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BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 12 Issue 5: Dec '22 - Jan '23



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Photo by: Robert Riddell.

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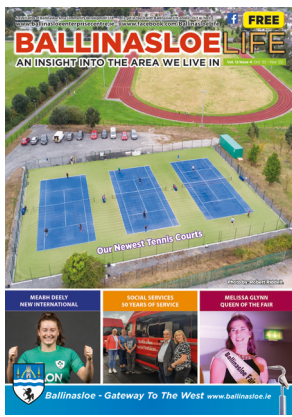
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REAMHRA

Welcome to Volume 12 issue 5

Welcome to this the 11th Christmas/New Year Edition!

The Festive Tree, the Carols, the rituals and of course all the traditions of the post Advent Celebration always cause the tribe to look back on the 12 months past and to look afresh with as the Castlereagh writer John Watters put it-the Great Hippopotamus in everyone's Irish hallway – HOPE!

Last Christmas tide we were just emerging cautiously from COVID and were still unpicking that damage – there was no Ukraine War of Invasion, no Energy Cost Crisis, no Refugee settlement crisis, no €8 billion in new corporate taxes and no inflation.

It's been a year to be reasonably cheerful locally, with lots of plans and affirmations of development strategies adopted. There is nearly some €60 million of Government money being invested in this area in the next 5 years by some 10 agencies, none of whom are engaged (as opposed to communicating) with each other!!!

When you are as privileged, as I am, to undertake the role of Editor you get to see and connect with the passion first hand for those in their neighbourhoods, families, clubs, network for this place. Social Media posts of clips, events, photos of iconic buildings, locations, events prove huge barometers of genuine public opinion and affection.

Some 100 volunteers interact per edition, and we see the time and effort they put in to promoting their activity, their club, their town. It is visceral, time consuming and all because they wish to build not just a population centre but an actual community.

Elon Musk after his expensive Twitter purchase is introducing the €8 monthly account verification charge for those genuinely posting concrete opinion, from non-fake accounts.

Taking all three: passion for place, voluntary effort, and then the pervasive lazy use of social media, you get a modern Bermuda

We had our AGM in recent weeks and I wish to thank those who turning out in large numbers to attend same.

It gave us an opportunity to share the good work being done across the community. This was the first opportunity we had to have a full public meeting due to Covid restrictions so we had a lot to cover.

We have continued to build on relationships with various state bodies (IDA / EI / WDC /Connected Hubs etc), 3rd level education facilities (UCC, UL, UCG, ATU & TUS) & many community organisations.

We have worked hard on the promotion of the town in a very positive manner via Ballinasloe life, social media, Videos & attendance at media events.

We have had visits from the leaders of the 3 largest parties in Dail Eireann and have been chosen as a centre for the launch of some media events.

We have also invested in more office space in the centre of Town and will



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Triangle of frustration. For example, two committed volunteers to the Fair and Festival, Kevin Murray and Niall Clarke spent some 15 hours each, during a busy Fair week for them, unravelling some factually incorrect posts about violence that allegedly broke out during the opening weekend.

Owing to the viral nature and commentary of several local account holders across all platforms, the posts and their narrative gained national traction and media attention. A local radio station, faced with evidence compiled by our two local volunteers, offered apologies. The Gardai under pressure from media enquiries could only confirm that public order incidents and arrests were on par if not below a normal bank holiday weekend of misbehaviour.

But by then the collateral damage had been done, a variety of obnoxious posts and commentary had oozed onto the Web Highway, a lot led by local account holders. Our town was supposedly an Oasis of Violence for the opening weekend of October Fair and Festival. One does not have to love Christmas, Easter, Trad Music, or Horses but one should be capable of giving those that do a chance to operate on a level playing field. Everyone has strong views about these events, but please pause for thought before liking and sharing something negative, that suggests it is of / from Ballinasloe when it is not.

It diminishes us all.

Every Good Wish for a happy and peaceful
Christmas and Healthy and Prosperous New
Year.

Enjoy the read,

Le Gach De Ghui,
COLM CROFFY,
Editor.



be adding 6,000 square feet to the 27,000 sq feet we have in the Enterprise Centre and will grow further if the opportunity arises as there is a shortage of suitable office space in the Area.

We have a lot of work done on a 10 year plus plan for the town under the headings of Sustainability, Tourism and Healthcare.

A big thank you to the Voluntary Board of Directors, Lyn and Martina in the office and all the Volunteers who have helped out across all the projects we are involved in.

Our fabulous Christmas lights will be switched on next week and finally I want to take this opportunity to wish all our reader both at home and abroad a safe and enjoyable Festive Season and a prosperous New Year

SEAMUS DUFFY,
Chairman Ballinasloe Area Community
Development Limited.



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The week following the November Municipal Council meeting Minister O'Donovan (OPW), met with local political reps and residents updating on progress of the crucial Flood Relief project.

He confirmed there will be another public consultation in the second Quarter of 2023 and the commitment of the OPW to deliver this project as soon as possible. Galway County Council are working with the OPW to ensure all temporary measures are in place to ease the stress on families and businesses who are worried about another possible major flooding.

Formal public consultations took place in Spring providing the public with an update on developing and progressing potential options for the flood relief scheme.

Most of the consultation took place online but at the in-person event on 15th March, 31 attendees and members of staff from the OPW, Galway County Council, ARUP (Design Team) and Ryan Hanley (Environmental Team) turned up.

At the meeting the following information was discussed around embankments, walls, other measures for people living in Deerpark, Derrymullen, Station Road, Sarsfield Road, Town-Centre out Bridge Street and Church Street to Creagh, The Pines and Portnick.

"I understand the frustration with the length of time it's taking to progress this Flood Relief Scheme but it's important that we can it right from the very start. The OPW are committed to working with the Council to defend the town" stated Minister O'Donovan. Liam Hanrahan Director of Services for Galway County Council told the Councillors "If we cut corners, it'll reduce the funding we receive."

Senator Dolan noted "These proposals are crucial to protect our town from future flooding and it entails flood embankments, flood walls and gates as well as potentially opening up arches of the bridge. My focus is on the timelines for the activity around consultation and prioritise the next stage of consultation.

We are currently in Stage one of the Scheme Development and Design and this is a five stage process, we have to see this progress to the next stage of detailed design. The last newsletter from the project team was December 2021, it is time there was another update from the contracted team.

"I welcome the fact that The Minister strongly highlighted how state agencies can work together to deliver public realm amenities as part of this project for example walkways, cycleways, or areas of biodiversity in the Ballinasloe area" she said.



Councillors Peter Keaveney, Dr Evelyn Parsons, Michael Connolly and Dermott Connolly with Minister Anne Rabbitt and Senator Aisling Dolan & Minister Patrick O'Donovan.



Ballinasloe Residents photographed with Minister Patrick O'Donovan, Councillors: Peter Keaveney, Dr Evelyn Parson's, Michael Connolly and Dermot Connolly with Minister Anne Rabbitt and Senator Aisling Dolan.

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Merry Christmas

And A Happy New Year



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With much speculation as to what landfull receipt monies had been sequestered by Galway County Council at the dissolving of the old town Council in 2014, Cllr Evelyn Parsons current Chair of the M.D.C. sought a formal written explanation at a recent meeting.

She specifically asked that the Chief Executive makes a written statement on the Ballinasloe Landfill Remediation Fund, which is a specific reserve held in the GCC

capital account and comprises part of the credit balance in GCC accounts to be used for future projects in Ballinasloe.

"There is a current credit balance of €10.2m held in a capital account related to the closed Ballinasloe Landfill site. Funds from this account have been used to date for a number of significant projects around the town."

The site ceased operations on foot of a High Court Order in February 2000. The Order specifically requires remediation works to be undertaken at the site and we are fortunate to have this sizeable balance which will be needed to progress same. Part of the site is an un-engineered landfill and the Council is responsible for the ongoing management of the leachate at the site.

The High Court Order specified that a remediation plan be developed, and the terms of the Order will be implemented in full. In advance of the remediation plan Galway County Council undertook a 2-year programme of immediate works required at the site which is now nearing completion. It is the intention of Galway County Council to comply with the requirements of the High Court Order in the first instance with the retention of consultants to prepare a costed remediation plan for the site and progress to implementation. It is expected that these works will exhaust the bulk of the monies in the capital account.

The Ballinasloe Inner Relief Road has been identified in

the recently adopted County Development Plan and will be progressed. There is a separate capital code for this project with a credit balance of €1.652m. Additional financial resources will be required for this project from the Department of Transport. In addition, there is a capital code for the Ballinasloe Amenity Park with a current credit balance of €500,000."

Cllr Parsons stated that there was a lack of investment and resources invested by the Council in the Ballinasloe Municipal Area in terms of significant funding applications and in the use of the Council's own match funding and she called for balanced county development.

"The Ballinasloe Town enhancement and other significant capital projects were funded out of Ballinasloe's own legacy landfill funds from the handover of Town Councillors. Though I was pleased to have obtained assurances at October's Municipal meeting that a feasibility study for an accessible swim and water recreation area on Suck would be prioritised in GCC's next round of funding applications, the decision whether to support the application will then rest with the deciding government department" said Cllr Evelyn Parsons.

She also ascertained agreement from the Chief Executive that consideration will be given by GCC to using Ballinasloe's remaining project balances as match funding to leverage the significant funding needed for the long awaited Townparks road and amenity projects.

"The Swim feasibility application, even if successful, will require significant funding to be progressed. I believe the swim/water recreation could potentially be incorporated into the Townparks amenity and road project and if leveraged as match funding through an RRDF type application - could be the most feasible route to generate the millions needed to deliver state of the art public amenities. This infrastructure would position our town positively for harnessing the river's benefits for community recreation, town centre regeneration, vitality and tourism development in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands" said Cllr Parsons.



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Christmas Wishes








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A local delegation met with the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Leo Varadkar T.D and representatives of the IDA to discuss investment opportunities and job creation in the area.

The team consisted of Senator Aisling Dolan, Alan Harney, Seamus Duffy, Chair of BACD; former Senator Michael Mullins and former Town Councillor, Cathal Concannon.

The results of the meeting were very positive with Seamus Duffy saying “that the Tánaiste is fully aware of the many positive developments that have been happening in Ballinasloe following on from his visit to the Enterprise Centre last year and was very supportive of the ongoing commitment and further development being done for Ballinasloe and its surrounds.”

The Tánaiste held one of his first post COVID events at the Enterprise Centre last June when he launched the Western Development Commission’s Connected Hubs Strategy.

Damien English, Junior Minister of State for Business Employment and Retail, was in the town the week before, as was Minister Hildergarde Naughton, Junior Minister for Transport; Patrick Donavon, OPW Minister, was in town two weeks before that to appraise public reps on the much delayed Flood Relief Scheme.

All Government Ministers visiting Ballinasloe Town and the Enterprise Centre get an extensive walk through on the development issues and current projects of the Community Development Company.

In Government buildings they discussed the work of the BACD and future plans the company have such as the new Bank Chambers building. Some of the projects the group are working on are developing the town based on improving the



Seamus Duffy Chairman BACD, Senator Aisling Dolan, Leo Varadkar, Tánaiste; Alan Harney Fine Gael, Michael Mullins retired Senator, Cathal Concannon, Constituency Chairperson Fine Gael.

health sector available, making Ballinasloe more sustainable and increasing the focus of the tourism sector, all of which is done by the ‘Town Team’.

A few months ago, Chanelle Pharma created 30 jobs when they moved into the old Aptar building. This was a big step forward and the hope is more work can be done to continually improve the IDA Business Park and adjoining lands of the old St. Brigid’s Hospital Campus.

Following the meeting Mr. Harney stated “We had a very constructive meeting with the Tánaiste and representatives of the IDA. We believe that Ballinasloe is well located with excellent infrastructure and transport links, and this makes the IDA Business Park in Creagh a prime investment opportunity for businesses looking to develop new facilities. We know that there is a significant land bank available on the St. Brigid’s Hospital campus and this will require significant collaboration to ensure it is utilised in the most beneficial way for the future development of the town.”

CLLR. DR. EVELYN FRANCIS PARSONS



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The former psychiatric hospital has been closed since 2013 and the HSE has finally decided to dispose of some of the property.

At a recent 'Regional Health Forum West' Cllr Evelyn Parsons requested an update from the HSE on the vacating of buildings and progression of the disposal St Brigid's hospital.

Brenda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West stated "Under the protocol for the Intra State Transfer and Sharing of State Property Assets and the Protocol for the Policy for Property Acquisition and for Disposal of Surplus Property, the HSE identified various properties within St Brigid's Campus including the former mental health facility on the State Property Register as surplus/available property. In September 2018, the Office of Public Works (OPW) expressed an initial only interest in considering St Brigid's Hospital and adjacent lands for their business needs. The following October 2019, after examination and consideration the OPW advised they were not interested as they believed the property was not suitable.

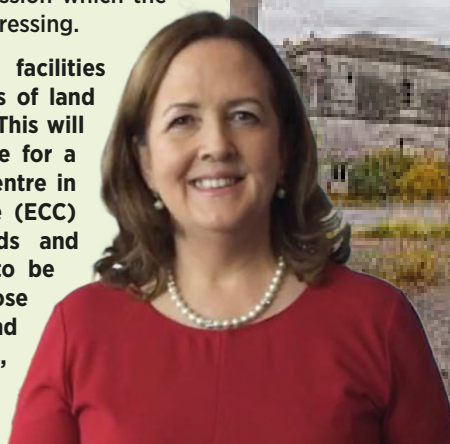
"In October 2020, the Department of Education and Skills made a formal expression of interest for the transfer of four acres of land for the provision for new school accommodation. This sale has been agreed subject to planning permission which the Department of Education and Skills are progressing.

"HSE will be retaining existing health facilities currently in operation along with elements of land for potential future use and development. This will likely include a potential development site for a proposed new Primary and Ambulatory Centre in the context of Enhanced Community Care (ECC) programme. The remaining surplus lands and buildings including the old hospital are to be disposed of. In order for the HSE to dispose of the former mental health buildings and land identified as surplus to requirements, the HSE is working through some steps to prepare the property for disposal. This has

recently included decanting of some remaining mental health services. There are some further services to be decanted along with the preparation/rectification of titles/folios maps and decommissioning of utility services. It is hoped to commence work on a strategy for disposal on the site before the end of this year."

Welcoming these clarifications of fact, Cllr Parsons stated "that there was light at the end of the tunnel and welcomed the statement from Ms Roche that the HSE sees Ballinasloe as the perfect place for an Enhanced Community Care Hub linking to the children disability network".

According to an Irish Times Report by Rosita Boland earlier this year - "in 1951, the town had a population of 5,596, while at the same time there were 2,078 'resident patients' in St Brigid's Hospital".



CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

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Joe Ward Menswear has re-opened just in time for the Christmas rush. After 45 years success in his clothing and footwear business on Main Street, Michael Ward planned to pass the business to the second generation, his eldest son Joe, in 2020. As the pandemic took hold, Joe did take over the day to day running of the shop but it was merely to stay afloat and weather the storm, with all retail closed and footfall reduced for the rest of the year. It was the ideal time to finally get the shop operating online with nationwide delivery, Joe also introduced 'Click and Collect' and maintained local deliveries during the lockdowns, which were both gratefully received by customers.

The Official Opening of the new store was on October 29th, when Joe has finally reached the end of a checklist of changes and improvements he wanted to make. With the benefit of Galway County Council's Streetscape Enhancement Scheme, he received a grant to help with the cost of repainting the building and replacement of the shop front by a restoration specialist, which had served his father so well for 30 years.

Owner Joe has upgraded all the interior and exterior lights to energy efficient LED lights, added new signage and branding to reflect the new name, as well as a complete refit of the dedicated suits and wedding sections which are located on the first floor. He has sourced as many supplies and trades for the works done as possible in town, as keeping business local is very important to him.

Joe Ward Menswear will continue the family legacy of providing high quality men's clothing in store, and online at www.joewardmenswear.ie. With 11,000 sq ft of space he has laid out specific sections dedicated to each collection of casual clothing, footwear, suits, and grooms wear to make browsing an easy and efficient experience.

Having worked alongside Michael for 25 years, since he was a teenager, Joe is excited to be taking this next step. He has chosen established and rising Irish and international brands such as Penguin, XV Kings, Jack Jones, Remus Uomo, Helly Hansen, Benetti, Finch Hatton, Gardeur, Vichi, Clean Cut Copenhagen, A Fish Named Fred and Swole Panda to reinvigorate the shop. He also stocks children's suits for Communion, Confirmations and Weddings.



Joe and his staff, L-R: Kyle, Michael, Aoife, Oisín, Joe, Katie, Nathan, Dara and Clodagh.



Joe outside store front



With music by John Mulvihill, food from Gullanes, special offers and giveaways. Joe's cousin Neil Molloy from Galway Bay FM's Mollie in the Morning was instore for the day, and even putting some of his previous experience as a Sales Assistant in Michael Ward's many years ago into practice! - the Opening Day was a huge success. The website also relaunched on the same day after a refreshing upgrade.

He looks forward to welcoming everyone instore in the busy lead up to Christmas, and for wedding and formal wear fittings for 2023 onwards in the dedicated space upstairs. There's also a new Photo Memory Wall upstairs chronicling the history of the shop, the town and the family, take a look when you're next instore or passing by.

www.facebook.com/JoeWardMenswear

Instagram: @joewardmenswear

L-R: Noel Finn, Bernie Hanlon, Marian Costello, Agnes Ward, Maureen Grady, Gabriel Leslie. Front Row Michael and Kathleen Ward.

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Love a Real Tree

Tony Cuniffe of Cuniffe Electrical has recently taken over 'Fletcher's' store on Society Street. This is their third outlet and according to Tony Cuniffe "when we heard that Sean Fletcher was thinking of retiring from his family shop, we thought that this would be a natural progression to our business."

Whilst all may be familiar with the Fletchers story - Cuniffe Electric was started way back in 1975 by the late Noel and Paddy Cuniffe. Hailing originally from Killimor, Noel's first taste of the electrical retail industry was as manager of Tara Electric here in Ballinasloe in 1971 before moving to Galway and eventually opening the first Cuniffe electric store with Paddy in the Galway shopping centre in 1975. Eoin (Paddy's son) and Tony (Noel's son) now look after the business.

A big attraction for Cuniffe to set up here was the talented work force already employed by Fletcher's. The current staff have all been kept employed. Tony feels very lucky to have Norbert, Sarah, Dermot, Stephen in store as well as Donald and Sean looking after warehousing and deliveries.

The store is going to continue trading under the Expert Electric umbrella group which is Ireland's biggest brand for electrical retail. This will continue to help locals from the town and surrounding areas to get the best prices. Consumers will now also have a larger selection to choose from as there will be more brands available and goods can be supplied from warehouses in Ballinasloe and Galway.

One big advantage of bringing Fletcher's into the Cuniffe group is that there will be a bigger selection of brands to choose from. They stock all the major brands in domestic appliances including Siemens, Neff, Bosch, Miele, Aeg, Electrolux, Zanussi, and Whirlpool. They also have leading brands in home entertainment such as Samsung, LG, and Sony. Some of the new brands they will stock include Dyson, Miele, Dimplex, Kenwood, Delonghi, Ninja, and Sage.

The store will have plenty of offers for Christmas and Black

Friday. Their Christmas club is now open, by simply placing a deposit on any product you pay it off and collect it in time Christmas. They are also going to have unbeatable Black Friday offers this year, including TVs, coffee machines, tablets, and cordless vacuums to name a few. Follow them on social media or check in store or their website cuniffeelectric.ie for details.

The store will continue to operate under the same opening hours from Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-6pm. However, you can now shop their wide range of products on the website cuniffeelectric.ie, for click and collect or to avail of their home delivery and installation service.

The aftercare sales service will remain the same as it was under 'Fletcher's' as this is one of the things, they were renowned for.

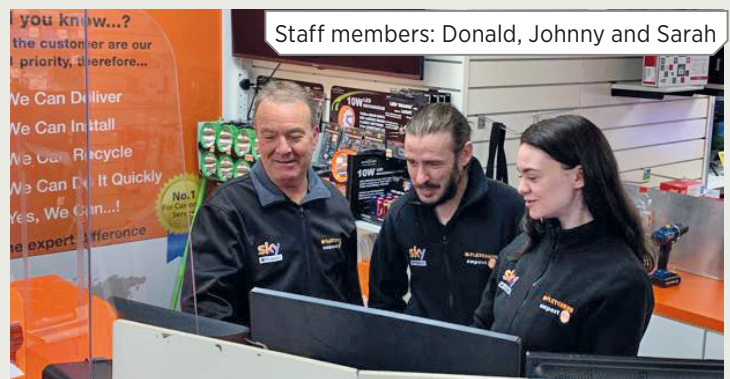
The transition from Fletcher's to Cuniffe's went smoothly and trading has continued to be very good over the summer period.

Mr Cuniffe's message for locals is "we intend improve on the great name that Fletchers have established in the last 60 years in Ballinasloe and bring a lot of the big brands. We also offer our price promise that we will not be beaten on price or service."

Staff members: Donald, Norbert and Sarah



Staff members: Donald, Johnny and Sarah



Store Front



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Shane and Ciara Walsh are the owners of Walsh's Furniture Repair and Assembly Ltd, a national furniture repair company with one office in Ahascragh and another in Leixlip, Kildare.

It's an independently owned Irish company providing dynamic, on-site nationwide repair service for leather, soft furnishing, beds, and cabinets. The company has been operating since October 2014 and currently employs nine members of staff. Six are full time and three are part time.

They repair and assemble furniture in customers' homes and commercial premises, a convenient alternative to costly replacements. Specialising in repair of upholstery, leather, timber, and furniture assembly. Offering an in home or business inspection, a detailed quotation and a professional repairer or assembly.

Their connection to the locale is that Shane's mother-in-law was from Ahascragh. There aren't many businesses like this in the country so filling a niche was easy but inspiration and drive was something else - "All my life I have had a great interest in taking things apart and putting them back together and trying to improve them. I am passionate about our company as are our staff have the same mindset and want to build on the legacy of keeping our customers, clients, and partners happy on every occasion," states Shane.

It usually takes around three weeks to complete the work depending on how long it takes to get parts. The firm pride themselves on providing skilled workmanship, top of the line replacement parts and excellent communication skills on each and every job. They understand and care about the importance of having the best home or business and ensure that your furniture is treated with the utmost care and professional manner. "Our team provide national coverage and come to your home or place of business", explains Shane.

