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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 9 Issue 1: April '19 - May '19

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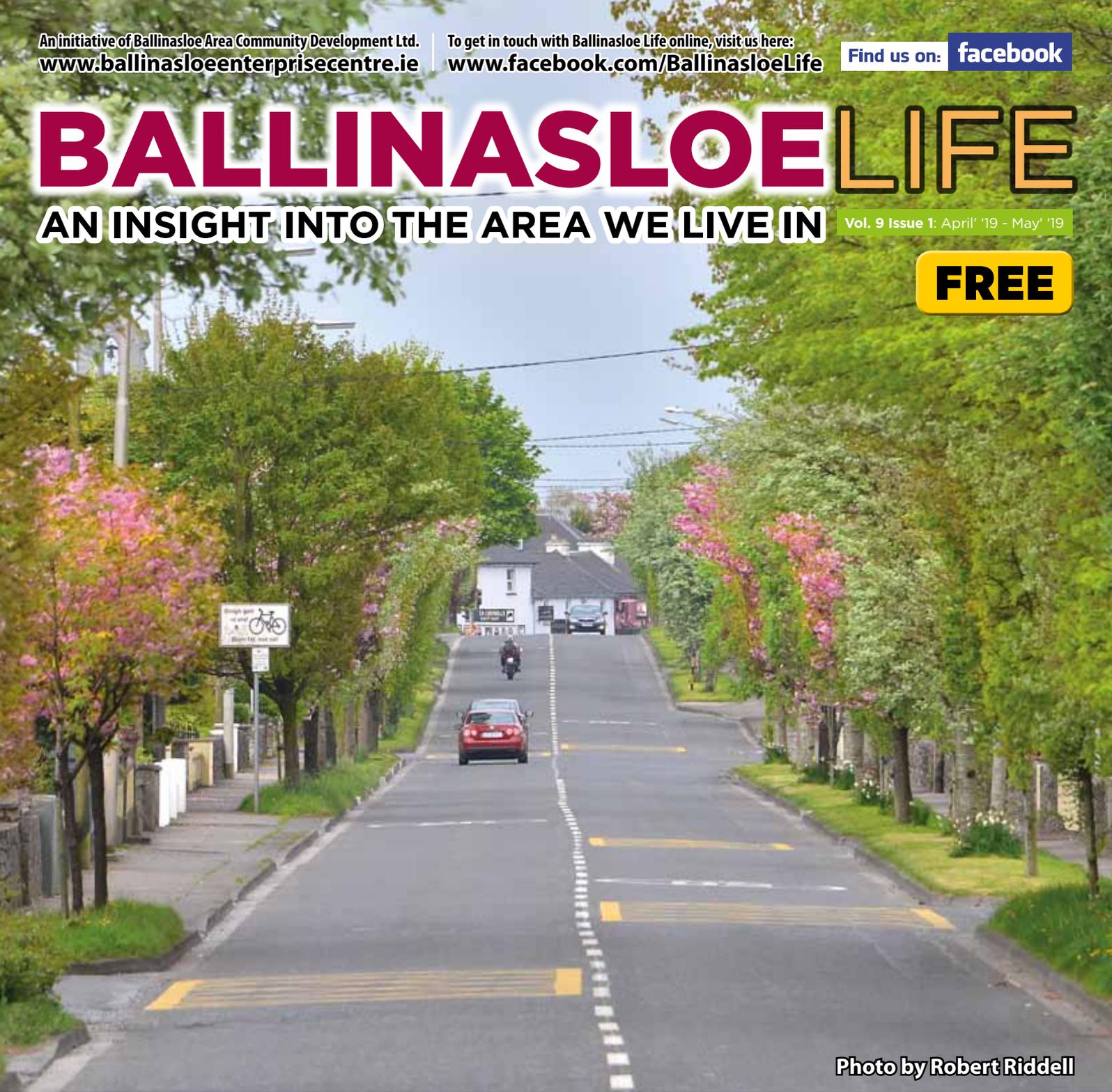


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So welcome to Volume 9 issue one

Firstly a huge thanks to the 80 plus businesses and firms who have pledged some of their marketing spend with us as subscribers. If it is not for your engagement with the project – none of these pages or promotional work would appear. Sadly there still remains a chunk of businesses who for whatever reason in 9 years can't divert some of their annual advertising spend to the Magazine. Again the core message from the LIFE team is that where we can, we ought to support those in our business community that are supporting us.

One of the key developments in the last 8 years has been the abolition of our Town Council. This Town - it might surprise some readers - first had a Town Commission in 1841, which became an Urban Sanitary District Council in 1880 and a Urban District Council since 1897, becoming a Town Council in 2001 - 2014. So 178 years of administering our own affairs in conjunction with the Dept. of Environment or Local Govt. and the County ceased in 2014, which has left a lasting legacy on our community DNA.

The election of the new Municipal District Council in 2014, saw representatives from the wider hinterland take their roles but a niggling sense of disconnect emerged. The legal dispute over the delivery of the Town Centre Big Dig further embittered already fraught relationships between town and county. The Development Company BACD since then has carved a lonely role in researching an Action Plan and creating a Town Team to implement it; in partnership with the County Council. You can read in this publication some of the recent

We are now entering into year 9 of Ballinasloe LIFE, this is issue No 49. Over the years we have been the bearer of many good news stories and they continue to flow unabated. We have had much success in Educational Terms and on the sporting fields.

Existing Businesses have flourished and New Businesses have opened up. Many of the larger employers in the area have expanded but I feel we continue to lose out on Central Government Investment via their urban and Rural Regeneration programme.

Through BACD our continued focus has to be to build a modern Advanced Technology Building on the IDA site as we have all the required ingredients to attract meaningful employment. We have distinct advantages namely access to workforce, 500k of the 2.2m people working are within commuting distance of Ballinasloe, Quality access to Road / Rail / Air Infrastructure & proximity to 3rd Level Colleges namely Maynooth, AIT, GMIT & NUIG.

We are in the centre of the Hidden heartlands project and should

results of this partnership and how other towns in a necklace of here – Roscommon, Galway etc. seem to have done much better out of competitions for National funding than from our efforts. You can also read of the hollowing out of resources from the town urban area since 2014.

We can take no pleasure from appearing negative, but we cannot ignore evidence and facts which are hidden in full view but rarely commented upon by those who wish to avert our gaze. In the absence of a Town Council elected by the residential citizenry, a voluntary Board of Directors and Town Team Members seeking to undertake improvements & forge development has become a little like the wailing wall of Jerusalem for those in our community who genuinely feel that we are being left behind.

In our efforts to communicate this frustration, disenfranchisement, disappointment and dismay at how matters seem to progress with greater urgency and focus elsewhere – we could be misunderstood from the powers that be as being negative or anti-establishment!

Sorry folks – we just want a better future not more of the jaded past! 10 locals are looking for your votes in elections this May – make your interaction with them on the issues that matter count!

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



Articles and Photos Welcome

NEXT ISSUE
Deadline 15th May

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BIG DIG PROGRESS ADVANCING SLOWLY BY DONOGH MOORE



It is Phase One works that have been taking place on Society Street, and since the area between the central Junction and Church Hill has been reopened, works have now progressed further up the street, from Church Hill to the car park beside the convent. Having undergone a full road closure, Society Street will reopen once the above works are done, which is scheduled to be in May. Works will continue between the car park and Sarsfield Drive, with the road operating under a single lane arrangement, in other words a staggered one way system.

St. Michael's Square will undergo a period of resurfacing, with one side of the square closed at a time. These works are aimed for completion by mid-April. Phase Three works are due to commence on Dunlo Street's parking bays and footpaths from mid-April onwards, and these will finish up in time for Society Street's reopening.

The Ballinasloe Municipal District Council was briefed on the current status of the ongoing works in the town recently. Ciaran McAlary, of Ryan Hanley Civil and Structural Engineers, updated the present councillors on when this phase of the Town Enhancement Scheme, which are currently taking place on Society Street and rendering it impassable, and the St. Michael's Square works will cease.

Phase One and Two of the works include all below ground work such as the laying of new sewers, surface water pipes, watermains and some ductwork. Phase Three includes the construction of new footpaths and street works, together with new street furniture, signage, lighting and trees.

Following the reopening of Society Street and the completion of these works, a full road closure will be enacted on Dunlo Street, to facilitate further Phase Three works. However, pedestrian access will be available throughout. Phase Three works will continue on Main Street and Society Street throughout the remainder of the year, and moving into April and May of 2020.

It is inevitable that a degree of disruption to will be caused by the Phase 3 works, however the project team are committed to minimising the inconvenience caused at all times. The aim of these works are to deliver a project which the business and community in Ballinasloe can be proud of for many years to come.

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FLOOD RELIEF PROJECT WORTH €8.6M SET TO COMMENCE

Consultant engineers are set to be appointed to the Ballinasloe Flood Relief project, Denis Naughten TD has recently confirmed. This project, which will see an investment of over €8.6 million being allocated to the town, sees a myriad of construction and development works take place, all with the intention of preventing the town from flooding in the future.

The proposed works under consideration by the engineering team to protect the town include the construction of 530 metres of new flood defence walls, alongside over five kilometres of flood defence embankments and a demountable flood gate. As well as that, construction will take place of two new six metre-wide flood alleviation arch culverts at Ballinasloe East Bridge. Works will also commence on the riverbank both upstream and downstream of the bridge to 35.5 metres to maximize the efficiency of the flood alleviation culverts. Two separate Lock Gates are also set to be constructed across the Canal, and a sluice gate across the channel, which will flow into the marina from the canal will be built.

Under this same scheme, more upgrades are to be applied to existing infrastructure, alongside the new construction taking place in the town. Upgrades are to occur on existing culverts which will see them widen to a two metre diameter, allowing for more water to pass through them. The existing Killooney Road Bridge on the River Deerpark will also be upgraded to comply with Flood Alleviation regulations. The riverbed both upstream and downstream of this bridge will have works done to it, all with the intention of maximising the efficiency of the upgraded bridge. Finally, maintenance works of the west and east channels will occur, to ensure their full capacity can and will be utilised in the event of a flooding emergency.

The announcement of these works builds on the investment of over €400,000, which has already been allocated in conjunction with Minister Sean Canney, the former Minister of State at Office of Public Works and Flood Relief, for flood relief measures in Ballinasloe, South Roscommon and East Galway.



Minister For State with responsibility for O.P.W. Boxer Moran & local TD Denis Naughten inspecting the East Bridge in Ballinasloe.

Deputy Naughten added: "To complement the flood measures to date and those planned for the local area, work is ongoing on the River Shannon itself, south of where it meets the River Suck, to remove blockages in the flow of the river that have a direct impact on flooding south of the town."

"Other projects throughout County Roscommon & East Galway are currently under consideration and further measures will take place along the River Shannon over the coming months which will have a direct impact on flooding problems along the River Suck and River Shannon."

A representative from the state body Office of Public Works also gave a presentation at a recent Municipal District of Ballinasloe meeting, held in the local County Offices, where technical details were presented to present local councillors.

BY DONOGH MOORE

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PER CAPITA SPEND ON TOWN CITIZENS DECREASED MORE THAN NATIONAL SHORTFALL IN 7 YEARS BY C CROFFY

There are lies, damned lies, and then statistics as the saying goes, and it's difficult to compare the monies being spent on our town from Municipal Sources when we had a rating authority – the Urban District Council and Municipal District Council - but based on public documents, the CSO and official statistics and minutes of various reports and meetings, the LIFE team have extrapolated some facts that may assist in forthcoming debates for local elections.

There is a view within the community that the level of investment being spent from recurrent resources – (not the capital works that were funded by the prudent management of the old urban, from landfill receipts and handed over to the County in 2014) - has been severely depleted.

The way budgets are presented and passed are completely different from the methods used when the town had its own Urban, and the headings or cost centres have since changed ie. there is no cost centre for Water Services anymore (handled by Irish Water) and no costs pertaining to Development and Planning (all done centrally).

Secondly the presentation of budget in this county does not break down income according to Town or Municipal Districts, so it's very difficult to examine in detail the state of rates, unrecoverable rates, and property tax per annum. It's impossible from public data to get evidence of loss of revenue from on-street parking during the big dig as there are no receipt figures for the preceding years.

A lot of services are provided centrally from Council, with costs apportioned across the 5 municipal districts - there does not appear to be a per-capita or per-rateable business threshold for that allocation. Finally the elephant in the room is the way County Councils have to allocate their non-national road schemes, repairs, constructs to their municipal district based on the kilometres of roadway in each area.

Take Loughrea Municipal District budget in 2019; €7.4m - up from €5.7m with some €5 million of this for roads. What the roads figure does is cloak the resource depletion, so one can quickly look at a total spend of €3.95 of the old Urban and €4.7 million of the new Municipal District in 2013 and 2018, up a total of 19% and another 20% to €5.7 million in 2019, and argue that in GROSS cash terms more is being spent, but when one digs a little deeper it's shocking-what has been axed.

When the Urban passed its last budget in 2013, it didn't have the full payment of local property tax. The CSO tells us (2011 and 2016 counted the Town Urban Area, not Municipal District) we have about 2,800 residential dwellings. Based on the average cost of sales of house in the locale for 2018 – the average band would be €315 per house – a cool €880,000 (80% of this tax is maintained locally). This is on top of water charges and refuse costs, and last summer Councillors had to use notice of motion funds to restore a grass cutting/estate maintenance service! Rates based on the 2013 Budget and increases since then should be in the order of €2.1million. In effect, the local businesses and local residents are contributing some €3 million towards the annual costs of Galway County Council.

From what can be seen from the 2019 Budget – some €603,573 is being spent Directly on the District but undoubtedly there are shared county wide resources – like Fire Service, Library Service, Heritage Service, Community and Enterprise Services, Insurances, Salaries and Wages to be added on top of this figure.

The commercial rate for the County can only be

increased once the rate for the former Town Council area has achieved parity (part of the merger negotiations). This rate currently stands at €66.59 which is unchanged since 2009, and the Ballinasloe rate is €61.00 which is being merged slowly since 2016, but prior to that had been unchanged since 2008. The local Rate will be the same as Galway in 2020, according to forecasts. For comparison - Ballinasloe €61; Galway County €66.59; Roscommon €71.44; Mayo €73.92; Clare €72.99.

A final consideration is that overall Galway has been faring disastrously in national allocations, once from the Car Tax but now the Equalisation Fund (The Residential Taxes). In 2008 the County Budget was at €160m - in the last decade reducing every year, and in 2018 stood at 30% less at €112m. This savage cutback has put - to be fair to the local authority - huge limitations on services, staff, discretionary funding etc. etc.

The amount approved by the District Council for Investment in



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Economic Development and Promotion for 2019 is €7,690 which represents 2% of the County's total spend of €400,000 for 2019!

From our crude and perhaps overtly simplistic analysis of the figures – removing the Road Expenditures and dividing the money allocated to the other cost centres - Town Citizens had a total amount of €2,777,683 spent on the town which equated to €417 per capita in 2013. Doing the same maths against the Municipal District Council area of 26,100 persons, with a Budget of €5,868,704 the average is €29 per capita in 2019. It is a long way off a 30% reduction!

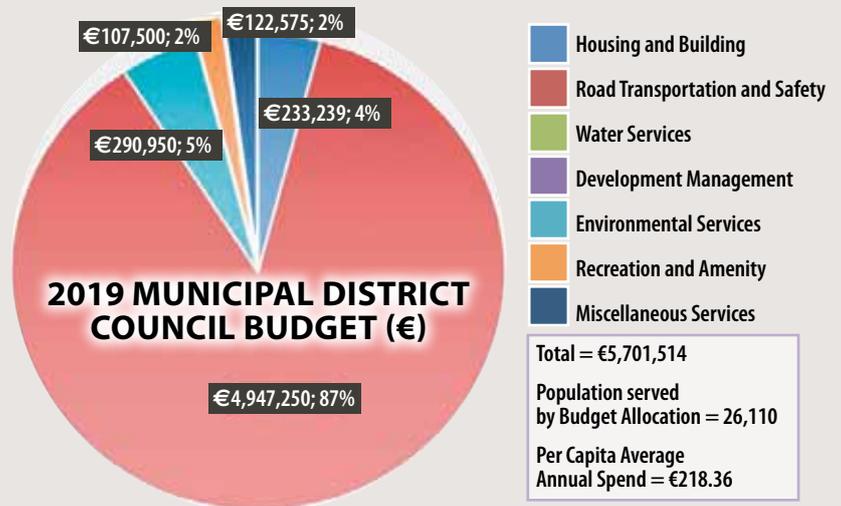
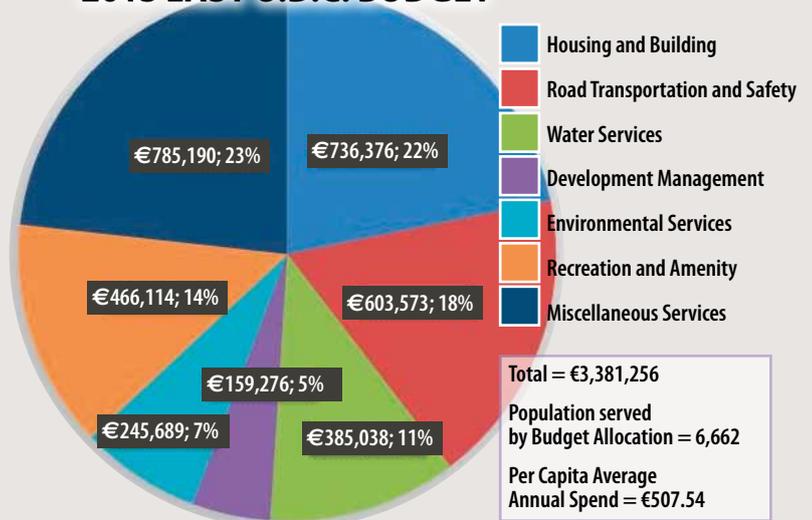
The Municipal Districts concept has not been kind to former Urbans all over the country. The above (and accompanying graphs) would suggest that we have slept walked through a raiding of our larder, but strangely it is the elected Councillors that have the statutory duty to pass the budget annually. It is one of their only three functions in the administration of local government; Elect the Mayor or Cathaoirleach, Amend/Adopt the Annual Budget and Approve the Development Plan for the County or Area Action Plan. Everything else we will read in the flyers is eye candy.

We cannot blame officials for the adoption of budget, but by law it is only the members elected that have the power to determine where the money, raised locally is spent within the country.

Cost Programme Area	2013 – 2019 % Change
Housing & Building	-68%
Road Transportation & Safety	+72%
Water Services	0
Development Management	0
Environmental Services	+18%
Recreation & Amenity	-77%
Miscellaneous Services	-84%

7 YEARS IN SOME CRUDE COMPARISON - AN URBAN VERSUS A DISTRICT

2013 LAST U.D.C. BUDGET



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FORMER POLL TOPPER JOHNNY WALSH NOT CONTESTING LOCALS

BY D MOORE

Former Mayor of Ballinasloe Johnny Walsh's name will not appear on a ballot paper for the first time in 20 years as he will not be contesting the May local elections due to family commitments.

Current Labour Party activist Johnny stated that it was an extremely difficult decision to make not to contest the local elections on this occasion. "Local politics is an ongoing huge interest and indeed passion of mine but after some reflection, I came to the decision that I simply could not devote the necessary time to an extensive election campaign given my family commitments".

He was expected to put in a very determined bid to secure a seat, given the fact that on a very bad day for the Labour Party locally and nationally, he had received a very credible 670 number 1s in the 2014 County Council elections and could have seriously challenged for a seat with around 180 more votes. Johnny is currently a member of the National Central Council of the Labour Party and had gained considerable political experience while working for a few years as an Oireachtas assistant.

He was elected on 3 successive occasions to the former Ballinasloe Town Council and served on the Council for 15 years, topping the poll in 1999 and never out of the top 3 in subsequent elections.



Photo - Johnny Walsh with Labour Party Spokesperson on Health Alan Kelly at the Nurses Strike demonstration in Dublin

Since the abolition of Town Councils in 2014, Johnny has been involved in an extensive campaign at national level to reintroduce Town Councils to every Town with a population of 5,000 plus. This has resulted in the Labour Party introducing a Bill which has passed 1st and 2nd stages with all political parties and groupings supporting the Bill except naturally the Fine Gael and government supporting independent deputies.

Labour Party Leader Brendan Howlin will be introducing it at 3rd stage (Oireachtas Committee level) in the next few weeks and it's anticipated that the Government TDs

will now come on board and support the bill or at the very least will not obstruct or delay its passage through the final stages to ensure it becomes law.

Johnny believes that Restoration of Town Councils will be a big talking point in the forthcoming local and European elections and has called on all candidates to express support for and actively campaign for support of the bill through the Oireachtas.

HOW DO I GET MY GLOW ON???

What sequence should I use my products and When?

Usually, at home, you will double cleanse, add serum and then moisturise. Adding an eye cream or eye serum at the end, particularly at night. It is advisable to exfoliate once a week and add a mask into the sequence once a week also.

This routine can be done morning and night but most often people wear make up during the day and like to keep to just a light moisturiser under their foundation so your night time routine should be the important one!

Cleansing is vital, even if you do not wear make up every day.

A good cleansing routine removes all the grime, dirt, micro organisms your skin comes into contact with on a daily basis. This gives your natural glow a real chance.

I like to cleanse twice, particular if you wear make-up. The first cleanse removes your make - up, the second cleanse gets into the nitty gritty and really cleanses the skin properly.

If you use face wipes.....**THROW THEM IN THE BIN NOW!!!** And then go to confessions!

Serum next!! Serums are lightweight and will penetrate the dermal layers easily and absorb super quick as most are water based so they are generally applied before your heavier creams. I would probably make sure my VITAL active ingredients are in my serum!

