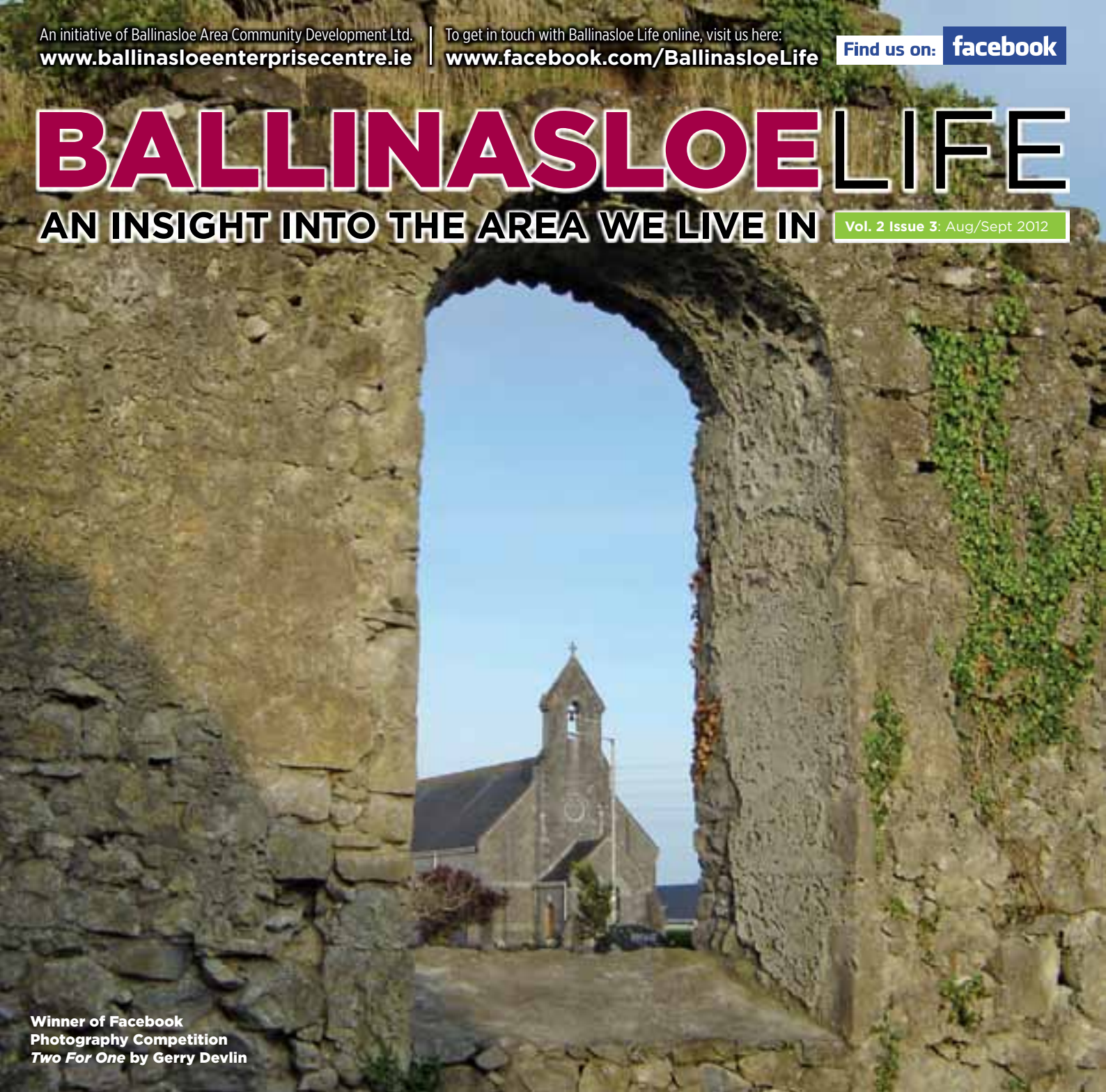


# BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 2 Issue 3: Aug/Sept 2012



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# BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 2 Issue 3: Aug/Sept 2012

## REAMHRÁ



*Contained in this edition are some of the straws in the wind that are going to impact on how we face current and future challenges. After some 35 years of being disentangled from South Roscommon, we are now fully Balkanised into a new constituency of Roscommon/Galway East. We will be a people facing a ballot paper in the next General Election, possibly without having any outgoing National Representative. What this means for National lobbying on scarcer public resources and facilities is anyone's guess. Equally there is a view that states*

*after four decades facing politically west to Galway, with not a lot to show for it, that the town might be better to engage East?*

*Secondly, The Government is either kite flying or serious about reforming local administration (it is a misnomer to call it Government). His visit to the town for the 100th Anniversary of Local Government will hopefully shed some light. Whilst it is hard to see the political machines fully dismantling the very ecosystem that delivers them the next crop of volunteers/victims for Dáil and Senate elections, there is a serious need for reform of scope, structure and purpose.*

*Thirdly you will read about a community spending or about to spend €1.8m on refurbishing churches, €3.3m on a new library in a disused convent and €3.6m on a town and streetscape enhancement scheme, during a recession? Our new Mayor is intent on leading the Town and its flagship development projects in the course of the next year; to have the place positioned for maximum advantage, when we do eventually, move out of this phase of the cycle.*

*Whether we are lumped with Roscommon or Galway, have a Town Council or not, we need more of the "Is Feidir Linn" approach and sometimes less wondering about what elsewhere is getting due to political clout or otherwise.*

*Le gach Dea Ghuí. Colm Croffy, Editor*



*Due to its central location, we are fast becoming a favourite destination for many occasions. The River Suck has been busy with over 1500 boats passing through the lock year to date. The USI held their annual conference here over four days earlier in the year and had Mr Michael D Higgins President of Ireland visit. Our proximity to the motorway is proving beneficial as many commuters from coast to coast are beginning to use town as a "pit stop" once again. There are over 150 wedding functions booked in the Hotels for the current year. Others such as coach tours are using us as a base to visit sites and facilities in the West and Midlands.*

*Our special guests in September are the Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland who are bringing their 100th annual conference to town along with 300+ delegates. I think that despite the announcement of over 1500 new jobs from International Companies coming to Galway in the past few months, none have been to Ballinasloe, we continue to depend on local indigenous business to fill the gaps.*

*We have the infrastructure (Rail, Roads, proximity to the 3 international airports), our own high quality Hospital, proximity to 3rd level Education (Galway/Athlone) and a range of residential properties suitable to meet all type of family needs with amenities & schools of top quality We also have a range of commercial properties which are now vacant and available for change of use if necessary. A prime example of this is the old St Brigid's Hospital this is a building which if in the hands of local Enterprise could be turned into a hive of activity for emerging businesses. We need the Gov Job Creation agencies to look afresh at how they are selling us.*

*Seamus Duffy, Chairman,  
Ballinasloe Area Community Development*

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### Former Governor of Mountjoy Confirmed For Lecture

John Lonergan former Governor of Mountjoy Prison will visit Gullane's Hotel to celebrate Ballinasloe Substance Misuse second year in existence. He will speak at 7.30pm on Monday, 12th November following the BSMRG AGM. The group has been a great support for individuals and families in difficulty with alcohol or substance misuse in the locality and surrounding areas.

Padraig Lyons the Chairperson of this important support group said, "We are not there to judge any person but to offer a confidential lifeline to those wanting a helping hand. It can be a traumatic time for individuals and families involved in addictive behaviour." The BSMRG is open every Thursday from 6.30pm to 7.30pm for one to one sessions and 8pm to 9.30pm for Family Support at the Social Services Building in Brackernagh beyond the TOPAZ Garage.

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# Corrib Oil's New State of the Art Service Station and Deli

## Barra Ó Crofaigh

**From humble beginnings in Mayo and Galway in 1987, Corrib Oil has grown to incorporate fifteen service stations across counties Galway, Roscommon, Leitrim, Mayo, Laois and Offaly. The Company celebrated the reopening of its newly renovated state of the art convenience store and deli in the town.**

A family funday with local national radio DJ Fergal Darcy broadcasted live from the new service station as crowds packed the forecourt celebrating the opening of its newest service station and to launch their new free fuel Triqo promotion across all Corrib Oil Stations.

With a 15 local full and part time staff, the new facility and team continue to pride themselves on offering the very best value and service to their customers.

Des Mahon, Store Manager, commented "The property was acquired a few years ago and Corrib Oil were keen to develop the site, geographically the site is perfect, just off the M6 and right on the outskirts of the town. This was a major factor in developing a state of the art facility today. This new development is not only for the betterment of M6 users but also for locals. Our strong customer base here in the town for heating oils etc, can now earn loyalty points and use them for fuel, at our new Deli or in our new Corrib bakery."

The new service station located at Brackernagh, just down from Garbally Gates, has a beautiful appetitising new Deli. It offers everything from freshly made sandwiches, toasties and wraps



through to salads and full dinners. Customers can choose from curries, stews and casseroles, each freshly made on the premises and select from chips, wedges, mashed potato and vegetable accompaniments.

There is a full carvery section offering a delicious roast option for lunch and, there is always a dinner of the day offer for only €4.99 when you use your Corrib Oil Rewards Tag. For those "on the go" pick up one of Corrib Deli's Chef Made Chilled Dinner Range which you can heat at home and enjoy a Chef Made high quality product. There is also a wide range of freshly made Salads and Desserts by Corrib Oils chef.

At Corrib Oil they believe in rewarding your loyalty. Their customers get a unique loyalty fob scheme which means that you can earn one point for every euro spent. Collect points and you can get discounts on everything from oil to

dinners, from groceries to briquettes. Buy four coffees or teas from the Tim Horton coffee dock and get your fifth drink free. Best of all earn points for your Home Heating Oil and use these points to give yourself a discount back in-store against anything they sell. The rewards tag can also be used in any one of the 15 Corrib Oil petrol stations across the country. Signing up is easy and only takes a few seconds in-store and you can start collecting your points straight away.

The company now have a dedicated home heating oil office located at their petrol station premises. Here you can order and pre-pay for home heating oil deliveries. Come in and speak with Sales Representative for Oil Supplies, Sean Daly to discuss your home heating needs. They can also provide oil tanks, lubricating oil and tractor diesel for delivery. If you're on a budget you can come in and speak to a representative about setting up a direct debit for your home heating oil needs.

Corrib Oil have endless offers in store, you really have to pop in and have a look for yourself, one great offer is the new Triqo toy, a unique construction toy. Because the constructions are three-dimensional, Triqo is suitable for children aged 5 and up.

With every €15 you spend in the store we will give you one piece free, where you will also get a chance to find a Golden Triqo label which will entitle you to €40 worth of Free Fuel! Available to purchase instore today is the 10 pack Triqo at only €3.99 so you can start collecting! With every 10 pack we are giving you 1 litre of Free Petrol or Diesel! There is no limitation but your own imagination!



# Tully Wins Major Plant Award

Writes Ken Kelly

One of the largest plant nurseries and garden centres in the country, headed by a Ballinasloe native, has captured a major international award at a National Plant Show in Coventry, England. Martin Tully and his family own Tully Nurseries in Ballyboughal, North Dublin, where they grow over one million plants each year for the home and export market. Derrymullen-born Martin has seen the business grow and expand over the last thirty years to become now one of the largest in the country.

Growing up in Derrymullen, Martin was intrigued by the interest his neighbour, Marty Madden, had in flowers, plants and nature. He decided to embark on a career in horticulture and in the sixties commenced his studies in the Botanic Gardens in Dublin. He worked with both Dublin Corporation and Dublin Co. Council before setting up his own business, in 1973, beside his home in North Dublin, close to the Airport. As a landscape gardener Martin won the Bog Oak Trophy in 1989 as Contractor of the Year in Ireland.

With the help of his wife, Joan and later by other family members, Martin saw his dream grow to be a nationwide service but his biggest achievement came recently when one of his plants was judged the overall winner in the New Plants Category at the HTA National Plant Show, in Coventry, England, from



*Tullys were delighted to win the overall award for best new plant for 2013 at the Bord Bia Glas Irish trade show in City West. It was the icing on the cake for Hebe 'Rhubarb & Custard' following its best new plant win in the UK last month. Pictured above from left to right: Niamh Tully, Pdraig Tully, Shane McEntee, Minister for Horticulture TD & Martin Tully.*

over one hundred entrants. An evergreen plant, with its distinctive spiky foliage and the added benefit of cream, pink and green foliage, Hebe "Rhubarb and Custard" has been one of the plants Tully Nurseries have been breeding for the past eighteen months. Marketing Manager, Niamh Tully said they were all excited at winning the award and added that the plant would be available in garden centre and DIY's under the brand "Winning Plants" from next Spring onwards.

The Derrymullen native is modest about his success and achievements and said he is blessed that so many of the family are involved in the business. "We have a great team here, with Joan my wife; my eldest son, Pdraig is the MD; daughter Niamh is Marketing Manager while my other son, Martin Jnr. looks after the landscaping company. It hasn't been easy at times but we persevered and this international award is a great honour, after so many years of hard work and commitment" he said.

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# Ballinasloe's New Town Mayor

Writes Colm Croffy

**At the July Town Council meeting Brackernagh resident and three term Councillor Carmel Greally was elected Mayor. It is the busy Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths second time in the office, having being previously elected during her second first term in 2003/2004.**

Carmel, when not undertaking her Council duties, which involve a heavy schedule as the Town's Representative on the VEC, Chair of Tidy Towns Committee and also National Vice-President of Community Games, a tremendous young countrywide activity association. Carmel has been involved in the local Games since 1973 and it will celebrate its 40th anniversary next year.

Reflecting on the changes she has witnessed since being elected in the Independent's Sweep of the Town Council elections some 13 years ago, she admits that the positives in terms of infrastructure, facilities, medical services, roads, schools are all to be seen. "We have fought and achieved a great deal for our community and the Town Council, where it could play a leading role, has in delivering better facilities."

"The loss of the town's manufacturing workforce and scattering of the 650 employees of AT Cross and Square D is something we feel most acutely but in terms of the big ticket item in replacing those jobs we have been let down by the Agencies and Government."

Since 1999, a lot has been achieved by positive investment by the Town Council in worthwhile developments within the precincts of the town the provision of the new Leisure Centre, the new playgrounds at Cleaghmore, Hymanny and Creagh, the new state of the art athletics track at Dunlo, the Convent purchase, the Enterprise Company and the gifting of lands for sports and educational facilities have gone a long way towards making the place more attractive to live, commute, visit or indeed invest in.

"We managed to do all this while prudently keeping Rates increase low, we are one of the lowest rated towns in the country and using our capital and development levies in a programmed way to focus on each project that made sound civic sense."

Looking at her 12 month term she outlined her vision for the town "We have to start thinking more positively for ourselves, the worst excesses of Ghost estates and empty shopping plazas with poor aesthetics have not been visited upon us during the Celtic Tiger years. We have a treasure trove of amenities and facilities that most young couples would love to raise kids near, we have excellent access to Galway and Dublin and we can become in time a genuine town of distinction and leisure as the Gateway to the West offering our own unique heritage and facilities to those who come to visit or live."

For Carmel the three most important projects for the coming year are: (1) Getting the €3.6m Town Enhancement Scheme started and finished in a timely fashion that avoids discommoding the businesses and town centre residents. (2) To get the Convent Library Plans out to Tender and progressed as soon as possible. (3) To use the development work at the Convent to reorientate the Town towards the River Suck and to get the back of Main St opened up with ring road access and river walks, enhancing the tourism and amenity value of the town centre.

"We need to see fast action on all these three significant infrastructural projects; the Council are convinced that by



getting these schemes off the plans and into implementation; we are sending out very positive signals about our future and our commitment to invest in it."

When asked about the Constituency changes she is sanguine "We are now to be at the political edge of two counties, which is worrying. We need to ensure who ever is representing us - will protect and develop the existing Government facilities particularly our Hospital & Health services, the HSE is the largest employer locally with over 800 jobs, these must be prioritised."

She is nervous too about Minister Phil Hogan's intended reform "if we are abolished and become just a creature of the County Council we will lose local democracy and local knowledge of the needs of the immediate community - it will affect the direct way we currently can prioritise our local needs and will probably mean higher charges and rates, also we could lose some 37 indoor and outdoor staff."

Focusing on the Staff, she warmly welcomed the new Town Clerk Caitriona Morgan and the new Senior Staff Officer, Anne Power, jokingly referring to the new all female "Troika at the heart of the civic offices. "I have always seen our Director of Services Kevin Kelly and all the officials I have worked alongside, put the long term best interests of our community first" she remarked.