The business has felt like Brexit is a thorn in their side as they still have to order parts from the UK, but they now must factor in custom duty taxes. However, Shane believes that the pandemic has helped with growth "people saved their money



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and instead of splashing out on foreign holidays they've decided to renovate or spruce up their homes. We can help by repairing their furniture" he notes.

Even though the firm is doing well now, there are currently

no plans to expand just yet. Since the pandemic things have worked out very well and they're very happy with how the business is progressing. The busy Entrepreneur said, "we're extremely busy and we are very confident that our business will continue to grow quickly, because of the quality service that we provide."

The enterprise services almost every furniture retailer, supplier and manufacturer that supplies to Ireland and they service domestically and internationally. Some of the manufacturers they service are in China, Australia, Italy, Belgium, Poland, UK, Spain, Portugal, Germany, France, Lithuania, and the USA.

Shane concludes by thanking his wife Ciara and two boys Dylan and Jacob, plus his family and friends. "They've always supported me in my decisions and helped me along the way."

To get in contact with them, you can call 091 373 132, email: info@walshsfurniturerepair.ie, or check out their website www.walshsfurniturerepair.ie. You can also get in touch through their social media pages on Facebook Walsh's Furniture Repair & Assembly Ltd LinkedIn.

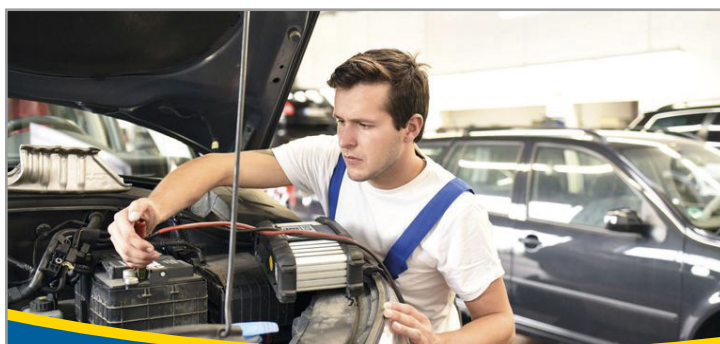


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Despite all the calamities of the past few decades - Kathleen's fashions on Dunlo Street celebrated 30 years in business this year. A testament in some measure to the owner Kathleen Connelly who has had to be resilient and adapt to change. She has said this achievement has "surpassed my expectations considering the downturn in 2008 and changing times regarding fashion and online shopping for the past number of years."



Kathleen and Mattie Connelly with their niece Kathy Daly.

Hailing from the Parish of Killimordaly - from a family of five brothers and one sister, Kathleen is married to Mattie Connelly and living in the neighbouring parish of New Inn/ Bullaun. The store is run by Kathleen who works full time, alongside her part time staff and niece Kathy, who is a great support.

The business was originally opened in September 1992 opposite Haydens hotel. It was successful and businesswomen Kathleen enjoyed many happy years there, but she decided to move in 2013 to her current location as the premises was bigger. Before buying the current premises, Kathleen had actually worked in it for Irene and Harry Lyne in O'Beirnes newsagent.

In recent years businesses had to be quick and adapt to change. Kathleen says "It was difficult going through both the Town Enhancement and Covid closures, but it taught me to be resilient and the importance of social media and Shopballinasloe.ie which

are brilliant platforms and a great help to all businesses. I am grateful to be part of Shop Ballinasloe initiatives and we accept the Ballinasloe Town Vouchers."

During her years in business, the busy entrepreneur has seen many changes. When they first started there were numerous supermarkets, pubs and two hotels. Unfortunately, these have all closed now but many new businesses have set up in their place.

For people considering buying Christmas presents here, the shop currently has special offers which include 40% off Joseph Ribkoff Dresses and 50% off Occasionwear, keep an eye on social media for

Christmas shopping times.

To celebrate their accomplishment of 30 years in business they had a wonderful evening of food, fashion, and fun in the Shearwater Hotel and Spa organised by the Fair and Festival Committee which they were delighted to be part of, thanks to many local ladies who showcased their Autumn/Winter Collections.

Currently in store they have labels ranging from smart casual to dressy available in sizes 8 to 26. They also stock Italian label Peruzzi, Robell trousers & jeans, Marble Knitwear, Castle knitwear, Lighthouse Rainwear, Normann Coats and Jackets, Christina Felix coats and jackets, Brandtex Jeans and Knitwear, Sunday Knitwear, Coco Doll Dresses, Kate and Pippa Tops, Dresses and Jumpsuits, as well as a beautiful range of Absolute Jewellery, scarves, wraps and handbags.

Shop owner Kathleen has this advice for anybody considering starting a new business "Find a niche in the market and do your research! You must enjoy what you are doing, and I feel blessed as I really enjoy what I do and love styling all my clients."

"I would like to thank my many valued customers for their friendship and support over the years, special thanks to my staff for their dedication and help, my family for always being there for me and lastly my husband Mattie for his unwavering support and for being my rock from day one", concludes Kathleen.





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Bunowen Bakery welcomed Minister of State Damien English at the opening of their new premises, now located in Derrymullen Industrial Park. They have worked with Galway Rural Development and successfully won funding of €120,000 to purchase new equipment and fit out a state of the art facility.

From humble beginnings in 2017, the bakery was founded by Andy Cavan and his father Danny and operated out of a small retail unit in the village of Ahascragh. The bakery still bakes its original artisan scratch recipes, which have been handed down through the family for generations. Danny had worked as a Baker in Northern Ireland for over 40 years and these recipes combined with Andy's knowledge led to Bunowen

Bakery offering "40 YEARS OF TRADITIONAL AND ARTISAN RECIPES" Their product is currently available in 13 counties across the country.

The company has one eye on the future and hope to distribute nationwide including Northern Ireland. They are working with government support to access more equipment, training and, delivery vans to reach their potential.

"The growth and expansion of Bunowen Bakery is a wonderful example of how businesses across the country can grow new markets and create new job opportunities from their local community. I am to meet with Andy Cavan and Seamus Concannon, two enterprising people who are part of our strong SME community who employ over one million people in Ireland" stated Minister Damien English.



Sean Tully, Minister Damien English, Agnes Hurley, Frank Cadam, Business Consultant; Michael Mullins.

Loretta Cavan, Danny Cavan, Katie Cavan, Minister Damien English, Rosaleen Kilgannon, Andy Cavan, Jennifer Hartigan & Senator Aisling Dolan.

Cllr Micheal Connolly, Lyn Donnelly (BACD) Sen Aisling Dolan, Minister Damien English, Sandra Regan, BIA Innovator; Seamus Concannon GM, Andy Cavan Founder, Claire Conroy (GRD), Seamus Duffy BACD.



Seamus Geraghty (Bakery Supervisor), Andy Cavan (Founder), Minister Damien English, Seamus Concannon (GM), Joyce Kelle (Finisher), Kaylie Mulvihill (Assistant), Mark Crehan (Baker).

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091 509551 ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie
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"As a chef I love going to work each day and working with an excellent team here in Ahascragh and Derrymullen from bakers to drivers, everyone makes the business a success. I would like to thank my father Danny for the family tradition and passion for baking which he has passed onto me" stated Andy at the formal opening.

"We are so fortunate to have access to so many local providers of fresh and premium local produce and all the ingredients used in our baking are sourced locally from eggs to milk, to flour - to printing and packing and more. Our focus is on excellence in food and reliability, and we plan to scale up our business to meet demand and to build the brand across the country. ", explained Andy .

They have grown from a team of three to the current 12 staff and plan to have 20 people working by the end of 2023. They are currently recruiting staff so please do send on CVs for baker, finisher, and bakery assistant. Call 90 964 3798 or info@bunowenbakery.ie

For consumers who love home-made crafts, Cherry Pedlar has moved her store Colourful Things Gift Shop a few doors down on Dunlo Street. The new larger store stocks design, and unique products by artists and crafters from the area. Currently the store stocks stunning bespoke hand-crafted items from 14 local crafters.

Owner, Cherry Pedlar, is a Clare native originally, but is no stranger to the town of Ballinasloe. Since marrying her husband Aidan and moving to Kilconnell, Cherry successfully held two separate Christmas Pop-Up shops on Society Street. Before opening her store in 2019.

Cindy Byrnes is one of the crafters that sells her pieces in the store. She lives in a small village near Killimor, and Colourful Things is the only shop you can purchase her crafts in. She currently up styles old furniture. This involves collecting old furniture and repainting and upholstering them, bringing the furniture back to life. Cindy has been crafting all her life but only began selling them in 2017.

"People look for quality crafts which looks like they can see in their home and something that is a little bit different, quirky, and

colourful. There has been an increase in interest in my designs since Covid; as people are more aware of recycling and re-using products" explains Cindy.

If people are interested in purchasing any of this furniture, they can buy it in Colourful Things or on her Facebook and Instagram pages "Vintage Design by Cindy". She also does commission pieces as well.

Cindy's work had been in Cherry's first shop, and she is still stocked in the new store. She found out about the store as she used to shop in it and when she saw a Facebook post by Cherry, they met and decided to work together.

Kasia Kucharska is another artist who sells her work in Cherry's store. For now, the shop is the only place where you can buy her earrings with different charms but she plans to set up a website in the future. She is from just outside Ballinasloe. She was always a creative person and loved making colourful things, this attracted her to crafting.

She believes that the more colourful and sparkly an item is the more it stands out to people. Post Pandemic she has had more of an interest in her crafts as she had more time to think about

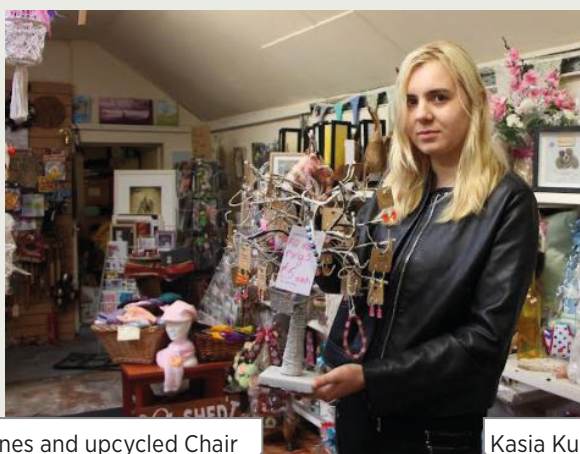
it and plan her designs. Kasia has only started stocking in Cherry's store this year.

She heard about the store through a friend. Once she found out, she thought it could be a good way to make money from her crafts. She has been working on her jewellery craft for two years.

This shop is an ideal place to get thoughtful, home-made Christmas presents while also supporting local crafters. Regular Opening hours are Daily apart from Wednesdays and Sundays from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm.



Cindy Byrnes and upcycled Chair



Kasia Kucharska and her earrings

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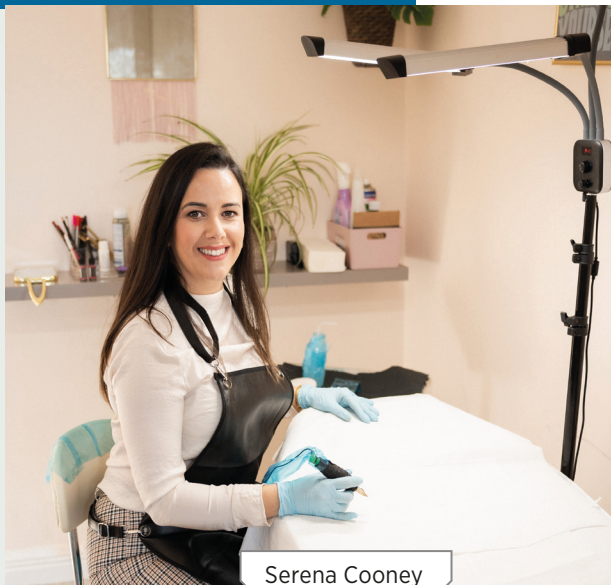
Delight Permanent Makeup is led by cosmetic tattoo artist **Serena Cooney**, specialising in the latest techniques in cosmetic tattooing for brows, eyeliner and lips.

Cosmetic tattooing is a technique that implants pigment into the dermal layers of the skin meaning the results cannot be washed off, but they do fade after several years so that you can maintain and refresh the treatment. It is not the same as body tattooing and there is no pain involved. It is commonly known as permanent makeup since it can create looks like makeup.

Serena is Dublin born but her family moved to Ballinasloe when she was 14. The town was always her second home as her mother, Jacinta Burgoyne, hails from town-growing up in Burgoyne's hairdressers, which was on Society Street. Her father is a Dub but loved the area when visiting for holidays and weekends.

"I'm not a real Dub at heart although I haven't quite shaken the accent" she laughs! Serena had worked in advertising for 12 years and was looking for a career change and came across permanent makeup when looking for a solution to her own brow problem. She couldn't believe the difference it made in people and the confidence it gave them.

There is a huge demand for her service, according to the businessowner, with brows being the most popular, followed by eyeliner and lip blush. Her service is important for women who have alopecia or are going through menopause as this can cause brow loss. Cancer patients also get the treatment in preparation



Serena Cooney

for hair loss. Some clients have good eyebrows, but they might have a lot of gaps which they would like permanently filled. Eyeliner is well known and will always be in demand, she offers lash enhancement, which means the colour is only in the lash line and not on the eyelid. This will give the illusion of lashes and mascara but it's not obvious that it's a tattoo. Lip blush is very popular around the world but its only now becoming popular here. Lips can be pale, blue, misshapen, or patchy in colour. Also, as people age, the lips lose their shape. Lip blush revives the lips with a subtle wash of colour and repairs the shape.

Creagh is the ideal location for her business. "There is always parking, and it's easy for clients to find if they're not familiar with Ballinasloe. It's a bonus that I can walk to work, and my children go to school across the road. It's almost full circle since I worked in the shop next door when I was 15" she explains.

To work in this industry education and continuous training is important- as the techniques, tools and pigments change and improve over time. So, to keep on top of this the tattoo artist is always looking for new courses and Serena is currently certified from three different accreditation bodies.

Some special offers are available in the run up to Christmas, if you mention Ballinasloe Life there is 20% off all treatments booked or gift vouchers purchased before December 21st.

For consultations, please call 090 960 0123 or email info@delightpmu.ie. Consultations are required before all treatments and are free. Her studio runs by appointment only from Monday to Saturday.


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It's getting close to the busiest time of the year and the ShopBallinasloe team are confident it will be another bumper Christmas for Town Vouchers and online ShopBallinasloe sales.

Now in its third year, ShopBallinasloe is still going strong with many vouchers purchased, online orders and new retailers joining the initiative to promote their products and services as well as accepting Town Vouchers.

To date, the team have achieved some great milestones:

- * ShopBallinasloe sales to date - €231,000
- * ShopBallinasloe On-Line Products - Sold to date - €91,000
- * Town Voucher Ballinasloe - Sold to date - €140,000
- * Winner of IE Digital Town Awards - Large Town Category 2021

The team are also encouraging employers who operate performance related payment and bonuses for their staff to consider gifting them Town Vouchers. Under the Small Benefits Exemptions Scheme, employers can now reward employees up to €1000 in Town Vouchers, completely tax-free and saving them and their employees money.

The vouchers are not only for Christmas, they are available all year round making them the ideal gift option for any occasion as well as ideal prizes for Raffles, Draws, Golf Classics and Table Quiz's. So, if you have a special occasion coming up or maybe you have a family member overseas - have them gift you some Town Vouchers.

But this initiative cannot be maintained without the commitment and support from retailers and the local community and we are asking the community to get behind this shop local initiative!

Membership for 2022 is now. If you are a local retailer and would like to be involved, membership is now open with early bird offers available before 31 December and further information can be found on our website www.shopballinasloe.ie

Ahascragh Distillery is on target to be the first eco-distillery of this scale in Ireland. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) is supporting the development of the distillery, with capital support of €500,000.

They engaged FDT Consulting Engineers and Project Managers Ltd. to undertake an energy efficient design review of the proposed distillery in Ahascragh. Decarbonisation specialist Astatine developed and installed the technology that has delivered substantial reductions in the utility demands of the distillery through a novel means of thermal storage, combined with optimal heat recovery within the process.

Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications Eamon Ryan said, "Ireland's first eco-distillery is an innovative example of what all Irish industry should be considering cutting cost and carbon at the same time."

Founder and Managing Director, Gareth McAllister said "We are delighted that SEAI have recognised this energy efficient design and are providing capital support to help realise the project."



Gareth and
Michelle
McAllister

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Having friends and family around or wondering where you could get a nice festive brunch, lunch, coffee & mince pies or go for dinner with co workers or order in for all the family, giving the home based Darina or Neven a night off – take a look at some of the places below for their trading hours. There is a myriad of choice to suit all tastes and budgets! It is not exhaustive, some outlets refused to participate and some still not had their kitchen or staff times worked out at the time of going to print.

The Old Mill Shop & Café - Ahascragh

Ahascragh Distillery is open between 8am-4pm from the 19-23rd December. On the 24th they're open between 9am-1pm. They are closed from Christmas Day to the 2nd of January and from the 3rd-6th they are operating between 8am-4pm. Contact them on 090 968 8935.

Apache Pizza

Apache will be open from 4pm-1:30am Monday-Thursday between the 19th of Dec-1 Jan. From Friday-Sunday they'll open between 4pm-2:30am. From 1st January they're open regular hours 4pm-12:30am Monday-Thursday and 4pm-2am Friday-Sunday. From the 10th of Jan any medium pizza with a drink will be €11.99 for the month of January. For takeaway call 090 964 4333.

Bethlehem

On the 24th opening hours are 3pm-8pm and they are closed on Christmas Day and Stephen's Day. On New Year's Eve they will operate between 3-8pm. They will close from the 1-2nd January, reopening normal hours on the 3rd. Call 090 964 6495 to order.

Bistro 18

Bistro 18 are closing at 3pm on Christmas Eve and will remain closed until January 4th. They've a lunchtime Christmas party menu between the 1-23rd December excluding Sundays. Call 090 964 4867 for more information.

Breadbasket Café

Normal Trading hours with lost of festive treats on menu till Christmas eve 3.00 pm Closed 25, 26, 27 – reopening normal hours on the 28th and closed New Year's Day, 0909644578.

Brewery Lane

They have a set Christmas Menu for €32 per person. They'll be open between 11am-5pm for food on Christmas Eve and the bar closes at 6pm. They'll reopen on St. Stephen's Day between 3-8pm. Usual trading hours from 11am-11pm. Contact 090 964 5294.

Fallons Shannonbridge

Trading hours are between 12:30-10:30pm on Christmas Eve with the kitchen closing at 5pm. They will close all day on Christmas Day. Re-opening between 12:30-8:30pm on Stephen's Day. On New Years Eve they are operating from 12:30-8:30pm and all day on the 1st of January. Contact 087 850 6630 for more information.

Fusion

Fusion restaurant will be open on Christmas Eve until 10pm. They are closed on Christmas Day and back to normal hours on St Stephen's Day. The latest possible order is 9:30pm and the last takeaway is 11pm. There is a special Christmas menu at €30 per person. For further information contact 090 964 5419

Good Taste Chinese

Good Taste will operate from 4:30-11pm on Christmas Eve and will close on the 25th. Open as normal on 26th.

Gullanes

Gullanes Hotel will close at 3pm on Christmas Eve and will remain closed until the 28th of December, re-opening at 9am. The last order in the restaurant and last takeaway order is 8:30pm. There is a special three course festive lunch costing €28 per person or a three course Christmas dinner at €35 per person (subject to availability on certain dates). If you require more information call 090 964 2220.

Karibas

From the 21-23 December Karibas will be running between 9am-4pm. On Christmas Eve they'll close at 2pm and will re-open on the 3rd of January. They are operating their full menu as part of takeaway service. Contact 090 964 4830 if you require any other details.

Kawa

Kawa will be open between 2-8pm on Christmas Eve. Closed on the 25th and 26th. Normal business hours from the 27th. New Year's Eve and Day they will be serving between 4-11pm. Contact 090 964 3931 to book.

Lukers, Shannonbridge

They are opening normal hours on Christmas Eve and closed Christmas Day. Normal hours on St Stephen's Day but no food is being served. On New Years Eve and New Years Day they are trading normal hours again. Contact 087 777 6252 to get more information regarding their special menu.

Loru

Loru's has a three course Christmas Party Special for €20. This must be reserved by calling 090 967 3153.

Meadow and Green (Golf Club)

They will close at 6pm on the 24th and remain closed 25th, no decision has been made yet for Stephen's Day. Christmas party nights which include a set menu and a mulled wine reception. The following dates are available in December 2nd, 3rd, 9th, 10th, 16th and 17th. Sunday lunch is between 1-6pm. Call 083 019 2688 for more information.

Moycarn Lodge

There is a festive menu for the whole month of December. The opening hours on Christmas Eve are between 8am-4pm, closed on Christmas Day, the kitchen is closed on Stephen's Day, but the bar will open from 3pm. New Year's Eve they're opening between 12pm-9pm and between 12pm-8pm on January 1st. Call 090 964 5050 to get more information.

Shearwater Hotel

The Shearwater Hotel is closed on the 23rd for dinner bookings. The bar will be open to midday on Christmas Eve and will remain closed until 12 noon on the 28th. They have an option for Private dining with Christmas lunch or dinner and festive afternoon tea. The last order for food will be 8:30pm and no option for takeaway. The contact number is 090 963 0400.

Supermacs

Supermacs have launched there festive five-ounce burger and free Christmas glass with every large meal. They will be open on Christmas Eve between 12-8pm, closed on the 25th of December and reopening between 3pm-12am in Stephen's Day. Usual trading hours from the 27th 12pm-12am. Check their social media for changes to dates and times.

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Christmas Reflection Fr. John Garvey Adm.

I love the advertisement with the pet lizard taking the robotic Hoover to go on an escapade down the street for himself. On the journey he mops up a tasty morsel for a treat, then uses the shiny hub-cap of a motorcar to serve as a mirror and later delicately maneuvers his vehicle to do some roller-blading with the local teenagers. Jeff exudes joy and freedom as he enjoys the sights of the city and then returns home hoping he has not been missed.

Thanks to modern technology however, though the family are away on a trip themselves the youngest member is able to link up with and view the living room and spots Jeff as he parks the Hoover at the spot where he pressed it into service. 'Enjoy the freedom of a better connected world with '3' is the message being conveyed.

We live in a connected universe and what happens in one part impacts directly on another. We see this with the effects of climate warming, with the displacement of peoples, and the ravages of war. On the other hand, the smallest gesture of kindness has a ripple effect that can have far reaching outcomes.