Moisturiser is your next step and moisturising helps the upper layers of the skin maintain elasticity and flexibility. It can improve the quality of your skin and some moisturisers also contain your SPF which you should be wearing daily regardless of whether the sun is shining!.



What Products Should I use?

The products you use and more importantly their active ingredients will and should vary depending on your skin's mood and what you are aiming to achieve but the routine should be kept simple and repetitive.

The following skin conditions are the most common and usually benefit from the ingredients we have listed below.

Anti - Ageing - you should be using a product containing antioxidants e.g. Vitamin C and Vitamin A like our Juliette Armand Retin C Serum.

Dry Skin - you should be using products containing hydrating ingredients e.g. hyaluronic acid, vitamin E like our Juliette Armand's Hyaluronic Acid Serum.

Acne prone / Oily - you should be using products with ingredients such as Canadian willow herb, Retinol (or Vitamin A).

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ROLLOUT OF NEW BROADBAND SCHEMES BY DONOGH MOORE

Two crucial internet service providers, Eir and Imagine, have announced plans to invest in the Ballinasloe town and surrounding areas' broadband services.

Eir first announced their plans to bring fibre internet connections to every single premises in the town in the first wave of a new ambitious plan. This is set to provide speeds of up to 10,000 megabytes per second for local businesses. Eir also announced that they will eventually roll out the same initiative to all other towns in the country, with a population over 1,000 inhabitants, over the next four years.

Imagine, a direct competitor to Eir, are also to bring wireless broadband to the town. This new scheme will see Ballinasloe have 5G coverage throughout the urban and rural surrounding areas, with speeds of up to 150 megabytes per second. These services will be brought to the four telecommunications masts that surround the area, meaning that nearby communities, such as Castlegar Ahascragh, Redmount Hill, Eyrecourt, Killbegley and Cappataggle will all benefit from the new investment also.

The news of these new investments to the town only further grows the platform that the town is a more than suitable candidate for "hotdesking" and remote work. "Hotdesking" is the practice of using desks on a rota, rather than having one's own desk, and the town has a myriad of spaces that could be used in this capacity.

Independent TD for Roscommon-Galway, Denis Naughten lauded the implementation of faster internet speeds, and spoke of the town's future as a business hub. "All of this investment now complements the new digital hub that has been developed on the top floor of the Library on Society Street which makes Ballinasloe far more attractive for new job creation in the digital economy".

Some of the origins of the schemes now being rolled out, occurred in the early months of Denis's stint in the Department of Communications and Climate Change.

Senator Maura Hopkins commented that "This rollout will see intervention in communities right across Roscommon-Galway with areas such as Ballinasloe Town and Mountbellew being included. Given this 5G service does not require the installation of fibre cable, it will provide a much higher standard of connection to rural communities outside of our towns and villages."

5G internet connections are the successor to the current 4G services available around most of the country, which means that Ballinasloe will be at the forefront in terms of the technological services it can offer potential entrepreneurs and businesspeople alike. Senator Hopkins further mentioned that "This commercial rollout, which is separate to the National Broadband Plan will see 155 areas nationally covered by this new service by June 2019. By June 2020 this will have increased to over 300 areas."



Denis Naughten TD with the fibre that's to be laid during the ongoing works in the town.

Enet is currently working with Galway County Council to put fibre into new ducting being laid as part of the work ongoing in the town centre. This will build on the three fibre optic cables that are already running through the town between Dublin and Galway, which are connected to the transatlantic cable running from County Mayo to the US.

This service from Imagine will be available to between three and four hundred customers at each individual location. There will be an installation cost of €150, and a further monthly cost of €60. Those looking to avail of the service can register at imagine.ie.



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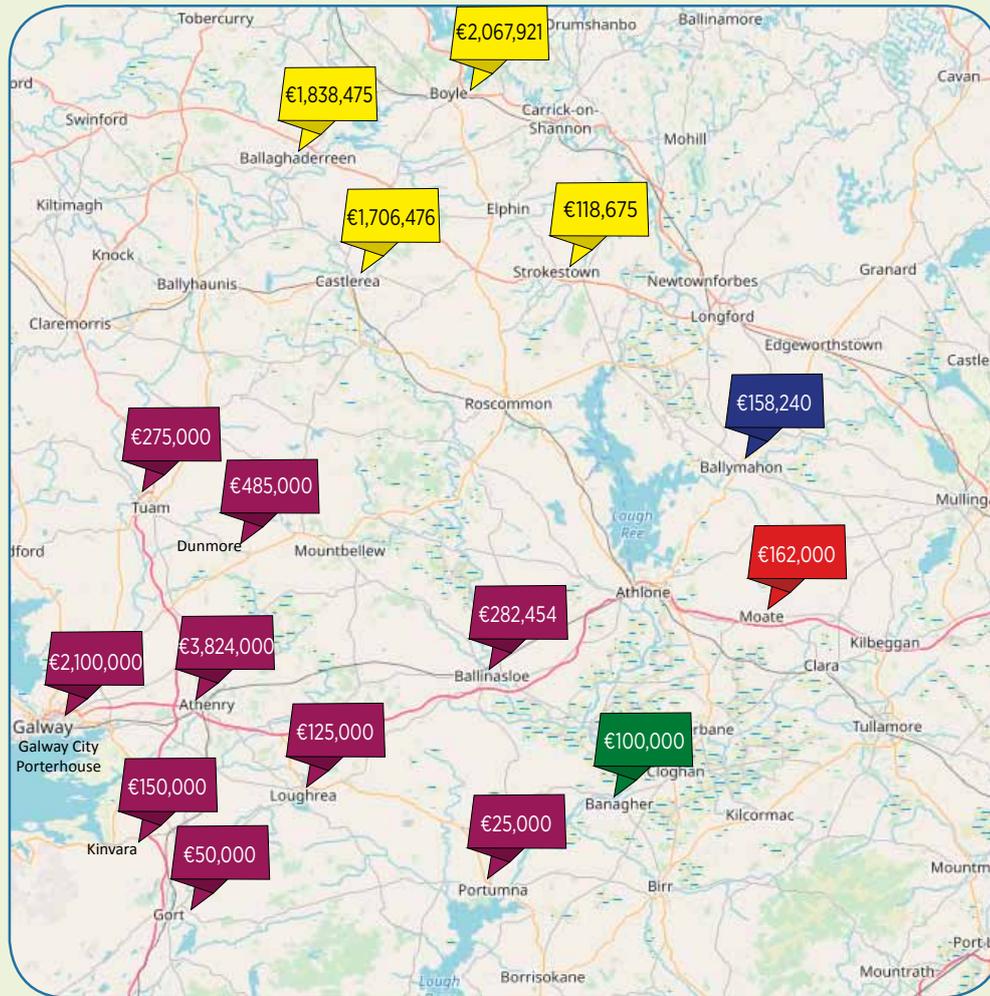
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TOWN LOSES OUT ON THREE YEARS OF RURAL DEV. FUNDS



Amounts of Department for Rural and Community Development successfully allocated in the last three years.

Recent announcements by the Government were hugely anticipated to deliver some much needed capital grant aid for development projects in the locale but instead, with Galway County awash with over €10 million and Roscommon County to the east of the town obtaining over €5 million, we in Ballinasloe obtained zero on the third round.

Countless other towns who had no benchmarking done in the last five years, no town action plans, no town teams and no formalised partnership (which we have) with their local authority till late in the day; have apparently done much better under these national schemes.

There is huge disquiet and dismay at BACD Board level and town team grouping that either the Department systems and analysis is failing to understand our needs and asks or there could be political reasons behind the rejections.

Discussions and meetings with Senior Officials at Galway County

SENATOR MAURA HOPKINS



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Council in the wake of the announcement left participants puzzled as to how an Advance Factory with full planning and support from IDA And EI all in place could not be demised as a "Shovel Ready Project".

Huge amount of management and Town Team time and energy are going into the making of these detailed applications and bids which under the terms of the scheme must be forwarded through the Local Authority. Many businesses, members of the company are openly asking what the development company and town team are doing in the wake of barrowloads of Exchequer money being invested in a necklace of towns around them but nothing for here.

In a detailed report to the Directors of BACD & Galway County Council the Manager and Town team outlined the narrative of the last three application rounds. In summary:

In 2015, BACD Ltd applied directly to the department for funding and were successful in being granted €60,500. Since then all applications made by BACD have had to go through Galway County Council who in turn put the applications together and submit them directly to department for the funding.

In 2017, BACD originally sought €172k in funding and after the process were awarded €29k. In 2017, BACD applied for €26,000 and were granted €20,000.

In 2018, as part of the Rural Regeneration Fund, BACD requested for 2 projects to be submitted. A Category 1 project for the construction of new ATU building on the IDA site (funding of €2m sought) and a feasibility Study (category 2) for St Brigid's campus (€90k funding). These projects along with 10 others were submitted by GCC in one application overall seeking €3.4m in funds for Ballinasloe. No

funding was granted.

As one can see the Development Company and Town Team are not shy of ideas or applications but we have not been successful.

"We've met with the Manager and Senior Officials at Galway County Council and conveyed our frustration at what is the perceived side-lining of our prioritised development bids. We feel that as Ballinasloe is on the periphery of the county and the fact we are in a different electoral area to rest of the county we are being left behind. Following from the meeting, there is a renewed sense of commitment to redouble our efforts in a focused way with our local authority partners as there is more National Government funding becoming available" stated Seamus Duffy Chair.

There are a host of Town Team ideas in IDA site Development, Heritage, Tourism, Hidden Heartlands, River Walks, Cycleways, St. Brigid's Campus Development and micro enterprise that have been identified and the group will be reviewing the towns Action Plan with the stakeholders in anticipation of more national calls and to have more projects shovel ready.

TOWN COUNCIL RESIDUAL CAPITAL ACCOUNT STATUS

With the investment of €6.5m to the library completed, the amounts of capital funding retained by Galway County Council (provided by the old Town Council) for agreed use in Ballinasloe projects are:

Project	Amount
Inner Relief Road	€1.4m
Riverside Linear Park	€0.5m
Town Centre Enhancement Plan	€2.5m
Remedial Works on Old Landfill	€6.6m
Total	€11m

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Wednesday 24th March: French	A taster of beginners French. Introducing themselves, family, likes, dislikes, food
Thursday 25th March: Maths	A good grounding in the topics you'll be doing in first year. Fractions, decimals, place value, long division and multiplication and other topics pupils find difficult.
Friday 26th March: German	A taster of beginners German. Introducing themselves, family, likes, dislikes, food.

Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre, Creagh Road, Ballinasloe
€80 per child. Booking essential.

Contact Liz: 087 9177323 to book your place
Register before 12th April to guarantee your place

NEW PHYSIOTHERAPY BUSINESS BRANCHES OUT

A new physiotherapy business has recently established a base in the Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre, on the Creagh Road. Action Physio, under the guidance of Keith Fox, aims to service the town's needs when it comes to physiotherapy, sports therapy and the like.

Action Physio opened a physiotherapy clinic in Athlone in back in 2006. Keith Fox, who qualified as a Chartered Physiotherapist back in 2000 from Liverpool University, saw to the opening of the first clinic. Keith is currently working for Irish Rugby, and more specifically the Senior Men's National Team, a post he has held for the last seven years. He has enjoyed many successes in this time, including being part of a team responsible for winning three Six Nations titles, as well as one Triple Crown win, and one Grand Slam win. Keith was born in the local Portiuncula Hospital and has lived in Athlone for the majority of his life.

The business decided to expand to the area of Ballinasloe, with a team of three Chartered Physiotherapists to help cater for their patient population in the area. The migrating team includes Keith Fox, Fergal O'Reilly and David Kelly. Many of the business' patients are from the town and its local surrounding area, and so they felt the move was necessary and that it would make travelling for physiotherapy easier and more accessible for anyone from that



David Kelly



Fergal O'Reilly



Keith Fox in action with Conor Murray.



Keith Fox

area. The local Enterprise Centre offered an attractive home for their new venture in the area due to its close proximity to both the town and the nearby motorway.

The team at Action Physio offer treatments and therapy for a variety of issues and ailments, such as spinal injuries, arthritis, muscle tears, road traffic accidents, sprains, occupational injuries, fractures, sports related injuries, biomechanical problems, and post operative rehabilitation. The business also spotted a potential market for their services, as the town is home to a multitude of sporting clubs and organisations, and having a business that can offer sports-related physiotherapy is a great addition and service to the local sporting community.

To book an appointment with Action Physio Ballinasloe, call (090) 649 4903, or email the team at physio@actionphysio.ie. For those seeking more information about the business and their opening times, visit their Facebook page, at: Action Physio or alternatively, visit their website at: www.actionphysio.ie.

 BY DONOGH MOORE

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NEW CRAFT STORE AND MARKETPLACE OPENS ON DUNLO ST. BY DONOGH MOORE

Colourful Things, a new craft shop and marketplace, has opened recently on Dunlo Street. The owner, Cherry Mullins, is a Clare native originally, but is no stranger to the town of Ballinasloe. Since marrying her husband Aidan and moving to Kilconnell, Cherry has successfully held two separate Christmas Pop Up shops on Society Street.

Colourful Things offers crafters a marketplace, where they can sell, advertise, and promote their own work at a very low cost. At present, the shop has over ten local Galway makers, with more enquiries coming in from around the country. Not only does the shop offer itself as a marketplace for other vendors, but they also give workshops on the Dunlo Street premises. There are currently workshops available on a variety of topics, such as knitting, crochet, stained glass techniques, jewellery making, applications and demonstrations of a myriad of body creams and lip balms.

When the weather improves in the coming summer months, Cherry intends to offer workshops on crafting willow baskets, as well as garden art. Colourful Things is also offering other local crafters the use of their facilities if they wish to give classes in their own chosen fields.

After the success of her and her husband Aidan's shop and garden in Kilconnell, as well as the aforementioned Christmas Pop Ups in the town, the pair decided to take the plunge and open a retail and craft shop in Ballinasloe on a permanent basis. They pride themselves in being able to offer a selling space for local handmade goods, and believe their shop compliments not only the other retailers on Dunlo Street, but in the town as a whole. She believes that the various local retailers have brightened the town, and brought it back to life.

In the future, Cherry is hoping to expand her business, and believes the town offers her the capacity to do so. She believes



her time spent in craft markets, tearooms and retail shops over the years have offered her a vast amount of experience when it comes to knowing what consumers want from a craft and retail shop. That, paired with the availability of on-street parking, and access to a wide network of other colourful businesses in the town makes Cherry hopeful for the future.

For the time being, she hopes that local customers will come in and browse the varied collection that Colourful Things has to offer, as well as using the facilities for their own artistry.

To contact Colourful things, call Cherry on (086) 192 1923, or find them on Facebook at: Colourful Things Gift Shop. The store is open Tuesday to Saturday, from 11am to 5pm.



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BEECHLAWN ORGANIC FARM GUIDED WALK FOR EASTER

Good Food Friday will take place from 2 to 5pm on April 19th at Beechlawn Organic Farm, Ballinasloe. The day will kick off with an extensive farm walk led by the founder and co - owner of the renowned Organic Farm, Padraig Fahy. His co-lead on the day will be the well-known and respected forager, Edward Blaine. Edward has years of experience in foraging, and since moving from the U.K to Co. Clare has set up his own artisan food business.



Una Ni Bhrion & Padraig Fahy

Between these two experienced guides this FREE walk is set to full of information, fun and one of the highlights of the day, and there is no registration – just turn up at the Farm main gate.

Next up will be internationally respected chef, restaurant owner and Irish Times columnist J.P. McMahon, who will give a demonstration to attendees on fermentation. With fermentation becoming increasingly popular in recent times, it is sure to be of great interest to guests, and J.P. will be using local seasonal veg and foraged items in this demonstration.

A Raffle will also take place on the day, with the prize being a giant Easter Egg Hamper. This raffle is in aid of Jackie Dolan's 'Road to Recovery'. As the event is taking place at Easter, there will be events on specially for the children, such as an Easter Egg Hunt, as well as Face Painting. Refreshments will be available onsite throughout the day.

Beechlawn Organic Farm is a family-owned business that Padraig Fahy and Úna Ní Bhroin founded in 2002, and is currently run from their farm at Beechlawn. Last year they were successfully ahead of the pack to win a highly acclaimed Bord Bia Award for Innovation,

for the launch of their bio bags. Beechlawn are now a leading force in the retail sector in the fight to eradicate plastic packaging in the area of fresh fruit and veg. Their first batch of compostable labels will be delivered in mid-April making the whole bio bag veg pack completely compostable. They are also expecting compostable cling wrap for some of the veg packs that are in trays and by the end of 2019

their target is to have all pre packs in compostable packaging. In order for veg to be clearly traced and certified as organic it is required to be separated from chemically grown veg, thus causing the packaging problem which are being encountered but focussing on tackling this year. The business was awarded both the McKenna Guide 2018 and the Georgina Campbell Award last year, which further proves that the farm's growth is gaining huge industry recognition, local stockists are Eurospar in the Square and O'Connors Foodhall in Brackernagh.

After their Good Food Friday event, the next big day in the farm's calendar is the annual gardening festival, BLOOM, which takes place over the June Bank Holiday weekend. Beechlawn Organic Farm will host a stand to display their variety of products on a national stage under the Bord Bia Banner of excellence. They will also hold a harvest fair on Sunday Sept 15th this year.

For more info or to purchase a home delivery veg box check out our webshop www.beechlawnfarm.org or phone the office on 090 9646713. (Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm).

BY DONOGH MOORE



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Ballinasloe Life is set to feature profiles on the key members of the town's newest entrepreneurial venture, the Pulse Club.



Joe Glennon has been involved in business ever since he moved here to join Bank of Ireland in 2006. After a period spent leasing a pub in Athleague, he left Bank of Ireland and began to pursue his passion of Digital Marketing. He now works out of the Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre as a Digital Marketing Consultant, as well as running his own jewellery e-commerce brand called Shuul Colours.

While he's been involved in business in the locality for years, Joe said that he's always felt the absence of an active business group or network for business owners to connect. "The Ballinasloe Area Community Development does a great job in promoting business in the town, but there is no chamber of commerce here any more, so when I was invited to become part of the steering group for the Pulse Club, I was delighted to help out." It is early days for the group still, but the members are excited about the direction the initiative is taking. There have been a few very engaging meetings already, and business owners are learning a lot from each other.

and Customer Services team for the Lafferty group. Renate got involved with the start-up of the Pulse Club when she was in talks of establishing a Grow Remote chapter in the area. Throughout various conversations it became apparent that the ideas to facilitate employment in the community were shared by the two initiatives, and from there it made sense to join forces. As the group develops, Renate's experience in building, operationalising and scaling teams will be sure to add value to the membership.

The Pulse Club are adamant that the town has many advantages to any budding entrepreneur or investor. Manufacturing or tech companies looking to set up or open a new location, often look at the pool of talent in the area. The town has Athlone IT, GMIT and NUIG all close by, who are constantly introducing highly educated graduates to the workforce. In addition, numerous members of The Pulse Club have returned to Ballinasloe after having successful careers abroad and are now starting their own firms. With regards to broadband services, the quality and speed in the town itself is very good which is key to attracting new business. These speeds are only going to improve however, with major Internet Service Providers investing more money into increasing not only the town's broadband capabilities, but the surrounding rural areas too, which will critically make more it more attractive for many small businesses operating from home.

The Pulse Club facilitates the gathering and networking of various businesses and entrepreneurs in the town. They meet on the first Tuesday of every month for group discussions, workshops and talks given by guest speakers.

For more information, visit www.thepulseclub.com, email: thepulseclub@ballinasloeenterprisecentre.ie, call: 090 9646516 or find them on Facebook at: [The Pulse Club Ballinasloe](#).



Renate Kohlmann, took up residence in the town over a decade ago, and is just as concerned with the commercial future of the locality. For the last nine years she led the European Sales, Service and Operations team for the US e-commerce company Wayfair, and managed the company from start-up to over 500 staff. Not only that, but she established operations for Dell Europe in Slovakia, as well as setting up multi-lingual Telesales



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Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

€5 MILLION ALLOCATED TO ATHLONE - BALLINASLOE GREENWAY

BY DONOGH MOORE

The local campaign behind the 'Athlone to Ballinasloe Greenway' project saw breakthroughs recently. Members from the initiative, John Kelly and Antoinette Gallagher, recently met with Transport Infrastructure Ireland to discuss the local run of the country-spanning Greenway, in a meeting facilitated by Senator Maura Hopkins.



Senator Maura Hopkins with Antoinette Gallagher and John Kelly from the Athlone to Ballinasloe Greenway campaign.

The 'Athlone to Ballinasloe Greenway' will run through the south of Roscommon and the eastern Galway region, is part of the larger Dublin to Galway greenway and is currently in the pre-planning stages of development. Over €5 million has been allocated to progress the 'Athlone to Ballinasloe' portion of the cycling path, but the project remains in limbo as not even a public project office has been established yet, although Transport Infrastructure Ireland has announced that one is to be set up, although the whereabouts of such is yet unknown.

Senator Hopkins has suggested that Ballinasloe, as the focal point of this initiative, should house the project office. She said that "It is essential that communities are engaged with at the earliest possible opportunity to ensure that we can achieve the greatest possible support for this development" stated Senator Maura.

The €5 million already allocated to the cycleway would allow for the construction of the railway underpass in Athlone to be finished. Not only that, but it will also mean that plans will progress on the bridge crossing the Shannon, which is located near to Athlone Castle. Last of all, these funds will go towards the appointment of dedicated staff for this project, who in turn will carry out the

delivery of this portion of the greenway. These works are scheduled to be completed by the middle of the year, and all plans afterward should ensure that the cycleway progresses west of the Shannon.

