) was invalided when he lost his hand at some point prior to Jim's death in May 1922. Jack Sr was interned at 'Tintown' in the Curragh Camp for almost two years, from August 1922 until May

1924. Drawings of Jack Sr have appeared in prisoner autograph books, including one on display

in Kilmainham Gaol. (One of Ballinasloe's Fianna Fáil Cumainn was named after James Keogh, and Jack Sr was secretary of it in 1929).

Jack's sister Kathleen was also interned for two weeks in April 1923, possibly in Athlone. The Keogh household was raided many times while Jack was on the run. The house was smashed up, with the occupants and any animals found subjected to violence. The youngest of the Keogh children, Frances, was moved to live with a neighbour for her own safety, while her mother Bridget was in hospital. She never moved back into the family home.

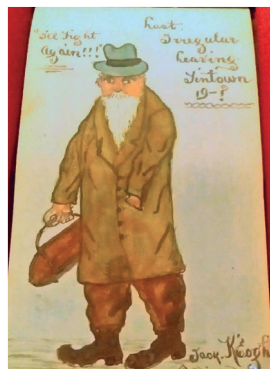
Jack came to an ignominious end. He was found dead in the field beside the Technical School in May 1945. The official verdict at the inquest was that he died of accidental poisoning, having drank bird poison while drunk rather than

the whiskey he was also carrying at the time.

I occasionally wonder about Jack's mindset at that point. It looks like he was struggling with alcohol. His family were left behind in Chicago. No doubt local resentments lingered, as much as he might have been lauded by some. If there were rewards to be gained from sacrifices made for his country, they seemed to

have passed him by. His brother dead, his family beaten, and he had lost his job as caretaker of the waterworks in the Mental Hospital.

I wonder if in among his books was some Yeats, and did Jack, like many before him and since, ask, "was it for this?"



Sketch of Jack Keogh Sr, Tintown camp, July 1923 (on display in Kilmainham Goal, photo courtesy of Leslie Sammon).

**Paul Murphy is from Enniskerry, Co Wicklow, and lives in Bray.*

1922

- Raided Woodlawn RIC barracks
- Burned Masonic Hall, Main St
- Bombed National (Pro-treaty) forces on Main St, killing 1
- Destroyed Eyrecourt Barracks
- Arrested and imprisoned in Athlone

1923

- Escaped and went on the run
- Burned Ballinasloe Railway Station, ambushed railroad patrol
- Burned house of agriculture minister
- Burned Ahascragh, Lawrencetown and Killimor Civic Guard barracks
- Raided Ballinasloe post office
- Arrested

1924

- Found guilty and sentenced to 30 years
- Entered Maryborough jail

1926

- Declared insane and moved to Dundrum Asylum
- Escaped

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To survive personally or in business for a hundred years is no mean achievement. Centenaries, however, are not just occasions for self-congratulation. They prompt us to reflect on the past and how it has moulded us into what we have become. This is particularly evident in the current spate of national centenary commemorations which has given impetus to much scholarly work on the events leading up to the foundation of the state and the turbulent years that followed.

We can only speculate on the specific reasons that induced the directors of the Munster and Leinster Bank to establish a branch at what is now Topman Barbers in Society Street at the foot of Church Hill in 1919. Obviously they calculated that the venture would prove successful, a judgement call that time has validated by the fact that on a November morning in 2019 the contemporary staff and a selection of customers were gathered together at Finnegan's Corner to celebrate a century of profitable trading both in Society Street and in the purpose-built premises to which the bank transferred its services in 1928. Subsequently the bank emerged in a new incarnation as Allied Irish Banks in 1966 following amalgamation with the Provincial Bank of Ireland and the Royal Bank of Ireland.