Christmas is a time to deepen our awareness of our connection with the created world, with one another and with God. Walk around sometimes in your bare feet and feel contact with the earth. Send a Christmas card or talk to somebody you have not been in touch with for a long time. Spend some time in silence before the mystery of the original 'three'----Father, Son and Holy Spirit in whose relationship of love we all share.

I also love a song "You do not walk alone" set to music by Elaine Hagenberg and available on Youtube.

Wishing you joy, freedom and peace at Christmas.

John Garvey.

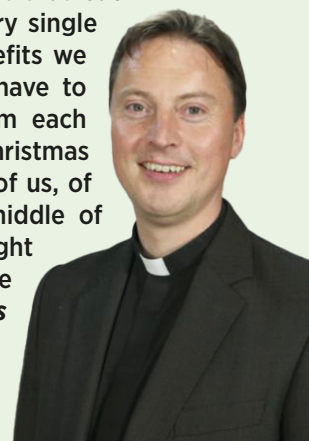


Rev. John Godfrey, New Archdeacon

Congratulations to Reverend John Godfrey who has been appointed Archdeacon of Killaloe. Currently the rector of Aughrim Union Parishes, his new role will also see him as Archdeacon of Tuam.

His geographical location and previous experience in Galway and Tuam will help him in this new job. John is well known for his gifts of wisdom, spirituality, pastoral commitment, and administration. The esteem in which he is held across the whole diocese was demonstrated by his recent election as Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe representative canon in St Patrick's Cathedral.

"The whole faith story is realising that the world is far from how it should be, but that each individual action matters. Every single positive thing we do has benefits we cannot yet imagine, we just have to start and then follow on from each positive step we take. In Christmas 2022 may it be a sign, for all of us, of God's enduring love in the middle of our current lives. May the light of Christ bring renewed hope to us all this Christmas" *wishes Archdeacon John Godfrey.*



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Moore Community Hall has just recently completed a massive €300,000 plus refurbishment project which was officially unveiled at a GALA evening, by Archbishop Francis Duffy.

The project, spearheaded by Moore Community Council, has seen a full upgrade of the building, and the provision of a remote working hub and training facility in the South Roscommon Hall to support people from the area working remotely, or accessing training and education courses.

The IT development was made possible by the arrival of fibre broadband via the National Broadband Scheme and boosters are provided throughout the facility. They replaced the floors and the roof and added some new modern office space.

During the renovation they also added a new top of the range playground. The total cost was €325,000. Funding was secured through LEADER, The Just Transition Fund, GRETB, Roscommon County Council, CLÁR, Parish Finance Fund and donations from the local community.

The work began in 2019 and it took place in stages. Unfortunately, there was delays in the work due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Original Community Council

The Hall was officially re-opened on the 23rd of September, by Archbishop Francis Duffy, with formal speeches, presentations, plaque unveiling and tea and sandwiches to follow some local music merriment to celebrate a milestone achievement for the Parish and Community.

Since the re-opening many new classes have taken place and they had a concert with Patrick Feeney which has been a huge success.

Members of the Council are really happy with how the refurbishment turned out. PRO Valerie Duffy stated "When we started out it was meant just to be a small project, but we've been successful with funding we applied for which allowed us to create a bigger project.



Current Council, The Community Council photo unfortunately doesn't include all members but those in the photo are:

Back row, l-r: Rory Curley, Sean O'Rourke, Tom Madden, Sean O'Rourke, Fiona O'Connell, John McHugh, Ivan Colleran, Derick O'Brien

Middle row, l-r: Paddy Feehily, Gillian Murray, Sarah Whyte, Ornaigh Gavin, Maura Kelly, Mary Kelly, Peter Naughton, Padraic Kilduff

Front row, l-r: Kathleen O'Shea, Mary Kelly, Carmel Scott, Willie Naughton, Valerie Duffy, Kathleen Feehily, Chrissie Kelly

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So, we are really delighted with the final outcome and especially when we see so many members of the local community come out and they've been very supportive of the final result."

Members of the community are also very happy with the work that the newly elected Community Council do. They facilitate many groups to use the new look hall for meetings, practices, classes, workshops and entertainment.

Committee Member Carmel Scott said "The re-opening was a wonderful occasion, especially after Covid and it's wonderful to see everyone here and in particular to have young people here at the opening. It was a wonderful occasion for a small parish in rural Ireland."

Chairperson Willie Naughton publicly thanked Carmel Scott and Valerie Duffy, who took on the task of applying for all of the grants, and without their "amazing work" the project would not have been completed.

He also praised Archbishop Francis Duffy, who blessed the building, and the speakers on the Gala night: Anne Mannion from GRETB, Cllr John Naughton, Tomás Beades and Denise McDonnell from Roscommon Leader Partnership.

Anyone wishing to use the hall should direct their enquiries to
+353 90 967 3538
moorecc3@gmail.com

SUCCESSFUL HALLOWE'EN ZOMBIE WALK

19

Over 2,000 brave and fearless souls successfully made it around the 2km looped walk through Garbally Woods despite the best efforts of the many Zombies, Chainsaw wielding beasts, White Ladies & Forest Fairies lurking along the route. Once safety had been reached on the other side of the wood the revellers were treated to entertainment from the Instep stage school dancers.

The event, in its seventh year, is organised annually by Ballinasloe Area Community Development (BACD) and the Ballinasloe Musical Society (BMS) with the support of many community organisations all of who give up their time voluntary across the Bank Holiday weekend to support this community initiative.

All funds raised go directly towards further promoting and marketing Ballinasloe and Surrounding Areas (including Ballinasloe.ie & Ballinasloe Life Social Media channels) and towards the Ballinasloe Musical Society.

A Special thanks to all the 125 Zombies, Dancers, Stage Crew, Makeup artists and stewards who helped make the weekend such a success and to Dolans Centra and Dunnes Supervalu who sponsored Food & Refreshments for the volunteers over the two days and to Ballinasloe Credit Union who also supported the event.

| Income | |
|--|-------------------|
| Ticket Sales | €24,000.00 |
| Expenditure | |
| Marketing/Signage/Flyers | €953.00 |
| Production/Props/ Lanterns/Tea Lights | €7,697.00 |
| Insurance, Indemnities & Security | €1,400.00 |
| Civil Defence First Aid Cover | €300.00 |
| Snacks/Water/Food | €1,474.00 |
| Bursaries | |
| Musical Society | €2,000.00 |
| Donations to local groups (who provided Property, Equipment etc) | €1,150.00 |
| Total: | €14,974.00 |
| Surplus for Town Marketing & Promotion | €9,026.00 |



Some of the Volunteer Zombies 2022

By Oisín White



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BACD recently held a successful community meeting in the Shearwater Hotel where they updated the over 70 attendees of the recent developments of the Charitable Company – set up in 1999.

As it was the first in person meeting held by the company since 2019 Seamus Duffy (Chairperson) was delighted to welcome everyone to the event.

Speakers on the night included Lyn Donnelly as company manager, Brian King (Vice Chair), Anita Kileen (Board Member and Town Team Coordinator) and Claire Gibbons (Tourism Committee).

Seamus, in a brief Chair's Address, reviewed the significant changes / developments since the last AGM including the new St Teresa's School Class Rooms, New Cycle Shelter, Energy Efficiency upgrades including Solar Panels & Led Lights, New Connected Hub Status, Tus Learning Gate, and New teleconferencing equipment, as well as new Assistant Manager Martina Flanagan to work alongside Lyn in all the new additional projects going forward.

He thanked the Board, Staff and over 200 volunteers that the Community Company relies upon as well as acknowledging the strong partnerships they continue to build with their funders such as Galway Rural Development (LEADER), Galway County Council, Department of Rural & Community Development & Western Development Commission, who all grant aided projects during the year in review.

Manager Lyn gave a detailed presentation on the Enterprise Centre which is now operating at full capacity – supporting 24 tenants based full time with another 8 clients that use the centre on a regular basis, giving rise to 170+ employees.

She updated on the €1.3 million investment in the Bank Chambers which will be capable of supporting 40+ entrepreneurs, with the costs being met by a €500,000 grant from Just Transition, a loan from BCU, BACD surplus funds and further grant applications made to the Town & Village.

The rebuild and refit contract is currently out to tender and the board encouraged all local contractors to enter the tender process on tenders.

Lyn also gave updates on the different events coordinated by the company including the Zombie Walk, Christmas lights and upcoming

Inaugural New Year's Eve Ball. Finally she updated everyone on the continued phenomenal growth of Ballinasloe Life Magazine (in the unavoidable absence of the Editor).

Vice-chair Brian King then outlined the progress of the 10-year community / Town Development Plan which is based on 3 pillars, Health, Sustainability and Tourism and called on advice and expertise from the community on how to evolve the health pillar of the plan.

Town Team Co-Ordinator Anita updated the meeting on the progress on the sustainable energy community masterplan being undertaken while Claire Gibbons outlined the work carried out by the dynamic Tourism Collective including a proposed new tourism brochure and website for the area.

Company Auditor James Coyle presented detailed Audited accounts for year-end (June 2022), showing income at €385,984 and Expenditure at €332,820. A surplus of €50,000 plus was recorded but between loan repayments and capital investment in the Bank Chambers building along with rising operational, construction and utility costs this will be easily utilised over the coming months. The meeting ratified Coyle and Co to continue as company auditor for 2023.

Noel Madden, Valerie Dolan and John McKenna retired; John McKenna made himself available for election.

Directors returned were Seamus Duffy, Chairperson; Brian King, Vice-chairperson; Anita Kileen, Dan Dowling, Deirdre Boyle, Eoghan Kenny, Joe Lyons, John McKenna, Kevin Broderick, Marina Downey, Michael Connolly, Pearse Keller and Sean Kelly.

Attendees on the night included Minister Damien English, Senator Aisling Dolan, local councilors Micheal Connolly, Evelyn Parsons, Declan Geraghty and Peter Keaveney along with many local businesses and community members.

Seamus thanked everyone for attending and commented on the amount of work that is being carried out on a voluntary basis ranging from attending meetings to magazine deliveries to zombies in Garbally woods that makes all these events and projects happen which accumulate in Ballinasloe being a fantastic place to work and live and he looked forward to working with the community over the next 12 months.

 By Oisín White

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The Social Services had an open day to celebrate 50 years in service. They began their work in 1972 but the current building was officially opened on October 20th, 1985.

Teresa Coughlan, who is director of services, stated "The open day was a celebration of the 50 years in business and to say thank you to the whole community. Without the people of Ballinasloe, we wouldn't be here today as they gave us so much support over the years in the forms of financial assistance and volunteers."

They provide three main services. They have meals on wheels-providing hot meals to older people in the locality, allowing older people to remain living at home for longer. The second service is the day care service in Brackernagh, which is open four days a week. Users get to do some activities and have lunch and tea provided. The hope is that people will make friends and alleviate social isolation. They also offer childcare. This is two pronged, there is a pre-school that runs in the mornings and in the afternoons. They also have an early intervention service which helps children that may need extra support.

They plan to continue their work in the future as demand is increasing because people are living longer. Mrs Coughlan states "We get funding from the HSE, but it isn't enough, so we have to fundraise and that's always a challenge. We do this to

keep the facilities functioning to the highest standard."

Tom Cregg, who is a service user, only found out about the facilities through word of mouth. He has this advice for people considering coming "I regret that I wasn't here 20 years ago. Personally, what I enjoy is the friendship both volunteers and service users are all one, there is no exception."

Mary Martyn is a volunteer. She only found out that they needed volunteers when she spoke to a member of staff, and they told her they always need volunteers. "If you have free time and are sad or bored at home, the social services are the place to come, there is something for everybody to do here" states Mary.

One of the key pioneers, Sister Alacoque Glesson is a Mercy Sister from the Western Province. "When the day care centre first opened, it was run by volunteers and if they didn't show up, the Mercy Sisters were called to see if anybody was available. I think it's absolutely fantastic what is provided here, our whole ambition at the start was to allow older people to remain in their own homes and not have to go into nursing homes."

"As a committee, we are always looking after the needs of the town. We hope to keep are current services going but at every meeting we are always trying to expand depending on how we can help the town." states current Chairperson Regina Power.



Annette Cornally, Ann Tully



Mandy Lloyd, Teresa Coughlan



Lar Ward, Nancy Cregg, Alanna Hogan, Mary McKeigue, Ann Creaven



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Health Minister Stephen Donnelly had good news for the town when after a concentrated campaign by Government and Opposition public representatives, here and in neighbouring constituencies, with Exchequer funding for out of hours GP services.

An urgent meeting in late summer to discuss the lack of out of hours services available in the area was attended by local public reps with many working 365 days a year and doing night-time work. meaning with the workload they and their families are suffering, as well as patients.

In the budget this year Minister Donnelly had promised more medical cards to cover all children aged six and seven by the end of 2022 and, from 1 April 2023, eligibility will further be extended to people who earn the median household income of €46,000 or less. This means that almost half of the population will have access to free GP care. Currently it is nearly impossible to be accepted as a new patient to any practice in the town and hinterland.

An Oireachtas meeting followed shortly with the Minister Donnelly; issues were raised by Cllr Parsons, Oireachtas members and Minister Anne Rabbitte. Cllr Parsons was there on behalf of Denis Naughten. As she was a former GP, Dr Parsons said, "Ballinasloe was not an attractive location for new GPs."

Originally Health Minister Steven Donnelly had agreed to examine the situation and the possibility of expanding the Westdoc service. Westdoc provides an Out of Hours Urgent GP service from 6pm to 9am the following day

as well as over weekends and Bank Holidays in the Galway, Roscommon, and Mayo regions. It is part-funded by the HSE.

The HSE had offered a locum solution which was imperfect and quite costly. But Minister Anne Rabbitte told the meeting that €2.5 million has been allocated to the HSE in West to ensure the continuation of Westdoc.

In late October Minister Donnelly created a welcome surprise announcing funding of €436,000 for an Out of Hours GP Urgent Service. This service will be similar to Westdoc. The Minister hopes this funding will ease pressure on the GP's and hospital staff as the HSE prepare for a tough Winter.

Senator Dolan has said "This funding will be life-changing for GPs who spoke of working excessive hours, travelling long distances and no proper breaks. This means that our GPs who are invaluable to families in rural areas will now have access to Out of Hours GP Urgent cover. These supports will also improve the quality of life for GPs reducing risks to patient and doctor safety and assist in recruiting GPs to our region."

Cllr Parsons welcomed this funding "This will attract GPs to the area and retain current GP's, which should futureproof health care in our area and is a good concrete example of all politicians – whether in power or not – working for solutions that are important for locals".



Cllr Parsons and Independent TD Sean Canney on steps of Leinster House.



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46 libraries nationally were selected to be part of this new access programme and Ballinasloe Library team were thrilled to be the first in Galway to be opened as a My Open Library (MOL).

Officially launched by the Cathaoirleach of Galway County Council, Cllr. Michael Maher in late November, the formal ceremony sought to acknowledge and platform the pioneering work that the Ballinasloe Branch of the County Galway Library Service does for its catchment of public and members.

My Open Library is a service which offers extended opening hours to library members on a self-service basis outside normal opening hours, from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Library members must be 16 years or over to avail of the service.

There are no staff present when the service is in operation. The library is monitored by CCTV cameras all the time. Users can access Wi-Fi and avail of self-service printing and photocopying, borrowing, and returning items and using the Internet.

Essentially you can do everything that you would normally do in the library after hours. Students can avail of the study space available which will help them while preparing for exams. To avail of the service members will go through an induction (under 18 to be accompanied by a parent or guardian) and upon completion their account will be activated.

To get access to this scheme people must have a library card and complete an induction to see how this works. Once all this is completed you will be given a code. At the door to the side of the library there is a keypad where you insert your card and the code.

For those with time between close of business and getting a lift home with a parent from study or time between a training session and getting home in a car pool or having a partner doing a class, or meeting friends in town – this new innovative service opens a myriad of practical possibilities for those who enjoy reading, listening to audio books, writing

or laptop browsing in a calm space.

Galway County Council has received investment from the Department of Rural and Community Development to facilitate the rollout of the project. Ballinasloe Library is one of the most innovative public Libraries – hosting the European Direct Information Centre – one of only a handful nationwide.

“My Open Library will give library members access to the library outside the normal opening hours. This initiative is a welcome addition to the other services that libraries provide to our local communities. My Open Library’ is the flagship initiative under the current Public Libraries Strategy ‘Our Public Libraries 2022 – Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities” sated Cllr. Michael Maher.

Head Librarian Una “We are absolutely delighted to be the first library to open as a MOL in Galway.”

Keep an eye on their social media pages for further details.

To find out more about My Open Library please contact Ballinasloe Library at 091 509551 or ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie.



The library staff with Cathaoirleach Cllr. Michael (Moegie) Maher and Director Of Services for Planning and Sustainable Development and Corporate Services in Galway County Council Michael Owens.

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Maura Healey, who was elected as Governor of Massachusetts, in the recent USA Elections, has strong local roots, despite the Kerry Healy-Raes making a rush to claim her !

Her paternal grandmother Katherine (Treacy) Porter was born in Killahornia, Creagh, on the 14 August 1896 to Michael and Mary Treacy. One of a family of five, all the Treacy children except her brother Michael (Sonny) emigrated to Boston.

The oldest of five children, Maura was raised in Hampton Falls, New Hampshire. She studied Government at Harvard where she was the captain of the basketball team. Once she graduated, she played professional basketball in Austria for two years. Upon returning she studied law in Northeastern University. Prior to becoming Governor, she was the Attorney General of the state for eight years. Before a career in politics began, the courageous woman was a civil rights lawyer, assisting illegal Irish immigrants.

Healey was formally nominated as the Democratic candidate for Governor on 6th September. Her platform focused on issues such as education, housing, electoral and criminal justice reform. Some promises from the campaign included expanding job training programs, making childcare more affordable, modernising schools

and protecting the right to access safe and legal abortion in Massachusetts after the controversy by the supreme court to overturn Roe v Wade. She faced Republican Geoff Diehl, a former Congressman who was endorsed by former President Trump.

Her distant cousin-no stranger when it comes to the hustings-trainee Solicitor Alan Harney, travelled to Boston to work the sideblocks and canvass for her. Speaking to media after her victory the incoming Governor paid tribute to her Irish ancestry stating "I was raised under Irish principles and my grandparents' values, and I learned a lot growing up about taking care of family, taking care of those who need an advocate, those who need help."

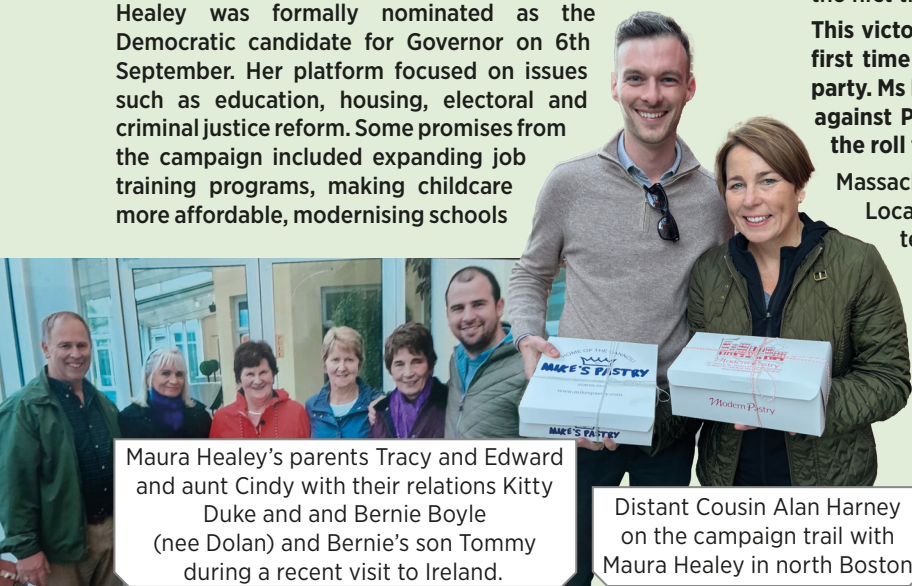
Maura has broken several glass ceilings on her election as Governor. She is the first woman to be elected as Governor of Massachusetts, the first gay woman to be elected as Governor nationally and together with her Lt Governor, Kim Driscoll, it is the first time that a State has elected two women to lead them.

This victory is a huge win for the democratic party as it is the first time since 2014 that the Governor is a member of their party. Ms Healey made a reputation for herself with her lawsuits against President Trump and the big pharma companies and the roll they played in the opioid crisis.

Massachusetts has been good for Creagh connects-politically.

Local Ballygortagh native Siveen Kelly was elected two term Mayor of the City of Somerville, Boston, at the turn of the Century and opened the 2001 October Fair to a glittering Town Council welcome.

"From a Senator from Ballinasloe to a Governor of the state of Massachusetts, whose grandmother came from Ballinasloe, I ask the Leader of the House to invite Governor Healey to visit Ireland and address Seanad Éireann" requested Senator Aisling Dolan on the floor of the Seanad, presumably before she gets to Kerry and Kilgarvan !!



Maura Healey's parents Tracy and Edward and aunt Cindy with their relations Kitty Duke and and Bernie Boyle (nee Dolan) and Bernie's son Tommy during a recent visit to Ireland.

Distant Cousin Alan Harney on the campaign trail with Maura Healey in north Boston

By Oisín White

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In choosing your gifts for this festive season try and leave a little of your budget for those crafters and artists who rely on this time of year for maybe 35% of their annual trade ! It's good for the local economy ! Here are just some of the ones that we are aware of at going to print time.

BROTHERS OF CHARITY

Deerpark Services, Ballinasloe are having their Annual Christmas Sale of Work and Cake Sale in the Shearwater Hotel on Thursday 8th December 2022 from 10.30am to 1pm. They will have a Monster raffle and lots of other Christmas items.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The social services have their Christmas Fayre and Cake Sale on Thursday 1st December from 10am - 3 pm. This is an important fundraiser for them.

BALLINASLOE COUNTRY CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Ballinasloe Country Market at the Supper Room - Emerald Ballroom - Society St. entrance will run every Friday morning 9am - 2pm, up to and including Friday 23rd December. Orders for baked goods, jams and chutneys can be placed by contacting Martin Deeley at 087 959 1548.

Many local crafters supply the market with a fine range of products, such as wood turned bowls, cosmetics from the Silky Suds range; hand painted cards, framed

GIVING LOCALLY

CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

This 2022 annual Christmas Jumper Day will be held on Friday the 9th of December. The event this year is in aid of The Galway Hospice and Ballinasloe Social Services.

Both organisations do enormous work in supporting those in need of care. If you are unable to donate on the 9th, and would like to, check out their Facebook and Instagram pages for the I donate link.

