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FREE

BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 12 Issue 2: June '22 - July '22



Photo by Robert Riddell

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REAMHRA

Welcome to Volume 12 issue 2

Welcome to what feels like a normal summer edition – at last! Barry Lally, our eminent local History Scholar, pens instalment two of our community flash back to 100 years ago and I had the pleasure of reading cover to cover Eoghan O Turaisc's childhood memoir of the same period in the "I am Lewey".

Barry's historical incisive presentation contrasts greatly with the recollections from a middle aged man of a six year old's memory of growing up in our island, community, and town.

Barry factual analysis is stark, cold and bare whereas Eoghan's reminisces convey vividly the cruel poverty of the times and tumult brought about by the First World War, the War of Independence and subsequently the Civil War in succession for young parents struggling with a clatter of children and infrequent income.

I did not review the Book – far greater than I in the literary world have, but I found myself steeped in the lore of my Grandparents generation who were born in the first years of this new State and recalled in their latter years to us pups what they understood to be going on.

Very often through a prism of political opportunity our forebearers interpreted the events that saw them as toddlers or young children witness, in a certain tribal way.

I laughed and smiled at Lewey's recollections of so much that was familiar with growing up and oddly could recollect some of the characters mentioned. All the complexity of a child being raised where violence is usual, poverty is endemic and the absolute might of the Roman Catholic Church was shining in its post McHale legacy, is narrated convincingly.

I read the memoir as the National Maternity Hospital row was

moving from a simmer to a fast boil and could not but be amazed at the view of the local Mercy Nuns from Lewey's toddler tint with their doling out of the pea soup and horrid injustices to the orphans in their care. Contrasting with the views of another giant of a man who gave us a summary of his life and times in the first summer COVID edition Joe Kelly Snr. Joe recalled the nuns of Society Street (like many of his generation) with fondness – the big breakfast for first Communion and the huge fry up served to the Altar boys after 6.00am mass.

Therein lies the crux of the tale – everyone has their views of Nuns tainted with their own experiences and then the current prevailing media group think. No one – apparently has an issue with the leases of the facilities that Sr. Consilio, or Sr. Stanislaus have as they do their humanitarian work at the edges and margins of society.

Doubtless many evil and frustrated people found themselves in religious orders and committed uncaring and criminal acts in the Magdalen's and the Mother and Baby homes. But to a family in the early years of this state with an average brood of 10 – sending the second son to the seminary and a daughter to the nuns had its economical as well as spiritual benefits.

Not every Irish women who professed wished to do evil, some did, others covered up that evil but in examining their role on the island since the time of St. Brigid their legacy and efforts perhaps need to be seen from a more balanced and long distance perspective.

Le Gach De Ghui,
COLM CROFFY,
Editor.



The events calendar is beginning to come to life as most businesses are back open fulltime once again. At the same time we cannot assume full normality will persist as the more recent widespread lockdowns in China tell us.

The bigger issues on our horizon appear to be around shortages of staff in Businesses with soaring cost of living for consumers.

From a BACD perspective we expect to commence refurbishment of the old Bank Chambers on Society Street during the Summer which will add to the range of office space available from the Company.

We are also expecting some very positive developments on the IDA site in Parkmore where we secured full planning permission for an Advance Technology Unit a few years ago.

Clubs and Organisations are now a hive of activity once more seven days a week and throw in Communions, Confirmations and end of year school

parties and a new vibrancy is coming back into our lives thankfully. We had the Dinny Delaney Festival May Bank holiday weekend, a successful County Fleadh also in the same month and will be welcoming in some of the Boating fraternity on June Bank Holiday weekend to the Marina along with a range of other events in the next few months. This gives us an opportunity to showcase our Town and what it has to offer. You can be a part of that by being fully aware of what is happening, where it is happening, and who is making it happen. You also can help by being aware of the whole range of products and services that are available locally and personally giving first priority to availing of same.

Stay safe and enjoy the Summer ahead.
SEAMUS DUFFY,
Chairman Ballinasloe Area Community
Development Limited.



WHAT'S INSIDE

LOCAL NEWS

- 4 Townspark Inner Relief Road
- 5 New Footpaths Delivery
- 5 Sheridan To Swim The Shannon
- 6 Students' Mental Health
- 7 Conradh na Gaeilge Business Awards
- 7 LIFE Advertising Rates Rise After 10 Years

BUSINESS

- 8 Mr. Price to Open in Old Crazy Prices Store
- 9 Corrib Oil Continues to Wow the Motorist
- 10 Ballinasloe Says No Campaign
- 11 Country Market's New Home
- 12 New Tourism Network Launched
- 14 Old Working Boats Return to Town
- 15 New Administration Manager
- 16 Groups Successful with Grants

COMMUNITY

- 16 Groups Successful with Grants
- 18 Tidy Town's Highest Marks Ever
- 19 Hospital Watch
- 21 High Honour for Ballinasloe Priest
- 22 River Suck IWAI Host Neighbours
- 23 ME/Fibromyalgia Support Group
- 24 Livestock Music Festival
- 25 Ahascragh/Fohenagh Toughest Townland

- 27 Schools Rule
- 30 Out And About
- 34 EGM Cancer Support

CULTURE

- 35 BCU New Current Accounts
- 36 Town Band Summer Season Underway
- 38 Moore Play Raises €5,850 For Ukrainians
- 41 Town Hall Summer Focal Concert
- 42 Ó Tuaisc's Civil War Child Memoir
- 43 Harbour Road Girl Best Youth Director

SPORT

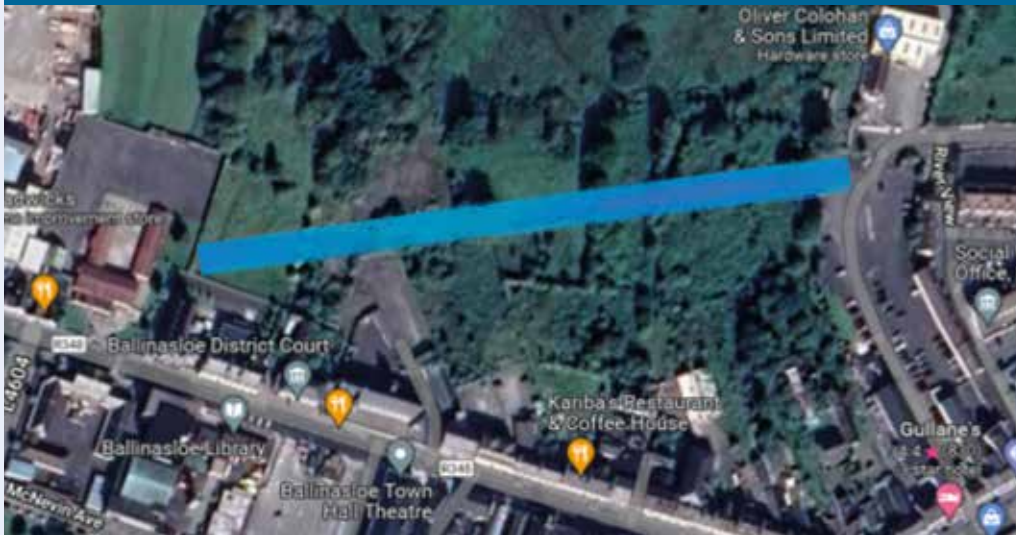
- 44 Liverpool Exchange Celebrates 25 Years
- 45 Tennis Busy Summer On and Off Court
- 46 GAA Update
- 47 Athletics Update
- 48 Golf Club Scoops Hidden Gem Accolade
- 51 Ballinasloe Showgrounds Busy Summer
- 52 Rugby Club Aspiring Stars

HERITAGE

- 54 Our Bloomsday
- 56 Sectarian Strife
- 58 The Delayed All-Ireland Final
- 59 Obituaries
- 61 Area Events Calendar
- 62 Ballinasloe History Walk

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An approx. graphic impression of the new relief road zone.



A motion having the Ballinasloe Townparks inner relief road inserted as specific project under named road projects, was carried recently and will also be in the County Development Plan which is a higher order plan than the Ballinasloe Local Area Plan.

The council are now enabled to support the delivery of the Inner Relief Road and to explore appropriate land uses adjacent to the road and River Suck harnessing the potential for recreation and related activities in association with the River.

The motion that was put forward by Cllr. Evelyn Parsons can now be progressed to form the basis to seek planning and a co-funding applications as it's listed as a road project in the CDP for the first time ever.

Cllr Evelyn Parsons stated: "It was an issue the Ballinasloe townspeople and business community repeatedly brought up with me. They wanted to open up the town and backlands towards the river and there are many fine commercial, tourism

and local recreational benefits to doing so and from the Town being more river centric."

"It could include a possible accessible swim and water recreation area and that would improve drinking water status and ensure higher quality water for the area with more rigorous standards and frequency of testing having to be applied to bathing status water," Cllr. Parsons added.

There were funds allocated for the project in 2014 from the old landfill fund, however when the town council dissolved the Galway CoCo took over with the commitment of delivering the road and Amenity area, nothing had happened since. There never was and there is currently no planning permission for

the road or amenity Townparks area.

"I put it forward to zone that Townparks area as amenity, community facilities, open space and insert a link road to emerge also at the new Scoil Croi Naofa School. This was not feasible as planners were adamant putting a zoning use of open space or amenity or community facilities on that area would completely preclude and jeopardise the development of any road or route in that zoning and leaving it unzoned gives it the best possible chance of getting through environmental hurdles as it is area of constrained land use which will be subject to stringent high level environmental assessments," Cllr. Parsons concluded.

Now that the motion has been passed and included in the CDP and the LAP, the Council in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development and environmental considerations will finally have both plans solidly backing delivery of the long-awaited Inner Relief Road.

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There has been a major investment in the town suburbs for badly needed new footpaths including Poolboy, Beechlawn and Creagh.

Active Travel funds have been allocated from the National Transport Authority in 2021 and 2022 as part of the Programme for Government focus on sustainable transport in regional and rural areas. This investment of €460,000 close to half a million is the largest investment into the Poolboy and Beechlawn area in decades and will develop safe looped walks. The project has been broken into two stages of development.

The first stage includes the wide footpaths with lighting completed through the first section of Beechlawn from the crossroad to beyond Beechlawn Organic Farm. The section in Poolboy is currently under construction to Old Mill Road estate along Old Mill Road (Hall's Boreen) and over to Oak Glen. The second stage of development will see the section completing the loop through Beechlawn and also a footpath from Rackzone previously Square D to Cúil na Canalach and Oak Glen.

Senator Aisling Dolan commented: "Beechlawn is an extremely busy and dangerous section for people walking especially at night-time. It will bring more people to safely see scenic routes along the banks of the River Suck to the old Grand Canal Bridge and the Poolboy Lock which allows the boats to come into

Ballinasloe Marina. As well as linking in with the Galway to Dublin Cycleway coming along the Grand Canal into Poolboy and town.

"I worked with engineers in Roscommon County Council to put together a case for the section of road from Beagh roundabout to Shannonbridge roundabout. So many people walk the 5km loop from Creagh Church along the Dublin Rd. and onto Shannonbridge Rd. However the section between roundabouts is just a hard shoulder with a lot of heavy traffic coming off the M6 motorway" added the Senator.

"Thank you to Paul Browne and Tom McDermott, engineers from Roscommon County Council, for a strong proposal and total €200,000 investment and now with our project contractors finalising up we can see construction and a footpath to promote safe places for walking for people in Creagh/ Beagh as well" she concluded.



Senator Aisling Dolan at the delivery of new footpaths near Domac at Poolboy Industrial Estate

SHERIDAN TO SWIM THE SHANNON

Aiden Sheridan is gearing up to embark on his epic journey when he attempts to swim the length of the River Shannon this summer, 245km in total. Starting in Dowra Co. Cavan, Aiden aims to make it down to Curraghgour Co. Limerick in 14 days.

He acknowledged all the support he has received to date since he announced the challenge: "The support for East Galway Midlands Support Cancer/Irish Cancer Society has been great from everyone, so many have been great getting on board and supporting the cause so I'm really

thankful for that. Donations are starting to come in already there's been a couple of thousand donated online and through sponsorship cards, so hopefully when I finish the swim, we'll have reached our goal."

You can donate to the fundraising page online at www.idonate.ie/aidensheridan and also keep up to date with Aidan's progress before and during the swim on the Facebook page Sheridan SWIMS the Shannon.



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A motion seeking to provide targeted mental and emotional health supports to students sitting the Leaving Cert and state exams was put to HSE West at a recent Regional Health Forum.

Cllr Dr. Evelyn Parsons told members of the Health Forum she has great concerns regarding the unique set of pressures young students are under sitting the traditional Leaving Cert and other state exams after prolonged uncertainty and recurrent disruptions through COVID.

"I am pleased to have gained widespread support for my proposal which the Regional Health Forum agreed to advocate the proposal to the National Office of Mental Health and Wellbeing. I welcome that it is now going forward for consideration of rolling out a National Student Mental & Emotional Helpline," said Cllr Parsons.

Cllr. Parsons proposed that HSE West put a Student helpline in place immediately to provide additional mental and emotional health supports targeted specifically to pupils sitting state exams this year in recognition of their unique mental health pressures engendered by prolonged educational and social disruption through COVID, and more recently the knock on impacts of a war at a key transitional development stage in their young lives.

"Over 60,000 students sit the Leaving Cert annually and even more students experience exam stress also. I proposed to pilot it in HSE West and that it would assist in expediting a fast track for urgent intervention and referral to specialist services.



Cllr Dr. Evelyn Parsons with Daniel Patrick Curley Manager Rathcroughan Visitor Centre, Tulska, at the inaugural Suck Valley Way Tourism Conference lately.

I'm pleased the Regional Health Forum felt there was merit in my proposal. Tony Canavan CEO Saolta, Ms. Breda Crehan-Roche CEO Community Healthcare West and senior executive staff supported the proposal of a student helpline at national level as did my councillor colleagues. I hope to see this implemented without delay so that it can serve our youth as a valuable mental and emotional resource for years to come," she added.

While there are mental and emotional health resources available, funded by HSE through Jigsaw, Mindspace Mayo, West be Well she stated she was concerned that students who are already overwhelmed with reading materials and bookwork and low mood might find it unwieldy to get to the information they need. Cllr Parsons said she was also concerned that a national resource might not be in place quickly enough to assist this cohort of young people with upcoming exams in HSE West area.

Ms Breda Crehan-Roche Community Healthcare West agreed to put together a more user friendly format of existing resources immediately for students and youth.

"It is important the resource information is presented in a user-friendly manner for students' quick access. I welcome the additional online platform at Westbewell.ie which launched since I raised this issue at the Health Forum last month and thank Ms Crehan Roache for her responsiveness in compiling mental health resources in a user friendly format," Cllr Parsons concluded.

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Lots of local businesses in the town got involved in the Conradh na Gaeilge Ballinasloe windows competitions during Seachtain na Gaeilge. Prizes were given to businesses with the best cultural and language themed windows designs during the week.

Prizes were also given for those who tried to use the most Irish to deal with customers during the week. The ideas were brought about by the local Conradh na Gaeilge group as a fun and innovative way to promote our native language during one

of the biggest international celebrations of our language and culture.

Corn Uí Cheithearnaigh was won by Gullane's Hotel for using regular Irish when dealing with customers. Hubert Dolan's, Kariba's Restaurant & Coffee House, and NCBI were also recipients of awards in recognition of their colourful shop window displays.

Ruairi O hAnnuain of the Conradh na Gaeilge group presented the businesses with their awards and thanked everyone who got involved in the celebrations for the week.



Ruairi O hAnnuain (Conradh na Gaeilge Ballinasloe) presents Corn Uí Cheithearnaigh to Gullane's Hotel L-R: Fintan Leslie, Sinead McKeigue, Ruairi O hAnnuain, Caroline Gullane, Tomas Gullane.



Ruairi O hAnnuain presents Corn Thomais Uí Bhaoill to Hubert Dolan's L-R: Ruairi O hAnnuain and Aodh O Dolain.



Ruairi O hAnnuain presents Corn Thadhg Mhic Lochlainn to Kariba's L-R Ber O'Leary, Ruairi O hAnnuain, John Ward, Marian Canavan, Della Keighrey, Joanna Florek, Grace Ward (front).



Ruairi O hAnnuain presents Teastas Ard Mholadh to NCBI L-R: Barbara Coakley, Patrick O'Neill, Grace McGrath, Ruairi O hAnnuain, Angela Flynn, Amy Ward, Kim Gorrard, Ellen Rose Flanagan.

Photos taken by J&S Photos

LIFE ADVERTISING RATES RISE AFTER 10 YEARS

Since the magazine inception in 2011, the team have endeavoured to run the magazine on a break even basis while meeting the demand from the wider community for more editorial space and additional copies!

The first edition was 32 pages with 3,000 copies printed and we are now printing 7,000 copies of a 64 page magazine for each edition, with the demand growing for extra copies, particularly from our newsagents (Dolans, Salmons and Corrib Oil, all being disappointed when we have no additional copies for their customers for the past

number of issues).

As a result of increased running costs (paper worldwide has increased by 45%), as the publication team enter the next cycle (commencing Aug/September edition) the advertising rates are to increase to ensure we can print same number of magazines as per previous editions.

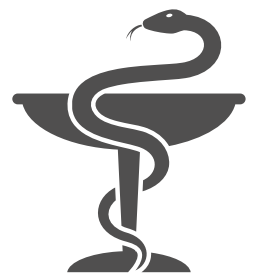
The advertisement rates for a 20% advert will be increasing from €108.33 to €123.33 and for a 40% size advert from €166.67 to €187.50 per edition.

Lyn Donnelly advertising manager stated:

"We have resisted increasing the advertising costs in the magazine for the past 10 years but unfortunately our hands are tied with the increased running costs, with our only options to either increase the advertising rates or to dramatically reduce the quality/quantity of the magazine per run. Our subscribers who are all local businesses are the lifeblood of the magazine, with many supporting the magazine from day 1 which is testament in itself and we are optimistic the increased costings won't deter new advertisers coming on board."



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A new Discount Store is coming to Ballinasloe in the form of Mr. Price. Ireland's Largest Discount Store Chain has its provisional opening date for the end of June. The store will be located in the old Tesco / Crazy prices Shopping Centre on Sarsfield Road.



The building was formerly part of the Dubarry Shoe Factory, which shared the premises with Paddy's Lamb meat processors which was all part of the old Workhouse site.

The Store opening represents the first arrival of a National Multiple discounter since the German retail discounters Lidl and Aldi in 2000 and 2002, adding to the retail mix in the town centre.

The Mr. Price business model sells top brand name items at a discount of 40% to 70%, making them the cheapest of all variety retailers. They currently have 60 stores nationwide and this new store opening is part of their exciting growth strategy.

The 100% Irish owned business, established in 2010 will provide all their usual bargains from toiletries to toys, food & drink, to fitness, stationery to confectionery, pet to homewares and much more!

Having received great interest in the roles advertised with over 100 applications for the jobs on offer from manager, keyholder to sales assistants, the store has employed up to 35 people for their opening at the end of June.

Laura Blighe Marketing Director at Mr. Price: "We're delighted to open in Ballinasloe which will be our fourth store in Galway and our 61st store nationwide. With lots of new jobs created in the local area there has been a huge amount of interest from applicants looking to join the team. We are bringing the best in branded bargains all at unparallel low prices exactly what our price conscious customers want."

Mr. Price also has a track record of sponsoring local charities throughout their years in the surrounding areas of their

stores. They also have a partnership with Rehab Group and its educational division National Learning Network. This partnership is part of their inclusive employment initiative ensures people with disabilities have equal access to fulfilling careers.

