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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 11 Issue 2: Jun '21 - Jul '21



Photo by Robert Riddell

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REAMHRA

Welcome to Volume 11 issue 2

Articles and Photos Welcome

NEXT ISSUE
Deadline July 12th

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by July 12th

CREDITS

EDITOR

Colm Croffy

REPORTER/

VIDEOGRAPHER

Jack Treacy

CONTRIBUTORS

Ken Kelly, Barry Lally, Willie Tully, Damian Mac Con Uladh and various other contributors

GRAPHIC DESIGN

KPW Ballinasloe

PRINT

KPW Print, Ballinasloe

PHOTOS

Robert Riddell
J&S Photos - jsphotos.ie
Evelyn Donellan
Michael S. Kelly
Gerry Devlin
Gerry Stronge

This is the 7th edition in a row that we have no events guide, planning events in a pandemic world is fraught – ask the parents of communicants or confirmation youngsters or indeed those who wish to hold a wedding or a drive in cinema.

Still we can see photos and welcome reports again of sports squads training, plans are afoot for club fundraisers, summer camps, walks, Golf and Tennis Open days; slowly and sequentially we can see as each week rolls by we are able to enjoy more possibilities.

Slowly and sequentially I suppose are the watchwords – no one wants to have the Indian tragedy visited upon us and let's recall that while the Media love to name variants according to their passport – the virus has no respect for what country it's in.

We can take heart from the open churches, more supporters for families at bereaved times, non-essential retail being back, people on sidewalks and pavements again, sports, gyms and folks not feeling guilty about a bit of chat – even if it is with a vaccinated person and socially distant.

And yet this new man-made virus of the Ransom attack on the HSE's IT system has thrown us ALL onto the melting slope of despair of sorts. Views on the solution are mixed but we have to feel for our frontline colleagues who have toiled in warlike conditions for over 16 months only to be thanked with having to deliver healthcare with pen and pencil.

Everyone has had a tough time since last Autumn, no one or no family or organisation is going to emerge from this calamity with out some impact and whilst we all make plans about the beaches, the cliffs, the rivers, the walks, the family barbeques and all the fun outdoor stuff

With Vaccinations proceeding at pace, most of the Media reports are now turning positive and other events making the headline news stories. We will gradually find out how individual habits have changed and for how long or will everything revert to the old ways, highly unlikely. There is opportunity here for East Galway / South Roscommon. More people are prepared to work locally, retail outlets have adopted to meet modern demands and we have all discovered little gems of walks and recreational options over the last past 18 months.

Over that time the Town enhancement scheme has been completed and with the support of Galway County Council and all shops are getting a facelift which will breathe a new lease of life into the town. Within Ballinasloe Life this month, you will read about several new businesses opening which is very positive.

We are a bit away from getting back to publishing our entertainment guide but as you will read all sporting organisations are back up and

that we wish to run off to do PLEASE have a think about ...

Those in our community who kept vital voluntary services and activities for young and old, who have had no break and are battle fatigued – might there be a few nights of the summer season or days or hours that you could offer to help out or learn the ropes so the fraught few might get some respite?

Not all heroes wear capes but some sterling service has been delivered over the past 16 months by wonderful volunteers in a variety of organisations in our community – we all had to re learn what is under our feet within 2km and 5km in the past few months – it does not run itself.

When is the last time you picked up someone else's rubbish at the side of a road, exercised a dog for an elder, helped with meals on wheels, drove for the Cancer patients, gave your time to teach our new immigrants how to read and write English, helped out a children's study breakfast, helped your neighbourhood association with grass cutting or flower planting ??? The list is huge of groups who need new people, new energy, new skills.

As we all re set our compass after the tempest can we try and keep in mind what could be assisted locally with a little of our time and energy.

Beir Bua

Le Gach De Ghui,
COLM CROFFY,
Editor.



running with numbers involved at record levels.

Retail is gradually re-opening and it is vital that they get our support. Your first port of call should always be to see if you can source your requirements in your home town as I cannot say often enough they are the Business who have been very financially generous to all forms of Community Organisations and Charities over the years.

While we are not "out of the Woods" yet, the future is looking much brighter and gives us the prospect of a much more interactive Summer ahead.

One final word of caution, we still need to adhere to the rules to avoid any setbacks and keep each other safe.

SEAMUS DUFFY,
Chairman Ballinasloe Area Community Development Limited.



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BEC
Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre
An initiative of Ballinasloe Area Community Development Ltd.

Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre,
Creagh, Ballinasloe. Co. Galway
T: 090 9646516 F: 090 9646517
E: info@ballinasloeenterprisecentre.ie
www.ballinasloeenterprisecentre.ie

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Dooleys' Bar and Grocery has been a prominent focal point pivoting the top of Dunlo St and Dunlo Hill where the row of Estate workers' cottages ends at the junction to Aonach behind the Mount.

This 1.8 acre site has now been acquired by Galway County Council to develop into 19 residential Units to ease accommodation waiting lists. Councillors have been briefed by the house consultants on final design, layout, look and feel of the new development as final plans are being drawn up for the Part 8 planning process due to commence over the summer months.

Cllr Dermot Connolly (SF) stated: "The design and architectural reports are still being looked at and I believe at the next Municipal meeting there will be a final update and sign off on that. We have put our input into the design and have specified that the new units must maintain the familiar Georgian look of the town, resembling the 19th century style of the town centre and ensuring it keeps a traditional provincial town look."

This development is anticipated to have 19 housing units, all Council owned and managed with no voluntary housing co-operative involved or private sales. Priority for the new housing units will be given to those who struggle with mobility particularly those who are elderly, as the Dunlo Hill setting will provide easy and safe access to the town centre for residents.

Councillor Connolly added: "In the Ballinasloe Municipal District alone I would not be too far off in saying that there would be over 600 people on the waiting list for housing. Every day we are getting phone

calls, emails, letters of enquiries from those on the housing list and their representative's asking about when they will receive the suitable housing they need.

"While there is no official timescale to the project, the Council is fully overseeing the project and they are looking at every method to ensure that this project is completed as efficiently, as cost effective and as quickly as possible. Once the designs come in and are approved we can move to give a proper timescale but I would be severely disappointed if there has not been significant works completed in the next 16 months" concluded Cllr Connolly.



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The draft County Development Plan (CDP) will be going out on public display soon for public submissions. After the intense engagement, robust discussions and several submissions to the CDP forward planners, Cllr Evelyn Parsons (Ind) was successful in having a specific motion passed unanimously at Galway County Council last month to have the Principle of Environmental Justice inserted and activated into the new County Development Plan 2022-2028.

All councillors throughout the county were in agreement and several spoke staunchly in favour of Cllr Parson's motion. Evelyn proposed an insertion under Environmental Protection and Waste Management headings of the adoption of the Principle of Environmental Justice defined as a fair distribution of environmental benefits and burdens, including the application of environmental policy, planning implementation and governance to be incorporated into the Co. Galway Development Plan 2022-2028.

Cllr Parsons noted: "The issue of Environmental discrimination is one that environmental justice measures should address with regard to the serial siting of old landfill, Superdump waste facilities in an area of heightened environmental sensitivity and/or community amenity importance close to residential communities."

She continued: "This is a principle which extends to the entire county but, it is particularly important that areas of heightened socio-economic deprivation indices should be protected from compounding environmental injustices and environmental discrimination and this principle of Environmental Justice should be reflected in planning policies and operations, in environmental decision making and implementation. Policy implementation and planning can stack the odds against attracting industry and investment to certain locations within the county and blight communities from attracting investment and high value job creation despite outstanding infrastructure, location, resources, skills and natural environmental beauty.

"While this principle of environmental justice cannot undo the past, it should help ensure that all communities will be supported by contents of the new county plan to improve and maintain a clean and healthy environment, especially those who have traditionally lived, worked and played closest to sources of

pollution, therefore in the interests of equity and fairness I was pleased to have brokered agreement that this principle of environmental justice is adopted and inserted into the CDP," concluded Cllr Evelyn Parsons.

Since the last edition, the Waste Transfer Station has been granted a permit to operate, as a result. Ballinasloe Says No are now considering all their options that they can do to appeal this decision.

They are currently studying the environmental impact on the River Suck callows and as a special protection area and previous high court judgements. Gearoid Geraghty and Co with the Senior Council are now exploring all legal options.

Dr Vincent Parsons, Chairman of the campaign stated: "The 1999 High Court Order is being reviewed which specifically states that a Waste Transfer Station could not be established adjacent to the Poolboy Landfill site. Another condition of this order states that Poolboy landfill could be remediated and converted into a community amenity area and park/playground. These plans are incompatible with a large Waste Transfer Station."

Senator Aisling Dolan commented: "The town is really in shock with this decision and people are very concerned. I would like to thank everyone who has been in touch and offered support, it shows that our town is ready to fight for the future health and safety of our community and to protect our environment." To get in touch with Ballinasloe Says No can contact (086) 369 0719 or email ballinasloesaysno@gmail.com



 By Colm Croffy

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BALLINASLOE OFFICE

Society Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
Tel. 090 96 50000 Fax: 090 96 50050
DX 62 002 Ballinasloe
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The Board of Voluntary Directors, led by Chairman Seamus Duffy and Manager Lyn Donnelly and members of the company reviewed progress on their 21st year of activities by way of ZOOM last month.

Opening the meeting the Chair reminded those in attendance of the formation of BACD and its rationale again in encouraging job creation, enterprise and attracting investment and he thanked Manager Lyn, his co-directors, and the different members of the working groups for their commitment, dedication and efforts to delivering a can do message in one of the most challenging of years in the Charitable Company's short history.

In a wide ranging address Seamus reviewed some key issues as he saw them for the town, the community and agencies that are currently operating here.

He praised and thanked the longstanding funders – GRD Leader, the Dept of Business and Enterprise, The Dept of Rural and Community Affairs, Galway County Council and the new very welcome funder – the Just Transition Fund.

He also expressed huge thanks to the resilient business community who despite the big dig disruption and pandemic shut downs; showed their support for the community efforts with their LIFE Magazine Advertising and their huge support for the New Xmas Lights Campaign.

"Tonight I also want to commend the work and generosity of one of founding partners – the Credit Union who since day one have been very supportive of all of our project needs and this year sponsored a significant sum towards the cost of the illuminations".

Seamus detailed the nearly €60 million of current and anticipated State

spending due into our community across some six Government Departments that he and the Board strongly believes needs a better degree of co-ordination or oversight to get maximum return for the tax payer funding but also for our town.

He explained that the Company had made a detailed submission to the new draft County Plan and in their own 10 year plan for the town would be seeking that an Interagency Task Force or Co – ordinating Group be charged with the monitoring of projects and delivery of elements of the spend and schemes that ought to be complimentary to each other.

"We have a number of project groups examining short, medium and longterm objectives across three pillars and we will collate priority actions into a simple final plan to be launched we hope with agency and Government buy in – in September", stated Seamus.

Manager Lyn Donnelly gave a very detailed presentation on the

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Her first point was between all the different project groups, there are now almost 200

volunteers giving significant hours towards the work of the company – “whether it is driving and delivering Magazines, preparing the Sustainable Town Applications or erecting and fundraising for the Xmas Lights – it’s hugely positive to working among so many positive community people” states Lyn.

The Enterprise Centre managed to remain at practical maximum occupancy for all of the year – with some 29 firms operating out of the old hospital building employing in total some 190 people.

The Pulse Club has remained active and is a key peer network for the younger entrepreneurs in the locality - using the lockdown for zoom seminar and sessions.

Ballinasloe GROW REMOTE Club co-ordinated by Renate Kohlmann, saw a spike in numbers working remotely from home and lot of the research and support work they have done provided the underpinning of the Bank Chambers project.

The Ballinasloe Life Magazine continued to be published even in the height of the lockdown and did not charge the advertisers for the two editions involved. They increased the print run to 7000 copies per editions which means that 42,0000 magazines are printed and distributed annually. It achieved its milestone decade of publishing and looking back managed to retain over €500,000 of marketing and advertising spend locally. She thanked the Editorial and delivery team and advised the meeting that the viability and investing in the online look of the Magazine platform would have to prioritised over the coming months .She also warmly thanked Sinead Colleran our Website Co-ordinator for the work she continues to undertake on Ballinasloe.ie.

She paid tribute the people on the Town Team under the stewardship of Anita Killeen who have ongoing projects like the Town Enhancement, the Sustainable Energy Town, The Business Networking Comedy Garden and of course the outstanding Christmas Lights Campaign – which gave everyone in the town a huge morale lift.

The Shop Local Online and Voucher Scheme launched in the summer of the Pandemic was a huge success and contributed in so many small outlets getting a trading bounce from the Xmas Retail season - with many local firms using them as Staff gifts.

She detailed the current funded projects in some detail and the route map for the company to keep all in motion to draw down maximum grant aid.

Auditor James Coyle of Coyle and Co gave a detailed audit presentation of the financial results showing certified income at €259,460 and Expenditure at €228,226.

Coyle and Co. were re-appointed Auditors.

The Chair and Manager detailed the priority actions for the current year ahead – Bank Chambers, Society St., Maintaining strong occupancy for the BEC, Finalising the delivery of the Shopfront Scheme, Finalising and Launching the 10 year Plan, Commissioning the Tourism and Heritage Feasibility Study, Establishing the Task Force, Resourcing the Town Team and its projects, Xmas Illuminations 2021 and attracting new investors to the locality.

The Directors for the next 12 months are Seamus Kelly (Credit Union), Dan Dowling (Creagh Community Development Council), Micheal Connolly (Galway County Council), Seamus Duffy (Membership), Valerie Dolan (Membership), Anita Killeen (Membership), Joe Lyons (Membership), Kevin Broderick (Membership), Pearse Keller (Membership), Marina Downey (Membership), Noel Madden (Co-opted), John McKenna (Co-opted), Brian King (Co-opted), Eoghan Kenny (Co-opted).



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Sarah Kilduff, owner of SMK Studios, Main Street has been nominated for the prestigious award of "Young Entrepreneur of the Year" in the Micro Business Awards, 2021.

The Micro business awards are the leaders in celebrating Ireland's small businesses and owners and appreciate the nation's best through recognition of their success and continuous hard work. SMK Studios, has made the final three in their category against many leading business and it is a proud moment, especially during these trying times of closure.



The awards will take place in October where the winner will be chosen directly by a judging panel of business experts. SMK Studios was nominated for the award as a "second generation portraiture photographer who has studied both nationally and internationally to build the perfect progressive business model for the new age of photographers in business."

In a dynamically changing society where the digital age is at a forefront, driving passion along with creative ability is more important than ever. Sarah specialises in new-born photography, children's milestones and studio-based family portraiture.

A Photography institute graduate, Society of Wedding & Portrait Photographers' member,

Business All-Stars accredited business owner and partner of Legacy wedding supplies, Sarah has overcome the obstacles of Covid-19 closures and has emerged stronger than ever.

In a whirlwind month, SMK Studios has also been recognised as a Business All-Star, a national accreditation. "The All-Star accredited companies are progressive indigenous Irish businesses that meet the highest standards of Verified Performance, Trust and Customer Centricity and I am thrilled with the attestation mark of my professional efforts and client focus" stated an elated Sarah.

Sarah is looking forward to welcoming all of her clients back into studio t on an appointment this summer on an appointment basis and is delighted that Ballinasloe town will start to reopen its doors to the public once more.

Further details - Website: www.sarahkilduffphotography.com ; Facebook: SarahKilduffphotography

Instagram: Sarah_kilduff_photography_

By Jack Treacy

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After eight years working with top English Premier football team Arsenal, as Head of Sports Medicine and Athletic Development, Aughrim born Des Ryan has returned to Ireland where he will work with Setanta College in Thurles.

The 46-year-old son of Kevin and Anne Ryan will link up with the founder of Setanta, Liam Hennessy, specialising in fitness and development in all sports. During his reign with the Arsenal club, Des worked in the London's side academy and had a direct involvement in the progression of some emerging Gunners like Emile Smith Rowe, Bukayo Saka and Eddie Nketiah in the first team squad.

He is currently a consultant to World Rugby and the Indian Cricket Board and has played a major role in the GAA's "Be Ready to Play"

programme. From 1999 to 2008 Des was Head of Strength and Conditioning with Connacht Rugby but now returns to take up a full-time consultancy role with Setanta.

Married to Lara, who is a physiotherapist, Des graduated with a Sports Science Degree from St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, London following his earlier education in Aughrim NS and Garbally College. He is now heavily involved in developing all youth sports and says his full-time role with Setanta will enable him to develop further online rollout of education.

Having worked for five years with Arsene Wenger, Des said he had a great interest in young players and was keen to follow their progress. "He knew every one of them, integrated them safely and gradually and didn't overload them." Des was also impressed with Liam Brady who was head of youth development at the North London club and was taken by "his knowledge of early and late developers."

The Aughrim man leads the GAA athletic development working group and sits on the sports science working group which brings together expertise in skill acquisition, nutrition, performance analysis, psychology and other aspects of team preparation. "It's for everybody. It's for somebody who is thinking of getting into Gaelic games, it's going to be used in many different ways and we are at ease with that" said Des.

He concluded by saying he is looking forward to new challenges in Munster with Liam Hennessy and Setanta and hopes all sports can return full-time as soon as possible.

By Ken Kelly



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LIAISON GREENWAY OFFICER

Mike Conroy from Cappataggle, is working as an engineer with the Cycleway Project Team on Society St, Ballinasloe. As a newly qualified engineer he is working as a Public Liaison Officer (PLO) on this project which has a strong potential to come through town.

If you are a landowner with questions, contact Mike at (091) 509 267 or email info@galwaytoathlonecycleway.com

Pictured with Senator Aisling Dolan outside the Greenway Offices.



BUSINESS

As we go to print the Government have approved outdoor dining from the 7th of June and we attempted to facilitate all our restaurant and cafe owners with a mention in this table.

