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# BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 13 Issue 1: April '23 - May '23



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## CREDITS

### EDITOR

Colm Croffy

### REPORTER/VIDEOGRAPHER

Liam Timmins

### EVENTS GUIDE CO-ORDINATOR

Tanya Joyce

### PRODUCTION AND

IMAGE ASSISTANT - Hugo Rotgé

### CONTRIBUTORS

Ken Kelly, Barry Lally, Damian MacConuladh and various other contributors

### GRAPHIC DESIGN

KPW Print, Ballinasloe

### PRINT

KPW Print, Ballinasloe

### PHOTOS

Robert Riddell, J&S Photos - jsphotos.ie Evelyn Donellan, Michael S. Kelly, John Finnerty, Olaiya Tunde.



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

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

# REAMHRA

Welcome to Volume 13 issue 1

Welcome to the first edition of our 13<sup>th</sup> Volume or year of printing !! Few would believe that this is the 73<sup>rd</sup> edition of LIFE since we started printing in the tsunami of floods and the banking collapse !!

Lots of food for thought again in these pages from a profile of some 3 new business people committing themselves to new enterprise, a new national chain starting, good news on the development front with significant permissions applied for. A new Omniplex about to open for summer, launch of our town Sustainable Energy Plan and a reminder of our strong spine of cultural endeavour – the Musical Society commemorating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the acclaimed Sound of Music production.

This edition though is the tale of the two Gerrys – Bruen and Barrett who are stepping off the treadmill of business after nearly a century between them of being commercial giants in the locale.

Both are amiable, modest and unassuming men who pursued a career in commerce in this town since the 70s and 80s. In speaking with them they both know where the axes are truly buried and which ones still have the handles sticking up!

Mr. Bruen, as well as being an employer and rate payer, was a committed civic player who gave a huge amount of time to a variety of organisations and projects which we have all benefited from today. He was a pivotal Chamber President and first Chair of the Development Company (that went out on a limb so far the concept invoked ridicule in some polite quarters) to buy St. Endas and create a Community Social Enterprise Company.

Mr. Barrett too had been involved in a variety of sporting, educational, health and business endeavours, sometimes on the Committee or more

often quietly in the background securing resources for groups and people who needed them most. He along with Gerry Bruen were some of the first guarantors to a commercial bank to secure a mortgage on the purchase of St. Endas in the late 90s. They both contributed cash contributions from their business turnover to support the work of the BACD as non-executive Directors. Gerry Barrett went a step further – the old U.D.C. was prevailed upon to buy some 28 acres of the Hospital Farm by Tainiste Mary Harney's Industrial Task Force in 1999 and then re sell with appropriate zoning to the IDA. The Creagh IDA Park was born but it had not a portacabin upon it for the first few years of its life as Govt. Policy forbade the State alone for advance building of its own Manufacturing Units. Gerry and a group other local businessmen pooled their acumen, cash and resolve to re birth the location as a Manufacturing Hub.

Both the buildings to the left and right of the Park Opening are there because of Gerry's commitment to a town and community. The Planning Permission for the next wave of industry in there is part result of him and his colleagues putting their money where their mouths were.

My hope is not alone that they enjoy a retirement of health and happiness with those that matter most in their lives but their example might somehow inspire others to help build a sustainable & vibrant community.

Enjoy the read,

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



Work has started on our new office space in Society Street with the expectation that we will add 35 / 40 new office workers by quarter 1, 2024. This should bring extra footfall to our town centre which is to be welcomed by all Businesses.

Following on from the street enhancement facelift last year, we ask that the owners of the remaining properties who did not get around to the work last year consider same as we enter into Spring / Summer. We have had many positive comments on the work done in 2023 from residents and visitors alike and it would be great if we could add further to the appearance of our streetscape.

Within a short time we will have a new modern Cinema for the area, which adds further to the entertainment options available for all ages. On top of that there will be a considerable number of new dwellings completed by year end with many more in the pipeline as per details in a recent Ballinasloe Life Magazine. This will also have a positive impact on footfall in our town centre.

We had breaking news last week that a planning application has been lodged with Galway Co Cl. This is to develop the site on which BACD obtained full planning permission with the support of Ballinasloe Credit Union several years ago. This is a welcome development on which we will have more detail as the year progresses.

We also had the launch of our Sustainable energy plan, which you can read about in the magazine with details available from our office on how you can avail of grants available.

As per our usual bi-monthly update there are a huge number of positive developments happening which should give us all a lift heading into the Summer season.

**SEAMUS DUFFY,**

Chairman Ballinasloe Area Community Development Limited.



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Local representatives across Galway, Roscommon and Athlone Municipal Districts united for a historic first official meeting, with the areas collaborating to explore the common areas each collectively serves.

Chaired jointly by Cllr. Dr Evelyn Parsons and Cathaoirleach Cllr John Naughten of Athlone MDC, at Gullane's Hotel and Conference Centre, the meeting was the first ever gathering of councillors and staff from the three neighbouring municipal districts.

Senior Council Executive staff representing Galway and Roscommon, were in attendance on a broad agenda examining collaboration in exploring assets and opportunities for each region jointly.

These include initiatives to encourage tourism and explore local heritage, with the under-utilized River Suck being a particular focus of discussion, as well as possible revenue streams for joint initiatives resulting from the Just Transition fund.

The Just Transition Fund – being administered by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly is a key new Govt. Funding initiative and Ballinasloe MDC is the in the whole only area of all of County Galway that owing to its links to Shannonbridge Peat and Power industries.

"It is great to hold this historic first meeting in Ballinasloe 'the Town of the Hostings' and to offer our guests a Fáilte Ui Ceallaigh to underline our common heritage. It was a hugely positive meeting between all Ballinasloe Municipal Cllrs with our Roscommon Colleagues where we jointly considered goals, visions, plans we have in common and the scope for a unity of approach in progressing cooperation, corporate will, funding applications and delivering sustainable transformative development for the people and areas we represent", asserted Cllr. Dr. Evelyn Parsons.

Presentations from Gareth Scahill and Therese Hanley of the Suck Valley Way Development Co-Op, along with Jacinta



Cllr John Naughten, Cllr Dr Evelyn Parsons, and Caitlín Conneely Director of Service, Roscommon County Council

Greene Beatty, a Lecturer in the Schools of Humanities with Southeast Technological University Waterford, explored some possible culture and socially innovative programmes.

Ronan Bilbow, Rural Recreation Officer of Roscommon County Council, illustrated potential developments to walks and trails within the locality, while Eimear Dolan, Economic and Rural Development Officer for Galway County Council, spoke about the opportunities of the Croí Cónaithe scheme as well as spotlighting the winning placement of Lawrencetown within the Pride of Place awards.

Huge positive engagement from all in attendance on the myriad of national and EU funding propositions have resolved that the Joint MDC session will again meet in May, identifying possible joint projects for follow-up - The River Suck, an asset acting as a common thread for the first meeting, will likely be revisited. "It's the start of what we all hope is a fruitful collaboration for the people we all serve," closes Cathaoirleach Cllr Evelyn Parsons.

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## Between Housing, and Commercial development more works are in the pipeline for our town.

A ready-to-go development site in the old Guinness Harbour Store house along Harbour Road, will comprise of 11 housing units, is now being marketed by John Dolan Auctioneers. With the outline planning application being finalised by last summer, the site comprising of an old stone warehouse and surrounding infill would make a good addition for potential investors.

The existing stone warehouse will be transformed into five townhouses and six apartments for individuals. Provision of a utility storage unit and communal amenity space will be included, along with all ancillary works. The site is to cover a total area of 1618 square metres.

Additionally, an application for three single storey terraced housing units proposed at Townparks, Moycarn along Church Street, Creagh has had further information requested in February. The development will include on-site car parking spaces and a common entrance to facilitate the two bed family housing. Originally applied for in December 2022, Galway County Council has since requested further information for the 850 square metre site from the applicant.

On the commercial front Coyle & Co Auditors have plans for expansion to their current Headquarters with Application to transform the adjoining ground floor retail Unit in Fallon's old Yard and connect to their existing offices lodged in April. This will compliment the streetscape area across from the New Enterprise Hub.

Top Quarries have been rejected planning which was lodged in Feb 2022 to demolish a derelict house and transform the entrance area in upper Brackernagh.

In Main St. the Old Woods Department Store of old is have its common ground floor back again in an application lodged by Euro Giant Express to refurbish and re instate the drapery section of the store with the current Euro Store – doubling its floor space for retail in town.

On the 6th of March an Application was made for St Teresa's Special School for another 3 Modular Single Storey extension and associated services to Galway County Council on the grounds of the Enterprise Centre, Creagh. This will accommodate further classroom accommodation, to the right of the current temporary prefab unit that was commissioned some 12 short months ago.

A number of derelict and distressed properties and sites are currently getting Vacancy Orders posted on them by Officials. These will then follow with full Dereliction site notices and the sequestration process – much needed by Government to speed up the Local Authorities to take possession of buildings that can help reduce homeless. Part of the additional funding measures agreed at the drop of the eviction ban are to fast track this.

As we go to print there is no decision on the new Scoil Chroi Naofa New School which was hoped for a final green light after further information requests by Galway County Council in the early part this year.

Similarly the Limehill Application for

Additional housing units behind the Tesco Plant which was anticipating a decision from Board Pleanala prior to Christmas is still in Limbo.



L-R Joseph Glennon, Shane McNeill (BCU) Honoria Mitchell Black, Grainne Murphy (BCU) Niamh Creaven Connaghton & David Ansley

Huge thanks to Ballinasloe Credit Union for their continued backing in supporting the ShopBallinasloe local community initiative! Their commitment to helping initiatives like ours has been truly invaluable, and we are grateful for their continued support. We look forward to working with the BCU for many years to come and contributing to the growth of our local community together", states Honoria Mitchell Black from the Shop Local Team. Shop Local Vouchers are not just for Christmastime and can be used year round [www.shopballinasloe.ie](http://www.shopballinasloe.ie)



The Current Board of Directors of the Not For Profit Charitable Community Company, BACD CLG elected at the AGM before Christmas 2022.



Thanks to a longstanding campaign for a landmark for lighting and the combined efforts of MDC Staff, Tidy Towns and the local Training for Employment Scheme – the La Poer Trench Monument has had a serious make-over and new illuminations installed.

The freestanding carved limestone open-sided monument, comprising of square-plan arrangement of square columns with moulded capitals, having fluted Doric column set diagonally to corner of each square column.

Erected in 1840, dramatically sited and finely designed and executed monument was built in honour of Charles Le Poer Trench, Archdeacon of Ardagh and a member of the Trench family of Garbally. Designed by George Papworth, a Dublin architect, it uses the sculptural qualities of the local limestone to good effect. Its setting, in a garden on a rise, makes it an eyecatcher.

In anticipation of International Women's Day, a light up facility was installed on the monument. The Trench Columns shone purple on the nights leading up to the global Remembrance Day, and on the day itself it was lit a darker shade of the colour.

Previously International Women's Day had been marked locally by various special occasions, such as when a gathering was organised outside An Táin on St. Michael's Square with Cllr Evelyn Parsons, composer Eimear Noone and Soroptimist member Myrne Kelly



The Le Pour Trench illuminated in purple for International Women's Day.

in attendance speaking about the importance of gender equality, and respecting people of all races and religions. Additionally, at Cllr Parsons' request, the Tuam clocktower was lit orange to mark the 16 days of Action Campaign raising awareness of violence against women over the past two years.

The lighting infrastructure on the Le Pour Trench has been a pet project since Dr. Evelyn Parsons became a Councillor and, as of March 4th, it has been operational. In addition to the monument being lit purple for International Women's Day, the Trench Edifice was illuminated green in celebration of St Patrick's Day.

The facility will provide numerous opportunities for celebrating holidays and events, such as blazing the Galway colours for a national sports match, or shining red, white and green for Christmas. In addition, the lights can communicate a message of unity from town with other cultures and countries, for example displaying the Ukraine colours in solidarity with their struggles.

"I need to express my sincere acknowledgement to Area Supervisor Paul Stafford and the local area staff for their work on the project, as well as refurbishing the bench and re-gravelling the entrance" stated the Chair of MDC area. In addition, she also thanked Ballinasloe Tidy Towns, Ballinasloe Training for Employment and the CE workers and volunteers who worked hard to bring back order and landscaping to local heritage sport which was overgrown and profusely littered. "Teamwork makes the dream work!" exclaimed Parsons in conclusion.

## PLAYGROUNDS

Ballinasloe Municipal Council have allocated €60,000 for six Council owned and managed playgrounds, on the instigation of Councillor Dermot Connolly. These include the sites at Kilgrave, Leisure Centre, Hymany, Meadowbrooke Estate, St. Michael's Estate and St. Grellan's Estate which are maintained by local community groups.

The balance will additionally go towards annual inspection by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. As well as inclusion of weekly inspections by Ballinasloe's Community Warden Service, including minor repairs of the facilities and the covering of insurance costs.



Dermot and Baby



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Ballinasloe native Alan Kelly is kicking off operations with a new business venture in Kelly's Audio Visuals, specializing in installing TVs, satellites, aerial equipment, home cinemas, smart homes and everything in between.

Originally from Aughrim, Alan worked in his father's former electrical shop on Dunlo Street throughout his teenage years and beyond. At this time he was surrounded by new technology, inspiring him to pursue a path in TV and Audio Visuals. Alan moved to Dublin to work in sales for several years, as well as being a manager for local and multinational electrical retailers.

Since then he has returned to Ballinasloe, living in Creagh for the past 17 years. He has recently set up shop in the field of equipment installations under Kelly Audio Visuals, enjoying this area and sector as it suits him to be out-and-about and meeting different people and clients.

"I specialize in installing televisions and audio equipment, finding the best means and locations for a set-up. I'm happy to consult with customers on the best TV and speaker placements for the most comfortable viewing from their couch and to suit the aesthetic of the room" the gregarious businessman states.

With so much entertaining being done in our homes and the myriad of offers and gadgets that ought to talk to each other – the selection and installation of the most appropriate kit for your surround sound or mini cinema den has become a tad more complicating and demanding and Alan's knowledge and skills are to assist that customer.

The technician is especially talented in hiding wiring and satellite cables, enabling the room to have a tidy and appealing



finish. Alan finds his service are in high demand in Ballinasloe and beyond, as although many people are familiar with operating software and technology, not many can install and engineer their equipment in their own homes.

As well as arranging equipment, Alan can help integrate music systems to play throughout a home, install smart home products, and distribute WiFi across a large house and places of business with the assistance of a client's electrician. Additionally, he is available to assist anyone with technology difficulties such as operating Youtube or Netflix, using a

phone's camera, or functioning an Alexa or Google Assistant.

Alan has three kids at home, one young boy who attends Creagh NS and two older girls who study at Ardscoil Mhuire, along with his wife Tina Kelly, who works at Ardscoil as a secretary. The IT Man also has an interest in music, performing live at numerous gigs and weddings. He is proficient in playing bass guitar, piano, as well as singing on occasion, being just as iconic for his music as his technician expertise.

"I'm happy to tackle any job regardless of the scale, whether minor or major. I enjoy the problem-solving aspect of this field and am committed to spending two to five days on a project" he explains.

He is typically on the road from Monday to Friday but can sometimes work a Saturday if the job requires it.

If you are interested in availing of his services, Alan can be contacted at (085) 178 1121 or by email at alan@kellyaudiovisual.ie. Additionally he is available to message through Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp and will usually answer any queries promptly.

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LEFT TO RIGHT: Lyn Donnelly (Manager BACD), Emma Moynihan (Town Team), Ronan Naughton (Town Team), Ryan Madden (Plan Energy), Brian Graham (Solar Homes Ltd.), Helen Leydon (Town Team), Ruth Buggie (SEAI).

The Ballinasloe Town Team formally launched their Sustainable Community Energy Plan with an extensive presentation at the Enterprise Centre from three guest speakers Ryan Madden of Plan Energy, Ruth Buggie of SEAI (Sustainable Energy Association Ireland) and Brian Graham of Solar Home LTD.

Lyn Donnelly, Manager of Ballinasloe Area Community Development (BACD), welcomed all to the seminar and thanked those who have contributed and helped thus far.

The public launch was open to everyone, hoping to consult and collaborate with all our community on how to effectively manage power, energy and reduce our carbon footprint over time.

Ryan Madden, a representative from Plan Energy, outlined the new Ballinasloe Energy Master Plan, reviewing the town's current energy practises. Reportedly, on average, a household in town can spend over €350 a month on all electric appliances, with an immersion, tumble dryer and dishwasher taking the heaviest bulk of the cost. The primary heating sources of Ballinasloe were found to be oil at 35.7% and peat at 26%, (average Nationally with Oil but over average with peat fuel) with the speaker encouraging the attendees to adopt wood stoves or natural gas if they could.

Reflecting on the broader Sustainable Energy Community of 700 locations across Ireland, there are various practices Ballinasloe could adopt to reduce power usage and costs. In an analysis of ten residences in the region, Ballinasloe received a D1 in its Building Energy Rating for efficiency, which is in line with the SEC average but could be increased to a B1 by retrofitting 20-25% of buildings before 2023. Ryan Madden suggested other measures the town could aim for this decade included a 20% transition to electric vehicles and potentially adopting solar and wind power alternatives. Additionally, a 40% reduction in car journeys was suggested, which could be reached by simply walking to a workplace or operating from home once or twice a week.

Overall, the goal has been set to reduce the community's carbon footprint by 3% every year, estimating it could be lowered by over 10,000 tonnes by 2030. In addition, the report detailed that the community could become significantly more sustainable with 36,792,146 kilowatts per hour of savings if the measures outlined were to be implemented.

To sponsor these initiatives, SEAI Programme Manager Ruth Buggie outlined attention to grants available from the Govt. Agency. This includes funding available for the community, which can vary from €50,000 to €2 million depending on the scale of the project, as well as grants for home retrofits, sustainable transport upgrades and solar panel instalments for individuals in the locality. Attendees were actually taken aback at some of the schemes available.

Brian Graham of Solar Home LTD followed her on the topic of renewable initiatives, exploring different solar installation types as well as the cost, being €14,600 for a 4.5 kilowatt an hour panel fitting which can be alleviated by a SEAI grant of €2400. Located in Athenry, the company can be contacted at (091) 848 700.

If you hope to find out more information about the Ballinasloe Master Plan, Ryan Madden can be contacted at [ryan.madden@planenergy.com](mailto:ryan.madden@planenergy.com), or for more information on SEAI Energy Grants you can visit their website at [www.seai.ie](http://www.seai.ie).



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Full Planning permission has been sought from Galway County Council on a large site in the IDA Business Park, Creagh in the last few weeks.

The Application is for a large-scale business and technology plant of some 80,191 square feet – which is practically 1/5th larger than the Chanelle Plant on the left-hand side of the entrance gate at 67,000 square feet which was built in 2005 by Conneely Construction. That plant had a staff compliment of some 200.

The last time outline permission was applied for and obtained in the park was when the BACD Board, with a Grant from the local Credit Union, sought permission for an Advance Technology Unit as a joint venture with the IDA in 2017.

The IDA positions the West Region as home to the leading cluster of Life Sciences industries employing the highest per capita of Medical Technology staff in Europe; Medtronic, Boston Scientific, Hollister and Baxter are some examples and of course Surmodics in Ballinasloe. These international brands are an attraction for additional companies to potentially locate to the West Region and Ballinasloe.

The Park and that site were being marketed by IDA as a planning de-risked and flexible potential property solution for the past number of years. Constant pressure at official and political levels has been maintained by the leadership of BACD for several years which hopefully is now delivering results.

The Dublin based Company who have made the application, have a successful track record in providing specialist engineering, construction and polymer services to design and deliver innovative solutions to solve complex construction challenges in High Technical facilities, the Pharmaceutical & Biotechnology Industry, and Medical Technologies amongst others.

The decision to apply for the permission comes hot on the heels of a visit by the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD where he indicated to the press and public that he was very hopeful of significant investment for the town.

The Full Application and all relevant details are viewable at Galway County Council Offices.

## BANK CHAMBERS REFURB UNDERWAY

Works have commenced in transforming the Old Bank Chambers on Society Street into a remote working hub called “Ballinasloe Enterprise Hub”. The project is being carried out by BACD with support from the Just Transition Fund and the Town & Village Fund. Following public procurement and e-tenders process, John McNamara & Sons Ltd, Kilcolgan Co. Galway were awarded the contract. The project will see the 6,000 sq. ft premises converted into a state-of-the-art remote working hub catering for 40+ persons, including 6 hot desks, 16 offices (1 – 7 Person capacity), 3 meeting spaces, 1 Meeting room, canteen, and Toilet /Shower Facilities within the 3-story building. The refurbishment will include the installation of energy-efficient lighting, heating and ventilation, installation of new internal and external doors and windows, internal partitions, floor and ceiling finishes, full furniture fit out and high-speed broadband installation.

Seamus Duffy, Chairman of BACD stated once completed it will offer flexible high quality serviced office space for local entrepreneurs

to co-work, meet & to collaborate with each other and will offer remote workers (currently working from home or in other locations) a long-term solution.

“This will attract people into the town centre which will have a positive spin-off for our town centre businesses. There is already huge interest by local businesses, entrepreneurs, and remote workers, who have formally expressed an interest in being in this innovative space when it is operational in early 2024” explained Chair Seamus. Further details available from Lyn in BEC on 0909646516 or lyn@bacd.ie



Design Team/Contractor Site Meeting Held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March L-R Adrian Lambe, Director Douglas Wallace Architects, Luke McNamara Managing Director McNamara Construction, Damien Donnelly, Quantity Surveyor Levins Associates, James Mannion, Site Foreman McNamara Construction, Ray Gohery, Gohery Consulting Building Services Ltd



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### RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Conduct fitness assessments and consultations with clients to determine their fitness goals, medical history, and any limitations they may have
- Develop personalized fitness plans for clients based on their goals and limitations
- Provide one-on-one training sessions to clients and demonstrate proper form and technique for exercises
- Monitor clients' progress and adjust their fitness plan as needed
- Educate clients on proper nutrition and healthy lifestyle habits
- Maintain accurate records of clients' progress and ensure all client information is kept confidential
- Ensure the fitness centre is clean and organized at all times
- Lead Small Group Fitness Classes

### REQUIREMENTS:

- Certification from an accredited personal training program or undertaking same at this time
- No experience required but will be required to shadow and learn on the go
- Strong communication skills and ability to motivate and inspire clients
- Ability to work flexible hours including evenings and weekends
- Knowledge of exercise physiology, anatomy, and nutrition
- CPR and First Aid certification
- Ability to lift at least 35kg



49 years after he finished his Leaving Cert and went down into the yard at the lower end of Main St., Gerry Barrett has finally decided to hang up his builder's suppliers boots and closed the door on a five decade career as the head of one of the most iconic family businesses of the Mid-west.

Sold in 2004 with Gerry & Mike as joint Managers to Heiton Buckley, the Barretts Builders Providers, commenced by Killimor native Dad Frank in 1954 has seen some changes in nearly 70 years of family leadership.

Gerry looks back on a lifetime of dedicated loyal service to the construction sector of the midlands and to the thousands of farmers, business owners and self-build operators who all built their dream project aided by supplies, advice and credit from Gerry and his team.

"I didn't even get a week off after the Leaving Cert exams", sighs Gerry-it was straight to the yard, trucking and of course hauling and learning the ropes from late Dad Frank and Mum Olga. "Back in 70's, 50 kg bags of cement still came to town by Heavy Goods Train and first thing every morning my job was to take the flat-bed truck up to the station and lug the bags from the CIE goods wagon to our yard at Main Street" he recalls.

Growing up in the former Masonic Lodge (that bookends Main Street) was fun time for

Gerry, his elder sister Carol, and brothers Mike and Kieran. "In the late 60s and 70s all the business families lived over their premises and there was a slow growing up on Main St at the same time - the Colberts, the Salmons, the Connollys, the Brennans, the Blundells, the Grenhams, and the Kellers which led to some fierce street league competitions" he laughs.

He remembers a less frenetic time, stores opened later and closed later, no business or site started before 9.30 am; to compensate for a very late Saturday night trading - up to 9.00 pm, shops closed at lunchtime on Thursday. "Early every Thursday morning, I was tasked with driving a large truck to collect supplies from Wholesalers in Dublin. Navigating the truck through the narrow streets of the small towns en route, often proved quiet challenging at a time when long traffic delays were common" he explains.

The 70s and 80s despite the national calamity of the economy were good for the family business - most of the building work being done locally was once off - self build, home or farm improvements or renovations. "We didn't have vast housing estates that could have swamped us in the first recession of the 80s or indeed the subsequent collapse of the Celtic Tiger", he explains. We are situated in a wonderfully strong agricultural economy, with large prosperous and innovative farmers, who, since joining the Common Market, have thrived and re invested in their holdings and homes - it was common to gift a site to a son or daughter on marriage which supported the sales of building materials" he recalls.

The hollowing out of the Manufacturing Jobs in the late 90s had a negative impact on the town reckons Gerry. He recalls the traffic

Jams at 4.45 pm to tea time five days a week with the workforce leaving both AT Cross and Square D. The predominately female workforce in Square D was a big contributor to our business as they would prioritise spending on their homes before they'd spend on the car or themselves" reminisces Gerry.

He recalls with glee that a fella would be in for the basics for the build but the value was in watching the real boss pick the gold taps and the avocado bathroom suites - in a limestone area.

He laughs about the way in the latter years of the last century preparing the house for the Stations could be more expensive than a family holiday abroad.

Looking back over the trends in 5 decades Gerry is amused by the fact that the Grant Aided house of 1300 sq ft, which easily reared a family of 2 adults and 4 children was superseded by the desire for a 2500 sq ft for the same size family.



Patrick Atkinson CEO Chadwicks, Joe Hynes, Theresa Galvin, Gerry Barrett

There were 22 staff in Main St in 1984 when the Barrett family purchased the old Paddy's Lamb Factory and site of the old ruined workhouse and transferred operations. He co-managed the company with his brother Mike, who remained with the company until his retirement in 2012.