"I am looking forward to trying to bring all our dispirit groupings together so we can get all the good news out first (Does anyone know we have five new businesses open in town in the past few months?). We have to promote the ethos of the Tidy Towns, that collective action across all our sectors and issues is the best way forward. I am really convinced that this community will, as in previous recessions and I have seen a few, come bouncing back but only if we pull together, accentuate what we have to offer and be positive about our prospects."

# Local Lads in Rose of Tralee Escort Roles

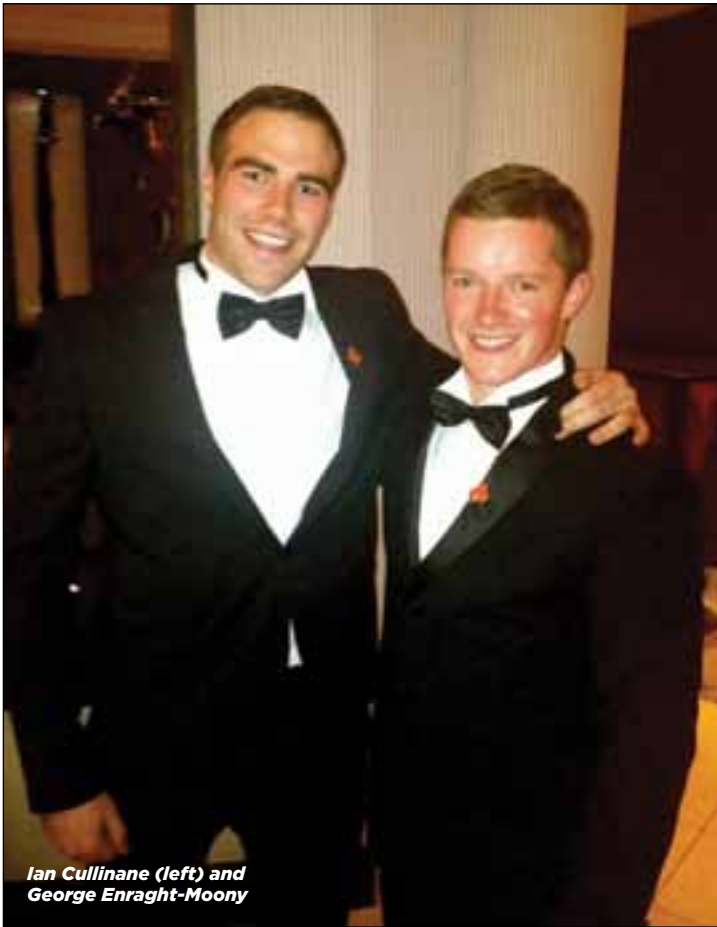
Writes Barra Ó Croaigh

Two local lads and past Garbally College alumni are set to have one of the best posts in Ireland this summer, after they were selected to be among the 32 Newbridge Silverware Escorts at the Rose of Tralee International Festival in August.

The lucky chaps, Ian Cullinane, son of Mick and Marie Rose of River Street and George Enraght-Moony from Doon in Athlone, son of Jane Rothwell (from Dunlo Street) and Peter Enraght-Moony, are set to be the perfect gentlemen who are allegedly happy to hold handbags, carry hairspray and lipstick for the beautiful Roses. The pair were chosen from more than 200 applicants for the coveted role and all 32 have been put through their paces at a gruelling, yet fun Bootcamp in Kerry before being given the final seal of approval.

Ian (24) works as a trainee Accountant for the ESB and is currently based in Dublin. He is a keen rugby player and captained Garbally College Senior Cup in his Leaving Cert year, he currently plays for Bective Rangers RFC and also enjoys cooking, listening to music and swimming. "Having heard so much about the festival, I really wanted to give it a go and I am so much looking forward after a few pre-festival events to getting paired with a really nice girl and having a mad magical week" said Ian. George (23) is currently studying Law at NUIG and was a boarder in Garbally College spending many summers in the town staying with his Grandparents. He and his brother Alec are familiar faces on the streets of the town as each summer they would be working for their grandmother. He was a member of the Rotoract Society in college, is a member of the West Offaly Lions Rugby Club and also the Mid-West Magpies Australian Rules football club in Galway. "I am looking forward to the week with my old rugby team mate, who was Senior Rugby Captain when I was a Transition Year student in Garbally. I'll be there for him if the dodgy knee gives out, with all the dancing that's ahead of us, but hope us two Garbally Lads will take Tralee by storm" said George.

You can follow these boys exploits live on TV from the Dome on the 20/21 August. The Rose of Tralee 54th National Tours stops once again in Ballinasloe with a short luncheon photocall to the Carlton Shearwater Hotel on Wed 15th of August.



Ian Cullinane (left) and George Enraght-Moony

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# CU Online at the Credit Union



## Writes Niall Clarke

Since its introduction as an additional free service to members in 2009, CU Online continues to grow in popularity among the 17,000 members of Ballinasloe credit union.

Using the free CU Online service, members can access their accounts in Ballinasloe credit union 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from the comfort of their Home or workplace via the Internet. With powerful security features and protection for member's identity, CU Online also caters for members in providing them with a safe environment to communicate with Ballinasloe credit union regarding their accounts.


This Free online service is available to all credit union members. Once registered with CU Online, members can view their credit union account(s) details online. Members can also use the online service to electronically transfer funds from their credit union account to any account in the Republic of Ireland. To start using CU Online members of BCU can register via the credit union website [www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie](http://www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie) and

follow the instructions on the register link. Members can also register for CU Online at the counter by appointment. The credit union will also be hosting a CU Online information week from Monday the 13th of August - Friday the 17th of August, so feel free to call into the office to check out CU Online.

In addition to CU Online, Paypath is another electronic service available at BCU. Using PayPath members can have their wages/salaries paid directly into their credit union account. Setting up PayPath is an easy and straightforward process with the relevant details available from the counter at our office in Main Street. Members can also set up direct debits from their credit union account to repay mortgages, credit cards or utility bills such as electricity, gas or phone. Members can also have payments such as pensions, social welfare, child benefit and other allowances paid into their credit union account.

The credit union has also teamed up with Paypoint so members can pay almost all your household bills and top up your pre-pay mobile phone - in the comfort, security and familiar surroundings of the credit union office. A more recent new service being offered to members is motor, home & travel insurance. In conjunction with Le cheile general insurances members of BCU are being offered up to 10% discount on insurance. Get a quote today by phoning 1890 336 339

The credit union is a community owned and run financial services co-operative that helps people in their daily lives, we want our members to know that we will put them first at all times and will continue to provide these local accessible services into the future. BCU recently published an information pack, which is available at the counter in our main street office or online at [www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie](http://www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie).

The information pack outlines all of the services that are available to members at BCU. So if you are already a member or someone who wants to learn more about the many services offered by BCU please call to the office or go online to download the information pack. 

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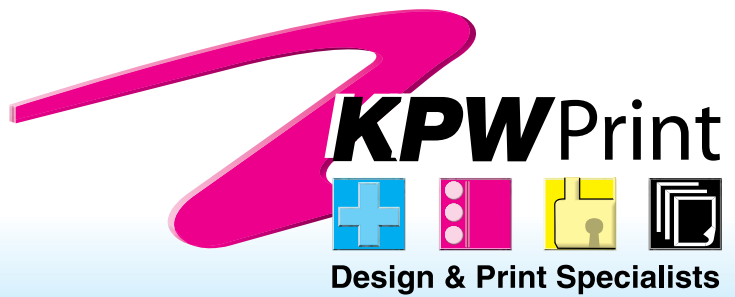
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# Kilmartins Celebrates 50 Years

Writes Barra Ó Crofaigh

**Fred Kilmartin Ltd dates back to 1962 when it began its business on an empty greenfield site then known as 'Crosby's Field' bought by the late Fred Kilmartin and his wife Rose.**

Through Fred's perseverance, innovation and willingness to take risks, the business grew into a full service Ford Dealership always aimed at meeting local needs. This year, the firm celebrates its 50th anniversary. Teresa Kilmartin, MD and daughter of the late Fred Kilmartin, said her father was a hands-on owner recalling that Fred would have them out manning the petrol pumps at a very young age while Rose, ever the mother, was trying to keep them in from the forecourt and he got all the family involved at an early age, all four of them, Anthony, Noel, Marie and Teresa, all of whom worked in the family business. Anthony started in the parts department in the mid 60's and went on subsequently to open successful Ford dealerships in Loughrea and Athlone.

Noel graduated from NUIG and having completed his accountancy studies with RBK, Athlone returning to the firm in the late 70s. Noel was well known and he was very much part and involved in the local community. For over forty years Noel was an integral part of the business, appointed MD in 1985, he spearheaded the Ford Dealership's growth for over 26 years until his untimely death in 2011.

Teresa then stepped up as MD and she now runs the Dealership, which still remains a family business since its founding 50 years ago. The refurbished modern Dealership, has employed a vast number of people over the years, it currently employs 15 full time and 3 part time staff.

Teresa said: "We have a loyal and hard working staff and they really are the backbone of the business and they too have played and continue to play a very important role in contributing to our success. Some of our long term staff have been with us over 40 years and they are our future." Michael Kelly, head of sales for 28 years: believes " This has been a great company to work for and Kilmartins truly put the customer at the very heart of everything they do and I'm proud to be part of their anniversary celebrations."

Tess Lyons who worked with the Company for over 40 years. Commented on how "I have seen incredible changes from the 60's to now. When I joined first we were using manual journals and



we then transitioned to computers, the methods in how we work have changed tremendously. What hasn't changed is that I've always felt part of the family and that is what makes Kilmartins a special place to work."

The family owned company has always been a strong business name in the town and at the heartbeat of the community working with sporting teams and local charities. The Midland Golf classic was set up bringing golfing people together from Ballinasloe, Athlone and Birr, which was not only a huge social event but a charitable one. In addition, the Kilmartins were involved in sponsorship of the Fair and Festival. The late Fred Kilmartin donated the first Defiblator to Portiuncula Hospital and for many years sponsored the jerseys for local football teams. Micheal Kelly, Head of Sales (a native of Clara), recalls some of the best sellers on the forecourt - the popular and trust worthy Ford Escort, to the compact Fiesta and in most recent years the

best seller has to be the all new Ford Focus. "Over the years the business has been expanding and strengthening its position to become a business that puts the customer and the community at the heart of everything we do. Our day-to-day business is selling and servicing Ford passenger and commercial range of vehicles but when you are in business as long as we are the business becomes more than just that. We are an integral part of the community in the town and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of Ballinasloe and its hinterland for their continued support." stated Teresa.

Mike added "As we celebrate our 50th Anniversary we have a number of offers which include 3 years warranty, 3 years Road side Assistance and 3 years servicing on selected models and have reduced many of our used vehicles."

The company anticipates continued and steady growth as it maintains focus and embraces additional opportunities to service the customer. The team at Fred Kilmartin Ltd will always, now or five years from now, work to form strong ties within the community and lasting partnerships together with their customer base.

To get in touch with Fred Kilmartin Ltd. contact 090 9630800 or visit [www.fredkilmartinltd.ie](http://www.fredkilmartinltd.ie) or visit our new Facebook page and enter a draw. This month's giveaway is a Full Car Valet and Polish to the value of €150. Like us on Facebook and share with your friends to be in with a chance to get your car looking like new!

**To celebrate 50 years, Fred Kilmartin Ltd will be displaying wonderful vintage Ford models that span 50 years of Ford's history in car manufacturing. Watch out for the Ford legacy Display any day soon in our Showrooms.**



Kilmartins Staff

# Ballinasloe RAPID Programme



Writes Kieran Coyne

**RAPID is ten years on the road this year in the town. It has delivered a series of projects across several thematic areas and supported the coordination of a number of different initiatives between various agencies.**

The community support budget, under the RAPID Programme there is an allocation of funding in 2012 for the development and support of the community and voluntary sector in the RAPID (Ballinasloe Town) area. Support will be in the areas of capacity building, community events, innovative community actions, and community public relations. Projects supported must be delivered in the current year. There is no formal application process but applicants are required to contact the RAPID Coordinator on prospective projects. If a project is eligible an applicant will then have to provide the following; Project outline, Project cost, Project timescale, Target group(s) supported and Projected local impact.

An example of an initiative we supported in 2011 was *Integration Through Music* presented by Martin Gavin, the project outline was five Sessions with five different learners learning to play the traditional instrument, the bodhrán. The Target Group were young people 16+ who were on probation or at risk of offending. The attendees had five sessions for two hour periods at Canal House. The initiative was to develop new musical skill, reduce offending and enhance self esteem in the young offenders.

The Employment and Training Initiative, The RAPID programme in conjunction with the Jobs Club (joint service providers) are looking to devise a voluntary placement programme for the area. The Department of Social Protection may have some involvement in the rolling out of the initiative. Other local groups may become involved in a support role if the need arises. The key concept of this programme is to match local people with a variety of employment skills seeking employment with businesses based in the locality who are looking for locally trained employees. The idea of this kind of placement programme is to provide people with some work experience with a view to up-skilling and upgrading their CV's. The service providers will also provide some formal training as part of this new work placement venture, to be agreed on later as identified by employers.

#### The Benefits to The Participant

- Current Reference on their CV.
- Work experience and real on the job experience.
- Confidence building.
- Gives participants a valuable sense of employers expectations.
- Opens doors to possible job outcomes.

#### The Benefits to The Employer

- Extra pair of hands to help with tasks at no additional cost.
- Giving back to your communities as employers are contributing to their corporate social responsibility.
- Employers are not asked to pay a wage as participants continue to retain their social welfare payments.
- There is no obligation on employers to continue beyond the placement. However should a position arise, the employer can employ the participant at no recruitment cost and will have had an opportunity to 'Trial before you buy'.

#### Obligations of Service Providers

- To organise the matching of placements with employers.
- To assess in conjunction with the placements and employers the ongoing progress of respective placements. A simple form should be completed (monthly) by the employer and submitted to the service provider.
- Service provider to keep a database of all employers who express interest or sign up to placement initiative.

#### Obligations of Employer

- Placements to be insured (both employers liability and public liability) under the employers insurance policy.
- Job descriptions to be compiled by employers involved and submitted to the service provider.
- Complete monthly placement progress form in conjunction with the placement.

For more information on the RAPID programme contact Ann or Ita at the Ballinasloe Jobs Club. Tel: 090 9643057.

#### Projects in planning

- Arts and craft workshops with Ballinasloe Community Resources and St Grellans Youth Development Group.
- Mental Health Matters initiative with Ballinasloe Mental Health Association (Volvo Ocean Race Galway and Ballinasloe Horse Fair & Festival 2012).
- Ballinasloe Care & Repair initiative.
- Project with Creagh Community Council.
- Ballinasloe Training Workshop courses.
- X-Hale Youth Awards initiative.



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# Village Crèche and Montessori



**Writes Sheena Kenny**

**During this recession, the demand for childcare has dropped, but the demand for quality has not. The Village Crèche in Glentaun, (behind Dubarry shoe factory) provides an excellent childcare service, while also gives great value for money.**

For a standard fee of €30 per day, your child will be looked after by a qualified member of staff and receive breakfast, morning snack, dinner and afternoon snack. This breaks down to €3 per hour, now that's value.

The concept of the crèche arose from an original idea in 2005 to open up a service which was open-plan, but could be divided for certain activities. This is particularly nice for siblings, who can still have contact throughout the day.

The Village Crèche was purpose-built in 2007 and is a lovely, bright and airy building. From the outside it looks the same as all the other bungalows, but the inside is completely different. As well as the decor, all the staff are very warm and welcoming. During the most recent pre-school inspection, the interactions between staff and children were described as 'excellent'. The qualifications of the staff begin at 'level 5' and go up to 'level 8'.

Each age-group has a designated worker, and the room is partitioned to facilitate different activities. The main idea behind the service is to provide quality childcare, which is friendly, caring and relaxed. I would have loved this type of childcare for my own children. Our policy is to try and accommodate all children, delivering a varied curriculum to all age-groups, whether they are booked in for five full-days or two half-days. We also contribute to our community by providing local employment for five people.

Each staff member is responsible for their own group, I look after the 1 to 2-year-olds, Dolores looks after the 2 to 3-year-olds, Helen looks after the 3 years and older group AND Liz is our Montessori teacher and provides the ECCE scheme, while Lisa is the Montessori assistant. Catherine provides cover and assistance wherever it's needed. We also have staff on a relief panel if needed.