Although Ballinasloe was the major transport centre for the province of Connacht in the 18th and early 19th centuries, as well as the westernmost terminus of the Grand Canal since 1828, there were no permanent banking facilities in the town before 1835. In that year both the Bank of Ireland and the National Bank of Ireland set up branches here. Prior to that the Galway City banks operated temporary offices on fair days. This was an arrangement that apparently continued to some extent well into the last century. According to Michael McCullagh, the Hibernian Bank had a pop-up branch at his mother's Society Street home up to the 1930s. The Bank of Ireland conducted its business from a succession of premises in Main Street before finding its present home in the former townhouse of the Earl of Clancarty in 1870, while the National Bank was located in what is now Gibbons's public house. In the 1840s it moved to a building opposite the Emerald Bar.

Known as "The Irish House" because of its policy of stocking only clothing of Irish manufacture, Finnegan's drapery store occupied a site at the junction of Dunlo Street and Society Street. I can lay claim to a tenuous connection with the business inasmuch as an aunt of mine had a short-lived career as a trainee assistant in its millinery department. She proved too honest to be an effective saleswoman since she refused to assure prospective lady customers that



the hats they selected suited them when she sincerely believed they didn't. Finnegan's ceased trading in the 1920s and the premises were demolished to make way for the present building. Nonetheless, the name Finnegan's Corner survived and still has a place in the colloquial vocabulary of some of the town's older residents. The Corner, specifically the Dunlo Street side, had long been the favoured rendezvous of the unemployed and unemployable, who continued to frequent it under its new owners. Schoolmasters were wont to predict a grim future "propping up the wall

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at Finnegan's Corner" for pupils whose application to their studies left much to be desired. However, not everyone there was a corner boy: it was also a meeting place for disabled war veterans who spent their days reminiscing and watching the world go by. In the words of Oliver Goldsmith, many an old soldier *"Wept o'er his wounds and tales of sorrow done, / Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won."*

In the recently-identified aerial photograph of the town dating from 1955 two solitary figures of one-legged men on crutches can be picked out. They are standing in front of a long dark line on the stonework of the bank that had been polished over the years by innumerable trouser-seats. Time inevitably took its toll of old soldiers such

as these, and even the corner boys have deserted the spot since the erection of kerb-side railings some while back.

Fr. John Heenan was probably the only Ballinasloe-born priest to later serve as a member of the parochial clergy in his native town. Following a brilliant academic career, in the 1890s he was appointed President of St. Michael's Seminary, a boys' secondary school in Bridge Street and a forerunner of Garbally College. However, a difference with Bishop Healy over his avowed political views resulted in his demotion as curate to a series of rural parishes, leading ultimately to his return to Ballinasloe in 1915 but without a restoration of status. Noted for his ready wit and scatological sense of humour, his health suffered a decline as rheumatoid arthritis gradually impaired the use of his limbs.

Local author Eugene Watters referred to him in an Irish-language newspaper article from 1975 entitled "Béaloideas na Galltachta". I make bold to translate the relevant passage: "The See of Clonfert became vacant in 1923 when the incumbent, Bishop O'Doherty, was moved to Galway. Everyone was speculating – who would be the next bishop? One evening a group of men, Willie Rourke the baker, John Smith of the shoe shop, and Nicholas O'Carroll the editor of the 'Democrat', were chatting at Finnegan's Corner when who should come hobbling down the street towards them,

bent over his stick, but Fr. John!

"We were just talking, Father," said Smith, winking at his companions, 'about the new bishop. And do you know what I said? Damn it, I said, I wouldn't be a bit surprised if the Pope made Father John a bishop!"

"John cast a rheumy eye on the company over the arthritic hand clutching the shawl beneath his chin. 'Smith', said he, 'Rourke, O'Carroll, listen to me. If it should ever happen that the Holy Father in his wisdom were to elevate your humble servant to the bishopric of Clonfert, Amen, Amen, I say unto you, it's not my episcopal ring I'd present to ye fellas to kiss!"



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Galway and Roscommon
Education and Training Board

SKILLS FOR WORK Education for working and living

WHAT IS THE SKILLS FOR WORK PROGRAMME?

Skills for Work is part of the Government's National Skills Strategy. This strategy recognises that the nature of the workplace is constantly changing; work is becoming less routine with a requirement for a workforce that is flexible, continuously learning and capable of personal growth.

Skills for Work is working with the ETB Network nationally to deliver training courses for **part time/full time employees**.

