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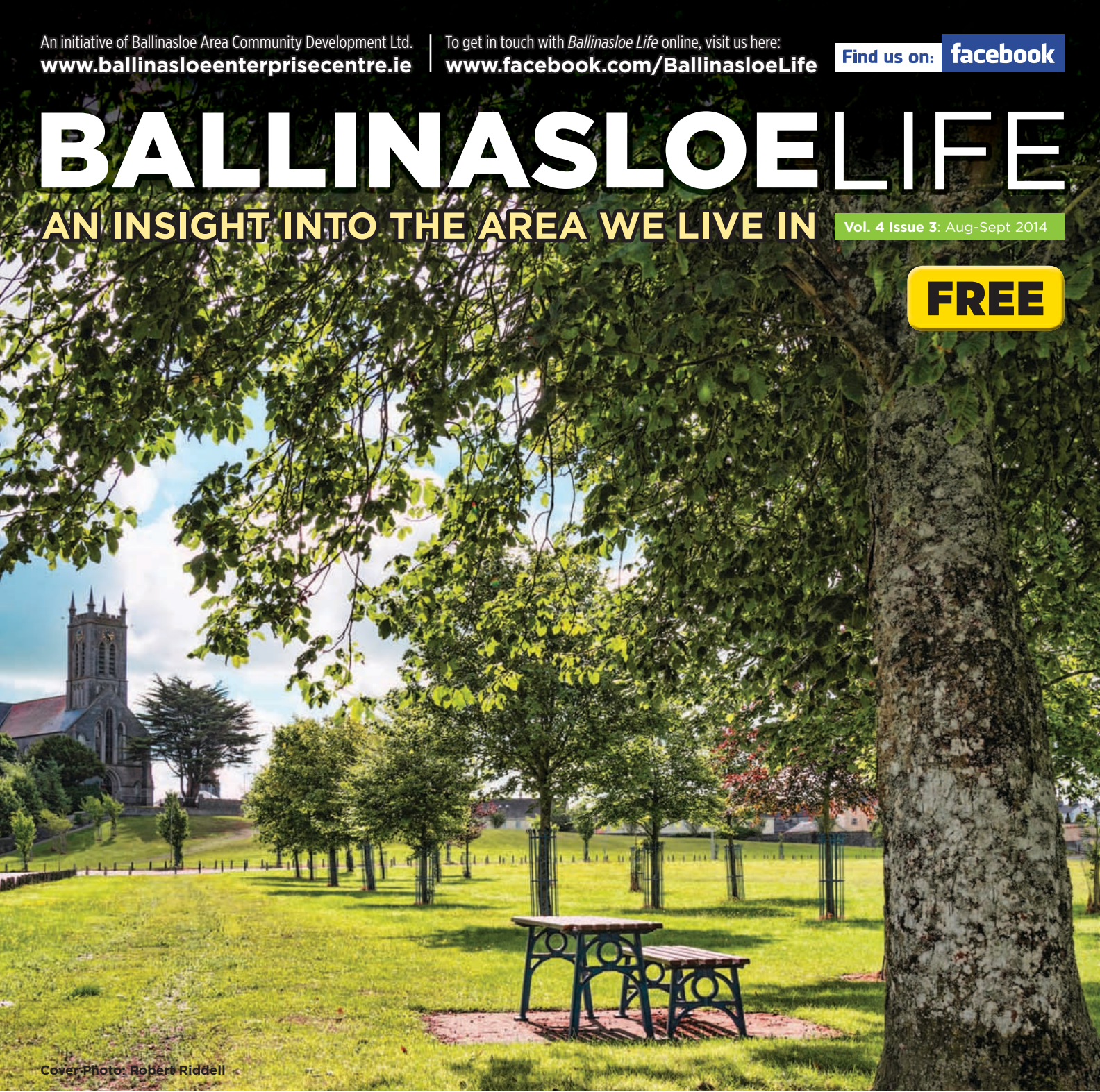
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BALLINASLOELIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 4 Issue 3: Aug-Sept 2014

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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 4 Issue 3: Aug-Sept 2014

REAMHRÁ



Since last June, the ministerial Mercedes have been given to different posteriors, the election posters are down, votes counted – the spoils of office have been distributed to the victors, which is not the same as the poll toppers in this area!

The two great each way bets of the coping classes since the Civil War are showing in this County and elsewhere that they have far more to protect, working together than by losing out in opposition – a portent of things to come perhaps? A restatement

of Coalition priorities for coping families plus can change, plus ce la meme chose. The usual consultation games between the governed and the governing continue apace, while West of the Shannon we grit our teeth for the seventh Autumn of austerity.

We can either curse the darkness or light a candle. The Town Mapping Project has seen huge online community engagement, showing us all that while we might be disillusioned with the downwards spiral we refuse to be despondent, we have new ideas, we have energy – there always has to be hope!

Key of course to the next phase of the Action For Market Towns led project; will be to get a group of engaged citizens and progressive organisations to really run with the template of development that can't be imposed but has to be shared and evolved. Our Action Plan has to be one that screams inclusivity as this time around we really will have no one to blame other than ourselves.

Colm Croffy, Editor
Ballinasloe Life.



You can have your say in our Community Development Company by becoming a member. We are enclosing a flyer with Ballinasloe Life seeking members @ €30 per annum. As you will see from same we are very involved in many aspects of Community Development and we are currently working to develop a Community Action Plan. The plan is being developed in conjunction with a UK company "Action For Market Towns" who have over 15 years experience in developing plans for Towns similar in size to Ballinasloe in the UK.

The plan will only be workable if we get you, the people, in the locality involved in the implementation of same. Our view is that if everyone does a little we will see sustainable results for the betterment of our Community. As an organisation we have representation in many key organisations which influence local and National Government policy, some of which are the Local Economic Forum, Rapid, GRD, Galway Co. Cl., National Association of Enterprise Centres, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, Retail Excellence Ireland, Westbic, Bord Fáilte, Waterways Ireland. Overall we strive to promote the Town very positively making it an attractive place to live, work and socialise in and you can be a part of this by becoming a member of our Company.

Looking forward to you coming on board.

Seamus Duffy, Chairman,
Ballinasloe Area Community Development.

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Photo: Liam Jordan

91 Years of Main Street Memories

By Colm Croffy

“Shure the times are fully different now’ says he, as his wife, Maura, plants a tray of biscuits and tea on the table and suggests we help ourselves. In what seemed a few minutes the wily retired saddler and perhaps Patriarch of town, has me spell bound with the razor sharp memories that span 91 Summers of continual Main Street living.

Rory was born one week before Micheal Collins was shot, an infant at the time of the bloody civil war. “The folks back then didn’t talk too much about the Civil War or indeed the Great War but there was plenty of auld stories fighting ‘the Tans’ and ‘Easter 16’, but this was always a pro treaty town, there was very little IRA activity here, more out the country but not in town,” recalls Rory.

He recounts his childhood as ‘a comical time’. He can vividly recall the first steam roller putting in the chips on Main Street in 1928. In summer ‘a contrary fellow’ named Burke drove a horse and water-cart to keep down the dust. “We all wore short pants at that time and so we would get rid of our shoes and follow him and splash in the water jets.” Burke would get annoyed. “He would let the whip fly and if he got you, he’d cut the ear right off of you. ‘Let the water on the road.’ he’d say. You’d think we were going to put it in our pocket and bring it home.”

Until the age of 7, five or six gas lamps were all that lit the town and they were turned off at 11pm each night. He can recount the electrification of the town in 1929. His dancing bespectacled eyes twinkle at the memory of the night a certain Mr. Higgins lit an ill-advised fire out the back of Harper’s hardware store (Where *Utah* is today) and nearly burned the town to the ground. “Harper’s used to sell guns and gunpowder for all the

muzzle loaders out the country,” laughs Rory, who was seven at the time. “The explosion blew all the windows out of Society Street and every second ceiling fell down, but no one looked or got compensation.”

Rory went to the boy’s school at the rear of the Town Hall which even then had an educational usage. “We were all marched up from St. Michael’s to the Workhouse for a banquet of a breakfast, with a Mr Wymys the Master (who refused to retire) where we got two boiled eggs each on the morning of our first communion.”

For someone like me who is challenged at the best of times with an iPhone, to get my head around the concept that Tofts ran the Piazza Picture House in



the Town Hall from 1925 and that the first “talkie movie” as Rory remembers, only came to town in the year of the Eucharistic congress, 1932 is remarkable. “A McGing from Westport got the lease of the Church and you got the film and a dance (once the floor was swept) with supper, tea and a sandwich, which was how a crowd of 450 or 500 enjoyed a lot of the late 30s or 40s.

Mentioning the Congress, the times were grim back then and families in town kept livestock in the back fields. In the 30s there were over 70 cows being milked daily by residents; “There was on only one wireless in the whole town, a Mr. Conroy who had a hardware shop where Danske Bank was, placed his in the shop window and you could hear a pin drop during the ceremonies. At one stage there were 300 on their knees joining in the prayers” he recalls.

Rory in his twenties didn’t join any of the towns more adventurous sons with forays to the Spanish Civil War as his father, who ran the business, took ill and then died young with a heart attack leaving a young Rory, his mother and six men in the Saddlery business.

He spiritedly joined the LDF and was assigned to a Fire Crew “If the German incendiary bombs fell on town; three of us had a small hose, two buckets and a stirrup pump; where were we going I ask ya?”

The deprivations of the 30’s gave way to the mini boom for Ireland of the Second World War. When even though there was heavy rationing of basic foodstuffs like tea, flour, especially sugar and oranges were never seen he recalls the change “The first run of money to the lanes was with the Emergency when the Dubs had no coal to burn and our lads made a fortune saving and harvesting turf, there

was also the few pound making its way back from England with the war factories.”

The five years of the War saw the compulsory tillage scheme and was in effect a boom for the horse and tack scene as tractors and mechanisation of the farms only took off in the 50s. He continued with the business, becoming a Main Street icon and indeed tourist stop until retirement in 1998.

Rory was found of the dancing, even frequenting the Workhouse Hops, where to avoid the 2 penny tax on a tanner dance, the impresario a Dick Kenny from Mountbellew took everyone’s photo on the way in for 8 pennies “But no one ever got a photo,” chuckles Rory.

It was at a Dance in the Town Hall where Rory first clasped eyes on a demure Sutton born nurse, recently moved to town, Maura Quirke. After a few more dances, hunt balls and the like they married 59 years ago this November, the reception was in the Shamrock Lodge, Athlone. They honeymooned in London for a few days.

Whilst Maura is the light of his life, his batchelor card playing prowess with Solo and twist was put to great use by Eddie Campbell Senior and Bill Flanagan who pressed upon him the need to play bridge. They used to play in Salter’s Hall in Mountpleasant for a good few years and then in the early 70’s he and Maura were instrumental in setting up, with John Madden, the 70 Bridge Club where both we wonderful members and mentors to generations of bridge players in the locality. “I counted 13 clerics playing cards with us one night in the sixties but it shure aint like that now,” he winks.

Whilst he used to smoke 20 Afton a day he gave them up thirty odd years ago and always enjoyed a nip of Irish whisky but puts the robust health down to the porridge he breakfasts on every day.

And what has not changed much about the place that has seen several different rubs of tar and countless talkies, to the iPod, “In fairness it’s people that make any place and there something shocking decent about the bulk of them around here. We still look out for one another, it mightn’t be about sugar or china cups nowadays but still we can reach out when people need helping and that is all the should matter.”



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Reporters Hand Over



Pictured on Manouveres at the Rose of Tralee International Festival were Life Editor Colm Croffy and outgoing Reporter Kevin O'Connor

New Reporter, Conor Finnerty

This is the transition edition where one pen/keyboard style has to to make way for another! We say a huge thank you and goodbye to the young Limerick man Kevin O'Connor, who has in the course of the past 8 months and 4 editions, delivered hugely for LIFE as our Reporter and indeed for AOIFE as the Communications and Press Assistant (at home and abroad). Kevin returns to his undergraduate Studies in English and Sociology in U.L and is spending the Autumn Semester in South Carolina USA. Kevin compiled four editions and was responsible for growing our online reach through Social Media. We wish him well for the future and know that his time with us all was a rollercoaster of memorable moments, which may well feed his writing career!

Fresh to the reporters bench for the rest of the year is Conor Finnerty a 20-year-old Journalism and New Media University of Limerick Undergraduate from Ballinamore Bridge, Ballinasloe. He takes up the post of Reporter and we wish the Colaiste an Creagain, Mountbellew alumni the very best in his communications career break! Conor can be contacted at 085 1481911 or indeed at ballinasloelife@hotmail.com

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New Shearwater Spa Manager

By Kevin O'Connor

Having worked in the spa industry for almost 10 years, recently appointed Heather and Earth Cspa manager at the Carlton Shearwater Catriona Kearns knows a thing or two about luxury treatment.

Her time spent working in high-end spas both in Ireland and in Australia (where she worked for four years) has earned her a wealth of experience and given her a fantastic knowledge of skincare brands.

The Carlton, which is listed on spairaland.ie as one of only six hotels in Galway with its own full spa, boasts seven treatment rooms and there are five girls working there. Head Therapist Aisling Finn is a native of town and has been working in the spa for over 4 years. Clodagh Boland, originally from Athlone and Breda Mongan from Mountbellew are both Senior Therapists. Two new members, Elizabetha and Sinead Kilmartin have recently just joined the team.



Catriona Kearns


"We would have more local people using the spa than residents of the hotel," said Catriona. The Cspa is busiest at weekends and mostly during the summer months. "From Thursday to Saturday would be our busiest," she said. "The holiday season, June and July, all the way up to late August and early September, sees a lot of clients coming in. With Wedding and Debs season we'd see a lot of non regulars coming in to us."

Having just won an award from Fáilte Ireland, the Carlton Shearwater is now in the category of 'Hotel with Extensive Spa'. The Shearwater is one of only a few hotels who have been placed in this prestigious category, meaning what it can offer outstrips many other spas in the country.

The spa has its own changing facility, separate from the gym and pool. However, guests who use the Cspa have full access to the pool and gym and gym members get a 20% discount from the spa.

The Cspa uses a skincare brand called Elemis. "It's the brand that has impressed me most over the years," said Catriona. "It's the number one skincare brand in the UK and it's exclusive to luxury spas, airports and luxury department stores. Elemis offers a wide range of treatments and deliver phenomenally clear, visible results." Elemis is clinically trialled and tested and Catriona has recently introduced it at the spa.

The spa rings to confirm your booking the day beforehand and have a 24 hour cancellation policy. The spa has great value offers on all summer and have plenty of exciting events in the pipeline ready to launch their new products. Catriona encourages people to come down and try their spectacular range of Elemis spa treatments. "We are hugely passionate in what we do here and can assure you that when you walk in our doors you can leave your worries and troubles behind," she said.