There is an excellent outside play-area. It has a soft-play surface, so is suitable and safe for even the smallest child. It is equipped with cars, tricycles, play-houses, slide and a sand-pit. It is enclosed and secured with two high locked gates, so it is very safe.

Our ethos here at The Village Crèche is simple; we are child-centred and are proud to say that the children in our care are looked after to the highest standards possible. We are aware that while the children are in our care, we are looking after them on behalf of you, the parents. We make it a priority to include parents as much as possible, and we welcome feedback on how you would like your child to be cared for.

The Village Crèche is a member of Early Childhood Ireland, who offers support and regular training, [www.earlychildhoodireland.com](http://www.earlychildhoodireland.com). The crèche is located at 3 Glentaun View, Glentaun Village, Creagh. The opening hours are 7.45am to 6pm. For enquiries; Please call in for a look around, or phone us on 090 9645698 or Visit our website: [www.thevillagecreche.ie](http://www.thevillagecreche.ie) Email us: [thevillagecreche@eircom.net](mailto:thevillagecreche@eircom.net) or follow us on Facebook at The Village Creche and Montessori.



*Back (L-R): Sheena Kenny, Catherine Quinn, Helen James-Greene and Liz Naughton. Front (L-R): Delores Kelly and Lisa Furey.*

# Beechlawn Organic Farmers Celebrate 10 Years in Business

**Writes Barra O’Crofaigh**

They started with one acre ten years ago, and nineteen acres later they celebrated their 10th Anniversary as one of the Green SME’s of the locality, promoting sustainable living. This year Beechlawn Organic Farm are growing twenty acres of mixed veg on three different farms, all certified organic. It is its own tranquil GMO free oasis which at the same time is a steady functional production line of some of the best tasting fruit and veg in the country. The farm started selling produce at local farmers markets but is now much busier selling more bulk wholesale, but they enjoy the one market they still do in Loughrea every Thursday.

The husband and wife team of Pdraig Fahy and Úna Ní Bhroin and their staff work with the intention of being “Kind to the Environment and to you.” Pdraig and Una work full time on the farm. They also employ a full time delivery driver, a part time office assistant, a full time head veg packer, a full time farm worker and three seasonal staff in the summer months for planting and harvesting.

Una commented “We sell our veg through many different outlets. We like to stay dynamic as we don’t want to rely on any one market source. We don’t want to have all of our eggs in one basket so to speak. We sell about 65 home delivery weekly family veg boxes in Ballinasloe, Galway, Athlone and some in our new Tipperary/Clare delivery route now also. We sell to 21 shops in total, mainly in Galway. Being in Ballinasloe is ideal as it’s a central location in Ireland for deliveries and collections of vegetables. Being next to the motorway helps a lot.” They are now also growing celery and leeks, which they are selling to Donnelly’s and Begley’s in Dublin, by the pallet. A new venture in 2011, they supply Superquinn and Dunnes Stores respectively with organic veg. But growing organically doesn’t come easy or cheap, a lot more care and

attention to detail goes into the harvesting of the fruit and veg and this is testament in the high quality taste you get with organic fruit and veg. Una went on to explain “Growing veg organically is more challenging financially as we have to hand plant and hand weed where chemical farmers can sow seeds mechanically and spray weed-killers and pesticides to kill off everything else that gets in the way. We use nets to keep off pests and some companion planting. We have nasturtium and marigold flowers growing in our polytunnels to attract beneficial insects which eat the baddies (green and white fly etc)”

Beechlawn Organic Farm supply home deliveries, Farmers’ Markets, and wholesale customers with fresh, seasonal, local organic produce all year round. To get in touch visit [www.beechlawnfarm.org](http://www.beechlawnfarm.org) or call 086 1799007



Pdraig and Una

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# 100th Anniversary of Local Government

Writes Barra O'Crofaigh

Preparations are well under way for the Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland annual conference which is being organised and hosted by our local Town Council and will be held in the Carlton Shearwater Hotel. The AMAI is the representative body for Town Councils throughout the country and this centenary conference will be a hugely significant event in view of the fact that the announcement on "Local Government" reform is imminent.

At the conference, keynote discussions will take place on the reform of local government and local development as well as discussions on the Green Government Paper on local government reform. Phil Hogan TD Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government will address the Delegates at the conference banquet on the Friday Night. A host of other National and Regional public representatives and delegates will attend. The conference will also see the official launch of the book "A Century of Service-History of AMAI 1912-2012." In excess of 350 public representatives are expected to throng the towns - three hotels with places in Athlone and Loughrea being provisionally held also. A top class social programme has been put in place by the town council sub-committee to entertain

the conference delegates. The social programme includes performances by three local talented singers, Niamh Kelly, Rachel Goode and Sarah Corcoran. The local Sean Nos dancers and the local traditional band *Still Sloping* will also provide entertainment. The delegates will enjoy a bus tour to Clonmacnoise stopping off at Dubarry Shoes and back to a Golf tournament. Afterwards the delegates will be entertained by Irish Dancing group *Mystic Force* and local band *Buzz the Agent.*" In support of this Town Council initiative, the local Chamber of Commerce are producing a 'Special Deal' booklet of vouchers for conference delegates and erecting welcoming signage throughout the town. It is a fantastic opportunity to showcase the town as a major conference centre and the 300+ delegates are expected to create a spend of some €130,000

for the local economy. The Conference takes place from 12th-14th of September. Mayor Carmel Greally stated that "The Town Council's organisation of this major conference is another positive example of our own town council promoting our town not just on a local basis but also on the national stage." She concluded by stating as Mayor, she was looking forward to welcoming the delegates from around the country. Cllr Johnny Walsh, who was instrumental in ensuring that the Town won the bid to host the event in the West, against Sligo and Westport is confident that the "Facilities, location and local support for such a prestigious event will ensure similar business to the locality." The council sub-committee consists of Mayor Carmel Greally, Deputy Mayor Johnny Walsh, Cllrs Lucy-Lloyd Keighery, Mike Kelly, Pat O'Sullivan and Cathal Concannon, as well as Town Clerk Caitriona Morgan and Senior Staff Officer Anne Power. It is hoped that the National Conference will entice more signature countrywide seminars and business meetings to the town, using the Shearwater Hotel Conference Centre.



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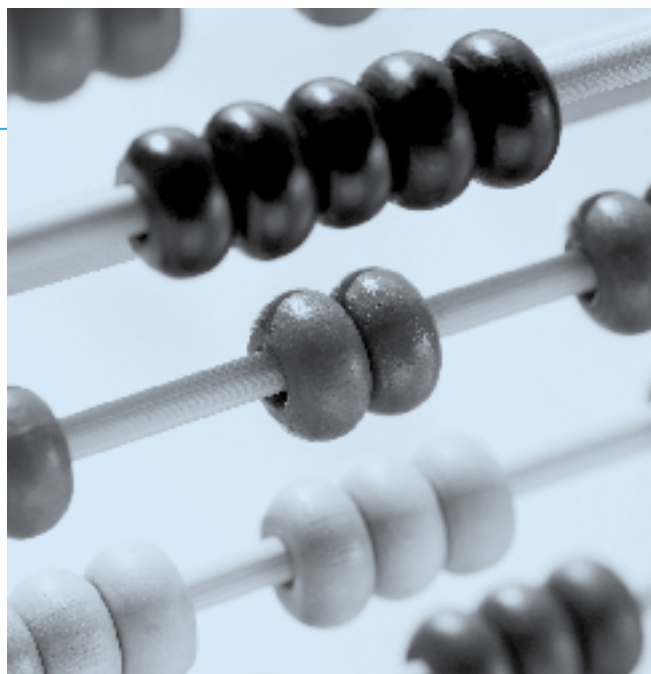
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## Ballygar Carnival - Going Strong After 68 Years!

Crowds will flock to the legendary, 68th, annual *Ballygar Carnival*. This year it kicks-off on Thursday, 2nd August and really has a jam-packed programme of events that are sure to please all, both young and old. It promises to be one of the highlights of the year locally, with plenty to do and see over the course of the bumper six day event. Music lovers are in for a treat with the very best entertainment being provided by some of Ireland's most popular acts including chart topper Ryan Sheridan, *The Killers of Leon*, Gina Dale Hayes & *The Champions* and *The Young Wolfe Tones*. There are also an array of novelty events taking place with hurling and football tournaments, the annual soccer tournament, a marching band competition, a children's fancy dress competition and Monster Bingo all being staged. See the events guide for dates, times and venues of all acts.

## Get Ready for Digital TV with Fletcher's Expert Wednesday 24th October is Analogue Switch off Date

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2. Check your aerial. You will need a rooftop UHF aerial to receive Saorview. If you can get the 4 Irish channels with your aerial it's likely that you will receive Saorview.
3. Choose your Equipment. You do not need a new TV to receive Saorview; however if you're thinking of upgrading ensure to get a Saorview Approved Model. If you want to keep your existing TV you may need to get a Saorview Approved Set Top Box. Your local Expert Store stocks a full range of Saorview Approved TVs and Set Top Boxes.
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# Where To Invest Your Money

## Writes Donal Scannell, Scannell Financial Services

The old saying “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket” has always been good investment advice. The amount of choice and spread of funds will depend on how much you have to invest.

**Instant Access Accounts:** Everybody needs to have an “Emergency Fund” with instant access. High Street banks tend not to pay much interest on this type of account. Online banks offer better rates. The interest for these accounts varies from 0.1% to about 3%.

**Notice/Term Accounts:** The more withdrawal notice you are prepared to give the more interest you can expect to earn. Notice of 30 days to 3 months and they usually pay 2% to 4%, whereas accounts with 1 to 5 year term can expect to be paid 3% to 5%. Some will offer limited access to your money, but generally your money is locked in for the period. If you can invest your money for 4 years or more you have a much broader choice of funds.

**Tracker Bonds:** Give you a 100% bank guarantee on your capital and they generally will give you a better return than deposit accounts. However, make sure you understand what they will invest in.

**Deposit Bonds:** These offer high interest rates that are guaranteed not to drop over the period. Annual interest rate of over 5% are available. If you have money that you can invest for 4 to 5 years these would suit. Interest rates are expected to decrease soon, so get the higher rates while you can.

**Split Deposit Bonds:** These are a mix of Deposit Bonds and Tracker Bonds. You will get a high (c. 10%) interest rate for 1 year on part of the investment, maybe 25% and this portion of the investment along with the interest will be paid back at the end of year 1. The balance will be invested for another 3-4 years.

**Property/Equity:** There are currently some good opportunities in property and equities available, but you would need expert advice on these as they tend to be more specialised and carry greater risk.

Overall you need to break down your financial needs on a timescale basic and having done that seek to maximise your returns at a risk level you understand and accept. And of course, seek expert advice if you are not sure what to do.



# Youth Group Trip To Germany

## Writes Barra O’Crofaigh

Ballinasloe Youth Group was set up for the betterment of youth interaction in the community and surrounding areas, it was set up in 2004 for young people in the locality to make new friends and most importantly have fun. The brainchild of Michael Riddell and helped by some very close mutual friends the youth group has evolved in numbers in recent years, Jimmy Corigan is another key player in the group, Jimmy from Ballinahown got the youth group involved in the Tus Velen soccer tournament.

The Tus Velen competition was created to build friendships all over the world through a common interest, football. “The tournament is held in Germany. The Youth Group usually go for a weekend, Fly out on a Friday and come back on the Monday night. The football tournament takes up the majority of their time on the trip, with meetings with the local mayor, visits to top football club stadiums and other events with the other teams making for a jam packed programme.” Mike Riddell stated. The Youth Group have attended tournaments 8 times in the last 9 years and the latest trip this year was their third trip to Germany.



*Tus Velen 12th International Tournament 26th-28th May 2012: Back Row (L-R): M. Coughlan, J. Greer, D. Kelly, D. Keane, S. Tierney, B. Rigney, C. Rohan, C. Dooley, S. Deane (Captain), T. Byrne, I. Rosney, E. Moran, P. Keenan and A. Watts. Front (L-R): M. Riddell, J. Curley, K. Egan, K. Briathwaite, I. Duffy, E. Blake, W. Healy, A. Reynolds, M. Langtry (Vice-Captain).*

The youth group is open to anyone who wants to join between the ages of 16-19.

In the past the group has had lads from Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Caltra, Laurencetown, Kiltormer, Ballinahown, Ferbane, Kilcormac, Doon and other surrounding areas. The Youth Group have come 4th twice and have won the fair play cup twice. The Youth Group are supplied with kit and jerseys every year they go thanks to generous sponsors from the town including Joe’s Bar, O’Neill’s Fireplaces and Padraig Concannon’s Mace. The trip itself is funded by half the money been paid by the young player going and the other half been funded by fundraising

via sponsorship, race nights, table quiz, penalty shoot outs and cross bar challenges.

Team captain Sean Dean said “It was a huge privilege to be asked to be captain of the team. All of the players really enjoyed the experience of playing in the tournament and its something we’ll never forget. I would really like to thank the manager and coaches for all the hard work they put into making this trip a success and also the people of Velen for their superb hospitality.”

*For more information or to get involved in Ballinasloe Youth Group contact Mike Riddell on 087 2698248 or like Ballinasloe Youth Group’ on Facebook.com*

# I Went To The Pictures Tomorrow

Writes Barry Lally

**At the junction of the Market Square and Main Street, near the upper end of the Lazy Wall, for several decades a hoarding rested against the lamp-post. Popularly known as the *Picture Board*, it was used to display large, hand-painted posters advertising the current attractions at the Plaza Cinema.**

The hoarding's situation in the middle of Ballinasloe could be taken as symbolizing the central position then occupied by film-going in the leisure activities of the town and its surroundings countryside.

The public house was still a male preserve, but everybody "went to the pictures", all classes, men and women, old and young. At a time when the generality of homes were less warm and comfortable than they are today, the cinema offered a welcome refuge where a good seat could be had for the price of a pint of beer. With the assiduity of something akin to a religious obligation, many people attended the cinema once or twice a week regardless of "what was on" and were in no way deterred by the prospect of having to watch the screen through a fog of cigarette smoke. Although normally featuring the least attractive films of the week, Sunday nights saw the both the Plaza and Central Cinemas packed to capacity, with seats unobtainable booked before midday.

While censorship was draconian, with some films so severely cut as to render their plots incomprehensible, this didn't seem to greatly bother audiences at the time. It was enough that the cinema offered glimpses of a world of glamour, colour and excitement so much – and so pleasurable – at odds with everyday life. As the late John McGahern wrote in one of his novels: "All pictures were marvellous. People who said one was good another bad had some secret knowledge."

Thursday and Saturday matinees in the Central (Now Utah Outlet on Society Street) with a serial as part of the programme, seldom failed to draw in the town's youngsters in their droves. A schoolboy nonsense rhyme that went the rounds in those days suggests the pervasiveness of cinema culture amongst the local children:

*I went to the pictures tomorrow.  
I took a front seat at the back.  
I fell from the floor to the gallery,  
and broke a front bone in my back.*



*Reviewing the LDF Volunteer Squadron during the Emergency in 1940 outside the Town Hall and Plaza Cinema. Pictured are some well known local faces Brendan Glynn (Solicitor), Dermot Staunton (Creagh) and the late Paul Dooley (Vintner).*

On certain Church holidays, such as Corpus Christi, altar boys were sometimes rewarded with complimentary tickets, or "passes", as they called them, to the Plaza, (The Town Hall Theatre) then under parochial management.

This cinema began operating in the Town Hall in the 1920's, spanning both the silent era and the age of the "talkies". Sunday matinees used to be part of its programme but were abandoned for some reason in the early '50s. The Plaza underwent a change of name in the 1975 when it was taken over by a cinema chain and became known as the Aisling. It closed in June 1983 with a screening of David Attenborough's *Ghandi*. The Central, colloquially referred to as "The New Hall", opened its doors in Society Street in 1932 on the site of Harpur's Dance Hall, and continued in business up to the spring of 1997, closing with *The Man in the Iron Mask*.

When Telefís Éirann was launched in 1962 there was no sudden, dramatic drop in cinema attendance. Nevertheless, it marked the start of a steady decline in audience numbers extending over three decades. People lost the habit of regular movie-going, preferring instead to stay in and watch the magic box in the corner of the room. A modest increase in personal incomes in the '60s made possible domestic improvements, encouraging a stay-at-home attitude. Soon the serried ranks of country folk's bicycles stretching from the wall of Fallon's pub in Main Street to the

edge of the pavement were no longer a sight to behold on Sunday evenings. The cinemas were dealt another blow in the early '80s with the advent of videos, enabling people to view the movies of their choice while relaxing on their living-room couches.

