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Vol. 8 Issue 1: April '18 - May '18

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REAMHRA

Little did one think, when musing how to kick off Vol 8 (which means the eighth year) of this still growing and evolving magazine that I would be penning this piece in the wake of the tragedy that has befallen beautiful people, and wonderful families. All of us associated with the Company, and the Magazine offer our heartfelt sympathies and again reiterate our thanks to the first responders based in our midst.

The phrase "words fail" is often heard at time like these. But they, along with gestures of solidarity, the guards of honour, cancelling of events of the weekend by a host of clubs and organisations that had direct connections, the calling to pay respects and helping with the practicalities of bereavement that eventually calls to all our doors.

There can be no real comfort from words in coping with such a shocking loss-however some solace has to be found in the generous way in which the community has rallied round in a sensitive, respectful and caring way to the devastating news that came from Station Road. Often our finest moments to remind us of the key thing that matter most, come in the depths of adversity.

In response to subscribers on the one hand and readers on the other we have added another 8 pages which will allow for more balanced space between much needed advertising and the ability to carry more photographs from activities. Personally I thank all our old and new subscribers and advertisers and salute the contributors and readers who react honestly on our contents.

Traversing the country is something I do as part of my day job – visiting towns and villages to assist with festival/event or marketing development and I have seen a fair share of these provincial and peripheral places over the past dozen years or so. Both boom and bust have taken different tolls and left legacies but always on return from my travels; I am astounded at the abundance of activity, energy, opportunity and possibility in our own community but still a tad despondent at how sometimes we see the glass half empty! If we need reminding of some of the positives – just look back through any of the pages of the past 42 editions!

Ireland 2040 was published with much fanfare but again the political classes are scratching their heads at what to do for small towns. The plan asks the wrong question – it's not what can be done for us but with us!!!

Le Gach De Ghui, **COLM CROFFY**, Editor.



Ballinasloe LIFE no 43. The vision of producing 3,000 copies of a 32 page magazine on a bi-monthly basis seemed like a challenging experience back at Christmas 2010 and not alone has it survived-it has gone from strength to strength. For the first time we are now moving to 64 page issues and printing 37,500 per annum. The volume of activities in the Ballinasloe Postal Area including South Roscommon has dictated this.

Footfall and traffic volumes in the area has most definitely increased in the last 12 months and maybe for the first time in a long time the ripple is coming out from our Capital City.

CSO Unemployment figures released last week show a drop of 16% year on year in the Ballinasloe Area which is the biggest drop in the county and not far of the National Figure of 6% which is over half what it was 10 years ago.

Employee numbers in our IDA site and Enterprise Centre were never as high and we in BACD are having meaningful discussions with the IDA and potential investors to develop the 15,000 sq ft Building for which Full Planning Permission was recently received. Much thanks to our local Credit Union who financially supported us to the tune of €30,000 in achieving this.

In this issue we have several new Businesses opening in the Town Centre and others celebrating many years in Business and wish them and all our subscribers continued success.

Congrats to the St. Joseph's College, Garbally on winning the Senior Cup, all of these lads have delivered Ballinasloe Life Magazines through your letter boxes.

On a final thought, when the country shut down for 3 days the local shop became very important again, don't forget them for the other 362 days of the year!!

SEAMUS DUFFY,

Chairman Ballinasloe Area Community Development Limited.



Articles and Photos Welcome

NEXT ISSUE
Deadline 15th May

For submission of articles, please email:
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Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre
An initiative of Ballinasloe Area Community Development Ltd.

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MINISTER NAUGHTEN LAUNCHES INNOVATIVE PROJECT 'REIMAGINING ST. BRIGID'S'

Upcoming survey to share your thoughts on potential future uses of St. Brigid's Hospital site

Local Minister Denis Naughten has announced details of a new project he, in conjunction with Ballinasloe Town Team are undertaking – 'Reimagining St Brigid's' – which aims to stimulate debate on the future of the Creagh, neighbourhood site.

"St Brigid's Hospital is an iconic landmark in Ballinasloe. With the assistance of the public, this project will be the first step in reimagining what the future could hold for it," explained Minister Naughten.

As part of this project, Minister Naughten will be inviting everyone with views on the future of the St. Brigid's Hospital campus to spend a few moments completing an online survey, which will explore how people use the town and its amenities, and what they think is missing.

"This is an exploratory process and each survey response will be read and analysed and form part of a wider discussion on the potential future use of this site," added the Minister.

The survey will be available on www.DenisNaughten.ie in early April and will run through the month.



NOT JUST ANIMALS FUNDRAISER

Local artists are coming together to support a fundraising event called 'Not Just Animals' for the Galway SPCA, which will provide a variety of reasonably priced artworks for sale with all proceeds going to support the local animal sanctuary in Heathlawn, Killimor.

A charity art exhibition will officially open at 8pm on the 1st of June in the Crumbs & Cream coffee shop, showing artwork which is donated by artists from Ballinasloe and surrounding areas. Some of the artists will include members from the Gables Art Group Artists plus many more. Local Artist Jackie Eastwood of Creagh, who is also part of GSPCA is appealing for any artists to come and get involved for the event.

The sanctuary, based in Heathlawn, Killimor, is run by a team of staff and volunteers from local areas, who provides a rescue, rehabilitation and rehoming service for abused and neglected animals around the county of Galway. They also operate a lost and found service for cats and dogs and several other animals too.

On behalf of the GSPCA, member Anita Broadmore says; "It takes an awful lot of money to fund the necessary veterinary care and supplies for all the animals that arrive at the sanctuary in Killimor and the city cattery".



Jackie Eastwood with some of her art exhibits.

"So, if you fancy purchasing a reasonably priced painting or wish to support the GSPCA please come along on the night to meet some of the artists and volunteers".

For more information about Galway SPCA, find them on Facebook or email info@galwayspca.com.

DENIS NAUGHTEN T.D.

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LOCAL ROADS DRAFT PROGRAMME APPROVED

Details of the 2018 Roads Programme have been released by Galway County Council, with grants, repairs and upgrading information for the Ballinasloe Municipal District specifically included.

The Restoration and Improvement budget for roadworks this year has increased from €2,162,127 to €2,323,961, whereas the Restoration Maintenance (Surface Dressing) has been upped from €533,419 to €640,252.

In 2015 Eyrecourt received a €250,000 grant in the Village Upgrade Scheme under the Road Programme while next year Ahascragh will receive the same amount of funding for enhancement.

The local Regional Roads general maintenance funds are listed at €331,740, along with the Local Roads general maintenance is up to €434,502. Bridge repairs have also been included in this category, with €10,000 being allocated to the Ballinasloe District, which looks to be a small figure compared to the Tuam District receiving €157,500 for their bridge works. A once-off Capital Grant of €50,000 has been awarded for the maintenance of the Breefield Bridge on the New Inn Road.

€250,000 was allocated for Safety Improvement Works, which was divided between each District in Galway County, with Ballinasloe District receiving none. In comparison Tuam was given €55,000 out of these funds, with Loughrea taking €110,000 from the kitty.

Nutfield Cross, on the Kilconnell road, has been given €300,000 under the Specific Improvements Grant, which is aimed at improving the quality and reliability of economic and social infrastructure.

Flooding has been one of the biggest issues around County Galway, therefore a Drainage Grant has been issued to all Districts to help prevent more damage from being caused. Ballinasloe lags behind Connemara, Loughrea and Tuam from the divided grant by receiving €133,628 out of a total €690,000.

The total National Maintenance allocation for the Municipal District comes to €28,441, Regional Maintenance at €331,740, and Local Road Maintenance Discretionary with Council Resources caps off at €659,359.

Given the huge uproar by many local house owners and Residents Associations over the recent grass cutting withdrawal of service at a recent monthly meeting of the Municipal District Council, the views of the majority Councillors were to cost the contracting of grass cutting and open space maintenance in the private (taken in charge) estates and to divert some of the local roads and notice of motion monies to this. It is anticipated that it will be the April meeting that this decision will be decided upon finally.

For more information on the Roads Scheme 2018 please refer to the Galway County Council Website under the Planning Sector. Telephone numbers and email addresses for the Council can also be found on their webpage.

2018 – TERTIARY ROAD REPAIRS			
Road Name	Work Type	Lenght of Work (M)	Estimated Cost of Work (€)
Crannagh	S0	240	€9,108
Cross	S0	657	€23,120
Castlegar	S0	600	€23,460
Easterfield	S0	600	€20,700
Easterfield	S0	100	€3,565
Colmanstown	S0	500	€17,267
Addergoole	S0	700	€26,565
Mackney	S0	600	€20,700
Cloonkeen East/ Cloonkeen West	S0	357	€12,322
TOTAL MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BALLINASLOE			€156,807

2018 – RESTORATION MAINTENANCE (SURFACE DRESSING)		
ROAD NAME	Lenght of Work (m)	Estimated Cost of Work (€)
Crannagh (Greenville)	240	€3,564
Cross	657	€9,047
Castlegar	600	€9,180
Easterfield	600	€8,100
Easterfield	100	€1,395
Colmanstown	500	€6,750
Creggaun	2,200	€72,600
Killuppaun	1500	€49,500
Sonnagh	1000	€33,000
Killure More	1000	€33,000
Castleffrench	1000	€33,000

Castleffrench	1000	€33,000
Hollygrove	1880	€62,040
Fairhill	1500	€42,780
Addergoole	700	€10,395
Mackney	600	€8,100
Cloonkeen	357	€4,820
East/Cloonkeen West		
Creagh/ Atticorra	820	€31,570
Kilmalaw	2200	€78,650
Kylemore	1920	€32,832
Ballynakill	2,331	€76,928
TOTAL MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BALLINASLOE	€640,251	



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*Principal: Eimear Loughnane B.A., L.L.B.
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MUNICIPAL DISTRICT SCHEDULE OF WORKS 2018

This is the schedule of proposed works and activities being funded by Galway County Council to cover the core activities of the old Urban District Council as approved at their annual budgetary meeting earlier this year

Service Area-Environment	Repairs and Maintenance	Number of Units/ Locations	Proposed Allocation	Estate Management	Headquarters relates to expenditure not directly attributable to specific houses e.g. Training, equipment, tool allowances etc.		€ 10,400.00
Bring Bank Maintenance	(Grants to committees who assist in maintenance of bring banks and upgrades)		€ 6,800.00				
Operation of Civic Amenity Sites	Ballinasloe		€ 41,450.00				
Litter Control (excludes central provision for Spring Clean, Clean ups and CCTV)	(Annual allocation per area for Litter Control small equipment, materials etc.)		€ 8,000.00				
Burial Ground Caretakers Payaments			€ 35,301.00				
Burial Ground Maintenance (excluding grants to Committees)	(Annual maintenance allowance to area offices and upkeep)		€ 55,000.00				
Service Area-Housing	Repairs and Maintenance	Number of Units/ Locations	Proposed Allocation	Service Area-Recreation and Amenity	Repairs and Maintenance	Number of Units/ Locations	Proposed Allocation
House Maintenance	House Maintenance Budget takes the overall adopted estimate for 2018 and apportions same across MD's on the basis of number of units in each MD	552 Housing Units in Municipal District	€ 239,071.00	Park & Open Space	This schedule includes open spaces in Ballinasloe and 15k towards the operation/ maintenance of Dunlo Recreation Park (running track and changing facilities)	Open Spaces, Ballinasloe & Dunlo Recreational Park	€ 136,000.00
				Playgrounds	The County allocation for Council wend and managed Playgrounds in €22,500. The funding balance is allocated by District towards: Bulk purchases chippings/minor repair, GEOPAL Inspection Software, Annual ROSPA Inspections by Council Warden Service. Remainder of Playgrounds in the District are insured by the Council but maintained by Community Groups	5 sites in Ballinasloe Town: Kilgarve Park, Ballinasloe Leisure Centre, Hymany, Meadowbrook Estate, St. Michael's Estate	€ 5,000.00
Service Area - Environment	Repairs and Maintenance	Number of Units/ Locations	Proposed Allocation	Swimming Facilities	Ballinasloe Leisure Centre is operated under tender to a private operator. This relates to Essential maintenance outside of operational obligations.	Ballinasloe Leisure Centre	€ 19,500.00 (Maintenance)
Estate Maintenance	Estate Maintenance/ Management Budget takes the overall adopted estimate for 2018, and based on contractual commitments, apportioning same across MD's on the basis of previous year's expenditure profile		€ 24,739.00				

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NEW ITALIAN RESTAURANT FOR DUCKS



Proprietor Simon and Chef Nickolai of Venezia.

East Galway and South Roscommon's discerning food lovers are in for a treat with the opening this Easter of a new 80 cover Italian Restaurant in the former "Duck Inn." The new Italian Family Orientated Restaurant will be open from lunchtime right through till 10.00 pm, Mon thru to Saturday, with an earlier closing time of 9.30 on Sunday night.

The new owner is no stranger to the Italian Restaurant business having opened and ran the very successful and popular Venezia Italian Restaurant in lower Abbeygate St. in Galway.

When Samir (better known as Simon) Bega took the lease on a small 28 seater restaurant in 2011 at the height of the recession, little did he know that he would be moving to a larger premises in 2015 and then opening his first county restaurant in 2018! Samir came to Ireland in 1999 and worked in catering in Dublin for a few years before moving to Galway and finetuning his craft in Mc Swiggans and also as a supervisor with Supermacs. He is happily married with four youngsters from 16 to 3 and a half years, and living in the picturesque village of Craughwell.

He reckons it was listening to his city

customers who have him the push to research a premises for the concept in the Eastern side of the county. "Many of my regular customers were coming from this part of the county and even South Roscommon and they kept saying to us – we would love something like this closer to home for formal and informal night outs" stated Simon.

He spent a couple of months prospecting around towns and finally settled on Ballinasloe and the Sweeney Bar premises as it ticked all his boxes. "We could keep the full bar licence, we had a premises that had history, excellent space, easy access from the Motorway, great parking nearby and a fabulous catchment area of people who like to eat on special occasions and more importantly just have to eat but with our busy lives-have not always the time!" reflects Simon.

The restaurant's head chef is Nickolas Erhardt who has come from Second chef at the Nox Hotel, and is moving from the Basilico Restaurant via La Collina in Galway (some 9 years of Italian cheffing behind him)- he will be cooking authentic Italian cuisine for affordable dining.

When asked what will mark this eatery out as different from the oodles of Pizza and Pasta places that dot the landscape he replies "We are not reheating pre-cooked food, we will be cooking from scratch; all our breads, sauces and desserts are being made on the premises and every meal will be authentically hand cooked for our clients".

Looking at the menu – they will be offering homemade, thin crispy base pizzas from €10 to €15 on average, depending on the toppings. All



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the famous pasta dishes – the Bolognese, the Carbonara etc. can be selected from between €10 to €15 each. All their fish will be sourced fresh from Galway and Clare fishmongers and pan seared for table.

A full draught bar service will complement the usual Italian wine card replete with the staples – like Chianti, Vallpolicella, Sangiovese, Montepulciano d’Abruzzo, Pino Grigo as well as all the usual pre and post dinner drinks – especially the Limoncello!

The emphasis on style is informal-there will be no one handing you a

jacket for evening dinner! - with families especially welcome but they will also be able to cater for private parties up to a number of 45.

So Simon has the last word “we look forward to meeting again many of our regular city customers who are county based and we are especially excited about introducing authentic Italian food to a new audience here in Ballinasloe.” For bookings call 09096 46483 or visit their facebook page Venezia Restaurant.

BY IAN O’BOYLE

SWEENEY BROTHERS TO CONCENTRATE ON NEW BUSINESS

Earlier this year one of Dunlo Street’s best known and longest family run businesses “The Duck Inn” closed its door as a Pub for the last time after nearly seventy years being run as a public house by the Dolan/Sweeney family.

The licence was granted in the 1870’s. It was passed down the generations, was leased for a good many years in the 1900’s, the Sweeneys’ grandmother bought back the lease in 1950 and it was run by the family since.

Known as “The Duck Inn” or colloquially “Ducks” was a very popular haunt for locals and especially for the discerning pint drinkers who loved long after banquet wedding speeches in Hayden’s Hotel! Sean and Gerard who ran the premises (since their father passed) would sincerely like to thank all their staff and customers for their support down through the years: “We had some great times, wonderful days and met some great characters and we were very lucky with the staff and clientele that we had” stated Sean.

However the duo are not leaving the world of business,



with the downturn in the bar trade, changing footfall pattern to the street and neither of them having a background in food they decided to concentrate on our new venture. “The bar/lounge will soon be reopening as Venezia Italian Bar Restaurant, We would like to wish our new tenants - Simir & Nico and all at Venezia all the best with their new Bar & Restaurant” said Gerry.

The Sweeney brothers have embarked on a new venture, digital wide format printing signs and graphics. At Dunlo Engrave & Print they manufacture roadside advertising signs, shop signs, party boards, they can brand vehicles, composite aluminium signs, banners, T shirts, Caps, wedding name plates, window graphics and frosting, name badges, door plates to name but a few. If you have a design well and good if not they can make one up for you. Banner Signs, once copy if approved can take a couple of hours, posters couple of hours, leaflets a day.