Even though there is an assumption that indoor dining will be opening, there is no official date confirmed officially for that.

Please before you make dining choices, if the weather is fine, to go check the social media accounts of the relevant businesses.

If you have a large number of more than 4 - all recommend that you call ahead.

Hopefully in our August edition we will have further updates on what our hospitality trade is doing locally.

	Days of Service	Hours of Service	Menu Offered					Booking Number	Number of People
			Breakfast	Brunch	Lunch	Evening Meals	Dinner		
Venezia	Mon - Sun	12.30pm - 9.30pm	x	x	Yes	Yes	Yes	964 6483	30 people
Deli Store	Mon - Sun	10.00am - 4.30pm	x	Yes	Yes	x	x	964 5058	4 people
Bistro 18	Mon - Sat	9.00am - 4.00pm		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	964 4867	32 people
Karibas	Wed - Sat	9.30am - 4.30pm	x	x	x	x	x	964 4830	30 people
Dolans	Mon - Sun	8.30am -10.30pm	Yes	Yes	Yes	x	x	964 2178	20 people
Corrib Oil	Mon- Sun	8.30am -10.30pm	Yes	Yes	Yes	x	x	964 6054	24 people
Lukers S'bridge/ The Boatyard	Mon - Sun	10.30am - 8.30pm		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	967 4995	25+
Loru's Rest. & Cafe, & Millars Bar	Mon - Sun	9.00am - 10.00pm	x	x	Yes	Yes	Yes	964 3513	30 people



Marian and John Ward Look Forward to Welcoming Back Customers to Karibas

Bistro 18 one of Many Restaurants Providing Outdoor Dining

Sean Magee of Deli Store Eagerly Awaits Customer Return

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Beagh, Birchgrove native and prominent national broadcaster, Fergal D'Arcy has teamed up with Supermacs for this season.

The Fergal D'Arcy Show will be taking to the road several times throughout the year and will broadcast from a number of Supermac's outlets.

'Tasty & Tempting Thursdays' where individuals will be able to nominate businesses to get €100 worth of Supermac's and Papa John's Pizza delivered to their workplace will be a prominent platform on-air and social media competitions as well as loads of chances to win prizes.

MD Pat McDonagh, said "Supermac's and Fergal are a great fit. He was born and raised in Ballinasloe, as was Supermac's, and he regularly speaks of those special moments he shared with us as he was growing up. Fergal is an outstanding broadcaster as was illustrated by his recent success as Best Radio DJ of the Year in the Hot Press Hotties Awards. We are very happy to be teaming up with him again and we are particularly excited to be bringing the Fergal D'Arcy Show to a Supermac's near you throughout the country."

Fergal D'Arcy said "When I think of Supermac's, I think of three things - happy memories, family, and success. Go to any Supermac's in the country, you're greeted



with a smile, entertained, and leave a happier person... just like listening to your favourite radio show. It's the perfect marriage, two national brands uniting to lift the nation's mood... I'm excited. A marriage made on Main St. - I'm looking forward to doing great things with Supermacs."



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SURMODICS ON SUSTAINABLE PLANT PATH *Advertorial*

SURMODICS, a leading medical device company based in the IDA Business Park, Ballinasloe, has recently received the "Zero Project Earth Day Award 2021" based on their sustainability journey with The City Bin Co.

Surmodics identified the need to increase recycling rates and their sustainability efforts, whilst reducing costs, and therefore kickstarted The Zero Project.

Prior to February of this year, the firm were using a number of 1100 litre bins for both general waste and recycling. The bins were many different colours and therefore caused confusion in terms of waste segregation, which resulted in low recycling rates. The site was producing enormous amounts of grass, which was being tended to by a tractor lawn mower, resulting in high carbon emissions.

SURMODICS



Since February 2021, Surmodics kickstarted their sustainability journey with "The Zero Project" - the company's efforts been led by Conor Forde, Senior Facilities Engineer. The City Bin Co. installed Front End Loader (FEL) bins onsite. The type of waste generated by the plant is dry industrial and therefore a good fit for the FEL bins. The waste is removed and transported to a recycling depot where it is sorted and either reused or recycled, helping the company divert waste from landfill.

John Farrell from The City Bin Co. presenting the Zero Project Earth Day Award to Conor Forde, Senior Facilities Engineer, and Damien Kilcommons, Senior Director of Operations.

fluorescent gas or lamps waste to dispose of. They also introduced light sensors that control 95% of Surmodics' lights, ensuring lights automatically switch off during quieter times,

saving energy.

Surmodics have started working towards a paperless business by introducing an e-signatures, thereby creating a paperless accounts payment system. The firm has provided keep cups and re-usable water bottles for their employees, cutting down on unneeded waste.

An electric robot lawnmower, the Mobot, which does not waste grass and does not require fuel to cut the grass, was acquired in March - resulting in carbon savings of 0.6 tonnes for the site. Recently the City Bin Co. carried out a waste audit onsite and put a plan together to ensure segregation of waste.

For the remainder of 2021, Surmodics sustainability plan is to ensure that the Zero Project standard is maintained across the site. Environmental training and awareness initiatives for employees is key to implementing sustainability in the workplace and an important element to this is generating environmental ideas from colleagues in order to continue the Surmodics journey to sustainability.

The results of the recent regional survey are in! After 12 months of forced remote working, people would like greater flexibility over where they choose to work.

79% of respondents would like to adopt the hybrid blend of working from both the office and home, 14% would prefer to continue to work fully from home and only 7% want to return completely to the corporate office.

Pre-pandemic, ad-hoc, 'one-off' type working from home arrangements had to be negotiated; however, the national remote working strategy, published earlier this year, will seek to normalise this way of working by legislating to provide employees the right to request remote working. Furthermore, it seeks to lead by example by mandating that home and remote working should be the normality for 20% of public sector employees.

On the question utilising a co-working hub in Ballinasloe (assuming sanitation and protected safe working areas and social distance), 62% of respondents are in favour of this option and it is encouraging to see the innovative BACD progress with Bank Chambers.

The Grow Remote (GR) workforce has voted to ditch the commute and capitalise upon the benefits they have experienced over the last 12 months. Specifically cited in order of priority were, the ability to be more productive, to notch up monetary savings from not having to commute, to take back the time for themselves and family thereby feeling more balanced, less stressed and knowing that the carbon impact is positive.

The biggest concerns of the new workforce included being isolated and missing the face-to-face company of colleagues, followed by internet connectivity, and the challenges associated with maintaining boundaries, not being able to separate work from home and working longer hours than when in the office.

While only 12% of participants need assistance finding remote work, they very much see the positive opportunity for new entrants to remote work, with 81% stating that remote work has the potential to deliver greater employment opportunities for people and to drive innovation locally.

Supporting remote work however, the responses expressed interest in training for remote tools, skills, competencies, policies, and processes required to enable working from home. Grow Remote currently provides access to training and for those that are interested, with the local chapter running a mini-series of training and workshop sessions for free over the course of 2021 and into 2022.

To find out more about Remote Working in the town and the hinterland, attend the following local chapter meetings on zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81928384856> from 12 o'clock to 1pm covering topics such as Finding Remote Jobs, Skills Training, Building Remote Community, Remote Working Hub Network, Wellbeing & Tools for the Job. These free online meetings take place on Tuesday, June 15, Tuesday June 29 and Tuesday, July 13.

Password for Zoom Link or for more information, see the Grow Remote Ballinasloe Facebook Group or contact renate@growremote.ie

By Jack Treacy



(L-R) Dorothy Scarry, Honoria Mitchell-Black, Niamh Connaughton, Renate Kohlmann, pictured at the early stages of the Grow Remote Chapter Foundation in pre pandemic times

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€15,000 euro worth of Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) funding has been secured by Ballinasloe Town Team as part of the Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) project.

The Town Team has taken another step in an exciting journey of becoming a low carbon urban area and developing the community with sustainability at the heart of all future projects.

A very successful collaboration with SEAI has culminated in the awarding of this substantial funding to carry out an Energy Master Plan in the area. This is essentially a process which will collect local energy data of the fuel types and energy systems used in the district. This data will be used for energy audits of local buildings and to establish a Building Energy Rating (BER).

A key objective of the SEC is to improve the energy efficiency of local homes. In particular the town team want homeowners to consider measures of reducing reliance on fossil fuel heating and transition to heat pumps or other appropriate sustainable technologies. Their Emergency Master Plan will carry out a directed assessment of 10 sample dwellings within the community.

Each direct assessment shall include the following:

- Visual inspection of the dwelling
- BER assessment including certificate and advisory report
- Heat pump assessment
- Recommendations to achieve a 150 kWh/m²/year uplift
- Recommendations to achieve BER B2

BTT are looking for homeowners to become involved in their Energy Master Plan. Are you a homeowner? Do you wish you were living in a warmer home? Ever wondered what BER rating your home has? Would you like a free energy audit carried out on your home? If you have answered yes to any of the above questions please contact Anita Killeen at ballinasloetownteam@gmail.com

 By Jack Treacy




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It has been over a decade since the National Ambulance Service College (NASC) began operating from the Enterprise Centre. NASC began with a base in Dublin and needed an additional site west of the Shannon to cater for those of the west from Malin Head to Mizen Head.



Ivan O'Grady, Training Officer NASC

With a proud medical teaching past – hosting the Madonna School of Nursing and Midwifery at Portiuncula and the Psychiatric Nursing School at St. Brigid's, the town was selected based on proximity to Dublin, centrality of location and adequate accommodation for their students, and their staff.

The college has brought great benefit and footfall income to the town in recent years. NAS Students shop, eat and live in the town so it has added to the local economy. There are hundreds of nights of student accommodation each year, through multiple classes. Where possible all supplies are obtained locally from the town. Some may be unaware but they also act as an extra emergency response team for the local area, which has been of significant assistance during the COVID emergency.

Paramedical Student Darren Taylor hailing from Swords, North County Dublin explains why trainees like the location: "the people are very hospitable towards us. There is plenty of shops, supermarkets, and food and a large variety of activities around this general direction as well. People are fantastic in here and all of us enjoy the experience."

The structure of the school's instructing staff has mainly remained the same but the training establishment has seen an increase in activity in courses being offered and student throughput.

The college now takes responsibility in training swabbers and vaccinators to assist with the response to Covid-19, in addition to developing paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). With all necessary precautions taking place they have managed to maintain a level of service throughout the pandemic.

John Marshall, Tutor and Advanced Paramedic, stated: "We get a lot of students undertaking the paramedic degree programme with ourselves and our academic partner which is University College Cork and we get people from all walks of life, people who have retired from one career and

are starting another one. We also get people from other agencies, be it voluntary agencies, like the

Paramedics Undergoing Hazmat Training


Order of Malta and the Red Cross and the Civil Defence and we also have students starting who have worked in the Gardaí in the other rescue services like the Fire Rescue and The Coast Guard and we support other agencies with their training as well."

Since the pandemic has begun a significant part has been played in providing programmes, where appropriate, approximately 100 students having been enrolled since March 2020, to allow the NAS to assist in the national recruitment process now spread across three educational sites.

Ivan O'Grady, NASC Training Officer states "They are our Immediate Care Operatives, so they came in last year and were sent out to deal with the pandemic."

Public health guidelines are likely to impact any graduations in the near to medium term, but one Paramedical Degree Programme is due to have their passing out ceremony in late July.

The Training Officer NASC concluded: "It is hoped that the college shall continue to provide educational programmes for our new recruits over the coming year, taking cognisance of evolving restrictions due to the pandemic. However, our priority is to try to remain in the area and support the work of our National Ambulance Service by providing high quality programmes necessary to improve our service to the public throughout the country."

 By Jack Treacy

Paramedical Students in Front of Ballinasloe Base

(L-R) Paramedic Students Darren Taylor, Máiréad Kennelly, Mark O'Donnell, and Andy Whelan



Height of Health Staff Members
Anne Quirke and Aileen Salmon
outside new Premises

Height of Health now has a new base on Dunlo Street (where Chris Daly's Shoe store was) and are providing a wide dedicated range of natural vitamins and minerals, skin and haircare products, joint care, herbal teas, coffees, incenses, essential oils and much more. The store is open Monday to Saturday 10:00 -18:00 and aims to provide all health-related products.

The store is a partnership between local Kiltormer man Liam Salmon and Clare native Fergal McNamara. However, it is very much a family run business with Fergal's wife Helen and daughter Sinead, both very much involved while Liam's daughter Aileen is also a member of the team working in the store. Rounding off the team at Height of Health is Killimor born Nutritional Therapist - Anne Quirke.

This is the third Height of Health store for Fergal who also runs a store in Ennis and one in Dundalk, where Aileen worked part-time while studying at Dundalk Institute of Technology. The McNamara family are also the team behind Ennis Health Store, with two successful stores operating in the Clare town for many years.

The store has set out to cater to the needs of all ages in the locality. The staff are well trained with extensive knowledge in the area of nutrition and years of experience working in health stores. They are well placed to guide you through all of the top name brands in natural health.

In the nutritional supplement side, the store stocks top brands Macánta, Solgar, Mag365, and more. The store also has a wide range of natural and organic skincare. Eco-friendly cleaning products, herbal teas, gluten free foods, foods suitable for diabetics and a wide range of organic and whole foods can also be found.

Therapist Anne states: "The store has a wide range of health products; we hope that in the next few months we can invite people to come and explore the products that we have on display and if there is something in particular

that they are looking for that we will try our best to source it for them".

The Salmon name is synonymous with the community and Liam Salmon, cousin of Dermot (Main St, Department store) does not want to bring down the name: "A very important goal is customer relations. We wish in our next few months of operation that we can build up a strong customer base, provide healthy competition to other outlets and have high customer satisfaction rates gaining regulars that we can continue to proudly serve." Liam exclaimed.

Height of Health provides another health space in the town that people can come and explore. Liam commented: "Ballinasloe has a great market for a dedicated health store, the town has other similar outlets but our store will be focusing solely on health-based products with an array of products that our customers can choose from."

If you'd like to phone in an order for collection, simply give the shop a call on (087) 436 4344 or email at heightofhealth1@gmail.com. Their opening offer is continuing right now too, which means that anyone who spends over €30 in the store will receive a free Macánta D3 product.

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With all the focus of Government sustainable energy policy on retro fitting homes and getting home owners to re-examine their BER number and quality of insulation, three canny locals with varied and distinguished careers in construction behind them have seized the initiative.

It is set up by three local men, Johnathan Dunne, Tomas Egan and Henry Lloyd. Tomas hails from Garbally Drive, where he had grown up alongside his sister Yvonne and parents Betty and Paddy Egan. It is also where he raised his son Sean Egan. His genial father, Paddy, was well known town wide working for Guinness delivering barrels to all the town's local public houses. Tomas attended St. Michael's Vocational School before a career in the building trade for over 25 years. He has plied his trade with Ballinasloe Stone, bricklaying, worked with Niall Poland and also five years of experience in modern wall insulation.

Henry Lloyd, is a St. Brendan's Terrace native, the son-in-law of Martin Hickey, married to his daughter Vanessa. Henry has amassed over 20 years of experience as a plasterer working with Padraic Campbell Construction throughout most of his career. A life-long friend of Tomas, Henry has fully backed the plan to pursue a new Home insulation business.

Johnathan is a Tipp man, moved to the town many years ago, starting a family with his wife Yvonne, has been a member of the Golf Club for over 10 years. A brother-in-law to Tomas, marrying his sister Yvonne, Johnathan has spent the last 7 years in M6 Motors as a mechanic and finished up there to join; becoming the third leg of the new business venture.

EDL ECO Insulations take great pride in their work and hope to establish a strong customer base and positive professional relationship with their clients.

Johnathan Dunne stated: "All we want to do is get up and running. We will hope that the work we do can be something we can be proud of and that

our customers can be highly satisfied with it."

There is promise for further expansion in terms of crew in order to get the fastest service and the highest quality work for your home.

Tomas stated: "We truly hope to have the best start to provide quality business to the town. We saw that there was an opening for Home insulation in town and with previous experience we jumped at it. In a few months' time we hope to have a few crews up and running and hopefully on the road."

Properly insulating your home not only reduces heating and cooling costs, but also improves comfort within your home so get in contact with the crew at EDL ECO by dialing (087) 342 7215 or email edlecoinsulation@gmail.com. To get in touch with their Facebook page visit: <https://www.facebook.com/EDL-Eco-Insulation-103788685219232> so you can arrange the best service that would suit your home.



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TIDY TOWNS ANNUAL GRANT

Ballinasloe Tidy Towns have been granted €1,750 from Galway County Council to enhance a non-developed green area that is surrounded by grey block concrete walls, overlooked by the Dubarry Factory and is devoid of planting.

Their primary aim is to develop this green area by initially planting trees and shrubs, concealing the factory from residents view. It will prevent teenagers from using this concrete wall as a shortcut. It will remove the industrial look by planting greenery that will encourage nature, birds and bees.

This area is surrounded by grey block walls and a factory site. The planting of these trees and shrubs will improve the mental well-being of the residents. It will be more pleasing to the eye, it will take the industrial look away from the estate, it will encourage the use of this underutilised green space by residents, allowing for children to grow up in a beautiful green area.

Shrubs, trees and plants have been chosen with the help and expertise of members of the local Tidy Towns Committee and the local Ballinasloe Garden Centre.

The group have applied for the Community Clean-up Pack. Tidy Towns Committee will ensure observance of current public health measures and will operate under the guidelines of the National Tidy Towns Association.

The Committee, under the Chairmanship of Tom Madden, work very closely in co-operation with Ballinasloe Training For Employment Services and Billy Ward and Eric Naughton, crew supervisors, have been undertaking trojan work with various clean ups and planting and maintenance programmes especially around the Creagh and Tesco roundabouts.

For more information or how you might get involved see their fbook page.

EGM'S NEW WALKING PROGRAMME

17

East Galway and Midland's (EGM) Cancer Support Centre have announced the commencement of the ACTIVATEator walking programme – Ireland's FIRST !

