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# BALLINASLOE LIFE

AN INSIGHT INTO THE AREA WE LIVE IN

Vol. 13 Issue 2: June '23 - July '23



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# REAMHRA

Welcome to Volume 13 issue 2

Welcome to our June / July edition where we break the gap of having a Picture House in town after 27 years, and for so many of East Galway and South Roscommon, the chance of seeing a new release, enjoying a bit of supper and a jar or two won't have to be done through the grind of congestion to points East and West of us.

The team toiled on this with the torrid back drop of burning of Immigrant Asylum Seeker tents and belongings in Dublin, and citizens illegally effecting road closure orders in Inch, Clare. I have long held the view that both hospitals, in their day, with their many ethnicities on staff and perhaps those in their care meant that we, in the last 3 generations since Independence, have been warmer to the other by experience.

Certainly, the arrival of the FMDM Nuns 80 years ago to Old Mount Pleasant to establish an International Teaching Hospital for their missionary work in the third world meant that their commitment to Human Dignity in all its manifestations was front and centre. The Madonna School of Nursing had, on any given year, from the 60s to closure – young women from all parts of the third world and many of the Junior and Senior Medical Staff hailed from a variety African and Indian Countries.

They shopped, lived, prayed, played tennis, went to the movies, ate in our restaurants, drank in our taverns along with those of us who were comfortable and those who were perhaps less.

I was rather hoping the C.S.O full Census would be released, but it will show that rather than our core urban centre population of 15% non-ethnic Irish (2016 figures) it will be slightly higher I suspect that the national average of 20%. Not being smug but we are doing the little things right.

The Countryside was never as Green as it has been the last few weeks and similarly there are many green shoots of economic development happening in our area.

As per every issue since we began 13 years ago, new Businesses are opening up, as are new clubs and organisations. We need to grasp the nettle while individuals and corporates are prepared to invest in our town as this will not always be the case as Economic Development take its meandering direction.

Unfortunately there are always a small percentage that will see a problem with progress and want to keep the status quo and unless we are prepared to work with new business and support more housing we will be left behind as has happened in the past.

The town has all three key infrastructures that are required namely, excellent road / rail accessibility, the Demographics to meet job roles (650,000 of the 2.5m Irish working population are within commuting distance if they wish !) and we have excellent second and third level Educational facilities on our doorstep in Ballinasloe, Galway, Athlone and Maynooth.

We are hospitable and somewhat generous in continuing to make space for "the other", don't take my word for it, read here in these pages. There are 39 countries and ethnicities took part in the Creagh NS Intercultural Day, our growing and hard-working Indian Community hosting their Cultural Events in our Community Centres, Members of the Polish and Indian Christian faith traditions using our churches for special religious services in their own languages. The upsurge of good will to the new Travellers Women's Group. To top it off, two centuries after it was begun on the ISLAND on our fair green; our Indian Immigrant Community have re-established our Cricket Tradition.

There are challenges in the road that communally we must share together. We have solid foundations that ought to leave social media grabbing consawing incidents and car theft to the very, very small spectrum of human behaviour.

I am not troubled as to who will be lucky enough to get the keys to the new apartments, houses and residences that are being finished in the town centre, wherever these people will come from on whatever list.

We have had good interplay with the unknown and "the other", we have 200 years of being a caring town for the sick and the demented, the Ford of the Hostings is in our DNA, we did not seek in time past to have all males crossing the Suck to trade in the western breed of ponies to be vetted!

Enjoy the read,

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



The local authority need to be to the forefront of engaging with investors and find workable solutions along with our local representatives to help meet the growth outlined in the recently signed off local area plan.

It is indeed welcome news that nearly 1,500 jobs have been announced in East Galway and Northern Tipperary in recent weeks and the expectation is that Ballinasloe will add to that in the coming weeks which makes this town central to potential employees in any of these locations.

Finally on another positive note, work on our additional Office space in Society Street is progressing satisfactorily with same coming available in quarter one 2024.

Enjoy the Summer ahead.

**SEAMUS DUFFY,**  
Chairman Ballinasloe Area Community Development Limited.



## Articles and Photos Welcome

**NEXT ISSUE**  
**Deadline July 12th**

For submission of articles, please email:  
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Creagh N.S. has been granted permission to proceed to tender for two additional classrooms which includes their first ever Special Education Needs Class, as well as an additional mainstream schoolroom.

The teaching staff are currently taking advantage of every space available indoors and outdoors, reducing their own canteen to help cater for over 440 pupils. Tender are being sought over the Summer months and hope to have extra accommodation space by September for their growing waiting list.

