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FREE

BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 13 Issue 3: Aug '23 - Sept '23



Photo by Robert Riddell

EVEANNA RYAN
CITY BUSINESS LEADER



GABRIEL ROHAN
LOOKS BACK



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REAMHRA

Welcome to Volume 13 issue 3

Welcome to our 75th read!

Read about our busy, vibrant and growing community.

Have to declare an interest here – My late nan - Maura came from St. Cuan's Village, her father was a policeman and vintner and like a lot in the community I took a small punt in the enterprise but the kinetic energy that bristled in the Ahascragh sunshine; the day the Mc Allisters had Minister Anne Rabbitte T.D. – (who worked up the road in the Bank), open their new business could have powered 4 distilleries!

New Energy, new people, a vision, a plan, leadership skills, shared stakeholder values – local support and private investment has seen a spot 10 km out from St. Michael's spire dust itself down and emerge from five decades of decline. Everybody wishes Gareth, Michelle and team all good things for their new Distillery and the Clan Colla range.

The west of Ireland village and town is starting to grow back – remote working, de congesting Metropolitan areas, low crime, access to reasonable services are all pointing towards progression.

That energy is palpable here in the epicentre too, drill down on the Census data – Urban Electoral Division is at 7361 – 707 souls more than 2016 but wait when you add all the outlying districts, we have a Census Electoral population of 10,584 – which gives massive comfort to employers and investors alike.

These figures are not taking into account the many new faces who will become welcome new residents with the 150 new keyholders for the Dunlo Estates (beside Tesco) over the next few months, the 60 new keyholders in Creagh or indeed the 8 new in St. Josephs Place, or the 13 in Dooleys Corner which all received the green light for planning to go to

The hours, days and weeks are rolling on for 2023 and we are still awaiting our Summer burst of sunshine, however there were many bright moments in the last few months, particularly in the sporting front.

We had John Devine playing a starring role and scoring in a World Rugby Cup Final in South Africa and Heather Payne making history with the Irish Soccer Team in Australia.

Our local Golf Club has facilitated National Competitions and our Golfers have had tremendous success on the National stage so well done to all concerned.

There is a lot of activity on the Building front with the Hospital extension well advanced and the new housing development beside Tesco nearing completion along with several other sites progressing well.

Our new Cinema complex has opened and is a welcome addition to the social life of the Area.

Similar to other towns around the country we will get our fair share of Modular Homes to facilitate the influx of Refugees in the short term and further info on this will evolve over the next few weeks. This will add to the diverse cultural mix the area already



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Tender at the last MDC meeting. As we go to print there is a chance that we may be ear marked - like 7 other towns in the county to undertake our bit of shouldering to the emergency response to the Humanitarian crisis of the Ukraine.

What should not shock us is the level of ambitious growth that the Planners and Local Reps have mapped out for this place – a growth of 30 % of the population by 2028 in the Statutory Area Plan. Some 13 % of that is currently achieved; with all that is in the planning pipeline we could surpass it.

The Office of the Planning Regulator assessment on our expansion plan did not disqualify such front-loading of targets, but said they were "ambitious and will require significant focus and the allocation of resources needed to achieve this level of growth".

Reading some recent social media commentary from locals as to possible new arrivals to our town, would provide little evidence that the state's key resources can cope with the population's basis demands at today's figures.

The OPR submitted that the plan must include age-friendly policies and "a clear strategy in relation to the provision of nursing homes and sheltered housing" given that we now have nearly 2000 folks over 60 year of age and rising – this and the other resource gaps and failures need to be tackled, focussed and not just reported on – as the State's Planning Regulator demanded!

Le Gach De Ghui,
COLM CROFFY,
Editor.



facilitates.

Work on our new Enterprise Hub is proceeding at pace and will be ready to accommodate new Business in Quarter 1, 2024.

We also expect some positive employment news on the IDA site in the coming few weeks.

It is great to see an inclusive Tourism plan being developed for the County, to which we have made submissions to the initial draft plan and look forward to the final plan later in the year. This will enable the Council to leverage funds from the Just Transition fund to enhance existing amenities and develop new ones.

All in all, as this magazine, now in year 13 illustrates, there is a huge amount of positivity about. As always we encourage you to support our advertisers as without them we would be able share the good news.

SEAMUS DUFFY,
Chairman Ballinasloe Area
Community Development Limited.



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Back (L-R): Paul Batty, South Area Engineer; Cllr Michael Connolly, Cllr Peter Keaveney, Cllr Tim Broderick, Cllr Dermot Connolly, Angela Spellman, Meetings Co-ordinator.

Front: Rachel Lowe, Senior Executive Engineer; Director of Services, Liam Hanrahan; Cathaoirleach, Declan Geraghty; Cllr Evelyn Parsons.

The ever-ambitious Cllr Declan Geraghty has been elected as Cathaoirleach for Ballinasloe Municipal District, taking over Cllr Dr. Evelyn Parsons in the role. The East Galway native believes the forecast is bright for the year ahead and hopes he can deliver to the town and surrounds in his new position.

Independent Declan Geraghty, who is married with one son, was first elected as Councillor for the Ballinasloe MDC in the 2019 local elections and has since been serving in the town. Declan found coming into the role that, being new and enthusiastic, he was optimistic he could bring change in the district.

He was initially surprised by the slower pace of working in local government, finding that while operating in the private sector, decisions and change could be made more immediate. Since 2005, Declan and his colleague Michael Donnellan, have been operating a successful roofing retail business - DG Roofing, currently employing 22 people, hubbed in Williamstown.

The Entrepreneur / Businessman believes that he has been quite grateful to be a representative on the Ballinasloe MDC, understanding that he and his fellow councillors must work well as a team. Additionally, he is delighted to help communities within the region and "always has the craic" with the people.

Cllr Geraghty found it was an honour to be appointed as Cathaoirleach, being nominated by Councillors Dermot Connolly and Peter Keavney. Declan believes the role is one of serious civic responsibility and will try perform all his duties and functions to the best of his ability.

Our newest Cathaoirleach (the last before the local elections next June 2024) will be prioritizing tackling issues surrounding drugs and rural crime, as per his appointment on the Joint Policing Committee forum, as well as establishing Community Alerts within the surrounding district villages. In addition, Declan will focus on providing social housing to all those in the area who need it, making sure everyone has a roof over their head. High on his agenda are the improvement of rural road conditions, as well as bringing young people into politics to demonstrate the efforts of Councillors in our regions.

Declan is optimistic about the year ahead and: "can see Ballinasloe go only one way, up". He referred back to recent development plans including the town enhancement scheme and Big Dig project, which he sees as only positives for the municipality. Declan hopes to continue partnering with his Roscommon Council counterparts on developing tourism on the River Suck, as well as in town referencing its accessibility and good infrastructure.

"The way forward with an organization is positivity, negativity can bring people down", he emphasized. Geraghty is adamant to remain optimistic in his role, and working together with the community, hopes to continue to push the town on track for new development during his term.

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In common with other Galway communities like - Gort, Loughrea, Kinvarra, Athenry - Ballinasloe is being earmarked to assist with the nationwide campaign to temporarily house War Refugees from the Ukraine.

A four-acre Poolboy site, located across from KPW Print and adjacent Western Post Form Premises, has been listed as a site of interest for temporary modular homes of Ukrainian refugees and the OPW are now surveying its feasibility for use.

The Galway County Council land is zoned as a R1 priority site for local Social and Affordable housing.

The Modular Home facility will be built and managed by Minister Joe O'Brien's Department, beginning with a series of briefings provided first to local Councillors and afterwards an extensive leaflet drop and email briefing those in the locality on what is being done with the site, who is coming, and the provision of services provided to them.

Extensive engagement with the HSE, Department of Education, local development companies and Galway Rural Development will ensure they have the facilities and resources required.

Director of Services Liam Hanrahan informed the Councillors at a recent MDC Meeting they will not be asked to approve the plans. "Councillors have no role to play other than act as information carriers. Galway County Council have no executive role in shaping or delivering this facility as it has been taken in charge by the State through the OPW vis a vis Emergency Powers."



While emphasising they had a right to ask questions - all six Councillors were unanimous in welcoming local relief to the plight of Ukrainian refugees with Parsons, Dermot Connolly, and Cathaoirleach Geraghty on record of supporting the humanitarian cause.

CLlr Parsons requested that written assurances of emergency resources in Health and Education be provided to them. "As we already have a well recorded deficit of services locally in primary health care, in hospital beds, in teachers and school places, mental health services, we need guarantees that the arrival of any group will not have huge negative impact, moving local people further down the line unfairly."

There is no timeframe available currently and it is understood that serious issues have been discovered in preliminary assessments, questioning the viability of the project in that location.

Mr. Hanrahan stressed 5,000 Ukrainian refugees have been securely living in Galway in harmony with their communities without displacing service users. He confirmed CLlr. Tim Broderick's query that this will be the first modular home facility in the county but emphasised other examples of their recent deployment in Dublin, Sligo and Claremorris.

The Director elaborated, from his understanding, that the site will return to the ownership of the Council upon war's end and the refugees return to their homeland for local social and affordable housing use.

As there is no MDC or County Council full meeting in August (by the September meeting, the units could be in place). The Director of Services gave his personal undertaking that the Councillors will be briefed and met before anything else significant occurs.

A fuller account summary of the proceedings of this agenda item is contained on the Ballinasloe LIFE Facebook page - 27th July.

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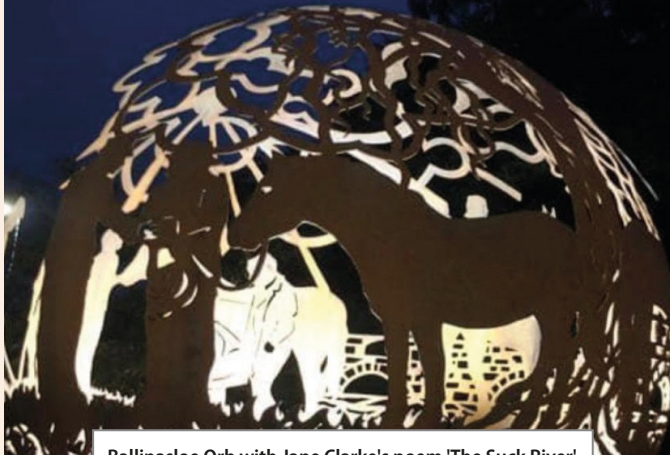
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The Suck
Sometimes together, most often alone,
we'd slip the catch on the rusted chain,
follow the cart track through the bottoms;
the river held our stories, it was where
we'd go to talk or cry or be quiet
in the company of the current,
whether it flowed fast after a flood,
rolled in circling eddies or drifted
smooth and slow past stands of alder
and silver-green willow. We could look
as far as the next bend or out to the island,
speckled with yellow iris, bordered with sedge.

By poet Jane Clarke



Ballinasloe Orb with Jane Clarke's poem 'The Suck River'

Progress is being made for the permanent installation of a new monument 'the Ballinasloe Orb' at the linear park in Slí na hAbhainn.

The Orb was donated as part of the Fire Tour for the European Capital of Culture 2022, designed by Sculptural Artist Jacqueline Pyle and will include a line from Jane Clarke in her poem 'the Suck River'.

"I am urging that it is installed in good time to celebrate Ballinasloe's heritage and culture for this year's October Fair with nice landscaping" states Cllr Evelyn Parsons.

Evelyn acknowledged the engineering staff of Ballinasloe Area Office, Paul Leonard, and the General Operative team who were responsible for temporarily positioning the monument during the 300th year celebrations, and now working to permanently establish it within town.

"I am contributing funding from discretionary monies to support a public lighting up feature which will showcase its design and will add significantly to aesthetics of our public realm, importantly providing extra lighting at night in this area" Parsons noted.

The local MDC Councillor was just elected as Leas-Cathaoirleach for Galway County Council, unanimously voted for the year ahead.

Upon her appointment to the new role, Evelyn explained "I am committed to supporting the Cathaoirleach in his demanding civic role and to ensuring the smooth functioning of our chamber and to support the vital work we undertake in our community for the good of all our people throughout County Galway, while ensuring I effectively represent my local electoral area of Ballinasloe East Galway."



Chief Executive Liam Conneally, Cathaoirleach Liam Carroll, and Leas-Chathaoirleach Evelyn Parsons of Galway County Council

BLUE WAY MOVES CLOSER

Plans are progressing for a new accessible public park and swim area along the River Suck, envisioned to be located behind Main Street. Included in the County Development Plan and five-year Ballinasloe Area Plan, the project has received unanimous support from Galway County Council and the local MDC, but has been the brainchild of Cllr. Evelyn Parsons.

The Council will seek funding for the measure through the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, with €50,000 in technical feasibility applied for in scoping the area for universal water activity, bathing, kayaking and more.

"This is absolutely fantastic news, a game changer for the town in terms of providing amenities, facilities, and as a tourist attraction" states Cllr Parsons, who has been working on the project since her appointment to the MDC council.

She highlighted the Blueway developments would complement the attractability of the Greenway and the 500km Beara-Breifne way passing through and should be signaled in the new Draft Tourism Plan.

This initial project development measure will be the first in a long process, with environmental assessments now to be undertaken.



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Church St,
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The Beagh Roundabout, situated along the Dublin Road towards Athlone, is set for a massive facelift with a welcome monument depicting a birch tree

The project will make use of the space within the centre of the M6 roundabout to erect a large landmark seen from all approaches while still allowing visibility on the road.

The landmark monument, promoted by Creagh Community Council, depicts a Birch Leaf hanging on the end of a twig, sculpted uniquely for the site. Former Garbally student PJ Moran is the engineer on the project and Noel Tighe, based in Glasheen, is the sculptor.

After some observations and measurements on site, the monument has been designed to be 4.8 meters high, 3.6 meters long and 1.6 meters wide. The sculpture will feature an aluminium casting, a bronze patina finish and a steel base bolted into reinforced concrete.

The leaf itself intends to represent the neighbouring areas of Birchgrove and Beagh and their history. Additionally, the monument hopes to enhance the experience of those approaching the busy Eastern entrance to Ballinasloe, with Creagh Community Chairperson John Molloy stating it will be a "wonderful attraction" for the area.

The total cost of the project will amount to €31,180, not including relandscaping works. South Roscommon District Council approved the maximum grant of €15,000 for its erection, while Creagh Community Council will cover the rest of the cost.

"Creagh Council would like to thank most sincerely South Roscommon Municipal District Council Councillors and officials for their generous support of the project" noted Chairperson John Molloy.

The designer speculates that the project will take 10 months to complete, as casting metal can be a slow process. Mr. Molloy hopes the monument will be completed in the early part of next year.

It remains to be seen if any suitable welcome structure can be funded and placed on the Western entrance to the town.



Members of the Creagh Community Development Council PJ Lenihan, Mary Burnell, John Molloy Chair and Christy Watters discussing the new Sculpture and feature at the entrance Roundabout to town.



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Alan and Tommie outside the new store in town



Alan and Tommie Kelly, father and son

Tommie Kelly Euronics have recently set up shop in Dunlo Street, in the old Hubert Dolan premises, offering high quality electrical products to the locality from sleek kitchen appliances to smart home gadgets. This is the second electrical store managed by Tommie and his son Alan, who operate deliveries and repairs from their locations.

In his early years, Tommie Kelly worked in electrical retail before establishing his first shop in Athleague. The store developed in the village, and in 2005 moved premises to Roscommon town.

His son, Alan Kelly, has been acting as Managing Director for the family business for the past 16 years. Alan has gained great experience in electrical retail having worked in the store growing up as well as graduating with an Honours degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering in GMT Galway.

Growing up, he and his brother would work on various projects including assembling alarm systems, circuits, and electric games. Alan recalled a time when they tried adapting a two pin European plug to a three pin, but disaster ensued when they cut the wrong ends of the lead.

“You learn from a young age” he explains, referring to both his experience in engineering and engaging with customers at the shop.

Alan and his dad also share an interest in sport, particularly taking to GAA. During their time in Athleague, their business sponsored the local Tremane Hurling Club and supported their Christmas draw with prizes.

Currently their stores are part of the Euronics buying group, an international retail company with 8,800 stores worldwide and over 50 locations within the country. Their relationship as a key regional player to Euronics enables them to have great access to the top brands including Samsung, BOSCH and LG at their best prices.

Before establishing their newest location in Ballinasloe, the business have been regularly operating repairs and deliveries within the district. The owners saw an opportunity to establish a location in town due to its access to the west, and opened in the second week of June.

Alan Kelly was touched by the community's response upon their opening noting: “Oh the people have been great. Lots of

well wishes when people have been coming in”.

Discussing challenges in the electrical retail industry, Alan referred to the new technology being released every year, but emphasized the business is ready to adapt to these changes.

Among the high-tech products in store are a variety of home appliances including washing machines, ovens and cookers, and Samsung Smart Fridges. In terms of

small-scale appliances for the house, you have coffee machines, washing irons, vacuums and kettles. Additionally, customers entering the store will be met with a showcase of flat-screen TVs of varying dimensions.

The group offers repairs for your washing machines, cookers or tumble dryers of all makes and models. All of their repairs come with a standard six months parts and labour guarantee for peace of mind of their customer base. Appointments typically take place during the mornings and afternoons, and often on Saturdays.

The store is open to serve from 9:30 to 18:00 Monday to Saturday. During their operating days, they offer nationwide deliveries for their products, with small items being delivered within 3-5 working days and larger equipment being delivered within 7-10 working days.

“We have an existing team and they're absolutely brilliant” Alan shared, “and as our business continues to grow we'd be absolutely looking to add more members to the team”. Anyone hoping to join the crew are encouraged to drop their CV in store. The business can be contacted at info@tommiekelly.ie or by phone at (090) 963 4465.

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A new interior design service is available to those in Ballinasloe looking to spruce up their home-décor through H.C. Interior Design, offering a variety of tastes to suit your household needs.

The designer Hani Colohan, originally from Israel, has been living in Ballinasloe for the past two decades. She worked for 18 years as a primary school teacher but has always taken an interest in art, fashion, drawing or anything creative related. Her first projects in home decoration included a revamp of her own house, as well as furnishing the rooms of her friends and families. Realizing her calling, she went back to college studying at the Interior Design Academy of Ireland in Dublin.

Hani is married and has three beautiful children. Her husband, Adrian, acted as a main source of inspiration for the artist on her path. "I would like to thank my dear husband who supported and believed in me all the way to make my dream reality, it wouldn't be possible without him" she stressed.

In May 2022, she formally opened her new business titled H.C. Interior Design. The studio offers the latest designs inspired by her home country, with bespoke wallpapers, paint and lighting imported from Israel.

Hani has travelled the world to find the best materials and ideas for her studio as well as for various assignments, with her primary client bases been located in Ireland, England and Israel. Currently her



most significant project is the redesign of a lobby and 14 apartments in Worthing, West Sussex for London company A&S Refurbishments Ltd.

Within Ballinasloe, the busy creative finds it important to support other small businesses, incorporating some of her designs with Keller's Furniture Shop in town. Hani has already redesigned the living room of Lauren Kildea's home of LMK Beauty Salon on Society Street, and will be collaborating on an upcoming project with Niall and Melissa at Croffy's Launderette. Hani acknowledged both businesses sharing: "I'm very grateful for the amazing support I am receiving from the town I live in".

A drop-in on site is essential for the Designer to get an understanding of the home and atmosphere she would like to create. Before her arrival, a client should typically share their goals and ideas for their house. Apartment or space-share how they live in their residence, determine any specific needs, likes or dislikes, establish who are the major decision-makers in the household for the final presentation meeting, and lastly determine a budget.

Once an agreement on a project is settled, a fee will be arranged with the visits included. If not settled, a fee for her time is typically charged by the hour.

Her studio works Monday to Fridays between the hours of 15:00 to 19:00. Anyone can get in contact by messaging her Facebook or Instagram at Hani Colohan/hani_colohan.



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Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre is one of 11 Connected Hubs facilities in the Midlands known as TUS 'Learning Gates' which allow part-time students to live and study within their own communities in partnership with Technological University of the Shannon.

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister for Further and Higher Education, Simon Harris TD, launched the new initiative that will allow TUS third level part-time flexible students who are learning online through the Faculty of Continuing, Professional, Online and Distance Learning to complete college courses in their local remote working hub.

The pilot initiative is targeted at adult learners and will see students carry out course work and attend classes in a group setting at a Connected Hubs facility.

The following programmes will take place exclusively in the 11 Connected Hubs and newly designated Learning Gates commencing in September 23:

- **Certificate in Business in Entrepreneurship (Level 6)** - the objective being to support potential entrepreneurs, start-ups and others locally with an interest in the world of entrepreneurship;
- **Bachelor of Business (Hons) (Level 8) degree programme** with plans to widen participation in third-level education through general business.