People looking for more information or to book their own day of luxury pampering can call the Cspa directly on 090-96-30521, where they will be more than happy to recommend treatments suitable for anyones skin type. 



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A New Personal Fitness Service

By Kevin O'Connor

Brian Brennan is a Personal Fitness Trainer from Ballinasloe who has just taken the plunge and set up his own business. He has been involved in the fitness industry for four years and has spent three-and-a-half of those working in the C-Spa in the Carlton hotel.

Graduating from the University of Limerick with an NFQ Level 6 and an EFQ Level 5 Certificate in Exercise and Health Fitness in 2013, he is continuing his studies in the University College of Dublin, where he is studying for a Level 8 Honours Degree in Sport and Exercise Management.

Specialising in Exercise Management and Nutrition, he aims to "motivate people to a healthier lifestyle through nutritional guidance, combined with personalised exercise prescription and instruction in a private, judgement free environment," he said.

Brian opened his own studio in Croffy's Yard, just off Main Street this summer, where he offers fitness assessments and personalised exercise programmes. "Whether you're improving your cardiovascular health, flexibility, body composition or simply motivating you to stay motivated, I can tailor a plan to suit your needs and goals," he said. Brian tailors his plans to fit seamlessly into your daily routine, personalising them to conform with your lifestyle.



"Personal training begins with an initial consultation and fitness assessment," said Brian. "I assess things like blood pressure, resting heart rate and weight. Then I'll design an individualised training programme and we'll work on a one-on-one basis and work towards your improved health."

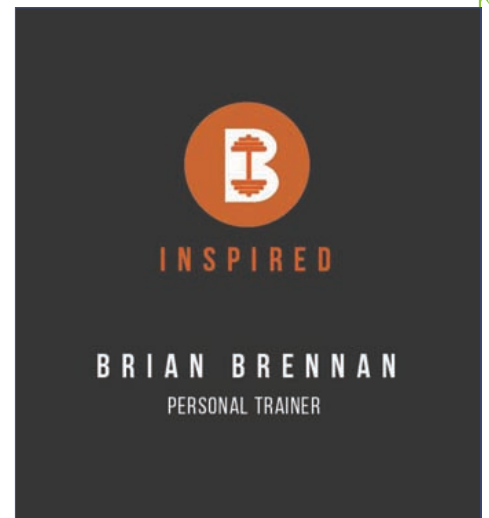
A personalised training programme can help you achieve your goals faster and with better results. For Brian, staying at the cutting edge of the fitness industry is of the utmost importance. He stays up to date with the latest research in the

health and fitness industry. "Personal training is very unique service," he said.

"I go through the workout step by step, from warming up to cooling down and stretching, modifying the intensity of the workout based on your feedback. I focus my attention on small to medium sized groups so as to ensure that everyone is performing their exercises correctly and efficiently."

Brian offers one-to-one training and group trainings, to a maximum of three people, from his studio in Croffy's Yard. There is a spacious parking lot, changing facilities and a toilet in the studio.

For anyone looking for more information, Brian's contact details are available on www.facebook.com/brianbrennanPT



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Galway's Only Michelin Certified Centre

East Galway tyre dealer Thom Fox has had his status as a Michelin Certified Centre operator endorsed. His Ballinasloe Tyre Centre was once again selected as Galway's only Michelin Certified Centre, one of 15 outlets in Ireland whose service meets a standard approved by Michelin Europe-wide. Established in 1999, the business has a full-time staff of five persons. Pictured is Thom Fox (centre) being congratulated on his appointment. With him are Michelin's Martin Pointer (left) and Michael Goode.



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New Carpark at Dunne's SuperValu



Dunne's of Ballinasloe
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By Kevin O'Connor

Dunne's SuperValu are continuing their investment into their property with the addition of a new 54 space car park on a 100 m2 plot of land next to the premises.

"We currently only have 16 spaces, which will increase to 70 with this new development," said owner Fergal Dunne. "The new car park will give our customers the full supermarket experience."

The strip of land was purchased in a win win deal from the local GAA Club grounds who were able to use the proceeds of the sale to acquire additional space for training pitches at the other side of the ground. Together with the car park, Dunne's SuperValu offers a Seafood Circle, Meat Counter, Salad Bar, an extensive Scratch Bakery, ATM, Deli Counter,

Post Point, ESB Top Up, Lotto and extensive fresh fruit and veg. SuperValu is the biggest buyer of Irish produce in the country, so a lot of our food is locally sourced," said Fergal. "This new development follows last year's and 2007's extensive re-vamps and this, we feel, is the final piece of the puzzle. Since we took over the business in 2006, we've worked hard to make it the success it is today."

The store already employs 29 people, both full-time and part-time and is employing a further 12-15 under Michael Brazil for the new construction. "Now that we have the extended car park, we're the first supermarket on the way in from Galway. We'd hope to see an increase in business, which would see an increase in employment, especially coming into the busy Christmas period. Dunne's SuperValu is open from 8am to 10pm, Monday to Sunday." 🌱

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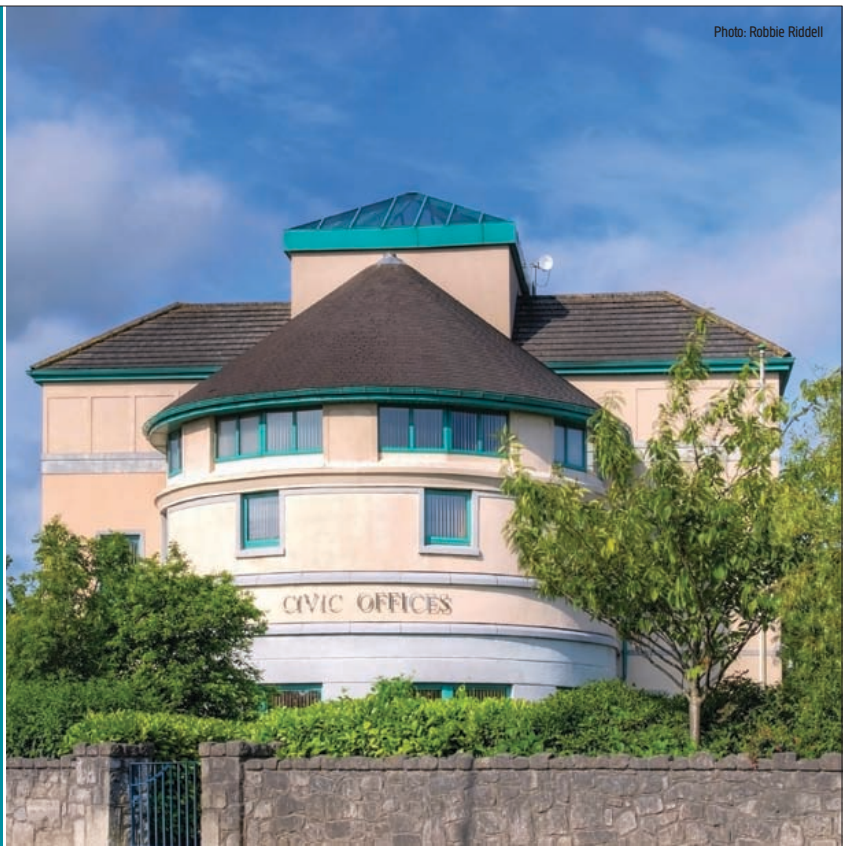
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Tiny Tots Crèche and Preschool provides free, full-time, part-time or after-school childcare places under the Childcare Employment and Training Support scheme. The CETS scheme is managed by the Dept. of Children and Youth Affairs, via Galway City and Co. Childcare Committee. "Places are limited and are allocated on a first come first served basis," Jennifer Sheridan explained. "People may qualify for a childcare place while on a vocational training course, an ETB or SOLAS vocational course, or participate in Momentum or Community Employment." Tiny Tots also offers free preschool places under the ECCE scheme starting in September. People call Jennifer on 909 964 4480 for more information or visit www.tinytotscreche.com

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Pat & Una McDonagh Invest in Loughrea Hotel & Spa



General Manager Noel Mulhaire



Pat McDonagh (Centre) with General Manager Noel Mulhaire and Hotel Staff.

By Kevin O'Connor

Pat & Una McDonagh have announced an investment of €1 million into their recently purchased Loughrea Hotel & Spa. The hotel's ballroom, restaurant, bar and main reception area will be considerably upgraded to afford an even greater level of luxury and comfort for guests.

Through the McDonagh's acquisition of the Loughrea Hotel & Spa, 70 jobs in the local area were saved. Pat McDonagh, who is also Managing Director of Supermac's, is pleased with early feedback from staff and guests of the hotel since the takeover. "We are delighted to enhance the exceptional facilities available to guests in the Loughrea Hotel & Spa," said Pat. "These improvements will allow us to create further employment in the area while offering a superior service to patrons. A portion of the investment will highlight the

wonderful new food offerings available in the restaurant and bar as well as in the ballroom for large events. We're most excited about the new personalities we have welcomed to the existing team in the hotel."

McDonagh also revealed the appointment of a new General Manager and Head Chef for the hotel. Noel Mulhaire joins the Loughrea Hotel & Spa as General Manager bringing his previous experience from The Clare Inn and the West County Hotel. New Head Chef Julian Bradfield has been introduced to create the high quality cuisine he is known for, having previously worked as Head Chef in The House Hotel and in the Claregalway Hotel.

"Having seen wonderful success through the growth of the Castletroy Park Hotel in Limerick during the last 18 months, we hope to see a similar level of progress in the development of the Loughrea Hotel & Spa as we move forward," said Pat.

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Ballinasloe Credit Union June Car Draw Winner (L-R): Michael Brodie, Teresa Kilmartin, William Duthie, Karen O'Grady (Winner) Kaithlyn Brodie & PJ Coyne

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New Slí na hÁbhainn Sculpture

By Kevin O'Connor

The Sli na hÁbhainn Public Park is set to become even more picturesque, with the addition of a new sculpture by artist Conleth Ghent. The Newbridge native has been giving new life to a dead chestnut tree sitting between the two channells in the park.

"The setting of the sculpture inspired its name, 'Confluence'," said Con. With the town being such a famous historical meeting point of both rivers and people, it's a representation of both rivers and people coming together. "It's an abstract piece, so you've got to move around it, look at it from different angles, and read it. I'd encourage people to take time and think about it when they come and look at it."



Photos: Liam Jordan

Con learned his craft by his own hard-earned experience, and by watching others. "When I got a penknife as a kid, I couldn't wait to start whittling and carving," he said. Con is 25 years as a full time artist, and is considering an exhibition in the coming weeks in town, to showcase his art in conjunction with the sculpture. Con was chosen to do the piece by Galway County Council and the Town Council after submitting his work.

"They decided that, instead of letting the tree be cut down, that they wanted to give it new life," he said. "It was just calling out to be done. I wanted to give it more unique feeling than the generic kind of sculptures you see. I wanted it to reflect the unique location, and the beauty of the area."

Initially roughed out with chainsaws, Con will use an Arbourtech, and eventually

hand-tools to finish it off. "It's very light at the moment, but it will get darker after it's treated," said Con. "There will have to be something put on the wood so that it lasts."

"I found it very peaceful working in the park," said Con. "There are so many different types of trees, it's a beautiful place to work. You can see the old Limestone stonework on the bridge was built to last the test of time. The park is a great amenity, and it would be great to see people use it more."

Some of Con's other work will be on display at 'Sculpture in Context', Ireland's biggest exhibition in the Botanic Gardens. He also has work on display at Vanishing Art at Carton House.

You can see Conleth Ghent's work on his website at www.conlethgent.ie

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Kiltormer N.S. Golden Jubilee

Kiltormer N.S. recently celebrated its Golden Jubilee, in a day of fun that saw board members, teachers and pupils past and present attend. On a sunny June day, the celebrations started out with a mass, and a re-enactment of the pupils of 1964 walking from the old school to the new. Three Sixth Class pupils read the 1916 Proclamation of Independence and 50 helium balloons were released. A hurling match was organised between the 1990 and 2010 classes, with the older lads running out winners in the end.

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Hogarty's 38 Years in Business

By Kevin O'Connor

Hogarty's is a family run, independent flooring and DIY retailer, established in 1977 and based on the Old Athlone Road, Birchgrove, Ballinasloe.

Catering for homeowners, landlords, property developers and rental agents of all tastes and budgets, they stock all types of floorcoverings, including carpets, vinyls, timber flooring and PVC. They have a very competent, professional team of fitters, who together have a combined experience of several decades in the trade.


With current trends the first thing on their minds, Hogarty's stock a comprehensive range of wallcoverings from all leading wallpaper manufacturers as well as a full library of books showing a wide array of styles to ensure there is always something to suit every taste, as feature coverings are very much in vogue.

Their paint department is fully stocked with everything needed to redecorate, including tools, sundries, primers and specialist coatings. They are stock all the leading names of manufacturers, such as Fleetwood Paints, Johnstones No Ordinary Paint, Rustoleum, Zinnseer, Ronseal, Everbuild, Synoxide and Lowe, to name but a few, meaning that they can provide everything for everyone, from the rookie DIY



From L-R: M Hogarty, Seán Hogarty, C Murray (Manager), Edward Hogarty, E McManus (Captain), M Cunniffe, J Egan

enthusiast to the trade professional. Rugs are available from stock and come in every shape, size, colour and price imaginable. Their lighting department is well stocked with lots of innovative options for both interior and exterior decorative lighting requirements. They also carry heavier goods, such as ladders, garden equipment, blinds, curtain poles, framed artworks, mirrors, light hardware, household sundries and oilcloths, each of which makes up an essential part of the home-improvers arsenal.

Additionally, Hogarty's offers a free home survey, quotations and of course, free advice. Their slogan, 'Come for a Look, Be Amazed!' is certainly well earned. 



Malin Head to Mizen Head Charity Cycle

Local Gardaí, Ciarán Ó Ráighne, Anthony Pender and Sergeant Tom Horkan, along with several members of the Fire Service are trying to raise €350 for a sponsored charity cycle. The three men will join an expected 120 more and cycle 770km from Malin to Mizen Head, stopping in Tralee, Lisdoonvarna, Claremorris and Donegal Town over 5 days in September. Money raised will go to charities decided by the families of two Gardaí killed in the line of duty in 2009, Robbie McCallion and Barry McLoughlin (The Jack and Jill Foundation, the Irish Wheelchair Association, Mayo-Roscommon Hospice and Donegal Hospice). Fergal D'Arcy will MC on the 29th August in Hayden's Hotel and there will be signed Mayo, Galway

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Property Roundup



By Colm Croffy

Practically six months on since *Life* last reported on the property sector, market conditions have changed significantly. More houses have been put up for sale in the last three months than in any previous quarter since 2008, according to the House Price Report released by Ireland's biggest property website Daft.ie. The steady hike in prices in the capital and in Galway city reflects the high demand rate in relation to the lack of suitable supply.