The loss of nearly 1,000 jobs in the late 90s provoked Gerry together with local business colleagues Brian Conneely and Noel Dillon to build the first two Advance Technology Units on the IDA site at Creagh.

Fortunately, this led to the creation of some badly needed jobs with the arrival of Aptar and Surmodics.

In a way, he was only doing what his father Frank did, when he, Billy Flanagan and Joe Hill persuaded the Advance Party from AT Cross to site the factory in Cleaghmore.

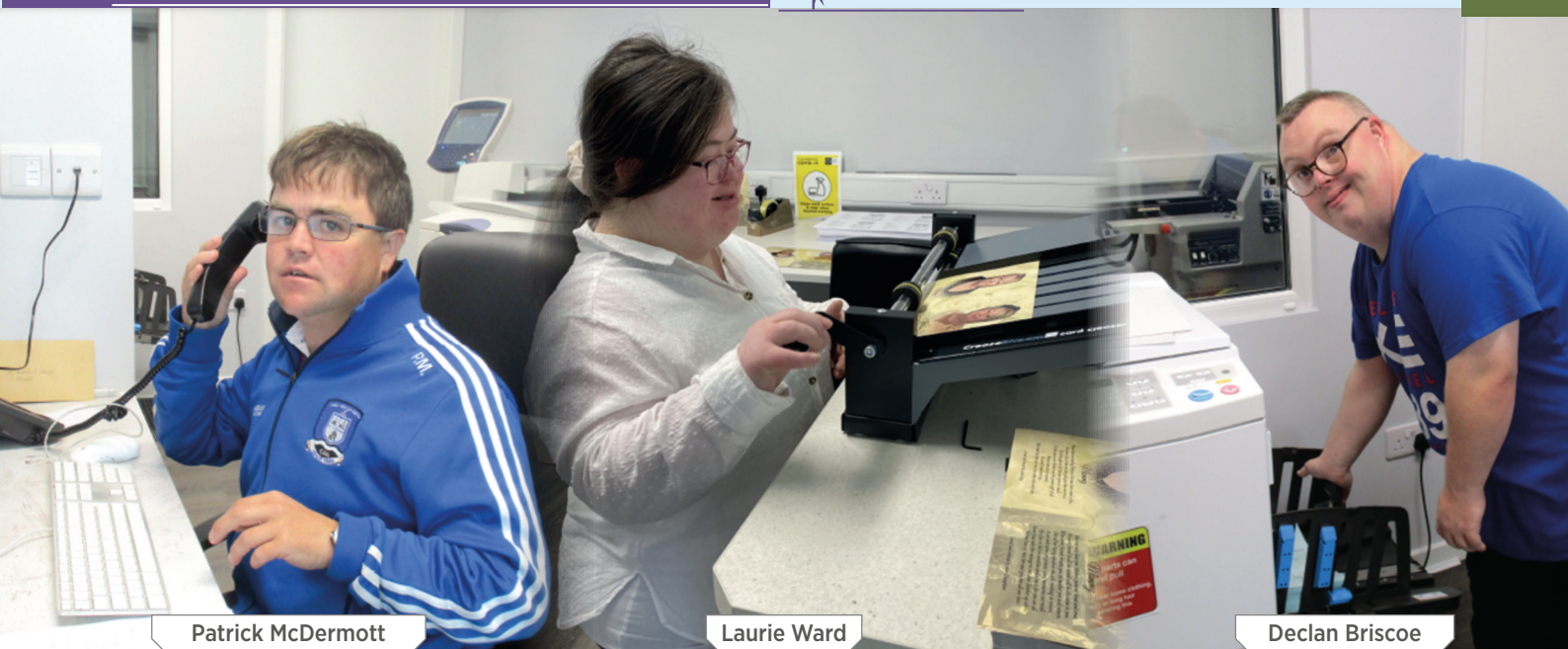
Gerry believes that Irish housing will continue to need steel, concrete and good Ballygar timber for construction, regardless of trends. He also muses "how the trend in a 1960s house was for all things white, then it changed to teak, to pine, to oak and now is back to plain white again!"

"There is great satisfaction in handing over a solid, profitable going concern, with increasing sales in recent years. I am very proud of our enthusiastic staff and loyal customer base, in a location that is poised for more growth" states Gerry.

As well as paying tribute to his brother Mike, wife Gerardine and children Emma, Conor and Laura for their support, he is effusive in praise for his loyal staff - their commitment and personal touch - many of whom have been with the company for most of their working lives. "I want to say sincere thanks to all the customers, firms and sales reps I have traded with over the years" states Gerry. Finally I would like to wish Chadwicks new Branch Manager Colm Dooley and his team every success in the future.

As to what the businessman intends to do next apart from keeping any eye on the Sarsfield Road Property portfolio "Gerardine and myself are going to travel and I'm going to work on reducing my golf handicap" he hopes.





Patrick McDermott

Laurie Ward

Declan Briscoe

The team at TOPE Printing are busy serving clients from their office on Jubilee Street, designing various graphics & printing material for companies locally and beyond. The business has provided posters and tickets for many local groups in town.

Deerpark Printing was established in 1988 by the Brothers of Charity Services, offering graphic design skills and employment opportunities to the intellectually disabled. In 2008, the business moved to TOPE Resource Centre in Poolboy where it changed to TOPE Printing, offering a range of printing services. Anthony Kearney led the group for 30 years, developing a loyal customer base and in August 2019, TOPE Printing moved to a commercial unit in Jubilee Street.

The Work Based Skills day programme continues to support individuals using the Brothers of Charity Services

by developing their employment skills in a real work environment. There are currently 14 people on the team, led by Niamh Sheppard and supervised by Martina Riddell.

Employment skills and roles vary from customer service, reception, printing, administration and deliveries. Supervisor Martina Riddell is glad to see increasing awareness of the programme, sharing: "we are grateful for the support of local businesses and the community of Ballinasloe over the last 35 years".

TOPE Printing is open Monday to Friday from 9:30 until 16:30, offering numerous services including Wedding, Business and Memorial stationary, Invoice Books, Raffle and Social Tickets, Thank You Cards and more. You can contact the business at (090) 964 3256 or by email at [tope4printing@gmail.com](mailto:tope4printing@gmail.com).


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Ballinasloe achieved a second place finish on a recent study by the Western Development Commission measuring towns for their sustainability and accessibility of transport, just being triumphed by Shannon in its overall mobility ranking.

The Sustainable Mobility Index 2022, developed by the WDC's Dr Helen McHenry, aimed to assess modes of transport across 35 rural towns within Galway, Roscommon, Clare, Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, and Donegal. The study reflects a shift in policy towards sustainable travel, encouraging active and public transport and the reduction of carbon emissions. Additionally, it sought to analyse accessibility and future developments needed for commuting in these rural towns.

The report was divided into 3 primary sub-headings, each featuring 10 indicators analysing different aspects of transport within the town. For the first primary heading Readiness for Low Carbon Transition regarding environmental concerns and access to schools, Ballinasloe reached second place scoring 63/100, just being outplaced by Carrick-On-Shannon. The town received a less favourable ranking with the second heading Access to Services and Social Facilities, reaching eight place with a score of 52/100. The third heading Access to Employment and Economic Activity had Ballinasloe placed third below Tuam and Athenry scoring 75/100, highlighting the town's relative convenient access to places of work.

The town scored First place in availability of charging points for electric vehicles, achieving a 10/10 against the average towns 2.4/10. Active travel and public transport to secondary schools was marked as a drawback, receiving a score of only 4/10 and a 29th finish against an average of 5.6/10.

The town's Access to Services and Social Facilities scored mixed results, poor results in overall travel times to its nearest international airport, accepting a 28th ranking and a score of 3/10 to an average of 5.3/10, naturally the town scored

highly in travel time by car and public transport to hospital outpatient services, gaining first place and a score of 10/10.

Indicators within Access to Employment and Economic Activity received commendable results, most notably with our area being commended for its Evening Public Transport Service to and from a larger town, achieving a second place finish and a 7/10 against an average of 2.8/10.

The rankings and commentary featured in the report are designed to help those providing transport, engaged in transport policy and in town development to decide what measures need to be taken going forward and identify environmentally beneficial practices, hopefully aiding in improving our towns transiting future.

## NEW OMNIPLEX CINEMA



Ballinasloe New Omniplex cinema, is fast approaching its Official Opening in May with Group Director Mark Anderson hinting that there will be a gala screening of Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3. to kick start Commercial Movie Return to town.

The new theatre will boast 5 screens in its state-of-the-art facility with an Omniplex Maxx auditorium complete, with rocker seats, double sofa beds, a 16 metre wide screen and Dolby audio technology. This will provide the town with 65 full/part time jobs.

Watch Social Media over the coming weeks for updates .

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## 2023 European Year of Skills

The European Year of Skills 2023 puts skills centre-stage. Helping people get the right skills for quality jobs and helping companies, in particular small and medium enterprises, address skills shortages in the EU is what this year is all about.



Stay tuned to our social media pages for upcoming events to support the #EuropeanYearOfSkills  
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## NEW PHYSIO PRACTICE IN DUNLO HILL

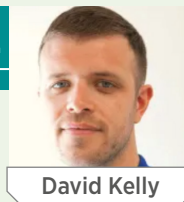
A new Physiotherapy Practice is right on its way to open in town, located on Dunlo Hill next to Billy King's Pharmacy.

Roscommon native David Kelly, who is a Member of the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists, will lead the centre in town and will be assisted by Athletic Therapist Alan Harrington. Both therapists have extensive experience working with the general public, as well as with semi-professional, professional and inter-county sporting organisations.

Since opening its first clinic in Galway City, Galway Bay Physio has expanded to have centres open in Athenry, Oranmore and now Ballinasloe. Working closely with local GPs and specialists, the firm aims to deliver a friendly and forward-thinking facility with an emphasis on providing high quality service for people suffering from neck and back pain, whiplash, and other sports related injuries to the county and the surrounding area.

The Suite in Dunlo Hill will provide a range of treatments including Vestibular Treatment, Spinal Mobilisation, Orthotic Assessment and fitting, Soft Tissue release, Deep Tissue Sports Massages, Trigger Point Release, Dry Needling, Comprehensive Home Exercise Programme and Shock Wave Therapy.

Their service places a keen emphasis on empowering their patients, enabling them to understand why they are experiencing pain, how they can resolve it, and to understand the steps needed to be undertaken to prevent their pain returning. Therefore, each



David Kelly



Alan Harrington

patient plays a major role in their recovery.

Lead Physiotherapist David Kelly, specialising in Musculoskeletal and Vestibular

13

Physiotherapy, has been working in this field for over seven years. Working on rotations in St James Hospital, England, he gathered valuable experience working on major trauma cases, in intensive care, and with elderly and general patients. Now operating in the West, David has worked with numerous national sporting teams including Galway United, Connacht rugby and NUI Galway scholarship athletes.

Eventually the therapist realised he preferred aiding people from all walks of life and joined Galway Bay Physio. Regarding his favourite aspect of his job, David explains: "I enjoy helping someone who's been suffering with chronic pain for a long time and being able to help them get back to their normal pain free self". He will be joined by athlete Alan Harrington, a recent graduate of TUS who has been working with the clinic for over two years.

The clinic is expected to open in April 2023, available for appointments Monday to Friday from 08:00 until 20:00, as well as on Sundays from 10:00 until 14:00. Galway Bay Physio can be contacted at (091) 569 706 or by email at [info@galwaybayphysio.ie](mailto:info@galwaybayphysio.ie).

Online booking can be made on their website at [www.galwaybayphysio.ie](http://www.galwaybayphysio.ie).

## NEW STRETCH THERAPY CLASS

A brand-new health class by Stretch Therapy Ireland is now available, hosted above Jorenas Health Suite by Laurencetown native Claire O'Leary.

Having completed her training in Sydney, Claire is one of a handful of qualified Stretch Therapy teachers in Ireland. She has earned a Diploma in Neuromuscular Therapy and, within the last seven years, has ran workshops and classes in community centres, gyms and workshops across the country. While in Australia, she has also worked with professional rugby team the Sydney Roosters, providing her physiotherapy expertise to the athletes.



Increasing the range of motion and freeing the body from discomfort, while helping to release tension, reduce injury, improve speed and agility, improve sleep, and move your body with ease. Are some of the benefits! Workshops are available for individuals as well as athletics clubs, with tailored plans suitable for each sport. Specialising in Neuromuscular Therapy (NMT), Claire can provide her hands-on approach by targeting muscles, tendons, ligaments and connective tissue to reduce short-term and chronic pain.

Claire is available on Saturdays in Jorenas Health Suite and can be contacted at (086) 406 6800 to book an appointment or to find out more.



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The astute Roscommon businessman, Gerry Bruen, that arrived to Ballinasloe's Main St in 1980, is finally this month retiring from the hectic world of Insurance, after just over 4 decades.

He has fond memories of being ensconced with support and guidance from his older brother Des (also an Insurance Broker) of his early days in the old Post Office. "The first few months were very memorable, we always had to have coins in the petty cash box, so we could go across to the payphone

and make calls as I had to wait nearly four months for a phone – now I go to Tesco and get one in 15 minutes" he laughs.

He was lured here to manage the Irish Permanent Branch and he moved the premises to where the Deli Store is now on Society St in 1982, before moving into the then Mc Kee Boutique premises in the mid-90s.

He has observed quite a lot – "it's much harder to provide the personal touch and service in these instant quote days and all the Info Tech Systems that are there now. There are some days you just can't over ride the system to help a client's genuine frustration" he notes.

People have in the last decade become a tad less patient and more demanding of service levels, which can cause frustration he feels. He was the last of an endangered species – a Mutual Building Society Agent, which meant in effect, he could negotiate and broker mortgages for properties but more importantly for first time buyers up until 2008 (when the Society de mutualised and became a bank – buying out all the agents).

"It was one of the most rewarding part of my brokerage career being able to advise a young first time couple how to make the best application and secure them the keys of their first home. I am happy to say I am still friendly with a great deal of them today" says Gerry.

He too remembers fondly the boom of the 80s and 90s when Thursday was the traditional pay day (in cash) for all the factory workers who mostly lived in town. "You'd never finish up early on those evenings as you had ladies mostly rushing about to sort out the weekly messages and then do the bit of banking – paying deposits, saving accounts, instalments on cover, car / house / life insurance etc. long, long before direct debit, paying online or Revolut were in vogue" he recalls.

In fairness, he believes that a certain age profile may still do some research online but will then arrive to the local store counter and look for as close a price or offer BUT with the personal service attached.

"The younger generation want it all on line, the more discerning

and older will research on line but come back into the town centre as they still want retail and services and are prepared to support those that provide same" explains Gerry.

During his years in business life he always played a very active role in civic affairs – he was a leading member of Junior Chamber, Musical Society, Town Hall Restoration Committee, Lions Club and indeed Chamber of Commerce, as well as the B.A.C.D. – playing significant leadership roles with success and élan in all.

He is not quite going to do nothing in retirement either, but he and his wife Ann are looking forward to spending more time with their adult children – Sarah, Leah, Richard and Heather. Leah delighted them recently with the arrival of Oliver their first grandchild and he is obviously the apple of their eye.

"The advice I have is to do nothing major for four seasons, I have the family, I have my huge lately found interest in my Road Running – and pounding the pavement for ½ marathons and distance runs and I'd like to engage a bit more perhaps with some history and heritage" he explains.

"I'd like to thank Ann, my wife, my brother Des for the early days of support and of course the many loyal and attentive staff I had-nearly 12 in all-as well as my wonderful customers for all the years" he says with conviction.

"I hope poor Ann is prepared to put up with seeing a lot more of me in the coming years" he jokes!



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The Golf Club confirmed Frankie Kenny, a 36-year-old Kiltormer native, as the new Franchisee for the Bar and Food Operation this month.

From a Garbally Leaving Cert his hospitality career began with Tomas and Caroline Gullane as your typical lounge staff, and he progressed there before moving to Hayden's Hotel under the Creaven and Downey years as Bar Manager.

He returned to Gullanes in the Bar and Restaurant section before taking up a position with the previous contractures to the Golf Club as Bar Manager in March of last year.

"Tee19@BallinasloeGolfClub" is what the outfit will be branded, bringing no nonsense dining and catering to hungry golfers and visitors alike.

For the members from 11.00 am there will be a lite brunch offering and then from noon until close of kitchen, a solid tasty and refreshing limited menu will be provided at a modest fare seven days a week.



opportunity.

Full and part time positions are still available as we go to print and you can contact the facility by calling the Golf Club main number at 0909642126 or if you wish to offer a CV by emailing frankietee19@gmail.com

All the exciting Offers and Specials will be posted regularly on the new Facebook page; TEE 19, Ballinasloe Golf Club.

Commencing service from mid-April onwards Tee19 will aim to provide club users and guests a distinctive West of Ireland slant to their kitchen with changing evening specials and of course an A La Carte Sunday lunch offering.

"We are still going to chase the private party and function market and will be able to cater for groups with special finger food up to 100 guests and for smaller intimate family gatherings like birthdays or anniversaries" explains Frankie, who is really looking forward to new

## THIRD COSTA COFFEE CAFÉ IN GALWAY OPENS

The third Costa Coffee Café to open in Galway is the one at Dunlo Shopping Centre and the Coca-Cola owned chain now has over 114 units serving customers across Ireland.

Originated in Dunstable, England by founder Sergio Costa, the Café will support 5 fulltime and 5 part time jobs and can accommodate 50 patrons indoor and some 40 outside on the terrace. Opening hours are from 8.00 am every morning until 7.00 pm with late hours on Thursday and Friday until 8.00pm and an early close on Sundays at 6.00 pm.

Proving popular as an alternative to the Pub hook up, or after a quick trolley dash in the aisles of the large stores around, Sarah Duggan the Claregalway native supervisor is well pleased with how the opening few weeks have gone.

For takeout or have in the customers are enjoying the snacks,

sweets and treats along with their regular hot drinks.

They also enjoy the new range of toasties and Vegan and Vegetarian lite bite options that are available all day.

The young Baristas are enjoying East Galway folk giving them some new twists on orders! "They seem to really enjoy all their coffees but especially their Lattes and Cappuccinos, really, really hot" explains Sarah.



Some of the New Costa Crew:  
Team Leader Marcel,  
with Baristas Tieyane, Alina and Patryk.



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Maureen McCabe works in Ballinasloe and Salthill as a Psychotherapist, Hypnotherapist and Counsellor and has been in private practice for over thirty years across the UK and Ireland. Living here in town, she loves the community and people she meets daily. Maureen has an MA(Hons) degree in Psychotherapy and Counselling from the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Science (ICHAS), Castletroy, Limerick.

Originally a Leitrim native, Maureen was already acquainted with Ballinasloe through frequent visits to the Hayden's Hotel throughout her childhood. At

eighteen, she moved to London where she worked for over 20 years.

Starting as a banker, Maureen pursued an interest in Hypnotherapy and Psychotherapy, attending Regents College University, and The National School of Hypnosis and Psychotherapy (NSHAP), earning a diploma and an advanced diploma in Therapeutic Hypnosis and Psychotherapy.

After her graduation in London, Maureen founded her private practice and worked in Bromley, Kent as a hypnotherapist and psychotherapist. She continued her endeavours as a therapist in London by establishing a successful centre in Harley Street for over 20 years in the city, enjoying the buzz of London life.

She later moved back to Ireland in 2005, initiating her current practice clinic in Salthill. Maureen was attracted to the Bohemian city of Galway but struggled to find a property to inhabit within the region. Ballinasloe came back calling to the therapist, discovering a house to stay in as well as a centre base for patients seeking her services across Athenry, over to Longford and beyond.

Since returning to Ireland, Maureen loves soaking in the Irish scenery while driving, finding the sight of cows, sheep, and a

complete field of horses a delight to behold.

She loves to stay active with walks throughout town, as well as participating in her favourite sport swimming. Maureen loves exercising within the swimming pools of Ballinasloe, finding she can do several lengths of the pool without bumping into anyone.

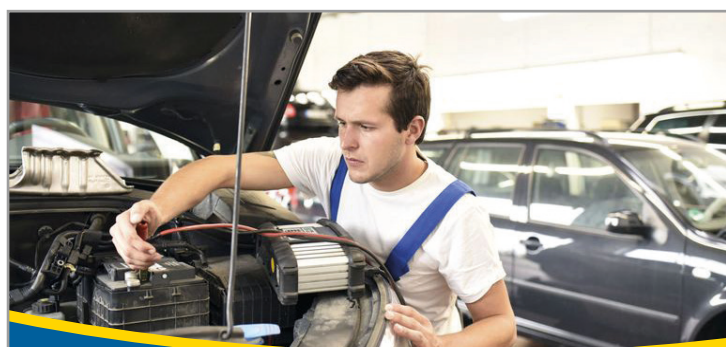
The psychotherapist is passionate about the power of the mind and about its connection to the body. She loves her work and finds interacting with people to be very fulfilling. In addition to her specialties in Hypnotherapy and Psychotherapy, Maureen is also trained in Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Neuro-Linguistic Therapy (NLP), Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI), Medical hypnosis and Bereavement Counselling.

The therapist can primarily help in areas regarding Stress, Anxiety, Panic Attacks, Phobias, Weight Management, Confidence, Public Speaking Skills, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Driving Test Nerves. Additionally, hypnotherapy can help to stop smoking and control your intake of alcohol or stop drinking completely.

However, you do not need to have a problem to benefit from the treatments offered. Many athletes and entrepreneurs working in business use these approaches to have better functioning skills and to become more motivated. "These practices can help to improve your performance on the golf course, as well as in the boardroom" Maureen emphasised. Other patients use these approaches to enrich and enhance their lives.

Her Ballinasloe clinic can be found along Harbour Road approaching Dunlo Roundabout and her consulting hours are typically between 08:00 to 19:00. Currently the clinic operates services in town from Tuesdays to Fridays, and on Saturdays in Salthill. Sessions vary if you seek a one-off session or further time, but Maureen tries to schedule at most seven meetings ahead. Additionally, the therapy provides a one off two-hour session for smoking cessation.

Maureen is happy to speak to you by phone, recommending anyone to get in touch regardless of the matter and offering connections to other organisations if she is unable to solve your dilemma. You can contact Maureen McCabe by phone at (087) 773 0401 or for further information you can visit [www.aquariushealthclinic.com](http://www.aquariushealthclinic.com).



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**Opening hours 7.30am to 6.00pm**





Ballinasloe Tidy Towns Committee held a jam-packed Annual General Meeting at Gullane's Hotel, focusing on the promotion of new nature conservation, clean ups, and creating a new officership.

Outgoing Chairperson Tom Madden led the meeting, thanking all officers, committee members and volunteers for their hard work and commitment. Tributes were paid to The Brothers of Charity, The HSE ID Services, Ballinasloe Soccer Club, Ballinasloe Probation Service Community Service Project, local businesses in towns, Galway County Council and the management and staff of Gullane's Hotel.

Likewise, outgoing Secretary Padraig Lyons thanked members of the Tidy Towns for their continued support, underlining their collaborative approach which has served the town effectively in the last 12 months. Their involvement was evident in the National Tidy Towns Report and in the recent Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Report in which Ballinasloe received extremely high grading and feedback.

The Treasurer's Report was delivered by Johnny Walsh, in which Galway County Council and Pobal were acknowledged for funding the group's endeavours, along with Tesco Ireland

being praised for their support.

A presentation on recycling and repurposing items in the household was given by Eric Naughton, who stepped down as Public Relations officer at the meeting (due to pressure from work and other commitments).

The protection of plants, animals, and habitats for the coming seasons, particularly in regards to grass cutting was discussed and explored in some detail. Significantly, a new position of Heritage and Tourism Promotions officer was created by the group in order to link the work of the group in with the preservation of the heritage of the locale and the tourism development of the town.

A new committee comprising of Tom Madden as Chairman, Geraldine Warde as Secretary, Johnny Walsh as Treasurer and Padraic Lyons as the new Heritage and Tourism Promotions Officer were warmly welcomed.

Padraig delivered a presentation on heritage and the built environment of Ballinasloe along with its environs. The outgoing Secretary then launched a short video which he produced, and narrated about nearby historical sites including the local train station, the Kilconnell Abbey and the Clonmacnoise Cemetery.

Padraig has a keen interest in local history, shown in his published work "Rediscover Ballinasloe and Surrounds". In the new position, Padraig hopes to focus on improving signage in the town, and to prevent significant heritage sites from being obscured and decayed.

The regular clean up Saturday and walk and litter pickups will continue with folks being reminded to stay tuned to social media sites for further updates.

Pictured are some of the attendees of the Tidy Towns AGM along with Treasurer Johnny Walsh, Secretary Geraldine Warde, Chairman Tom Madden and Heritage and Tourism Promotions Officer Padraig Lyons.



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Ballinasloe town continues to have the most concentrated areas of acute disadvantage in the county, but it also has huge potential, believes our newest Community Engagement Worker – Yvonne Hoary.

Yvonne's role is initially focused on three specific estates (namely St Teresas, St Annes and St Grellans), however the project anticipates widening to the neighbouring three estates of Hymany Park, Curragh Park, and Dunlo Court over the coming months. In Galway Rural Development, we are already active through our existing programmes and staff from our Dunlo Street office.

Under the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), significant support is provided in the areas of training, CV preparation, interview readiness, etc. The SICAP team at GRD have engaged with 32 individuals in the three initial estates over the past four years and has also provided grants and other supports to the different groups operating in the estates.

The work of the Tús 'job activation' programme in Ballinasloe has been hugely beneficial to those finding themselves on the live register. GRD has a quota of 220 participants in east Galway with many finding employment following their work placement. There are currently 10 individuals on a Tús placement from the estates.

ParentChild+ is a home-based literacy and parenting programme that helps children from disadvantaged backgrounds to succeed academically. Currently, more than two dozen families in Ballinasloe rely on ParentChild+, creating transformational change through home visit support.