The new stores opening hours will be:
 Monday-Wednesday 8.30am – 9pm;
 Thursday-Friday 8.30am – 10pm;
 Saturday 8.30am – 8pm;
 Sunday 10am – 7pm.

People can visit www.mrprice.ie/careers to contact their recruitment team or to check for more job openings. Keep an eye on Mr Price Facebook page for updates on the stores opening.



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Corrib Oil – Spar in Ballinasloe is a firm favourite with locals and commuters alike. The Corrib Oil Service Station is managed by Adrian Gavin and employs 27 local people between the shop, Corrib Deli and the oil office. Its one of 33 forecourt retail operations run by the Company in over 20 counties nationwide.

The shop which opened in 2011, on the site of the Louis Bannerton Renault garage, proves to be the perfect one-stop shop for all your needs with its perfect location for passers-by just off the motorway, with ample car parking spaces making it ideal to pull in on a journey. Customers have an exciting range of fresh food to choose from such as the Award-Winning Corrib Deli which serves Breakfast, Lunch and Dinners all prepared in-store.

They are opened from 6.30am-11pm daily with the deli open from 6.30am-7pm daily (5pm at the weekends).

Manager Adrian Gavin discussed some of the company's deli unique selling points: "You can choose from 7 main courses each

day including Roast of the Day, Chicken Curry, Lasagne and much more. The Hot meals are available until 7pm on weekdays and 5pm at weekends. There is also a Hot Buffet Bar with snacks and a sandwich selection

prepacked or choose your own filling. There are delicious treats from Corrib Bakery, Insomnia takeaway teas and coffee and a SPAR grocery convenience store with a full off licence offering a wide selection of beers and wine."

Customers can sign up for a Corrib Oil Rewards Programme which offers perks such as your 7th Coffee Free, 7th Sandwich or Breakfast roll free along with special offers on groceries. The shop also includes an oil office where you can order your home, commercial and agricultural home heating oil from Sean Kitt.

You can also gain Rewards Points on your home heating oil orders which can be redeemed instore. (T&Cs Apply).

For more details check their Facebook page Corrib Oil – spar Ballinasloe or you can contact them on (090) 964 6054.



Corrib Oil Ballinasloe



Corrib Oil Staff



Dermot Hogan, Sales Assistant



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Ballinasloe Says No public meeting in Shearwater Hotel

The Ballinasloe Says No committee have taken their next step in their campaign as they are now reviewing legal options to tackle the decision by Galway County Council to grant a permit to the waste transfer station.

Chairperson Vincent Parsons stated: "Ballinasloe Says No are committed to fighting for health, safety and to protect our unique environment around the Suck River Callows -an SPA (Special Protection Area) under EU law-on behalf of the people of Ballinasloe. It is shocking that Galway County Council Executive have decided to grant this permit despite thousands of objections from people in the area.

"The decision by the Council to grant a permit was quashed by High Court Order on two occasions in 2018 and again earlier this year. In addition, this area is subject to a 1999 High Court Order halting all major waste facilities. Despite all of this Galway County Council Executive have granted another permit for a major waste facility in the town centre showing total disregard for the people of Ballinasloe and surrounding area," he added.

Chairperson Parsons and Senator Aisling Dolan, with the committee, also noted that a public meeting will be held within the next few weeks to give people an update.

PRO Senator Dolan stated: "I want to thank people in the town and living all around Ballinasloe for their continued support.

This development means hundreds of trucks coming on every road into town. It will have a detrimental impact on the lives of residents and people using our roads competing with 10 ton, 20 ton and 30 ton trucks. We look forward to holding a public meeting in the next few weeks please check our Facebook page for details."

For more information on when the public meeting see Ballinasloe says NO to Toxic Waste Dump on Facebook for further updates.



KENNY'S HOME FURNITURE



Kenny's Home Furniture is the new, local furniture store in Ballydangan, Ballinasloe.

Following on from PJ Kenny Beds & Furniture, Andrew Kenny has opened a new purpose built, boutique-style furniture store offering an extensive range of mattresses, divans, sofas and wooden bedframes.

With over 20 years sales and marketing experience Andrew is delighted to be able to "lay his hat" back home to develop his new business. "I am proud and excited to be able to invest on my home patch, developing this extended arm of PJ's originally founded business back in 2004. It's been a difficult few years as we all know. Developing a new build project during a pandemic and the rising costs of materials associated with that development has been challenging to say the least" Andrew states.

"You stick with it though. There are always challenges in life and business. I sensed an opportunity to expand an offering of quality products and service and since I opened our new premises, business has been steadily growing. People are financially challenged right now with so much uncertainty but I'm learning that if somebody is in the market to purchase, they are placing more emphasis now on quality and the value that goes with that. Here at Kenny's Home Furniture that's exactly what we are striving to offer, quality and value" he added.



"With ample free parking and a relaxed, stress free opportunity to browse and shop our products, you are afforded the time to choose the right mattress, bed, sofa, dining table, etc that suits your requirements. Stocking Respa, Briody and Glebe mattresses along with leather and fabric sofas from our Irish made and Irish owned suppliers. Our new, exclusive West & Moore brand offering fabric, custom made sofas, suites and corner suites is now launched," concludes Andrew.

To find out more about what's in store call their phone **(090) 963 3878** or mobile **(085) 866 6010**, email them on **sales@kennyshomefurniture.ie**, check out their website on **www.kennyshomefurniture.ie** or better again, visit them in-store, **Thomastown Demense, Ballydangan, Ballinasloe, N37 N298.**



The Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market moved to their new home recently in the Social Centre on Society St., leaving their previous base in the Town Hall, where they were located for almost ten years.



Country Market members on the new premises opening day

The new move came about to accommodate more stalls as the weekly Country Market hopes to grow this year - their tenth year in existence.

Chairman of the market, Martin Deeley, said they are always looking for more producers: "The new move coincides with the need for new producers, we are looking for producers all the time especially organic vegetable producers. We have everything from baking, crafts, knitting homemade jams, that's the good thing about the market it's all local people doing local things," he stated.

Martin has encouraged people who may not have heard of the market to go see what they have to offer: "I'd encourage people to come along on a Friday morning, we're always here. We're open friendly people, we have everything in the market and at good prices, there's always something nice to find."

The Country Market is open every Friday morning from 9am - 1pm. If anyone is interested in getting involved in the market they can see Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market Facebook page or simply call in during trading hours to discuss with Martin how to join.

The Ballinasloe Country Markets Ltd is affiliated to the national cooperative organisation founded in 1947. There are currently 30 affiliated branch markets nationwide, with approximately 800 members. All branches are governed by the same rules. The produce at branch markets is all local farm, garden, home produce and crafts which we sell directly to customers.

All produce sold in branch markets uses a standard label which includes the Country Markets Ltd logo, the branch market name, the individual producer number and the national organisations registered address. This ensures full traceability.



Martin Ryan



Mary Byrne



Marion Deeley



Gerry Ward



Gerry Devlin



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Local Tourism Working Group alongside Failte Ireland Representatives

BACK ROW: Lyn Donnelly (BACD) Tony Dawson (Fáilte Ireland) Brian King (BACD) Gareth McAllister (Ahascragh Distillery) Alan Harney (Town Hall Theatre) Billy Reynolds (Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds) Matthew Hughes (Ballinasloe & District Vintage Club) Seamus Duffy (BACD). **FRONT ROW:** Paddy Mathews (Fáilte Ireland) Valerie Dolan (Ballinasloe Walks and Trails) Frances Leahy (Town Hall Theatre) Michelle McAllister (Ahascragh Distillery) & Colm Croffy (IFEA). **MISSING FROM PHOTO:** Graham Bartlett (Inland Waterways Association Ireland - River Suck Branch) & Ruth O'Brien (Shearwater Hotel)

Encompassing from the Beara Breifne Way on the West of the town and the Shannon Erne Water system on the East; a new Community Tourism network was established at a launch meeting in the Shearwater Hotel, Ballinasloe recently.

The launch night saw the Ballinasloe Area Community Development Company (BACD) outline how Tourism Development for the town and its hinterland is one of the three key pillars of the new Strategic Development Plan.

BACD had commissioned a GRD Funded Feasibility Study on the potential of a new Tourism Development which was presented to the invited audience of some 80 delegates from the trade and sector.

The Feasibility outlined how the scoping exercise identified almost 170 visitor related experiences / firms and services in a 25 km radius of the town Centre from Meelick Weir to Ballyforan and from Dartfield to Clonmacnoise.

A preliminary Map of O'Kelly Country was circulated with some 27 points of notable interest on it and the plan outlined where



Attendees and contributors on the night

BACK ROW: Seamus Duffy (BACD) Brian King (BACD) Clr Timmy Broderick, Clr John Naughton Gerry Finn (WDC) Lyn Donnelly (BACD). **FRONT ROW:** Anita Killeen (BACD) Sen Aisling Dolan, Claire Kerrane TD, Clr Emer Kelly.

the current level of evolution the network location is at, between Involvement and Development among the 3 Hotels, 21 Accommodation providers, 20 Services, 14 Live Music Pubs, 12 Restaurant / Cafes, 23 attractions, 12 Community Development groups, 7 heritage groups, 10 leisure groups, 17 Cultural and Events activities, 15 Crafters and 3 Artisan Food and Distillery firms.

The plan went on to identify how the new network could compliment the Strategic Direction of both the Beara Breifne Way Development Plan and Shannon Erne Masterplan in delivering the targeted visitor numbers that Hidden Heartlands has for the region.

The Plan used many of the benchmarks from the Destination Town Toolkit and the Community Network Guide researched by Failte Ireland to outline what actions are required to make the area more visitor friendly when the Greenway spur and Blueway of the Suck are completed over the coming years.

A strong panel of industry leaders contributed their perspectives on how places in undiscovered Ireland need to establish an experience and offer as well as just identifying assets.

Paddy Mathews, CEO of Hidden Heartlands, presented an overview on what his organisation were doing to maximise the potential of the region that had 80% of the Wild Atlantic Way passing through it but only managed to keep less than 5% of the total visitor numbers to the island. He explained their target markets for season stressing the Northern Ireland and


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Domestic Visitor. He believed that some three years on, having first attending a briefing in the town – the group were on the right direction of travel and that he and his team from Hidden Heartlands would be engaging and supporting them.

“It’s no longer enough to say come visit us and discover our assets, we need to bundle them into experiences that encourages people to play here when they stay here, this network will be significant part of getting that new message out there” stated Paddy.

Ruth Mulhern, the Galway County Council Tourism Officer, was pleased that the Study referenced the Lough Derg Visitor Plan which she was involved in and outlined that the new County Tourism Plan she was currently drafting, would utilise some of the scoping work undertaken by the Feasibility - developing lesser known parts of the County.

Gerry Finn, the Chair of the Western Development Commission, referred to the role of his organisation towards reaching out for new families and businesses to establish west and that a new look tourism feel to the Just Transition Zone of the Midlands with its emphasis on Sustainability and Eco Tourism was the way forward. He also offered many practical insights in how the King House Project and establishment of the Una Bhain Tourism Network that he personally worked on, is still showing success 25 years later.

Eanna Rowe, Regional Manager of Waterways Ireland, was very enthusiastic about the plan and gave references to projects that he worked on in Killaloe and Boyle that had key learnings for the Collective. “The 7,000 boat owners are a very networked community and you must try with the launch of this network keep reaching out to a variety of groups and segments that will in time become ambassadors for this part of the country. The start-up if a new Local IWA Club on the Suck will be a huge building block in this” he stated.

Steve Dolan, the CEO of GRD Leader – who had funded the Study which has some 47 recommendations – the key to which is to form from a Working Party and new Collective – welcomed the Plan and the large, renewed interest in tourism. “From listening to the presentations from looking at the larger numbers of hinterland communities and key private investment support, we can see here tonight how much part of the Hidden Heartlands that Ballinasloe and its hinterland want to be”. He referenced the difficulties with Leader Funding in transition and spoke candidly about some of the projects he was involved in, in the past with Portumna Castle, Courthouse and Workhouse.

Many Oireachtas Reps and local Councillors spoke in strong support that the Collective was the progressive route to go in chasing new business and employment for the area.

There was a robust question and answers session with the panelists before the Moderator Brian King Vice-chair of BACD wound down the evening stating that the Collective would be establishing new working relationships with all the agencies on the stage in creating an innovative and dynamic Tourism Collective for East Galway South Roscommon and North Offaly.

The emerging Map and Summary of the Plan will be available on the BACD Enterprise Page and on www.ballinasloe.ie over the coming days. For further information please email info@ballinasloeenterprise.ie or call 090 9646516.



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Barge 48M unloading at Ballinasloe Harbour in the 1950s

The Heritage Boat Association (HBA) is celebrating its 21st birthday in Ballinasloe Marina over the June public holiday, whilst also marking the 21st anniversary of the opening of the Suck Navigation system and marina.

Up to 30 Canal Barges are expected to turn up to celebrate the Anniversary promising to be quite a spectacle with great historical significance, considering these are the very boats that travelled to Ballinasloe before the closure of the Grand Canal Line back in 1961.

The Harbour is steeped in the history of the Grand Canal. The final section of the canal, from Shannon Harbour to Ballinasloe, was opened in 1828. It terminated at Dunlo Harbour, which consisted of a harbour master's house and two stores, all still surviving to this day on Harbour Road in town. The massive iron mooring rings can be seen on the lower reaches of some

of the apartments and houses now in the basin.

Before the advent of the Railways in 1830s the Canals were the principle means of bulky goods transportation – agricultural produce, coal, turf, glass, tobacco, whiskey, beer, lumber, ballast, bricks were all taken from the Ships at Dublin Port, transferred to the Grand Canal Basin and their cargos despatched to the West via the terminus at the Harbour Road. The Westminster Parliamentary Gazette in 1836; officially recorded some 1,628 first class passengers and 1,830 who travelled by Canal from the Harbour Road terminus to Dublin-a journey that took approx. 2 and half days.

Following the closure of the canal in 1961, it was no longer possible for boats to make the journey to Ballinasloe until works commenced in the 1990s to make the River Suck navigable, including the construction of Poolboy Lock – joining the town to the majestic Shannon – Erne Waterway in May 2001.

There are 40 retired M (for Motor) working boats or barges still active on the inland waterways. The last seven were sold by Inland waterways by way of tender in 2013 when raised from the bed of Tullamore Harbour. The Canal company in the 50s sank a lot of the craft to preserve them in the freshwater in the old harbours and jettys.

Ciarán Clinton of the Heritage Boats Association stated: "We are looking forward to our 21st anniversary event in Ballinasloe Marina. Seeing these barges dating back to 1847 is like taking a step back in time and will give an insight to life when Ballinasloe was the last stop on the Grand Canal. Do come along and have a chat when we are in town, our members enjoy sharing these incredible stories."

Boats will arrive on May 28 and will be moored for the week until June 6. This will be a great opportunity to get up close to the very barges which were once part of everyday transport life in the town and bring back memories for those who remember the barges in action especially with Guinness.



Heritage Boats Gathering

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The Directors of BACD have formally appointed local, **Martina Flanagan (Nee Ruane)**, as the Company's first new Administration Manager.

With the new Innovation Hub building (Bank Chambers on Society St.) coming on stream over the next few months and the company's ambitious developments with the 10-year plan, additional resources were deemed necessary by the board to allow the company to pursue and expand its development reach.

Following strong interest for the position and subsequent rigorous selection process, Martina Flanagan was offered the new position. She began last April, supporting and working alongside General Manager Lyn with the growing complex admin needs of two buildings, 29 current enterprise clients, 10 project/event teams, 14 stakeholders and of course the wider community and members to cater for.

Martina is no stranger to town, born and raised in Mackney the second youngest of six was educated locally, with both parents Psychiatric nurses and like all children worked in the hospital during school holidays (St. Enda's). So, in essence it's full circle - back walking the old Parka Floors again !

Not following the parental nursing route, she did a Secretarial Course in Roscommon, moved to London and started her 1st Secretarial role to a customer service director for a computer company in the heart of London. During her time in London, she met her husband Barry from Dublin, in a London Irish Centre, returning back to town in the early 90's marrying and having 2 sons, David and Brian.

She spent the past 25 years working for Barna Waste and JJ Rhatigan Builders.

Martina is now putting over 30 years' experience in administration management working in customer service and the construction industry to use for BACD.

"I always enjoyed the efforts of BACD from a community point of view and am thrilled with the opportunity to work alongside Lyn. Already a couple of months in I am thoroughly enjoying the busy working environment and its diverse range of roles



Seamus Duffy, Chair; Lyn Donnelly, General Manager; Martina Flanagan, Administration Manager.

and responsibilities. Since starting work for BACD I am amazed at the huge amount of work that Lyn and the volunteer Board of Directors have undertaken in the past number of years, mostly behind the scenes, for the benefit of the town and the community, I am looking forward to working with the team and allowing them more time to focus on the 10-year plan and the development of Bank Chambers", states Martina.

Seamus Duffy, Chair stated "We are delighted to have Martina on board, she brings a massive amount of experience and skill to the team, which will be a huge help to groups and individuals in the area to help fulfil our ambitious 10 year plan".

BALLINASLOE ENTERPRISE CENTRE:

The Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre is currently 100% occupied, with 29 Enterprises employing 172 people. There is currently a waiting list of clients for both the Enterprise Centre and the new hub building, Bank Chambers on Society Street. The Training Room (catering up to 20 people) and The Board Room (catering for up to 8 people) is available to rent on an hourly or daily basis and can be booked through the connectedhubs.ie platform or by contacting the Ballinasloe Enterprise office on **09096 46516**.

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Four local voluntary groups received grants under the Community Activities Fund, co-ordinated by the Dept of Community and Rural affairs recently.

The Town Hall, Town Band, Social Services and Ballinasloe Care and Repair all received funding under the new initiative that aims to provide small grants for community groups impacted by the pandemic.

The funding was brought about to give a helping hand to the smaller groups and facilities at grassroots level by supporting them to continue their important work on the ground. Galway County Council invited community groups to apply for funding at the start of the year and the four groups were recently informed that their applications were successful.

The Town Hall secured €4,500 under the scheme. The funding which was under two strands will support the Hall's essential running costs. The committee also intends to upgrade the Cyclorama on the stage to allow for projections that are being used increasingly in place of physical sets.

The Town Band were allocated €2,500 Grant Aid which will be put towards the cost of insurance and the purchase of new equipment for their members.

Ballinasloe Social Services in Brackernagh received €1,500. Teresa Coughlan, Director of Social Services stated: "From

the funding, we were able to purchase a Sara Steady Aid. This piece of equipment encourages those using it to fully participate in transfers, thus improving circulation, breathing, digestion and muscle tone. It provides support for those to continue to attend our day services, who previously may not have been able, due to reduced or little mobility. It also enables us to provide a day service to new referrals who previously may not have been suitable to attend due to the high level of support needed. The feedback from our clients who have used the Sara Steady is very positive."

The Ballinasloe Care and Repair team were awarded €2,000 which will enable them to cover insurance costs of their van and keep it on the road. The group is a free service that helps to keep people living in their own homes in increased safety and comfort. Volunteers carry out DIY work for older people free of charge.

The grants are due recognition for these groups whose efforts throughout the pandemic were immense and were vital to maintaining community spirit and resilience during the difficult times.



Town Hall



Care and Repair



Social Services



Town Band

EYRECOURT VINTAGE RALLY



The Eyrecourt Vintage Rally returns this year after its two-year hiatus. The rally will take place on Sunday, June 19 in Eyre Estate, Eyrecourt village. The show will include its usual display of fine vintage machinery, steam engines classic cars, commercial vehicles and much more. This year's theme features Massey Ferguson tractors, BMC and British Leyland Cars.