However despite these impressive results the average house prices in County Galway has fallen 11% to €135,000. Roscommon has the second cheapest housing market in Ireland after Longford but here in town it appears that the average price of the typical three bed family home is between €70,000 and €80,000. DAFT currently has over 250 properties listed for sale with a Ballinasloe local postal address. Paddy Keane, Auctioneer in Main St.

ventures that compared to previous months, the first six months of the year were buoyant. "We're seeing a number of emigrant buyers who have maybe 5 or 6 years done working in the UK or Middle East, have cash and are now finding themselves priced out of the Dublin and city markets."

It's very much a buyer's market still with 4 bed bungalows in the rural hinterland on maybe half an acre moving for between €80 to €90k, depending on the finish. Paddy is very well clued in agricultural affairs and believes there is still considerable interest in farmland.

Society Street based Michael McCullagh feels that the first time buyer and maybe some resale locators are what are making up the bulk of sales this year. "The upper end of the market here is sluggish, the property needs to be of exceptional finish to command bigger prices," states Michael.

Commercially he feels the market is very undervalued "The only commercial

units being viewed are ones for the sole operator, on the other hand farmland is holding good interest."

Michael, similarly to most of the local auctioneers, feels that distressed or foreclosed properties are very much undervalued. Pat Finn based in the Square notes that a shortage of rental accommodation is very evident and that the cash buyer is still king "Where the sales are for the lower end of the spectrum or indeed if it is a receiver type sale, small cash buyers are making good pickings, but its small numbers." Commercially he only sees a slump "Look at some of the windows on some of the finest premises in the heart of the town, with weekly rents for less than €200 per week. What have we done, if our town centre is that unattractive to doing business?" bemoans Pat.

John Dolan based in Main Street agrees that first time buyer are fuelling most of the demand, with distressed properties being let go for €60K or less depending on the location and finish. "Family homes with three or four beds can be had from a range of between €80k and €100k, with Creagh sometimes commanding a bit more of a differential." John has had a few farm auctions where acres were averaging between €8k to €10k and up to €11,500k at the edge of villages.

With a steady increase in the asking prices for residential homes since the beginning of 2013 you can now expect to pay €74,000 for a 3 bed semi-detached, €158,00 for a four bed bungalow and €182,000 for a 5 bed detached home in Co. Galway according to Daft.ie

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Town Mapping 2014

Project Co-ordinator Owen Dunne has recently been conducting research as part of a BACD town development initiative. The aim of the project is to help guide our town and its hinterland along a progressive path in the hope of further positive development and economic success. An online survey was distributed to a wide range of individuals across the town centre and surrounding areas. It received a great response from the community and has given a fantastic insight into the public perception of the locality. The results are being presented to a project Stakeholder meeting in August which is being facilitated by Chris Wade (CEO of Action for Market Towns UK).

All analytical information gained from the survey and the demographic profiling will be used by Action For Market Towns and their team to create an overall image of the town and its needs economically, socially and culturally. A larger scale and more detailed survey will then be conducted by the AMT team at the back end of the year with a full scale report expected by late Winter 2014. The Mapping project will be used by the Community as a way of articulating it's own vision of how the town should develop in conjunction with Galway County Council. The project is being funded by the Credit Union, Chamber of Commerce, BACD and Galway County Council. Summary Results will be posted on line at our Blog and Facebook page and we will publish in next editions of LIFE.

New Health & Beauty Business

By Kevin O'Connor

Allure is a new Health and Beauty business that has just started up at the bottom of St. Michael's Square, ready to serve the local area. Gary Sheridan, with the help of his father, has put together an excellent team of individuals to help the people locally look their best.

Chris Hardiman, who is well known around town for his skill and creativity, is Allure's in-house tattoo artist. He is joined by Jamie Walsh, who does quality hair extensions in-store. Gary has three Ergoline Sunbeds, two lie down ones and one stand up. Ergoline are the leading sunbed brand all over the world, and their sunbeds are fully certified by all major skin foundations.

"All you need to bring is yourself," said Gary. "We have everything here, the suncreams, the aftersun, aloe vera gels, and everything else you might need." Allure also sells gym supplements, from leading brands such as Kinnettica and Optimum Nutrition. "The shop's purpose is that it is both male and female friendly," he said. "As many fellas as girls use sunbeds, and as many girls as guys now take supplements."

The premises is almost 1000 square foot, with ample parking all around. It's open seven days a week from 11am to 9pm. Allure offers the cheapest rates and packages, such as 50



minutes for €35, 100 minutes for €70, or 200 minutes for €120. "We don't really take bookings, since with three sunbeds on the go the longest someone will be waiting is 10-15 minutes anyway," said Gary. "Anyone who's looking to get in contact with us can find us on Facebook, or call me on 087 768 2976."

"In challenging times such as these, it is important that people still mind their health and appearance that's why we provide a friendly very affordable service." Gary singled out his Mam and Dad, Mark and Brenda, for their help in opening the store.



Coach House Art Group Exhibition

A warm welcome and an array of colourful artworks greeted visitors to the recent Coach House Art Group coffee day and art exhibition held at Cluain Mhuire, Brackenagh. The very successful event raised over €750 for the East Galway Cancer Support and a good number of paintings were also sold. On behalf of the Group, Jackie Eastwood commented "It was a lovely day and a great opportunity for our members to get together and show their work whilst raising funds for local cancer support services."

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Hospital Watch

By Colm Croffy

Reasonable news for the Maternity Services in the past few weeks when Bill Maher, CEO of the West/Northwest Hospitals Group, confirmed at the end of June that the review of the maternity services in Portiuncula, among other hospitals in the North West Region has been suspended and will be incorporated into a national examination of maternity services.

This comes just weeks after Noel Daly, Chairman of the hospital group, resigned after allegations of a conflict of interest. It has emerged that Mr Daly is a shareholder in a consultancy firm that was hired by the hospital group to review the maternity services provided in the region. Opposition TDs and Senators caused furore in both houses with the then Minister O'Reilly and the indefensible became just that.

Galway East Fine Gael TD has called for Portiuncula's maternity service to become a centre of excellence. Despite Ireland still having one of the highest birth rates in Europe, figures are showing a continuous decrease in the number of births in Ireland since their peak in 2009. Portiuncula is one of the only hospitals in the country to record an increase in the number of births in the first four months of the year, with an increase of 4.6% while UCHG suffered a 6% decrease. Worryingly though in a recent call for indicative capital requirements for

the next 15 to 20 years UCH placed a modern Maternity stand alone unit on its shopping list to the Department of Health. As one wise commentator puts it "You never hear of the Hanley Report anymore but it is steadily being rolled out quarter after quarter." Vigilance will be key and in finding out what terms of reference the new National Maternity Review will have.

Portiuncula has also managed to hold its position of 9th on the leader board of 45 Public Acute and General Hospitals compiled by Ratemyhospital.ie. UCHG however have fallen down the leader board and let their score slip to 60%, below the overall average score of 68%. Portiuncula is the highest rated hospital in this region when it comes to the level of care received and has a rating of over 90% when it comes to paediatrics.

Portiuncula is also performing well with regards to INMO trolley watch. Between April 2013 and April 2014 the hospital's emergency department use of trolleys have fallen from 106 to just 43, a drop of 63. These figures are a continuation of the downward trend of trolley usage in the emergency department. Between end of May and end of July there were only 2 patients on average facilitated on Trolleys where in UCHG the comparative figure was 25.

The hospital still has its detractors, HIQA inspectors carried out a surprise inspection of St John's Ward, a 34 bedded



medical, surgical and gynaecology unit and St Joseph's ward a 33 bedded acute medical and stroke unit, they made their report public on the 8th of July.

Similar inspections were also carried out in Merlin Park and UCHG on the same day and received similar feedback to Portiuncula. According to the report these hospitals must put in place a more robust system to keep their blood monitoring equipment clean. The inspectors also pointed out issues with cracks in tiles and chipped paintwork which hindered effective cleaning.

The report also stressed that hand hygiene is recognised internationally as the single most important preventative measure in the transmission of HCAs in healthcare services. The low level of hand hygiene compliance observed by the HIQA inspectors was brought to the attention of Hospital management.

LIFE will continue to update our readers on all topical matters on Portiuncula Hospital.



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Queen of The Fair

By Kevin O'Connor

The search for the Fair & Festival Queen of the Fair is on! All local clubs, pubs, organisations and businesses are invited to nominate a candidate over 18 years-of-age to take part in the competition in September sponsored by Gullane's Hotel. The successful girl will be an ambassador for the town and have the opportunity to meet and greet all nationalities during the year. Last years winner, Rachel Goode (Birchgrove), has now completed her First Class Honours Degree in Music Performance and intends to take a year out to save for her Masters Degree in Opera. "I had a great year and encourage any girl to participate in the competition," said Rachel, who was sponsored by Dolans' Centra. "It's a great confidence builder and I loved every minute of it." Rachel undertook some charity work throughout the past year, organising a concert in St. Michael's Church in aid of Galway Hospice. The competition will take place in Gullane's Hotel (Sponsors) on September 27th. Further information from: Mary 087 207 1869; Kathleen 085 102 8685. This Year's Fair takes place from October 4th to 12th.



Ada English Symposium Dates

By Kevin O'Connor



Previously run in May, this year St Brigid's Hospital Heritage group are organising the Ada English symposium to run between the 17th and 18th of October. "Aspects of institutional care in the 19th and 20th centuries" will be the core theme for this year's event. Professor Brendan Kelly of the Mater Hospital, will be launching his book *Ada English: Patriot and Psychiatrist in Ballinasloe* which tells the story of Dr Ada English (1875-1944), who worked for almost four decades at St Brigid's Hospital.

Ada oversaw several significant therapeutic advances, including the development and expansion of occupational therapy programmes. Ada also spent several months in a Galway jail for possessing nationalist literature in 1921 and while there was elected to the Dáil. "We are looking forward to getting more students, heritage groups and people to engage and participate in the formal and indeed fun aspects of the weekend," said group spokesperson Brian Casey.

Further details about the symposium and it's events will be in our next edition or check out the St. Brigid's Hospital Heritage Group Facebook page.

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Fletchers *Modern Media* Keeps the town Flag Flying Nationally



By Kevin O'Connor

Local businessman Seán Fletcher is using Fletchers Expert and his own promotion company Modern Media to keep Ballinasloe to the forefront of the national media.

With Fletchers Expert Ballinasloe continuing their sponsorship of the afternoon Rick O'Shea Show on RTE 2FM, Seán is making sure that the town is being talked about for all the right reasons.

"What it means is that Ballinasloe is mentioned six times a day from 2-4.30pm, six days a week, 52 weeks a year," he said. "We sponsor their Nine Lives competition, where people can enter in to win an iPod from us here." They have just signed on for another year, making this the third year of their sponsorship. "We're on board as sponsors of the RTE 2FM Roadcaster, which is the mobile unit they use to

broadcast live from locations all around the country." People can book the Roadcaster through Modern Media and having the show broadcast from any sort of event adds to the hype and credibility of it. "The coverage you get from having the Roadcaster there is really amazing" said Seán.

"Before the event, it will be mentioned multiple times to the whole country where the show will be broadcast from and during the event itself, you'll be mentioned all day. You can't get that kind of coverage with anything else. We just held a concert in Kilmainham and had the Roadcaster there. It was fantastic," said Seán. "From 1991 to 2008, our town had the Roadcaster twice a year. We've had it here more than anywhere else in the country."

Already well-known for booking Coronation Street stars to visit various locations across the Midlands through Modern Media, Seán is hoping to expand in this area. "We already regularly book visits to nightclubs in Mullingar, Tullamore and I'd like to see them come to town more," he said.

Having previously organised six concerts in Dublin, with acts like The Truth, Secret Affairs, and The Chords, Seán is hoping to bring a large concert called 'ModFest', which happens in Brighton in the UK every year to Dublin. "It's a huge event that brings loads of bands that were popular in the 80's together for a huge festival," said Seán. "I'd like to bring that to The Academy, or The Village in Dublin."

"I have ideas as well to bring a Big Top Event on the Fair Green. 'Ocean Colour Scene' have always expressed an interest in playing an event like that here and various other acts have too," said Seán.

Seán is available to club and festival organisers to book celebrity visits or the Roadcaster and can be contacted on his website modernmedia.ie



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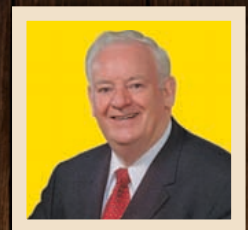
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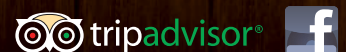
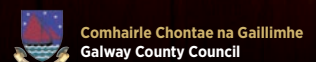
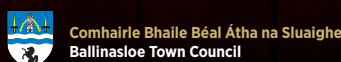
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Ballinasloe Care & Repair

By Ken Kelly

A voluntary service set up by a handful of volunteers in Ballinasloe four years ago, to help senior citizens with minor household chores, have now found that at least 150 people availed of their expertise and companionship. Lawn cutting, painting, even changing a bulb can often pose problems for the elderly and those living alone but the assistance of "Ballinasloe Care and Repair" comes as a "blessing in disguise" for many of our elder citizens.

Now, thanks to a number of local groups and businesses, the group have purchased a van and equipment to help them provide a more effective and efficient service for those over 65 years of age who maybe living alone and in need of getting minor problems solved.

It was in April 2012 that a number of Ballinasloe people, under the auspices of Ballinasloe Social Services, took out a franchise agreement with Age Action Ireland to operate a free voluntary service to local people over 65, to carry out minor repairs, trades referral service, quote check service and a befriending service. The group operates under the name of "Ballinasloe Care and Repair" with local volunteers and staff and backed by a tremendous team from the local Dept. of Social Protection Scheme. Up to now the volunteers and workers used their own transport and equipment to visit



homes and carry out works. Now with support from a number of local bodies, such as the Social Services, Town Council, Credit Union, Lions Club, Bridge Club, Community Hearts, Salmon's Dept. Store, Dolan's Service Station, Sisters of Mercy Western Province as well as a number of private donations, the Care and Repair programme (which has a team of 15), has been able to purchase a van and equipment, thus providing a faster and more efficient service.

Retired tradesmen, nurses, company executives, legal eagles and ex-members of the medical profession are among those who give their time and expertise free to many of our senior citizens. A spokesperson for the volunteers said "We always welcome help, in whatever way it comes, even those who can have the time to call and befriend a lonely or house-bound person would be much appreciated. Our office is in the Social Services Centre, in Brackernagh (9630630) where we would welcome any queries from the over 65's or anybody else needing assistance. We have a great team of volunteers, willing to help those in need of lawn-cutting, painting or other types of small jobs" he added.