The Department of Education has announced funding close to €700,000 for the expansion. Judging by similar classroom facilities on site, units will cover approx .025 hectares. The design for the modular units suggest installation by the available space towards Creagh Junction, but the school aims to maintain its green space and allocate room for a proposed softplay area.

In other planning developments, the Ballinasloe Wastewater Treatment Plant have applied for major upgrades to their facility to improve water quality for the town. UISCE Eireann hope to demolish existing inlet works and rebuild them with duty standby five screens, a screening handling unit, a vortex grid trap, a grit classifier, a storm overflow chamber, storm feeding station and a bypass channel with a manual bar screen. The developments will surround the full facility located north of town, Derrymullen comprising of 1.32 hectares.

A Natura Impact Statement for the proposed development has been prepared to guarantee no adverse effects occur in accordance to Uisce Eireann's Water Services Strategic Plan, ensuring safe drinking water for consumers. The planning application for such developments are currently being inspected by Galway County Council and a decision is due by June 20.



Chairperson Creagh School Board, Frank Gallagher, Senator Aisling Dolan, Áine Ní Cholleráin Bleahene, Kai O'Rourke and Deputy Principal Majella O'Rourke outside the school building.

Since our last issue, further information has been requested from the new technology plant at the IDA site and for the Euro Giant, Old Woods store merger. Additional details have been received by Galway County Council for a .10 hectare site in Moycarn comprising of the 3 single terraced houses, 8 units, and on-site parking via applicant Raymond Sheridan.

An Bord Pleanála are still to rule on the 165 units behind Tesco, originally due last December 2022. The agency is currently facing a backlog in strategic housing development.

## ECO PARK IN FORMER LANDFILL SITE

Plans to transform the former Kilconnell Landfill site are underway, developing the grounds into an outdoor recreational amenity and biodiversity park as a local and regional attraction.

The East Galway Eco Park will cover 60 hectares, nine times the size of Croke Park, offering multiple walking trails suitable for all ages, and other outdoor amenities including a cycling hub, adventure play trails, picnic areas and more. The park intends on being public and accessible to all at no cost.

Consultants Brady Shipman Martin and Fehily Timoney, have been scoping with the local community on these proposed developments, hosting a public information day in Kilconnell Hall. A budget of €108,370 has been allocated in the plan's early stages for the appointment of the design consultants, with funding of €50,000 being received through the DECC's Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme and a matching contribution from Galway County Council in the region of €59,000.

Following the consultation process, a landscape masterplan is to be finalized and submitted for approval through the European Protection Agency and Part 8 process in July, hopefully to tender Phase 1 works by October.

Project Manager at Galway County Council Mike Melody demonstrated the Eco Park progress to the local Ballinasloe Councillors during their Municipal District meeting in April. Cathaoirleach Cllr Evelyn Parsons welcomed the concept and requested a dog park be included.

Cllr Dermot Connolly concluded the presentation by paying tribute to all the hard work carried out by the East Galway Landfill Liaison Committee for making such developments possible for the Kilconnell community.

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Councillor Declan Geraghty has been appointed as a representative on the Joint Policing Committee, a unique forum which gathers senior Gardaí with local politicians to discuss policing and crime issues from each respective county. Prior to his appointment, Ballinasloe was the only Municipal district in the county not to be represented.

Councillors from the Ballinasloe Municipal District have been vociferous in their appeals to have a voice on the committee, especially with the raft of recent break-ins and burglaries in the outskirts last Spring and indeed the impacts of the national crisis of police staffing, and drug problems endemic to all parts of the country.

**Independent Cllr Declan Geraghty was promoted for this role as he has been hugely vocal in calling attention to crime and burglaries affecting rural communities surrounding town and been leading the set ups of Community Alerts in many of these neighbourhoods.**

“There are critical issues that need to be addressed and there must always be a representative from our area speaking on people’s behalf, looking for more resources, looking for more squad cars, looking for more gardaí to patrol the areas at times” states Councillor Geraghty.

Following his appointment, Cllr Declan represented Ballinasloe at his first Galway JPC Meeting. Chief Superintendent Gerry Roche was very transparent regarding difficulties in staffing in the Ballinasloe community, with the Counsellor and Superintendent engaging in robust debate in how to tackle crime in the area.

Regarding the epidemic of drugs locally, the primary means Declan feels to tackle these issues is through education. He hopes to promote the message to schools, local leaders,



Councillor Declan Geraghty

youth clubs, sporting clubs about the dangers of drugs and the traffickers associated with them. “Drugs destroys communities, and it destroys people” Declan emphasised, “You do not realize what these criminals do”.