Cinema-going experienced a revival in the 1990s when the multiplexes came on the scene. These were large cinemas, each comprising a number of auditoria, thus allowing for the screening of several films simultaneously. However, this development had a disastrous effect on the single-screen houses because of an arrangement whereby the film distributors would not release prints of movies until the multiplexes had done with them. As a result, there are few if any old-style movie theatres left in Ireland at present.

In recent years a new cinema was mooted for Ballinasloe in relation to the Dunlo Retail Park. Sadly the downturn in the economy seems to have slowed the arrival of the screens. However, when things improve, as the surely must, hopefully the plans will again be taken out and progress made in ensuring their realisation.

A cinema would constitute a considerable asset for the town and while it might never again play the important role on the local recreational scene as represented by the old "Picture Board", its value in making Ballinasloe a more attractive place to live and work in can scarcely be in doubt. 🐸

# Gullane's Log Cabin Reunion

Writes Jacqueline Daly

The brainchild of Gerry Devlin came to fruition when the reunion of Gullane's Log Cabin took place. It was a night to remember as people from far and wide including a few from overseas took part, in what definitely was a very enjoyable night in aid of two local charities, East Galway Cancer Support and Ballinasloe Social Services.

The main bar of Gullane's had up to thirty traditional musicians including Joan Broderick and Tom Quinn from the Ballinasloe Comhaltas, Ballymacward's set dancers took to the floor as did Claire Gibbons, doing some Sean Nós dancing. Musicians from as far away as Dublin took part in a brilliant 'seisiun'. Upstairs in the Forester's room a talented group called *Gaegan Paegan* entertained the younger generations.

In the main ballroom the packed audience was entertained by bands and singers from years back. Those who took to the stage included Billy and Louis Burgoyne, Seán Crehan, Valerie Seale, Jack Mannion, Richard Moore, Tony Murray, Pat Kenny, Phil Lloyd, Frank Hession, Brendan Loughnane, Pat Carney, Stephen Dervan, Cecil O'Grady, Ken Glennon, Eamon and Willie Devlin, Silver Sands and Ancel O'Carroll who brought the house down and received a standing ovation for his performance.

Tomás Gullane had everybody on their feet as he took up the guitar and took the crowd back to Gullane's Log Cabin with his rendering of *The Young Ones* and a few more oldies. To end the night all the performers gathered on the stage for a good old sing song.

Tomás commented "It was like a resurrection, a real blast from the past, it was great to see so many of the old entertainers and patrons reliving the fantastic nights of the past. The atmosphere was euphoric. The night gave me the opportunity to thank all those people for their talents and support to the Gullane's Log Cabin, which I described on the night, 'The Log Cabin had character, but it was the characters that made it.' It truly was a great night."

Chris Doherty was thanked for managing the sound, Pat McGovern for the lighting and Domac Plant Hire for the on street advertising. Both charities recorded their gratitude to Gerry Devlin who came up with the idea and put in hours of work organising bands, singers, spot prizes and advertising. Over €3,000 in total was raised, part of which was donated to Ballinasloe Social Services. "I'm now working on *The Log Cabin, Your Second Chance* (Sunday of the October Bank Holiday)" said Gerry.



Heat Wave



Brendan Loughnane



Cecil O'Grady and Stephen Dervan



Tomás Gullane



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Photos selected in the Top 4 of the Facebook Competition.

## Facebook Photo Competition

Top 4 images were in no particular order (clockwise on the left): Kevin Murray, Ciarán O'Connell, Geoffrey Grolier and Lorraine Coyne, but the winner was Gerry Devlin, with his photo *Two for One* which is on the cover of this issue. Gerry wins dinner for two at the Carlton Shearwater. You can view all the entries by simply logging onto our Facebook page, liking the page and enjoy the countless images that were entered [www.facebook.com/BallinasloeLife](http://www.facebook.com/BallinasloeLife). The theme was *A Summers Evening in Ballinasloe*. Thanks to all who entered. More fun competitions to come.



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# Reynolds Celebrates Milestone



Larry and Phyllis their Surprise 80th Birthday with Ballinasloe family members in Concannon's Village Inn Boston.

## Writes Barra O'Crofaigh

**Ahascragh born but Boston Resident, traditional fiddler Larry Reynolds enjoyed his 80th birthday recently with a huge family celebration in his adopted Boston home.**

Larry was born in Ahascragh in 1932, the 12th of 13 children. He began to learn the fiddle at age 10 when his brother Harry bought one for him. His sister Betty, working as a domestic, paid 30 shillings a quarter for lessons from Mabel West.

Reynolds immigrated to Boston in 1953, he left Ballinasloe as a young man, fiddle case in hand. The gregarious, genial fiddle player has been a central figure in Irish music circles for over half a century, and has been perhaps the major influence in popularising Irish traditional music throughout New England in the States. Larry's connection to Ballinasloe has not disappeared, as his nephews and nieces, grandnephews, grandnieces are all well known and prominent faces locally. Nelius, James, Walter, Nolle and Fiona all contribute hugely to business, social and community life within the town of Ballinasloe.

Larry says that he always enjoyed the traditional music, listening to it over the radio whenever the opportunity presented itself. On arriving to the USA the talented musician quickly got into the thriving dance hall scene along Boston's Dudley Street in Roxbury, playing with musical greats Paddy and Johnny Cronin, Joe Derrane, Brendan Tonra to name but a few.

Larry has played with several groups: The Tara Ceili Band, The Connaught Ceili Band, The Boston Ceili Band, Tommy Sheridan Band, Tara Hill, and The Boston Comhaltas Ceili Band. Larry recorded with The Connaught Ceili Band, and with Comhaltas band members and guests on

the album *We're Irish Still*. Having hosted the Comhaltas Concert Tour Group in 1973, '74, and '75, Larry and others founded the Boston Hanafin-Cooley Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann in Boston in 1976, and have hosted the tour group every year since. He is also Treasurer of the North American Provincial Council of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann. Having always enjoyed his association with Comhaltas, he stated "I can't imagine not being involved, in promoting Ireland and her music."

The Boston Comhaltas Ceili Band, including band members Larry and Tom Sheridan who played with the old Boston Ceili Band of the 50s. has played out for more than 15 years, performing from Alaska to the Grecian Islands to the Caribbean, from Cleveland in the mid-west to Cape Cod in the East, at Ceilis in resort hotels in the Catskills and at fabulous hotels in downtown New York. Ready to play at both local benefits and major Irish music festivals, the band has built their reputation also in part upon their great musical depth. The great Seamus Connolly plays occasionally. Larry and his sons Mike and Sean, his nephew Pat, and father and son Fergus and John Keane are band regulars.

Harvard University have even recognised the exploits of Reynolds. He was selected to receive the prestigious honour bestowed each year by Harvard due to his generous and unflinching devotion to traditional Irish music in Boston, a devotion that covers half a century. He follows in the footsteps of other prominent men and women to receive the honour, including poet Seamus Heaney, politician William M Bulger. 'Larry got two standing ovations during the evening, putting him on a par with Seamus Heaney, Whom we honoured back in 1997,' said Philip C Haughey, Chairman of Harvard's Friends of Celtic Studies, which hosted the event. Seamus

Connolly, considered one of Ireland's finest fiddlers, praised the work that Reynolds and his family has put into Irish music over the last fifty years. 'I don't know of anyone outside of Ireland who has done more to promote Irish traditional music than Larry Reynolds,' Connolly said. 'He has helped scores of young musicians fresh off the boat, giving them money out of his own pocket and setting them up with gigs. When I first came here in 1975, he gave me my start.'

Connolly also credited Reynolds for helping to make Conhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann such a vibrant group with chapters all over the US of which Boston's is among the largest. "I was very proud to be honoured by Harvard as a proponent of Irish music,' Reynolds says modestly. "For me, it's a sign that Irish traditional music is now on a plateau where it belongs."

Reynolds earned his living as a master carpenter, working on many of Boston's finest buildings. He and his lovely wife Phyllis live in Waltham, where they raised five sons and a daughter, all of whom took up Irish music. Larry has five brothers and four sisters. Sean, Bill (Deceased), Harry (Deceased), Pat (Deceased), Jimmy (Deceased), Neil, Mary Guider (Deceased), Betty (Deceased) and Nan (Deceased).

Today the Reynolds have nineteen grandchildren and one great grandchild. Neilus Reynolds (Nephew) said "Larry's brother Sean and his wife Peggy along with many of Larry's nieces and nephews travelled from Ballinasloe to Boston for Larry's surprise 80th birthday party, a double celebration as Larry's wife Phyllis was also 80 this year. It was a great night, a lot of people turned up to celebrate Larry's 80th with a surprise birthday party in Concannon's Village which really shows the high esteem people treat him with over there."

# CLARKE

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## Care To Drive Up and Running at Portiuncula

Irish Cancer Society's Care to Drive service is up and running for patients attending Portiuncula Hospital, since March of this year. It is a free service where the Irish Cancer Society recruits and trains volunteers to drive patients who are undergoing chemotherapy treatment to and from their hospital appointments. We currently have 50+ volunteers ready to transport patients to Portiuncula Hospital, for their treatment. The service is door to door, from the patients to the hospital and then returning after they finish treatment. There are a number of reasons why patients might avail of this service:

1. Patients living on their own with little or no family support
2. The patients family is not in the immediate vicinity
3. The patients family cannot take time off work to bring them to and from the hospital (when the recession really hit, people became afraid of taking time off work)
4. Elderly patients can't drive (or their spouse can't drive).
5. The treatment is too aggressive and the patient has been advised not to drive

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# Politicians Back Upcoming Digital Television Switchover

Writes Barra O'Crofaigh

A united political front was shown in Expert Electrical Fletchers as TD Paul Connaughton (Fine Gael), TD Micheal Kitt (Fianna Fail), Senator Lorraine Higgins (Labour) and Senator Michael Mullins (Fine Gael) all backed the Digital Switchover campaign for the local area.

Community organisations in East Galway are being called upon to assist older and more isolated people to make the switch to digital television. As the analogue signal for receiving TV will be switched off on 24th October, viewers who use an aerial will need to take action so they will continue to receive a TV signal after that date. While most people are expected to get around to it, a new Community Outreach programme, initiated by the Department of Communications, is targeting people who, for whatever reason, are less likely to make the change in time. These people may be older, live in more isolated areas and possibly live alone.

The Association of Irish Festival Events (AOIFE) is co-ordinating the campaign for the Old East Galway Constituency, led by Development Officer Claire Heskin the Digital Outreach Champion for the East Galway Campaign.

Working with LOCAL HEROES, she and the AOIFE team will involve a wide range of organisations in this part of the county to help create greater awareness and understanding of the Digital Switchover in local communities. Volunteers from these organisations will identify people who might have difficulty making the switch and will assist them to do so.

Claire said that she believed that a huge community effort is needed. "We need to make sure that people are not afraid of this change, that they can see the benefits, such as getting a clear, consistent picture, and that they know how easy it is to make the switch. We need people to get involved in every



TD Micheal Kitt, TD Paul Connaughton, Claire Heskin (DSO Champion), Sean Fletcher (Fletcher's Expert Electrical), Barra O'Crofaigh (DSO), Senator Michael Mullins, Senator Lorraine Higgins and Nancy Cregg FF.

parish in the county, volunteers in organisations who already know the people in their own communities that may need some help and are in a position to reach them. We're going to work hard right up to the 24th October, relying on the deeply ingrained Irish tradition of caring for our neighbours. We need to make sure that nobody gets left behind."

The Community Outreach Switchover Programme is being run in every county and is a partnership between The Wheel, an umbrella body for the community and voluntary sector, and the leading voice for rural Ireland, Irish Rural Link, with funding from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. Heskin and LOCAL HEROES were chosen following a competitive selection process and undertook training in early March.

If you're interested in getting involved or would like further information, please contact Claire Heskin at 090 9643779 or [claire@aoifeonline.com](mailto:claire@aoifeonline.com)

## New Town Clerk Takes Up Post

Writes Barra O'Crofaigh

Ballinasloe Town Council welcomed their newest senior staff member with the recent arrival of Catriona Morgan as the new Town Clerk.

A native of Clones, Co. Monaghan she has been living in Galway City since 1990, where she studied a primary Degree in Business at GMIT and a postgraduate degree in NUIG. She started working with Galway County Council in 2004, prior to that she worked with a computer company in Ballybrit, her first placement with the county council was in finance, then with a move to the West Regional Authority where she worked with the roll out of the group broadband scheme and then a move back to the County Council into the housing department and from there to Community, Enterprise and Development where she spent



the last four years. Catriona stated "A large amount of statutory work has to be done and I need to my find feet. There are countless exciting and interesting projects coming down the line with the Town Council so I'm really looking forward to working on these. She believes her primary concern in the new post is to work with everyone in the community: "From the business sector to voluntary groups, across the whole spectrum. Ballinasloe's central

location is key to its future, with a great infrastructure on its doorstep, literally on the M6 motorway, the old N6 passes through, the Dublin to Galway Rail and Bus services stop here. These are huge advantages. From a tourism point of view the fact that it is on the water is a key aspect to exploiting the tourism sector and it's something that not only this town but the whole country needs to get back to, attracting tourists to come spend and experience the region. "I think Ballinasloe can be up there with a top destination as a place to visit with much to see and do. One thing I've noticed since I've come here is that there is a vibrant community and voluntary sector that I look forward to working with."

Catriona replaces Mark O'Donnell as he moves on to work with the West Regional Authority, coincidentally where Catriona started her public service career.

# AUGUST Events Guide

## 1st AUGUST

Gullane's Hotel	Relays Dance Group	8pm
An Táin	Trad Night	8pm

## 2nd AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & Friends	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm
Ballygar	Annual 68th Carnival Grand Opening	10pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic Session	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	David Maguire	10pm

## 3rd AUGUST

Maud Millar's	Alan Lawlor	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Ballygar Carnival	Ryan Sheridan Live. Admisson: €15	11.30pm
Emerald Bar	Comhaltas Traditional Session	9.30pm
Blakes Bar	DJ Eoin Quinn Blakes Late Bar	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Bojangle	10pm

## 4th AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Christy & Mike	10pm
Maud Millar's	Keith and Johnny	10pm
Pillar House	The Klients	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	11.30pm
Blakes Bar	See Saw Swing Live in Blakes	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Trolley Till Late	11.30pm
Downey's Bar	All the Latest Sounds with DJ	10pm
Ballygar Carnival	Killers of Leon	11pm
Carlton Shearwater	Rosie Flanagan	10pm

## 5th AUGUST

Downey's Bar	Colin Gallen followed by DJ til late	8.30pm
Pillar House	Silent Wave	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivuletes	10pm
Ballygar Carnival	Gina Dale Hayes & The Champions	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Country Night with Declan Nerney	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Trad Session	10pm
Blakes Bar	Chillout in Blakes Bar	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Lee Johnston in East Nightclub	11.30pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	10.30pm
Carlton Shearwater	Claymore	10pm

## 6th AUGUST

Dunlo Tavern	Anne-Marie McLoughlin	10pm
Ballygar Carnival	Derek Warfield & Young Wolfe Tones	11pm
Downey's Bar	Trad Session with Davey and Friends	10pm

## 7th AUGUST

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
Ballygar Carnival	Bingo at the Centre	11pm

## 8th AUGUST

An Táin	Trad Night	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Relays Dance Group	8pm

## 9th AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & friends	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm
Gullane's Hotel	Bruno Groening - Circle of Friends	7pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	10.30pm

## 10th AUGUST

Emerald Bar	Comhaltas Traditional Session	9.30pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Blakes late Bar	DJ Keith Gerathy	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Hooch Hickers	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Frankie McDonald	10pm

## 11th AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Tara Shamrock	10pm
Maud Millar's	Coverstory	10pm
Pillar House	Two Below	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	10.30pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Ozzy G	11.30pm
Downey's Bar	All the latest sounds with DJ	10pm
East Venue	Taxi for 5 in aid of Relay for Life	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Ciaran Whyte	10pm

## 12th AUGUST

Dunlo Tavern	Done & Dusted	10pm
Downey's Bar	Paul Byrnes followed by DJ Til Late	8.30 pm
Maud Millar's	The Skillet Pot	10pm
Pillar House	DJ Keith	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Country Night with Derek Ryan	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	10.30pm
Carlton Shearwater	Liam Doyle	10pm

## 13th AUGUST

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Downey's Bar	Trad Session: Davey & Friends	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Helium	10pm

## 14th AUGUST

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
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## 15th AUGUST

An Táin	Trad Night	10pm
	Leaving Cert Results issued	

## 16th AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & friends	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic Session	10pm