The brothers have also done a lot of shopfront and business signage in the West and Midlands which can take up to a couple of days all depending on how much design has to be done on the location and project. Sean and Gerry will be working from the upstairs of the old Bar premises and can be contacted by Email: dunloengraveandprint@gmail.com or Phone: 090-9642179.

BY IAN O’BOYLE



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GALWAY RURAL DEVELOPMENT MOVE TO DUNLO ST. LOCATION

Galway Rural Development (GRD)

has just moved to new offices in Dunlo St. besides the former Hayden's Hotel. GRD was first set up in 1994 and currently administers the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP), LEADER, the Rural Social Scheme (RSS), and the TÚS Programme. GRD also acts as a sponsor of a Community Employment Scheme for the Craughwell area.

Delia Colohan, CEO of Galway Rural Development Company said "GRD is committed to enhancing and supporting the abilities of individuals, communities and enterprises in rural towns and villages to take part in the economic and social development of their area; we do this through the provision of guidance, practical support and resources. For many years our Employment Mediator was based in River View, offering support for people looking to get back into education, training and employment."

Commenting on the new location Delia said "our new 5 year SICAP tender is really focused on the personal development side and providing people more with a hand up as opposed to perhaps a handout - for many of our new target groups we need better visibility and this high street presence will allow the passer by to pop in and enquire possibly about a neighbour who has poor English or their 16 year old son who needs to get back to training . Being open 9 to 1 and 2 to 5 Mon to Friday will help us reach out and connect with more client organisations and individuals."



L-R: Felicity Hannon - Admin Support, Martin Ward - Community Development Officer, Delia Colohan - CEO, Linda Cummins - Tús Supervisor, Mary Ward - Receptionist / Admin Support, Marie Finnerty - Employment Officer.

The staff in the office now are:

MARIE FINNERTY is the Employment Officer providing pre-employment support to individuals. She identifies and organises educational and training support to facilitate the development of individuals by liaising with in-house Education Officers, Colleges and other training providers. Marie runs small interactive workshops such as CV development, Job searching and Interview skills and also organises driver theory training for people who are unemployed.

MARTIN WARD is the Community Development Officer responsible for ensuring delivery of SICAP for GRD in the Ballinasloe area. Part of his role is to provide tailored support to local community groups. This is achieved in many ways such as training, mentoring as well as building the capacity of community groups to access services and supports.

LINDA CUMMINS is a supervisor for the TÚS Job Activation scheme for Ballinasloe and surrounding areas. TÚS provides short-term, quality work opportunities for those who are unemployed and provides certain services of benefit to communities. Participants have an opportunity to

gain good experience in a working environment, learn new skills in an area that matches their abilities and improve their work readiness. People can put themselves forward for TUS by a Self-Referral process, and may also be identified by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

FELICITY HANNON is the SICAP Administrative Support. She oversees the administrative operations of the office and offers excellent assistance to all staff members.

MARY WARD is the front office Receptionist and Administrative Assistant. Mary is the first

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point of contact for the office and ensures the smooth flow of all correspondence.

The Ballinasloe Office is also used by Michael Burke, our Back to Work Enterprise Officer, who can advise on setting up self-employed businesses and our Youth Development Officer, James Applegate who works with young people.

Here is an example from a young person that James Applegate worked with:

"Sean, a 24-year-old man and an early school leaver, self-referred to the GRD Youth Development Officer. He expressed an interest in a career in the security industry and successfully completed a GRD funded Safe Pass course, a Manual Handling course and a QQI Level 4 Door and Guarding Skills Security course. Following this, GRD staff assisted him in applying for his PSA security licence and provided him with CV and interview skills supports. As a consequence of his engagement with GRD and the supports offered to him, Sean's self-esteem and self-worth has increased. He is highly motivated to progress into employment and is currently applying for work with security companies looking for long term employment." (The name has been changed to protect the identity).

The team at GRD understands that social exclusion is something that affects a wide variety of groups and can upset a number of areas in a person's life. Because of this, they have been tackling social exclusion through targeted supports and services and are proud to provide an all-inclusive approach in the delivery of our programmes, as well as

a commitment to make sure all members of society have access to information, education and services. They have a united and shared approach when working with other agencies in these areas.

The contact details for the Ballinasloe Office are: Telephone: 090 9645111 Email: ballinasloe@grd.ie



BY IAN O'BOYLE

A memorial image featuring two circular portraits of women, Deirdre Kilmartin on the left and Maureen Dooley on the right. Each portrait is set against a dark background with a lit candle. The text in the center reads: "The sympathy of the entire community is extended to the families of all those involved in the recent tragedy at Station Road, Ballinasloe in which Deirdre Kilmartin (on left) and Maureen Dooley (on right) lost their lives. May they Rest in Peace."/>

The sympathy of the entire community is extended to the families of all those involved in the recent tragedy at Station Road, Ballinasloe in which Deirdre Kilmartin (on left) and Maureen Dooley (on right) lost their lives.

May they Rest in Peace.



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NATIONAL AWARD FOR MAIN ST. JEWELLERS

Local Ballinasloe business woman Maureen Cahalan of Cahalan Jewellers, took first prize for the Retail Business of the year in this year's Irish ISME (Small Medium Enterprise) Business Award, following an online campaign which saw nominations flood in from all across the country.

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are businesses whose personnel numbers are 250 employees or less. SMEs are also responsible for driving innovation and competition in many economic sectors.

"I was contacted by the SME to tell me my business was nominated for the award, I did not know what to expect. When I found out that we won there was great excitement" stated Maureen.

"Without my staff members this achievement would not have been possible, they are the worthiest of this award. It feels wonderful to be

able to use The Irish SME Business Award 2018 on all our letterheads and correspondence going forward" outlined Maureen.

"I would highly recommend people to nominate more businesses from Ballinasloe for the award as this would put our town in the headlines more frequently, which in return could attract more companies to locate in our midst".

**THE
IRISH SME
BUSINESS
AWARDS 2018
WINNER**



REFURBISHMENT OF GARDA STATION WELCOMED

Fine Gael Senator Maura Hopkins has welcomed the refurbishment works on Ballinasloe Garda Station. She said "These works include a major refurbishment of the station including new office space and reception area as well as the development of new custody facilities.

"I am delighted to see that works have now commenced. Having visited the station on several occasions, I have been raising the need for these upgrades for several years. Capital Funding for this project was provided by former Minister for Justice, Frances Fitzgerald T.D. in late 2015. When the works are completed, the upgrades will allow the Gardaí to provide an enhanced service to the public in terms of supporting victims and investigating crime. The Station will also have better facilities for members and staff" she added.

Over 40 Gardaí are based at the station which is the headquarters

for the Ballinasloe district covering areas including Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Ballygar, Mountbellew, Kiltormer, Kilconnell, Moylough and Creggs.

Senator Hopkins concluded, "It is anticipated that these works will be completed by October and I welcome the new facilities."



Former Senator Michael Mullins, Cllr. Aidan Donohue, Senator Maura Hopkins with former Minister for Justice, Frances Fitzgerald T.D. with Supt. A. Foley and Sgt. P. Keaveney.

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DUBARRY'S LONG-SERVING EMPLOYEES RETIRE

Three long-serving members of Dubarry in Ballinasloe, with over 116 years of service between them, have retired from the workforce and were honoured by management at a retirement function.

JOHN BURKE started his employment in Dubarry on 13th January 1969 where he began as a Factory Operative. In later years he became a Factory Supervisor, and more recently worked as part of the Dubarry Service Team.

TONY COYNE began in Dubarry on 3rd January 1989 where he undertook the role of Clicker in the Clicking Room. Like John, he also worked as part of the Dubarry Service Team. Both Tony and John had a brief interruption in service in late 2004/early 2005 as part of the restructuring that took place at that time.

MICHAEL FLYNN entered Dubarry on 16th May 1977. He first served in the Transport Office, under Joe Duffy. As time and technology advanced, so did Michael, and he trained in computer programming. Since then, Michael has headed up the IT department, making sure Dubarry and its employees were kept up to date with the latest technology and devices.

Each of the trio were very popular employees and contributed tremendously to the Dubarry brand during their years of service. Their absence will be sadly missed by their colleagues while management would like to sincerely thank them for their hard work and dedication during their employment.



Pictured above are Michael Flynn, Tony Coyne and John Burke with Michael Larkin (Financial Director, Dubarry of Ireland) during their retirement presentation, which took place in the Shearwater Hotel.

BY KEN KELLY

DOWNEYS ON SITE CATERING

Downeys Bar and Restaurant, Society Street, are offering full food catering for events such as Christenings, Communions, Parties and even Weddings along with much more.

Downeys first opened their doors back in the year 2000, starting off as just a Public House, before the addition of a Restaurant to the premises in 2002. There are currently nine staff members employed, three full time and six part time. All are employed locally from the town and surrounding areas.

Catered food is done by Proprietor/Manger Marina and Carmel Kenny, along with the chefs Steve Hogan and Colin McGrath. All foods are available upon request such as sandwiches, finger food, to hot dishes such as curry's, lasagne and all meats.

"We cater for all budgets available, with a fine range of choices for all ages and tastes. Gluten free and other dietary foods are also available upon request" says Maria.

Bookings can be made by contacting 090 964 6018.



Marina Downey with her catering selection.

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NUXE PROMOTION ON FRIDAY APRIL 27TH

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COOPER PLAN MAJOR EXPANSION

BY KEN KELLY

A Ballinasloe sports outlet, in its fourteenth year of trading, has now decided to expand into the rugby and cycling world with their famous Cooper helmets. The famous Cooper hurling helmet is regarded as the No. 1 on the field and is worn by players in every one of the 32 counties.

The business, located in the Poolboy Industrial Estate, has now plans to expand to meet the demands of their wide range of leisurewear. Set up in 2004, Cooper started trading with sliotars and the renowned GAA used Cooper SK 100 Hurling Helmet, which still is the leading seller-fourteen years later. There are now up to 40 more Cooper products available to purchase from the Poolboy outlet for both male and female sports enthusiasts, including full sports kits and accessories.

The Cooper helmet has its origin in Canada where it catered for Ice Hockey and Skateboarding sportsmen as far back as the 1960's. In 2003 Ronan Lally and Brendan Kelly set about acquiring the Brand rights of Cooper from one of the biggest sporting

brands in the world-Nike. The product was an instant success in Ireland and now the Ballinasloe concern is exporting the helmets to hurling clubs in England, Australia and the United States.

The slogan "No. 1 helmet in hurling" is used for a very good reason. In last year's All-Ireland hurling final, 21 of the starting 30 players from Galway and Waterford wore the Cooper headgear. The brand name carries a huge tradition all over Ireland in the game of hurling but the wide range of products cater for other sports such as the IRB Approved Scrum Caps for rugby and a newly designed Cycling Helmet on the horizon for later this year.

Director Ronan Lally explained that Cooper leisurewear caters for all ages, male and female, in a variety of sports. "We are open here in the Poolboy Industrial Estate five days a week (Monday to Friday) for sales or you can purchase online at www.cooper.ie. As a result of the huge growth in business, we now plan to expand the workplace into a Factory shop, displaying all the Cooper products along with memorabilia of Sporting Greats of the past" he added.

For more information on Cooper products, call Ronan on 087-2369665.



Ronan Lally and Brendan Kelly of Cooper Helmets with Galway hurlers' trophies, including the Liam McCarthy, the Bob O'Keeffe, The Irish Press and the National League Cups, when they came to the Cooper plant in the Poolboy Industrial Estate in Ballinasloe.

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GERRY CROFFEY GARDEN MACHINERY

HOW GREEN DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW ?

So with the "Beast of the East" and its follow up Baltic conditions hopefully behind us-thoughts turn to real spring, growth, grass and of course gardens.

If you require affordable, high-quality garden machinery or is your lawnmower in need of a service and repairs, then check out Gerry Croffey Lawnmowers and Garden Machinery, Killure Castle, Ballinasloe. Croffey's are a multi-award winning, main Honda dealer with other well-known brands such as Stihl, Jonsered, Toro, Gardencare, Viking, Berg Toys, Mountfield, Hayter, Karcher and many more garden goods on offer.

Croffey's are now celebrating 26 years of business, after setting up back in 1992, into what is now one of East Galway and South Roscommon's largest garden machinery suppliers.

"Our well stocked bright and airy showroom includes robotic mowers, tractor mowers, strimmers, chainsaws, hedge cutters, power washers, power tools, sweepers, oils and gardening accessories, such as gloves, hand-held cutters, watering cans and shovels" says Gerry. "For children

of ALL ages between 0 and 99 to be precise, we stock the famous Berg Go Karts and Trampolines, including the new range of in-ground models, for extra safety starting at just €299 which are ideal for Birthday gifts" explains Gerry.

Croffey's also cater for every budget with a large variety of second-hand and hire machinery in stock.

Gerry would also like to welcome trade-ins to his store for anyone who is interested. "The most common trade-ins we see are people upgrading from a push lawnmower to a tractor mower, which takes the chore out of cutting your lawn."

Croffey's strong belief is that the most important thing when it comes to your machine is care and regular servicing. "Servicing your mower once a year at the end of the growing season or your chainsaw will ensure a long lifespan on your machinery" remarks Gerry.

A team of trained, and fully qualified mechanics are on hand six days a week from Monday to Saturday 9am-6pm (4pm on Saturdays) to ensure that all customers are given the chance for an aftercare and repairs service.

For more information please visit gerrycroffey.ie or contact 090 9688840. Gerry Croffey Garden Machinery can also be found on Facebook.



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NEW GM IN SHEARWATER

Des O'Connor has been recently promoted to new General Manager in the Shearwater Hotel after four years of service. Des started off in the Shearwater as the Conference and Banqueting Manager, then as Deputy Manger before taking the top position.

Des commutes a quick 40 mins each day from the town of Birr, Offaly, though he is originally from Abbeyfeale in Co. Limerick. He once owned his own restaurant in Birr called the Riverbank for 11 years before moving onto the Shearwater.

"Here at the Shearwater we have approximately 100 staff members in the hotel, bar and restaurant, all of whom give their best when it comes to making sure customers are looked after and enjoy a pleasant visit", states Des.

"To be made General Manager is a great honour for me, I love working here at the Shearwater. The extra work load and responsibility that comes with it doesn't bother me whatsoever, I will always give my best to make sure our hotel will make everyone happy".

"Our biggest focus still is our wedding events, we do our very best to make sure that married couples have the best day of their lives when they come to us. We also put our heart into all events from Communion to Confirmations and other special family occasions".

If you are looking to book a function at the Shearwater, or for any other enquiries, please contact the team 090 963 0400.



BEALTAINÉ FESTIVAL EVENT

A cross community intergenerational choir of Active Retired, Cancer Centre Friends and National School Children will come together to mark the Bealtaine Festival in song this May.

Accompanied by an ensemble of local musicians who play flute, violin, trumpet & piano will entertain together in Gullane's Hotel, the 10th of May at 8 pm.

All proceeds on the night will go to a number of local charities in the area. Up until now the Songfest 1-5 has contributed €8,000 to support local projects.

Tickets are available for just €10 (with concessions) from Ballinasloe Active Retirement or East Galway & Midland Cancer Centre, Brackernagh, or you can pay on the night at the door.

For more information please contact Marie Power: 087 9790416



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GIFTED WOODMAN PASSES AWAY



It was more than sixty years ago that Bill Colleran of Rathpeake, Ballinasloe and his brother, Tommy, set up their first carpentry and joinery workshop in an old coach-house at the rear of Woods' shop in Main St., Ballinasloe. For the following fifty years they saw the business expand, providing an array of services with their sawmilling, construction and carpentry services.

In his 90th year, Bill Colleran passed away recently and where endless lines of mourners turned out to pay their respects to a well-loved gentleman. He was a gifted craftsman and his knowledge of timber was unique. Always helpful, obliging and accommodating, Bill was

also a gentleman "to his fingertips."

After six years in the carpentry and joinery business, the Colleran brothers moved to Society Street, taking over the former Flanagan's Sawmills, in 1959, where they remained until 1970. They then set up in Hobson's Lane, off Main Street, expanding their carpentry, joinery and sawmills enterprise before embarking on the construction business, building several dwelling houses in the locality. Even though the business ceased in the mid-eighties, Bill's love of timber remained with him until his untimely passing.

Bill's talents as an accordion player were in big demand. Along with his brother Tommy, who also played "the box" as well as the keyboard, they provided the musical entertainment for the senior citizens in the Social Centre, at their monthly sessions as well as for the Wheelchair Association. And when the senior groups went of bus tours, the duo were only too happy to entertain them with their musical numbers.

Courtesy, modesty and helpfulness were some of Bill Colleran's hallmarks and it gave him great pleasure to see some of his children set up their own businesses in Ballinasloe town. He will be sadly missed by his wife Rose Ann, his six sons, four daughters, three sons-in-law, six daughters-in-law, nineteen grandchildren and his brother Tommy as well as many other relatives and friends.