Senator Hopkins concluded: "This project has the potential to be the flagship tourism offering for Ballinasloe and the wider region. It will play a central

role in the connection between the Beara Breifne Way and linking this region into the New Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Tourism brand. In particular, the Athlone to Ballinasloe section of this greenway has so much to offer in terms of tourism development. The wake house at Nure, the Clonmacnoise monastic site, Shannonbridge as well as the wealth of history which exists in Ballinasloe itself, all should be key sites of interest on this National greenway route. We have seen how greenway development can revive communities through the examples in Waterford and Mayo and I want to see Ballinasloe and this region benefit fully from that potential", continued the Senator.

This meeting followed the news that Denis Naughten TD announced that the larger 'Athlone to Galway City Greenway' had received funding of up to €200,000 as part of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme for 2018, and was reaching the closing stages of finalisation. A major issue that this project was facing was reaching an agreement with all of the landowners whose land would be affected by the proposed route. However, almost half of the landowners between Galway and Connemara recently reached agreement in principle with the county council.

For more information regarding the planned Greenway, see the Facebook page: 'Athlone to Ballinasloe Greenway'.

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SMK PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIOS FOR MAIN STREET

Sarah Kilduff is the proud new owner, manager and primary photographer of SMK Studios at Sarah Kilduff Photography based on Main Street, Ballinasloe. Her studio is located beside Salmons, on the premises where her father previously ran a photography business, and her uncle ran a sweet shop.

She is a second-generation portraiture photographer to come out of her family, and because of this she feels like she is holding onto some more traditional aspects of the style, all the while trying to meld them into newer practices of the digital era that she learned in college, such as the use of tools like Lightroom, and Photoshop.

Growing up, Sarah watched her parents run a successful wedding and portrait business in Ballinasloe. She fondly remembers following her father, Padraic, around to various weddings, minding his equipment, which in her mind meant she was his assistant. It was at these events that she saw the creative side of the business, and picked up many tips from her father. However, it was spending time with her mother Sandra in the office that made her appreciate the more commercially-focused side of the business.

She is also a registered nurse/paramedic who has spent the last ten years involved in the emergency side of healthcare, all the while exploring photography on the side. Her passion for it led her to study photography at the same time as her other degree and she ended up with a Diploma in Photography, which has expanded to many more certificates over the years, including studies in advanced portraiture, wedding photography, business, branding,



Sarah with her parents.

marketing and social media.

Sarah believes that her experience gained from her time with her parents' business has given her an extra edge in customer care, and that her healthcare background provides her with the necessary skills to assist with any emergency situation, especially when dealing with newborns, children and large crowds. She feels these attributes make her stand out, in comparison to other photographers.

In recent years, Sarah has photographed various different clients, such as models, stylists and make-up artists. She has managed to get published both on a national

and international forum for her past portraiture, and she hopes to add to those records in the future. As well as that, she is currently working towards her Licentiate with the Irish Professional Photographers and Videographers Association, and has just been nominated for the 'Best of Galway 2019' awards.

She has a fully-insured, professionally-lit photography studio on Main Street, Ballinasloe, located beside Salmons Department Store and across from Brewery Lane. The studio is open by appointment only for the moment, as there are various construction, painting and planning works currently in progress. Office appointments are available, but must be booked up to a week in advance.

The official opening of SMK Studios will take place over the May Bank Holiday Weekend, and those looking for further information about it should check the Facebook page and website for details. Sarah can be found at www.Sarahkilduffphotography.com, on Facebook at: Sarah Kilduff Photography, on Instagram at Sarah_Kilduff_Photography, or can be emailed at sarahkilduffphotography@gmail.com.

BY DONOGH MOORE

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PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL REVIEW RESEARCH



When asked what people liked about the parish the overwhelming response was that there are fantastic priests who were always welcoming and caring. The churches are places of peace and quiet which enhanced the practice of worship. There is beautiful singing at the masses and the choirs are very much appreciated. There is a great sense of community within the town, and the churches being opened all day allows the community to spend time in quiet reflection.

When asked what they would like to see more of many said they would like to see more young people returning to the church and becoming involved in the Sunday mass. The return of altar servers was very high on peoples' list and the

return of the Faith for Fun club. Many people felt

that it would be good to meet after mass some times for a cup of tea and a chat.

As a result of this they have decided to establish a hospitality group which will cater for this request at special events, to start off with, and hopefully be in a position to carry this further in the coming months. The establishment of a Parish web site is also high on the agenda for the council and there have been several meetings and discussions on the best way forward for this project.

Parking and the sound system in the churches were issues that people felt needed addressing and again these have been discussed at parish level. The Council hope to be in a position to address all the issues raised and reflected on over the coming months.

"On behalf of the parish council, I would like to this opportunity to congratulate all those who will be making their First Confession, First Communion and Confirmations and to thank all their teachers, mentors and priests. May God bless you and walk with you always" stated Seamus McGuinness, Chairperson.

BY DONOGH MOORE

Over the past several months the Parish Council has been engaged in a consultation process with the parishioners of St. Michael's Ballinasloe and Our Lady of Lourdes Creagh, regarding their views on issues affecting the church. This process has now ended and the Council Chair Seamus McGuinness "expressed their thanks to all who submitted responses over this period of consultation".

The Council acts as an advisory body to the clergy of the parish, and through meetings held over the past several months they have begun to implement views expressed in the survey. This can be best seen in the liturgy of the Eucharist in both St Michael's and Creagh at weekends. Readers of the word now process to the altar at the beginning of mass with the priest and introduce the liturgy to the congregation. Eucharistic ministers now take their place around the altar before communion which is now available in both body and blood of Christ.



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NEW VISTA HEALTHCARE PRODUCTS FOR JORENA'S

Jorena's Health and Gift shop are holding a launch of new products in their Society Street store from 11am to 3pm on 4th April. The launch will include a range of new products from a number of companies in the natural health range. Martin Murray, of New Vista Healthcare, will present on the benefits of natural health products.

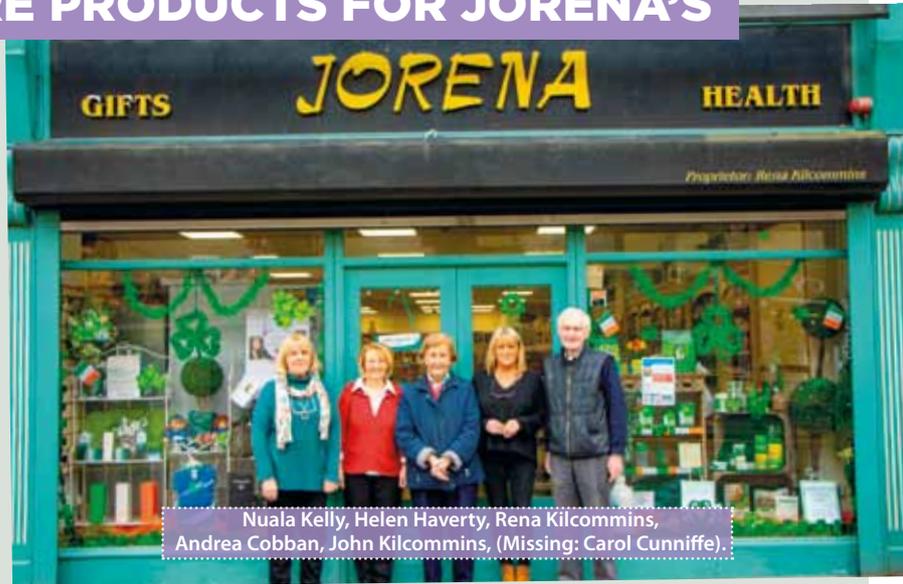
New Vista is Ireland's leading supplier of homeopathic and herbal products, with many specialised supplements such as Vibracell, Turmeric, Immiflex and Organic Noni Juice. Solgar Vitamins and Minerals are one of the best known brands in the world, as are Viridian Nutrition, and Nature's Plus.

Eating seafood is a key part of a balanced healthy diet. If you don't eat fish on a regular basis, you should consider an omega-3 fish oil supplement. Historically fish used to be a much larger part of our diet, but in recent centuries it has fallen out of favour. Aine from Wiley's Finest, a leader in EPA & DHA supplements, will be in store to answer any questions you may have, and to give free advice on a range of fish oil supplements available.

Tanya Keegan will be on hand to advise on hair colouring from Phytocolour, with soothing natural ingredients as well as other new products for the launch.

In recent years the importance of magnesium for optimal health has been a forerunner in health stores, wellness magazines, and media sites. There is good reason for this – magnesium is a foundational building block for the body, and is essential for us to achieve our optimal sense of wellbeing.

Magnesium deficiency can present itself in many ways – lack of energy, poor sleep, over-activity, sluggish bowel movements, various PMS symptoms and general malaise. Since magnesium is responsible for over 350 enzymatic processes in your body, it can be a good starting point for feeling better and improving your sleep.



Nuala Kelly, Helen Haverty, Rena Kilcommins, Andrea Cobban, John Kilcommins, (Missing: Carol Cunniffe)

Magnesium bisglycinate consists of one element magnesium molecule bound to two glycine amino acids. Glycine is the smallest of all the amino acids, and it is so small that it can easily pass through the cell wall, making it a highly absorbable form of magnesium. This is important, because some forms of magnesium can't be tolerated nor utilized by your body, take magnesium oxide for instance. Studies show only 4% of the magnesium oxide is absorbed in the body, and the rest gets flushed through the system.

Both glycine and magnesium combined have been shown in studies to improve sleep quality and duration as well as mood and energy therefore combining them together is a great way to not only get the most out of your magnesium, but get a great night's sleep.

Call into Jorena's Health and Gift shop on the day to meet the experts, and hear of the new products as well as the wide range of natural products and herbal remedies for every ailment. There will be light refreshments served, as well as a free raffle for all attendees.

 BY DONOGH MOORE



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OVER 40 TRAINED FIRST RESPONDERS VOLUNTEERS NOW IN COMMUNITY

A group of over 40 volunteers are currently available to respond to any cardiac or choking emergencies around the town. The Ballinasloe-Creagh CFR Group were set up in 2012, when they first fundraised for an Automatic External Defibrillator to be placed in Creagh. The first of these AEDs were placed at Dolan's Centra, in Kilgarve, and at the entrance to Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre, on the Creagh Road.

From there the group joined the National Ambulance Service scheme, which allowed local, trained volunteers to respond to



Back row: Pdraig Glynn, Aidan Curley, Oliver Coffey, Aileen Harney, Declan Harney, Ivan Stehel, Micheál Kelly
Front: Ana Victoria Mulcahy, Marian Brady, Laura Barrett, Denise Treacy, Helen Harney

cardiac emergencies in their locality. On receiving a distress call, the ambulance dispatcher can inform the caller of their nearest AED, and its access code. The dispatcher will alert the paramedic service, and if a cardiac arrest or choking incident has happened, they will also alert the CFR group via a mass text system. Members that are free to respond will do so, and once on the scene they will provide CPR and AED use until the paramedics arrive.

AEDs are life-saving pieces of equipment used in the early treatment of cardiac arrest that can increase survival rates dramatically, through its delivery of an electric shock to the heart. If CPR and defibrillation are provided within three to five minutes of a victim collapsing, survival rates can be increased up to 74%. In Ireland about 100 people each week die from a sudden cardiac arrest, with 68% of these cardiac arrests occurring in the patient's home. Considering the high number of arrests that take place away from medical areas, it is greatly important to the community that efforts are being made to increase the availability of AEDs and to train the general public in both AED use, and CPR.

The group have identified a need for additional AEDs that have 24/7 availability throughout the area. While many local organisations and business have their own AEDs, these are generally not available outside of their business hours. Ballinasloe-Creagh CFR Group have now purchased five additional AEDs and located them strategically within the town, with the help from funders such as An Post, Bank of Ireland, Canada Life, Ballinasloe Credit Union, as well as Tesco, East Galway Cancer Care and the residents of Hymany.

The volunteers have yet to receive funding from the HSE or any other state body. In fact, in the event of using their equipment the group must fund the replacements themselves. AEDs, including the heated box in which they are stored, cost in the region of €1,800-€2,000 and have an average maintenance cost of €150 per unit. All the training is provided free by qualified instructors and none of the volunteers get any remuneration, even though it costs in the region of €500 per annum to keep all the members registered.

For further information on the Ballinasloe-Creagh CFR Group, please contact Helen Harney, (0878205840), Aidan Curley (0872514001), or Marian Brady (0851660310) or see their Facebook page: Creagh Ballinasloe CFR Group.

BY DONOGH MOORE

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ACTIVE RETIREMENT PREVIEW BUSY YEAR AHEAD

There was a large attendance at the Ballinasloe Active Retirement Association's 'Annual General Meeting' held recently in Gullane's Hotel, where outgoing Secretary, Anne Duffy, reported on a very busy and successful year, full of various activities in recent months.

The group have in the region of some 200 members although this increases through the summer months. Throughout the year, many members availed of a wide range of activities which included holidays, both at home and abroad, day trips, concerts, plays and community works.

Whilst the new statutory retirement age is 67, the CSO still collects data for 65 pluses, and our town urban area saw the total population of over 65 grow 7% from 1046 in 2011 to 1120 in 2016. The Association however does not confine itself to the town precincts but draws many of its newer members from the surrounds and environs.

There are more exciting trips arranged for the year ahead which will see members depart Ireland on foreign visit to Krakow, in Poland. As well as that, from the first week of August, members will set off on a cruise spanning over 10 days, which will visit countries such as Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar.

In May, the group are looking forward to a four day visit across the country to Carlow. While there, the group will visit the region's most famous sights and attractions, such as the Delta Sensory Gardens, the Altamont Gardens and Huntington Castle. There are also some interesting day trips planned for the summer months, of which the



Social Committee: (Back) Douglas Rafter, Brodie Whelan. (Front) Chris O'Flynn, Philomena Kelly, Anne Duffy, Maura Rafter.



Incoming Committee: (Back) Chris O'Flynn, Noelle Rohan, Deirdre Hogan. (Front) Mary Slattery, Margaret Brennan, Goretti Fallon, Douglas Rafter.

details will be revealed as the weeks progress.

The AGM saw successful reports come in from the association's various different sub-divisional groups, such as their walking club, their indoor bowls club, the book club, the bridge group and the singing group. The association's singers, under the direction and leadership of Marie Power, are currently very busy rehearsing for their annual concert, titled 'Songfest', which will also take place in May. As always, the society's knitting club knit for charity, and members convene every Monday to do so.

A new committee was also selected. Margaret Brennan is the new Chairperson of the committee. Joining her is Margaret McDonnell as Vice-Chairperson, Deirdre Hogan as Secretary, Goretti Fallon as Assistant Secretary, Mary Slattery and Noelle

Rohan as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer respectively, Chris O'Flynn as the Public Relations Officer, and Douglas Rafter as the association's IT Consultant.

The Active Retirement Association hold a monthly meeting in Gullane's Hotel, while the branch/ activity groups of the Association meet more frequently. At these monthly meetings, the committee organise for guest speakers to come in, and hold talks for the members. For further information on Ballinasloe's Active Retirement Association, visit ballinasloeactiveretirement.com or contact Margaret at (090) 964 2061.

BY DONOGH MOORE

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BALLINASLOE ELECTORAL AREA CANDIDATES

COMPILED BY KEN KELLY



TIM BRODERICK – Independent

My name is Tim Broderick and I am a 55 year-old publican from Kilconnell. I have been elected to Galway County Council on two successive occasions, in June 2009 and subsequently was re-elected in June 2014. I live in Kilconnell with my wife Edel above the business. I also have two children, Ceallaigh and Lonán.

I am putting my name forward again for the local elections on May 24th 2019. Our constituency has been changed considerably since 2014 and

this makes a successful election result significantly more difficult. I have endeavoured over the last 10 years to represent individuals and groups on any issues, local or national, to the best of my ability and would be privileged to be able to carry on this work for the next 5 years if successful in the upcoming elections. I have a real concern for the future of our urban and rural areas and I'm always lobbying to ensure that we are not forgotten.

With the help of the people in the Ballinasloe LEA I will ensure that the issues of the municipal district are always a priority. To all the young voters make sure you're registered to vote and you will have your say on Friday May 24th.



KEN CAMPBELL – Social Democrats

Ken Campbell is community driven and looking to re-engage people with political action at a local level. He is an ardent advocate for those with special needs, as a father of a young girl with special needs he has been actively promoting equality and awareness for all through his advocacy group called Miles for Emma.

He has hosted and completed "A Special Journey for Special Needs" where he walked non-stop from Ballinasloe to Dublin, and the Croagh Patrick 4 Peak challenge to highlight the struggles parents with children with special

needs face on a daily basis.

Ken is one of four volunteers who launched a new initiative for Ballinasloe called "Accessibility Ballinasloe" a community group to develop the Ballinasloe area as an accessible, inclusive environment which welcomes and supports everyone to live an independent and healthy life regardless of age or disability.

Ken launched Running against Cancer in 2010 and organised numerous events to raise money for worthy causes.

Ken has proven himself time and again to be a person of action. He believes in working hard to stand up for issues that really matter to us all, especially for better health services, improved community and youth resources and revitalising towns across the county.



DERMOT CONNOLLY – Sinn Féin

Clr Dermot Connolly of Sinn Féin is married with three young children and lives in Glennavaddogue, Aughrim, Ballinasloe. Dermot was first elected as a Sinn Féin councillor in June 2004 and has served the people of Ballinasloe and surrounding districts in this capacity for 15 years. He sits on the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, the Planning & Community Strategic Policy Committee of Galway County Council, the Western Regional Health Forum and as Chairperson on the Kilconnell Landfill Liaison Fund Distribution Committee.

Dermot wants to see the development of Ballinasloe socially, economically and culturally. He has actively supported many campaigns over the years for the retention and improvement of local services and opposes the stripping back of both service provisions and good working conditions for local people. Dermot proudly supported the nurses of Portiuncula Hospital in their recent strike action for fair pay and decent work practices as well as having successfully proposed a motion of support for them at a meeting of the Regional Health Forum in Merlin Park, Galway.

Dermot will continue to stand with the people in calling for an end to the degeneration of Rural Ireland and for investment in communities across Ballinasloe and East Galway.



MICHAEL CONNOLLY – Fianna Fáil

Living in Moylough, I am married to Bridie and have a family of four: Brian, Anne Marie, Patrick and Aisling. I was first elected to Galway Co. Council in 1999 and served as Cathaoirleach in 2016/2017. I was also Chairman of the Ballinasloe Municipal District Council in 2014/2015.

I am a committed Public Representative and part-time sheep farmer and am a member of the IFA and ICMSA. A former chairman of the Co. Galway VEC, Galway Rural Monitoring Committee, Western Inter County Rail Committee and

the Roads and Transport Special Policy Committee, I am also a Board member of Ballinasloe Association Development Company.

Michael Connolly, who is currently a member Galway Co. Council, would be thankful for your support and requests your No. 1 Vote, to ensure he can continue to represent you on Galway Co. Council where he promises to work tirelessly for you and your community; deal effectively with your queries and concerns, be available and approachable and to listen to people; keep your trust through his commitment to Ballinasloe and the Ballinasloe Electoral area.

"I would be delighted and honoured to continue as a Councillor, acting on your behalf, for the Ballinasloe Electoral area" he said.



AIDAN DONOHUE - Fine Gael

I will be contesting the upcoming County Council elections once again on May 24th 2019. After winning a seat at the first attempt in 2014 I have worked tirelessly for the people of the Ballinasloe Municipal District over the last five years.

I was both honoured and privileged to serve as Chairman of the Ballinasloe Municipal District from June 2017 to May 2018. During this period three major projects commenced in the town namely, the €6 million town enhancement scheme, ten social houses at Garbally Drive at a

cost of €2.5 million and the upgrade of the Garda Barracks on Dunlo Street. I am on the County Joint Policing Committee and the Regional Health Forum West.

I work closely with our Oireachtas representatives and facilitated many visits of Ministers to the area seeking funding for various projects in the area.

Rural towns and villages still face many challenges and they need strong representation at both local and national level. I would be privileged to get the opportunity to continue my hard work for another five years especially in the areas of job creation and the construction of the 50 bed extension to Portiuncula Hospital and look for your support on May 24th .

FOR GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2109



MICHAEL FINNERTY - Fine Gael

Michael works in Portiuncula Hospital, married to Mary; they have three children and live in Tobergrellan. First elected in 1985 to the Urban District Council and was elected chairman in 1990 and 1998, Michael was the first UDC member to become chairman of Galway County Council in 1997.

With the abolition of the Town Council in 2014, the Ballinasloe local election area stretches from the bridge of Banagher to Ballymoe. This area of almost 80km is represented by six councillors

who you will choose to represent you on May 24th alongside elections to the European Parliament.

Michael's experience and location in Ballinasloe, alongside his knowledge of the Local Government system will be vital over the coming term to deal with many varied issues in our area. He is a sponsor of the great October Fair, a member of Ballinasloe Rugby Club and a supporter of the Town Twinning concept which was recognised by Mary Robinson in 1991.

Michael wishes all candidates well and looks forward to working with everyone to make sure our future is as bright as our past has been proud. A candidate with a fine record, Michael will garner support across the entire political spectrum on polling day.



DECLAN GERAGHTY - Independent

I would like to introduce myself to you as an independent voice for the Ballinasloe Municipal District. I attended Garbally College from 1981 to 1986 and afterwards I became involved in my father's business - which was an oil distribution and roofing supply company. I am now the Managing Director of DG Roofing Ltd, which manufactures roof cladding, portal steel buildings etc. and currently employs 20 people in Williamstown, Co. Galway.