Event goers can find numerous demonstrations on the day from stone crushing to wood sawing, to butter making and much more. There will also be jumble stands, family entertainment and live music to ensure there is something for everyone and to keep all ages occupied for on the day.

As the family-friendly show returns for its 28th year, event organisers hope to make this year's event bigger and better than ever. The show will run from 10am to 5pm. Admission prices on the day are €10 for adults, €5 for OAPs and all children go free. There is free car parking on site for all attendees. Keep an eye on Eyrecourt Vintage Rally on Facebook where they post frequently and will have further updates closer to the event.

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Abbie McGowan has started her new role as a librarian in town and is looking forward to bringing her expertise and her love for books to improve the overall library experience for everyone.

Abbie was born in Croydon in the UK, has Irish connections through her father's family in Sligo and Clare. She moved to Ireland when she was 9 and graduated from NUIG in 2012 with a BA in History and Archaeology, and did her Post-Grad in Library and Information Studies in Robert Gordon University Aberdeen. She has worked in a huge variety of different jobs- toyshops, book shops, pet shops. Among those roles she worked as an intern in Westside Library where current County Librarian Bernie Kelly officiates.

Prior to her full time move, Abbie was familiar with the town as she had previously worked at the Battle of Aghrim Visitor Centre for two summers in 2015 and 2016 and is the current secretary of Cath Eachroma 1691. She moved to Ballinasloe permanently at the start of the lockdown in March 2020 and started working in Ballinasloe Library last month.

Abbie's love for books and reading began early: "Thanks to my parents I developed a love of reading at a very early age- I was reading Tolkien aged 6, and knew I wanted to be a librarian as soon as I realised it was a job. I love libraries because they offer a world of information and the exact same opportunities to everyone; when you come in through the doors of the library everyone is entitled to access the same services" she explains.

"I love the Church Gallery and the local history services. The Gallery has so much potential and I'm really excited to be able to work with a space like that. Ballinasloe is one of only four



Abbie McGowan

libraries in Galway that has access to a whole archive of newspapers. These are invaluable to anyone trying to research their family tree, for leaving cert and third level students, or anyone looking for information about the town. We also have a substantial collection of newspapers dating from the early 1800s that can be viewed on microfilm along with access to dedicated genealogy websites" Abbie notes..

"The library offers audio and e-books, along with newspapers, a wide variety of magazines, and even online courses- all for free. Even those not interested in reading fiction can still find a wealth of information on a subject they're interested in. For those that don't use the library or think that libraries aren't for them I would strongly suggest just coming in and checking us out. The library is one of the few public spaces left that

doesn't require you to spend a penny, and we have the potential to bring together any type of group you can think of, be it Vinyl Record Swap Meetings, Documentary Clubs, Knitting Groups, or art groups" she enthuses.

"While I think reading books will never go out of fashion, I think libraries have expanded so much that the possibilities for the future are now endless. Libraries can now offer everything from 3D printers, to mum and toddler groups, exhibitions, and everything in between. Were only really limited by the imagination of the local community" Abbie concluded.



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Eric Naughten gathering some illegal dumping

Eric Naughten Public Relations Officer.

Chairperson Tom Madden congratulated all members for their hard work to date but expressed his dismay at the illegal dumping still going on around the town: "I am horrified by the amount of illegal dumping taking place around the town and I suggest that we may be forced to name and shame those doing this, the €5,000 fine for illegal dumping is being ignored" he said.

He also thanked the local council, the Ballinasloe Training for Employment CE Group, the probation services, local resident groups, the town team and all the hard-working executive and members of the Tidy Towns Committee.

Secretary Padraig Lyons also discussed the groups plans to build on the great marks they received last year: "We must build on this great result by involving more of the Ballinasloe community, schools, organisations and businesses for the town's successful future in this competition. To achieve this outcome, local people are asked to 'Adopt an Area' in order to cover all areas of our developing town."

For further information on how to get involved or on any upcoming projects contact Tom Madden on 086 8179580 or ballinasloetidytowns@gmail.com

Ballinasloe Tidy Town's group have been very active of late as the summer months are bedded in and the whirr of the lawnmower fills the senses !

The local group achieved the highest marks ever for the Town, scoring 315 points in the Tidy Towns Competition last year. These points come from an assessment of all participating towns, carried out by an independent panel of adjudicators appointed by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

The group has also been very busy over the last few weekends as their Spring/Summer clean-ups continued. Many members and volunteers turned up on different days and all playing their part for the benefit of the community.

The association held their AGM recently in Gullane's Hotel where their new committee was elected as follows - Tom Madden Chairperson; Padraig Lyons Secretary; Johnny Walsh Treasurer;



Tidy Towns Crew



Tidy Towns AGM attendees

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A graphic design image of what the new 50-bed ward will look like at Portiuncula.

The construction of the long-awaited hospital expansion at Portiuncula Hospital is set to begin in the coming weeks. The development will see a new 50-bed ward added to the hospital that has felt the brunt of a shortage of beds across Irish hospitals over recent years, it won't add to the total bed tally – merely refresh the original number in a modern layout!

The replacement unit which was included under the new HSE Capital Plan 2019 – 2021, include the replacement 50 bedded ward block, fire safety works and lift replacement programme, had been due for completion in April. The 4,038sqm building which will cost approximately €25m is now expected to be completed by the middle of 2023.

“It is hard to believe that it has taken nearly three years since I secured the commitment for the ward block development at Portiuncula Hospital from the then Health Minister Simon Harris, but I now hope that the final legal issues can be completed and a contract signed to start the construction of this vital project,” said TD Denis Naughten.

Naughten described the progress on the development as “frustratingly slow” and that the delays in the completion of the project had led to “serious overcrowding” at the hospital.

Planning permission was first granted for the project in July of 2017 and was set to expire in August of this year. The HSE were granted an extension of planning permission for the construction of the new ward block by the County Council and stated that the extension was needed due to “financial concerns, requirement of enabling works to prepare for development, phasing works under a separate contract, and the unexpected delays such as Covid.” A contractor has now been selected for the project and hopes to start the build.

A new CT scanner will become operational at the Hospital by the

end of July. Councillor Evelyn Parsons believes the equipment highlights a commitment to the investment and expansion of radiology services at the facility and allows the hospital to provide a high quality of care. “I had previously raised concerns over the frequent breakdown of the previous scanner, however, the HSE

has now confirmed that building works to accommodate the new machine is at an advanced stage” stated Cllr. Parsons. A temporary CT scanner is now on site and is currently being used to ensure appointments continue.

The results of a national survey were published recently, revealing the experience of patients at public hospitals last year. The National Inpatient Experience Survey covered a range of criteria, including admission, hospital environment, etc. asked patients to rate, out of ten, a wide range of criteria about their time spent in hospital, from beginning to end.

Portiuncula Hospital was rated 8 on Admissions; 7.9 on Care in the Ward; 7.5 on Examinations, Diagnosis and Treatment; 6.4 on Discharge or Transfer; 7.2 on Care During the Pandemic; and 7.9 on overall experience. Out of the 40 hospitals that took part, Portiuncula ranked 29th in the country.

The feedback showcased that areas of good patient experience included being treated with respect and dignity, cleanliness of rooms and wards, privacy while being examined or treated, confidence and trust in hospital staff, and pain management. Areas needing improvement included the availability of emotional support, time to discuss care and treatment with a doctor, information on how to manage a condition after leaving hospital, and the opportunity for families to talk to a doctor.

The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) Trolley Watch reports that Data collected from the month of May showed a steep decrease in the number of patients waiting for beds. There were just 24 patients waiting on trolleys in the hospital come mid-May which were the lowest numbers in the midwestern region. The figures showed a 20% decrease from the same stage in April when some 125 patients were on trolleys and a 10% decrease from May 2021 when 34 patients waited on trolleys.

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The Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre is re-opening for the summer months and are eagerly anticipating the return of visitors after the last two years.

Since the centre last opened its doors significant refurbishment has been carried out by Galway County Council. A redesigned layout, improved information boards, and dozens of new props and displays will be available to visitors to view until September.

A new Education Zone has been created which is specifically aimed at school children. School visits will also be able to avail of the new activity pack which was produced by Dr Padraig Lenihan of NUIG. There is also a scenario game produced by Dr. Lenihan and Michael Riddell which allows visitors to act as a general and command soldiers on a map of the battlefield.

Visitors will now be able to see what a soldier in 1691 would have carried in his pack, see a surgeon's kit in all its gory detail, and admire the new sets, costumes, and props from the era.

This year's marquee event for the centre will be Heritage Week which will take place in August. Many special events are being planned including a Walk About and Talk About with local group Cath Eachroma 1691. The group also produced a short photo booklet last year titled "Where Musket Balls Are Buried" which allows readers a birdseye view of the battlefield, along with detailed information about key sites. The booklets are

available in Valerie's and Burke's shop in Aughrim village, or by messaging the group on either Facebook or Twitter.

A new app has been produced that allows people to get a virtually guided walking tour of the Aughrim battlefield.

"Aughrim Tours Galway" was produced by remember when.ie for the Aughrim Community Development Company. The app contains two tours. The first around the Aughrim Battle Site and introduces the armies and strategies that were deployed in the Battle. The second tour centres around the Village its unique history and many colourful characters.

The free app is designed so that a virtual tour guide will follow you on your journey and plays audio messages at each historical landmark throughout. The tour lasts approximately two and a half hours and gives you a great insight into one of the bloodiest battles in Irish History. The app is available to download for free on all Android devices through the Google Play Store.

Seasonal opening of the Centre is from end of May - 4th September with opening times from Tuesday - Saturday, 10.30am - 4.30pm and Sunday 2.00pm - 5.00pm.

Schools tours, groups, special interest & educational tours are all welcome and enquiries can be sent to battleofaughrim@galwaycoco.ie. Keep an eye on their social media for updates, and information on tours of the battlefield can be obtained by messaging either Facebook or Twitter @1691Aughrim.




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The extraordinary life of a Ballinasloe-born priest took another turn recently when he was appointed Diocesan Administrator of a South American diocese where he was ordained. For 76-year-old P. J. Madden from Brackernagh, the latest honour bestowed on him by the Holy Father, comes after less than eighteen years in the priesthood. He will be in charge of the diocese of Houma-Thibodaux in Louisiana, New Orleans, which has a population of 34,000 until the appointment of a new bishop.

Fr. P.J., the second eldest in a family of ten, to Tomo and Gertie Madden, won an All-Ireland medal for acting while a student in Garbally College, then studied for the priesthood in the SMA Novitiate in Kilcolgan. While working on a summer job in St. Brigid's Hospital in Ballinasloe he met Mary Mitchell from Moylough and they married in 1970.

Pursuing a career in psychiatric nursing, P.J. qualified in 1968, winning first place in Ireland in the finals in 1968. Along with his new wife, they embarked on a five-year stint as Lay Missionaries in New Orleans and on their return P.J. became involved in Industrial Relations. He was appointed General Secretary of the Psychiatric Nurses' Association of Ireland as well as Assistant Secretary of the LGPSU-a union representing Co. Councils and Health Boards nationwide.

In 1987, he became General Secretary of the Irish Nurses' Organisation and oversaw it being recognised as an Official Trade Union and becoming the largest women's union in the country, increasing its membership from 6,000 to 28,000 during his twelve year tenure in charge.

However in 1999 tragedy struck when PJ lost his beloved wife, following a serious illness. He took the unusual step of returning to New Orleans and spent three-and-half years studying for the priesthood. The widower was ordained in May 2004 as a Diocesan Priest for the City of Houma, where he ministered for five years. He then returned to Ireland and joined the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin for three years, serving in the combined parish of Naas, Sallins and Twomilehouse in Co. Kildare.

Returning to Louisiana at the invitation of Bishop Shelton Fabre, he was made Parish Priest of Houma and has served there since. The much-travelled Ballinasloe man said he is deeply honoured by his new appointment particularly as it comes from the recommendation of the College of Consultors in the Diocese. "This diocese was formed on 5th June 1977 and has 39 parishes with 59 secular priests. It has the Cathedral of Frances de Sales in Houma, which is in south-east Louisiana" explained Fr. PJ.

"I want to thank my family and my many friends in Ireland for their good wishes and hope I can carry out the duties of my new role. I have had something of a chequered life but I always trusted the faith my parents and my late wife had in me" said the new Administrator.



The Madden Family

BACK ROW L-R: Noel, Mattie, Fr. P.J., Austin. **FRONT ROW L-R:** Deirdre, Elizabeth, Helen, Anne and Martina

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The newly formed River Suck Inland Waterways Branch welcomed the Athlone Branch to Ballinasloe Marina recently. About 25 members in a fleet of more than ten boats of all sizes made the three hour journey along the River Suck to the town centre to meet local members and officially welcome the formation of the new Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI) River Suck branch.

It was a great opportunity for everyone in both branches to meet their new neighbouring branch and network with other IWAI members. There was a food and drinks reception to meet the visitors.

Locals Rachel Staunton and Ed Galvin brought their lovely barge into the marina for the occasion. Athlone IWAI Chairperson Ian Craig presented River Suck IWAI Chairperson Graham Bartlett with the Athlone branch burgee and officially welcomed the branch members to the IWAI family.

Graham Bartlett stated: "It was a pleasure to welcome the Athlone IWAI branch to Ballinasloe and we thank them for their kind donation to help get our new branch up and running. It was great to see a large number of boats in the marina and it being utilised to its full potential."

Senator Aisling Dolan also commented: "John Jones, Waterways Ireland engineer and Foreman for the region David Mills met to discuss access and upgrades in preparation for events taking place this summer. Thank you to the Waterways Ireland team for sandblasting and cleaning the service block

area. Many activities are being planned for June Bank Holiday weekend so do pop down to have a look. With IWAI River Suck branch, we plan to make Ballinasloe a key destination on the waterway."

Cruisers Ireland also visit on Saturday June 18. There will be many Freeman boats visiting Ballinasloe Marina for the group's inaugural outing, with a barbecue and other events taking place during the day.

For further information, please check out 'River Suck IWAI Branch' on Facebook. If you have an interest in the River Suck, boating and developing events at our marina then do get in touch. Members are very welcome for the River Suck IWAI branch, please go to www.IWAI.ie or send a message on Facebook.



Athlone IWAI Chairperson Ian Craig presented River Suck IWAI Chairperson Graham Bartlett with the Athlone branch burgee



Ben Treacy HBA, Graham Bartlett, Leo Kiernan, Darragh Dolan IWAI River Suck with John Jones, Paddy Harkin, David Mills Waterways Ireland and Ciaran Clinton HBA and Senator Aisling Dolan

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The Ballinasloe ME/Fibromyalgia Support Group was set up to provide a forum for those living in the area with ME (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome) and Fibromyalgia to meet, share experiences and support one another.

The group was established in March 2020 and they have been running virtual meetings through the lockdown and are now finally able to meet up in person. The founder of the group Mary Barret explains "Both ME and Fibromyalgia are long term chronic conditions, with common features including extreme fatigue, brain fog, headaches, sleep disruption and gut sensitivity. Fibromyalgia also features significant pain and stiffness all over the body. The result is that many aspects of normal day to day life is difficult for those living with these conditions which can result in many having to give up work and not being able to participate in many family and social events despite from the outside looking like there is nothing wrong with them. With no cure and little research being conducted on either illness, those diagnosed can often face a long and lonely road living with these conditions.

"Our support groups aims to limit those feelings of isolation for members by facilitating a sharing of experiences with those who can truly empathise in a supportive and confidential environment. All members are advised to seek medical advice as the purpose of the group is not to diagnose or provide medical advice but to support members on their journey" she added.

Having provided face to face meetings before the pandemic the group had to adapt to the challenges of the pandemic so decided to commence online zoom meetings until they finally

got the chance to come together again last month. In their first physical meeting back, participants discussed the challenges they faced on a daily basis and shared experiences on how they navigated those challenges with many tips and ideas shared on ways to improve their quality of life.

It was also agreed that the group would make a schedule for the year and that meetings would take place going forward on the first Saturday of every second month at 2:30 pm in GELS (Galway East Life Support), Cullen's Yard, Ballinasloe beginning in July with plans for a mix of support meetings and hosting guest speakers. The provisional dates for groups meetings for the rest of the year are: July 22; September 3; November 5.

New members are welcome all the time and you can do so by emailing ballinasloeme.fibro@gmail.com or requesting to join the Facebook group: Ballinasloe ME/Fibromyalgia Support Group where frequent updates and messages are posted.



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Livestock Music & Arts Festival the exciting, brand new, family friendly, music and arts festival is just around the corner.

The event which takes place on the 1st and 2nd July in Liskelly Farm, Aughrim, will feature music, art, food, entertainment, and activities centred around the ancient ringfort at the Farm. The festival aims to provide a platform & promote the talents of independent and local artists through genres such as Irish music, contemporary trad, folk, alternative rock and more.

The line-up for the festival was announced recently with a number of local artistes taking to the stage on Friday night including Jiggy, Galway Street Club, Sli Village Fete, Chase Nova Band, Ras Tinny and The Skank High Sound System, Caravan Mamba just some of a wide array of acts. The stellar performers continue on Saturday featuring Kila, Bunoscionn, The Barley Mob, John Conneely Inc, Sli na croi, Bog Bodies and many more.

There will be a wide range of seminars and activities across the weekend, for all ages and interests, provided by expert

and fun facilitators. Join in with Yoga, Iron Forging, Weaving, Meditation, West African Drumming, Soundbath, Raven Pottery, Tai Chi, Afro Brazilian Dance, Craft Workshops, Malinke Village Style Fete, Mudbugs, Rinka, Facepainting, and the Greenmantle Community Art Project. Or wander through the inspiring art exhibition, the mini Viking village, traditional craft area, tea room or our vibrant market where there will be a range of delicious food vendors. Alcohol is not for sale at the event; however, you are welcome to bring your own (strict "no glass on site" policy).

Cormac Jennings the festival organiser stated: "The two-day event offers you the perfect amount of time to switch off, relax, explore and have fun! So, dust off your camping equipment, fill your cooler box with your favourite beer and enjoy the music, art, activities, and entertainment of LiveStock 2022! A Céad Mile Fáilte awaits."

Tickets are priced at €120 for a weekend ticket with free camping. The campsite opens on Friday July 1 at MIDDAY. Day tickets are also available through the website www.livestockfestivalgalway.com. Follow Livestock Music Festival on Facebook and Instagram for more information and updates.



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Ahascragh/Fohenagh GAA Club's fundraiser Toughest Townland is putting townlands from all around the club against each other to find out which is the toughest!

The club are running this event to celebrate their 20th anniversary and to raise funds for the development of their club facilities and for East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support. The hope is to promote fun community events that everyone can get involved in and launch their new Healthy Club initiative

The event sees teams from 17 townlands from the parishes of Ahascragh, Fohenagh and Caltra forming teams from their own areas and organising a fundraising event. The teams will then compete in a series of physical, mental and teamwork challenges on June 25 in Fohenagh pitch.

Paul Lohan, one of the organisers of the event stated: "In addition to raising money for the club we will be making a donation to East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support. This important local charity provides a very important and valued service to our community and we, as a club, are delighted that they have come on board with us. The club had a representative from the charity speak to club members at a recent coffee morning fundraiser in Ahascragh and this was valued by all present."