In conjunction with Athlone Institute of Technology and delivered by EGM Cancer Support, ethics approval has been granted for a pilot study in which the effectiveness of an Activator pole walking programme has on the physical and psychosocial health of individuals living with and beyond cancer.

ACTIVEator is the first Activator pole walking programme to be delivered in Ireland. It is also the first study to evaluate the effectiveness of this type of programme among individuals living with and beyond cancer.

Individuals who have completed cancer treatment will get an invite to take part in the programme. Participants will complete two activator pole walking sessions each week for 12 weeks. These sessions will be 60 minutes in duration and delivered by staff at the EGM Cancer Support Centre who have completed training in activator pole walking.

East Galway Midlands Cancer Support Centre is indebted to Frank Fahey from FITWALK Ireland for training and support and also to Galway Sports Partnership for their support.

For More Information on the programme visit the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/EGMCancerSupport>

or enquire at info@egmcancersupport.com

By Jack Treacy

Pictured is Lisa Moore (Volunteer at EGM) who has completed the Activator Pole Walking Training Programme and will also be a participant in the study being carried out by AIT.

(L to R) - Anna Obara and Jacqueline Daly who have Both Completed Training in the Activator Walking Pole Programme. Both Anna and Jacqueline will be leaders of the programme with Jacqueline also being a participant in the study being carried out by AIT.



Mai Bowes celebrates
her
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Minister of State in the Department of Health and Fianna Fáil TD for Galway East, Anne Rabbitte, has confirmed that the new modular building at Portiuncula University Hospital (PUH), Ballinasloe has been up and running for occupation in recent weeks.

Minister Rabbitte commented: "This is great news for the people of the area, ensuring an increased level of service in Galway, Roscommon, Midlands and Mid-Western areas. As a Minister of State in the Department of Health, I have been working to ensure that progress is being made."

The modular building proposed will provide for 14 temporary COVID-19 ED minor injuries treatment/assessment rooms with associated support facilities. The unit will also help with the overload of outpatient accommodation after the Covid-19 emergency. Located at the rear of the building, it will provide clinical space for outpatients to be seen. Moving the outpatient clinics to this new facility has allowed PUH to seek the development of 12 new single en-suite rooms in the former outpatient area. These new rooms will meet the highest infection control standards and will enable patient isolation if necessary. It will also allow single room accommodation for patients who are receiving end of life care and can provide patients with privacy and dignity. Subject to funding, it is hoped that these 12 new beds will be in place by the middle of next year.

The new St. Theresa's children's ward development is still well underway, the new 50-bed ward had its tender applications close in March, and enabling works is well underway and expected to continue until July before construction, scheduled for quarter three, can begin taking place.

Anne Rabbitte stated: "I've also been advised that 'Suitability Assessment Questionnaires' to select a contractor for the construction of the 50 Bed Ward Block at Portiuncula are currently being evaluated by the HSE."

With building works to the Fluoroscopy room complete, equipment commission and training also complete further works to Radiology, Public Toilets, the x-ray rooms, changing and cleaner stores is required with the completion of all works including enabling works scheduled for the end of June 2021. It is also understood that Portiuncula's CT is scheduled for replacement in the coming



1. Interior New Modular Outpatient Building
2. Exterior of New Modular Outpatient Building
3. New Modular Out patient Building Located at the Rear of the Hospital
4. Site of new St. Theresa's 50-Bed Ward

of the next year through the HSE's Equipment Replacement Programme, subject to funding availability.

Ann Cosgrove, Chief Operating Officer at the Saolta Group, added: "Across all our Group Hospitals we are working hard to put facilities and measures in place to help our staff deliver care in very difficult times. These new projects in Portiuncula University Hospital are really important and will have a significant impact over the next year and beyond as the hospital continues to see and treat increasing numbers of patients."

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A South Roscommon woman, who was born in the year of the Spanish Flu in 1918, survived the current Covid epidemic to celebrate her 103rd birthday. Nellie Tumulty from Tanvey, Ballydangan, was born on 6th April 1918 and was the second eldest of seven children born to Michael Kenny and Catherine Kelly.

Nellie is the last surviving member, having lost her youngest sister two years ago. Her late husband Tom, who was a great community worker in the parish of Moore, died sixteen years ago. Now she is being cared for at her home by her two daughters Mary and Kathy.

A former psychiatric nurse in St. Brigid's Hospital, Nellie married in August 1956 and settled into a farming way of life. She credits her longevity to hard work, her faith and



Mary and Kathy Tumulty join their mother Nellie to celebrate her 103rd birthday at her home

being a lifelong pioneer.

A great baker of home-made bread, the 103-year-old played bingo frequently but now resorts to "Telly Bingo" three times a week. She also loved crossword challenges and recalls the games of cards played in different houses in the parish over the years. "They were great fun and a great place to get all the local gossip" she said.

On the occasion of her historical birthday, which she celebrated with her family and close relatives, the Moore lady proudly displayed her three Presidential medals she had received as well as the many congratulatory good wishes, phone calls and gifts.

Nellie is now hoping for the current restrictions to be over soon, so that she can have a visit from her hairdresser, as well as calls from relatives and many, many friends.

TULLYS CELEBRATE GOLDEN JUBILEE


BY KEN KELLY



Sean and Ita Tully of Derrymullen, Ballinasloe celebrated their Golden Wedding Jubilee with a close family event because of Covid restrictions. They were married in St. Brendan's Church, Mullagh on 28th April 1971 with Sean's brother Willie as best man and Ita's sister, Theresa, as bridesmaid.

Ita (nee Spain) is a native of Gurtymadden while Sean comes from a legendary Derrymullen family. They were blessed with three children-Caroline, Donal and Niall and have eight grandchildren. A former psychiatric nurse, from 1963 to 2002, Sean Tully was chairman of the Urban Council on three occasions and was involved in many sporting, cultural and educational committees in the town and county.



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Ballinasloe youth made a significant contribution towards examining by way of video “Why Youth Work, Works” !

This saw several local young people submitting short videos and feature-length videos towards the short film on why youth work has worked for them.

Joseph Burke and Ellen Butler, who have nearly 10 years of youth work experience each, were on the panel for the Why Youth Works webinar. Joseph also shared his story in the short film and was part of the Youth Advisory Committee where he planned and organised the projects.

The Youth Advisory Committee Galway, which is a group of young people aged between 15 and 25 began exploring that question through their European Solidarity Corps project in 2020.

Producing a short film called ‘Why Youth Work, Works’ which captures the far-reaching impact of youth work, the group showcase young people’s stories and reflect on how youth work has influenced their lives, personally, professionally and socially.

To finish the project, the group hosted an event consisting of a panel discussion on why youth work, works, with six panellists who have participated in Youth Work Ireland Galway projects or who are working for them. The webinar dealt with interviews on the participant’s youth work experience.

Youth Work Ireland (Galway) operates a centre in town at Marina Point that hosts the East Galway Youth Project catering for young people 10-24 years. The Youth Information Centre, Counselling service and The Junction Youth Diversion Project are also based from there who all fall under the umbrella of Youth Work Ireland Galway.

Joseph Burke, a previous member of Why Youth Work, Works, stated: “One of the reasons we moved to Marina House was because we operate from a budget and the building was within our budget and we had flexibility to design it to make it youth friendly. Ideally, we would like a venue with a larger outdoor space and possibly a space for indoor sport/dance/yoga to cater for more young people.”

The centre is open to all young people from the Town and its hinterland aged between 10 and 24 years of age. The centre caters for as many as restrictions allow for. With over 300 attending the centre in 2019, in recent times all group work and individual work transferred online. Support was provided via Zoom, WhatsApp, and other social media groups such as: Get Lippy Youth Council, FunAtics Junior Youth Group, Dungeon and Dragons Youth Group, Lego Youth Group, Mental Fitness Programme, Photography Group and Sixth Class Transition/Next Steps Programme all delivered online.

In the coming months Youth Work Ireland Ballinasloe plan to join the Junction Youth Project in running a Tailored Horse Riding Programme with teens within the town. Towards the end of the month a blended (online and in-person) Climate and Injustice Summer camp.

“We are happy to announce Upcoming summer camps will include online Dungeon and Dragons Camp, in-person ‘Let’s Get Moving’, Senior and Junior Outdoor Activity Summer Camps in association with Healthy Ireland will all take place in July. The project will then close for annual leave in August” states Youth Officer Deirdre Bermingham.

The Short Film is available on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/492085127> Those interested in the Youth Work, Works project can enquire by contacting Deirdre on (087) 329 1931 or email: deirdre.bermingham@youthworkgalway.ie or you can get in touch with Maria (087) 770 7775 or email eastgalway@youthworkgalway.ie



(L-R) Youth Works event April 2021 – Jakub Kostanski, Joseph Burke, Nicola Johnston, Oran Tobin, Francis Olajide and Ellen Butler

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James Gavin is a five-and-half year old boy, living in Taughmaconnell and enjoys all the things kids his age do: Toys, Games, Cars and his Tablet. During his nine-month developmental check doctors had noticed that his right knee was bent. James has Cerebral Palsy which has badly affected his right knee. His hamstring has tightened as his limbs have grown and as a result of this James wears braces on both legs to assist him.

"James relies on me for everything, he can walk to some to degree but even for him to strap his shoes is next to impossible" states his mother Elizabeth

The family originally hail from both Athlone and Taughmaconnell, with James's father, Anthony, having a brother living in Ballinasloe and settled nicely with Anthony working fulltime in Roscommon as a HSE storeman and wife Elizabeth in fulltime care of James and his sister Kayla. James is currently enrolled as a junior infant at St. Ronan's National School and the family could not be more grateful to the school

Elizabeth continues "The school has been brilliant. Lisa White is his teacher and Anne Marie Downey does his physio for him in school, which is more than we could ever ask for. We are pushing for a specific SNA for James in the school to assist him wherever possible."

Through much research the Gavin family approached Neurosurgeon Tae Sung Park with James's Case, who has successfully performed over 4,000 Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR) procedures, and he quickly responded claiming James would be an excellent candidate for SDR and this surgery would permanently remove James's Spasticity and improve the strength and endurance on his legs.

The surgery, however, does not come without a cost. Two surgeries will be required within an intense three-week surgical period in which the SDR procedure will cost 40,000 USD and James will also require Muscle Lengthening Surgery costing 15,000 USD, both at St. Louis Children's Hospital in Missouri. James will then require two years of buildup physio at home to build up his strength as his legs will be very weak after the spasticity is removed.

Elizabeth commented: "This is a permanent solution. It is only a

matter of time before James loses his mobility and while the thoughts of a wheelchair scare me, it is the pain he will have to endure on a daily basis with spasms that upsets me the most."

A date has been set to undergo operations in late July and the SDR procedure taking place August 5th. The family have set up a go fund me page to try and raise the funds for the €100,000 it will cost to cover the procedures, physio, accommodation and travel.

To date with the overwhelming support from friends, family, and the local community and No Uniform days raising over €1,860 for the cause, to date over €60,000 has been raised for the family. They are still €40,000 short of the needed funds as the family hope for a final push to bring them over the line over the coming months.

"We have been completely blown away by the community generosity, especially with support of the fundraiser we launched. We were hoping to cover some of the costs, but the response has been incredible! This is the last thing we want to do but we do not have that kind of money lying around" explains Elizabeth.

To assist the Gavin Family, you can donate at <https://www.gofund.me/e457e062>

Or you can track their journey: <https://www.facebook.com/joinjamesjourney>



Ard Scoil Mhuire Raised €960 for James With 'No Uniform Day'

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DIL Ballinasloe Committee members impart some important messages Kerrill Burke, Aidan Lonergan, Shane La Comber, Joanne Jordan, Brian Derrane



DIL Ballinasloe always appreciated the assistance of the Emergency services. Inspector Conor Madden, Junior Hannon, Shane La Comber and Joseph Burke



Martin and Conor Ryan of Ryan's Pub.



Joanne Jordan and Family.



Claire Dolphin, Marian Dolphin, Emily Dolphin and Johnny Bartlett

What would have been Ballinasloe's sixth "Darkness into Light" flagship fundraising event in 2020 had to be cancelled on public health grounds.

As with many other charities such cancelled events created a huge dent in the finances of Pieta House, so they were determined to ensure the 2021 Virtual Darkness into Light should go ahead whilst adhering to public health guidelines and safeguards.

DIL 2021 was therefore always going to be a different Darkness into Light experience. Unlike usual, when hundreds gathered locally, there were no organised walks. Instead, people were asked to share their sunrise moment and to participate by walking a route of their own choosing at a time of their own choosing or to engage in the 2021 DIL Challenge fundraiser.

The awful conditions that heralded the dawn on Saturday, May 8th, did not dampen the spirits or weaken the resolve of the hardy souls who braved the elements as they undertook the walk in the town and its environs. Pockets of walkers were observed keeping socially distanced in their family bubble groupings at dawn and throughout the day, proudly sporting their iconic yellow tee shirts around the town and neighbouring villages.

Besides the traditional walkers, others undertook the DIL challenge fundraising by organising a run, a swim, a cycle, a hike, a pony trek and many other personalized events raising vital funds to maintain the free services that Pieta House provides to its service users.

Many others chose to donate directly via the website. In all 143,642 registered nationally online raising €7,454,252 to-date.

Nationally the

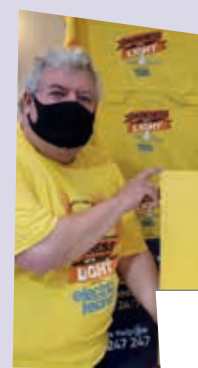
figures show Pieta answered 21,000 calls in 2020 who were suicidal or self-harming. They have engaged with 15,820 second level students through their Resilience Academy. To date they have also provided free counselling to over 60,000 people.

A feature of the traditional DIL walk was the signing of the Banner of Hope by participants as they returned from the walk feeling elated, energised, empowered, emotional & exhausted, recording their support and expressing the Hope that their efforts would rekindle 'The Light of Hope' in someone's darkness and help spark the will to live their life again.

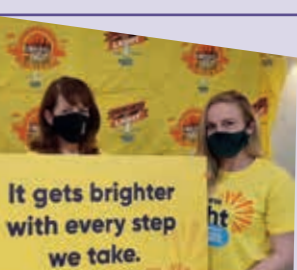
The Ballinasloe Committee held a symbolic Banner of Hope signing ceremony in a socially distanced manner in the town centre. Members of the Business, Faith, Sporting, and Political Communities signed the Banner of Hope on behalf of their customers, congregation, clubs and constituents and the locality and hinterland at large.

This year the HOPE light was erected overlooking the Fairgreen acting as symbolic beacon of HOPE. Hope is an intangible concept yet it is reached for, grasped and held tightly by those in distress and need of help. It is our hope that people reach out and seek help by ringing (1800) 247 247 or texting help to 51444

Pieta House are hopeful that the traditional format of Darkness into light returns for 2022. Committee Chair Brian Derrane stated "We would like to thank most sincerely all those who participated and donated in this year's event. It is still possible to register or donate up until May 31st on darknessintolight.ie Remember You make a difference, where a difference saves a life."



Thomas Gullane and Marina Downey



Brian Derrane DIL,
Mary Noone and
Eimear Noone,
Kilconnell.



Clit. Timmy Broderick and
Inspector Conor Madden



The HOPE team of Aidan Lonergan, Brian Derrane & Sean Kelly erect the Beacon of Hope outside St. Johns Church overlooking the Fairgreen.



SENATOR'S NEW ASSISTANT UNVEILED

By Jack Treacy

Senator Aisling Dolan announced her new full time assistant as Caroline Lynch, who lives in Clontuskert, with her husband, Kiltormer native, Michéal Lynch and mother of three children, Kathryn (9) Thomas (7) and Seán (6).

Caroline started the Clontuskert Community Noticeboard Facebook page, which is a forum for the local community to share information. With three young children she also takes an active interest in education and is the Chairperson of the Parents' Association of St Augustine's National School.

Originally from Castlebar, Caroline has been studying and working in Galway since the 1990s. For 15 years she worked in food research & project management and more recently in Digital Marketing. With a background

in science and management, she brings a lot of skills and experience to the role.

Working in a Senator's office can bring lots of varied activities, from engaging with people on their concerns, to helping community groups to co-ordinating schedules and working with the Seanad.

Caroline added: "I enjoy volunteering and being able to contribute to local groups. I know Aisling's strong commitment and focus to the area and that we will really have the chance to make a difference. This is going to be exciting and I really look forward to working with you all in Ballinasloe and hinterland".

Senator Aisling Dolan stated: "I'm delighted to welcome Caroline to the team and she is off to a flying start. It's another person who is working for the town and we have so much going on from the Cycleway campaign, Shopfronts Scheme, Active Travel footpaths connecting 200 families as well as working on funds to support businesses and communities. Building on our successful investment with Just Transition and our new Pulse Hubs remote working building on Society St. with BACD as well as jobs and encouraging companies to consider an ideal location in our IDA Business Park, are some of the positive priorities we are working on. We are moving towards better times with vaccine roll-out and I'm looking forward to safely meeting people again."



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Parentchild+ have been operating in Ballinasloe for five years and since then have served over 70 families. The non-profit organisation run by the Early Learning Initiative, are based in the Enterprise Centre. ParentChild+'s vision is that every child enters school ready to succeed because every parent has the knowledge and resources to build school readiness where it starts: in the home environment. There are five trained home visitors all committed to carrying out this vision for our locality.

The programme initially began in the US, fifty years ago and since 2007 has established 11 ParentChild+ sites in Ireland. They are open to all families of toddlers aged 16 months to 42 months in the community with no requirements needed to get involved. Families involved receive two 30 minute weekly visits within the academic school year. In total 92 visits are arranged and with Covid-19 these visits are via video call or an outdoor visit. The programme will start up again in term time.