BY KEN KELLY

HOLLYS FUNDRAISING SUCCESS

Hollys Pharmacy, Marina Point, recently raised €537 for the East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support. A coffee morning was held by the company for the second year, in which locals came and gave many donations for the cause.

Hollys, which is located right beside the Marina Point Medical Centre, has been running for over 14 years, with prescriptions available along with many more products such as skin care, vitamins and much more to offer.

"The Coffee Morning was a huge success, we couldn't have asked for it to go any better. We would like to give a huge thanks to everyone who turned up on the day and gave what they had, their proceeds will make a big difference to such a worthy cause" said store owner Frank Holly.

Hollys can be contacted on 090 964 5676, or check out their Facebook Page for more information.



Deirdre Donoghue, Bridget Martin, Jackie Daly, Tracey Monaghan, Frank Holly and Paul Hennely.

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NEW HOLISTIC MASSAGE BUSINESS

Robert Geleta, originally from Slovakia and now living in Creagh, has started his own business in massage therapy, which can be availed for at home or at his own therapy room.

Robert came to Ireland in 2005, lived in Athlone for eleven years, before moving to Ballinasloe. He worked for many years in the catering business, but his heart really cried out for a more challenging occupation.

In 2011 Geleta gained a Diploma in Holistic massage in AIT Athlone, and in 2012 Certificate in Sports massage therapy. Now Robert is extending his qualification in Pregnancy massage and Hot stone massage, which could be of great help to anyone carrying a child or just looking to wind down.

This year Robert has decided to do massage therapies full time and set his own business. Robert's key focus is "Massage at your home", which is very simple and hassle-free. He is offering massage in his own therapy room as well at 30 Rathglas, Creagh, Ballinasloe. This service is even simpler and so convenient for clients from Ballinasloe and better value for money as well, according to Robert.

He believes that this type of service has a big future due to more and more clients suffering from side effects of everyday stress such as neck tension, headaches, back pain, stiffness etc.

"We sometimes don't realise that massage



could help us to relieve the pain more effectively than any painkillers. Massage helps you to relax, refresh and rewind. It promotes better sleep and helps to gain more energy. It relieves the stress, delivers relaxation and mind & body balance" states Robert.

His motto is: "Keep it simple". He believes the service he offers is simple and extremely convenient. "When you choose to have a massage at your home you don't have to travel, your home environment is more natural for you and relaxation process is smooth, not interrupted and more intensive. All you need is a room heated to a comfortable temperature and area in the room large enough for set up massage couch" explained Robert.

Sports massage therapy is also offered to clients by Robert, which can boost your performance, helps you to get ready before the match or helps you to recover after the training session quicker.

To avail of this service, clients need to book an appointment by calling 0863010870, or email robert@massageatyourhome.ie. Service is available 7 days a week 10 am - 8 pm. More details regarding this service can be found online at www.massageatyourhome.ie, or on the "Robert Geleta Massage At Your Home" Facebook page.

Gift Vouchers are also available to purchase for customers who want to treat their family and friends with a perfect gift.

BY IAN O'BOYLE


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TONY CARROLL BUTCHERS CELEBRATE 21ST ANNIVERSARY

Tony Carroll Family Butchers, Marina Point, Ballinasloe, are celebrating 21 years in business this year.

With the pressure on the multiples and large superstores on prices, the town has seen the demise of at least 3 craft butchers in the town centre over the last two decades – it's a remarkable benchmark that Carrolls Family butchers are not just holding their own but increasing their business share to their discerning customers.

Tony started his trade back in 1973 as an apprentice in Paddy Connolly's of Main Street, before opening his own butcher shop in March 1997. From a small operation in the then newest retail zone of the town, with loads of free car parking, the enterprise has expanded to five fully qualified butchers as staff members, currently employed.

All beef and lamb sold in Carroll's are primarily their own farm and other local farmers thus ensuring customers of the best quality produce with complete traceability to the highest possible standards.

"We have a very loyal customer base here in our store which means we are always kept busy, thanks to the people of Ballinasloe and surrounding areas " stated Tony when asked about his customer care.

Even through the tough recessionary periods it didn't stop Tony from doing what he loves the most "During the recession period in 2008 to 2014 our business took some hard hits with customers not being able to spend as much as they would have wanted to, but they still gave what they had which kept us in the swing of business", states Tony.



Tony Carroll and Michael Gately.

"I'm hoping that Brexit won't affect our business as much as the media is portraying it will do, but should livestock prices fluctuate and increase it could have an effect" he added.

Tony believes Ballinasloe has a lot to offer for somebody considering setting up their own business in the town but bringing more industry to the town is what's needed most, as spending power will increase all across the locality .

Reviewing his online presence – most of his customers reflect on the quality of the produce, the friendliness of the staff and the knowledge of the store team of just how to cook some of the cuts.

The store is open 6 days a week from 8.00am and closes just after 6.00pm, Monday to Thursday with a later closing for the weekend till 6.30pm.

For orders phone (090)9644949 or call instore.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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BALLINASLOE DOWN UNDER

Erica Connolly, a 27-year-old doctor from Creagh, has been embracing the down under lifestyle in Australia for the past number of months, just as many Irish have done before.

Erica, is the daughter of Sean Connolly and Maeve Darcy, who run Sean Connolly Butchers in Creagh. She went to primary school in Creagh N.S. and Secondary level in Ardscoil Mhuire, before studying for a degree in Medicine in UCD which she graduated from in 2016. Before shipping abroad, Erica did her intern year in UCHG, with her first 3 months spent in Portiuncula Hospital-where her Mum Maeve is the Radiographer!

The recently qualified doctor emigrated to Perth, Australia in August 2017, a decision encouraged by the fact that many of her friends in the year ahead of her had done similar, including Aidan Stankard and Colm Brassil, both from Ballinasloe.

"For many UCD graduates, I feel it is fast becoming almost a rite of passage prior to returning home to undertake a medical contact overseas. In addition to this I also wanted to experience an alternative sunny lifestyle by the beach, which I am fortunate enough to be able to do, based on the high demand for Irish doctors in Western Australia" states Erica.

"I have rarely worked a shift in the FSH (Fiona Stanley Hospital) where I haven't been rostered on with another Irish doctor. Many of their junior staff are comprised of Irish graduates, which usually means I'm working with my friends. Lastly, I knew it would allow me to make a head start on the repayment of my student loan before returning to Ireland, an additional bonus" said the medic.

Coincidentally Erica was employed for her first 6 months by (FSH), a major tertiary hospital in the South of Perth, where both Aidan and Colm from Ballinasloe were already employed. Erica only discovered this when she bumped into Colm in the Emergency Department where she was working in FSH, and then into Aidan when she arrived at a surgical handover, in which he greeted her with the pager.

Since then Erica signed a contract with a more peripheral hospital, Joondalup Health Campus (JHC), which is located 40 minutes north of Perth. JHC have offered many Irish Junior Doctors 12-month contracts rotating through different medical/surgical specialties.



Maeve, Erica and Sean Connolly on her Graduation Day in UCD.

Erica currently works in the Coronary Care Unit which is comprised of five Irish junior doctors compared with only two Australian juniors.

Erica now lives in Cottesloe, Perth which is a beach side suburb of near Fremantle. She rents a house with three other UCD graduates and is frequently reminded by the locals of the rising amount of Irish living in both Fremantle and Cottesloe.

"The weather is beautiful, despite taking a while to acclimatise after a lifetime of cold temperatures and rain in Ireland! For me, the main attractions to Perth are the beautiful beaches all along the coastline which I'm looking forward to sharing with my family when they visit. I have cousins in both Brisbane and Sydney which affords me the opportunity to travel there with the comfort of family" she explains.

"Despite the lifestyle and weather here being beautiful, my job requiring less overtime with better pay, the opportunity to travel around Australia and to nearby places such as New Zealand, Japan, Bali to name a few, inevitably I will be coming home. In addition to Perth being a 24-hour journey from home, Australia is missing some key things like Irish banter, my family and many of my friends. I'll be following in Aidan's footsteps and intend on coming home but will be very excited to come back and visit Australia again in the future" states the Creagh native.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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	€20,135	€2,015	€18,120	€274.19	€63.27	€8,250	37	0%

IRISH VINTAGE SOCIETY APPOINTS NEW DIRECTOR AND PRO

The Irish Vintage Society Clg (IVS), an organisation representing over four thousand members and one hundred vintage clubs all over Ireland, has a new director and PRO in Anthony Grenham who hails from Ballydangan but is better known as manager of the An Post, Delivery Services Unit in Poolboy, Ballinasloe.

The IVS Clg have many members locally with local clubs Eyrecourt Vintage club and Loughrea and District Vintage Club affiliated to them, plus a new club formed recently under Anthony's supervision, Mid-Roscommon Vintage Club. The purpose of the organisation is to promote their hobby helping bring people together who have an interest in all things vintage, not just the things that spring to mind like cars and tractors but also old ways of life and crafts showing people how life existed over previous generations.

The IVS have an insurance scheme with FBD Plc Insurances that our members get preferential rates when they insure their vintage vehicles, and the IVS Clg can arrange cover for public liability insurance for over six and a half million euro for vintage clubs who have affiliated to the IVS Clg to run their events safely and with peace of mind to the organisers/committee e.g. Vintage Road Runs, Vintage Field Days or Vintage working Days etc....

The IVS Clg also provide person to person, member to member

insurance cover, for members attending all affiliated IVS Clg events and all members receive a full colour magazine annually. Health and safety is also paramount and they provide assistance with organising training courses. Anthony hopes to promote the society more by increasing their public profile and has already increased the number of views on their Facebook page tenfold since taking over the job of PRO. Any queries on vintage membership etc. can be answered between office hours or anyone wishing to join can log onto www.irishvintagesociety.ie or by phoning Sharon in the IVS office on 087 8507700.

The IVS Clg biggest event on the vintage diary is the National Ploughing Championships where the Society are invited every year to display vintage items and memorabilia of years gone by. Over the years Tractors were very popular but things have changed where the general public want to see working exhibits and crafts from Ireland and the IVS have adapted with a 1.5 acre display of not just tractors, which are still very much in demand, but also vintage cars, motorbikes and trucks and a big display of items used around farms and in the kitchen and shops of years gone by. To compliment this they also put on a display of almost forgotten crafts such as wood-turning, butter-making, wool-spinning and they had a tinsmith making pots and pans from scrap copper and tin.

Anthony is also a collector of all things vintage and is currently building his own museum in Ballydangan. He hopes to fill his centre with old house, pub, shop and farm items and is always on the lookout with items that have been used locally or better still manufactured in the midlands or west



BY KEN KELLY



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SYRIAN REFUGEES IN BALLINASLOE

The Syrian Refugee Crisis of the last few years looks set to continue, and some of those have settled in Ballinasloe. One of those is Fatima Ali Bakoush, who explains her involvement with the Syrian refugees in town, and how you can help in their time of need.

Fatima and her husband are originally from Libya, moving to Belfast in 1992. Her husband began working in Portiuncula Hospital in 1999, so the couple moved to Ballinasloe. She has been an active part of the Ballinasloe community, taking part in Lily Kelly's Art Studio and being involved with the Social Services. Most recently, she received a People of the Year Awards nomination for her involvement with the Social Services and her work with the Syrian refugees.

Fatima began helping out at the East Galway & Midlands Cancer Support centre after a friend recommended it. From there, she started going to the Social Services Centre and at the Christmas sale in 2016, she met Dan Dowling. "Dan introduced himself to me and told me that he was assisting the new Syrian refugees who had recently come to Ballinasloe," Fatima explained. "He asked me if I knew Arabic and if I would be able to help act as a translator. I told him I would be more than happy to help."

At the time, there was only one Syrian family that had come to Ballinasloe. "They were only here for a week when I first met them. I got to know them, I started helping them and acted as a translator when they needed me" she explained. "My son Abdulkarim started to help them as well, and a little bit after that, my friend Eman Almaghrabi was brilliant in assisting them.

"The Syrian families came here from Dublin, and were afraid at first. It was understandable, of course. They were moving to a small town, where they don't know the people or the language. They felt a lot more comfortable when they met people who speak the same language as them, people who could help them," Fatima added. The families were able to settle down more easily than they had thought at first. The Social Services held a "Welcome to Ballinasloe" party for the new families, where they got to meet more of the community, as well as other Syrians in the same situation.

Fatima and her family are still involved with the refugees, visiting them from time to time. "We invite them for tea or coffee. Sometimes if they get a letter, we help translate and sometimes provide transport if they have appointments or need to go shopping."

Most of the Syrian refugees in Ballinasloe are families with children, fleeing from the horrendous civil war in their home-country. "There are two Syrian families in town. One family has seven children, and the two parents. The other has the grandmother, the son, his wife and their three kids, while there are also two single Syrian men" Fatima said.

Refugee-intake is a hot issue right now, with a number of countries blatantly stating that they will not accept any refugees. Fatima, however, is happy with Ireland's stance. "The Irish Government has done an amazing job at providing food and shelter, as well as educational support through English courses. Ireland is one of the



Fatima receiving her People of the Year Award.

most welcoming countries in Europe," she stated.

"They are really getting involved in the community. The kids are involved in a local extracurricular arts programme that their parents can participate in as well. They go to school, and the adults take English courses to help them improve their communication. Every few months, they go on a trip to learn more about Ireland."

Fatima implores the community to continue their warm welcome for the Syrian families. There are a number of ways to lend a helping hand. You can get in touch with the Ballinasloe Social Services at their day-centre in Brackernagh and offer your assistance in a way that suits you.

BY STEPHEN COLEMAN

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THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER.....

BY KEVIN KAVANAGH

DUBARRY SHOES in Ballinasloe have donated over 300 pairs of shoes to children in Haiti, following a request from NPH Haiti, who look after neglected and abandoned children in Kenscoff, Haiti. Many of the children come from very poor families, who cannot afford to feed or educate them and they attend schools run by the Salesian nuns.

KILLIMOR MEN are keeping fit with weekly runs and walks at the Astroturf centre. They meet at 7.30 pm on Wednesday evenings. Contact 087 7646530 for more information.

CAPPATAGGLE experienced some of the highest snow drifts during last month's blizzards. The road from Cappataggle Cross to Kilconnell was completely impassable and some drifts exceeded ten feet high, according to locals.

HOUSING ESTATES in Ballinasloe are to have the grass cutting services restored after a U-turn by Galway Co. Council. Following complaints by Councillors, the Council reviewed its budget and decided to advertise the contract for tender.

AUGHRIM Active Retirement Group staged a one-act play in Kilconnell Hall with the proceeds going to Sr. Annette Farrell to help her work on the Foreign Missions. They have now commenced a series of weekly exercise classes under the watchful eye of Siobhan Smith.

GARBALLY COLLEGE past pupils are planning a re-union for those who left the College in 1958. The 60th Anniversary get-together is planned for June, in Ballinasloe. Further details from Michael McCullagh at 086 2550877.

CHARLIE GALLAGHER, who died recently in his native Bangor Erris, Co. Mayo, served as Garda Sergeant in Kilconnell and Mountbellew in the 1970's-80's, prior to his retirement. He is survived by his wife Maura, one son, four daughters and a sister.

VIOLET WALSHE (nee Attridge) entertained the staff of Hillside Nursing Home in Aughrim with her singing of "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" only days before her demise. The Roscrea native, in her 98th year, was predeceased by her husband, Albert of Mackney, Ballinasloe, who passed away in 1992.

JOHNNY LYONS, the affable fruit and vegetable vendor from Killimor, missed the weekly market in Ballinasloe on Saturday, 3rd March because of the arctic weather conditions. It was the first time in over fifty years he or his late father had failed to attend the event. And because of a Council ruling, Mr. Lyons was also prohibited from trading in St. Michael's Square on the St. Patrick's weekend.

KILTORMER Nursing Home captured the Community Initiative Trophy at the Irish Healthcare Awards, held in Dun Laoire and hosted by RTE's Marty Whelan. The award was accepted by Gordon Glynn, Manager and Derek Glynn, Director of Nursing at the Kiltormer Home, which was established thirty years ago.

JOHN HOLOHAN from Perssepark was a member of the outdoor staff of Ballinasloe Town Council for over 35 years. He was Town Council caretaker in Creagh Cemetery, before being promoted to Grade 5 Caretaker at the Waste Water Treatment Plant, from where he retired in 2013. At his funeral, indoor and outdoor staffs of the Town Council provided a guard of honour.

MOORE & CLONFAD Drama Society's 3-night run of "Cupid Wore Skirts" was so successful that they decided to run an extra show on Sunday 18th March. The sell-out show saw the night's proceeds divided between the East Galway Cancer Support Group and the Quest Brain Injury Services, which helps those who have acquired brain injury.

ADRIAN HEADD, Acting Senior Executive Engineer in the Ballinasloe Municipal Council District, is going on promotion to Clare Co. Council. A native of Derrybrien in South Galway, he has worked in the Ballinasloe area for the past ten years.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND are looking for volunteers on Saturday, 14th April, at Tesco in Ballinasloe, fundraising by packing shopping bags. Contact Collette McEntee on 01-8821970.