This collaboration between Connected Hubs and Technological University of the Shannon will bring third-level education to communities all over Ireland through the National Hub Network, allowing adult learners to learn in a group setting locally alongside their peers.

Speaking at the launch in Athlone, Minister Humphreys said: "Learning in the Hubs' is the latest in a range of exciting new initiatives that we are rolling out as part of our bold ambition to make remote working a reality I believe that by giving our students that choice to do a course in their local hub, we will breathe new life into towns and villages and change the way education is delivered for the better."

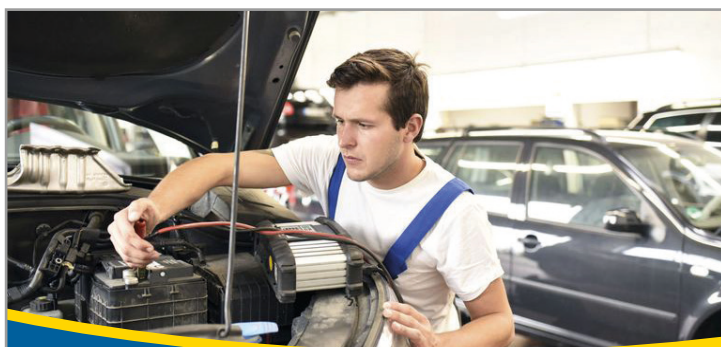
Manager of Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre Lyn Donnelly said: "We are delighted to be able to bring the opportunity of these fantastic courses to the wider Ballinasloe community, we already have had a great response particularly from our Pulse Club Members. It really is about making our local community aware of the many opportunities available to them on their own doorstep".

For Further details about the courses contact Declan Doran, Business Development, TUS - 086 0748499 Declan.Doran@tus.ie Or Lyn in Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre on 0909646516 or lyn@bacd.ie or see www.tusflexiblelearning.ie



Seamus Duffy (Chair BACD), Heather Humphreys TD (Minister for Rural and Community Development), Claire Gibbons (BACD Board Member) and Lyn Donnelly (Manager BACD) at the launch of the Tus Learning Gate Initiatives.

ConnectedHubs.ie provides a vehicle for individual hubs to come together under a shared identity to maximise the economic opportunity of remote working and is represented locally through The Study Centre and Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre, with the New Ballinasloe Enterprise Hub on Society Street to come on stream in Q1 2024.



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A new Driving School has opened for learners in Ballinasloe through the Murphy School of Motoring, with Alan offering lessons to Category B (cars and light vans) drivers locally.

Alan Murphy, son to Paddy and Lily Murphy, is a native of Clontuskert and attended Garbally College as a youngster. He is married to his wife Mary, and together have a nine year old son Eanna. Alan is a GAA fanatic and has been acting as a coach and manager with the Ballinasloe Camogie Team for the past three years!

Previously Alan worked for 15 years with Barna Waste and afterwards with Arrabawn in Kilconnell for three more where he was unfortunately made redundant during the pandemic.

While in lockdown, he completed his course in Advanced Driving in Galway and qualified in November 2021 as an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI). He attained great work experience working for a driving school in Offaly in months past, and now established his own business in Ballinasloe upon seeing a niche in the market.

“Special thanks to my family and friends for all their support and also two men who gave me great advice throughout my journey, especially Pat Harte and Vincent Jennings Snr” states Alan.

Currently Alan can practise with learners who are required to complete their 12 Essential Driving Training (EDT) lessons before applying for the practical exam. Additionally he is available for pre-test sessions before the run-up to the big day.

In the run up to the exam, Alan believes learners should choose him as their driving instructor. “I am very flexible with times, can offer competitive rates, and most importantly of all offer a friendly environment to learn” he explains.

For further information, Alan can be contacted by phone at (087) 911 2770 or by email at murphyalan240@gmail.com



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Minister Anne Rabbitte cutting the ribbon on Ahascragh Distillery

Michelle and Gareth McAllister with Minister Anne Rabbitte.

Ahascragh Distillery officially opened their doors, now offering fully guided tours of the renovated Mill Complex. Celebrations were officiated by Minister Anne Rabbitte T.D. on the launch day hosted for the local community, friends and family of founders Gareth and Michelle McAllister, industry colleagues and investors.

In her speech, the East-Galway Minister reflected on her first time meeting the McAllisters and their visions for the distillery: "I saw something totally different. I saw the huge opportunity for development".

The Dublin founders drew up their initial business plan while operating a small café in Happy Valley, Hong Kong. They spotted a demand in overseas markets for premium Irish whiskey, with the exports to Asia growing 360% from 2013 - 2019 and projections showing an annual growth rate of at least 20%.

Michelle and Gareth settled on opening their distillery in Ahascragh, insisting on the location as they believed the hospitality of the village would be more meaningful than a typical business park. They renovated the local 19th century flour mill as the base for complex.

The building incorporates much of the old mill's machinery and restored many of its wooden beams. Additionally, parts of the original machinery can be found in the neighbouring Old Mill Café which was opened by the distillers this year serving coffees, cakes and light bites.

After two years of heavy restoration, the site was transformed with an overall investment of €10 million. In his address, Gareth thanked the Ahascragh locals for bearing through the long construction process and supporting their efforts.

"You have all supported us in various remarkable ways to realize our visions for this wonderful old mill" he extended to all in attendance, "and from the bottom of our hearts, we'd like to thank each and every one of you for your help".

Anne Rabbitte paid tribute to their over 150 distillery investors for their contribution, and to the McAllisters for putting Ahascragh on the map. The Minister suggested visitors detouring from Galway/ Dublin into the village to: "give a taste of what's going on off the main road". Referencing economic difficulties in East Galway, Minister Rabbitte praised the founding duo on creating a significant tourist destination attraction for the region.

Michelle and Gareth were praised for opening Ireland's first zero-

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emissions distillery. Powered by offshore wind farms and onsite solar panels and hydro wheels, there will be no carbon released from the facilities energy supply. With use of heat pumps, heat recovery and thermal storage, the energy inputs to the building are that of a third of a distillery using traditional technology.

Minister Rabbitte also acknowledged the founders for creating significant employment opportunities for East Galway. She noted that in three years, the distillery will create 60 direct jobs and offer 100 to 120 spinoff jobs to the locality. "That's an awful lot of jobs in rural Ireland" she would emphasize.

She encouraged tourists to pop along to the village to have a coffee at the Old Mill Café (open Mon – Fri – 8am to 4pm, Sat 9am to 4pm, and Sun 10am to 3pm), take a tour of the distillery and sample some of the whiskey and spirits.

"I have seen what this building was like, and unless you had a dash of madness and a really good creative board behind you, you wouldn't have taken that leap of faith" concluded Minister Rabbitte.

Tours through the distillery are available week-round at €15 per admission, hosting two a day at 12:00 and 14:00 recapping the history of the building, the craft of whiskey and gin distillation and discussing the potential of their spirit.

Tastings of their award-winning Xin Gin, Clan Colla and UAIS Irish Whiskey are included, along with an Ahascragh Distillery glass to take home. Bookings can be made on their website at ahascraghdistillery.com.

The next phase of renovation over the coming months is to renovate the large stores to the back which will form the Events complex and visitor exhibition area.

Rather like any new business or farm premises in the countryside – the premises was opened to all in Village and parish the following day for everyone to see the new jewel in Ahascragh's transformation – with the builders hoarding taken down!

The position of a full-time tour guide is available, requiring knowledge of the drink industry, passion for whiskey and/or gin, and a minimum of two years retail experience.

Additionally, a position for a Connacht Sales Executive is on offer, working with the Head of Sales and Marketing to promote product visibility and distribution in the region. Two to five years in sales is really required for candidates.

To apply, you can email jobs@ahascraghdistillery.com with your CV and Cover Letter attached. Salaries are dependent on experience. Further information on the positions can be found on the website.



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Galway's Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) have opened a new charity shop along Main Street, and since their launch have cooperated in helping numerous abandoned animals to find a new home, locally.

Galway SPCA is a charity based within the county aiming to help, rescue, rehabilitate and re-home domestic animals to permanent homes. The service hosts a cattery in Athenry, a dog sanctuary in Killimor, as well as three charity shops at Briarhill Business Park, Athenry and now Ballinasloe.

The Ballinasloe GSPCA store offers a vast range of items for ladies, gents and the young ones with clothing for all seasons, books, DVDs, homeware items, and small furniture pieces including coffee tables, bedside lockers and bookcases. The not-for-profit business is supported by a team of volunteers who, as SPCA volunteer Anita Broadmor described: "are the backbone of the shop and who we simply couldn't manage without".

Since their initial opening in March 2022, they have been open five days a week between Tuesday and Saturday from 11:00 and 16:00. In April 2023, they welcomed a new vibrant sign on their store front displayed onto Main Street. The shop

does not offer any treatments or services itself for animals but can help by providing any necessary GSPCA contacts.

The charity provides support to all animals whether abandoned or in distress, but are only able to house cats, dogs and other small companion animals such as hamsters, guinea pigs or rabbits. Regardless they work closely with selectively chosen wildlife specialist groups and the Department of Agriculture, ensuring assistance is available to other species in need.

One of many animals who received treatment through the GSPCA was an English Bulldog named Mrs Slocombe who was found on the streets within Ballinasloe with bones protruding from her skin, punctured wounds on her head and with knee and elbow difficulties. She was estimated to be six years old, assumed to have given birth to a litter of pups and lived a life of cruelty and neglect.

The GSPCA team brought her safely to their sanctuary in Killimor and within weeks treated her skin issues, kept her well fed, built up her strength and showered her with love and kindness. Soon she recovered and has since found a forever home through a lady named Caroline and is living a comfortable sheltered life.

Available pets to adopt can be found on the Galway SPCA website at gspca.ie. Those who witness animals in distress or abandonment can contact their office at (091) 563 631 between Monday to Saturday from 10.30 to 17.30.

Donations can be given at their Ballinasloe counter, with any purchase being appreciated by the charity. Further discussions surrounding contributions, or enquiries regarding volunteering, can be made to them at (083) 811 3391. OR checkout their fbook page – [gspcashop](https://www.facebook.com/gspcashop), Ballinasloe.



New store front of the Ballinasloe GSPCA store



Mrs Slocombe following her recovery at the Killimor dog sanctuary.



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BALLINASLOE PEOPLE OF THE YEAR

The fourth edition of the Ballinasloe People of the Year Awards will be Launched on 15th September when nomination forms will be available through ballinasloe.ie and bacd.ie. The organisers are encouraging all organisations and individuals to nominate deserving candidates. Closing date for nominations will be October 6th.

Nomination categories will include awards in the areas of Arts Cultural & Heritage, Social Impact, Business Community & Sporting Achievements and Volunteerism.

The Hall of Fame (Lifetime Achievement Award), will also be awarded on the night which recognises individuals who have achieved excellence and are successful in the field of either sporting, professional, business, entrepreneurial, community, charitable or artistic endeavours over their lifetime. Past Winners include the late Tom Quinn, the late Liam Kelly & Billy O'Carroll.

The awards ceremony takes place on November 16th at the Shearwater Hotel with this year's MC Darren Frehill (former Garbally Past Pupil) from RTÉ Sport.

Ballinasloe Credit Union are the kind sponsors.

XMAS LIGHTS PLANS UNDERWAY

15

The Christmas lights cost about €26,000 per year, funded last year through 47% business contributions 16% of Ballinasloe Credit Union Sponsorship and 37% from Raffle Draws and Surplus of the 2021/2020 Xmas Lights and various other fundraising ventures.

In essence the lights Income was some €8,800 short to cover the operational costs for last year and the challenge now is to find the missing €10k gap and allow for some small investment in repairs and well as lighting up some new features around the town and locale.

Accordingly, to try and keep the set that cost over €140,000 to purchase, up and running, the business baseline contribution will be levied at a higher rate than in the previous 6 years.

The Lights Team are examining avenues of assistance where members of the community – instead of buying a raffle ticket, will be able to donate to the Festive lighting in the memory of a loved one – similar to other towns.

It has further emerged that the annual Zombie Walk in Garbally Woods, which contributed to the costings of Christmas lights in the past, will not take place this season due to insurance reasons. It is hoped that another community event; led by different groups may be able to deliver an entertaining programme for families on that bank holiday weekend.

PULSE CLUB UPDATE

Gullanes Hotel played host to a great evening of networking in June, where the Pulse Club celebrated the rich diversity of attendees, uniting early-stage businesses, budding entrepreneurs, and accomplished owners from Ballinasloe, the Midlands, and West of the Corrib.

Next informal networking event is Friday 15th of September at Brewery Lane, where drinks, food and banter set the stage for a relaxed and enjoyable networking experience after a week's hard work and the summer is behind all.



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Call it a midlife crisis, a case of itchy feet, or just a craving for a life where I didn't need a coat but when a chance came to take a couple of years off work and move abroad I grabbed it. I packed up my life in Ireland, loaded everything into the car, my two dogs and a few suitcases and moved to South Eastern Spain.

My friend Deborah travelled with me, on our "Thelma and Louise" style adventure, without the cliff bit. (Or the Brad Pitt bit) mores the pity. She stayed a few weeks and the day we arrived it was lashing rain.

That was in March 2022 and for the first three weeks it never stopped raining here in the Vega Baja. Rivers were flowing past the house and you most definitely needed a coat. Poor Deborah went home paler than when she arrived.

Jump forward to summer 2023, I've been living here 16 months now and have grown to love this Spanish life. Yes it's roasting hot at the moment, hovering between 35 and 45 degrees celcius and we're expecting it to stay that way for the next month or so.

But you learn to adapt.

We live in a small Spanish Village about a half an hour south of Alicante, quaint, cute, and very, very Spanish. But that's exactly what we wanted.

If we want crowds of tourists, bars and nightlife we can drive

for an hour or so and reach the tourist hub that is Benidorm to the North or 30 minutes south, the very popular area of La Zenia, a favourite with Irish visitors.

For me life here in Spain is slow and simple. The cost of living is lower. Eating out 4 or 5 times a week is affordable, the cost of any medical treatment for myself or veterinary treatment for the dogs is half the cost of home. Did I mention the weather is glorious?

Yes I miss things about Ireland, my friends and family of course, but they can have a Spanish holiday whenever they like and I get the excitement of waiting for them at Alicante airport and the fun of showing them around my new home. Tour guide Barbie is alive and well.

As I write, the temperature is 35 degrees, but sitting here in my shaded patio area is no hardship, and the house is air conditioned should I start to break a sweat.

I heed the warnings from the authorities here about staying safe in this type of heat and humidity. It's simple common sense really-stay out of the sun between midday and at least 4pm, drink loads of water and for God's sake don't be that crazy Irish person burned to a crisp on a Costa Blanca beach, and I've seen plenty despite all the warnings.

This heatwave is a bit different to any other I've experienced as its intense and prolonged and nighttime temperatures are not much different to daytime, dropping only a mere 10 degrees or so. 6am yesterday morning it was already 31 degrees.

That said, I'm enjoying life here, I can finally speak a fair bit of Spanish and I'm "brown as a berry" as my mother used to say.

This isn't my forever home. That will always be Ireland, but maybe when we fully retire we can make a life of 50/50, Winter in Spain and Summer in Ireland.

Now where did I leave that lotto ticket?

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The county's population is growing at a faster rate than the city, up by 13,933 (7.8%) in six years.

The growth in population has been attributed in Central Statistics Office (CSO) data to a mixture of 'natural' increases as a result of new births, and inward migration.

In the county, inward migration represented a greater proportion of the increase at seven per 1,000 to six births per 1,000 people.

The latest Census shows that as of April 2022 Tuam had a population of 9,647. Ballinasloe is the second largest town officially with an electoral division population of 7,361 Urban and 555 Rural, followed by Loughrea 6,322, Oranmore 5,819 and Athenry 4,603, neighbouring Roscommon is 6,555.

Locals will know that for most of the 20th Century Ballinasloe had a larger population than Tuam owing to the number of patients that were being accommodated in Psychiatric Hospital. That number two decades into the 21st Century-is gone but we as a community are holding our own as top town in the County.

As readers will know the town straddles two county lines and has 5 Electoral areas (Kellysgrove, Moore, Creagh, Culliagh, Killure, which form the natural hinterland of the town within what would be a normal suburbs territory for towns like Tuam or Roscommon.

Totalling these LEAs gives a total population of 10,584 – which would give the town a compelling reason to be the largest, if the numbers were allowed be counted this way.

We have improved – combined to move slightly ahead of the national figure of 24% of the population under 18 to 26%.

Worryingly on the other end of the scale – the national average nationwide for those over 65 is 15% and we are 4% higher at 19% with 1924 folks enjoying Autumn years.

Among the 5 outlying LEAs plus the Town Centre and Town Rural – all had people growth apart from Ballinasloe Rural which lost 19. Kellysgrove had the largest increase.

We will bring readers more analysis on these figures as the CSO releases reports.

Additional research Thibautperrin

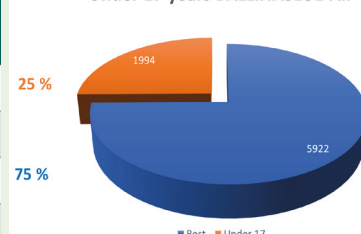
Age Profile	Ballinasloe RURAL	Ballinasloe Urban	TOTAL	%
Persons aged 0-17 years	114	1880	1994	25%
Persons aged 18-19 years	15	148	163	2%
Persons aged 20-29 years	54	723	777	10%
Persons aged 30-39 years	57	1077	1134	14%
Persons aged 40-49 years	73	981	1054	13%
Persons aged 50-59 years	85	785	870	11%
Persons aged 60-64 years	42	395	437	6%
Persons aged 65-69 years	37	383	420	5%
Persons aged 70-74 years	33	326	359	5%
Persons aged 75-79 years	22	257	279	4%
Persons aged 80-84 years	11	186	197	2%
Persons aged 85 years and over	12	220	232	3%
TOTAL			7916	100%

19%

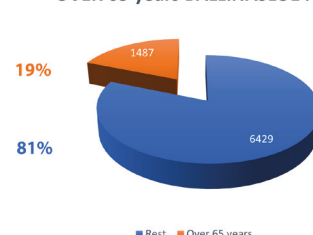
Area	Population			Average Age	
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Kellysgrove	193	193	386	41.3	44
Moore	167	163	330	40.1	40.7
Creagh	507	498	1005	43.3	44.7
Culliagh	102	106	208	41.3	45.1
Killure	364	375	739	39.8	43.2
Town Urban	3528	3833	7361	38.4	40.6
Town Rural	288	267	555	43.4	42.8
Total 2022			10584		

Population Core and Rural Hinterland		
	2016	2022
Kellysgrove	361	386
Moore	308	330
Creagh	1000	1005
Culliagh	207	208
Killure	717	739
Town Urban	6654	7361
Town Rural	574	555
Total	9821	10584
	Increase 8%	

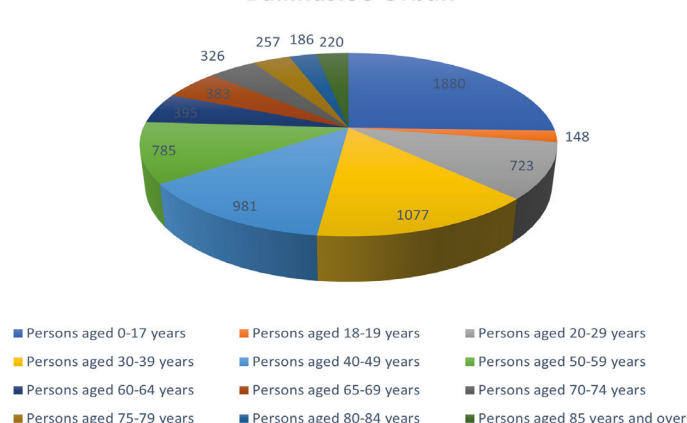
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€20 million of investment was allocated for Portiuncula Hospital in the latest HSE Capital Plan 2023, detailing new developments and expansions to provide space for patients and its healthcare teams.

Every year, the hospital caters to over 400,000 patients across Galway, Roscommon, parts of Westmeath, Offaly and North Tipperary. With just 157 beds and an average of 22 patients on trolleys each day, Portiuncula has a 40% greater demand than Limerick University Hospital and a whopping 325% demand than University Hospital Galway.

A new 12 bed extension is currently under construction at the existing Outpatient department offering eight new single rooms and two double bedded rooms, all with ensuites included. The expansion will assist staff in infection control, accommodate singles for end-of-life care, and will greatly benefit the Emergency Department during the winter.

The total cost of the expansion will amount to €5.11 million and is estimated to be fully operational in the later end of 2023.

Those walking the hospital will notice ongoing construction of the new €15 million bed ward block on the site. The two-storey building covering 4,038sqm will include 50 accessible single bedrooms with ensuite facilities and will link to the existing hospital. Its flexible ward design will allow the HSE to introduce additional beds in

response to demand.