Having already been endorsed by independent TD Michael Fitzmaurice, my goal is to get elected

in the upcoming local elections and to provide an independent voice for everyone in our area - especially the farming community who are in serious difficulty at present.

Along with Deputy Fitzmaurice, I have been involved in many issues in my hometown and surrounding areas. I am chairman of the Williamstown Water Group, a member of the Tidy Towns' Committee and I contribute to GAA, rugby and soccer clubs in the area.

Equality, fairness, productivity and community development are the key pillars for which I stand. With strong, likeminded people in our large and small towns, I believe we can strive to rebuild our rural areas and communities. By voting for me, you will have a voice.

declan@declangerahy.ie



PETER KEAVENEY - Fine Gael

Married to Breda, they have 2 sons and 4 daughters. Peter, who is vice-chairman of Galway Co. Cl. and Chairman of Tuam MDC, is a farmer and an Agricultural Contractor. He has built the family farm up to a successful suckling enterprise and has also established a thriving Agricultural Contracting business, providing employment and an excellent service.

Peter is deeply involved in voluntary organisations for over 30 years. Some of these include Glenamaddy Ploughing Association, Glenamaddy Theatre Festival, Arts and Historical Society, Musical Society, Community Council and

Glenamaddy-Williamstown LGFA and GAA.

Elected to Galway County Council in 2014, one of his first undertakings was to call a public meeting to find a solution to the old vocational school in Glenamaddy which had fallen into disrepair.

Other tasks that Peter has spearheaded include flood relief measures in Glenamaddy & Williamstown, heritage grant Town Hall Theatre, Glenamaddy; €10m Water Scheme for Williamstown, Glenamaddy Sewerage scheme, Clar funding and Community Involvement Schemes for safety works at Glenamaddy NS and many other areas, local improvement for Bog Road in Williamstown and other roads in Glenamaddy and Kilkerrin, Safety lights for Clonberne and Williamstown NS. Peter has also completed lots of road improvements, footpaths, housing grants and a wide variety of schemes and requests.



MIKE KELLY - FIANNA Fáil

Ballinasloe native, born and raised in Brackernagh, I now live in Derrymullen with my wife Anne and daughter Niamh.

Public representation is not new to me. For 10 years I served as an elected member of Ballinasloe Town Council and was elected Mayor on three occasions during that time. I am a strong advocate of local democracy.

I have decided to contest the County Council Election as a Fianna Fail candidate as I am passionate about the welfare of our town, its hinterland and its people.

I am aware of the challenges facing urban and rural communities, both of which are interdependent. Ballinasloe and its hinterland is strategically placed to avail of new opportunities designed to further the local economy.

It is important that all initiatives promoting health services, housing, employment, tourism, transport, infrastructure and rural broadband continue to have active focus. Ongoing investment in our sporting, recreational and cultural facilities remains a priority.

If elected, I will work tirelessly with all relevant bodies on a fulltime basis, addressing all issues to ensure that this area is a great place to live, work and do business. I promise to be a strong voice for all.

I ask you to trust me with your vote on this occasion.



KENNETH O'BRIEN - Fianna Fáil

I am from the parish of Glenamaddy in Co. Galway. I come from a farming background and have a strong interest in the agricultural sector and community development. I also have an interest in the agri-environmental sector, looking at sustainable methods that would have benefits to the farming industry going forward.

My passion for helping people and communities came about through a group known as "The Forgotten Farmers". This group highlighted the inequality young farmers faced in gaining

access to the National Reserve.

I organised a National meeting in 2015 to highlight the discrimination that this group of farmers faced. Subsequently to this I represented the Forgotten Farmer group at the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture and spoke at The Fianna Fail Ard Fheis on this matter.

Recently I spoke at the 79th Fianna Fail Ard Fheis in relation to the National Boardband plan. This is a major concern in rural communities and towns and is vital for Ireland's future prosperity.

My vision is to be a strong voice and representation for the people, communities and local businesses going forward. Job creation is also imperative in the Ballinasloe region in which it would see an injection of life to the town and surrounding regions.

LOCAL WINNERS IN GARDA YOUTH AWARDS

BY D. MOORE

The Garda Youth Awards, in conjunction with Supervalu, were held for the first time in Galway. These awards have been run in various Garda Divisions throughout the country for a number of years, and An Garda Síochána has now decided to roll out these awards nationally. They are designed to recognise the good work and positive contribution that youths make to their community and how they try to improve the place they live.

There are four awards in the national competition: the Individual Award, the Group Award, the Special Achievement Award, and the Community Safety Award.

Ballinasloe was very well represented on the awards night, as from the one hundred nominations which were received from across the county, the town had representatives on the night in three of the four categories, and two of these went on to win their respective awards.

Beibhinn Parsons, who was nominated for the Individual Person Award, is a student at Ardscoil Mhuire. She became Ireland's youngest ever senior rugby debutant, coming off the bench in a test match against the US at sixteen years of age. Her hard work on and off the pitch has shown as she has continued to be selected to represent Ireland and was the only scorer for the Irish senior team in the games against Wales when she scored a try in the opening minutes. She was nominated for the Individual Award by Lillian Hynes, Vice Principal of Ardscoil Mhuire, and although she unfortunately didn't win, Beibhinn has placed Ballinasloe on the sporting map of Ireland.

The Special Achievement Award is awarded to a person who overcomes incredibly difficult circumstances, and whose commitment deserves recognition. Sinéad Carty, a first year student in Ardscoil Mhuire, was diagnosed with a brain tumour in November 2018. Since then, she has undergone three major



Galway Community Safety Award Winners L-R Mr Brian Sexton Regional Manager Musgraves, Saoirse Mullen, Rita Warde, Ryan Kealaghan, Mary Hession, J.P. Griffin, Eric Duane, Missing from picture Aonraoi Mullen, Melony Markham and Ronan Donohue.

Galway Special Achievement Award Winner Sinead Carty pictured here with Regional Manager Musgraves, and her extended family and Superintendent Sean Glynn



Beibhinn Parsons Ballinasloe Individual Award Nominee: L-R Mr Brian Sexton Regional Manager Musgraves, Lillian Hynes Vice Principal Ard Scoil Mhuire, Ballinasloe, Evelyn, Beibhinn and Vincent Parsons and Supt Sean Glynn.

surgeries, showing immense courage and optimism throughout this difficult journey. Her class and school alike have been greatly moved by her plight, and have

supported her throughout her treatment. Sinead was awarded the Special Achievement Award at the Youth Awards, where she was accompanied by her extended family.

The Community Safety Award is handed out to a group or individual who have made their community a safer place to live, through the implementation of a crime prevention or a safety initiative. Irish Water Safety Ballinasloe is comprised of a group of young local adults who have all taken measures to improve the safety of their area. They have learned how to perform, and now deliver classes in cardio resuscitation, basic first aid, the use of an automated external defibrillator, and water safety principles, as well as practicing various water-based rescue scenarios. They meet every Saturday from September to Easter, to deliver various classes. The group have also managed to fund the Assistant Swim teacher course offered in the town entirely by themselves. All of these young people give their time voluntarily, for the good of the community. They are fostering a culture that encourages safer attitudes and behaviours in all of those who live, work and play near the water.

The Galway award winners will go through to the National Garda Youth Awards, which are due to be held at the end of April.



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ARD SCOIL MUIRE STUDENTS COMPETE IN NATIONAL RECYCLING FASHION EVENT



Junk Kouture is fashion competitions where inspiring young designers in second level education use everyday rubbish to create striking works of wearable art.

Three groups from Ard Scoil Mhuire, Ballinasloe recently got through to the regional finals of the Junk Kouture, held in TF Royal, Castlebar. The models performed on the catwalk in front of hundreds of people, including esteemed judges such as Louis Walsh and Doireann Garrihy. Only twenty designs got the chance to progress through to the glamorous grand finale held in the 3Arena, in Dublin. The girls were delighted that they got to this stage, as Junk Kouture has an extremely high standard, with over 1400 entries coming in from all over Ireland, and only 320 spaces in the regional finals. However, the girls were unlucky on the day not to be selected for the Grand Finals.

The three groups that got through to the regional finals are all comprised of TY students.



Give it Socks is made up of Ailbhe Hanlon, Megan Fitzpatrick and Alison Markham. Their dress was made with over 1,000 odd socks. This innovative design comprises of a dramatic tiered skirt, a structured top with a shoelace corset and an eccentric headpiece. The group chose this material, at they found that odd socks are a commonly wasted item - research shows that the average person loses approximately 1,264 socks in a lifetime.

CafQueen was the team of Martha Freehill and Orlaith Brennan. Their design was a powerful warrior outfit created using strong and durable coffee related materials which are near impossible to recycle. Up to 200 million single-use coffee cups are thrown away in Ireland every year. They created this powerful warrior outfit to highlight this ongoing issue and to encourage companies and individuals to fight against this unnecessary wastage. Approximately 150 coffee pods were used to create their design. These came from a weekly collection from the school community, parish and local coffee shops. All were willing to contribute as these pods are nearly impossible to dispose of.



The Final Straw consisted of Leah Hogarty, Clodagh Powell and Aoife Murray. This group's neon geometric dress represents their concept of sea pollution, a problem that affects over 817 sea species around the world. This major issue is a result of people disposing of single use materials into our seas. The girls wanted to pay tribute to this problem with their jellyfish-inspired skirt. The single use materials that were manipulated to make the design were collected from local pubs. The design entailed metal bottle caps which had holes punched into, weaving string through and bent wooden corks. The group cut, wrapped and tessellated Straws. They also individually weaved, folded, intertwined

and ironed these straws. A cereal box & paper cups were used as a base for the top and old wire, a hula hoop and foam underlay for the skirt.

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KILTORMER N.S. EFFORTS FOR WORLD BOOK DAY



Pupils in Kiltormer National School dressed in many book characters, such as Little Red Riding Hood, Roblox, Little Blue Truck, Ghost of Christmas Past, Sherlock Holmes and even Where's Wally? Senior pupils also designed covers for their books.



Junior classes- Abbie Guinan, Nevaeh Glynn, Ella Glynn, Jessica Tierney, Eva Quinn, Mia Ryan, Blathnaid Farrell, Oisín Mitchell, Manus Finnerty, Jessica Brumar, John Mitchell, Damien Farrell, James Glynn, Anthony Mannion, Tommy O'Brien, Principal -Grainne Dooley.

Senior classes- Teachers: Sean Tuohy, Margaret Mc Donnell, Sophie Quinn, Kate Kilkenny, Darragh Egan, Isaac Markham, Louis Markham, Dylan Harewood, Adam Roche, Jack Egan, Sophie Flynn, Caoimhe Kilkenny, Amanda Brien, Thie Jones. (Names not in order but all included.)

GARBALLY NEWS



L to R: Back: Mr. Michael Gallagher, Declan Kenny, Dara Hession, Liam Hession, Eoin Coleman, Ben Daly, Andrew Gibbons, Tom Fitzpatrick, Jack Finn, Conor Goode, Naoise Murphy, Fionnan Darcy, Adam Mulry, Cian Connolly, Cian Poland, Kealan Glynn, Caelim Keogh, Jack Downey, Adam McGreal.
Front: Evan Clancy, Shane Costello, Ronan Finn, Gerard Colleran, Cormac Kenny, Adam Fogarty, Luke Walsh, Terry McGowan, Eoin Colleran, Shea Hennessy, Jack Tumulty, Adam O'Connor, Conor Costello, Liam Collins, Josh Dolan.

Garbally College became Connacht Champions with a victory over Balla, Co. Mayo. The match went ahead with a change of venue at the last minute, moving to Ballyhaunis Centre of Excellence. The Ballinasloe school ran out winners on a score of 3:14 to 3:10.



A group of students in Garbally College received their Gaisce Awards from the President. They completed a series of tasks covering Community Involvement, Learning a personal new skill, Physical recreation and finishing off with an overnight stay in Birr Activity Centre where they undertook a 15K Kayak and a 15K Hike. All of this took place over a 26 week period and was supervised by Ms Inagh Murray and Mr. Paul Walsh.

Back row: Liam Creaven, Aaron Keighery, Craig Potter, Pdraig Flanagan, Stuart Madden, Evan Donelan, Dara McManus, James Burke

Middle: Andy Naessens, John Curley, Connor Rice, Shane Fallon, Mark Mitchell, Joseph Gibbons, Ronan Hanrahan

Front: Patrick Dolan, John Moore, Ciaran Reddan, Dillon Hopkins, Daniel Coen, Conal Moore

Garbally College do the double



Junior Cup Winners



Senior Cup Winners

100 YEARS OF MERCY SECOND LEVEL GIRLS EDUCATION CELEBRATED



Staff and students past and present, parents and # public came together to celebrate the centenary of Ardscoil Mhuire Ballinasloe recently.

The theme of the day was celebrating the contribution of women to society over the last 100 years and the vital role of education in enabling them to do so. The day began with the arrival of Mairead McGuinness MEP for the official opening. Mairead spoke of the importance of education, now more than ever in our society as well as the importance of working together to create a better society for all. She reminisced on her own time in school and acknowledged the role of the Mercy Sisters in educating the young women of Ireland.

Five current students Alice Duncan, Keri Manning, Leah Clogher 5th Years, Emily Gillespie and Roisin Grealy 1st Years, presented "Echoes of the Past" - a moving history of the school in tandem with the major historical events over the last 100 years. Sr Loreto McLoughlin spoke eloquently of the history of Scoil Mhuire from its beginnings. Dr Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington spoke of the role of her grandparents in the fight for the vote in the early part of the 20th Century.

From there, a panel of past students discussed their experiences of school life in Scoil Mhuire or Ardscoil Mhuire, and the impact their education had on their careers. They reminisced about their most abiding memories of their teachers and fondly remembered extra-curricular activities. The panel included Margaret Curley, Zoe Carol, Dr Caitriona Cormican, Ann Walsh, Dr Aideen Ryan and Anne Marie Hayes. They each outlined their respective careers and were encouraged to elaborate on their many achievements by moderator, Mary O'Rourke, former TD.

Margaret Curley is the Series Producer of the Marian Finucane Show on RTE 1. Zoe Carol is a fashion designer with her own online label. Dr Catriona Cormican



Panellists L-R: Margaret Curley, Zoe Carol, Caitriona Cormican, Mary O'Rourke, Ann Walsh, Aideen Ryan, Anne Marie Hayes, past students who took part in a very interesting discussion of the importance of education in the lives of women.



L-R: Lisa Loughnane and Caroline Jackson pictured with members of the school choir who performed beautifully on Saturday March 9th at Ardscoil Mhuire 100 Heritage Day.



Ms Jackson and the school choir in action at Ardscoil Mhuire 100 Heritage Day.



Sr Loreto McLoughlin speaks at the Ardscoil Mhuire Heritage day.



L-R: Leah Clogher, Roisin Grealy, Keri Manning, Emily Gillespie and Alice Duncan present "Echoes through the Ages" a history of Ardscoil Mhuire as told by our present students.



Eithne Treanor, past student, with members of the audience who won copies of The Success Principles by Jack Canfield, following her inspirational talk at Ardscoil Mhuire 100 Heritage day.

combines her busy GP job with her camogie and football commitments to both club and county. Dr Aideen Ryan is involved in ground breaking research into the cure for Colonic cancer. Ann Walsh is a Senior Lecturer in Marketing in NUIG while Anne Marie Hayes combines her Primary teaching job with regular sports commentary on RTE 2's "The Sunday Game". Eithne Treanor, past student, gave an hour long presentation on "The Success Principles" by Jack Canfield. Following her talk she generously gave ten members of the audience a copy of the book "The Success Principles".

Throughout the day the school choir and trad group entertained the audience. Included in the exhibits were recordings of interviews with many past students as well as recorded messages from past students who could not attend on the day. Geraldine Lynagh sent a message from outside the Four Courts, a place she regularly reports from with Virgin Media TV. Aime Doherty sent her good wishes from Hollywood, where she is forging a very successful career in composing for film. Caroline Curley, airline pilot with Aer Lingus sent her wishes also. An extensive display of photos and Echoes magazines were on view throughout the day and many projects completed by students to mark the Centenary.

TEXAS HOLDEN FOR LAWRENCETOWN Y'ALL!

Everything is bigger in Texas, or so the saying goes, and on Friday 12th April, the village of Lawrencetown is hoping to raise funds for the local national school by hosting a 'Texas Hold 'Em' poker game in The Beautiful Bird.

Lawrencetown National School is a rural primary school with 62 pupils currently on the roll, and projections for the next three years all indicate that that number will increase.

One area where funds are urgently needed, is in funding the cost of transport for the children for fieldtrips. With 62 pupils and 4 teachers travelling together, it sometimes means two buses have

to be hired and if the cost of fuel rises, so too will the cost of bus hire. The fundraiser hopes to kick-start a 'Bus Fund' so that pupils can continue to benefit from such experience.

A raffle will also take place on the night. Members of the Parents' Association have been busy collecting spot prizes for the night, including an Easter hamper, beauty hampers, a cash prize, vouchers and more.

Pat Lawless, poker extraordinaire, will also be on hand to kick-start the event at 8pm. It promises to be a worthwhile event for a good cause. Tickets cost €20, and are on sale in pubs around Ballinasloe and surrounding areas, or pay at the door that night.

OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



Pictured at the presentation of prizes to the winners of the Ballinasloe Indoor Bowls Club Competitions were front row l-r : Joe Murphy (winner "B" Final), Padraic Moran (winner "C" Final). Emmet Keoghan (winner "A" Final & the "Pairs" final) with Ita Rigney. Back – Michael Kelly (runner up "A" final), Dolores Fortune (runner up "C" final). Sean Craughwell (Club Chairman), Nancy Kelly (runner up "B" final), Billo Whelahan & Brendan Kelly (runners up "Pairs").



Ba í Craobh Ghrealláin, Béal átha na Slua, a bhain an gradam mar an Chraobh is fearr de Chonradh na Gaeilge i gCúige Chonnacht
Back Row L-R: Seosamh Ó Beirgin, Ruairí Ó hAnluain.
Front Row L-R: Pádraigín Uí Mhuineachán, Máirín Uí Thuairisg.



Margaret Tierney of Pieta House, Carmel Dillon and Geraldine Deane presenting the proceeds from the Ballinasloe Christmas Jumper day in Gullane's recently. Over 20 local schools and businesses took part in the fundraising day, which asked locals to wear a Christmas jumper to school or work. The cheque for €6,767.30 was handed over, which will go towards helping those in crisis.



Andrew Smith, vice-captain of St. Michael's College senior rugby team who defeated Gonzaga College in the Leinster Schools' final on St. Patrick's Day, with his grandmother Marie Byrne (formerly O'Neill from Ballinasloe) and the Leinster Schools' Cup.



A Special Olympics Fundraising Competition was held at Ballinasloe Golf Club for Katie Dillon (2nd from right) who represented Ireland in the "Shot Putt" & "400m Walk" in the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi. Pictured at the presentation to the winning team in the competition were l-r: Adeline Naughton (Lady Captain), Alan & Isac Oliver, Mark & Niall Conneely, Katie Dillon and Michael Ward (Captain).

OUT AND ABOUT IN BALLINASLOE



GARBALLY JUNIOR RUGBY SQUAD

Back L to R: Adam Potter, Conor Ryan, Cailum Lionel, Oisín Cooley, Cian Poland, Caelim Keogh, Samuel Almeida, Luke Feehily, Eoin Colleran, Daithí Blackweir, Adam O'Carroll, Cian Grenham, Daniel Whelan.

Front L to R: James Mooney, Daithí Ward, Cathal ÓhAnluain, Jack Tumulty, Cathal Dempsey, Luke Walsh, John Devine, Joseph Tierney, Adam McGreal, Shane Fitzpatrick.



The group of Ballinasloe and Irish rugby fans as they were heading to Cardiff for the weekend, for the 30th Anniversary of former Irish International Noel Mannion's historic try.

Annual Fish & Chips Supper in Karibas



Maureen Cahalan Founder of Community Hearts, Ballinasloe with Sean Ward.



Community Hearts, Fish and Chips evening, in aid of Jackie Dolan Road to Recovery.



Proprietors of Karibas Cafe and Restaurant John and Marion Ward



Liam Ward receiving the Rugby International tickets he won in the Ballinasloe Social Services draw.