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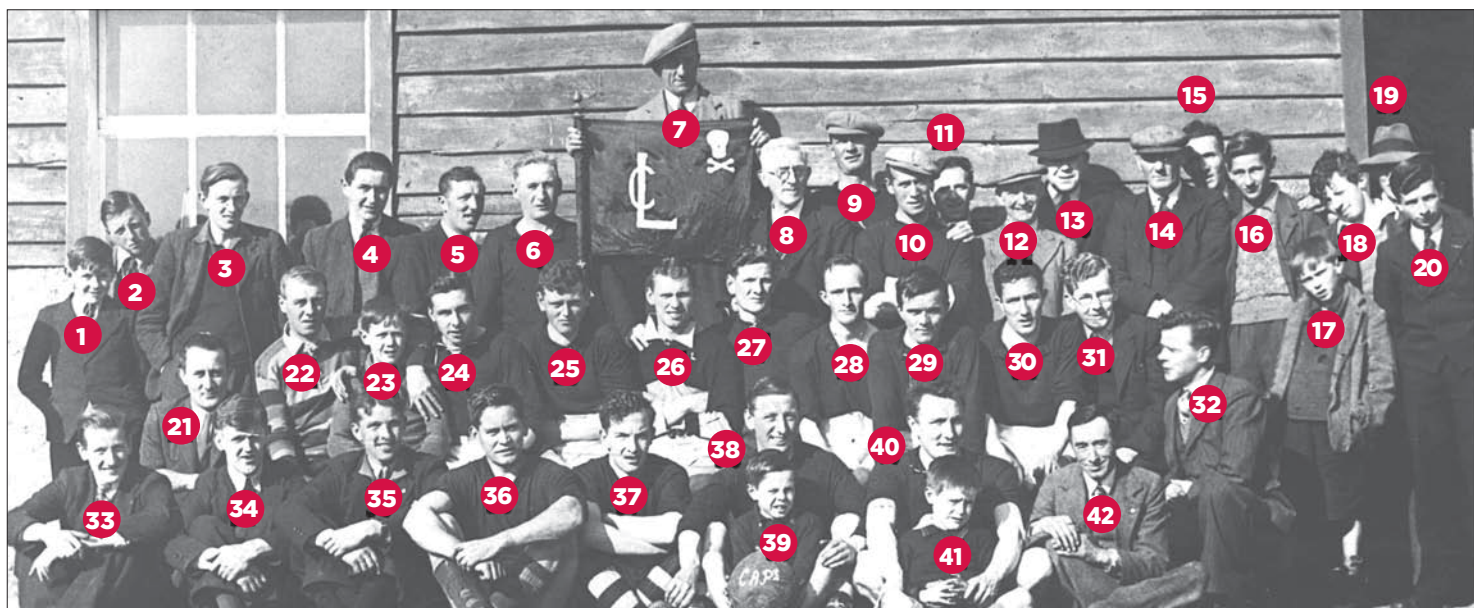


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The Hut - Names for the Faces



By Douglas Rafter

This photograph was taken outside the British Legion hut in the early 1940's. The Hut was situated in the Fair Green where the public toilets and recycling bins are now located. It was published with Barry Lally's piece on the towns involvement with World War One in our Spring edition.

Douglas Rafter and a crew from the Heritage group have retraced most of the names behind the faces, giving a fascinating insight. The Hut was used as a meeting place for soldiers who survived the First World War.

It contained two full size billiard tables and card tables. There was a pot belly stove for heat. It was a place of comfort and companionship for men who shared a very traumatic period in their lives. As the older members passed away it evolved as a Social Club and was very popular as there were very few outlets for "Townies" at that period.

1. Dermot O'Beirne. Born 1932. He died tragically 1959 as a result of a car crash at Blueball near Tullamore. He lived over his parents shop next to Hayden's Hotel. He was an insurance agent.

2. Tom Fahy. Born November 1926 - Died 2013. His lands are now the Organic Farm in Beechlawn farmed by his son Padraig.

3. Vincent Higgins, Brother of Joe, lived most of his life in Emmet Place. He was a painter in St. Brigid's Psychiatric Hospital.

4. 'Ponphret' worked at the Railway Station, lived in digs at Rose Higgins Tea Room Society Street. Rose's husband Willie McNamara, was a rent collector for the local Council. The premises is now a Barbers shop.

5. Billy Shanley was a lorry driver for Sisks who owned Top Quarries at that

time. He also helped out in his father's business, selling calves to local farmers, he also worked as a labourer in St. Brigid's Psychiatric Hospital. His mother had a tea house in St. Michael's Square.

6. Paddy Roche won an All-Ireland Football medal in 1925 for Galway. He lived in Harbour Road and worked in Fallon's egg store in Society Street, now known as Society Court.

7. Peter Ward had a horse and cart, did odd jobs and was sometimes helped by "Joker Harney". He also worked for Rothwell's and Hubert Dolan. He sold apples in the Main Street from his cart.

8. Joe Evans affectionately known as "The Blind Tailor" his business premises were where Gearoid Geraghty's law practice is now, in Society Street. His daughter married Joe Kelleher.

9. Bartley Murray played in goal for the Galway Football Team.

10. Mickey "Skipper" Fahy was a good boxer. He worked as a labourer. He was father of Olive. He lived in St. Grellans.

11. Bill Murphy, a Kerryman, worked for Rory Kilduff as a saddle maker. He lived with the Jones family in the St. Michael's Square and fished with the Keoghs.

12. Christy Donnellan was a tailor, he worked in Woods of Main Street. He lived at No. 3 St. Brendans. He was an uncle of Buddy Donnellan.

13. M. Ryan "M.J." Michael Ryan's family still run Ryan's Pub in Society Street. He was an E.S.B. meter reader and was involved with Social Welfare and because of this was unable to take a seat on the Town Council when elected in 1974.

14. La Kelly Lived in Jubilee Street. He was a caretaker in the Town Hall. He collected tickets for 9 penny seats

(chats). He also worked as a gas lighter during the period when the town was lit by gas. He was a W.W.1. veteran.

15. Johnny Lennon, father of Paddy Lennon of Station Road was a driver for Arnott's of Dublin. He brought salesmen and samples to drapery shops.

16. Alec Rothwell Born 1926 Died 1988. His family still run the auctioneering and undertaking business set up by his father Paul. Paul was an agent for the Legion and was a member of the committee with garage owner Tim Killeen whose premises is now a bookie shop at the end of Duggan Avenue. Paul's wife saw service in Queen Alexander's Nursing Corp. in WW1.

17. Jock Kelly, it is believed to have emigrated to America.

18. Jackie Duignan formerly of Dunlo Street where his father had a Butcher shop, lived on Church Hill. He was a taxi driver and greyhound breeder. His father had the grazing rights of the Fair Green from the Council. He also worked as a contract butcher in St. Brigid's Psychiatric Hospital, when two bullocks and five sheep were slaughtered each week to feed the population of the hospital.

19. The Hat Unknown.

20. Paddy McKenna a skilled bacon counter hand and shop assistant. He worked for Armstrong and Lalor now Ward's menswear. He also worked for Earnest Murray now Supermacs Main Street. He set up his own business in Dunlo Street in Carr's bicycle shop now Chris Daly's Shoe Store.

21. Jack Keane lived in Poolboy Cottages and married Josie Llyod, aunt of former Councillor Lucy Llyod-Keighery. He worked in Smiths now Clarkes and later became steward in the Emerald Social Club.

22. Willie Smyth played for Galway and also won all Ireland medal. He worked in Flanagan's Sawmill which was located at the end of the Pillar Bar archway. He was a drummer in the Town Band.

23. Seamus 'Giggler' Smyth was a painter in St. Brigid's Psychiatric Hospital. He also played Trombone in the town band.

24. Vincent Connaughton, married Paddy Ward's sister, He was father of Brian who worked for Inland Waterway's.

25. L. Kelly lived with Jim Higgins (Blacksmith) in Grenham's Lane. He did casual work around town.

26. Tom 'Bomber' Kelly worked in Dubarry and was also a Galway Footballer. His father worked in Killeen's Garage (now a bookies shop at the end of Duggan Avenue). He lived opposite Portiuncula.

27. Jack Lillis was son of Mick, who had horse drawn hearses and also collected the mail from the Railway Station for the Post Office. The postmaster on hearing that the horse had only one eye inquired about this and was told the horse was hired to collect the mail not to sort it. Jackie collected rent for the Council and was assistant fire chief leaving Ballinasloe to become fire chief in Donegal.

28. Seamus or Jimmy Doran worked in Dubarry and emigrated to England. He was brother of Danny, Chrissie and

Anne (who worked in Cullen's Clothes shop Society Street now Jorena's Health Store). Danny worked for Joe Price who managed Parson's shoe shop (now Jordan's Photo Studio) before moving across the street to Salter's shoe Shop.

29. Paddy Ward known as 'Pancake' a great character about town. Also a great supporter never missing a match. He also sold herrings fresh from Galway on Fridays long before Bord lascaigh Mhara thought of the idea.

30. Georgie Shanley. Georgie played with the Aughrim Slopes Ceile Band. He emigrated to America.

31. D. McKeigh Worked at Railway Station and possibly Rothwell's furniture.

32. Charlie Ward was a tailor and worked for Kiely's Clothes Shop (now an arcade in Society Street) before setting up his own business in the Square. He was father of writer Sandra Ward-Kilduff.

33. Joe Higgins, Brother of Vincent (No. 3), worked in Dubarry and was involved in Talk of the Town Theatre productions. He was also elected "King of the Fair".

34. Arthur McAdams ran his shoe repair business from his house at the rear of Rothwell's archway in Dunlo Street.

35. Paddy Dervin worked for Town Council.

36. Unknown.

37. Micko Kelly worked in Andrew Jennings grocery and hardware in Society Street (more recently David Manning's). He is an uncle of Joe Kelly of Joe's Bar Society Street and Mike Kelly last Mayor of former Ballinasloe Town Council.

38. Timmy "Skinny" Kelleher was a foreman in Dubarry. He lived next door to the Garda Barracks. His wife had a hairdressing salon there. Timmy was also a member of the town band.

39. Johnny Geraghty emigrated to America. He returned every October to renew old friendships He passed away recently.

40. Johnny "Krishna" Shanley was a baker, he ran his own business out of Flanagan's archway (now the Pillar Bar archway). He got his nick name from the time as a young boy he helped a travelling showman called "Krishna the Great Magician"

41. Youth (unknown)

42. Peter "Dido" Connolly lived in Harbour Road he was a painter/decorator. His sister ran a small shop from his house.

The information collected is as near as possible correct but at 70 years out some of it may need correction. Research: Douglas Rafter, Ballinasloe World War One Heritage Group (Project part funded by Ballinasloe Town Council).

Knives Silently Cut The Tension

By Maureen Cahalan

Many summers ago, Josie and Tommie got married, with much fanfare with family and friends. Their wedding day was memorable for all the right reasons. Being in love was very evident.

They cut their gorgeous wedding cake with a lovely knife presented by the hotel's management. As time passed by Josie always insisted on each anniversary, the 'wedding knife' was used to cut the cake.

Over the years, they were blessed with three beautiful children. And each year occasions such as birthdays, christenings and anniversaries invited the 'wedding knife' to be used with memorable smiles from Josie and Tommie. As the years passed the complexities of life brought on by demands of

work, socialising and the usual anxieties caused Josie and Tommie to drift apart. Where once love blossomed, they had now become distanced strangers. Making excuses not to spend quality time together became the norm. When something is almost gone or disappears altogether, we really realise its significant in our lives.

One day, totally out of the ordinary, Tommie arrived home with a small yet elegant cake. There was no special occasion. Josie was busy watching Judge Judy while Tommie busied himself in the kitchen making two cups of tea. In he walks and silently placed the tea, cake and 'wedding knife' on the small coffee table situated between both of them. With tears in her eyes Josie realised that she was truly loved. Tommie had found his peace and together they became reunited. Knives can show unlimited love and yes, they silently cut tension.

East Galway Family History

East Galway Family History Society are preparing this years annual bi-lingual calendar on themes of heritage and historical interest from East Galway. The Society, based in Woodford Heritage Centre are calling for submissions for the 2015 issue. They are hoping to incorporate an agricultural/country life theme. They are looking for old photos and documentation from East Galway showing pre and post mechanisation developments in agricultural/country life. In addition, the Society are looking for photos of towns and villages around the area for the photo gallery of their bi-lingual website, www.galwayroots.com. Permission must be given from donors to use their submissions in print, online and other formats, but everyone who submits their photos or other documents will be credited accordingly. Anyone interested in donating for either project can get in contact through email, at galwayroots@eircom.net or telephone 090 9749309 for more information.