Debra Greenan Co-ordinator stated: "For the moment we are to stay outdoors or on video call but we hope to be all fully vaccinated soon to bring our learning indoors."

This is a fun learning opportunity for both parents and children. Families involved receive a selection of educational and developmentally appropriate books and toys to keep, creating a quality home learning environment for them to use at their own leisure.

Although there is no monetary cost involved, there is an expectation for the participation of parents in each session and to make use of the

books and toys as often as they can between visits. As well as following on with the weekly activities with a goal of empowering the parents as they are their child's first and best teacher.

Ballinasloe's Trained Home Visitors include Debra Grennan, Regina Tyrell, Shauna Somers, Yvonne Dunne and Seenas Ahammed Sebin, all local to the area. These ladies model appropriate parent and child interactions, using a non-directive child-led approach. All are required to have at least a level five QQI with many attaining higher levels and all receive ongoing CPD. All practices are in line with the National Curriculum and Quality Frameworks for Early Years, Siolta and Aistear.

One of the Mums engaged with the Programme Diana Popescu, explains "It has been an amazing journey for my son and me. We both learnt so much, my son is flying with his colours, numbers, he enjoys books so much. I would highly recommend any parent to have confidence and try this programme as it is incredible. I cannot thank enough our home visitor Yvonne, she is great, so nice and Luca enjoyed every single visit. I am sad it is over and will value all that was

given to us. THANK YOU!"

Due to increased demand, there has been a waiting period for up to one month to join the programme but for those looking for positive child interactions, increased children's social-emotional development and to foster pre-literacy skills essential for school readiness please contact Coordinator Debra Grennan Keighery at (086) 060 6002 or email at DGreenan@ncirl.ie. You can visit <https://www.parentchildplus.org/> or visit their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ParentChild-Ballinasloe-548534122308475> for more information.



Debra Greenan



Luca and Mother, Diana Popescu, have been creative with their Art Activity Packs, Provided by ParentChild+



Stella's Graduation with her big Sister and Home Visitor Regina Tyrell

Photos: Gerry Stronge

Paddy Keane I.P.A.V.

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Anne Egan has been one of the most dedicated, capable and obliging Municipal staff members of the old U.D.C. through to Town Council and then with her stint as a valued and approachable member of our library staff.

Anne, after nearly five decades of public service as an employee of Galway County Council effected her retirement in a low key way early this May while the Library she worked in was operating behind closed doors owing to COVID Regs.

Those of a certain vintage remember the UDC offices at River St.-where the Simon Drop in Centre is housed now, which was the Town's Administrative Headquarters for some four decades and it was to this building that Ahascragh native Anne entered in the mid 80s after her secondary schooling and some semesters in third level in Dublin.

The golf type writer was about to be over taken by the ribbon cartridge, calculators were as rare on a desk as a fax machine and each monthly Tuesday then then Staff Officer, Mary E Molloy, would instruct the crew – not just to tidy desks but to clear them, so the nine Urban District Councillors and the Executive could meet !

It was to this madness that Anne signed upto as a Clerical Officer – supporting all departments and she saw the Municipality Bureaucracy grow from Town Clerk Harry Lyne and five of a support act in the 80s to some 18 staff in the mid 90's, needing a much bigger building.

Anne at the time of the move had moved steadily through the promotional ranks and was practically the Dept of Finance Head as Assistant Staff Officer when the Town Council took up their new lodgings in Marina Point.

All through her years at the desk, the dreaded hatch, the reception, the phones, the invoice chasing, the receipt issuing, she was one of the most organised, industrious and pleasurable to deal with by all who engaged with her.

Phil Hogan's reform meant that all the County Council staff had to be re assigned to new roles similar in rank in 2015 and the new Library was about to open. Few knew then that the efficient and ebullient administrator was also a creative writer, very well read, a great follower of theatre and always enjoyed supporting the performing arts would take up a new position on the Library team.

For her swansong in assisting the



public of Ballinasloe and locality it proved to be a winning combination for Anne.

"Anne was always willing to share her immense knowledge of books will be greatly missed by everyone especially the members of her book group who enjoyed many Thursday evenings happily discussing their favourite reads. Anne was a fantastic co-worker and a good friend; to say she will be missed seems like such an understatement.

All of our local art and community groups will really miss her help in organising their exhibitions and events. She greeted all our library friends with words of greeting and a welcoming smile. We wish Anne a relaxing, fun, and long retirement and we hope she will always be surrounded by books and flowers" stated Una Kelly, Head Librarian Ballinasloe.

Always keenly interested and supportive of her immediate family in Ahascragh, Anne was also a committed member of Social Services and loves reading, writing, travelling to exotic places and flowers. We hope she is blessed with health and happiness to enjoy much more of these pursuits.

All at LIFE wish her well on her new chapter and thank her for her commitment in her professional life to the town and its people.



Picture: Gerry Stronge.

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Seven new generation Europe Direct (ED) Centres began their work in the country after the European Commission announced the revamping of its network of information and communication points around the continent recently – happily for Librarian Una Kelly and her team at Ballinasloe – their bid was successful.

As one of only two in the West, these new centres will bring the EU, its policies and values to the community, as part of a network that provides timely and information on European matters, as well as seeking to engage with citizens regarding the state and future of the EU.

ED Ballinasloe will organise participatory events, for example for the Conference on the Future of Europe and will offer relevant information on EU policies and priorities to local media and communities.

Our Library will help the Commission keep track of local sensitivities linked to EU policies as well as promoting active European citizenship in schools and coordinating with other EU networks in the regions, ensuring easier local access to information for citizens, organisations, and businesses.

These new EU missions will see benefit from established connections with key local partners; including groups representing the business/enterprise/ICT community, colleges, local authorities, community interest groups, lobby groups and more. Additionally, the Library Building boasts the Church Gallery with excellent AV and reception facilities which can be used for EU signature events.

Ballinasloe Library will greatly benefit, hosting public events based on European themes, highlighting the town and surrounding areas on national platforms.

It will work with local interest groups especially in the areas of boosting recovery through Next Generation EU and tackling the green and digital transitions. Forging a close partnership with local suppliers and service providers has been a necessity for ED and they will hope to continue this relationship with the next generation. This new centre also provides an opportunity for the local community to have their voice heard throughout the EU Institutions.

Andy Klom, acting Head of the European Commission Representation in Ireland said: “Europe Direct centres play a key role facilitating people’s easy communication with the European institutions but they can also help citizens have a powerful voice in the ongoing EU-wide conversation on the future of Europe to which everyone is invited and every opinion matters.”

The Ballinasloe Library also has plans of their own for the summer. The Summer Stars Reading Adventure will run from mid-June until the end of August. Children who sign up will receive goodies and a

certificate and medal on completion. Wanting children to experience the joy and pleasure of reading or listening to books and there are lots of new books on the way through the BorrowBox App, especially for Summer Stars 2021. Keep an eye on social media for updates about competitions, Storytime’s and much more.

The Library team are thrilled to be involved in the “First Five, Little Library Initiative” where 4,500 Early Learning and Care settings, including registered childminders, are to receive free picture books for children. Registered groups will be invited to collect their books from the collection and a selection of these for loan to children and their families.

To get in contact dial (091) 509 551 or email ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie



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Recently during lock down, Ard Scoil Mhuire Transition Year students began work on a project that focused on providing reading material suitable for children who are deaf/blind and or those with additional disabilities, whether it be cognitive physical or sensory.

The project was brought to life by American born Deirdre Leech, whose mother emigrated from Dysart in the late 1950s. Deirdre now resides in Athenry and works as a Deaf/Blind Consultant with the Anne Sullivan Association, which aims to see the children supported in schools with combined hearing and vision impairment have access to a variety of materials specific to each type of learner in their class in order to teach concepts and encourage literacy.

At a small outdoor socially distant handover ceremony in the lawn behind

St. Theresa's School, Deirdre praised the Transition girls: "You are the first group to complete this pilot lock down project. You have set the bar very high so any groups that do this after you they have a lot to do."

Those at Ard Scoil Mhuire were ever grateful for the opportunity that they were provided with and will be ever proud that they were able to assist the students and teachers at St. Theresa's. Student Chloe Costello said: "It all felt like it like it was a great opportunity to do and it felt like we were giving back to the community that we were involved in."

TY Co-ordinator Angela Cusack commented: "We were delighted to be asked to take part in this project. We wanted to give something back to the community. We have a great group of TY girls this year and we wanted this year to be involved in the literacy project. They're all very creative and they wanted to produce the books and help out at St. Theresa's."

The staff at St. Theresa's upon seeing the work that the TY girls had been so hard at work on were hugely impressed at the creative crafting and significant effort that the pupils had made in storyboarding with sound, fabric and colour – popular children's tales.

Principal Anita O'Reilly exclaimed: "To have books like this that they can feel, touch and even smell, and some of them even have sound built into them, it is just such a joy for us to have and we're so grateful to Ard Scoil Mhuire girls for making these books for us and for Deirdre for leading the online workshops."

Check the website is www.annesullivan.ie if you want to know more about our Outreach Services and/or deaf blindness.



St. Theresa's TY Group With Their Sensory Literacy Materials



Ella Scannal and Chloe Costello Pictured With new Literacy Materials for St. Theresa's



Deirdre Leech Representing the Anne Sullivan Foundation

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Ms A Kelly's 5th/6th class from Scoil an Chroí Naofa taking part in the National Credit Union Monster Quiz with Fergal D'Arcy



Ms G Kelly's 6th class using our outdoor classroom. Some of the children are sitting in the same desks that their parents and grandparents sat in! Sustainability at its best.



ARAS NS MBUACHAILLI, GARBALLY COLLEGE

The students from Aras NS mBuachaillí, Garbally College, recently held a charity car wash to raise money for the Patient Comfort Fund in Portiuncula Hospital.

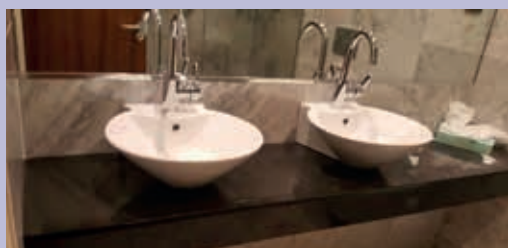
The school has given their thanks to Dillon's Tyre centre for sponsoring gloves and soap and to Billy's Discount Store for providing gloves. On the day they raised a total of €316.



Daniel Flynn, Marita Fogarty
(Portiuncula Hospital)
Loyola Nnaji



Ilya Manning, Paddy Dillon
(Dillon's Tyre Centre),
Mark Cuniffe



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“Tá daltaí Rang a sé ag baint taitneamh as an cúpla seachtain deireadh i Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh. Tá siad ag tnúth leis an gCóineartú agus an Céimniú ag deireadh na bliana.”

“Sixth Class Students enjoying their last few weeks in Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh. They are looking forward to their Confirmation and Graduation at the end of the year.”



Sixth Class Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh Jump For Joy As They Celebrate Graduation



SCOIL MHUIRE GRADUATION AWARDS



Saidhbe Concannon and Alannah McKeigue receiving their awards from Gael Linn having reached the Regional Final. Also pictured Ms Mary Eileen Neylon (Teacher) Mr Pauric Hanlon (Principal) and representative from Gael Linn.



Katie Naughton – Bank of Ireland Leaving Certificate Student of The Year – Pictured with Ms Lorna Blake (BOI) and Mr Pauric Hanlon (Principal)



Catherine Gately – Winner of the Spirit of Mercy Award. Pictured with Ms Emma Donohoe (Special Guest) and Mr Pauric Hanlon (Principal)



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Kay Cunningham from Meals on Wheels receiving a donation for €161.70 from Bernie in Tesco, Ballinasloe. This money was raised from the sale of 3D Easter chicks in Tesco, which were designed and printed by Bernie Johnston and Liam McDonnell.



Hilary O'Brien of Ahascragh and formerly the compiler of our Events Guide for two years married Kerion Higgins in a very quiet family ceremony on April Fools' Day with witness, daughter Taylor. We wish the couple every health and happiness.



(L-R) Ellen Egan-
Soccer Club Treasurer,

Karen Leonard
(Head Paediatric
Ward, Portlucula
Hospital),

Ann Marie Furlong,
(Portlucula Hospital),

Joeb Kelly,
Soccer Club
Chairperson.



PARSON'S OVARIAN CANCER SUPPORT

Cllr Dr Evelyn Francis Parsons lighting a TEALight candle on World Ovarian Cancer Day. If you have any of the following for three weeks or more: Bloating that is persistent and does not come and go, Eating less and feeling full more quickly, Abdominal and pelvic pain you feel most days, Toilet changes in urination or bowel habits.

Cllr Parsons Stated: "We need to give every woman the best chance of survival. Knowing what signs and symptoms to look for is the first step to help BEAT Ovarian Cancer. I am delighted to lend my support to the wonderful staff and volunteers at devised a useful infographic based on the BEAT Ovarian Cancer Campaign which focuses on knowing your body, knowing the signs and seeking medical care at an early stage."



Pictured at the presentation of a set of rugby Jerseys for Ard Scoil Mhuire Junior Team, sponsored by Credit Union, L-R Leah Fogarty, Pauric Hanlon, Shane McNeill BCU & Angela Flaherty.

For daily updates on news, events, death announcements and traffic updates - tune into our Local Radio Partner



Local Soprano Rachel Goode and her Uncle - Organist Michael McCullagh undertook a live Fbook broadcast from the Organ and Choir Loft, St. Michael's Church on May Day with a stunning rendition of **"Bring Flowers of the Rarest"** (also known as the Fairest) the Maytime traditional favourite a Marian hymn written by Mary E. Walsh. It was published as the *"Crowning Hymn"* in the *Wreath of Mary* 1871/1883 and later in *St. Basil's Hymnal* (1889). The hymn is frequently sung during a May Crowning service, one of several May devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The performance can still be viewed for free on BallinasloeLifefbook page - by checking the May 1st post.



(L-R) At the opening of the new Regatta Store Sara McGreal, Val Colleran, Bridget Spain.



At the opening of the new Regatta Store, Marina Point were Bridget Spain, Sara McGreal, Tammie Kells.



Shane K. Kelly (2 handicap) Ballinasloe Golf Club marked the re-opening of Golf Courses with a "hole in one" at the 10th hole. In his previous round of golf before the Covid lockdown Shane also had a "hole in one" at the 16th Hole.

Ballinasloe Walks and Trails are delighted to be back for their next 10km walk in Woodlawn, taking place on June 13th. The group are meeting at Woodlawn Train Station at 9.30 am.

This journey is of an easy grade with terrain on flat ground, wood trails and a little part road. This walk is spectacular in many ways as much of the stroll is through forest trails with an abundance of natural biodiversity to be seen.

There are mixed woodlands of deciduous and coniferous trees. Sometimes, there have been deer sighted. Also for those of you that like to step back in time, they pass the Woodlawn House that dates back to the 1760s. This

three-storey Palladian house is built on 115 acres. Although the group is not permitted to enter the grounds, there is a hunting lodge, ice house, and a manmade lake to be seen.

The Group welcome all walkers to join their strolls. If it is your first time or you have traversed with them before. All Covid restrictions will be adhered to. It is asked that all walkers are they have comfortable footwear and dress appropriately for the weather. It is advised to bring a drink to keep hydrated and a snack as they will stop for a short while along the route.

In the meantime for any of you that will be walking in Poolboy bog during June and early July please keep your eyes open for the protected Marsh Fritillary butterfly and the Bee Orchid flowers quite limited to this area.

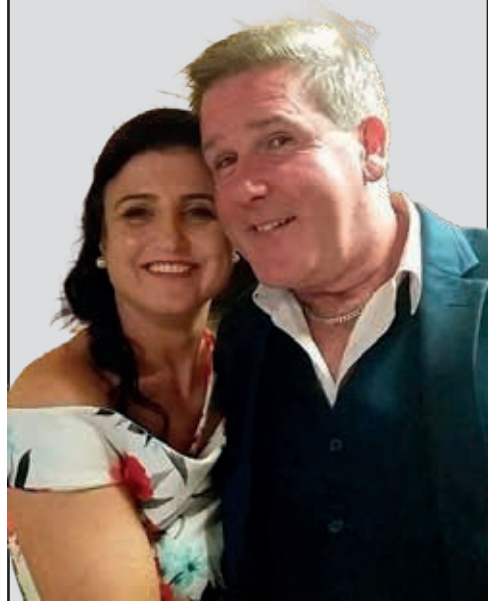
All the photos on this page were taken in Poolboy Bog last month by one of our passionate walkers - Deirdre Ó Baoill.

For further information on Ballinasloe Walks and Trails please visit their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ballinasloewalksandtrails> email ballinasloewalksandtrails@gmail.com or contact them on (087) 645 8979.



Photo:
Deirdre Ó Baoill

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Kenny and Tumulty families, friends and neighbours of Nuala and Joey who lost their lives tragically in a fire on the night of May 12th.





Over the last few weeks the Town Team ran a Spring Photo competition over on Instagram. Many of our followers tagged us in their photos of Ballinasloe. It is so uplifting to see people posting great photos of our locality and all its famous landmarks. Now more than ever, so many people are out and about walking, running or cycling and taking the time to appreciate all that Ballinasloe has to offer.



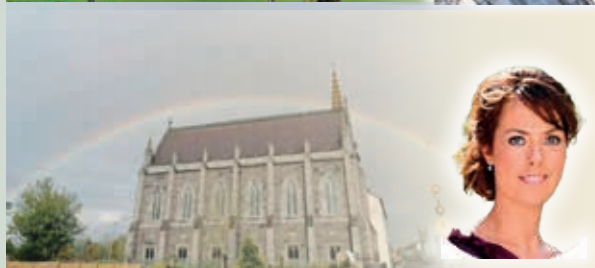
The judging panel had a tough choice to pick their favourite top 5 photos. They are all uniquely Ballinasloe in terms of recognisable landmarks or locations.