APRIL EVENTS GUIDE

Monday 1st		
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Tuesday 2nd		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 3rd		
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5-7.15pm
Trad Folk-Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm
Thursday 4th		
Parent Child Home Prog.	B'sloe Library	10-11am
Knitting & Crochet Grp	B'sloe Library	11-1pm
Live Acoustic Session	Brewery Lane	10pm
Friday 5th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys	6-9pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
The Happy Bar Stars	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
The 2 Q's	Brewery Lane	10pm
Ken solo	Auld Sod	10pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Saturday 6th		
Cathy Hokins Sch. of Dance	Town Hall	7.30pm
Bingo	Kilconnel Town Hall	8pm
Joe Glynn	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Bojangle	Killeen's S. Bridge	10pm
Laker	Auld Sod	10pm
Des Egan	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Toxic Twins	Brewery Lane	10pm
DJ Chris	Downeys Bar	10pm
Paul Burns	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Simon Bordy	An Tain	10pm
Sunday 7th		
B'sloe & Dist. Vintage Club	Gullanes Hotel (start)	9am
IKKI Nat. Championships	Newinn Sports Complex	10am
Trad session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
The Noshowband	Brewery Lane	8pm
Liam's Country Road Shw.	Auld Sod	9.30pm
Split	Killeen's S. Bridge	10pm
Blue Tax	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Sessions Front Bar	Valeries of Aughrim	10pm
Monday 8th		
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Tuesday 9th		
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	6-7.45pm
Land, Sea & Memory - J. Vahey	B'sloe Library	6.30pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 10th		
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit.	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Cuidiu Breastfeeding SG	B'sloe Library	9.45-11.45am
Knitting & Crochet Grp	B'sloe Library	11-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5-7.15pm
Trad Folk Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm
Thursday 11th		
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Live Acoustic Session	Brewery Lane	10pm
John Molloy Live	Downey's Bar	10pm
Singers Circle	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Friday 12th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys	6-9pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
Pub Fiction	Auld Sod	10pm
Steve and Friends	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
The Goodfellas	Brewery Lane	10pm
Shane Downey	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Saturday 13th		
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Bingo	Kilconnel Town Hall	8pm
Red O'Neill	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Loose Rooster	Brewery Lane	10pm
Nightowls	Auld Sod	10pm
Small Deal	Killeen's of S'Bridge	10pm
Double Trouble	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Lorcan Live	An Tain	10pm
DJ Crazy Chris	Downey's Bar	10pm
Live Music	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Sunday 14th		
Trad session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Robbie & Brian	Brewery Lane	8pm
Dave mills	Auld Sod	9.30pm
C.Down Solo	Killeen's of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Sessions Front Bar	Valeries of Aughrim	10pm
Monday 15th		
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Digital Skills Training	B'sloe Library	10.30-2pm
In Step - "Imagine that"	Town Hall	7.30pm
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Tuesday 16th		
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Easter Camp	Coral Leisure	10-2.30pm
Digital Skills Training	B'sloe Library	10.30-2pm
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
In Step - "Imagine that"	Town Hall	7.30pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 17th		
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Easter Camp	Coral Leisure	10-2.30pm
Digital Skills Training	B'sloe Library	10.30-2pm
Knitting & Crochet Grp	B'sloe Library	11-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5-7.15pm
In Step - "Imagine that"	Town Hall	7.30pm
Trad Folk Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm
Thursday 18th		
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Easter Camp	Coral Leisure	10-2.30pm
Parent Child Home Prog	B'sloe Library	10-11am
Digital Skills Training	B'sloe Library	10.30-2pm
In Step - "Imagine that"	Town Hall	7.30pm
Holy Thursday Mass	St. Michael's Church	8pm
Holy Thursday Mass	Our Lady of Lourdes Ch	8pm
Live acoustic session	Brewery Lane	10pm
Live Music With Live Line	Downey's Bar	10pm
Friday 19th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Good Friday Ceremony	Our Lady of Lourdes Ch	3pm
Good Friday Ceremony	St Michael's Church	3pm/8pm
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys	6-9pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
Beggars Velvet	Brewery Lane	10pm
Small Deal	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Saturday 20th		
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Rebel Heart	Shearwater Hotel	7pm
Easter Saturday Mass	St. Michael's Church	8pm
Easter Saturday Mass	Our Lady of Lourdes	8pm
Bingo	Kilconnel Town Hall	8pm
Red Tape	Brewery Lane	10pm
Dusty Bloom	Auld Sod	10pm
DJ DAVE	Downey's Bar	10pm
Lyrical	Killeen's of S'Bridge	10pm
John F	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Dave Mills	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Eoin Maher	An Tain	10pm
Take 2	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Sunday 21st		
Easter Sunday Mass	St Michael's Church	9.15am/12pm
Easter Sunday Mass	Our Lady of Lourdes Ch	10.30am
Trad session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Live music	Brewery Lane	8pm
Boithrin	Killeen's of S'Bridge	10pm
Off the wall	Auld Sod	10pm
DJ John Finnerty	Downeys	10pm
Shane Moore	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Sessions Front Bar	Valeries Of Aughrim	10pm
Hickory Wind	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Monday 22nd		
Moore Scouts Duck Race	Suck River	12PM
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Tuesday 23rd		
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Easter Camp	Coral Leisure	10-2.30pm
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
Wednesday 24th		
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Cuidiu Breastfeeding	B'sloe Library	9.45-11.45am
Easter Camp	Coral Leisure	10-2.30pm
Knitting & Crochet Grp	B'sloe Library	11-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Unislim	Gullanes Hotel	5-7.15pm
Trad Folk Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm
Close of Nominations for Municipal Elections		5pm
Thursday 25th		
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Easter Camp	Coral Leisure	10-2.30pm
Live acoustic session	Brewery Lane	10pm
Live Music Steve Reilly	Downey's Bar	10pm
Friday 26th		
B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
Easter Swim Camp	Coral Leisure	9-10am
Pam Dolan Art Exhibit	Church Gallery	opening hrs
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys	6-9pm
Pole Dance Show	The Pillar House	9pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
Niall Rutledge	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Live music	Brewery Lane	10pm
Small idea's	Auld Sod	10pm
Ken Solo	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Saturday 27th		
German Photo Exhibit	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Bingo	Kilconnel Town Hall	8pm
Live music	Brewery Lane	10pm
Pacifica	Auld Sod	10pm
DJ Crazy Chris	Downey's Bar	10pm
Maggie D	Killeen's of S'Bridge	10pm
Live Music	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Dollar Daly	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Average James	An Tain	10pm
Live Music	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Sunday 28th		
Blossom Harp Ensemble	Town Hall	5pm
Trad session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Brego	Brewery Lane	8pm
Liam's Country Rd Show	Auld Sod	9.30pm
Last Man Standing	Killeen's of S'Bridge	10pm
Small Ideas	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Sessions Front Bar	Valeries Of Aughrim	10pm
Monday 29th		
Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Tuesday 30th		
German Photo Exhibit	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm

MAY EVENTS GUIDE

Wednesday 1st

German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Knitting & Crochet Group	B'sloe Library	11-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Unislím	Gullanes Hotel	5-7.15pm
Trad Folk Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm

Thursday 2nd

German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Parent Child Home Prog	B'sloe Library	10-11pm
Live acoustic session	Brewery Lane	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm

Friday 3rd

B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys Bar	6-9pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
The 2 Q's	Brewery Lane	10pm
Sugar Candy	Auld Sod	10pm
Adrain Rabbit	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Saturday 4th

German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Bingo	Kilconnel Town Hall	8pm
Boithrin	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Laker	Auld Sod	10pm
Red Tape	Brewery Lane	10pm
Blue Tax	Joe Kelly's	10pm
DJ Crazy Chris	Downey's	10pm
Celtic Swing	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
HB Aine	An Tain	10pm
Live Wires	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Sunday 5th

Point to Point	Eyrecourt	12PM
Trad session	The Pillar House	6pm
Bumble bee honey	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Live music	Brewery Lane	8pm
Pacifica	Auld Sod	10pm
Karoke	Joe Kelly's	10pm
DJ John Finnerty	Downey's Bar	10pm
Sessions Front Bar	Valeries Of Aughrim	10pm
Humble Superstars	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Tuesday 7th

German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm

Wednesday 8th

German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Cuidiu Breastfeeding SG	B'sloe Library	9.45-11.45am
Knitting & Crochet Group	B'sloe Library	11-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Trad & Folk Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm

Thursday 9th

German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Live acoustic session	Brewery Lane	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm
Singers Circle	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Friday 10th

B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys Bar	6-9pm
Songfest	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
Dave Mills	Auld Sod	10pm
Alex Roe	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Toxic Twins	Brewery Lane	10pm
Alan Lawlor	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Saturday 11th

German Photo Exhibition	Church Gallery	Opening hrs
Bingo	Kilconnel Town Hall	8pm
The Tav jam band	Brewery Lane	10pm
DJ Crazy Chris	Downey's Bar	10pm
Small deal	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Finnegans fury	Auld Sod	10pm
Booren	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Dave Mills	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Lorcan Live	An Tain	10pm
Live Music	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Sunday 12th

Trad session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Robbie & brian	Brewery Lane	8pm
Jock and Davy	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Liam's Country Road Show	Auld Sod	9.30pm
Ken Solo	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Sessions Front Bar	Valeries of Aughrim	10pm

Monday 13th

Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
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Tuesday 14th

Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm

Wednesday 15th

Knitting & Crochet Group	B'sloe Library	11-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Paudge B	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Trad & Folk Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm

Thursday 16th

Parent Child Home Prog	Gullanes Hotel	10-1pm
Live acoustic session	Brewery Lane	10pm
Trad nite	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Live Music Steve Reilly	Downey's Bar	10pm

Friday 17th

B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys Bar	6-9pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
Beggars Velvet	Brewery Lane	10pm
Small Ideas	Auld Sod	10pm
Billy Garvin	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Shane Downey	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Saturday 18th

Bingo	Kilconnel Town Hall	8pm
Snooker Extravaganza	Shearwater Hotel	8.30pm
Live music	Brewery Lane	10pm
DJ Live	Downey's Bar	10pm
Happy Bar Stars	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Dusty bloom	Auld Sod	10pm
Paul Byrnes	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Alex Roe	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Eoin Maher	An Tain	10pm
Boithrin	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Sunday 19th

Trad session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
Brego	Brewery Lane	8pm
Dave mills	Auld Sod	9.30pm
Lyrical	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Pub Fiction	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Sessions Front Bar	Valeries of Aughrim	10pm

Monday 20th

Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
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Tuesday 21st

Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm

Wednesday 22nd

Cuidiu Breastfeeding SG	B'sloe Library	9.45-11.45pm
Knitting & Crochet Group	B'sloe Library	11-1pm
Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	3pm
Paudge	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Trad & Folk Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm

Thursday 23rd

Live acoustic session	Brewery Lane	10pm
Trad music	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Live Music	Downey's Bar	10pm

Friday 24th

B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys Bar	6-9pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
Small Deal	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Live music	Brewery Lane	10pm
Ken Solo	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm
Polling Day Elections	Polling Stations	8am-11pm

Saturday 25th

Bingo	Kilconnel Town Hall	8pm
Loose Rooster	Brewery Lane	10pm
DJ Dave	Downey's Bar	10pm
Chillbillies	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Nightowls	Auld Sod	10pm
The Sharps	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Joe Glynn	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Simon Brody	An Tain	10pm
Crowbar Hotel	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

Sunday 26th

Trad session	The Pillar House	6pm
Live Music	An Tain	7pm
The goodfellas	Brewery Lane	8pm
ken solo	Auld Sod	9.30pm
Small Deal	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Double Up	Joe Kelly's	10pm
Sessions Front Bar	Valeries Of Aughrim	10pm

Monday 27th

Line Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	8pm
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Tuesday 28th

Gaelscoil Ensemble Concert	Church Gallery	1-2pm
Lego Club	B'sloe Library	4.30-5.15pm
GROW Meeting	B'sloe Library	6-8pm
GAA Bingo	Emerald B'room	8pm
Social Dancing	Gullanes Hotel	9pm

Wednesday 29th

Active Retirement	Gullanes Hotel	9pm
P Bennett	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Trad & Folk Bobby & Frank	An Tain	9.30pm

Thursday 30th

Parent Child Home Prog	B'sloe Library	10-11am
Live Acoustic Session	Brewery Lane	10pm
Trad session	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm

Friday 31st

B'sloe Country Market	Town Hall	9-1.30pm
Kids Friday Fun	B'sloe Library	3.30-4.30pm
Steak House	Downeys Bar	6-9pm
Find The Joker	An Tain	9pm
The hoppy bar stars	Brewery Lane	10pm
Bojangle	Killeen's S'bridge	10pm
Dollar Daly	Shearwater Hotel	10pm
Trad Session	Dunlo Tavern	10.30pm

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

CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS



Enda O'Brien was the leader of the parade held by St. Teresa's Special School. Joined by Scoil Uí Ceathairnigh and Tiny Tots Creche, the participants gave a great display of music and colour for all family and attendees.



Presentaion of a cheque for €1085.63 to Ms. Jackie Daly on behalf of East Galway & Midlands cancer support centre from the staff and clients at Creagh Training Centre



Pictured at a presentation of club development grant of €2500 from Ballinasloe Credit Union to Balinasloe Town AFC from L to R Brendan McNally club groundsman, Johnny Walsh club development coordinator, Joby Kelly club chairperson, Shane McNeill manager Ballinasloe Credit Union, Ciaran Keighrey club secretary and Ellen Egan club treasurer

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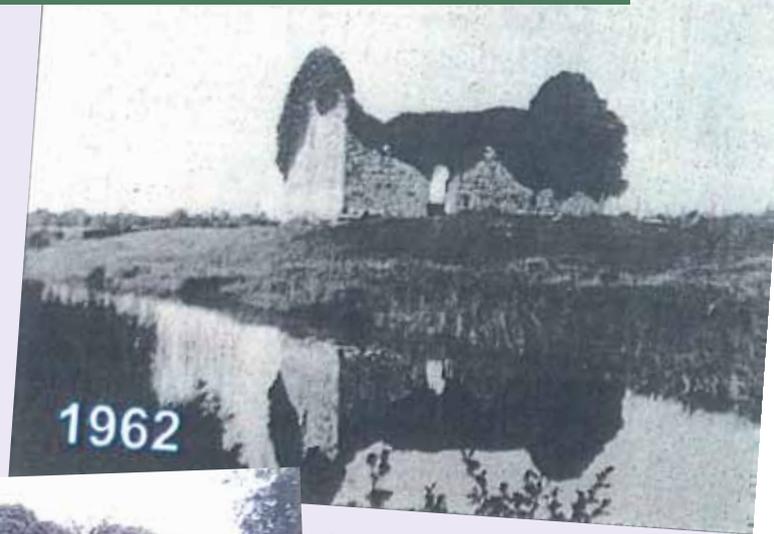
LOCAL ANGELS' PLOT BURIAL GROUND TO HAVE REFLECTION EVENT

A night of reflection will take place for all of the infants who are buried in and around the Teampoilín, in Gullane's Hotel, Main Street on Friday April 5th at 7pm.

The Teampoilin is the name given to the ruins of an early thirteenth century medieval church, which is lost in the midst of a tangle of bushes and trees and weighed down by a massive covering of ivy. It is located close to the banks of the old Grand Canal, about 400 metres from the canal bridge on the Pollboy road. It's not accessible to the public however, due to it being located on privately owned land. It is one of the very few remaining medieval ruins in the Ballinasloe area, and its existence is unknown to many of the local population.

The Teampoilin was one of the earliest churches built by the Order of St. Augustine after they came to the West of Ireland from the continent. It had a close association with the Clontuskert Priory, and was staffed by the Canons of St. Augustine who crossed the bog from the Priory to Pollboy. Evidence of a wooden walkway called the "togher" was uncovered in the Kellysgrove bog during drainage by the Land Commission in 1946, and from then it was known locally as the "Monks' Pass".

The original building was constructed of stone and measured 57 feet long and 21 feet wide, and to date the east, south and west walls are all still standing, probably held together by the growth of ivy, while most of the north wall has fallen away. Some of the original features are still to be seen, including the transitional pointed doorway on the south wall, as well as aumbries for the keeping of the church vessels at the east end.



1962



2015

Some time after this, it fell into disuse as a church, and it became a burial place for stillborn, unbaptised babies, although there is some evidence that other infants may also be buried there. Burials reportedly ceased there in the 1950s. One headstone lies within the ruin, bearing the inscription: "Here lies Walter Joseph, infant son of Rob Pilkington. Died 12 September 1828".

In more recent times a number of families in the area have become aware that older siblings or relatives are buried at the Teampoilin and are now organising a time to reflect and remember all infants who are resting there. This event will take place in Gullane's Hotel on Friday 5th April at 7pm, and all are welcome to attend.

BY GABRIEL ROHAN



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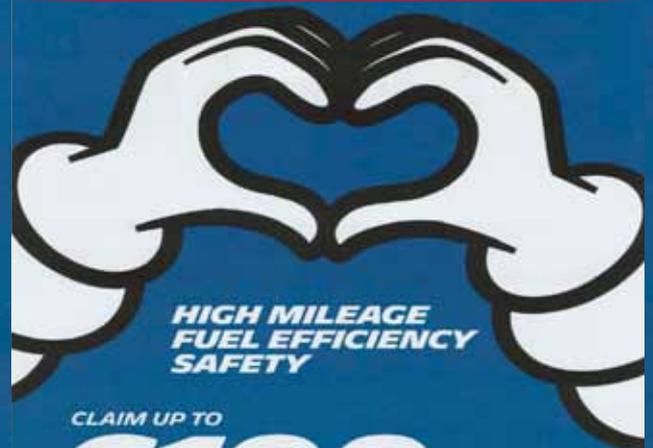
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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARKED ON MAIN ST.

Soroptimists International Ballinasloe and District held a celebration in Gullane's Hotel, Main Street recently, in honour of International Women's Day around the globe. Many local women turned up, and were given the opportunity to discuss topics among their peers, listen to a guest speaker, all the while accompanied by tea and a light bites reception supplied by the hotel.

This year's International Women's Day celebrations were well supported by local Soroptimists, and the local branch of the organisation shared the day's celebrations with Girls4Girls.

Girls4Girls Education is a small Ballinasloe-based group that fundraises to support education projects in Dar-es-Salaam, the most populated city in Tanzania, as well as supporting these educational initiatives for the Daalit children in India. Throughout the world, over 130 million girls do not have access to basic education but the group's fundraising efforts have given hope to many individual girls over the last thirty years, and they hope they will continue to do so in the future.

Patricia Johnson, guest speaker on the day, gave a very interesting talk in which she drew parallels between the education system in 1990's Ireland and the education system in Africa now. She also spoke of the great work being done by Sr. Annette (a Kilconnell native) for children abroad, with classrooms being built with support organised through our local schools and the Farrell/Johnson families.



Kitty McHugh, Aurienne, Lucy, & Mary Courtney



Facing the camera L-R: Pat Dunne, Mary Magee, Margaret Mansfield, Rosaleen Cahill Annette Lynagh, Geraldine Lohan, Aoife Salmon.

The local chapter of the Soroptimists have been supporting women and girls in the local area for over twenty four years. They currently have twenty one members and are looking forward to welcoming new members .

Soroptimist International as a whole are committed to the education of women and girls all around the world. The local branch has just completed a three-year project, which entailed the assisting of girls in Ard Scoil Mhuire in the financial challenge of accessing third level education. Currently they are working in partnership with Safe Ireland in educating communities about domestic violence and how help can be obtained by victims.

The club's social calendar includes supporting the 1ST Furlong Ladies Lunch in aid of Breast Cancer Research, attending the Phil Coulter concert in the Town Hall, Galway as well as many other events. Members also have the opportunity to attend meetings of the Soroptimists International community as well, with recent meetings having been attended by members in Liverpool and Malta.

Soroptimists International Ballinasloe and District are always appealing for new members. Any woman interested in joining the local group will be welcomed, and for more information, contact the group via email at: siballinasloe21@gmail.com, or find them on Facebook at Soroptimists International Ballinasloe and District.

BY DONOGH MOORE

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FIFTH DARKNESS INTO LIGHT DAWN WALK BY DONOGH MOORE

Ballinasloe's fifth successive 'Darkness into Light' 5km fundraising walk takes place at 4:15 am on Saturday 11th May 2019, and will follow the same course as previous years.

Darkness into Light 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 therapists are fully qualified and operate out of Pieta centres nationwide, including those near Ballinasloe in Tuam and Athlone. The initiative also helps fund the 24 hour helpline, at 1800 247 247.

Brian Derrane, chairperson of the local organising committee believes that Darkness into Light is a fulfilling experience with a very important purpose. He sees it as a valuable opportunity for individuals, groups and families to come together as a community to dispel the stigma of suicide, to raise valuable awareness of the help available and to educate the community about the supports that Pieta House offers free of charge to its service users, by raising vital finances to allow the organisation to do all that it does.

"By participating, you make a difference in the lives of someone you love and care for, and even those you don't even know. You can change a person's life for the better and maybe even help save their life. You empower someone to take that first step from darkness toward the light, and thereby rekindle the light of hope in their dark despair. More importantly, you can help spark the will to live their life again. You genuinely help those in distress and also help the families



Local Darkness Into Light Volunteers, Michelle Kelly, Joanne Jordan, Miriam Hurley.

of those in distress. You publically remember those loved ones lost from our families and our communities and you also help share the grief and sorrow of those who have lost a loved one, by being there as a support for them. You become a beacon of hope for those who are still silently troubled and help light the path to the help and the supports that Pieta house freely provides when they decide they are ready to seek them?"

Ballinasloe's Darkness into Light will take place Saturday morning May 11th 2019, at 4:15am. Registration is open online at www.darknessintolight.ie. A free, iconic yellow t-shirt with the all-new Darkness into Light logo will be posted out to those participants who register online before May.

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PORTIUNCULA AWAITING FINAL FUNDING APPROVAL FOR 50 BED UNIT

BY DONOGH MOORE

Portiuncula Hospital is currently awaiting funding approval from the Minister of Health, Simon Harris, to begin work on a new fifty bed unit in the hospital. Planning permission for the project has been received by the Health Service Executive, and now the project lies in limbo until it has its funding approved by the Minister.

Denis Naughten TD recently raised the issue in a Parliamentary Question, where he asked the Minister the status of plans for the ward block extension, what stage the proposed development was at, and the timeframe for the completion of works. He added: "We are being told that the Department of Health will prioritise increasing capacity in our hospitals as part of the current review of all building projects as a result of the overspend on the National Children's Hospital. As the new 50 bed ward block at Portiuncula will increase bed usage and can also provide additional beds in the hospital system, I believe that this project should be prioritised."

Senator Maura Hopkins added: "This is a shovel ready project and it is essential that we see works progressing as soon as possible. Hospital management have confirmed to me the urgent need for this project to progress."

In response to Deputy Naughten's PQ, Jim Curran, Head of Estates at the HSE stated: "Tender documents are being prepared with a view to progressing the procurement process and commencing an enabling works contract in 2019, subject to the availability of funding. The 2019 Capital Plan is currently being finalised and no funding will be allocated to any project until the 2019 Cap Plan is agreed with the Department."