**He also believes it’s important to target the supply of drugs, believing dealers are only getting craftier in distributing their stock, which is becoming more widespread throughout the M.D.C. region.**

The next meeting of the Galway Joint Policing Committee is in early June, which Cllr Declan hopes will be an opportunity to push further for effective solutions on policing, crime and drug issues facing Ballinasloe.

He encourages anyone to approach him about their experiences of lawlessness in the region and can be contacted at [dgeraghty@cllr.galwaycoco.ie](mailto:dgeraghty@cllr.galwaycoco.ie).

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St. Brigid's Nurses Home Campus in the 1940's

After a decade of neglect and various initiatives led by local Councillors, a Seminar by a Government Minister and The Town Team - the St. Brigid's Campus and associated grounds are to finally be sold by the HSE, with Galway County Council purchasing one derelict site and a lot of acres sweeping down to the River Suck on the southern side of the campus.

The HSE, who currently own the grounds, have indicated their interest to ready the Brigid's Campus for the market appointing a property sales advisor for the site.

Each of the three property campuses which include the 95 acre primary campus site under the clock tower, the 25 acre site surrounding the hospital premises across the Creagh Road, and the 62 acre Nurses Home campus situated opposite the main facility, are likely to be sold individually.

Galway County Council Director of Housing Liam Hanrahan confirmed at the May Municipal District Meeting stated that site will be acquired under the state register listing process to establish a domestic refuge for women and children in the old Nurses Home.

Galway County Council in collaboration with Safe Ireland and Government departments of Housing & Justice is finalising negotiating the acquisition of St Brigid's Hospital Nurses Home Campus for the development of a state-of-the-art regional domestic violence refuge in Ballinasloe.

This refuge aims to provide a safe haven for women and children fleeing domestic abuse, catering not only to victims in the county but also accommodating those who may prefer or benefit from sheltering outside their immediate vicinity. The refuge will offer short-term stays, ensuring a secure environment for survivors during their time of need.

Cllr Evelyn Parsons obtained confirmation through her seat on the HSE Forum that consultants are currently engaged in detailed survey work and valuations and that the project's funding mechanism will be facilitated through the Capital Acquisition Scheme (CAS), which supports the establishment and enhancement of essential community infrastructure.

By leveraging CAS funding, Galway County Council and its partners aim to create a secure and supportive environment for survivors of domestic violence, offering them a lifeline to rebuild their lives with access to a range of necessary services. Aspects of the Nurses Home building are protected and will require design before going for planning permission late 2024.

The refuge's development will involve close collaboration with Safe Ireland, a national organization dedicated to

supporting and advocating for victims of domestic violence. Safe Ireland ensure that best practices and expertise are incorporated into the refuge's design, operations, and support services, guaranteeing a holistic and survivor-centred approach.

"A regional domestic violence refuge is a very welcome vital safety measure for women and children fleeing domestic violence - an issue which has seen an alarming rise in recent years on a backdrop of the housing crisis and lack of refuge places. It's a vital & necessary response though not a solution to preventing the complex issue of domestic violence but offers protection to victim and survivors. Ballinasloe has a range of medical, social, educational, recreational, crime prevention

services - short term stays are being envisaged. However I also believe Ballinasloe now merits added consideration in view of its regional role in opening its arms to those in need yet again and that Government Depts should now ensure that services are well resourced and every assistance given to have local capacities enabled", stated Cllr Dr. Evelyn Parsons.

"This refuge will serve as a beacon of hope for women and children fleeing domestic abuse, offering them safety, support, and the opportunity to rebuild their lives and to thrive in a society free from violence, where every individual can live with dignity and security", noted the M.D.C. Cathaoirleach whose work in highlighting the lack of resources and awareness in this area has been formidable.



Cllr Evelyn Parsons



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Liam Conneally the new County Manager dangled the carrot of reform of doing business at his first meeting of the County Council - stressing the need to reduce Municipal District Matters clogging up main Council meetings.

In his previous posting in Clare he managed to get the Municipal Districts there to undertake more autonomy and direction over their own administrative and local needs - within overall County Policies, amended Standing Orders and regulations - without recourse to changing the legacy of Phil Hogan's "reforms" of local Government, which in effect was more centralisation to County Hall and subservience to Custom House.

Cllr. Peter Keavney "Certainly welcomes it, wouldn't be no harm. We need more power in terms of housing and getting the most of our business done at the MDC meetings".