There has been a wide variety of fundraisers being held by the townlands, so far, Fohenagh, Ballydoogan and Kilgerril have put on a play in Fohenagh Community Centre, Clooncannon have held a coffee morning in The Old Mill Café in Ahascragh and Clonbrock have held a fun run/walk. Killure ran a golf classic in Ballinasloe Golf Club, Castleblakeney held a quiz in Gerry McDonaghs pub, and Pallas/Kinclare are hosted a tractor run in Caltra.

Ballyglass held a quiz night on May 28, Eglish are holding an auction on June 5, there is Progressive 25 on June 10 in Fohenagh and Castlegar are hosting Hurling on the Road on June 11.

On June 25 the big event will take place in Fohenagh, there will be a number of events for the teams to compete in, including a tractor pull, hang tough, teamwork course and the final obstacle course. Each event will be timed and points awarded based on the best time. And the eventual Toughest Townland winner will be crowned at the club's 20th Anniversary celebration that night in Fohenagh Community Centre.



Fohenagh Drama Group Cast of the The Kings of the Kilburn High Road



Organisers and attendees with Jacqueline Daly from East Galway and Midlands Cancer support and Cllr Dr Evelyn Parsons at Clooncannons Coffee Morning in The Old Mill Cafe Ahascragh



Castle French fundraiser: Guess How Many Balls in the Car?



Crowd gathering before Clonbrocks 7km Fun Run/walk

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Lawrencetown NS Confirmation Day

5th and 6th class confirmation - Thursday 12th of May
Principal Andrew O'Regan, Fr. Bernie Costello, Fr. Micheal Ifiora, Bishop Michael Duignan.



Kilglass NS

Teachers Ms. Bonner and Ms. Byrnes



Killimor NS

Teacher: Mr. Feury • Priest: Fr. Kitching



Aughrim NS

Teacher: Mr. Shane Kelly • Priest: Fr. Geraghty



Over the past year, Creagh NS have been focusing on celebrating and enhancing their local school environment. At the start of the year, Mrs Gallagher and her committee began the task of bringing the art and joy of gardening and nature to the school. After sourcing, purchasing, and installing their new polytunnel, came the hard graft of making it an environment suited to teach classes in.



Jack Kennedy with his planting box

Facilitated by a generous monetary donation from Cregg Stone, as well as the carpentry skills of caretaker Eddie Brady, the polytunnel soon became a horticultural haven. It is now filled to the brim with a wide variety of plants, vegetables, herbs and fruit thanks to the green fingers and endless enthusiasm of Assistant Principal Caroline Gallagher and her army of helpers. Mr Geraghty's 6th class have also designed and painted

beautiful potting tables for outside the polytunnel.

The front of the school has also recently been enhanced by a beautiful, hand-crafted outdoor planting box. This piece of work was designed and made by their talented 6th class pupil, Jack Kennedy.

Inside the school, there are lots of reflective spaces and friendship pods, all designed to enhance the day-to-day experiences of the school population.

On the sporting front, the inaugural soccer play-off of the



Joe Murphy presents the Joe Murphy cup to captain Fionn Duffy

Joe Murphy Cup, named in honour of their retired caretaker, took place with great success recently. They hope that this will become an annual event in the school. Past pupil and current parent, Val Colleran, proprietor of UTAH and Regatta also donated a full new set of jerseys to the school.



Val Colleran with his son Eanna and Ronan Daly present jerseys



A display of window boxes



One Step at a Time

"Ah, many is the time I walked in that archway and climbed the stairs to place a printing order with your late father"

is a comment often expressed to the Kelly brothers about their former business, Kelly's Printing Works, in Society St. "And I would sit on the window sill as he took my order" they often recalled.

The humble entrance led to the former East Galway Democrat newspapers offices, acquired by Michael Kelly in 1951 and which served the community well before moving to a purpose-built factory in the Poolboy Industrial Estate in 1983. Nostalgia and loyalty still exists with the sons and daughters of "old friends" remaining steadfast to one of Ballinasloe's oldest family run businesses, now in its fourth generation. Hardly a day goes by without a complimentary comment like "my father/mother always did business with your father, many years ago" as customers arrive at the Poolboy plant. Time moves on, friends pass away, but the service at KPW remains as committed as ever.

Why not drop in and see for yourself. There is nothing they can't print-from large outdoor roll-up signs to a colourful memorial card. And you don't have to climb the stairs!



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Camcloon NS is a rural, three teacher school based in Ballydangan, Co Roscommon which currently facilitates 59 students.

As many locals may be aware, a new extension to the school is now nearing completion. This will provide the school with an additional mainstream classroom, a special education classroom and a wheelchair accessible WC. As a result of this new extension, the existing playground has been significantly reduced.

Camcloon NS Parents Association have been fundraising to build a new play area which will consist of a concrete play space, an Astroturf pitch, a new boundary fence, a bicycle rack and canopy and a biodiversity and sensory space.

As a way to raise funds the Parents Association have decided to host a concert with the hugely popular Brendan Shine in the Shearwater Hotel, Ballinasloe. This will take place on Thursday July 28th at 8pm.

Damien Cuniffe Chairperson of the PA stated: "We are extremely thankful to the kind and generous support from people to date through our 'Buy-a-Block' campaign and donations from many local individuals and businesses. We must continue in our fundraising efforts to ensure completion of the project. We hope this will be a huge success and look forward to seeing lots of friends and supporters of Camcloon N.S. there on the night!"



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Garbally Past Pupils' Union, an organisation representing former students and staff of Garbally College, is back up and running following a successful AGM.

Former students from afar as Queensland, Australia and Boston, USA were among the 30 or so past pupils who joined the event, which was held in Gullane's Hotel, and live stream.

Arguably Garbally's oldest past student, centenarian Val Martin (Class of 1940) opened the event with some reminiscences on how he ended up attending the college despite the lure of Roscrea in his native parish of Portumna.

Following the approval of a new constitution, the AGM proceeded to elect Paddy Feehily (Class of '72) as the PPU's new president. Paddy, who was the last secretary of the PPU's Dublin branch until it petered out in the late 1990s, said he was honoured to have been nominated for the role. He received his chain of office from Gary Hynes, whose father, Pat, was the PPU's last elected president.

Martin Nunan (Class of '93) was elected chairperson and Aidan Ryan (Class of '86) vice-chairperson. Secretary is Damian Mac Con Uladh (Class of '93) while Alan Harney (Class

of '14) is treasurer and Colm Croffy (Class of '87) PRO. Mike Sheil (Class of '84) is a committee member.

Projects that they will be focusing on include assisting with class reunions and other social events, marking the centenary of the move from the Pines to Garbally in 1923 and digitising old issues of the college annuals Gearrbaile and the Fountain.

Originally established in 1929, almost 150 past pupils have already signed up to the PPU via the online registration form at <https://bit.ly/garballyppu>. The PPU can be reached on social media at <https://linktr.ee/garballyppu>.



Some newly elected committee members: Michael Sheil, President Paddy Feehily, guest speaker Val Martin, Alan Harney, Treasurer and Chair Martin Nunan

NEW CURATE WELCOMED

Ballinasloe Parish Pastoral Council have welcomed Rev Charles Nyameh as the new Curate in Ballinasloe, Creagh and Kilclooney.

Fr Charles, from the Diocese of Jalingo, Nigeria, has been in Ireland for some time now and was previously appointed to Loughrea as a curate in St Brendan's Cathedral. As well as his role in the Ballinasloe Pastoral Area he will be the Diocesan Co-ordinator for the Pastoral Care of Immigrants. He enjoys playing soccer and comes with a reputation of being quick on the ball!

Seamus Mc Guinness, the Chairperson of the Ballinasloe Parish Pastoral Council stated: "We are

delighted to welcome you to our town and parish and wish you every blessing and support from all in the town and surrounding areas."

Fr Charles was one of six Clerical Appointments in the diocese recently and Bishop Michael Duignan added: "I wish to thank all those who have been so generous in taking up these new appointments, especially those who do so in addition to other responsibilities. I pray that with God's help those taking on these new roles will provide us with wise and dedicated leadership. My hope is that together we will continue to forge a way forward that best responds to the pastoral needs of our Diocese at this time."



Seamus McGuinness Chairperson Ballinasloe Parish Pastoral Council and Fr Charles.



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Laurencetown NS • Dinny Delaney Festival 2022

Ballinasloe Credit Union are delighted to sponsor the schools workshops as part of the 2022 Dinny Delaney. Pictured with Students from Laurencetown are Mike Casey Festival Producer, Joe Byrne Uilleann Piper Tutor, Grainne Murphy CEO Ballinasloe Credit Union & School principal Andrew O'Reagan.



Presentation to March Prize Draw Winner, Marian Brady Chairperson BCU & Ann Bugler



Presentation to December 21 Prize Draw Winner, Marian Brady Chairperson BCU & Yvonne Concannon



Kerrill Burke, Brian Derrane and Aidan Lonergan



Ivan, Michaela, Avril and Deirdre Smyth



The Sea of Yellow

DARKNESS INTO LIGHT SUCCESS

Over 450 locals set off from The Emerald Ballroom, at 4.15am on the sixth "Darkness Into Light Walk." They joined the 18 other venues in the county and the thousands of walkers at home and abroad in the annual flagship fundraiser for Pieta House.

It was the first time since 2019 that in-person walks took place from organised centres. Individuals, couples, and families all joined together creating a wave of yellow as they all wore their iconic yellow t-shirt with pride.

They moved silently and respectfully through the street, up Brackernagh and Mackney before entering the darkened Ard Scoil Mhuire avenue reflective section. They paused at the lantern and candlelit display before continuing through Garbally. Here the area was bedecked with lanterns, with Paul Drysdale and Frank Kennedy providing background music as the walkers filed past, before turning into the Garbally Avenue lined with the iconic yellow tealights as far as the Garbally exit before returning via Brackernagh, some tired, others invigorated, and some a little overwhelmed.

The walk is meant to be symbolic of the journey a person makes from the darkness of despair into the light of hope and wellness. It also serves to raise awareness and vital funds for the free life-saving services that Pieta House provide in its centres nationwide.

Brian Derrane, Chairman of the Organising Group, reported that Pieta received around 100,000 calls and texts last year, up 40% from previous. The charity's telephone and video therapy services had also seen an increase in demand, up 20% on this time last year. "A huge thanks is owed to the committee members, local voluntary groups and individuals who assisted with the stewarding and other aspects of the event ensuring the walk was a safe experience for participants, as well as the local businesses who contributed ensuring the event was cost neutral with approximate €6,500 locally raised going directly to Pieta House" he continued.





Going Green: New Bike Stand installed at the BEC through funding from the Galway County Council Climate Opportunity Fund pictured - Lyn Donnelly Manager (BEC), Andrea Audagnatto (Italian Trainee IFEA Europe) & Ingrid Clarkson (Ballinasloe Training for Employment - keen cyclists!



Creagh Training Centre
L-R Leslie Groarke, Patt Groarke, Phillip O'Connor, Liz Madden, Cllr Evelyn Parsons attending the fundraiser Tea Party the Creagh Training Centre in aid of the Ukrainian Red Cross Appeal



The Galway County Fleadh was hosted by CCE Local Branch, Ballinasloe recently in what was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend for all. Competitors across all grades produced some excellent performances for audience and participants alike in the first hosting of the County Fleadh locally in a decade. Boys and girls from u10s to u18s took part in music, song, dancing and speaking competitions with over 40 members competing from the local Comhaltas branch. Competitors who qualified through the various competitions will now go on to the Connacht Fleadh which will be held in Sligo from July 1-3.



Jack Egan from Kiltormer who won the junior class at the RMAAC May Rallysprint in his Toyota Starlet. (Credit: Eoin Stapleton (Eye To Eye Photos)



Val Martin was recently honoured by the Institution of Engineers of Ireland (Engineers Ireland) at a special ceremony held in Galway on the occasion of his 100th birthday.



The Ballinasloe Active Retirement Group celebrated their 20th anniversary recently in Gullane's. Lots of their members attended what was a joyous occasion for all involved. The guest speaker was Active Retirement Ireland National President Anne Drury who acknowledged the magnitude of the group reaching 20 years. BARA Chairperson Mary Brennan was delighted to see so many turn out and the group made a special presentation of thanks to the founders of the local branch Chris Flynn .



Michael & Maisie Manning, Aughrim who recently celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary

JUNE 1, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Monthly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Heritage Boat Association (HBA) 21st Anniversary	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin Bar
Cuidiú Breastfeeding Group	11am - 12:30pm	Ballinasloe Library
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library

JUNE 2, THURSDAY

Heritage Boat Association (HBA) 21st Anniversary	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina
Barra Singers Annual Concert	8pm	Gullanes Hotel
Women's Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

JUNE 3, FRIDAY

Heritage Boat Association (HBA) 21st Anniversary	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina
B'sloe Annual Memorial Golf Classic (Team4-€120)	12am-4pm	B'sloe Golf Club
Eleanor Shanley/John Feeley/Ulton Conlon & Band	8pm	Town Hall
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Music - Brego	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Michael Regan	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JUNE 4, SATURDAY

Heritage Boat Association (HBA) 21st Anniversary	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina
B'sloe Annual Memorial Golf Classic (Team4-€120)	10am-2pm	B'sloe Golf Club
Loose Rooster	9:30pm	Brewery Lane
Sean Creahan	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
John Shannon	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Music	10pm	The Dunlo Tavern

JUNE 5, SUNDAY

Heritage Boat Association (HBA) 21st Anniversary	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina
Mens 18 H.S. S'ford. (UTAH)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar
Red Tape	9:30pm	Brewery Lane
Party Night	7pm	Joe's Bar

JUNE 6, MONDAY

Heritage Boat Association (HBA) 21st Anniversary	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina
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JUNE 7, TUESDAY

Ladies 18 H.S. Stroke Medal 3(Murphys Pharm)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

JUNE 8, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Weekly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin Bar
Cuidiú Breastfeeding Group	11am - 12:30pm	Ballinasloe Library
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library
Age Action Bookclub	3:30pm	Ballinasloe Library

JUNE 9, THURSDAY

Womens Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

JUNE 10, FRIDAY

Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Thunderslap duo	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Shane Moore	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JUNE 11, SATURDAY

Cruinniú na nÓg Event	Afternoon	Ballinasloe Library
Beggars Velvet	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Niall Ruthledge	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
Ken Solo	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Music	10pm	The Dunlo Tavern

JUNE 12, SUNDAY

Mens 18 H.S. S'ford. (Joe Murray Motors)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar
Alex Roe	7pm	Joe's Bar

JUNE 13, MONDAY

Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
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JUNE 14, TUESDAY

Ladies 18 H.S. GOY 3 Medal 4 (50% Sub)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

JUNE 15, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Weekly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin Bar
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library

JUNE 16, THURSDAY

Women's Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Stars Tour - Showjumping	Daytime	B'sloe Show Grounds
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

JUNE 17, FRIDAY

Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Stars Tour - Showjumping	Daytime	B'sloe Show Grounds
Fremans Cruisers Ireland Visit	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Keith & Liam	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Ken Glennon	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JUNE 18, SATURDAY

Fremans Cruisers Ireland Visit	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina
Eamonn O'Neill	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
3 men & a bass	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Party Night	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Music	10pm	The Dunlo Tavern

JUNE 19, SUNDAY

Captains Prize Qualifier (Barretts Hardware)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar

Shane Moore	7pm	Joe's Bar
Fremans Cruisers Ireland Visit	Daytime	Ballinasloe Marina

JUNE 20, MONDAY

Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
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JUNE 21, TUESDAY

Ladies 18 H.S. S'ford (Holly's Pharmacy)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

JUNE 22, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Weekly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Parent Child Group & Graduation Ceremony	10am - 2pm	Ballinasloe Library
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin Bar

JUNE 23, THURSDAY

Captains Mixed (M.O'Hehir)(Tim Brodeick)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Women's Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

JUNE 24, FRIDAY

Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Michael Regan	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JUNE 25, SATURDAY

Toughest Townland (Fundraiser for 2022)	Daytime	Ahascragh/Fohenagh GAA Club
Captains Prize(M.O'Hehir) GOY4(Barretts Hard.)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Live Music	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Happy Bar Stars	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
Boogiemen	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Music	10pm	The Dunlo Tavern

JUNE 26, SUNDAY

Mens 18 H.S. S'ford. (Loughrea Driving Range)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar
Finneans Furey	7pm	Joe's Bar

JUNE 27, MONDAY

Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Social Centre, Society St.
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JUNE 28, TUESDAY

GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
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JUNE 29, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Weekly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin

JUNE 30, THURSDAY

Women's Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

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voice message. We will be back to confirm by 13th July**

JULY 1, FRIDAY

Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Live Stock Festival (Music & Arts Festival)	Daytime	Aughrim, Galway
Niall Rutledge	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
The 2 Q's	9:30pm	Brewery Lane
Joe Dolan Tribute Night with Paschal Brennan & Band	8:30pm	Gullanes Hotel
Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JULY 2, SATURDAY

Amy Brennan	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
Loose rooster	9:30pm	Brewery Lane
Small Deal	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Stock Festival (Music & Arts Festival)	Daytime	Aughrim, Galway
Live Music	10pm	The Dunlo Tavern

JULY 3, SUNDAY

Mens 18 H.S. S'ford(50%Sub-Shearwater Hotel)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar
Live Music	7pm	Joe's Bar

JULY 5, TUESDAY

Ladies Open 18H.S.Str. Medal5 (Clodagh Bout.)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Gentle Yoga	6:30pm	B'sloe GAA Clubhouse
GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

JULY 6, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Weekly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library

JULY 7, THURSDAY

NBCRI Ladies & Gents OPEN 18 H. Fourball		B'sloe Golf Club
Women's Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

JULY 8, FRIDAY

17 Festival of Golf (open comp. TBA)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Eamonn O'Neill	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Thunderslap duo	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JULY 9, SATURDAY

Happy Bar Stars	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
Acoustic ninjas	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Teresa O'Hara	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Music	10pm	The Dunlo Tavern

JULY 10, SUNDAY

Festival of Golf Competition	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar
Dave Mills	7-9pm	Joe's Bar

JULY 11, MONDAY

Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Social Centre, Society St.
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JULY 12, TUESDAY

Ladies 18 H.S. S'ford (Karibas/ Tom Fox)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Gentle Yoga	6:30pm	B'sloe GAA Clubhouse
GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

JULY 13, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Weekly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library
Age Action Bookclub	3:30pm	Ballinasloe Library
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin

JULY 14, THURSDAY

Women's Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

JULY 15, FRIDAY

Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Music - TBC	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Beggars velvet	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JULY 16, SATURDAY

Sean Crehan	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
3 men & a bass	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Finnegans Fury	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Music	10pm	The Dunlo Tavern

JULY 17, SUNDAY

Festival of Golf Competition	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar
Party Night	7pm	Joe's Bar

JULY 18, MONDAY

Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
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JULY 19, TUESDAY

Ladies 18 H.S. Stroke GOY 4(Salmons)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Gentle Yoga	6:30pm	B'sloe GAA Clubhouse
GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

JULY 20, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Weekly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin

JULY 21, THURSDAY

Women's Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

JULY 22, FRIDAY

Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
St. Gabriels GAA Classic	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Parent Child + (Graduation Ceremony)	10am	Ballinasloe Library
Music -TBC	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Down the road	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane



For daily updates on news, events, death announcements and traffic updates - tune into our Local Radio Partner

Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JULY 23, SATURDAY

St. Gabriels GAA Classic	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
Sean Crehan	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
Red tape	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
John Shannon	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Music	10pm	The Dunlo Tavern

JULY 24, SUNDAY

Mens 18 H.S. Scratch Cups GOY 4 (Tom All Day Fox Tyres)		B'sloe Golf Club
Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar
A - One	7pm	Joe's Bar

JULY 25, MONDAY

Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Gentle Yoga	6:30pm	B'sloe GAA Clubhouse

JULY 26, TUESDAY

Ladies 18 H.S. S'ford (Billy King Pharmacy)	All Day	B'sloe Golf Club
GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

JULY 27, WEDNESDAY

Active Retirement Weekly Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Brendan Shine & Friends (Concert)	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Crochet and Knitting Group	11am - 12:45pm	Ballinasloe Library
Soccer Club Bingo	8pm	Shearwater Hotel
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	An Táin

JULY 28, THURSDAY

Women's Group	11am - 12noon	Ballinasloe Library
Trad Session	9:30pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge

JULY 29, FRIDAY

Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Centre, Society St.
Mens Shed Open	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main St.
Eamonn O'Neill	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Keith & Liam	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9pm	Joe's Bar
Trad Session	9pm	Emerald Bar

JULY 30, SATURDAY

Music - TBC	9:30pm	Shearwater Hotel (Bar)
Live Music	10pm	An Táin Bar
Live Music	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane
Boogiemen	10pm	Joe's Bar
Music in the Bar	10pm	Fallons Bar S'bridge
Live Music	10pm	Dunlo Tavern

JULY 31, SUNDAY

Trad & Folk Session	6pm	An Táin Bar
Ken Solo	7pm	Joe's Bar
Toxic twins	9:30pm	The Brewery Lane



Ulтан Dillane, Mack Hansen, Colm Reilly and Oisín McCormack.