It is feared by many public representatives that the claw back in health capital spend due to the over run on the Children's National Hospital will see this project stalled.



RATE MY HOSPITAL

According to RateMyHospital, Portiuncula is sitting at a 74 percent approval rating. Ratings, which are submitted by the public upon visiting the local hospital, cited kind, caring and friendly staff as a huge bonus to their stay in PUH. However, every comment made in 2019 noted that while the staff were incredibly helpful and welcoming, they were constantly under pressure. St. Francis' Ward was mentioned repeatedly as being the busiest ward in the hospital, although the care that patients received was not compromised due to this.



TROLLEY WATCH:

The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation frequently publish their analysis of how many patients are left occupying trolleys throughout the country's various public hospitals. In February of this year, Portiuncula Hospital had 83 patients on trolleys. This is a lower figure than February 2018, which saw over 100 patients left waiting on temporary beds. This, in comparison with the Midland Regional Hospital in Tullamore's 329, and University Hospital Galway's 526 shows that while shortages are present in Portiuncula, in terms of both staff and facilities, statistically the hospital has less patients residing on trolleys than any nearby competitors.

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NATIONAL FEASTDAY COMMEMORATED WITH COLOUR



Ballinasloe held its annual St. Patrick's Day Parade through the rerouted streets of the town.

Participants ranged from businesses to sports clubs, and each entry in the parade gave a lovely visual representation of how diverse and multi-faceted the town is. Due to the ongoing works on Society Street, the route had to be changed for this year's instalment, and participants and watchers alike converged on St. Michael's Square to hear the results of the parade.

In the cultural category, Milkshake Dance Academy came first, with Colohan's Musical Float coming in second. In the voluntary category the Active Retirement group won, with Timmy Casey's Horse and Cart following behind them. In the sporting category, Ballinasloe GAA took the first place award, with the local cycling club trailing in second. In the commercial group, Hogan's Trailers won, with the Bogmasters following behind in second. Two special merit awards were given out on the day too, to Venezia Restaurant, Dunlo St. and Ballinasloe Town AFC. The overall winners of the Tony Colohan Memorial Trophy were Ballinasloe GAA.

Committee Secretary Carmel Grealy noted that: "There was a very good turnout, especially considering the constantly-changing weather." She also thanked the many sponsors - Vintners, Credit Union, Supermacs, Bank of Ireland, AIB, Fair and Festival and Gullane's Hotel.

"I'd like to thank the Town Band, who entertained the public, both before and after the parade, as well as all of the participants and groups in the parade, giving special mention to the Active Retirement - through rain or shine, they always offer to participate and support events. Special mention also to all the sporting clubs, who did a wonderful job showcased the excellent sports facilities here in the town. Finally, I'd like to thank our sponsors, our volunteers, - we had a lot of help, especially having to overcome the obstacle of the route change."

Carmel finished by looking to next year: "We would like to see more entries. It would be great to get the schools, as well as more businesspeople involved, alongside a marching band to lead the parade. The success of a parade depends on the extra effort that the community are all prepared to make."

There were also Parades over the weekend in both the villages of Aughrim and Ahascragh.



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Adv.  BY MAUREEN CAHALAN

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Maureen and her team continue to put themselves out there so as to grasp the opportunities that are available and this always raises the morale in the store. The staff like challenge and there is not much they cannot do with Jewellery, Trophies, Silverware and all things related to the Jewellery and Trophy business.

"Hard work comes at a price and always pays off, but the most important thing in business is respect and manners. We believe this to be true among staff and then it flows on to our customers. It never hurts to greet people and to say the magic words "Thank You" states Maureen.

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Anna Geary, ambassador for Cristallo di Milano

7TH BARRA SONGFEST RETURNS FOR MAY 10TH

Over two dozen local voices will again take to the stage as part of the Bealtaine Event in May at their 7th presentation of the BARRA Singers Songfest.

Patrons this year are in for a particular delight as the first half of the show is a dedicated musical review of the songs and popular entertainment of James Joyce called "Shem".

The Choir is led and conducted by Marie Power and music is being provided by the Songfest Ensemble.

Again this year proceeds from the Concert will go to Charity.

Tickets are priced at €10 each and can be purchased on the door.



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SISTER ACT WELCOMES NUNS ON THE RUN IN SOCIETY ST.

Simply Divine is one way of describing Ballinasloe Musical Society's acclaimed SELL OUT annual run of "Sister Act" at the Town Hall.

Whoopi Goldberg starred in the 1992 film, and its 1993 sequel, which is aired as regularly as "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" on the Xmas Schedules. Following on from their production of Dolly Parton's "9 to 5" last year, cast and crew are continuing with the more modern musicals, in another first for the Society.

Whether it was the angelic faces in the habits that hooked the audience in a nostalgic trance of yesteryear – (it is some 12 years since nuns in large numbers were on the run in Society St!) , or the slick dance moves, fabulous castings, realistic set or uptempo modern music – the audience on most nights took to their feet with appreciation.

The buildup of story and establishment of characters took a lot of the focus the first half in this Paul Norton produced show but from once the adroit Emily Lohan as Deloris took the baton to conduct her disharmonious choir the energy and pace climbed to crescendo proportions. Rare on stage to see cast capture fully some of the verve and chutzpah of the silver screen version but this society nailed it; in every department.

Ordinarily when large amateur choruses sing and dance at the same time one activity tends to discommode the other – not so on this occasion – those habits, veils and heels moved with Carmelite precision and never lost a quaver, or crotchet which all could be fully heard. Full marks to Choreographer Aoife Clafferty and to Musical Director Shane Farrell who used the vocal dexterity and full range of the choruses and principals to interpret the score faithfully.

Strong sterling performances were turned in by all the principals – they all deserve mentions but Nick Lawless as Eddie, the accomplished and nuanced Madeline Flemming as Mother Superior, Lisa Whyte and Emma Greally all gave forceful, realistic studies. The Character Nuns added sublimely to the telling of the tale, weaving traits into their parts that could only have been gleaned from nun



watching in the schools of their formative years.

The male chorus were clearly outnumbered, did not have as much to do musically but got the lion share of the comic territory. Kay Purcell Award winner Seamus Feerick gave a Cavan version of a crusty but cash savvy

Monsignor, Mike O'Reilly (Joey) as ever led the hoods in timing and moves, while it was left to Paul Drysdale to take the role of the Baddie as Curtis. Cute Cameos from Brian Derrane as the Cop and Gerry Sweeney as Ernie all helped but two younger principals took their modest roles and milked them for every ounce of laughter – Barry Dune as Pablo and Ciaran Smith as TJ.

The chorus included over fifty talented individuals. All of these onstage stars, as well as the Stage Crew managed by redoubtable Pat McGovern. It gave Society St. a rollicking sell out run for five nights of cracking good entertainment.

Emily Lohan – Deloris Van Cartier, Madeleine Fleming – Mother Superior, Cherise O'Moore – Sister Mary Robert, Seamus Feerick – Monsignor O'Hara, Paul Drysdale – Curtis, Nicky Lawless – Eddie, Ciaran Smyth – TJ, Mike O'Reilly – Joey, Barry Dunne – Pablo, Catherine Dempsey – Sister Mary Patrick, Margaret Mulligan-Murphy – Sister Mary Lazarus, Frances Leahy – Sister Mary Martin-of-Tours, Gretel Sullivan – Sister Mary Theresa, Lisa Whyte – Michelle, Emma Greally – Tina, Gerry Sweeney – Ernie/Pool Player/Cab Driver, Brian Derrane – Cop.

BY COLM CROFFY



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DUNLO PLAYERS TO PRESENT “ THE SEAFARER “ FOR ROAD TO RECOVERY

BY DONOGH MOORE

Live drama makes a return to The Shearwater Hotel in Ballinasloe, when The Dunlo Players present Conor McPherson's "The Seafarer". After its premiere at London's National Theatre, this play was nominated for an Olivier Award as under the "Best New Play" category, although it unfortunately lost out to David Harrower's 'Blackbird'. The Broadway production of 'The Seafarer' was nominated for four Tony Awards, including Best Play, where it again lost out to Tracy Letts' August: Osage County.



David Hardiman, Brendan Boland, Dean Flanagan, Barry Healy and Declan Kelly.

Set in north county Dublin, 'The Seafarer' tells the story of four friends with a penchant for hard drinking, and a strange visitor who joins them on Christmas Eve for a game of poker. Sharky, who's now off the drink, returns from Clare where he worked as a chauffeur, to care for his blind brother Richard. Richard's house is a drop-in centre for every "misunderstood" heavy drinking, married man in the Howth area. Among them is Ivan, an almost permanent guest, as well as Nicky, who is living with Sharky's wife and children. The final character is Mr. Lockhart, who arrives with Nicky for the annual game of poker and bout of drinking that ensues. Lockhart is an immortal character from Sharky's past, and he raises the stakes of the poker game to an all-time high.

The cast and crew of this production have left no stone unturned in preparing for this showing, directed and produced by John Boland.

The cast of the Dunlo Players' production of "The Seafarer" include

Brendan Boland as James 'Sharky' Harkin, David Hardiman as Richard Harkin, Dean Flanagan as Ivan Curry, Barry Healy as Nicky Giblin, and Declan Kelly as Mr. Lockhart.

The proceeds from this staging will go to the Jackie Dolan "Road to Recovery" fund. "We are delighted to avail of the professional assistance of the Ballinasloe Panto Group in making this a successful venture, as Jackie has been a huge supporter to many performing groups in Ballinasloe over the year" stated John Boland, the Show's Producer. Gullane's Hotel has been the rehearsing area for the Players in the weeks leading up to this production, but they are now ready to perform Conor McPherson's hit Irish comedy in the Shearwater Hotel, from the 9th to the 11th of April. Tickets can be bought in J&S Photos on Society Street, and they can be contacted at (090) 963 1566, or alternatively they can be bought online at Ballinasloe Panto Society's box office website, which can be found at www.ballinasloepanto.com.



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KILCONNELL NATIVE HONOURED BY MUSIC FOR GALWAY AS INTERNATIONAL CONDUCTOR & COMPOSER

Kilconnell native Eimear Noone was recently received her **Laochra Ceoil Cellissimo Honouree** award from Music for Galway, in recognition for her work as a leading conductor and composer of video games music.

When she was 15, an army band played a concert for her and her Ardscoil Mhuire classmates in the Town Hall Theatre. She was already studying flute and piano and she was invited to sit in and sight-read a part with the band. Rather audaciously, she chose to play piccolo. During the performance, she was invited to take the role of conductor. Her friends assumed it was all part of a gimmick, but little did they know that Eimear had actually been studying scores at home for years. She said she had been "watching videos of conductors, anything I could get at the library, trying to figure out what on earth they were doing, looking at diagrams".

Eimear began learning music during her time at school in Kilconnell National School, first starting on tin whistle, playing traditional music, while at home she picked up themes from television by ear. She moved on to flute and piano, and travelled every Saturday to the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin for lessons.

It was as a teenager, while she attended Ard Scoil Mhuire, that she also began composing and arranging. Eimear was a member of the local Town Band, who gave her huge opportunities to practice and perform throughout her formative adolescent years. The Town Hall Theatre also proved itself to be instrumental throughout these years, as for many years the theatre was one of the major places that the band could practice.

popular classical works, the orchestra gave the Irish premieres of a range of well-known scores. Their premiere performance was their renditions of the Braveheart score, of the Batman score and Empire of the Sun by John Williams.

Her further move into game and film music came via Screen Training Ireland in Dublin. Eimear then took a film composing course (part of the UCLA Extension Film Scoring programme), where she received training from renowned film composers such as Don Ray. She also met the orchestrator Steven Scott Smalley who had worked on the Batman score which she had just performed and knew well. Smalley hired her as an assistant and asked her to do some orchestration on a video game project that he had received. That project was the first 'World of Warcraft' game, which remains as one of the highest-grossing video games of all time.

Now based in Los Angeles, Noone has since recorded and composed the music for many video games, including World of Warcraft: Warlords of Draenor, StarCraft II, and Overwatch, and has written music for film thrillers such as Mirrors (2008) and The Hole (2012). She has conducted performances of games music all over the world, and she also co-founded the Dublin International Games Music Festival with her husband, composer Craig Stuart Garfinkle.

She has blazed a trail in the composing and conducting international world and was one of the first female conductors to perform at the National Concert Hall, Dublin.

In all of her international performance and collaborations – she was in Buenos Aires at the Callas Festivals for St. Patricks Weekend she still takes an avid interest in matters local and is keen to acknowledge the musical ecology of East Galway and the activities and organisations that helped nurture her talent. "I can't overestimate how important the Ballinasloe Town Band was to me as a kid. Noel Madden and the senior band members were incredibly good to us kids and the work Noel did was constant and unflinching. He often threw clarinet parts or other instrumental parts for us to transpose and sight-read. The education we got, both musical and cultural was beyond description. Please support the continuation of this gem for the next generation" stated Eimear on her latest of many trips back to Kilconnell.

BY DONOGH MOORE



Eimear Noone, Craig Stuart-Garfinkle, Lindsay Kent, Mary Noone at the Music For Galway Gala Awards Ceremony in Galway.

Eimear went on to study music at Trinity College Dublin and it was there that she started to gravitate towards film music, co-founding the Dublin City Concert Orchestra with her classmate Jillian Saunders and running it for five years. Set up to perform film music and

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TOWN BAND AMBITIOUS FUNDRAISING PROJECT CONTINUES TO ATTRACT SUPPORT

BY DONOGH MOORE

The Town's Band are in the midst of their latest fundraising campaign. Its aim is to raise €180,000 for the purchase and renovation of the local Parochial Hall, and so far €20,000 has already been raised since the beginning of the year.

At its March monthly meeting the Chair, Damien O'Neachtain, thanked the Town Band supporters who had returned their direct debit form to the credit union. (These forms were delivered with the Jan. issue of LIFE magazine). Additional forms are available in the credit union or from any member of the Band.

The Town Band Hall is an old 19th Century building which requires refurbishment and upgrading. A local engineer has examined the roof alongside dedicated roof specialists and a plan to repair the damage is underway.

Recent visitors to the Hall include Máiread McGuinness, MEP and Senator Maura Hopkins – both of whom advised on various grant schemes available. While these schemes are being looked into by the group, local fundraising is continuing – the Town Band held a table Quiz recently in the Shearwater Hotel, and a Progressive 25 will be held on the night of Good Friday, April 19th, in Gullane's Hotel.

An appeal for support to the business community is also progressing, as the Town Band requires the long-term commitment of individuals, businesses and supporters in general to maintain and develop the group future. They are asking for your support for the Town Band Hall project.

The Parochial Hall was the recreational hall for many in the locality and many over the age of 50 will remember the "hops" held there in the 1970s and 80s, and even more will remember the Irish dancing



Members of the Ballinasloe Town Band standing outside the Town Band Hall

classes held there over many years. In taking possession of the hall, the Band intend to renew the premises and make it available once again as a community facility.

The Town Band is an organisation dedicated to having a community-based band in Ballinasloe. Since its reformation in 2014, the band members, who are all volunteers, have grown in numbers, where there are currently 25, between junior and senior members. They provide music for community events and are available as required by local community organisations. In addition, there are up to 50 young musicians in the Junior Band and the Recorder class. They aim to provide access to music education through participation in the group, for anyone in the locality with a musical talent. The Town Band is committed to equality of opportunity to any person who wants to participate, and will supply the education and the musical instrument (brass, woodwind and percussion) to anyone who wishes to learn how to play music.

In the near future the music making will continue uninterrupted - however the focus for the foreseeable future is to renovate the Town Band Hall and bring it back into use for the benefit of the entire community.

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TOWN HALL THEATRE CONTINUES TO NOURISH CULTURAL SCENE

BY DONOGH MOORE

The first Sloe Sessions Live was held in the foyer space of Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre recently. Sloe Sessions promoter Ben Parker has used the Town Hall Theatre as a primary location in the recording of original music videos with local singers and songwriters. Sloe Sessions Live is the next step in promoting these artists.

Grace Byrne, a talented local singer/songwriter opened the Sessions with some of her original songs, and afterwards said she "was delighted to be given the opportunity to perform in front of a live audience". Local musicians Barry Power and Kevin Herm-Connolly completed the line-up on the night. The night was full of original songs and music, all set in front of an enthusiastic audience. Plans are being made for further Live Sessions, showcasing original music and songwriters from the locality.

Following the successful run of Ballinasloe Musical Society's Sister Act, the Town Hall Theatre will host much more local talent during the month of April. Cathy Hopkins dance troupe take to the stage for a fun filled show on Friday April 5th.

On April 15th to 18th, the students of In Step Stage School will dazzle with their graceful movements in their production of 'Imagine That'. Children from Birr, Athlone, Mountbellew and Ballinasloe will all be taking to the stage in this production. Two graduates of In Step Stage School received scholarships to continue their training at prestigious dance and performing arts colleges in London in the past.

Blossom Harp Ensemble will host members of L'Atelier Musical 3Tombours from Paris, France. Fourteen young people from the Parisien music school will spend a week with Blossom Harp Ensemble developing a music programme which will culminate in two joint concerts, the first at 5pm on Sunday 28th April in Ballinasloe, and the second at Halloween in Paris. There will be a lot of musical instruments involved, from trombones, to flutes,



Musicians Kevin Herm-Connolly and Barry Power



Youngsters from In Step Stage School.

alongside trumpets, double bass and harps.

The Town Hall Theatre recently benefitted from the Community Enhancement Programme, which went towards now-completed refurbishment work backstage toilets and dressing rooms. The Theatre is a not for profit charity, so upgrading and refurbishment works are being carried out as funds allow.

Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre facilitated the reforming of the Town Band with free rehearsal space and is delighted to see the passion for music of all involved result in their recent purchase of the local Parochial Hall. The theatre continues to facilitate all our local arts groups with rehearsal space and performance nights. Volunteers are always welcome for all aspects of the theatre such as marketing, fundraising, IT skills, administration, stage lighting and sound, set building etc.

Currently the theatre is running a fundraising campaign to assist with the installation of a gas heating system. This can be accessed at the box office online at www.ballinasloetownhall.com or by contacting the theatre at 090 964 6540.

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FIONA MOORE-NAUGHTON SHOWCASES CURRENT WORK IN LIBRARY

BY DONOGH MOORE

Fiona Moore-Naughton held an art exhibition in the town recently. Operating as Fiona Moore, the artist showcased some twenty plus paintings from her collection in the Church Gallery, above the Library on Society Street. The exhibition, titled 'An bhfuil cead agam dul go dtí an leithreas?' investigates two very old school buildings based in South Roscommon and was very well received.

Fiona comes from a large family, which includes eight brothers and two sisters. Originally from Taughmaconnell, Fiona married Shane Naughton from Doohan, Ballydangan, Athlone, and currently resides there with her husband and her three children Jack, Abaigeal and Cillian. Fiona studied 'Fine Art' in the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, and has previously held exhibitions all over the country, including Mullingar, Tipperary and Galway.

Fiona has a great connections with Ballinasloe. Not only does she have many family and friends living in the town, but she has previously volunteered her time to the River and Arts Festival, as part of the local arts group. 'An tSuca Fiáin', or 'The Wild Suck' in English, which ran for a total of nine years. It was a week-long event, which held arts and crafts for the young children of the area, and ended with a parade through the town centre, which finished up at the town's Marina. All the while, the creations the children had made throughout the week were showcased during this parade.

When asked about her creative process, Fiona stated "My art is inspired by local landscape and observing nature. My paintings often go behind the image of the landscape and embrace the human relationship with the land. I work in series and enjoy experimenting, digging deeper into the idea of place, memory, land and people."

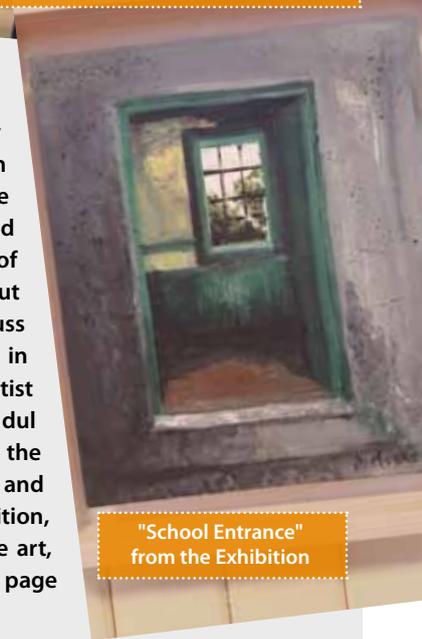
"I often rework paintings by layering and taking away, searching

for an emotional response. I was delighted to have my art work on display in The Church Gallery. My current art work investigates and explores two classroom schoolhouse buildings, alongside their sense of place and memory in the landscape." The paintings were developed from both studio and site based studies conducted in South Roscommon.

The exhibition was opened by Roscommon Councillor John Naughten, and drew a sizable crowd. Visitors to the exhibition had the chance to not only study each of Fiona's paintings in great detail, but they also had the chance to discuss the themes and motifs present in each individual work with the artist herself. "An bhfuil cead agam dul go dtí an leithreas?" featured in the Church Gallery for two weeks, and more information on the exhibition, such as details and pricings of the art, can be found on Fiona's Facebook page at: Fiona's Art.



"Fiona with Cllr. John Naughton at the opening of her exhibition in the Church Gallery"



"School Entrance" from the Exhibition



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KATIE DILLON – LOCAL OLYMPIAN

Katie Dillon represented not only Ballinasloe, but the country when she competed in the Special Olympics which took place in Abu Dhabi this year and saw competitors from countries all around the world stake their claim in being the best in their sport. Katie, daughter of Mary and Billy, grew up in Aughrim alongside her brother Justyn and her sister Ciara.