## 17th AUGUST

Ahascragh Festival	Festival Begins	All day
Blakes Late Bar	DJ Lee Johnston	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Emerald Bar	Comhaltas Traditional Session	9.30pm
Carlton Shearwater	Chris Nash	10pm

## 18th AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Last Man Standing	10pm
Maud Millar's	Streetwise	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	10.30pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Ahascragh	Community Festival	
Blakes Bar	The Sheerins Live	10pm
Pillar House	Geagan Pagans	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Darren P	11.30pm
Downey's Bar	All the latest sounds with DJ	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Michael Regan	10pm

## 19th AUGUST

Ahascragh Festival	Hurling Tournament and Family Fun Day	
Moore	Moore Race for Crumlin (Millars Pub)	1pm
Maud Millar's	The Hoppy Bar Stars	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Country Night with Robert Mizzell	10pm
Pillar House	DJ Keith	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	10.30pm
Dunlo Tavern	Cajun Chicken	10pm
Downey's Bar	Actin the Magot Followed by DJ	8.30pm
Hayden's Hotel	Bo Jangle	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Rosie Flanagan	10pm

## 20th AUGUST

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Dunlo Tavern	One 2 One	10pm
Downey's Bar	Trad Session with Davey & Friends	8pm

## 21st AUGUST

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
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## 22nd AUGUST

An Táin	Trad Night	10pm
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## 23rd AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & friends	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic Session	10pm

## 24th AUGUST

Maud Millar's	The Hooch Hikers	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
	Big Tom - Admission: €20	10pm

## 25th AUGUST

Convent	1st Years Start Term	
Emerald Bar	Comhaltas Traditional Session	9.30pm
Blakes Late Bar	DJ Keith Gerathy	10pm

## 25th AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Country comfort	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Pillar House	DJ Lee	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivuletes	10pm
Pillar House	Cool Hand Dukes	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	11.30pm
East Nightclub	DJ Flip	11.30pm
Downey's Bar	Party Zone with all the Latest Hits	10pm
Blakes Bar	See Saw Swing	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Ken & Steve	10pm

## 26th AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Night Owls	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Country Night with Jimmy Buckley	10pm
Maud Millar's	Barry Power	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Buzz the Agent	10pm
Downey's Bar	Live Music	10pm
Pillar House	Geagan Pagans	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Tir Na Nog	10pm

## 27th AUGUST

Dunlo Tavern	Boys from the Blackstuff	10pm
Downey's Bar	Trad Session with Davey & Friends	
Garbally College	1st Years Start Term	
Convent	2nd Years and LCA 1 Return	

## 28th AUGUST

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
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## 29th AUGUST

An Táin	Trad Night	8pm
Convent	5th Years and TYs Return	

## 30th AUGUST

Hayden's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & friends	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic Session	10pm
Convent	All Other Students Return	

## 31st AUGUST

Maud Millar's	Live Music	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Trad Session	10pm
Blakes Late Bar	DJ Eoin Quinn	10pm
Emerald Bar	Comhaltas Traditional Session	9.30pm
Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
GAA Clubhouse	Ballinasloe GAA Super Draw	8pm



# SEPTEMBER Events Guide

## 1st SEPTEMBER

Carlton Shearwater	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	Streetwise	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Annmarie McLoughlin	10pm
Pillar House	Slider	10pm
Blakes Bar	Chillout Live in Blakes	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ in East Nightclub	11.30pm
Downey's Bar	Back to College Party	10pm
Hayden's Hotel	Night Owls	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ	11.30pm

## 2nd SEPTEMBER

Carlton Shearwater	The Skillet Pot	
Hayden's Hotel	One to One	10pm
Downey's Bar	Actin the Magot Followed by DJ	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Skillet Pot	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Trad Session	10pm

## 3rd SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Downey's Bar	Trad Session with Davey & Friends	10pm

## 4th SEPTEMBER

Planet Night Club	DJ 'til late	9pm
Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm

## 5th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Trad Night: Tony Kennys 88th birthday	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Singers Circle	10pm

## 6th SEPTEMBER

An Táin	Kevin Rohan & Friends	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Live Acoustic Session	10pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic Session in Bar	10pm
Hayden's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & friends	10pm

## 7th SEPTEMBER

Carlton Shearwater	Bojangle	10pm
An Táin	Trad Session followed By Geagan Pagans	
Gullane's Hotel	Ballinasloe Cancer Support Fundraiser	9pm
Maud Millar's	Keith and Johnny	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Sons of Erin	10pm
An Táin	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Blakes Late Bar	DJ Lee Johnston	10pm
Pillar House	Trad Session with Still Slopin'	10pm

## 8th SEPTEMBER

Aughrim	Festival and Show	
Dunlo Tavern	Geagan Pagans	10pm
Maud Millar's	Chillout	10pm
Hayden's Hotel	Gentleman John	10pm
Downey's Bar	All the Latest Sounds with DJ	10pm
Blakes Bar	Ray Montanna Live in Blakes	10pm
Maud Millar's	All Day Traditional Music & Song	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Ozzy G in East Nightclub	10pm
An Táin	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Pillar House	DJ	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Trad Session with The High Reel	10pm
	Claymore	10pm

## 9th SEPTEMBER

Aughrim	Festival and Show	
Town Hall Theatre	Actin' The Magot	10pm
Downey's Bar	Live Music with Too Tall Paul	8.30pm
Maud Millar's	The Hoppy Bar Stars	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	The Ramblers	10pm
An Táin	Country Dance in The Ballroom	10pm

## 10th SEPTEMBER

Carlton Shearwater	Line Dancing	8pm
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Downey's Bar	Trad Session with Davey & Friends	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Cúl Camps	

## 11th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
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## 12th SEPTEMBER

B'sloe GAA Grounds	Trad Night	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	B'sloe Flower & Garden Club	8pm

## 13th SEPTEMBER

Hayden's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & Friends	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Singers Circle	10pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic Session	10pm
Shearwater	AMAI Conference	All day

## 14th SEPTEMBER

Hayden's Hotel	Keith & Johnny	10pm
Maud Millar's	Geagan Pagans	10pm
Blakes Late Bar	DJ	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Done & Dusted	
Ballinasloe Life	Oct/Nov Edition Copy Deadline	4pm
Maud Millar's	Live Music	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Michael Regan	10pm
Shearwater	AMAI Conference	All day

## 15th SEPTEMBER

Carlton Shearwater	Backstage	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Elvis Theme Night	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ in East Nightclub to be announced	10pm

Downey's Bar	All the Latest Sounds with DJ	
Hayden's Hotel	DJ Corry	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm
Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Pillar House	Geagan Pagans	10pm
Hayden's Hotel	David McGuire	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Backstage	10pm
Shearwater	AMAI Conference	All day

## 16th SEPTEMBER

Planet Night Club	Anne Marie McLoughlin	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	The Skillet Pot	10pm
Downey's Bar	Live Music	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Sons of Erin	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Skillet Pot	10pm

## 17th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Downey's Bar	Trad Session with Davey & Friends	10pm

## 18th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
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## 19th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Irish Blood Transfusion Service	From 5pm
	Trad Night	10pm

## 20th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & Friends	10pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic Session	10pm
An Táin	Irish Blood Transfusion Service	From 5pm
Hayden's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & friends	10pm

## 21st SEPTEMBER

Show Society	Deadline for all entries	4pm
Blakes Bar	DJ Eoin Quinn Blakes late Bar	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Rivulettes	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Deal or No Deal with Eddie Short	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Dew Drop	10pm

## 22nd SEPTEMBER

Carlton Shearwater	Tir Na nÓg	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	The Klient	10pm
Blakes Bar	The Coyles Live in Blakes	10pm
Hayden's Hotel	Last Man Standing	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Trolley	11.30pm
Maud Millar's	The Hooch Hickers	10pm
Downey's Bar	DJ	10.30pm
Carlton Shearwater	Tir Na nÓg	10pm

## 23rd SEPTEMBER

Planet Night Club	DJ Till Late	
Dunlo Tavern	Actin' The Magot	10pm
Hayden's Hotel	Bojangle	10pm
Downey's Bar	Live Music with One 2 One	8.30pm
Dunlo Tavern	Boys form the Black Stuff	10pm
Maud Millar's	The Hoppy Bar Stars	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	DJ	10.30pm

## 24th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Line Dancing	8pm
Downey's Bar	Trad Session with Davey & Friends	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Helium	10pm

## 25th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Tea Dance	9pm
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## 26th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Trad Night	10pm
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## 27th SEPTEMBER

Gullane's Hotel	Kevin Rohan & Friends	10pm
Maud Millar's	Live Acoustic Session	10pm
An Táin	Live Acoustic Session	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Queen of the Fair Selection Night	9.30pm

## 28th SEPTEMBER

Hayden's Hotel	Idle Tone	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	One 2 One	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ Lee Johnston	10pm
Maud Millar's	Coverstoe	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Ken & Steve	10pm

## 29th SEPTEMBER

Ballinasloe	October Horse Fair and Festival	
Show Society	Agricultural Show in Showgrounds	All day
Dunlo Tavern	Kiwi Paddy	10pm
Blakes Bar	See Saw Swing Live in Blakes Bar	10pm
East Nightclub	DJ John McHugh	11:30pm
Downey's Bar	All the Latest Sounds with DJ	10pm
Hayden's Hotel	Live Music in the Bar	10pm
Carlton Shearwater	Liam Doyle	10pm
Pillar House	Slider	10pm

## 30th SEPTEMBER

Ballinasloe	October Horse Fair and Festival	1pm
Planet Night Club	Barry Power	10pm
Downey's Bar	Frankie McDonald Followed by DJ	8.30pm
Pillar House	Live Music	10pm
Planet Night Club	DJ till Late	10pm
Dunlo Tavern	Live Music for Start of the Oct Fair!	10pm
East Nightclub	Ray Montanna and DJ	11.30pm

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## Hector Broadcasts Live From Shearwater

Hector Ó hEochagáin broadcasted Live from The Carlton Shearwater Hotel to kick off the summer holidays and launch the brand new Carlton Mini Explorers Club. The Hotel was a hub of activity with Live Music from Key West, a gathering of local groups and of course “The Mini Explorers Club” was in full swing. Navan Gaelgeoir Hector was a boyhood friend of Tommy Tiernan and spent most of his youthful summers as a student of Coláiste na bhFiann in Garbally, mastering his Irish. Launching *Mini Explorer Club*, based around healthy eating and fun outdoor activities. The club opens daily to children aged 4-12 years. Ellis Ryan Camp Co-ordinator said “The Children enjoyed activities like Laughter Yoga, Mini Olympics and Duck Duck Goose. The Mini Explorers made their very own eye patches and bandanas on the day and mimicked being mini explorers for a treasure hunt.”



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# Out and About in Ballinasloe

*The organising Committee of the Connacht Fleadh Cheoil*



*Students and Teachers from Colegio Mater Salvatoris, Madrid attending Midland Language School in Scoil an Chroí, Ballinasloe for the month of July.*



*(L-R): Paddy Kelly, Elaine Standard, Kathleen Treacy, Bridie McClearn and Christine McWalter bid farewell to Dympna Hardiman (seated) who recently retired after over 12 years with Cahalan Jewellers.*



*Laura Eakins, Alanagh Ruane, Peter Timlin and Caoimhe Ruane from Ballina who took part in the Fleadh Ceoil Group U12 Competition.*



*Dean Lomas receives his Award for 1st Place in the Foroige Xhale Art competition from Fr. Molloy, Moore Parish Priest and Eimear Cotter of the Irish Cancer Society*



*PJ Coyne (Kilmartins) presents the keys to Peg Clogher Ballinasloe Credit Union (Members Car Draw Winner) and Shane McNeill*



*Ballinasloe Train Station won the Best Overall Station in Connacht, improving on their joint 2nd position in 2011. Pictured (L-R) are Tom Earls (Staff Member), Fintan Gately (Staff Member), Mayor Michael Kelly, Pdraig O'Ceithearnaigh, Kerrill Burke (Staff Member).*



# The Grand Canal 133 Years at the Western Terminus

Writes Barra Ó Crofaigh

**The Canal Basin, once a hive of activity in the town, a transport link just as important as the train and railway service or as the new M6 motorway today, saw its last canal chug through in July 1959. Its arrival marked the end of 133 years of the Canal Basin being the centre piece of commercial goods activity in Ballinasloe.**

The Barge No. 48m was skippered by John Dunne and the Canal Agent Mr. Gerry Flynn (Father of Maureen O'Donoghue and the late Kay Purcell) was on hand with the Store Manager for some scenes of celebration when the cargo was safely loaded.

The Old Guinness Store House now houses apartments and the basin was utilised under an urban renewal scheme in the late 90s for apartments. One can still see the Barge Rings on some of the Masonry elements. The huge cut stone three floor warehouse, which was once Declan Bannerton's Mitsubishi Garage, were stores and part of a Goods Depot. The Grand Canal is the southernmost of a pair of canals that connected to Dublin, in the East of Ireland, with the River Shannon. Its sister canal on the Northside of Dublin is the Royal Canal,

Ballinasloe was the furthestmost western point of the canal and the terminus for Connacht.

It's difficult to envisage in the age of kango hammers and JCBs the complexities and difficulties caused by the terrain from Shannon Harbour, where the cut to Ballinasloe starts and the basin. A report from the Western Argus, from June 1828, gives ample evidence of the scale and impact of the project.

"About 15 English miles in length, there were nearly 13 miles cut through bog, principally red shaking bog of the softest and most unimaginable description over which it was scarcely possible to walk, yet the bottom of the canal was to be sought in many places at a depth of from 24 to 25 feet below the surface of this floating mass, shaking for miles around; this could evidently be only attained by time and constant persevering attention at all seasons directed by the greatest skill and experience bringing down to some degree of solid consistency the whole district or line of country through which it passes, by innumerable drains to the extent we calculate of above 200 miles in length."

Excavation on the Grand Canal commenced in 1756, opening to Shannon Harbour in 1804 and to Ballinasloe some twenty three years later in 1827. Ownership passed from Canal Company

to Rail Company in 1950 and from CIE to the office of Public Works in 1986 and finally under the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 to Waterways Ireland.

The area which gave its name to Harbour Road fell derelict and from the mid sixties onwards the authorities used its depth for landfill. With the development of Sli na hAbhainn in the early 80s, intersecting the basin from the channel, which runs along in front of the new Carlton Hotel. Its chances of ever being a pleasure craft facility were nil. The remains of the earliest nationwide piece of transport infrastructure dot the inner town landscape, with the Harbour Master's House now derelict beside the old Gas works across from the Carlton Hotel, one can still get a sense of the scale of the terminus.

Canalach, the new housing scheme accessible by foot along the cut or channel of the old canal, sports one of the finest of 64 stone hump arched bridges, easily accessible by foot along the back of the old Square D building.

The M6 works completely intersected the channel again but the Poolboy bridge still remains in place and you drive through it enroute to the new navigable water system, connecting the Suck and town to Shannon Erne waterway, up at the Poolboy lock. All sections of the bed from Poolboy down

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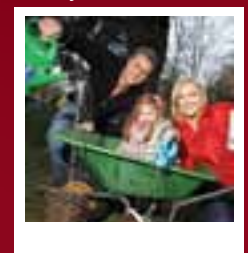
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to the Shannon are overgrown and not really fully passable and the section that runs through the bog is now used by Bord na Mona for a light railway bed, transporting hoppers of peat.

Canal House which now houses the Dept. of Justice "Ballinasloe Training and Education Centre" was the residence of the Guinness Area Manager/Canal Agent and he was from the 1860 onwards, the principal Manager of the zone. Guinness contracted with the Grand Canal Company at its inception, parts of James' Gate connect to the Dublin Basin and became synonymous with the barge transportation of its wooden casked porter or firkins as they were called at the time.

For most of the early part of 19th century all the porter for Connacht was despatched from the Canal Basin depot by horse and dray. The Railway over the coming decades overtook the barge and eventually the road lorry has now superseded the trains. Guinness as a depot/store employed many locals, including the towns most well known and respected resident Mattie Ganly.

Mattie recalls starting working for Guinness stores in the 1940s, a young strapping man he was ready for the hard labour that was to be done lifting the barrels of stout and storing them, "I started work in the summer of 1942, the boss John McGuinness told me I'd be earning £4 a week. He asked me on the first day, had I notions of going off to be a teacher? I was still only training and damn glad of the money, so I said yes. He told me that I would never go any higher than a labourer at this job




Unloading Firkins of Porter in the 1940s.

no matter what. Subsequently when I qualified to be a teacher I only earned £3.10 a week. I should have stayed at the Store House!"