Ronan Garvey, Christopher Donnellan and James Garvey, winners on the day.



Ulтан Dillane, Mack Hansen, Emily Gavin, Oisín McCormack, Colm Reilly, Mathew Devine.

The East Galway & Midlands Cancer Support Centre held their Move Against Cancer Fundraiser recently in St Michael's Square which netted a cool €7,000 for the services at the Brackernagh based centre.

The head to head competition involved teams of three using exercise machines to see how many miles they could clock up collectively in ten minutes. The treadmill started moving from 9am and did not stop until 7pm in the evening, with the first brave teams getting ready to compete from 10am. The response to the call for teams was immense with over 25 teams signing up to compete from across Galway and the Midlands, meaning the machines, that were sponsored by the Shearwater Hotel, did not get a break all day!

On what was a bitterly cold day, there was still a party-like atmosphere with performances from the Town Band, Ria Purcell Milkshake Dance and Performance Academy, The Boogie Men, In-Step Stage School and Rachel Goode, to keep spirits high and all spectators entertained.

Support for the fundraiser continued with Connacht and Irish

Rugby player, Ulтан Dillane launching the day. He was joined by Six Nations heroes Mack Hansen and Matthew Devine. Shane Jennings and Oisín McCormack, Colm Reilly and Emily Gavin were also good sports, taking to the machines to see how far they can go.

Further support came from the Queen of the Fair Ashley Walsh and local businesses, Cathal Coleman Triur Construction, The Bread Basket, Domac, Eurospar and members of the Fair and Festival Committee. As the day wore on, it was clear that no-one was going to beat the crew of Ronan Garvey, Christopher Donnellan and James Garvey from Cappataggle who set an incredible distance of 11.25km.

Noel Gavin, Transport Manager of the EGM Centre, expressed his gratitude for all who got involved: "An enormous thanks must go to everyone who participated on the day; they remained good humoured despite tired limbs and treadmill jelly legs! We are incredibly grateful to everyone who supported this fundraiser. We have raised over €7,000, and all donations will go straight back into the Centre and ensure that we can continue to provide support and care for cancer patients."



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- James Sheerin - Chartered Physiotherapist
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With some banks exiting the Irish market and the ensuing transfer of current accounts to the remaining financial institutions in the market – people can consider the Ballinasloe Credit Union; now providing a current account with a Mastercard Debit card. Members now have a local alternative to cater for their banking needs.

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 MYCU Current Account offers simple, transparent fees with no penalty charges. It offers all the features and benefits members have come to expect from a current account including an overdraft facility but is delivered with the same local, trustworthy service of Ballinasloe Credit Union. Members will benefit from banking anywhere, anytime through Online Banking and the debit card allows members to access their credit union account wherever, whenever, worldwide.

The introduction of the MYCU Debit Card offers members the flexibility to pay bills, withdraw cash at ATMs and 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.

A recent national survey conducted by CUSOP highlighted the high level of trust among the public in the credit union movement, showing:

- 65% of the general public trust credit unions more than their local bank - that figure rises to 86% among credit union members



- 71% of people would use a credit union for a debit card or current account if they didn't already have one
- 75% of credit union members would like to be able to speak to someone directly in branch if needed

Members of Ballinasloe Credit Union can open a current account online via the website / mobile app or in the Main Street office.

Speaking to Ballinasloe Life about the MYCU current account, Grainne Murphy, CEO of Ballinasloe Credit Union said: "It means credit union members with savings and loans will now be able to get a competitive current account from their trusted credit union, and they will no longer need to go to a bank to get this service. Ballinasloe Credit Union can now provide our members with a real choice for their day-to-day financial needs. And this service, which will be accessible globally and digitally, will enable Ballinasloe Credit Union to become even more relevant to our members in the ever-increasing digital world."

FAIR PLANS TO RETURN FOR 2022

By Robbie Gately

The 2022 edition of the annual Horse Fair and Festival is scheduled to commence on Sunday 2nd October, with equine competitions continuing on Monday 3rd & Saturday 6th October.

The importance of hosting this international event to the economy of town and its hinterland cannot be underestimated; proof enough was provided with the two year absence during the Pandemic and the Year of the Foot and Mouth. As a heritage event it has no equal-a point underscored and acknowledged by President Higgins in his opening address in 2018 when he pronounced the Great October Fair being worthy of UNESCO status. With the cooperation of local authority there is no reason why this cannot be achieved.

However with some 4 months left on the planning cycle there is frustration on the part of the Festival Organizers on how some of the undertakings given last Autumn will ever be put in place.

With practically six months of the year behind us, commitments and assurances given to meetings of the MDC and full County Council about significant resources being deployed and the early appointment of an Event Co-ordinator, assistance with Insurances have yet to be finalized.

"We have been looking for a follow up meeting with the Council Executive to discuss plans and production for 2022, in its absence it is extremely frustrating and difficult for our voluntary committee to plan for this year's event" said chairman Mal Croffey.

To coincide with the Horse activities the festival committee are currently busy putting together a programme of events to ensure visitors to town over the first two weekends in October have an enjoyable experience. The second weekend focused on Country

Fair Day has become a huge annual gathering of local diaspora.

Fireworks are scheduled for the Friday night, with the Country Fair Day spectacle in the town centre and the Mare and Foal Fair taking place on the Green on Saturday.

The closing Sunday (9th October) the festival dog show, food and craft

market, children's bakery competitions, children's tractor race and vintage display are again all being planned.

With 90% of all the events/activities staged being free, the bulk of the revenue needed to pay to produce the Festival or Carnival activities requires sponsorship and support from the town's business and commercial sector.

"The lifeblood of the festival is our loyal sponsors and we are indebted to the local business's that contribute towards our running costs which are in excess of €50,000. If our festival is to continue then we need more sponsors underwrite the investment" urges Mal.

The Queen of the Fair selection night is scheduled for early September and any Girls over 18 interested in taking part this year should contact the festival secretary.

For more information log-on to ballinasloeoctoberfair.com, email info@ballinasloeoctoberfair.com or call the Fair HQ on **087 2071869**. Follow the festival activities on [facebook/ballinasloeair](https://www.facebook.com/ballinasloeair)





Winner of the Easter Bonnet Competition Ciara Gately

The summer season of public recitals kicked off with a visit to Community Nursing Unit in Creagh recently. The residents enjoyed the occasion, and all were blessed with the sunny weather. Further visits to the other nursing homes in the locality will take place over the next few weeks as will recitals in the Town Square on Saturdays.

The Town Band Annual General Meeting will take place on Thursday 9th June at 8:30 pm in the Band Hall, Dunlo Hill. The Band will also participate in a collaboration with Marie Power and the BARA Singers with Song Fest 8 in Gullane's Hotel on Thursday June 2nd at 8pm.

Their Golf Scramble fundraiser was held last month and was an immense success. Winners over the two days were Tom Cafferkey, Ben Bleahen and Hugh Killeen, and the Ladies winning team were Dolores Finn Kelly, Anne Claffey and Margaret Kelly with Amie Doherty winning the raffle prize.

The Band also held an Easter Fete fundraiser in the Band Hall. It gave the public the opportunity to see the progress with the renovations to-date. There were twenty-one stalls displaying the absolute best of local artisanship. The large crowd that

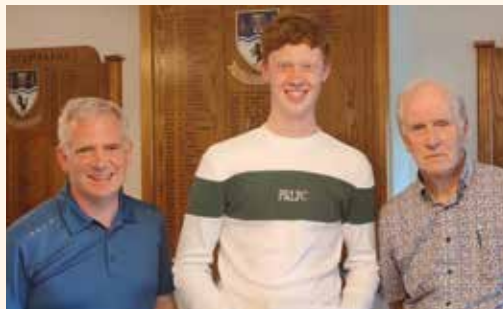
attended were treated to entertainment by the town band and by the Ballinasloe Active Retirement singers under the baton of Marie Power.

Attendees also availed of the delectable homemade confectionary delights. The children's Easter Bonnet competition displayed the creative talents that abound locally with Ciara Gately taking the honours. The chairperson, Damian Naughton thanked the stall holders and the public for their support and presented Margaret McDonnell with a hamper in appreciation of her fundraising for the Town Band.

The group continues to practice in the Town Band Hall, as well as other associations including Music Matters and BARA Singers. If you are a part of a group who are interested in availing of the hall's facilities, contact Damien at (087) 418 6536. The band will be looking for new members from 8 to 12 years of age in the coming months so keep an eye on their Facebook page for updates. Parents can register their interest in advance by contacting ballinasloetownband@gmail.com



Damian O Neachtain, Margaret McDonnell and Noel Madden.



Ben Bleahen accepting his teams prize from Band Chairperson Damien O'Neachtain and Event organiser John Power



View of the Band Room with stalls



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It was fitting that the Moore and Clonfad Dramatic Society should celebrate their 40th year with the staging of a special show to support Ukrainian Refugees and in the process raised €5,850 for the war-torn victims. A packed house witnessed the hilarious comedy "The Stations" in the local Community Hall, as part of their annual productions.

From small beginnings in 1983 Moore & Clonfad Drama Society has grown from strength to strength. The parish has a long tradition of involvement with the stage right back to the late fifties when the late May Greene, Patrick Kenny and PJ Flannery toured the West with the comedy Hospital Ward written by Lady Gregory. For many years the late Patrick Kenny and Micheál Grenham, and many more no doubt, were often seen threading the boards in comedy sketches – those two had a particular penchant for comedy.

Following in this tradition very shortly after Fr Richie Horan became PP in the parish of Moore, the well-known magician priest, worked his magic and very quickly gathered an ensemble of willing parishioners to take part in a play. Thus, the Moore & Clonfad Drama Society, came into being. The Group performed its inaugural play in 1983, directed by Fr Richie Horan. Sive, by the very well-known playwright John B Keane was the first performance of the group all those years ago.

This was followed by two further productions of Sive in 1989 and again in 2003. Many of the same cast were involved in the first two productions but the late May Greene and Patrick Whelan were the only two to reprise their roles as Nana Glavin and Carthalán in all three productions. The group performed many other plays from the pen of John B. Keane, including The Field (1984), Many Young Men of Twenty (1985 & 2001), The Year of the Hiker (1991), Big Maggie (1995) and Sharon's Grave (1996).

The Group were also successful across a range of other plays from many other playwrights such as Thy Dear Father (1986); Daughter from over the Water (1987); The Year of the Hiker (1991); The Righteous are Bold (1992); Philadelphia Here I Come (1993); A Crucial Week in the Life of a Grocers

Assistant (The Fooleen) (1994); The Playboy of the Western World (1997); Happy Birthday Dear Alice (1998); Juno and the Paycock (1999); A Lovers Meeting (2000); The Country Boy (2002); Lovers - Winners & Losers (2004) and Out of Order (2009). These plays covered a range of genre from the very serious to more comedic. The Group were very lucky to have superb directors to guide the various productions regardless of the genre. These included Fr Horan himself; the imminent John Boland, well known in drama circles, who acted and directed in many productions with the Group; Greg Blackwell



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Cast of the first play "Sive" staged by Moore and Clonfad Dramatic Society in 1963.

FRONT ROW, L TO R: Fr. Richie Horan (Producer), Mary Greene (who played the part of Nana Glavin), Mary O'Neill (Sive), Maura O'Brien (Mena Glavin), Michael Scott (Mick Glavin).

BACK ROW, L TO R: Miceal Grenham (Tomasin Sean Rua), Bernard Dolan (Pats Bocach), Patrick Whelan (Carthalan), Tomas Fahy (Liam Scuab), Patrick Kenny (Sean Dotha).

and Liam Curley, who both acted and directed in different productions.

In recent years the Group has concentrated on comedy, bringing so very highly acclaimed productions such as Wake in the West

(2012 & 2014); Cupid Wore Skirts (2018); Pretend Sick (2019) and The Stations which was due to go on stage in March 2020 but couldn't be performed because of the Covid Pandemic. This was eventually staged this year in April 2022. The Group is now very well-known for its funny and fun filled productions. Audiences are guaranteed 'a belly load of laughs'. The productions generally include plenty of mayhem and comedic intrigue brought to life under the superb directing skills of Mr. Liam Curley. Liam's association with this group is of very long standing and the group acknowledges that its success is synonymous with Liam's particular genius, in directing comedy and his capacity to bring every modicum of fun from every character on stage and every line in the script.

When not involved in plays many members of the MCDS are involved in other activities on stage such as variety concerts and Scór. Scór audiences all over the county will recognise many of the members and the many wonderful characters brought to life in the many Scór sketches down the years. Many individuals have acted in perhaps one production but there is a core group that have remained stalwarts of the Group both on and off the stage but having new people join as both cast and backstage crews has ensured a lifeblood in the group that is very necessary to keep the tradition alive.

Over 300 very memorable characters have been brought to life in over 25 plays since the inaugural play in 1983. This is a significant achievement for a small rural parish but one that MCDS is very proud of. The Group use their performances to generate funds and over the years have managed to raise significant funds for various charities supporting the development of Moore Community Hall and projects associated with local schools and many different community groups.

Amateur Drama is great fun and a wonderful way to make friends and give something back to the Community. As always the Moore & Clonfad Drama Society would love to see new members join the group and keep this wonderful tradition going in our parish.



Cast of "The Stations" which raised funds for Ukrainian Refugees.

FRONT ROW, L TO R: Carmel Scott (Veronica O'Brien), Aoife Hibbitt (Ciara O'Brien Lloyd), Bernie Greene (Sr. Bernadine), Liam Curley (Director), Maura O'Brien (Freda Devers), Chrissie Kelly (Martha). **BACK ROW, L TO R:** Tom Fahy (Jack Devers), Patrick Whelan (Tristan), Tom Costello (Stanley O'Brien), Niall Flynn (Uncle Ned), Pdraig Egan (Fr. O'Malley), Ben Halpin (Mass Server), Oliver Grenham (Jonathan). **MISSING FROM PHOTO** Michael Glennon (Neighbour).

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The BARA Singers are gearing up for their annual marquee event Songfest this June. They have become an intrinsic part of community life, growing organically from a first meeting in October 2005 of a group of active retired people who liked to sing together have fun, entertain and be creative.

Offered as an optional winter activity to an already very busy active retirement association in Ballinasloe eleven ladies and two gentlemen signed up initially. They continued for the season of weekly two-hour rehearsals learning songs of all genres. Some remain the backbone of the group. The group have performed mainly in nursing homes, recitals, concerts, exchanges with other ARAs, Dawn choruses, and amassed a considerable repertoire.

Songfest came about in May 2012 when the group who had just been formally named as the BARA Singers collaborated with the Western region of ARAS for a concert in the Town Hall.



The first Songfest was an 'Andre Rieu' style music event with Noel Madden as Musical Director and a Songfest ensemble of musical friends from the neighbourhood, violins, flute, trumpet and piano.

The format has not changed since but there have been many collaborations along the way, with Slua Cairde, Gaelscoil, Cancer support Choir, Omna Singers, and many more. Over €10,000 has been distributed over the

7 Songfests to many including worthy causes including Special Olympics, Children's hospital care, music bursaries etc.

After a two-year hiatus the group of singers got back to their weekly rehearsals at the start of the year. The programme for this year includes a tribute to Charlie Chaplin. Marie Power Musical Director of the BARA Singers explains: "Songfest also always includes a taxing major classic, we hope to do justice to Mascagni's Easter Hymn from "Cavaleria Rusticana" and the light and fun are in "Trip The Light Fantastic" from Mary Poppins." Returns some Big Band favourites and some folk songs make up the rest of the menu! There's always an audience opportunity in our singalong part of the programme."

On Thursday, June 2nd in Gullane's Hotel at 8 pm BARA Singers will present Songfest 8 with Ballinasloe Town Band. Tickets are €10 and are available at the door on the night. They can be pre-booked by calling (087) 979 0416. Proceeds will benefit local needs and charities as they have done so in the past.

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

Ballinasloe Library is currently giving out Little Library Book Bags to children due to start school this September, there are still some available for parents to collect.

The Library also celebrated Bike Week recently which was all about the promotion of the benefits of cycling. There was an exhibition "The Story of the Bicycle" by Brendan Smith, which showcased the history of the bicycle in Ireland and also featured a display of vintage bicycles loaned by Barry Taylor.

The Library's Crochet & Knitting Group continues every Wednesday between 11am-12.45pm and the Women's Group every Thursday from 11am-12pm.

The Library is open from Wednesday to Sunday from 11:00 -



Trevor and little sister Mary Anne picking up his little library bag



Annamarie picking up her library book bag

1pm and 2pm to 5pm. If you have any questions on how to get involved in any of the activities, or what events are coming up you can email the library on ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie and follow their Facebook and Twitter pages @EDBallinasloe for updates.



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Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre will host the Ceol an tSamhraidh 2022 concert featuring local artistes, Eleanor Shanley, John Feeley and Ultan Conlon. This concert is scheduled to take place on Friday, June 3 at 8 pm, and is made possible through the support of the Local Live Performance Programming Scheme (LLPPS).



Ultan Conlon

Eleanor Shanley and John Feeley first met in London in the 1990s, when she was touring with the iconic De Dannan. They did not meet again for almost twenty-five years when John was doing a show in Eleanor's now hometown of Ballinasloe. They flirted with the idea of doing some work together and have since worked on numerous live shows and their new album "Cancion de Amor" is the result of their recording collaboration. Eleanor and John share a meeting of musical minds and both love how John's classical and Spanish-influenced guitar styles works with Eleanor's distinctive voice in this unique and very special collaboration.

Ultan Conlon is a singer-songwriter and guitarist, who has shared the stage with the likes of John Fogarty, Bryan Ferry, Mavis Staples, Eddi Reader and Patty Griffin to name a few. Many of Ultan's critically acclaimed songs have received extensive air play in Ireland and the UK. Conlon's voice has been likened by some music writers to that of Roy Orbison, and his original song writing style combines depths of feeling, introspection and modesty that is always reaching to connect with the listener's heart and soul.