After attending St. Catherine's National School and Woodford, Katie went on to complete various VEC courses, travelling independently to Galway four days a week, to attend programmes such as a Brothers of Charity drama/art group called 'The Blue Teapot' and the 'Arts Alive' course.

However, she is obviously talented in sport, to have been selected to represent Ireland for the second time this year in shot put and walking, with the first being in the European Special Olympic Games in Antwerp 2014, where she participated in boccee and won a silver medal for the country.

After winning both a silver and a gold medal at the National Games held in Dublin in June 2018, Katie was selected to represent her country in the World Olympic Games in Abu Dhabi, alongside over 7,000 fellow Olympians from 170 participating countries, including 90 other Irish athletes. She competed in the 400m walk, as well as the shotput in the largest sporting and humanitarian event of the year.

Katie has had a huge network of support around her throughout her life. Her family, friends and schoolmates have all been valuable



Katie at the launch of team Ireland

sources of aid and assistance over the years. None more so than the Mountbellew Tigers, however. The club is a Special Olympics athletics club, of which she has been a member of since 1999.

Having had a massive interest in sport all her life, she never ignored other activities to focus on just one, and she has participated in a myriad of different sports over the years, such as horse-riding, swimming, basketball and golfing. In recent years however, Katie has decided to focus on the shotput event, as well as walking.

Katie has met many famous athletes in recent year, such as professional rugby players and Ireland internationals Devin Toner, Cian Healy and Rob Kearney. Not only that, but she also met Joe Canning recently at the Ploughing Championships. None of these athletes have inspired her as much as her peers competing in the Special Olympics. These athletes, alongside her own family, have been her sources of inspiration in competing. Her parents, Mary and Billy, her brother Justyn, her sister Ciara and her partner Shane all made the journey over to Abu Dhabi to watch Katie represent Ireland.

Before setting off for the United Arab Emirates, Katie held a very successful coffee morning in Gullane's Hotel which raised funds in aid of the Special Olympics. To help with this, local schools also held non-uniform days, as well as various breakfast mornings. In all, Katie raised over €3,000 for the Special Olympics with the help and generosity of the local community.

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CONNACHT INDOORS SEES MANY ATHLETES COMPETE

The Ballinasloe club was well represented at the Connacht Indoors Athletic Championships held in AIT recently, with many members competing across all age grades and codes on the day.



Caoimhe Kilkenny (left) being presented with her medal finishing in 3rd position in the girls u14 60m at AIT.

In the girls under-12 60m race, Sinead Greene finished strong in 6th position out of 76 runners. Sinead also competed in the 600m, placing 17th overall. Eva Ruane represented the girls' under-13 in both the 60m and 600m, finishing in 11th position in her 600m race.



Attending Connacht Indoors at AIT L-R: Aaron Hogan, Daniel Mooney, Keelan Kelly, Adam Doran, Eva Ruane, Sinead Greene.

The under-13 boys' Relay Team included Aaron Hogan, Adam Doran, Keelan Kelly and Daniel Mooney. All boys also competed in the under-13 60m, with Daniel taking 11th place. Aaron Hogan and Keelan Kelly ran the boys 600m and also competed in the Shot Put, while Adam Doran took on the long jump.

Caoimhe Kilkenny will go on to represent the club in the All-Ireland Finals, having taken 3rd place in the girls' under-14 60m. She also ran the girls 800m race, finishing in 14th position.

In the boys' under-16 60m race, Cailum Lionel sprinted to finish in 5th position overall. Martin Keane also represented the club in the Masters Men Shot Put.



Sinead Greene and Eva Ruane attending the Connacht Indoors at AIT.



Boys u13 Relay Team Aaron Hogan, Daniel Mooney, Keelan Kelly and Adam Doran attending Connacht Indoors at AIT.

BY DONOGH MOORE

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BALLINASLOE RFC ENJOY GOLDEN FEW WEEKS

The club have had a welcome period of success with wins in all age categories and heroics from international players in both men's and women's rugby.

The under 14 Boys, and the under 14 Girls both saw teams from Galwegians RFC off, with the boys coming out victorious in their Plate quarter final, and the girls doing the same in their Plate semi-final. The under 18.5 boys team beat Ballina RFC by a score of 25 - 10 in their Cup quarter final, and the Senior men's beat Corrib RFC 23 - 15 also.

The Sportsground was home for two Girls' Connacht Cup Finals recently, with local players contesting both the under 16 and the under 18 titles. The under 16 team faced off against the combined forces of Portumna/Loughrea, and Ballinasloe were rewarded after periods of sustained pressure, eventually winning out 22-0. This win capped an undefeated season for these girls, having already won the under 16 League Title a few weeks ago. These girls were mentored by the management team of Dermot Frehill, Noel Gavin, Mike McCann, Mark Harrigan, Annmarie McCann and Sinéad Manning.

The under 18s match saw the girls meet Westport RFC just a week after they had met previously in the under 18 League Final, a game which saw the local girls reign victorious. After taking an early lead, Ballinasloe had to contend with Westport fighting back and levelling the score at 12-12. It was after this however, that the local girls really hit their stride, as they overpowered the Mayo team to finish the game with a score of 50 points to 24.

The girls are a testament to their management team, who have brought them up through the grades for the last six years. Emily said: "I'd like to thank our trainers and helpers this year: Stephen Reilly, Gearoid Finneran, Dermot Tierney, Ann Conlon, Rita O'Hara, Andrew Mannion, Fionnuala Reilly and Tommy Grehan. But, I always have to give a special thanks to Declan Murphy. Declan was the main campaigner for girls rugby to start all the way back in 2013, and women's rugby in the club has been striving every day since then. If it wasn't for Declan, women's rugby may have never started up in Ballinasloe, and no one would have known the huge potential we had."

Both teams were cheered on by a huge

Ballinasloe contingent of family and loyal followers led by Ballinasloe RFC President Tom Horkan, with cups and medals presented by Connacht Rugby President Mossy Moran.

Garbally College were recently victorious also, as both of their Senior and Junior Cup teams overcame their Roscommon CBS counterparts in a pair of thrilling Connacht Senior and Junior Cup title deciders. The finals, also held in the Sportsground, saw the local college take home their 47th Senior Cup title out of 93 years of the competition running. This only



Beibhinn Parsons scoring her try



U18s celebrating their Connacht Cup Win



Colm Reilly scoring his try, and celebrating with teammates.

BALLINASLOE POWERLIFTER

BY KEN KELLY

A 21-year-old Ballinasloe man is hopeful of All-Ireland success when he contests the National Power Lifting championships, even hoping to take home three titles. For Tristan McDonagh from Hymany Park it would be a great achievement after only three years in the sport.

Tristan joined the local gym in 2016 and started strength training. "Power lifting is a sport where a person attempts the maximum weight they can lift for Squat Bench and Deadlift" he explained. Later that year he won a charity organised event which encouraged him to train harder for the Irish Federation Nationals Meets. Competing in the 74kg class, he was placed first but in October 2017 he sustained a hand injury which curtailed his training.

However he bounced back last year, following several months of dedicated training, to record a number of successes. These achievements qualified him for the 2019 national IPF finals where "the best of the best would compete." Here he finished third in the 66kg class which has encouraged him to contest three different grades in



the forthcoming National Championships and hopefully bring back the first-ever All-Ireland Power Lifting title to Ballinasloe.

further the lead they have as the most successful team in the competition, as Coláiste Iognáid trails behind them in second place, with a total of 14 titles.

Meanwhile local NUIG Commerce student and Connacht Academy member Colm Reilly was hailed a hero all around when he secured a late victory for the Irish under 20s against Wales recently. Coming on from the bench in the dying minutes of the game, Colm managed to lift his team's spirits, with a breakaway try in the 71st minute.

The individual effort rallied the team, and they managed to hold on to become only

the second Irish under 20s team to win the Grand Slam, after the 2007 team which saw stars such as Keith Earls, Felix Jones and Sean O'Brien progress onto provincial and subsequently international fame. When asked about his favourite moment of the campaign, Colm really only had one pick: "The best memory was definitely the final grand slam game against Wales and celebrating with my teammates afterwards." He cited many trainers over the years as having been integral in his development as a player. He said: "I'd like to thank Gerry Kelly, Kevin Tierney, Mike Devine, Noel Mannion, Ronan Flanagan, Damien Feeney and Liam Carroll who all coached me either through Garbally College or Ballinasloe R.F.C."

As the season draws to a close there certainly is a lot to look forward to at Ballinasloe RFC including the completion and official opening of our new 3G Astroturf facility. For more information about the club's upcoming fixtures and results, see their Facebook page at Ballinasloe Rugby Club.

Ballinasloe's Beibhinn Parsons was the only try scorer in the Ireland Wales Senior Ladies team recently!



GARBALLY SENIOR RUGBY SQUAD

Back L to R: Padraig Flanagan, John Claffey, Mark Mitchell, Jack Dempsey, Shea Hennessy, Saul O'Carroll, Jack Ryan, Seamus Egan, Fergus Finneran, Shane Jennings, Patrick Grehan, Padraig Galvin, Conor Goode, Cormac Finn, Jack Noone, Robbie Carry.

Front L to R: Cian Treacy, Kyle Blackweir, Ben Daly, James Carry, Tom Fitzpatrick, Oisín McCormack, Cathal Dolan, Sean Horkan, Stephen Mannion, Matthew Devine, Jamie Curley, Odhrán Dooley, Brian Feeney, Joey Carry, Matthew Kelly.

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GAA CLUB GEAR UP FOR NEW SEASON BY DONOGH MOORE

Ballinasloe GAA Club had a very busy 2018. Despite the loss to Limerick in the All-Ireland Hurling Senior Final last August, the club members involved with the County Minor team were successful on the day and Shane Jennings from Deerpark, who lined out at full back, winning the prestigious Man of the Match award.



Padraig Fahy, Chairperson of the Ladies Committee with Roisin Fahy, Hannah Gullane, Jemma Ward, Aisling Brannelly and Club Chairperson Paul Madden at the LGFA All Stars Awards.

Three club footballers, Oisín McCormack, Odhrán Dooley and Cian Reynolds were on the Galway Under 17 panel that went on to contest the All-Ireland Minor Final in September.



Odhrán Dooley, Oisín McCormack and Cian Reynolds who were on the Galway U17 Team

No less than four of the club's Junior C lady Footballers, Roisin Fahy, Hannah Gullane, Jemma Ward and Aisling Brannelly made it on to the Co. Galway Junior C All Stars Team with Jemma Ward, at just 15 years old winning the Junior C player of the Year. Another of our Lady Footballers, Amy-Louise Dempsey, was awarded a College All Star after lining out for Athlone IT.

The club have now joined up with ClubForce, and so anyone can now register online by going on to the website - ballinasloe.gaa.ie and following the 'Register now' link. Training has now recommenced at all age levels for the 2019 season, as the new season gets underway.

New officers have been elected at their Spring AGM, and can be contacted as follows: Paul Madden is Ballinasloe GAA's new Chairperson, and can be reached at (087) 9182559. Gerry Seale

is the Secretary, (087) 237 6976, Mark Ward was elected as Club Treasurer (087) 258 7058. Colm Brown is the new club PRO (087) 915 1748. Janice O'Grady is the club's new Child Protection Officer, Pat O'Sullivan is the County Board Delegate and Senior Chairperson, Diane Dolan is the Senior Secretary, Ruairi O'Hanlon is the Juvenile Chairperson, Breda Cleary is the Juvenile Secretary, Padraig Fahy is the Ladies' Chairperson and Mairead Mitchell is the new Ladies' Secretary.

The club has some important dates to note coming up in the calendar - their Easter Training Camp will take place from April 23rd to April 26th, and will involve two days of hurling, and two days of football. National Feile Weekend will take place from the 29th to 30th June.

Finally, the club's Cúl Camps will run as follows: Football will take place from July 1st to July 5th, and Hurling will commence July 8th through to the 12th. The Club's weekly Bingo continues every Tuesday Night at the Emerald Ballroom at 8 o'clock.

Chair Paul Madden stated "As with all voluntary organisations, we welcome all the help and support from parents/guardians and if anyone wishes to offer their help, please contact any of the above officers, in the coming weeks, months ahead".

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UNDERAGE TALENT DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES AT TOWN F.C.

BY DONOGH MOORE

Ballinasloe Town AFC have been having a vibrant period of success with the development of their underage players. Oisín Duffy and Jordan Carr, both former youth players in the club, were called in to the Athlone Town senior squad for their recent League of Ireland game against Bray Wanderers.

Cameron Keighrey has recently made the move from Ballinasloe Town AFC to Galway United, where he will play with their under 13 team. United were incredibly interested in the young player's talent, and were eager to sign him into their ranks. Cameron went on to make his SSE Airtricity under 13 League debut, when he started against Cobh Ramblers in the first-ever league game played by Galway United.

Under 18 players Cian Reynolds, Cian Naughton and Shane Carrig all made the step up from underage to senior level recently, when they made their first team debuts in the Raftery's Oakland Hotel Roscommon & District Football League Premier Division.

The boys made their debut away to Ballymoe FC, which ended in a scoreless draw.

This recent result leaves Town AFC sitting at fifth in the league table, trailing leaders St. Peter's FC, of Newtown, Co. Westmeath, by 33 points to 27. This extends to the club's current form of having failed to win a game in the last four league matches. The senior team have also reached the quarter final of the Joe's Bar RDFL Challenge Cup recently, with a strong 3-0 victory over Cam Celtic in the last 16.

The club's B team are currently sitting at eighth, which is second to last in the Norio's Takeaway RDFL Division One Table. They trail the leaders, Moylough '79 by 32 points to 8. The leaders also have two



Cameron Keighrey, who recently signed from Ballinasloe Town AFC to Galway United FC.



James Kinsella (Captain Ballinasloe Town B), with Match Official and Captain Killala FC.

games in hand. The club's under 13/14 Flyers team are currently leading the Combi league as the end of the season draws closer. The team, managed by Mickey Walsh and Noel Lyons, have worked their way to the top of the table of a very competitive season in this league.

The club run an Academy every Wednesday evening for younger kids to get a chance to train and enjoy the sport. Training sessions have seen numbers rise as high as 60 children attending, and to accommodate these numbers various volunteers give their time to help train these kids. This voluntary coaching team consists of Tony Coyne, Katie O'Connor, Shane Egan, Breda Cleary, Darrell Finn, Warren Coyne, Luke Caulfield, Cait Cleary, Gary Fuery, Mikey Kelly, Sonya Coyne, Wayne Braithwaite and Joby Kelly.

The club was recently awarded a grant of €2,500 from the local Credit Union. They have also made an application to the Department of Sport for a grant which will go towards the next stage of the club's development at the Curragh grounds. Any update the club receives will be found on the Club's Facebook page, alongside all results, upcoming fixtures, important dates in the club's calendar and more. The club can be found on Facebook at: Ballinasloe Town AFC.



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JOHNNIE RIDDELL MEMORIAL SNOOKER AND BILLIARDS FINALS RESULTS

Ballinasloe Social Club saw two finals played recently in Snooker and Billiards. Christy Keighery beat Gerry Daly by two frames to one on the Snooker Final Cup, and Titch Riddell defeated Colm Keighery in the Billiards Final Cup.

Both of these finals were very close, going down to the final frame. In the Snooker Final, Gerry Daly took an early lead, although Keighery found his form and went on to win the final two frames, along with the cup.

The Billiards Cup Final again saw Titch Riddell take an early lead, Keighery fought back but as the game came to a close, Titch's years of experience stood to him, and he went on to clinch the final.

Johnny Riddell was a lifelong member of the local club and was a dual player, winning county titles in both Snooker and Billiards. He rarely missed a night in the club, and Barry O'Connor, PRO for the Ballinasloe Social club said "I think Johnny would have been proud of the two finals played in his memory. He would also have been proud to see thirty-two players in the competition. Johnny was a legend of the club as well as a gentleman to everyone involved, throughout his time serving in every office of the club over the years."

The Johnny Riddell Memorial Snooker and Billiards Finals will be an annual competition in the club's calendar going forward. The Riddell family supported the club in launching this inaugural competition, as well as putting up two cups and other prizes in their father's memory.



Names L-R: Paul Keighery, Eugene Riddell, Colm Keighery, Jennifer Riddell, Mike Riddell, Nigel Burke, Titch Riddell, Joey Walsh, Thomas O'Connor, Sean Riddell, Christy Keighery, Declan Colohan, Bosco Riddell, Gerry Daly, Joseph Kelly.

NATIONAL IKKI KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR NEW INN

An important date in the Itosu-kai Karatedo Ireland's (IKKI) national karate calendar is the annual black belt ranking. Selections for such an event are based on the level of expertise and dedication to the sport demonstrated by athletes over time. Shodan is 1st Dan degree, and Nidan is 2nd.

IKKI Chief instructor Leo Mulvany, commented that all students performed excellently with great showcases on the day and were worthy of their new ranks. The official certificates and belts will follow from Soke Sadaaki Sakagami, President of Itosu-kai Japan and will be presented on the 7th April in New Inn at the IKKI National Karate Championships.

Club and squad competitors (kata & kumite) have competed in national and international competitions over the past year with magnificent performances and many medals won. IKKI coaches have also been performing well, with some achieving National and International coaching and refereeing qualifications.

IKKI National squad coaches, Marie Dolphin (kata) and Kevin Casey (kumite) have worked hard over the past year alongside their assistant coaches, Claire Harte, John and Shane Dolphin, and Donal Monahan.

Looking ahead, there's great excitement with upcoming events in April and May; International competitions in Guadalajara, Spain, The European Games, Minsk, Belarus (Olympic qualification), IKKI National Karate Championships and an International Karate Seminar in Stockholm, Sweden. The IKKI association wishes all involved the best for the coaches and competitors.

For general queries, email the IKKI Secretary/PRO, Claire Harte at galwaydojo@gmail.com or visit www.ikki.ie



Standing, L-R: Evan Donelan (Nidan), Wojciech Jurasz (Shodan), Aaron Fortune (Shodan), Aoife O'Grady (Nidan), Eimear Porter (Nidan), April Curran (Nidan), Faye Mulvany (Nidan), Sean Power (Shodan), Martin Coen (Shodan), Niall Costello (Nidan) & Nathan Donelan (Nidan). Seated, L-R, IKKI Ranking Panel: Kevin Casey, Claire Harte, Tony Dolphin, Leo Mulvany, Marie Dolphin, John Dolphin & Donal Monahan.

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Some of the fifty volunteer workers pictured l-r Danny Farrelly, John Rogers, Margaret Killeen, Michael Kelly, Dermot O'Mahoney, Martin Lyons, Pakie Coleman, Mike Gormally, Gerry Kenny, Michael Lynch, Willie Nevin, Andy Fenton, Michael Ward Captain, Frank Leonard, Tess Raftery, Kevin Ryan, Aiden Dooley, Tommy Finnerty, Des Harney, Kazimierz Cisowski and Johnny Coughlan.



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The New Office/Meeting Room/Store.

Up to a few years ago it was costing Ballinasloe Golf Club €230,000 per year to maintain the course. The main costs were the repair/maintenance/finance of machinery, wages, fertilizers, chemicals, machinery hire and the use of outside agencies. With golf declining in popularity and rising costs, Ballinasloe like all other clubs in Ireland were finding it hard to meet financial demands.

Rather than let the high standard and presentation of the course decline members volunteered their services. These volunteer members worked with the course staff on a weekly basis and have greatly reduced running costs in the club. The work they do includes driving a tractor with gang mower to cut long grass, maintenance of machinery, spreading and brushing sand on the greens every few months, bunkers are raked and weeds removed, fences repaired & painted, shrubberies, cleaning drains, hedges and trees are maintained to name but just a few jobs undertaken by the male members of the club. The female

members also volunteer their services by decorating, cleaning, painting and maintaining flower beds around the clubhouse. It has been estimated that the work on the course undertaken by the "club volunteers" saves the club in excess of €70,000 per year.

When Club Captain Michael Ward decided to convert the old machinery shed building into a new office, meeting room, store and buggy area almost fifty club members again volunteered their services and financial assistance. Over the last few months the trades, services and machinery of volunteer members (block layers, plasterers, carpenters, roofers, electricians, welders, painters etc.) came to the fore to complete the renovation on time for the "Captains Drive In" on the 30th March at minimal cost to the club. Thanks to the "club spirit" of the members, Ballinasloe Golf Club has a well maintained course, clubhouse, new office, meeting room and buggy area.

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FIFTY YEARS OF HURLING IN KILTORMER

BY KEN KELLY



Kiltormer Hurling Club will celebrate their Golden Anniversary this June with a memorable weekend of celebrations. And for the 432 players who have worn the blue and white, in all grades, over the past fifty years, it will be a historic reunion.

Winning the All-Ireland Club Championship in 1992 was surely their greatest success which has now been immortalised by the naming of an Aeroplane in South America in their honour, to commemorate their great win. Many great players have contributed to the Kiltormer cause down through the years since they amalgamated with Clontuskert including the great Conor Hayes who captained Galway to All-Ireland glory in 1987 and 1988.

The celebrations get under way on Friday, 21st June with Mass in the Sports Complex, followed by various activities with special celebrities and musical entertainment. On Saturday there will be a coaching session followed by a senior hurling challenge match. In the evening there will be a full sit-down Gala Dinner, in the Sports Centre, with The High Kings providing the entertainment. It promises to be a nostalgic night, with former players coming from many continents to renew old acquaintances.

Former star Andy Fenton said "Every effort is being made to contact each of the 432 players who represented the club in various grades, hoping they can make the trip for the special occasion. If anybody has any old photos, mementos or souvenirs of the club's games over the past half century I would appreciate the loan of them for the June weekend." Andy can be contacted on 086 8170358 for more information.