AUGUST Events Guide

1st AUGUST

Pool Competition Continues	Downey's	9pm
Michael Regan (Winner of Glór Tíre)	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music	The Auld Sod	10.30pm
The linkage	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
The Lazy blues band	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Pony Show Jumping	Showgrounds	6.30-9pm
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm

2nd AUGUST

Ultan Conlon	Pillar House	10pm
Gaegan Pagans	Joe's Bar	10pm
BoJangle	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Last Man Standing	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
The Blaggards live	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Justy	East Nighclub	midnight
Arrival Shannon Boat Rally	Marina	noon
Live Music	Egans	10pm
Too Tall Paul	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Beggars Velvet	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Joe's Band (Downstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

3rd AUGUST

Sharon Turley	Downey's	8-10.30pm
Pillar House Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
Chillbillies	Pillar House	10pm
Driftwood	Joe's Bar	10pm
Shane Moore	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Joe Glynn	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Stephen Smyth, Thomas Maguire, Fiona Ennis	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Big Deal Live	The Auld Sod	10pm
A Day for Jay, Live Music	The Auld Sod	3pm
DJ Robbie Ward	East Nighclub	midnight
Live Music	Egans	10pm
The Gegan Pagans	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Imposter	Maud Millar's	8pm
Pink Panther Jazz Group	An Táin	12.30pm
Madden Family Band	An Táin	8pm

4th AUGUST

Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
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5th AUGUST

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm

6th AUGUST

Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
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7th AUGUST

Kevin Rohan	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Dunlo Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
The Thursday Jam Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

8th AUGUST

Pool Competition Continues	Downey's	9pm
Backstage	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music with Frank Nestor	The Auld Sod	10.30pm
Declan Keenahan	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm
Strange Brew	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

9th AUGUST

Johny O'Halloran	Pillar House	10pm
Slider	Joe's Bar	10pm
Last Man Standing	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Happy bar Stools	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Live Music	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nighclub	Midnight
Live Music	Egans	10pm
Stephen Blake	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
The Gaegan Pagans	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Wallop the Cat (Downstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

10th AUGUST

Nite Owls	Downey's	8-10.30pm
Battle of the Bands	Downey's	10.30pm
Pillar House Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
Sara O'Kane	Joe's Bar	10pm
John McNicholl	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Live Music with Sway	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nighclub	midnight
Loose Rooster	Maud Millar's	8pm
Charity Walk	Aughrim	1pm

11th AUGUST

Line Dancing	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Rugby Summer Camp	Rugby Club	9.30am-2pm
Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

12th AUGUST

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm
	Golf Club	10pm

13th AUGUST

Active Retirement Meeting	Gullane's Hotel	3pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm

14th AUGUST

Bruno Groening (Circle of Friends)	Gullane's Hotel	5pm
Kevin Rohan	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Dunlo Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
The Thursday Jam Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

15th AUGUST

Friday Club	Downey's	9pm
Ahascragh Village Festival	Ahascragh GAA Ground	10am
Folk Club: Mick Hanly (Tickets: €20)	Pillar House	9pm
Happy Bar Stools	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music	The Auld Sod	10.30pm

15th AUGUST (continued)

Paul Watchorn	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
Alan & The Accident	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm

16th AUGUST

Charity Barn Dance Lots of Spot Prizes	Downey's	10pm
Live Music	Joe's Bar	10pm
Black & White	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Ahascragh Village Festival	Ahascragh GAA Ground	10.30am
Chequers	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Nightowls	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nighclub	Midnight
Live Music	Egans	10pm
Good Ole Trusty	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
The deans	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
The Big Lad (Downstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

17th AUGUST

Dave & Alan Live	Downey's	8-10.30pm
Leaving Cert Results Party	Downey's	10.30pm
Pillar House Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
N21	Joe's Bar	10pm
Ahascragh Village Festival	Ahascragh GAA Grounds	2pm
Derek Ryan	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Too tall Paul	The Auld Sod	10pm
The nude suits	Maud Millar's	8pm

18th AUGUST

Line Dancing	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

19th AUGUST

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm

20th AUGUST

Active Retirement	Gullane's Hotel	3pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm

22st AUGUST

Kevin Rohan	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Dunlo Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
The Thursday Jam Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

22nd AUGUST

Friday Club	Downey's	10pm
Sweet Sensation	Carlton Shearwater	10pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music with Franck Nestor	The Auld Sod	10.30pm
Lynched Album Lauch	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
Mickey & the Scallywags	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Pony Show Jumping	Showgrounds	6.30-9pm
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm

23rd AUGUST

Live Music with Replica	Downey's	10pm
Think Big	Joe's Bar	
He's Not me	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Chris Nash	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Colin Galigan live	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nighclub	Midnight
Live Music	Egans	
Kensey 3	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Beggars Velvet	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Schtick Her Down (Downstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

24th AUGUST

Live Music with Black Shadow	Downey's	10pm
Streetwise	Joe's Bar	10pm
Shane Moore	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Robert Mizzell	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Live Music	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Robbie Ward	East Nighclub	Midnight
Washout	Maud Millar's	8pm

25th AUGUST

Line Dancing	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

26th AUGUST

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm

27th AUGUST

Active Retirement	Gullane's Hotel	3pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
Kevin Rohan	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Dunlo Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Tracing Your East Galway Ancestors	Woodford Heritage Centre	2-4pm
Heritage Bites	Aughrim Visitor Centre	noon-2pm
The Thursday Jam Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

29th AUGUST

Friday Club	Downey's	
Charity Leg Wax	Hayden's Hotel	8pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music	The Auld Sod	10.30pm
Buzz The Agent	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Heritage Bites	Aughrim Visitor Centre	noon-2pm
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
Bootleg Nation	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Pony Show Jumping	Showgrounds	6.30-9pm
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm

30th AUGUST

Back-to-Skool Party	Downey's	10pm
Pillar House Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
Sara O'Kane	Joe's Bar	10pm
Last Man Standing	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
The Blaggards live	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nighclub	Midnight
Ballinasloe GAA Sponsored Cycle	Ballinasloe GAA	10pm

SEPTEMBER Events Guide

30th AUGUST (continued)

Live Music	Egans	10pm
The Livewires	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Heritage Bites	Aughrim Visitor Centre	noon-2pm
Monumental Heritage Trail	Killaan Cross	3-5pm
The Hush	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Live Music	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

31st AUGUST

Paul Burns	Joe's Bar	10pm
Jim Devine	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Live Music	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nightclub	Midnight
Heritage Bites	Aughrim Visitor Centre	2-4pm
Neil Young & Crazy Horse Tribute Band	Maud Millar's	8pm

1st SEPTEMBER

Line Dancing	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

2nd SEPTEMBER

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm

3rd SEPTEMBER

Active Retirement Meeting	Gullane's Hotel	3pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm

4th SEPTEMBER

Bruno Groening (Circle of Friends)	Gullane's Hotel	7pm
Kevin Rohan	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Dunlo Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
The Thursday Jam Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

5th SEPTEMBER

Euro Qualifiers	Joe's Bar	7pm
Michael Regan	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music	The Auld Sod	10.30pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
Beggars Velvet	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Pony Show Jumping	Showgrounds	6.30-9pm
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm

6th SEPTEMBER

Fundraising Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Christy Moore Tribute	Joe's Bar	10pm
Ultan Conlon	Pillar House	10pm
Trouble Clefs Concert	Hayden's Hotel	6.30pm
Shane Moore	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Agricultural Show at the Ag. College	Mountbellew	10am
Joe Glynn	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Big Deal Live	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nightclub	Midnight
Live Music	Egans	10pm
Too Tall Paul	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Live Music	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Madden Family Band (Downstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

7th SEPTEMBER

Buzz The Agent	Downey's	8-10.30pm
Pillar House Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
All-Ireland Hurling Final, Live Music (Slider)	Joe's Bar	3pm
Jimmy Buckley	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Live Music	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nightclub	Midnight
The Nudies Suits	Maud Millar's	8pm

8th SEPTEMBER

Line Dancing	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

9th SEPTEMBER

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm

10th SEPTEMBER

Active Retirement Meeting	Gullane's Hotel	3pm
Ballinasloe Flower & Garden Club	Gullane's Hotel	8pm
Trad Session	An Táin	10pm

11th SEPTEMBER

Kevin Rohan	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Singers Circle	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
The Thursday Jam Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

12th SEPTEMBER

Happy Bar Stools	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Larry Reynolds Gala Concert	Ballinasloe Town Hall	8pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music with Frank Nestor	The Auld Sod	10.30pm
Stephen Blake	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
Imposter	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Pony Show Jumping	Showgrounds	6.30-9pm
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm

13th SEPTEMBER

Sara O'Kane	Joe's Bar	10pm
Black & White	Maud Millar's	10pm
Irish Culture & Heritage Day Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
Paul Burns	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
The Woodbines live	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Jee Johnston	East Nighclub	Midnight
Live Music	Egans	10pm
Gaegan Pagans	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Live Music	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
The big lad (Downstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

14th SEPTEMBER

Outback live	Downey's	8-10.30pm
Lunchtime Boxy Session	Pillar House	2pm
Buzz The Agent	Joe's Bar	10pm
Mike Denver	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Sway live	The Auld Sod	10pm
Loose Rooster	Maud Millar's	8pm

15th SEPTEMBER

Line Dancing	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

16th SEPTEMBER

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30 pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm

17th SEPTEMBER

Trad Session	An Táin	10pm
Pony Show Jumping	Showgrounds	6.30-9pm

18th SEPTEMBER

Kevin Rohan	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Dunlo Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
The Thursday Jam Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

19th SEPTEMBER

Backstage	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music	The Auld Sod	10.30pm
Buzz The Agent	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
Strange Brew	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm

20th SEPTEMBER

Paul Burns	Joe's Bar	10pm
Last Man Standing	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
World Karaoke Championship	The Auld Sod	9pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nightclub	Midnight
Chequers	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Live Music	Egans	10pm
The Livewires	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Acoustic audio	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Schtick Her Down (Downstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

21st SEPTEMBER

Dave & Alan Live	Downey's	8-10.30pm
Pillar House Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
All-Ireland Football Final Live Music (Sway)	Joe's Bar	3pm
Pattern Day	Clonmacnoise	2.30pm
Too Tall Paul live	The Auld Sod	10pm
Johnny Brady	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Washout	Maud Millar's	8pm

22nd SEPTEMBER

Line Dancing	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

23rd SEPTEMBER

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm

24th SEPTEMBER

Blood Bank	Gullane's Hotel	5pm
Trad Session	An Táin entertainment	9.30pm

25th SEPTEMBER

Blood Bank	Gullane's Hotel	5pm
Bruno Groening	Gullane's Hotel	5pm
Ryder Cup Live	Joe's Bar	All Day
Kevin Rohan	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Dunlo Trad Session	The Dunlo Tavern	10pm
The Thursday Jam Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

26th SEPTEMBER

Ryder Cup Live	Joe's Bar	10pm
Sweet Sensation	Carlton Hotel	10.30pm
Jive Lessons	The Auld Sod	8.30-10.30pm
Country Music with Frank Nestor	The Auld Sod	10.30pm
Live Music	The Dunlo Tavern	10.3
Ballinasloe Country Market	Society Court	9am
Macey South	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Pony Show Jumping	Showgrounds	6.30-9pm
Comháltas Night	The Emerald Bar	9pm

27th SEPTEMBER

Queen of the Fair	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ryder Cup Live	Joe's Bar	All day
Sara O'Kane	Joe's Bar	10pm
Shane Moore	Hayden's Hotel	10pm
Happy Bar Stools	Carlton Shearwater	10.30pm
Colin Galigan live	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Lee Johnston	East Nightclub	Midnight
Live Music	Egans	10pm
Beggars Velvet	Maud Millar's	9.30pm
Paul Watchorn	The Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Joes Band (Downstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm
Live DJ (Upstairs Bar)	An Táin	9.30pm

28th SEPTEMBER

Live Music TBC	Downey's	8-10.30pm
Ryder Cup Live	Joe's Bar	All Day
Think Big	Joe's Bar	10pm
Pillar House Trad Session	Pillar House	6pm
Derek Ryan	Carlton Shearwater	9.30pm
Live Music	The Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Robbie Ward	East Nightclub	Midnight
The Gaegan Pagans	Maud Millar's	8pm

29th SEPTEMBER

Line Dancing	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Live Acoustic Session	Maud Millar's	9.30pm

30th SEPTEMBER

Unislim	Gullane's Hotel	5.30pm
Tea Dance	Gullane's Hotel	9pm
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	Hayden's Hotel	8.30-10.30pm

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First Reynolds Trad Weekend

By Kevin O'Connor

The Pillar House is going to be the centre of all things Irish from this September, as the Larry Reynolds Irish Music, Heritage & Culture Weekend will be taking place. It promises to be a weekend of remembrance, music, song, dance and, of course, good old fashioned craic.

Larry Reynolds was the second youngest of ten from the well known Reynolds family of Ahascragh. When he was 10 years old, in what would prove to be a very worthwhile investment, his eldest brother, Harry, bought him his first fiddle and his sister Betty paid for his first lessons with Mabel West.

Emigrating, like so many others, to Boston in 1953, he kept up the fiddle-playing. Eventually, his East Galway style of playing made a significant impact to the Irish culture in Boston and indeed, all of North America.

Larry became a founding member of the Boston Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann in 1975, a member of the Tara Ceilí Band and The Connaught Ceilí Band. He was a very active recording artist and featured on many well known albums, as well as being an Irish music broadcaster for a Boston radio station. He had the honour of playing for two Irish Presidents, Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese and also some of America's political elite, such as Tip O'Neil and William Bulger.

Marrying Phyllis in 1954, Larry went on



to have six children, each of whom went on to become musicians themselves. Larry's home had an open door policy for young Irish and American musicians and he has led the way for generations of trad musicians.

To honour Larry and his great work, Gibbons Pillar House is hosting a weekend of concerts, sessions, ciorcal comhras and workshops. With everything from music lessons to dancing classes, it promises to be a weekend to be remembered

Building on the success of their live music Programme and weekly Sunday Trad Sessions, "The Pillar House Folk Club", was launched in mid-June. Featuring a performance from the legendary Seán Keane, the night sold out, leaving many disappointed to be left without.

The club has an intimate setting, with

artists up close and personal for their performances. The immersive setting creates an atmosphere that matches any you'll find around the country. "I'm delighted to be playing the first night of the Folk Club, It's a great venue and I hope to see more like it opening up." said Seán Keane.

"Feedback from people in the audience tonight was fantastic, People could really engage with the performers and we were absolutely delighted to have a performer as prestigious as Seán to launch the Club for us." said Ray Gibbons. Eleanor Shanley has since played The Pillar House and received a similarly warm reception.

With spaces limited to just 80 people, the tickets are in high demand, so advanced booking is recommended. To reserve call 087 904 6140, 090 964 3939, or simply call in! www.thepillarhouse.ie

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Lynched Launch New Trad CD

By Damien Clarke

Lovers of Traditional Irish Music at its best are in for a rare treat on Friday the 22nd of August when *Lynched* a four piece group from Dublin and Galway launch their Debut Album in The Dunlo Tavern.

The Lynch Brothers also met and befriended fiddle player and singer Cormac Dermody who was born in Dublin but whose mother and father originally came from Clonbrock and Woodford in Co. Galway.

Cormac's parents, Seán and Theresa Dermody, moved back to Kilconnell some 6 years ago and were actively involved in the Traditional Music scene around the locality especially the Singers Circle in The Dunlo Tavern. Theresa passed away after a long battle with Cancer in July 2012 and is still sadly missed among the Traditional Musical Community in Ballinasloe. Seán continues to be an active supporter of all things Trad from Dublin to Galway.

Lynched are a four piece traditional folk group from Dublin, who combine distinctive four-part vocal harmonies with arrangements of uilleann pipes, concertina, Russian accordion, fiddle and guitar. Their repertoire spans humorous Dublin music-hall ditties and street-songs, classic ballads from the Traveller tradition, traditional Irish and American dance tunes and their own original material.

The band was started by brothers Ian and Darragh Lynch, who play uilleann pipes and guitar respectively, as well as both being singers. Radie Peat another group member who plays the Concertina and also sings on the Album was taught the concertina by the legendary Noel Hill at traditional music sessions around Dublin.

In 2012, after recording some demos in the Irish Traditional Music Archive, the four friends decided to become a dedicated four-piece called *Lynched*. They gained experience and confidence as they played together at the Grand Folk Club gigs in Dublin, which they hosted monthly. They also applied



around this time for the Arts Council's 2013 Deis Recording Award, for which they were approved.

Cold Old Fire was recorded by Danny Diamond in ITMA in August of 2013 and although fundamentally an album of traditional Irish song, heavily influenced by Irish legends such as Frank Harte, *Planxty* and *The Dubliners*, subtle traces of the group's collective influences can be detected, from American old-timey music, ambient techno and psychedelic folk, to black metal, punk and rock n' roll.