The fact that specific estates have been chosen for national focus on the basis of the Pobal Deprivation Index, and other metrics indeed, illustrates that there are additional challenges in areas

of Ballinasloe that need additional resources. To understand the challenge, available data was collated and provided to the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

The breakdown by gender/age, nationality/culture, housing, economic status, education, disability, general health, and more was provided. There was also in-house data collected through our various programmes and from partner groups which illustrate the needs and which can be leveraged to make the case for targeted supports.

In addition, the previous 'needs analysis' completed in Ballinasloe by the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP), including the estates of St Anne's, St Grellan's and St Teresa's, noted the employment status of the residents. In some areas, 39% of the respondents identified as being unemployed and only 24% respondents were employed.

"All Councillors have been briefed on the project and we are aware of individual resident concerns, estate management issues, etc. While there will be no magic fix to any issue, my commitment is to do all I can to improve matters. I am also focused on those with disabilities, and those suffering from mental health issues", explains Yvonne.

The Empowering Communities programme was announced by the government nine months ago when 14 small geographical areas of socio-economic disadvantage, identified by the Pobal HP Deprivation Index, were chosen.

As part of this programme, a Community Engagement Worker was recruited in each of the selected areas and Yvonne and her colleagues are tasked with developing and facilitating relationships between community stakeholders, community groups, and statutory agencies.

"Empowering Communities will focus on supporting communities in building leadership within those neighbourhoods. It's about supporting and enhancing collaboration between existing community structures to develop and help implement tailored community work responses to the specific challenges faced locally" she states.

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True community development must always be about allowing communities to decide what's best for them so while other initiatives have failed because they try to superimpose a fixed 'solution', we want this to be more tailored.

Education, training and job activation are all undoubtedly important, however areas of focus must also include care for the elderly and a focus too on children in the estates. If the narrative is to be changed, then the actions into estates needs to be changed also.

Like most of the roles in the community development sector, no two weeks are the same. "This sees me meeting as many groups and individuals as humanly possible and driving linkages, its important there is no duplication of existing structures. I'm not here to tell existing groups what they should be doing. For example, SICAP give significant support already in the areas of training, interview readiness, etc." explains Yvonne.

Reflecting on the new immigrants to our town Yvonne notes there are a great mix of nationalities and personalities. "These 'New Irish' will play an important role in the future of this country and GRD work to support that contribution. We already work to highlight the mechanisms for greater inclusion and integration though our programmes so that culture is imbedded. There will always be a need to embed migrant integration within the wider social inclusion context through the activities of clubs, community groups, the arts community, the media etc. While it can sometimes take a little longer, and while the needs are sometimes different, overall the same desire is there for

betterment for the individual, their family, their community and the town", she advises.

She really does enjoy working here since her pre-Christmas appointment. "I love Ballinasloe. While my last role in GRD saw me based in Portumna, I worked here previously at different times in the town and was involved in different community development projects within Galway Rural Development - I was fortunate in knowing many of the groups and personalities in Ballinasloe. The town has advantages over many other towns across the country. It offers retail, employment and leisure opportunities, education and healthcare facilities and many natural amenities that other towns envy. It also services a large rural hinterland and while it's well beyond my remit, I have no doubt that Ballinasloe will thrive over the coming years".

Yvonne continues "I've been very lucky, and perhaps it's a personality thing, but I love working with people and helping them progress. Ultimately, that's what it's all about for me. It might sound obvious to say, but community and individual is a calling and there's a reason in life why we're all drawn to different professions".

Looking forward there are no promises with new initiatives and year-to-year funding but Minister O'Brien is strongly committed to Empowering Communities and CEO Steve Dolan had applied separately for a similar role for Ballinasloe some years ago so fingers crossed the position will continue and grow helping the town and targeted areas.



At GRD's offices were: Steve Dolan, Yvonne Hoary from the new Empowering Communities programme in the town, with Dr. Anne Cassidy, Karyn Gavin, Elaine Quinn, Linda Cummins, James Applegate, Damien Quinn and Marie Finnerty.



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**Creagh N.S. were one of few schools nationwide to be given a flying visit by the Irish Coast Guard Helicopter recently.**

The visit was made possible through Canadian Holding Company Ireland (CHCI) Maintenance Manager Pat Downey, whose employers are the sole providers of the fleet of five search and rescue helicopters for the Irish Coast Guard under a €50 million a year deal. Pat, a former pupil of the school (Class of '92) who is the father of students Eoin and Liam Downey, suggested a Coast Guard visit to the Parents' Association during National Engineers Week.

An extensive site survey was required on the Creagh football pitch, with the staff and Pat Downey measuring where the €24 million worth helicopter would land and accounting for the enormous blow-back that would result. Additionally, Creagh NS Health and Safety Officer Caroline Gallagher made sure any students with sensory needs would have headphones administered to them on such an occasion. The visit was kept mostly under-wraps to the pupils, staff, and community, seeing as an arrival date and time could not be guaranteed due to emergency call outs.

Over 400 students, 35 staff and roughly 30 members of the

community flooded the pitch on the morning of the 6th of March, shocked with the sounds overhead but amazed by the technology. Most of the Creagh Parish thought a major incident had occurred such as the blade noise - on that March morning.

The fully trained paramedics of the Irish Coast Guard Service gave a presentation to the audience, teaching them about how the mechanics of the Sikorsky S-92 helicopter, how to conduct CPR, how to operate a stretcher and integral aspects of water safety.

The children were very inquisitive asking various questions to the crew. Junior Infant student Tadgh impressed everyone in attendance, who asked the crew about the buoyancy of the helicopter.

All of the special needs pupils were offered on board access to the helicopter, while respecting any children's desire to not do so out of discomfort. One of the pupils volunteered eagerly but was bitterly disappointed when they learnt they could sit at the control panel but they would not be flying the aircraft. Additionally, Pat Downey's children Eoin and Liam had the chance to jump on (for their first time) the machine their Daddy is responsible for the smooth running of! This was a huge historic moment and a hugely memorable one for all involved as The Irish Coast Guard can only occasionally do similar visits once or twice a year. Principal Aine Ní Cholleraín was incredibly grateful for the opportunity, concluding by giving special thanks to Pat who helped map and arrange the once-in-a-lifetime experience for the school community.

The Pupils and staff have spoken about nothing since!



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The Ballinasloe Garden and Flower Club are stomping back into a full season of meet ups after the Pandemic break and have welcomed to one of their evenings Diane Gallagher from Doddervale, a renowned instructor from the Association of Irish Floral Artists.

The club members were enthralled by Diane's display, demonstrating her excellent bouquet arrangement skills during the two hour event.

Committee member Noelle Rohan was impressed with Diane's presentation on the night, admitting: "Myself, I come to watch these lovely ladies show what they're able to do and it's so encouraging and informative".

Originally founded in 1994, Ballinasloe Garden and Flower Club now boasts over 44 members who participate in a varied, valuable gardening experiences and activities.

First returning after a Covid break in September, the club continues their regular meet-ups in Gullane's on the second Wednesday of every month at 8:00pm, organizing typically two gardening nights and six flower arrangement demonstrations a year.

For their gatherings, usually at Gullanes Hotel, the group hosts well-known horticulturalists and flower demonstrators. Last February, the enthusiasts had the chance to host Kevin Begley from Coolwater Garden, County Limerick for their monthly Garden Talk. As part of this meetings theme of "Goodbye Lawn, Hello Pond", the speaker demonstrated a before-and-after transformation of his back garden into a large pond and provided a tutorial on how to achieve this. Kevin also taught about appropriate water plants for the pond and surrounds.

The club expects to feature Ann Marie O'Keefe as a guest presenter in April, and Janet Maddock in May. Before their summer break, the committee are looking forward to continuing their annual Summer outing, a day trip which will have the group visit one or two gardens of interest across



Diane Gallagher Flower Arranger

the country, with non-members also welcome to join.

With the club starting again in Autumn, a flower demonstration will be undertaken by Sharon O'Sullivan in September and subsequently a garden talk focused on "Forest Moon Plants" by Rory Newell in October. In November, a gala fundraiser will be held commencing at 7:30pm at Gullane's with Mary McKee from Ennis Flower and Garden Club as a speaker,

along with a complimentary glass of wine for the attendees. This event has raised thousands of euro for local charities in former years, and this November the group will donate their proceeds to Ballinasloe Social Services.

Closing the year, a Christmas Demonstration will be held on December 13 with Samantha Horan displaying her seasonal festive arrangements, which are reported by committee member Mary Rose Cullinan as: "a sight to behold".

For these gatherings, the club holds a monthly sales table selling potted plants provided by the members, a helpful source of income benefitting the group. Additionally, you can enrol for their annual membership fee for €30 and non-members can participate in each of the monthly nights for €10.

Anyone is welcome to join, whether you are a new to the hobby or already have a green finger. "You may not reach a high standard, but you'll get to love the flowers!" asserted Noelle Rohan.

If you require any further information or wish to become a member, please contact [gffrench\\_kelly@hotmail.com](mailto:gffrench_kelly@hotmail.com).



Founding member Eimear Nolan of the Ballinasloe Flower and Garden Club

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Members of the Ballinasloe Women's Traveller Group made an appearance at the premier of Mincéir during the Dublin International Film Festival in support of activist Nora Corcoran who was featured in the documentary.

Spearheaded by director, cinematographer and editor Teresa Lavina along with Assistant Producer Mary McDonagh, the 50-minute feature was created to explore Irish traveller traditions and how their culture artistically evolved over the years.

Ballinasloe native Nora Corcoran made an appearance



in the picture, discussing discrimination against their community and encouraging members to not be ashamed of their heritage.

The documentaries premier was held at the Dublin International Film Festival stage to a grand audience last March. In attendance at the premier were representatives of the Ballinasloe Traveller Women's Group and the Galway Traveller Movement including Nora, Winnie Mongan, Jane Ward and Winnie Stokes.

The film was extremely well received at the premier by a captivated audience.

Pictured are Ballinasloe Traveller Women's Group and The Galway Traveller Movement members: Nora Corcoran, Winnie Mongan, Jane Ward, and Winnie Stokes at the Mincéir premier.

## LAWRENCETOWN'S CLIMB FOR CRUMLIN

The Let's Get Active Group are hosting a 6k Walk/Run in Lawrencetown on Easter Sunday April 9th. This will be the 6th year the group will hold this type of event, to raise funds for the Children's Heart Centre in Crumlin.

A local family experienced first-hand the amazing and lifesaving work in the Children's Heart Centre in Crumlin with their newborn daughter undergoing 2 life-saving open heart surgeries within the first three months of her life. She spent long periods in Crumlin during that time and experienced first-hand the amazing work carried out for the children who are born with and those who develop heart problems.

Whilst the journey was terrifying seeing a newborn baby taken to intensive care and hours in theatre; having the expertise and support of Crumlin was such a relief for the local and countless other parents.

Crumlin provide vital supports and lifesaving equipment for Children at their most vulnerable time. The Event will give something back

to the Children's Heart Centre and ensure future children and their families will have the same invaluable support and care.

A bake sale starting at 12.10pm in the community hall and an Easter Raffle on the day should ensure a good community vibe with the playground just across from the start line - there will be something for all the family.

The 6k Walk/Run will be in Lawrencetown on Easter Sunday April 9th at 1pm.

Registration in Pardy's Bar at 12.45. Families welcome. Children must be supervised. Donate what you can at registration or online: [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/climbforcrumlinlawrencetown](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/climbforcrumlinlawrencetown)



Members of the Lawrencetown Community preparing for Climb for Crumlin Event in Lawrencetown.



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The Ballinasloe Men's Shed celebrated their nine year anniversary, with Chairman Charles Doherty blowing out the club's birthday cake candles. Charles was responsible for founding the workshop, and leading the group through nine years of unfailing service.

The Donegal County native has decided to step down as Chair but regardless he will not be saying his farewells just yet to the Ballinasloe Men's Shed as he remains to be involved with the group as a member.

The first shed in Ireland was established in 2009, inspired by the Men's Shed movement originating in Australia. Charles founded the idea of a workshop in town, and in October 2014 the Ballinasloe Men's Shed was established. In their attempts to find a venue, the group met the Galway East Life Support Group who they now share an office space with, in Cullen's Yard.

The centre currently features six workspaces which allow members to work on various projects relating to carpentry and ironwork. Additionally a social room is present on the premises, where members can relax and enjoy a tea or coffee.

Attendees are free to participate in whatever activities they see fit, whether they desire to get their hands dirty on projects they brought from home, or if they look to socialise and have banter with fellow members.

The local carpenters meet regularly at the Cullen's Yard in the centre of town every Monday and Friday from 10:00 until 14:00. Although not usually gathering outside of these hours, the men do occasionally meet to celebrate birthdays and their annual Christmas lunch in Dolan's.

The local shed currently features 20 members, with the centre only supporting a limited number of people. The Ballinasloe branch are associated with the Irish Men's Shed Association, which now boasts over 400 workshops across Ireland.

If you are interested in joining, a registration form can be found at the Men's Shed centre, with assistants ready to help with your application. The fee to join is €25 annually with third party insurance included.

For more information about the group, or for an informal chat about opportunities you can contact Charles at (090) 964 4051.



Pre-Covid picture: Back - Charles Doherty, David Rafter.  
Middle - Gerry Moran, Tom Finnerty,  
Martin Egan, Patrick Brennan, Michael Manning.  
Front - Desmond Cannon (deceased),  
Liam Egan, Max Faircloth (deceased)



Back - John Reilly, Patrick Brock, Michael Manning.  
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Fiona Hope is the newest Humanist celebrant for County Galway East and South Roscommon, beginning her training with the Humanist Association of Ireland (H.A.I.) in 2021 and now fully accredited to carry out all ceremony types including Weddings, Baby Naming's, Vow Renewals, Funerals, Memorials and Milestone ceremonies.

Born and raised in Ballinasloe, Fiona has never wandered too far from home. Being a fan of the sense of community in town, she holds great affinity for the various groups, clubs and volunteer efforts within the municipality. "You won't meet nicer than a Ballinasloe person" declares Fiona.

As a young girl, she always viewed the world differently from what she learned at home. Originally brought up Catholic, her views began to fluctuate over time. Fiona first encountered the Humanist Association of Ireland (HAI) website when she became a parent in 2016, contemplating how she would celebrate her child's birth and what beliefs she would bestow onto him outside the constraints of religious belief. Her contact with the forum gave her a sense of relief, finding a community that voiced similar thinking to her and resources to celebrate her beliefs, including the option of having a Humanist Naming Ceremony.

She contacted celebrant Bridget Carlin who arranged the occasion. Fiona was inspired by how the event was conducted, finding it very personal, meaningful, and inclusive of all people and beliefs. From that moment on she decided this was the path she hoped to follow.

Fiona's parents were very understanding of her outlook, encouraging her free thinking without any judgment. Both her parents grew up in the heart of town, with her mom originally living in Society Street and her dad in St Joseph's Place.

Now listed on the Register of Solemnizers in Ireland, the young celebrant can now legally marry couples and carry out ceremonies at a host of hotels, restaurants, museums, galleries, and other landmark locations around the country. Fiona derives great satisfaction

from hosting these ceremonies and feels an incredible buzz for the day after the event. She feels incredibly grateful and honored in delivering these life marking ceremonies and appreciates all the feedback given following the occasions.

"I find each ceremony unique and special in its own right, providing a real insight into people's lives and stories. I especially love it when friends or family reach out for ceremonies, once having to double job being both bridesmaid and celebrant for one of my close friends" she states.

The HAI carries out roughly 3,000 ceremonies per year, growing each quarter. According to a recent survey via weddingsonline.com, fewer than half of Irish wedding ceremonies were religious for the first time in the country's history.

Fiona describes the difference between Atheism and Humanism and the confusion that sometimes arises – "Atheism is simply being an absence of belief in God, while the latter is a worldwide view and way of life. Humanism seeks to rationalize the remedies of society exclusively behind people, as well as emphasizing human values and goodness. The belief presents itself to an audience who



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interpret existence resulting from the natural world, defining itself behind values of compassion, equality and reason” she explains.

“Humanism is all about celebrating our lives as free, loving and creative humans. That’s why we offer non-religious humanist celebrations, based on celebrating life and love as an alternative to a religious wedding, christening or funeral. Every ceremony we do is different because each one is built around the person or the couple. That makes each event unique and meaningful, with words, readings, music, day, time and even the location all chosen by the individuals to represent their love, feelings and experiences. I work alongside individuals; couples and families to create a meaningful ceremony for their personal occasion” states the busy Celebrant.



Fiona is always happy to have a chat over the phone, preferring a ring over a message as she finds it more personal. She would suggest people call her to ask any burning questions and get a feel for the service she offers. The celebrant would recommend getting in touch with her as soon as possible at the early stages of planning a ceremony, with weddings usually having a lead time of six to nine months. On the other hand, affairs such as a funeral would be organised with urgency and a typically much shorter planning period.

She can be contacted at (087) 642 2006 or by email at [fionawardcelebrant@gmail.com](mailto:fionawardcelebrant@gmail.com)

Available Humanist celebrants for your occasions, including Fiona, can be found on the HAI website [www.humanism.ie](http://www.humanism.ie).



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## GOLF CLASSIC FOR GARBALLY

The Garbally Parents’ Association are hosting their second annual Golf Classic at the Rossgloss Golf Course for their major fundraising event this May.

Last year, an incredibly tight competition was held, with just eight points separating the first and last team placements. The winning squad consisted of Connemara natives Colum O’Meara, Declan Grimes, Mike Kealy and Dave McDermott who scored together 108 points and helped upgrade facilities in the school, raising proceeds for the current and capital requirements of pupils.

On Friday May 12 and Saturday May 13, the Parents’ Association are looking to host an even greater competition for the town. “We are fortunate that in our community people and businesses are always very generous in their support of the school and we are asking again for everyone’s support to make this year’s golf classic event a success” stated Ann Marie Waters a member of the Organising Team.

The Association are promising it will be an exciting event with a host of great prizes to be won. Additionally, the group are encouraging anyone to help raise funds for the school through sponsoring a T Box for €50. Sponsorships are well publicised on the day and are advertised for all golfers and fans to see.

Supporters can submit a team of four members. There are two deals available, one being the Golfers package at a cost of €160 per team and a Corporate package at a cost of €300 per team.

If you wish to sponsor a hole or book a tee time, you can call the organisers at (089) 207 5318. “We would love to see you there and please feel free to spread the word to all golfing enthusiasts that you know” concluded Ann Marie.



Last years Golf Classic winners Colum O’Meara, Declan Grimes, Mike Kealy and Dave McDermott.





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Outgoing Chairperson Margaret Brennan welcomed unfamiliar faces, glad that the group was rising in numbers after the toll taken by Covid to Ballinasloe Active Retirements' AGM held in Gullane's Hotel.

The Ballinasloe branch now boasts over 200 members and many of the retirees are involved in local volunteer groups such as Ballinasloe's St. Vincent De Paul, Social Services, and the Care and Repair service.

Last year the Club celebrated their 20th anniversary with a great function in Gullane's Hotel, and the group continues to develop its numbers and range of weekly activities and outings.

Social Committee Secretary Anne Duffy reported on the group's busy year. The trips to Liverpool, Clonakilty and the "Ara-Go-Festival" in Westport proved to be the highlights, as well as their summer day trips. The "Young at Heart" Christmas Dinner in the Shamrock Lodge Hotel was reviewed with Midlands Troubador Brendan Shine's delightful musical performance being a hit for many.

The various activities offered by the group received positive reports, however Noelle Rohan emphasized that more members should return for the walking exercises at the Dunlo Recreational Park on Tuesdays, as well as the knitting and craft clubs who are welcoming more people to join in Gullane's Hotel on Mondays, both gatherings taking place between 10:30 and 12:00 in the morning.

David Dully introduced himself as the Community Garda. David spoke briefly about cyber security, calling attention to common scam attempts and practices. He later returned for the group's March gathering in

Walking Club



Gullane's. Fire Officer Jamie Ward is to follow, presenting to the group in April.

The new year's committee elected features Michael Walsh as Chairman, Deirdre Hogan as Secretary, Michael Colohan as Treasurer, Chris O'Flynn as PRO. Additionally the Social Committee, responsible for the extracurricular activities for the members, were appointed with Martin Colleran as Chairman, Bridie Whelan as Treasurer, Anne Duffy as Secretary, as well as Maura Rafter and Maureen McIlvenny.

The AGM concluded with teas and coffees, with members in attendance enjoying a nice chat. Ballinasloe Active Retirement encourages bonding in its ethos, aiming to prevent loneliness by establishing a network of friendly connections for their participants and allowing them to live healthy, active lives.

There are now 80 Active Retirement branches in the West of Ireland, along with 577 branches and 5000 members nationally. Ballinasloe's group accounts as one of the larger with approximately 200 members, being one of the most active in the country.

All are welcome to come along to the regular meetings in Gullane's Hotel every Wednesday at 15:00. The Social Committee additionally have various trips and activities planned for this year, and new attendees are welcome to join. If you would like to book a place for these events, or you are interested in becoming a member at an annual cost of €25, you can contact Secretary Deirdre Hogan at 086 3824556 or by email ballinasloeactiveretirement@gmail.com.

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Over 35 community, sporting and cultural organisations and some 15 commercial entities took part in a joyous and colourful annual parade witness by one of the largest crowds in recent memory.

The winners in each category of this year's Ballinasloe St. Patrick's Day Parade included Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh and Creagh NS joint for the Education category, Colohan's Céilí for the Cultural category followed by the Milkshake Dancing Academy in 2nd place. Ballinasloe Town AFC for the Sporting category followed by runner-ups Ballinasloe GAA and Ballinasloe Mini Rugby.

Active Retirement took the laurels for the Voluntary Category followed by the Civil Defence in 2nd. P Clarke and Sons won the Commercial category followed by Hogan's Trailers in 2nd and a special merit for Wag "N" Tail Pet Shop.

Special Community Effort Awards were given by the judges to Ballinasloe's Indian Cricket/Sports Club for 1st place and the Ukranian Friends Welcome came 2nd.

The Overall Winner of the Tony Colohan Memorial Trophy was jointly awarded to winners Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh and Creagh NS.

The Facebook LIVE screening from LIFE platform had a reach of almost 10,000 views over the Weekend, which combined by the Garda estimates of 5,000 people being in town for the parade is welcome news for the organisers and sponsors - Ballinasloe Vintners, Credit Union, Supermacs, Galway County Council, Ballinasloe Fair and Festival, Gullanes Hotel .

The Parade Committee this year under Chair Johnny Walsh comprised of Carmel Greally, Mike O'Brien, Tomas Gullane, Niall Clarke, Donal Croffy, Jim Doherty, Kathleen Croffy, Conal Duffy, Michael O'Grady.

" We would like to thank all the volunteers who turned up on the day and assisted with stewarding and all the participants, sponsors and supporters - without whose help the success could not have been achieved" stated Johnny Walsh.





Kilglass NS showcased their physics expertise when they participated in this year's ESB Science Blast showcase event in the RDS.

Involved in four Science Blast projects to date, the school took the theme 'Fantastic Fractals' which are never-ending visual patterns made from simple math equations. The entry received high praise from their assigned judge and even brought a visit from the Minister of Education Norma Foley.

The pupils who attended the RDS on Monday February 27 had a great time interacting with the various STEM events and viewing the innovative Science work being completed by young science minds across the country. The students were joined by New Inn NS whose project asked "Will my resting heart rate decrease as I become fitter?".

This STEM initiative was developed and delivered by the RDS, first introduced in 2019 and grown in popularity among Primary schools across the country, with a total of 35,00 students having

participated on the occasion. The Science Blast is a non-competitive learning event and one of the largest national science programmes for primary schools. Showcases are held in the RDS, Limerick and Belfast, with pupils being encouraged to investigate the science behind a question proposed to them. This year the question explored was "how will climate change affect baby sharks?".

It was a highly-rewarding day for all the Kilglass pupils, with teacher Peter Kane expressing thanks to "Ciara Byrne, Science Administrator and her great team for organising another fantastic event".



Kilglass NS with Project.

## WORLD BOOK DAY

The students of Clontuskert NS enjoyed an action

packed programme on this year's World Book Day.

Packed with a number of activities for each class, including quizzes and art competitions. The pupils had the opportunity to share their favourite books by sending them to other students through Microsoft Flip. To mark the day, each of the children dressed up as their fictional idols including superheroes and princesses.

Clontuskert's senior team participated in the Connacht Volleyball finals at the Ardscoil Mhuire grounds. Two squads joined the frenzy, one being a mixed group and the other an all-boys group. The students demonstrated their great serving and dunking skills, being especially impressive as this was the schools first competition since 2019.

It was a fantastic tournament for the children, along with the coaches Mrs. Murray, Ms. Yi, Ms. Egan and Ms. Murray who were excellent in teaching them the rudiments of the sport. "The



Students of Clontuskert celebrating World Book Day 2023.

teachers were delighted to make an attendance at Ardscoil, getting an opportunity to meet their former past pupils and I also have to thank Conor Flood and Karen Usher for organising the great event" stated Principal Kate Murray.

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A consultation process has begun for Ardscoil Mhuire and Garbally College regarding the future of Catholic post-primary education provision in Ballinasloe and beyond, conducted by their patrons the Diocese of Clonfert and the Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust (CEIST).

Independent facilitator Frank Smith is to compile data from the feedback of management, staff, parents and students within the community to determine subsequent decisions for the two schools.

Last February, the patrons of Clonfert and CEIST began to collaborate and explore the direction of secondary school provision within Ballinasloe. Chief Executive Officer of CEIST Gerry McGuill states "Education, as with many things in life, is rapidly changing, and as patrons of Ardscoil Mhuire and Garbally College the Diocese of Clonfert and CEIST, we are determined to embrace these changes to meet the needs of future students and parents".