The oldest serving member of the M.D.C. Michael Connolly sated "I believe he hopes to spread work to the MDC's. he will make his changes slowly, potentially after Summer in August".

Cllr Dermot Connolly was happy to hear of these proposed reforms "we also face staffing issues and are limited in what they achieve. I hope to see a greater focus coming forward regarding job creation, emphasising the fantastic infrastructure here from this new Manager ". noted Dermot.

"I would like to see more autonomy for the local Municipal District and ensure we have more freedom to receive funding without having to go through Galway County Council. For example, Ballinasloe is the only Municipal District in Galway to avail of the Just Transition Fund, but the most recent launch of the project was delivered county wide.", noted Cllr Timmy Broderick.

Councillor Declan Geraghty noted they do not have complete details on what these reforms entail but have faith in the decisions and direction of the new Chief Executive. "Chief Executive Liam Connolly wants to work with Councillors which is quite important, and is not attempting to limit the control of

the municipal local authority, which is welcome " expressed Declan.

Cathaoirleach of Ballinasloe MDC Cllr Dr. Evelyn Parsons welcomed these proposals and emphasised that each of the five Municipal Districts have their own separate needs and each require representation respective of their district. " We need more control and autonomy at MDC level over issues like the Active Travel mission and more freedom to control the Municipal Districts allowance's via Galway County Council in deciding which local community groups to support" stressed Cllr Dr. Evelyn .



Cathaoirleach Cllr Dr Evelyn Parsons at the 62nd Fete des Vin D'Anjou with Chalonnese-sur-Loir Mayor Marie Madeleine Monnier as part of the Town Twinning



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It's full steam ahead for the Ahascragh Distillery, which will be opening for tours of the premises this Summer, offering an elaborate tour of Ireland's newest and first ECO Energy Distillery of local whiskey and award-winning gin.

Just ten minutes outside of Ballinasloe, in a grain mill and store building dating back to the 19th century. The mill ceased operations in the 1950s and remained derelict until recent years when Gareth and Michelle McAllister restored the premises into a state-of-the-art craft distillery and visitor experience centre – a project worth over €6 million.

Gareth anticipates that on a five-day week schedule output will be 500,000 litres of pure alcohol (lpa) per annum, which will rise to 800,000 lpa when operations are 24/7. All going well, production could be expanded to 1.5 million lpa in a number of years.

Half a million litres of pure alcohol can make c.1.5m bottles of whiskey, which is a lot. "That would be our minimum, and that will have to grow" he insists. 15 jobs will be created at the distillery and visitor centre, with a further 60-70 indirect roles for suppliers, farmers, logistics providers and other local and national businesses.

Solar power installations are currently underway, with two out of five of their roofs being fitted with panels. The distillery will run entirely on renewable energy, with 70% being sourced offshore from wind farms and 30% from on-site solar panels and hydro wheels, enabling the team led by Cáit Baxter to distil some of the first zero-emission spirits in Ireland.

Cait joined the team in late spring from her role as Senior Distiller with Dingle, in Kerry having worked her way up through all points of the Whiskey business since her first graduate experience as Tour Manager with Teelings.

Currently the rooftop on the fourth floor of their events and hospitality building is being replaced and restored. The space will be used for whiskey tasting, a bar, a retail space and for their visitor audio-visual experiences.

The exhibition area aims to celebrate the history of the building while also exploring Irish whiskey

making, the future of the Ahascragh spirit, and will include sample tastings of their UAIS, Clan Colla whiskey and Xin Gin products.

Similar guided distillery tours nationwide like Middleton in Cork and Bushmills in Antrim see basic admission prices around the €30 mark, with more being paid for more elaborate tastings – no doubt season one will be pitched appropriately and more information will be available on their social medias or website at ahascraghdistillery.com.

The distillery has the potential to deliver great tourism prospects to the village and locality with their tours. Marketing and Communications Manager Alison Greene emphasised that, along with dropping by their visitor centre, visitors should: "explore the locality during their stay, including the gorgeous walkways and scenic routes."

Meanwhile the Old Mill Shop and Café have their doors open – seven days a week Mon to Fri – 8 am to 4 pm, Sat 9 am to 4

pm and Sun 10 am to 3 p.m, offering appetising food and wonderful hot drinks. Their first batches of their premium spirits are expected to be finalised within the coming months.



Gareth and Michelle McAllister



Construction taking place on the roof of the events and hospitality building



Renovated exterior of Ahascragh Distillery with Copper Stills pictured inside

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H53 Coffee is being opened by Derek Frehill, a native of Creagh, his wife Lisa and Rob Nolan originally from Tipperary who is married to Sandra from Kiltormer and they have been living in Creagh for ten years.