Since then, the group have completed a six week coast-to-coast tour of the United States, as well as performing in the last two years alongside some notable artists, including Harry Bradley, Fred Fortune, Mike Gangloff, Paddy & Séamus Glackin, Barry Gleeson, Lau, Leyla McCalla, Liam O'Connor & Seán McKeon, Morgan O'Kane, Lisa O'Neill and *Blackbird Raum*.

The album was released in May of this year in Dublin and on the 22nd of August in The Dunlo Tavern, the Album receives its Galway Launch. 

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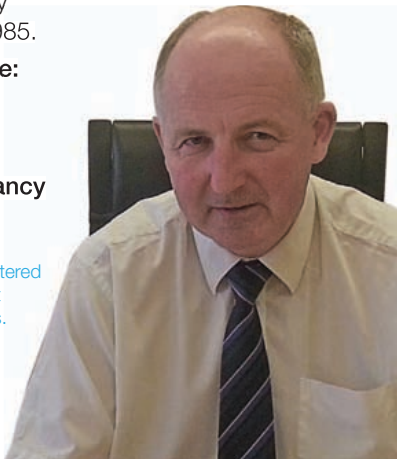
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Fourth Ahascragh Village Festival

By Kevin O'Connor

The middle of August will see the picturesque village of Ahascragh overcome with light, colour and sound as the Ahascragh Village Festival returns for its fourth year. This year sees the festival expanding further, going from a two day event to three.

"Going off the figures of the last three years, we're hoping that over 1500 people will pass through over the course of the weekend," said Joseph Finnerty, Ahascragh Development Chairperson. "The festival creates a wonderful sense of community spirit and a positive community image."

The three day festival will be kicked off on the Friday, with Mike Denver and his band playing at the Festival Marquee in the GAA grounds. Saturday will see a Community Mass at St. Cuan's Church, which will be attended by all the active community groups in the area. A Juvenile Hurling Tournament will take place in the GAA pitch and at 6pm the Ahascragh Festival Queen 2014 will open with a cheese and wine reception. "The Pink Panther JAZZ Band will be playing and there'll be stalls up with products from health and beauty businesses from

Ahascragh and Ballinasloe," said Karyn, Festival PRO. "Fergal D'Arcy will MC for the night and the winner will be automatically entered into the Rose of Tralee Galway Selection." There will be DJ entertainment after the selection and the Escorts for the Queens on the night will come from the local sporting clubs."

Sunday will see the final day of the festival go out with a bang and a full day of activities is planned. The Ballinasloe and District Vintage Club will carry out the Finger Bar Mower Challenge and there will be presentations to local schools, residents and businesses, market stalls, musical entertainment, sheep racing, horse carriage rides and music by Steve Blake, followed by The Indians to close the festival. "We'll be making a special presentation to our two local Olympic heroes as well, John Loughnane and Dara Flynn," said Karyn.

The festival is organised by a core committee of 12 people and run by up to 20 local volunteers. Tickets for the Friday night are available on the door and cost €15. Tickets for the Saturday Queen of the Fair show cost €15, with concessions available for children and families. Sunday is free, with tickets for the Indians costing €15. For more information, you can call Karyn Gavin at 087 670 2011.



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Active Retirement Association

By Kevin O'Connor

The song queries.. "Will you still need me when I am sixty four?" but just reviewing some of the Group Travel reports from the Active Retirement Association, leaves no one in any doubt that the hospitality sector and the holiday businesses of Europe very much still need and look after our societies, newest teenagers!

The buy Ballinasloe branch are continuing in their touring of mainland Europe and are just a few weeks back from their exhaustive but entertaining trip to Berlin.

The tour began with a 'Berliner' guide, which saw the group on a bus through both the east and west sides of the city. The historic Brandenburg Gate was the focal point of the tour. With a genuine Berliner as their guide, the society learned many interesting facts that can't be learned from simply reading books. "We finished off the day with a chance to see the shops," said Michael Walsh, a member who went on the tour.

Their second day saw them drive through the rain to arrive at a sunny Colditz Castle. "This 11th Century castle was built in 1065 on 40ft of solid rock," said Michael. "It was used as a Prisoner of War camp during WW2, is now used as a Hostel and music lessons. We got back on the bus in the rain and headed for the beautiful city of Leipzig, home of Bach, Wagner and Mendelssohn, We were in awe of the architecture, where the old was beautifully complimented by the modern."



The group returned to their hotel, the Grand Excelsior City Hotel, for dinner and to relax, celebrate and bid farewell to Berlin. After a quick breakfast the next morning, they left Berlin and, perhaps most shockingly of all, it was sunny in Dublin upon their return. "The trip was intensive, educational and enjoyable," said Michael.

Next on the European agenda for the crew is a 10 day cruise of the Norwegian Fjords. "25 are already signed up," said Chris O'Flynn, a member. "The weather is supposed to be a bit unpredictable, like ours, but we're hoping to get some great photographs anyway," she said.

Earlier this year, in April, 79 members had their spring break in Cavan and over four nights and five action packed days, they got to see much of Ulster. The group stayed in the Slieve Russell Hotel in Cavan and used it as a base to explore Cavan, Fermanagh, Armagh, Belfast and Monaghan.

"The national tours seem to be the more popular and more tend to go on them," said Chris. "We plan them every month or so and we get great deals from them since we're such a large group." With membership numbering between 210 and 220, the club has developed hugely in recent years and not just confined to those of pensionable age but also to those in early retirement.

"We have our monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of every month at 3 o'clock in Gullane's Hotel. Then every second Wednesday we have informal meetings, where we tend to decide where to tour next, whether there's a play on somewhere, where we want to day-trip to and things like that," states Chris.

People looking to join can attend one of the meetings, or call Chris at 0876492466. Membership for the year costs €25 and people can also visit ballinasloeactiveretirement.com for more information.

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South Roscommon Vintage Club

By Kevin O'Connor

The South Roscommon Vintage Club has been very active in recent months, organising several Road Runs and Rallies and most importantly, doing their bit for Emma Naughton-Heavey, by fundraising for the Help Emma Beat It Fund.

"We organised a big Auto Jumble back in January, hoping to raise money to help Emma and her family pay for her treatment," said Liam Keogh, Club Secretary. Emma, from Oranmore, is the daughter of the editor of the Irish Vintage Scene magazine. She has been diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer and needs help to get the treatment she needs in America.

"We're doing our best to help and fundraise for her and to help out the family. As well as the Jumble in January, there was recently a very large, successful Rally in Ballybrit," said John Roche, club PRO.

The South Roscommon Vintage Club was set up by the late Michael Lyons in 1997 and has become one of the best established clubs in the country. Michael also served as the secretary of the Irish Vintage Engine and Tractor Association for a time. Every year in September, they organise a road run in his memory. "This year the road run will see approximately 25 to 30 vintage tractors and cars travel from Ballinasloe to Portumna, where we will visit the old workhouse," Liam said. "There'll be a trophy on the day for the



At South Roscommon Vintage Annual Christmas Dinner in Moycarn Lodge were Dermot Coyle, Rachel Coyle, Liam Keogh and Oliver Hardgha.

best engine. We try to avoid clashing with the All-Irelands and if anyone wants any information, they can call me."

"The club has over 80 active members and is spread throughout the West Midlands region," said John. The club held their annual Christmas dinner in the Moycarn Lodge in December and their January Jumble attracted a very large crowd to the Taughmaconnell Community Centre in wet and windy conditions. "People from as far away as Meath, Cavan and even Limerick travelled up," John said.

On the first Sunday in April, the club members put on a special exhibition at the County Roscommon Championships near the village of Athleague. Following this was the annual Charity Road Run, which took place in May. "Some 31 vintage tractors were involved," said John. The

club raised money from bucket tins to help Emma and her family and were very successful in their efforts.

Anyone looking to contact the club can call the club secretary, Liam Keogh at 087 756 5157. If people would like to donate to Help Emma Beat It can visit helpemmabeatitfund.com.



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Out and About in Ballinasloe



At the Ballinasloe RFC Awards Presentation night were, Front (L-R): Sean Brennan (Connacht Junior Inter Pro Manager), Alan Wade (Dev. Squad Player of the Year), Geraldine Kelly (Clubperson of the Year), Niall Staunton (Player of the Year), John Hayes (Captain, Connacht Junior Inter Pro Team). Back (L-R): Keith Spain (Dignity Funeral Directors), Patricia Tierney (Secretary), John Doolan (President), Sinead Ryan (Ass. Sec.) and Declan Quinn.



John and Mary Slattery with members of the Ballinasloe October Fair and Festival Committee following a presentation on the occasion of his retirement as Treasurer.



Ballinasloe GAA Croke Park to Club House takes place Saturday 30th August. Practice days take place every Saturday at 9am from the Town Hall Car Park. For more info contact Ronan on 087-2369665



Attendees at the Golden Jubilee celebration of Fr Noel Colohan which took place at Gullane's recently



Rónán Mullen with Teresa Geraghty (Ahascragh), Grace Finnerty (Ahascragh), Maureen Finnerty (Ahascragh), Senator Rónán Mullen, Aingeal Uí Cheithearnaigh (Ballinasloe), Pádraig Ó Ceithearnaigh (Ballinasloe), Brid Geraghty (Ahascragh).



Mrs. Joan Carty, Ballinasloe donated her 100th pint of blood at the Blood Clinic at Gullane's Hotel, Joan's daughter Laura also pictured donated her first pint of blood the same night (L-R) Margaret Rushe, Joan Carty, Laura Kelly and Carmel Devaney



East Galway Cancer Support

By Kevin O'Connor

For the past four years, based just out the road in Brackernagh, the East Galway Cancer Support Centre has been steadfastly providing a service of immeasurable value to people who have been diagnosed with cancer. Serving some 100 to 150 people a week, EGCS has been a pillar of comfort for people and families affected by the disease.

"Most of the people who founded it would have a history of having had cancer ourselves," said Jacqueline Daly. Jacqueline is the PRO, Assistant Chair and Centre Manager for EGCS. The rest of the committee is made up of Chariman Fergus Curren, with Mary Jordan, Kathy Keogh, Michael Daly, Gerry Devlin, Tom Haynes, Vicky Costello and Edith Ward.

"It is great having Portiuncula so close and it really is an excellent facility," said Jacqueline. "Sometimes though, it is easier for patients to talk to a complete stranger about what they're going through. That's what we're here for. We're here to listen and support, because you might not want to burden your family any further. So we are the community helping the community."

With four different support groups, for Breast, Prostate and Bowel Cancer and a Family Support service, the Centre caters for up to 150 people a week. It's run by a core of roughly 30 volunteers (including the committee). "Most volunteers have been diagnosed themselves, or who have a family member who used the service," said Jacqueline. "It's always someone who wants to give something back that volunteers."

The centre itself boasts Therapy Rooms, Meeting Rooms, an Office Space and offers Energy Healing, Bio Energia, Chiropody, Reiki, Reflexology, Acupuncture and Art Therapy. There are facilities for Massage there and much more, including facilities for the deaf. "More happens offsite as well," said Jacqueline. "We have a choir and the use of the running track next door. We hold an Annual Conference on Bowel Cancer every year in April and there are always numerous information evenings and seminars throughout the year. One of our Volunteers, Moire Gormley, is a retired Medical Social Worker and is on hand to help people with the paperwork side, like sorting out Medical Cards, insurance claims and things like that."

Following the success of their first DVD on the after care of Prostate Cancer (which is used in the nursing school in AIT, in Beaumont Hospital, has gone to Australia, all over Ireland and the UK), the group is getting ready to release a second DVD on alternative treatments and side-effects of Prostate Cancer. "We had huge support for this project from the students of Garbally College and Marina Downey in Downeys Bar. Thanks to them and everyone else who contributed, anyone can ring up and get a DVD posted out to them, completely free of charge." Having a resource as vital as these DVD's available to everyone is an amazing achievement and has undoubtedly made an enormous positive impact on hundreds of people.

EGCS are the only Cancer Support Centre in Connacht who have allied with the Patient Advocacy Board in the HSE. "This ensures that we are safe, our services are to the highest standard and that our clients are always put first," said Jacqueline. "We're also affiliated to the Irish Cancer Society." All their funding comes from fundraising, which is a testament to the generosity of the people of Ballinasloe and the surrounding area, when you consider how much they are able to offer. "We cover a huge area," she said. "People come from Westmeath, North Tipp, Galway and even Longford. We don't care where you come from, we welcome all comers." Local Business have been very supportive of the Group like Colohan's Hardware, who did a coffee morning and a shave for them in November. and The Pillar House, who provided rooms for Pilates.

EGCS offer a 24-hour call service, which can be reached on 090 964 2088, for anyone who needs to talk. "Every day on the radio, TV or newspapers, you hear about more cuts to public spending and health services. If we don't help each other, things will become very difficult for us all. We're here to offer hope, at all hours of the day, to people who need it, when they need it most," stated Jacqueline.

Further information on the East Galway Cancer Support website, eastgalwaycancersupport.com or on Facebook.

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Aughrim's Interpretive Centre

By Kevin O'Connor

323 years ago, one of the most important battles in Irish history was fought, just a few miles away, in Aughrim. This Jacobite-Williamite conflict was the largest battle in Europe until that point and the Aughrim Interpretive Centre is keeping the memory of that battle alive today.

"We concentrate on living history," said Julie Cruise, the centre manager. "Kids learn more when they get to experience the history compared to reading from a book. We have films and kids can actually wear the armour and clothes that would have been worn by the people fighting the battle."

The centre has prepared a new education pack for schools and is opened for May, June, July and August. "We open on request during the year as well," said Julie. The centre offers a diverse range of experiences "The centre suits all



age groups. It can be very academic, for students or historians, or indeed people interested in military history," she said. "We can also make it more fun for younger people."

The centre boasts a small coffee shop, local arts and crafts, artefacts of the

battle and includes a film and dress up for children. Car parking is free with room for 20 cars. The building is completely wheelchair accessible and Special Needs groups are more than welcome.

"I go in myself with groups and explain the history," said Julie. "A lot of students come to do projects on the battle and the effects it had on Irish history and I'm more than happy to help them out."

In the 3 hour battle between 45,000 men, 9000 were killed. "We explore not only the battle, but also the lives of the soldiers involved and the lives of the camp followers," said Julie. "Each army would have been followed by staff, horse surgeons, cooks, a medical community and families. More died in the terrible camp conditions than in the actual battle itself."

Anybody looking for further information on Aughrim Interpretive Centre can Email: battleofaughrim@galwaycoco.ie or call us at 909 967 3939 

Eyrecourt Town Twinning

For the past 23 years Eyrecourt has been twinned with a town in Brittany called Gouesnac'h, 40 residents of which have just paid their biennial visit to the village. "It's a great opportunity to experience another culture," said Josephine Lynch, Committee Member. "You get the chance to sample their hospitality and they get the chance to sample ours. "It's a very beautiful area, very near the coast."