Independent facilitator Frank Smith is now consulting with all the stakeholders of both schools, conducting surveys and personal meetings with anyone involved within the post-primary school community. More significantly, Frank is to confer with primary school parents, seeing as their children will be impacted by any decisions resulting from this process.

This analysis aims to not only discuss Catholic education in Ballinasloe, but the widespread form it will take in the future.

Patrons Gerry McGuill and Bishop of Clonfert Michael Duignan emphasised in their statements that there is no pre-determined outcome from this process, whether that implies the amalgamation of a new build or no changes to the established post-Primary education provision. "If the people of Ballinasloe prefer that the status quo is retained, that's what we will take into account" asserted Gerry.

Surveying is scheduled to be completed by April 9, the Easter Holiday, and after a period of time compiling data, concrete results from this consultation should be available in May. Only then will the patrons determine the process needed to be taken for the path ahead of Ardscoil and Garbally.

Everyone is encouraged to provide their view in this matter, and to voice your opinions to the local teachers and principals. Furthermore the Clonfert Diocesan Office can be contacted at (091) 841 560 or by email [office@clonfertdiocese.ie](mailto:office@clonfertdiocese.ie), and CEIST by their website at [www.ceist.ie](http://www.ceist.ie).

Contact the teachers, principals, for more information on CEIST website.

Bishop Michael Duignan, Bishop of Clonfert



The 2nd Year Ardscoil Students bog-jumping at Delphi Resort as part of their Residential Trip



Ardscoil's CANSAT team participating in the regional satellite competition at the Atlantic Technology University



Students Olwyn Kelly and Alannah McKeigue, along with teachers Ms. Slattery and Ms. Comhghairdeas, being presented with an award for their outstanding Junior Cert results by the University of Galway



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The students of Creagh National School raised over €6000 for the Ballinasloe Social Services through the production, distribution & sales of traditional St. Brigid's Crosses by the pupils.

Coinciding with St. Brigid's Day, students from third to sixth class assembled for the school's annual fundraising activity, learning the technique of creating traditional green straw and reed crosses. Lunch breaks and after school time was fully used to produce them.

In accepting the cheque, Teresa Coughlan Manager of the Local Social Services congratulated the children on their great effort and said the money was vital to the organisation due to increasing day-to-day costs. After the presentation, the students were rewarded with a pizza party and party games. The initiative is co-ordinated every year by teachers Regina Power and Antoinette Blade and widely supported.

Creagh NS also hosted an entertaining culture night for St. Brigid's Day, with the school hall being alive with music and stories with a diverse audience of parents, pupils and the wider community with tea and refreshments provided by the Parents Association.

The pupils showed their great technical minds during Engineers Week which entailed activities such as KNEX construction

challenges, Scratch Programming workshops and "Trashion", where students designed fashion accessories from rubbish. In addition, Creagh celebrated World Book Day, where the children dressing as their favourite cast of characters, as well as participating in book themed activities.

Creagh NS are active on their Twitter page @creaghschool for further updates.



Front: Conor Ansley and Hannah Dunne proudly present the cheque. Back: Regina Power, Antoinette Blade, Teresa Coughlan - Director Ballinasloe Services, Mandy Lloyd - Day Care Manager Ballinasloe Social Services, Janet Ansley - Ballinasloe Social Services and school principal (acting) Áine Bleahene.



The pupils of Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh participated in and won the Seachtain na Gaeilge table quiz hosted by Conradh na Gaeilge at Gullane's Hotel. • Back L to R Lorcán Mac Taidhg, Conall Ó Maolmhuaidh, Luke Ó Finneagáin. • Front L to R Oscar Ó hAnluain, Aidan Óg Ó Gallchoir, Siofra Ní Neachtain



The Junior Team Ardscoil Mhuire team at the regional Seachtain na Gaeilge quiz who won the overall first place prize • Back L to R Vivienne Naughton, Maeve Ní Cheallaigh • Front L to R Caoimhe Ní Neachtain, Aoibhinn Ní Chocláin, Ellen Curtin



The Senior Team Ardscoil Mhuire team who won the third place prize at the Seachtain na Gaeilge quiz. • Back L to R: Anna Trappe, Marianne Ní Mhuineacháin, Sórcha Ní Ruiséil • Front L to R: Clíodhna Ní Anluain, Ellen Ní Churraoin, Saidhbhe Ní Choncheanainn

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**BARA Singers** hard at work with 60s, Maritana. Music Hall, Mozart and more for our Singalong Songfest Town Hall Sunday afternoon May 7th 3pm. Free concert to mark Bealtaine Festival.



**Ballinasloe Vintage Club** held a very successful table quiz at the Gibbons Lounge, with over 20 tables competing. The winning team included Nuala Payne, Martin Lyons, Brid Lyons and Lucy Wallace. PRO Desmond Harney would like to thank everyone who took part and sponsored prizes.



The students of **St. Teresa's Special School** were out in the Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre halls in celebration of this year's World Down Syndrome Day. Raised by the General Assembly of the UN, the occasion serves to raise awareness about the down syndrome condition and explore means of improving quality of life for people affected through education and meeting their health care needs. The staff of the school were especially excited to commemorate the day, decorating the porch at the Enterprise Centre in purple balloons.



**Donnchadh Duane** represented Newtown National School Ballinasloe at the 2023 Connacht Minor School Championships, coming first in the Boys Butterfly 50m U11 & third in the Boys Freestyle 50m U11 held in Leisureland, Galway. He then went on to represent his school at the Irish Minor Schools Championships at the National Aquatic Centre, Dublin on the March 25. Pictured are Swim Ireland Connacht officials presenting medals to Donnchadh Duane at the Minor School Championships.



#### MARTIAL ARTS EXPO

Itosu-kai Karate Ireland held a kobudo seminar recently in the Emerald Ballroom to great success.

Kobudo is the ancient art of handling weaponry and, as well as the martial art Karate, the local IKKI group have practised kobudo since 1976. Claire Harte, IKKI association secretary and PRO, demonstrated five weapons including the Bo, Tonfa, Nunchaku, Sai and Kama.

Claire primarily focused on the basics of the Bo kihon, being the use and control of a hard wood staff. All participants enjoyed the session while learning the technique and developed a valuable kobudo skillset. Sensei Tony Dolphin, Kevin Casey, Chief Instructor Leo Mulvany, Donal Monahan and Claire Harte hosted the occasion and provided valuable tuition to the martial artists.

Classes are held every Monday and Wednesday at the Emerald Ballroom starting from 19:00, with the beginner sessions ending at 20:00 and for advanced members until 21:00. Anyone is free to drop in and view these sessions to gauge their interest in the sport. For more information you can call Sensei Leo at (087) 4159858 or email at [leotmulvany@gmail.com](mailto:leotmulvany@gmail.com)





Geraldine Warde, Kevin Staunton, Orla Farragher and Taoiseach Leo Varadkar



Caroline Burkner Lawlor with a photo of her father Jim Burke



Senator Aisling Dolan, Amy Kelly and her baby, along with Leo Varadkar



The team at McGorisk's Pharmacy with Leo Varadkar



Tommy Dolan meeting An Taoiseach in Gullanes Hotel



Pictured at the Annual World Day of Prayer at St. Johns Church, Ballinasloe - some of the leaders and some members of the congregation.



Tidy Town's Chair Tom Madden making a presentation to retired supervisor Billy Ward at the AGM.



Michael and Ann McCullagh, longstanding supporters of the Ballinasloe Musical Society enjoying Patrons opening night of the 100th Anniversary Presentation of the Sound of Music.



Kitty Colbert, member, back stage make up artiste and longstanding Society Supporter and Patron enjoying the opening night of the Sound of Music with her grandson Jack.



# APRIL EVENTS GUIDE

## APRIL 1, SATURDAY

|  |              |                          |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|
| Easter Fair                            | 11am -4pm    | Bsloe Town Band Building |
| Tennis. Junior Sessions                | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Classical Music Performance            | 2.30pm       | Bsloe Library            |
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8)         | 11am         | Pearse's GAA Club        |
| Music. 3 Men & A bass                  | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Shane Moore      | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Jimmy Buckley (support Stuart Moyle's) | 9pm, 11pm    | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Music                                  | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                            | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music.                                 | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Music. One                             | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Live Music And Dancing                 | 10pm         | Valerie's of Aughrim     |

## APRIL 2, SUNDAY

|   |              |                               |
|---|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Palm Sunday. Holy Communion.                  | 10am         | Ardrhan Church                |
| Palm Sunday. Holy Communion.                  | 12pm         | St. Matthew Chur. Clontuskert |
| Morning Prayer                                | 10am         | Woodlawn Church               |
| Morning Prayer                                | 10am         | St. John's Church Bsloe       |
| Morning Prayer                                | 11.30am      | Holy Trinity Church Aughrim   |
| Bsloe & District Vintage Club Rd Run          | 9.30am       | Gullane's Hotel carpark       |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Beginners)  | 11am 12 noon | Bsloe Tennis Club             |
| Tennis Open Adult Club Sessions (Exp.Players) | 12noon - 2pm | Bsloe Tennis Club             |
| Mike Denver (support John Molloy)             | 2pm, 4pm     | Shearwater Hotel              |
| Sunday Night dance. Andy Feery, John Molloy   | 8pm, 10pm    | Shearwater Hotel              |
| Traditional Music                             | 6pm          | An Táin Bar                   |
| Music. Ken Solo                               | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                     |
| Traditional Music                             | 9.30pm       | Valerie's of Aughrim          |

## APRIL 3, MONDAY

|   |                 |                        |
|---|-----------------|------------------------|
| Penitential Service                         | 7.30pm          | St. Michael's Church   |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics      | 2-3pm           | Coral Leisure Centre   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling             | 10.30 - 12.30am | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe |
| Bsloe Acti. RTRMT Knitting / Crafts session | 10.30-12.30am   | Gullane's Hotel        |

## APRIL 4, TUESDAY

|  |               |                            |
|--|---------------|----------------------------|
| Bsloe Breastfeeding Support Group      | 10am-11.30am  | Youthwork, Marina Point    |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                  | 6pm           | Bsloe Tennis Club          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics | 7-8pm         | Coral Leisure Centre       |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                      | 7.30 pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Walking Club   | 10.30-12.30am | Running Track, Brackernagh |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                        | 8pm           | Emerald Ballroom           |

## APRIL 5, WEDNESDAY

|  |                |                             |
|--|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Chrism Mass  | 8pm            | Loughrea Cathedral          |
| Knitting and Crochet Group                             | 11am - 12.45pm | Bsloe Library               |
| Bsloe Act.RTRMT Group Meeting                          | 3pm            | Gullane's Hotel             |
| Bsloe Active retirement Book Club                      | 3.30pm         | Bsloe Library               |
| French Conversational Class With Lizzie                | 11am-12pm      | Gullane's Hotel             |
| Bsloe Act. RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics                   | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre        |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group "Bridge"                      | 11am-1pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,    |
| Jiving Classes   | 8pm            | Pearse's GAA Club House     |
| Traditional Music                                      | 9pm            | An Táin Bar                 |
| Mass Of The Lord's Supper                              | 8pm            | St. Michael's Church        |
| Maundy Eucharist                                       | 11am           | Clonfert Cathedral          |
| Women's Group Meeting                                  | 11am-12.45pm   | Bsloe Library               |
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig 'Ciorcal Comhra' | 11am-12        | Gullane's Hotel             |
| Bsloe Active retirement Group Aqua Aerobics            | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre        |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                                      | 7.30pm         | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,    |
| Institution Of The Last Supper                         | 7pm            | Holy Trinity Church Aughrim |
| Line Dancing   | 8pm-9.30pm     | Moore Community Hall        |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling                        | 7-9pm          | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe      |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Singing class                  | 10.30-12.20 am | Town Band Hall              |
| Traditional Music.                                     | 9pm            | Fallons Bar, Sbridge        |

## APRIL 6, THURSDAY

|   |              |                              |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Good Friday. Celebration Of The Lord's Passion                                  | 3pm          | St. Michael's Church         |
| Good Friday. Stations Around The Cross  | 7pm          | St. Michael's Church         |
| Good Friday. Celebration Of The Lord's Passion                                  | 3pm          | Our Lady Of Lourdes, Creagh  |
| Ecumenical Way Of The Cross Procession (held jointly with St. Michael's Church) | 12pm         | Duggan Park Bsloe            |
| Ecumenical Way Of The Cross Procession (held jointly with St. Cuan's Church)    | 1.30pm       | St. Cuan's Church Ahascragh  |
| Ardrhan (held jointly with Labane Church)                                       | 6pm          | Labane Village Square        |
| Bsloe Cancer Support Centre. Drop In Centre                                     | 10am - 1pm   | Cancer Supp. Centre, Main St |
| Bsloe Indoor Country Market   | 9am - 1.30pm | Bsloe Social Centre          |
| Camper & Caravan Weekend  | Daytime      | Pearse's GAA Club            |
| Tennis. Open Sessions   | 6pm          | Bsloe Tennis Club            |
| Find The Joker  | 8pm          | An Táin                      |
| Traditional Music Sessions  | 9.30pm       | Emerald Bar                  |
| Music. Goodfellas   | 10pm         | Brewery Lane                 |
| Traditional Music Sessions  | 9pm          | Broderick's Bar, Kilconnel   |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Paul Dawling  | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel             |
| Texas Holdem Poker  | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                    |

## APRIL 8, SATURDAY

|                                    |              |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Holy Saturday. Easter Vigil Mass   | 8pm          | St. Michael's Church     |
| Tennis. Junior Sessions            | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Camper & Caravan Weekend           | Daytime      | Pearse's GAA Club        |
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8)     | 11am         | Pearse's GAA Club        |
| Live Music                         | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music. Na Riadoiri                 | 10pm         | An Táin Bar              |
| Music.                             | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                        | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music. Caroline Moore              | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Sean Crehan  | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Music. Miranda                     | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Music. DJ John Finnerty 80's Night | 10pm         | Gibbons Pillar House Bar |

## APRIL 9, SUNDAY

|                                 |         |                             |
|---------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| Easter Sunday. United Eucharist | 10.30am | St. John's Church Bsloe     |
| Easter Sunday Mass              | 9am     | St. Michael's Church        |
| Easter Sunday Mass              | 12noon  | St. Michael's Church        |
| Easter Sunday Mass              | 10.30am | Our Lady Of Lourdes, Creagh |

|   |            |                            |
|---|------------|----------------------------|
| In Aid Of The Children's Heart Centre in Crumlin Hospital 6K Run & Walk | 12.45pm    | Pardy's Bar Lawrencetown   |
| Camper & Caravan Weekend  | Daytime    | Pearse's GAA Club          |
| Traditional Music   | 6pm        | An Táin Bar                |
| Music. Boogie Men   | 10pm       | An Táin Bar                |
| Social Dancing. Bernie Heaney   | 5pm-7.30pm | Shearwater Hotel           |
| Country Dancing. Derek Ryan   | 9pm        | Shearwater Hotel           |
| Lea Heart live at The Boatyard  | 9.30pm     | Lukers Bar, Sbridge        |
| Music. Red Tape   | 10pm       | Brewery Lane               |
| Live Music  | 8pm        | Broderick's Bar, Kilconnel |
| Music. John Finnerty  | 7pm        | Fallons Bar, Sbridge       |
| Music. Matt Keane & colm Naughton                                       | 9.30pm     | Joe's Bar                  |
| Traditional Music   | 10pm       | Gibbons Pillar House Bar   |
|   | 9.30pm     | Valerie's of Aughrim       |

## APRIL 10, MONDAY

|  |               |                        |
|--|---------------|------------------------|
| Bsloe Social Services Golf Fundraiser  | Daytime       | Bsloe Golf Club        |
| Camper & Caravan Weekend               | Daytime       | Pearse's GAA Club      |
| Lea Heart live at The Boatyard         | 9.30pm        | Lukers Bar, Sbridge    |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics | 2-3pm         | Coral Leisure Centre   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling        | 10.30 - 12.30 | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Knitting / Crafts   | 10.30 - 12.30 | Gullane's Hotel        |
| Music. Boogiemans                      | 9.30pm        | Joe's Bar              |

## APRIL 11, TUESDAY

|   |                  |                           |
|---|------------------|---------------------------|
| Tennis. Open Sessions                       | 6pm              | Bsloe Tennis Club         |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                             | 8pm              | Emerald Ballroom          |
| Bsloe Active retirement Group Aqua Aerobics | 7-8pm            | Coral Leisure Centre      |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                           | 7.30 pm          | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,  |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Walking Club        | 10.30 - 12.30 am | Running Trac, Brackernagh |

## APRIL 12, WEDNESDAY

|   |                |                          |
|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| Flower Arranging Demonstration by Ann Marie O'Keefe | 8pm            | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Knitting and Crochet Group                          | 11am - 12.45pm | Bsloe Library            |
| French Conversational Class With Lizzie             | 11am-12 noon   | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Jiving Classes                                      | 8pm            | Pearse's GAA Club House  |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics              | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group "Bridge" game              | 11am-1pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Traditional Music                                   | 9pm            | An Táin Bar              |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Group Informal Meeting      | 3pm            | Gullane's Hotel          |

## APRIL 13, THURSDAY

|  |                |                          |
|--|----------------|--------------------------|
| Women's Group Meeting                                | 11am-12.45pm   | Bsloe Library            |
| Line Dancing   | 8pm            | Moore Community Hall     |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics               | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                                    | 7.30pm         | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Irish Conversation Class w/ Padraig 'Ciorcal Comhra' | 11am-12        | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling                      | 7-9pm          | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe   |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Singing class                     | 10.30-12.20 am | Town Band Hall           |
| Traditional Music.                                   | 9pm            | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |

## APRIL 14, FRIDAY

|   |              |                             |
|---|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Bsloe Cancer Supp. Centre. Drop In Centre | 10 am - 1 pm | Cancer Supp Centre, Main St |
| Bsloe Indoor Country Market               | 9am - 1.30pm | Bsloe Social Centre         |
| Bsloe Men's Shed Weekly Meeting           | 10am-2pm     | Men's Shed, Cullens Yard    |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                     | 6pm          | Bsloe Tennis Club           |
| Find The Joker                            | 8pm          | An Táin                     |
| Traditional Music Sessions                | 9.30pm       | Emerald Bar                 |
| Music. Down the Road                      | 10pm         | Brewery Lane                |
| Happy Bar Stars (Canal Bar)               | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel            |
| Texas Holdem Poker                        | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                   |

## APRIL 15, SATURDAY

|                                   |              |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Tennis. Junior Sessions           | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Healthy Ireland. Mini Health Fair | 2.30pm       | Ballsallons Library      |
| Féile Hurling Competition         | 11am         | Pearse's GAA Club        |
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8)    | 11am         | Pearse's GAA Club        |
| Music. Anchormen                  | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music                             | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                       | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music. Padge Bennett              | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Amy Brennan | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Party Night                       | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Music. John Rabbittie             | 10pm         | Gibbons Pillar House Bar |

## APRIL 16, SUNDAY

|   |              |                      |
|---|--------------|----------------------|
| Scór Connacht   | All day      | Town Hall Theatre    |
| Tennis Open Adult Club Sessions (Beginners)             | 11am 12 noon | Bsloe Tennis Club    |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Exp. Players)         | 12noon - 2pm | Bsloe Tennis Club    |
| Traditional Music                                       | 6pm          | An Táin Bar          |
| Social Dancing. Stuart Moyle's                          | 5pm - 7.30pm | Shearwater Hotel     |
| Country Dancing Patrick Feeney (support Stuart Moyle's) | 9pm          | Shearwater Hotel     |
| Music. David Mills                                      | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar            |
| Traditional Music                                       | 9.30pm       | Valerie's of Aughrim |

## APRIL 17, MONDAY

|   |                  |                        |
|---|------------------|------------------------|
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics    | 2-3pm            | Coral Leisure Centre   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling           | 10.30 - 12.30am  | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Knitting / Crafts | 10.30 - 12.30 am | Gullane's Hotel        |
| Heritage Public Meeting                   | 8.30pm           | Gullane's Hotel        |

## APRIL 18, TUESDAY

|  |                |                            |
|--|----------------|----------------------------|
| Tennis. Open Sessions                  | 6pm            | Bsloe Tennis Club          |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                        | 8pm            | Emerald Ballroom           |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics | 7-8pm          | Coral Leisure Centre       |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                      | 7.30 pm        | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,   |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Walking Club        | 10.30-12.30 am | Running Track, Brackernagh |

## APRIL 19, WEDNESDAY

|   |              |                          |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|
| French Conversational Class With Lizzie | 11am-12 noon | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics  | 2-3pm        | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group "Bridge" game  | 11am-1pm     | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Bsloe Active retirement Book Club       | 3.30pm       | Bsloe Library            |
| Jiving Classes                          | 8pm          | Pearse's GAA Club House  |
| Traditional Music                       | 9pm          | An Táin Bar              |
| Bsloe Act. RTRMT Group Informal Meeting | 3pm          | Gullane's Hotel          |

## APRIL 20, THURSDAY

|   |                |                          |
|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| Women's Group Meeting                           | 11am-12.45pm   | Bsloe Library            |
| Irish Conversation Class w/ P. 'Ciorcal Comhra' | 11am-12        | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics          | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                               | 7.30pm         | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling                 | 7-9pm          | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe   |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Singing class                | 10.30-12.20 am | Town Band Hall           |
| Line Dancing                                    | 8pm            | Moore Community Hall     |

|                    |      |                      |
|--------------------|------|----------------------|
| Music. Na Riadoiri | 10pm | An Táin Bar          |
| Traditional Music. | 9pm  | Fallons Bar, Sbridge |

## APRIL 21, FRIDAY

|   |              |                              |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Bsloe Cancer Supp Centre. Drop In Centre  | 10 am - 1 pm | Cancer supp. centre, Main St |
| Bsloe Indoor Country Market   | 9am - 1.30pm | Bsloe Social Centre          |
| Bsloe Men's Shed Weekly Meeting   | 10am-2pm     | Men's Shed, Cullens Yard     |
| Tennis. Open Sessions   | 6pm          | Bsloe Tennis Club            |
| Lip Sync Battle Royale (Fundraiser for Moore Scouts and Moore United FC Underage) | 8pm          | Moore Community Hall         |
| Find The Joker  | 8pm          | An Táin                      |
| Traditional Music Sessions  | 9.30pm       | Emerald Bar                  |
| Music. Robbie And Brian   | 10pm         | Brewery Lane                 |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Nial Ruthledge  | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel             |
| Texas Holdem Poker  | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                    |
| Table Quiz In Aid Of St. Catherine's Hall   | 9pm          | Valerie's of Aughrim         |

## APRIL 22, SATURDAY

|                                   |              |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Tennis. Junior Sessions           | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8)    | 11am         | Pearse's GAA Club        |
| Music. Super Freaks               | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music                             | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                       | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music. Paul Dawling               | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Sean Crehan | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Party Time                        | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Music. Trevor Cavanagh            | 10pm         | Gibbons Pillar House Bar |

## APRIL 23, SUNDAY

|  |              |                      |
|--|--------------|----------------------|
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Beginners)           | 11am 12 noon | Bsloe Tennis Club    |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Experienced Players) | 12noon - 2pm | Bsloe Tennis Club    |
| Traditional Music                                      | 6pm          | An Táin Bar          |
| Live Music   | 7pm          | Fallons Bar, Sbridge |
| Music. Tongue And Groove                               | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar            |
| Traditional Music                                      | 9.30pm       | Valerie's of Aughrim |

## APRIL 24, MONDAY

|  |                  |                        |
|--|------------------|------------------------|
| In Step Stage School Show                    | 7pm              | Town Hall Theatre      |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics       | 2-3pm            | Coral Leisure Centre   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling              | 10.30 - 12.30 am | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Knitting / Crafts session | 10.30-12.30 am   | Gullane's Hotel        |

## APRIL 25, TUESDAY

|   |                |                            |
|---|----------------|----------------------------|
| Tennis. Open Sessions                       | 6pm            | Bsloe Tennis Club          |
| Bsloe Active retirement Group Aqua Aerobics | 7-8pm          | Coral Leisure Centre       |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                           | 7.30 pm        | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Walking Club        | 10.30-12.30 am | Running Track, Brackernagh |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                             | 8pm            | Emerald Ballroom           |
| In Step Stage School Show                   | 7pm            | Town Hall Theatre          |

## APRIL 26, WEDNESDAY

|   |                |                          |
|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| Knitting and Crochet Group                  | 11am - 12.45pm | Bsloe Library            |
| French Conversational Class With Lizzie     | 11am-12 noon   | Gullane's Hotel          |
| In Step Stage School Show                   | 7pm            | Town Hall Theatre        |
| Bsloe Active retirement Group Aqua Aerobics | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group "Bridge" game      | 11am-1pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Traditional Music                           | 9pm            | An Táin Bar              |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Informal Meeting   | 3pm            | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Jiving Classes                              | 8pm            | Pearse's GAA Club House  |

## APRIL 27, THURSDAY

|  |                |                         |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Women's Group Meeting                                  | 11am-12.45pm   | Bsloe Library           |
| Irish Conversation Class With Padraig 'Ciorcal Comhra' | 11am-12        | Gullane's Hotel         |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics                 | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre    |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                                      | 7.30pm         | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling                        | 7-9pm          | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe  |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Singing class                  | 10.30-12.20 am | Town Band Hall          |
| Line Dancing   | 8pm            | Moore Community Hall    |
| In Step Stage School Show                              | 7pm            | Town Hall Theatre       |
| Mike Denver & Friends                                  |                |                         |
| Traditional Music.                                     | 9pm            | Fallons Bar, Sbridge    |