The lads are great friends and have worked together on numerous projects including training hurling teams and running premier GAA Stats in recent years. Being ambitious they had always talked about opening a business together and when what was formerly Sean Connolly's butchers became available, they felt it would be a great location to open a Coffee Shop. On speaking with family and friends the feedback was extremely positive so H53 Coffee was born.

They aim to provide the many residents of Creagh, the wider Ballinasloe area and those working locally with somewhere to enjoy a coffee and sample a unique but tasty breakfast and lunch menu while also having the option to takeaway.



“The name H53 came from one of our many discussions around the kitchen table but we all agreed on and with H53 being the eircode for the Ballinasloe area, we felt it was fitting as for us to flourish as a business we will rely on the support from the people in the ‘H53’ catchment area” explains Derek.

With seating for roughly 16 people, opening hours to start will be 8am – 4pm Monday – Saturday and 9am – 1pm on a Sunday but like all new businesses this is subject to change based on customers’ response and feedback.

“Our menu will be fluid to start with but will include acai bowls, smoothies, homemade sausage rolls, soup, gourmet sandwiches along with a range of delicious bakes provided locally by “Baked by Triona”. We look forward to adding to this as we get to know our customers more“ stated Derek.

They are building a really good team in H53 with local people and hopefully this will grow in the coming months.

Starting with a slow launch on the June Bank Holiday weekend, the entrepreneurs hope to get the main things right first and get a feel for what our customers would like to see from the facility and add to their menus organically.

Both Derek and Rob are looking forward to providing something that they feel the area is missing and that people can enjoy coming into H53 Coffee to catch up with friends, bring their children for a treat, meet other locals and most importantly providing great coffee, food and service.

“We would like to thank our friends and family for their help and support in setting up H53 Coffee and we would also to thank everyone that has wished us well it has been overwhelming. It’s clear to see the people of Creagh and Ballinasloe really want two local lads to do well” remarks Derek.

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## CLONTUSKERT DAY OUT!

Clontuskert Community Development Group have announced their inaugural Community Day Out.

Heading to the National Famine Museum and Walled Gardens at Strokestown Park House, Co. Roscommon on Saturday 24 June. There will be a guided tour of Strokestown House, followed by a self-guided visit to the National Famine Museum and walled garden. Tea/coffee and scones will be served in the onsite café.

Time permitting, a stop off in Cloontuskert Abbey, Roscommon is planned prior to enjoying a 3 course meal in the beautiful Athlone Golf Club on the homeward leg !

If interested, please text your name to 087 4106450/ 086 1706475. It promises to be a brilliant day and the first of many Community Day's out with friends and neighbours.



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Claire and staff of Healy's Pharmacy

Claire Healy and her business, Healy's Pharmacy, are celebrating 25 years in operation, dispensing prescriptions and providing health advice along Society Street over the past quarter century.

Following her studies in Trinity College, Dublin, in Pharmacy, Tipperary woman Claire Healy worked for some time in McGorisks in Athlone. Claire always had the desire to establish her own business, keen to work for herself. The opportunity arose 25 years ago in town when Brendan Walsh sold her the business upon his retirement, and Healy's Pharmacy has been operating since June of 1998.

Fortunately she inherited a thriving establishment, with Brendan building a loyal customer base over the years. She only continued to build on the foundation he left behind, over the years making major refurbishments to the store including in 2009 where they extended the dispensary and private consultation areas.

Claire expressed her gratitude for Ballinasloe and townsfolk for their support throughout the many years sharing: "I was very fortunate that those people gave me a chance and supported me even though I was a blow-in from Tipperary!". Claire has established a strong friendship base and connection here in town, and has a bit of fun with the people come the hurling season, supporting her home Munster county.

The Pharmacy was met with some challenges in recent years with the disruption caused by the major town revamp along Society Street in 2019 and the pandemic years, interfering with their business. However, the business overcame these challenges and is going strong to this day.

It would not be possible to have remained in operation without the support of Healy's Pharmacy's great staff. Claire's current team include long-time staff Carmel Connelly and Ethel Crehan who run the front of shop, pharmacist Niamh Walsh,

technician Lauren Gavin and locum pharmacist Trish Halliday, who all run the dispensary at the back of the establishment. Over the years, Claire had the opportunity to work with many other great people, in particular remembering Sarah Geraghty, Mary Doyle, Christina Keegan, Claire Greene and Teresa Whyte for their efforts.