If you wish your premises or organisation to participate, please contact Committee Member Geraldine Deane 089 4154193.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL

"We firstly wish to thank you for your ongoing support. Please be assured that your donations are used to help people who are struggling in your community and without your generosity they would not be able to help. The assistance provided is through our home visitation volunteers", states Kevin McMarrow President of the local St Vincent De Paul branch.

With donations they can offer practical and financial support towards day-to-day essentials like food, heating, and energy costs. Their volunteers are also involved in educational and youth initiatives and work directly with the elderly in the community.

The Christmas collection is a huge part of the Society's local income each year. If it's possible they ask if people can remember them again this year. People can give their donation into the Vincent's Shop, the Presbytery, to any of their Volunteers or electronic transfer. (IBAN: IE83 AIBK 9370 4530 7561 83, BIC:AIBKIE2D) There is also a blue envelope provided in the magazine which can be used for donations as well.

They greatly appreciate the support from the public. Kevin wants to take this early opportunity to "wish you and your family a happy, healthy and safe Christmas on behalf of all in the SVDP."

CLONTUSKERT PARENT ASSOCIATION

The Clontuskert NS Parents' Association are running a raffle for Christmas - with Ballinasloe Town Vouchers as the prizes. The raffle will be kicking off at the end of November. People can donate if they scan the QR code and this will allow users to take part in the raffle online and take them to the website.

poetry, stone art, scented candles and wreaths, plants and fresh flower wreaths, baby knitwear scarves and hats, handmade dolls and much more.

Check their Facebook, Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market.

AUGHIRM OPEN AIR CHRISTMAS MARKET

The Aughrim Open Air Christmas Market will be on Saturday 10th December at 10am. It takes place in Aughrim Park. It'll be followed by the festive farmers' run and all proceeds go to the Jack and Jill Foundation.

TOWN BAND CRAFT AND FOOD FAYRE

On Saturday 3rd December the Christmas Craft and Food Fare takes place in the Band Hall, Dunlo Hill, from 11 am to 4 pm. There will be a large selection of Christmas gift ideas on sale by local artisans

SHEARWATER HOTEL

Craft Fair Day on Sunday 4th December between 12-4:30pm. If you have a table you can set up between 10am-12pm.



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Congratulations were extended to all involved in the Ballinasloe Tidy Towns, as they finished third in their category. In every department they were being judged on, the town either matched or improved on their score from last year. The committee currently has 20 members and an additional 30 volunteers.

The group works with a wide number of organisations, including everyone from the local Community Employment Project, walking groups, sports groups, residents' associations, and the probation services, as well as government bodies and agencies.

The judges were really pleased with how the town is dealing with the problem of dereliction. There is also development work planned for the tennis club, the refurbishment of the service block at the marina, new footpaths, upgrade works in train for the leisure centre playground and a new cycle track.

The committee are working on low mow and no mow areas which will help protect pollinators and encourage bees. The rugby club also got a mention for work their doing in reducing clothes, going into landfills.

On the application form, it mentioned that Ballinasloe had a litter problem, but the judges report stated "you are to be applauded for the work you are doing in trying to tackle this head on, not an easy thing to do unfortunately, so well done on getting the walks and approach roads in Poolboy Bog virtually litter free, and best of luck with all you are doing in order to maintain it like this. It is great to hear that regular clean-ups have been organized by your local 'Friends

of the Environment Group' in the unique bog area, and very impressive to read that over 300 bags of rubbish have been removed, and that Galway County Council are assisting with getting rid of larger items."

The on-line report concludes by mentioning "It was a pleasure to visit Ballinasloe, and despite some of the challenges that you are facing, you are doing a tremendous amount of work to overcome these, particularly in relation to litter control, well done, and best of luck with your work in the future."

Tidy Towns Committee Chairman Tom Madden stated "The report acknowledges how well maintained the approach roads to town are but also notes the continuous challenge that the area has in tackling the instances of fly tipping and illegal dumping."

The Chairman also acknowledged the ongoing financial support of Galway County Council and Pobal. "We are now reflecting on the achievements to date and have identified three key category areas for improvement; Sustainability: doing more with less, Nature and Biodiversity, Tidiness Litter Control. These aspirations are on the agenda for a tidy town's annual general meeting to be held before year end" concluded Tom.



L-R: Renate Kohlman, Eric Naughton, Billy Ward, Gerry Cleary, Claire Connolly, Kevin Connolly, Senator Aisling Dolan, Mary Burke, Patricia Tierney, Liz Madden, Francis Healy, Johnny Walshe, Mary Whelehan, John Barrett & Tom Madden.

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After 32 seasons at the help of various Community Training Projects, Billy Ward has formally retired this October.

Local Billy Ward was self-employed until 1990 when he was approached by Eamon Lally to manage a project in FAS Community Employment Project Clontuskert. From there he was asked by the late Michael Hyland to run a project in Garbally College and grounds.

There he was joined by Assistant Supervisor Kevin Coyne whom he worked with until 2008. When

the various departments decided that Community Employment should not be in schools, Billy and his board relocated to Harbour Road and then onto Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre in 2007/2008, where they have manned their Ballinasloe Training For Employment Service.

When the project started in Garbally, Billy was joined by Kevin Coyne who retired in 2008 and he was then joined by Patricia Tierney Assistant Supervisor.

Looking back in over 30 years working his proudest achievements were in seeing people progress educationally and into employment and working with over sixteen community groups and seeing these grow and evolve over the years. "We have been very lucky as Supervisors and a company to have had wonderful support from our community groups and local businesses who have hired many staff from us over the years" states Billy.

One of the issues that has crept steadily in over the decades is the increase of regulation and compliance and the onus it puts on local volunteers, "hopefully it will not deter people from volunteering with our wonderful local groups" argues Billy.

Each year Kevin and himself, and then Patricia and himself, supervised over 30 staff at any one time. They always had a high turnover of people progressing onto employment. In the number of years, they have had an average of over 70% of staff progress into employment.

For Billy some of the most significant changes he has seen in the town since he started and finished has been the growth in the number of community groups. "We have a wide variety of sporting and voluntary social groups in our town. Some of these



groups have received large volumes of funding in the last few years and have increased their capacity to deliver services to some of our most vulnerable citizens" states Billy.

One of the key focuses of the project has been bespoke tailoring for the trainee. "We always have had a wide and varied group of people working with us. We have also worked with each person on an individual basis to organise training and education to suit their own individual career plan, something that has stood the test of time and contributed to our placement record" he explains.

He is very hopeful that Training For Employment will continue to evolve and change to accommodate all the different people who come through its doors. To remain relevant and to keep community and people at its forefront. "In essence that our in house work experience will continue to be relevant and match a person's training to allow our participants to move forward with academic training and relevant work experience", notes Billy.

He hopes the that the community spirit that is so strong in the town and hinterland keeps thriving.

Billy has no plans to take up fishing but he is embracing this new change by staying involved in a small way with some of the community groups he hand in assisting as a volunteer - He will stay involved with Ballinasloe Training for Employment as an elected Director, sharing some 30 years of training and dealing with the minefield of Govt. changing regulations and departments with the Management and crew.





As part of learning about safety, the students of Aras and Seomra na mBuachailli paid a visit to the local fire station. Here Jamie showed them the fire engine, how to access the water hydrant and tools that they would use. He also let them get suited up with helmets. The boys would like to thank Jamie and Ballinasloe Fire Station for accommodating this visit. Their students had a great time and will have precious memories from the visit.



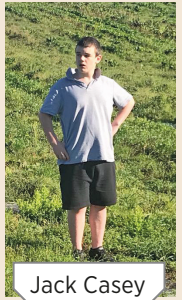
L-r Tyrone, Wayne, Loyola, Rory, Henry, Liam, Adam, Brandon, Ilya, Harry, Cian, Alfred, Laurence, Daniel F and. Daniel L



Students from Aras na mBuachailli enjoyed a trip to Beechlawn Organic Farm to learn about vegetables with a view to growing some in school. They would like to thank Úna Ni Bhroin and her team for providing them with a really enjoyable and educational experience.



L-R Rory, Sinead, Tyrone, Henry, Una, Harry, Matthew and, Ilya.



Jack Casey

ARAS AND SEOMRA TRIP

This was an annual trip for both classes during fair week. Both students from Aras and Seomra Na mBuachailli with some TY students, enjoyed a trip out to the funfair. They went on lots of different rides and got bucket loads of treats. They would like to thank all the staff at Fox McFadden funfair for providing this amazing experience. It was a highlight of their year.



Henry and Cian on the whizzers



Angela and Wayne



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A group of Ardscoil Mhuire TY girls decided they wanted to become more involved in local fundraising and set themselves the task to organise a fundraiser for East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support. After much deliberation the plan was made to raffle off a calf.

Selling ice-creams at break time on a Friday, raised €300 for the project which allowed the pupils to buy a calf !! Money in hand the girls headed to Athenry mart to buy the first prize in the raffle. Using their own initiative, they also asked local shops, hardware stores and hotels to sponsor them and got seven other fantastic prizes donated.

For example, Barretts sponsored them with a Firebox Pizza Oven, Joe Murrays a €50 voucher, Coral Leisure a three-month gym and pool membership plus a few other great prizes. Tope Printers generously supported them with 100 professionally made raffle cards. Feeling they needed more publicity they also contacted Signs and Systems who kindly made them a professional sign which really benefited the girls when selling the raffle lines.

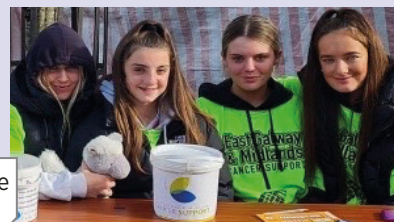
Making sure all legal technicalities were covered ticket sales were undertaken at the Agr Show and the Square during the two weekends of the Fair Week.

This fundraising endeavour was a huge success but a huge undertaking for the girls who conducted themselves in such a professional way. Organising the whole event themselves from start to finish meant overall, they raised €3,820.

The raffle was drawn recently, and Father John Garvey won the prize. He decided to take the cash prize of €100 as he didn't have the facilities for the calf in the Presbytery. He then donated the money back to East Galway and Midland Cancer support. Caoimhe Dunne who was involved in the raffle, father bought the calf. This money was also donated to the pot, Caoimhe is delighted as she had become fond of the calf, which she has named Soother.

They handed over the cheque to East Galway and Midlands Cancer support in late October.

The Girls involved were Caoimhe Dunne, Orla Kenny, Sophie Flynn, Lalitah Geraghty, Alisha Hanlon, Rebecca Bleahen, Erin Brogan, Emma Mulry and Kayla McKeon.



Alisha Hanlon, Sophie Flynn, Caoimhe Dunne and Lalitah Geraghty.

CLONTÚSKERT NATIONAL SCHOOL

Mark Sparvell, Global Director of Education for Microsoft Worldwide, visited St. Augustine's N.S. Clontuskert to learn about the work of the staff and students, as they are the only primary school to be a Microsoft Showcase School in Ireland.

Showcase School status is awarded to school that create student-centered, immersive, and inclusive experiences that inspire lifelong learning, stimulating development of essential future-ready skills so students are empowered to achieve more.



Back L-R Kaylum O'Brien, Senan Shiel, Siún Murray, Caoimhe Dolan, Oliver O'Flynn, Eimil Scott (Teacher), Lucy Dolan, (SNA).

Front L-R Stephen Eustace, (Microsoft Ireland) Sarah Kenny, Méabh Butler, Dominic Ward, Eoin Brennan, Niall O'Connell, Ava Coleman, Mairéad Larkin, Chloe Conneely and Mark Sparvell (Microsoft Seattle).



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- **Darragh Bolton** - Chartered Physiotherapist
- **Mark Gallagher** - Chartered Physiotherapist
- **Fergal O Reilly** - Chartered Physiotherapist
- **James Sheerin** - Chartered Physiotherapist
- **Aaron McDermott** - Chartered Physiotherapist
- **Robbie Fox** - Sport Masseur Connacht Rugby

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Good news for staff, pupils and parents at Ardscoil Mhuire who will receive four new Special Education Teaching rooms.

The Department of Education has granted initial approval for the construction of an arts and crafts room, technology and tech prep rooms, and a project store.

Principal Pauric Hanlon, staff and the near 500 strong student body were approved for an 8000 square foot extension and will cost €3.2 million. It'll improve their



modern subject suite while also providing additional space for staff and students.

Fianna Fail Senator Eugene Murphy stated "I expect this particular development to

move very swiftly. This is the initial stage but obviously it'll be a couple of months before we get all up and running." The construction work is going out to tender.

It marks another sizeable investment in Dept of Education funds for the town.

CREAGH NATIONAL SCHOOL

The Junior Infants class in Creagh national school got time to get to know each other as they played together through the Aistear programme.

The fourth class are currently doing a gymnastics class with TÚS, and sixth class are taking a six week cycling programme.



GARBALLY PPU FESTIVE WALK

The new Committee of the reformed PPU led by Chair Martin Noonan are holding their first ever Christmastide meet up with a walk scheduled in the Garbally grounds Wed 28th Dec at 2.00 pm .

Past Pupils and their families or partners are asked to register their interest on the Garbally Past Pupils

Facebook page.

Further details will be posted there but it is hoped that the walking group can finish with a chat by the cosy fire with refreshments at the Rugby Club till 6.00 pm

Anyone who wishes to get involved in the years programme of activities should reach out to any of the Current Committee members.



We are proud to announce that we have now affiliated with CrossFit and are now the first and only gym in Ballinasloe to offer CrossFit training.

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Our CrossFit program works for everyone - if you've never been to a gym before or if you've been training for years, we can get you stronger, fitter and healthier.

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Louise Mac an tSaoi has recently been voted Galway carer of the year at the Netwatch Family Carer of the Year Awards. She cares for her son Liam who has chronic lung disease, a serious metabolic disorder called PKU, autism and had his left leg amputated. He spent the first few years of his life in Crumlin, but Louise battled tirelessly to make sure he could come home. Her husband Sean passed away last year after a long illness. This award seeks to recognise and shine a light on the remarkable contribution of the more than half a million people in Ireland who provide care at home to loved ones.



Valerie Duffy from Moore Community Council has been named as County Roscommon's most Inspirational Person. Her extensive and inspirational work within various community groups in her South Roscommon area have earned her the title of Inspirational Person in this year's awards. Some of the groups she works with include Moore Community Playground and Camcloon NS Board of Management. Some of the work Valerie did include securing thousands of euros in funding for various projects. As a prize from Gala Retail the winner from every county received a €1,000 voucher from Ireland Hotel.



Christmas Ideas at Jorena
Jorena recognises the importance of a holistic approach to healing the body and mind. The concept of the psychosomatic experience of the body holding the emotional stress has been well researched. Based on this Jorena has introduced; reflexology, Nutrition, Massage therapy, Body talk, Yoga, Baby yoga to their service offering. Why not get a gift voucher for the special person to enjoy many therapies available in a private setting @jorena YOGA by Judith, crystal healing by Mel, nutritional therapist by Caroline, Holistic Therapy by June Counselling by Carmel, Energy healing by Elaine and Meditation by Tara. For further information please call in and ask one of the assistants.



Enda Brien from St Dympha's school Portumna completed the second part of his Gaisce program and was awarded the Silver award on the 3rd of November. His aim is to complete the program and he has begun working on the Gold award. This young man is an inspiration to us all.



Garbally 1972 Class Reunion

BACK ROW L TO R: Noel Mannion, Michael Mannion, Tom Kennedy, Sean Clarke, Michael Mahony, Martin McDonagh, Martin Finn, Tom Dolan, Ian Gaughan, Jim Fennell. **MIDDLE ROW L TO R:** Tom Lyons, Richard Burke, Jack Mannion, Brendan Naughton, Peter Hill, Eamon Gilmore, Tom Kelly, Ignatius Kelly, Sean O'Connor, Joe Kelly, Pat Costello, John Flynn, Padraic Minton, Gerry Fitzgerald (teacher). **FRONT ROW L TO R:** Frank McDonagh, Peter Burns, Martin Craven, Michael Curley, Brian Connell, Paddy Feehily, Ray Flanagan, Stephen Dervin, Cecil O'Grady, Paul Flatherty, Peter Raftery.



RETURN OF CLONFERT DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE IS A HUGE SUCCESS

The first Clonfert Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic took place from 19-24 August 2022. Over 130 pilgrims from the diocese travelled an increase on 2019 figures. The Pilgrimage was the first led by Bishop Michael Duignan since he became Bishop of Clonfert in late 2019.



Attendees at the Digital First Day held in Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre. "Sustainable Energy for Rural Communities"



Pictured at the launch of the Clontuskert Heritage Group "Talks and Walks" Series were: Presenter Joe Molloy, Guides Adeline Finneran and Eileen Curley and Brid Lyons, Committee. Next "Talks and Walks" in Aughrim, first weekend in December.



Celebrating National Women's Enterprise Day 2022(13th October) in Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre (BEC) Honoria Mitchell-Black (Araya Business & Marketing Solutions) , Lyn Donnelly (BEC), Niamh Creaven-Connaughton (Araya Business & Marketing Solutions), Gina O'Neill (Engagement Gifts & thegiftshop.ie)



JOHN POWER AND SEAMUS DUFFY
John recently vacated his office in Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre after 23 years. Seamus Duffy as Chair of BACD made a presentation to John as acknowledgment of John being the first tenant of BEC after its purchase in 1999 and to thank John for all his assistance to BACD throughout the years.

DECEMBER EVENTS GUIDE

DECEMBER 1, THURSDAY

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Christmas Fayre and Cake Sale | 10am-3pm | Bsloe Social Services |
| Padraig 'Clorcal Comhra' | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Bsloe Women's Group | 11.15am | Bsloe Library |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

DECEMBER 2, FRIDAY

| | | |
|--|--------------|----------------------------|
| Indoor Country Market | 9am - 1pm | Social Centre, Society St. |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Bsloe Golf Club |
| The East Galway Hunt Pony Club Rallies | 7pm | Bsloe Show Grounds |
| Music: Sean Grehan | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Music: Toxic Twins | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Texas Holdem poker | 9pm | Joe's Bar |
| Music: Abba Tribute | 9pm | Lukers Bar Sbridge |
| Christmas Party Night | 6pm-9pm | Meadow and Green |
| Castleblakeney Open Day | 3pm-5pm | St. Cuan's College |
| Christmas Party | 6pm-9pm | Bsloe Golf Club |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Tain |
| GAA Youth Club (1st - 3rd year) | Evening Time | Ballinasloe GAA |

DECEMBER 3, SATURDAY

| | | |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|
| Music: Niall Rutledge | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Music: 3 men and a bass | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 years old) | 12 noon-1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Live Music | 9pm | Joe's Bar |
| Christmas Party Night | 6pm-9pm | Vallinasloe Golf Club |
| Castleblakeney Open Day | 10am-1pm | St. Cuan's College |
| Christmas Party | 6pm-9pm | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music: Kevin Corry | 10pm | The Pillar House |
| DJ John Mulvihill | 10pm | An Tain |
| Marie Lyons Book Launch | 2.30pm | Ballinasloe Library |
| Christmas Craft and Food Fair | 11am-16pm | Band Hall, Dunlo Hill |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Music (DJ) | Evening Time | Moycarn |

DECEMBER 4, SUNDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Christmas Craft Fair Day | | Shearwater Hotel |
| Social dancing: Michael Collins | 5pm-7.30pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| Country Dancing: Derek Ryan | 9pm-12 | Shearwater Hotel |
| Adult Open Sessions (Begin. & Ladies) | 10-11am | Tennis Court |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Adult Tennis Sessions (All members) | 11am-2pm | Tennis Court |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Tain |
| A Winter Concert of Music and Song | 3pm | St. Augustine's, Ctusker |

DECEMBER 5, MONDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Ballinasloe Panto, "Cinderella" | 7.30pm | Town Hall Theatre |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------------------|

DECEMBER 6, TUESDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |
| Ballinasloe Panto, "Cinderella" | 7.30pm | Town Hall Theatre |

DECEMBER 7, WEDNESDAY

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Bsloe Breastfeeding Support Group | 11am-12.30pm | Ballinasloe Library |
| Set Dancing Class | 8.30-10.30pm | Scoil an Chroí Naofa |
| Ballinasloe Panto, "Cinderella" | 7.30pm | Town Hall Theatre |
| Bsloe Town A.F.C. Community Bingo | 8pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| French Class with Lizzie | 11am-12 noon | Gullane's Hotel |
| Traditional Music | 9pm | An Tain |
| The Knitting And Crochet Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Seniors Competitions | From 8am | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

DECEMBER 8, THURSDAY

| | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------|
| B. of Charity Work, Cake sale & Raffle | 10.30am-1pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| Ballinasloe Panto, "Cinderella" | 7.30pm | Town Hall Theatre |
| Aughrim Christmas Trees Lightning | 6pm | Aughrim Park |
| Christmas Carol Singing & Blessing | from 6.30pm | Aughrim Park |
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Bsloe Women's Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

DECEMBER 9, FRIDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Indoor Country Market | 9am - 1pm | Social Centre, Society St. |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music: Amy Brennan | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Music: 3 Men and a Bass | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Christmas Jumper Day | All day | All Town Businesses |
| Ballinasloe Panto, "Cinderella" | 7.30pm | Town Hall Theatre |
| Music: DJ John F | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Music: 80s Night | 9pm | Lukers Bar Sbridge |
| Christmas Party | Evening Time | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Tain |
| GAA Youth Club (1st - 3rd year) | Evening Time | Ballinasloe GAA |
| East Galway Hunt Pony Club Rallies | 7pm | Bsloe Show Grounds |

DECEMBER 10, SATURDAY

| | | |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|
| Music: Niall Rutledge | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Music: Beggars Velvet | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Ballinasloe Panto, "Cinderella" | 7.30pm | Town Hall Theatre |
| Matinees | 2.30pm | Town Hall Theatre |
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 years old) | 12 noon-1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Music: Dave Mills | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Aughrim Christmas Market | from 10am | Aughrim Park |
| Family Winter Wonderland - Boat Yard | Daytime | Lukers Bar Sbridge |
| Christmas Party | Evening Time | Meadow and Green |
| Music: Ollie Rocks | 10pm | The Pillar House |
| Music: Boogie Men | 10pm | An Tain |
| Alan Scott Exhibition Launch | 2.30pm | Ballinasloe Library |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Bsloe T. Band Nursing Home Recitals | 11am-1pm | Around Ballinasloe |
| Music (DJ) | Evening Time | Moycarn |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