An updated timeframe presented at a recent Health Forum West Meeting now expects it will be completed in the latter half of 2024, as opposed to the mid-2023 estimate in the 2021 planning permission extension.

Ballinasloe's Cllr Evelyn Parsons was unsatisfied with the timeframe of the project, accentuating the emergency departments repeated overcrowding issues lately. Local TD Denis Naughten called on the Minister for Health to include a second 50 ward block as part of the HSE's tender for 1,500 new hospital beds nationwide.

Also included in the Capital Plan are a modular build for ten extra treatment bays in appraisal. Senior management in Portiuncula submitted a request to the HSE for the model, which has been considered by government over three years.

The new bays proposed will relieve pressure on the Emergency Department, as well as offering greater room for staff to operate. Upon visiting the hospital and opening the new CT scanner facility, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar met with ED workers to understand their concerns and request for the new build.

Further capacity in the ED is being assessed, according to the HSE Capital Plan. Development for an Ambulatory Gynaecology unit at the hospital are also due to tender in coming weeks.



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Waterways Ireland are proposing significant changes to the current Shannon Navigation and Canal Bye Laws, some affecting operations of local boat owners and cruiser traffic of the River Suck.

The Irish navigation authority, responsible for the management, maintenance, development, and restoration of inland navigable waterways, has proposed revisions to their bye-laws including an introduction of a €200 Annual Registration Fee for vessels, mandatory insurance for all vessels, abolishment of their Winter Mooring facilities, reducing the Five Day Mooring Rule to three days in key locations, and introducing a Fixed Penalty Notice of €150.

The primary proposal affecting boat lovers of town and the area would be the abolishment of Winter Mooring where boat owners, who can currently leave their vessels in the harbour during the off-season between November and April for a fixed charge, would no longer have the service available. This will result in the local marina being deserted during the Winter and Spring seasons and force local boat owners into the financial strain of taking up private mooring facilities. Thankfully the Marina remains at the current Five Day Mooring Status for the main-season within town.

Several Public Consultations have taken place nationwide, with locals giving their views at a recent meeting in Athlone. Many attendees agreed paying the €200 Annual Registration Fee for use of the navigation was a reasonable ask, although some remained concerned regarding proposals which could personally impact their operations.

The deadline for the

consultation is 16:00 on October 2, 2023. River Suck IAWAI Club Chairman Graham Bartlett encouraged submissions reminding: "I would very strongly advise that anyone that enjoys the use of our local waterways in any capacity to visit the Waterways Ireland website and familiarize themselves fully with all the proposed changes".

Those with thoughts can email a submission to corporate@waterwaysireland.org (including 'Byelaw consultation' in the subject line) or you could post it out to Waterways Ireland Inspectorate, The Docks, Athlone. Additionally an online Feedback Form is available at [waterwaysireland.org/Pages/Public-Consultation-on-Draft-Byelaws.aspx](https://www.waterwaysireland.org/Pages/Public-Consultation-on-Draft-Byelaws.aspx).

In other activity, the River Suck played host to the annual gathering of the Freeman Cruisers Ireland. Owners of Freeman vessels berthed in the Marina and participated in a competition judging the appearance of their crafts. The first place winner of the best decorated boat were Nuala and Cain on their 'Funky Duck', along with Runner-Ups Sinead and Brendan on 'Take a Chance' and Conor on his 'Camino'.

Club Chair Graham Bartlett expressed thanks to Ryan's Bar for their support, and confirmed that the event will take place again next year.

The River Suck is available for hosting any potential events, ideal for its easy access to the town's shopping and hotels. The first point of contact for organising your occasion would be through Waterways Ireland via their Online Services Portal on their website. The IAWI River Suck Branch can be of assistance in any way via email at iwairiversuck@gmail.com.



Members of the Freeman's Cruisers at their 2023 annual gathering.



Memorial

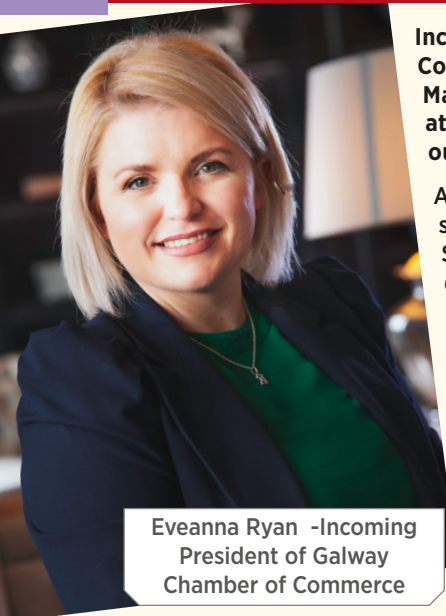
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Eveanna Ryan -Incoming President of Galway Chamber of Commerce

Incoming Galway City Chamber of Commerce President and Group Marketing and Innovation Manager at Connacht Hospitality Group is our own Eveanna Ryan.

A popular pupil in St Joseph's NS, she then spent 6 amazing years in Scoil Mhuire, before obtaining her diploma from Cornell University in strategic Management.

"Having spent my teens working in the East County Hotel and Tohers, I caught the bug for hospitality early. The summer after my leaving cert I worked in Clifden and deferred college (fine art degree in Waterford) to travel and that spring I was lucky enough to be hired to do a season with Kel Air Vacances

(Campotel) working in the west coast of France. From there I joined the team in the Office of Kel Air in Ballinasloe and stayed there for a very happy 8 years, until the Carlton Shearwater opened and I returned to my hotel roots, I was part of the pre-opening team working in reservations, before moving into a sales role and from there I continued my career with Carlton for 8 years working in both the Shearwater and in Blanchardstown in Dublin. It was at this time I completed my Cornell University course and really found my love for marketing and was able to get back to being creative" recalls Eveanna.

But ultimately the West called again, and she returned to Galway City to the role of Sales and Marketing Manager for the reopening of Glenlo Abbey Hotel and the Harbour Hotel under MHL. She spent a whirlwind four years learning about the luxury market and building her connections in Galway and now finds herself in the most exciting role yet with Connacht Hospitality

Group where she oversees all the marketing and innovation functions of 11 brands (and growing).

Reflecting on her two decades in hospitality she accepts it is not for the faint hearted, but if you thrive on working at pace, and genuinely enjoy people it is a wonderful career. "No two days have ever been the same and the world of Marketing changes every day, and you need to stay ahead and relevant. Hospitality gets a bad reputation, but it has given me a life and career I could only have dreamed of. It allowed me to work and study at the same time as well as being a young mother (he's 22 now) and if you are willing to work hard there are so many rewards. If it's any testament my son Cillian having trained in a completely different field (graphic design) has recently taken up a hotel management role and I couldn't be prouder, I know he is in the right career for him and I'm excited to see him grow and develop within this exciting industry" enthuses Eveanna.

She was lucky enough to win - Sales and Marketing Manager of the Year 2019 at the Irish Hospitality Institute Awards in 2019, serving on the national council for the IHI. She then joined the board of the Galway Convention Bureau and is currently the deputy President and soon to be the President of the Galway Chamber.

When asked why she preferred to reside for so much of her last two decades in the town she is blunt - "For me it was proximity to family, Cillian being able to go to a school like Garbally and see his Grandparents every day. Also affordability, my commute on a daily basis was "just a quick podcast" and for nights



Eveanna Ryan receiving her Irish Hospitality Award in 2019

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that I had events I would avail of the 10.10pm train home “so it was a great asset”.

“Ballinasloe is home and will always be home, more and more of my childhood friends have moved home as I did to raise families. Hotels like the Shearwater gave me a career and for that I will always be grateful” she states.

Focusing on the tourist potential of town she believes that Ballinasloe has as much to offer as any town on the Shannon with our Marina and waterways, great hotels, growing restaurant & bar community and the wealth of local history. “Ultimately, I believe this is about branding, deciding what we want to be perceived of as a town, what markets we are looking to target and working together as a town and industry to get them here. As the businesses of Kinsale say “lets fight together to get them here and fight over them when they are here” she explains.

Looking forward to her new role for the Regional Capital Business Community she states “I’m honoured to be the incoming President of Galway Chamber of Commerce. For me it was about giving a voice to the hospitality industry and highlighting the importance of tourism in the overall Galway business community, from marketing to FDI. I follow a line of financiers in this role, and I hope to be able to bring my own strengths, in storytelling, positive outlook and strategic planning to the role”.

She strongly believes the West of Ireland is incredibly well positioned for business growth as indeed is Ballinasloe. “Boasting a highly skilled and educated workforce. Renowned universities and educational institutions that produce a steady stream of talented graduates, makes it easier for businesses to find qualified professionals across various industries. The West of Ireland’s diverse economy, spanning sectors like technology, tourism, healthcare, agriculture, and renewable energy, also contribute to its appeal for business growth” she ascertains.

In her view the diversity ensures that companies in various fields can find a suitable niche and prosper in this dynamic and robust marketplace. Beyond business, the West of Ireland offers



Eveanna with Charlene Hurley Director of Fundraising and Communications with Galway Hospice and members of the Connacht Hospitality Staff at one of their many Charity Fundraising Events - at the Galway Bay Golf Club.

an incredible quality of life. Its breathtaking landscapes, and charming towns and villages like Ballinasloe make it an attractive destination for employees and their families.

As for those grappling with CAO choices her advice is simple -

“I have always preached the benefit of having a good attitude and working hard. Attitude wins over aptitude every day in my opinion. And also to be patient with yourselves, you don’t need to have a fixed career path any time soon, be flexible and curious and let the opportunities find you. And last bit of advice “take the job your think you’re not qualified for and figure it out.” It’s worked for me to date,” she frankly admits.

In looking back on the breaks she still has a wonderful soft spot for The Keller’s for giving her first “office job” when she didn’t even have an email. “I still recall the wise words of GaGa (Mr Liam Keller). “If you don’t know something, be honest but go find out! A life lesson I still live by, my years working in Kellers were some of the happiest of my life. And ultimately huge thanks to my parents, siblings and my son Cillian who keep me in check but are also my biggest supporters” states a very busy Eveanna.

BALLINASLOE NUN THANKS IRISH PEACEKEEPERS

 By Ken Kelly

A Portiuncula retired nursing sister has fulfilled a lifetime ambition by meeting with, speaking to, and thanking many of the Irish UN Peacekeepers, who helped save her life in West Africa 57 years ago, at a function held in Renmore Barracks, Galway.

Sr. Theresa O’Sullivan (formerly Sr. Colman) from Rathmore in Co. Kerry, came to Ballinasloe, as a teenager, joined the Franciscan Order and completed her nursing studies. Then she, accompanied by two colleagues, Alice Nealon from Mayo and Margaret Rudden from Cavan (now deceased) were sent to work in one of the Franciscan Missionary Hospitals in West Africa.

“It was a traumatic experience for three young nuns” she recalls. “On my very first Sunday on duty, I noticed a man pass through the compound carrying the corpse of an adult on his back. He was on the way to the graveyard which was behind the mission. This had a profound effect on me and later I went to the Rev. Mother and told her I could not stay there and would have to return home. Needless to say, I didn’t get much of a hearing but she did add that if I stayed around long enough, I might be able to improve the quality of life for those people. And so, I thank God that I was able to stay 18 years” she said.

“In 1966 I found myself, along with my two comrades, caught up in a raging Ethnic Conflict. One night we were taken into a Police Barracks for protection, after being ‘on the run’ from our attackers for several days, without food or water. As we sat on the bench in the yard of the Barracks, thinking about how our parents and families back home would hear of our deaths,

three Policemen came to us and checked we were Irish.

“They told us they would protect us because when they were in the Congo, as part of the UN Peace-keeping Mission, they served along with the Irish Army. They told us that the Irish soldiers used to play cards with them, and share their cigarettes and Guinness from their own rations. They were talking about you-you Veterans who are here tonight and who served in the Congo over 60 years ago. To hear them say that they would protect us, when we were in such a state of terror, was just incredible. I could never say how much it meant to us” she explained.

Now in her 80th year, Sr. Theresa told the UN Veterans “those words of that night will remain with me for ever. Were it not for your humanity and generosity I would never have heard them and now, in future, instead of thinking of that dreadful night so many years ago, foremost in my mind will be the memory of this very happy evening here.”



Retired UN Irish Peacekeeper, Tommy Gavin from Tuam, pictured with Sr. Theresa at the IUNA Annual Commemoration Ceremony in Renmore Barracks, Galway.

St. Michael's Church in Cappataggle was packed to capacity as parishoners, invited guests, relations and fellow priests gathered to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Retired Bishop John Kirby's ordination to the priesthood.



Bishop Kirby with his sisters Rose and Joan at his Diamond Jubilee

The man from Athlone was ordained on 23rd June 1963 with 50 fellow students in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. He came to Garbally College in 1951 as a student boarder, before studying in Maynooth for the priesthood and subsequently returned to Garbally as a maths teacher, principal and president in 1979. He succeeded the late Bishop Joe Cassidy, who was appointed co-adjutor Bishop of Clonfert and in 1988 when Bishop Cassidy was made Archbishop of Tuam, Bishop Kirby became Bishop of Clonfert, a role he served for 31 years.

Having previously ministered as a curate in Ballymacward, Gurteen and Kilrickle, Bishop John went on to become Parish Priest of Cappataggle and Kilrickle, on his retirement. He has been praised for his work as a former head of Trocaire, raising money for the poor in many countries throughout the world over many years.

Michael Hannon, Chairman of the Cappataggle Area Recreation and Social (CARS) said that since coming to reside in Cappataggle four years ago, the Retired Bishop Kirby had made a huge effort to integrate with the community and the parish. He had got involved in several committees to support the local community and congratulated him on reaching the Diamond Jubilee of his ordination.

The Retired Bishop was principle celebrant at a special Mass in St. Michael's Church where several priests presided. He was joined by his two sisters and some former classmates from his years in Maynooth as well as many friends from near and far.



Bishop Kirby performing the episcopal consecration of his immediate successor Bishop Michael Duignan as Bishop of Clonfert



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A brand-new art and heritage collaboration is set to launch in the Ballinasloe Library titled 'On Our Doorstep' highlighting the wealth of the town's unique historical features through art.

The project came about through Library Assistants Zara Little-Campbell and Abbie McGowan, a collaboration with Zara as Chairperson of Group 8 and Abbie as Secretary of Cath Eachroma 1691 and the newly formed Ballinasloe and District Heritage Society.

The organisers hope that each year will see artists submitting their work on a different theme, which will then be showcased in the Church Gallery. This year's exhibition theme is the 1691 Battle of Aughrim, possibly the most significant point in Ireland's turbulent history. Submissions have already been made, and all are welcome to the launch on Saturday August 12 at 14:30 free of charge with no booking required.

Following the exhibition, the library will feature Dr Geraldine Curtin to discuss the Ballinasloe Girl's Reformatory School at 15:30 that Saturday. The talk is a joint venture by the Ballinasloe and District Heritage Society in association with Galway Archaeological and Historical Society.

A graduate of the University of Galway, Dr. Curtin holds a Ph.D in Modern Irish History with a particular focus on juvenile crime in Connacht during the nineteenth century. Dr. Curtin currently works in the Special Collections and Archives Reading Room at the University of Galway.

Dr. Geraldine will outline the background to the Ballinasloe reformatory's establishment, discuss the circumstances of the children detained there, the staff who ran it, along with spotlighting the day-to-day lives of its residents.

Recently the Ballinasloe Library hosted Irish novelist Colm Tóibín, along with writer Kevin Power who showcased his book *White City*. A large crowd attended the event, who had the opportunity to raise any questions to the two authors.

Additionally, the Library showcased a new exhibition 'Renewal: Grennan Mill 1981', highlighting the work of the very first students of a crafts course in Grennan Mill Craft School, Kilkenny. Forty years later, their original craftwork filled the Church Gallery, viewed by many upon their launch day earlier in the Summer.

Later in the year, The Tallest Smallest Theatre will deliver two live performances at the Ballinasloe Library on Culture Night on September 23. The first will feature a stilt-walking, storytelling session of Roald Dahl's *The BFG*, offering an experiential and entertaining approach to one of the most loved books for children. The other performance will see a series of circus acts challenging and delighting both young and old. The events are free and no booking is required.



Authors Kevin Power and Colm Tóibín with Galway County Librarian Jo Vahey.


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Ballinasloe College of Further Education are offering new courses this September, along with a host of existing free programmes, providing both full and part time opportunities to applicants.

Ballinasloe College of Further Education, based along Sarsfield Road, is one of the leading colleges of further education delivering QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) certificates at levels 3,4,5,6.

As part of the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETb), their services aim to help early school leavers, mature applicants and those looking to upskill with the knowledge, skills and competencies to work in a variety of settings and to progress to potential employment.

New this year is a Physiotherapy Assistant programme accessible at Level 5. The course involves students working with a chartered physiotherapist in treating clients who have mobility issues and restoring their vigour. Part of the programme will additionally focus on infection prevention and control. It is offered part time and can be completed over 41 weeks.

For entry, applicants must have completed their Leaving Cert, The Leaving Cert Applied or any equivalent, although Mature students are also welcome to register. Graduates may find employment opportunities as a Physiotherapy or Healthcare Assistant in home care, nursing homes, day care, or hospitals.

Additionally an extension to the Early Learning and Care programme at a Level 6 is available, with stage two now offered upon completion of the first. It aims to

allow individuals to lead and coordinate in a childhood care and education environment, promoting children's well-being and development. Once completed, an Advanced Certificate in Early Learning and Care award can be accessed.

The course is offered to applicants on a part time basis, with six modules timetabled across the two semesters. Among the new modules on offer are Sociology and Social Policy in Early Learning and Care, The Developing Child and Curriculum and Pedagogy.

A total of 22 courses are available come September time. All are free of charge and will run until May 2024. Full-time programmes take place 5 days a week from 10:00 to 16:00, while part-time programmes are offered 2/3 days a week between 10:00 and 13:30, or 13:30 and 16:00

Martin Guinan, native of Shannonbridge, began his studies with the college in September 2021 and graduated with a QQI Level 5 Healthcare Major Award in June 2022. He commenced employment with TUS Athlone within student support, and now works as a healthcare assistant with Home Instead Ireland.

"This college really went the extra mile. The course was well organised, well-structured and excellently delivered by highly professional and capable tutors" explained Martin, "The Ballinasloe region is very fortunate to have this excellent College and I have no hesitation in recommending it to any prospective learner considering completing one of their many QQI Courses."

Anyone can apply and register for courses through FETCH at <https://www.fetchcourses.ie/>.



Martin Guinan graduating and receiving his QQI Level 5 Healthcare Major Award Certificate at Ballinasloe College of Further Education.



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Supporting over 200 members within the Ballinasloe branch, the town's seniors are some of the most active across the entire island. Since their appointment earlier last Spring, this year's Social Committee have been responsible for the many activities and well attended breaks throughout the last few months

The local Branch founded in 2002, is the largest of the 34 strong county wide in Galway for registered members, linking in with the 550 plus units nationwide.

The season started with 51 Ballinasloe Active Retirement (B.A.R.A.) members embarking on a five-day trip to Arklow and its surrounding countryside by coach. Stopping off in

Newbridge for a brief coffee, the tourists eventually made their way into Wicklow for a four-night residency at the sumptuous Arklow Bay Hotel. The following afternoon they visited the splendid Powerscourt House and Gardens, as well as Bray with its famous strolling promenade and Bray Head Walks.

The retirees took guided tours of Wicklow's world famous sites including Glendalough, Mount Usher Gardens and Avoca. The final morning, they returned to Ballinasloe, weary and tired but overall satisfied with their sweeping journey.

Among their other breaks for members this season was a pleasant evening in County Clare's Bunratty Castle and Folk Park. Additionally, a full coach travelled East to ferry towards England to Bristol and Bath thereafter. Following a guided tour of Berkeley Castle and a scenic drive of Castle Combe in Cotswolds, they made their way to the country's smallest city Wells. They were able to take a day of leisure in Bath where they would later explore its stunning abbey.

Finally, they capped off their Summer Season with a visit to Dublin where as well as some City Centre browsing they had a wonderful afternoon at the Dail in Leinster House. Joined by TD Denis Naughten, they availed of every photo opportunity at the House of Oireachtas, including some shots with Tánaiste Michael Martin.

Next on the menu for the BARA members will an outing to Leitrim's Carrick-on-Shannon, as they glide back to their usual activities. The walking club and 'keep fit' regime continue every Tuesday morning on the Dunlo Running Track in Brackernagh at 10:30, while their regular meetups resume in Gullane's Hotel every Wednesday at 15:00.

New members are always welcome, and those hoping to get involved can contact their Secretary Deirdre Hogan at (086) 382 4556 or visit their website at ballinasloeactiveretirement@gmail.com.