Examples of Courses Available:

- Basic & Intermediate Computers
- Internet and Email
- Improve your Reading/Writing/Spelling
- iPads and Smartphones
- Online Shopping
- Online Banking and Paying Bills
- Video Calling using Zoom and MS Teams
- CV Preparation
- Spreadsheets
- Powerpoint Presentations
- Workplace English
- Workplace Maths
- Public area Cleaning
- IT for Farmers

**All courses are FULLY FUNDED. Contact Anne-Maria Egan, Skills for Work Coordinator
Tel: 086 0755269 Email: Annemaria.egan@gretb.ie**

ONLINE COURSE PAYROLL – MANUAL AND COMPUTERISED

FUNDED TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES THROUGH THE SKILLS TO ADVANCE INITIATIVE

Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETb) are delighted to bring you this comprehensive Pitman Training Payroll course, which provides a thorough introduction to Payroll Principles in the Manual Section and in the Computerised Section you create real life payroll scenarios using Sage Micropay software, in addition to learning about PAYE Modernisation. This course is fully funded under the Skills to Advance Initiative for those in employment.

Topics covered include:

Payroll Roles and Responsibilities, Calculating Tax, Methods of Taxation, Understanding PRSI, Protecting Confidential Data, Revenue Requests, Processing New Starters, Pension Contributions Reporting.

- Evening Online Learning two evenings per week
- eTutor Support
- Course duration 8 weeks, commencing 30th August
- Pitman Training Certification

It is a requirement that you will have previously completed a Level 4 Certification and will have good computer skills with appropriate internet coverage.

Contact GRETb Skills to Advance Coordinator Amanda.percy@gretb.ie or call 091 706276

Provision co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union.



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Ahascragh native Padraig Lyons officially had his first book 'Rediscovering Ballinasloe & its Surrounds' launched by Denis Naughton TD at the Killconnel Abbey in glorious late July sunshine.

Padraig explained to a social distanced audience the genesis of the book after meeting two Americans in the Shearwater Hotel - looking for a guide that could tell them about the town and its popular sites and heritage. However, Padraig found that no such book existed and sought to fix that.

Notwithstanding the work of distinguished writers on the annals of Ballinasloe like Rev. P Egan, Tadhg Mc Loughlin and Declan Kelly - Padraig sought to create a book that was simple, light weight for car, back pack or bike and accessible to all.

"Most people will not read a historic book they might if they are in university or studying for a degree or whatever but most people like pictures and a short story so that was the first concept I had."

The Book is an ideal dip, in dip out of meander through some of the key sites, buildings and locations of heritage and historical note of town and the necklace of wonderfully curious villages and abbeys.

Local Soprano Rachel Goode and poet and cousin Michael Glynn added to the evening's gaiety.

In formerly launching the Book Denis Naughton T.D. thanked the author most sincerely; "in getting the support of BACD and the Credit Union to produce it - I think this will be a tribute not just to Padraig, but to the community as a whole." Stated Denis.

Denis expanded a little about the Bearra Breffni Way and the Shannon as being the twin pillars of the Hidden Heartland's strategy and how South Roscommon and East Galway with Aughrim Battlefield and new cycle way connecting the two becoming hugely important over the coming years and how books like this would assist visitors on new discoveries.

"I got some funding from BACD which was invaluable for the design of the and for Kelly's printers who have done a magnificent job on it and the local Credit Union which were fantastic. I'd also like to thank the editors because



Author Padraig Lyons with his special Aunt Sr. Helen Mitchell FMDM Portiuncula and guests at launch.

we had many Paula Kennedy for example, and Aoife McCaig one of my grind students, Padraig O Ceithernaigh and I want to dedicate this book to my mom and dad, Mick and Tess Lyons, and also Uncle Pat Mitchell who taught me all about photographs" states Padraig.

Rachel fittingly sang the prayer of St. Francis to conclude the evening which tied in the Abbey dedicated to him and to Padraig's eldest Aunt Sr. Helen Mitchel of FDM Order Portciuncula who was present.