THE PAROCHIAL HALL on Dunlo Hill, in Ballinasloe has been put up for sale by the Church of Ireland body. Auctioneer Michael McCullagh says that the Hall was built in the 1940's and is a protected structure.

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LAWRENCETOWN NEW PLAYGROUND

The community of Lawrencetown were delighted to officially open their brand-new playground recently as a result of a project that had been in the pipeline for the past two years.

It all started when a local community group named the "Childcare Chicks" began meeting with the intention of improving facilities, events and activities for the children in their community. This group

was established under the broader umbrella of the Lawrencetown Community Development Group.

Their main priority was to provide a playground for their own children and others in this small rural area. Meetings were held regularly, a plan was drawn up, consultation with various playground providers began and a funding applications were made to all agencies.

The Committee secured 90% CLAR funding of €49,475 for the project last April, with the total cost coming close to €60,000. Everyone involved did very well to raise the last 10% (approximately €10,000) for the playground.

The amenity itself boasts a fabulous junior and senior play unit, swings, a see-saw, springers, a natural outdoor area with a willow structure, fairy garden, wishing chair, little obstacle course, two picnic tables, flowerbeds and a sizeable sandbox with diggers. Slogans created by the local national school children adorn the walls. The playschool, which is run in the adjacent community hall

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will benefit immensely from this project as the children will have this facility literally at their backdoor.

A great many people involved in this project and development were thanked on the day from the people of the parish, local councillors and TD's, the local TÚS and Community Employment Scheme workers, sponsors such as Barna Waste, the local parish priest Fr. Christy O'Byrne, and all who helped and donated their money, time and energy including the committee responsible for this project.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

Open during daylight hours. Committee member Jackie Nevin is issuing a warm invitation to come and visit the brand-new facility.



All-Ireland Camogie winners Shauna Duane and Chloe Reily open the playground.

NEW DISABLED PLAY EQUIPMENT AT POOL PLAYGROUND.

The Ballinasloe Accessibility Group recently unveiled brand new Swings and a Picnic Bench, which are suited for people with disabilities and special needs, along with members of Galway County Council, St Teresa's Special School and Brothers of Charity.

The swings were given their first ever test run by Brothers of Charity service users William Moloney and Damien Trappe who were very delighted them. The playground is open for use during daylight hours seven days a week.

Social Democrats member and chairperson of the Ballinasloe Accessibility Group Ken Campbell says that everyone deserves a chance of living like no matter what disability they have.

"It's great to see these new facilities in our town, everyday we take a step closer to making Ballinasloe an equal opportunity town. It's great to see these new swings included to the playground, now anyone no matter their disability, can join in the fun" states the Mayor of the Municipal District Aidan Donohue. "The Accessibility Ballinasloe



Committee: Theresa Coughlan, Ken Campell, Trace O'Mahoney, Mayor Eileen Mannion, Deborah Brady, Marian Donohue, and Stephen Roche.

group have done a fantastic job in helping people with disabilities and I hope to see much more of their work to come".

Chairman Campbell thanked everyone who turned up on the day, along with Marina Downey for her catering and the Coral Leisure Centre for use of the premises.

For more information please check out Ballinasloe Accessibility on Facebook.



Theresa Coughlan, Ken Campell, William Moloney, Noreen Donlon, Lily Spenlon, Michael Finnerty, Damien Trappe, Eileen Mannion, Aidan Donohue, Debra Brady, Marian Donohue, Michael Connolly and Trace O'Mahoney.



Debra Brady, Theresa Coughlan, Noreen Donlon, William Moloney, Marian Donohue, Eileen Mannion, Stephen Roche, Aidan Donohue, Ken Campell, Trace O'Mahoney, Michael Finnerty, Damien Trappe, John Glennon, Sean Kilray and Lily Spenlon.

GARBALLY SENIOR CUP WINNERS



Senior Cup Team who defeated Col. Iognaid by 45 - 26

Back Row, L-R: Fergus Finneran, Nathan Horan, Barry Codyre, Cian Silke, Padraig Galvin, Keomea O'Connor, Odhrán Dooley, Matthew Comerford, Stephen Grenham, Colm O'Brien, Stephen Mannion, Patrick Grehan, Shane Jennings, Saul O'Carroll, Jack Dempsey, Jack Noone.

Front Row L-R :James Carry, Morgan Smyth, Aaron McGreal, Cathal Dolan, John Coughlan, Cormac Finn, Seamus Egan, Joseph Devine (Joint Captain), Colm Reilly (Joint Captain), Jamie Curley, Cian Treacy, Seán Horkan, Jack Ryan.

GARBALLY SENIOR BLUES HOIST 46th CONNACHT TITLE

Both the Senior and Junior Rugby Teams made it into the Connacht Rugby Finals this year, with the Seniors winning out and the Juniors just falling short.

There were huge scenes of joy as the Seniors lifted their trophy after winning 45-27 against Coláiste Iognáid in their match. Captain Joseph Devine was full of delight after the game "It was an amazing team performance, not one individual player stood out, we were all one together and I'm super proud of the team today. We put so much work into this, training three times a week in which some mornings we were brought in at 7.30am, which in my mind shows huge dedication".

Senior Manager Gerry Kelly says the match was one of the best he ever seen in all his time managing "It looked for a while that we'd score, and they would score straight after, but it was a great performance with some great tries scored. This is our 46th Senior Cup, but in recent years we have made it to four finals with nothing

to show for, so to win today means a lot to everyone in Garbally College. No doubt there's some great talent in that team, three of whom represent Ireland and Connacht at under age level, and I have no doubt that they will go further in the next few years."

Principal of the school, Stephen Reilly, stated that the two teams did the school very proud on the day "For the two teams to get into their finals is a huge achievement. Everyone of those players gave it their all, and win or lose it doesn't matter, their hard work and dedication is a reward in its own regard".

The Juniors were beaten on a score line of 17-20 against Marist College after a tough game. Captain John Claffey stated "The second half we gave it our all, but we just didn't have the energy in the first to make an impact, then by the second half it was too late. The team deserved more, and they should be proud for giving their all I've never seen them work so hard than today."

Check out the Garbally College Website and Facebook Page.

GARBALLY JUNIOR CUP RUNNERS-UP



Junior Cup Team who were defeated by Marist 17 - 20

Back Row, L-R : Andrew Doyle, John Devine, Matthew Kelly, Joey Carry, Keelan Kenny, Matthew Devine, Mark Mitchell, Brian Feeney, Conor Goode, Oisín Carroll, Adam Fogarty, Luke Walsh, Daithí Blackweir.

Front Row, L-R : Robbie Carry, Adam O'Carroll, Tom Fitzpatrick, Naoise Murphy, Gerard Colleran, John Claffey (Captain), Kyle Blackweir, Adam Dowd, Jack Tumulty, David Treacy.

AUGHRIM NEWLY REFURBISHED NATIONAL SCHOOL



St. Catherine's National School of Aughrim is enjoying its first school year in their newly upgraded and refurbished building which opened up in early September last year, after 20 years of applications.

The new building, which started in June 2016, has been built in a decorative passive design, also known as a Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB), which reduces energy costs and keeping the building heated. All the energy comes through the modern new solar panels on the roof top, and the brand new large size windows allows for extra light to reach the classrooms.

The total refurbishment programme cost €1.4 million with local builders Brian Conneely being the principle contractor.

Currently there are 87 students enrolled with the school, along with four teachers and five other members of staff.

St Catherine's first opened its doors in 1948 after moving from what is now St Catherine's Hall, which opened in 1893 on the outskirts of the village. Up until the new works there had been no maintenance done to the school which, over time became too overcrowded and out dated for a proper National School to function.

Pat O'Sullivan, who was principal in Aughrim for numerous years, said that this renovation was needed decades

ago as he spoke about the old building. "1998 marked the 50th anniversary for St Catherine's here in Aughrim, at that stage we put in our first application for the new building and renovation to be done. As the years passed we thought we'd never see it happen, with all the issues of the economic crisis and so forth.

"The building was deteriorating beyond control and something had to be done, not just for the members of the school, but for the parish itself. Now that the new school is up and running you can see a huge change, it catches people's attention as they drive pass, and the best part is that its so modern and energy efficient, just one of few Primary Schools which are".

Principal Brendan Naughten said "I came to this School in June 2015 when the old building was still in use, it was cold and cramped and didn't reflect the atmosphere of the work which was carried out within. Now that the new school is up and running you can really see the difference it makes; the students are much happier, and the new space really helps with modern learning.

"We now hope that our fresh new school will encourage more parents from all surrounding areas to consider sending their children St Catherine's, and so far we've only been hearing fantastic compliments from the current students' parents".

The Department Of Education has gone so far as to send members of other schools boards from all around Ireland to come and see the School to get a look at how it's built. Their aims are for other Schools to replicate this passive design in the future to lower costs on energy consumption and aid the environment.

BY IAN O'BOYLE



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100 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION IN BALLINASLOE



As Ardscoil Mhuire approach the celebration of their Centenary in town, they remain to cater for the needs of all students in Ballinasloe and the surrounding areas as they have done since 1919, and are fortunate to have a highly skilled, dedicated team of teachers who endeavour always to nurture the full potential of every student.

The school has always achieved academic excellence in Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations each year. 97% of the Leaving Cert class of 2017 went on to third level education, as reported in the Irish Times League tables recently. The majority of students gain entry to Third Level universities and colleges and in fact many of the students are awarded entrance scholarships to universities annually, based on the high points they have achieved in their Leaving Certificate Examination.

Speaking on behalf of Ardscoil Mhuire, Principal Patricia Kilgallen, states "As 21st century citizens our students need to develop a love of learning, be adaptable skilled communicators and be able to set and meet goals. In Ardscoil Mhuire, through our academic, co-curricular and extracurricular programmes, students are given the opportunity to acquire these skills. Students are encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of school life so that they can develop their talents and skills. We also give students an opportunity to develop their leadership potential whether through team sports and activities, the Student Council, Leaving Cert Prefects, 5th year Meitheal Programme or the Buddy System. All aspects of a student's development are catered for with the result that we have built a strong community where all students are cared for and are helped and encouraged to reach their full potential.

"We have great success each year in team sports, athletics, debating, public speaking, choir competitions, creative writing and art competitions and many more activities. Our 1st and 2nd Year Spikeball and Volleyball teams have won at All-Ireland level. Our students take part in German, Irish and English debating each year and have established a reputation as formidable debaters in the prestigious Goethe Institute German debating competition as well as the Gael Linn competitions. We have qualified for All Ireland finals in both competitions and won. We have two students competing in the All-



Senior German debating team Aoife Sidaway, Hannah Finnerty, Meadhb Fahy, Amy Kelly.

Ireland Matheson Junior Debating National Mace in St Conleth's College, Ballsbridge in April next. Our choir will compete in the Navan Choral festival in May and we have had All-Ireland success in this competition in the past and we are hopeful of a good result this year. Our talented Art students have won many competitions including reaching the last seven in the National "Doodle for Google" competition last year" explains Patricia.

She is keen to stress the connections involved in the schooling process. "Education is a partnership, a joint venture between school and home. We

deeply value the relationship between staff, students, parents, and the community and strive to build an ever stronger bond. We respect the uniqueness of each student, we are proud of our students and look forward to nurturing a positive engagement in school life".

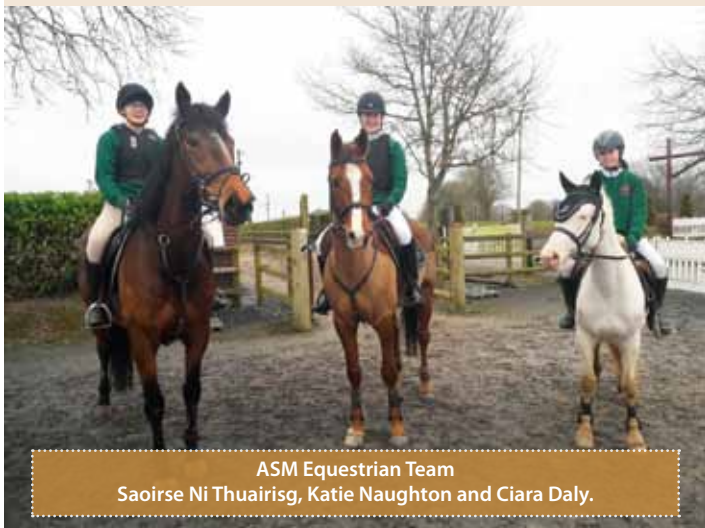
The ASM website and School App helps to keep the school community up to date with all necessary information with regards to school life. Everything from the schools Improvement Plan and all policies are published on the website and School App records on a daily basis. The website can be accessed at www.ardscoilmhuire.com, and the School App can be downloaded from the App Store at Ardscoil Mhuire Ballinasloe.

Significant investment and planning has ensured that Ardscoil Mhuire is at the forefront in using IT as an effective tool to enhance teaching and learning. The school has high speed broadband, and 365 Learning Platform is used to communicate between staff and students.

The VSWare software administration package is used to maintain attendance reports, academic reports and student records. This system also contains a text messaging service which is used to keep parents/guardians informed of absences, school activities, reminders of meetings, events and much more.

With a teaching and staff compliment of 37 and an average enrollment of 540 pupils the school looks well positioned for its next century of development. Ardscoil Mhuire are available for contact by phone at (090) 96 42206 or by email at ardscoilmhuire@eircom.net.

BY IAN O'BOYLE



ASM Equestrian Team
Saoirse Ni Thuairis, Katie Naughton and Ciara Daly.



Senior Rugby Team
Back Row: Deirdre Egan, Sarah Dent, Emily Gavin, Niamh Kenny, Aisling Murphy, Eleanor McMahon, Hannah Gullane.
Front Row: Shauna Finneran, Aoife Dudgeon, Meabh Deely, Claire Egan.

TEDDY BEAR HOSPITAL



The Naíonáin Beagas with Student Staff members of Portiuncula.

The Naíonáin Beaga (Junior Infants) students of Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh, in Garbally Drive, were given the opportunity to be a hospital employee for a day by looking after teddy bears, under the supervision of Medical Students from Portiuncula University Hospital.

All teddies were cared for and given a clean bill of health by the children on the day. "All of the students did an excellent job on making sure the teddy bears were well looked after, and I am also delighted to report that there were no major queues or waiting lists on the day. I have no doubt that one day some of these students will make fine doctors and nurses in the real-life world" said Principal Ruairí O'Hanlon.

Ruairí and the staff thanked doctors Oliva Dunne and Padraig Curran for organising the visit to the school.

JUNK KOTURE SEMI-FINALISTS

BY IAN O'BOYLE

Two groups of TY students from Ardscoil Mhuire made it into the semi-finals of the Junk Koture regional final in the 3 Arena this year, but were very unfortunate not to make it through to the final stage.

The first team of Aoibhin Cary and Shauna Mulry designed their dress 'Broken Bounce' from recycled trampoline material such as the springs and felt. They were joined by students Mei Chen Kennedy, Amy Coyne and Keri Manning who came up with 'Tribal', a dress created from hurley shavings and sliothars.

Art Teacher Elva Conole said "The girls were delighted to make it this far, out of a competition of over 1500 applicants, of a very high standard I believe we done very well. Only 395 groups are selected to make it to the regional stages, so to get there was a fantastic achievement and they have done our school very proud."



Aoibhin Cary and Shauna Mulry
Broken Bounce.



Mei Chen Kennedy, Amy Coyne
and Keri Manning Tribal.

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OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



Ava McKeon from Ballinasloe after winning 2 gold medals and 2 silver medals at the Connacht Indoor Track & Field Championships held in AIT.



*Back Row L-R: Eamon Craughwell, Maeve Ryder, Tom Turley, Colette Breheny, Michael Finnerty C.C., Loraine Treacy.
Middle Row L-R: Sean Canney TD, Celine Pardy, Jacqueline Nevin, Brian Kenny, Anne Rabbitte TD, Donal Burke C.C., Sharon Kenny and Kate Kenny (Baby).
Front Row L-R: Annmarie McEvoy, Ciaran Cannon TD, Shauna Duane, Chloe Reilly and Aidan Donohue C.C.*



Amy Kelly, Ciara Hibbett, Mary Cuddy, Kate Doyle, Aoife Dudgeon & Saoirse Ní Thuairisg representing Ard Scoil Mhuire at Seactain Na Gaelige.



John, Tommy and Ellie Lucia Corker enjoying the St. Patrick's Day Parade.



Enjoying the Elenaor Shanley and John Feeley fundraising show.



L-R: Michael Kissen, Eugene Murphy, Gill Ryan, Paddy Keane, Michael Connolly with Micheál Martin upon his visit to Ballinasloe.



Mary Courtney, Aideen Bergin and Anna Victoria Mulcahy at Bank of Ireland Ballinasloe to mark Internation Womens Day.

OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



Ballinasloe AFC marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade.



Ballinasloe Camogie Club.



Ballinasloe Cycling Clubs Float.



Ballinasloe Karate Club.