## APRIL 28, FRIDAY

|   |              |                              |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Traditional Music Sessions                  | 9.30pm       | Emerald Bar                  |
| Bsloe Indoor Country Market                 | 9am - 1.30pm | Bsloe Social Centre          |
| Bsloe Cancer Support Centre. Drop In Centre | 10 am - 1 pm | Cancer supp. Centre, Main St |
| Bsloe Men's Shed Weekly Meeting             | 10am-2pm     | Men's Shed, Cullens Yard     |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                       | 6pm          | Bsloe Tennis Club            |
| Music. Boogie Men                           | 10pm         | An Táin Bar                  |
| Find The Joker                              | 8pm          | An Táin                      |
| Music. Brego                                | 10pm         | Brewery Lane                 |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Paul Dawling          | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel             |
| Texas Holdem Poker                          | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                    |

## APRIL 29, SATURDAY

|                                |              |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8) | 11am         | Pearse's GAA Club        |
| Tennis. Junior Sessions        | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Live Music.                    | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music                          | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                    | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music. Shane Moore             | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Happy Bar Stars (Canal Bar)    | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Music. Ollie Rock              | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Music. Cruiscin                | 10pm         | Gibbons Pillar House Bar |

## APRIL 30, SUNDAY

|  |              |                            |
|--|--------------|----------------------------|
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Beginners)           | 11am 12 noon | Bsloe Tennis Club          |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Experienced Players) | 12noon - 2pm | Bsloe Tennis Club          |
| Traditional Music                                      | 6pm          | An Táin Bar                |
| Super Sunday Dancing. Michael Collins                  | 5pm-7.30pm   | Shearwater Hotel           |
| Super Sunday Dancing. John Molloy                      | 8pm-10pm     | Shearwater Hotel           |
| Super Sunday Dancing. Michael Collins                  | 10pm 12      | Shearwater Hotel           |
| Music. Red Tape  | 10pm         | Brewery Lane               |
| Music  | 8pm          | Broderick's Bar, Kilconnel |
| Music. Matthew And Conor                               | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                  |
| Traditional Music                                      | 9.30pm       | Valerie's of Aughrim       |



# MAY EVENTS GUIDE

## MAY 1, MONDAY

|  |                |                        |
|--|----------------|------------------------|
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics       | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling              | 10.30- 12.30am | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Knitting / Crafts session | 10.30-12.30am  | Gullane's Hotel        |

## MAY 2, TUESDAY

|  |               |                             |
|--|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Bsloe Breastfeeding Support Group      | 10am-11.30am  | Youthworklre., Marina Point |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                  | 6pm           | Bsloe Tennis Club           |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                        | 8pm           | Emerald Ballroom            |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics | 7-8pm         | Coral Leisure Centre        |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                      | 7.30 pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,    |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Walking Club        | 10.30-12.30am | Running Track, Brackemagh   |

## MAY 3, WEDNESDAY

|  |              |                          |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|
| Knitting and Crochet Group               | 11am-12.45pm | Bsloe Library            |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Monthly Meeting | 3pm          | Gullane's Hotel          |
| French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie    | 11am-12noon  | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics   | 2-3pm        | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group "Bridge" game   | 11am-1pm     | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Bsloe Active retirement Book Club        | 3.30pm       | Bsloe Library            |
| Jiving Classes                           | 8pm          | Pearsees GAA Club House  |
| Traditional Music                        | 9pm          | An Táin Bar              |

## MAY 4, THURSDAY

|   |               |                          |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|
| Women's Group Meeting   | 11am-12.45pm  | Bsloe Library            |
| Irish Conversation Class w/ Padraig 'Giorcal Comhra'          | 11am-12       | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics                        | 2-3pm         | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Bridge Club   | 7.30pm        | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling                               | 7-9pm         | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Singing class                         | 10.30-12.20am | Town Band Hall           |
| Rachel Goode in Concert (w/ special Guest Charlie McGettigan) | 8pm           | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Line Dancing  | 8pm           | Moore Community Hall     |
| Traditional Music.  | 9pm           | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |

## MAY 5, FRIDAY

|   |              |                              |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Bsloe Indoor Country Market                 | 9am - 1.30pm | Bsloe Social Centre          |
| Bsloe Cancer Support Centre. Drop In Centre | 10am - 1 pm  | Cancer supp. Centre, Main St |
| Bsloe Men's Shed Weekly Meeting             | 10am-2pm     | Men's Shed, Cullens Yard     |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                       | 6pm          | Bsloe Tennis Club            |
| Bsloe Town Hall Theatre Fundraiser Concert  | 8pm          | Town Hall Theatre            |
| Find The Joker                              | 8pm          | An Táin                      |
| Traditional Music Sessions                  | 9.30pm       | Emerald Bar                  |
| Music. 3 Men & A bass                       | 10pm         | Brewery Lane                 |
| Traditional Music Sessions                  | 9pm          | Broderick's Bar, Kilconnel   |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Shane Moore           | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel             |
| Texas Holdem Poker                          | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                    |

## MAY 6, SATURDAY

|                                    |              |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Tennis. Junior Sessions            | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8)     | 11am         | Pearsees GAA Club        |
| Music. Toxic Twins                 | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music                              | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                        | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music. Anything Goes               | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Paul Dawling | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Music. Miranda                     | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Music. Joe Gibbons                 | 10pm         | Gibbons Pillar House Bar |

## MAY 7, SUNDAY

|  |              |                          |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Beginners)           | 11am 12 noon | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Experienced Players) | 12noon - 2pm | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Song Festival. BARA Singers                            | 12-6pm       | Town Hall Theatre        |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT & Town Band Concert                 | Daytime      | Bsloe Town Band Building |
| Traditional Music                                      | 6pm          | An Táin Bar              |
| Live Music   | 7pm          | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Music. Zac Moran                                       | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Traditional Music                                      | 9.30pm       | Valerie's Of Aughrim     |

## MAY 8, MONDAY

|  |                |                        |
|--|----------------|------------------------|
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics       | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling              | 10.30- 12.30am | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Knitting / Crafts session | 10.30-12.30am  | Gullane's Hotel        |

## MAY 9, TUESDAY

|  |               |                           |
|--|---------------|---------------------------|
| Tennis. Open Sessions                  | 6pm           | Bsloe Tennis Club         |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                        | 8pm           | Emerald Ballroom          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics | 7-8pm         | Coral Leisure Centre      |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                      | 7.30 pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,  |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Walking Club   | 10.30-12.30am | Running Track, Brackemagh |

## MAY 10, WEDNESDAY

|   |              |                          |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|
| Flower Arranging Demo. By Janet Maddock   | 8pm          | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Knitting and Crochet Group                | 11am-12.45pm | Bsloe Library            |
| French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie     | 11am-12 noon | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics    | 2-3pm        | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT "Bridge" game session  | 11am-1pm     | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Jiving Classes                            | 8pm          | Pearsees GAA Club House  |
| Traditional Music                         | 9pm          | An Táin Bar              |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Informal Meeting | 3pm          | Gullane's Hotel          |

## MAY 11, THURSDAY

|  |              |                 |
|--|--------------|-----------------|
| Women's Group Meeting                                | 11am-12.45pm | Bsloe Library   |
| Irish Conversation Class w/ Padraig 'Giorcal Comhra' | 11am-12      | Gullane's Hotel |

|  |               |                          |
|--|---------------|--------------------------|
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics | 2-3pm         | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                      | 7.30pm        | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling        | 7-9pm         | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Singing class  | 10.30-12.20am | Town Band Hall           |
| Line Dancing                           | 8pm           | Moore Community Hall     |
| Traditional Music.                     | 9pm           | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |

## MAY 12, FRIDAY

|   |              |                              |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Bsloe Indoor Country Market                 | 9am - 1.30pm | Bsloe Social Centre          |
| Bsloe Cancer Support Centre. Drop In Centre | 10am - 1 pm  | Cancer Supp. Centre, Main St |
| Bsloe Men's Shed Weekly Meeting             | 10am-2pm     | Men's Shed, Cullens Yard     |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                       | 6pm          | Bsloe Tennis Club            |
| Music. Down The Road                        | 10pm         | Brewery Lane                 |
| Find The Joker                              | 8pm          | An Táin                      |
| Traditional Music Sessions                  | 9.30pm       | Emerald Bar                  |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Michael Reagan        | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel             |
| Texas Holdem Poker                          | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                    |

## MAY 13, SATURDAY

|                                       |              |                          |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Tennis. Junior Sessions               | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8)        | 11am         | Pearsees GAA Club        |
| Art exhibition by Sean Kelly (Launch) | 2.30pm       | Bsloe Library            |
| Music. Beggars Velvet                 | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music                                 | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                           | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music. Sabrina Fallon                 | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Kora            | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Music. Boogie man                     | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Music. Kevin Corry                    | 10pm         | Gibbons Pillar House Bar |

## MAY 14, SUNDAY

|  |              |                       |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|
| Bsloe & Distr. Vintage Club. Tynagh Track Day          | Daytime      | Tynagh Pallas Carting |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Beginners)           | 11am 12 noon | Bsloe Tennis Club     |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Experienced Players) | 12noon - 2pm | Bsloe Tennis Club     |
| Traditional Music                                      | 6pm          | An Táin Bar           |
| Music. John Fennerty                                   | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar             |
| Traditional Music                                      | 9.30pm       | Valerie's Of Aughrim  |

## MAY 15, MONDAY

|  |                |                        |
|--|----------------|------------------------|
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics       | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling              | 10.30- 12.30am | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Knitting / Crafts session | 10.30-12.30am  | Gullane's Hotel        |

## MAY 16, TUESDAY

|  |               |                           |
|--|---------------|---------------------------|
| Tennis. Open Sessions                  | 6pm           | Bsloe Tennis Club         |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                        | 8pm           | Emerald Ballroom          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics | 7-8pm         | Coral Leisure Centre      |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                      | 7.30 pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,  |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Walking Club   | 10.30-12.30am | Running Track, Brackemagh |

## MAY 17, WEDNESDAY

|   |              |                         |
|---|--------------|-------------------------|
| Knitting and Crochet Group                  | 11am-12.45pm | Bsloe Library           |
| French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie       | 11am-12 noon | Gullane's Hotel         |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics      | 2-3pm        | Coral Leisure Centre    |
| Bsloe Act. RTRMT Grp. "Bridge" game session | 11am-1pm     | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield |
| Bsloe Active retirement Book Club           | 3.30pm       | Bsloe Library           |
| Jiving Classes                              | 8pm          | Pearsees GAA Club House |
| Traditional Music                           | 9pm          | An Táin Bar             |
| Bsloe Act. RTRMT Grp. Informal Meeting      | 3pm          | Gullane's Hotel         |

## MAY 18, THURSDAY

|  |                |                          |
|--|----------------|--------------------------|
| Women's Group Meeting                                | 11am-12.45pm   | Bsloe Library            |
| Irish Conversation Class w/ Padraig 'Giorcal Comhra' | 11am-12        | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics               | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                                    | 7.30pm         | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling                      | 7-9pm          | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Singing class                | 10.30-12.20 am | Town Band Hall           |
| Line Dancing   | 8pm            | Moore Community Hall     |
| Traditional Music.                                   | 9pm            | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |

## MAY 19, FRIDAY

|   |              |                              |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Bsloe Indoor Country Market                 | 9am - 1.30pm | Bsloe Social Centre          |
| Bsloe Cancer Support Centre. Drop In Centre | 10am - 1 pm  | Cancer supp. Centre, Main St |
| Bsloe Men's Shed Weekly Meeting             | 10am-2pm     | Men's Shed, Cullens Yard     |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                       | 6pm          | Bsloe Tennis Club            |
| AKT Stage School Show                       | 7.30pm       | Town Hall Theatre            |
| Find The Joker                              | 8pm          | An Táin                      |
| Traditional Music Sessions                  | 9.30pm       | Emerald Bar                  |
| Music. Robbie And Brian                     | 10pm         | Brewery Lane                 |
| Happy Bar Stars (Canal Bar)                 | Evening Time | Shearwater Hotel             |
| Texas Holdem Poker                          | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                    |

## MAY 20, SATURDAY

|                                   |              |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Tennis. Junior Sessions           | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8)    | 11am         | Pearsees GAA Club        |
| Music. Red Tape                   | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music                             | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                       | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music. Steve Reilly               | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Amy Brennan | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Music. David Mills                | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                |
| Music. Alan O'Neil                | 10pm         | Gibbons Pillar House Bar |

## MAY 21, SUNDAY

|  |              |                      |
|--|--------------|----------------------|
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Beginners)           | 11am 12 noon | Bsloe Tennis Club    |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Experienced Players) | 12noon - 2pm | Bsloe Tennis Club    |
| Traditional Music                                      | 6pm          | An Táin Bar          |
| Live Music   | 7pm          | Fallons Bar, Sbridge |
| Music. Nightowls                                       | 9.30pm       | Joe's bar            |
| Traditional Music                                      | 9.30pm       | Valerie's Of Aughrim |

## MAY 22, MONDAY

|  |                |                        |
|--|----------------|------------------------|
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics       | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling              | 10.30- 12.30am | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Knitting / Crafts session | 10.30-12.30am  | Gullane's Hotel        |

## MAY 23, TUESDAY

|  |               |                           |
|--|---------------|---------------------------|
| Tennis. Open Sessions                  | 6pm           | Bsloe Tennis Club         |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                        | 8pm           | Emerald Ballroom          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics | 7-8pm         | Coral Leisure Centre      |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                      | 7.30 pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield,  |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Walking Club   | 10.30-12.30am | Running Track, Brackemagh |

## MAY 24, WEDNESDAY

|   |              |                          |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|
| Knitting and Crochet Group                | 11am-12.45pm | Bsloe Library            |
| French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie     | 11am-12noon  | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics    | 2-3pm        | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Act.RTRMT Grp "Bridge" game session | 11am-1pm     | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Jiving Classes                            | 8pm          | Pearsees GAA Club House  |
| Traditional Music                         | 9pm          | An Táin Bar              |
| Bsloe Act.RTRMT Grp Informal Meeting      | 3pm          | Gullane's Hotel          |

## MAY 25, THURSDAY

|  |               |                          |
|--|---------------|--------------------------|
| Women's Group Meeting                                | 11am-12.45pm  | Bsloe Library            |
| Irish Conversation Class w/ Padraig 'Giorcal Comhra' | 11am-12       | Gullane's Hotel          |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics               | 2-3pm         | Coral Leisure Centre     |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                                    | 7.30pm        | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling                      | 7-9pm         | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe   |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Singing class                | 10.30-12.20am | Town Band Hall           |
| Line Dancing   | 8pm           | Moore Community Hall     |
| Traditional Music.                                   | 9pm           | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |

## MAY 26, FRIDAY

|   |              |                              |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Bsloe Indoor Country Market                 | 9am - 1.30pm | Bsloe Social Centre          |
| Bsloe Cancer Support Centre. Drop In Centre | 10am - 1 pm  | Cancer supp. Centre, Main St |
| Bsloe Men's Shed Weekly Meeting             | 10am-2pm     | Men's Shed, Cullens Yard     |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                       | 6pm          | Bsloe Tennis Club            |
| Social Dancing. Pat Mulchrone Band          | 9.30pm-12    | Moore Community Hall         |
| Find The Joker                              | 8pm          | An Táin                      |
| Traditional Music Sessions                  | 9.30pm       | Emerald Bar                  |
| Music. Brego                                | 10pm         | Brewery Lane                 |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Nial Ruthledge        | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel             |
| Texas Holdem Poker                          | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar                    |

## MAY 27, SATURDAY

|                                       |              |                          |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Tennis. Junior Sessions               | 1am-1pm      | Bsloe Tennis Club        |
| Football. Red Tigers (under 8)        | 11am         | Pearsees GAA Club        |
| Milksake Dance & Perfor. Academy Show | 7.30pm       | Town Hall Theatre        |
| Live Music                            | 10pm         | Brewery Lane             |
| Music                                 | 10pm         | Fallons Bar, Sbridge     |
| Live Music.                           | 10pm         | Lukers Bar, Sbridge      |
| Music. Michael Regan                  | 10pm         | Millars Bar, Ballydangan |
| Music in a Canal Bar. Sean Crehan     | Evening time | Shearwater Hotel         |
| Music. Ollie Rocks                    | 9.30pm       | Joe's bar                |
| Music. Kevin & Fiona                  | 10pm         | Gibbons Pillar House Bar |

## MAY 28, SUNDAY

|  |              |                      |
|--|--------------|----------------------|
| Bsloe Town Band Golf Scramble                          | Daytime      | Bsloe Golf Club      |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Beginners)           | 11am 12 noon | Bsloe Tennis Club    |
| Tennis. Open Adult Club Sessions (Experienced Players) | 12noon - 2pm | Bsloe Tennis Club    |
| Traditional Music                                      | 6pm          | An Táin Bar          |
| Live Music   | 10pm         | Brewery Lane         |
| Music. Ken Solo  | 9.30pm       | Joe's Bar            |
| Traditional Music                                      | 9.30pm       | Valerie's Of Aughrim |

## MAY 29, MONDAY

|   |                 |                                |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Bsloe Town Band Golf Scramble                     | Daytime         | Bsloe Golf Club                |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics            | 2-3pm           | Coral Leisure Centre           |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Bowling                   | 10.30- 12.30 am | Emerald Ballroom Bsloe         |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Knitting / Crafts session | 10.30-12.30 am  | Gullane's Hotel                |
| May 30, Tuesday                                   |                 |                                |
| Tennis. Open Sessions                             | 6pm             | Bsloe Tennis Club              |
| Bsloe GAA Bingo                                   | 8pm             | Emerald Ballroom               |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics            | 7-8pm           | Coral Leisure Centre           |
| Bsloe Bridge Club                                 | 7.30 pm         | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, Bsloe |

|                                      |                |                           |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Bsloe Active Retirement Walking Club | 10.30-12.30 am | Running Track, Brackemagh |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|

## MAY 31, WEDNESDAY

|   |                |                                |
|---|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Knitting and Crochet Group                          | 11am - 12.45pm | Bsloe Library                  |
| French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie               | 11am-12 noon   | Gullane's Hotel                |
| Bsloe Active RTRMT Group Aqua Aerobics              | 2-3pm          | Coral Leisure Centre           |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Group "Bridge" game session | 11am-1pm       | Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, Bsloe |
| Jiving Classes                                      | 8pm            | Pearsees GAA Club House        |
| Traditional Music                                   | 9pm            | An Táin Bar                    |
| Bsloe Active Retirement Group Informal Meeting      | 3pm            | Gullane's Hotel                |

To Advertise Your Events here please contact  
ballinasloeelifereporter@gmail.com or call 09096 45831 and leave a  
voice message. We will be back to confirm by 6th May





Pulse club coffee morning held in Gullane's Hotel recently, creating opportunities for networking and professional development. Looking forward to the next networking get together on the last Thursday of every month.. so 27th April, 25th May, alternating between morning and evening meets..Keep updated on social media Pages @The Pulse Club Ballinasloe or Contact 0909646516



Vice President Willie Dolan Presenting the Fr Dunne Cup to the winners Maura Croffy & Brid Grehan

### A Triple Crown Family !

John Devine, who only recently was selected for the Irish Rugby U20 squad, joined his team in winning the Grand Slam against England at Musgrave Park, Cork. This great sports accomplishment is one of many from the Devine family, with John's older brother Joseph previously winning a Connacht medal with Garbally, and his eldest brother Matthew claiming a Grand Slam title of his own last season.



John Devine with a medal after winning the U20s Rugby Final against England



John alongside brothers Joseph, Matthew, and mother Catherine Devine after winning the U20s final.



Supporters of Eimear Noone from Kilconell who travelled en masse to support her conducting the special Concert on Women's Day in the National Concert Hall.



Carol McCarthy presents the Peter McCarthy Memorial Cup to Cecil O'Grady, winner of the Ballinasloe Golf Club Seniors Matchplay Competition.



# RUMOURS

## NIGHTCLUB

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PRESENTS



## EASTER BANK HOLIDAY PARTY

DJ JOHNNY M

APR  
09

09.04.23  
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DOORS  
11:30

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## MAY BANKER BLOW OUT!

DJ JOHNNY M

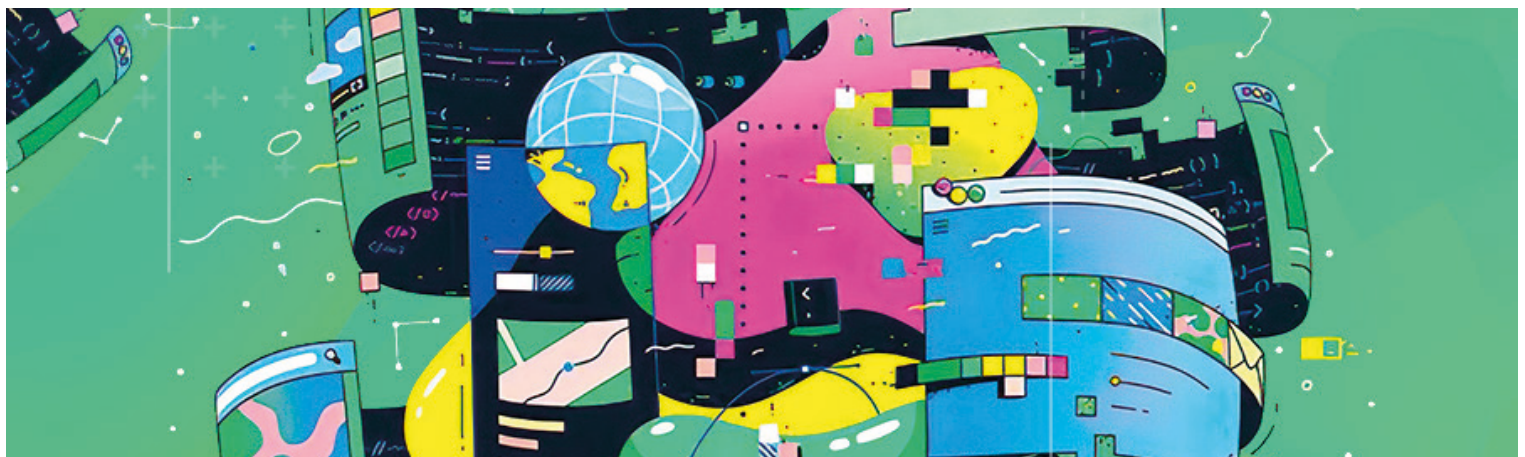
APR  
30

30.04.23  
RUMOURS NIGHTCLUB

DOORS  
11:30

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Ballinasloe Soroptimists held a successful coffee morning in Gullane's Hotel with a large group of diverse women in attendance. The audience included members of the Ukrainian community living in Kiltormer and Loughrea, who shared compelling speeches about their experiences fleeing the war and taking refuge in Ireland.

The Ballinasloe Soroptimist branch were founded in 1995, aiming to transform the lives of women and girls locally and to promote gender balance. Every year, the group holds a Public Speaking Competition open to all second level schools in the area, and additionally they recently hosted a successful Orange the World campaign aiming to highlight domestic violence. Their Programme Action plan this year primarily focuses on wellbeing initiatives for their local group, and then rolling out workshops to marginalised women and girls within their club areas.

Their most recent meeting, fell on the International Women's Day. President Marirose Cullinane welcomed everyone to the event, giving a brief outline on the history of the holiday, with its first iterations gaining prominence in the United States in the early twentieth century.

Ukrainian native Liliia Kutuzova was then welcomed and addressed the gathering, sharing a moving story about her and the Ukrainian attendees' lives before the war broke out. She explained the awful experience of bombs and explosives dropping on their towns and cities, forcing women and children to flee the country. Ireland was

chosen as a refuge as they spoke English, eventually settling in Kiltormer. Lilia expressed her gratitude to Derek and Gordon Glynn for their hospitality and continued support, but naturally expressed her hope for the war's end and to be able to return home.

The group's main speaker, Lieutenant Colonel Sharon McManus, Military Engineering and Energy Lead of the Irish National Defence Forces took to the podium. Originally from Athlone, Sharon now lives in Lawrencetown with her husband Brian and her three children. Always very ambitious, Sharon joined the army in 1996 and then transferred to the Corps of Engineers on completion of a degree in Civil Engineering in NUIG in 2003.

Describing her diverse and exciting career story, where she was deployed to Liberia, Chad, Kosovo and Lebanon on overseas missions throughout the decade. From 2015 until 2017 she worked in the European Defence Agency in Brussels, producing energy research for the European Armed Forces. Sharon was recently promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, where she is now responsible for Military Engineering and Energy Analysis for the Defence Forces.

Both speeches were found to be incredibly inspiring by the audience, with PRO Maura Joyce thanking both speakers and presenting them with an arrangement of flowers. The committee hopes to feature the ladies again at their events, and work with the Ukrainian women in Kiltormer, on other projects in the near future.

Further info on the Soroptimists see their Facebook Page SoroptimistsBallinasloe & District



President Marirose Cullinane, Lt. Col Sharon McManus, Liliia Kutuzova and Maura Joyce PAC Ballinasloe Soroptimist



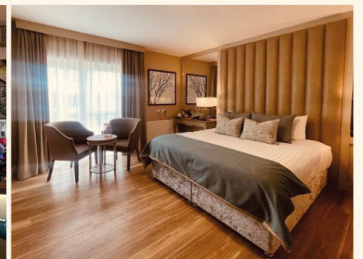
Members of the Ukrainian Community now residing in Kiltormer who were guests at the Coffee Morning.

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## CANCER DROP-IN HUB RESUMES

Ballinasloe Cancer Support Centre have recommenced services at their Drop-In Hub in Cullen's Yard just off Main Street. The support group are welcoming anyone to visit and avail of their facilities, as well as to oblige the volunteers for a chat and a coffee.

Counselling is available again at the centre offering psychological and emotional assistance services for people diagnosed with cancer and their families whether in-person, on the phone or via a zoom meeting.

The group's therapist is actively accommodating people for treatments, but the committee are hoping to find a second counsellor due to high demand. The Committee are encouraging therapists to contact them if they are interested in providing their services to people within the area.