DECEMBER 11, SUNDAY

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------------------|
| Social Dancing: Steven Smyth | 5pm-7.30pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| Ciaran Rosney, Support John Molloy | 9pm-12 | Shearwater Hotel |
| Matinees | 2.30pm | Bsloe Town Hall Theatre |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Adult Open Sessions (Beginners & Ladies) | 10-11am | Tennis Court |
| Adult Tennis Sessions (All members) | 11am-2pm | Tennis Court |
| Family Winter Wonderland - Boat Yard | Daytime | Lukers Bar Sbridge |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Tain |
| Bsloe Town Band with Athenry Orchestra | 3pm | Athenry |
| Christmas Carol Service | 10am | St. John's Church Bsloe |

DECEMBER 12, MONDAY

| | | |
|---|--------|---------------------|
| Alan Scott Exhibition Launch "Story Teller" | 2.30pm | Ballinasloe Library |
|---|--------|---------------------|

DECEMBER 13, TUESDAY

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |
| Alan Scott Exhibition "Story Teller" | Daytime | Ballinasloe Library |

DECEMBER 14, WEDNESDAY

| | | |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|
| Set Dancing Class | 8.30-10.30pm | Scoil an Chroí Naofa |
| Bsloe Town A.F.C. Community Bingo | 8pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| French conversational class w/ Lizzie | 11am-12pm | Gullane's Hotel |
| Traditional Music | 9pm | An Tain |
| Alan Scott Exhibition "Story Teller" | Daytime | Ballinasloe Library |
| The Knitting And Crochet Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| The Mother And Toddler Group Meeting | 11am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Seniors Competitions | From 8am | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Scoil An Chroí Naofa Christmas Carol Service | 7pm | St. Michael's Church |

DECEMBER 15, THURSDAY

| | | |
|---|----------|---------------------|
| The Magic of Christmas Concert | 7pm-10pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Alan Scott Exhibition "Story Teller" | Daytime | Ballinasloe Library |
| Women's Group (looking for new members) | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

DECEMBER 16, FRIDAY

| | | |
|--|--------------|----------------------------|
| Indoor Country Market | 9am - 1pm | Social Centre, Society St. |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music: Sean Grehan | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Music: Keith and Liam | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Music: Texas Holdem poker | 9pm | Joe's Bar |
| Music: Cheesy Pop Night | 9pm | Lukers Bar Sbridge |
| Christmas Party | Evening Time | nBallinasloe Golf Club |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Tain |
| Alan Scott Exhibition "Story Teller" | Daytime | Ballinasloe Library |
| Social Dance . Music by John Molloy | Evening Time | Moore Community Hall |
| Music (DJ) | Evening Time | Moycarn |
| GAA Youth Club (1st - 3rd year) | Evening Time | Ballinasloe GAA |
| The East Galway Hunt Pony Club Rallies | 7pm | Bsloe Show Grounds |

DECEMBER 17, SATURDAY

| | | |
|--|--------------|-------------------------|
| Music: Happy Bar Star | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Music Acoustic Ninjas | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Matinees | 2.30pm | Bsloe Town Hall Theatre |
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 years old) | 12 noon-1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music: Miranda | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Christmas Beer Hall in The Boat Yard | Evening Time | Lukers Bar Sbridge |
| Christmas Party | Evening Time | Bsloe Golf Club |
| Live Music | 10pm | The Pillar House |
| Music: Na Riadoiri | 10pm | An Tain |
| Alan Scott Exhibition "Story Teller" | Daytime | Ballinasloe Library |
| Christmas Story Time (all ages) | 12noon | Ballinasloe Library |
| Town Band Perform in Nursing Homes | Daytime | Nursing Homes Bsloe |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Music (DJ) | Evening Time | Moycarn |

DECEMBER 18, SUNDAY

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------------------|
| Social Dancing: Liam Mannering | 5pm-7.30pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| Main Act J. Buckley, Sup. B. Heaney | 9pm-12 | Shearwater Hotel |
| Matinees | 2.30pm | Bsloe Town Hall Theatre |
| Adult Open Sessions (Beginners & Ladies) | 10-11am | Tennis Court |
| Adult Tennis Sessions (All members) | 11am-2pm | Tennis Court |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Tain |
| Town Band Perform in Nursing Homes | Daytime | Nursing Homes Bsloe |

DECEMBER 19, MONDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Town Band Perform in Nursing Homes | Daytime | Nursing Homes Bsloe |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|

DECEMBER 20, TUESDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |
| Town Band Perform in Nursing Homes | Daytime | Nursing Homes Bsloe |
| Penitential Rite (Confessions) | 7pm | St Michael's Church |

DECEMBER 21, WEDNESDAY

| | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------------|
| Set Dancing Class | 8.30-10.30pm | Scoil an Chroí Naofa |
| Joe's Massive Christmas Draw, Cust. Party | 9pm | Joe's Bar |
| Bsloe Town A.F.C. Community Bingo | 8pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| French conversational class w/ Lizzie | 11am-12pm | Gullane's Hotel |
| Traditional Music | 9pm | An Tain |
| Town Band Perform in Nursing Homes | Daytime | Nursing Homes Bsloe |
| The Knitting And Crochet Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Seniors Competitions | From 8am | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

DECEMBER 22, THURSDAY

| | | |
|--|---------|----------------------|
| Children's Christmas Movie (€5 per child includes the movie and hot chocolate) | 2pm-4pm | Ahascragh Distillery |
| Music: Boogie Men | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Ballinasloe Women's Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Town Band Christmas Carols | 7pm-9pm | Around Ballinasloe |
| Town Band Perform in Nursing Homes | Daytime | Nursing Homes Bsloe |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

DECEMBER 23, FRIDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Indoor Country Market | 9am - 1pm | Social Centre, Society St. |
| Music: Red Tape | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Music: Ken solo | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Tain |
| Town Band Perform in Nursing Homes | Daytime | Nursing Homes Bsloe |

DECEMBER 24, SATURDAY

| | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------------|
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 years old) | 12 noon-1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Music: Joe Wynne | 7pm | The Pillar House |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Christmas Mass and Carol Singing | 7pm | St. Catherine's Crch, Aug |
| Town Band Cmas Carols, Folk Choir | 7pm-9pm | Around Ballinasloe |
| Christmas Eve Mass | 7pm | St. Mary's Crch, Moore |
| Christmas Children's Mass & T. Band | 6pm | St. Michael's Church |
| Christmas Eve Mass | 10am | St. Michael's Church |
| Christmas Eve Mass | 6pm | St. Michael's Church |
| Christmas Eve Mass | 9pm | St. Michael's Church |
| Christmas Eve Mass | 7.30pm | Lady Lourdes, Creagh |
| Christmas Eve Mass | 9pm | St. Augustine's, Ctusker |
| Christmas Eve Eucharist | 12pm | St. Matthew, Ctusker |
| Christmas Eve Eucharist | 5.30pm | Woodlawn Church |
| Christmas Eve Eucharist | 7.30pm | Holy Trinity, Aughrim |

DECEMBER 25, SUNDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------|
| Christmas Mass in Portiunculla Chapel | 11am | Portiunculla Hospital |
| Christmas Morning mass | 11.30am | St. Mary's, Moore |
| Christmas Day Mass | 9am | St. Michael's Church |
| Christmas Day Mass | 12noon | St. Michael's Church |
| Christmas Day Eucharist | 10.30am | St. John's, Ballinasloe |
| Christmas Day Mass | 10.30am | Lady Lourdes, Creagh |
| Christmas Day Mass | 10am | Lady Clonfert Church |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Tain |

DECEMBER 26, MONDAY

| | | |
|------------------------|----------|------------------------|
| Music: DJ John F | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Music: Ollie Rocks | 10pm | The Pillar House |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Captains XV vs Exhiles | 2.30pm | Rugby Club |
| Traditional Music | from 3pm | Brodericks, Kilconnell |

DECEMBER 27, TUESDAY

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------|------------------|
| Music: Boogie Men | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |
| Music: A-1 | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Music: Balld Group "Cruiscin" | 9pm | The Pillar House |

DECEMBER 28, WEDNESDAY

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Music: Seattle Unplugged | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Set Dancing Class | 8.30-10.30pm | Scoil an Chroí Naofa |
| Bsloe Town A.F.C. Community Bingo | 8pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| French Conversational Class, Lizzie | 11am-12 noon | Gullane's Hotel |
| Traditional Music | 9pm | An Tain |
| The Knitting And Crochet Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Seniors Competitions | From 8am | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

DECEMBER 29, THURSDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Live Music | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Music Party with DJ Fahri Mac & DJ | 9pm | Lukers Bar Sbridge |
| Lewis Hackett in the Boat Yard | | |
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Music: High Reel | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Ballinasloe Women's Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

DECEMBER 30, FRIDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Indoor Country Market | 9am - 1pm | Social Centre, Society St. |
| Music: Niall Rutledge | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Acoustic Ninjas | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Tennis Ball (Everyone welcome) | 8pm | Gullane's Hotel |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Tain |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| GAA Youth Club (1st - 3rd year) | Evening Time | Ballinasloe GAA |

DECEMBER 31, SATURDAY

| | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Music: Amy Brennan | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Music: Colm Carroll | 10pm | Brewery Lane |
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 years old) | 12 noon-1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| New Year's Eve With DJ John F | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| New Year's Community Welcoming | 12 midnight | Aughrim Park |
| New Year's Gala Ball 2022 | Evening Time | Gullanes Hotel |
| New Year's Eve Party with DJ Fahri Mac & DJ Lewis Hackett in the Boat Yard | Evening Time | Lukers Bar Sbridge |
| Music: Ollie Rocks | 10pm | The Pillar House |
| Town Band . Rining in the New Year | 11.30pm-00.30am | St. Michael's Square |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music (DJ) | Evening Time | Moycarn |
| New Year's Eve Party | 8pm | Brodericks Bar |

JANUARY 1, SUNDAY

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Adult Open Sessions (Beg. & Ladies) | 10-11am | Tennis Court |
| Adult Tennis Sessions (All members) | 11am-2pm | Tennis Court |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| New Year's Day Eucharist | 12pm | St. Catherine's, A. cragh |

JANUARY 3, TUESDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| Speech And Drama Classes (3-7yrs) | 4pm-5pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Speech And Drama Classes (8-12yrs) | 5pm-6pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |

JANUARY 4, WEDNESDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Bsloe Breastfeeding Support Group | 11am-12.30pm | Ballinasloe Library |
| Set Dancing Class | 8.30-10.30pm | Scoil an Chroí Naofa |
| Bsloe Town A.F.C. Community Bingo | 8pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| French Conversational Class Lizzie | 11am-12 pm | Gullane's Hotel |
| Traditional Music | 9pm | An Táin |
| The Knitting And Crochet Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Seniors Competitions | From 8am | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

JANUARY 5, THURSDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Ballinasloe Women's Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

JANUARY 6, FRIDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Music. Texas Holdem poker | 9pm | Joe's Bar |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music. Paul Dowling | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel |
| GAA Youth Club (1st - 3rd year) | Evening Time | Ballinasloe GAA |

JANUARY 7, SATURDAY

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 yrs) | 11am -12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 yrs) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 yrs) | 12 pm -1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Music. Boogie Men | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Music. Adrian Rabbitte | 10pm | The Pillar House |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music. Sean Crehan | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel |

January 8, Sunday

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Adult Open Sessions (Beg. & Ladies) | 10-11am | Tennis Court |
| Adult Tennis Sessions (All members) | 11am-2pm | Tennis Court |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

JANUARY 10, TUESDAY

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| Speech And Drama Classes (3-7 yrs) | 4pm-5pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Speech And Drama Classes (8-12 yrs) | 5pm-6pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |

JANUARY 11, WEDNESDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Set Dancing Class | 8.30-10.30pm | Scoil an Chroí Naofa |
| Bsloe Town A.F.C. Community Bingo | 8pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| French Conversational Class Lizzie | 11am-12 pm | Gullane's Hotel |
| Traditional Music | 9pm | An Táin |
| The Knitting And Crochet Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| The Mother And Toddler Group | 11am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Seniors Competitions | From 8am | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

JANUARY 12, THURSDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Ballinasloe Women's Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

JANUARY 13, FRIDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Music. Texas Holdem poker | 9pm | Joe's Bar |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music. Happy Bar Stars | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel |
| GAA Youth Club (1st - 3rd year) | Evening Time | Ballinasloe GAA |

JANUARY 14, SATURDAY

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 yrs) | 11am -12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 yrs) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 yrs) | 12 pm -1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Music. Tongue & Groove | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Music. Alan & Mick | 10pm | The Pillar House |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music. Amy Brennan | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |

January 15, Sunday

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Adult Open Sessions (Beg. & Ladies) | 10-11am | Tennis Court |
| Adult Tennis Sessions (All members) | 11am-2pm | Tennis Court |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

JANUARY 17, TUESDAY

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| Speech And Drama Classes (3-7 yrs) | 4pm-5pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Speech And Drama Classes (8-12 yrs) | 5pm-6pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |

JANUARY 18, WEDNESDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Set Dancing Class | 8.30-10.30pm | Scoil an Chroí Naofa |
| Bsloe Town A.F.C. Community Bingo | 8pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| French Conversational Class Lizzie | 11am-12 pm | Gullane's Hotel |
| Traditional Music | 9pm | An Táin |
| The Knitting And Crochet Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Seniors Competitions | From 8am | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

JANUARY 19, THURSDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Ballinasloe Women's Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

JANUARY 20, FRIDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Music. Texas Holdem poker | 9pm | Joe's Bar |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music. Niall Rutledge | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Dancing. Mike Denver Weekend | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel |
| GAA Youth Club (1st - 3rd year) | Evening Time | Ballinasloe GAA |

JANUARY 21, SATURDAY

| | | |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 years old) | 11am -12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 years old) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 years old) | 12 pm -1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Music. Ken solo | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music. Shane Moore (TBC) | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |
| Dancing. Mike Denver Weekend | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |



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

JANUARY 22, SUNDAY

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Adult Open Sessions (Beg & Ladies) | 10-11am | Tennis Court |
| Adult Tennis Sessions (All members) | 11am-2pm | Tennis Court |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Dancing. Mike Denver Weekend | 4pm-6pm | Shearwater Hotel |

JANUARY 24, TUESDAY

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| Speech And Drama Classes (3-7 yrs) | 4pm-5pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Speech And Drama Classes (8-12 yrs) | 5pm-6pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |

JANUARY 25, WEDNESDAY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Set Dancing Class | 8.30-10.30pm | Scoil an Chroí Naofa |
| Bsloe Town A.F.C. Community Bingo | 8pm | Shearwater Hotel |
| French Conversational Class Lizzie | 11am-12 pm | Gullane's Hotel |
| Traditional Music | 9pm | An Táin |
| The Knitting And Crochet Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Seniors Competitions | From 8am | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Concert. Three Amigos | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel |

January 26, Thursday

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig | 11am-12 | Gullane's Hotel |
| 25 Cards | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Ballinasloe Women's Group | 11.15am | Ballinasloe Library |
| Traditional Music | 9.30pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |

JANUARY 27, FRIDAY

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Music. Texas Holdem poker | 9pm | Joe's Bar |
| Trivia/Fun Bingo | 9pm | The Pillar House |
| Find The Joker | 9pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |
| Music. Shane Moore | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel |
| GAA Youth Club (1st - 3rd year) | Evening Time | Ballinasloe GAA |

January 28, Saturday

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Junior Open Sessions (5-8 yrs) | 11am -12 | Tennis Court 3 |
| Junior Open Sessions (8-12 yrs) | 11am-12 | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Junior Open Sessions (12-17 yrs) | 12 pm -1pm | Tennis Court 1 and 2 |
| Live M8usic | 10pm | Joe's Bar |
| Live Music | 10pm | Fallons Bar Sbridge |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

January 29, Sunday

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Adult Open Sessions (Beg & Ladies) | 10-11am | Tennis Court |
| Adult Tennis Sessions (All members) | 11am-2pm | Tennis Court |
| Traditional Music | 6pm | An Táin |
| Men 18 H.S. Competition | Daytime | Ballinasloe Golf Club |

JANUARY 30, MONDAY

| | | |
|--|-----|----------------------|
| Ard Scoil "Joseph & Amazing Dreamcoat" | 8pm | Bsloe T Hall Theatre |
|--|-----|----------------------|

JANUARY 31, TUESDAY

| | | |
|--|---------|------------------------|
| Speech And Drama Classes (3-7 yrs) | 4pm-5pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Speech And Drama Classes (8-12 yrs) | 5pm-6pm | Laurencetown Com. Hall |
| Ballinasloe GAA Bingo | 8pm | Emerald Ballroom |
| Ard Scoil "Joseph & Amazing Dreamcoat" | 8pm | Bsloe T Hall Theatre |

To Advertise Your Events here please contact
ballinasloelifereporter@gmail.com or call 09096 45831 and leave a voice message. We will be back to confirm by 11th January



Credit Union Members prize draw winner Maureen Donoghue and runner up Sadie McDonnell with Melissa Glynn, Marian Brady & Grainne Murphy.



Special presentations were made to Nancy Cregg & Sean Tully in recognition of their long services to Ballinasloe Town Twinning by Geraldine Kelly Sec. (left) and Mike Kelly (right) Chairman Town Twinning Committee.



ILCU Day Colouring Competition prize winner Orin Hynes with Grainne Murphy.



Liz & Tom Madden Ballinasloe Town Twinning Committee with Marie Annick Cebon (Chairperson Twinning) and Marie Madeline Monnier (Mayor) Chalonnes-sur-Loire.



International Credit Union Day Colouring Competition prize winner Katie Killeen Lyons with Grainne Murphy.



Pictured at the Ballinasloe Town Twinning Function were Geraldine Kelly, (Sec.) Alan Farrell, Acting Director of Services, Galway County Council, Dominique Pairochon, President Anjou Wine Festival, Catherine Gagneux, Honorary French Consul and Anne Kelly (Twinning Committee).



Pippa Hackett, Junior Minister for Agriculture with responsibility for organics with Padraig and Úna Fahy, Beechlawn Organic Farm - Overall Winner in the E Commerce Category at the Bord Bia Awards for their Grown in Ireland Veg Box.



Dermot Salmon in front of their Lego range

Salmons

For all your last-minute Christmas gifts, Salmons is the place to go. As part of their Toymaster range they stock Lego for all ages as well as Warhamer, Playmobil and outdoor toys. They also have some science experiment kits as well and this includes chemistry sets and robotics. Pool and snooker tables are also available.

Dermot Salmon states "We have a Christmas club open, so people can put money aside for toys."

Cahalan

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diamond of the west

The mystique which surrounds Diamonds and precious Gemstones has captivated us for thousands of years. From Cleopatra to Marie Antoinette, gold and silver set with sparkling gems have combined to create fine jewellery which everyone can admire. For those who saw the movie, who can forget the Diamond and Ruby necklace worn by Julia Roberts in "Pretty Woman". Diamonds have certainly been a girl's best friend.

And not only Diamonds but natural precious gemstones such as Ruby, Sapphire, Emerald, Aquamarine, Garnet and Pearls, all have added to the mystique of fine jewellery through to the present day. And all of this can be found at Cahalan Jewellers located on Main Street, Ballinasloe, at prices to suit everyone's budget.

Diamonds are often associated with Engagement Rings, Eternity Rings, Necklaces and Earrings, and Cahalan Jewellers stock all of these in a range of prices to suit most pockets. Natural Gemstones such as Ruby, Amethyst and Sapphire are also readily available in all of these jewellery styles and, if the style which you're looking for is not in stock, the highly trained staff at Cahalan Jewellers will be happy to find it from their Suppliers List and order it for you.

One of the key reasons that fine Jewellery has become more affordable in today's world is the steady rise in popularity of high-quality synthetic gemstones. This trend began in the middle of the last century with man-made synthetic diamonds called Moissanite and the creation of man-made Sapphire, Ruby and other Gemstones too.

Today these low-cost man-made versions of Diamond, Ruby and Sapphire Jewellery are of such a high quality that, in many instances, only a highly trained professional can tell the difference. And naturally, these man-made gemstone



Maureen and her son Andy
busy engraving orders for personalised Christmas Gifts

equivalents can create very affordable, beautiful, high quality jewellery within everyone's reach.

Cahalan Jewellers can also advise you on which precious Gemstone is traditionally associated with your birth "month". So, whether it's a Garnet for those born in January, an Emerald for May, or a Sapphire for September (and the other 9 months too), Cahalans can advise you of which Gemstone belongs to you, and also show you jewellery set with those Gemstones, either as individual pairs of Earrings, a Ring or a Bracelet, or sets of 2 or 3 matching gemstone items to create a suite of Jewellery, at a range of prices to suit everyone's style and taste.

And sometimes, the customer's most precious piece of Jewellery may be the broken piece in their Jewellery Box at home. It may be missing a stone, or need a clasp or a setting repaired, and Cahalan Jewellers' trained staff will be happy to provide a free estimate, before proceeding with any repair or restoration takes place.

So, if you prefer natural Diamonds and Gemstones, Cahalans can offer you the very best. And if your preference is for the wide selection of man-made alternatives, Cahalans can offer you beautiful Jewellery at prices to suit everyone. Their staff have huge experience in selecting items of jewellery to suit your personality, and especially, rings to suit your fingers.

And always remember to ask about "Cahalan's Easy Pay Plan".

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Christmas MENU

STARTERS

Maple Roasted Celeriac and Parsnip Soup

With Hazelnut & truffle served with homemade soda bread

Moycarns Spiced Beef Caesar Salad

Baby gem lettuce, parmesan cheese, crispy shallots, smoked bacon lardons
Mulled wine rehydrated apricots served with Homemade Caesar Dressing

Chicken & Mushroom Vol-au-vents with Cranberry Glaze

Creamy tarragon & smoked bacon white wine sauce
Served in a crunchy vol-au-vent case

Festive Superfood Salad

Mixed baby leaf salad, toasted walnuts, dried cranberries,
apricots, clementine, thyme & honey goat cheese
Beetroot & Strawberry Dressing

MAIN COURSE

Moycarns Signature 24 Hour Slow Cooked Beef

Crispy Yorkshire pudding stuffed with a smoked bacon duxelles
Rosemary & veal stock reduction

Rolled Turkey Breast Wrapped in Smoked Streaky Rashers

Stuffed with glazed bacon covered in a sausage & sage
stuffing Cranberry tartlet, red wine jus

Pan-fried Fillet of Seabass

Diced Toulouse sausage, kale, crispy potatoes
Fennel Puree, chive white wine cream sauce

Tortellini Giganti with Asparagus & Ricotta Cheese

Creamy spinach & roast red pepper sauce
Grated parmesan cheese & fresh basil pesto

📍 Shannonbridge Rd, Creagh, Ballinasloe Galway, Ireland H53 AC83

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✉ info@moycarnlodge.ie

🌐 moycarnlodge.ie



Ballinasloe has third level compliment of about 175 – primarily medical students each year between the National Paramedical College and Portiuncula Hospital.