Ballinasloe School of Irish Dancing.



Committee of Accessibility Ballinasloe.



'Ballinasloe Says No' Group with their Float.



Ballinasloe Active Retirement Members Margaret Brennan, Anne Duffy and Mary Slattery.

APRIL EVENTS GUIDE

Sunday 1st		
Easter Sunday Mass	St. Michael's	9am
Easter Sunday Mass	Portiuncula Chapel	9.15am
Easter Sunday Mass	Creagh	10.30am
Easter Sunday Mass	St. Michael's	11am
Easter Sunday Mass	St. John's	11am
Easter Sunday Mass	St. Michael's	12.15pm
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Declan O'Rourke	Lukers of S'Bridge	8pm
Session Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Live Music	An Tain	9.30pm
M. Keane & C. Naughton	The Pillar House	10pm
Pacifica	The Auld Sod	10pm
Chillbillies	Killeen's of S'Bridge	10pm
DJ LADD	Downey's Bar	10pm
Paul Burns	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Monday 2nd		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Tuesday 3rd		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.30pm
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 4th		
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	9.30pm
Thursday 5th		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Dancing Michael Regan	Downey's Bar	10pm
Friday 6th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	8.30am-1.30pm
Table Quiz Port. Hosp.	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Michael Regan	Canal Bar	9pm
Comhaltas Trad Session	Burke's Bar	9.30pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Saturday 7th		
Coding Club	B'sloe Library	11am- 12pm
Town Band Recital	Church Gallery	12.30pm - 4
Music Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Billy Garvin	Canal Bar	9pm
Pacifica	The Pillar House	10pm
Night Owls	The Auld Sod	10pm
Jockstrap	Killeen's of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Luker's of S'bridge	10pm
Simon Bordy	An Tain	10pm
Live Music	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Sunday 8th		
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Olivia Douglas	Downey's Bar	7.30pm-9.30
Liam's Country Rd Show	The Auld Sod	9.30pm
Monday 9th		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Tuesday 10th		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30pm - 5.30
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm

Wednesday 11th		
Cuidiu Breastfeeding	B'sloe Library	9.45am-11.45
Knitting & Crochet Club	B'sloe Library	11am-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B'sloe Flower club	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	9.30pm
Thursday 12th		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Contempo Concert	Church Gallery	1pm - 2pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Ger Long Social Dancing	Downey's Bar	10pm
Singers Circle	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Friday 13th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	8.30am-1.30pm
John Molloy	Canal Bar	9pm
Eleanor Shanley Live	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Comhaltas Trad Session	Burke's Bar	9.30pm
Small Idea's	The Auld Sod	10pm
Ken Solo	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Saturday 14th		
Coding Club	B'sloe Library	11am- 12pm
Happy Bar Stars	Canal Bar	9pm
Music in Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Chris Nash	The Pillar House	10pm
Finnegan's Fury	The Auld Sod	10pm
Live Line	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Luker's of S'bridge	10pm
Eoin Maher	An Tain	10pm
Bothareen	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Sunday 15th		
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Session Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Ken Solo	The Auld Sod	9.30pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Monday 16th		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Tuesday 17th		
Art Trail Exb	Church Gallery	11.00 am
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30pm- 5.30
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
Art Trail Exb	Church Gallery	Launch 6
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 18th		
Knitting & Crochet Club	B'sloe Library	11am-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	9.30pm
Thursday 19th		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Shane Moore Dancing	Downey's Bar	10pm
Friday 20th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	8.30am-1.30pm
Ard Scoil Mhuire T. Quiz	Gullanes Hotel	8.30pm
Red O'Neill	Canal Bar	9pm
Rodneys Glory	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
C.Begley & L. O'Connor	The Pillar House	9pm
Comhaltas Trad Session	Burke's Bar	9.30pm

Saturday 21st		
Coding Club	B'sloe Library	11am- 12pm
Luka Bloom	Lukers of S'Bridge	8pm
Steve O'Reilly	Canal Bar	9pm
Session	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
DJ Johnny Finnerty '80s	The Pillar House	10pm
Treblemakers	The Auld Sod	10pm
Small Deal	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Country Music DJ	Downey's Bar	10pm
Live Music	Luker's of S'bridge	10pm
Lorcan Live	An Tain	10pm
Jiggers of Erin	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Sunday 22nd		
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Session Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Live Music	An Tain	9.30pm
Emerald Dave	The Auld Sod	9.30pm
Happy Bar Stool	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Monday 23rd		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Tuesday 24th		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30pm-5.30pm
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 25th		
Cuidiu Breastfeeding	B'sloe Library	9.45am-11.45am
Knitting & Crochet Club	B'sloe Library	11am-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B'sloe Garda D Table Quiz	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	9.30pm
Thursday 26th		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Steve Reilly	Downey's Bar	10pm
Friday 27th		
Monster Open Classic	B'sloe Golf Club	First Day
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	8.30am-1.30pm
Amy Brennan	Canal Bar	9pm
Comhaltas Trad Session	Burke's Bar	9.30pm
Beardy Bucks	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Saturday 28th		
Coding Club	B'sloe Library	11am- 12pm
Billy Garvin	Canal Bar	9pm
Party in Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Take Time	The Pillar House	10pm
Laker	The Auld Sod	10pm
Boithrin	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Luker's of S'bridge	10pm
Hot James	An Tain	10pm
The Live Wires	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Sunday 29th		
Monster Open Classic	B'sloe Golf Club	Last Day
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Shane Moore	The Auld Sod	9.30pm
Live Music	An Tain	9.30pm
Cudas Millocco	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Session in Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Monday 30th		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm

MAY EVENTS GUIDE

Tuesday 1st		
Art Trail Exb	Church Gallery	Last Day
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30- 5.30pm
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 2nd		
Knitting & Crochet Club	B'sloe Library	11am-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	7pm
Thursday 3rd		
C. Banahan Art Exb	Church Gallery	First Day
Stableford Format 4 P	B'sloe Golf Club	First Day
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Social Dancing	Downey's Bar	10pm
Friday 4th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	8.30-1.30pm
Ken	Canal Bar	9pm
Brendan Shine Fundr	Gullanes Hotel	Doors 9pm
Comhaltas Trad Session	Burke's Bar	9.30pm
Liam's Country Road Show	The Auld Sod	10pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Saturday 5th		
B'sloe Library	B'sloe Library	Closed
Stableford Format 4 P	B'sloe Golf Club	Last Day
Joe Wynne	Canal Bar	9pm
Country Comfort	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Hickory Wind	The Pillar House	10pm
Night Owls	The Auld Sod	10pm
Cruiscin	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Luker's of S'bridge	10pm
Aine 31	An Tain	10pm
Take 2	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Sunday 6th		
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Session Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Off The Wall	The Auld Sod	9.30pm
Live Line	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm
Hickory Wind	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Monday 7th		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Tuesday 8th		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30- 5.30pm
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 9th		
Cuidiu Breastfeeding	B'sloe Library	9.45-11.45am
Knitting & Crochet Club	B'sloe Library	11am-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B'sloe Flower Club	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	9.30pm
Thursday 10th		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Concert BARA Singers	Gullanes Hotel	6pm-10.30pm
Social Dancing	Downey's Bar	10pm
Singers Circle	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Friday 11th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	8.30am-1.30pm
B'sloe Camogie C. Fund	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Ger Long	Canal Bar	9pm
Comhaltas Trad Session	Burke's Bar	9.30pm
Paul Watchorn	Dunlo Tavern	10pm

Saturday 12th		
Coding Club	B'sloe Library	11am- 12pm
C. Banahan Art Exb	Church Gallery	2pm- 3.30pm
Little Hours	Lukers of S'Bridge	8pm
John Molloy	Canal Bar	9pm
Music in Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Geagan Pagans	The Pillar House	10pm
Pacifica	The Auld Sod	10pm
Babylon	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm
Live Music	Luker's of S'bridge	10pm
Lorcan Live	An Tain	10pm
The Hush	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Sunday 13th		
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Session Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Ken Solo	The Auld Sod	9.30pm
Maggie D	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm
Monday 14th		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Tuesday 15th		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30- 5.30pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 16th		
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
Knitting & Crochet Club	B'sloe Library	11am-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	9.30pm
Paudge	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Thursday 17th		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Trad Nite	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Social Dancing	Downey's Bar	10pm
Friday 18th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	8.30am-1.30pm
Steve & Friends	Canal Bar	9pm
Rodneys Glory	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Comhaltas Trad Session	Burke's Bar	9.30pm
Brian O'Rourke	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Saturday 19th		
Coding Club	B'sloe Library	11am- 12pm
Eamon O'Neill	Canal Bar	9pm
Music Lounge	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
DJ John Finnerty	The Pillar House	10pm
Streetwise	The Auld Sod	10pm
Jock & Davy	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm
Live Music	Luker's of S'bridge	10pm
Eoin Maher	An Tain	10pm
Ken Solo	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Sunday 20th		
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Session Front Bar	Valerie's of Aughrim	9pm
Pub Fiction	The Auld Sod	9.30pm
BoJangle	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm

Monday 21st		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Ceol & Craic	Killeens of S'bridge	9pm
Tuesday 22nd		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30- 5.30pm
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 23rd		
Cuidiu Breastfeeding	B'sloe Library	9.45-11.45am
Knitting & Crochet Club	B'sloe Library	11am-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	9.30pm
P. Bennett	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Thursday 24th		
C. Banahan Art Exb	Church Gallery	Last Day
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Contempo Concert	Church Gallery	1pm-2pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Traditional Irish	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Social Dancing	Downey's Bar	10pm
Friday 25th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall Theatre	8.30am-1.30pm
Comedy Night	The Pillar House	9pm
Billy Garvin	Canal Bar	9pm
Small Idea's	The Auld Sod	10pm
Live Music	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Saturday 26th		
Coding Club	B'sloe Library	11am- 12pm
Lousie Colohan Musical S.	Town Hall Theatre	8pm
Amy Brennan	Canal Bar	9pm
Music Lounge	Valeries of Aughrim	9pm
Pacifica	The Pillar House	10pm
Laker	The Auld Sod	10pm
Small Deal	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm
Live Music	Luker's of S'bridge	10pm
Simon Brody	An Tain	10pm
Bothareen	Dunlo Tavern	10pm
Sunday 27th		
Trad Session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Session Front Bar	Valeries of Aughrim	9pm
Emerald Dave	The Auld Sod	9.30pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm
Boithrin	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Monday 28th		
Yoga	Gullanes Hotel	6.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Tuesday 29th		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30- 5.30pm
GROW	B'sloe Library	6pm- 8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 30th		
Knitting & Crochet Club	B'sloe Library	11am-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
B.Killkenny/F.Hession	An Tain	9.30pm
Paudge	Killeen's Of S'Bridge	10pm
Thursday 31st		
Ciorcal Comhra	Gullanes Hotel	11am
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5pm-7pm
Social Dancing	Downey's Bar	10pm

To advertise your events here contact: ballinasloelife@hotmail.com or Call 090 964 5831 by May 15th.

CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS



Seamus Duffy, Chairperson BACD Ltd, Lyn Donnelly, Manager BACD Ltd & Adrian Ahern BCU at the presentation of the BCU Social fund sponsorship to allow for planning permission to be achieved for an advance factory on the IDA site at the Business Park



Pictured at the Parting Glass session on Sat 25th of March when many musicians and troubadors gathered to say farewell to Mike O'Brien and team at Mauds who are crossing the road this Easter to launch "Brewery Lane"!



Cathal Ó hAnluain, Adam Mc Greal, Luke Galvin, Abdullah Shehid, Fionnan, D'arcy & Luke Feehily representing Garbally College at Seachtain Na Gaelige.



Tom Costello, Eoin Croffy, Jackie Pando Kelly, Una Kelly, Cathal Gregg & Sean De Halpin at 'Hello In There' Book Launch.

St. Patrick's Day Parade



E&O Donellan 2018

MODERN NEW NURSING CARE UNIT MARKS 3 YEAR MILESTONE

Ballinasloe Community nursing unit, located on the Roscommon road on the same grounds as the old Admission Unit of St. Bridgid's Hospital, are celebrating 3 years of caring this coming May. It opened with 15 short stay beds at that time, staffed by agency nurses, and agency Multi Task Attendants supervised by staff member Caroline Manning.



Sinead Carty, Mary Shea, Jackie Smyth, Bernie O'Donnell, Pauline Nzaki and Therese Burke.

This unit was set up to provide short and long-term care in the East Galway region, which was a big issue up leading up to 2015. The Care Centre is managed by Fiona Fahy, Assistant Director of Nursing, supported by Caroline Manning. Dr. Olivia Dunne is the unit's medical officer, along with two clerical staff members, Mary Coy and Mary O'Brien.

At present the complex has 35 residents. 13 of these clients are short term and come from acute public hospitals. Here they can avail of Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, two days per week, to enable them to get back to their baseline and return to their own home, or to give family an opportunity to have a care plan put in place.

The unit plans to increase their numbers to 50 residents in total, the additional 15 beds to open when additional staff are in place, with recruitment for these additional staff members nearing completion. It hopes to be employing approximately 19 nursing staff and 27 Multi-Task Attendants when all staff are in place over the coming months. In addition they have Physio and Occupational Therapy staff with supports from other services such as Speech and Language, Dietetics and Palliative Care, to name a few.

There is also a Catering Department, Maintenance Department, contract Cleaning Staff, Stores Department and Portering service shared with Mental Health Services from the HSE staff list. The staff members also provide long-term Care Residential service in this unit. Work is also done closely with the discharge co-ordinators in the acute hospitals and assistance with patient discharge when possible.

Manager Fiona Fahy gives a quick overview into what all staff members set out to achieve within Ballinasloe Community Nursing Unit. "We aim to maintain a high standard of care here in the Ballinasloe Community Nursing Unit, and this was proven on our last HIQA inspection in 2017, where we achieved 100% compliance and the new key task now is to maintain this standard. The atmosphere we aim to achieve is a home from home environment for our residents, where we as staff



Fiona Fahy.

are coming to work in their home. For staff we aim to have a working environment where every member of staff is valued and treated with respect" states Fiona.

The unit also provides extra-curricular activities for the care patients to get involved with, such as art classes weekly which are provided by local artist Vincent Warde.

Ballinasloe Community Nursing Unit also welcomes links with the local community, active retirement groups, musicians, school projects/ transition year student visits, choirs, volunteers etc. to come and get involved with the centre to try and provide a warmer environment to all the patients.

Ballinasloe Community Nursing Unit can be contacted at 090 96 30120 for any further enquiries, or the HIQA website.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

4th ANNUAL DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

The fourth Darkness into Light 5km fundraising walk, takes place at 4:15 AM on

Saturday 12th May 2018, the tenth anniversary of the original walk through the Phoenix Park when 400 first took part. Last year 150,000 participated in over 150 venues. DIL Ballinasloe 2018 will start at 4:15 and follow the same course as other years.

This year registration is only online at dil.pieta.ie. A special 10th anniversary iconic yellow T-Shirt to mark the event can be secured by registering before 4th May, to ensure shirt delivery.

DIL is the flagship fundraising and awareness event for Pieta House. It funds the free counselling service to those suffering from suicidal ideation, those bereaved by suicide and people engaging in self harm. All 270 therapists are qualified and operate out of 12 centres nationwide, including Tuam and Athlone.



SHEILA GETS BEST MAMMY AWARD

Sheila Gavin of Poolboy was treated to a special surprise on Mother's Day, after her daughter Ellen nominated her on iRadio for the Best Mammy Award.

Sheila was in pure shock when Presenters Garry and Fionnula from iRadio turned up unexpectedly with a bouquet of Flowers, along with other small gifts to make it a Mother's Day she would never forget!

Her daughter Ellen told the radio station that her mum works so hard in Portiuncula Hospital as a Midwife and looking after her family, that she needed a proper treat this Mother's Day, as she doesn't give herself enough credit for what she does.

Sheila nee Flynn of Main St., is married to Noel and they have four girls – Ellen (22) Laura (20) Emily (16) and Clodagh (10). The treat still didn't stop Sheila from taking to her typical Irish Mammy duties as she invited the crew in for a cup of tea after the gifts were given, much to their delight so it seemed.

"It was a huge shock, a bit of an embarrassment but a lovely surprise, and I suppose like all Mammies we hope we are appreciated but I have to thank the girls and Noel for keeping me in the dark" said Sheila.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

For more details, check out the Ballinasloe Facebook page to see the full video of Sheila's reaction on the heart-warming visit.



Sheila with her daughter Ellen and husband Jim, being presented with her gifts from Fionnula and Garry from iRadio.



Sheila Flynn with Gary and Fionnula.

GORDON BURKE-EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Gordon Burke of Ballinasloe was recently rewarded for his hard work and dedication to the Galway Bay Hotel by being named as employee of the month by the hotel's management and staff.



Gordon being presented with his award by management and staff members of The Galway Bay.

Gordon, who studied Culinary Arts in GMIT, worked as a popular senior bartender in Gullane's Hotel for numerous years, before studying Culinary Management at the GMIT - is now working in the Galway Bay Hotel, one of Galway's most recognised and

popular tourist hotels on the edge of Salthill, as a Breakfast and Carvery Chef de Partie.