For their 25th anniversary on Friday June 2, Healy's Pharmacy are running a draw for all their regular customers and anyone in attendance on the day. The first place prize is a hotel voucher for €250 of a hotel of the winner's choice, the second a €100 voucher for Gullane's Hotel, third a €100 voucher for Jorena's Gift Shop and fourth €50 voucher for Kariba's Restaurant.

The store offers a wide range of health products and beauty products for both regular clients and visitors in the town. The highly trained staff can also provide valuable advice and treatments for a wide range of health issues ranging from minor aches and pains, to cold and flu symptoms. Furthermore, those suffering from chronic conditions including diabetes and high blood pressure can consult with the healthcare professionals for guidance.

"Our customer base spans all ages and we try our best to give a very personal service" states Claire. "Bearing in mind that people can be at a very low point when they come to the pharmacy, be that through physical or mental illnesses, we hope they feel cared for here and that we can play some part in supporting them through difficult times" she explains.

Healy's Pharmacy is open from Monday to Saturday from 09:15 to 18:00. For those hoping to get in contact with them for their services, they can be reached by phone at (090) 964 2252 or via email at [healyspharmacyballinasloe@eircom.net](mailto:healyspharmacyballinasloe@eircom.net).

"I cannot thank the people of the town and hinterland enough for their loyalty and I hope I and my staff have repaid them in terms of the service we offer" enthuses Claire.



Claire Healy pictured with prize winner Liz Cahill



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The Clontuskert Parents' Association held this year's Tractor Run with a slew of vehicles departing the Rugby Club for their annual fundraiser.

Started in 2019 by John Paul Butler, in memory of his father John Paul Senior, proceeds went towards the St Augustine's National School, Clontuskert, as well a third of the funds raised going to the East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre.

By midday of the May event, roughly 60 tractors departed from the Club grounds following a route towards Laurencetown, venturing up Redmount Hill, travelling around Eyrecourt, going back towards Kiltormer and finally returning to the grounds. John Salmon and his



John Paul Butler, organiser of the Clontuskert Tractor Run

team of traffic marshals ensured safety for all at the occasion.

On returning to the Rugby Club, a host of activities were held for families and children including table quizzes, tug-o-war, face painting and more. Additionally, the Parents' Association were out on the day keeping the community fed and refreshed.

Organiser John Butler was impressed by the work of his committee on the day expressing "We have a great team behind us led by Laura Coleman, and there were loads of food, drink and refreshments for the kids on site as well".

Clontuskert Principal Kate Murray stated "On behalf of the staff and Board of Management we were delighted to see so many out today to support our lovely school, huge thanks

to Laura Coleman, Darina Cooke and Ada Cooke and all of the Parents' Association Committee for the mammoth task." Just over €900 was raised.

"Over the past year the funds raised have meant that we can continue to deliver an extended curriculum to the children where they have many outside school learning opportunities. Our student buses have been subsidised to enable teams to represent the school at hurling, Gaelic football, volleyball, swimming and more, and this year we plan to use some of the funds to develop our play area and outside learning environment" explained Kate.

The proceeds issued to the EGM Cancer Support Centre helps with ongoing services.



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Thirty-nine years from recalling when nearly 700 bicycles a day pedalled through town in the mid-80s between Garbally, Scoil Mhuire and the Vocational School, as well pelotons of cyclists from the National Schools - could be serviced from a zone 15 feet x 30 feet in John Fletchers old store - to today where very few cycle to school but our leading bike specialist needs 2400 square feet of space to cope with trade! tells us a lot.

For Managing Director Barry Taylor, just moving from his old 900 square foot premises on Sarsfield Road to the adjoining one - it's a lifetime of frames, pedals, helmets, ups and downs.

He started as a teenager for five years with Sean Fletcher's Dad, where they had 30 bikes on display and some 12 styles in the early 80s, through his first five years in Society Court on his own and then to his premises on Sarsfield Road, where he has been the epicentre of biking for 29 years !!

Today in the recently refurbished, gleaming new Bike Store -- he and his daughter Alanna - the new Store Manager keep an inventory of over 160 new bikes and over 20 styles with frames, spare parts and indeed complete bikes from their specialist suppliers deliverable with 48 hours of an online order!

"Since Gerry and Mike Barrett asked me to move in here 29 years ago I have had some wonderful years trading, some tough times - sure too, but I have seen three generations come to me for their bikes and made wonderful friendships. I'd say I safely knew 80 % of the town in the 80s and 90s - we all had to have the bike, and there were very few two-car families back then - but my how it has changed now - I would still know a lot, but there wonderfully so many new faces, new customers that I can't place or name ", he laughs.