Add short term medics, lab staff and other allied staff plus all those contract workers in the Agricultural, Service and Food processing industries of the hinterland – it makes for a significant number of short term renters.

Daft.ie for the last two quarters were showing less than 4 a month average rooms to let in the town and surrounds and Employers and the Training Courses are struggling to assist new arrivals.

“Renters moving to Ballinasloe to take up employment find it difficult to source suitable rental accommodation and this can hamper local recruitment and provision of much needed services. Portiuncula University Hospital is only one such example of a large dynamic mobile workforce” says Cllr Evelyn Parsons who states that never has accommodation been in more demand and supply so scarce.

Athlone and Loughrea are nearly as bad with limited availability and higher weekly or monthly costs.

The Rent-A-Room relief scheme can benefit homeowners with a spare room as it helps meet cost of living increases while providing much needed accommodation in times of intense shortage.

Every homeowner’s situation is different and they need to check that the rules suits their individual circumstances. People whose children have left home may wish to boost their income in retirement, or homeowners trying to pay large mortgage repayments could benefit if they rented out a room.

Last summer Ballinasloe homeowner Mary (not real name) had a vacant bedroom and decided to rent it out. She drew up a rental agreement in consultation with a local letting agent and obtained permission to display her advert on Portiuncula Hospital staff noticeboards.

Within a month Mary had interviewed several people and found

a lady tenant who was a perfect fit for her home. The new tenant also interviewed Mary’s family and knew what to expect, what the house would be like to live in with a very busy family. Mary states it’s been a learning experience and highly recommends it to homeowners with suitable spare rooms who could benefit from Rent a Room tax relief up to €14k.

The tenant values the convenience and proximity to her work in Portiuncula. Mary makes sure that the tenant has her own time in the shared kitchen, her personal space and checks in regularly to see that she is happy. Rent is inclusive of heating, electricity and wifi. It provides extra income for Mary’s family while helping solve accommodation shortage for a needed worker in town.

Cllr Parsons sincerely thanks Mary for sharing her positive experience. Those interested should check terms of Rent-a-Room relief on revenue.ie.

Given the amount of empty nesters in the locale – it should be possible for more to make full use of the scheme especially with monthly utility costs increasing at such a pace.

By Oisín White



Cllr. Parsons, Chair MDC, Ballinasloe with Theresa Coughlan, Director of Ballinasloe Social Services at their 50th Open Day recently.

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Credit Union Horse of the Fair

L-R: Ciara Croffy, Andrew Gardiner, Susan White, Melissa Glynn, Marian Brady BCU Chairperson, Mal Croffy, Steve Whitaker, Sophine, Michael & Linda Mullane



Dermot Goode, Chloe and Bear, Champion Puppy of the Fair.



Picture at the festival heritage night with current chairman Mal Croffy & festival secretary Mary Phelan were past chairmen Stanley Clarke & Adrian Ahern



Phil (90) and Frank O'Dowd (95) from Castleblakeney at the Ballinasloe horse fair, Frank has not missed a year since he was 5 years old.



Crowds enjoying the junior Jiving at the Festival Jiving Competition



Runners up in the Festival tug-o-war competition were local factory Western Post Form



Martina Reynolds, Sponsor (MD Bread Basket) with Champion Dog of the Show - an African Hound and owner Tara Hunt



Picture at the festival heritage night were from l-r festival Queen Melissa Glynn, Kieran Egan, Frank O'Dowd, Arthur Judge, Carmel & Martin Stack.



Pictured at the presentation of the overall Ram Lamb at the Ballinasloe fair were Judge Aine Devlin, Valerie Lyons, Moya Flynn, winner Leo Glynn, Cónal Flynn, Karen Lyons, Jimmy Lyons, Mary Phelan, Melissa Glynn and William Glynn.



Fair & Festival Committee 2022

Back L-R: Thomas Gullane, Niall Clarke, Ciara Croffey, Kevin Murray, Meave Kiernan, Kieran Egan, Francis Leahy & Mal Croffey
Front: Kathleen Croffey, Anna Victoria Mulcahy, Melissa Glynn, Sinead Mannion & Mary Phelan

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• Est. 2004 •

Rachel Goode our local, classically trained Soprano best known for her singing of folk, country and classical is organising a Christmas concert in the Shearwater Hotel with all money raised going to East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support.

She will be joined by two of Ireland's finest folk singers, Sean Keane, and Eleanor Shanley, and the Ardscoil Mhuire school choir. The concert will feature many Christmas favourites, Irish folk favourites, country, classical crossover. There will be something for everyone and it's for a good cause. They will all be backed by a fantastic band with some of the finest musicians in Ireland who have played with the likes of Mary Black and some currently with Derek Ryan. The Ardscoil Mhuire trad group will be there to serenade everyone as people arrive, this will start at 7pm.

This is now Rachel's third big charity concert to organise locally, the first was for Galway Hospice which raised €4000, the second was back in 2018 for East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre and it raised €6500.

"I am very excited to be joined by such a high calibre of singers and musicians on the night. I think it will be special and it will most definitely get everyone into the festive spirit. I hope that people will support this wonderful charity and come to what will be an amazing night of entertainment. I have always sung for many charity events over the years, and I like to try and give back as much as I can and have always enjoyed organising my

own concerts, you just never know when you could need one of these wonderful organisations, so I think it is important to support these and the amazing work that they do."

Rachel has some new music planned for the new year. She is now working on creating a "folk" sound that is unique to her. She will be working on this with the same musicians that will feature in the concert, and she is really excited to be recording a mix of folk, country and some other classics thrown in there.

The next big event for Rachel is performing on a cruise to Alaska where she'll be singing with the All-Star Irish Cruise with the likes of Daniel O'Donnell, Nathan Carter and Brendan Shine.

The concert takes place on the 15th December at 8pm. Tickets cost €25 and are available online at The Magic of Christmas Tickets, Thu 15 Dec 2022 at 19:00 | Eventbrite or in the hotel reception, cancer centre and Keller's of Ballinasloe.



GABLES ANNUAL ART BACK

Members of the Gables Art Group were delighted to be back in the Ballinasloe Library for their annual art exhibition after a two year break due to the pandemic. Over 70 colourful and varied paintings were on display in the church gallery during the month of November. Every artist had their own theme. To see the artwork check out

the Ballinasloe Life Facebook page.

On behalf of the Group Jackie Eastwood said "It was great for our artists to be back, and we were very grateful to the Ballinasloe Library for providing us with such a fabulous venue to show our paintings".

If you are interested in purchasing any of the artwork, you can contact the library on 091 509 551 and they can give you the contact details of the painters or phone tutor Jackie Eastwood on 087 234 1535 or Geraldine Kelly on 087 250 4189.

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An abundance of costumes, custom lights, scenic artists, music scores and a multitude of children singing, dancing, and acting, all pulled together by an array of bewildered adults - this can only mean only one thing: it's **FINALLY** Panto time again in Ballinasloe! B'sloe Panto are back after a three-year break to bring their production of "Cinderella" to Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre from the 5th to the 11th of December.

The production crew have been working tirelessly since August to bring their latest show from an idea to the stage. There are costumes to source, sets to design and build, special effects to be planned and brought in from overseas, countless dance routines to be choreographed, posters to be designed and printed and tickets to sell just to name a few! And that's all on top of countless rehearsals! It takes a lot of careful planning and organisation, but the results are always worth it.

This year's cast features an assortment of Panto staples along with many new faces. The title role of Cinderella will be played by TY student Abaigh Hardiman. Pat Vaughan takes on the role of Buttons. Mike O'Reilly will play the role of Cinderella's dad, The King, who makes an unfortunate choice by marrying

Voluptua, the typical evil stepmother. Sharon Dooley will be making her stage debut in this role. Two more newcomers complete the family as Gorgon and Zola, the ugly stepsisters played by Des Grealis and Doireann Gilmore. No panto would be complete without a Prince, and 6th year Garbally student Brendan Rice will be playing this royal part. The cast is rounded off by another newcomer, Ornaigh Gavin, who fulfils Cinderella's wish to go to the ball by being her Fairy Godmother.

Ria Purcell, who has been involved for several years will be choreographing the entire cast. The accomplished Dave Hardiman, who has over 25 years theatre experience both on and off the stage, takes the helm as director for this year's show. The production crew is rounded off by the extremely talented musical direction of John Roe.

The show begins nightly at 7.30pm with two fancy dress matinees on Saturday and Sunday (December 10th and 11th, respectively) at 2.30pm, where both children and adults alike are invited to come in outfits fit for the stage with prizes for the best dressed. Tickets are available online (find B'sloe Panto on Facebook or Instagram for more information) and from the Panto booking office at 'J&S Photos' on Society Street, drop in or call (090) 963 1566 to get yours! They will also be available on the door; however, pre-booking is advised!



Back Row (L to R): Sharon Dooley, Saidhbhe Concannon, Brendan Rice, Doireann Gilmore, Des Grealis
Front Row (L to R): Mike O'Reilly, Ornaigh Gavin, Abaigh Hardiman, Pat Vaughan, Poppy Farrell.



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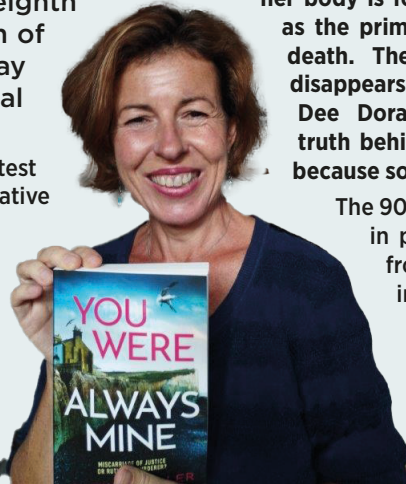


If you require any further information please contact the Nurse in Charge on **Phone: 090 9642622 Fax: 090 9644278** or **Email: garballyview@gmail.com**

Ballinasloe-born Sheila Bugler has just published her latest crime thriller book "You Were Always Mine" which is the eighth novel she has written. Living in Eastbourne, in the South of England for the past nine years, Sheila's successful foray into fictional writing has seen her climb to international success with publishers, Canelo.

Daughter of former GP Harry Bugler and his wife Adrienne, Sheila's latest book is the fourth in her Eastbourne crime series, featuring investigative journalist Dee Doran. It is part of a second deal with Canelo and the fifth book published with that company. "I've published eight novels to date, with a ninth coming out next year called 'Black Valley Farm' which is a stand-alone novel and not part of the series" said Sheila.

A brief synopsis of "You Were Always Mine" reveals how Cassie McNamara was found guilty of the murder of her husband, Paul Cavellini, but she has always protested her innocence. Upon her release, she hires local journalist, Dee Doran, to prove she was wrongfully convicted. Cassie and Paul's daughter, Grace, was adopted by Paul's family.



When 18-year-old Grace goes missing and her body is found, all eyes turn to Cassie as the prime suspect in her daughter's death. Then Cassie, just like Grace, disappears. Left behind to investigate, Dee Doran must work to find the truth behind Grace and Paul's deaths, because someone is keeping secrets.

The 90,000 word thriller is available in paperback, ebook and audio from all good bookshops, including Salmons in Ballinasloe. Judging by the success of her previous publications, this will surely be another blockbuster for the Ballinasloe lass.

VON TRAPPS MAKE RETURN TO TOWN HALL

By Oisín White

Celebrating their centenary with their 2023 production of The Sound of Music. Ballinasloe Musical Society is looking forward to entertaining audiences in the Town Hall Theatre from Wednesday March 22nd to Saturday March 25th.

After a break of 3 years it will be the ideal musical to celebrate this and the first time ever for them to produce Maria and the Von Trapps – even though Scoil Mhuire did the show in the mid-70s.

The production team of Declan Kelly, Director; Shane Farrell, Musical Director and Aoife McClafferty, Choreographer had the difficult task of matching the many talented attendees with the roles best suited to them.



Seamus Feerick
who plays Max



Sarah Corcoran
who plays
Mother Abbess

The cast supported by a very strong chorus is as follows:

Maria – Emer Kelly, Captain Von Trapp – Padraic McDonagh, Mother Abbess – Sarah Corcoran, Elsa – Megan Lohan, Max – Seamus Feerick, Liesel – Izzy Tuohy, Friedrich – Harry Greaney, Louise – Eva Bergin, Kurt – Ronan Harney, Brigita – Teagan Farrell, Marta – Eve McCourt, Gretl – Anna Morrissey, Sister Sophia – Fiona Sceri, Sister Bertha – Lisa Whyte, Sister Margareta – Mary Rose Finlan, Rolf – David O'Grady, Frau Schmidt – Gretel Sullivan, Herr Zeller – Brian Derrane, Admiral Schrieber – Gerry Sweeney, Baron Elberfeld – Mike O'Reilly, Ursula – Rachel Walker.

Rehearsals begin after Christmas and all the members are looking forward to the fun and camaraderie that each show brings. Details re tickets sales will be available in the new year. Once again *'the Hills will be alive with the Sound of Music'!!!*

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The Town Band are busy practicing a selection of carols which they will play at the local nursing homes throughout the month of December, in preparation for them ringing in the New Year at St. Michael's Square from 11:30 pm to 00:30 am on Dec 31st.

A very well attended and enjoyable table quiz took place in Gullane's Hotel on Thursday 20th October, as one of its fundraising ventures. Niall Clarke proved to be a very entertaining quizmaster as he delivered the challenging questions prepared by Kevin Duffy.

The band hosted a touring group of young and accomplished French harpists called 'Harp in Bag', who played an entertaining selection of tunes and songs. Local harp instructor Lizzie Alfaffer, a French native residing in Ballinasloe, joined the ensemble along with two of her own talented students, with the Town Band joining forces at the end of the concert to deliver a beautiful rendition of the Parting Glass, in the Band Hall.

It was with a great degree of sadness that the band learnt of

the passing of one of its senior and much-loved band members, John Flynn. John joined the band after he had retired from active practice as a consultant in Portiuncula Hospital when his wife kindly presented him with a trumpet. He was instrumental in driving the committee to purchase their own home. He loved to see the skill of the kids and marveled at the speed in which they picked up pieces. He will be missed by young and old alike and will hold a special place in the hearts of the trumpet section where he was happiest in the band. May his gentle soul Rest in Peace.

Don't forget our Annual Christmas Craft & Food Fair in the Band Hall on Saturday 3rd December from 11 am to 4 pm. A large selection of Christmas gift ideas on sale by local artisans along with mouthwatering hot crepes, delicious baked goods, mulled wine and teas and coffees to wash it all down. Entertainment will be provided hourly by the Music Matters Quartet, Ballinasloe Active Retirement Association, and the Town Band. This is a major fundraising event to help the band meet its running costs and your support would be gratefully appreciated. Drop in to have a look and indulge in the selection of goods on display.

TY MUSICAL ARDSKOIL MHUIRE



Narrators (Abaigh Hardiman and Maria Reynolds)

This year's musical from Ardscoil Mhuire in association with Garbally College is "Joseph and His Amazing Technical Colour Dream Coat".

The story, as told by two narrators, is a tale that follows the journey of Joseph, who is given a coat of many colours by his father Jacob, which is symbolic of his favor and an object of his brothers' jealousy.

Slavery, Prison and Egyptian Adventures ensue before the Pharaoh hears of his talent.

The show takes place in the Town Hall between Jan 31st and Feb 2nd. Tickets go on sale in January.

CAST LIST:

Narrators: Maria Reynolds and Abaigh Hardiman, **Joseph:** Alannah McKeigue. **Brothers:** Samuel Godswell, Aleisha Hanlon, Fionnan Seale, Eve Costello, Jack Scannell, Erin O'Callaghan, Cormac Frehill, Beibhinn Kiernan, Martin Tully, Jessica O'Brien, Leon McKeon, Hannah Farrell. **Jacob:** Aida Costa, **Pharaoh:** Patrick Hanrahan, **Potiphar:** Mark Grenham, **Mrs Potiphar:** Mariam Melaadi.



Joseph
(Alannah Mc Keigue)

The First Show in the Town Hall Theatre in the New Year is "Beyond the Horizon", the Irish Pink Floyd tribute act, on Saturday 14th of January. This eight-piece band is made up of session musicians and singers. Tickets available online.

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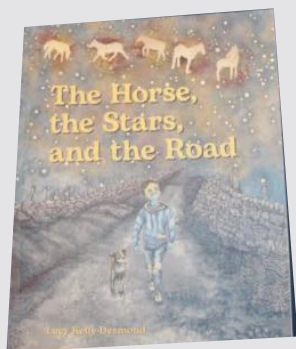


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Local Creative - Lucy Kelly Desmond's first book *"The Horse, the Stars and the Road"* is a beautifully written and illustrated children's book with a 'Traveller Centric' theme.

Born in London to an Irish family, she moved back to Ireland at a young age. While her family isn't from a travelling background, cultural identity has heavily influenced her artwork.

For her graduate degree she focused on her own conflicting London-Irish identity and reflected on the positive impact that her friendship with travellers had on her childhood. Lucy credits her friendship with traveller twins for instilling a deep love of their culture and heritage.

"Being accepted and welcomed by them made me feel extremely determined to focus on work that could help traveller children see their rich and wonderful heritage reflected in literature. I learned from my traveller friends how to defend myself and my identity in a respectful and dignified way" she states.

While working at a family resource centre in Athlone she worked on a 'traveller centric' project, where charcoal portraits based on photographs of traveller men and women were created.



Lucy Kelly Desmond

Lucy exhibited these and other art pieces based on scenes from Ballinasloe Horse Fair as part of the Traveller Pride event in Roscommon in 2016.

After graduating in textile design, she decided to become an illustrator because she wanted to use her art as a form of storytelling. She particularly wanted to write a story that celebrated the dying art of tin smithing.

The author debuted her book at Ballinasloe Library's Storytime on October 25th where she enthralled her young audience from Scoil an Chroí Naofa with her story about Sonny's journey in a barrel top wagon with his tinsmith uncle, Jim. Sonny learns to love his rich cultural history and traditions of the Irish Travelling community.

The artist took part in the Great Dublin Castle Draw Along on the 12th of November, inviting children to listen to her story and draw motifs from the night-time scenes in her book, there is significant interest in the publishing rights overseas through her publishers - Little Island Books.

The Horse, The Stars and the Road is available for loan from Ballinasloe Library.

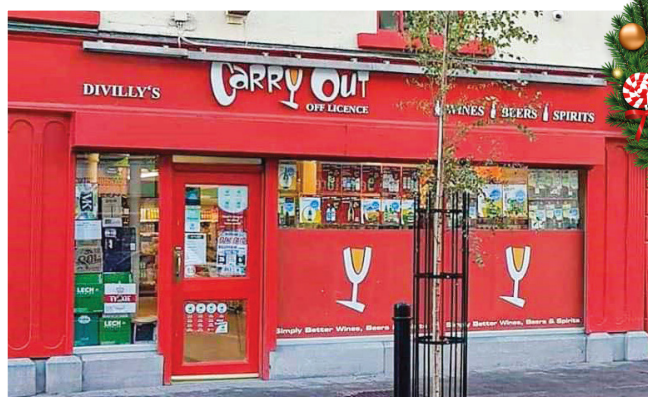


Lucy reading to students from Scoil an Chroí Naofa

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The history of a Community Hall, built “ahead of its time” has been published by the Killalaghton Hall Committee. The 64-page book describes building the hall in 1939, mostly through voluntary labour, in a parish once described by a local Macra leader as having “no Church, no shop, no pub and no school.”

“However, the strong sense of community spirit in the Killalaghton area, along with a strong loyalty to the hall where the support spans several generations, starting with the building of the venue in 1939 and is still evident today” according to Michael Treacy, chairman of the local dramatic group.



Mr J.J. O'Halloran. Principal school teacher, Killalaghton national school.

The late Josie O'Halloran followed in his late father's footsteps, to become principal of Killalaghton school in 1929. He had a deep love for the Irish language, music and culture but most of all he was passionate about bringing people together as a community. His greatest vision was to build Killalaghton Hall in the late 1930's. Music and drama dominated his life-he was a talented musician with several instruments-he believed every student had some musical ability and subsequently formed a school marching band. And he went on to produce sketches and plays in the Old School.

In 1938, Josie O'Halloran, the local school principal, decided that a Hall was needed. It was apparent to him that a Hall was required to act as a centre point for the community and a venue to stage cultural events and those that the School were currently hosting. A site was purchased for £13 and with a grant of £220 from the Carnegie Trust UK, the project got under way. The total cost was £545 and for over eighty years it has been the venue for plays, concerts, dances, meetings and social gatherings for the local community.

When the new Hall opened at Christmas 1939, two three acts plays “Tactics” and “The Young Fellow” were staged as well as a concert, which were a week-long production.

Every year since people travel from near and far to witness the “Killalaghton plays” around Christmas time, which are naturally sell-outs.

The enthralling book, which looks back on eighty years of the Killaghton community, its leaders and its drama history, is dedicated “to all who have gone before us” and a remarkable record of their school principal, Josie O'Halloran, whose vision and foresight left such an impression on his adopted parish.



The old hall before renovation.



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TG4 recently screened a documentary about different Championship Cups – down through the decades and it featured the daughters of a very famous GAA star of our Town – “Inky Flaherty”.

Deirdre Timlin, Inky Flaherty's daughter starred on 'Scéalta na gCorn.' Deirdre currently living in Salthill and her sister Geraldine residing in Corofin met up with Hannah, the producer in Galway, where she outlined the plan for the show and how they would manage the reflection interviews. The interviews were facilitated by the Ballinasloe GAA and Gerry Seale at their Brackernagh pitch in January 2022. The show is still available on the TG4 player.

Michael John (Inky) Flaherty was born at number 17 Bohermore (now 143), Galway on September 27th, 1917. His parents, John Flaherty and Mary Kelly were both from Monivea and had returned a few months previously from England and purchased their home. He was the third child in what was eventually a family of five.

Liam Mellows Hurling Club was formed in 1933 and Inky was involved with the club from the outset. Two years later they reached and won the County Final and at 17 he won his first County Senior Medal. Sixteen years later he won his second, captaining his adopted town of Ballinasloe. The athlete started playing hurling with the county in 1936 and played for 17 years until 1953.

He was psychiatric nurse at St. Brigid's Hospital for 35 years. His

wife, Kathleen (Gunnigan) was a great support to him while she was able but unfortunately, she got ill with cancer and passed away, on her 44th birthday in 1966. He stepped back from some of his GAA commitments for a few years then as there were six children to look after, ranging in age from three to 15.