Gordon, who is married to Cait Noone of Bearna, was in complete shock as he was presented with the award, and he feels that it was a great token by his fellow work colleagues who nominated him. "Thank you to everyone who put me forward for employee of the month, without your help it would not have been made possible" he said.

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BALLINASLOE TEACHER BACK FROM GAMBIA

Ballinasloe's Agnes Hurley was one of fifteen retired Irish schoolteachers who recently spent five weeks volunteering with GIVE in the West African country of The Gambia. GIVE (Gambia Ireland Volunteers in Education) works in cooperation with the Catholic Education Secretariat in The Gambia, where all subjects are taught through English, which is the second language for all.

One of four retired schoolteachers from Co. Galway in the group, Ms. Hurley said "It was a challenging, but worthwhile experience to gain an insight into The Gambian culture." She added that their visit was much appreciated and she and her colleagues are looking forward to returning there soon to continue the work.

GIVE aims to develop a collaborative and supportive partnership between working Gambian teachers and retired Irish teachers, Irish teachers on career breaks and others with an involvement in Education, for the benefit of Education in The Gambia. It is always looking for volunteers or donors and Agnes Hurley said it was a very enlightening five weeks, working with the children and their teachers in the West African country.

Jean Geraghty from Galway and Carmel Harrison from Athenry were assigned to work in one of the Skills Centres which provide second chance education mainly to young women, aged 17 to 20 years, who for various reasons did not complete their secondary education. GIVE volunteers provide assistance by teaching English, Maths, and Computer Skills in three centres where practical skills including sewing, embroidery, knitting, cooking etc. are also taught.

Meanwhile, Mary Cunningham, Galway and Agnes Hurley, Ballinasloe, worked as

part of a team providing workshops for teachers of Grade 1 in the Lower Base (Primary) Level. Challenged by large classed (usually between 55 and 60 pupils) and a lack of resources (blackboard and chalk being the main resources available) Gambian teachers struggle to implement the National Curriculum.

GIVE workshops focused on developing the teachers' knowledge and skills in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy, Integrated Studies and Classroom Management, Resource making is an integral part of every session. Up to 30 Gambian teachers participated in these workshops over a three-week period. This was preceded by visits to their schools by GIVE volunteers, who saw at first-hand, the difficulties encountered by their Gambian colleagues.

This month a team of four GIVE volunteers will visit The Gambia to work in the area of Nursery Education. Anyone interested in supporting the work of GIVE, by becoming a volunteer or donor, can find details of the organisation on its website-giveireland.ie

BY KEN KELLY



Pictured in The Gambia are Galway retired teachers, from left: Carmel Harrison, Athenry; Agnes Hurley, Ballinasloe; Jean Geraghty, Barna; Mary Cunningham, Galway City.

Moycarn lodge & marina



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A JOURNEY FROM JOBS CLUB TO PHD



Anna Hobbins from Gurtymadden, Mullagh, is currently carrying out a PhD in Health Economics in the School of Medicine, Dentistry and BioMedical in the centre of Public Health at Queen's University Belfast, after starting her journey in the Ballinasloe Jobs Club.

The Jobs Club was established in 1999 under the Ballinasloe Community Resources LTD, which is a voluntary body. The organisation was set up due to the severe loss of manufacturing industry jobs which hit the town and surrounding areas at the time. The mission to tackle unemployment has been massively aided by the Jobs Club since their establishment.

The Jobs Club support and assist anyone who is seeking work, or looking to improve their skills in the workplace. Participants develop skills which they will use in actual job finding activities under the guidance and supervision of a job club assistant.

Formal Workshops are run for one to four weeks depending on what's being done within them on a regular basis. The programme includes self-assessment, identifying skills and abilities and training in aptitude tests and computer work. Working on the C.V, interview skills and other assets when applying for a job are also covered within the programme with some assistance.

Anna started in the Jobs Club back in 2001 after seeing an advert for it on the local church newsletter. She began a job preparation and interview skills course after injuring her back, which made her want to try some part time work. Anna's first workshop went on for two weeks, then in 2008 she completed a foundation course from September to May, 2 nights per week, before moving onto a Bachelors of Commerce degree in NUI Galway.

"I was interested in returning to education

for some time. The Jobs Club was nearby so I went to the open night and listened to the speakers, some of whom were people who had completed the return to education foundation course the year before. The main thing the foundation course did was give me confidence in my learning and gave me new skills. Having received a scholarship from NUI Galway, I went on to do a Master's of Science (Health Economics) in the J.E. Cairnes School of Business and Economics in NUI Galway and my first class honours results gave me confidence to apply for a PhD" said Hobbins.

Lots of resources are now available within the Job Club, such as fully equipped tech rooms with computers, full internet access and printers if needed. In the upcoming year the Job Club hopes to set out an Apprenticeship Ready Workshop for those looking to apply for one.

Anna recommends for anyone looking to get back to education to give the Jobs Club a go: "Do a foundation course that will give you the updated skills to be confident in the college setting. On campus in NUI Galway there are many people to help you achieve your full potential, it will not be like your previous experience in education. Now you can choose your path and what subjects to take to suit your strengths. Be positive and give it a go-the journey will be well worth it."

BY IAN O'BOYLE



Back Row, L-R: Bernie O'Brien, Margaret Mansfield (Secretary), Kevin Walsh, John Boland, Sean Tully (Garda Vetting Officer), Pat O'Sullivan (Treasurer), Ger Maloney (Assistant Supervisor).
Front Row, L-R: Rita Head, Annette Cosgrove, Ita Hodgins (Jobs Club Assistant), Anne Hill (Jobs Club Leader), Terry Hanlon (Supervisor) and Grace McGrath.

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TOM CAHILL ELECTED TO FIANNA FAIL OGRA EXECUTIVE

Ballinasloe's very own Tom Cahill has been elected as the Policy Director of the Fianna Fail Ógra Committee at the National Conference, held in Athlone. This position entails working with young members of the Ógra to develop policies for the parliamentary party.

"It's a great honour to be elected into one of the top positions of the Fianna Fáil Ógra, it is good to know that all my political acquaintances have good faith in me" stated Tom, after his election. Cahill, 22, who comes from Laurecetown Road, studied in Garbally College before going on to pursue a career in politics by studying Arts in NUIG, where he also completed his master's degree.

Tom joined the Fianna Fáil Ógra at the age of 16 while still in secondary level studies, before joining the senior party as soon as he became a third level student in NUIG.

"First of all, I have to say that Micheál Martin was a huge influence for me to join his party after he took the reins after Brian Cowen in 2011, I find him to be a simple man who looks out for simple men" states Tom, as one of his key reasons for joining up.

"Eugene Murphy TD and Ann Rabbitte TD have also played a big factor in making me realise that Fianna Fáil was the right party for me. I campaigned with both in 2016 and have worked in the Fianna Fáil offices with them for the past 16 months" outlines Tom.



Tom Cahill, Peter Caulfield, Elaine Dold, Michaél Martin, Sorcha Ní Conghaile, James Doyle, Paschal Lehany.

"And of course, I couldn't forget my late grandfather Gus Colohan, who had been involved with politics for most his life. Without his encouragement and support I wouldn't be where I am today", sates Tom.

Tom, who also studied Urban Development Planning during his course believes that small towns like Ballinasloe have a future if it's in the right hands. "Urban and rural areas such as Ballinasloe need more businesses and people which will drive service to our town, and this can only happen if businesses start to intensify. With the new Ireland 2040 plan in place I feel that not enough has been included for small rural and urban areas, that the current governments key focus only lies in large urban set ups".

Whilst running for Fianna Fáil in a general election is not yet on his agenda, he does admit "however if the opportunity arose I wouldn't say no. I love working with and helping people in my community and I would most certainly do everything I can for this Town."

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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SPRING GARDENING TIPS



Whether you have a well-developed garden or have just acquired one, you will always have dreams of transforming the garden in one way or another. The possibilities are endless, from planting to encourage wildlife to making an ornamental garden so much that it becomes the room outside, a place of tranquility.

When looking at the garden as a blank canvas the lawn has a large impact, and is a great place to start in the creation of a relaxing space. If you have not fed the lawn up to now, this is a good time. Pick a nice dry day, make sure the lawn has not been cut for about 5 days, and spread the feed of choice evenly across the lawn. There are organic feeds available for the lawn which are chemical free and the well-known weed feed and mosskill treatments if required.

Ornamental plants will provide colour and lovely scents, some such as the lavender plant will encourage the bumble bee. Plants to encourage wildlife can be researched at www.ipcc (Wildlife Gardening Tips). Flowering plants will require some attention to ensure they produce their beautiful flowers.

In horticulture, potash is the common term for the nutrient forms of the element potassium.(K). Soil reserves are essential for adequate nutrient supply to plants and there are no environmental risks associated with the use of this fertilizer.

Rose plants for example will require potash to maintain healthy and nutritious growth. Fruit bushes and fruit trees will love you for this treat also.

For those of us who have started summer bedding plants from seed, from the middle of April we can start hardening off by taking the plants out of the protected area during the day but protect at night in case of frost.

The soil has dried out enough to till the ground and make ridges, sow seeds directly into soil such as carrots, parsnips, scallions, lettuce, peas, spinach, to name but a few. Always check the packets

for best dates to plant. Soil will be at a good temperature now but it can be helpful to cover the planted area with frost fleece for about a week to start the seed growth as this will immediately increase the temperature of the soil.

Sweet pea can be sown into enriched loose clay now, and the flowers produced will give heavenly scent all summer long.

Finally beautify your garden space by using containers of your choice, it's best to use fresh compost and a slow release fertilizer can be an additional bonus for your plant.

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CHORUS: Rachel Walker as Margaret/Nurse, Nessa McLoughlin as Kathy/Patient, Emma Greally as Maria/Pregnant lady, Lisa Whyte as Missy, Katie Bebbington as Candy Striper, Lucy Dolan, Claire O'Brien, Gretel Sullivan, Fiona Flaherty, Margaret Mulligan, Liz Arringan, Alice Duncan, Hannah Moore, Mei Chen Kennedy, Megan Kelly, Hazel Kenny, Shauna Mulry, Anna Kelly, Sara McGreal, Robin Newton, Cian O'Grady, Aaron Keighery, Darragh Leonard, Oisín Staunton, Jack Delaney, Michael Arrigan, Shane McDermott, Dixie Carrick

PRODUCTION CREDITS: Director - Paul Norton, Musical Director - Shane Farrell, Choreographer - Aoife McClafferty, Stage Manager - Pat Mc Govern, Stage Director - Dave Hardiman, Lighting - Pascal Gough, Ken O'Carroll, Kevin Murray, Sound - Derek Recks, Costume Team - Eithne Blackwell, Magdalena Garcarek, Lisa Whyte, Costume

Providers - Utopia Costumes, Hair Design - Jacinta Keane (Talking Heads), Scenic Design & Colour - Fiona O'Leary, Props - Lisa Whyte, Ingrid Clarkson, Fiona O'Leary, Magdalena Garcareck, Paul Drysdale

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BACKSTAGE CREW: Dave Hardiman, Pat McGovern, Conor Ryan, Kevin Murray, Geoffrey Casey, Paul Drysdale, Cai Drysdale, Miriam Hurley, Mike O'Brien, Annette Hurley, Ingrid Clarkson, Karen Hurley, Noel Gavin, Donal Croffy, Niall Hurley, John Scully

SET PAINTING: Fiona O'Leary, Karen Hurley, Fionn Ryan, Sarah Parker, Saoirse Boden

HAIR & MAKE UP TEAM: Jacinta Keane, Paula McGrath, Kate Madden, Eithne Blackwell, Magdalena Garcarek, Siobhan Byrne, Kasia Kubiank, Julia Pacholezyk, Breda Manton, Kay Carrick

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TRAD & COMEDY AT THE PILLAR HOUSE – SPRING 2018

An exciting year lies ahead for The Pillar House, in Ballinasloe's Society Street, as the Gibbons' family will celebrate 60 years since Evelyn & Godfrey Gibbons bought the premises in 1958.

The business now offers quality dining seven days a week, caters for all functions from First Communions, Confirmations to Birthday Parties, either in-house or in your own home.

There's also no shortage of entertainment, with live music every weekend, including The Pillar House Trad Session every Sunday at 6pm. On Friday 20th April, The Pillar House will host two of the most iconic Traditional Musicians, concertina player Cormac Begley and fiddle player, Liam O'Connor.

Cormac is a bass, baritone, treble and piccolo concertina player from West-Kerry. He currently plays in several projects including duets with Rushad Eggleston (cellist), Clíodhna Ní Bheaglaoich (fiddle, viola and sean nós dancer), Liam O Connor (fiddle), Caoimhín O Raghallaigh and Liam Ó Maonlaí, to name but a few.



Liam O'Connor, one of Ireland's leading fiddle players, was born into a musical family in Dublin. He has several Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann and Oireachtas titles as well as TG4 Young Musician of the Year. Both Cormac and Liam released solo CDs in 2017 and each

have received 5 star reviews in many respected publications.

On Friday 25th May a Comedy Night takes place at 9pm, which will feature up to 5 comedians who will provide the night's entertainment.

Further details can be found on The Pillar House Facebook page and on www.thepillarhouse.ie. Tickets for both events are available by calling The Pillar House at 090 96 43939 or at www.thepillarhouse.ie

BY IAN O'BOYLE

A portrait of Eugene Murphy, a man in a dark suit and blue tie, smiling slightly. The background is a soft-focus green.

Eugene Murphy
Roscommon - Galway

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Dáil Éireann, Leinster House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2 Tel: 01-6183056 Email: eugene.murphy@oireachtas.ie	The Square Roscommon Town, Co. Roscommon Tel: 090-6625722

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TOWN HALL REFURBISHMENT CONTINUES



Stairs BEFORE.



Stairs AFTER.



Town Hall Floor.

The Ballinasloe Town Hall has recently undergone some well needed refurbishment, the lions share of which has been aided by the Galway County RAPID Programme. The RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development) Grant Aid funds capital projects in small towns such as Ballinasloe.

New external CCTV cameras have been installed since early February by Xtra Security, Monksland, Athlone, along with an alarm system inside which includes motion sensors and heat detectors to provide extra security for the building. The building had been the subject of some break ins and vandalism in recent years.

These works were underwritten partly by the RAPID grant who provided €6,000 for the works to be completed.

Work has also been carried out on the old wooden floors and stairs around the theatre area of the hall. Richard Lynch of Craughwell made the timber look as good as new with a fine polishing and sanding job being done.

New Fire Exits and external door locks are currently being put in place at the Town Hall by Harney Locksmiths, Dunlo Street, Ballinasloe. Paint work has also been completed on the doors to give them a more vibrant look to the outside of the building.

Most of the Town Halls finances comes through rental of the Theatre

and rehearsal space, with many capital projects and improvements to the building being assisted by various forms of grant aid such as the RAPID Scheme.

The 400 seater hall which was built in 1845, currently has nine of a serving board directors Maire Hughes (Chair), Mary O'Connell (Secretary), Frances Leahy (Treasurer), Pat McGovern (Tech Support), Eoin Croffy (P.R.O.), Elaine O'Hanlon, Eva Burgoyne, Niamh Cavanagh and Pat Joe Guinnessy, elected at their autumn A.G.M.

This year the Hall has held rehearsals for the annual Musical Society Production of "9 to 5" and staged the acclaimed production; provides music rooms for the Town Band and hosted a few other evenings of theatre, as well as stage and dance schools.

Secretary of the Town Hall, Mary O'Connell states "We'd like to thank everyone who has assisted in funding the Town Hall, and a huge thanks to all businesses who have worked on making the complex what it is today".

For those groups interested in using the facility – which has 250 free carparking spaces adjacent to it and a tailor made online ticket booking system, they can call (0)90 96 46540 or email - info@ballinasloetownhall.com

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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CREDIT UNION SCHOOLS QUIZ U-11



Creagh N.S. U-11 Winner

Back Row: Noel Lohan John Coughlan, Jim Kent, Adrian Ahern, Aine Bleahen and Shane McNeill.
Front Row: Sulaiman Shahid, Cormac Murphy, Evan McKeown and Rodger Punnelliparambil.



St. Catherines Aughrim U-11 2nd Place

Back Row: John Coughlan, Jim Kent, Adrian Ahern, Stephanie Reddin and Shane McNeill.
Front Row: Ribh Fournet, Cian McLaughlin, Ciaran O'Hara & Laura Trappe.



Kilglass N.S. U-11 3rd

Back Row: John Coughlan, Jim Kent, Adrian Ahern and Shane McNeill.
Front Row: Ryan Fitzpatrick, Darragh Braithewaite, Shaua Kelly, Aine O'Brien.



Scoil an Chroi Noafa U-11 3rd

Back Row: John Coughlan, Jim Kent, Adrian Ahern, Declan Rynne and Shane McNeill.
Front Row: Ryan Howard, Daniel Nott, Daniel Connolly and Oisín Fallon.