MOORE SCOUTS COMPLETE FIRST AID TRAINING

Local scout members recently attended and passed their Basic Life Support and CPR first aid course, which was delivered at Moore Hall by the members of Education Training Quality Assurance Solutions, and attended by fifteen scouts, aged between twelve and sixteen.

This is a substantial qualification for people so young. These scout members are now qualified in CPR (both Adult and Paediatric), Defibrillator Use (both Adult and Paediatric), and can deal with Choking, Stroke, Seizures, Burns, Bleeding, Convulsions, Shock and Anaphylaxis.

The scout members have also attained their Stage 6 Emergencies Badge. The journey to achieving this badge began back when the group first joined the scouts, starting as a Beaver or a Cub.

As well as undertaking lifesaving badges, the scouts have also worked

in conjunction with Ballinasloe Tidy Towns in the past, having cleaned up the local Marina as part of National Spring Week for the last two years.

The Scouts meet every Monday night in Moore Hall. Their youth members are from 12 to 16, and after that they progress on to be venture scouts.

The Moore Scouts will also be holding a 'duck race' on Easter Monday, on the River Suck. The funds raised from this event will go towards the cost of the Scouts' annual trip over to Scotland, which will take place in July.



Ronan O'Grady, Katie Harrison, Nicola Curley, Katie Murray, Nathan Staples

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NUTFIELD CROSS on the Ballinasloe-Kilconnell road, is undergoing major safety works following a number of fatal and near-fatal accidents at the junction. Extra land has been acquired from two landowners, enabling Galway Co. Council to provide a "staggered" road crossing from the Aughrim to Ahascragh roads. The works are expected to cost in the region of €250,000 and should be completed shortly.

CLONTUSKERT FARMER Mark Melvin, who died on 23rd September 2017, left €1,535,340 in his will. Former Galway Football team sponsor, Tommy Varden of Kilcloghans, Tuam, who passed away on 24th April last year, left €2,307,102 in his will.

BALLINASLOE RAILWAY STATION was narrowly beaten by Sligo in this year's Iarnród Éireann Best Station Awards in the Connacht Region. The Ballinasloe station was very proud to have made it into the last three in Connacht this year according to Station Manager John Burke.

BALLYMACWARD SOCIAL CLUB are planning their annual outing this year to Donegal, from 16th to 19th September. Bookings can be made by contacting Anne (087 2405168).

AHASCRAUGH'S HUSBAND AND WIFE, Joe and Anne Burke, have been elected Captains of the Mountbellew Golf Club. Joe is captain of the Men's club while his wife is the Lady captain.

MEELICK WEIR which was badly damaged by flooding in 2009 and 2015 is to undergo a €3.2million refurbishment.

The 300-metre bridge on the Shannon, near Eyrecourt, will link up Meelick in Galway with Lusmagh in Offaly when completed.

OLLIE DOOLEY had his first-ever Hole-in-one at the Ballinasloe Golf Club when he aced the par-3 17th hole. The former Roscommon footballer said it was his one ambition he wanted to achieve on any golf course.

THE EAST GALWAY HUNT will hold its annual Point-to-Point on Sunday, 5th May, at Stowlin, Eyrecourt. First of the six races gets under way at 2 pm while there will be Cake Stands, Food Stalls and a Bouncing Castle on the grounds.

CIARAN ARNOLD is the new Captain of the Millennium Golf Society. President Tony Dolphin, Treasurer Pat Harney and Secretary Leo Mulvaney were all re-elected at the AGM. The Society have the first of their outings to Doonbeg on Thursday 4th April. Bookings can be made by contacting Leo on 087 4159858.

MICHAEL COOKE who passed away at his home in Laytown, Co. Meath was a former teacher at St. Grellan's NS in Ballinasloe. A native of Gort, he played the part of "The Black Man from the Mountain, Thomasheen Sean Rua" the matchmaker, when Relays Drama Group staged their first play "Sive" sixty years ago. Relays presented the John B. Keane blockbuster in each of the four provinces where the title role was played by Patty McGuire and the producer was the late Fr. Kevin Ryle.



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TAUGHMACONNELL NATIVE SPEARHEADING RATHCROGHAN VISITOR CENTRE



Recently married, Daniel Curley of Taughmaconell has found himself in a whirlwind of innovative heritage site and tourism facility development, in Rathcroghan Visitor Centre, Tulsk Co. Roscommon.

Son of Danny Curley, recently retired postal worker and Josephine Curley (Judge, Brackernagh) who works in

Dubarry, Daniel had his interest in history kindled since he took honours in the subject in Garbally under the then History Maître Stephen O'Reilly and Pat Johnston.

He describes his fervent love for ancient and medieval Irish History in simple terms of being "mad about every that happened here before the gun". His accomplished academic route through NUI Galway saw him immerse himself in his BA in History, and his MA in Medieval Irish Studies - which featured a study of local ruins, Dundonnell Castle, potentially in use from the 7th Century through to the seventeenth.

Having tried the teaching route post his studies, he applied for a post relatively local - to a Pobal-funded community initiative in Tulsk as Education Officer with the Visitor Centre in 2013. At the time, it was a small scale community enterprise with a manager and 3 crew and some 3,500 service users per annum.

In 2014, the Managers position fell vacant and he applied for the post and began an upwards trajectory of growth and development that is unprecedented in Community-led visitor development.

In four years, he has spearheaded the development of the only Annual Community Archaeology Conference in the country, which is a sellout and has a waiting list! Service users and visitor numbers have risen to 19,000 in 2018 and he has a team of 7 staff, 3 RSS, 2 Tús and some Solas Trainees on site. Turnover has grown from €40,000 in 2013 to €180,000 by the end of 2018.

Rathcroghan, a UNESCO-nominated heritage site - is the oldest and largest unexcavated Royal Complex in Europe, covering a sprawling site of 45 landowners, over 240 archaeological sites and 60 national monuments protected by the Office of Public Works.

It is the Royal Seat of the Iron Age and medieval Kings of Connacht and it is from here that Queen Meabh (Maeve) had her home and the origin point for our National Epic "An Táin Bó Cuaile", all this just under 60 kms away !!

The Centre is owned, managed and run by the Community through Daniel, while the majority of the site is owned by farming landowners, with 70 acres owned by the OPW. "It's interesting watching the growth in visitors, remember that we have been here for some time - nearly 3500 BC; so the Hidden Heartlands is only playing catch up. But we are getting a lot of second time visitors, fascinated by Ireland's past and searching for roots - American, Canadian, and Australian typically. Our Coach tours have grown significantly but we are nowhere near the 310,000 visitors a year that Clonmacnoise is at but getting there", states Daniel.

Key to the continuing success story has been the award of the first ever European Innovation Partnership in archaeological landscape preservation, sustainable farming and community development

which sees some €984,000 over three years being pumped into the area for the farming community, along with the employment of a dedicated project staff, adding to the positivity surrounding this rural area of the west of Ireland.

"The Board and I am very fortunate that we have hands on engagement and backing of Roscommon County Council, their Tourism Officer Eimear Dowd, and Heritage Officer Nollaig Feeney; Cultural Heritage is being championed in this county and we will reap jobs and economic investment from it" notes Daniel.

He is aghast that the lessons of Clonmacnoise or Tulsk, which are very replicable have not been adopted in East Galway with the Aughrim Interpretive Centre, the Abbeys of Clonfert, Clontuskert and Killconnell around Ballinasloe. "Heritage is obviously not valued as an economic driver on the Western bank of the Suck, I am personally very disappointed at the inaction of the authorities to promote and develop the key historical sites and community heritage tourism that seems to working well elsewhere", argues Daniel.

Not content with resting on his laurels, Daniel is completing a PHD backed by the Irish Research Council on the O'Kellys of Uí Maine (Hymany) - effectively the Starks of the Suck Valley in medieval times!

To this end he is urgently seeking information on the O'Kelly Clan from the 8th to the 17th Century especially on Forts, Wells, Burial Grounds, Bridges, Battle sites or such like and would really like to know if anyone at all, local or elsewhere know where St. Grellan's Crozier ever ended up!

When not playing soccer for his local Skyvalley Rovers, he can be found singing a few tunes or else enjoying the company of his new bride - Danielle, who is a nurse from nearby Ballinamore Bridge.

For help with the Thesis on the O'Kellys - drop him an email at info@rathcroghan.ie



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WALKS & TRAILS – STROLLING IN LOCAL NATURE

A meeting up of like-minded people who enjoy walking for fun, and regularly walk local bogs and trails; to introduce and bring awareness of these fantastic resources on our doorstep to the local and visiting community alike, has created the Ballinasloe Walks and Trails Group.

Using Facebook and whats app - walks and trails are highlighted to enable and invite people to join up on these walks, which are led by the volunteers of varying lengths and times every 2 weeks approx. on either Saturday or Sunday mornings from Poolboy at the Grand Canal.

The aim is to bring awareness to people of the beautiful unique natural habitat and wetlands on our doorstep, and encourage people to protect and use them, heritage intertwined with habitat and this pathway is unique allowing people to explore, discover, appreciate and investigate further.

They are inviting people of all ages, and walking ability as walking in nature promotes the spirit of physical, mental, emotional wellbeing and health. There are no charges currently. Register your interest on Ballinasloe Walks and Trails Facebook page.

Upcoming Walks: Good Friday - Ballinasloe to Shannonbridge, Easter Monday - local Poolboy, Grand Canal and bog wall, May Bank Holiday - Route TBA.



LAND, SEA AND MEMORY

An Exhibition of paintings by West of Ireland Artist, Pam Dolan.

Pam Dolan, born and reared in Crossmolina Co Mayo, is a contemporary visual artist, living and working in Galway. Having lived and hosted her own exhibitions in Australia for over two years, Pam went on to teach Arts and Crafts at second level, until taking a career break in 2016.

Pam also had a very successful and critically acclaimed solo exhibition, titled "Boglands, A New Cut" at the Town Hall in Galway

late last year. She has also shown in the RDS at Art Source.

Inspired by the rugged West of Ireland and the Wild Atlantic Way, she is now holding an exhibition titled "Land, Sea and Memory" in the Church Gallery, Ballinasloe, which will run from Monday April 8th until Friday April 26th, and will be launched by Josephine Vahey at 6:30pm on Tuesday April 9th.



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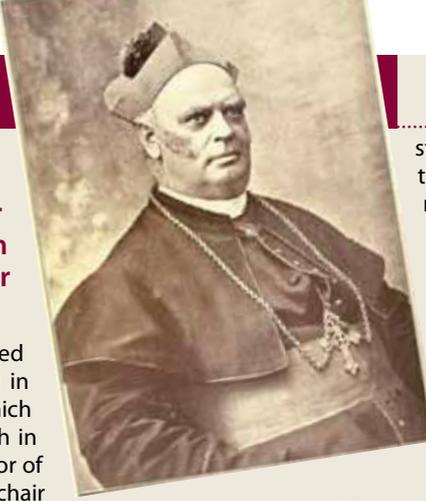
ARCHBISHOP HEALY

He was bishop of Clonfert and therefore ex officio parish priest of Ballinasloe. By far the most colourful prelate to rule the See of Brendan over the past two hundred years, John Healy was born in Ballinacorney, County Sligo, on 14th November 1842 to parents who were both schoolteachers.

After secondary education in Summerhill College, he entered Maynooth where he was ordained for the diocese of Elphin in 1867. A brief stint of teaching in Summerhill ensued, after which he served successively as curate in Ballygar and Grange, both in County Galway. Following closely on his appointment as rector of St. Asaph's classical school in Elphin, he went on to occupy the chair of theology at Maynooth in 1879.

He moved to Portumna in 1884 when he became coadjutor with right of succession to Patrick Duggan, the ailing bishop of Clonfert. Apparently in his youth Healy had been suspected of holding revolutionary nationalist views, but by now he was an inveterate conservative, a stout upholder of the union with Britain. Though guardedly approving of the idea of Home Rule, he vigorously opposed the tactics of the Land League and succeeded in making himself so unpopular with agrarian agitators that he narrowly escaped assassination when a bullet was fired through his bedroom window as he prepared to retire for the night. Later he was to prove an enthusiastic supporter of recruitment to the British armed forces during the Great War, declaring: "We owe Belgium a debt that can never be repaid in full. Now is the time to repay it in part, and in this diocese we shall not fail to do our own duty." Duggan's political philosophy could not have been more antagonistic, thus setting the scene for a fraught relationship that continued up the latter's death in 1896.

Healy took up residence at Mount Bernard, Ballymacward, in 1891, a year after assuming the administration from Duggan who was becoming increasingly incapacitated. While there, to use a phrase current at the time, he "killed his own meat", and had the priests of the parish to dinner every Sunday. His contempt for ascetics was undisguised. Few things pleased him more than a dinner of many courses, rounded off with several brandies and a flavoursome cigar. "Hospitality," he often said, "was one of the episcopal virtues recommended by St. Paul who was good enough to advise Timothy to take a little wine for his



BY BARRY LALLY

stomach's sake. I'd like to know what those good teetotallers I see around me have to say to that." A story is told of how he undermined the efforts of a team of visiting preachers who had spent a week exercising their oratorical skills to persuade a congregation to embrace the ideal of total abstinence from alcohol. In the course of the concluding ceremonies of the retreat, Healy announced from the pulpit that in his considered opinion every man was entitled to drink three pints of Guinness after his day's work.

During his time in Clonfert it was his custom to preach in Ballinasloe one Sunday every month and to preside at the Asylum Board next day. He was instrumental in the construction of the presbytery in Dunlo Street, as well as the commencement of work on Loughrea cathedral. In 1902 he oversaw the purchase of The Pines in Creagh for use as a diocesan seminary.

On his translation to the archbishopric of Tuam in 1903 he was reported as saying: "I leave Clonfert with great reluctance, because I had there a loyal and obedient clergy, who never gave me any trouble, but always obeyed me with the utmost docility and reverence." As archbishop, one of his first acts was to revive the annual Croagh Patrick pilgrimage, which his predecessor had tried to suppress. Healy initiated the restored event by ascending the sacred mountain on horseback. He built a new episcopal residence for himself in Tuam and bought a seaside house in Clifden. Healy also owned a yacht but was an inept sailor, who, though a strong swimmer, almost drowned on two occasions.

The antiquities of Ireland were amongst his lifelong interests, and he became a frequent contributor on the subject to learned journals. In 1890 he published his magnum opus, "Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars", employing students in the diocesan seminary as proof readers by offering a sixpence reward for each error detected. He had taught himself to read Old Irish, but never mastered the modern vernacular, and was opposed to the inclusion of Irish as a compulsory matriculation subject for the new National University of Ireland in 1909.



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Healy was tall and fair-haired, with a ruddy complexion. Though sturdily built, he was inclined to waddle in his gait. For recreation he roamed the woods and bogs with dog and gun. Inordinately fond of hunting, he would drop whatever he was doing on hearing that a chase was in progress and rush outside to join in pursuit of the quarry.

A bully not averse to the use of firearms, he once shot a pig that had the misfortune to wander into his garden from a neighbouring farm. On another occasion, on the island of Inishmurray off the Sligo coast, he rounded up a group of women, whose menfolk were all drunk and incapable, and compelled them at gunpoint to row him to the mainland in the teeth of a storm at sea. Members of his household had reason to tremble at the prospect of incurring His Grace's displeasure, since

any perceived neglect of duty was sure to draw down a thunderous reprimand well laced with epithets of opprobrium.

The archbishop's health began to deteriorate in 1909, and in 1913 he suffered a stroke. By 1916 he had been diagnosed with dementia, two years before his death on 16th March 1918. Summing up his career, Patrick Maume, his most recent biographer, has written: "Healy's extreme conservatism has overshadowed his reputation; but in other respects he was the most representative voice of the increasingly confident, institution-building generation of Catholic clergy that consolidated the post-famine 'devotional revolution'. He also represents the arrogant paternalism, intellectual sloppiness and contempt for alternative viewpoints that flawed this achievement."



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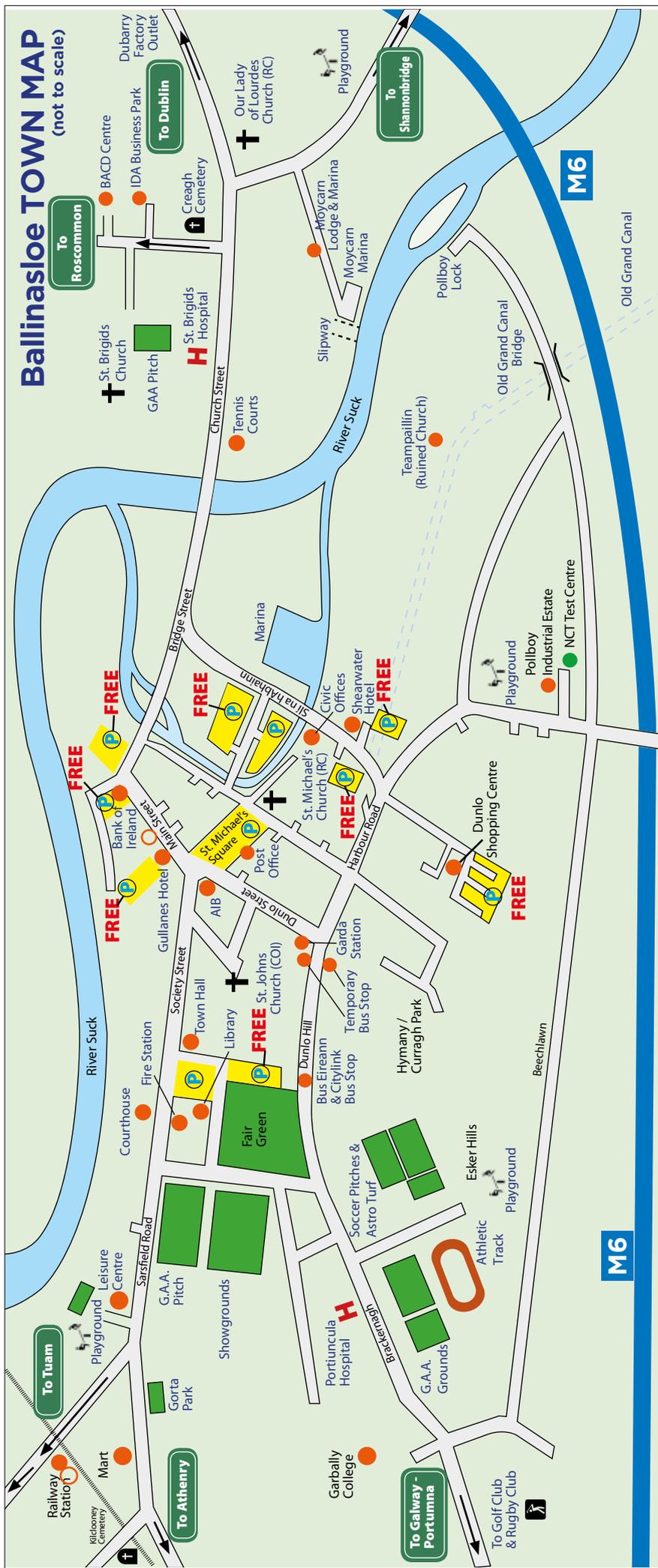
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Ballinasloe History Walk

1 – Start at the statue known as *The Man with the Horse*, where Main Street joins St. Michael's Square. From the crossing near the statue, continue by turning right onto Main Street. The prosperity of Ballinasloe in Georgian times can be seen in the scale and classical style of the buildings here. A fine group of four frontages stand across from the statue of The Man with the Horse. With shops and pubs on the ground floor for the most part, these Main Street premises have several floors above.

2 – Walking along Main Street, lift your eyes above the shop frontages for one of the town's characteristic sights. There are the Diocletian windows that grace several facades. They are from the years after 1805 when the 2nd Earl was in charge. A window of this sort is formed under a semi-circular arch with two upright divisions so that the whole opening is divided into three parts.

3 – As you stand at the meeting point of Bridge Street and Main Street, you will see the Victorian frontage of a commercial premises, originally the Masonic Hall. Next to it stands a classical looking, beautifully-crafted, early 19th century stone house, currently a guest house. Beside these is a tall, fine stone-fronted classical mansion, which is now the Bank of Ireland. It was originally the town mansion of the Lord of all of Ballinasloe, the Earl of Clancarty. A friend of king George IV, the Earl was one of the architects of the resistance to the emperor Napoleon. It could be said that he was the person to whom most credit is due for the layout, growth and architectural character of Ballinasloe as we see it today.

4 – At the end of Main Street, head along Bridge Street, then turn to the right to the pathway which runs to the riverscape where you can see channels flowing through the several arches of the long stone bridge over the river Suck, one of the town's most precious monuments. The Bridge has been in continuous use since the 16th century and its extension in 1754 prepared it structurally to carry even the heaviest juggernauts of today.

5 – Walk through to the far end of the park; you will approach St Michael's Church (1852-58) that stands in a commanding position over the Square. Its architect was J.J. McCarthy, a follower of Augustus Pugin (famed for other Neo-Gothic churches in Ireland) – and the design is said to have been revised by Pugin himself. Inside are many fine stained glass window. Of particular quality are those of St. Patrick and St. Rose of Lima, of 1925, by the renowned Dublin Stained glass artist, Harry Clarke and The Raising of the daughter of Jairus by Patrick Pollen, inserted in 1958.

6 – From St. Michael's Church now walk up St. Michael's Square back towards the Man with the Horse Statue. Take a left into Dunlo Street, an important street in the history of the town, which contains, together with other buildings of about the same date, the late-Georgian Garda Station. The Station is towards the far end of the street, on the right hand side. Also on this street, over Dolan's Electrical Shop, you can see another fine example of Diocletian windows.

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

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



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