Mattie speaks highly of all the great characters there and how times have changed since then. He describes McGuinness the boss "A native of Sligo, he was a hard man to work for but fair, he was the first Roman Catholic to ever hold the managerial position at a store house but he got the post as he was high up in the British Army, only Protestants held the role before that."

Mattie described the loss of the basin as "a tragedy", he recalls his late wife and former Town Councillor Sile as "fighting tirelessly" to save the basin as a heritage feature of the town. For many of a generation the Canal was also the place where in the 1950s the first Kings of the Fairs arrived on their Ceremonial Barge into the Basin - where

huge cheering crowds would be on hand to see the King and entourage transported onto Carriage or Lorry for crowning in the Square. Up to the arrival of the Steam Train in 1851, for most of the great trek from Connacht during the economic collapse post the Napoleonic Wars and indeed during the Famine times, the Canal Basin was the first port of disembarkation for thousands of emigrants, heading to the cities of the UK or the new world for work and a better way of life. In 1845 steamboats were used on the canal for the first time. The crew consisted of a master, a steersman, one man and one boy, together with the master's wife superintending refreshments assisted by a barmaid. The uniforms consisted of leather breeches and gold banded hats.

Why not walk the old canal way from the Basin the whole way to the motorway and see for yourself the canal in its current state. 



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# Ballinasloe Removed From The Galway East Constituency

Writes Barra Ó Crofaigh

**National politicians have always viewed the East Galway Capital and largest Urban centre as an area of political importance and meticulously canvass the area in the run up to an election, but the town will see new political faces on the streets in the next General Election campaign. The likes of Luke “Ming” Flanagan, Denis Naughton and Frank Feighan to name but a few.**

The local political landscape is set to undergo some radical changes at the next General Election, after the Constituency Commission last week recommended an overhaul of Galway East which includes Ballinasloe Urban and Rural voters being transferred to the new Constituency.

The commission’s report, which is based on Census findings, has recommended that the four-seat Galway East constituency become a three-seat constituency and that 22 electoral divisions of existing Galway East constituency be combined with Roscommon to form a three-seat constituency called Roscommon-Galway.

The change has effectively robbed Fine Gael TD Paul Connaughton jnr. of around 2,400 first preferences of the 7,255 he received in the general election last year while Deputy Micheal Kitt of Fianna Fail is down around 2,200 from the 6,585 he secured in 2011. Kitt’s Castleblakeney home is now in Galway-Roscommon as the same is true of Connaughton’s home place in Ballinlass, Mountbellew.

Deputy Connaughton said “I am currently coming to terms with the move and that I will not make any decisions on which constituency to run in for a couple of years. As far as I’m concerned, I have an office in Ballinasloe and an office in Tuam; they will remain open, the hours, clinics will stay the same and it’s only closer to the time of the next election will I make a decision as to where I am running,”

Deputy Kitt commented “It has to be said I am disappointed in the revision of the constituencies. County boundaries are now being breached. Half my vote will now be in one or the other new constituencies, but Fianna Fail will concentrate on local elections in 2014 to get candidates and policy ready for the

next general election. I will continue to work hard for the people of Ballinasloe no matter what constituency it lies in.”

Deputy Colm Keaveney commented that he will be standing in Galway East but that “I have been working over the last few weeks with my colleague Senator John Kelly to give him an understanding of the issues and concerns of the people of Ballinasloe and we will be working together in the Oireachtas and with Government to ensure that services in Ballinasloe are protected.

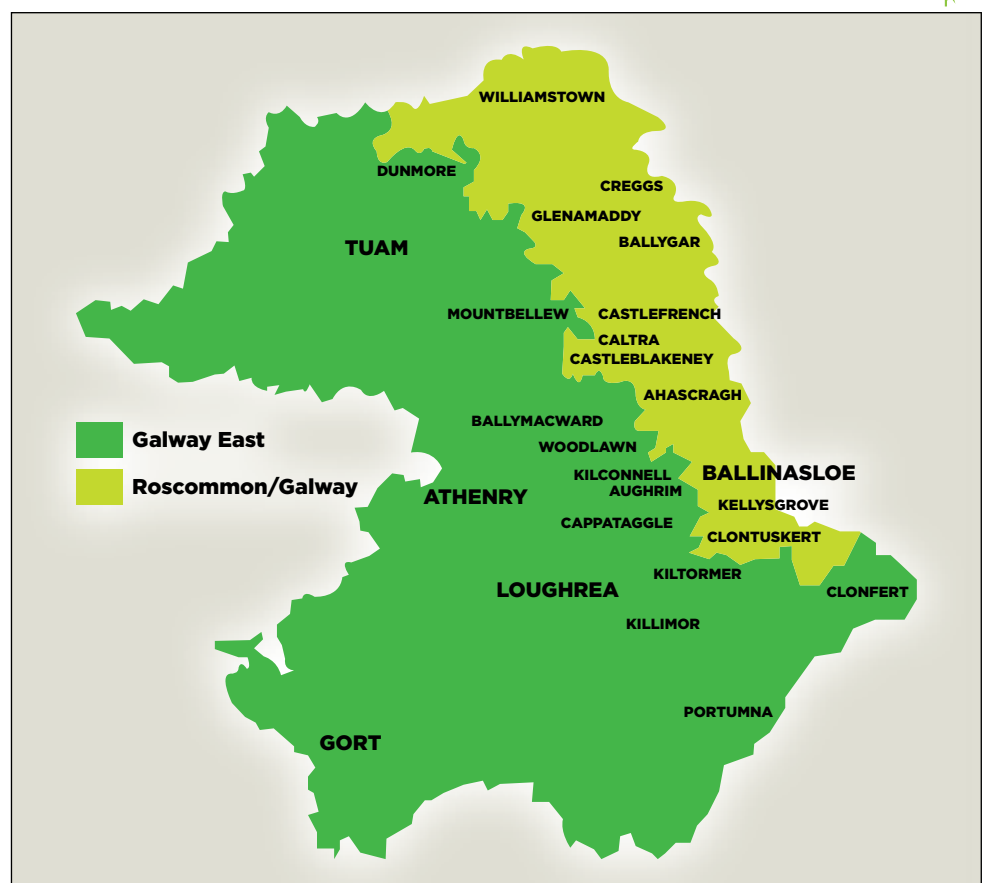
Senator Kelly is an excellent public representative who has previously served as a County Councillor in Roscommon and has a particular focus on health issues and on protecting rural areas. He has worked for over 24 years in the Public Service as a Community Welfare Officer and this has given him a deep insight into the needs and problems of ordinary people, and more importantly, an analysis of what the solutions are to those issues.

Trevor Ó Clochartaigh Galway West Senator stated “We feel every effort, where possible, should be made to ensure that county boundaries are not breached. Putting Galway East and Roscommon together is not ideal in many respects. There are two separate

councils and it dilutes county identities. We favour larger constituencies of 5-7 seats, which would better be able to accommodate whole counties instead of breaking them up. We would have concerns as to the effect these changes would have on representation in East Galway and of Roscommon and its ability to have its voice heard at a national level.”

Galway East will now become a three-seat constituency, with 33 electoral divisions adjacent to County Roscommon transferring from the Galway East constituency to the county of Roscommon in order to form a new three-seat constituency called Roscommon-Galway.

Areas affected by this recommendation include Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Clontuskert, Kellysgrove, Killure, Kylemore, Ballinastack, Ballymoe, Boyounagh, Creggs, Curraghmore, Glenamaddy, Island, Lismany, Kilcroan, Kiltullagh, Raheen, Shankill, Templetogether, Toberroe, Ballynakill, Caltra, Castleblakeney, Castlefrench, Clonbrock, Cloonkeen, Killeroran, Killian, Taghboy, Dunmore North and Toberadosh. It is still not clear at this point what, if any, these changes will make to the running of the County Council Local Authority Elections.



# Teams Called To Rally For Relay

**Writes Declan Finn**

Relay For Life is a community based initiative in support of the Irish Cancer Society and their work in patient support and research. We are calling on all groups, societies and individuals to gather a team together and join in the fight against cancer. Relay for Life, a 24-hour marathon project will take place in the old Tesco building on Saturday and Sunday 11 and 12 August, 2012 to highlight cancer awareness.

In the mid-1980s, Dr. Gordy Klatt, a colorectal surgeon from Florida, wanted to enhance the income of his local American Cancer Society office. He decided to personally raise money for the fight by doing something he enjoyed running marathons.

In May 1985, Dr. Klatt spent a gruelling 24 hours circling the track at the University of Puget Sound in Florida for more than 83 miles. Throughout the night, friends paid \$25 to run or walk 30 minutes with him. He raised \$27,000 to fight cancer. That first year, nearly 300 of Dr. Klatt's friends, family, and patients watched as he ran and walked the course. This was the beginning of Relay for Life as we know it today.

Teams are the backbone of Relay for Life. They provide the moral support, act as leaders during the event and raise much needed funds for the Irish Cancer Society. Once a team is registered, they will receive all the information required



including ideas on how to raise money and what the team are required to do during the event itself.

The project is based on the premise that every team registered can hold their own individual fundraising events over the Relay for Life weekend. The teams will also set up a stall in the old Tesco building for the 24-hour period where they can continue to raise awareness for their chosen cancer. Fun is the byword for teams entering into the spirit of Relay for Life. One member of each team must walk or run on the track for the entire 24-hour period. It is recommended that a team should consist of between 10 and 15 members, but of course where teamwork is involved, the more members

you have, the more fun it is and the less walking you'll have to do yourself!

It's time to reactivate your Twitter account, update your Facebook profile, take your runners out of the attic and get involved in the race against this killer disease. Call all your friends, chat your neighbours and see what you can do to raise money for those who need it most. Contact Nuala Mitchell on 086 0508414 or [mitchnu78@hotmail.com](mailto:mitchnu78@hotmail.com)

*If you would like to participate or get involved you can contact Relay for Life by Email: [relayforlifeballinasloe@gmail.com](mailto:relayforlifeballinasloe@gmail.com) or on our website at [www.relayforlifeballinasloe.ie](http://www.relayforlifeballinasloe.ie) Anyone who is worried about cancer in any way should contact their local G.P. but information and guidance can also be found on the Irish Cancer Society website: [www.cancer.ie](http://www.cancer.ie).*

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# Creagh Church Gets A Facelift

Writes Fr. John Garvey

Our Lady of Lourdes Church Creagh is undergoing an extensive renovation programme at present. The former Athlone Military Garrison Church was originally built in the 1880s and in the early 1930s was dismantled and transported block by block (horse drawn dray), reconstructed on its present site (that of an old Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks) and consecrated in 1933.

Some minor modifications were made in the early 1970s to incorporate the changes which emerged from Vatican Council Two. A wooden Altar, ambo and platform were added but it was always envisaged that there should be constructed in marble in keeping with the general character of the sanctuary area. The Church restoration fund committee which was set up in the wake of the fire in St. Michael's promised that refurbishment work to the Creagh Church would also be undertaken.

"We retained Mullarkey Pedersen Architects as the Design team and engaged with PD Contractors, Kiltormer following a tendering process" said Michael Walsh Chairperson of the Restoration Committee. The scope of works involves a reordering of the sanctuary area to include a new altar, ambo, chair and baptismal font to be made from the existing marble. The building will be rewired and new lighting system will be installed. The heating



system is being upgraded and all interior surfaces will be cleaned, painted and varnished as needed. The Stations of the Cross will be cleaned, the wooden floor will be sanded and a finish applied as will a new sound, fire and burglar alarm system all be added.

Externally a new toilet block with disabled access will be fitted in the school shed. A new stone wall will surround the site and landscaping to enhance the building will give definition to the parking area.

The cost of the works is in the region of €700,000 and the second collection at

weekend Masses over the last number of years has been building up the funds. Thanks to all the contributors. The work will take approx six months to complete.

The Chapel in St. Brigid's Hospital is being used for weekend masses Saturday at 6.30pm, Sunday at 10.30am and for the weekday masses at 10am.

Through the decades many people have worshipped and given glory to God in Our Lady of Lourdes Church. When the present work is completed it is hoped that this place of prayer will continue to help many more to develop the spiritual aspect of their lives. ?



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# The Old Convent Buildings To House New €3 million Library



**Writes Barra Ó Crofaigh**

**The old Convent buildings on Society Street will be turned into a new Ballinasloe town library worth €3 million**

The unused buildings on Society Street, which were bought by the Town Council in 2003, will be transformed into a new library and ancillary facilities within the ground floor of the terrace building and old chapel structure.

This will place the town on par with other Town Libraries within the Galway County Council Library service which are housed in old religious buildings such as Gort, Tuam and Clifden.

The Sisters of Mercy established their foundation in the parish in 1854 on that site to be close to the workhouse patients (located where Barretts - Heiton Buckley is today). The Convent Church proper was built in the 1860s and in 1918 the secondary school was opened. The Congregation moved the renowned all girls secondary school to the grounds of Garbally College in 2003 to a new state of the Art secondary school for over 400 girls. A new extension to the rear of the building will be built. The chapel space

on the first floor will be used as a public gallery and function area and will be connected to the terrace building via a new purpose-built linking structure and the upper floors of the terrace buildings will be developed for office and other activities uses. The plans include a small urban garden between the chapel and the retained terrace as well as the development of a landscaped courtyard to the rear.

According to the Town's recently elected Mayor Carmel Greally, this whole redevelopment of the site is part of the ongoing Town's Council's strategy to open up the back of Main St. and re-orientate development to the River Suck that flows to the rear of the town. "This is a critical development for our town as it fixes a library location, addresses the use of signature buildings on Society St. and provides a pivotal piece of engineering to allow access to connect along the river to the bottom of Gullane's carpark."

The beautiful gothic style chapel and new connecting sky bridge will hopefully return the building as a focal point of the community and will rejuvenate to its architectural strengths. The limestone building was designed by JK Kempster in 1864 and has some beautiful stained

glass windows as well as a tower and a spire. At the moment the buildings adjacent to the chapel are looking drab and unused it is hoped that the restoration of these buildings will bring a new sense of life to this part of the street. The plan is to replace the existing windows with new painted timber windows in the traditional style, restoring it sympathetically.

The proposed new library will replace the existing facility in the fairgreen car park for which there are no concrete plans and will provide a library service for approximately 15,000 locals with the expanded service anticipated to attract greater usage and an estimated 60,000 book issues in its first full year of operation.

The project is to be financed with Galway County Council, Department of Environment and local Town Council co-funding. It is not anticipated that any EU structural funds can be drawn down to support the largest building project that town will see in 2013, when building work is hoped to commence. The proposed new development can be viewed at the civic offices and indeed online on the Town Council Official Website [www.ballinasloe.ie](http://www.ballinasloe.ie)

# Europe's Oldest Horse Fair September 29th – October 7th



Maresa Murray, Stanley Clarke, Kathleen Croffy, Martin Daly (General Manager Carlton), Queen of the Fair Catriona Farrell, John Flynn, Mary Phelan and Timmy Broderick (Fair & Festival Chairman).

## Writes Niall Clarke

With just over 8 few weeks remaining to the start of Fair week, the volunteers of the Fair and Festival Committee are busy finalising the schedule of events.

The Fair is once again expected to attract upwards on 85,000 visitors to town over the nine-day event. The programme of events organised by the Fair and Festival committee all of whom give of their time in a voluntary capacity costs an estimated €160,000 to stage annually and is worth in the region of €8 million to the local economy.

The Carlton Shearwater Hotel will once again be the main sponsor for 2012. Associate sponsors include Ballinasloe Credit Union, Gullane's Hotel, Supermacs, Domac Plant and Tool Hire and Premier Proteins

On the equestrian side of events, Horse, Foal and Pony sales will take place on the Fair Green over three days, Sunday the 29th of September, Monday, 1st October and Saturday the

6th of October. The Horse of the Fair, Pony of the Fair, Cob of the Fair and Foal competitions will all take place during the 3 days of sales on the green.

Popular events organised by the Fair and festival committee during the nine-day festival will include busking competition and free street entertainment. The All Ireland Tarmac Tug-of-War Competition which will take place nightly from Tuesday 2nd to Friday 5th October. The Singing Pub competitions will also take place midweek. A Monster Fireworks display at the Marina on the 2nd weekend will light up the night sky. Bakery Competitions, Art Competitions, Dog Show, street entertainment and the International Craft and food market in St Michael's square will conclude the programme of events on the weekend of Friday 5th to Sunday 7th of October.