BARA Members in Bath city
Back: Ml. Staunton, Elsie Begley, Norbert Colbert, Ollie Broe, Maura Rafter, Anne Murray.
Front: Ina Broe, Kitty Colbert.

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Well Done Heather

At Ballinasloe Credit Union we want to extend our warmest congratulations to you on your outstanding achievement representing Ireland at the World Cup. Your success serves as a shining example to local children, showing that with determination and perseverance, dreams can become a reality.

Your journey from the street league to the World Cup is an incredible source of inspiration and brings immense pride to our community,

We wish you continued success in your future endeavors, both on and off the field.



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A collaboration of community groups in the region have been gathering regularly aiming to highlight the unique karst landscape of South Roscommon, including its biodiversity, culture, heritage and folklore.

Volunteers of the Ui Maine Kingdom Group, made of artists, farmers, singers, herbalists, poets and more, gathered for the first time two and a half years ago. The name is derived from one of Connacht's most ancient kingdoms encompassing parts of Galway and south and central Roscommon.

The bodies involved with the coalition include the Celtic Eye Art Group, Karst Farming Group, Taughmaconnell Hall Committee and Walk the Rocks. The Roscommon collective works in collaboration with the Irish Wheelchair Association, St Hildas Special School Athlone, as well as other creatives around the country.

Their core group features Nicola Bowes, Liam Kildea, Ann Hill, Rosemary Carty, Natasha O'Brien, Emel Osman, Fiona Moore, Paula Sharkey, Louise Whelan and Vincent Glennon.

Their ambition is to continue to underline the importance of protecting the counties doline (a depression in the topography), and unique karst landscape which provides fresh drinking water to the region. Through art, poetry and music they advocate and operate to keep their special local culture alive within their community.

"We love to work in a positive way and bring communities together through exhibitions, nature walks, talks events, and also support other groups and organisations" explains local artist Nicola Bowes.

Recently the group visited the Seanad and Dáil at the invite of Senator Aisling Dolan to highlight their efforts. Accompanied by some locals from South Roscommon, they had a wonderful day out at the capital.

This year, the Celtic Eye Artists partnered with Evoking Ireland's Resilient Female Icons (ÉIRÍ), a competition and research project founded by Athlone professor Ralph Kenna, along with The Irish Post, Story Archaeology, L4, and the Rathcroghan Visitor Centre.

Currently the collective are preparing for the 'Land Of Legends' art exhibition by Jeremy Turkington, Seed Collector and Seed Bank Coordinator with nature charity Hometree. The showcase will be launched on Saturday August 19 between 14:00 to 18:00. in the Choill Tigh Gallery, Cappataggle, Ballinasloe.

Additionally anyone can pop down to the Ballygar Carnival on the August Bank Holiday weekend to see them participate in talks, poetry readings, demonstrate some of their work, as well as for the launch of Nicola's newest poetry and art book titled 'The Colour of My Life'.

Their many projects and works over years past have been archived on their Facebook group at 'Celtic Eye Art Group (Extension)'. Videos of their pieces can be found on the Ui Maine Kingdom YouTube channel, and the locals will be featured on the radio project 'Ours to Protect' in the coming year.

Those wishing to get in contact can email Nicola at nicolashiona@outlook.com or phone her on (087) 362 4422.



Liam Kildea, Rosemary Carty, Professor Ralph Kenna, Louise Whelan and Nicola Bowes at the Choill Tigh Gallery.



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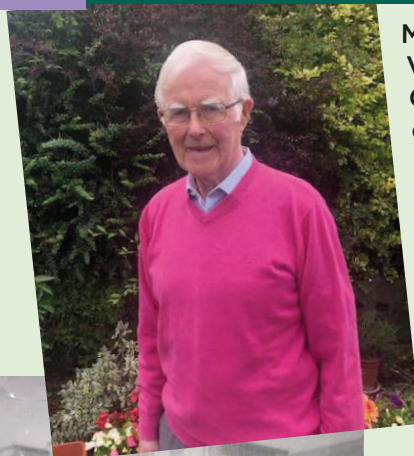
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Moher resident and retired Vocational School Teacher, Gabriel Rohan, has some decades to reflect upon since his arrival to a family of 11 (7 boys and 4 girls) in Tiaquin, near Athenry during the Emergency.

The 7th eldest boy on a modest family farm - did chores in the morning and indeed, well after his national schooling days, and in common with all other youngsters walked the roads to his education. A long monastic and austere regime of five years as a boarder in St. Mary's Galway, where ration books, porridge and bread measured by the half slice were common place!

While he dabbled in hurling - in common with most of the pupils, he found some merriment in the Stage - school plays, the annual Gilbert and Sullivan production at Christmas time before sitting the leaving cert in 1959.

Of the 40 or so lads who completed their studies - a third went back to family farms, businesses, about a third went on to the Priesthood and he was in the lucky third of those who signed on for third level education after Matriculation.

He chose Agricultural Science as he enjoyed Biology, being an early third level commuter - he took the early train from Athenry,

staying in digs for a few weeks before the ritual exam times.

"We had a very tight, small circle of friends which anchored around the Lydon's Coffee House, the Tennis Club, Seapoint and The Hanger were regular evening haunts and you have to remember the only Quad facilities were a small coffee dock back then" he recounts.

He recalls his first real summer job working for the Board of Works before heading to the big smoke as the final years being completed in UCD. He remembers the freedom of that time and city - "you could walk from the DCU campus now (it was the Ag College Farm back then) in Ballymun all the way into O'Connell St and we often got a lift home after a hop with a milkman - it was such a calmer place back then" he states.

The late 50s in Dublin-the start of the Showband era young students were often refused access to dances due to the width of their ties! "The dances started at 7.30 pm and finished around 11p.m in the city so the Nurses could be home to their residences in time for curfew" he laughs.

The Ag Society ran hops to fund their outreach activities and he recounts the wonderment of all the class being on study trip to Denmark and discovering silage being made for the first time. "The modern management and efficient methods the Danes were using at the time, surpassed anything we were doing in Ireland - all the livestock were being raised 8 months of the year indoor and this was nearly a decade

before we joined the E.E.C."

There were 3 vacancies for Rural Science Instructor at the Galway Vocational Educational Committee, he applied and got the nod!

In Sept 1960 he found himself in Ma Kellers- Curramore Guest House and sharing the Tech Staff room with Stephen Folan, Principal; Nicholas Hartnett, the woodwork teacher; Peter Weafer, Art; Pauline Mc Namara, Home Economics and Joe Brennan, Irish. Once pupils received their Group Cert after three years of schooling they could finish formal education. It was not until the Free Secondary Schooling Act of Donagh O'Malley that pupils stayed on and undertook Inter Cert and Leaving Cert.

Gabriel's love of Biology saw him move to teaching science and preparing students for Leaving Cert Biology. "Back the for the Group Cert there was a lot of Oral Examination and different teachers would be allocated to different schools around the country to examine the students. By the time of the leaving cert there was a lot of project work as well so the rote learning was well out of the system by the time I left" he notes.

In the 60s Teaching staff were expected to live locally and he thrived in the pastimes of tennis, golf, swimming but the lure of the stage, song and drama from his St. Mary's Days - allied to most of the Tech Staff - building sets, painting scenery was strong. A meeting of the Musical Society in the Whigam Hall, chaired by Monsignor Gordon, saw a new Guinness PA recently moved to town from Ballina in attendance and as the Hammerstein lyric goes - "the enchanted evening saw the stranger across the crowded room."

Noelle and Gabriel were married in St. Muiredach's Cathedral in 1965 and the moved into their new Moher Home in 1970 - along with family Brian, Aileen and Carmel. Brian works in Switzerland while the two ladies are teaching locally.

Family life was busy in the 70s and 80s but he managed to act as Treasurer for the VEC County teams and when



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the kids got involved in swimming he went and undertook all the courses to become a qualified swim instructor. He also was persuaded by stage manager Larry Duffy to participate in a few Relays productions in front of the curtain.

He recalls the Swimming Club of the 80s with some affection – “Popsee Fenton, along with Mick Walsh Chief Coach – the Walshe’s, the McKeowans, Ganlys, McCullaghs, we were one the few Clubs in Connacht to have a professional coach back then “.

He also in the late 80s got involved in the Tidy Towns as a member and eventually held a number of Officer Positions

In 1998 Galway County Council had a problem – it could not manage Carrowbrowne Dump and a plan was hatched to utilise the UDC’s own dump to temporarily facilitate the refuse of City and County about a kilometre from his back garden and some 2.6 Kms from St. Michael’s Church.

He found himself asked to chair a public meeting, then was asked to Chair the Action Group to contest the issue on behalf of the community when it became obvious that the political class locally were



not seeing the wider picture.

Even though its twenty years ago the legacy is still very raw today where 30 citizens were injuncted by High Court order (14 of that list have passed) and eventually the Community got an Agreed High Court order which the Council truculently had to eventually abide by.

Many of the committee were challenged as to who they were mandated to represent and subsequently several of their number contested the local Urban Council elections in 1999 – resulting in a huge turnout in numbers and some four of the nine councillors being non-party.

“They were difficult testing times, as a community activist, and as an elected Councillor – I am very glad we never took the officials advice on anything-had we-we would not have got the dump closed in 2005

and the town’s balance sheet before transfer to Galway County Council would not have been as large, which allowed for a great deal of public realm investment“ he opinions.

Looking back he believes that Urban or Town Council abolition was very wrong. “The centralising of all decision making back to the County or in reality back to Dublin by faceless bureaucrats where local representatives can offer no real engagement or analysis into policy or decision making is just plain wrong, not the magic bullet promised – true the system needed reform and executive functions needed revisiting but Chambers now, sadly”

we have remote’. Municipal states Gabriel.

The town centre today he feels needs a major review of what property owners wish to do with their real estate – “we have to find a different way of utilising precious space, would they lease on a sliding scale, take equity in the business concern – look at all the families and people you could house over the first floors of all these shops not being used and the housing crisis.”

The future is bright he is assured – “the assets have never been fully exploited, - Garbally, the Marina, Brigids, the Greenway, Good housing stock , public transport access, educational, sports and health facilities” he notes.

He is currently enjoying retirement with wife Noelle and their 8 grand kids between 8 and 21, they love their train trips and picnic lunches, they enjoy a lot of the Ballinasloe Active Retirement Assoc. activity programme as active members and he knows “this is a marvellous community to be retired in.”

With his Agricultural prowess he feels there is a major land reusage transformation about to happen. “There is not an acre of tillage, crop or arable sown land between Galway and Limerick – all livestock and a shortage of vegetables, pulses, and grains – not in my lifetime but with Climate Change and people eating less meat – we will see people out working the fields like I did as a child in Tiaquin” he concludes.

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Sixth class pupils of Creagh NS have been active again with a fundraising campaign to support community education programmes in Tanzania, raising a total of €2,515 for the social cause.

Former Creagh Deputy Principal, Johnny Johnston, brought about the schools contact with the Holy Union Mission through his sister-in-law Sr. Annette Farrell. The sisters work with the Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) project initiated in 1999 in the poor district of Dar es Salaam, offering education to over 200 children in disadvantaged backgrounds.

Unfortunately in recent years, government funding for the programme has been significantly cut. Regardless Creagh NS have always been around to give their hand, previously supporting the refurbishment and running costs of the Tanzanian school.

The sixth class pupils have been active fundraising across the year, promoting their social action and awareness. Last December, they went carol singing in St. Michael's Square and lately ran a cake sale, with some contributing their own Confirmation money to the efforts.

Their hard work and generosity culminated in the presentation of a cheque of €2,515 to Johnny Johnston and his grandchild Saoirse, on behalf of Sr Annette.

In a letter thanking the pupils, Sr Annette detailed: "I was going to have to stop the daily porridge breakfast

and to let the Band teacher go in order to cut costs. I dreaded telling the teachers because both elements are really important to the programme. Now, thanks to your help, I'll be able to manage. The funds from Creagh will ensure that the porridge breakfast will continue for the next 7 months".

The school received a Green Flag for Global Citizenship Litter and Waste at an Awards Ceremony in the Galway Bay Hotel. Past pupil and Connacht Rugby player Matthew Devine returned to the grounds to raise the banner, along with Social Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) coordinator Mark Ronaldson.

The Parents' Association ran a successful and well supported 5k Fun Walk Fundraiser on Father's Day, with €2,400 raised towards their sporting and leisure facilities. Snacks and drinks were generously sponsored that afternoon by new local business-H53 Coffee.

In addition, John Molloy and PJ Lenihan of Creagh Community Development Council presented €5,000 to Board of Management Chairperson Frank Gallagher and Acting Principal Aine Bleahene for the school's leisure developments

Before closing for the Summer, Creagh NS held their End of Year Awards with categories in sports, art, pupils of the year, certificates of excellence, as well as the Johnny Johnston award. A number of students were honoured, including the sixth class fundraisers who will soon be starting their stint in secondary school.



GIFTS

Find us on UPCOMING
EVENTSGalway
bay

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DEPARTMENT STORE

Galway Bay FM will be back in store on Friday 22nd September (Ronan Lardner show 12pm to 3pm) for **more giveaways and 25% off selected Toys**, plus we will be launching our Christmas savings club and The Toymaster Christmas catalogue. So not one to be missed.

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1st place prize winning Colm Browne of this years Garbally Parents Association Golf Classic (L-R) Ballinasloe Golf Captain John Donnellan, Principal Paul Walsh, Parents Association Chair Geraldine Kelly, Colm Browne, and Ann Marie Waters of the Parents Association.

All Garbally College graduates of 1962 to 1967 are invited to a school reunion and tour of the current grounds later this year.

Following a meeting with Principal Paul Walsh, the Re-union has been organized so past pupils will arrive at 14:00 outside the college front, where they will be invited inside to the library. There the graduates will be offered a tea or coffee while scanning through some past records.

Thereafter, a tour the now closed Old Building will be facilitated by Fr. Colm Allman and Bishop John Kirby. A visit to the West Lawn will come after, along with a tour of the school grounds by Paul Walsh. The schoolmates will later gather in Gullane's at 17:30 for their dinner, with the hotel offering a set evening meal at €40 per person.

Gullane's currently have all 27 rooms ready for the re-union on Thursday October 26 and can be contacted at (090) 964 2220. The Shearwater will have in the range of 40 to 50 rooms available and can be contacted at (090) 963 0500. Upon your bookings, graduates are encouraged to specify they are with the 'Garbally Block'. Wives and partners are welcome to attend. For further information, you can contact Organiser Mattie Kilroy at (087) 633 5479.



Simon Keller, Cathal Keogh, Orla Purdy, Pearse Keller at the Golf Classic.



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- Fergal O Reilly - Chartered Physiotherapist
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- Aaron McDermott - Chartered Physiotherapist
- Robbie Fox - Sport Masseur Connacht Rugby

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Athlone staff of courier provider DPD Ireland presenting a cheque of €1000 to EGM Cancer Support. L-R: Breda Malynn, Mary Gaffey, Jacqueline Daly, Noelle Egan, Anna Obara.



Margaret Lantry who ran in the Ladies Mini Marathon presenting a cheque of €1000 to Jacqueline Daly of EGM Cancer Support



The Men Junior Gaelic Footballers who won their League shield Final against Loughrea. Met with tough competition and tied with Loughrea into extra time, they scored a winning goal to bring them ahead by 2-15 to 1-14.



Taughmaconnell U-10 Girls Indoor Soccer Team were crowned All-Ireland Community Games Champions for 2023. The team included Róisín Cleary, Kayla Galvin, Robyn Brooks, Aoibheann Daly, Ella Grehan, Amy Grehan, Meabh Finneran and Laura Lyons. Team Management included Nigel Moore (missing from photo), Louisa Brooks and Catherine Lyons



Caoimhe Flanagan of Ballinasloe Golf Club came second in the Girls 13s Irish Kids Golf Tour in Galway Bay



Ballinasloe Town AFC Senior Players Gary Egan and Mike Lynch after returning from Poland representing Ireland at the Soccer Dia Euro Futsal Finals, a tournament for players with Diabetes raising awareness of the condition.



Fr. Michael Finneran was awarded the Parker Cup in Clontuskert for his sporting achievements in Gaelic Football and Rugby. Captaining the Roscommon Minor Football Team in 1959 and 1960, and playing both football and rugby for St. Peter's as well as Garbally. Fr. Michael's sisters Phil and Sally and their husbands, Paddy and Tommy were welcomed to Clontuskert to celebrate the occasion.



New bicycle stands have been installed at Ballinasloe Civic Offices and at the Dunlo Running Track in response to a call from Cllr Evelyn Parsons for active travel measures. Cllr Parsons credited the engineering staff, Supervisor Paul Leonard and the General operative crew who responded very proactively to the request. Pictured is Paul Batty Area Engineer Ballinasloe and Cllr Evelyn Parsons.



A coffee morning and cake sale organised by staff of St Claire's Ward for the retirement of Geraldine Goherty (pictured with flowers). The event raised €4190 for Mary's Meals, a charity offering feeding programmes to children in poverty. "I would like to sincerely thank everybody for their exceptional generosity and those who supported this fundraiser and helped in any way" Geraldine notes.



Creagh's Catherine Conway recently celebrated her 100th birthday. On the occasion, she issued a bit of advice stating the key to a happy life is 'working hard.'



Sophie Kenny from Eyrecourt who cut 14 inches of hair and raised €4,140 for EGM Cancer Support



Another defibrillator has been added outside Greene's Forge Earlspeak, pictured with Karyn Gavin of Galway Rural Development who funded the AED, Padraig and Frances Greene who installed it, and members of Creagh/Ballinasloe CFR Group Helen, Aidan, Paulo and Denise.

AUGUST EVENTS GUIDE

August 1, Tuesday		
Cuidiu Breastfeeding Support Group	10am-11.30	Youthwork Ireland
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Tennis. Mixed Doubles Night (weekly)	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
August 2, Wednesday		
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Massage Therapy	10am-12.30	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cntr
Bsloe active retirement meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Tennis. Club Night (weekly)	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
August 3, Thursday		
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 4, Friday		
Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Music in the Canal Bar. Sean Crehan	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Tennis. Club Night. All Welcome (weekly)	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar
Music. The 2 Q's	10pm	Brewery Lane
August 5, Saturday		
Cemetery Sunday - Parish of Creagh	3pm	Creagh, Ballinasloe
Cemetery Sunday - Parish of Kildoonoy	4.30pm	Kilclooney
Traditional Music Sessions	Evening time	Pearse's GAA Club Hse
Music In the Canal Bar. Lal Lee	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Tennis. Supervised Jnr Ses (4-11yrs)	11am-noon	Bsloe Tennis Court
Tennis. Supervised Jnr Ses (ages 12 +)	noon-1pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Loose Rooster	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Michael Reagan	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. Kevin Corry	10pm	Gibbons Pillar Hse Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 6, Sunday		
Tennis. Beginners Club Sess (weekly)	10am-11.30	Bsloe Tennis Court
Tennis. Club Sess. All Welcome (Wkly)	11.30am-1pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Social Dancing. John Molloy	5pm-7.30	Shearwater Hotel
Jimmy Buckley (sup Brendan Jermin)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music Sessions	9.30pm	Valerie's of Aughrim
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music. Red Tape	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Matt Keane	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 7, Monday		
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Tennis. Ladies' Night (weekly)	6pm-8pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
August 8, Tuesday		
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
An Grúpa Comhrá Gaeilge & Cultúir meet	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA Club Hse
August 9, Wednesday		
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Bsloe active retirement meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
August 10, Thursday		
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge

August 11, Friday		
Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Reiki Session	10am-2pm	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cntr
Music in the Canal Bar. Glen Flynn	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar
Music. Down The Road	10pm	Brewery Lane
August 12, Saturday		
Exhibition Launch - On Our Door Step	2.30pm	Ballinasloe Library
Bsloe Girls Reformatory School	3.30pm	Ballinasloe Library
Music in the Bar. Niall Ruthledge	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. 3 Men And A Bass	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. Alan O'Neill	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 13, Sunday		
Walk Clontuskert to Lismany Boardwalk	10am-3pm	Bsloe Gun Club, Pboybog
Social Dancing. Michael Collins	5pm-7.30	Shearwater Hotel
Gerry Guthrie (support Andy Feery)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music Sessions	9.30pm	Valerie's of Aughrim
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 14, Monday		
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Tennis. Summer Camp (ages 5-17)	10am-2.30	Bsloe Tennis Court
August 15, Tuesday		
Tennis. Summer Camp (ages 5-17)	10am-2.30	Bsloe Tennis Court
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
August 16, Wednesday		
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Massage Therapy	10am-12.30	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cntr
Bsloe active retirement meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Tennis. Summer Camp (ages 5-17)	10am-2.30	Bsloe Tennis Court
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
August 17, Thursday		
Tennis. Summer Camp (ages 5-17)	10am-2.30	Bsloe Tennis Court
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 18, Friday		
Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am - 1.30	Bsloe Social Centre
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Tennis. Summer Camp (ages 5-17)	10am-2.30	Bsloe Tennis Court
Music Canal Bar. Micheal Reagan	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar
Music. Brego	10pm	Brewery Lane
August 19, Saturday		
Battle of Aughrim - Talk & Walk About	12pm	BOA Visitor Centre
Glimpses into the Past	4pm-6.30	Moore Hall, Bdangan
Roscommon Senior Ftbll Champ	7pm	Creggs
Music in the Canal Bar. Amy Brennan	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music. Dan McCabe	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Retro Groove	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Padge Bennett	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Live Music	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge

August 20, Sunday		
Walking Tour - The Mouth of Ford, Bsloe	1pm-3pm	St. Michaels Car Park
Social Dancing. Stephen Smith	5pm-7.30	Shearwater Hotel
Michael English (Sup Stuart Moyles)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music Sessions	9.30pm	Valerie's of Aughrim
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 21, Monday		
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
August 22, Tuesday		
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
August 23, Wednesday		
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Bsloe active retirement meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
August 24, Thursday		
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 25, Friday		
Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am - 1.30	Bsloe Social Centre
Reiki Session	10am-2pm	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cntr
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Music in the Canal Bar. Saddletramp	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Social Dancing . Music Matt Leavy	9.30pm -12	Moore Com Hall
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar
Music. DJ Colm	10pm	Brewery Lane
August 26, Saturday		
Music in the Canal Bar. Donie O	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music with Matt and Conor	10pm	An Táin
Music. Red Tape	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Alex Roe	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. Adrian Rabbitte	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 27, Sunday		
Social Dancing. Teddy Cathal Barry	5pm-7.30	Shearwater Hotel
Patrick Feeney (Support Steve Reilly)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Clontuskert Community Fun Day	2-5pm	Clontuskert
Traditional Music Sessions	9.30pm	Valerie's of Aughrim
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
August 28, Monday		
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
August 29, Tuesday		
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
August 30, Wednesday		
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Massage Therapy	10am-12.30	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cntr
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Bsloe active retirement meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
August 31, Thursday		
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge

SEPTEMBER EVENTS GUIDE

September 1, Friday

Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-130pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Roscommon Jnr Ladies Fball Champ	7pm	Woodmount
Music in the Canal Bar. Amy Brennan	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Tennis. Club Night. All Welcome (weekly)	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar
Music. Down The Road	10pm	Brewery Lane

September 2, Saturday

Music in the Canal Bar. Donie O	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Tennis. Supervised Jnr Ses (4-11 yrs)	11am-noon	Bsloe Tennis Court
Tennis. Supervised Junior Ses (12 +)	noon-1pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Toxic Twins	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Nightowls	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. Adrian Rabbitte	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House

September 3, Sunday

Tennis. Beg Club Session (weekly)	10am-11.30	Bsloe Tennis Court
Tennis. Club Session. All Welcome (Weekly)	1130am-1pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Social Dancing. Liam Mannering	5pm-7.30	Shearwater Hotel
Sunday Club. Mike Denver	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music Sessions	9.30pm	Valerie's of Aughrim
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar

September 4, Monday

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Tennis. Ladies' Night (weekly)	6pm-8pm	Bsloe Tennis Court

September 5, Tuesday

Cuidiu Breastfeeding Support Group	10am-11.30	Youthwork Ireland
An Grúpa Comhrá Gaeilge & Cultúir	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA C. House
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Tennis. Mixed Doubles (weekly)	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court

September 6, Wednesday

Bsloe Active Retirement Mnthly Meet	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
French Conversational Class Lizzie	11am-noon	Gullane's Hotel
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Tennis. Club Night (weekly)	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar

September 7, Thursday

Irish Conversation Padraig 'Giorcal Comhra'	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge

September 8, Friday

Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-130pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Reiki Session	10am-2pm	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cntr
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Music in the Canal Bar. Kora	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar
Larry Reynolds Festival. Trad Music	10pm	Brewery Lane
Feile Cheoil Larry Reynolds	Evening	Gibbons Pillar House

September 9, Saturday

Ceoil na nÓg teaching ses A. O'Sullivan	Evening	Pearse's GAA C. House
Music in the Canal Bar. Paul Dowling	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Larry Reynolds Festival. Music. Live	2pm	An Táin Bar
Larry Reynolds Festival. Music. Live	10pm	An Táin Bar
Larry Reynolds Festival. Trad Music	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Shane Moore	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Feile Cheoil Larry Reynolds	Evening	Gibbons Pillar House

September 10, Sunday

Roscommon Jnr Ladies Fball Champ	11am	Woodmount
Country Dancing. Patrick Feeney	3pm-5.30	Shearwater Hotel
Sunday Club. Michael Collins	8.30pm-11.30	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music Sessions	9.30pm	Valerie's of Aughrim
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Larry Reynolds Festival. Music.	4pm	An Táin Bar
Larry Reynolds Festival. Trad Music	10pm	Brewery Lane
Feile Cheoil Larry Reynolds	Evening	Gibbons Pillar House

September 11, Monday

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
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September 12, Tuesday

Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Ballinasloe Bridge Club AGM	Daytime	Bsloe Bridge Club
An Grúpa Comhrá Gaeilge & Cultúir	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA C. House

September 13, Wednesday

French Conversational Class Lizzie	11am-noon	Gullane's Hotel
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Bro of Charity Service. Drop In Day	11am-2pm	85 Upper Brackernagh
Massage Therapy	10am-12.30	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cnt
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Bsloe active retirement meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar

September 14, Thursday

Irish Conversation Class With Padraig	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge

September 15, Friday

Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-130pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Music in the Canal Bar. Matt Dillon	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar
Music. Robbie & Brian	10pm	Brewery Lane

September 16, Saturday

Music Canal Bar. Frankie McDonald	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music. The Whistling Donkey	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. 3 Men & A Bass	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Na Riotara	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. Cruiscin	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House

September 17, Sunday

Ballinasloe Panto Auditions	noon-3pm	Bsloe Town Hall Theatre
Pat McKenna & Glenshane Country	5pm-7.30	Shearwater Hotel
Gerry Guthrie (Support Andy Feery)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music Sessions	9.30pm	Valerie's of Aughrim
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar

September 18, Monday

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
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September 19, Tuesday

Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
An Grúpa Comhrá Gaeilge & Cultúir	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA C. House

September 20, Wednesday

French Conversational Class Lizzie	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Bsloe active retirement meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar

September 21, Thursday

Irish Conversation Class With Padraig	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge

September 22, Friday

Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-130pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Reiki Session	10am-2pm	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cntr
Culture Night	TBC	Bsloe Town Hall Theatre
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Music Canal Bar. Michael Reagan	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Culture Night. Seamus O'Rourke	Evening	Moore Com Hall
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar
Music. 2 Q's	10pm	Brewery Lane

September 23, Saturday

The Tallest Smallest Theatre	Daytime	Ballinasloe Library
Group A Art Exhibition	Daytime	Bsloe Town Hall Theatre
Music Canal Bar. Niall Ruthledge	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Beggars Velvet	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Sibrina Fallon	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. Kevin & Fiona	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House

September 24, Sunday

Bsloe Horse & Agricultural Day Show	10am	Ballinasloe Sgrounds
Group A Art Exhibition	Daytime	Bsloe Town Hall Theatre
Social Dancing. Checkers	5pm-7.30	Shearwater Hotel
Robert Mizzell (Support John Molloy)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music Sessions	9.30pm	Valerie's of Aughrim
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar

September 25, Monday

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
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September 26, Tuesday

Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
An Grúpa Comhrá Gaeilge & Cultúir	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA C. House

September 27, Wednesday

French Conversational Class Lizzie	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Knitting and Crochet Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Massage Therapy	10am-12.30	Bsloe Cancer Sup Cnt
Bsloe active retirement meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar

September 28, Thursday

Irish Conversation Class With Padraig	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge

September 29, Friday

Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-130pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yd
Music in the Canal Bar. Billy Mac	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

September 30, Saturday

Music in the Canal Bar. Eamon O'Neill	10pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan

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Bishop Michael Duignan accompanied by John Weldon (left) representing St. Grellan's Council of The Knights of St. Columbanus, Ballinasloe Credit Union Chairperson Sean Madden (right) representing all sponsors, along with children who were commended at the prize-giving ceremony for the Clonfert diocese's 2023 Children's Art Competition.



Fr. Robert McCabe (left), Bishop Michael Duignan (centre) and Mr. Francis Donohue (right) pictured with members of Ballinasloe Pioneer Centre during a social gathering in Gullane's Hotel formally welcoming forty-two new young people of Clonfert diocese parishes to the Pioneer Association. Adults seated (left to right): Ms Sheila Walsh, Justin Harkin, Ms Agnes Duignan, Ms Ann Downey and Ms Elizabeth Campbell.



Superintendent Finbarr Philpott, now stationed in Ballinasloe in the Galway County East Community Engagement Area. The Cork native is a NUIG graduate in Law, served in Bosnia with the United Nations, Cork City, Loughrea, Loughgeorge, Clifden, Galway City, Tuam and Garda HQ, and was promoted to Superintendent in 2022.



Paramedic Class PD138 at their recent graduation from their base in Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre
Back Row (left to right): Maeve Connolly, Katelyn Ryan, Ciara Clyde, Ronan Gallagher, Bryan Hyland, Deanne Gallagher, Megan Jinks, Colum Crawford, Tony Tuohy, John Rhatigan, Keith Fitzgerald, Patrick Brereton, Lee Chambers.
Front Row: Kirst Kelly, Adam Dunne, Tom O' Connor, Naomi Bradley, Luke O' Neill, Liz Purcell (Tutor), Sharon Meehan (Course Director), PJ Commis (Tutor), Clara Grey, Patrick Frehill, Mike Curran, Aaron McGrath.



John McHugh, Sean Madden, Michelle-Forde-Roche, Leo Kiernan, Beibhinn Kiernan, Rachel Murray, Brónagh Kiernan, Evin-Forde-Roche, Michael John Murray, Oisín Murphy, Paul Bradley, Rachel McHugh, Isabel Murray, Lilly Kenny, Ciara Grenham, Shane McNeill, Joan Casey.



Sean Madden, Michelle-Forde-Roche, Leo Kiernan, John McHugh, Beibhinn Kiernan, Isabel McHugh, Shane McNeill, Joan Casey

The Ballinasloe Credit Union recently supported the 5th Roscommon Moore Scout group with a significant sponsorship towards their Annual Camp, this year venturing internationally to Wales.

The Scout section, between ages 14 to 17, will embark from Moore Community Hall and take a ferry across the Irish Sea to

Coxwood Scout Campsite, staying abroad for nine days with the leaders, taking in what the Welsh lands have to offer.

In the itinerary, the scouts hope to travel the world's fastest zip-line, go White Water Rafting, hike the tallest mountain in Wales-Snowdon, spend a day in the valley known as the MACH Loop where RAF pilots hone their skills. If that was not enough, they also plan to travel north to Anfield, home base of Liverpool FC, and abseil from the top of the soccer stadium.

"Our annual camp and all our activities is about challenging young people to achieve things they never thought they would, to help all of us appreciate what we have and appreciate the support of others" states leader Leo Kiernan.

The non-profit group held regular fundraisers, including their recent two-day Lip-sync Challenge against Moore Soccer Club, as well as their Duck Race where sponsors contested one another with rubber ducks in a race along Moycarn Lodge.

Overall the committee were overwhelmed by the support provided by organisations including the Ballinasloe Credit Union who are of tremendous help in funding their large-scale events.

Recently they hosted their group camp in Portlick Scout Campsite welcoming all ages, including the younger Beavers and Cub sections. Great fun was had that weekend with activities ranging from archery, wall climbing, human foosball and some water gun fights.

Local business contributed their hand to the camp with Chill-Out Firewood donating timber for the fires, Beechlawn Farm distributing their famed organic produce, and Waldron Family Meats presenting 150 sausages to them all.

Those hoping to join or volunteer can contact the Moore Scouts on their Facebook page or at moorescouts@outlook.com. Donations for the costs of the Wales camp can still be made at <https://gofund.me/abd8bb79>.

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Locals from Ballydangan and Moore collaborated in producing a promotional video with Roscommon County Council for the Red Grouse Project, an initiative aimed to prevent the extinction of endangered bird species.

The widely acclaimed innovative, Ballydangan Red Grouse Project, was founded in 2009 by Moore Gun and Conservation Club and a small group of its village residents. Since then a long standing partnership with Moore District CE Scheme has supported the initiative and is currently employing four workers to help on the land with predator control and nest protection.

The project was initially established to protect Red Grouses in Ballydangan, who has experienced a 50% decline nationwide between the 1970s and 2008 and has especially seen a reduction within the local region as a result of commercial peat extraction.

The initiative has since diversified and welcomed a breeding site for varying wader species including Lapwing, Curlew, Snipe, and other small ground nesting birds. The community pursuit aims to increase awareness surrounding these species, as well as any other listed mammals, insects and plants found on their sites.

The projects leader Pat Feehily, a suckler and sheep farmer from Ballydangan, spoke about the habitat grounds in a recently produced video with Roscommon County Council sharing: "we are blessed to have this natural resource on our doorstep. It is regarded as one of Ireland's best examples of community conservation." The wet bogs of Ballydangan store over 10,000 years' worth of carbon and act

as a safe-haven for its vulnerable species with its abundance of insects, as discussed by Moore peatland ecologist David Fallon.

The bogland has been attracting visitors from nearby schools, colleges and the general public, as well as international students from the University of Galway to study biodiversity in the area. The project leaders hope to continue educating the public on the declining number of red listed species and other aspects of conservation.

The land is currently home to eight to ten pairs of Curlew, previously one of the most common birds in the Roscommon landscape but now down to 150 breeding sets across the Republic. "We have seen a phenomenal increase in the number of ground nesting birds on site and we look forward to its continued success and improve into these numbers in the future" stated Pat.

The short promotional video can be found in its entirety on the Roscommon County Council YouTube channel at [youtube.com/watch?v=Q4kH9pnk8bs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4kH9pnk8bs).



Members of the Project with local TD Denis Naughton



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Participants of Line-Dancing classes by Ria Purcell

Local members of Support Upskill Advocate Socialise, (SUAS) a community outreach service of the Brothers of Charity Ireland have been enjoying a wide variety of activities with the service, attending gatherings which channel their inner creativity and improve their technical skills in a working environment.

The service, provide multidisciplinary supports to adults with mild intellectual disability living locally, promoting well-being and prioritising people's independence, choices, safety and opportunities. Their Advocacy Committee regularly campaign with local representatives to improve their amenities, facilities and access to medical services for card holders.

During the past year, members of SUAS enjoyed coffee mornings in Gullane's Hotel, participated in a Sound Recording Project facilitated by Alain Halimi, tutor with arts development programme That's Life; and enjoyed a night away in Westport.

Last January, the products of a popular Woodcarving course, hosted by Connemara Ecoskills were exhibited at the Ballinasloe Library. The artisans continued with a pottery course facilitated by Maeve Gallagher Ceramics, which was also displayed at the venue during the Summer season.

Both courses are funded by the



SUAS members at a Woodcarving exhibition at the Ballinasloe Library

Galway and Roscommon Training Board, who support SUAS. Line Dancing classes with Milkshake Dance Academy's Ria Purcell at the Town Band Hall over recent months as well as Ukelele sessions with Gina Hickey this September. SUAS have also been liaising with GRETB Adult Education and Literacy Coordinator Sheila Donnellan, hoping to support members in attending beginner IT classes in town come Autumn.

Currently SUAS have been arranging ongoing art classes where crafts-men and women create cards, calendars, candles, and Yule Logs. Every Thursday in their base by Canalach Estate, the men's group have been working hard gardening in their polytunnel. At their second location on 10 Churchill Ballinasloe, the Brothers of Charity artists painted a vibrant mural within the courtyard.

Discussing further activities, Job Coach Outreach Support Worker Sarah Reynolds shared: "We are delighted to have Martin O'Malley back on board again with another exciting woodwork project which will be funded by Galway County Council Community Schemes Cultural Development fund and the BOCSI.

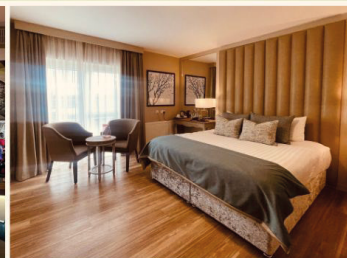
"We also host regular coffee mornings and have a Summer BBQ for individuals who use SUAS and their family and friends. We facilitate our annual Christmas dinner, regular social outings to Athlone, Galway, Dublin, festive outings to the Ballinasloe Pantomime and the Galway Christmas Market. Individuals have also enjoyed trips to the Cinema and to the Bowling Alley" she finishes.

Regular updates on the group can be found by their newsletter, shared with SUAS members and family and friends thrice a year. For more information, you can contact SUAS Services Manager Geoff Quinlan by (090) 964 3687.

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Locals of Ballinasloe and Aughrim have been kicking back to the medieval ages, participating in historical reenactments and learning cooking, sewing, leatherwork, and other trades from the period.

The Society for Creative Anachronism is an international organization with over 50,000 participants worldwide pursuing recreation of skills developed between 600 to 1600. The national branch is split into three groups: one in the North, one encompassing Dublin and the East, and one for the rest of Ireland covering Galway to Cork.

The Midlands 'Barony of Eplaheimr' group are 50 strong, regularly holding online meetings and monthly face-to-face gatherings. Some events see attendees dress in garb and practicing activities of interest which may include fighting, archery, brewing, dyeing and more. During single day gatherings, everyone in attendance offers a dish to share for a feast, and following the meal the reenactors typically break into singsong.

Weekend events are also provided in locations with accommodation, such as Petersburg Outdoor Education Centre, or sites where attendees can camp. Cost is kept to a minimal to cover the venues of choice.

Edel Chadwick, a lecturer with TUS living in Ballinasloe, has been involved with the SCA since she was based in Australia twenty years ago. Her own enjoyment in medieval reenactment comes from creating fancy clothing, dressing up, and spending: "a weekend away from mundane life".

Another member Ger Clarke, working in Ballinasloe, shows a keen interest in medieval Irish cooking and recently presented a talk to Moore History Group on the craft.

Among Edel's favourite gatherings would be the Valentines 'Court of Love' which typically includes archery competitions, arts and sciences competitions, along with a feast with singing and storytelling.

She is also looking forward to a heavy fighting tourney in November encompassing Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales where men and women will duke out in armour plating with large battle sticks.

Rather than playing a character, 'Adele de Chadwykke' described

the masquerading as adopting a persona, ranging from various personalities covering the medieval period.

"Our events are not acting or theatre, we don't have an audience, they are not for profit. We just like to dress up, enter into a different world, leave the screens behind and chat, make stuff, make new friends and just have fun" she explained. Some events not in garb might see them making clothing or leatherwork. Someone is always available to give a hand in the respective trade.

Many events take place in Clara or Moate, but the Midlands group hope to start events in Ballinasloe soon.

New members of all ages and orientations are welcome to come along for a taster, although children must attend events with a parent or guardian. Membership options can be found on the society's website at www.SCA.org. For further information regarding the SCA and local group, you can email Edel at Chadwykke@gmail.com.



'Adele de Chadwykke' and 'Rogned Stengrimova' at the Tíonol Barúnach Eplaheimr event



Ballinasloe and Aughrim Reenactors.

Back (L-R): John Prendergast, Geraldine Clarke, Edel Chadwick, Brian Eccles
Front: Fiona Scerri, Isabelle, Jacqueline Daly, Maya Frost

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The Huge Cast and Ensemble at the Songs For Saoirse Concert



The new spruced town hall floor

County Council for kindly funding this project” stated committee member Alan Harney.

The facility was used to great effect during the Sing for Saoirse concert, where hundreds of adult and youth choral singers gathered to fundraise for the Galway Sick Kids Foundation towards the end of July.

The show was initially created as an online pandemic project supporting Galway girl Saoirse Ronan who fought cancer at the time, but now had the opportunity to perform live at the local theatre.

The Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre revamped their wooden flooring approaching the stage, sanding down and treating the boards until they appeared brand new.

“A huge thank you to Padraic Lyons, Donal Croffy and Dave Hardiman for carefully removing the seats for us, to Aidan (Browne) and company for their expert work and to Galway

The Theatre’s Pane of Glass Fundraiser is just coming to an end, with donations landing in across the globe from Edmonton, San Francisco, Dubai and Melbourne. The Summer Variety Concert playing to a packed house was a huge entertainment and financial success. The Committee expects to have hit their €30,000 match-funding target by the summer and the capital works are expected to begin on the Windows doorways later this summer.