We love all 5 photos but we will leave it up to the public to vote for their favourite. The winning photo will receive a €100 ShopBallinasloe voucher.

Voting is through Instagram platform only. To vote; follow ballinasloetownteam on Instagram. Voting open now



1. Annette Hurley, who works locally, is a born and bred Ballinasloe native. During Lockdown on one of her many walks around Ballinasloe and its places of interest, she took this picture on the Eve of May Day, capturing one of our most famous landmarks, The Fair Green. She loves being able to go for walks around the area especially Garbally, appreciating the beauty we have on our doorstep.



2. Amy Uí Neachtain is a local designer who specialises in bridal headwear and accessories. Although she is a native of Co. Cork, she loves living in Ballinasloe because there is such a great sense of community. The Town has so many hidden gems which provide for some great photo opportunities. She has recently taken up sea swimming and is looking forward to socialising with family and friends again soon.



3. Patricia Hodgins lives in Ballinasloe with her fiancé David and their son Tyler. She works as part of the Household Team on St John's Covid Ward in Portlincula Hospital with the most amazing team. She took this photo while taking part in a local fundraiser 70miles for 70years with BTAFC with her son Tyler. She loves to partake in as many local fundraisers as she can to help our community as it is so important to try and give something back. Garbally is like a second home to her, it is the most beautiful place to visit and she recommends it. Ballinasloe has so much to offer with great history and traditions that will continue to grow. She firmly believes we have such an amazing community who always pull together in times that we need it most and that is what makes our town the best.



4. Karen Campbell was born in Ballinasloe and lived here her entire life. This picture represents Hope and Strength in relation to the town she loves and is proud to call her home. She submitted this shot as for her the brightness represents a community that pulls together and works alongside each other to bring our town back into fruition. A team spirit that has the ability to conquer any fear and strive to stand united..... The light coming through the clouds symbolizes the beginning of a positive change in our town which offers hope, belief and positivity.



5. Avril Noone grew up in Cappataggle/Kilconnell and has been living in Derrymullen for the last 17 years. Her interests include keeping fit/running /walking. She is an animal and nature lover with a passion for photography and GAA. She loves Ballinasloe town and its people, she finds there is always great community spirit, togetherness, pride in our Heritage, and ambition for the future of our town.



Emma Donohue, the 22-year-old songstress from Killoran, Cappataggle, has been crowned the "TG4 Glór Tire winner for 2021" following a series of heats. She defeated David Connor from Claremorris in the final, to take the coveted title and a cash prize of €5,000.

Daughter of Tommy and Helen (nee Keary), Emma is training to be a nurse but is an accomplished singer and musician for many years. With three well-received singles already behind her, Emma also plays the accordion, the tin whistle, the spoons and is well on the way to mastering the guitar.

Emma, who was mentored by Portumna country star Mike Denver, is modest about her latest

success. "I am just an ordinary country girl who lives with my family and loves the farming life. I have big dreams in life and will thrive to achieve them. I always had a burning desire to sing but I love my nursing training as well" she added.

By Ken Kelly

VINTAGE PLAN FOR SLOW RETURN

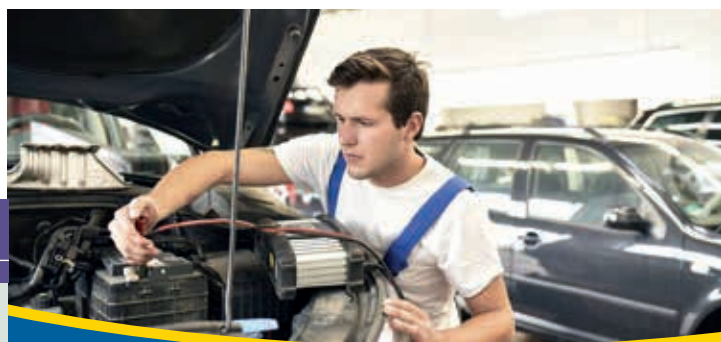
As Covid Restrictions ease Ballinasloe and District Vintage club are putting plans in place for some activities ahead.

June 20 which (traditional date for the Eyrecourt Rally) a Vintage Car and Tractor run from Eyrecourt is planned. On June 27th at Pallas karting track Tynagh, the first of the year testing event takes place.

A Threshing Day is being planned in the beautiful setting of Finnerty's mill a beautifully restored water driven corn mill.

A cars and coffee event where young lads and lassies can display their custom or modified cars in a safe and controlled manner, as well as classic vintage cars showing event is being safely planned – a first for the Club.

All going well the Club hope to be able to undertake their traditional second Sunday in October event on the Streets of the town with their unique Heritage and Vintage day. Follow the Club and their plans on their fbook page – Ballinasloe and District Vintage Club.



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Soroptimist International Ballinasloe and District held their AGM via Zoom recently and have announced their recent officer elections.

Maire Hughes, Eileen D'Arcy, Maura Joyce and Kathleen Croffy have been elected as Secretary, Treasurer, Programme Action and Public Speaker respectively.

Elected as Social Secretary is Mary Magee, while Marirose Cullinan and Mary Courtney have taken over as Friendship Link and Head of Communications.

Kitty McHugh is the elected Attendance Officer. Previous President Marie Connolly has stepped down, taking the role of PRO this year. Vice President Myrnnie Kelly has taken over as new President. Nominated to serve as National Delegates include Maria Finnegan, Maire Hughes and Mary Courtney.



Marie Connolly
Outgoing President

Myrnnie Kelly
New President

This year, is one hundred years since the founding of the first Soroptimist Club in California on June 21, 1921. Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland together with Soroptimist Clubs from around the world join together to celebrate 100 years of Soroptimist International.

Outgoing President Marie Connolly states: "Our Programme Action Officer Maura Joyce is busy organising a tree planting ceremony and arranging a seat in the graveyard to mark 25 years of Soroptimist International Ballinasloe and the centenary of Soroptimist International. Social Secretary Mary Magee

is hoping to organise a luncheon to celebrate the event, when it is safe to do so."

On Women's International Day 2021, the then Vice President Myrnnie Kelly along with Composer and Conductor Eimear Noone, and Cllr Evelyn Parsons marked International Women's International Day with a lighting up ceremony in St. Michael's Square and announced that the local Group were donating a bursary of €1,000 to Ard Scoil Mhuire for STEM studies for the coming year.

It was noted at the meeting from outgoing Treasurer Kitty McHugh that the organisation were in a position to make donations to the Simon Community, Town Hall, Town Band and Women's Aid for 2020.

Finally the outgoing President Marie Connolly thanked everyone for their help and support and gave a warm welcome to Myrnnie Kelly as their new President and wished her the best of luck in her new role.

If you would like to join the Club in this their Centenary year then reachoutthroughsiballinasloe21@gmail.com or visit their facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Soroptimists-International-Ballinasloe-and-District>.

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Sinn Féin TD for Roscommon/Galway Kerrane claims rents are out of control and rising in Ballinasloe as well as raising concerns around the quality of private rented accommodation.

In the last year alone, rents in County Galway have increased by 5% with some tenants in the community receiving rent increases of between €300 and €400 in one go. There are more renters in the area (private renting and renting from the local authority) than there are households who own their own homes or have mortgages, according to the 2016 Census.

The Roscommon/Galway TD stated in the Dail: “Unfortunately, this is nothing new – these institutional investors enjoy tax advantages and exemptions, given to them by the government, to squeeze out struggling home buyers, pushing up property prices and rents.” This message was backed by Cllr Dermot Connolly.

Speaking in the Dáil, Kerrane said: “Galway is now one of eight Counties where average rents stands above €1,000. I had also recently contacted by a resident of the town who had their rent increased by nearly €400. This represents a rent increase of over 45%. Yet, landlords can do this and it is happening all of the time”.

Claire stated “In government, Sinn Féin would implement an emergency, three-year ban on rent increases and legislate for tenancies of indefinite duration. We would also introduce a refundable tax credit for tenants in the private rented sector to put a month’s rent back in every renters pocket. We would also ensure that all rental properties are compliant with minimum standards by introducing an NCT style certification system.”

One of the biggest issues that Claire reported was the continuous phone calls, letters and emails her office received every week from renters in the locality and its hinterlands pointing out the poor quality of private rented accommodation.

Fianna Fáil Senator for Roscommon/Galway Eugene Murphy has also hit out: “I am dealing with many genuine cases where there is a real need for housing due to unfortunate family circumstances and in one particular case an individual has been on the housing waiting list for seven or eight years. It is totally unacceptable to leave people on a house waiting list for this length of time.

“Apart from the dire need for the construction of new social housing stock in Ballinasloe, there is a problem with the existing housing stock as some people are currently living in unacceptable conditions with heating and damp problems or overcrowding conditions. It is not acceptable to have more than two people in a one-bedroom apartment and unfortunately this is the cases in some circumstances” urges Senator Murphy.

“There is action that can be taken to address the rental crisis. It just requires political will. This government has no plan to reduce rents, protect renters from further rent hikes or prioritise affordable rental supply” notes Claire Kerrane T.D.



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Accessibility Ballinasloe Committee, along with Brothers of Charity services Tope and SUAS, has been working with local representatives in highlighting the need for accessible footpaths in Poolboy. Access is delighted to state that funding has been granted for this. The lack of a footpath in this area has been an ongoing issue that is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.

The committee is delighted that funding of €770,000 has been allocated to the town under the Active Travel initiative. Furthermore, Access is also working with their public representatives concerning the accessible bus stop that will be located at the Marina to ensure it will be accessible to all.

The committee has also been working with the Athlone to Ballinasloe Greenway Group highlighting the need for a safe and accessible space that everyone could access. The group were delighted to partake in the promotion of the Greenway starring in a video highlighting the need for the Greenway to come through the town and how it will be of huge benefit to individuals of all abilities, families, sports groups, businesses and organisations in the community.

Currently, a lot of emphasis has been placed on the public toilets in the locality and the upgrading of them. As restaurants and cafes begin to open with an emphasis on outside dining, having accessible facilities capable of catering for all abilities. The upgrading of the public toilets should be wheelchair friendly and has been highlighted same to their public

representatives.

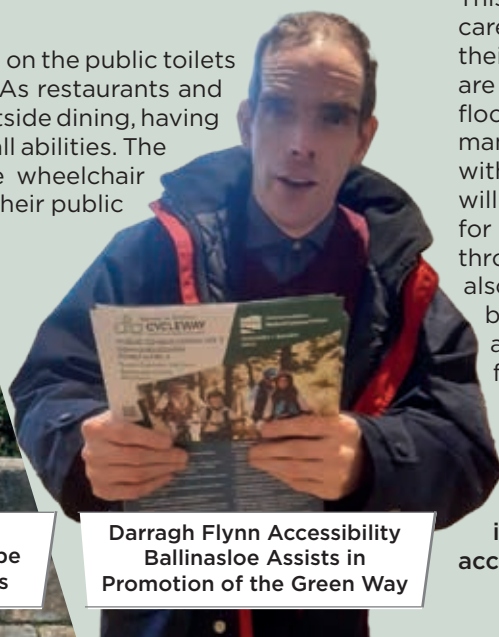
As the stores, restaurants and bars begin to open up again it is encouraged that all businesses should keep accessibility and inclusion at the forefront of their decision making so everyone can access their premises and facilities.

Furthermore, the organisation are pushing to have a changing places facility available for those who need overhead hoists and a changing table to support them. Please research changing places in Ireland for further information. This is necessary to prevent carers from having to change their loved one or person you are caring for on a public toilet floor. Sadly this is a reality for many wheelchair users and those with high support needs. This will also be hugely beneficial for when the Greenway comes through Ballinasloe while also highlighting the goal of becoming Ireland's leading accessible and inclusive town for all that live and visit here.

New members are being sought to join the group. For those that are interested or would like further information please contact accessibilitybsloe@gmail.com.



Senator Dolan at local Housing Development to be linked with new pathways



Darragh Flynn Accessibility Ballinasloe Assists in Promotion of the Green Way

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In early 1959 a young schoolteacher was plucked from obscurity and thrust into the stage footlights to play the title role in the John B. Keane blockbuster drama "Sive." Patty McGuire was in her first year teaching in St. Augustine's National School, Clontuskert when she was approached by the late Fr. Kevin Ryle and Dermot Connolly of the newly-founded Relays Drama Group to make her stage debut.

Patty's older sister, Joan, who was teaching in Taughmaconnell at the time, had already been chosen to play Sive's mother, Mena Glavin, for Relays first ever production and Patty was selected for the title role. "I was shocked and surprised because I never had been on the stage before, but I never thought that the play would be such a success" she said.



Patty McGuire as "Sive" and Liam Keller as "Liam Scuab" in their first play.

Relays Drama Group was founded to pay off the debts of three consecutive athletic meetings that were completely washed out. Stage veterans Dermot Connolly and Margaret Geraghty joined newcomers Michael Cooke, Martin Greally, Paddy Corban, Billy Vaughan, Liam Keller and the McGuire sisters in staging the play to packed houses all over the country.

The initial three night opening run in Ballinasloe's Town Hall had to be extended to eight nights before community groups

and organisations sought their production, which each night proved to be a sell-out. "The spring of 1959 was hectic" said Patty. "In the middle of a petrol strike we staged the play in each of the four provinces and even turned down an invitation to perform "Sive" in London and New York. We had late nights and then up for work in the mornings but it was a real happy family affair. Many business people provided transport for us as it was hard to get petrol. We all got on great" she added.

For the record, Relays were the first group outside the Listowel Players in Kerry to stage "Sive" in this country, even before it was accepted by the Abbey Theatre. The Ballinasloe cast performed in New Inn, Killimor, Ennis (2 nights), Boyle (2) and Tullamore (2) as well as Cavan.

The young Ballinasloe heroine went on to play roles in other plays staged by the Relays Group including The Country Boy, Ill Met by Moonlight, In Wild Earth, Don't Bother to Unpack, The Hostage and Many Young Men of Twenty.

By Ken Kelly



Pictured at a Reunion of the original Relays Drama Group in 1999 to mark their 40th anniversary, were:
Front Row (L-R): Patrick Vaughan (representing his late father Billy), Margaret Geraghty (Horan), Fr. Kevin Ryle, Patty McGuire, Nora Relihan (Listowel), Joan McGuire (Nolan).
Back Row, (L-R): Peter Weafer, Paddy Corban, Michael Cooke, Liam Keller and Ken Kelly.
Missing from photo: Martin Greally and the late Dermot Connolly.

Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market, which runs in the Town Hall Theatre every Friday morning, celebrates its first decade anniversary in November. Over that time the market has become both a place to buy baked goods, artesian crafts and a place to have a good chat. Since 2011, the market has gone from strength to strength and has remained very successful.



Phillip White Alongside
18-week old Arthur Visit
Ballinasloe Indoor
Country Market

The market is a co-operative enterprise under the auspices of Irish Country Markets Ltd. As a co-operative, the suppliers to the market set up their produce in the early morning and various members taking turns looking after customers from week to week.

The market makes sure that it is in full compliance with all Covid-19 protocols. Hand sanitiser is provided at the doorways, and masks are required at all times when on the premises. All suppliers of food products are visited periodically by the local Health Inspector. This is a requirement of Irish Country Markets Ltd.

A very loyal and growing customer base has been built up and it is a case of the early bird catches the worm as produce sells out very quickly. This is very encouraging for the suppliers and since reopening at the beginning of March the Market have also adopted a new service of order and collect, which has proved

to be very successful, ensuring customer satisfaction.

Currently some 18 suppliers trade at the Market, all of whom pay a yearly membership that covers insurance and other costs throughout the year, the market still boasts a wide mix of produce available - brown bread, tarts, cakes, desserts, buns, savoury products, free-range eggs, jewellery, knit goods, dolls, soaps, bath bombs, greeting cards, photography and all types of crafts all sourced from local goods and produce makers.

If you have a special event coming up in your family, without a doubt, there will be something that will cater to your needs. Check out some of their bakers that can supply high-quality desserts and cakes. Be sure to pay a visit Friday mornings from 9 am to 1 pm.

Outdoor seating has been installed so they are resuming free tea/coffee for our customers who make a purchase.

Orders are taken weekly by Co-ordinator Martin Deeley at (087) 959 1548, up to Wednesday of each week or can be placed in the Market stalls on Fridays.



(L-R) Mary O'Connell, Martin Deely, Senator Aisling Dolan
and Marion Deely enjoying the Indoor Country Market



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Ballinasloe Town Band held their first ever virtual Annual General Meeting via Zoom. Chairman, Damien O'Neachtain, warmly welcomed the attendees before continuing: "This year has been an incredible year for the whole community and has had a very significant effect on the Band and its activities. which have been curtailed significantly".

Damien went on to outline the progress on the renovations noting that the roof has now been completed on the Band Hall in the old Parochial Hall. However, the recent lockdown restrictions brought all further works to a halt, delaying the planned opening and use of the facility as a result. It is hoped that as restrictions are lifted, the works can be finally completed.

The Chair, on behalf of Town Band, thanked the local community for their generosity in supporting the band's "Raise the Roof" fundraising activity which succeeded in meeting its target of €50,000.

Particular thanks was paid to Martina Doherty who drove the campaign on behalf of the band. Galway Rural Development, the principal funder towards the first few phases of the renovations, was also singled out for gratitude. Bandmaster and Committee member Noel Madden was also warmly mentioned for the work he put in to secure the funding, as was Chris Doherty for coordinating the renovation work being undertaken.

Ballinasloe Credit Union were also thanked for their generous support when they recently presented the Band with a payment of €10,000 from their social fund. Galway County Council were also thanked for their €3,000 towards the gas heating installation.

Despite these generous contributions it was highlighted how fundraising had become impossible in recent months and how this had impacted the finances of the Band. There will be ongoing expenses when the hall is completed, and fundraising will need to become a priority once restrictions lift. Hope was expressed that the community would be as generous as they could be when approached.