Two new events are being added to the programme of events for 2012. On Wednesday the 3rd a Heritage day will take place in the town and on Wednesday and Thursday night a Country Music festival will also happen.

In keeping with tradition the annual event to select the Fair's Queen will be held prior to the Fair and marks the countdown to the age old Festival. Entry forms are available from the secretary at 087 2071869

As preparations continue for the Festival the committee are calling on local citizens to assist in the running of the nine-day event. If you have an hour or two to spare during the week perhaps you would consider helping out, a helping hand is always needed. Call to the festival office, which will be opened in September if you like to get involved.

If you are interested in providing B&B accommodation and would like to be included on the official accommodation listings please contact the Festival Secretary Mary Phelan on 087 2071869. For more details on the Programme of Events log on to [www.ballinasloeoctoberfair.com](http://www.ballinasloeoctoberfair.com)

## Garbally View Nursing Home

**Garbally View Nursing Home is a family run business providing convalescent, respite and long term care for the past 19 years in Ballinasloe. The Nursing home is registered with HIQA and provides a variety of services for its Residents.**



*If you require any further information please contact the Nurse in Charge on **Phone: 090 9642622 Fax: 090 9644278** or **Email: [garballyview@gmail.com](mailto:garballyview@gmail.com)***

# Ballinasloe Turned into Film Set for A TV Documentary

Writes Barra Ó Crofaigh

**The town of Ballinasloe has been turned into Hollywood somewhat, with Abu Production taking over parts of the streetscapes and buildings for filming of the second series of 1916 *Seachta na Casca*.**

The series is a historic style documentary; in seven hourly programmes. The first series was on the signatories of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic, with each episode telling the story of one of the them, their early life, their political motivations, their involvement in the IRB and/or the republican movement and their actions on Easter week, 1916. The first series on TG4 in order of airing featured Thomas Clarke, James Connolly, Joseph Plunkett, Thomas MacDonagh, Sean MacDiarmada, Eamonn Ceannt and Padraig Pearse.

Indoor and outdoor scenes are being shot around the town during the summer featuring the second part of the series where it will follow the other patriots who were executed alongside the seven who signed the proclamation, namely - Edward Daly, Michael O'Hanrahan, Willie Pearse, John McBride, Michael Mallin, Seán Heuston, Con Colbert, Thomas Kent and Sir Roger Casement. The bulk of the filming for the second series has been shot here in the locality, mainly because St. Bridgid's Hospital was used in the first

series. James Ryan Locations Manger for Abu Entertainment commented "This town is perfect for what we do, it has all the right characteristics, period buildings, some unused which is like taking a step back in time, St. Brigid's Hospital is a major factor, we can do a lot of shooting out there as its unused, the hospital has been transformed into the Jacobs Factory in Dublin and The Royal College of Surgeons, while Creagh Cemetery has doubled as Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin. The people of Ballinasloe have been so welcoming and hospitable. There has been little red tape when acquiring locations which is always a plus and shows how amenable the people here are."

The period buildings throughout the town are perfect for early 20th century Ireland but James admits modernisation can be a problem with some buildings.

A lot of filming was carried out in other locations: Harneys Archway on Society Street; Lancaster House and the Town Hall Theatre as it doubled as the Abbey theatre; the fireplaces upstairs in the town hall were found by chance and proved perfect as inner Dublin city apartments for the series.

Over 150 local extras and actors were used in the shooting of the film with a small fee been paid for the days work, Charlie O'Donnell said "It was a most enjoyable experience, it gave a real insight into how TV and media work,

all the crew were so courteous and a real pleasure to work with."

All the various property owners received location fees for the use of their premises and many members of the Relays, Musical Society and other acting and drama groups were used as extras.

The town of Ballinasloe was shortlisted alongside other similar sized towns for the shooting of this series and had tough competition from Birr, Tuam and Castlerea. The film crew were supposed to travel to Tuam for some of the final shots of the film but decided to hang on in Ballinasloe as things worked out so well here. Over 30+ crew stayed locally in the town over the course of the filming of the series, with the Moycarn Lodge and Marina becoming the centre of operations for the four week location shoot.

The series, funded by BAI, is split between re-enactments of the events in question and the opinions of numerous experts, including footage of interviews with survivors. Skilfully narrated, as Gaelige by Brendan Gleeson, the series brings the figures of the period and the events that they were involved in, to life in a way that is at once deeply fascinating to the scholar and easily accessible for the outsider who knows nothing about Irish Republican history. The series will be aired in early 2013. For further information about the filming see [www.abumedia.com](http://www.abumedia.com)



*Filming of the Gun Running scene in Harney's Lane on Society Street (L-R): Henry O'Hanrahan played by Aonghus Weber and Michael O'Hanrahan played by Aonghus O' McNally from Galway. Courtesy of Scannain Nua Teo*



# The Ballinasloe Show - 29 Sept



2011 Agricultural Show Directors and Committee.

## Writes John Harney

The agricultural show takes place this year on the 29th September with Three All-Ireland Foal Finals taking place on the day. First the All-Ireland Irish Draught Filly Foal Final which is sponsored by Parkmore Staples, Creagh, Ballinasloe and the Irish Horse Board €2,000. Also the All-Ireland Irish Draught Colt Foal Final, sponsored by Garbally Oil, Ballinasloe €1,000. The Gain Feed All-Ireland Colt Foal Final which is sponsored by Gain Feeds €2,500. There are also classes for Horses, Ponies, Cattle, Sheep, Poultry and Pet Class for juniors at the show. There are 30 classes for Horses, 38 classes for Ponies; Cattle 23 classes Sheep 15 classes also 5 classes for Pets. Also the Saler All-Ireland Calf Final, both Male and Female will take place and the AIB Champion Beast of the Show Over all winner competition. On Sunday and Monday of the Fair, parking will be available in the Showground's for Lorries, Car and Jeeps and Horse Boxes. On Saturday 6th of

October there will be 2 All-Ireland Connemara Pony Finals. The Connemara Two and Three year old Filly and Mare of the Future All-Ireland Final Sponsored by Ballinasloe Registered Connemara Pony Owners Syndicate €1,000. The Connemara Pony Gelding All-Ireland Championship (To be shown under Saddle) Sponsored by An Garran Syndicate and Fr. Christy McCormack €1,000.

The All-Ireland Donkey Mare and Foal Final Sponsored by Gerry Stronge and John Harney €600. There will also be a Food Hall on Saturday with competitions for Baking and Vegetables, a Pets Corner, Children's Art Competitions and a country village. There will be also show jumping in October with horse competitions taking place on Saturday and Sunday, with the Final of the Connaught Grand Prix taking place on Sunday at approx 2pm. Closing dates for entries for the show is the 21st of September and all entries and further enquiries should be directed to the Secretary at 090 9645040. ↗

## Ballinasloe Town Council

Comhairle Baile Bhéal Átha na Sluaighe



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# Conor Finn Stars at World Cup



Conor in action against England

Writes Barra O Crofaiigh

## The hotly tipped Conor Finn showed his ability at the IRB U20s World Cup in South Africa.

The Aughrim native, was called up alongside Buccaneers team mate and fellow Connacht academy man Jack Carty from Barrymore in Athlone. Both have been in outstanding form for Buccaneers and Connacht and made their names available for selection with solid performances all year.

The IRB Junior World Championship is an international rugby union competition organised by the sport's governing body, the International Rugby Board (IRB), and is contested by 12 men's junior national teams with an Under 20 age requirement.

Ireland players and fans celebrated some emphatic wins in the competition held in June. After causing a massive upset by beating hosts South Africa 23-19 to silence the home crowd in Stellenbosch in the first group game. Few would have given Ireland a chance of upsetting a Junior Boks side packed with Super Rugby and Sevens experience in their own backyard, but the Irish lads did just that and started the campaign with high hopes.

Next was a battle with our neighbours and oldest rivals, the English. The Irish lads dominated for the majority of this game and looked like winning it for the best part of it, but England didn't give up and kept the pressure on running out eventual winners 20-15. Ireland then faced Italy in the final group game, a must win for the Irish boys and they delivered with a superb performance from Conor Finn on the wing, he showed pace, skill and a determined grit as he made some big hits in this encounter with Ireland destroying the Italians and

securing a bonus point with a 41-12 victory. Unfortunately progression to the semi finals wasn't to be, as other results didn't go the way of Finn and his Irish team mates but a showdown with England to decide who would contend the fifth-place play off kept the Ireland team in Cape Town. The former Roscrea boarder came on after 44 minutes to make sure and secure an emphatic win over favourites England as they ran out 27-12 winners. Mike Ruddock's side had

lost to England on the previous two meetings but were third time lucky at the University of Western Cape Stadium.

It was then on to play 6 nations high flyers France in the fifth place show down. The Ireland Under 20s led from start to finish as they overcame the French to earn a fifth place finish and the highest ranking an Irish team has ever reached in this tournament. Ireland won the game 18-7 with Conor Finn making an appearance in the final game. South Africa went on to win the tournament beating New Zealand 22-16 in the final.

Speaking about the Ireland Under 20's fifth place finish at the IRB Junior World Championship, Finn said: "I'm really proud of the lads for the effort they've put in and the attitude they've shown, not only against France but the whole tournament. It's been a fantastic experience; I think we got what we deserved out there today. It was a great honour to play alongside some great players, I've really enjoyed my time in South Africa and with the Under 20 set up. I would also like to thank everyone back at home for all the good luck messages and tweets. It made a big difference to know everyone was cheering us on." 



Conor and fellow Connacht Academy player Jack Carty, on a visit to a school in South Africa.



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## Beechlawn Lad Signed Up By Dublin Club

Ballinasloe lad Ian Fletcher, an extremely talented, up and coming Soccer player has joined Dublin's Home Farm F.C. The Garbally student already has a jam packed soccer CV, at just 15 and it looks like it is just going to continue to grow. Home Farm have produced Irish soccer greats like Ronnie Whelan, Richard Dunne and Kenny Cunningham. The left back signed from Crumlin United (Robbie Keane's boyhood club) where he picked up the Players Player Award for 2012 (left). Ian is son of Society Street Businessman Sean and Teacher Teresa. He has just completed his Junior Certificate and is also a very talented Gaelic Footballer playing for Ballinasloe GAA.

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# Ballinasloe AFC Summer Camp


**Writes Barra O’Crofaigh**

The Curragh Grounds was alive and well during the soccer clubs off season as boys and girls from the locality attended the annual summer soccer camps. Open to boys and girls aged 6 to 14 years of age the kids were coached the game of soccer by some top class coaches and senior players from the club. This year’s summer camp seen over 83 kids attend for an action packed 5 day camp. Head Coach Barry O’Connor aided by senior players Gary Egan, Liam Lynch, Gary Fury, Ciaran Keighery and youth coach Sean Dean shared their knowledge of the game and kept a watchful eye on the camp participants as they improved their ability in the game.

Head coach Barry O’Connor commented “Ballinasloe Town AFC wanted to give back to the community as best we could, the people in the town have been so good to the club over the last few years and with the recession we listened to the people and halved our price for the summer camp to just E45 per child and €25 for the second child in the family, we were very lucky with the weather this year, it was great to see the kids out and keeping them active over the summer months. Hopefully this is a stepping stone for a lot of kids and now that they have a taste for the game they will continue on with soccer and the club but the most important thing they keep fit.” The camp focused on team building and interaction type games where the children would get to know each other better and make friends through soccer. Barry added “It was clear the kids really enjoyed themselves and they keep coming back the camp has grown with each year we hold it, the first



year we had 36 kids, second year there was 51 and this year it exploded to 83, so lets hope next year is bigger and better.”

All the attendees of the camp were provided with gear, they received a football, crested t-shirt, a beanie hat and a certificate. The certificate was presented by Mayor Carmel Greally. To learn more about Ballinasloe Town AFC or to book a place for next year’s summer camp contact Barry O’Connor on 086 8427576 or visit their Facebook page. 

# GAA Monster Fundraising Draw

**Writes Barra O’Crofaigh**


Ballinasloe GAA Club are running a fundraising draw, to help pay for the recently installed floodlight system at the grounds in Brackernagh. There is a substantial prize list, including the following: 2 x Dream Tickets to each of the following sporting events + €10,000 or Cash Alternative or Renault Sports Car Rugby Soccer GAA Football; Six Nations home matches; Ireland Autumn Internationals (Home); Heineken Cup/Amlin Challenge Cup Home matches for Irish province of choice; Heineken Cup Final 2013; Rabo Direct Pro 12 League (Province of choice); FAI Season ticket (Club of choice); FAI Cup Final; Ireland Senior Home Internationals; Selected Premier League match; UEFA Champions League game; All-Ireland Football Final; All-Ireland Football Semi Finals; Provincial Football Final of choice; County Season ticket of choice; Ladies Football All-Ireland Final; International Rules Series; Punchestown Membership All listed meetings; Curragh Membership, All listed meetings; Cheltenham Festival One week pass; Dublin Horse Show Season ticket.

As well as the main prizes, there will also be 2 local draws. With some of the following prizes: a €1000 Voucher Campotel Holiday from Keller Travel, Leisure Centre Membership for the Shearwater Hotel, a Laptop from Hubert Dolan, 2 All-Ireland Hurling Tickets and 2 All-Ireland Football Tickets from Galway County Board, His & Her Bikes from Barry Cycles along with many more great prizes from local businesses in the town. Tickets are priced at €30, contact Seamus Duffy on 087 2506431 or Stephen Ruane 086 8506795, John Shaughnessy 087 2389938 or any committee member. The first of the draws will take place on August 31st.



*Ballinasloe’s Eoin McCormack, who starred for Galway in the recent Connacht Minor Football Final.*

Ballinasloe Junior A football are through to the semi finals of the North Board Championship after 3 wins, beating Milltown 3-13 to 0-9, Claregalway 0-12 to 0-9 and beating near neighbours and rivals St. Gabriel’s on a scoreline of 2-12 to 0-10. Minor star Eoin McCormack started on the Galway Minor football team at No. 13 against Roscommon in the Connacht Semi-Final, Eoin Scored 1-3, but Roscommon won after Extra-Time, the Ruane man promises to be one to watch for the future, with bags of talent.

In Hurling the Junior C Hurlers have played 2 championship games, defeating Athenry and Annaghdown next up is Tuam, while the Minors are through to the quarter finals after winning against Kiltormer, Annaghdown and Ballygar. 

# Local Golfer Plays Irish Open



Writes Barra Ó Crofaigh

**Mark Staunton (30) a promising professional golfer from Creagh competed in the Irish Open recently alongside Golfing giants Pdraig Harrington, Rory McIlroy, Graeme McDowell, Ross Fisher and Jeev Milkha Singh to name but a few.**

Staunton appeared to be a promising talent from a very young age. He was educated at Garbally College where he developed his passion for Golf during his school years. A member of Ballinasloe Golf Club, he spent countless summers evenings perfecting and being mentored by the watchful eye of Frank Kavanagh. After a successful amateur career Mark decided to join the Professional ranks. He joined the PGA and graduated from Birmingham University with a degree in Professional Golf.

In 2007 Mark was runner up in the Europro Tour Qualifier and now has Category 3 (2) status and is playing on this Tour. In 2007 he finished 6th in the Irish PGA championship won by Pdraig Harrington. He finished 1st in Irish Order of merit in 2007. More recently he finished 6th in the 2011 Irish Order of merit with 1 Tournament win and a number of high places.

A son of Joe and Anne Staunton, Creagh, his achievements list is growing. Some of his amateur achievements are on par with some of the household names we know in Golf. Mark's Amateur Achievements include an All-Ireland Schools Win in 2000, Youth Interprovincial 2001, 2002, 2003, Senior Interprovincial 2003, Ulster Youths Champion in 2003, Irish

Youths Open Championship runner up in 2003; Mark was also a member of the Irish International Youth team which won the Nations Cup in Belgium in 2003.

Staunton is a player growing in grandeur and confidence in the golf world and his professional achievements to date are testimonial to this. He is now a fully qualified PGA professional with Pro-Am wins in 2004 and 2005, Irish Assistant Champion in 2005 as well as Various Pro-Ams in 2006 and 2007. Mark was 12th in Irish Order of Merit 2006. One of his best wins was the being crowned the Ulster PGA Champion in 2007 and also coming 1st in the Irish Order of Merit in that year and won the Club Pro Tournament in 2009. With 12 top ten finishes in 2011 including 2nd In the PGA Southern Championship and 1st in the Connemara Pro-Am. Mark has shown a consistent run of form in the last few years. Currently 5th in the Ping order of merit with 6 Top ten finishes including 2nd in the Carne links Pro-Am where he shot the course record of 66, he also had a win at the PGA Irish Pro-Am at Dundalk Golf Club.