The Ceol an tSamhraidh concert, promises to be a wonderful night's entertainment, and is certainly not one to be missed. Tickets for this event are €10 and are available from BTHT's online Box Office at www.ballinasloetownhall.com.

The upcoming concert follows a host of recent events that have seen the Hall finally back to normal operation

after the last two years. Connacht Scór na nÓg Finals took place in the Hall recently, which proved to be a very entertaining all-day event. Following that, In Step Stage School had four packed audiences for their spectacular production, "Topsy Turvy". The Hall was then the venue for two thoroughly enjoyable concerts during the Dinny Delaney Festival over the May Bank Holiday weekend. Ardscoil Mhuire held a very successful screening of their TY production "A Night at the Musicals" over two nights. And AKT Stage School rounded off the action with their amazing variety show "Curtains Up". Chairperson, Máire Hughes, noted: "It's been heart-warming to see this beloved theatre come to life again with so much wonderful entertainment and such appreciative audiences."

Office spaces to the front of the building have been recently refurbished, with brand new flooring and all new paint work, and are now ready for rental at very reasonable rates. Anyone interested in renting these office spaces can contact Micheal McCullagh on (086) 255 0877 or michaelmccullagh30@gmail.com.

As always, there are also multiple rooms and spaces in the Hall available to rent for rehearsals, classes, meetings, once off events etc. For further information on these rentals get in touch via email (ballinasloetownhalltheatre@gmail.com), and make sure to follow Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre on Facebook and Instagram to keep up to date with all the latest events and news.



John Feeley and Eleanor Shanley

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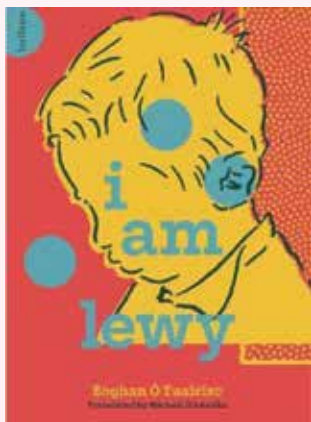
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I Am Lewy is a fresh, contemporary translation by poet Mícheál Ó hAodha of Ó Tuairisc's late novella *An Lomnochtán* (Mercier, 1977), which brings alive Lewy's vivid, impressionistic account of a tumultuous few months in the early/mid 1920s.



The autobiographical novella plays largely around the centre of Ballinasloe – St John's Church of Ireland, Dunlo Hill, the Fair Green, St Michael's Square. The Earl has left, but Lewy's family now pays their rent to a solicitor in town instead. The residue of the Civil War is still to be felt and a Free State soldier has had his head blown off by a bomb in the Square, according to Lewy. Irregulars roam east Galway and south Roscommon, especially around Dysart. Car stealing and a variety of other non-peace time acts are vividly portrayed through the lens of a very young boy.

At the fair with his demobbed, slightly shellshocked father, under his seamstress mother's table while she measures the clients, minding his siblings on the Green across from the Workhouse, entangled with memories of 'Brazenface' Rosaleen McNally, and the skeleton in the sandpit, pitying the Orphans fed on the Nuns' Pee-Soup, Lewy tries to get his head around it all.

Eoghan Ó Tuairisc (1919–1982) was born Eugene Rutherford Watters on Dunlo Hill, Ballinasloe, where he grew up in one of the sadly now-derelict houses. His parents were Thomas Watters, a shoemaker, who had been wounded at the Battle of the Somme in France. His mother, Maud Watters (née Sproule), was a seamstress and clairvoyant.

After attending Garbally College and graduating as a primary school teacher in 1939 from St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, he taught in Finglas, Dublin for many years, and completed a Masters in UCD in 1947. He is remembered best as a writer

with a prolific output through both Irish and English, of poetry, stories, prose, novels and plays. He received numerous literary awards throughout his life for his bilingual writing and was elected as one of the early members of Aosdána.

Ó Tuairisc is buried in Creagh Cemetery, next to his first wife, the painter Una Watters (d. 1965), whose work has recently been revived. An exhibition of her work was held at the United Arts Club in Dublin earlier this year.

Ó Tuairisc is survived by his second wife, Rita Kelly, herself a bilingual poet and writer of note, brought up in Clontuskert and Brackernagh, who is the rights holder to all his work. Her support for and editorial input to this translation of *An Lomnochtán* was invaluable, according to publisher Bridget Farrell of Bullaun Press.

I Am Lewy is available to purchase online from Kennys Bookshop, Co. Galway, and is also stocked in Salmons Department Store, Ballinasloe.

For more information, see this recent blogpost on Eoghan Ó Tuairisc's archive at NUI Galway:

<https://nuigarchives.blogspot.com/2022/04/eoghan-otuirisc-archive-of-bi-lingual.html?m=1>



Pictured at the launch where publisher Bridget Farrell, Rita Kelly (widow of Eoghan) and translator Mícheál Ó hAodha.

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Louise Colohan, a native of Harbour Road, Ballinasloe, has been making waves across the Irish Sea in the Musical Theatre and Performance Scene when she scooped “Best Youth Director” in the North of England for her role in directing the Congleton Amateur Youth Theatre’s production of “The Wizard of Oz.”

The North is made up of 12 districts and there are approximately 150 youth groups adjudicated in the Awards. This is her second time to win this prestigious gong with her production “All Shook Up” in 2016. She also picked up the award for Best Musical for Evita at the ACT awards recently.

From the Harbour Road, Louise is the daughter of David and Martina Colohan and is now based in Knutsford, Cheshire but her love for performing came from an early age. She attended Ardscoil Mhuire where she found a passion for singing under the care of the late Kay Purcell. Louise commented: “The main encouragers of my love of performance in my formative years were my family, members of BMS, and a number of people I’ve worked with including Peter Kennedy, Paul Norton, Kay Purcell R.I.P. and Marie Power.”

Her first musical role came at the age of 19, under the direction of Paul Hughes, who would later become an inspiration for her when she began directing. Louise played various roles over the years with societies in Ballinasloe and across Galway where she gained a lot of recognition for her performances.

She went on to move to the UK, hitting the ground running when she landed her first role and Noda Award within her first few months of being there. She travelled with different groups to take on roles which allowed her to make friends and theatre connections that would lead to other great opportunities



Louise Colohan winner of Best Youth Director Award 2022 with NODA President Gordon Ricardson

further on down the line in her career.

“I’ve taken part in some great productions down through the years. The Little Mermaid, Elf the Musical, Oliver, Evita, Steel Magnolias, Sunshine on Leith, American Idiot, have been some of my favourites. The thrill of live performing is like no other. You get one chance to live the moment! It’s electric and there is nothing like the feeling when the curtain comes down” she added.

Louise currently balances her day job in the property sector, working closely alongside a team of architects and surveyors. By night she continues her work directing theatre productions for several groups. She still performs regularly and will embark on a UK tour in June as a lead vocalist. Her busy schedule also includes directing four shows a year, two adult musicals, a youth musical, and a play.

The performance sector was one of many that was impacted massively by COVID 19 with shows, musicals, and concerts non-existent for the past two

years. “The pandemic’s effect on the industry was terrifying. So many groups, amateur and professional have suffered losses both financially and low return of audience at the start of the reopening. A lot of groups have folded and it’s extremely sad” she stated.

Louise is a positive inspiration for the young aspiring performers in the area and she offered them some advice on how to achieve their dream: “Learn everything you can from those around you, there is a wealth of knowledge in the Town Hall, use it, take all the opportunities you get, work hard and remain humble.”



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Ballinasloe Town AFC and the Halewood Juniors Soccer Club from Liverpool celebrated 25 years of friendship and sport over the Easter period when a group of adults and youths visited for the Ballinasloe Town biennial Exchange Trip.



Joe Kelly, Katie O'Connor and Martin Lynch with under 12 Ballinasloe Irish Cup team

Joe Kelly Senior, was one of the main founders of this hugely successful relationship 25 years ago and was on hand again this year to meet up with the Halewood group and to cheer on the teams from both clubs.

Over the 4 day visit, numerous activities were organised for the Halewood group including swimming, shopping, Bingo at the Soccer Club Bingo in the Shearwater Hotel and a presentation dinner in Gullane's Hotel in addition to the Tournament Games. Significantly this year the first year that there was an all-girl under 12s game and the Ballinasloe girls won the Irish Cup after a 1-0 victory.

Club Development Co-ordinator Johnny Walsh stated: "Apart



The Ballinasloe Town team that beat Castlebar Celtic

from the promotion of Soccer this Exchange Trip has developed a great sense of camaraderie between the Ballinasloe and Halewood Communities. It has also proved to be a very beneficial and positive contributory factor to the local economy as in the region of 100 people make the biennial trip for the few days while some of the group also make additional private trips to Ballinasloe at other times of the year." Ballinasloe Town AFC are already making plans for the return trip to Liverpool next Easter.

The Senior A team have once again qualified for the Connacht Cup Final after a tremendous semi-final win away to Castlebar Celtic. The 'Town' were 1-0 down at half time and faced an uphill battle but they regrouped well at the break and put in a magnificent second half which saw former Irish under 16 International Jordan Carr score 2 goals to secure the victory for Ballinasloe on a 2-1 scoreline. The 'Town' will now play Salthill Devon FC in the final. The final has been fixed for Éamon Deacy Park (Galway United Grounds) on Sunday May 29th, as the club seeks to win their fifth Connacht Cup title.

The Club's Development Committee have been busy recently with preparations for the next phase of the Club Development



Halewood Lions and Ballinasloe Town teams together

Works which consist of additional works to upgrade the floodlight system on the Main Grass Playing Pitch to energy-efficient LED lighting and also to upgrade the perimeter fencing, lighting and pitch surfaces at the astroturf pitches. Club Development Co-ordinator Johnny Walsh stated that he expects works to commence in the very near future.

The Club's Senior Ladies Team are back training at the Curragh Grounds every Monday evening. The Roscommon and District Soccer league are organising a series of friendly games and intend to set up a Ladies League if there is sufficient interest from other clubs. The 'Town' have a great tradition of organising Ladies Soccer down through the years and wish to invite all interested ladies to join the club for training every Monday evening at 7.30pm. For anyone wishing to get involved contact Breda Cleary on (087) 153 3804.



Jordan Carr celebrates with his teammates after scoring the winning goal against Castlebar Celtic

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Work has started on the next stage of the development of the club's facilities. The next phase will include a 3rd court, lights and all weather surfaces for all 3 courts, a small temporary clubhouse, a CCTV security system and improvements to the car parking area and grounds.

Having received funding recently under the Sports Capital grant, which will cover most of the cost of the latest development, the club still needs to raise more funds towards the costs. Their latest fundraiser will be a Wimbledon draw, with tickets now on sale - for just €10, you get drawn one female and one male player with 10 chances to win cash prizes.

Club activities have continued at the courts during the works with the club also getting access to use the courts at Ard Scoil Mhuire when necessary.

On the court there has been plenty of action with all the various age groups and players getting back out for the summer months. There are open club sessions on Tuesdays and Fridays from 6-9pm and Sundays 10am-2pm with the first hour focusing on newer members.

There are junior sessions Mondays 6-7pm for ages 5-12 and 7-8pm ages 12-18 at Ard Scoil Mhuire. The Ladies' and Men's ladder competition are also currently ongoing. More recent activities included a one day mixed double competition which raised funds for Pieta House, and a very successful Easter Camp.



Junior Easter Tennis Camp players show off their certificates

In other news, club member Rachael Staunton has been selected to represent Connacht in the forthcoming interprovincial competition in Malahide.

The club are very active and are always looking for new members of all standards to join the club, or to come along to one of the club open sessions first. Annual membership is €50 for adults, €30 for juniors and €90 for families which allows unlimited access to the courts (subject to availability) and all the above activities.

All updates on the club's fundraiser, activities and news will be included on their new website, where courts can also be booked and members can renew and new members can join. For more information see <https://ti.clubspark.com/Bsloetennisclub/>, email bsloetennis@gmail.com or call Joe 087 252 1424, Garry (085) 112 4197 or Sarah (087) 680 0598 (juniors and coaching).



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The club ran a very successful Easter Camp for Boys and Girls aged 5 to 13. 112 children participated over the three days along with volunteers, parents and coaches who helped to make it such a memorable experience for all the kids.

The U15 Feile competitions in hurling and football for boys and girls took place last month. The boys football team put in a great performance over the three day event going all the way to the final where they were narrowly beaten against St Brendans, Ballygar.

Emma Mitchell was part of the Galway Minors Ladies team who won the Connacht Final after beating Mayo, with Emma playing a significant role in the game. They now go on to play the Leinster Champions in June. Clodagh Killeen also played a big part for the Galway U16s Ladies and played in their Connacht B final against Mayo. Club PRO Damien Clarke stated: "Well done to both girls on making it onto a county team and representing the Club so well. We're very proud of them."

The annual Cul Camps will get underway in July with the football camp taking place from July 4-8 and the Hurling camp running from the July 11-15, - for boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 13 and promises to be an action packed and fun filled few days. Bookings can be made online at kelloggsculcamps.gaa.ie. The cost is €75 for 1st child, €60 for 2nd and €50 for 3rd and subsequent child. Each child will receive a Cul Camps kit pack consisting of a Backpack, Jersey and a Zip Top.

Another date for the diary is the County U10 blitz which takes place over two weekends on the 19th and 25th of June in the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence and the club will be sending all their U10s to that.

If you or your child are interested in joining the club and training with any of the underage or junior teams then contact the relevant coach from the listed.

BALLINASLOE GAA CUMANN LÚTHCHLEAS GAEL BÉAL ÁTHA NA SLUA	
Team	Contact Details
Football & Hurling Nursery	Shane Kenny 086 3624580
Boys Born 2015/2016/2017	Gary Coone 086 3871872
Girls Born 2016/2017	
U8 Girls Football	Emma Noone 086 3484233
U8 & U9 Boys Football	Shane Kenny 086 3624580
U8 & U9 Hurling	Ronan Lally 087 2369665
U10 Girls Football	Damien Clarke 086 1704241
U10 & U11 Boys Football	John Coughlan 087 7433117
U10 & U11 Hurling	Damien Friel 087 9477492
U12 Girls Football	Ronan Campbell 087 8456682
U12 U13 U14 Hurling	Damien Ó Neachtain 087 4186536
U12 & U13 Boys Football	Michelle Creaven Kelly 086 1976254
U14 Girls Football	Kathryn Gibbons 087 9046140



Clodagh Killeen



Emma Mitchell



U15 Féile Team

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The Athletics club were represented brilliantly at the Galway County Indoor Championships in AIT (TUS) Athlone recently.

For many of the young, energetic athletes this was their first-ever time competing and they all did themselves proud. One of many highlights from the day, Freddy Brown, won gold in the boys u10 400m race. With many speedsters in their ranks the club had numerous competitors in the 60m and 200m races including Alice Moloney, Sarah Berrigan, Emelia Noone, Emma Hurley, Lillie Browne and Luke Mulvey.

Fionn Stephenson, Emmet Dolan, Ella Bookless and Esther Donnelly also competed in the long jump in the various age groups. Club PRO Marion Ruane praised all athletes, coaches and parents involved for making the day very enjoyable for all.

If you are interested in joining the athletics club, you would have to pay a yearly fee no matter what time of year you join. There is training every Tuesday and Thursday at the Dunlo Recreational Track from 6-7pm. For more information on joining the club contact club secretary Antoinette Stephenson on (087) 285 9167 or email ballinasloeanddistrictac@gmail.com



Freddy Brown winning gold in the boys u10 400m race



Alice Moloney competing in girls u10 60m



Lillie Browne competing in girls u10 60m & 200m



Ella Bookless & Esther Donnelly competing in u11 long jump



Sarah Berrigan, Emelia Noone & Emma Hurley competing in girls u9 60m



Fionn Stephenson (u10), Christopher Glynn (u11), Ronan Harney (u11), Philip Newton (u11) & Luke Mulvey (u11)

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L-R: Golf Club Captain Mick O'Hehir, Gary Rigney (Meadow and Green), Lady Captain Peggy Wong, Golf Club president Mattie Curley, Frankie Kenny (Meadow and Green)

The Golf Club has seen some significant work both completed and commenced in the past two months and has seen its efforts rewarded with a "Connacht Hidden Gem Club Award" at the Golfers Guide to Ireland Awards recently.

The buggy paths have been completed in the lower section of the course. The combination of good weather and fantastic work ethic has seen these completed and available for use to members and visitors in a very short period of time.

Having received funding under the Sports Capital Grant, the drainage programme for this year also commenced and members will see significant benefits from the work once completed. The parking facility for buggies beside the clubhouse was extended to account for greater buggy usage.

The Ladies "Get in Golf Programme" continues to grow and over 50 ladies recently commenced the six week beginner programme. Committee member Barry O'Keefe stated: "Facilitated by Mark Staunton, it is fantastic to see such a vibrant interest in the game locally and we look forward to welcoming many of the participants as future club members. At Ballinasloe Golf Club, we were proud to become a Women in Golf Charter Signatory thus showing our commitment to creating a more inclusive culture in golf."

Junior golf is also very active and practice evenings have begun again for the clubs younger members. The young golfers receive tuition on their short game around the practice chipping area and greens. With the guidance of volunteers, the aspiring golfers also have the opportunity to play some holes on the course to put their practice into action.

There was great recognition for the club's management and Meadow and Green restaurant recently as they picked up great accolades at the awards night for Golfers Guide to Ireland in Co. Clare. Meadow and Green Club Restaurant won the best clubhouse restaurant in Connacht. With the Golf club winning the Hidden Gem award in Connacht.

Planning for this year's Festival of Golf is advanced. The festival will run from July 8 to 16 and encompasses an open team of 4 competition, an open ladies day competition and an open seniors gents competition. Thanks to generous sponsorship the club are able to offer many prizes extending to almost €10,000 in total. The novelty raffle for a Mondello Park driving experience is sure to be an attractive proposition for both golfers and non-golfers alike. Tickets will be priced at €10. All proceeds from the Festival of Golf will be reinvested in the club.

If you are interested in joining the golf club, please phone the office - (090) 964 2126 or email ballinasloegolfclub@hotmail.com to talk through options for beginners, improvers and returning members.



Aidan Grenham of Ballinasloe was selected by Golf Ireland to be part of a four-man team for the 2022 to represent Ireland at the European Team Championships for Golfers with a Disability. Aidan was selected after a two selection day selection process at Carton House recently. The competition will take place from June 9-11 in Belgium's Koksijde Golf ter Hille.



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It has been a busy couple of months for the cycling club. Activities kicked off with the club's Annual Couch to 50k which commenced in March and ran for 8 weeks. It was a great opportunity for people to get out on their bikes regardless of experience. Ten people overall took part over the few weeks.

Club member, Gerry Blake was part of the Cycle 2022 team who cycled 800 km over seven days on behalf of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust recently. This annual sponsored cycle normally takes place in France but due to Covid, took place in Ireland this year. The Irish Pilgrimage Trust has been travelling on pilgrimages/holidays with young people with special needs from all over Ireland for over 50 years.

Ballinasloe Youth Group held its annual Youth Races catering for U12, U14 and U16 age groups for both boys and girls at Aughrim Village. The event was a great success and Club Chairman Seamus Kelly thanked everyone who got involved: "We would like to thank all the riders, their parents, the sponsors Cooper Helmets and Barry's Cycles, and especially the volunteers who assisted on the day and without who's support such events could not happen."

Unfortunately, the club's Tour de Shams has been postponed for this year but it will return in 2023.