Inky had a trophy named after him, the 'Inky Flaherty Cup' was presented by the Connacht Council in 1995, when the Connacht Senior Hurling Championship was reinstated, having been suspended since 1923. It was contested again for five years until it was discontinued, after the Connacht Final in 1999, because of the dominance of Galway. Since the competition was abandoned, the cup has gone missing.

As well as being a talented hurler, he enjoyed boxing and won a Connacht title in 1939 and was runner-up in the National Junior Middleweight Championships in 1940. He was Connacht Champion again in 1947 and 48 at Light-Heavyweight. His refereeing career began at 20 and he did a lot of refereeing over the years including 13 County Hurling Finals. His greatest achievement as a referee was refereeing the 1949 All Ireland between Laois and Tipperary. He played on the Galway team that was beaten by Laois in the semi-final and was then nominated by the GAA to referee the final.

He was a coach, a manager, an administrator, and Chairman of the East Board for many years and was a selector with the county when Galway won the All-Ireland in 1980. He was a county delegate to the Connacht Council in his later years.

Michael John was manager of many teams during his career, including the Ballinasloe hurlers in 1951 when they won the County Senior Hurling Final; the Mullagh team who won the County Intermediate Final in 1982 and Turloughmore seniors, winning the County Final in 1985. He trained Galway in the fifties and was Galway Trainer/Manager from 1973 to 1978, winning the League Final in 1975 and reaching a couple of All-Ireland Finals during that time.

Michael John passed away on May 20th, 1992, aged 74.



Inky's 70th birthday on 27th September, 1987. Seán and Anthony are at the back with Geraldine, Máire, Inky, Deirdre and Brenda in front.

Ryan's hotel in Limerick just after Galway won the league in 1975. Seán back left, Máire is in front of him and Anthony is at the front beside Inky. Deirdre is on the right.



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L to r: Coach Andrey Fedotov, Sive, coach Evan Scully, coach Martina McCarthy.

For youngsters thinking of taking up the sport, “try as many different sports as you can and keep doing it as long as you enjoy it” she advises.

For anyone looking to try out the sport there are usually taster sessions at the Sports Ireland Campus. People can keep an eye on Pentathlon Ireland website for details.

She has finished college and graduated with an honour's degree from UCD in Spanish and French and is currently training full time. While she is training, she doesn't have a specific diet because modern pentathlon is an endurance sport, she needs to make sure she is eating enough to recover from her training and to fuel her performance, which means taking in a lot of calories.

Her training sessions are intense, as she trains two to four times a day, six days a week. Every week she completes five runs, four swims, four fencing sessions,

Sive Brassil had her best result to date at the European Championships in Székesfehérvár, Hungary when she finished eighth. Before this her highest result was 13th at the World Championships earlier this year.

Luckily she is one of the few athletes in Ireland who was awarded the Paris Scholarship. This was given to a handful of individual sportspersons and teams who are training to qualify for the Paris Olympics. The aim is to help support them to train and travel to camps and competitions in the lead up to the games.

Right now, Sive is enjoying some down time and getting ready for a long Winter training block. Her next competition will start in February 2023.

Even with her result at this year's European Championships she hasn't qualified for the Olympics. The qualification process begins next year. If she finishes in the top eight again of the European championships she will automatically qualify. Every competition in 2024 will carry ranking points for the Olympics as well.

The youngest of five siblings, all her older brothers and sisters were in the East Galway pony club, Ballinasloe swimming club and the Ballinasloe and District AC. Naturally enough, she wanted to follow in their footsteps, so from a very young age, she was running, swimming and horse riding.

She competed at Pony Club tetrathlon and then when she heard about modern pentathlon, she decided to give it a go and never looked back.

two shooting sessions, one horse riding lesson and two gym sessions. After all this she likes to unwind by watching TV in the house as she is usually too tired to go out.

Sive tries to get back home to Ballinasloe as often as possible; this is usually once a month or every six weeks. “I have a great team of coaches, nutritionist, and sports psychologist around me that help me every day. I also must thank my first coaches from Ballinasloe. Michael and the late Anne Burke in the Ballinasloe and District Athletics Club who were so good to me and helped me to discover my love for competing. Liz Scott in the East Galway Pony Club taught me almost all I know about horses. John Jordan was a fantastic coach too in the Ballinasloe Swimming Club” she concludes.



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Garry Kilcar has been announced as the new 'Sports Activation Officer' for the town as part of a new Galway Sports Partnership initiative

He graduated from Athlone Institute of Technology with an honour's degree in 2008 and emigrated to Australia the following year to work for a digital marketing agency in Sydney. After returning to Ireland, Garry worked full time in hospitality and a part time role in event management, working on various fundraising projects for local clubs and charity organizations. He also has an annual consultation role with the Galway Races.

In 2020 he worked as a volunteer with Special Olympics Ireland and then with Galway Sports Partnership in January 2021.

"I firmly believe everyone should be affiliated with a social group it's vitally important for both our mental and physical health. I will be helping create brand new groups and seek feedback from the community if there is a desire to reignite once popular groups that disbanded in the last number of years" states Garry.

"After spending a week getting familiarized with Ballinasloe and visiting all the clubs in town, I'm

extremely excited to start building up a rapport with everyone in the community and the surrounding parishes. Relocating to Ballinasloe will help me to both fully understand the needs and meet those needs of the community with tangible results" he explains.

The broad GSP strategy is to increase awareness, participation, and promotion of physical activity in the Ballinasloe locality, to add to the already established activities available, with their particular focus on communities that feel their needs are currently not being met.

The town has a rich history both historically and in a sporting sense and he would like to support the local community to restore this legacy.

€60,000 has been allocated for our local Sports Hub Round one from The Dormant Accounts Fund and this is allocated to Ballinasloe under Sport Ireland.

"This is great news, and the hubs will provide information, support and advice on a wide range of sports and physical activities to make it easier for people in areas to get involved and engage in a more active and healthier lifestyle," welcomed Senator Aisling Dolan.



KARATE KATA SEMINAR

Local Karate association, IKKI, held a kata and bunkai seminar recently. Karate can be broken down into "kihon" or basics, "kumite" or sparring against an opponent and "kata" which is mostly performed solo is a structured way of practising karate techniques.

What's important is the meaning (bunkai) of the techniques used and their correct execution as many of these techniques are used for self-defence. Techniques included arm bar, wrist/elbow locks and, escapes. The seminar was well



supported with students of all ages and grades with black belts from the associations clubs attending. If you would like to know more about the karate clubs in your area, visit the association website: www.ikki.ie or text/phone 0874159858.

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Ballinasloe RFC continues to prosper and grow with record numbers of playing members. With a long-standing reputation for producing top class rugby players since its establishment in 1885, it currently has Shane Jennings, Colm Reilly and Oisín McCormack contracted to Connacht, with brothers Mathew and John Devine in the academy.

In recent years it has progressed further and now has a very impressive high achieving female division. Three graduates of the club, Beibhinn Parsons, Aoibheann Reilly and Méabh Deely recently signed professional contracts with the IRFU, making them the first paid, centrally contracted Irish woman's rugby team. They all started with the Leprechaun or Minis in the Club.

The Club operates a Minis or Broncos division for girls and boys from ages six to 12 years where they then graduate to the youth level at under 13s. The club has fielded at senior level for many years and are currently rebuilding with an exciting young team competing in the Connacht J1C League and are currently top of the table and pushing for promotion.

Off the field the club continues to press ahead with much needed improvements to the playing facilities. They are building a new

storage shed to accommodate playing and training gear as well as a field maintenance tractor and grass mowers.

It has also received a capital sports grant to support the completion and upgrading of the dressing rooms and the construction of a walkway on the perimeter of the playing pitches. This will encourage and facilitate parents and members of the public to gain exercise while their children are training on the adjacent pitches.

This is in addition to the recently completed high quality, all-weather astro-turf training pitch. The most pressing development now to be undertaken is the replacement and upgrading of the pitch lighting to allow for the playing of games at night for which there is great demand.

The club bar reopened on October 21st with the running of a very successful Table Quiz. On Stephens Day the annual Captains selection v an Invitational Exiles XV match takes place and should be an entertaining day out for old and new players, with full bar from 2:30-7pm., kick off at 2.30 pm It is also hoped that recently graduated Connacht and Irish players might attend.



The senior panel after their win vs Galwegians



Under 18.5 side after their win vs Loughrea in round 2

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Ballinasloe and District Tennis club has made great progress on their new development above the running track in the past year.

Last summer, club members gathered on an empty lot to clean rubbish in preparation of commencement of two tarmac courts. This year, a third court has been built and artificial surfaces added to all three. A temporary clubhouse has been installed, with floodlights on the courts, due to be installed in early December, and water to the clubhouse for toilets etc. When completed the club will be able to offer a very high standard of facilities for their ever-growing membership.

The work has been funded by a substantial Sports Capital Grant, a generous donation from Ballinasloe Credit Union, a contribution from Texaco, and the club's own fundraising efforts over many years.

Great support has also been provided by Billy Ward and his team from 'Training for Employment' in helping maintain the grounds at the courts.

Coaching has been available for junior members and adults, and junior sessions will continue on Saturdays over the coming months for ages six to teenagers. Open club nights are held every Sunday for adults, and open sessions on Tuesday and Friday night will resume when the lights are installed. Members can book courts for no charge for any other times, subject to availability.

The club will be having their 'Ball' on December 30th in Gullanes in the evening time. Members and non-members are welcome with tickets €15 per person.

Potential new members of all standards are welcome to attend an introductory club session and membership is extremely reasonable. For full details, as well as updates on all activities and news can be found at the club's website: <https://ti.clubspark.com/Bsloetenniscub/>



Standing l to r: Gary Zancanaro, Diarmuid Leyden, Enda Staunton, Ben Feehily, Michael Bleahene, David O'Brien, Robert Riddell.

Seated l to r: Emily Riddell, Aine O'Brien, Aisling O'Brien, Finola Riddell, Bertha Forrestal.

PONY CLUB UPDATE

By Oisín White

The East Galway Hunt Pony Club is one of over 50 branches of the Irish Pony Club. Current members are actively involved in Show Jumping, Combined Training, Eventing, Dressage, Hunter Trials and Mounted Games.

Many of their activities are based in the Ballinasloe Show Grounds including weekly Friday night rallies. There is also an annual five-day residential summer camp for members and their ponies/horses. This year they spent an action-packed week at Gurteen College. They hosted a Fun Minimus (swim, run and ride) and various qualifiers for Irish Pony Club championships.

Their members were also very successful in representing them at Pony Club events at Barnadown in Wexford, Kilguilkey in Cork and at the Horse Show in the RDS.

Membership is open to boys and girls up to 21 years of age with activities to suit all levels. New members are always welcome! (Enquiries to Ruth @ 087 3741869). Visit the Facebook page East Galway Hunt Pony Club to keep up to date with all our activities and upcoming events.



(L-R) Hannah Lawless, Ellie Condon, Jed Dillon, Bébhinn Lawless, Sean Lawless & Ashley Cannon. Our young squad showing off their rosettes from the Pony Club Festival Qualifier held in the Showgrounds in July.



Amber Tobin and Fairy finishing 4th in the Working Hunter class at the RDS this year.

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James Kelly Captain

Congratulations to the Junior A footballers who beat St Ronans by 0-11 to 1-6.

Last year was the first time they reached the final of the competition since 2000, unfortunately, they were beaten on the day. The character shown by the players to recover and come back from the heartbreak last year is a testament to the coaches, players, and their families.

The management team always had the belief that the team could win this year. When starting out their aim was to have a good league campaign to put the team in the best position possible to get back to the final and go one better this time around. Winning promotion to Division Two in the campaign as

well.

When asked about any matches that stuck out the management team of Eoin Curran, Aidan Colleran and Paul Kelly responded "The first championship game v St. Joseph's in Kiltreevan, as we had played them last year in the group and in the semi-final, it was a tough physical battle; the game v Strokestown in the semi-final, we didn't start well but never panicked. We also referenced St. Michael's game in the quarter final, we struggled against them last year in the same game, but this year beat them 3-09 to 0-10."

This result wasn't an overnight success. The team had been getting to quarter finals and semi-finals in recent years but were unable to make the next step. They had also been playing in division three for a number of years previous. The squad had made incremental improvements every year.

As a result of winning Padraig Pearses are unable to play in this competition next year, so they won't be retaining the trophy. They will however have the chance to play in the Intermediate Championship, so they will be looking to have a good year in that competition.

The management team concluded by thanking "our families for allowing us the time to put into the work with the team, the players for their commitment for the year, the Adult Football Board, Club Executive and the supporters who came out in massive numbers for the finals."



Conor Ryan- Man of the Match



Junior A team

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Ballinasloe girl, Heather Payne, has been an integral part of the Irish Women's Senior team and is hoping to be heading down under next July after they qualified for the World Cup last month. It is the first time that they've qualified for a major tournament. She stated, "It still hasn't quiet hit me yet that we have qualified, and I don't think it will until we are heading to the world cup in Australia next summer."

The Irish players were bitterly disappointed when they missed out on a place at last Summer's European Championships after being defeated by Ukraine in 2020. The team were determined to make sure that something like this didn't happen again.

Before the campaign began, the squad knew that every game was as important as the next regardless of who they were playing. After losing to Sweden at home in September they were very disappointed, but the next game was going to be Finland away and it was going to be a crucial one. Getting the three points away

to Finland in October 2021 was when they really started to believe that a second-place finish in the group meant securing a playoff spot. Another significant result throughout the campaign was the 1-1 draw away to Sweden in April. Every result during the campaign was very important to their success and as the campaign went on, the belief grew.

The team didn't get much chance to celebrate after their playoff win versus Scotland as they had to fly from Glasgow to Dublin that night. Everyone was due to return to their clubs the next day, therefore that didn't allow for too much celebrating. However, they plan to celebrate properly when they all return home for Christmas.

Before the playoff match there was a positive atmosphere amongst the group and a general feeling was that they were capable of winning and going to the World Cup.

To prepare for the World Cup next year - Heather will remain focused in college in Florida where she is studying Dietics, for her



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final semester before graduating in May 2023. "I will be training and playing matches throughout the spring with Florida State University in preparation for the summer. With regards to the Irish team, I am not quite sure what the plan is yet but, there will be camps held in February and April during the FIFA windows and I am sure Manager Vera Pauw will have some plan in place in the months leading up to the World Cup in July."

She finds it hard to balance studying and sport. However, the athlete is grateful to the university for providing a schedule which allows her classes from 8am to 12pm. She then trains in the afternoon between 2:30pm and 5:30pm.

Her parents have been her biggest supporters "both my mum Grainne and dad Brendan were able to attend the game in Scotland. It was great to have them there cheering us on and to celebrate with them after we won. They are both avid supporters and try to attend every game when given the chance" exclaimed Heather.

The family are also planning on going to Australia with the team as they've already begun looking at flights. Her sister is also hoping to travel from Vancouver as that's where she is living. A couple of

the aunts and uncles are wanting to make the once in a lifetime trip to cheer on their niece. Irish support is known worldwide for being fantastic and creating great atmosphere and Heather believes this will be needed when Ireland plays hosts Australia in the opening game of the tournament.

The athlete will return in mid-December to have a month at home to spend with family and friends and get the opportunity to recharge before the new year.

Heather always credits Ballinasloe AFC for getting her soccer career started and coaches Tony Coyne, Noel Lyons and Jason Fallon. "I would also like to thank Creagh National School and Padraig Pearses for their continued support as well as Coral Leisure for kindly letting me avail of their facilities every time I return home. Lastly, I would like to thank my parents and family for everything they have done for me so far and for being my biggest supporters" she states.

"I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy new year. I hope 2023 can bring everyone as much joy as 2022 brought me and I am looking forward to seeing everyone once I return home" our homegrown International Soccer Star concludes.



Celebrating after qualifying for the World Cup

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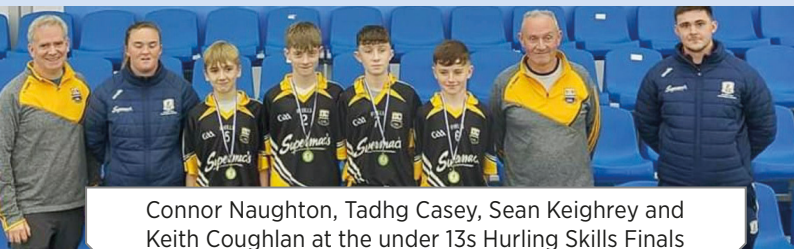
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As the 2022 season draws to a close Ballinasloe GAA club can report on a very successful year with nearly all teams in hurling, football and ladies football reaching the semi-final and final stages in their respective divisions, with a lot of hard work put in by all teams giving a very strong foundation to build on

The boys U13 had a fantastic season, one which saw them winning the Division 4 County Title, a massive achievement.



Connor Naughton, Tadhg Casey, Sean Keighrey and Keith Coughlan at the under 13s Hurling Skills Finals

They beat a strong Corofin team in a very entertaining final on a score of 3.10 to 1.09.

The U19 boys reached the North Board Final but despite their best efforts in a tight game they lost by two points to neighbouring St Gabriel's - 0.09 to 0.07.

Their U16 Girls footballers reached the Division 2 shield final against An Spideal. The game was played in Claregalway in terribly wet conditions but still delivered a



Boys under 13 County Champions



Girls under 16 Football county finalists

very exciting and enjoyable game losing by one point with a final score of 3.06 to 1.11.

The Connacht U13 Hurling Skills Finals took place in the GAA Centre of Excellence in Began. 12 clubs from across the province took part with Ballinasloe being one of the four clubs representing Galway. Skills tested were a combination of point scoring, striking, and catching accuracy, soloing and all skills were against the clock. They won out the striking and catching competition and came third in the overall result. The team was Conor Naughton, Keith Coughlan, Sean Keighrey and Tadhg Casey.

The youth club will be resuming for the winter months on Friday nights in the club house for boys and girls from first to third year. An athletics programme for girls aged 13 to 16 on Thursday nights is available from 7-8pm at the running track. Bingo continues every Tuesday night in the Emerald Ballroom at 8.00pm

P.R.O Damien Clarke "thanked all the club officers, team managers, coaches, pitch committee and all the many other volunteers for all their hard work during the year and wishes all their members and families very Happy Christmas and Healthy New Year."

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Emma McGrath of Leahy's Life Pharmacy presenting the new team kit to team manager Michelle Kelly, Captain Niamh Prendergast and team members Niamh Kelly, Rhona Black, and Aishling Brannelly.

It's been an eventful and long year for the Junior team, which was one of the highlights for the year in review at their most recent A.G.M.

Training started at the end of January under the charge of Alan Murphy and Michelle Kelly with preparations made for the season ahead. First up was the League. As the competition progressed it quickly became obvious that this panel of women meant business.

Having won all but one of their matches they earned their place in the league final, played in sweltering conditions against Oranmore Maree in St. Thomas's GAA Club. The girls came out on top that day and the picked up the league title, their first piece of silverware in many years.

The scene was set for the championship campaign. Their winning ways continued and as each match was won their confidence grew. They had an

astounding championship run winning all their matches and progressed into the county final. This was played on the 29th of October in Tynagh against a strong Carnmore side. It promised to be a tight game and it lived up to those expectations finishing all square at full time. The replay a week later was also a very close game but unfortunately the team lost out by the smallest of margins, one point.

The panel were of course disappointed but yet extremely proud of the achievements this year and talk of next season has already begun.

The manager Alan Murphy would like to bid a fond farewell to Junior Captain Niamh Prendergast and Rachel Mannion who have jetted off to a new chapter in Australia.

The club were thrilled to welcome Leahy's Life Pharmacy, Dunlo Street who came onboard and sponsored new jerseys and training tops for the team.



Back Row: Lisa O'Neill (Player of the Match), Roisin Coleman, Siobhan Carey, Emma Keane, Cally Moir, Niamh Kelly, Chliona O'Hanlon, Emma Mitchell, Anne Ward, Mary O'Grady, Neola O'Neill.

Front Row: Niamh Loughnane, Aishling Brannelly, Sinead Costelloe, Olivia Walsh, Niamh Prendergast (C), Shauna Mitchell, Ellen Curran, Xiege Kennedy, Aoibhin Coughlan. Eilsh Kerr (Absent).



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The club committee, coaching staff, players, and everyone involved with Ballinasloe Town AFC are extremely proud of former club player Heather Payne and the rest of the Irish International Senior Ladies squad for the outstanding and historic achievement in qualifying for next year's World Cup finals. Heather in recognition of her outstanding commitment and form was selected and is the current Irish Ladies International Player of the year.

The Clubs Senior men's teams good run in the FAI Junior Cup recently came to an end when old rivals Castlebar Celtic beat them two nil. The team are currently fourth in the Roscommon and District Premier league with two games in hand and are



Ballinasloe under 13 players who represented the Galway League, Fionn Duffy, Calum Conway, Éanna Colleran and John Kelly.

in with an excellent opportunity of competing for league honours this season.

Under 13 players Fionn Duffy, Callem Conway, Éanna Colleran, John Kelly and Adam McLoughlin all represented the Galway League side when they beat the Roscommon League four one and the Midlands League three one. Club player Tadhg Casey also represented the under 14 Galway League side in a two all draw versus the Mayo League.

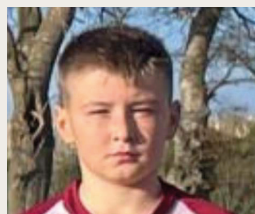
The Club are steadily building up sales of the weekly 50/50 draw

whereby a winner is drawn out every Wednesday night at the Clubs Bingo in the Shearwater Hotel with the winner receiving half the proceeds of that week's sales and the Club retaining the other half to go towards the running costs of the Club.

Draw Co Ordinator Pat Campbell stated that the 50/50 sales are steadily improving each week. Weekly Community Bingo is on every Wednesday in the Shearwater Hotel at 8pm. There is a weekly prize fund of €2,270 and the Jackpot is €2,500.



Galway under 14 team



Adam McLoughlin, Ballinasloe under 13 player who represented the Galway League.