Scoil Ui Cheithearnaigh U-11 3rd

Back Row: John Coughlan, Jim Kent, Aisling Folan, Adrian Ahern and Shane McNeill.
Front Row: Caoimhe Ni Neachtain, Aoibhin Ni Cochlain, Odhran Sheanain and Conchuir Ó Beirgin.

CREDIT UNION SCHOOLS QUIZ U-13



Scoil Bhride New Inn U-13 Winner

Back Row L-R: John Coughlan, Jim Kent, Diarmaid Burns, Adrian Ahern, Shane McNeill.

Front Row L-R: Saoirse Duhan, Olivia McGuinness, Tyler Earls, Megan Dolan.



Creagh N.S. U-13 2nd

Back Row L-R: Noel Lohan John Coughlan, Jim Kent, Adrian Ahern, Aine Bleahen, Shane McNeill.
Front Row L-R: Fionnan Seale, Emma Harvey, Niall Jennings, Charlie Mooney.



Scoil Ui Cheithearnaigh U-13 3rd

Back Row L-R: John Coughlan, Jim Kent, Aisling Folan, Adrian Ahern, Shane McNeill.
Front Row L-R: Ronan Ó Siorain, Jenny Ni Mhuiri, Eimear Ni Bhroin, Cliodhnan Ann Luain.

LITTLE RASCALS ANNOUNCE NEW SENSORY GARDEN



Little Rascals preschool has recently undergone a large renovation and refurbishment, in which the building had been opened up internally and completely refurbished, to create two large pre-school rooms with an additional room for arts & crafts and messy play.

The new management pair of Claire McGreal and Miriam Murphy were keen to stress that they would soon be turning their attention to the back garden and true

to their word, began major work on the garden last Summer, which was completed in September 2017.

This large outdoor space now includes a sensory garden, poly tunnel, fairy garden, tree house, mud- kitchen and pirate ship. "It is a wonderful addition to the facility and provides opportunities for children to play and explore in a way that is not always possible in an indoor environment" says Claire.

Claire and Miriam have always strongly advocated the importance of outdoor play for young children. According to Claire "playing outdoors is about more than just fresh air and exercise, it encourages children to be creative, to problem solve, work as a team, learn social skills and be adventurous. It also helps children to connect with the natural environment which can have a very positive affect on their emotional well-being. It is hoped that the children will access the garden year-round,



and the poly tunnel will provide welcome shelter should it be needed."

As Miriam adds "We hope to suit and boot up and get out every day, even if it's only for ten minutes it can be hugely beneficial to a young child. Now that Spring has arrived we will begin planting fruit and vegetables in the poly tunnel and look forward to getting maximum use out of this lovely space".

Little Rascals is currently taking Pre-school bookings for September 2018, please contact Claire or Miriam at (09096) 44577.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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CYCLIST HONOURS FALLEN CREW OF RESCUE 116



James Murphy alongside his children Katelyn and Fionnán at the finish line.

Local Ballinasloe cyclist, James Murphy, recently undertook a 347km cycle with many others in honour of the Rescue 116 crew Paul Ormsby, Ciarán Smith, Mark Duffy, Dara Fitzpatrick and Caitríona Lucas who tragically lost their lives after their rescue chopper collided with Blacksod Lighthouse over a year ago.

Murphy (living locally in Caltra, but originally from Beal an Mhurithe, Mayo), had only six weeks training and preparation, which for any person looking to cycle such a distance would be deemed too short. However, this wasn't the case for Carpenter James as he took centre stage in the event, not hesitating to turn back or give up at any stage during the long trek.

Starting out at Dublin Airport, 77 cyclists made their way west on an enduring journey which lasted two days with an overnight rest in Carrick-on-Shannon. Bonfires greeted the cyclists, from Crossmolina all the way to the lighthouse in Blacksod off the coast of Belmullet, where the accident occurred.

For more information on upcoming events including their annual Couch to 5k, check out their Facebook Page for regular updates.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

CORRECTION AND CLARIFICATION

In our last edition in the community/culture section, a preview piece on the forthcoming production of a New Comedy Play in the Moore Hall, by the Moore and Clonfad Drama Society, contained some errors.

We wish to advise readers that The "Mather's of Falty" play was written and produced by Xandra Kilduff with the Moore History Groups Community Drama Project, and not the Moore and Clonfad Drama society as incorrectly stated. The proceeds from the Mather's play went to the Moore History Group's Kilbegley Graveyard reading and research project, not to the Our Boys Trust as was suggested.

The Editor and publication regrets these inadvertent errors in presentation and apologises to the principals, groups, societies and to anyone to whom upset or confusion was caused.

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LADIES' RUGBY TEAMS PROGRESS TO FINALS

The Under 18 and 15 Ballinasloe Ladies' rugby teams both reached the Connacht Finals recently, with the under 18s taking home silverware and the under 15s just falling short after a hard-worked performance.

The under 18s faced off against Westport in the Galway Sports Ground, winning by a narrow margin of 26-24. A tough final 10 minutes saw the girls with their backs to the wall, which was just enough to stop Westport from getting a winning try.

Captain Maeve Dooley was full of praise for the team afterwards "The match was too close for comfort, both teams gave it their all, but we just about crossed the victory line. I can't put into words how I feel about the victory, it means so much to everyone associated with the club."



U-15 Girls

Back Row L-R: Niamh Kelly, Avril Deely, Shauna Mitchell, Anna McCann, Roisin Kelly, Aoife Castle, Joann Curley, Aoife Burnell, Emma Keane, Ruth Manning.

Front Row L-R: Alisha Williams, Leah Hogarty, Orlaith Brennan, Niamh McCann, Martha Frehill, Emma Mitchell, Eimear Hynes, Isabelle Finneran.

Missing from photo Alisha Manning and Alisha Noonan.

Silverware was not to be for the under 15 girls as they fell short against Ballina which finished out 17-10. The girls pushed and pushed to try and get into the try area for the whole second half, but it just wasn't to be.

Coach Gearoid Finneran had some honest words about the game "It was a mixed performance on the day, we started well early on by scoring a penalty, but we took our eye off the ball for a split moment which led to Ballina taking advantage and getting over the score line. At the end of the first half we trailed by 14 points and we knew we had a major hill to climb, but that didn't stop us from trying and we managed to get one try back, but unfortunately we just couldn't get the final plays right."

For more information on the girl's rugby matches check out the Ballinasloe Rugby Facebook page.



Connacht Cup U-18 Rugby Champions

Back Standing: Georgia Codyre, Mia Fahy, Claire Egan, Shauna Finneran, Abigail O'Hara, Natasha Hynes, Macy McDermott, Jordan Hopkins, Deirdre Egan, Eleanor McMahon, Claudia McNicholas, Sarah Dent, Aisling Murphy, Aine Galvin and Aoibheann Reilly.
Front Row: Rebecca Galvin, Beibheann Parsons, Hannah Gullane, Niamh Kenny, Amie Hawkins, Meabh Deely (captain) Aoife Dudgeon, Emily Gavin, Leona Larkin and Laura Finn.

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SHANE JENNINGS CAPPED FOR IRELAND UNDER-18

Shane Jennings from Derrymullen, son of Pat and Enda Jennings, was recently called up to the Ireland Under 18s Rugby Squad.

Shane, a senior Garbally student, scored one of the winning tries in the Connacht Senior Cup final as the full back on the Garbally team that defeated Col. Iognaid.

Club PRO Declan Murphy stated "We are all extremely proud of Shane and congratulates him on behalf of all members in the Ballinasloe Rugby Club".



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HON. LIFE MEMBERSHIP FOR CLUB STALWART

Ballinasloe Town A.F.C. recently honoured long-serving Club member Brendan Fahy by appointing him as an Honorary Life Member of the Club.

Brendan has served the Club for the last 45 years in a variety of dedicated and committed positions including Chairperson, Secretary, P.R.O., Treasurer, and Committee member. Brendan, a proud Beechlawn native, also played a significant development role as Secretary of the Roscommon and District Soccer League for 27 years while he also served with distinction on the Connacht Football Association, Connacht Schoolboys, F.A.I. Junior Council and the F.A.I. Referees committee.

The Club, in honouring Brendan, have in effect acknowledged a lifetime of giving, supporting and promoting a game and sport that he loves so much.

"Brendan still retains an active role and interest in the Club and shows no sign of stopping soon, and all of us here at the Club offer him heartiest congratulations" states secretary Johnny Walsh.

Liverpool based Soccer Club, Hailwood Juniors, are visiting Ballinasloe for a three day visit over the Easter period once again as guests of Ballinasloe Town A.F.C. A group of 75 players will travel over from Liverpool on what will be the 23rd year of the friendship soccer exchange. The clubs will be competing at under 11s and under 13s for the Bob Paisley Cup and for the Irish Cup.



The Paisley Cup is donated by Bob's family which is played for every year between the two teams. Secretary of the town's soccer club Johnny Walsh is looking forward to another successful year with the exchange.

"The Hailwood Town Council play a major part in financing and supporting the trip to Ballinasloe, as indeed they do when we visit Hailwood, every other year. Apart from the soccer side of things, the locals of our town have organised a fun-filled programme of activities for our friends from Hailwood. This hugely successful exchange also offers a significant boost to the Ballinasloe local economy with hotels, guest houses, pubs, shops and others benefitting from the significant spending over three days and nights by the 75 strong visitor group" explained Johnny.

The Soccer Club will soon commence the next phase of the Club Development scheme, by purchasing a drive-on mower to maintain the three Club pitches, along with commencing work on upgrading the perimeter fencing at the Club's two astro turf pitches.

Johnny Walsh would like to thank local Oireachtas members Minister Denis Naughten, Michael Fitzmaurice T.D., Eugene Murphy T.D., and Senator Maura Hopkins for the representations they made on behalf of the Club which helped the Club to secure €48,000 in Sports Capital Funding.

For more information on the Club, please check out their website at www.ballinasloetownafc.com, or find them on Facebook 'Ballinasloe Town AFC'.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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FIRST GAA THIRD LEVEL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

Ballinasloe GAA are offering a scholarship awards scheme for students entering their first year of third level education. Those eligible for the scholarship must be a member of the GAA Club in good standing and represent both Club and the Secondary School they attend. Three candidates will be chosen on the first of October 2019, one from each section of the Club

Each candidate will receive €1,000 which will be split in half for both semesters of their first year. An independent panel will assess players who apply, with input from management at Club level and School Teams, modelled on City Club schemes-Ballinasloe is only one of a handful in the West to promote this approach.

Players will be assessed not alone on training and match attendance-but also their discipline and leadership qualities.

The aims of the scholarship is to reflect the commitment on the part of Ballinasloe GAA to excellence in sport, and to encourage sportspeople to develop their sporting career within both club and school with the incentive of a financial contribution towards their third level academic studies.

Students must apply, by typed letter or email, to the Secretary of Ballinasloe GAA (secretary.ballinasloe.galway@gaa.ie) for the 2019 award. Proof of course acceptance from a third level institute will be required to receive this award.



GAA Under 12s

Payment of Bursary will only be on continued attendance of third level education. If the student happens to drop out of their course, then all further Bursary payments will be terminated.

For further information, please contact Ballinasloe GAA's club secretary Gerry Seale on 087 237 6976, or the Club Chairman Seamus Duffy on 087 250 6431.

SUMMARY TRAINING UPDATE

Club House Pitch (CHP),
St Teresas (ST),
Ballwall/Astro (B/A).

FOOTBALL:

U6: Sun 11am-12pm (CHP), U8: Sun 11am-12pm (B/A), U10: Tue 6:30pm-7:30pm (CHP) & Sun 11am-12pm (ST), U12: Wed 7pm-8pm (ST) & Sun 12pm-1pm (ST), U14: Wed & Fri 7pm-8pm (CHP), U16: Tue 7pm-8pm (CHP), Minor: Wed 8pm-9pm (CHP), Junior: Sat 7pm-8pm (CHP).

HURLING:

U6/8/10/12: Sat 10am-1pm (CHP), U10: Wed 6pm-7pm (CHP), U12 Thur 7pm-8pm (CHP), U14: Mon & Thur 7pm-8pm (ST), U16: Thur 6pm-7pm (CHP), Minor: Mon 8pm-9pm (CHP), Junior: Tue & Fri 8pm-9pm (CHP).

LADIES FOOTBALL:

U8/10: Mon 6pm-7pm (CHP), U12: Mon 7pm-8pm (CHP), U14: Tue 7pm-8pm & Fri 6pm-7pm (ST), U16: Tue & Fri 7pm-8pm (ST), Junior: 8pm-9pm Tue & Fri (ST), Mothers: Wed 8pm-9pm (ST)

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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CAMOGIE FOR ALL AGES

A new season of Camogie is currently under way indoors (moving outdoors in April) in Ard Scoil Mhuire Hall, and the committee are encouraging girls in every age group-from 5 years upwards to come up and give it a go. Camogie is a fun experience and a great way to make new friends while also developing your co-ordination skills, with hurleys and helmets provided to girls who currently do not possess them.

Cumann Camógaíochta Béal Atha na Slua had another successful year in 2017. County titles were won at U10, U12 and U14 level, while the Juniors were runners up in their County title. These are fantastic achievements for the players and their coaches as for some of the players it was their first season playing camogie.

The U6's and U8's participated in several blitzes across the county during the year and our Club also hosted an U8's blitz.

A number of players were selected by the club to participate in County Trials such as Emma and Shauna Mitchell along with Emma Keane,

who played on the Galway U13 squad in the Connacht Intercounty Blitz.

Emma Brody also represented the club in the County U14 squad, a fantastic achievement. Also, a big congratulation to Caoimhe Ní Thuairisg who received a Connacht Medal for playing on the Galway U12's Camogie A Team that won the Connacht Division 2 Competition.

The U12 panel will be heading to Croke Park on Sunday 8th April to play in the National Caman on Croker day. This is a fantastic initiative which focuses on U12 players. It provides them with the opportunity to experience the skills and fun of the game and leaves them with great memories of playing in Croke Park, a place where all young players aspire to play.

The Club will also be hosting the U14 County Feile in June and preparations are currently under way to ensure the successful hosting of this event.

Aoife Clarke (Senior Coach) thanked all their local Sponsors "whose assistance is greatly appreciated and goes a long way in helping towards the development of our young players".



U6 GROUP

Back Row L to R: Greg Flynn, Joyce Heavy, Sarah Loughnane, Ava Knott, Caitlin Clarke, Eimear Flynn, Aislinn Coughlan, Niamh Kelly.
Front Row L to R: Hannah Burns, Mia McCarthy, Caitlin Kilduff, Charlotte Burns, Emily Clarke, Sophie Maloney.
Missing: Teegan Ni Bhroin.



U8 GROUP

Back Row L to R: Maddison Moloney, Leah Kelly, Isabella Fallon, Aoife Burns, Layla Moloney, Carley Furey, Lauren Loughrey.
Front Row L to R: Katelyn Caulfield, Laura Berrigan, Laura Costello, Eabha Curran, Amy Carroll, Zohra Riaz
Missing from picture: Amy Brannelly, Caoimhe Flanagan, Mia McCarthy, Zoe Cleary.

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Anyone looking to get involved with the club should contact one of the following coaches, training times are also included:

U6/U8's every Tuesday evening 6pm-7pm.
Niamh Prendergast 086 2677397

U10's every Tuesday evening 7pm-8pm.
Kevin and Sharon Caulfield 087 2122493

U12's every Wednesday evening 6.30pm-7.30pm.
John Carroll 087 4610582

U14's every Wednesday evening 6.30pm-7.30pm.
Pamela Hall 086 2028636 or Frank Kennedy 087 9904651

U16/U18's every Saturday evening 7.30pm – 8.30pm.
Michelle Rigney 085 7047434

Juniors
Lorraine Canavan 087 3547102.



U10 GROUP

Back Row - L to R: Sharon Caulfield, Adele Finnegan, Caoimhe O'Connell, Deirdre Headd, Laoise Caulfield, Mary O Grady, Caitlin Dempsey, Amy Clarke, Aoife Berrigan, Aoife Headd, Ceyda Cara, Kevin Caulfield,
Middle Row - L to R: Rachel Kelly, Amy Swariz Grace Coleman, Matilda Kelly, Ola Sweeny, Emilia H ealy, Emily Dowd.
Row row - L to R: Aleana Kilduff, Ruby Kearns, Mia Casey, Lily Casey, Heidi Comer, Sadbh Waters, Fiona Zancarano, Laura Dowd.
Missing from photo: Distiny O Driscoll, Mary Ann O' Driscoll, Britney Sweeney, Ava Burke, Hannah Clarke, Clodagh Gavin.



U12 GROUP

Back row - L to R: Aoibhinn Fitzpatrick, Abbey Carroll, Anna Harney, Niamh Casey, Ellen Curtin, John Carroll.
Front row - L to R: Eva Ruane, Aoibhin Coughlan, Caoimhe Naughton, Sarola Gallagher, Eabha Hardiman.
Missing: Sinead Greene, Ruth Dudgeon, Niamh Kerr, Alannah McKeigue.