Along with their launch last March, many of their resource services have returned including Massage Therapy every Wednesday from 10:00 until 13:00. The service is conducted by professional therapists who aim to reduce a patient's pain and stiffness and enhance their wellbeing by treating the soft tissues of the body. Their massage service is booking out fast, with Chairperson Liam Connaire recommending clients book weeks in advance to secure a place.

Shortly the committee hope to introduce Reike, with further updates on timings to be published on their Facebook page and website. The return of their Reflexology sessions are being



Chairperson Liam Connaire outside the Ballinasloe Cancer Support Centre



By Liam Timmins

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considered, but the support group have no current plans to renew the service in the near future.

In addition, Drop-In Mornings are resuming every Friday from 10:00 until 13:00, encouraging anyone to visit the volunteers for a casual chat and a hot drink. The support group hope to find this as a great opportunity to get an impression of their audience in town, as they are only re-establishing their services.

"I would like to thank the businesses in Ballinasloe and the surrounding area for their backing regarding a recent appeal for funding in re-establishing their services. The appeal is ongoing and provides much needed funds for the facility" stated Chair Liam. A list of their patrons is now available on their website [www.ballinasloecancersupport.com/supported-by](http://www.ballinasloecancersupport.com/supported-by).

Maura Fahy McLaughlin was wished the best after stepping down as Director following 11 years of involvement with the group. "Her contribution to cancer facilities in town is something that will not go unnoticed, leaving a significant mark on the volunteers at Cullen's Yard and the people who avail of the centre's facilities" noted Liam. An AGM will be held in the coming weeks to finalise the new board.

The centre is open to everyone, although booking is essential for some of their services including counselling and massage therapy. Reservations and queries can be made to their office at (090) 964 9767.

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER RETURNS

The annual and internationally celebrated World Day of Prayer service returned to Ballinasloe recently and this year was hosted by St John's Church. The ecumenical service for 2023 had been prepared by the Christian women of Taiwan and was based on the theme "I have Heard About Your Faith."

Led by Penny Kearney, and with a number of local people taking part, with readings and prayers providing an account of the lives of various women living through Covid in Taiwan. Local organist, Michael McCullagh, kindly provided the accompanying music throughout the service.

Two young teenagers led the intercessory prayers and Rev. Fr. Charles Nyameh led us in the Lord's Prayer and the Sending and Benediction. A lovely service full of faith and fellowship.

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The steering group of local tourism and hospitality interests (under the auspices of BACD) have been working hard in the background to build on the huge heritage and amenity work done by a variety of community and voluntary interests to position Ballinasloe & Surrounds as an off grid slow tourism gem of the Hidden Heartlands.

Following on from the launch of the Tourism Feasibility Plan for the area network in April of last year – the group have had some helpful support from Web Marketeers and Strategic Tourism Business Development Consultants funded by Hidden Heartlands under a Cooperative Network Support programme.

This helped assist ways forward for the group to champion some key visitor attraction issues for the town and locale.

With the active support of Hidden Heartlands, the group are organising a “Ballinasloe Tourism Taster Weekend” 26-28th May 2023, offering some key pillars of activity and theming to locals and visitors alike to grow awareness of all the opportunities that really do exist locally for people to be engaged with on a break.

The working group comprises of Seamus Duffy, Chair BACD Clg, Brian King, Vice Chair BACD Clg, Michelle McAllister, CEO & Founder Ahascragh Distillery & Visitor Centre; Graeme Gullane, Gullanes Hotel; Ruth O'Brien, Manager Shearwater Hotel; Brid Lyons, Clontuskert Development Group & Ballinasloe Walks and Trails; Graham Bartlett, IWAI River Suck Branch; Pearse Keller, Keller Travel & Board member of BACD; Tommie Costello, Cuckoo Hill Bootcamp, Abbie McGowan, Aughrim 1691, Claire Gibbons, Gibbons Pillar House Bar & B&B & Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds, Seamus Duffy, Chair BACD, Claire Dolphin, Rossway Walking Group, Mike Riddell, Aughrim 1691, Alan Harney, Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre, Frances Leahy, Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre, Lyn Donnelly, BACD, Martina Flanagan, BACD & Feile Cheoil Larry Reynolds.

They have been meeting monthly since last Autumn and are keen to maximise for the town and locale all the exciting opportunities that are planned for new visitor development as the bridging town between the Beara Breifne Way and the Shannon – Erne Waterway.

The Outline programme for the Tourism Taster weekend is on the page.

### PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE:

Bookings for each event will be available in due course though Ballinasloe.ie & Lyn Donnelly BACD Manager at Lyn@bacd.ie

| DAY / TIME      | EVENT / LOCATION   | DETAILS   |
|-----------------|--|---|
| <b>FRIDAY</b>   |  |   |
| 9pm-11pm        | <b>Rambling House</b><br>Pillar House  | An evening's entertainment of Song, Music, Storytelling and Dance to recapture the spirit of the rambling houses which were a big feature in Irish Rural Life   |
| <b>SATURDAY</b> |  |   |
| 9.30am          | <b>Guided Bog Walk</b><br>Ballinasloe to Shannonbridge                           | Guided tour including Kylemore bog, Hymann Way, Lismanny boardwalk. Starting at Ballinasloe with buses available at midway and end points. Total Distance approx. 13km, time: 4.5 hours                                     |
| 11am            | <b>Guided Tour</b><br><b>Ahascragh Distillery</b><br>Ahascragh Distillery & Cafe | Be one of the first cohorts to tour the newest Irish distillery transformed from a nineteenth century mill into an eco-distillery and visitor centre exploring Irish whiskey making and the future of the Ahascragh spirit. |
| 4pm             | <b>Boat Cruise</b><br>Shannonbridge to Ballinasloe / Moycarn                     | Boat cruise on the River Queen. Starting @ Shannon bridge. Drop off Points at Moycarn Lodge & Ballinasloe Marina (Bus transfer from Ballinasloe to Shannon Bridge at 3.30 pm)   |
| <b>SUNDAY</b>   |  |   |
| 10am            | <b>Tour of Battle of Aughrim</b><br>Aughrim                                      | Undertake a guided tour of the Battlefield Trail to uncover the dramatic story of the Aughrim 1691 battle   |
| 1pm             | <b>Kayaking</b><br>River Suck  | Kayaking on the River Suck with “Lets Enjoy Outside” Kayaking, suitable for adults & Children (minimum age 8 years old)   |
| 1pm             | <b>Kids Heritage &amp; Treasure Trail</b><br>Ballinasloe Town                    | Heritage & Treasure trail located around Ballinasloe town For 8–12-year-olds  |

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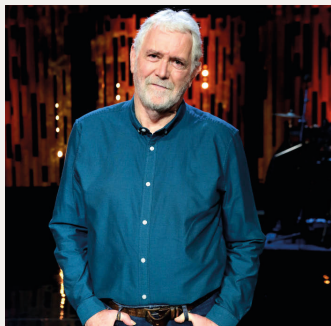
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One of Ireland's finest upcoming female singers Rachel Goode is joining one of Ireland's finest songwriters Charlie McGettigan for an unforgettable intimate night of Song and Stories.

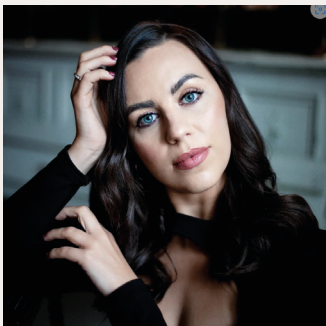
Rachel is our own local and is a classically trained Soprano, most well known for her singing of Opera, Folk and Country Blues. She has performed in all the top venues in Ireland and most recently was a finalist on 2022 Glór Tíre on TG4 and the Euro Song final on The Late Late Show on RTE.

They will be joined on the night by some of Ireland's finest musicians, Enda Dempsey on guitar, James



Blennerhassett on bass, Stephen Doherty on accordion and whistle and Robbie Casserly on Percussion for a raw folk sound.

Rachel will be singing some original music, not yet released, plus many Irish folk and country favourites including "Red is the Rose" "Sonny" and many more surprises thrown in. Charlie McGettigan best known for his Eurovision hit track with Paul Harrington "Rock n Roll kids" in 1994 and also his big folk hit "Feet of a dancer" will also be joining on the night for some songs and hopefully duetting with Rachel.



**Thursday 4th May - 8pm**  
Gullane's Hotel. Tickets €20 can be purchased from hotel reception OR [www.eventbrite.ie](http://www.eventbrite.ie)

## EIMEAR WOWS NATIONAL CONCERT HALL AUDIENCE

Renowned local composer Eimear Noone led a concert at the National Concert Hall in Dublin for International Women's Day. The show was met with a standing ovation, including by President Michael D Higgins and his wife Sabina who were in attendance.

Eimear is a conductor and composer of international importance, born in the village Kilconnell. Having graduated from Trinity College Dublin, she has since conducted the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic, the Orchestre National de Bretagne, and significantly is the first woman to ever serve as lead arranger for the Oscars.

Based on the tale of "The Pirate Queen", an ensemble of Irish female musicians joined her on stage including soprano Celine Byrne, singer/songwriter Emma Langford and guitarist Wallis Bird to tackle the tale of Grace O'Malley.

To Eimear's delight, some locals from her village decided to show their support by attending the concert. The Kilconnell ladies came in mass to Dublin for the occasion, with Sarah Leonard organising the bus to the show. From the balcony of the concert hall, Eimear's friends and family blazed the Galway flag to express some love from home.

"I cannot thank the National Symphony Orchestra and the National Concert Hall enough. A brand-new Irish show exists today because of your faith and support. The spirit of Grace O'Malley is alive and well in all of us! And what an honour to have President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina in attendance" Eimear stated at curtain call.



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After last year's resounding success, LiveStock Music and Arts Festival is returning to Aughrim, Co. Galway on Saturday 1st - Sunday 2nd July 2023 for another exciting weekend. This family-run and fully independent festival is organised by local farmer Cormac Jennings, his family, and their friend Barra Ó'Flanniagh, and they are thrilled to be bringing together such a talented group of performers and artists. It promises a fun and relaxing experience with fantastic independent music, art, entertainment, activities and natural beauty all centred around the ancient ringfort at Liskelly Farm, just a few miles from Ballinasloe.

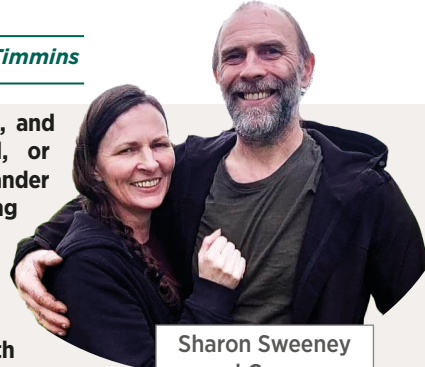
The LiveStock Team are incredibly proud to showcase and champion some of the most exciting and diverse original music from Irish-based artists. And with over 40 multi-genre acts, this year's stellar line-up is no exception. Building on the electric performances from last year, returning acts include the fantastic Jiggy, Bog Bodies, Slí na croí, Chase Nova Band, Martin Staunton, John Conneely inc and Tom Portman. Alongside these favourites, the unmissable Overhead the Albatross, Aindrais De Stac & The Latchikos, Staff Party, Paddy Dennehy will perform at this year's highly-anticipated festival.

Cormac adds "Alongside the amazing line-up, we also have a wide

range of workshops, seminars, and activities over the weekend, or maybe you would prefer to wander through the woods to the inspiring art exhibition, rediscover traditional crafts, immerse yourself in our community art project, or explore the vibrant trading village filled with quality crafts, handmade goods, and delicious food vendors. There's something for everyone at LiveStock '23!"

Tickets are available on Tickets.ie and are selling fast! Weekend tickets are priced at €125 (including booking fee) and include free camping and parking. The festival does not sell alcohol on-site, but you're welcome to bring your own!

Shuttle buses to the event will be in operation from Aughrim Village, Ballinasloe Town & Ballinasloe Train Station, so getting to the festival couldn't be easier. Dust off your camping equipment, fill your cooler box with your favourite beer, and enjoy the music, art, activities and entertainment!



Sharon Sweeney  
and Cormac  
Jennings

## FIRST NATIONAL AIMS OFFICER FOR TOWN

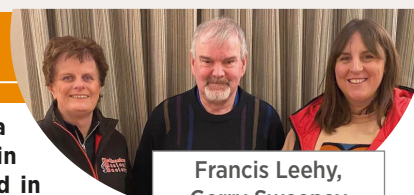
Gerry Sweeney, one of the most long-standing supporters of musical production within Ballinasloe, has been elected as Vice President of AIMS, the Association of Irish Musical Societies, - the first time for any member of the 100-year-old local Society.

Known for his calm and helpful nature, former Dunlo Street Vintner Gerry has been dedicated to the world of live performance and is a lifelong supporter, administrator, and performer with the Ballinasloe Musical Society. Holding the position of Treasurer until later becoming Chairman.

Gerry (who now works with brother Sean at Dunlo Engrave and Print) has been credited for his volunteer involvement with the Town Hall Theatre, taking responsibility for the finances of the project for the last 14 years. Máire Hughes, Chairperson for the Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre states: "Huge congratulations to

Gerry Sweeney. He has been a lifelong supporter of the Arts in Ballinasloe, and is well versed in all aspects of theatre both on stage and off. He is a serving member of our local Musical Society and only recently stepped down from our own committee having spent well over a decade lending his time, wisdom and experience to Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre. Wishing you the very best in your new National role Gerry!"

At the launch of the Sound of Music, the popular Officer and Musical Society stalwart was made an Honorary LIFE Member of the local Musical Society. "It is an absolute honour and a privilege to represent Ballinasloe Musical Society, both locally and nationally, and I couldn't be representing a better group of people" responded Gerry after Chair Frances Leahy conferred the honour to him.



Francis Leahy,  
Gerry Sweeney  
and Lisa Whyte.

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Packed out houses and rave reviews greeted the 100th anniversary Show of the Sound of Music. On the opening night as is tradition - a very special lady, the late musical director Kay Purcell's Annual Award is presented by a member of her family to a member of the society who makes a difference with the contribution they make, be in on or off stage.

"This year's recipient is so deserving. She has been an integral part of the society for the last number of years. For her no task is too big or too small. There is nothing she can't do and is super organised, cool, calm, collected and the voice of reason. Always thinking of new ideas and following them through. From the day of the auditions, through rehearsals, to this week when she is not on stage she is busy back stage. She has done trojan work preparing for this show and we appreciate everything you do- we salute you tonight Lisa Whyte" stated Frances Leahy. Chair.

The Ballinasloe Musical Society have come a long way since their establishment in 1923. Ms. Lavinia Sheridan and Fr. John Heenan founded the group as the Choral and Orchestra Society and held their first staging of Gillbert and Sullivan's Trial by Jury in 1924. The 'Orchestral' name was dropped during the 1980's, rebranding under the current Ballinasloe Musical Society. The group have received national recognition since, including the Best Overall Show for Honk in 2009 by AIMS and many more.

Through Wars, Recessions, Closure of Theatre, (but not pandemics) the original mission to nurture a love of light musical song, dance and stagecraft has been faithfully handed down the generations.



Chair Frances Leahy with Kay Purcell Award Winner - Lisa Whyte



Principals & Cast of 2023 Sound of Music.

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Newton NS U11 Second Place Winners Katie Costello, Sophie Donnelly, Conor Gordan and Ben Price



Aughrim NS U13 First Place winners Saoirse Dunne, Ella Trappe, Etan Fournet and Cillian Hardiman



St. Ronans NS Taughmaconnell, U11 3rd place winners Eóin Canavan, Jessica Galvin, Katie-Anne Kelly, Pádraic Cunniffe

Ballinasloe Credit Union annually produced a calendar, FREE for members, with selected shots from commissioned local photographers, but this year are trying something quite different.

Members of the public, Credit Union Members and indeed hobby photographers are being urged to submit their photography work for their 2024 Calendar, with a winner to be decided each month to feature in the photo compilation, as well as winning €50.

The calendar will have significant global appeal, with over 5,000 printed and distributed internationally and within Ballinasloe. Entrants are encouraged to submit their best landscape pictures showcasing the most aesthetic spots around town. Only earlier this year, Helen Maloney won the January competition, with her photo to be included in the 2024 Calendar.

Shane McNeill, Business Development Manager for the Ballinasloe Credit Union, stated they have received some amazing entries for January and February and are hoping for more submissions for the next few deadlines. For more information on the competition or to submit an entry, visit the credit union website at [www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie](http://www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie).



Scoil Ui Cheithearnaigh U11 First Place Winners Rebecca Ni Mhainnín, Teegan Ni Bhroin, Fionn Mac Stiofain and Ester Ni Dhonghaile



Ballymacward U13 Second Place Winners Rian Mitchell, Roisin O Dea, John Parker and Ella Kelly



Linda Feeney operations manager BCU along with January Calendar competition winner Helen Maloney who's photo will feature in the 2024 Credit Union Calendar



Scoil Ui Cheithearnaigh U13 Third Place Winners Siofra Ni Neachtain, Oscar O hAnluain, Luke O Finneagain and Cameron O Cleirigh

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The Voluntary Committee of the Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre held a formal launch for their "Buy a Pane of Glass" campaign, with Taoiseach Leo Varadkar being in attendance for the board's brand-new fundraising initiative for the continued transformation of the auditorium.

Part of the conditions of the Community Centre Investment Fund Grant won before Christmas is that the Committee must raise at least 5% match funding by themselves. Consequently the Town Hall Theatre are inviting local business and individuals to donate to the "Buy a Glass Campaign" in raising their portion of the project costs by purchasing a pane of the building's window for €50 each.

Every donation provided will be invested in preserving and maintaining the centres facilities and will help the board reach the final step of reinventing the landmark historical building.

The committee hope to also raise capital to cover some expenses over the last two years resulting from the theatres closure during the Covid pandemic.

The Theatre has seen the transformation of its foyer and visitor facilities into a state-of-the-art, welcoming, and modern space over the past two years, with support from GRD and Galway County Council. The investment were also used to enhance the interior of the building, in replacing the roof, to renovate the auditorium and rehearsal spaces, and in upgrading the heating system.

The new grant and fundraising will go towards the restoration of the building's exterior, modern innovative stage lighting, and new windows and doors. This will be a major project and a substantial investment for the future of arts in Ballinasloe and East Galway, drawing plenty of attention for its contemporary facilities.

Town Hall Theatre Chairperson, Máire Hughes encourages all "The Voluntary Committee have been working hard since 2012 to develop the theatre. We are delighted to have been successful in securing funding which will go towards renovating the exterior of this historical building. We are now asking the community of Ballinasloe to help us continue to enhance and protect the Town Hall. Many of us have passed through these doors for various plays, musicals, concerts, films, exhibitions and more throughout the theatre's 180 year history. The building has always been the heart of creativity in Ballinasloe. We're asking the community to be a part of the project by purchasing a pane of glass and helping us to secure a legacy for the Town Hall Theatre."

You can now purchase a pane of glass on the Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre website at <http://www.ballinasloetownhall.com/booking.shtml>

Pictured at the Launch of the Fundraising Campaign were Committee Members: Frances Leahy, Mary Barber, An Taoiseach Leo Varadker TD, Maire Hughes Chairperson, Alan Harney, and Noel Lohan, at the Front of the 181 year old Theatre.



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Local Creative Gerry Ward was shocked to be nominated for and win a prestigious trophy at the Galway Traveller Movement Awards, given for his contributions to Arts and Culture. A renowned poet in our community, his many works are on display at the Indoor County Market in the Emerald Ballroom every Friday.

Born in Ballinasloe, Gerry was always interested in history and a great fan of literature. Studying at the Athlone Institute

of Technology, his professor Michael McCormack inspired him to pursue his talent in writing. Particularly interested in poetry, the wordsmith's many influences include William Wordsworth, William Shakespeare, Robert Burns and Patrick Kavanagh.

Gerry keeps himself busy, releasing numerous pieces varying in topics including folklore and Irish history. He also has a

distinct interest in local heritage, taking great inspiration from historical sites in Ballinasloe when writing his poems. To accompany his work, he features an art piece which he sources from local collectors or from archives such as the National Library. Regardless if the piece is currently in the public domain, Gerry is always diligent in asking permission from the creator for its use.

In late January Gerry attended the Galway Traveller Movement Awards 2022 at the University of Galway. The ceremony featured music performances, presentations from Galway traveller spokespeople, and prizes in numerous categories including Community, Education, Sport, Enterprise/ Employment, a Young Person title and an Overall Winner. In the category Music, Arts and Culture, Gerry Ward was declared the winner.

His poetry is currently in display at the Indoor Country Market in town, with a stall featuring a selection of his best pieces. Gerry, who is loyal member of the local market, is appreciative of the platform for the venue stressing: "It is a fantastic opportunity to show my work and hopefully people will enjoy it". His poetry and the accompanying artwork can be seen during the market's opening hours from 9:00 until 13:30 every Friday.

## DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

Darkness into Light walk is set to return this year for its seventh cycle, departing early in the morning from the Emerald Ballroom, along with 200 similar fundraisers happening nationwide on the day.

Darkness into Light is Pieta House's top fundraising and awareness event aiming to help those impacted by suicide and self-harm. The walk brings the participants from the pitch black of the early morning on a silent walk through their towns, eventually finishing their journey at the sunrise, symbolising

victims finding the light of hope and wellness. Last year, over 450 locals joined the fundraiser, with the town lit in a great display of candlelight and lanterns.

This year's event will depart from the Emerald Ballroom at 4:15 on Saturday May 6th 2023. You can register to participate or donate online at [darknessintolight.ie](https://darknessintolight.ie). Fully qualified therapists are also available 24/7 at the helpline (180) 024 7247 or by texting HELP to 51444 for those in distress or crisis.



Kerril Burke, Brian Derrane, Aiden Lonergan, volunteers of Darkness Into Light.

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Ballinasloe Town Band on the March, leading the Saint Patrick's Day Parade 2023

Recent activities for the youthful Town Band involved adding new music pieces to their growing repertoire for public events. These got their first airing when the band were invited to participate in the celebration of Lawrencetown's win in the Pride Of Place Awards. Following a celebratory mass the Town Band, including four band members from Lawrencetown, entertained the local population in the community Hall

An interesting collaboration between the Town Band and Music Matters resulted in a very entertaining concert in Gaelscoil Ui Cheithearnaigh, a recital by each group separately before they combined to give a resounding orchestral conclusion to the event.

The Band were then honoured to lead the Saint Patrick's Day Parade



Town Band Members Emma Glynn, Ciara Gately, Katelyn & Peter Culleton from Lawrencetown at the Lawrencetown Pride of Place Award Celebrations

behind the Army Colour Party and Grand Marshal Sr. Alecoque. It marked their first time to play on the march, having provided recital music the year before. They then serenaded the crowd as the parade passed the reviewing stand before bringing the event to its conclusion with the National Anthem.

The Band is now concentrating on preparing for the Band Festival and competition in Athlone in April and a collaboration with the Ballinasloe Active retirement Group on 7th May. Saturday April First will see the band hosting their next fundraiser, with their second Easter Fair in the Band Hall on Dunlo Hill.

Later in the month the Golf Scramble for much needed costs will take place at Ballinasloe Golf Club on 28th and 29th May. Stay tuned to their facebook page for further updates.

## PUBLIC MEETING ON HISTORY

A small group of passionate and dedicated volunteers have been meeting since the New Year to attempt to establish a new grouping focused on heritage and history in all its guises in the locality.

The ad hoc group ran a small pop up Heritage Hub in Greene's Store, Society St., during St. Patrick's Day featuring a lot of lovely dated and mounted black and white photos of times past from the Gerry Devlin Archive.

The Group are keen to stress that the elements they wish this new project to embrace are our people, traditions, architecture,

archaeology, fairs, Music, Sports, Industry and Art.

On the night in question – Mon 17th of April-in Gullanes Hotel at 8.30 pm, they are encouraging as many as possible to come but also for those who may have some unseen black and white photos, artefacts, old books, souvenir programmes, equipment, uniforms or household items associated with East Galway or South Roscommon - to bring them along for an Antiques Roadshow display.

Items will be recorded on the night with the owner and a small video clip made for broadcasting later.

It is hoped that the project will get as wide as possible support from the upsurge in local amenities, heritage, attractions and publications that all emerged during COVID.



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The Ballinasloe Towns AFC under-14's gave a tremendous display in the Schoolboys' Football Association of Ireland National Cup, with the team going blow for blow against Gorey in the thrilling last 16th match. Unfortunately falling short in their penalty shootout, the young football stars performed an excellent game.

Kicking off the game on March 5th, John Kelly shot a brilliant free kick towards the head of skipper Aaron Treacy who took the first goal of the match. Before half time, Gorey equalised the game with a score of their own. The young sportsmen regained their lead with a corner kick from Fionn Duffy leading to an excellent header from Matthew Blair. Just after the 60 minute mark, their opposition scored again, with both teams now equalised. The match was forced to go to penalties, and although they earned their first shot, the following two penalties were saved and the other hit the goalpost. Gorey despatched three penalties which send them through to the quarter finals.

Nonetheless the match was a spectacle to watch, with Club Development Co-ordinator Johnny Walsh commending the "superb effort from every member of the under 14 squad and their brilliant ongoing development". The Man of the Match was credited to James Connolly who played defence for the Ballinasloe team.

The under-13's team also made a name for themselves reaching the final 16 of the SFAI National Cup, but were defeated by Champions Pike Rovers who scored 2-0 on February 25.

Ballinasloe started extremely well with Adam Lloyd and Paddy O'Connell coming very close to breaking the initial deadlock. Ten minutes from the match's end, their challengers opened the scoring with a well taken free kick. The Town players threw everything they had to secure an equaliser, but unfortunately were hit on the break when Pike scored their second goal during the final five minutes of the game.