"The Town Twinning organises transport, the lodgings are sorted and you can use it as a base to explore the region. They'll have various events organised, and you can come or go as you please," said Josephine. The group are in the early stages of setting up a student exchange programme between schools in Eyrecourt and Gouesnac'h.

People looking to join the Eyrecourt-Gouesnac'h Town Twinning can contact Josephine Lynch on 087 630 2011.

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FINE GAEL

Local Chanteuse with An Edge!

By Kevin O'Connor

Organisations like the Musical Society, the Town Band and the Panto Society seem to be giving locals an edge on the musical scene. Among those who have come up through those organisations ranks and gone on to bigger and better things is Louise Colohan.

Originally from Aughrim, Louise currently lives in Manchester, working in Sales and has just finished a run of *Jesus Christ Superstar* for 1,600 people in Daneside Theatre, where she played Mary. "My first music teacher was Kay Purell, who I adored," said Louise, who went to school at Scoil Mhuire, when it was based in town. "She made all our class in first year sing solo and she told me I had a sweet voice, but I was about 15 before I fully let my voice out," she said. "I auditioned for *Oklahoma* and was given two lines to sing and from then on I was hooked."

Louise's first show with the musical society was a production of *Guys N Dolls*, for which she played the lead role. Under the tutelage of the Society, her love of music and performing grew. "I'm so proud of every show I've performed with the Society. Everyone involved works tremendously hard to put on amazing shows." They welcome more and more people to join their ranks every year and with a new roof over their heads, the Musical, as well as the Panto Society, will doubtless see themselves grow and develop. "What you learn with these




groups you will not learn in any music college. Stage talent has to be expressed and only by watching and performing with others will you learn your craft," she said. Louise certainly has the record to back up her statement, as she was nominated for three AIMS Awards, for Best Voice, Best Actress and Best Comedian.

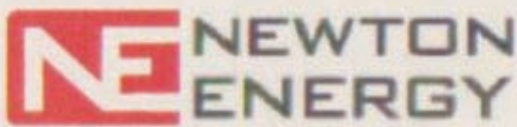
Getting young people involved is important for these kinds of societies and can be a great way for kids to explore their talent and boost their confidence. "I always think that bridging with local schools, in a type of 'Arts Week' is a really good way of creating interest," said Louise. "Schools can opt to have a theatre group come into the school and prepare a performance with the class. It can also show kids that it's not just about performing, but about directing, set design, or make-up." The variety of

things available to do with it means that there is something for everybody. "I think more people would be involved if they realised how much more is involved," she said.

Involvement with these types of societies can often lead on to things that make a huge positive impact on other peoples' lives. "I was humbled to be asked to perform as a soloist for the charity single *Tiny Dancer, A Song for Lilly Mae* alongside Mary Black, Paddy Casey, Damien O'Rourke and others," said Louise. "The single went to Number 1 for a few weeks and we raised a lot of money for Lilly Mae," she said. "We even got to appear on the Late Late Show! It was amazing."

In mid-August, Louise will be lending her talents to another charity event, in the form of a concert. *Music From the Heart* will be performed at the Mullingar Arts Centre on Sat. 16th of August in aid of Evelina Children's Hospital where children from Ireland are sent for special care. "They are Ireland's leading hospital for heart services and specialists in kidney transplants, dialysis, cleft lip and palette surgery, metabolic conditions, allergy and neurology," said Louise. With a champagne reception to greet people to the concert, it's a great cause to support.

If you're in Manchester, in October, you can catch Louise performing as Reno Sweeney in *Anything Goes* in the Daneside Theatre. 



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Creagh Graveyard Restoration

By Kevin O'Connor

A celebration mass was recently held in Creagh Cemetery early in July, to mark the completion of the restoration project undertaken by Creagh Community Council. A large congregation attended with dark clouds looming overhead, which luckily staved off the deluge until after the ceremony. The eighteen month long project restored five cemeteries at the site and involved fitting and repositioning many of the fallen headstones and also general maintenance of the graves. The project will be handed over to a cemetery maintenance committee later this year.



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Longfellow, 1874 (Marituri Salutamus)*

Mill Race Nursing Home is located on Bridge Street on the Main N6 linking Dublin to Galway. It is conveniently situated in Ballinasloe town centre. Ballinasloe is nestled on the borders of Co. Galway and Roscommon and is the gate way to the west.

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Show Society Gearing Up For The Annual October Event

By Kevin O'Connor

The Show Society have been preparing for this year since late June, and are looking forward to this year's Show on Saturday October 4th to being even more impressive than last years.


The Society prides itself being older than the Royal Dubin show and has over 170 odd years of Shows under its belt. Coming on the opening weekend of the Fair the event should see the town flooded with visitors, from farmers inspecting the produce and livestock to agricultural and horsey tourists admiring the spectacle of one of Europe's oldest horse shows.

With 6 All-Ireland Show finals taking place this year, the committee has upped the prize money for each class from €60 to €100. "Another new aspect is that we've asked local schools to grow food for the show," said long serving Show Secretary, John Harney,

This year's show will again see a diverse range of classes, from horses, ponies, poultry and childrens art classes. Roughly 3,000 people are expected to attend the Showgrounds which has had further significant investment in facilities, which hopefully will have the 40-member committee, chaired by Fr Christy McCormack, plus the extra 30 volunteers on the day, working hard. "With all the cutbacks we see everywhere it's going to be a lot harder this year," said John. "The first thing we need



is a fine day, then, if we can get the same type and size of crowd we got last year, we'll be very happy."

People looking for more information on this year's Show can call into John Harney's Premises (CH Computer and Office Supplies, on Main Street, or call him on 087 210 5032). Entries will close midway through September. "We're always looking for new blood, new ideas and new volunteers to come in and join the team. We welcome anyone to get in contact if they'd like to help out," said John. Tickets for the Show are available for €10. 

More Success for Athletics Club

By Kevin O'Connor

The Ballinasloe Athletics Club has been running strong for the last decade, and is gaining momentum and clout as it develops into one of the most formidable clubs in the west. With around 100 members, the popularity of running in the area is plain to see, as is the massive success the club has recently enjoyed.

Among the clubs recent winners of All-Ireland medals in Tullamore are Aoibheann Fitzpatrick and Kayla McKeon, who both won Silver All-Ireland Medals in the Girls U9 600metre Paired Sprint.

Their success was followed by Conor Harley and Shane Fitzpatrick, who won Gold All-Ireland Medals in the Boys U11 600 metre Paired Sprint, where they cruised in a full 3 seconds faster than their nearest opponents. They added to their tally with U11 Gold Connacht Relay Medals, which they won along with teammates Joseph Tierney, Charlie Naughton and Mark Kilkenny. Veronica Burke continues to represent the club well internationally, recently picking up a Silver medal in the Small Nations Cup in Belgium in Race-Walking.

"The reason it's so popular is partly because of how much success the club is having," said Anne Burke, who has been



Some of the Athletes that represented Ballinasloe in the Community Games Front (L-R): Becky Cawley, Joseph Tierney, Shane Fitzpatrick, Eoin Connell, Clodagh Kileen, Caoimhe Ni Thuairisg, Kayla McKeon, Emma Mitchell, Rachael Hayes, Aoibheann Fitzpatrick, Ava McKeon, Roisin Greally. Back: Evan Hayes, Rowan Harley, Charlie Naughton, James Burke, Godfrey Gibbons, Tom Fitzpatrick, John Devine, Conor Harley, Shauna Mitchell, Katie Naughton, Maeve Deeley, Aoibheann Reilly, Saoirse Ni Thuairisg, Rachael Cawley.


involved in the club since its revival 10 years ago. "It also serves a great base for other sports. You always know which kids do Athletics because they're faster and fitter than the others."

"The facilities we have are also improving greatly. With the new track here for 3 years, works are almost finished on the new toilet & changing facilities at the track. "The roof is already on the building," said Anne. "We hope to see them completed within the next 6-8 weeks."

Track season has almost finished, and the club are preparing for cross-country season, which will run from September to Christmas. Indoor running takes place for the Spring and early Summer, at which point it goes back to track. "The only

break you'd get would be August. It's practically a year-long sport," Anne said.

People looking to join the club can come up to the running track during training, which takes place every Tuesday and Thursday from 6.15pm to 7pm, and on Sundays from 12pm to 1pm. "Training is never cancelled, unless there's thunder and lightning!" said club PRO Monica McKeon. "People can come to 2 or 3 trainings, and if they like it, they can get a registration card from us here," said Anne. Membership costs €40 for one child, €60 for two, and €90 for a full family for the year.

The club has a Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ballinasloe.ac.5 where regular updates are available. 



Golf Summer Camp

By Kevin O'Connor

The Golf Club was recently taken over by 30 youngsters, including several international students, eager to learn how to play the sport in their annual summer camp. Having run for over a decade, this year's sell-out camp brought the experience of the older coaches together with the enthusiasm of the younger pupils.

"The reason it's such fun is because you get to play on a real golf course with your friends," said Eoghan Costello. "You get to feel a bit like a pro."

"It's really fun and I've learned loads already," said Orla Madden, whose father is a member. "I have two friends doing the camp and all the other girls are really nice too. My favourite part is the putting so far."

This year's camp was limited to 30 spaces for health and safety reasons. Kids don't have to be members to take part in these camps and it cost €35 per youngster, with generous family discounts available. The camp was organised under

the direction of Michael Mulryan, who is a member of the Pro Golfers Association. "The kids were split into three groups of 10 and monitored by two volunteers each. Michael walked around to the different groups and demonstrated and corrected their technique," said Johnny Farrell, this year's camp co-ordinator and longstanding member.

The club has a magnificent structure in place for young people. Former athletes who came through the club's Junior Academy include Mark Quinn, who won the Connacht Boys Open in 1991, Nigel Howley, who won the Irish Youth Championships in 1996 and Mark Staunton, the Ulster Youth Champion 2003.

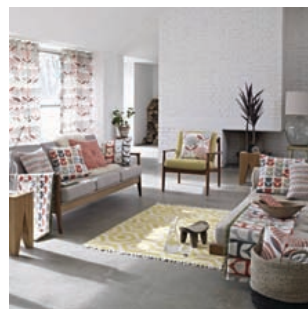
"Golf is popular because everyone can play," said Catherine Owens, last year's Ladies Captain. "The Handicap System means that you can play from any age, to any age. Brothers can play with sisters and parents can play with their children."

"We're continuing to develop more as a community club, that serves the locality in any way we can," said Joe Gaffney, the Men's Captain. Membership for a child/Junior costs €75 for the year and you can contact the club at 090 964 2126.

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Henry's Connacht Cup Record

By Kevin O'Connor

One of Ballinasloe's native sons made history recently and became the first person to win four Connacht Cup medals in soccer. Henry Loughnane, originally from St Grellans Terrace in Brackernagh, won his fourth Connacht Cup medal earlier this year, after Ballinasloe beat Castlebar in penalties.

"I started playing outside on the street," said Henry. "That's where every kid starts, is outside, kicking a ball against the wall. You have some of the best fun in your life playing out on the road." Henry joined Ballinasloe FC at age 10 in 1985 and started playing in midfield, before making the transition to forward in 1991. "Seán Riddell was captain of the Senior team and in the middle of one match he had a chat with the manager and put me up front. That season, I scored 29 goals over 14 matches and I've been up front ever since!"

Henry, who has been working for the Toll Bridge since 2011, had trials with English team Gillingham in 1991, at just 16 years old, the same year he started playing for the Senior team in Ballinasloe. "English teams had been over and back the year before and after we played them in a friendly, they invited us over for trials."

In 2002, Henry won his first Connacht Cup medal with Mervue United, with whom he played for six years, in a match against Castlebar where scored the winner and only goal. He won another



with Ballinasloe against Manulla in 2004 and twice more with Ballinasloe, in 2013 against Westport and in 2014 against Castlebar.

With the local soccer facilities as good as they are, it's no wonder the town has seen so much success in recent years, "Teams visiting the Curragh are always amazed at the stellar facilities we have. The two storey clubhouse is particularly impressive and there's always more developments going on," said Henry. "The club management have taken the grounds from just a field and goalposts, when I started out, to a State-of-the-Art facility, which are now among the best in Connacht, or indeed all of Ireland at an Intermediate level."

"The structure of the club means it's great for nurturing young talent too," he said. "With underage soccer starting at such a young age, the players are guided up through the ranks. From Under 8-18, you always see kids on the grounds, kicking around. Kids can't wait to wear the black and amber of Ballinasloe, so the club continues to develop and improve."

"I'm now playing with the over 35's in Ballinasloe and in another league in Mervue at the moment," said Henry. "I'm thinking of going down the road of refereeing in the next few years. I don't think I'd be too interested in coaching at this point, but hopefully, I'll be able to help out at the club in any way I can in the future."

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Coaches (L-R): Conor Payne (squatting), Ciarán Keary, Kevin Broderick, Unkown, Gary Egan (Main Coach), Unkown, Wayne Braithwaite, Unkown, Ian Fletcher (squatting).

By Kevin O'Connor

With many of us just recovering from World Cup Fever, the soccer club was busy training the next generation of football stars. Over 70 kids, from four to 14 took over the Curragh for one week in July, to learn the basics or hone their skills.

The young players were split into age groups and under the guidance of Head Coach Gary Egan, along with Wayne Braithwaite, Craig Keighery, Conor Payne, Ian Fletcher, Kieran Braithwaite and Ciarán Keighery.

The participating athletes received a goody-bag with shinguards and shinguard wrape, a gym sack, a 'Ballinasloe Town AFC' football and a participation medal, handed out by the main sponsor, Kevin Borderick, of Broderick's Pharmacy. Following the success of this year, the camp is certain to go ahead next year and will hopefully draw in even more young players.



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Tennis in Full Swing for Summer

Back (L-R): Shane Quinn, Mark Newton, Lauren Doherty, Gerard Colleran, Tara McKeon, Allana Donnellan, Ashling Murphy, Ronan Murphy, Rob Johnson. Middle: Roisin Grealy, Jack Finn, Emily Bradley, Tom Cafferkey, Joey Tierney, Emily Riddell, Holly Cafferkey, Ava McKeon, Aisling O'Brien, Aaron Hanrahan, Evan McKeon, Kyla McKeon. Front: Cian Whelan, Adam Newton, Kym Doherty, Chloe Greene, Cillian Greene, Roisin Finn, Lee Hanrahan, Cody Greene, James Reynolds, Fiona Zancanaro, Áine O'Brien, Evelinn Zancanaro.

By Kevin O'Connor

While Wimbledon was filling our screens again, the local Tennis Club was out in the heat of the day, busy training the next generation of tennis stars. With as many as 40 boys and girls attending each session, the love of the sport is clearly still alive and well locally. The camps were for people aged 6-17 and took place over 4 weeks.