'Rediscovering Ballinasloe & its Surrounds' is available in Salmons Store now for €5.99.

The first €500 of proceeds are being donated to SUAS in association with the Brothers of Charity.

LIST OF DEATHS IN PARISH

Helen Lynch, St Brendan's Terrace
died on 21st May 2021.

Rebecca Lynch, St Grellan's Terrace
died on 28th May 2021.

Eddie Moran, St Michael's Place died
on 16th June 2021.

Elizabeth (Betty) McGuinness, Dunlo
Street died on 14th July 2021.

Ann O'Connor, St. Brendan's Terrace
died on 16th July 2021.

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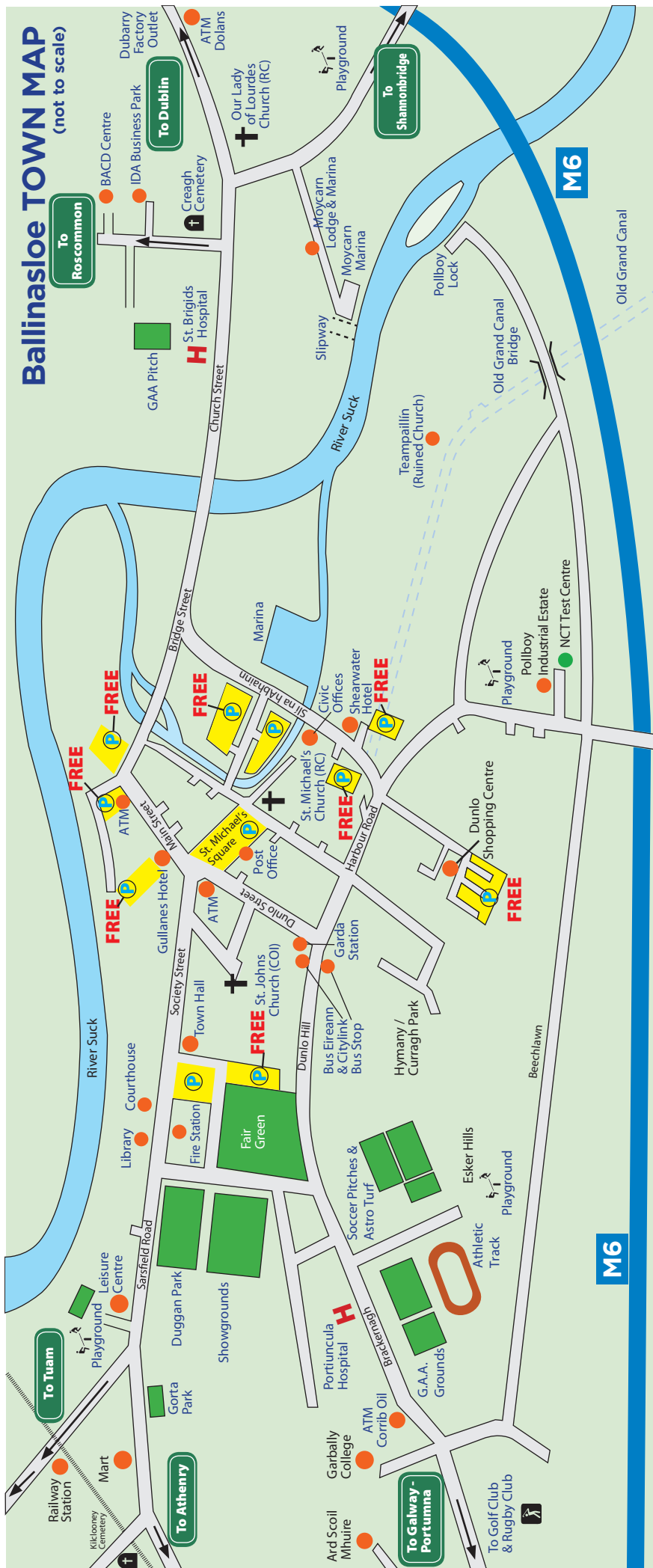


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Ballinasloe TOWN MAP

(not to scale)



Ballinasloe History Walk

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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