The club holds cycles on Sunday mornings from 8.00, 8.30 and



Seamus Kelly, Edel Kelly, Tracy Slevin, Helen Gavin, Kerrill Burke, Noel Slevin and Paul Dolan – Couch to 50K

9.00 am catering for different fitness levels with coffee stops along the way. Similarly, on Wednesday evenings at 7.00pm. All cycles leaving from Barry's Cycles.

If you are interested in cycling, you can contact their Facebook or Instagram page at ballinasloecyclingclub or email ballinasloecyclingclub@gmail.com about joining for the year.



Club member Gerry Blake

KEIGHERY WINS ANOTHER TROPHY

Ballinasloe Snooker Club have continued their successful 2021/22 campaign with yet more silverware to add to the trophy cabinet.

Chairman Paul Keighery collected a huge national accolade, winning the snooker and billiards Ireland Coach of the year. A well-deserved honour following successful coaching programmes with young people in the area.

The club also hosted the Ger McGrath memorial tournament in honour of the late Ger McGrath who won multiple trophies in the club. A thrilling final went the way of Paul Keighery who defeated Adrian O'Rourke 3-2.



Paul Keighery

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A fun-filled day of basketball was held locally for the opening of regenerated courts at Hymany Park/Esker Fields. Basketball Ireland hosted the open day, and national basketball players were in attendance.

The aim of the project is to establish Basketball as a mixed sports for after school hours. Senator Aisling Dolan stated "It was great to see 30 or more children and students out enjoying basketball. This event is funded through government investment by Sport Ireland in the Ballinasloe area last year. Evie Day from Doire Beg also shows how everyone can make a difference, who with her cousin Fia started a petition to have access to a basketball court after school hours in Ballinasloe and I was able to raise this with Galway Sports Partnership".

"Credit is due to the residents in Hymany Curragh Park who wanted more activities for children in the area clearing up this area and working with Esker Hills & Seamus Goldrick in Galway County Council to rejuvenate the basketball court," Dolan added.

The project was a cross collaboration between the Galway Local Sports Partnership, the Housing Department of Galway County Council, OMW suppliers and Basketball Ireland, the national governing sports body who all supported the opening day.

James Kilkenny of Galway Sports Partnership was in attendance on the day and thoroughly enjoyed it: "It was great to work with Mike Murray from Basketball Ireland who brought players from the NUI Galway team Mystics, organising games for children with a few professional basketball tips in there too."

Louise Burke, from Sport Ireland added: "This is an incredible opportunity to get so active and there is a fantastic atmosphere here. Basketball is such an accessible sport for girls and boys



Sen. Dolan with Evie Day from Doire Beg and her cousin Fia Hamill from Garbally Drive with their petition from local residents to have a basketball court in town which could be used outside of school hours.



Mike Murray Basketball Ireland, James Kilkenny Sports Partnership, Louise Burke Sports Partnership, Caroline Walsh East Galway Celtics Basketball team, Senator Aisling Dolan, Helen Cawley Hymany Curragh Park Residents Association, André Esker Fields resident.

and Sport Ireland supports initiatives with Sports Partnership groups across the country to achieve our goal of 60% of people in Ireland to be physically active and enjoying sport in their local area. I look forward to seeing a basketball club start in the Ballinasloe area."

The hope in the future is to get enough interest to start up a Basketball Club for the area for boys and girls of all ages. Galway Sports Partnership are planning to hold a second event in June, check their Facebook Page for updates.

HOCKEY CLUB CELEBRATE FIRST SEASON



BACK ROW: Ava, Lydia, Lauren and Ryan
FRONT ROW: Cailín, Katie and Rebecca enjoying the blitz

Ballinasloe Lions Hockey Club is coming to the end of their very successful 12-week trial period. Over the past number of weeks boys and girls aged 8-16 and a mixed adult group have been training weekly as they all came together to try out the sport, some for the first time.

The woman behind it all is Jennifer Hyde, a star hockey player, who started the project as she felt people in the locality would love to try the new sport out. "Our club is a grassroots project which aims to promote the game of hockey in the locality. Absolutely no experience is required to join any group. This is particularly applicable to the adult session. The aim here being to get out, try something different, meet new people and challenge yourself to learn something new" states Jennifer.

"As adults we push children out of their comfort zones but all too often we like to stay firmly in our own comfort zones. We



Kids playing in the recent blitz

have a number of adults who only started hockey this year and the feedback from them has been fantastic. Reassuring us that sport is for all and that we can indeed still surprise ourselves with our abilities once we allow the barriers to come down and let go of the fear of failure" she added.

The club's underage players had their first blitz recently in which they played against all four newly founded clubs in Connacht. They played the Loughrea Lakers, Athenry Swans and Tuam Falcons in what was a fantastic experience for all the new players.

"The club has a wide range of boys and girls in all age groups and it has been so rewarding to see the progression of these players week by week. Connacht Hockey has been incredibly supportive of our endeavours and they are running coaching courses for the fundamentals of hockey this Summer. Again, no experience is required to complete this one day course. Thanks to everyone for the fantastic support we have received so far, particularly from Ballinasloe Town Football Club who allow us to use their Astro turf pitches to run training sessions" Jennifer concluded.

If you have any queries about the club on getting involved in any capacity, you can get in touch via their social media platforms on both Instagram and Facebook as well as via email at admin@ballinasloelionshockeyclub.com

The Ballinasloe Showgrounds are gearing up for an action packed and eventful summer. They recently held the Connacht Horse League which is one of the most popular leagues that runs throughout the summer in different venues throughout the province. The first day included the fiercely competitive Connacht Grand Prix with some of the finest jumpers in the region contesting. There were four other competitions on the day as well. The Sunday was for pony jumping with 8 competitions taking place over all. Up to €6,000 in prize money was won over the two days.

The show is running a show jumping event on July 16 and 17 called the Stars Tour Horse Jumping for the first time ever. The event is a set up league and is seen as an excellent opportunity for those preparing for the season ahead. The Tour will run from 9 am each day to 6 pm each evening.

On Saturday the youth tour will take place while on Sunday it will be the adult tour. The national wide league will see the horses jump over different fence heights in different events with an appealing €2,000 worth of prize money and a Rosette to the first four winners in each event. The public can attend the event free of charge with it being a great chance to see some good jumping over the two days.

Further down the line, there will be an Irish Draught All-Ireland Show in the showgrounds on September 11 followed by the annual Ballinasloe Agricultural Show on September 25. Closing dates for the show entries this year will be September 17.

The Ballinasloe Horse & Agri. Show is open every day of the year for the schooling of Horses and Ponies. For further enquiries on schooling, for arena hire or for entries for the Agricultural Show call their office number (087) 367 5757.



The showgrounds in action

Photos by Gerry Stronge

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The Ballinasloe Rugby Club's conveyor belt of talent continues to produce players of great potential, with two of the club's finest products nominated for some outstanding awards of late.

Matthew Devine capped a brilliant season, with the scrum half named Connacht Academy Player of the Year at the annual Connacht Rugby Awards Ball held recently, largely thanks to his terrific form for the Ireland Under-20s during their Grand Slam-winning Six Nations run. Devine played a key role in the under 20s, winning all five of their games during the campaign as he wowed spectators and pundits alike with his excellent performances. Touching down four times throughout the tournament the award was due recognition for the hugely promising

20-year-olds form this season.

Aoibheann Reilly was also nominated for the WHOOP Women's 15s Young Player of the Year at the Rugby Players Ireland awards. Having impressed for Blackrock College during the All-Ireland League season, Reilly earned her first cap for Ireland against Wales in their Six Nations opener. Reilly hasn't looked back since and went on to be a shining light for the side during their campaign. Having now got the experience under her belt Aoibheann is now no doubt looking ahead to a long and successful career in the green jersey.

Ballinasloe Rugby club are holding an 8-week programme to encourage girls from the 8-14 to take up rugby in association with Irish rugby called "Give it a try".

The course is designed to teach all the basic skills required for rugby through rugby based games and drills, they will be slowly built up to be able to participate in games by the end of the programme and participate in a regional blitz against other GIAT clubs.



Ballinasloe u16 team Connacht U16 Plate Champions with coaches Tosh Walsh and David McKeigue

Ballinasloe was one of the founding clubs to encourage girls into the game, setting up both minis and youth girls teams. They currently have girls' teams at u10 to u18's level and have produced many representatives on both the Connacht team and now the Irish national team.

If you'd like to follow in these ladies' footsteps or just have some fun and meet some new friends the course will be running until June 26, at 10am every Sunday at the clubs pitch. The cost is €10 per person which includes a free t shirt. You can register on the following link www.sportsmanager.ie/registration/event-registration

The club's u16 girls team triumphed in the Connacht U16 Plate Final against Claremorris recently. There was some outstanding skill on display from both teams and it was an extremely close encounter with Claremorris leading by the narrowest of margins towards the end. The Ballinasloe girls never gave up and showed what a skilful and talented side they are and with the last kick of the game they came from behind to win 29-26 making it a fantastic end to the season for the team.



2nd pic: Matthew Devine with the Connacht Academy Player of the Year Award

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St. Cuan's Utd have strengthened the role of women in sport this season with the successful registration of their new women's team and the U14's girls squad entered into the new RDYSL/Girl's League. They hope to continue their focus by promoting participation amongst girls starting from an early age within the club.

The club held their AGM recently where it was decided they would appoint Hazel Crowley as Club Children's Officer and Padraig Concannon as Club Designated officer. They will provide an important role in ensuring the necessary compliance, requirements and procedures set out by the FAI and RDYSL are maintained in the football club, focusing on a child-centred ethos.

It's a busy time once again for all underage squads and coaches with the resumption of matches. PRO Leanne Mongan thanked all their members for their continued support: "We are always grateful to the players, parents, volunteers, coaches and committee members for their continued support and dedication to the club as we embark on another exciting season for all our teams."

Under their new club development plan, the club are also making plans on some major developments of their football pitch and they are for any new sponsorship ahead of these plans. If interested you can contact Chairperson Padraig Concannon on (087) 699 3470 or PRO Leanne Mongan on (085) 846 5754.



Senior Women who played against Kilkerrin recently



St Cuan's u14 girls team

COMMUNITY GAMES BACK ON TRACK

The Ballinasloe Community Games are up and running again after two years of Covid lockdown, as the children get out and about again taking part in healthy sporting and cultural activities.

The Community Games programme of events with competitions in art, model making and handwriting already having taken place, with music and quiz events also well underway.

The big upcoming event is the Annual Community games Parish Sports, which will be held in Duggan Park on Thursday, June 9 at 6 pm. Boys and Girls aged 6 to 16 will take part in a wide range of events throughout the evening including 60m, 80m, 100m, 200m, 600m and 1200m races, hurdles and relay races. There's fun promised for all ages as there will also be

Mam's, Dad's and Granny's races! Entries are confined to Ballinasloe Community Games Area and entry forms are available in parish schools and will be distributed to each child.

July sees the team events like: soccer, Gaelic football, camogie, hurling, rounders, rugby, pitch and putt and swimming, so there is plenty for everyone to get involved in. If there is anyone interested in entering a team, please contact Carmel at (087) 620 7477

If you have any queries on age groups or eligibility for the Ballinasloe Community Games you can contact the committee through www.communitygames.ie/ballinasloe





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Damian Mac Con Uladh, our Corinthian Correspondent, awoke me to the Bloomsday connection to our fair town and indeed one of its prominent public worship buildings as well as the Holles Street National Maternity Hospital some years ago.

Bloomsday (16th of June when James Joyce first met his lover and wife – Galway based Nora Barnacle) whilst celebrated the world over, has muted acclaim in town even though the web of time and 117 years has brought us back full circle to the plot of Ulysess (celebrating its centenary year of publication) and the romantic wanderings around Dublin of the protagonist – Leopold Bloom.

For those unfamiliar with the novel “Oxen of the Sun” chapter 14 of Ulysses, mentions a Dr “Horne” no less than ten times. That refers to Sir Andrew J. Horne, who was born in 1856 in Ballinasloe, the son of Junius and Frances Horne of Society Street, who owned a number of buildings on the street, from the old Convent secondary school at No 2 (where they probably lived. Dr Rossitor later lived there) up to what was McCullagh’s at No 5.

Horne was the founder and first Joint Catholic Master of the National Maternity Hospital in Holles Street. He studied medicine

in Dublin and Vienna, was joint Master for 30 years, he was active in the Foundation of the Women’s National Health Association as well as the Society For The Prevention of Cruelty To Children. He became President of the Royal College of Physicians in 1907 and died in 1924.

It is suggested that Horne represents Helios, the Greek sun god, and also oxen (Horne=horn).

Playing around with his name, Joyce wrote: “Send us bright one, light one, Horhorn, quickening and wombfruit.” Referring to the hospital, Joyce continued: “Of that house A. Horne is lord. Seventy beds keeps he there, teeming mothers are wont that they lie for to thole and bring forth bairns hale so God’s angel to Mary quoth. Watchers tway there walk, white sisters in ward sleepless. Smarts they still, sickness soothing: in twelve moons thrice an hundred. Truest bedthanes they twain are, for Horne holding wariest ward.”

In 1915, Horne had a stained glass window erected in memory of his parents in St. Michael’s Church, which also contains windows erected by his father, Junius who died in 1907.

We published a snippet on the Facebook page last summer and I got a call from an (former Portnick based Horne) inlaw who thought I might be interested in meeting a descendant of the Hornes – the Great Granddaughter of Junius and Granddaughter of Andrew – Margret – a sprightly ninety something year old – still living a fiercely independent life in south Dublin in the Horne residence.

The appointment was arranged and I over stayed my welcome by some 2 hours – she was utterly engaging – she had unique memories of her childhood before the war and her father’s recollections of visits to Ballinasloe. The sitting room and dining room walls were bedecked with photos and souvenirs



Sir Andrew J. Horne



John Feely plays guitar for the President Michael D and his wife Sabina at the Phoenix Park Bloomsday Celebrations 2021.

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The Horne Stained glass window in St. Michael's Church.

of her family tree – and she showed me wonderful scrap books of picnics at Garbally's 40 steps, Clonfert Cathedral, The River Suck in the thirties and forties.

Margret's father Andrew, like his father born in Society St (who gave his residence to the Sisters of Mercy for their School) – studied medicine in Trinity and when the bugles sounded in 1914 he volunteered for service with Royal Army Medical Corps. He served with distinction and his photographs and watercolour sketches of his time on the front and tending to the wounded are fascinating. As a Lieutenant he was one of the very last cohort of officers with the wounded evacuated from Gallipoli.

The story of the fledging state and the Catholic natives finding their way through education and sacrifice – sometimes with huge support from the church and betimes frustrated by the same institution is etched into this family's tree. Andrew eventually became Assistant Master of Holles St. and was married to Delia Moclair it's first ever assistant female Master!

Margret herself studied and trained for Almoning (modern day Social Services) she was the Chief Almoner to the Adelaide & Meath Hospital and was a pioneering voice in the early days of getting social workers accepted into the trade union movement. She also served in a variety of Catholic third world lay missionary activities. A connection



Margret Horne

with Sean McBride (who famously was nearly killed in a road accident and nursed back to life by the FMDM sisters in Portiuncula – and became Chair of the Board of Trustees) saw her develop a friendship with Monsignor Louis Page. Sadly she was one his last visitors to Arus Vianney before he died in 1999.

The erudite, loquacious and very hospitable Margret was able last summer to get about to visit her since deceased twin sister, attend her religious duties – as a car driver but railed at the injustice of COVID having to stop her playing her GOLF!!

Ballinasloe had significant input into the Annual National Joycean Bloomsday Celebrations last year when, local Classical guitarist John Feely actually got to play Joyce's original guitar for the President Michael D and his wife Sabina and acclaimed local author Nuala O'Connor was flat out with oodles of live radio programmes and TV broadcast - discussing indepth Nora Barnacle who she profiled in her latest Novel "Nora".

Her Novel was selected by Dublin city Council for "One Dublin One Book Read" and featured recently on the RTE's "Book On One". 'I'm honoured and humbled that Dublin City Council has chosen Nora as its One Dublin One Book read for 2022, the Ulysses centenary year. I imagine Nora Barnacle would be as pleased as I am to see her contribution to the life and work of James Joyce celebrated in this way. I'm a proud Dub and this wonderful opportunity has me really looking forward to engaging with library users and readers, all over my home city, in 2022.' stated Nuala.

NORA has been shortlisted for two awards - Kerry Group Irish Novel of the Year at Listowel and Irish Novel of the Year at the Dalkey Literary Awards.



Author Nuala O'Connor

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In his probing assessment as to why our community may have witnessed sectarian outrages 100 years ago this is the second and final part of a moment in our collective history that does cause some shame and discomfort.

"The East Galway Democrat" published the following letter from Andrew Staunton, Chairman of the Urban Council, on 22nd April:

"I desire to bring under the notice of the Public the following:

(1) The failure of non-Catholics in Ballinasloe and District to take any action in connection with the atrocities in Belfast.

(2) No protest has been made by this section although other parts of Ireland have done so.

(3) The non-Catholics here as in other parts of Ireland are amongst the most prosperous in the community.

(4) Although a Conference has been held by the three Governments and certain recommendations made, no effective steps, as far as the Northern and English Governments are concerned, have been taken to honour the agreement arrived at.

(5) It is time a Conference of the leading people of Southern Ireland was held with a view to making an exchange of the Catholic workers of Belfast for some of the large non-Catholic landowners and businessmen, or as an alternative, that families be migrated from Belfast and billeted on non-Catholic families outside the Six County Area, as this seems to be the only remedy to avoid the possible extinction of the Northern Catholics."

One can only guess at what the writer hoped to achieve by the publication of this letter, but its effect must certainly have been to exacerbate sectarian tensions locally. He was wrong, though, in assuming that the Protestant community in Ballinasloe was indifferent to the situation in the North, for on the same page of the paper a news item appeared headed SOUTHERN PROTESTANT APPEAL: "We are informed that the Southern



Protestant Appeal reached Ballinasloe on Thursday evening for signatures, and already some have been affixed by the local Protestants. By Saturday it is hoped to have the Appeal completed and returned to headquarters." The text of the Appeal read as follows:

"We, whose signatures are here appended, being Protestant residents of Southern Ireland, desire to express our abhorrence of sectional bitterness manifesting itself in acts of violence. We earnestly hope that recent horrible reprisals, culminating in the killing of children, will make it clear that citizens of all creeds and classes must unite in a most determined effort to secure peace.

"We most earnestly represent to our fellow-Protestants, as well in Southern Ireland as in the Six Counties, that all their

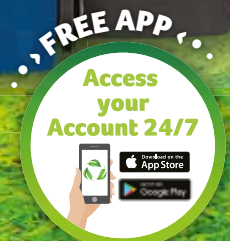
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influence should be used to secure the greatest possible means of agreement and co-operation between all sections of Irish citizens.

"We further desire, as members of religious minorities in Southern Ireland, to put on record that the South of Ireland has been notably free from sectarian violence, and that in our opinion it is only by the maintenance of friendly relations between members of the different religious bodies that the future happiness and prosperity of the country can be assured."

In addition, on 13th May a letter appeared in "The Democrat" from Rev. Samuel J. Narney, Methodist Minister of Ballinasloe:

"With reference to the Southern Protestant Appeal which has been circulated amongst the ministers and people of our Protestant communities, and which expressed abhorrence at all sectarian bitterness, I wish to point out that I submitted the document to every available member of my congregation with others, and in no case was a signature refused. Our Methodist people here bear willing testament to the goodwill and support of our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, for many of whom, personally, I have the utmost respect and esteem. As a community we wish to live as Christians first and foremost, imbued with the spirit of love towards all, enjoined by Our Blessed Lord, claiming only the liberty to exercise our faith and free citizenship, and holding ourselves aloof from mere party politics. We have had special services of intercession for the peace of our beloved land, and in every way have sought to contribute our quota to the peace and prosperity of the town and district in which our lot is cast. I may also add that it is proposed to send a Methodist representative from the town to convey our candid sympathy with the sentiments of those Southern Protestants who have this evening convened a meeting in the Mansion House, Dublin, for the purpose of bearing witness to the spirit of goodwill and tolerance



hitherto general in the South and West of Ireland. To this spirit I, as a much-travelled Methodist Minister, can bear hearty testimony."