U14 GROUP

Back row - L to R: Emma Mitchell, Caoimhe Ni Thuarsaig, Emma Keane, Lorna Kennedy, Shauna Mitchell.
Front row - L to R: Roisin Coleman, Maria Dolan, Ellen Burns, Aoibhean Fitzpatrick, Ellen Curran, Abbey Carroll,
Missing: Xige Kennedy, Clionagh Ni hAluain, Nicole Ward, Elish Kerr, Ava McKeon, Molly Naessans, Maeve Casey, Zoe Tumulty, Amy Leonard.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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Some of the staff of KPW Print pictured with the Galway Hurlers winning Trophies when they visited the Ballinasloe factory.



Ballinasloe Bowls Club Competition Winners pictured with their trophies at a Presentation Function in Gullanes Hotel,

Front row l-r: Michael Kelly (winner "A" singles competition), Martin Lyons (winner "B" singles competition),

Hugh O'Neill (winner "C" singles competition).

Back row: Brendan Kelly, Julie Finn, Frank Dolan & Sean Craughwell (winners doubles competition).



Eamon Staunton (President), Johnny Farrell (Captain), Barbara Harney (Lady Captain), Ollie Dooley (Seniors Captain) pictured at the Ballinasloe Golf Club Captain's Drive-In.



Pictured at the presentation to the winners of the Ballinasloe Golf Club Captain's Drive-In Scramble were, l-r:

Micheal Deane (Fred Kilmartin, Sponsor), Aideen Bergin, Jackie Cunningham, Ailish Brennan with Barbara Harney (Lady Captain) and Johnny Farrell (Captain).

BALLINASLOE EAGLES SPECIAL OLYMPICS CLUB

Ballinasloe Eagles S.O.C. came into existence in 1996. The Athletes participated in sports comprising of Swimming, Bocce and Horse Riding. When the roof of the swimming pool was blown off in high winds the club was disbanded. The club was set up again in 2003 to provide a sporting outlet for people with special needs. It encompasses Horse Riding, Swimming and Golf.

Unfortunately the Bocce (Bowling) was discontinued in the year 2000 due to the fall in numbers.

The club take athletes with special need from age 6 and up. It also covers a radius from Portumna, Mountbellew and Athlone.

The National Special Olympic Games are being held in Dublin from 14th - 17th June 2018 with venues still to be decided. There are four athletes from the Ballinasloe Eagles who have qualified for these games. They are Fionnuala Treacy and Bernard McDermott in Equestrian, Kieran Lyons in Swimming and John Loughnane in Golf, who is partnered with Séan Tully. Over the years the parents, coaches and volunteers have helped the Athletes to participate in the Special Olympics All-Ireland Games and World games which are held every four years. Local Athletes have had great success at these games bringing home Gold, Silver and Bronze medals.



Chaperone Teresa Kelly with Swimming Athlete Kieron Lyons.

The AGM of Ballinasloe Eagles was held recently in Gullanes Hotel. Officers elected for this year are Vanessa Lloyd (Chair), Aine Lyons (Secretary), Gerry Kelly (Treasurer) and Teresa Kelly (Membership Officer).

Ballinasloe Eagles Committee member Sean Tully thanked the Ballinasloe Eagles sponsors, Bridget Gohery, Ballinasloe Golf Club, Séan



John Loughnane and Sean Tully at the Connacht Regional Special Olympics in Ballyhaunis May 2017.

O'Rourke and Patrick Garvey USA. "Everyone involved with the club wishes the Athletes and Teresa Kelly, who is accompanying the Athletes as Coach/Chaperone, the very best of luck at the National Games" states Sean.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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CHESS CLUB WINTER LEAGUE

BY IAN O'BOYLE

Ballinasloe Chess Club capped off their winter league this year, with Kenneth Higgins winning his third Winter League Chess Title after edging out defending champion Tommy Dunne Jnr. in the final round in the Creagh NS premises.

The 2011 and 2015 winner became just the second person in the Club to complete a hat-trick of titles after defeating Dunne in a pulsating battle. Higgins finished with an impressive 5.5/6 and a point ahead of four players all tied on 4.5 points.

Debutant George O'Brien was declared second place on countback after completing the rare feat of finishing unbeaten and yet not winning overall! O'Brien added three draws to his three wins before Christmas including being the only person to take points off Higgins. Tommy Dunne Jnr. got the consolation of third place after his defeat, leaving Paddy Divilly and Johnny Dunne to complete the top five.

There was equal excitement in the battles for the other prizes on the night, as Jake O'Grady delivered a shock victory over the club's junior champion Aoife Castle to become the first ever winner of the Winter League under 16 competition after finishing with 4 points. Liam Martin had to wait over an hour for Luke Feehily's battle with Christy Archer to become the second youngest ever winner of the grading prize, one month older than Roisin Coleman who was victorious in 2017.

The biggest Club Senior Championship ever with 33 entries enjoyed many exciting twists and turns right up until the final game. Higgins now joins Tommy Dunne, winner of the Winter League 2013, 2014, 2017, at the top of the Roll of Honour in the chess club.

The summer league starts again on the second Tuesdays of the month in Creagh NS at 7.30 pm and newcomers are always welcome. Contact their facebook page BallinasloeChess.



Liam Martin Grading Winner.



Jake O'Grady Under 16 Winner.



Kenneth Higgins Senior Champion.

SENATOR MAURA HOPKINS



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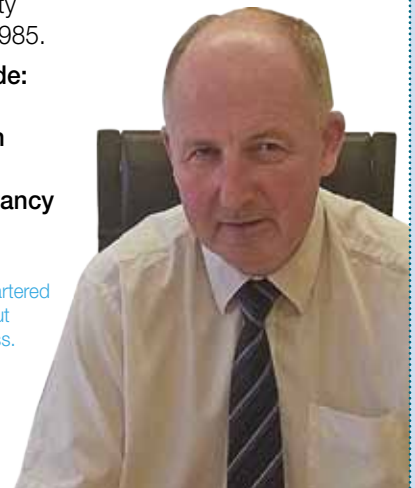
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COUCH TO 5K ROAD RUNNING SUCCESS

The Ballinasloe Road Runners recently held their Couch to 5k finale in which close to 100 people, of all ages and fitness levels, took part. The 5k loop was around Beechlawm and back to the GAA grounds, thus completing their third annual 'Couch to 5k running programme.'



Ballinasloe Road Runners.

"We have received great feedback from all involved and are extremely delighted with how everyone who took part has progressed week in, week out, and indeed on the final 5k run" said Committee Member Brendan Boland

The Road Runners meet every Tuesday and Thursday night at 7:45pm at Dunlo running track. Whilst not a professional running club, just a group of running enthusiasts of all fitness levels, they are always looking for new members to join their ranks. For further info on a spring/summer programme check out the Road Runners Facebook page 'Ballinasloe and District Road Runners' or email ballinasloeroadrunners@gmail.com.



John Egan, Karol Fitzgerald, Denise Boland and Brendan Boland.

BY IAN O'BOYLE

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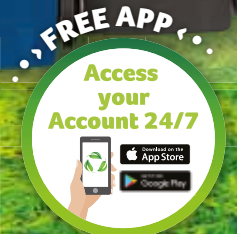
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THE BURMA ROAD

A road linking the bottom of Brackernagh with the western end of Society Street, in Ballinasloe, is officially known as Harris Road, named after a 19th-century MP and Land Leager. Locals, however, invariably refer to it as the Burma Road, a nickname it acquired in the course of its construction during the Second World War.



I used to think that its soubriquet was a peculiar instance of Ballinasloe humour: naming something small after something very big – the real Burma Road was 717 miles long! That was before I discovered that there are several other relatively short Burma Roads both at home and abroad. What then of the original of the species?

In the 1930s Burma was a British colony and the world's greatest exporter of rice. During the latter half of the decade, Japanese successes in the Sino-Japanese War had enabled them to seize control of the Chinese seaboard, so that the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-Shek had to find a new way to import war material from the outside world. Some goods could be shipped across the land frontier with the Soviet Union, but the deserts of inland China made the route too difficult for the quantities to be of significance. Since the British authorities in Burma were amenable, the route from Rangoon into south-west China was ideal for transporting equipment and munitions originating in the Western world, especially the United States.

A railway extended northwards from the port of Rangoon via the city of Mandalay to its terminus at Lashio in the north east. Historian Alan Warren writes: "The governor of the Chinese province of Yunnan was instructed by the leadership at Chungking to build a new road

BY BARRY LALLY

on the route from Lashio to Kunming. Work on the so-called Burma Road began in earnest at the end of the 1937 monsoon season. Lashio and Kunming were 320 miles apart as the crow flies, but the winding road would need to be over 700 miles in length. The construction of the new road by Chinese engineers and labourers incorporated existing sections of road where possible. Long suspension bridges were built to cross the fast-flowing rivers; many lesser rivers and streams also needed new bridges able to carry heavily loaded motor vehicles. The road looped sharply and dramatically as it rose in and out of valleys and across a succession of steep ridges. There was little modern equipment available; men used picks and shovels to move earth and break down the cliffs and hillsides. Blasting of limestone rock was done with black gunpowder in bamboo tubes as dynamite was seldom to be had. The Burma Road was officially opened early in 1939."

To service the route, an international team of lorry drivers and mechanics was recruited. The village of Lashio quickly became a boomtown where something of a Wild West atmosphere prevailed with pistol-toting, hard-drinking and hard-living truckers roaming the streets and nightly raising hell in the bars.

Inefficiency, corruption, and the difficulty of the route into south-west China all combined to retard the transport of war material, a portion of the goods disappearing into the black market with the connivance of venal officials. A widespread abuse was the smuggling of cigarettes and petrol, though a more serious practice by far was the pilfering of military equipment for adaptation to civilian use. Moreover, facilities for the repair and maintenance of motor vehicles were woefully inadequate on a route strewn with the wreckage of road crashes.

Disruption of this life-line to China was probably the chief motive behind the Japanese invasion of Burma in January 1942, in addition to Burma's rice-producing capacity and its potential use as a base for launching an attack on the Indian subcontinent. Because of their commitments in other theatres of war, the British were unable to deploy sufficient resources to repel the invaders. As a

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consequence, British troops were forced to undertake a 1,000-mile retreat northwards to India, and within three and a half months the entire country was in the hands of the Japanese.

After the 1942 Japanese invasion, the Allies had lost control of the original Burma Road. Now everything had to be flown to China over what was known as the Hump, the eastern end of the Himalayan Mountains, a dangerous and costly exercise during which more aircraft were lost because of accidents than through enemy action.

The Americans decided early on that it was imperative to build a new road from India to link up with the Chinese section of the old Burma Road, and the project was initiated in late 1942 by General "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell. Starting from Ledo in India, the road would thrust 500 miles through Allied-controlled territory over some of the most brutal terrain on the face of the earth. It was built

by 15,000 American soldiers and 35,000 local workers. Over a thousand Americans died during the construction, as well as many more locals, mostly from tropical diseases. Eventually completed in January 1945, the new road had come too late, however, to affect the outcome of the war, and supplies carried over it at no time approached the tonnage levels of supplies airlifted monthly into China over the Hump. After the war the road fell into disuse and today is largely impassable, long stretches having been swallowed up by the jungle.

To conclude the saga of the Burma Road, it should be said that in the early '60s we had a Burma Grill opposite the northern end of our own version of the famous highway. This was not, as you might suppose, a restaurant specializing in oriental cuisine, but rather a fast-food outlet, latterly known as a branch of Supermac's.

BALLINASLOE VINTAGE CLUB SECOND ANNUAL TRACTOR RUN

Ballinasloe & District Vintage Club Annual Tractor Run will take place for the 2nd year running, following the successful turnout and success of last year's event. The event takes place this year on Sunday the 22nd of April, with the Committee and all their members working hard on making sure that this year's run is just as good as last year's.

The Tractors will start off from Gullane's Hotel and is open to all makes of Vintage and Classic tractors. All machines must be road worthy, insured and be at least 30 years old to take part.

This year the main beneficiary of the run will be the East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre. Registration on the morning of



Shane Burns, Marion Naughton, Jackie Daly, Conor Donellan and Alan Mc Devitt.

the event takes place in Gullane's Hotel from 10am. Entry fee is €20. Refreshments will be provided at the start and finish of the run.

For more details please contact Alan on 085 1437307/ or Conor at 087 6636891. More information and updates will be posted on the Vintage Clubs Facebook, so be sure to check it out.

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DOWN MEMORY LANE



Ballinasloe Vocational School-Co. Hurling Champions 1956.

Back row, l to r: Maurice Madden, Sean McGilloway, Paddy McGilloway, Vincent Ryan, Tony O'Connor, Bernard Ryan.

Second row, l to r: Henry Gately, Billy McKeigue, John Lyons, Vincent Coffey, Oliver Flynn.

First row, l to r: Pdraig McGann, Gerry Kelly, Jackie Clarke, Sean Kelly, Liam Smith, Seamie O'Connor, Frank Curley.

In front: Kevin Hogan.



At a homecoming reception in the Crystal Ballroom, Kiltormer, for the All-Ireland football champions of 1964.



Can You name the two gents on Duggan Avenue outside Grenhams Garage?

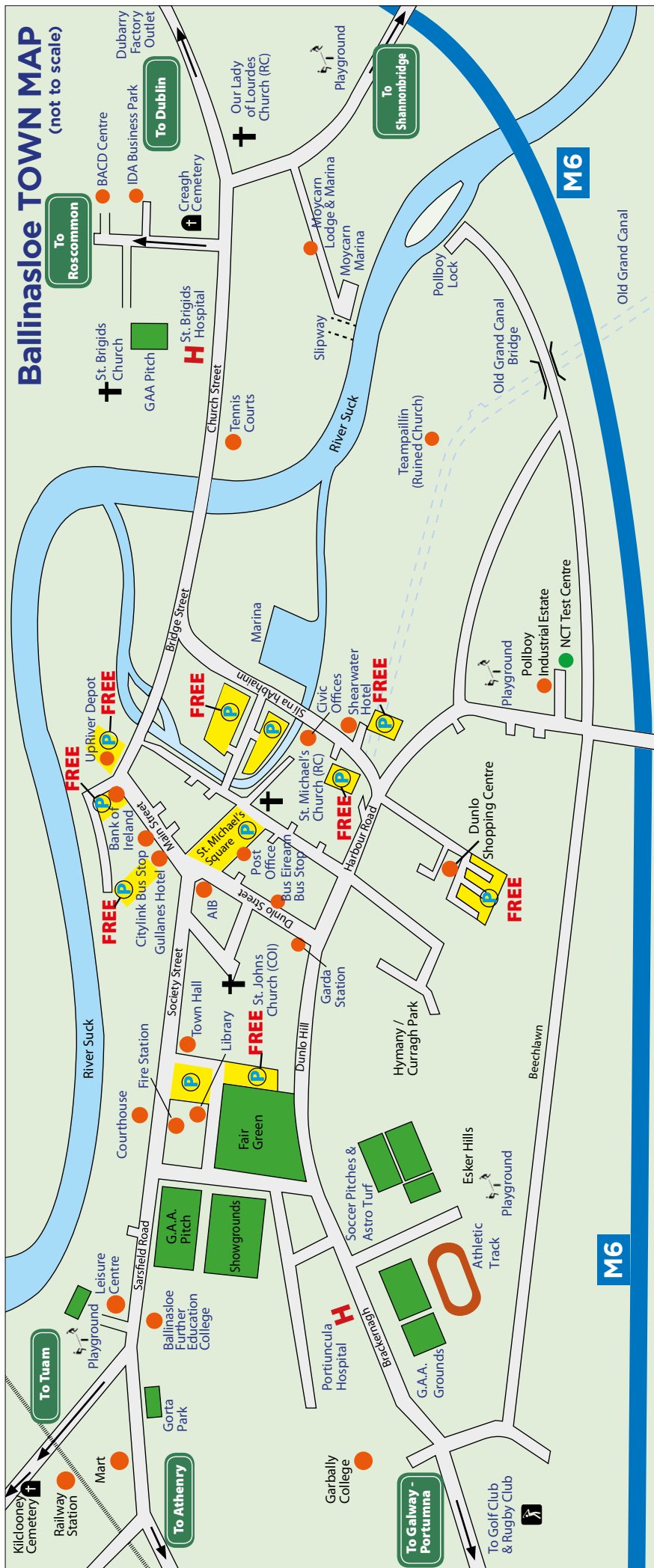
Send your names to ballinasloelife@hotmail.com before the 20th of April and win a special readers prize.



CURLEY AND McCLEARN FAMILY REUNION

At a reunion of the Curley families from Clontuskert and the McClearn families from Killimor, with their 4th, 5th and 6th generation of cousins, whose forefathers from both families emigrated to Indiana, USA in the 1840's.

23 Americans travelled over to Ireland to meet their 123 Irish cousins, after they were discovered through "Ireland Reaching Out." The visitors spent over two weeks looking at the original homesteads their ancestors emigrated from as well as churches, cemeteries, schools and farms associated with them.



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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