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The 10th Annual Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds takes place from September 7th to 10th. The Féile started in 2013 in the form of a traditional music concert to commemorate the musical life of Larry Reynolds and to promote the East Galway style of music and playing which is synonymous in the region.

Over the past ten years the organisers have built on those foundations and now promote a four-day festival with a large programme of events, bringing a feast of traditional Irish music, song and dance, arts, heritage, and culture to Ballinasloe every September.

Chair person Martina Flanagan expressed her enthusiasm saying “We are looking forward to welcoming both regular and new friends for another

remarkable Féile Cheoil. Our programme of events shares the same calibre of artists and musicians as those of other iconic traditional festivals such as Feakle, Willie Clancy and the Joe Mooney Summer School”.

The 10th anniversary sees an expanded programme, with workshops in music, traditional singing and Sean Nós dancing to a Trad Music Trail of Sessions (indoors and outdoors), Singers Circle, Historical & Heritage Walk, Busking Competition, Photo, Shop Window Display, & Schools Art competitions, Set Dancing Céili and a Crafters Village in the town square, all topped off by an opening anniversary concert featuring Breaking Trad, sponsored by the Ballinasloe Credit Union.

East Galway’s distinctive style of music and playing has been an integral part of the experience for many years, so as special event has been curated-a free day-long exhibition entitled “East Galway Style”.

It is the audience’s chance to soak in an array of music, song, dance, talks, photos and videos from professionals and enthusiasts. Direct descendants of the Aughrim Slopes Céili Band and The Ballinakill Céile Band will be there to share their favourite tunes. Dr Verena Commings of NUI, Galway will give a captivating lecture “Listening to the Sounds of East Galway Style” There will also be performances from Sean Nós Dancers & Set dancers as well as Sean Nós singing and Traditional songs.

You won’t want to miss the photo exhibition & the video featuring Máirtín O’ Fathaigh’s footage on the Ballinakill Céili Band either. The finale of the exhibition will be a CD launch from Composer Iomar Barret with Chris Kelly & Proinsias Kitt, what a wonderful wrap up to the day which will take place in the church gallery of the Ballinasloe Library on Saturday September 9th from 11:00 am to 4:30 pm. This event is FREE to the and sponsored by the Shearwater Hotel

The overall cost of running the festival this year is approximately €20,000 and



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Vera Craughwell, Tom Madden, Claire Gibbons at Finns Session 2022

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would not be possible without the financial support of the main sponsors, the Ballinasloe Credit Union, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media, Galway Co Council, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann The Shearwater Hotel & Spa, and Galway Rural Development. Bookings and

tickets for all events this year are available on Eventbrite.ie/ search Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds. Follow Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds on Facebook, Instagram, Eventbrite and www.feilecheoilarryreynolds.com

TOWN BAND UPDATE

By Colm Croffy

Band rehearsals became more intense as the young members practised for upcoming events in the Town Square and Local Nursing Homes. A new initiative started whereby young members will be given the opportunity to wield the Baton during rehearsals contributing to their overall musicianship and understanding. Many are eager to become Protégés of the Baton over the coming months.

Running a band and maintaining a hall is not inexpensive and the Band relies heavily on the goodwill of the membership and the local community to support the bands efforts. The more recent income generating event was a Tea Party Fundraiser on the last Sunday in May in the Band Hall, with tables of 5 people and 10 people being accommodated. Each table host provided delicious, delectable treats for their invited guests and great fun and merriment was had with Brendan Loughnane providing the entertainment.

As a community Band they supported The Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre Concert on Thursday 6th July as they fundraised towards their target of €30,000 matching finance to unlock the Government Grant received recently. In a delightful departure for the Band, Trombonist Eimear stepped forward and sang the accompaniment to the theme of Pocahontas which was very well received by the packed audience.

The renovated Band Hall is now being used by a variety of groups like the Ballinasloe Active Retirement Association, Music Matters, The Cathy Hopkins School of Hip Hop, Trad Lessons for Violin and Bodhran and a Yoga Group all contributing to the revenue stream.

The 2022 Annual General Meeting being held in the Supper Room in early June. Damien O Neachtain, Chairperson, welcomed all and during his report he complimented the membership and their supportive parents for helping to maintain the band throughout the year. He complimented and thanked the local community for their ongoing loyal support for the band fundraising events. The collaborations of the band had throughout the year with Athenry School of Music, Music Matters String Group and the touring Japanese Higashi were very beneficial and educational as well as being fun. The Band also hosted an Irish Marching band event in the Emerald Ballroom.

He recounted on the successes of recitals at Local Nursing Homes and The Town Square. Ringing in the New Year is now an annual outing, as is the St. Patrick's Day Parade which the Band had the honour of leading this year. The Band participated in the National Band Championships in Athlone with the young percussionists winning a trophy. He then noted the sad passing of John Flynn who had been an active and dedicated member who helped drive the fundraising for the Band Hall. He finished by thanking Bandmasters Noel Madden and Keith Kelly, as well as Martina & Chris Doherty who are the driving force of the band and its activities.

Treasurer gave a fulsome report the finances of the Band which cost some €36,000 to operate for the 12 months. The meeting was also informed there are no debts outstanding and the mortgage was redeemed this year.

Officers returned were Chairperson Damien O Neachtain Secretary Katja Connolly, Treasurer Carmel Dunne, Assistant Treasurer Martina Doherty, PRO Brian Derrane.



Brenda Loughnane and her guests enjoy delectable treats at the Tea Party

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After 60 strong years, Pádraig Pearses GAA Roscommon continues to grow and develop in Woodmount, Creagh. Some might be unfamiliar that, as well as promoting sport, the club host a wide range of cultural and social activities offered to those in the area

The club welcomed a full house of members and friends on their 60th anniversary with musical entertainment performed by local musicians, singers and the 'Healthy Club' jiving group. The gathering offered a time for reflection showcasing a photographed collection of their Chairpersons to date and a coloured enhanced photo of the Pádraig Pearses Senior semi-final winners 1963.

Although formed in 1962 the club had no grounds of its own until 1983. Up until then the club played its official games at Ballyforan (St. Aidan's GAA Club) or Johnstown (Clan Na nGael GAA Club), also using facilities such as Finneran's Field Taughmaconnell, Green's Field Moore, St Brigid's Hospital Grounds in Creagh and the pitch at the rear of the then Falty National School.

After years of planning and fundraising, the club carried out a major development plan establishing the current grounds at Woodmount, Creagh, Co. Roscommon, officially opened in 1984 by Dr. Donal Keenan, former GAA President. The new grounds had

an immediate impact, within 12 months capturing a first Senior Hurling (1984) and Ladies Football (1985) Championships.

1993, saw the purchase of additional grounds, which were developed and improved further over the years to give the current facility equipped with 2 full size floodlit and 3 training (1 floodlit) pitches, six team dressing rooms, match official dressing room facility, squash courts with viewing gallery, fully equipped gym, hurling wall, large spectator stand with press facilities, two turnstiles, a 750m lit walking track, office, function room with kitchen facilities and a members bar open seven nights a week.

Among their roll of honour – they have won County titles, an All-Ireland Junior 7's title, three Leo Kenny Cups, and many more to boast. The ladies footballers sit atop the all-time Roscommon LGFA roll of honour with 17 Senior, one Intermediate, one Junior and six Minor titles, one Connacht Intermediate and three All-Ireland 7's wins.

Significantly, the club have also been active in cultural competitions, securing 60 Roscommon and 6 Connacht Scór County titles since 1980.

An Grúpa Comhrá Gaeilge agus Cultúir, formed four years ago, are the body responsible for promoting cultural and social events. While initially founded to encourage speaking the Irish language, they have since branched off into a variety of other traditional pursuits.



Scór na Nóg members on a concert night

American Tea Party at the clubhouse

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One of the group's first activities was a night of music, singing, dancing, poetry reading, recitations and lilting. In conjunction with Moore History Group's Maureen and Moira Duffy and Bridie Kenny, attendees recalled the life of the deceased local musician Paddy Connors with a presentation of his family tree. Bobby Kilkenny, who performed before with Connors, gathered a group of players to honour his friend's memory through a live trad session.

"We recognise and appreciate the help Pádraig Pearses have given us" notes club member Séamus Mac Choistealbha, "and the contribution of our local musicians, singers, dancers, reciters is what is what keeps our traditional sessions alive and vigorous. Local talent provides the inspiration for our cultural wellbeing, and it is greatly appreciated and a source of immense pride."

Their next Comhra Irish-speaking gathering will assemble on August 8 but following the summer break will return to meeting weekly Tuesdays at 20:30 in the clubhouse. Their past meetup, organised by Language and Cultural Officer Mary Darcy, was widely enjoyed themed around an American Tea Party and included a demonstration on the old tradition of butter churning. Later this year, they will commence Irish language classes for parents and their children.

On bank holiday weekends, typically on Saturdays, the clubhouse hosts traditional sessions for a growing number of musicians, singers and other artists. Aisling O'Sullivan has been organising Ceoil na nÓg casual music sessions on the second Saturday each month, with guidance provided by group members Jim Troy,

Eoin Moran and Aisling O'Sullivan to many students.

Each of the culture nights are topped up with a cup of tae in hand, along with food provided by members.

Outside the clubhouse, An Grúpa Comhrá Gaeilge agus Cultúir have gone Mountain climbing in Connemara, stayed overnight in the Gaeltacht Islands, walked along the strand to Omev Island and taken a boat trip to Shannonbridge. Everyone on the trips are encouraged to speak Irish to their best ability, but the group will provide assistance when needed and a relaxed, casual environment to learn.

"While the GAA has responsibilities to promote all aspects of Irish culture, as with the case with all clubs, Cumann Phádraig Mhic Phiarais is more renowned for its on-field activities" Séamus emphasised. "The majority of members are football and hurling players and would regard the club's main function, or indeed sole function, lies in promoting those games".

An Grúpa Comhrá Gaeilge agus Cultúir welcome all residing in the club catchment area and interested in aspects of Irish culture, especially the language, to join. Young people are particularly welcome.

For further information, you can get in contact with Séamus at (086) 602 5068 or Mary at (085) 776 0652. Membership options can be found on the Pádraig Pearses website at clubs.clubforce.com/clubs/gaa-padraig-pearses-gaa-club-roscommon-roscommon/.



Séamus Mac Choistealbha and Language and Cultural Officer Mary Darcy

A group trip to Jack Mulveys house in Coolumper

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By Liam Timmins

The Ballinasloe and Vintage Club presented a cheque of €500 to Ballinasloe Meals on Wheels following their Vintage Vehicle Fundraising Run. The event last Spring saw motorists departing Gullane's Hotel to loop the southside of the Ballinasloe area towards Kiltormer and Belview, and then ending their journey in Aughrim.



Vintage Club Treasurer Mike Glynn, PRO Des Harney and Chairman Christy Ward presenting a cheque to Kay Cunningham with Meals on Wheels

A Road Run in memory of Essie (Ether) Stapleton is being organised by her son Eoin on August 20 raising funds for Galway Hospice. Registrations are open at 9:30 at €25 per entry. Motorists will depart Lawrencetown at 11:30, with separate routes for tractors and cars/bikes. For further information you can phone (087) 275 1733 or (087) 812 3269.

TIDY TOWNS RAMPING UP FOR JUDGES



By Liam Timmins

The Ballinasloe Tidy Towns are in the midst of preparing for the association's national competition, sweeping the streets and making sure all public realm parks are in order.

Judging is carried out randomly at any point between now and September, therefore the volunteers are keeping on top of their clean-ups against the looming examination.

A 'Think Twice' campaign was launched by the committee,

encouraging all to be mindful of litter spots on the streets. Even some younger volunteers have been out to give a hand in polishing up the town lately.

The water pump at Derrymullen is currently being cleaned and upgraded in a joint project with the Ballinasloe Probation Service, aiming to complement the new pavements added to the area by Galway County Council.

The Annual Estates competition, sponsored by Dunne's SuperValu, where contestants will be judged in separate categories including their local garden estates and residential areas is underway. Applications can be picked up at the Ballinasloe Library or by email at ballinasloetidytowns@gmail.com, the deadline being Tuesday August 8.

Their next clean-up will take place at the Marina on August 12 between 10:00 and 12:00. New volunteers and members are always welcome, and for more information you can contact Chairman Tom Madden at (086) 817 9580.



Ballinasloe Tidy Towns Committee, participants in the Tesco Community Fund 2023 receiving a cheque this week.



Volunteers and Committee members along with St Joseph's Residences involved in the annual Estates Clean up.

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The Annual Horse Fair is scheduled to take place during the first week in October with traditional horse sales taking place on the 1st, 2nd, and 7th of October.

To coincide with the horse fair, a local voluntary committee has annually taken the initiative to organize a series of events in the town centre, aiming to create a vibrant and festive atmosphere. Last year to celebrate the 300th edition the committee worked tirelessly to curate a diverse range of activities, including 20 live music performances on the festival soundstage.

It needs to be acknowledged that the success of the festival atmosphere during the horse fair was greatly attributed to the generous support of local businesses and sponsors. Their financial contributions played a crucial role in making the diverse range of events possible and ensuring that the town centre came alive with excitement and merriment.

This year the organizing committee have taken the difficult decision to scale back on the festival events for the opening weekend. Chairman of the Festival Committee Mal Croffy acknowledged "it was not an easy choice to make, but due to financial constraints and a shortage of volunteers, the Committee had no other option. While the opening weekend may be less elaborate than previous years, the essence of the unique horse fair will still be cherished by all those attending".

Effectively the opening weekend is now being fully operated, tolled, and managed by the Local Authority alone and the Committee will just confine



Marian Brady, chairperson of Ballinasloe Credit Union presenting to Sophie, Michael & Linda Mullane - 1st in the Credit Union sponsored Hourse of the Fair

their engagement to the Equestrian Competitions on the lunging pocket in the Green. It is unclear at the time of going to press if the Council intend to host an official opening, or host the Three Fairs Traditional Twinning Dinner (with Puck Fair Kerry and Auld Lammas Antrim) on the eve of the Great Horse Fair.

It has proven difficult to organise the Event Co-ordinating Committee since the last successful hosting of the 300th last year. There will be no Fair and Festival Office and there is no longer any

local assistance with accommodation enquiries for fair goers, apart from the Failte Ireland and Hidden Heartlands channels.

Even though there will be no carnival entertainment for the opening weekend for locals or visitors for the first time since the late 50s, the equestrian competitions will still take place as scheduled on Sunday the 1st October. The Committee recognized the significance of these competitions to the domestic horse sector, and their appeal to participants and spectators alike.

"Festival events for the 2023 fair will now commence on Thursday, the 5th and continue to Sunday the 8th. We have a small dedicated committee and with the support of our sponsors we are determined to make the best of the resources available and ensure that the festival remains a memorable and enjoyable experience for everyone", states Mal.

A full programme of all the festival events, commencing on the 5th of October, will be published shortly on the festival website and social media pages.

www.ballinasloeoctoberfair.com

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photo - Robert Riddell

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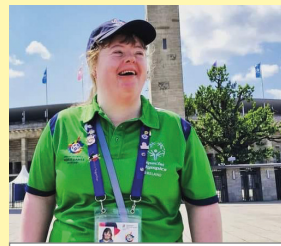
Sive Brassil, Modern Pentathlon Athlete at the European Games Krakow



Heather Payne, Women's FAI World Cup competitor and Young International Player of the Year



John Devine, International Cap World Rugby U20 Championship



Kate Dillon, Shotput and 100m Run Paralympian at the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin



Issac Oliver, International Contestant for the McGregor Trophy

NEW FULLTIME SPORTS CO-ORDINATOR ROLE



By Liam Timmins



Gary Kilcar, who just finished his part-time stint as Sports Activation Officer, discussing his time working for Ballinasloe

A full-time Community Sports Hub Coordinator, via Galway Sports Partnership, will be appointed in the coming months to aid in all club and sports developments. Part of a five year dormant funded scheme.

Funded by Sports Ireland, Galway Sports Partnership provide physical and sporting initiatives to the county. The Partnership has been responsible for regenerating many basketball courts and outdoor gyms.

Among the responsibilities for the hub co-ordinator include delivering the association's programmes, collaborating with community figures, raising awareness of current facilities, and providing guidance to committee members. The salary for the Ballinasloe position will be in the range of €27,500 to €30,000 depending on candidate experience.

There are already 40 co-ordinators nationwide, with one currently based in Galway city. The hub intends on acting

more of a concept than a location, although the partnership are in the progress of finding an office space to base the upcoming coordinator.

Full details were outlined during a public meeting in Gullane's Hotel, open for club delegates and local representatives. The gathering was welcomed by James Kilkenny of Galway Sports Partnership, who ran through the agenda and the position of the coordinator.

In advance of the appointment, the speakers encouraged the audience to collaborate in establishing a five-year plan for Ballinasloe to guide the appointee in their mission. The main objectives of the plan were motivating more participation in the community, promoting sustainability of our clubs, promoting inclusivity and cooperation, as well as making full use of our geographic assets such as the River Suck.

Bottom line is we should be encouraging more people to get active in sports come 2028, with teenagers between 14-20 declared as the least active demographic in town.

The Sports Partnership intends that competition for the new exciting role will open in late August, further details will be posted on the Galway Sports Partnership Facebook.



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Ballinasloe GAA Gaelic 4 Mothers & Others (G4M&O) has been a driving force in the community of Ballinasloe and surrounding areas since it began in the club in 2017.

G4M&O is a Ladies Gaelic Football (LGFA) initiative for women aged 25 and above, who are not currently playing competitive football with a club. It was set up to bring women of all ages, backgrounds, and fitness ability together

to play Gaelic football in a fun, non-competitive and social environment whilst meeting mothers and others from the local area of Ballinasloe. For anyone new moving to the town or anyone who feels they would like to join a new club to meet more people this is your chance!

Over the years they have been extremely lucky with their coaches/trainers who have generously given up their free time to come and train us. They have many fun outings during the year to other clubs as well as attending the Connacht Blitz and the National Blitz in Dublin and social nights out. G4M&O is a unique part of the club as not many other GAA clubs in the extended Ballinasloe area have a G4M&O team. Currently

they have mothers from surrounding areas such as Ahascragh, Caltra, Taughmaconnell, Moore, Laurencetown, Kiltormer, Aughrim, & Kilconnell.

"Since joining Ballinasloe G4M&O I can honestly say it was one of the best things I did for myself to settle into living in Ballinasloe. I look forward to the training sessions every week. I see it as my hour to get out of the house and go down and play some football with the girls and get some exercise. I have met many amazing girls along the way and I'm so happy to call them friends" states Laura Howley, Goal Keeper Extraordinaire

"I was hesitant to join at first, being over 50 years old and never having played any team sports before but I'm so glad I took the leap! The team is incredibly welcoming and supportive, and the coaches are fantastic at teaching the game in a fun and approachable way. Not only have I learned a new sport, but I've also made some amazing friends and feel so much fitter and healthier. It's been a great way to stay active and socialize, and I look forward to our training sessions every week. I never thought I'd enjoy playing sports, but Gaelic for Mothers and Others has completely changed that. It's never too late to try something new, and I highly recommend giving it a go!" explains Una Ní Bhroin – Fearless Forward.

The training sessions are always fun and cater for all fitness levels. They are always looking to welcome new players so if you're interested dig out those football boots and bring a friend along. They train every Wednesday @ 8:30pm at Teresa's Pitch, Ballinasloe GAA club.



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Having just won the County Féile Final, the U15 Girls travelled to the Staker Wallace Club in Limerick to compete in the Regional Finals. After playing three group games, they qualified for the Shield semi-final against St. Patricks, Limerick.

In an exciting game which ran into extra time, the girls lost narrowly by just two points. It was a fantastic achievement for the footballers to have reached the National Finals regardless, and the girls enjoyed the entire journey throughout.

Similarly, the U14 Girls Footballers reached the Shield Final in their league but unfortunately lost out to Oughterard. The U12 footballers progressed to the Shield Final in their campaign but fell to St James of Galway despite their best efforts.

The Men's Junior Hurlers made a very impressive start to their Championship with two out of two wins, beating Kilimor 2.20 to 2.19 and Kilnademma 2.14 to 2.12.

The Footballers are having a great season, winning their League Shield final against Loughrea. The boys showed great determination all season, especially evident in their Shield semi-final where came back from 5 points down in extra time to beat Glinsk.

The final, played in Duggan Park, was a dramatic encounter start to finish before Ballinasloe ran out winners on a 2.15 to 1.14 scoreline and are now looking to their Championship with great confidence.

U17 player Clodagh Killeen took part in the Galway Co. Development football programme and joined the Galway squad in winning their Shield Final in the National Blitz at Abbottstown, Dublin.