The future looks bright for the band with large numbers of young musicians in the Junior bands under Junior Bandmaster Keith Kelly. Some of these will break into the Senior band in the coming months and years. Huge compliments were

given to the Senior Band, under the baton of Bandmaster Noel Madden, which has a very committed and loyal base who made several public appearances in the Town Square and at the local Nursing Homes during the year of the pandemic, helping to raise local spirits and return a smile to the faces of locals.

The meeting concluded with the following officers being returned. Chairperson Damien O'Neachtain, Secretary Katja Connolly, Senior Bandmaster Noel Madden, Junior Bandmaster Keith Kelly, Treasurer Carmel Carrick, Band Manager and Asst. Secretary Martina Doherty and PRO Brian Derrane.

Everyone is looking forward to rehearsing and playing when it is safe to do so.



Conference on the Future of Europe

In May the Conference on the Future of Europe platform was launched.

This hub provides an opportunity for you to speak up, to say what kind of Europe you want to live in, to help shape our future.

You can join or organise an event, see what others have to say and you can make sure your voice is heard.



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The launching of the Town Hall Theatre's first ever livestream series, Seomra Eile, since February has been a huge success and all involved have been blown away by the support it has received.

It was a joint venture between filmmaker Mike Casey and the Town Hall, set up to provide a platform for local artistes to perform and connect with an audience virtually while they couldn't do so in person.

Since its launch in February, they have run 11 entertaining concerts watched live from the Hall, by audiences all over the country with some concerts even garnering international viewership.

While the series is now retiring for the summer, they hope to be back with it (and other livestream events) in the Autumn. All involved in the series: the crew, the acts and especially the audiences are commended for making it such a success.

On behalf of the Town Hall Theatre, Chairperson Maura Hughes states: "We owe the people of Ballinasloe and the surrounding community a debt of gratitude for all their continued support, especially over the last number of months. You have given so generously to our fundraising appeal, which has been a real lifeline for the Theatre, and have been so supportive of the Seomra Eile series. We are very appreciative and we hope to be able to welcome you all back to the Hall very soon."

It has been a difficult fourteen months but there is finally some light at the end of the tunnel. Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre (BTHT) are among the many who are anxiously awaiting the government's announcement in relation to the return of the Arts and Entertainment sector and are hoping for some good news in the near future. It has been very strange to have the Hall, which is usually so full of life, quiet for so long and the committee are so looking forward to welcoming back performing groups and audiences as soon as it is safe to do so.

A small group of volunteers have taken the opportunity to continue to work on renovations within the building. They have been busy completely doing up the back kitchen, along with other general

repair and maintenance, such as the repainting of all the seats.

The next project over the coming months will be the redecoration of the front foyer. In the last few weeks, members of the Community Employment Scheme have been able to return to work outside the Hall and they have been painting all the outside doors and working on tidying up the backyard.

The Friday morning Country Market continues.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the Town Hall Committee or would like to get involved in any way, please email aoife@ballinasloetownhall.com. Follow BTHT on Facebook and Instagram to keep up to date with the latest news and events from the Hall.



Liam Loughrey, Johnny Johnston and Alan Coolhan in rehearsals for their performance on Seomra Eile



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After a long delay Cumann Camógaíochta Beal Atha na Slua season has finally got underway. For the past three months the committee has worked towards this day. Like every GAA organisation, meticulous preparations, procedures and protocols have been put in place and are being adhered to in every way possible.

Each player, parent and guardian have completed an online module and registered on the new GAA Return to Play App. They then resubmit their health status before each training session. A Covid Supervisor has been assigned to each team to monitor this, and to coordinate the team activities. It is certainly different times in sport but the players, coaches, parents and guardians have taken it in stride and are actively playing their part in facilitating the continuation of club activities.

The U16s were the first to return, followed by the U14s, then U12s, U10s, Under eights, Under sixes and the Juniors. They were all delighted to be back training after the long break and now look forward to games ahead.

As a club, Ballinasloe Camogie's finances have taken a huge

hit. As the weekly lotto was put on hold when COVID struck. With restrictions likely to be in place for a long time to come and with the health and wellbeing of the collectors and sellers foremost in their minds, the committee decided to look at alternative methods of fundraising. A new monthly draw was decided and agreed upon.

June sees the launch of CLUICHE CAOGA 50/50 monthly draw. There is no doubt that the support the club lotto has enjoyed over the years will continue with this new venture. The draw will take place each month and there will be a monthly winner with no rollover. The monthly cost of the draw is eight euro (just two euro per week), paid via standing order from your bank account, or an annual payment of €90. The first draw will take place on June 5.

Details are available on the club Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BallinasloeCamogie> and will also be circulated to all teams and parents via the team communications channels.



Mothers and Daughters (pre-Covid) of Ballinasloe Camogie Club

CAHALAN JEWELLERS & BALLINASLOE TOWN BACK TO FULL BUSINESS

Cahalan Jewellers welcomes back to all their business neighbours in Ballinasloe and surrounding areas in these past few weeks.

The Store also gives a big welcome to their new neighbours New Look Town on Main Street, What a positive and wonderful change for the best.

There has definitely been a sombre feeling for the time that Cahalan's was closed. Cahalan's certainly felt it, they have missed you, their customers very much, be it for a chat, a purchase, to browse or to use their Easy Pay Plan for the past year especially in recent months of closure. What a shock it was then and since as it continued, however the excitement and delight that the jewellers have experienced

since being permitted to open up fully in May is beyond belief.

Over the past 47 years, Cahalan's have never had a break from the public like this past one. Years ago, in Secondary School, they held a three-day silence retreat, it was thought it was a lifetime not to be able to speak to others. However, the lockdown has taught them that interaction with people is so important and is seriously missed by many, especially those living alone. Interaction and friendship are two wonderful blessings, and it is only now that many realise these gifts and appreciate them.

"There is a miracle called Friendship, that dwells within the heart,

And you don't know how it happened, or when it got its start.

But the happiness it brings you always gives a special lift,

And then you realize that friendship is such a precious Gift."

The store looking forward to seeing you, drop in if you are passing and there is absolutely no need to feel you have to buy, pop in for a chat too and rekindle friendships.



Cahalan
JEWELLERS

A semblance of normality has returned to those involved in Ballinasloe GAA, and it's great to see all the football, hurling and ladies football teams back at training and they look forward to a summer of games in all codes. Importantly, Covid protocols are in place, equipment is sanitised after every use, and each player must have completed a health questionnaire before going on the pitch.

Cúl Camps are now available to book online at kelloggsculcamps.gaa.ie. Children from the ages of six to 13 years can enjoy an action-packed and fun-filled week of football activity from July fifth to the ninth, and hurling activity from July 12



JUNIOR FOOTBALL TEAM

Back Row: James Shaughnessy, Graeme Gullane, Jonathon Maloney, John Coughlan, Shane Reynolds, Dan Barrett, Oisín Cooley, Brian Feeney, Cian Poland, Cormac Gillespie.

Middle Row: Danny Byrne, Ronan Kelly, Cian Dooley, Cian Reynolds, Tom Fitzpatrick, Eoin Coleman.

Front Row: Evan Hayes, Odhran Dooley, Jack Mitchell, Conor Coleman, Craig Potter, Naoise Murphy.



JUNIOR HURLING TEAM

Back Row L-R: Shane Kelly, Declan Dillon, Michael O'Grady, Adam Potter, Dylan Curley, Craig Potter, Liam Donagh, Cian Fahy, Shane Reynolds, John Coughlan, Conor Gibbons, Cian Ward, Craig Keighrey, Michilín Fogarty, Conor Coleman, Daithí Ward, Brian Fahy, Evan Glynn, Dan Dolan, Evan Hayes, Rian Dolan, Micheal O'Neill, Davy Gavin.

Middle Row L-R: Michael Fogarty, Eoin Fenton, Gavin Hynes, Eoin Colean, Ciaran O'Reilly, Shane Gibbons, Cormac Casey, Stephen Hill, Alan Reynolds, Phelim O'Reilly, Cathal O'Hanlon, Eric Luwaga, Tom Fitzpatrick, James Ward.

Front Row L-R: Liam Gordon, Danny Byrne, Jack Mitchell, Anthony Smyth, Patrick Sheehan, Cian Connolly, Pa Casey, Aodhain Connaughton, Niall Kelly, Alan Caufield.



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to 16. The cost is €65 for your first child, €60 for a second child and €50 for subsequent children which include the Cúl Camp kit – Backpack, Jersey and a quarter zip top which will be delivered directly to your home. Early booking is recommended as places are limited and can only be booked online.

Run4Pieta was launched in 2020 to create a community event with GAA clubs across the Country. Last year €8,743 was raised with many getting involved for Pieta and people from all over the country as well as all over the world took part by running, walking and cycling for a slot over 24 hours. This year, on Friday fourth of June, from 7 pm for 24 hours, Ballinasloe GAA will again be participating in Run4Pieta.

This year, Pieta, cognisant of the impact that Covid-19 has on Club funding and the positive role the GAA plays in the lives of its players, have offered to give 50% of funds raised back to the club. The club is asking people to contact the GAA Facebook page or kathryngibbons25@gmail.com to register for a slot to walk, run or cycle during the 24 hours on the June Bank Holiday Weekend.

Bingo is back and has proven to be very successful in its new format. Every Tuesday night growing numbers are logging on to play Bingo, listening to the familiar voice of

Noel Dillon calling the numbers.

Anyone can sign up, no matter where in the world you are and for only €10, it is a great way to have a real-time connection with the town. There is a prize fund of up to €7,000 every week, the jackpot being €5,000. GAA Lotto is happening every Friday night and tickets can be bought on the club's website. The Jackpot currently stands at €3,600.

To register for a slot to walk, run or cycle during the 24 hours on the June Bank Holiday Weekend contact the Facebook page or kathryngibbons25@gmail.com

PEARSE'S TO 'ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK'

By Jack Treacy

Members of Padraig Pearse's GAA are emerging from a long lockdown and gearing themselves up to rock their way around the walking track within the club grounds in Woodmount over 24 hours.

The 'Rock around the Clock' Fundraising walk begins at 12 noon on Saturday, June 26 and continues during the day and night, finishing at 12 noon on Sunday, June 27.

Twenty-four teams will take an hour each to keep the relay going to raise much needed funds to continue with the development of the club and playing grounds.

In recent years floodlights have

been installed, the walking trek upgraded and in recent weeks the pitches drained and reseeded. The event is set to become a real community event with many hours taking on a theme which will enhance the events with colour and fun. There are plans afoot for a drinks and snack station and music will help those through the dark hours!

Which team will complete the most laps? Who is the fastest / slowest walkers or who is able to dance their way around the clock? There will also be an hour in which participants will remember former members and supporters, particularly those who have passed since the start of this pandemic, and a chance for the club to say thanks to all the frontline workers and community members who have assisted during challenging time. To add further intrigue and excitement to the event a draw will take place nearer to the day from which each team will be allotted their walking hour.

As Pearse's prepare for the new season it is important to remember that all activity has been made possible through the extensive fundraising and support of the public, none of these developments would be possible and all are extremely grateful.

Team Captains are presently recruiting their team members and if you wish to get involved you can contact Frank Canning on (086) 385 7414 or Anne Lohan on (087) 767 8196.

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It may be off-season but it's all a go at Ballinasloe Rugby Football Club (BRFC) with several teams back training for fun and fitness, although there will be no competitive fixtures for some time yet. Mini Summer Camps have been scheduled for late July with further updates coming soon. Overall, it is recognised that they have an important role to play in the physical and mental wellbeing of its members.

Similar to other sports, players will be required to submit health declarations before training/activities. While hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and social distancing will feature strongly amongst other measures to minimise risk to players, coaches, and volunteers. The committee and coaches are working hard to ensure the Club is prepared to welcome you all back for the 2021 rugby season.

Fundraising through its 50/50 fundraiser continues with ever-increasing members. The community's continued support has been greatly appreciated. It is easy to enter by setting up a five euro per month standing order to the club or by paying a once-off €60 that will guarantee inclusion in the draw for 12 months. More details can be found on their Facebook page or from any committee member.

A very popular clothing collection was held to raise much needed funds, not only for the teams but also for a local worthy charity, Ballinasloe Lions Club. The collection is ongoing so keep an eye out on social media for further collection dates. All money

raised will help fund ongoing and future projects including pitch lighting, entrance safety enhancements, car park drainage to include tarmac and lighting, dressing room completion and other facility enhancements.

Some former and current players have also been shining provincially, nationally and internationally of late. Béibhinn Parsons has continued to feature strongly with the Irish Women's squad in this year's Six Nations competition with several tries to her name and some memorable performances. Colm Reilly has signed a professional contract with Connacht Rugby. BRFC offer their heartiest congratulations to Méabh Deely and Aoibheann Reilly who have been selected in the Irish Women's Sevens squad for the International Rugby Sevens tournament at St George's Park.

To get in touch with Ballinasloe RFC with their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BallinasloeRFC> or email ballinasloerfcmembers@gmail.com for further information.



Méabh Deely and Aoibheann Reilly selected in the Irish Sevens Squad for the International Rugby Sevens tournament at St George's Park

Béibhinn Parsons Continues To Perform For Ireland During Six Nations

Colm Reilly Signs A New Contract For Connacht

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Ballinasloe Town AFC has been very active over recent weeks with the recent success of the 70 Mile for 70 Years Challenge raising €7,452.34 for St. Teresa's Children Ward, leaving the club with a balance of €17,598.82.

A €600 donation was also made to Brothers of Charity after a tremendous effort by Patrick Staunton. With the return of training for both senior teams and underage and competition returning in early June, a positive start is hoped for quarter three of 2021 with all guidelines being adhered to.

Chairperson Joby Kelly states: "We were absolutely thrilled to support the Children's Ward in our home town and also to see at first hand the great Community spirit that our Club event has promoted".

The Committee have decided to run this Community Challenge on an annual basis and the Committee will select a different local organisation or charity to benefit each year from 30% of the overall profits.

The Committee also paid tribute to local Tidy Towns activist Eric Naughten for the outstanding work he is doing in recycling bottles and cans and in general clean-ups of the local area. Joby and Club Secretary Wayne Braithwaite recently made a presentation to Eric for his voluntary time and effort and as an acknowledgement have planted an appreciation tree (Magnolia) for Eric at the Curragh Grounds.

Development Co-ordinator Johnny Walsh (who is also Tidy Towns Treasurer), stated: "Eric has been an inspiration to the Ballinasloe General Public for his outstanding Tidy Towns work and the practical way he is addressing local clean-ups and recycling."

Former BTAFC player Oisín Duffy made his first-team start of the Season for Athlone Town in April and has retained his place on the starting line-up since.

Heather Payne pictured after she won the Player of Game Award after the recent senior ladies international vs Belgium.

Former Ballinasloe Town AFC player Oisín Duffy, now starring with Athlone Town in the league of Ireland.

The club is extremely proud of Oisín. His dad Mark, has been a prominent and active Ballinasloe Town Committee member for several years and has been very involved in the managerial team for the senior squad for the past few seasons.

Former player Heather Payne is now very much an established member with the Irish Senior Ladies' International Soccer Team. In the recent International vs Belgium, Heather was selected as the Carlsberg 'Player of the Game'.

Club members were extremely busy collecting scrap metal from households throughout the community as well as items that would have been dumped throughout the local area. This is doubling up as the Club's fundraising venture and contribution to cleaning up the local area and also does our bit for the environment. After the community scrap collection drive, a general litter collection clean up in the general vicinity of the club grounds was done.

BTAFC is delighted to be back with our underage training sessions and anyone interested should contact any committee member for details or check out their facebook page.



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After many unexpected delays, now that construction has reopened, work has finally started on the first phase at the new site west of the running track in Brackernagh.

In preparation, a small volunteer group of club members gathered to collect the large amount of rubbish that had accumulated in and around the site.

Once the site was cleaned up a simple Sod Turning Ceremony to herald the historic end of their nomadic adventures from Garbally, River St, Rugby Club, Ard Scoil Mhuire was held.

Attended by community representatives, including the local residents' associations, tennis club members, and representatives from the Brothers of Charity, who have for many years participated in dedicated sessions offered by the tennis club.

"We are thrilled to moving to our new home at last and are grateful and thankful to all the residents of this area for making us feel so welcome, we hope our future here will be a happy and successful one for all" stated long time Tennis lover and Club Chair Joe Staunton.

"It's a fitting testament to players, committee members, parents and supporters down through the years that we have gotten to this exciting phase" he continued.



L-R Sarah Doherty (tennis club), Claire Madden, Laura Madden, John Loughnane (Brothers of Charity), Joe Staunton (tennis club), Derek Kelly (spade, Brothers of Charity), Nora Dowd, Marie Fogerty (Residents' Association), Emily and Finola Riddell (tennis club), Joan Walsh (Residents' Association) Fiona and Garry Zancanaro (tennis club)

Two tarmac courts, to be opened in July, represent the first phase of a highly ambitious plan for the site, culminating with the eventual development of multipurpose indoor Community and Sports Centre, providing a much needed facility for numerous activities for young and old.

Sports Capital funding has been applied for the next phase of the development, a third court and artificial surfaces and lights for all three courts. Subject to this further grant, the next phase will be completed next year.

Even with this funding, considerable additional fundraising will be essential. The club's new EuroMillions Lottery Syndicate will be launched shortly, and the club are keen to hear from any individuals or groups that may be able to help with fundraising or in any way.

Until the new courts are opened, the following programme of activities will continue at Ardscoil Mhuire:

Monday and Friday -
Open Club Nights 6.30-9.00pm
Saturday 11am-12 Noon -
Junior Sessions ages 7-11
Saturday 12 Noon-1pm -
Junior Sessions ages 12-17
Sunday 10-11am - Introductory
Session for New Players
Sunday 11am -1pm -
Open Club Sessions

New players of all standards are welcome to attend a free introductory session or to join the club for the extremely reasonable membership fees of only €30 for adults, €20 for Juniors and €50 for Families.