It was not a complete loss for the Under 13s that week, as the following day Adam Lloyd and Éanna Colleran would both



Ballinasloe Town A. F. C. under 14 team and team management who reached the last 16 in the Schoolboys Football Association of Ireland National Cup.



Ballinasloe Town A. F. C. Under 13 Squad who reached the last 16 in the Schoolboys Football Association of Ireland National Cup recently.

attend the National Assessment Session at the AUL Complex in Dublin, representing Ballinasloe in a display against the top juvenile soccer players in Ireland.

In other news, the development of replacement Astro-Turf pitches and floodlights on the club's Curragh Grounds is nearing competition, and soon players and the public will be able to practice on the state-of-the-art sportsground. Johnny Walsh stated that the Club will shortly be organising an official launch, premiering the addition of the new facility to the Ballinasloe Community.

Meanwhile the Brown Underage squad confirmed their new Kit Sponsorship Deal with Kellers of Main St as the finalise preparations for their trip to Hartlepool, Liverpool over Easter break.

If you or your child is interested in joining Ballinasloe Town AFC, you can contact the club secretary by email at [secretary.ballinasloetownafc@outlook.com](mailto:secretary.ballinasloetownafc@outlook.com) or by phone at (087) 633 7093.



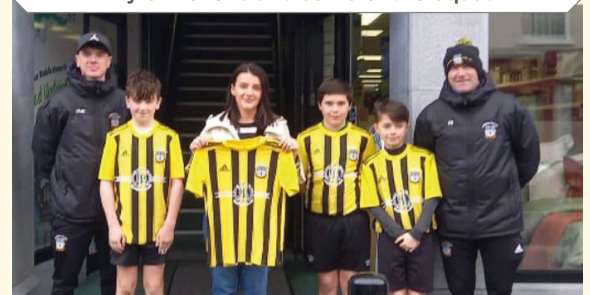
Member Aoife Berrigan Captained the Galway U14 girls who won the SFAI National Title beating CWSSL (Cork) by 4 goals to 1, pictured here with her Mom and Dad.



Ballinasloe Town A. F. C. players Adam Lloyd and Éanna Colleran who both attended the under 13 National Assessment Session held in the A U. L. Complex recently.



Kellers of Ballinasloe are sponsoring the Under 12 Brown team - a brand new kit for the squad ahead of their upcoming trip to Liverpool. Pictured with Amy of Keller's and some of the Squad.







The Ballinasloe Bowls Club won the prestigious Active Retirement Ireland Billy Pope Cup for the first time in 22 years, being the second town to win the trophy in that period withstanding the dominance of the city teams.

Thirty-two teams entered and contested in several venues across four days, kicking off in Galway City inside the Mervue Community Centre, and finishing in Loughrea.

Along the competition, Ballinasloe defeated 2020 title-holders Corofin, and then overcame the challenge of Mountbellew in the quarter-final.

The competition concluded with the semi-finals and final being staged in the Temperance Hall Loughrea on February 22 this year.

Ballinasloe triumphed against home-players Loughrea to pass the semis by a margin of two points. The following match saw the two squads from Salthill competing against one another to place in the final, with the area's Team One beating their Team Two by a margin of three points.

The decider was now set for Ballinasloe versus Salthill One, played over nine ends. Ballinasloe's team featured Brendan Kelly as Skip, along with Joe Murphy and Michael Kelly against Salthill's team with James Sargent as Skip along with Michael Dempsey and Breda Sargent. The squads went blow for blow, with one point being scored in each round.



Brendan Kelly (skip),  
Joe Murphy, Michael Kelly (lead)

After six ends both teams were equal in score, with three totalled each. Ballinasloe pulled away in the penultimate stage to win the competition by a margin of three, with the town scoring a final result of six points and Salthill three.

Winning this Cup is a remarkable achievement for the Kelly twins and Joe Murphy. The trio played exceptionally against their seasoned and talented opponents. The team's

skip Brendan Kelly was a former International Discus Thrower and represented Ireland on a few occasions within Bowls competitions in the 1970's.

The club welcomes new members, open to men and women aged from 50 to 90 years. The sport provides plenty of exercise, social interaction, and opportunities to learn good sportsmanship and etiquette.

Ballinasloe Bowls gather twice a week, early every Monday from 10:30 until 12:30 and late every Thursday from 19:00 until 21:00, at the Emerald Ballroom in town. The first three attendances are free of charge and €3 per occasion afterwards.

To join the group, you can contact the Western Bowls Association at [lillypmooney@gmail.com](mailto:lillypmooney@gmail.com).



Members of the Club receiving  
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Ballinasloe RFC was one of the original clubs to start girls' rugby in the province, and despite being a small group, they have produced some exceptional stars in the game including Méabh Deely, Aoibheann Reilly and Bebhinn Parsons.

In the early days, the female squad were required to play with the boys seeing as they did not have enough members for a full team, but as the club and numbers grew, Ballinasloe RFC fielded their girls league team, winning the U15 Cup twice.

Covid saw numbers reduce but after running the IRFU GIAT programme last summer, many girls between eight and fourteen years were encouraged to come and try the game out. This year the Club are fielding a team at every level available from U8 through to U18 level.

The upcoming stars are making great strides, with the U12's and U10's featuring regularly in Connacht blitz's. The U14's are undefeated so far this year and are through to the Cup Final, with the U16's making both the League & Cup semi-finals. Additionally, the U18's reached the semi-finals of the league, and hopefully will follow the younger teams into later stages of the cup.

The club are not only making strides in regards to female sport on the pitches, seeing as this summer they also hope to be one of the first clubs in Ireland to have female designated changing rooms especially designed to meet their needs and give the girls a comfortable and welcoming experience.

Ballinasloe RFC runs a mixed Tag group for adults, and new members are always welcome. The club will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2025 and the structures and plans are in place to ensure this milestone is reached with a competitive senior womens team within the club.

President Pearse Keller thanked the Ahascragh Old Mill Café for kindly sponsoring the girls' section and kit this year. Sponsors Gareth and Michelle McAllister were hosted at the club grounds, with 95 players wearing their own initialled warm up tops. In addition Murphy's Medical Hall sponsored the U14's Jerseys, as well as Unique Hair Salon, Greenville Ltd and Habit Health for sponsoring the U12's and U10's jerseys.

The RFC will be running the GIAT programme again this year, starting on Wednesday 19th April from 18:00 until 19:00. The 8 week-long course will cost €10 and each girl is to receive a free Canterbury T-shirt for their participation. For more

information on this programme or anything else to do with the girl's section, you can contact Minis-Coordinator Steve Goode at 085 266 2142.

Gareth and Michelle McAllister of Ahascragh Old Mill Cafe and club players



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Ballinasloe GAA's Nursery programme for young boys and girls is back and running. A great turnout was had for their first session, with lots of happy, smiley faces in the midst of the occasion.

"Playing to Learn, Learning to Play" is the motto for the initiative, aiming to allow kids aged from five to six to have fun playing together while preparing them for the skills and functional movement required for hurling and football. The club tries to accommodate children depending on their individual needs and abilities, allowing them to grow at their own pace with positive and engaging training sessions.

Children of all skill levels, whether beginners or having played before, are welcome and are invited to bring along friends. The nursery programme takes place every Saturday morning at 10:30 on the club grounds behind Dunne's SuperValu.

The junior men's footballers recently starting their league campaign with a well-earned draw against Corofin on March 10. The juveniles are back to training on a weekly basis, welcoming new members to join at any time.

Bingo nights are ongoing with €3,000 to be won every Tuesday in the Emerald Ballroom at 20:00.

The GAA Mentors were also involved in marching in this year's Ballinasloe St. Patrick's Day parade. The camogie girls were out on the day blazing their banners, while some of the Committee members and players strutted their stuff on a Truir sponsored Float-making a spectacle of a very giddy St Patrick and some Bingo Callers for the judges. Overall, the club won a Runner-up prize for Sports.

This year the Committee are offering local businesses the opportunity to avail of their new advertising signage along the fence perimeter of the main pitch. With increasing numbers attending matches, the signs offer great exposure and visibility for any desired promotion. For more information, contact Assistant Treasurer Mark Ward at 086 301 5746.

Aine Slattery has been welcomed as Club Development Officer for the spring period. Aine is already active in coaching local primary schools, as well as assisting with upcoming club activities, proving herself to be quite popular with the young players.

For now, activities and regular training resume for the GAA enthusiasts. It is never too late to join the club who can be contacted at (087) 904 6140 or by email at Secretary. Ballinasloe.Galway@GAA.ie.



Committee members and players from Ballinasloe GAA on their float during the Parade.



Young players aged five to six participating in the Nursery Programme.

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Ballinasloe Road Runners seventh annual "Couch to 5k" programme reached its conclusion - starting and finishing at Moycarn Lodge following, what is now known by the BRR community as, the 'Creagh Loop'.

Almost 50 participants, started their 6 week venture in late January, with the programme aiming to bring participants from 'zero' to 5km, gently increasing the time spent on their feet through a combination of walking and running intervals. The focus is solely about getting the participants ready to complete the 5km run, with no emphasis on speed.

The Ballinasloe Road Runners held three sessions a week at the Dunlo running track, each being led by at least two BRR members who demonstrated the warm-up and cool down. The leaders also had the job of managing the stopwatch, which brought many retorts from the breathless runners shocked about the amount of running time they had left.

The athletes were accompanied in their laps of the track by other BRR members who acted as 'buddies', offering words of encouragement when needed.

After horrible rainfall for days previous the day of the 5km dawned clear and the relief was palpable when each participant crossed the finish line and collected their medal, with the runners blazing a smile after their unique success.

"This year's group were truly remarkable. From the first session, whether walking or running, they were fully engaged and there was very little attrition throughout the programme. We want to stress that BRR is open to everyone regardless of your running experience, how far you want to run, etc. We have something for everyone, from the short run once or twice a week to persons who might want to go that bit further in terms of distance. We meet at Dunlo running track every Tuesday and Thursday evening at 7:30 and also every Saturday morning at 8:00 am at Creagh church. Most importantly don't forget to check



out our Facebook page for regular updates" stated Denise Boland, BRR Committee Member.

Denise also thanked everyone who helped host such a successful event, along with the Moycarn Lodge for their facilities and their offerings of tea and coffee, Dunne's Supervalu for their generosity in supplying the race goodie bags. An Garda Síochána were also praised for supporting the event's safety with patrols.

The BRR group members who volunteered their time as leaders and buddies over six weeks, contributed to the success of the 2023 edition of Couch to 5K were warmly applauded by all !



Loreto Bernal who won the U17 Silver Medal for Long Jump at the Connaught Indoor Athletic Championships.

Below:

The Ballinasloe and District Athletics Club crew were joined by Regional Development Officer of Athletics Ireland Timmy Crowe, providing great training to the little athletes and assistance to the wonderful coaches Rhona Jennings and John Donnolly.



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This year saw the long-awaited return of the Ballinasloe GAA Street League. The 7 a-side league was made up of four teams from different areas around Ballinasloe, with Creagh, Derrymullen, Garbally and Town making up the competition. The league ran over 3 Saturday mornings, the 11th, 18th and 25th of February.

A dominant first week display from the Garbally boys left them top of the table with a healthy score difference, beating Creagh and Derrymullen. Their young midfield of Cormac Harrington and Naoise Murphy caused problems for the opposition's defenders all morning, while Cian Dooley channelled his inner Rory Beggan from goals, slotting over 5 points.

Town also recorded a first week win against Creagh, with Creagh and Derrymullen settling for a draw. Rumour has it John Coughlan had the Creagh lads running laps around St. Brigids for the rest of the week.

His harsh coaching style seem to do the trick as Creagh came back in week 2 to bring Garbally's unbeaten streak to an end and get revenge for their first week defeat to Town. Derrymullen also recorded 2 wins, a fierce rivalry beginning to form between themselves and Creagh, leaving the table tight.

Semi-finals saw first place Garbally face fourth place Town, while second place Derrymullen would finish their trilogy against Creagh, two teams separated only on score difference. It was here that Town would cause the upset of the tournament, possibly even of the year, to beat Garbally, and book their spot in the final. Derrymullen would come up trumps once again against Creagh, Niall Jennings delivering another standout performance.

This set up the most unexpected final between Derrymullen and Town, but what a final it was. Michilin Fogarty began to draw comparisons to David Clifford, popping the ball

over on his left and right with ease, MVP chants being heard from the crowd. Derrymullen's runners were relentless though, highlighting why they were worthy finalist and ultimate winners, their ability to score goals being the difference in the end.

Derrymullen's captain, Jack Mitchell, had the honour of receiving the Barry Brennan Memorial Trophy, which was presented to him by Barry's parents, Paddy and Margaret. Michilin Fogarty received the Gullanes Hotel Player of the Tournament trophy.

It was a great Spring Start to all 55 players that participated, the team's management, referees Alannah Cunningham & Katherine Gibbons, the Brennan Family, the groundsmen, and everyone else involved in Ballinasloe GAA that made the tournament possible.

James Shaughnessy competes with Aidan McNamara for a high ball



Margaret and Paddy Brennan present the Barry Brennan Memorial Cup to Derrymullen captain Jack Mitchell.



L-R, Back Row: K. Kelly, C. Coleman, D. Ward, C. Potter, S. Reynolds, A. Potter, N. Jennings, E. Coleman.  
Front Row: N. Cotton, A. Leonard, J. Cunningham, J. Mitchell, C. Waters.

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Members of the Ballinasloe Golf Club have been making national and international headlines, with various players winning prestigious awards within the country and debuting abroad.

Tom Cafferky earned the U18 Connacht Order of Merit at the latest Galway Sports Stars of the Year Awards, Issac Oliver won the U14 Connacht Order of Merit for his displays.

Last February, Aidan Grenham made his G4D tour debut in Singapore at the Laguna National Golf Resort and enjoyed an impressive third place finish. Aidan posted an eagle and eight birdies for his two days at the event in a brilliant first introduction to the G4D. "Ballinasloe's Grenham took to the G4D fold like a duck to water, signing off with a one-under par round of 71 for a one-over tally and outright third place" reviewed golf journalist John Craven.

The Golf Club recently held their St Brigid's Scramble, seeing a massive turnout with 75 teams competing. In Category One, the winners were the team of Charlie Mooney, Mark Conneely, Niall Conneely and Raymond Dervan, in Category Two the team of Alan Glynn, Nigel Brooks, Sean Glennon, Mark Larkin, and in Category Three the team of Michael Forde Junior, John Scarry, Stephen Forde, Michael Forde. The Ladies Team prize was awarded to Rita Moore, Holly Cafferky, Ann Jordan and Anne Greene, along with the Men's nearest the pin title to

Daithi Tiernan and the Ladies' nearest the pin title to Lena Donohue.

The Golf Committee held the Women's Get in Golf Programme, a very popular annual occasion which began on Monday March 27. The event



John Donnellan, Rita Staunton, Angela Lyons and Fr. Bernie Costello.



Issac Oliver, President Rita Staunton, Tom Cafferky, President John Donnellan.

affords beginners the opportunity to take lessons with a PGA Professional in a fun, friendly environment. Additionally sixth class pupils from Scoil an Chroi Naofa are being invited down to the club grounds as part of the Golf 4 All - 6 Week Programme. The Good Friday Bonus Ball competition is next up.

Fr Bernie Costello celebrated Mass in the clubhouse in memory of all deceased members. A beautiful, thoughtful ceremony was held, further enhanced by Fr Bernie's humour and recollection of his golfing exploits!

Pat O'Sullivan and the race night committee organised a very enjoyable race night prior to Cheltenham seeing a large turnout to raise funds for the club. The evening commenced with a whiskey tasting - with Gareth and Michelle McAllister from Ahascragh Distillery providing insightful information about the whiskeys under review and the distilling processes. Furthermore, the draws for the Golf Ireland Inter-Club Competitions have been made and various matches are now prepared to commence in May.

The society's bookings are proving to be busy again, with many visitors enjoying the wonderful course. The Committee at the Ballinasloe Golf Club encourage all organisers to book early to secure preferred dates. If you are interested in joining the golf club, please phone the office at (090) 964 2126 or email ballinasloegolfclub@hotmail.com to talk through options.

 By Liam Timmins

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Ardscail Mhuire's Senior Camogie team eventually ran out of steam after a fierce blitz in the Allianz Post-Primary School Championship, led them to the All-Ireland final played at Johnston, Kilkenny.

Despite making history for the school they unfortunately lost by 3 points to St. Declan's Community College, the girls regardless had a fantastic experience working together as a team throughout the competition.

Joint captains Emma Mitchell and Leah Campbell influenced the team by their dedicated example and directed the eager bunch of students within the squad. Both 18 years old and in their final Leaving Cert year, they were focused in reaching the All-Ireland final, confident they could reach this stage with the level of skill the squad possessed.

After being crowned Connacht Champions with their bout against Clarin College Athenry, the girls were in a strong position to reach the finals.

The players initially practised one hour a week at the beginning of the year, gradually building up to two hours before the Connacht finals during the final classes of the school day. As well as training during school hours and holidays, many kept up the sport during off-school hours daily and during practise sessions with local Camogie clubs.

The team were built from fierce athletes who painstakingly trained for their games and set a high competitive standard for the school.

In addition, the students benefitted from a strong management team of Mr. Hardiman, Ms. O'Higgins, Geraldine Malone and Aliesha Kenny.

Ardscail's players developed a strong relationship with each other from their mutual interest in Camogie and found their bus rides to their matches to be entertaining. Reflecting on the best moment of the campaign, Leah Campbell explained "For us all we would agree that it was definitely the All-Ireland semi-final against Newry in Kilcoo Co. Down. It was the best game of camogie we have played this year. Everyone performed so well and we worked great as a team. Although the bus journey was 4 hours, the time just flew and there was a great buzz on the journey home. Being named captains of this brilliant team was a huge honour for us both. Especially with all of our achievements this year".

The final games result was disappointing to the girls, but nevertheless the team were proud of their accomplishment. Captain Emma Mitchell was effuse in praise of their finalists St. Declans Community College, stating that: "It wasn't for us on the day as the other team were the better team. We battled hard throughout the game, never letting them get too far ahead. We brought it back to a point at one stage, but for a finish they proved to be too strong. It was by far the toughest match we have played this year but still one of the best experiences".

Despite the result, Ardscail goalie Michelle Gately won Player of the Match for her outstanding performance on the day, and each player are to receive Connaught winners' medals and All-Ireland



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runners up medals in May at the schools awards day.

Mentor Mr. Derek Hardiman spoke glowingly of the valour on display: "The girls fought on bravely against a tough wind and never gave up. They showed huge character all year. They were a joy to work with not only this year but for some over the past six years. We are extremely proud of their achievements this season."

Manager Ms. Mary O'Higgins, reviewing the accomplishments of captains Emma and Leah, reflected that: "The older girls have led by example, showing their love for camogie from first year through



Emma and Leah

to their Leaving Cert year. When these girls leave Ardscoil Mhuire, it is their love of Camogie that will help them meet new friends along the way."

Now being up a division for next year's competition, the Senior Camogie team are looking forward to their next challenge, along with the Junior players who are to rank up. "So onwards and upwards for the Camogie teams in Ardscoil Mhuire. We will be back!" concluded Mary O'Higgins.

## TENNIS LOOKS FORWARD TO SUNNY SEASON



By Liam Timmins

With warmer weather and longer days, Ballinasloe and District Tennis Club's new courts are seeing much more activity. Members frequently practise on the courts during their afternoons and evenings, in addition to regular scheduled sessions, and a spring adult tournament is to take place in the coming weeks at the recreational centre.

Modern energy efficient LED floodlights are now on all three courts which, combined with the finest all-weather surfaces, offers facilities of incredibly high standards to serve tennis on.

Soon the water supply to their temporary clubhouse for kitchen facilities and toilets will be connected. In the meantime, club

activities continue on the courts with Open Adult Sessions for beginners from 11:00 until 12:00, and experienced players from 12:00 until 14:00, every Sunday. Night meetings are now resuming every Tuesday and Friday with the court lights, practising between 18:00 and 21:00.

Junior sessions are available from 11:00 until 13:00 every Saturday, along with individual coaching to teach the basics of the sport.

"We like to thank Billy Ward and his team from Ballinasloe Training for Employment who provided invaluable help with preparation for the installation, as well as carrying out ongoing maintenance of the courts and grounds" stated Garry Zancanaro.

The courts are available to book for the public, with members paying no additional charge for use. New members of all standards are welcome to attend an introductory club session to get a flavour for the club's activity.

For updates on all activities and news, as well as contacts, you can visit their website at <https://ti.clubspark.com/Bsloetenniscub/>.



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For almost 1500 years, very little light has been shone on Saint Caireac Dergain, founder of one of the most important Early-Christian convents in Ireland in Clonburren, Moore, but recently a special mass was held to honour her feastday.

A daughter of sovereigns Connal and Briga Dearg, Caireac came to the area a young woman with a mission to establish an Abbey and an order of sisters to minister to the locals.

A princess of Airgíalla, one of the three kingdoms of Ulster, she was reared in Rath Mor, Tyrone to the Colla de Crioich tribe along with her three sisters Fanchia, Lochina, and Darina who have all since become Celtic Saints. It was agreed that the then King would allow her the lands of Clonburren to build an Abbey and, as was tradition in those times he granted the manpower and finances to build a fort in Clonburren.

The Abbey was then established in the region and became a school for the daughters of the wealthy, many whom widows joining the order to work the lands and tend the sheep. The nuns spent their days administering to the sick and embroidering alter cloths and wall hangings.

They copied the gospels and answered calls to prayer several times a day from dawn to dusk. Holy water was used to bless the houses, the sheep, their food and themselves. They taught the daughters of royalty including Rincinn, the niece of King Carbre Crom. Additionally the Queen of Ul Maine and her ladies would often donate clothing and materials to the sisters every year.

Visiting Saint Enda on the Aran islands, Caireac founded two churches and a nunnery on Inishmaan. She would later die and be buried on the island, recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters as 577 AD. Although her remains are unfound, it is possible that in 578 some of her bones were brought to her principal Abbey in Clonburren, as part of a tradition in lifting a saint's remains from the ground and bringing them to a place of honour.

On February 9th, local couple Xandra and Padraig Kilduff hosted a special mass in Moore to commemorate the local saint. Held by parish priest Fr. Michael Molloy along with a local choir of school children and musicians, the Saint's life was commemorated. Padraig marked the occasion by presenting a painting he created of Caireac Dergain.



The saint's day is marked every year on the ninth of February to celebrate the patron who contributed a great deal to local history and the early Christian Church.

Members of the Moore History group: Mary Ryan, Kathleen Fehilly, Padraic and Xandra Kilduff, Joe Burke, Maureen Duffy, Tom Collieran, Bernie Greene and Moira Brien.

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Back when Dean Martin was releasing hit after hit, the Galway GAA East Board still existed, meeting regularly in the Killalaghton Hall. Delegates would gather frequently on cold, winter nights to debate about ongoing matters regarding the sport in the region and proposing delegates from clubs within the region to assume positions on the Committee. On one particular Autumn gathering, a bizarre series of events ensued which caused an uproar from all the attendees in the hall.

The Delegates were summoned on this night by board Secretary Jack Whelan, who issued meeting cards informing them of the date and time of the occasion. The chairman of this meeting was M.J. "Inky" Flaherty an inter-county hurler and a mean boxer, who later coached the Galway Senior hurling team.

Objections and appeals enlivened most meetings and were debated, with the fervour of a Dail No Confidence motion. According to writer David McGann, the most celebrated objection occurred on this occasion which concerned the East Board minor hurling final in the early sixties between Killimor and Fohenagh. The discussion came from when allegedly, while driving for Glennons of Birr, the late Noel Cuniffe picked up

six County Offaly players to compete for the Killimor club.

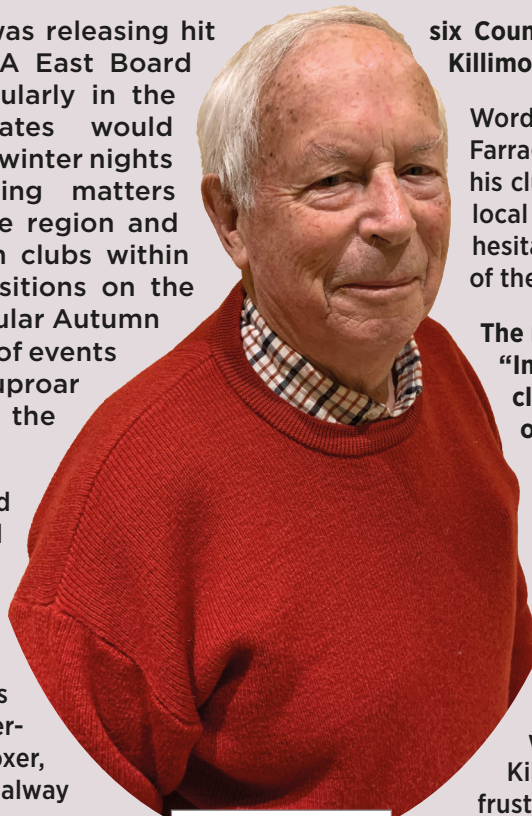
Word leaked out about this incident. Norman Farragher lodged an objection on behalf of his club Fohenagh and got in touch with the local Parish Priest, Fr. Vaughan who, without hesitation, said he would prove the illegality of the Killimor team.

The night of the objection arrived with M.J. "Inky" Flaherty presiding. The Killimor club was ably represented by two men of strong characters Jack O'Hara and Thomas O'Grady.

Norman outlined the club's objection to the packed meeting. However his primary witness, Father Vaughan, who promised to attend, was absent. The Fohenagh man attempted to waffle with the purpose of passing time, hoping for Vaughan to appear with a testimony. Uproar ensued with Killimor native Jack O'Hara, who was frustrated with the allegations placed on his team. Eventually the priest entered, who had been struggling to find the hall for hours, identified himself, proved the objection was valid and then left.