Unfortunately, the club were recently hit by news that longtime player Paraic Gavin passed away. As well as being a selector and manager with many teams in his time, Paraic established the Suck Valley League which proved massively successful in promoting hurling in Galway, Roscommon and Mayo.

"All at Ballinasloe GAA would like to send our sincere condolences to the Gavin family and put on record our deep gratitude for his many years of service to the sport he loved" shares PRO Damien Clarke.

The club's nursey programmes continue for the younger players with training, matches, and some occasional trips. Lately the boys U8 Footballers made their way to UCD for a 'Festival of Football' organised by Kilmacud Crokes competing against teams nationwide. The U10 Girls participated in the County Blitz at the Connacht Centre of Excellence, playing within the Dome.

The nursery programme welcomes new players to join, with training every Saturday morning at 10:30 on the grounds. Girls U8 and U10 football take place on Monday evenings at 18:00.

Those with any enquiries or wish to join the club can contact Club Secretary Stephen Kerr at (087) 231 2273.



U17 player Clodagh Killeen who participated in the Galway Squad in winning their Shield final.

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U18 players Catherine Fleming and Róisín Power who were named for the Connacht Women's Squad

During the Summer break, Ballinasloe RFC have been organising an ongoing mixed tag competition on the clubgrounds, inviting players of all skill levels to face off against one another.

Squads for the tournament comprise of maximum 12 players and seven on the pitch, a minimum of three being women. Some of the competing teams include 'The Barbarians', 'Serial Taggers', 'Norfolk Enchants', 'Tagaholics', 'Harewoods Heros' and 'Coupers Troopers'. The Troopers have been especially dominant thus far, defeating the Norfolk Enchants 29 to 14 and earning a victory over their closest competition Harewoods Heros.

The six-week tourney is scheduled to end on August 11, with the finalists duelling out to become the summer champions. For further information, you can contact Conor at (083) 821 1599.

Lately the club concluded their Give It A Try (GIAT) 2023 programme ran by Wendy Hickey of Connacht Rugby, an initiative providing girls an opportunity to try out rugby in a friendly environment, learn new skills, make new friends and

develop bonds and respect for their teammates.

Over 50 players took to the pitch on the final day, with the mothers coming along for a tag session with their kids. The occasion was capitalised with ice-cream and pizza, and a couple of happy-campers now willing to give the sport a try.

The club also held a three-day Golf Classic in Ballinasloe earlier in the summer. Team Andrew Fahy came out winners with 105 points, team Darren Rosney in a close second with 104 points, and team Enda Jennings in third with 102 points. The longest drives were awarded to Caroline Lyang and Stephen Grenham, and the nearest pin was won by Laura Nugent and Stephen Scannell.

U18 players Catherine Fleming and Róisín Power were named for the Connacht Women's Squad for the upcoming Interprovincials in August, and both attended their first training camp in Belfast with Ulster. U17s Éanna Caulfield and Sean Glennon, U18's Joseph Smyth, and U19's Sean Power were also named for their respective Connacht squads, training over July and August for their competitions.

On the field, construction is underway on a new walking track covering the perimeter of the grounds of roughly 400 meters. €32,000 of funding was granted by rural investment programme CLÁR last year towards the project which aims to be an amenity for both members and the wider public.



Links to membership registration can be found on their website at ballinasloerfc.ie. For any further enquiries, you can contact the club at ballinasloerugby@gmail.com.



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The all-conquering U13 Town AFC team have been on a hot-streak, completing the Galway League and Cup doubles and emerging victorious upon a visit to the Netherlands at the Brabant International Cup.

Played in Holland's sweltering heat, the U13s faced against Belgian, Dutch and German squads on their path to the final against California's MVLA Academy. Local AFC player Callum Conway scored a superb 25 yard free kick to secure their victory, and Ballinasloe's Keela Donnelly Meehan earned Player of the Tournament.

At home base, Club under 13 Players Callum Conway, Adam Lloyd, Éanna Colleran, John Kelly, Fionn Duffy and Adam McLoughlin represented Galway at the Centre of Excellence, Dublin, playing three showcase games against Waterford, Dundalk/Drogheda and Kerry. Ballinasloe's captain Aaron Treacy became the first county player to lift the prestigious Kennedy Cup after beating the Midlands League 2/1. Additionally, U12s Ty Finnerty, Nathan Blair and Aaron Mannion were selected on the Galway United Academy

who defeated Finns Harps 2/1 in the Westport Invitational Tournament final.

A 5K Solidarity Walk was held for U13/14s player Luke Doherty who was diagnosed with Hodgkins Lymphoma last year. A great turnout arrived at the AFC grounds to support Luke in the walk, raising €14,412 on the day towards St. Teresa's Ward at Portiuncula Hospital, Our Ladies Children's Hospital Crumlin, Aobheann's Pink Tie Charity Foundation, Cliona's Foundation, while the last 20% was donated to the family by the club to treat Luke to a holiday.

Walk Organiser Johnny Walsh thanked the local community for their support, and the Doherty family for their cooperation in agreeing to the event.

The Annual General Meeting saw a new committee elected with Bjorn Manning as Chairperson, Vanessa Lloyd as Secretary, Johnny Walsh as Treasurer, Ellen Egan as Assistant Treasurer, Sonya Dowd as Youth Secretary, Simon Price as Child Protection Officer, Michael Burke as Groundsman, Brendan McNally as Assistant Groundsman, Johnny Walsh and Joeb Kelly as joint PROS, along with Committee members Demelza Egan, Michael Riddell, Joey Walsh, Noel Lyons, Mark Duffy, Shane Fallon, Séamus McCarthy, Sylvia ó Hara, Seamus McCarthy and Breda Cleary.

Outgoing Chairperson Joeb Kelly thanked all committee members, coaches and mentors for their dedication to the club and addressed the past season of play and development of facilities. New Chairperson Bjorn Manning thanked the meeting for his election, and urged everyone to redouble efforts this season, while Secretary Vanessa Lloyd gave a comprehensive report of activity during the past season. Outgoing Treasurer Ellen Egan thanked all the Club Sponsors, paying particular tribute to the Shearwater Hotel and the Comer Group, echoed by all in attendance. Ellen stressed this would be a challenging financial year for the AFC, with Club Development Loan repayments and an additional top-up loan for the new Astro Turf.

The state of the art facility, incorporating new pitch surfaces, fencing, ball retention netting, and LED Floodlights, has been completed and now available to hire. The total cost of this development phase amounted to €154,000, with €128,000 covered through the Department of Sports Capital Programme. The club has also benefitted from several grants and donations via the Ballinasloe Credit Union and F.A.I. for regular development works.

The new Astro will officially be opened by former member Heather Payne in Autumn. The grounds were decorated with Irish flags and bunting wishing Heather the best of luck in competing in the Senior Ladies World Cup down under.

Those intending to book a slot on the pitches can contact Brendan McNally at (087) 793 6535.

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Colaiste Chiaráin student, Isaac Oliver, was selected on the Irish team to play the three day McGregor Trophy at Hunstanton Golf Club, representing his home club, Ballinasloe.

"A proud day for his parents Alan and Concepta, sister Lilliana, his family and friends and all of us here at Ballinasloe Golf Club. We wish Isaac the very best of luck" states Committee member John Donnellan.

Skilled with his iron, Oliver has recently taken major titles south in the Minster Boys U16 Amateur Open, placed second in the U16 Ulster Open Day and finished as a runner-up in the Leinster U16.

Oliver went overseas to England to compete in the McGregor championship, played over a 72-hole stroke championship. Unfortunately young Isaac did not make the cut, finishing with a total gross of 153.

He performed well for the Ballinasloe club during the Fred Daly final who became Connacht Champions for the second year in a row. During the competition, Isaac put Ballinasloe 1-0 up in their first game with a 7&5 result. The club's opponents Sligo were thanked for their sporting game.

Another title-holder in the U16s John William Burke won gold at the Connacht Open Championships. JWB played flawless golf, shooting a round of 71 to capture the title by one stroke over 5 players on level par 72. Additionally he took home an U14's trophy up for grabs. His teammates Niall Conneely, Luke Murphy and Liam Tully were commended for playing with distinction on the day.

Charlie Mooney emerged victorious with a plate during the Irish Boys 2023. Showing class in his match and entering the last 8, he would shoot level par tied with two other players. Mooney would win the competition after taking two holes to decide the outcome.

47 younger golfers participated in the Junior Golf Camp 2023, teaching the rudiments of the sport along with basic etiquette. PGA professional Mark Staunton coached the newcomers along with Junior Conveyor Rita Moore.

Junior players earned fresh titles during the Irish Kids Golf Tour, with Caoimhe Flanagan coming second in the Girls 13s

and Senan Greene a third place finish in the boys 8s in his first ever tournament.

Newcomers are always welcome, and those hoping to join can find membership options on their page at ballinasloegolfclub.ie/website/. For further information, you can contact their office at (090) 964 2126.



Isaac Oliver accepting the gross captains prize from Tom Caffersky with Committee member John Donnellan.

Charlie Mooney winning a plate at the Irish Boys 2023



Junior golfers learning the rudiments of the sport with Mark Staunton.

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ATHLETES TAKE A BREAK

The Ballinasloe and District Athletics Club completed one final training lesson prior to their summer break practising their javelin throws, sprints and more. A highlight of the day included the young racers transferring the contents of one bucket of water to another at opposite ends of the court using a sponge.

"Well done to the coaches who put so much effort into making it such a success despite the weather" comments PRO Dawn Slevin. "We as a club would like to thank the Parents/Guardians for their continued support in helping make our



55


club a success."

They are looking forward to seeing the young athletes back in September.

Those hoping to join the club following the break can contact them at (087) 676 9876.

PARAIC GAVIN - AN APPRECIATION

 By Ballinasloe GAA



All at the heart of the GAA locally and especially Ballinasloe Club were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Paraic Gavin. Paraic was at the heart of hurling in Ballinasloe for many years and he leaves behind a huge legacy in the club.

As well as being a selector and manager with countless teams over the years, Paraic set up the Suck Valley League which proved massively successful in promoting hurling in Galway, Roscommon and Mayo.

The longstanding retired St. Brigid's maintenance staff member died peacefully at home, surrounded by his loving family, after a short illness. He was predeceased by his parents Paddy and Mary Gavin. He leaves behind his loving wife Kathleen, sons David and Shane, daughter Lisa (Kennedy), daughter in law Breda, son in law Colm and Shane's partner Siobhan; grandchildren Roisin, Lorna, Ryan, Aoibheann, Caoimhe and Leah; brothers



Michael, Martin, Kevin and Noel, sisters Marie (Hynes), Noeline (Mulhern) and Teresa (Prendergast), aunts, uncles, brothers in law, sisters in law, nephews, nieces, relatives and a wide circle of friends and neighbours.

In a moving eulogy son at the funeral mass in Creagh, Shane sketched the impact of his Dad had on them all and on his community. He was indeed one of life's givers. Many locally will remember his fearless advocacy and campaigning to have more public disabled car parking spaces located in the town centre. He served for years as Secretary and Committee member of the Ballinasloe Disabled Drivers Society.

All at Ballinasloe GAA would like to send our sincere condolences to the Gavin family and put on record our deep gratitude for his many years of service to the sport he loved.

A gentleman always and a dedicated family man, he will be remembered fondly by so many in our club.

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SPORT



Ballinasloe Credit Union Chair Sean Madden presenting a €7500 cheque to Joe Staunton of the Tennis Club



Mixed double teams from Athlone and Ballinasloe at a friendly matches played in Ballinasloe.

The Ballinasloe Credit Union sponsored a cheque of €7,500 to the Ballinasloe and District Tennis Club to support them, following the opening of their state-of-the-art facility.

Clr Evelyn Parsons cut the ribbon on the three new all-weather courts, joined by the Presidents of Tennis Ireland John Ryan and Connacht Tennis Gerry Smyth, during the recent open day. Those attending enjoyed tennis matches, music, refreshments, in the new premises behind the GAA Club Grounds in Brackernagh.

"The new courts look absolutely brilliant, and we extend our heartfelt congratulations to all those involved" states Niall Clarke, Marketing Manager at the Ballinasloe Credit Union.

The total cost of the new courts amounts to roughly €250,000 which will be funded through Sports Capital grants, fundraising, donations, loans and membership.

"To all the tennis club committee members who dedicated their time and expertise to make this project a success, we commend you" Niall expressed. "Your hard work and commitment have truly elevated the Tennis Club to new heights, and we are delighted to witness the impact it will have on both current and future players."

Club members recently participated in Birr's Mixed Doubles tourney, with Emily and Robert Riddell being narrowly defeated in the finals. The club hosted a Doubles Open evening for their neighbours at Athlone Tennis, facing off on the home courts.

Prior to the holidays, the club ran tennis sessions in local primary schools for students to try the sport. They will be providing a free programme of activities to the local Brothers of Charity group in the coming weeks.

Court bookings can be made on their website www.ti.clubspark.com/Bsloetennisclub, where you can also find their weekly activities and membership options.

LOCAL FRISBEE INTERNATIONAL

Jack Mitchell, son of Mairead and John Mitchell, represented Limerick-based team PELT Ultimate during an U24 World Championship of Ultimate Frisbee in Nottingham, England.

The University of Limerick student only joined the club a year and a half ago following an open day for Clubs and Societies in the college. Initially sceptical of the sport, he eventually gravitated to its surprisingly fast-paced nature following some training sessions.

Jack Mitchell competing in the U24 World Championship

His team were placed 11th. Mitchell was overwhelmed with the transition to playing in a major competition in Frisbee, only competing at a college level prior to this point.

Jack will have his head down studying for his final year, but sees himself competing again in the near future. "I will keep coming after fourth year and see how it goes" he concludes.



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Aughrim Paralympian Katie Dillon just returned from Berlin after competing in this year's games in the shotput and the 100m run, placing fifth overall in both events.

Katie is no stranger to the Special Olympics, coming home with a silver medal at the 2014 European Games in Antwerp, and in 2019 represented Ireland at the World Olympic Games in Abu Dhabi. She has also competed in the National Games, in 2018 earning a silver and gold medal.

In advance to this year's competition, Katie prepared well with her clubs-the Ballinasloe Eagles and the Mountbellew Tigers. In addition, she practised with her coaches Ailish Smyth and Paddy Slattery monthly in Dublin and participated in some sessions with Coral Leisure in advance of the games.

This time around, she trained for the 100m run, finding it more difficult than the 400m walk at Abu Dhabi. The talented Olympian went again for the shotput in Berlin, a sport which seems to be her strongest field discipline.

Comparing her experiences, the Aughrim athlete shared: "I liked both Abu Dhabi and Berlin, both were wonderful experiences. I made new friends with the members of the athletic teams who were from all over Ireland." Katie was joined by 72 other athletes of Team Ireland, four of which were within her Athletics category.

She initially stayed in Germany five days prior to the opening ceremony, taking in the culture of the country. Similar to her stay in Abu Dhabi, the temperature was sweltering between 28 and 31 degrees.

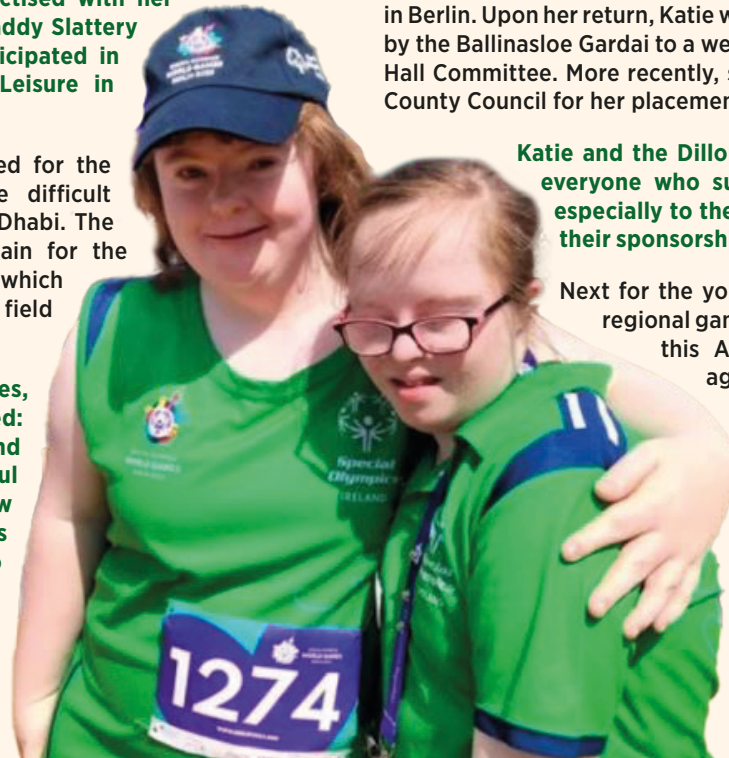
Regardless, the Irish sportswoman persevered, winning her quarterfinal in the shotput against stiff competition, as well as the semi-final 100m run with a personal best. Team Ireland were unlucky in the 4x4 100m relay with a disqualification which may have earned a silver medal.

Katie received a great deal of support back home, with cards and calls ringing in from neighbours and friends, along with her Mountbellew coaches and family members who joined her in Berlin. Upon her return, Katie was escorted through Aughrim by the Ballinasloe Gardai to a welcome party organised by the Hall Committee. More recently, she was honoured by Galway County Council for her placements and efforts in Berlin.

Katie and the Dillon family would like to thank everyone who supported her this year, and especially to the Ballinasloe Credit Union for their sponsorship.

Next for the young competitor will be some regional games in swimming and athletics this Autumn where she hopes to again reach the national games. In the long-term, Katie has her eyes set ahead at the next World Games in Perth, Australia.

"I may be lucky enough to get through. If not, I have wonderful memories of the past games and it would be lovely for someone to get the chance to go next time" she concludes.



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It's been a busy and successful season for the Ballinasloe Swimming Club, performing throughout the Summer in a range of competitions.

Ethan Mahon, Kayla McKeon, Robyn Carty and Evan McKeon qualified to compete in the Connacht Long Course championships in Limerick, putting in personal best performances in their respective events.

Ethan made the final for the boys' 100 Backstroke and 50m Freestyle, placing sixth in both. Kayla made the final of the girls' 17 and placed fifth in the over 50m Butterfly, while Robyn swam a personal best in the girls' 50 m Freestyle against a competitive field. Evan had an excellent championship, coming home with gold in the boys' 1500m Freestyle, 400m Freestyle and in the 200m Backstroke, as well as a silver medal in the 200m Freestyle.

Early in the Summer, a number of swimmers represented Galway in the Community Games National Finals in Castlebar. Abigail Monaghan earned a medal for fourth place in the U10 girls' Freestyle and Evan McKeon won a bronze medal in the U16 boys' freestyle. In addition, U16 Philip Costello welcomed a new personal best in the Breaststroke.

The youngsters have also kicked off their first gala during the Connacht Swim Festival in Castlebar. 12 local swimmers competed at the event and did their club proud with respective personal bests, along with some two bronze medals for Caoimhe Lohan, two gold for Ava Coone, a bronze of Donnacha Coone.

Head Coach Fiona Monaghan congratulated the newcomers on their performances, and affirms she was: "very proud of all of them for their achievements."

Training breaks for August but will resume in September. The Club always welcomes new members and cater for those who would like to swim for fun, fitness or for competition. All enquiries can be made to Sinead McKeon at (087) 910 9909.



Young Swimmers from Ballinasloe Swimming Club at their recent gala in Castlebar.

DEVINE'S WORLD CUP TRY

John Devine made the parish, the Town, the Club and Province proud after scoring a try for Ireland during his first World Cup U20 Championship final against France.

John earned a Grand Slam with Ireland earlier this year during the Six Nations Championship, following suit with his brother who took the title in 2022.

He admitted before the Final: "I'd be lying if I said I hadn't thought about it. But a big thing with our team is being moment-focused and we'll take every play at a time and we won't get too fixated on the end result."

During the decider, a Gus McCarty pass to midfield Devine,

found a soft shoulder and dived across the line, bringing his team ahead 14-10. Unfortunately for all, team and supporters, France would dominate the second half ending the game 14-50 in their favour.

The young sportsman will continue competing for Connacht and Ireland while maintaining his studies in Commerce in Galway.





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There is a huge upsurge of history and heritage and a variety of local groups have taken up the challenge to programme some activity for this year's Heritage Council Heritage Week.

Beginning August 12th and concluding on the 20th, there are 9 FREE events to choose from the town centre-as far as Athleague-if you have an interest in the UiMaine Kelly kingdom of lore.

The table on this page gives an over view of some of the key events that someone with even a passing interest in folklore or crafts – never mind the history that they perhaps hated at school, could attend !

The week's activities concludes with a guided walk around the town, taking in key water related landmarks in the area – in keeping with the National theme by the locality's newest District Heritage Society.