Unfortunately Staunton didn't get the rub of the green and luck wasn't on his side at the Irish Open this year as he shot a +7 overall at the Royal Portrush course while tournament winner Jamie Donaldson shot an impressive -18 to clinch victory and became the third Welshman to win the Irish open taking home €333,330 in prize money. Mark commented "I was disappointed not to have played better at the Irish Open, but happy to be competing alongside some world class golfers. That's the level you have to aspire to."



(L-R) Nigel Howley (Pro golfer and Mark's Caddy) Alan Maguire, Kevin Roche, Mark Connelly and Damien McGuire.

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# Underage All-Ireland Hurling Tournament - A Great Success

**Writes Ronan Lally**


As Underage hurling in Ballinasloe goes from strength to strength, numbers at the recent Mini All-Ireland Hurling games run by the club showed the amount of talent which the town will have in the future.

Over 80 children took part in the games which catered for Under 6, 8 and 10 teams. All teams represented four different Counties ie Kilkenny, Waterford, Tipperary and Cork where all players had there own team Tee Shirts which were kindly Sponsored by KPW Print and Cooper Helmets. The competition was during the month of June, with the weather treating the competition

kindly this year. On the Finals Day of the competition all Children received a medal for their efforts along with some refreshments after the games. For any parents who are interested in getting these children involved with under 6 or 8 Hurling, coaching takes place every Saturday and 10.30am in the local club GAA grounds which are situated behind SuperValu. The Hurling season is now in full swing and all of the town underage hurling teams are competing very well in there respective grades. The Under 10 Hurling Panel reached the Final of the East Galway Hurling League where they came up against an impressive Cappataggle team and came up just short on the day. The Under 12 and 13

teams are currently competing very well in their current ongoing competitions. This years Under 14 panel can count themselves very unlucky not to have reached the knockout stages of there grade. Under 16 and Minors are also having good fortunes in their grades and with a couple of more good performance they hope to reach the knockout stages.

The adult Junior team have started there campaign well with two good wins over Athenry and Annaghdown.

The Club are always looking for new faces to get involved. If any people would like to help the club on our of the field of play please contact Jim Lally on 086 846 2054 



*Left: The U10 Cork Mini All-Ireland team, with Brendan Kelly of KPW Print (Sponsors).  
Above (L-R): The U10 Kilkenny Mini All-Ireland team, with Brendan Kelly of KPW Print;  
The U8 Waterford Mini All-Ireland team, with Brendan Kelly of KPW Print.*

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# Tennis Club Set for New Season

Writes Claire Staunton

The original Tennis Club was located in Deerpark on grass courts but to facilitate the establishment of A.T. Cross factory, it was agreed with the council that they would forfeit the courts in exchange for two hard courts provided by the council in River Street.

Unfortunately this situation proved unsuitable as a clubhouse and third court could not be provided. Consequently with the Rugby Club providing the site, three courts and changing facilities were built in Moher on the grounds of the Rugby Club in the late 90s. With three courts and one floodlit there is great scope for a vibrant club. The Tennis Club are very appreciative of the past and ongoing support from the Rugby Club and their President Geraldine Kelly. After a few years of inactivity with the Club, a numbers of people are coming together



to rejuvenate the club membership for all levels and ages. Our AGM was recently held in Gullane's Hotel where this seasons committee was formed.

As a club we are now ready to accept memberships with full club activities including coaching, competitions and inter club events both at junior and senior levels. For the month of July a

junior summer camp has been run with coach Robert Johnson. This has proved very successful and demonstrated the talent in the area and a number of the juniors will compete in the Connaught Open Championships later this month. We encourage anyone of all levels with interest in the sport to get involved and join our club. For more info or to join the Tennis Club Call 087 9359627.

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# St. Gabriel's N.S. Kilconnell Opens New School Extension

Writes Barra Ó Crofaigh

**St. Gabriel's N.S., Kilconnell recently celebrated the official opening of its school extension, comprising of a mainstream classroom, 2 resource rooms and a staffroom. The extension was opened by Bishop of Clonfert John Kirby and Minister of State Ciaran Cannon T.D.**

St. Gabriel's N.S. is a co-educational primary school with an enrolment of 84 pupils. It currently has four mainstream teachers, three special education teachers and an SNA. The school is characterised by a very warm and caring atmosphere which promotes open communications amongst its staff and pupils. Commendable efforts are being made to implement early intervention programmes in literacy and numeracy to ensure all pupils reach their potential.

St. Gabriel's N.S. participates in the Green Schools Programme and has just been granted a fourth Green Flag. The theme for this Green Flag was 'Travel'. This was an enjoyable journey for all involved which included the launch of the Walk on Wednesdays 'WOW' days. Cycle training was provided by Galway County Council for parents and pupils from 4th to 6 classes.

The school also participates in the ACE Schools (Activity Confidence Eating) initiative run in collaboration with the HSE. This is a multi-stakeholder project that involves various HSE Departments such as community nutrition, dental service, the health promotion service and psychology service. Parents and children participated in cookery classes which gave us an opportunity to use our new kitchen facility. A dietician from ACE Schools visited to advise parents on nutrition for children. The pupils enjoyed setting up a school garden and growing a variety of vegetables, herbs and fruit. St. Gabriel's N.S. has just been awarded the ACE Schools 'Gold Award' and is the only school participating in the programme to receive its highest award.

St. Gabriel's N.S. has applied for the Active Flag and held its first Active School Week in March. This proved a huge success and children participated in many enjoyable activities including: workshops from Junior Golf Ireland, trips to the local park and playground, handball etc. The children raised over €900 for the Irish Heart Foundation



*Bishop Kirby with Principal Roisin Ryan at the Extension Blessing.*

when they held a skipathon in April. Local Garda Paul McManus delivered workshops on Road Safety during Active School Week.

The school has a wonderful choir which are always on hand to perform at Communion, Confirmations and any other school events. They also perform regularly at mass. The choir performed on the occasion of the opening of the extension which was enjoyed by all the guests.

Children in this school participate in a variety of sporting activities including: football, hurling, soccer, handball, swimming, camogie, tennis etc. The Boys 9-a-side football team won the the Cumann na mBunscol final this year making history. It was the first time to win the final having come close on many previous occasions. The girls reached

the final in the 7-a-side school football blitz. The school is fortunate to have so many coaches coming to the school as well as parents volunteering to train the school hurling and football teams.

The school participates in the Garda Quiz, Credit Union Quiz, Scor na bPáisti and many other initiatives. All pupils enjoyed birdwatching workshops as part of the Heritage in Schools initiative. Grandparents Day was celebrated with a prayer service followed by a cup of tea during Catholic Schools Week.

In May this year, the children enjoyed performing for the community in the local hall with acts like, *Ireland's Got Talent*, *Blunderland* and *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*.

*For further information on St. Gabriel's Contact: Principal, Roisin Ryan on 090 9686820.*



*Boys 9-a-side Football team, Cumann na mBunscol Winners*

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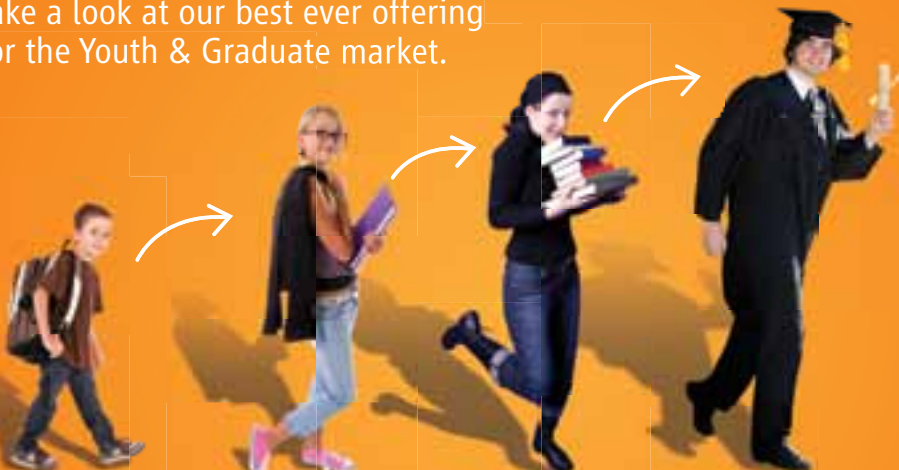
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- Corrib Oil/TOPAZ, Brackernagh

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# Connacht Fleadh 2012 Review



*Máirtín G. O Máicín, TD Paul Connaughton, Mike Brennan (Connacht Chairman), Mayor Carmel Greally, Peadar Brick, Ellen Connolly, Helen Duggan and Vera Barrett.*

## Writes Barra Ó Crofaigh

The Ballinasloe Comhaltas hosted a very successful Connacht Fleadh in July, giving a welcoming boost to the economy in the town. Over 9000 visitors from all over Connacht visited during the course of the Fleadh weekend.

Most hotels and B&Bs were busy catering for visitors to the Fleadh and most restaurants reported brisk trade. The Gardai reported they had no trouble at all for the weekend, a great credit to our visitors and locals. The "Craic" was had in good spirit for the weekend and people came together to enjoy the festivities.

The competition judges reported that the standard of competitors was so high, that in all competitions, All-Ireland honours will be no surprise. Several local competitors will carry the Ballinasloe flag to Cavan to compete in the All-Ireland Fleadh at the end of August.

A special word of thanks is due to some unsung helpers who worked away in the back ground, The Gardai who kept an eye on matters, and assisted us in every way with parking supervision, traffic control for our Marching Bands etc, a huge thanks to the guys in blue for assisting with the crowd control.

The organisers were very appreciative of the Chamber of Commerce for all the bunting the Comhaltas Welcome banners and for running the traditional windows display, won by J&S Photos, Downey's Bar and Broderick's Chemist were singled out for special mention by the judging panel in this competition also.

"The number of unpaid volunteers, young and not so young, that helped really is a credit to the people of town" reported Phil Whyte, the Fleadh Secretary.

"We raised in excess of €40,000 to cover the costs of the event. Comhaltas are very grateful for the contributions made by all. Ballinasloe business people have shown they are ready to roll in behind any venture that will attract visitors and we are very grateful to them" says Kevin Whyte, the Fleadh Treasurer.

Michael Cusack, the Fleadh Chairman, expressed his delight with the visit to the Fleadh of the new Uachtarán of Comhaltas, Uinsíonn MacSúirtáin who expressed his pleasure at the warm welcome he received from the organisers and he was very impressed by the friendliness and welcoming nature of the people in attendance.

"Who knows, there could well be an All-Ireland Fleadh in the future for Ballinasloe, with the successful campaign of the Connacht fleadh, only time will tell." Kevin concluded.



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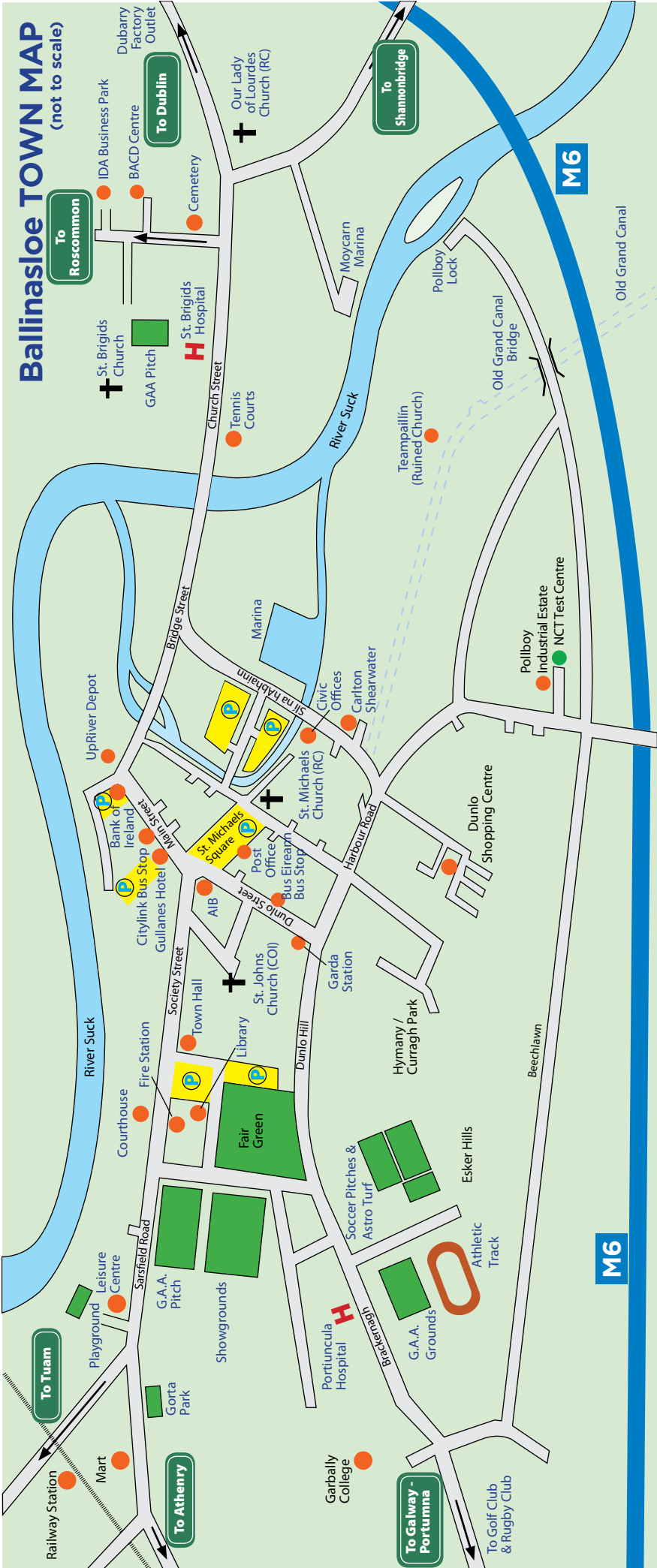
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# Ballinasloe TOWN MAP

(not to scale)



## Ballinasloe History Walk

- 1** – Start at the statue known as *The Man with the Horse*, where Main Street joins St. Michael's Square. From the crossing near the statue, continue by turning right onto Main Street. The prosperity of Ballinasloe in Georgian times can be seen in the scale and classical style of the buildings here. A fine group of four frontages stand across from the statue of The Man with the Horse. With shops and pubs on the ground floor for the most part, these Main Street premises have several floors above.
  - 2** – Walking along Main Street, lift your eyes above the shop frontages for one of the town's characteristic sights. There are the Diocletian windows that grace several facades. They are from the years after 1805 when the 2nd Earl was in charge. A window of this sort is formed under a semi-circular arch with two upright divisions so that the whole opening is divided into three parts.
  - 3** – As you stand at the meeting point of Bridge Street and Main Street, you will see the Victorian frontage of a commercial premises, originally the Masonic Hall. Next to it stands a classical looking, beautifully-crafted, early 19th century stone house, currently a guest house. Beside these is a tall, fine stone-fronted classical mansion, which is now the Bank of Ireland. It was originally the town mansion of the Lord of all of Ballinasloe, the Earl of Clancarty. A friend of king George IV, the Earl was one of the architects of the resistance to the emperor Napoleon. It could be said that he was the person to whom most credit is due for the layout, growth and architectural character of Ballinasloe as we see it today.
  - 4** – At the end of Main Street, head along Bridge Street, then turn to the right to the pathway which runs to the riverscape where you can see channels flowing through the several arches of the long stone bridge over the river Suck, one of the town's most precious monuments. The Bridge has been in continuous use since the 16th century and its extension in 1754 prepared it structurally to carry even the heaviest juggernauts of today.
  - 5** – Walk through to the far end of the park; you will approach St Michael's Church (1852-58) that stands in a commanding position over the Square. Its architect was J.J. McCarthy, a follower of Augustus Pugin (famed for other Neo-Gothic churches in Ireland) – and the design is said to have been revised by Pugin himself. Inside are many fine stained glass windows. Of particular quality are those of St. Patrick and St. Rose of Lima, of 1925, by the renowned Dublin Stained glass artist, Harry Clarke and *The Raising of the daughter of Jairus* by Patrick Pollen, inserted in 1958.
  - 6** – From St. Michael's Church now walk up St. Michael's Square back towards the Man with the Horse Statue. Take a left into Dunlo Street, an important street in the history of the town, which contains, together with other buildings of about the same date, the late-Georgian Garda Barracks. The Barracks are 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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