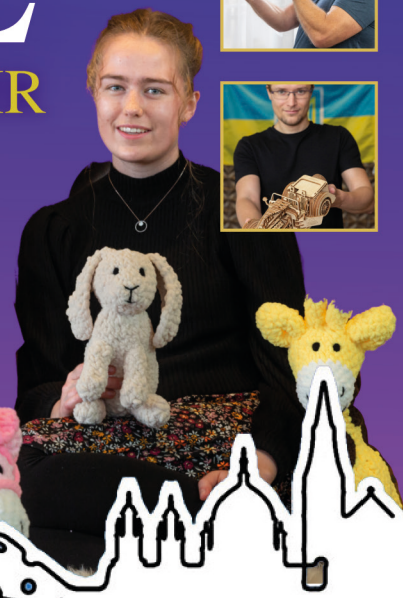
Ballinasloe under 14 player Tadhg Casey who represented the Galway League.

Saturday 3rd December 10am - 6pm and Sunday 4th December 11am - 5pm at the Blackbox Theatre, Dyke Road, Galway

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2022 has proven to be a very successful year for their Junior Boys and it also saw Aidan Grenham commence his EDGA journey. "Well done to all involved, including parents who put in so much time and effort, our junior convenors and all volunteers" states Club President Mattie Curley.

At this stage of the year, Ladies and Gents Club AGMs have been completed. PRO Barry O'Keefe states "we sincerely thank our outgoing officers for their outstanding contributions, specifically Mattie Curley (President), Peggy Wong (Lady Captain) and Mick O'Hehir (Men's Captain). We welcome the incoming officers for 2023, Angela Lyons (President), Rita Staunton (Lady Captain) and John Donnellan (Men's Captain)."

Congratulations were extended to the following who have also been selected to Connacht (West) Area Development panels - Caoimhe Flanagan (u12 girls), Joe Casey (u12 boys), Liam Tully (u16 boys). Continuing their recognition by Golf Ireland has seen Isaac Oliver (u16) selected for the high-performance panel, Niall Connelly (15) and Isaac Oliver (u15) have both been selected for the West Performance Development panel. Their respective selections are testament to their diligent work and commitment throughout the year.

President Curley concludes "given that this is the last publication for 2022, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all our valued members and their families a Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year. Hopefully you will get the opportunity to enjoy some golf with us over the festive period."

In 2022, they were delighted to see so many new and returning members and we always look forward to welcoming many visitors to the club. Ballinasloe is becoming the hub of junior golf in Connacht.

Anyone interested in starting up their junior golfers please contact the club office, and they will point you in the right direction. If you are thinking of joining the golf club, please phone the office - (090) 964 2126 or email ballinasloegolfclub@hotmail.com to talk through options for beginners, improvers.



Front row l-r: John William Burke - Fred Daly All-Ireland team 3rd place.
Niall Connelly - Connacht close u13s winner, Fred Daly Connacht winner, Fred Daly all Ireland team 3rd place.
Liam Tully - Fred Daly Connacht panellist winner, Fred Daly All-Ireland panel 3rd place
Middle row l-r: Isaac Oliver - Fred Daly Connacht winner, Fred Daly All-Ireland team 3rd place, 2nd in Irish U14s order of merit
Tom Cafferky - Fred Daly Connacht winner, Fred Daly All-Ireland team 3rd place, Irish boys close champion, Irish team representative, 4th in Irish u18 order of merit
Mick O'Hehir - Men's Club Captain, Mattie Curley - Club President, Aidan Grenham - EDGA Irish team representative, European team championships Edga champion
Charlie Mooney - Fred Daly Connacht winner, Fred Daly All-Ireland team 3rd place, Connacht close U17 winner, 9th in u18 Irish order of merit
Back row l-r: Edwin Flynn - junior officer and management team Fred Daly
Ben Bleahen - Fred Daly Connacht panellist winner, Fred Daly All-Ireland panel 3rd place
Hugh Killeen - Fred Daly Connacht winner, Fred Daly All-Ireland panel 3rd place
Mark Conneely - Boys Junior Convenor and management team Fred Daly
John Hurley Senior - Junior officer and management team Fred Daly
Liam Coughlan - Fred Daly Team Manager

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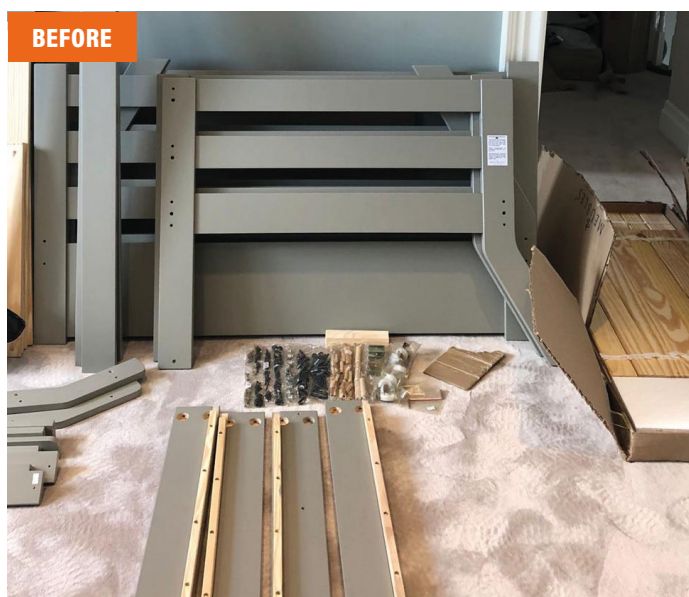
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After the success of *Killure-Kilgerrill: By Its People & Friends*, published in 2010 and which won a Galway County Council Heritage award, Killure Heritage Group began working on a sequel, culminating in this work, *Killure-Kilgerrill: Its People & Places*.

The 726 page book's focus is on the family history and genealogy of people in the Civil Parish of Killure-Fohenagh-Kilgerrill with its 14 townlands, as well as neighbouring townlands in East Galway.

Containing invaluable data on Parish baptismal and marriage records from 1827 to 1891, Information is also provided on land holdings with occupiers' names from 1826 up to the 1970's; updates on local graveyards; Killure chapel; and parish townlands and place names.

The larger houses in the area and their families from as early as the 17th century up to the present time, are described. It contains a chapter on law and order, which covers detailed descriptions of members of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) from the parish. Petty Session Court records from the mid-1850s to 1919 for the different townlands are analysed including court case descriptions.

A social history chapter contains interesting articles on topics such as: herds and shepherds, whose social class was relatively high - broadly equivalent to that of a tenant farmer; relief funds to alleviate hardship due to bad harvests associated with the near famine of 1879-1880; and arrears of rent of tenants owing to the local landlord (Lord Clonbrock) in Cloonigny, Killuremore and Killure Castle.

A major focus of the book is on families in the parish - 40 in all, which covers their family history, from earliest available records up to the 1970's. Initial records were obtained from Parish registries, and from microfiche data in places such as the National Library of Ireland, the National Archives, the Galway County Library, and in Special Collections of the University of Galway Library.

An emigration article tracks the emigration of around

150 people from the area who departed for America between 1884 and 1932 and in many cases includes their subsequent path. The book also traces the lives of those who stayed, mapping the connectivity of kinship and marriage between families of the parish to a degree that is perhaps unrivalled for a local history book of its kind.

Another substantial chapter contains extracts from a wide range of newspapers from 1837 to 1973 relating to the parish townlands as well as adjacent townlands of Lowville and Sonnagh. Old age pension applications from 1916 to 1921 are described which yield useful information from the 1851 Census returns (used to confirm age) that would otherwise have been lost due to the destruction of the Public Record Office in 1922.

Published with the support from the Ballinasloe Credit Union and from the Galway County Council Heritage Office, as well as from local Councillors. "The Killure Heritage Group wish to sincerely thank the many people in the parish and beyond including several descendants of emigrants, for their invaluable inputs, as well as our sponsors and funders" stated Chair Eamon Keogh.

The Book is available at Salmons; Concannons, Ahascragh; Gerry Croffy Garden Machinery, Killure Castle; Greenes Hardware, Ahascragh; Hickey's, Kilconnell; Charlie Byrne's Bookshop, Galway; Kennys Bookshop, Galway and available on-line at <https://www.kennys.ie>.

Further information can be had from: killureheritagegroup@gmail.com or through social media via www.facebook.com/KillureHeritageGroup.



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"To drink a toast,
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 To hunt the fox,
 To drink in punch the Solway,
 With debts galore,
 But fun far more;
 Oh, that's the man for Galway."

Reputed to be the original of the protagonist in one of Charles Lever's novels of rollicking adventures in the early 19th-century Irish countryside, Giles Eyre was born in Eyrecourt on 19th July 1764.

According to family tradition, the first Eyres arrived in England with William the Conqueror. In the course of time, they divided into two branches, one in Derbyshire and the other in Wiltshire, the former remaining Catholic at the Reformation, while the latter conformed to the Church of England.

Two of the younger sons of the Wiltshire Eyres, John and Edmund, accompanied Cromwellian General Ludlow to Ireland in 1651. Edmund established himself in Galway town, eventually becoming mayor and giving his name to the city square. His brother amassed large estates in East Galway, as well as other lands in Tipperary, Clare and King's County.

At first, John lived in the village of Clonfert before moving into Ballymore Castle near Eyrecourt, which had been confiscated from the Lawrences. Eyrecourt Castle was built in 1661 on lands purchased from Sir Thomas Esmonde and featured a magnificently carved double staircase imported from Holland and occupying a third of the entire building. John founded Eyrecourt village, which became a thriving location of the linen industry in the 18th century.

The Eyres were renowned for generosity, simple dealing and



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attachment to the countryside, earning a reputation as kind and considerate landlords whose estate in consequence was never subjected to agrarian outrages. In matters of religion they were tolerant and quite averse to proselytizing, which probably explains why in 1700 they were instrumental in having a small group of Quaker preachers arrested in Eyrecourt and put in the village stocks before their eventual release.

Another John Eyre, a descendant of the original, was ennobled in 1768 as Baron Eyre. He was said to have lived "according to the style of the country, with more hospitality than elegance, for while his table groaned with abundance, the order and good taste of his arrangements were little thought of." In 1775 his only child, Mary, who had married Lord Charlemont, was drowned together with her husband and their young infant when their ship sank in a hurricane between England and Ireland. A philistine who kept no books in his house, the Baron devoted his time to drinking claret and watching cock-fights. When he died in 1781 he was succeeded by his brother Richard, Giles's father. That same year the family was obliged because of debts to vacate the Castle and lease it to Michael Prendergast for close on a quarter century.

Giles's education had been so sadly neglected that he grew to adulthood unable to read or write. He seems to have inherited all his uncle's vices and a few more besides. A contemporary described him as "a great sportsman, a negligent farmer, and a most careless father: he looked upon a fox as an infinitely more precious part of creation than a French governess, and thought that riding well to hounds was a far better gift than all the learning of a parson." In 1792 he married Anne Daly, a cousin of the Trenches of Garbally, with whom he had two sons and four daughters. Six years later he was appointed a Colonel of the Galway Militia and High Sheriff of the county. He married secondly Sophia Walsh of Tipperary in 1806.

His illiteracy notwithstanding, he entertained political aspirations, and in 1811 he stood for Parliament in the Galway constituency. Despite, however, his incurring electoral expenses amounting to £80,000, the equivalent of several millions of euros in today's money, the voters of the county decided that as far as they were concerned Giles was not "the man for Galway" when they chose Richard Martin of Ballynahinch as their representative in his stead.

To avoid process-servers, Giles would barricade himself at the

top of his house, drawing up his food by means of a rope attached to a basket. Another eccentricity of his was, when "flush", to leave a plate of money outside his front door from which passing beggars could help themselves.

If keeping 30 to 40 hunters, as well as three packs of hounds, was a qualification to be Master of the County Galway Hunt, then Giles certainly met that criterion, occupying the position from 1791 to 1829, the year before his death. It was during his term in office that the Hunt became known as the Blazers. Legend has it that their new title was acquired following an incident at Dooley's Hotel in Birr. Giles and his companions had been entertaining members of the Ormond Hunt when, having dined "not wisely but too well", they set fire to the premises before their departure.

John Eyre, Giles's eldest son, apparently continued the family tradition of financial irresponsibility, spending several years in debtors' prisons. The estate had to be put up for sale in 1854 with encumbrances of over £40,000. Some of the lots sold were bought in for the family, enabling them to remain in residence at Eyrecourt. John, aged 61, was killed in a fall from his horse while hunting near Kiltormer in 1856.

William Henry Gregory, the last of the Eyres to reside at Eyrecourt, died in a Dublin nursing home in 1925. By now the estate had dwindled from over 30,000 acres in its heyday to 620 acres. The following year the beautiful Dutch staircase was purchased by Sir Charles Allom, a London interior decorator, who had it dismantled and shipped to California to be installed at San Simeon, one of the palatial residences of William Randolph Hearst, the newspaper magnate. For some reason the plan was never carried through, and when Hearst died in 1951 the staircase was donated to Detroit Institute of the Arts where it remains to this day in its original packing cases.

I leave the last word to a commentator on the fate of the landed class in Ireland, which applies especially to the Eyres: "Profligate spending, too much enthusiasm for horses, dogs, card games and alcohol, all made the political ramifications of land acts and encumbered estate courts merely the finger that pushed this way of life into extinction."



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Carol Singers will return to the streets of Ballinasloe on Christmas Eve after a lapse of three years because of the Covid. Between 11 am and 4 pm, the St. Michael's Church Folk Choir will be joined by members of other choirs and soloists from the surrounding areas as they entertain the shoppers, on stage, outside Gullane's Hotel in Main Street.

The Festive Singing programme is all in aid of local charities and over the years the Choir has raised more than €80,000 for deserving causes in the region. Volunteers will be throughout the town all day, suitably dressed in Christmas attire, seeking your donations for the less well off. So, this Christmas, please make sure you support your local charity.

Ballinasloe - County Minor Football Champions 1974



The Ballinasloe team with subs, selectors and fans after defeating Caltra in the County final in Athenry.



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TONY'S MOVE FROM EAST TO WEST



Having retired from Bord Gais in Dublin, **Tony Mahon** decided to head west, with his family, and set up home in Cleaghmore, Ballinasloe in 1989. Although born in Valkeymount, Co. Wicklow in 1938, Tony's love for his adopted town was immeasurable, in work and deed.

He immediately became very involved in parish activity, helping out on various committees as well as being a Eucharistic Minister. He was on the board of management of the national schools and was on the parents' association of Garbally College. But as well he gave freely of his time to other groups, whose mission was to reach out to people in need, such as the Legion of Mary and The Samaritans.

Coming from the Garden County, Tony Mahon was a very popular and obliging neighbour. His keen interest in their welfare and always willing to lend an ear, endeared him to many

and several of his charitable deeds remained unheralded and unsung.

Tony was a familiar face at election times, where his friendly and courteous manner was evident as he escorted voters to their Polling Booths, in his capacity as Presiding Officer. Even under pressure his personality shone through, as he patiently exhibited a kind and friendly smile in the execution of his duty.

He is survived by his wife Anne, sons Seamus, Kevin and Thomas, daughter Maria (Corcoran) as well as many more relatives and friends.

A GIFTED MAN IN SO MANY WAYS



Frank McGuire of Kilgarve Gardens, Ballinasloe was born in Ahascragh in February 1933, the oldest of twelve children. He later moved to Ballinasloe and married local girl, Dymphna Hynes, who sadly passed away 24 years ago, and only six years ago lost his son, Ger.

Employed with Bord na Mona, in Blackwater, Shannonbridge, Frank was highly popular with his workmates and colleagues, adopting a hands on approach and willing to get involved in any task. Gifted with his hands,

Frank could make nearly anything, where his attention to detail was pivotal.

He rose to the post of supervisor foreman and his gifted talents can be seen in many of his grandchildren.

In his retirement, Frank loved his daily walks, in and out of town, helping out his late son Ger, in *The Countryman*, where his banter with the locals endeared him to many. He was a great lover of sports and was a TV addict when gaelic games and snooker were shown.

At his funeral mass, the Social Services Centre in Brackernagh was thanked for the

"fantastic service they provide in the community" a place where Frank enjoyed his weekly visits to enjoy the music, dancing and hospitality offered.

"Frank spent the last two years of his wonderful life in Ballinasloe Community Care Unit-his home from home-where he was loved and cared for in such a special way. An amazing bunch of exceptional people who go above and beyond their call of duty" the congregation was told.

Frank is survived by his two daughters, Ann and Brenda, his eleven grandchildren, brothers, sisters and many more relatives, neighbours and friends. As one sympathy card read "You are on the high bank now Frank, and the turf is home. Rest in Peace."

Three cheers Captain.

LAST BANK MANAGER IN SOCIETY STREET



George O'Dea, who passed away at his home in Moher recently, was the last manager of the former National Bank in Ballinasloe's Society Street. The Listowel-born George followed his late father into the banking service and was first posted to the Longford branch

Later on his promotion to manager, the jovial George worked in Callan, Kilkenny and Ballyhaunis before being posted to Ballinasloe in 1976-in the middle of the bank strike. Not known in his new abode, George found that nobody would cash one of his cheques, despite his pleas that he was the new bank manager. At that time he was one of the youngest Bank Managers ever appointed by the National Bank in the country.

During his reign in Society Street, George oversaw the interior completely reorganised, its operations remodernised, resulting it being recognised as one of the most successful National Bank branches in the region. The Society Street and the Bank of Ireland branch in Main Street amalgamated in 1989 and George was subsequently appointed manager of the new Bank of Ireland branches in the town.

A very approachable official, who treated his clients with great understanding and compassion, George O'Dea was a bank manager of "the old stock" where every customer was important. He was a private man outside his work, playing the odd game of golf,

having a quite drink with friends and looking after his garden in Moher. He was a great rugby fan, having learned the game in the Cistercian College, Roscrea; often travelling to the local games as well as the internationals.

Though shy to get involved in committees, the former bank manager was very supportive of businesses and projects in his adopted town. He was very popular with his staff down through the years and it was fitting that as his final remains passed the Main Street bank, on their way to Creagh Cemetery, staff members, both present and retired, should line up to bid a fond farewell to the man from Listowel who left such a legacy on Ballinasloe banking.

George O'Dea is survived by his wife Marge, daughter Fiona and sons Declan, Conor and Fergus as well as many more relatives, neighbours and friends.

ONE OF THE TOWN'S LAST BAKERS



Brian Darcy from Harbour Road, who passed away after a short illness, was the youngest of a family of twelve, who nearly all were employed locally. He himself was one of the town's last bakers, having entered Rourke's Bakery as a fourteen year-old to learn the trade.

Joining a workforce of nearly forty, Brian spent forty-five years in "the hothouse" and when Rourke's ceased to trade, he worked for Roger Mulvihill, both at the Derrymullen and Society Street outlets. After their closure, Brian involved himself in helping local charities, particularly the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party and remained a loyal supporter of the Boy Scouts-a group he had joined as an 8-year-old.

A great sportsman, he played in all the street leagues, in both football and soccer and was a keen table tennis player in the Whigham Hall. He participated in many musicals,

with the local Choral Society, in the Town Hall and was a great lover of all types of music.

A pleasant and engaging conversationalist, Brian loved to talk about his native town, proudly reminding people of the vast changes and improvements he had seen in his 77 years. His support for local events down through the years was typical of a modest Harbour Road born man that wore his heart on his sleeve.

Brian Darcy is survived by his wife Helen, son Aidan, daughters Paula and Maria, sister Nuala as well as his grandchildren and many more relatives and friends.

FORMER KING OF THE FAIR



When **John Cosgrove** first came to work in Square D, in the mid 70's, he arrived in a gleaming new Ford car which he won while working in Ford's of Dagenham, as part of the employee suggestion scheme, during his years employed in the UK plant.

A native of Menlough, John's passing evoked memories of the many functions at the Poolboy plant where his melodious voice enthralled those present as well as visiting dignitaries. Employed in the warehouse for over twenty years, John was a dedicated and pleasant worker, often singing along as he carried out his chores.

The brilliant tenor, who was a member of St. Michael's Church Choir, released a number of CD's and took part in many musicals in the town. He was elected "King of the Fair" in 1977 and following his retirement devoted himself to looking after the welfare

of his beloved wife, Doris (nee Finn). By a strange coincidence, they both passed away on the 28th September-Doris in 2001 and John in 2022.

John Cosgrove was a gentleman that loved to chat, socialise and sing a song, whether it be in his local hostelry or at a friend's wedding. He was engaging, entertaining and modest about his knowledge of "the gi-gis." He is survived by his brothers Paddy, Michael and Jimmy; sisters Della, Margaret, Helen, Kathleen and Julie as well as many other relatives and several friends he made during his half century living and working in Ballinasloe.

A LOYAL AND COMMITTED SURGEON



Arriving in Portiuncula Hospital on 1st July 1978, **Dr. John R. Flynn** was one of three consultants appointed as the hospital, then run by the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine motherhood, embarked on a period of exceptional expansion.

A native of Terenure in Dublin, John Flynn's years in Portiuncula were recalled at his funeral mass as someone who was the embodiment of loyalty and commitment, first of all to his patients, to the staff, the hospital and, most importantly, to what was right. He would stand up for, and support the staff of the hospital always, and was never afraid to challenge when this was warranted.

The consultant surgeon regarded every patient as important to him. He was only interested in how he could help each of them and was compassionate and understanding with their relatives. But probably his greatest gift to Portiuncula was when he deferred his retirement age in December 2005, without ever being asked, and stayed to October 2011, to ensure the hospital had funding for three consultant surgeons.

When he finally retired, John Flynn joined the Friends of Portiuncula Hospital Committee,

eventually becoming its chairman. He loved the outdoors with hunting and shooting as his great outlet, helping to keep fit and healthy. He became a "late recruit" with the Town Band, learning to play the trumpet and participate in many of its engagements. His support for the younger band members was greatly appreciated and encouraged so many to follow their dreams.

Remembered as a "man of real integrity" the quietly-spoken surgeon passed away with his family by his side after a short illness. He is survived by his wife Deirdre, sons Cian and Darragh, daughters Niamh and Sinead, sisters and many other relatives and friends. His burial took place in Woodford Cemetery.

AN EMERGING AREA EVENTS CALENDAR 2023

| | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|-------------------|
| St Patrick's Day Parade | 17 March | Ballinasloe Agricultural Show | 29 September |
| Dinny Delaney Festival | 29 April - 1 May | Ballinasloe Horse Fair and Festival | 01 - 08 October |
| Eyrecourt Vintage Rally | 17 June - 23 June | Ballinasloe Vintage and Heritage | 08 October |
| Livestock Music and Art Festival (Aughrim) | 01 July - 02 July | Zombie Walk | 28 - 29th October |
| Battle of Aughrim Remembrance | 12 July | New Year's Black Tie Ball | 31 December |
| Feile Cheoil Larry Reynolds | 7 - 10 September | <i>Please send details of your event for next edition.</i> | |



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