While the school going age has no interest in biking , their parents and grandparents certainly do.

"Back then, it was either kid's bikes or racing bikes, now it's the leisure bike and the electric bike for the generation that is not on the road driving their kids everywhere anymore but want to enjoy cycling again and need a little help on some hills or on the homeward leg "explains Barry.

Since COVID and the development of specialised biking amenities nearby - they now sell a lot of Mountain bikes to cyclists who love the Slive Bloom Trails and other Western Cycle Ways - the growth of cycling clubs has really helped foster this new trade.

Alanna, the new store manager, is very proud to be walking into her Dad's footsteps and Barry is thrilled "herself and sister Rebecca grew up with me in the store and the way the business is gone so much online with ordering, banking, dealing with suppliers you need a wrench in one hand and the mouse in the other to manage it but Alanna has all those IT skills of her age and is putting them to huge effect here", states Barry.

Alanna is keen to stress that the store will not be losing any of its niche services "we are expanding our stock lines, our accessories and in time opening hours but quality servicing of bikes to a high standard will remain a key element of our business" she enthuses.

Currently opening hours are Tuesday to Friday 10 am to 6 pm and Saturday closing at 5.00 pm but they are examining changing their closed period once things settle down.

A lot of their new customers come from Tuam, Oranmore and Athenry - "they find it easier to come out to here for repairs or sales than using the clogged city zones", explains Alanna.

"I have to thank our loyal customers and especially the people who helped us move in here and get everything up to shape, Mike and Gerry Barrett, John Donnelly, Noel Slevin, Aiden Dolan and of course, Alanna and Rebecca", states Barry.

During the summer months, the Store will be hosting Opening Days with their Top Marquee Partners - Giant and Lapierre.

Stay tuned to their Website [www.barriscycles.ie](http://www.barriscycles.ie) facebook page [facebook.com/BallinasloeBikes](https://www.facebook.com/BallinasloeBikes) or call at 090 964 4358.



New Team at Barry's Cycles: Alanna Taylor Store Manager and Barry Taylor Managing Director in new premises



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Numerous bus routes and new services for Ballinasloe have been underway since Spring as part of the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan 2023 and other policies developing public transport, providing the town with easy and accessible connections to other towns and cities within the vicinity.

TFI Ireland is now hosting a new bus route connecting Castlerea to Ballinasloe seven days a week. The 546 line operates three times a day at peak hours in each direction, leaving Portiuncula Hospital at 08:55, 12:30 and 15:00. The route covers Dunlo Hill, Castlerea, Williamstown, Glenamaddy, Kilkerrin, Moylough, Mountbellew, Caltra, Ahascragh, the Ballinasloe Train Station, Dunlo Hill and the Hospital, and costs €6.50 for the full journey, one way.

Other TFI lines, including Portumna-Ballinasloe and Loughrea-Ballinasloe, were included in the most recent Rural Mobility Plan for routes to receive major enhancements – chiefly more frequency of service.

Currently the Portumna Route 547 operates four times a day Monday to Saturday between 08:15 and 19:17 and twice every Sunday at 13:50 and 18:30, departing the train station for Eyrecourt and Laurencetown before arriving by the town's Castle gates.

Loughrea Route 548 operates three times week-round, leaving at 09:35, 16:46 and 19:15 and stopping by Kilconnell, Cappataggle and Kilreekil.

Final decisions are still awaiting to be made regarding the enhancements to be taken place, but Route 547 intends in adding Shannonbridge in its list of destinations. For an adult single, the Portumna to Ballinasloe line costs €5 and Loughrea to Ballinasloe is currently €2, with bookings being made at [www.transportforireland.com](http://www.transportforireland.com).

Currently Senator Aisling Dolan is petitioning for a new route from Ballinasloe to Athlone along the old Dublin-Galway road. The line hopes to include the communities of Moore and

Summerhill who currently do not have access to major facilities in the neighbouring towns including TUS University and Portiuncula Hospital.

Following a motion sent to Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan emphasising this concern, Minister of State Josepha Madigan indicated that new routes are currently under view.

Senator Dolan emphasised that the Athlone-Ballinasloe route was a matter of urgency stating: “we need to see this happen sooner than 2024”.

In other developments, a new bus service is now available by Citylink connecting to Galway city, stopping by Aughrim, Kilreekil, Loughrea, Craughwell and Oranmore. The bus departs from Creagh, Dunlo Hill and Portiuncula 10 times a day from Monday to Friday between 07:45 and 00:22, and 8 times a day Saturday and Sunday between 09:22 and 0:22.