Starting at the Suck on River Street, moving along to the Elizabethan Bridge, through the town and around by the old Canal Basin before finishing at the Marina, this guided tour will encompass all the key historical places and roles these landmarks played, and continue to play, in the story of the townscape.

From the very forming of the settlement, through the medieval period and industry of the 18th and 19th centuries, water has played a central role in the development of the townscape.

This walking tour will visit these sites, as well as give context on their historical importance to the area and how they effected the lives of the townspeople who lived through these periods. The walk, with input from local historians and archaeologists, is a continuation of the new group's work this year in renewing and expanding

on the knowledge of our rich history and heritage. The Tour Route is just over 2km in length. No charge and all are welcome.

The monthly public meetings are proving to be very popular in providing a forum for local individuals and groups to give input on how the society can expand its work and commitment. The next meeting is on September 6th from 8 to 9pm in the Men's Shed (behind the Credit Union) and again is open to all !

The group is also very excited about plans being finalised for Culture Night, an insight into the towns outstanding examples of stained-glass windows. Keep an eye on the new Ballinasloe & District Heritage Society Facebook - page for further information in due course.



National Heritage Week 12 -20 August 2023 Local Events

Saturday, August 12	2pm-5pm	O'Kelly Country and it's history	Athleague Community Centre
Saturday, August 12	2.30pm-4.30pm	Art Exhibition- "On Our Doorstep"	Ballinasloe Church Gallery
Sunday, August 13	10am-3pm	Canal and Bog Walk through Clontuskert to Lismany Boardwalk	Ballinasloe Gun Club Entrance, Poolboy bog
Wednesday, August 16	7.30pm - 9pm	Preserving Our Local Heritage. Public event and information evening	Gullane's Hotel, Ballinasloe
Wednesday, August 16	11.15am-4.30pm	Hand Crafts, Crochet, Knitting, Felting, Spinning, Sewing, Embroidery	Ballinasloe Library
Saturday, August 19	2pm-4.30pm	A guided visit to the Ballydangan Bog Red Grouse	Moore Community Hall, Ballydangan
Saturday, August 19	4pm-6.30pm	Glimpses into the Past	Moore Community Hall, Ballydangan
Saturday, August 19	12pm	Battle of Aughrim - Talk About and Walk About-	Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre
Sunday, August 20	1pm-3pm	A Walking Tour at "The Mouth of the Ford" Ballinasloe	St. Michaels Car Park Ballinasloe

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"A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own home."

Take a good look at the accompanying photograph. Why? Because it features something unique: the only local street sign bearing the name of a Ballinasloe native – and no, Harris and McNevin don't count, they were from Roscommon town and Aughrim respectively.

It isn't that the town is short of individuals from the past who distinguished themselves in their chosen fields by a combination of talent and application. We can think of names such as John O'Connor Power, one of the most celebrated parliamentary orators of his day; George Brent (Nolan), born in a Main Street pub, who rose to major stardom in the fiercely competitive world of 1930s Hollywood; Dr. Andrew Horne, an eminent obstetrician and co-founder of Holles Street Maternity Hospital, performed the first successful Caesarean section in Ireland, and who figured in the pages of James Joyce's "Ulysses"; Emily O'Shaughnessy, born during the Great Famine, emigrated as a child to Australia where she became a pioneering and much-feted portrait photographer; Eoghan Ó Tuairisc (Eugene Watters), widely regarded as the most versatile creative writer in Irish to come from a non-Gaeltacht background. Not one of the foregoing has ever been honoured in a permanent and public manner by the community he or she hailed from

To appropriate memorialize the notables of other days would contribute significantly to making the town more interesting for both visitors and locals alike, and would also foster a legitimate pride in the achievements of past generations. This, however, should not be done by re-naming street or housing estates. Place names are reflective of the times in which they were acquired and encourage curiosity about their origins. Whether or not such names chime with current attitudes is irrelevant, and to change them, especially if they are long-standing, can be seen as a kind of cultural vandalism. From my schooldays I recall a teacher who would wax indignant at the thought that there were people

in town who would prefer Duggan Avenue to be still called Victoria Street. Similarly, Todd Andrews, IRA veteran and former chairman of CIE, bitterly lamented in one of his autobiographies that in post-Independence Dublin there were streets that continued to carry the names of viceroys and other British officials. Individuals who had lived through and supported a revolution promising the transformation of Irish society often lacked the requisite maturity appreciate the diversity of our heritage and viewed relics of the "ancient régime", be they in the form of place names, monuments, or even buildings, as jeopardizing the success of a project for which many of their contemporaries had fought and suffered. An egregious example of this mindset was the decision (not acted on) of Athlone Urban Council in the 1960s to demolish the castle in the centre of the town because it had been built by the Anglo-Normans. Another phenomenon that has latterly come to the fore is the reprehensible practice of judging the past by the standards of the present, as exemplified by Trinity College's recent move to de-name the Bishop Berkeley Library after it was revealed that the philosopher had owned slaves in America.

If name-changing is not on the agenda when it comes to honouring the distinguished departed, what is to be done? Locally there are several building developments, either currently progressing or on the horizon, that are as yet anonymous and will present a cost-free opportunity to make amends for past neglect.



Darren Goode

B.Comm, M.Acc, F.C.A.

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But the story shouldn't end there. Something more visible is required in addition. The display stands positioned at various points around the streets could be used to feature potted biographies. As well, the scheme that has been ongoing in Galway City since the early 2000s should be looked at. This consists of bronze commemorative plaques, often free-standing or attached to walls in the neighbourhood. They usually incorporate quotations attributed to the persons in question, an undoubted improvement on bald statements of fact. Perhaps it would not be overly-optimistic to look forward to a day in the not-too-distant future when footballer "Tull" Dunne, good and all as he was, will finally lose his uniqueness.

Cllr. Michael Connolly, a Director of Ballinasloe Area Community Development (BACD) raised the treatment of East Galway and Ballinasloe being delineated as a Zone 1 Aspiring Tourism Destination, as opposed to the Zone 2 Pioneering; in the new DRAFT County Development Plan under consideration by Galway County Council.

He raised the issue at the regular meeting of the MDC last month and wondered why the plan singularly failed to highlight the various attractions and amenities that were clustered around the town and the quality accommodation that hospitality providers had. He noted that various public reps and tourism interests had made detailed submissions (including the BACD Tourism Network) on the strategy for the area.

There was universal agreement to Cllr Dermot Connolly's view that the presentation by CHL Consulting on the Draft Plan to the whole Council earlier in the month was too rushed and he had several observations to make on heritage, fishing and especially the Aughrim Interpretative Centre

Cllr. Evelyn Parsons warmly thanked the unanimity of her colleagues in having the River Linear Park and Waterside Amenity Development project progress to Feasibility under the ORTIS round of outdoor recreational support announced by the Department of Rural and Community Affairs lately.

"This study will allow the town to develop the potential of our river access, the swimming, and other water pursuits – with universal access in a way that will surely contribute to the Tourism Potential of East Galway and can be funded by Just Transition" she noted.

As the Liaison Engineer for the Flood Relief Scheme was in the Chamber with a briefing, she also urged him and his ARUP colleagues to see what aspects of the Capital Riverside works could find synergies with the recreational use of the emerging Blueway, which should compliment the Greenway.

Before the conclusion of the meeting all Councillors agreed that the Draft Plan be a stand-alone item for review at the next MDC September meeting.



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The Ballinasloe woman's fictional writing career has blossomed with the launch of her latest thriller "Black Valley Farm." Published once again by Canelo, the book has been described "As absolutely unputdownable thriller. Perfect for fans of C.L. Taylor, Tim Weaver and T. Orr. Munro."

The prolific Sheila has already seen eight of her novel receive rave reviews in the UK, where she has been living for many years. Her latest publication is a stand-alone novel and is about a crime that's never been solved. "A decade ago, the bodies of nine people were discovered at Black Valley Farm.

The only suspect vanished without a trace. Clare has spent ten years living a lie, but a new podcast on the



murders threatens to bring her carefully built life crashing down. Because somebody else has listened to the podcast. Someone who knows Clare is lying, and who will stop at nothing to ensure the truth never comes to light."

Sheila Bugler's latest book is now available in all bookshops, including Salmons in Ballinasloe.

REPRINT FOR POPULAR GUIDE

Author and Tidy Towns Heritage Officer Padraig Lyons, has relaunched his prized book "Rediscover Ballinasloe and Surrounds" a publication aiming to highlight the hidden gems and interesting sights within the district.

Padraig began working on his passion project in 2018, finding that there was a distinct lack of literature focusing on the heritage of Ballinasloe. The book aims to be a light read, showing photography of places accompanied by a brief description.

The first edition was released to great acclaim, and completely sold-out from stores last year. The relaunched features a brand-new red sleeve and slightly higher price tag.



"I'm very grateful to BACD and the Ballinasloe Credit Union who sponsored half of the book initially and being a great support" noted Padraig. Available to purchase at Salmon's Department Store, on their online page, or at other retail outlets in town at €10 per copy.

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As part of Heritage Week, Moore History Group will be showcasing a new event 'The Parish of Moore, Glimpses into the Past' in their Community Hall, covering three aspects of the village's past and present.

The first will include the unveiling of a detailed information board map of the parish. The display will be placed permanently outside the Community Hall and will encapsulate photographs of significant buildings, places and objects of the area.

The second section will include a framed presentation by the family of local athlete John Flannery. The Moore sportsman was born in 1932 to John Flannery and Bridget Fallon into a large family at Falty. At an early age he was sprinting around the village, inspired by his teacher Richard Kenny at Mount Welcome school. John would go on to become a successful cross-country and road runner, winning various national medals between in the fifties.

When the Moore Athletic Club was revived in 1952, the local man was to the fore in helping its re-establishment and promotion, and was always proud to run as part of a team. In 1982, he was entered into the Hall of Fame for

Roscommon.

John was a humble individual who didn't let success go to his head, instead using his talents to help and inspire others. Even after a serious tractor accident, he soon returned to running and up to his eighties could be seen running in the fields and lanes of Falty. John died on November 18 2021.

The showcase at the Community Hall will include his achievements and medals over a 50 year run which will go on permanent display inside the Community Hall in the hopes it will inspire future generations.

The final part of the day will include a film representing farming life of the locality in past times featuring the warmth of country life. The production will demonstrate the arts of threshing, house dancing, bread making, and will include a bit of music and some refreshments.

All activities will take place on Saturday August 19 between 16:00 and 18:30 For further information, you can contact the organisers at www.europeanheritagedays.com/Event/The-Parish-of-Moore-Glimpses-into-the-Past.



UÍ MAINE CHIEFTAIN FOUNDERS OF TOWN TALKS



By Liam Timmins

To mark the beginning of Heritage Week, Kelly Clan Association invites all of South Roscommon and East Galway interested in Gaelic history and archaeology to join them for an informal chat on topics relating to Ó Cellaigh Uí Maine and the region's past.

Kelly Clan Association Uachtarán Joe Kelly and local archaeologist Dr Daniel Curley, Tomás Ó Brogáin, founder of Donegal living history group Oireas, will all be contributing.

The day correlates with the return of the Gaelic family of Ó Cellaigh to their ancient home of Athleague, Co. Roscommon.

"We are running a series of talks on the old Gaelic family of Ó Ceallaigh" states Joe Kelly. "The O'Kelly Clan were the chiefs of the territory known as Ui Mhaine named after Mhaine Mor,



Ó Cellaigh Coat of Arms

our progenitor in the 4th century."

"We feel it's important to tell their story and research the further lives and events of the historic family during their 1200 years as chiefs covering South Roscommon and East Galway".

Rathroghan / Tusk Centre Manager Daniel Curley commented: "The medieval history and fascinating archaeological remains of our region is an incredibly vibrant story that we should all be proud of an celebrate. The awareness and research into this period and place is less than what it could be."

"We would like to see this event as the first of many as we seek to promote a better knowledge and identity in our medieval Gaelic past."

The event will take place on Saturday August 12 between 14:00 and 17:00 at the Athleague Community Centre. Further information can be found at heritageweek.ie/event-listings/okelly-country-and-its-history and kellyclans.ie/.

AUGHRIM HERITAGE WEEK

Cath Eachroma 1691 will present their annual 'Talk About and Walk About' during this year's Heritage Week.

The heritage group, formed to educate the public about the 1691 Battle of Aughrim and its significance, invites you to join them at the Visitor Centre for a guided tour of the surrounds of the historical site. Over 100 people participated in 2022, and this year they hope to expand their programme to include weapon and uniform displays

The event will be hosted on Saturday August 19th at 14:00, no booking is required. The Aughrim archivists recently held a foraging event exploring the battlefield rummaging for food, and showcased historically accurate props at their stand during Livestock Festival.

Chairman Michael Riddel presenting the Visitor Centre to Dr Loïc Guyon, Honorary Consul of France.





The sudden passing of Bridget Rose (June) Hurley of Brackernagh, came as a shock to all who knew her. The youngest of a family of six of the late Peter and Peggy Hurley, June lived her entire life in the family home and was actively involved in the business life of the town.

June worked for a number of retailers before joining AT Cross in the customer relations department, where she remained for 13 years until the factory closure. More recently she was employed for many years in the Carry-out Off-

License where her pleasant disposition and manner endeared her to many.

Her contribution to charitable causes in the town was widespread. On a number of occasions she travelled to Lourdes with the Wheelchair Association as a volunteer and was a loyal fundraiser for the Alzheimers organisation and the Galway Hospice. Socially, she was involved with the Relays Drama Group, the Choral Society and the No Name Club, among others. June was also a Eucharistic Minister.

The late June Hurley is survived by her brothers Sean Og and George, sisters Terry, Mary and Peg, as well as many other relatives and friends.

GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO TOWN



Since arriving in Ballinasloe in 1976, the late Maura Hennelly of Creagh, became actively involved in the sporting, social and artistic life of the town. Born in Ballyheane, Castlebar, Maura Jennings joined Mayo Co. Council shortly after leaving school and later worked for the Bovine T.B. Eradication Scheme in Castlebar.

She married Padraic Hennelly in 1967 and came to live in Creagh in 1976 when her husband moved to work for the ESB in Shannonbridge. Maura regarded joining the Creagh Guild of the ICA as one of her luckiest moves, where she got to meet and make great friends with so many members. In the ICA she learned all types of crafts which she excelled at. Later on she became Secretary and President of the Guild and was instrumental in opening new Guilds around the county.

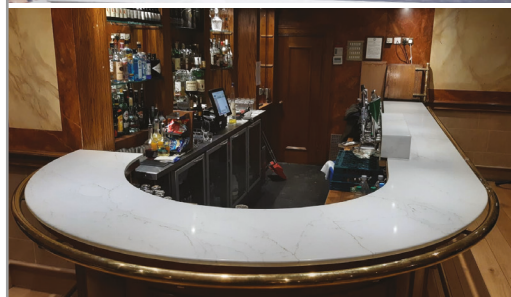
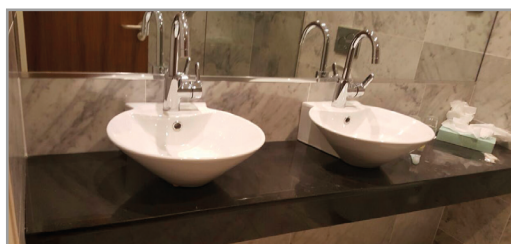
However, it was in the local Athletic Club that Maura's

contribution will be best remembered. For very many years she was the inspiration behind so many young athletes. Assisted by her husband as coach, the Creagh woman saw their children, with many other locals, compete at many venues around the country and bring honour and pride to her adopted town. But the Hennelly parents were rewarded with their endeavours when they saw their daughter, Dervila, selected as a junior international in the sprint competitions.

Maura also served as secretary and registrar of the Ballinasloe Athletic Club before being appointed to similar posts with Co. Galway BLE.

In later years her hobbies included gardening and picture framing, long walks with friends and enjoyed the trips with the ESB Retired Association. She was also a member of the Dunlo Singers and the Church Choir.

Maura is survived by her husband Padraic, daughter Dervila, sons Declan and Daragh as well her five grandchildren, brother Sean and many more relatives and friends.



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SOCIAL CLUB BILLIARDS AND SNOOKER TEAM 1971



The Social Club team who won the Midlands and West of Ireland Billiards and Snooker championship in 1971, sponsored by P.J. Carroll & Co.
Front row, l to r: Oliver O'Grady, Ronnie Coulter, Area Manager P.J. Carroll; Johnny Riddell, Sean Farrell, Area Rep. P.J. Carroll; Johnny Shanley.
At back, l to r: Johnny Keighrey, Mattie Madden, Des Madden, Ken Kelly.

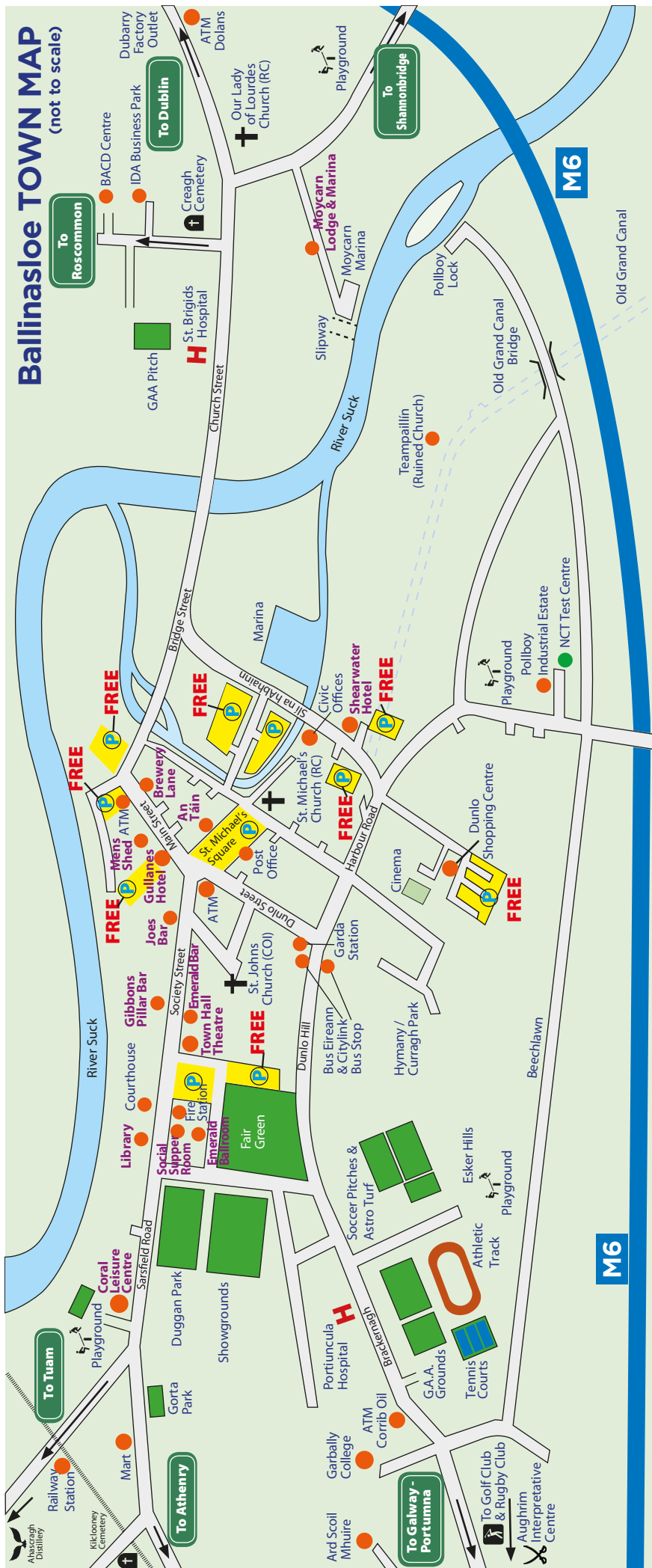
PORTIUNCULA GRADUATING NURSES 1962.



Front row, l to r: Maura Dermody, Nellie Barry, Peggy Gilligan, Maura Guinan, Nancy Horan-Ward, Eileen Winters-Egan, Breeda Mulcahy, Nora Donnellan, Mary Joe Molloy-Curran.
Back row, l to r: Sr. Aloysius, Pauline Hayes, Maureen Guilfoyle-Hession, Breda O'Brien, Theresa Mulryan, Sr. Regina Heing, Sr. Brid McCarthy, Sr. Agatha, Hannah Rowan, Maura Molloy-Briscoe, Margaret Mulrooney-Boland, Sr. Seraphina, Tutor Madonna College of Nursing.

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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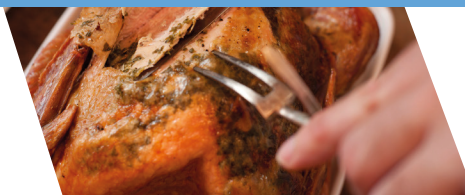


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