"Many players have now joined the club, taking advantage of the reduced rates available for the camps and regular coaching season," said Garry Zancanaro, a coach with the club. "Junior members can participate in open, supervised sessions, so you can leave them play from 7-9pm and they'll be matched with players of a similar age and standard." The camps and trainings are run by professional coach Robert Johnson, someone who has been playing tennis locally for years. All players reap a huge benefit from Robert's experience and enthusiasm and they get regular opportunities to practice what they've learned.

With open mixed adult sessions taking place as well, members have started competing in inter-club competitions. With recent success for the club from Enda Staunton, Mike Johnson and Robert Johnson, more Junior and Senior Intra and Inter Club competitions are being planned for the months ahead. Talks are also underway with Galway County Council about finding the Tennis Club a new home. Until such time as a new facility is provided for the club, they will be remaining in their current home on the rugby grounds and are continuing to expand their activities, to the benefit of their members.

Annual Membership is available from just €15 and the club warmly welcomes people of any age. "Anyone can just turn up and try one of the open sessions first and of course, we welcome people of any standard. It's a great sport, it's great fun and a brilliant way to keep fit," said Garry.

Anyone looking to join the club can call Garry Zancanaro on 085 112 4197, Declan McKeon on 087 915 9771, or Joe Staunton on 087 252 1424, or see www.facebook.com/bsloetennisclub

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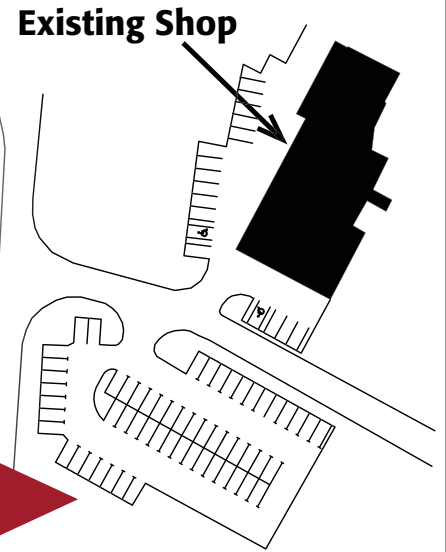
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Trouble Clefs' First Showcase

The Trouble Clefs, Ballinasloe's community choir, are holding their first showcase on September 6th in Haydens Hotel. Under the musical direction of Sarah Corcoran and Triona Waters these three choirs range in age from 5-years-old to the most senior adults. Beginning at 6.30pm this special evening is to showcase some of the songs the choir have prepared since last May for their first collective performance. Tickets can be purchased on the door, €5 for an adult and U15's go free. Contact 0851178405 for more details.

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Swimming: All-Weather Sport

By Kevin O'Connor

It's nice to be involved in a sport that you know will be going on whether it's raining or shining. The Ballinasloe Swimming Club is one club that can offer such security. "Training is never cancelled," said Declan McKeon Committee Member "There's never an issue with the weather, since the Municipal Swimming pool is indoors."

With 75 members, the club has brought in an impressive tally of medals and accolades this year. "Next year, we will have the option of joining the National Division Two," said Declan. "With so much success and talent around here, including some members winning Connacht Medals, it's clear that investment in the club is very worthwhile. It used to be that people who wanted to swim at Masters Level had to travel to Athlone S.C., but we now have the facilities here in Ballinasloe to take the club to that level. All it will take is more development and investment into the club and we could get back to the level we were reaching 30 years ago."

The club has invested in its three coaches and are now being tutored by one Level Two Swim Ireland Coach and two Level One coaches. "We'd hope to go even higher again and see further development of the club," he said. "We're always looking for more members for the committee too, for which we currently have five members."

Because of the amount of muscles being used, swimming is a very intense sport. The local club trains three times a week, with the main squad training five times a week. Ability does not always correspond to age, however. "It depends on the child, you could have a nine year old that's faster than a 14 year old in some cases," said Declan.

Swimming can benefit other aspects of a sporting career, this is something that the club advocates. "We encourage people in the club to get involved in other sports," said Declan.

Anyone looking to join the club can contact Declan at 087 915 9771, or find them on Facebook: 'Ballinasloe Swimming Club'



Front Row (L-R): Evan McKeon, Kayla McKeon, Caoimhe Kennedy, Leon McKeon, Ava Brehony, Fionnan Darcy, Kayla McKeon, Charlene Grenham. Back Row (L-R): Kayetan Jagielski (Head Coach), Tara McKeon, Declan McKeon (Club Chairperson), Rita Warde, Fintan Kennedy (Club Secretary), Alana Higgins, Ciara Warde, Ethan Moran, Maeve Glennon, Cian Brehony, Hannan Gullane, Cahal King (Coach).



U13 Boys Relay Team Representing Galway in the National Community Games Finals, (L-R) Adam McGreal, James Mooney, Fionnan Darcy & Killian Murphy.



U13 Girls Relay Team Representing Galway in the National Community Games Finals (L-R) Tara McKeon, Caoimhe Kennedy, Sarah McGreal & Ruth Dolan.

Garbally View Nursing Home

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Annual Karate Club Roundup

Itosu-Kai Karatedo Ireland IKKI

By Kevin O'Connor

It has been a busy year for the Ballinasloe Karate Club since their success in the IKIF World Championships in Osaka, Japan, last year. Outside of normal training sessions, several club members represented Ireland under NGB National Coach Marie Dolphin at the British Open Karate Championships in September, where club member Karen Dolphin took home a silver medal in the Ladies Senior Kata.

The IKKI National Championships took place in November in the Carlton and was attended by all the IKKI Clubs, from Ballinasloe, New Inn, Galway City, Loughrea, Kiltormer, Eyrecourt, Mountrath, Shinrone and Mountbellew. "It was a great venue and there was great excitement, particularly from the Junior matches," said Leo Mulvany, IKKI Chief Instructor.

December saw the culmination of years of hard work, dedication and practice, with many students taking their Black Belt Exam. Reaching Black Belt represents an important milestone in any athlete's career, something 13 of Ballinasloe's club members finally reached, with one, Pamela Nee, progressing to Third Dan.

In February, three IKKI squad members, Jean Kennedy, Eimear Porter and Kian Porter, led by IKKI/NGB Kata coach Marie Dolphin, represented Ireland at the EKF Junior Championships in Lisbon, Portugal. In this fantastic tournament, the team got the opportunity to test their skills against some of the best that Europe has to offer. In the same month, 22 IKKI students took part in the Academy of Shotokan Karate Open Championships in Newmarket-on-Fergus.

The IKKI took 24 medals from the competition which was attended by top teams from all over Ireland. April saw a tremendous turnout at the IKKI National Karate Championships

in the Shearwater Hotel. Students from all the clubs competed in exhilarating Kata and Kumite. The Ballinasloe club moved location in March, after many great years, from the Recreation Hall in St. Brigids Hospital to the Gaelscoil (Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh), Garbally Drive.

"Besides competition at National and International level, our core work is teaching traditional Japanese Okinawan Karate and Kobudo (ancient art of weaponry)," said Leo Mulvany, IKKI Chief Instructor. "Training takes place in the Gaelscoil on Tuesdays and Thursday nights and we run occasional sessions and seminars at weekends."

For more information on the club, see www.itosukaiireland.org



Progressing to 1st Dan black belt, Back (L-R): Marcus Doherty, Joe Ward, Shane Kilkenny, Michelle Nevin, Alisha Burke, Caitlin Dunphy, Pamela Nee and Jean Carter (Pamela Nee ranked to 3rd Dan Karatedo). Middle left: Kian Porter and Evan Dowd, Eimear Porter, Layla Ward, Aaron McGreal & Evan Donelan. Seated (examiners): Front (L-R), Shane Dolphin, John Dolphin, Leo Mulvany (IKKI Chief Instructor), Marie Dolphin & Donal Monahan.

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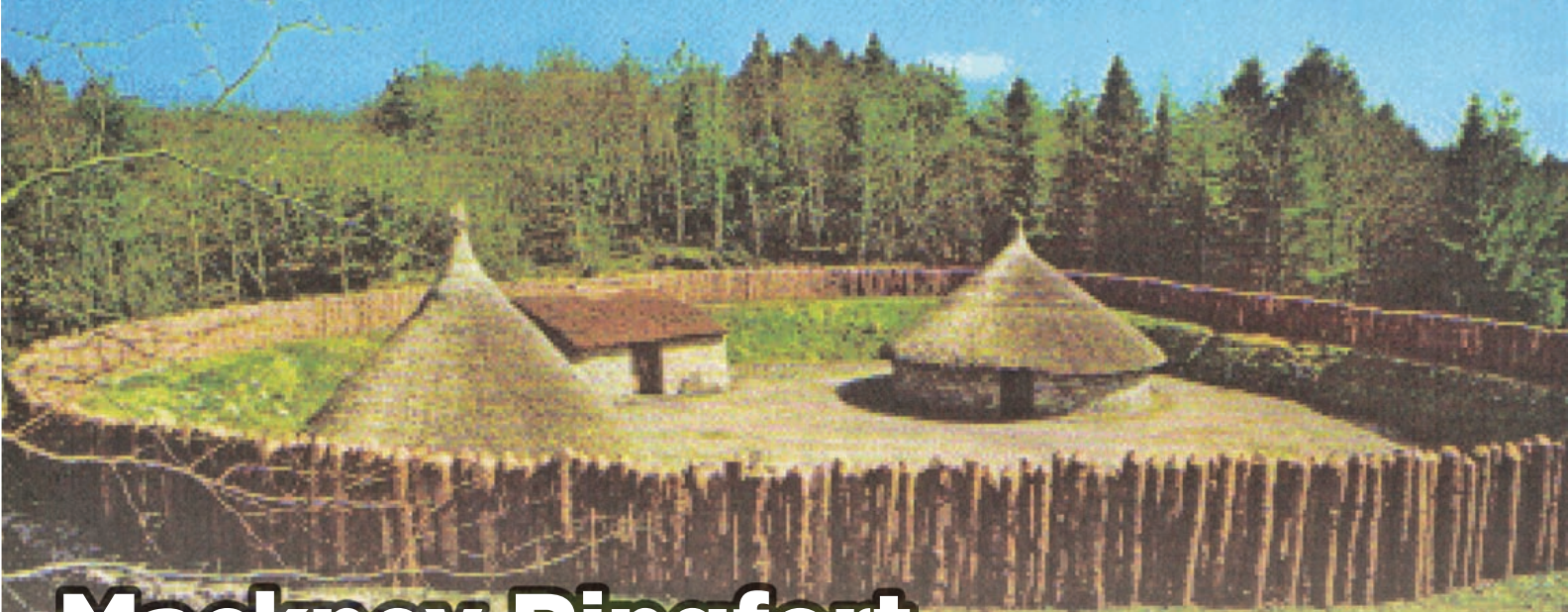
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Mackney Ringfort

An example of a Ringfort

By Barry Lally

Unquestionably the most important archaeological excavation ever carried out in this parish was that undertaken at the Mackney ringfort in 2006 prior to the construction of the N6 motorway.

Ringforts are the most common field monuments in Ireland, there being an estimated 45,000 examples extant. The term, however, is misleading, since they never had a military function. Many were simple animal enclosures, while others were defended farmsteads or the dwelling-places of the professional classes and the aristocracy. Mostly built between 500 A.D and 1100, in some instances they continued to be occupied up to the end of the middle ages and even beyond.

A ringfort was constructed by digging a circular ditch and forming an internal bank from the excavated soil. On the bank a stockade was set to repel intruders. A section to serve as an entrance was left undug, usually on the south-east circumference and protected by a gate or gate-house. If the ringfort was intended for habitation, one or two large, timber-frame, round or rectangular huts would be built within the enclosure. The roofs were thatched and the walls were of wattle-and-daub (wicker-work plastered with a mixture of mud and cow-dung). Smoke from a central hearth escaped through a hole in the roof.

Ringforts offered a measure of protection at a time when lightning raids for cattle and slaves were commonplace and souterrains were part of their defensive armoury. These were built by digging a trench, lining the walls with a dry-stone revetment and roofing the structure with stone slabs. Basically places of refuges, they may also have been used to store food. Colloquially referred to as fairy forts, ringforts used to be regarded



with a great deal of superstitious awe. Initially they were probably respected as the abodes of the ancestors, who in time became conflated with the “good people”. These beliefs have in part accounted for the fact that so many ringforts survived to the present day.

Unconsecrated burial grounds, known as “killeens” and by various other names, mostly used in the post-medieval period to inter still-born infants and unbaptised children, are often located in ringforts and in fact this is the case of more than half the “killeens” in Co. Galway. Popular superstition would certainly have guaranteed the bodies against disturbance at these sites.

Challenging the conventional perception of Ireland in the early middle ages as an island of saints and scholars, ringforts serve to remind us that slavery persisted for longer here than in any other European country. It only went into decline in the twelfth century after the Anglo-Norman invasion, an event the Church interpreted as an act of divine retribution on the Irish for continuing to enslave their fellow-humans.

Situated about mile south-west of the town, close to the site of the residence of Archdeacon Trench, who died in 1839, the Mackney ringfort was unknown prior to 2004. In fact it had almost disappeared from the landscape when

an archaeologist who was conducting a preliminary survey noticed a curved bump in a field. Excavation revealed a levelled ringfort enclosed by a single bank and ditch of unusual depth and width encompassing an area almost twice the normal diameter of 100 feet.

Clearly this had once been the home of a person of consequence. Dating from the eight century, the ringfort seems to have been occupied for several hundred years, with suggestions of activity associated with iron-smelting extending into the 1600s. It contained a twin-chamber, L-shaped souterrain accessed by a flight of stone steps. Post holes indicated the presence of two circular houses, while charcoal deposits in pits near the north-east entrance testified to extensive metal working.

What makes the Mackney ringfort exceptional if not unique is that in the re-use of the site as a burial ground, following the abandonment of the settlement, the majority of the bodies were interred in the south-west arc of the ditch rather than within the enclosure, which would have been the usual practice. A possible explanation of the concentration of the burials in this area is the close proximity of the souterrain, which may have been regarded as some sort of portal to the netherworld. Of the 143 skeletons excavated only three were of adults, the rest being infants and children under six years old. Most appear to have been interred respectfully with evidence of shroud use.

The significance of the Mackney ringfort lies in the fact that it was one of the few such monuments ever to have been properly excavated. Though the site was eventually obliterated by the motorway, a meticulously detailed record remains, adding to the fund of knowledge of how our forebears lived a millennium and more ago.



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 Station. The Station is towards the far end of the street, on the right hand side. Also on this street, over Dolan's Electrical Shop, you can see another fine example of Diocletian windows.

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

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



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