For further information see <https://www.facebook.com/bsloetennisclub> or email bsloetennis@gmail.com or call: Garry (085) 112 4197, Joe (087) 252 1424, Louise (087) 135 3751 or Sarah (087) 680 0598 (Junior queries).



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Now that golf clubs are open again Ballinasloe Golf Club had a low key Captain's Drive In to mark the start of the 2021 golfing year.



Pictured l-r: Pat O'Sullivan (Seniors Captain), James Mooney (Junior Boys Captain), John Hurley Snr. (President), John Hurley Jnr. (Mens Captain), Anne Greene (Lady Captain) and Holly Cafferkey (Junior Girls Captain). Other club officers for 2021 (not in picture) include David Flynn (Chairman), Aideen Bergin (Secretary), Richard Carroll (Treasurer), Michael Barrett (Course Manager), Peggy Wong (Lady Vice Captain) and Micheal O'Hehir (Mens Vice Captain).

Since re-opening the Golf Club has seen a huge response and have actively seen members and non-members come down to the club and enjoying the club's facilities. The club has ensured that all Covid-19 regulations are still being followed allowing an enjoyable and safe experience for everyone.

The Club in its inactive period were rather busy having almost three miles of buggy paths fitted on the course. These paths are a valuable asset in that they allow anyone driving a buggy to play year round while still protecting the course. The paths were completed to a high standard in record time, with little damage to the course by Brian Conneely, Construction. May and Dermot O'Mahony have been praised for their financial assistance with the project.

The Club has also seen the completion of a brand new flood lit practice chipping area and green which will be due to open shortly. Mark Coneely who headed the project said: "it will be a valuable practice asset to the members of the club for years to come. Ballinasloe is the envy of most clubs as it now has a floodlit practice area and putting green."

Eugene Riddell (head greenkeeper) has retired recently after many years of dedicated service to the club. Club Captain John Hurley stated "The club and members appreciate very much Eugene's valuable contribution and service to the club over the years and we wish him all the best in his retirement".

His replacement has been is Ross Fitzgerald as the Course's Technical Superintendent at the club. Ross is a native of Kilgarve and had been greenkeeper at Westport Golf Club before his appointment.

"As well as the enhanced facilities there are a core group of lovers of the game who are passionate about welcoming new members and introducing one of life's most pleasurable outdoor sports – at any age or ability to the ambiance of our parkland course of Rossigloss", explains John.

Golf nationwide has seen a resurgence in popularity among all age groups. Younger people are enjoying new challenges while other sports have been closed off. Ballinasloe Golf Club welcomes new members irrespective of their skills.

Seniors Captain Pat O'Sullivan emphasises the benefits of golf through both exercise and mental wellbeing. "Even if you have an old set of clubs in the attic, I strongly urge my fellow seniors to come up and join us – there is

fantastic camaraderie and it is great to get out in the fresh air!" say Pat.

There is also a vibrant ladies section led by Captain Anne Greene which welcomes all levels of players. There is an incredible friendship among all the women, and I am proud to be part of it" she says. "There is also an active "Get into Golf" as well as junior golf programmes being planned – all dependent on the relaxation of Covid 19 rules".

Last season, the club welcomed 200 new members – many their first time to the game – juniors, women, seniors and are again extending the hand of friendship to those who wish to join or just try it out. Since re opening, this new membership trend continues to grow.

The Club are unveiling its revamped Clubhouse facilities later in the month of June under a new management team and will be available for outdoor and indoor dining and catering to small private (COVID Compliant) functions as well as non-members.

For details on Club Memberships, Open Days, Summer Camps, Golf for beginners and any other details please check out their website at www.ballinasloegolfclub.ie.



An aerial photograph of Ballinasloe, taken in April 1955 and part of the Morgan Aerial Photographic Collection of the National Library of Ireland.

On the NLI website, the image is labelled "Aerial photograph of an unidentified town". It was identified recently after @IrishFoodGuide tweeted it.

On the NLI site, you can zoom in on the photograph, which contains amazing detail, for instance

- * Girls in the yard of Scoil Iosif
- * Society St back yards
- * St. Grellan's Boys' National School, with no Emerald Ballroom towering over it
- * Ballinasloe Workhouse (destroyed by fire later in 1955 or 1956) with Dubarry shoe factory and Workhouse Infirmary in the background
- * Bank/Hill's corner
- * Main Street (Duane's, Kelly's, Salter's, Wood's, Gullane's, Jenkins', Crichton's).

Damian Mac Con Uladh shared all this to our Facebook page and Tomas Gullane, Hotelier of Main St – recalled the day the plane flew low over the town – he was in in short pants at the time and everyone spoke about the flight for weeks after as the undercarriage could be so easily seen.

<http://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000733790/HierarchyTree>

Images Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.





Back row, l to r: Paddy Riddell, Bobby Walshe, Unknown, Liam Hickey, Eddie Fallon, Gerry Daly, Gordy Ward, Unknown, Timmy Kelleher, Unknown, Unknown, Tony Kelly.

Front row, l to r: Mikey Darcy, Tom Finn, Paddy Ward, Liam Goode, Noel Finn, Seamie O'Neill, Unknown. In front: Patsy Finn.

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Back row, l to r: Brendan Nestor (Dunmore MacHales), Frank Morris (Corofin), Frank Fox (Dunmore MacHales), Mickey Murray (St. Grellan's, Ballinasloe), Jack Mitchell (Corofin), Mick Stewart (Tuam Stars), John Dunne (St. Grellan's), Jimmy O'Rourke (Tuam Stars), Patrick Daly (Army, Renmore).
Middle row, l to r: Tom Murphy (Co. Board), Martin Regan (Sec. Galway GAA Board), Martin Donnellan (Mountbellew), Paddy Walsh (Tuam Stars), Stephen Wilson (Kilkerrin), Bill Birrell (Tuam Stars), Martin Mannion (Tuam Stars), Mick Connaire (St. Grellan's), P.J. Morris (Corofin), Rev. James O'Dea (President Galway GAA Board).
Front row, l to r: Paddy Roche, trainer (St. Grellan's), Brian Higgins (Kilkerrin), Bartley Murray (St. Grellan's), Joe Kelleher, captain (St. Grellan's), William Mannion (Kilkerrin), Robert Donohue (Galway City), Paddy Stevens (Corofin).

Thanks to a penalty scored in the dying seconds by Ballinasloe's Joe Kelleher, ninety years ago, Galway junior footballers went on to win their first All-Ireland title, in 1931. However, the controversial score against Kildare in Athy, in the Home Final, was appealed to the Central Council by the Lilywhites but the score stood and Galway were victorious by 1-8 to 1-7.

The irony of the outcome is that the hosts had accorded a civic reception to the Westerners in Athy the night before the game but were not pleased when referee Paul Russell of Kerry told Joe Kelleher he had to score direct from the penalty with the last kick of the game to salvage a win as the Leinster champions were leading by two points at that stage.

Galway, powered by six members of the St. Grellan's Club in Ballinasloe, went on to defeat London, by 3-3 to 1-4, in the All-Ireland and Great Britain final, played in Croke Park on 21st November 1931. It was the first junior football title won by Galway but the seniors won the All-Ireland title in 1925 and the senior hurlers were champions in 1923.

On the path to the final, Galway beat Sligo by 2-11 to 0-2 in Castlerea, overcame Leitrim by 3-6 to 0-4 in the Connacht final in Roscommon, defeated Kerry by 2-7 to 2-4 in the All-Ireland semi-final played in Parkmore, Tuam. The controversial win in Athy qualified them to play London and consequently their first All-Ireland junior football title.

The Galway team on the historic day comprised Joe Kelleher (captain), Jimmy O'Rourke (goal), Mick Connaire, William Mannion, P.J. Morris, Jack Mitchell, Mick Mannion, Patrick Daly, Frank Fox, John Dunne, Mick Stewart, Bill Birrell, Frank Morris, Martin Donnellan, Brendan Nestor.

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When the *Lady Kennaway* arrived in Port Phillip (now Melbourne) on 6th December 1848, it would mark the beginning of a new life for 191 Irish orphan girls on board who hailed from counties Donegal, Cork, Leitrim, Louth, Mayo, Queen's (Laois), Sligo and Tipperary as well as Galway.

Among the orphans were 13 girls from Ballinasloe Workhouse, ranging in age from 14 to 19. Two more girls from the workhouse would follow in February 1849 aboard the *Inchinnan*, which sailed to Sydney. The girls had been selected by the Poor Law Guardians – who managed the workhouse – to avail of the offer of free passage made by the authorities in Australia to address the gender imbalance in the new colony.

Ahead of the 175th anniversary of their arrival in Australia in 2023, a project has been launched on Facebook to trace the subsequent paths of these 15 girls, to find their descendants and to reconnect them with lost family in Ireland.

Called the Ballinasloe Orphan Girls Project (fb.com/BallinasloeOrphanGirlsProject), it was started by Martin Curley, a professional genealogist based in Mountbellew, and local historian Damian Mac Con Uladh. Martin decided to trace after helping an Australian man descended from an orphan girl from Mountbellew Workhouse connect to long-lost cousins in Abbeyknockmoy in 2017.

Martin hopes his current project will gather as many of the girls' descendants in Ballinasloe in 2023. "For the girls' descendants, walking in the area where their ancestors grew up in and meeting kin folk is a huge experience – it helps bring the girls home again" he says.

"With the advent of DNA testing and the emerging large database in East Galway, not alone could we try and find descendants but we could also reconnect them with lost family here in Galway and elsewhere in the diaspora," he adds.

Martin is also the founder of the East Galway Genealogy & DNA page on Facebook, which has attracted over 3,100 members since it began in May last year. The page seeks to help

its members in their genealogical research by encouraging them to share their DNA results from the various testing companies to a dedicated ancestor project centred on East Galway on the GEDmatch website.

"Sharing our DNA results will make it easier to reconnect the girls' descendants once we find them to their long lost cousins" Martin says.

Ballinasloe Orphan Girls Project:
fb.com/BallinasloeOrphanGirlsProject

East Galway Genealogy & DNA:
fb.com/groups/eastgalwaygenealogy

Ballinasloe Workhouse Orphan Girls who went to Australia, 1848–49					
Name	Native Place	Age	Parents	Religion	Ship Name
Margaret Boland	Ballinasloe, Galway	17	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Mary A Connor	Ballinasloe, Mayo [sic]	17	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Sarah Eagan (Egan)	Ballinasloe, Galway	19	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Catherine Egan	Ballinasloe, Galway	16	Martin & Biddy (mother living)	Catholic	Inchinnan
Catherine Kelly	Ballinasloe, Galway	19	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Bridget Kelly	Ballinasloe, Galway	16	John & Mary (mother living)	Catholic	Inchinnan
Mary Kenny	Galway, Ballinasloe	18	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Biddy Kenny	Galway, Ballinasloe	18	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Catherine Kenny	Galway, Ballinasloe	17	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Ann Kildea (Gildae, Gilday)	Donegal [Ballinasloe]	17	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Mary McAleer (McAteer)	Ballinasloe, Galway	14	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Mary Mitchell	Ballinasloe, Galway	16	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Jane Rodden	Ballinasloe, Galway	16	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Mary Ryan	Galway [Ballinasloe]	17	Not recorded	Catholic	Lady Kennaway
Eliza Todd	Ballinasloe, Galway	14	Not recorded	Church of England	Lady Kennaway



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A childhood memory of the nightmare of an elderly acquaintance: in a mansion in the East Galway countryside he was descending in semi-darkness seemingly interminable flights of stairs. On each landing were life-size statues that vibrated at his approach. Panic-stricken, he attempted to scream but no sound emerged from his throat. Somehow he reached the hall and rushed headlong towards the entrance, collapsing panting and quivering on the threshold to awaken in a sweat of fear. The house was the former residence of Colonel Lawrence of Lawrencetown.

According to the late Dr. P.K. Egan, the Lawrence family originated in Lancashire. Their first contact with this country was in 1571 when two brothers, Elizabethan soldiers, came here as part of the entourage of Sir John Perrott and became involved in the Wars of Munster. On Perrott's return to Ireland following his appointment as Lord Deputy in 1584 they again accompanied him as members of his staff.


The elder brother acquired a large estate in County Galway by marrying a daughter of O'Madden, the last chieftain of the name, and took up residence in Ballymore Castle close to the present-day Lawrencetown. Being Catholic and Royalist, the family suffered the confiscation of their lands and the loss of Ballymore as a result of their association with the 1641 Rebellion. Under King Charles II their estate was partially restored, and they built a residence for themselves in nearby Lisreaghan.

In 1729 John Lawrence married a rich heiress, Mary Scott, who owed her wealth to property in the West Indies, and converted to the Established Church, his wife remaining Catholic. He died the following year, leaving an only son, Walter. Using his inherited fortune when he came of age, Walter built himself a stately home at Lisreaghan, which he named Bellevue, gradually filling it with art treasures he accumulated during his travels on the Continent. A highly cultured man, he made the acquaintance of some of the most prominent writers and artists of the day, becoming an intimate friend of Antonio Canova, internationally-renowned sculptor and foremost exponent of Neoclassicism, many of whose works adorned the Bellevue mansion. Walter is credited with the publication of at least one play in Italian, "La Virtuosa di Teatro". Brought up a Catholic, he converted to the Church of Ireland in 1751 and married Marjory Netteville nine years later. The couple had two children, Peter and Maria. Lawrence's wife having died some years previously, he remarried in 1791 a widow, Catherine Darcy, of Merlin Park, by whom he had a

son and a daughter.


Though sometimes idealized by later generations of nationalists, the 18th-century Irish Parliament had in fact very limited powers, was vulnerable to manipulation by Westminster, and was permanently dominated by the Church of Ireland ascendancy,







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while the Catholic majority in the country was denied representation and, from 1728 to 1793, excluded from the franchise. Under Poynings' Law of 1494 proposed legislation had to be approved by both the English monarch and the Privy Council. Furthermore, the Declaratory Act of 1719, popularly referred to as the Sixth of George I, authorized the British Parliament to pass laws for Ireland.

Over the years the efforts of advocates of reform in the Irish Parliament had come to nought. Circumstances, however, were about to change in their favour. In 1778 France declared war on Britain in support of the American Colonies in revolt against the mother country. Consequently, a French invasion of Ireland seemed to be in prospect, especially since thousands of troops of the British Army garrison had been withdrawn to deal with the American rebellion. Spontaneously local militias of volunteers began to form to defend the county against a possible French attack, and also to act as special constables, controlling crowds, protecting excise men, escorting prisoners to jail, and suppressing riots. Within a matter of weeks 40,000 men were drilling under arms. Walter Lawrence, with the rank of Colonel, raised a regiment from his tenants and neighbours, who served under the name of the Bellevue Volunteers. Their uniform consisted of a scarlet coat with mulberry facings trimmed with silver, a white waistcoat and breeches.

The Volunteers proved to be an invaluable bargaining tool for reformers such as Henry Grattan, particularly after the famous Dungannon Convention of February 1782 passed resolutions denouncing the claim of the British Parliament to legislate for Ireland, and demanding free trade, as well as the repeal of Poynings' Law. Fearing a revolt in Ireland similar to what had occurred in the American Colonies, the English Parliament passed an Act declaring that the Irish Parliament was free from English control and that it alone had the right to enact laws for Ireland.

To commemorate the Volunteers' victory the Colonel had an elaborate gateway erected at the entrance to his estate. Arguably the most impressive 18th-century monument in the county, it has been described as a main entrance flanked by smaller openings which in turn are connected to gate-lodges. The entrance is surmounted by a pediment once topped with an urn that has since disappeared, and with a carved medallion beneath, while sphinxes rest on either side. A recessed panel directly beneath the pediment bears a Latin inscription which translated reads: "Liberty after a long servitude was won on 16th April 1782 by the armed sons of Hibernia, who with heroic fortitude regained their ancient laws and established their ancient independence."

Whimsical structures known as follies were fairly common features of Irish estates in the 18th and 19th centuries. Purely decorative, of no practical use, they acted as focal points in the rural landscape and provided topics of conversation for visitors. The Colonel built two such follies on his property, of which the more fantastical is shown in our photograph. This example is battlemented, topped with obelisks, and features a pointed doorway flanked by lancet windows, plus a pair of flying buttresses, all meant to convey the impression of a medieval facade.

Walter Lawrence died in 1796, five years before the Act of Union negated the political achievements of the Volunteers. His descendants' fortunes suffered a decline in the following century, and by the late 1850s much of their lands were in the Encumbered Estates Court, the Victorian counterpart of NAMA. The art treasures were put up for auction in 1912, by which time there were no longer any members of the family resident in Bellevue. After a final sale in the 1920s of what remained of the furniture, the house was demolished, though curiously the portico and pediment were allowed to stand for several decades thereafter, to become perhaps the stuff of dreams if not of nightmares.



Fifty years ago, over 100 British coarse anglers arrived in Ballinasloe to take part in the 3-day fishing competition on the River Suck. The May Gala Fishing week was the brainchild of the local Chamber of Commerce and for over twenty-five years it proved a massive boost to the commercial life of the town. Hotels and guesthouses were packed out with many visitors have to seek accommodation in Shannonbridge, Athlone and Portumna.

In 1971, 124 anglers competed, with the British contingent led by the world-renown Sid Meades as well John Callodine, Stan Redding etc. Local anglers helped to steward the three day's fishing on stretches of the River Suck, mainly from Culliagh Bog to Correen. All the bream, tench and rudd that were hooked were retained in keep nets before being weighed and returned to the river alive.

The late Paul Dooley and Michael Keller were early organisers as well as Tony Ellis, Ken Bamford, Brendan and Kevin Dillistone as well as the local Chamber members. Pdraig Lawless was the event's secretary from 1976 and said the biggest catch recorded over the years was by Stan Redding with a total day's landing of 183 lbs. By 1994 the number of competitors, between British and Irish, had dropped to 45 and so the event fizzled out.