"Inky" declared Fohenagh had won the objection and awarded them the East Board Title. Jack O'Hara, determined to have the final word, asked: "how do we know that man was a priest at all?". He was silenced by the Chairman, Thomas O'Grady placated his friend, and peace reigned once more.

The East Board, with the other three Boards, were abolished in 1976 and replaced by a hurling Board, a football Board, and the governing county body. Nowadays Killalaghton Hall is now noteworthy as local drama groups perform there annually to packed audiences during the Christmas and New Year period.



David McGann

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| A Tourism Taster Weekend          | May 26 <sup>th</sup> - 28 <sup>th</sup> 2023       |
| Eyrecourt Vintage Rally           | 17 <sup>th</sup> June – 23 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 |
| Livestock Music and Art Festival  | 1 <sup>st</sup> July – 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2023   |
| Battle of Aughrim Remembrance     | 12 <sup>th</sup> July 2023                         |
| Feile Cheoil Larry Reynolds       | 7 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> September 2023  |
| Ballinasloe Agricultural Show     | 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2023                    |
| Ballinasloe Horse Fair & Festival | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2023     |
| Ballinasloe Vintage & Heritage    | 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2023                       |
| Zombie Walk                       | 27 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> October 2023   |
| Comic Con                         | 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> November 2023    |
| New Year's Blacktie Ball          | 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023                     |

*Please send details of your event for next edition.*



A century ago, the ending of the presence in Ballinasloe of the Earls of Clancarty was sealed with the sale of their former home at Garbally. Nick Trench, the 9th Earl, talks to Ballinasloe LIFE about his background, visits to the town and how Brexit pushed him to claim his Irish citizenship.

The shape of Ballinasloe as we know it today is intrinsically bound up with the story of the Trench family, who acquired land in the area in the mid-1600s. By the 19th century, the family had become the Earls of Clancarty, lived in a fine mansion in Garbally and were one of the biggest landlords in the county, with over 25,000 acres in Galway and Roscommon.

A grandson of the last of the last Lord Clancarty to live in Garbally, Nick Trench, 70, who lives in Petersfield, Hampshire, says his middle-class upbringing was far removed from that of his ancestors.

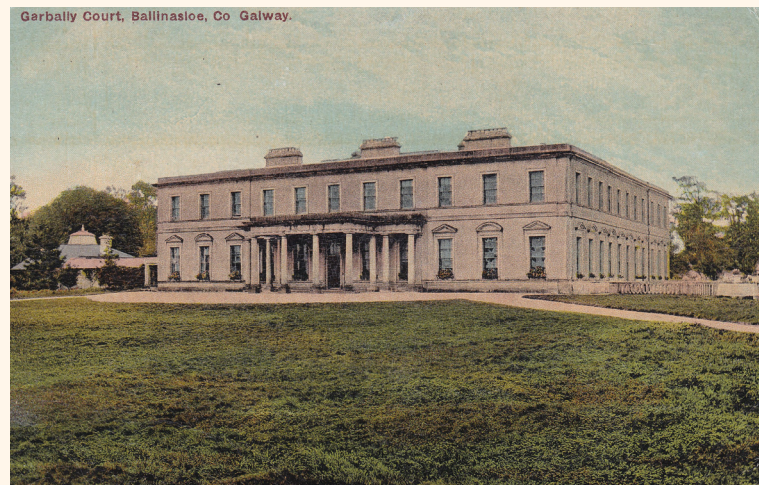
"By the time my father was born [in England in 1917], the family had long ceased to be wealthy. So I didn't have some sort of

Downton Abbey existence – nor did I expect one," says Nick, who acquired the Clancarty Earldom upon the death of his uncle in 1995.

"My father, Terry Trench, was a film editor and a socialist: he was a trade union rep for in the 1960s so not stereotypically upper class. Instead, my younger sister Caroline and I had a middle-class upbringing, living in a bungalow in the west London suburbs, with holidays in seaside destinations like Hayling Island and East Anglia."

While his grandfather, the 5th Earl, was born in Ireland, so too were his maternal ancestors, some of whom also spent time in a "big house" but at the other end of the spectrum.

"The Courtney family of my mother were Irish, too: Dubliners, some of whom drifted across the Irish Sea looking for work in the first half of the 20th century like so many others. So I'm Irish on all sides, from different types of family. Interestingly, my mother's mother came from a background in service; her first job was as a maid in a big house," he says.



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A few years after becoming earl, Nick made his first visit to Ballinasloe, “curious to see this part of my roots”. He recalls a lunch at Hayden’s Hotel as being one of the highpoints of the visit and was also shown around Garbally by the school.

Asked if he had any comment on recent reports about the possible sale of the house, Nick says that “its future is in the hands of the town. I know they will make the best use of it.”

He and his wife, Victoria Lambert, who is a journalist, and their daughter, Rowena, who is doing her A levels, have been back to Ireland a few times since and look forward to every visit.

“For those of us based outside Ireland, a visit to Ireland is special. Anyone with Irish blood who is part of the diaspora will understand that. We didn’t grow up in Ireland, yet we respect and love the country. My family and I are always pleased and grateful to get the chance. The last time my wife was there she fell ill near Ballinasloe and ended up in Portiuncula Hospital. Her care was faultless; the nurses were supportive and kind.”

He also reveals that Rowena – who is vegetarian – “is very partial to a Supmac’s veggie burger.” No different to other families these days, the Trenches tend to book Airbnb when they do visit. As Nick underlines, neither he “nor the Clancarty family has any financial or land interests in Ireland”.

After studying geography and geology at Plymouth Polytechnic, Nick went to do an MA in geography at the University of Colorado, in Boulder, where he mapped natural hazards including areas at risk of landslide. After working in a civil service upon his return, he moved on to study fine art at what was then Sheffield Polytechnic.

He describes living and working in Yorkshire in the 1980s during the miners’ strikes as a powerful, politically charged experience. It was around this time that he began to make short films and exhibit art.

Before inheriting the title in 1995, he worked as a self-employed artist, freelance writer and translator. He recognises that becoming earl and joining the House of Lords is an “incredible privilege”, one that has allowed him to amplify the voices of



Trench family nailing their Remain colours to the mast before the Brexit referendum in 2016

others.

“The one advantage inheriting the title has given me is the chance to join political life in the UK. I realised early on I could be a conduit for creative people who felt they weren’t being heard: artists, writers, actors and educationalists. But also for those people who never have a voice – those are on benefits or homeless, caught in the poverty trap. I wanted to push their concerns.”

Nick sits as a crossbencher in the Lords, meaning he’s not affiliated with any political party. While he admits that his sympathies are left-wing, he believes he could be more honest as an independent member of parliament and not have to take a party whip.

Brexit is one of the issues he’s been most vocal about. “I feel very strongly that the UK should be a member of Europe like Ireland. The UK was good for Europe and it was good for the UK,” he says, pointing out that 90% of those working in the creative industries in the UK voted to remain in the EU.

“As artists and musicians in Ireland will be very aware, free movement across Europe is essential for their work. I would like the UK at the very least to rejoin the single market as soon as possible, though it is disappointing that at present no major UK political party is yet promising that.”

If Brexit had one positive outcome, though, it reminded him to organise his Irish passport, something he had meant to do for a long time.

“I’m lucky enough to claim two Irish grandfathers. They came from very different worlds but hope they would both be pleased I am now officially an Irish citizen and to see that I am proud to be Irish and my daughter too is keen to explore her heritage. As a girl, she won’t inherit the title, which may well die out.”



Nick Trench, 9th Earl of Clancarty.



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In 1351, William Buí O'Kelly, Lord of Hy Many, invited all the bards, brehons, artists, musicians and jesters from across Ireland to a Christmas Day feast at his castle on the banks of Lough Ree near Knockcroghery in County Roscommon. The month-long festivities gave rise to the expression "Fáilte Uí Cheallaigh", still current in Irish, meaning hospitality of exceptional warmth and munificence. As he watched the departure of his guests from the temporary village he had constructed for their accommodation, O'Kelly was heard to ruefully remark: "Nach raibh mise an t-amadán mór?" (Wasn't I the great fool?) Two years later he founded Kilconnell Conventual Franciscan Friary on the site of the 6th-century monastery of St. Connal.

Besides the O'Kellys, the friary enjoyed the patronage and protection of other powerful Hy Many families such as the O'Donnellans, the O'Maddens and the Wards from the 14th to the 18th centuries, and the tombs of many of its patrons survive inside the ruins. In the 1460s, Malachy O'Kelly, a great-grandson of the founder, induced the friars to adopt the Observant reform involving a stricter interpretation of the rule of St. Francis.

Between 1405 and 1534 all but one of the bishops of Clonfert were friars, and the bishop of Clonfert was one of the clerics most frequently called on the execute Bulls in favour of the friars. The presence of these friar-bishops must have played a crucial role in promoting the various forms of mendicant activity in the diocese.

Though the friary had been officially dissolved in 1541 and granted to two English lessees, when Sir Richard Bingham, Governor of Connacht, garrisoned his troops there in 1580 he insisted that the buildings not be damaged or the friars molested. Similarly, in 1596, when the friary was occupied for nine months by the forces of Captain Stryck during a conflict with the O'Kellys, the friars were allowed to remain. Moreover, Kilconnell was

one of only five Irish friaries still inhabited and in good repair in 1616.

Archbishop Rinuccini, Papal Nuncio to the Confederation, in 1649 stopped over in Kilconnell on his way from Kilkenny to Galway where he was to board ship to be taken back to Rome. Within two years the friary was the scene of a stirring episode in the wars of the period when Major Dermot O'Daly's troops were besieged there by Cromwellian forces. According to an account written 21 years later, "the Cromwellian horse and foot stubbornly assaulting the monastery of Kilconnell, stoutly attacked two or three troops of the Confederates, which Dermot O'Daly commanded as Major. But the besieged bravely repelled the hostile attack as long as gunpowder lasted, and when destitute of gunpowder with rocks and the skulls and bones of the dead hurled against the besiegers, for they some time drove them from the approach, when a woman, graceful in excellent beauty of form, showing herself to the soldiers so as to be seen, supplied gunpowder to the soldiers, man by man, from an apron, the whiteness of which the nitrate powder did not darken in the blackness. At length on a wild night, the besieged taking care, the pealing of the great bell, a very brisk rattling of the drums, and a hasty sound of the musical trumpet, burst forth with a tumult, which struck such fear in the

besiegers that, persuading themselves that by that signal the neighbouring inhabitants were being summoned to bring present aid to the besieged, turned suddenly away that night. They raised the siege and never afterwards returned to attack the monastery."

Fearful of confiscations during the Cromwellian period, in 1654 the friars sent their most valuable objects to St. Anthony's College in Louvain for safekeeping, comprising over 30 vestments, as well as three silver-gilt chalices, one silver chalice and a ciborium. Some chalices, including that of their founder, were retained in Kilconnell.



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By a government order dated 15th February 1697, the friars were forced to break up house and dispose of their goods and chattels by 1st May 1698. They had no option but comply, thus marking the end of the Franciscan community's occupancy of the friary. They managed, however, to maintain a minimal, token presence in the locality at least up to the end of the following century.

With reference to the friary, in 1709 a traveller noted that "this

abbey was in repair and inhabited in King James's time, so that the woodwork, the wainscot and ordinary painting still remain." He also recorded that the buildings were surrounded by a wall of skulls and bones, supposedly the unburied remains of the fallen at the Battle of Aughrim. The wall was about 4 feet high and 5 feet 4 inches thick. It doesn't appear to have survived intact into the following century, for in 1827 Rev. Caesar Otway, a Church of Ireland clergyman, reported that nothing remained of it but "an immense stack of human bones." Later in the century Baron Clonbrock used his influence to have the bones and skulls properly interred.

The most interesting of the friary's altar-tombs is located near the west door of the nave and dates from the late 15th century. It has been described as having a flamboyant canopy with a front divided into six panels, "each one filled with a saintly figure, surmounted by its respective name, which are as follows: St. John the Evangelist, St. Louis of Toulouse, St. James, St. Catherine of Alexandria, the Virgin Mary, and St. Denis of Paris. The finial is divided into two panels, the one on the left is the figure of a bishop, and on the right is St. Francis." Neither the owner of the tomb nor its occupant or occupants have been identified.

Another tomb deserving of note is found in the north wall of the chancel and described as "altar-shaped with a rich canopy of quite different design (to that located at the west door), consisting of a rose tracery on a circular arch, the panels in front being plain." Of mid-15th century construction, its original owner is unknown. At some stage it was appropriated by the O'Daly family.

Kilconnell Friary is one the gems of Ballinasloe's hinterland and well worth a visit, not only because it contains within its walls some of the masterpieces of Irish medieval figurative sculpture, but also for the pervasive sense of history that the place exudes, a special place where we feel in communion with our Gaelic heritage and that helps locate us in the continuum of time. To quote the late Rabbi Jonathan Sacks: "Through personal identification with the great moments of the past they become part of what makes us who we are. We become characters in a continuing story which began before we were born and will continue after we have ceased to be. Without history there is no identity, and without identity we are cast adrift into a sea of chance, without compass, map or destination."



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With the passing of **Walter Warde**, Ballinasloe lost a brilliant, obliging and unassuming man whose skills were vital to many individuals and businesses in the area.

Walter was raised in St Michael's Square along with 5 sisters and 2 brothers by his parents Mary and John. John or Josh as he was known, had an engineering works in the Square where Walter developed his keen interest in all things technical.

He liked all sports but especially Squash and Handball and was a very good swimmer, learning as a child in the river Suck. His children became Scouts and he loved bringing them to camps around the country.

Walter's technical ability enabled him to be a great aide to his father who was the manager of Ballinasloe Water works. Here while still in his teens Walter learned about water filters, pumps and dosing all of which he utilised in his later career.

Walter's first full time work was with Dubarry where he maintained the plant's machinery or anything else that needed his technical skills. However it wasn't long before the bright lights of Dublin called him where he joined his brother, Sean (Gordy) in another shoe factory.

At a dance in Clery's Ballroom, in 1965, Walter met his future wife Sheila, and they married in 1968, a year after he returned to his home town.

Following a stint with Bord na Mona in Shannonbridge and later in West Shoes in Ballinasloe, Walter joined A.T. Cross in Cleaghmore, in May 1972.

Following a two month work experience period in Providence, Rhode Island, studying the equipment used by A.T. Cross to manufacture "Fine Writing Instruments" Walter returned to Ballinasloe. With responsibility for all the factory facilities and services, and preparing the factory for production, Walter was appointed Maintenance Manager.

This was a demanding key position taking in all aspects of electrical and mechanical engineering. It also involved the procurement and installation of all types of equipment and services that are used in

industry along with the supervision of over 40 skilled and unskilled personnel, it was an onerous task.

In October that year, five colleagues that had also been in Rhode Island during the summer, returned to Ballinasloe. Under Walter's tutelage they helped Walter finalise the workstation setups with power, airlines and lighting in preparation for the hiring of production employees in coming weeks. In April of 1973, largely thanks to Walter, A.T. Cross "Limited" shipped its first products.

A.T. Cross continued to increase production with Walter at the helm of maintenance. Over the years as the plant expanded it underwent dramatic changes, including a floor area increase from 20,000 to 60,000 sq.ft. and 3 transformer upgrades.

Walter was key to Cross's growth, installing modern screw compressors with waste heat recovery systems, natural, D.I. and soft water systems, elaborate effluent treatment plants, a digital phone system, numerous computerised production machines to match the plant expansions and overseeing the installation of the transformers.

Up until Walter left A.T. Cross in 2001 he had maintained the entire plant, opened every morning, ensured it was locked every night; made sure it was heated, cleaned to perfection and most importantly that all the canteen equipment worked.

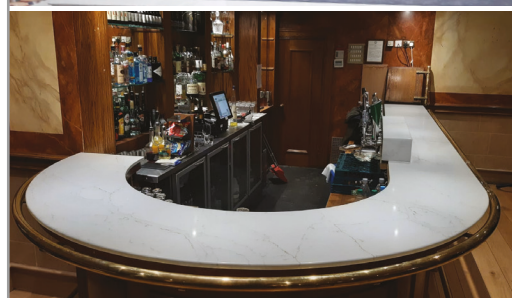
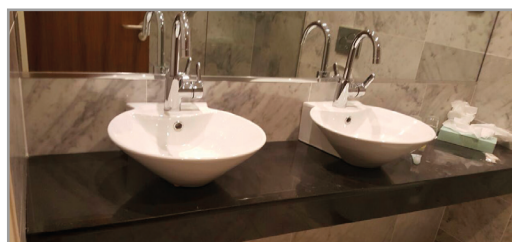
Walter's loyalty to the company, his conscientious work ethic and punctuality were legendary. But the main attribute Walter will be remembered for by everyone who knew him both inside and outside of A.T. Cross was his patient and helpful good natured manner.

His engineering expertise was in demand outside of A.T. Cross as many people around Ballinasloe town will vouch. His gifted craftsmanship was appreciated by hotels, churches and anyone that was in need. Again his caring helpful personality being foremost.

He was Ballinasloe's most sought after "Safe Cracker". Several local banks sent for Walter when the keys to strong rooms or safe's went missing, wouldn't work, or got broken. He would make, repair or alter keys to solve the problem. Opening locked desk drawers and filing cabinets were a regular part of Walter's private activities.

It will be a long time before Ballinasloe has another craftsman as skilled & versatile as Walter Warde.

The late Mr. Warde leaves behind his wife Sheila, four sons, their families and many other relatives and friends.



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Thomas “Trixie” Leech was a gifted footballer, and was the only Ballinasloe man to win a gold medal at the Tailteann Games, in Dublin, in 1932. He had spearheaded Galway’s first-ever All-Ireland senior football title seven years earlier, in 1925, on a team comprised of twelve Ballinasloe colleagues.

Leech’s dazzling footwork and deft moves earned him the nickname of “Trixie.” Born in Ballinasloe in 1904, his father Patrick was a tailor from Gort while his mother was Mary Agnes Greally, who came from Galway City. The family ran a tailoring business at the top of St. Michael’s Square. “Trixie” was the middle of five children and went to school in the Old Garbally College, where he excelled in many sports.

It was hard to get on a Ballinasloe senior football team in the ‘20’s because they were such a powerful force. And it was even harder to get on the Galway senior team—you had to prove your worth. But “Trixie” persevered and his footballing skills on pitches all around the country was a joy to behold. He was rewarded with an All-Ireland senior football medal in 1925 when Galway, captained by Michael “Knacker” Walsh defeated Mayo on a scoreline of 1-5 to 1-3 which was played in Parkmore, Tuam. Galway’s captain accounted for 1-3 on that memorable day while “Trixie” and “M. Ward” added points, giving Galway their first-ever All-Ireland senior football title.



In 1932, “Trixie” was selected on the Eire football team that defeated America by in Dublin and he was the only Galwayman to win a gold medal at the famous Tailteann Games. Four years earlier, at the same games, he also won another medal for his place-kicking ability.

Following the death of his father, “Trixie” emigrated to London where, in 1939, he married Frances Reilly, the youngest daughter of a well-known Ballinasloe family and had one daughter, Patricia. Now a UK resident, he served in the Artillery during World War II. On returning to London he took up a position at the Savoy Tailoring Guild and worked there until his retirement at the age of 70. He continued his interest in sports and followed West Ham football team.



The former tailor kept in touch with his hometown, making many trips on holidays and renewing acquaintances with footballing friends and foes. He attended the 50th celebration of Galway’s All-Ireland success in 1975 in Ballinasloe and was presented with a commemorative plaque.

However, “Trixie” Leech passed away in London on 16th March 1983 and his remains were brought back to his native town and buried in Creagh Cemetery. A gifted footballer, a man of few words, a legend in his own lifetime, a great family man, all of which epitomises the one and only “Trixie” Leech.

First Victorious All-Ireland Galway Football Team, 1925:



Back Row (l.-r.): Le. McGrath, Lar. McGrath, F. Benson, P. Gantly, J. Egan, G. Jennings, Mick Bannerton.  
Centre Row (l.-r.): M. Donnellan, ‘Knacker’ Walsh, T. Molloy, J. Walsh, W. Smith, D. Egan.  
Front Row (l.-r.): Harry Burke, T. Leech, Paddy Roche.





**Margaret Creaven (nee Hynes)**, who passed away in her 94th year, was born in Oatfield, Cappataggle, one of a family of twelve. Brought up on the family farm, Margaret often argued with her dad "it wasn't fair that the girls had to do the same work in the fields as they boys, and then come in and do the housework."

During her schooling in Killalaghton NS, she credited Josie O'Halloran and Tommie Leonard with instilling in her a love of education in the broadest sense, and a love of the Irish language, music and dance. Then at the age of 18 years, Margaret embarked on a career of becoming a psychiatric nurse in St. Brigid's Hospital where she worked for twenty-five years.

There she was a strong advocate for the patients, striving to give a voice to those with little voice in the system. She spoke with warmth and compassion for the women she served and it was clear she knew and valued each one as individuals in their own right. Later she played her part in the advancement of women's rights in Ireland through her fight, ultimately successful, to overturn legalised discrimination against married women in nursing.

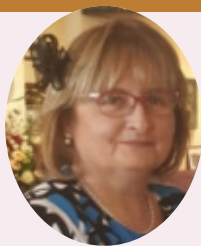
It was while working in St. Brigid's that Margaret met her future husband, Jimmy Creaven, and they were married in 1954. They set up home in Parkmore, Creagh and were blessed with nine children Mary, Noreen, Ann, Paddy, James (dec.), Austin (Ennis), Sean (Sligo), Seamus (Galway) and Sheelagh (McDonagh, Sligo) and each of them was encouraged to follow their own path and be true to themselves. She also had a unique bond with each of her treasured grand and great-grandchildren, each of whom had their own special thing for her.

The "Cappy" woman loved to socialise, particularly with former workmates or old school pals. Her love of golf was legendary. Often teaming her with her late husband, her sisters or brothers in competitions they were a formidable outfit while her sons and daughter followed suit, inevitably leading to great rivalry on courses throughout the country in search of trophies. And in the evenings, Margaret was a popular member of the local Bridge Club while in the winter months she loved to play cards with her family and neighbours.

At her funeral Mass she was described as a "treasured mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, mother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, auntie, cousin, colleague, golf partner, bridge partner and friend to so many, and like St Brigid, she was a strong independent woman."

It was fitting that past and present officers of both the Golf and Bridge Clubs should form a guard of honour as her remains were brought for burial in Creagh Cemetery, following Requiem Mass in Creagh Church. Her passing occurred on International Women's Day, an event very dear to her heart.

## A DOER, A GIVER, A FORCE OF NATURE



**Mary Coughlan**, Fairfield, Ahascragh who passed away recently, was the eldest of six children and grew up in Brackernagh, Ballinasloe. Being the senior sibling, responsibility came easy to her and this unfortunately increased drastically upon the untimely deaths of her parents in 1972 and 1978. She then took on the role as head of the family and put her own life on hold to raise her siblings.

She was a fantastic organiser which reflected in her home life, with each family member assigned their own jobs on a weekly basis. No matter what challenges they faced, Mary's main priority was to keep them together as a family.

**Mary held down a number of jobs in her lifetime both day and night, from working in administration in Square D during the day to "on-the-door" in the East county every weekend. She was an integral part of Square D, being the organiser of many events, not least the legendary Christmas party every year.**

Michael Mullins, former Personnel Manager in Square D, said Mary commenced her career at the Square D Company in the Accounts Department in April 1974 and continued with the organisation until the plant closed in September 2003. "During her time with the Company, Mary distinguished herself in many roles, but particularly in the IT Department as she embraced the many challenges that arose as the Company invested heavily in the automation of manual systems.

"Her work ethic, organisational skills and innovative ideas were widely recognised throughout the organisation, resulting in her receiving a worldwide PWMD Award (Person who made a difference in 1987. Mary was involved in all aspects of Company life, with the Sports and Social Club, Inter-firms' hurling, Social events, educational courses and Company sponsored outings.

"One of the most memorable events she was involved in a summer outing for the children of employees, which involved taking close to 200 children and parents by bus to Shannon Airport, then flying on to Dublin by Aer Lingus Jumbo-jet, touring the capital by bus, visiting the Zoo and returning to train by Ballinasloe, without a hitch or an accident.

"Mary will be fondly remembered as a kind and caring person who put others ahead of herself. This was particularly evident following the announcement of the closure of the Square D plant when she helped colleagues pursue other employment opportunities or up-skilling courses. Her contribution to many organisations has enhanced and enriched the lives of many people" said Mr. Mullins.

With the closure of Square D in 2003, Mary joined the team at Elan which is now known as Alkermes. Once again Mary made her mark as a leader, an organiser and a well-respected colleague. She was with Alkermes until her retirement.

Busy as she was in her working life, Mary still had time to devote to others in the shape of

her involvement in Ballinasloe St. Vincent de Paul. She went to great lengths to help many people and families locally, who needed a helping hand. She continued this work right up to recently.

As if that wasn't enough, Mary was a board member with Ballinasloe Credit Union to which she gave her time and expertise in a selfless manner.

Mary's love of sport reflected in her commitment to Ballinasloe GAA where she was secretary in the 1980's. During that time, Ballinasloe reached the All-Ireland Football Club final for which she was extremely proud.

She was also involved in the Ballinasloe swimming club when funds were raised to build the local swimming pool in the 1970's while Macra na Feirme was also another passion of hers where she made great friendships, which have sustained the test of time.

Mary's number one priority throughout her life was her family and this was accentuated since her illness. She adored her nieces and nephews and took great comfort from their regular phone calls, FaceTime's and visits from all around the world. Mary's wisdom and advice was greatly valued by all her family.

Anyone that knew Mary knew she was a doer, a giver, a force of nature, and not fond of the limelight.

Mary is survived by her sister Carmel, brothers Mike, Jack, Des and Ger, brother-in-law James, sisters-in-law Teresa, Ber, Helena & Aoife, aunt Bridie, nieces, nephews, grand-nephew and grand-nieces and a large circle of friends.



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