The same edition of the paper reported that the Select Vestry of Creagh Church of Ireland Union passed a resolution on 11th May to the effect that "we abhor and condemn as most unchristian and uncivilized the murders and outrages which have been committed upon men, women and children, as a result of sectarian hatred, as well as the forcible depriving of any Irish citizen of his means of livelihood because of his conscientious opinions."

While nobody claimed responsibility or was ever brought before a court of justice for the campaign of intimidation in Ballinasloe, it was common knowledge that the Executive (Anti-Treaty) forces were the culprits. This faction of the I.R.A. remained dominant locally until challenged by the arrival of a 50-strong company of GHQ (Pro-Treaty) troops to occupy Garbally Court on 14th June.

Though there were many instances of attacks on Southern Protestants during the period in question, these were mostly confined to the countryside. Ballinasloe seems to have been the worst urban area for this activity. It is scarcely without significance that, whereas the Protestant population of the Twenty-Six Counties fell by 34 per cent between 1911 and 1926, locally the decline was 50 per cent.

How did Ballinasloe achieve this unenviable distinction for sectarian intolerance? A number of factors were at play here. Firstly, the practice of Presbyterian-owned businesses employing their co-religionists from Ulster rather than recruiting locally was a cause of resentment. Secondly, there was a total absence of responsible leadership, military, political and religious, at a local level. Neither Ada English T.D. (Anti-Treaty) nor Patrick Hogan T.D. (Pro-Treaty) is on record for a statement on the situation. The Urban Council was similarly tight-lipped, as was Fr. John Madden, Administrator of the parish, who became preoccupied with the moral issue posed by girls from the town visiting Garbally Court after dark to consort with the Free State soldiers billeted there. No attempt was made to rally the majority community of the district in support of their Protestant neighbours. Thirdly, the local I.R.A. had failed to cover themselves in glory by their martial prowess during the War of Independence. When the opportunity presented itself, targeting with impunity defenceless Protestants and ex-policemen provided a welcome release of pent-up energies.

Until the work of the late Peter Hart began to appear over the past two decades, historians of the period generally ignored the more vicious manifestations of sectarianism in the early days of the Free State. An egregious example of the air-brushing out of unpalatable facts can be found on page 293 of Fr. P.K. Egan's "The Parish of Ballinasloe" published in 1960, where he writes: "In the Ulster pogroms, carried out by Orange mobs, following the establishment of the Northern Ireland parliament by Lloyd George's 'partition act', many Catholics were killed, and greater numbers were driven from their homes. Fearing reprisals a few Protestant businessmen left Ballinasloe and retired to the North, but those who remained were not molested."

Egan, who was regarded as a serious historian, came to Ballinasloe as a curate in 1938 when many parishioners must still have had a clear recollection of the events of 16 years previously, and he was known to have conducted extensive local interviews in the course of his research. It strains credulity that he could have been unaware of what really happened in the town in 1922!

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Because of the Civil War in Ireland, one hundred years ago, the All-Ireland Football Final was not played until 7th October 1923 which saw Dublin defeat Galway by 6 points to 4.

The Westerners featured eleven Ballinasloe men in their lineout, backed up by one from Loughrea, two from Dunmore and one from Mountbellew. However the road to Croke Park was not easy as the Connacht championship did not commence until 6th May of 1923 and saw two objections being successful. The Connacht final saw Sligo beat Galway by 3-2 to 1-7 but Galway lodged an objection over a controversial goal and in a re-fixed Connacht final the men in maroon beat the Yeats county by 2-4

to 1-5, in Croke Park.

A week later, Galway faced Dublin in the All-Ireland final with Willie Flanagan replacing Frank Benson in goal, and introducing Paddy Kilroy from Caltra and Harry Cunningham (Mountbellew). A young man who played his way onto the Galway team that day was Patrick Jennings, a native of Kilbannon, Tuam, who was ordained a priest seven years later and was PP in Killarney for 17 years until his death in 1981.

The Galway lineout on All-Ireland final day was: Willie Flanagan, Harry Cunningham, Tom Molloy, Tom Hession, Mick Donelan, Paddy Kilroy, John Kirwan, Denis Egan, Jack Hanniffy, John Egan, Leonard McGrath, Gilbey Jennings, Martin Walsh, Michael (Knacker) Walsh, Paddy Roche.



GALWAY-SENIOR CONNACHT FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS 1922

BACK ROW, L TO R: Tom Egan, P. Flynn, R. Kenny, S. Burke, S. Murray, Paddy Kilroy, Martin Egan, Willie Flanagan, Denis Egan, Paddy Reddington, Tom Hession, John Egan. **MIDDLE ROW, L TO R:** Frank Benson, Tom Molloy, John Hanniffy, Mick Donelan, Michael (Knacker) Walsh, capt.; Gilbey Jennings, John Kirwan, Martin Walsh, Leonard McGrath. **IN FRONT:** Paddy Roche and Harry Cunningham.



BRACKERNAGH-STREET LEAGUE FOOTBALL WINNERS 1958/59

BACK ROW, L TO R: Mr. Pat Carney NT, Kevin Hill, Patrick McGinley, Michael O'Grady, Des Madden, Gregory Dunne, Gabriel McCann, Michael O'Dwyer, Brendan Boswell, Michael Commerton, Fr. P.K. Egan. **FRONT ROW, L TO R:** John Treacy, Kevin Hyland, Paddy Egan, Ronnie Madden, Sean Og Hurley, Jeffrey Cunningham, Francis Finnerty, Louis Commerton, Francis O'Dwyer.

The community of Moore, Cullagh and wider Ballinasloe has been reeling with the news that Claire Curley (nee Guinan) – Accountant and Auditor, has passed away at home on the 18th of April.

Claire had battled with a serious illness in recent years but no one really anticipated her untimely passing.

Educated in Scoil Mhuire – she went on to follow her passion for numeracy in studying accountancy. She qualified with Willie Staunton and Co in Athlone. She then did a number of years with Paddy Pendergast and finally she did two years working in RBK Athlone before moving on up the ranks there – undertaking a lot of professional certifications in the process.

Claire married her teenage sweetheart James Curley and in time became, mother to Jake, Ciaran & Aiveen.

Folks of her vintage who knew her well in her younger years will recall a lover of music, voice and movement - in many of her spare hours she could be found singing and dancing with the Ballinasloe Musical Society or involved with Live Performance theatre in Moore, Athlone and Town.

She starred in a great many of live shows, cabarets and performances in the Town Hall and elsewhere and was a marvellous disciplined performer on stage. Off stage at various awards, homecoming receptions and fundraising she was in every sense the life and soul of the party.

The Moore lady even managed to coax a stage shy hubby into the Town Hall to help with sets and lights and swore some of her toddler babies could better sing the numbers that she would have to learn! She was a dedicated committee member of the Ballinasloe Musical



Society - serving as an Office holder for a number of seasons.

She was gentle, courteous, fun loving and generous to a fault.

In her professional life she was helpful, thorough and had a huge attention to detail. She went over and beyond duty to any client. She established her own private accountancy and audit practice in the last decade and was the first Auditor to the Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre CLG - guiding the financial prudent management of the early years of the company through Charity formation days. All her private and public clients will testify to her dedication

and professionalism.

Few will remember her passion for sport of her pre marriage days apart from the usual Roscommon and Pearses supporting moments but when her children took up soccer and indeed camogie – she threw herself into the support of them on the field and Clubs that encouraged their talents with huge vigour and typical 100% commitment. Town AFC and Pearses Camogie Clubs were both blessed with her support and enthusiasm.

Claire was a very active member of those club through the years and always there to help out – whether it was trips to Halewood or Club Rossie All-Ireland Final Preps.

In latter yearws, as the cliff face she was facing grew taller and her own options for fun became limited, she would light up with the retelling of exploits or just activities and key educational moments of her three chicks!

Claire will be missed by us all. Our community's cultural and sporting fields have lost a huge enabler, participant and encourager. Our loss is a drop in the ocean to the void in her loving family - Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with James, Jake, Ciaran, Aiveen and all of the Curley & Guinan families at this very difficult time.

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Aughrim lost one of its beloved teachers and community activists with the recent passing of Jo Scannell O'Sullivan (formerly Ward).

The former primary school Principal and local heritage and history devotee, began her teaching career in the early 1950s, having briefly served in both Ballinasloe and Kiltormer, settled permanently in her native Aughrim for another 43 years. She

was appointed Principal in St Catherine's Aughrim, for the last 8 years of her career.

Jo began her studies to be a primary school teacher at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick during the late 1940s. During this time and beyond, the marriage ban was in place, and Jo had decided that such was her vocation to teaching that she would forego any ideas towards marriage. Thankfully, however, the ban was lifted and Jo married Garda Detective Tony O'Sullivan, having three children, Eoin (deceased) Shane and Sinead, where they settled in Aughrim and which allowed Jo to be involved and immerse herself not only in the school, which she always loved, but in the community at large. In later years after Tony passed away, Jo remarried Ballinasloe native Liam Scannell, a retired garda.

She was very interested in local history and was a very active member

of the Aughrim Heritage committee which later evolved into the Development Committee. This group was instrumental in getting the Heritage Park in the centre of the village and the Interpretive Centre; a centre that educates on all aspects of the Battle of Aughrim, incorporating a museum and lecture space along with a café. Jo, herself, would have given some talks during the annual summer schools on the battle and she very much incorporated this epoch of history into her daily classes. She too, was a contributor and co-editor on a book that was published on the history of Aughrim in the late 1990s.

Jo's commitment to community life in Aughrim was further exemplified by the love she had of her local Church. This was recognised a number of years ago when she was awarded the Benemerenti Medal, or Papal Medal for over 50 years' service to the Church. For many years Jo prepared the readers schedule, the servers, sang in the choir and was a minister of the Eucharist along with preparing students for the sacraments.

After Jo retired, she totally enjoyed spending time in the company of her two granddaughters Alida and Sholah while always indulging in her passion for painting and true to form continued to help students, this time at Glebe National School with their art. Her love of heritage, the Irish language, art and music amongst other things form part of the great legacy she left behind to the village that she cherished.

It was fitting that many of her former pupils returned to form a guard of honour as their teacher's remains was brought through the village to its final resting place in the New Cemetery.

BALLINASLOE MAN DIES IN NORTHAMPTON



John Brendan D'Arcy who passed away in Northampton, England was one of a family of twelve that grew up in Ballinasloe. He was born to Thomas and Janey D'Arcy on 29th April 1927, in the Market Square and in his late teens enlisted in the Irish army for the last few years of World War 2.

Like some of his late brothers, John worked in Ballinasloe's Top Quarries and also trained as a carpenter before being "invited" to England in the 1950's to help with the rebuilding of London after the war. But living in dormitory type accommodation, as well as feeling homesick, was not what he expected. However John persisted and became competent in many trades. He helped build Gatwick Airport in readiness for the Queen's opening, painted the lampposts and phone boxes on The Mall in preparation for Princess Margaret's wedding and still managed to work for Bryan Ferry and Roxy Music.

In 1974, John and his family moved to Northampton where he spent

many years working at the Ministry of Defence bases. This entitled him access to the inner sanctums of top security installations throughout England, something he was very proud of.

A great lover of Chelsea football, his love of country music, listening to Irish Radio and his love of his family were always his priority. But John never forgot his roots and on his 90th birthday he brought his entire family back to Ballinasloe for a gathering with his Irish relations. It proved to be a very nostalgic occasion, reuniting with his two remaining siblings, Nuala and Brian, as well as in-laws, cousins and friends.

Although still driving at 91 years, his health gradually deteriorated and the loss of his beloved wife was another blow. He then unfortunately contacted Covid in hospital and passed away just short of his 93rd birthday.

The family honoured their dad's wishes by bringing his ashes back to his hometown and following mass in St. Michael's Church, the funeral took place to the family plot in Creagh Cemetery. It would have been his 95th birthday. John D'Arcy is survived by his daughters Mary and Sandria, son Keith, brother Brian, sister Nuala and a very large extended family and friends.

25 YEARS A CROKE PARK STEWARD



Terence Fahy came from a great Ballinasloe sporting family and not surprisingly spent twenty five years working as a steward at Croke Park. And he even got some of his brothers and cousins to help out on All-Ireland days at headquarters.

He was the 7th son in a family of eight boys and one girl, born to Patrick and Mel (nee Goode) in Beechlawn, getting involved in many sports with his siblings. In the 1950's, Terence went to England but later returned to Dublin where he met

his wife, Anne, and had two daughters during their fifty-two years of married life.

A proud Galway man, Terence loved to bring his family on holidays to Salthill and in later years moved back to his home town and purchased a dwelling in Derrymullen. He loved to meet up with old friends, reminisce and socialise where football and hurling were foremost in the lively debates he enjoyed.

A committed family man, Terence will be missed by his wife Anne, daughters Majella and Lorraine, granddaughters Katie and Rebecca, brother Brendan, sister Mary and many other relatives and friends.



Sean, the youngest of thirteen children, was born to Corneilus and Mary Reynolds of Shanboley. Along with his siblings, he attended Newtown N.S. As a young man, he worked in Cullen's Shops, in both Society St. and Main St., Ballinasloe where he had many admirers, some saying he was a 'stunner' and great dancer.

After immigrating to Boston, he met the love of his life Peggy. They married in 1966 and set up life in Boston where they had eight children. The family made yearly trips home where they spent time in Shanboley and Camus, Connemara. But following an accident in 1975, Sean and Peggy decided to move home to Ireland permanently while on holidays in 1976. He was a carpenter by trade and, worked in Boston with his brothers and nephews so Sean started in Portiuncula Hospital with the maintenance staff where he made many friends. It was remarked over the years that "no job was too big for him".

Sean enjoyed all types of sport but, in particular, he loved the Gaelic Games and played a "mean game" of football for Ballinasloe. Down through the years, many family days out were to GAA games and always had an opinion on the referee! He also enjoyed playing darts and competed at both local and regional levels. Many comments were made over the last few weeks about the family's Renault white minibus which Sean drove their children, and often other players, to training and to games when transport was short. Countless memories were made in the bus and there was usually a picnic basket with plenty for all! Sean was involved with underage teams for St. Grellans (Ballinasloe), then with St. Grellan's Ladies GAA and was chairperson of the Galway Ladies GAA in 1988 and 1990.

A lover of traditional Irish music, Sean played the fiddle as a young man. On many occasions, he would play a football game and then go to a dance in the Emerald or cycle to Ballyhaunis or Roscommon.

Sean and Peggy always took the opportunity to get on the dance floor and were flawless in their steps. They both enjoyed playing cards and met some of their best friends playing 25 over the years, winning many hampers at Christmas time.

Sean lived life as best as he could and always enjoyed the craic. He is survived by his wife, Peggy, daughters Mary, Margaret, Bernadette, sons Sean, Brendan, Harry, Robert and William, grandchildren, sons-in-law, daughters-in-laws and extended Reynolds family. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

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AN EMERGING AREA EVENTS CALENDAR 2022

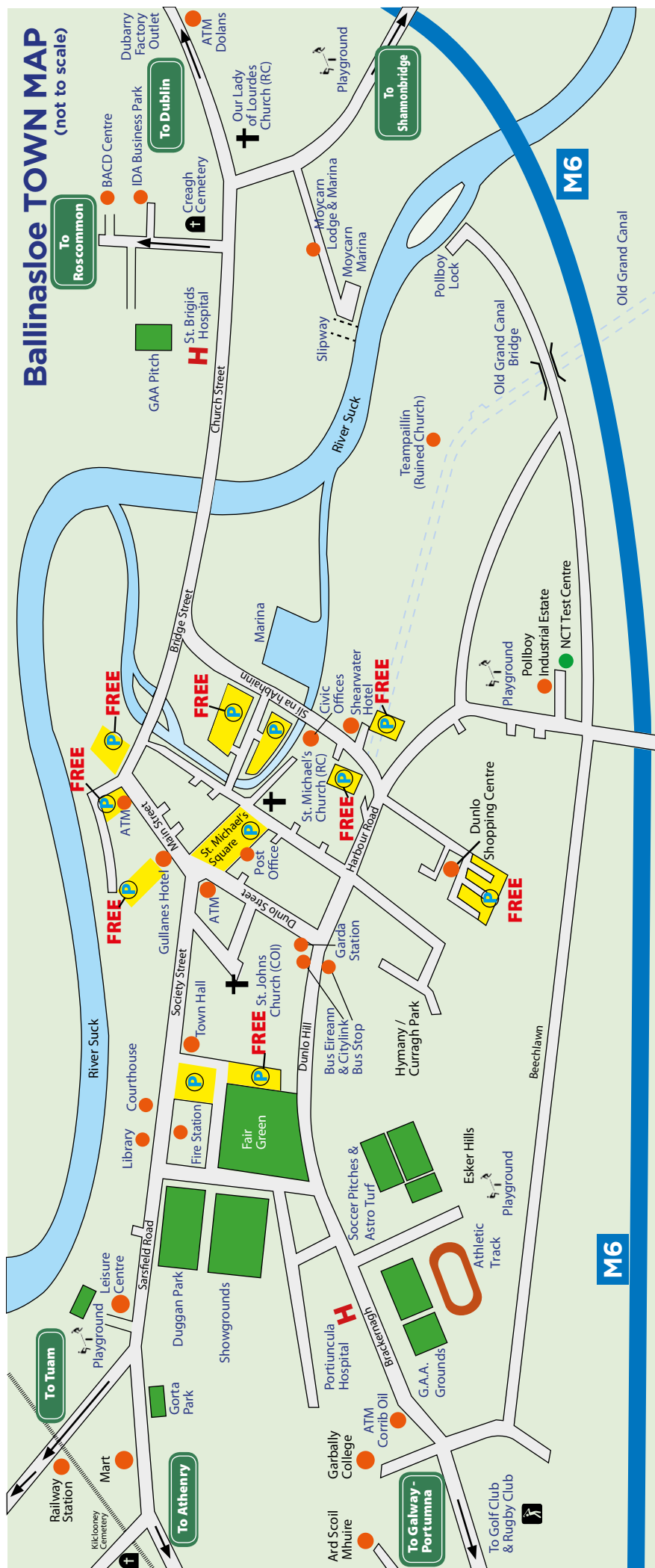
Each edition we will try and list the forthcoming HEADLINE events in our town and locale some 12 months out to give families, relations, visitors and other clubs and societies a chance to see where events are now being scheduled. Please contact us with your Key event dates as early as possible.

All Ireland Heritage Boat Inland Rally	4, 5, 6 June
Eyrecourt Vintage Rally	19 June
Livestock Festival Aughrim	1 & 2 July
Ballinasloe Showground Stars Tour Horse Jumping	16 – 17 July
Ballinasloe Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds	8 – 11 September
Ballinasloe Agricultural Show	25 September
Ballinasloe Horse Fair and Festival	2 – 9 October
Ballinasloe Vintage and Heritage Day	9 October
Zombie Walk	28 – 29 October
ComicCon	4, 5, 6 November*
Christmas Lights	27 November*

*Provisional

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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