Angler Pat Loughnane, who was starter for most of the years, said it was a tremendous boost to the area. "Fishermen were staying in all the hotels and guesthouses and all the pubs were packed in the evening. On non-competition days, they still fished all along the Suck and even parts of the Shannon. They were most working-class who loved to socialise and enjoy the banter, coming

back year after year. They really looked forward to coming back to Ballinasloe each year" he said.

Pdraig Lawless pointed out that several local charities benefitted from the proceeds of a Race Night, organised by the visitors on the Wednesday night and compered by well-known English bookmaker Michael Scotney.

"It's a pity it finished but most of the ardent English anglers have moved on in age and were no longer interested in spending a week in Ireland. The prize-giving on the Friday night was the highlight of the week when many friendships were forged and some are still going strong to this day. I would love to see the May Gala Fishing Week revived. We have the River Suck with an abundance of coarse fish-something other towns lack" said Pdraig.



Ballinasloe Anglers with Chamber of Commerce members to announce details of the May Gala Fishing Week on the River Suck, in 1970.

Seated, l to r: Victor Carr, Billy Flanagan, Eoin Lysaght (Guinness Group Sales-main sponsors), Joe Hill and Paul Dooley.

2nd row, l to r: Martin Bradley, Jimmy Smith, Val Martin, Mattie Cunningham, Paddy Moran, Ned Riddell, Gerry Corcoran (Bank of Ireland-sponsors), Unknown, Charlie Murray, Unknown.

Back row, l to r: Paddy Riddell, Pierce Courtney, Pat Keogh, Pat Loughnane, Jack Riddell.

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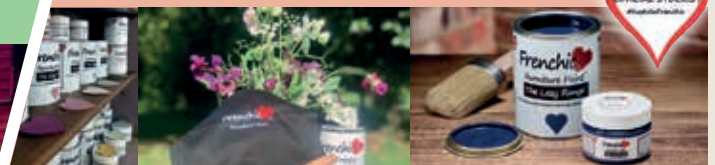
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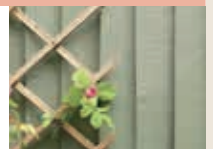
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Emma Ryan,
Researcher

Emma Ryan, a native of Portumna, is currently undertaking historical research on Ballinasloe's old lanes for her Masters' Degree thesis.

The finished work promises to provide fascinating new perspectives on what life was like for the residents of places like Pipers Lane and Rutledges Lane (accessed off the current Hymany Street), Paradise Row (located off St Michael's Square), Ivers Lane (the entrance to which is beside Woods' Drapery) and Bolgers Lane which is between Main Street and Society Street.

Also included in the work are Tea Lane (known as Tay Lane, now Jubilee Street), Reeves

Lane, Hopson's Lane and Woodslip Lane. Emma has discovered in the course of her research that most of the lanes came into existence about 1830 and were abandoned by the 1930s

when a newer supply of housing became available.

She says "During my studies at the University of Limerick, I became focused on recording the stories of those who in the past had not been given a voice to record the realities of their lives in an era of fierce economic and social divides. There is a rich history in the Ballinasloe lanes and it is vital to have it documented."

As places like Pipers Lane and Rutledges Lane were demolished in 1936, there are now few, if any, who can recall anything about these areas and that



Tea Lane or Tay Lane where Jubilee Street now stands in the early forties during the Feast of Corpus Christi.

makes research like Emmas all the more valuable in reminding people of important aspects of Ballinasloe's heritage and past.

Her work is all the more significant as the last two of the old lanes that contain examples of the houses people occupied are Bolgers Lane and Ivers Lane.

Strange Times

The last year or more has been very traumatic for many families. The Covid pandemic brought lockdown, loneliness, misery and many tragedies.

The loss of being unable to drop in for a cuppa with your neighbour was nothing compared to the passing of a loved one when only a handful of their family were allowed say goodbye. Sons, daughters, etc. living abroad could not return for funerals while close friends could only offer condolences.

We, here at KPW, sympathise with the many households affected and would like to remind them that lifelong memories can be treasured with a suitable Memorial Card, Bookmarker or Sympathy Card of your choice by dropping into our Poolboy Factory, where your request will be dealt with in a compassionate and confidential manner by one of our staff. They are there to help.



Contact Diane for further information - diane@kpw.ie | 090 9631848

Camogie clubs from around the county, as well as officials of the Co. Board, formed a guard of honour as Jackie Brien's cortege made its final journey to St. Cuan's Church in Ahascragh from his home in Runnymede.

It was a fitting tribute to a man who had given nearly a lifetime of service to the sport, not alone in his native parish, but throughout the country. Evidence of his popularity was highlighted in the many condolences that poured in from nearly every county, praising him for his commitment and support to the game of camogie.

The passing of Jackie Brien of Ahascragh came as a huge shock to his family, friends and in particular to the camogie world. Jackie was one of the founding members of his beloved Ahascragh Camogie club and was also a founding member of the North Board in Camogie, which was a progressive step to help clubs in the promotion of camogie in Galway and Connacht.

Jackie gave a lifetime of service to camogie and held officership in Ahascragh club, Galway Camogie Board, Connacht Camogie Council and on Ard Comhairle and up to last March was a member of the National Final Appeals committee in Ard Comhairle. The Ahascragh man had also served on the National Transfers Hearing Disciplinary Committee for many years and various other committees at local and national level in camogie. Jackie was also involved in management of many teams with his Ahascragh club and with Galway, including three All-Ireland successes at Minor level with the county. He was an outstanding officer, member and supporter of camogie in Galway over a long period of time.

A lifelong pioneer, Jackie was also involved in so many organisations in Ahascragh parish and the area, and was always a source of encouragement to young people. A man of honesty, integrity and diligence, he was much loved by all who were privileged to cross his path. Jackie was also Chairperson of the Ballinasloe Cancer Support Centre since 2019, he also served on the committee since its inception in 2009.

Long serving Galway Co Board official Ann Kearney, current secretary of Galway Camogie Board expressed deep sadness. "It was my pleasure to have worked with Jackie on Galway Camogie Board over a long number of years and he always had the best interests of camogie at heart and was respectful and at all times, he was a true gentleman." At the time of his passing Jackie Brien was Vice-president of Galway Camogie Board.

Jackie Brien will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by many in camogie circles, not alone in Galway but in many parts of Ireland where he was much loved and respect.

Throughout Jackie's life he was active in his community where he selflessly gave his time to many groups, clubs and organisations. He loved Gaelic games and was involved in the Ahascragh Hurling club, but his particular love lay with Camogie and he was one of the founders of the Ahascragh Caltra Camogie Club. It might have been a success just to field a team at times in the beginning. Victory was often scarce. But at the core of it all for



Jackie, and whoever was with him at the field of play, was fun and friendship. He served in every role both on and off the field for the club and he continued to attend games as the club grew from strength to strength.

Jackie, along with the late Michael Kennedy and others founded the North Board League in the early 90s. This began with a handful of local clubs aimed to help clubs develop. Pre Covid the league had expanded to 12 clubs across North Galway, Mayo and Roscommon helping to promote camogie throughout Connacht.

His name will remain synonymous with Ahascragh, Caltra, Galway and Camogie across the country. A friend to players, officials and Camogie clubs alike, his support, advice and assistance knew no borders.

All of this was second only to his love and devotion to his family, his beloved wife Lily and his daughters Majella and Sharon, son in law Diarmuid, and his ten grandchildren who brought him such pride and joy.

Jackie's cortege was met in the village by a guard of honour formed by the Camogie club, clubs from around the county, officials of the Galway County Board, his former colleagues of Greenes, Ahascragh, neighbours and friends. His remains was applauded as he made his last journey to the church he attended all of his life.

By Ken Kelly

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Ballinasloe lost another of its famous characters with the passing of Patrick (Paddy) Carr. Like his five late brothers, Paddy loved sport and like them represented his beloved St. Grellan's and Ballinasloe in different codes.

In the 50's, the Carr brothers were to the fore in football, hurling, rugby, boxing, snooker, pool and golf, bringing honour and glory to the town. Born on 17th April 1937, Paddy worked in Top Quarries for many years with his late brother Michael (Pie). Later, while employed in Portiuncula Hospital, he met his future wife Josephine and they moved to Manchester where they got married in October 1960.

On their return home, Paddy worked for the Urban Council for over twenty years and they were the proud parents of four children Patrick Jnr. (Carra), Caroline, Regina and Alan. Of a friendly and warm personality, with a pleasant smile, Paddy could engage in the most entertaining stories, anecdotes and memories while respecting another person's point of view. He always found time to stop and chat whether it be the topical news or to reminisce on his sporting achievements over many decades.

In his later years, Paddy Carr was host to the many friends and neighbours that came to visit him and over a cup of tea the banter could be heard in nearby

houses. There was laughter and tears, tall tales and wonderful stories by the legendary Paddy, as he sat by the fireside with his beloved wife Josephine.

They were grandparents to nine children and great-grandparents to three.



Paddy Carr is predeceased by his son Patrick Jnr. (Carra), brothers John, Mattie, Michael (Pie), Josie and Tony and sister Bridie. As well as his wife Josephine, he is survived by his son Alan, daughters Caroline and Regina, sisters Nora, Ann and Bepo together with a large extended family and a wide circle of friends.

BALLINASLOE MAN DIES IN TORONTO

By Ken Kelly

James (Jim) Egan, who has passed away in Toronto, Canada, grew up in Creagh, Ballinasloe. The eldest son of Bill and Anne, Jim or Seamie as he was affectionately known by his school pals, was an outstanding underage footballer and hurler before emigrating to the USA with his great pal, the late Liam Cunnane. There he also excelled in the sport and played with many county teams in New York.



On a football tour of Toronto, Jim met his future wife, Bonnie and together they had three daughters, Maeve (McCarthy), Shelly (O'Neill) and Kelly (Freisen), and were grandparents to Erin, Jason and Samantha. Unfortunately, Jim lost his beloved wife in late 2019.

Jim Egan kept in touch with his native Ballinasloe, making many trips home to visit relatives, friends and old school pals. He was an avid follower of Galway GAA teams, in all grades, and followed their performances with a keen interest. Having just passed his 81st birthday, his sudden death came as a shock to all who knew him as his plans included another trip to Ireland, when Covid restrictions allowed, to celebrate a school reunion.

In Toronto, Jim is survived by his three daughters, three grandchildren and brother Liam while in Ireland his brother Joe resides in Dublin, sister Patricia in Ballinasloe and his twin sister, Maureen is in London. He is also mourned by many other relatives and friends throughout Ireland. Jim's funeral took place in Toronto.



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GRETb has developed a 2-year apprenticeship in Arboriculture, which recently started in the Outdoor Education and Training Centre in Clonbur, Co Galway, this is the first time a career path has been developed in this industry and will lead to a level 6 qualifications for those on the programme. If you would like more information on this apprenticeship contact **arbapprenticeship@gretb.ie** here is our first class, eager to get started:

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Due to the Cancellation of this year's and last year's Junior Certificate examinations it has been determined that the 2020/21 State Certificate and the School Report provided to Junior Certificate students will be deemed to be an 'approved equivalent' as per the eligibility requirements for some Apprenticeships. However, higher educational qualifications and other requirements may be sought by employers.



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The construction industry and Roscommon GAA lost a huge presence with the recent passing of Taughmaconnell native Paul Flynn.

Schooled firstly in Taughmaconnell NS and later in the Marist College, Athlone as a boarder. His first stint in the working life was in Paddy's Lamb factory but Brother Colman, Marist College, got him a start as a Trainee Quantity Surveyor in London in the swinging sixties.

While possessing a huge work ethic, Paul was not an office man and left eventually to become a shuttering carpenter with his brother Michael.

During his London days he met the love of his life, Mela and they married in Harrow, with the first of their two girls and four boys arrived to Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow in 1973, Tara.

All of the rest of the family Paul, Mark, Anne, John and Nial were all Portiuncula babies as the family moved back to Kilgarve to set up Flynn Construction in 1975.

Paul was a major employer back in the 80's and 90's, initially building council houses throughout the County and then went on to build schools, churches, housing developments, commercial and office units.

Paul was then joined by his daughter Tara and son Mark in the mid nineties. The firm is now run by his two sons, Mark and John (who also joined the company in 2014) and his daughter Tara.

His other sons, Paul Junior and Nial also got a great grounding working with their Dad for a number of years. His other daughter Anne, escaped somewhat but is now also married to a builder!

Paul's love of GAA was huge since winning a county football title with Taughmaconnell U13 as a 'no nonsense' half back. He thrived in the supporters' fun of going to Pearses and Roscommon matches with his sons. Loved days out in Croke Park regardless what teams were playing and always saw to it that sponsorship cheques kept the Padraig Pearses dream alive for his generations and the next.

He was also a hugely happy person when out socially, favourite haunts of his with family, friends and sporting colleagues, he enjoyed the conviviality and storytelling whether in Egans Pub or indeed Finns establishment.

His integrity in business dealings, his dogged pursuit of quality and

exemplary workmanship, sheer determination, and hard work were some of the attributes recalled that allowed him to steer his firm through recessions, economic woes and construction collapse. Many clients over the 50 years of his active involvement in the firm can testify to the craftsmanship, efficiency and durability of what he built for them.

However it was to his quiet faith and family of Mela, Tara, Paul, Mark, Anne, John, Nial and 18 grandchildren, his brothers and sisters that commanded his first and final allegiance. He doted upon the newest generation and was steadfast in his support and advice for his own brood, always happiest in their company and epoch marking events.

Ar Dheis De Go Raibh a hAnam.



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Paddy Carr Snr, Hymany Park - 16th April, 2021.

Michael Finnerty, 23, St Theresa's Park, St Grellan's Tce - 18th April, 2021.

Mary McCarthy, formerly Dunlo Hill & Cork - 25th April, 2021.

Sr. Michaela), F.M.D.M., Ard Mhuire - 28th April, 2021.

Anne Kenny, Glentaun Village, Creagh - 3rd May, 2021.

Kathleen Shaughnessy, Garbally Demesne - 4th May, 2021.

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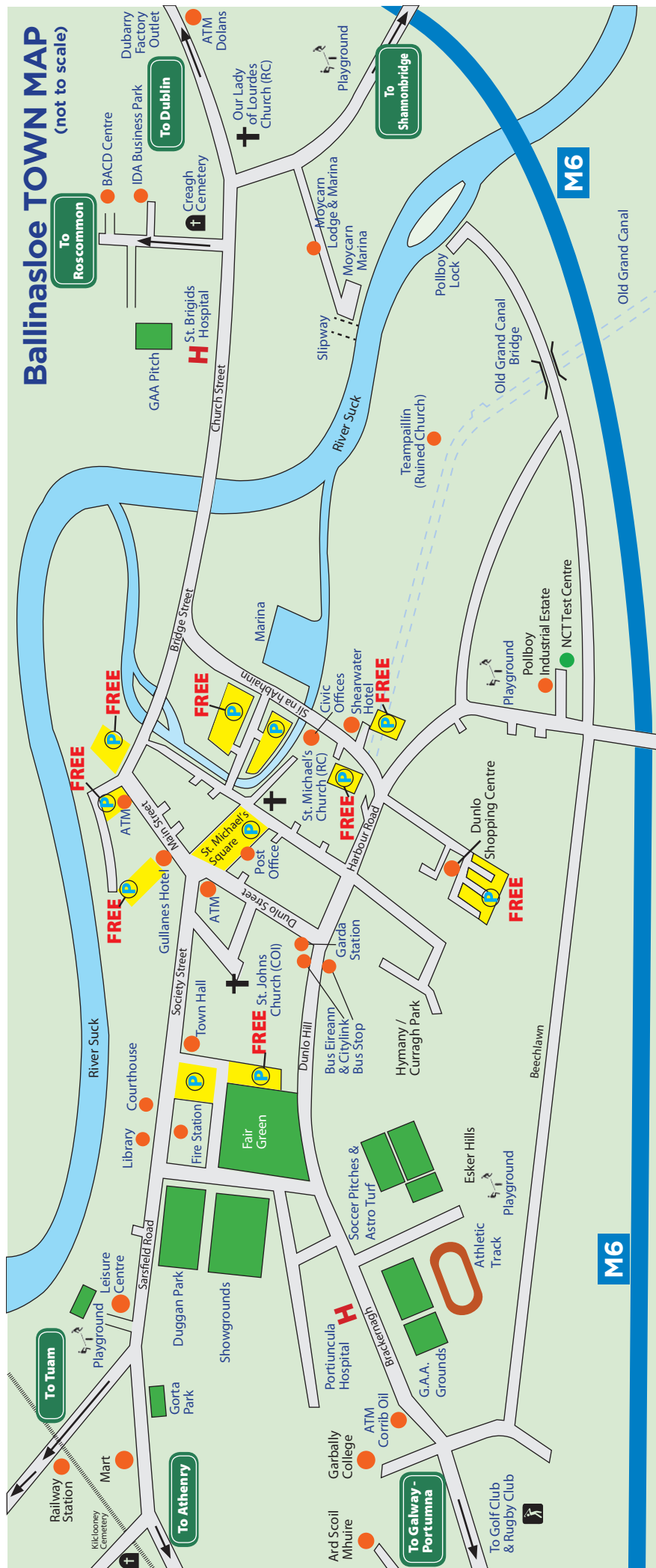
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Ballinasloe TOWN MAP

(not to scale)



Ballinasloe History Walk

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

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

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

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

5 – Walk through to the far end of the park; you will approach St Michael's Church (1852-58) that stands in a commanding position over the Square. Its architect was J.J. McCarthy, a follower of Augustus Pugin (famed for other Neo-Gothic churches in Ireland) – and the design is said to have been revised by Pugin himself. Inside are many fine stained glass 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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