The price for an adult ticket to the city costs €11.50, but reduced fares are available at €5 for their service departing Ballinasloe at 07:45 and their route leaving Galway at 18:30. Bookings and a full timetable can be found on their website at [www.citylink.ie](http://www.citylink.ie).

Reduced fares are available for all the mentioned bus services through the TFI Young Adult and Student Leap Card, offering a 50% discount to graduates with a minimum of 16 hours of class time a week, or for commuters between ages 19 and 23. For those who qualify, applications can be made to [about.leapcard.ie](http://about.leapcard.ie).





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## NAME THAT BUS

The East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre are in the final laps of a creative new fundraiser, asking the wider community to help name their bus service which delivers patients for radiotherapy treatment in Galway.

Director Jacqueline Daly explained: “The routine of radiotherapy can be gruelling and draining on patients, as well as a worry for their families, but the support of the bus service can act to ease the patient’s cancer journey and ensure the family support systems know they are in good hands”.

Although undecided, three options have been shortlisted including ‘The Sunshine Bus’, ‘Radium Gaga’ and ‘Bus Buddies’, with a name to be decided in June. Their donation page remains open, already raising over €2,000, and contributions can be made at <https://gofund.me/18784dca>.





At the end of Main Street in Ballinasloe, a new café has opened at the former Masonic Lodge building; offering an alternative coffee spot for locals and a location to enjoy a variety of fresh treats and delicacies.

The vibrant and freshly decorated café of Pinky Moo Moos welcomes old and young to their establishment, with the interior space being designed akin to a retro milkshake parlour of the 50's.

On offer at the establishment are some speciality crepes, waffles, sandwiches, cakes, signature ice-creams, sundaes, as well as some hand shook drinks including milkshakes and slushies for the warmer summer months.

The Café is happily fully accessible for all, with a wheelchair ramp installed at the back door of the premises and a disabled toilet for customer use and space for some 50 patrons seated as well as offering takeaway.

The team behind the new venture aim to target morning workers in the vicinity who require a quick coffee or a wrap before their daily grind., the usual mid-morning tea merchants as well as catching some of the bustling lunchtime trade. The

café also aims to target a gap in the market for the youth of town who can now enjoy a crepe or milkshake with their friends after schools or indeed on the weekends.

Current opening times are still a bit fluid until they fully gauge customer preferences. At the moment the café is running 6 days a week between the hours of 09:00 and 18:00, and eventually 10.30 am to early close on Sundays.

Plans to cater for kids' parties are currently on the café's radar, who are considering having further menu options and deals for such occasions. Additionally special offers are planned for the June month, with more information being published across their social media channels or on the noticeboard at their store premises.

Supervisor / Duty Manager Deirdre Ryan has been encouraged by customer response so far. "The reaction from Ballinasloe has been brilliant, everyone seems delighted we have opened the doors up. Perfect timing just before the summer season" she noted.

For Deirdre what makes the café special, as opposed to other places, are the bright colours and the style of the place; "Many customers are often surprised by the fun theme when they enter and of course, Pinky Moo Moos claims to have not only the best coffee locally, but rather "the best in the world" explains Deirdre.

The business is still finalising some slots on their staff rota, seeking full-time, fully flexible staff and duty managers to work with them, preferably with prior Barista or Ice-Cream parlour experience. For all those interested in applying for the position, they can be contacted at pinkymoomoos23@gmail.com.



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The long-awaited Ballinasloe Omniplex Theatre has finally opened to the public, with the cinema staff directing filmgoers to a variety of flicks suitable for all ages across their five screens.

It marks the return to commercial movie entertainment 26 years after the closure of Swanwicks – Central Cinema (where Utah is now) on Society St. This cinema was the younger of the town – with the Plaza Cinema in the Town Hall running from 1920 to 1983 prior to being decommissioned. Incidentally the last movie shown in the Plaza was David Attenborough’s “Ghandi” and the last one in Swanwicks was “The Man behind the Iron Mask”.

The Omniplex group is an Irish company owned by the Anderson family, being the largest cinema group operating on the island with over 37 locations nationwide. The movie theatre in Ballinasloe, opposite Aldi, offers a capacity of 448 people, showcasing the latest major movie releases and changing screenings approximately every four to six weeks. Screen 1 offers a MAXX Recline service, with each seat being fitted with an electric recliner.

“Guardians of the Galaxy” was the Premiere Feature movie for the opening days, Directed by James Gunn. The cinema will be providing some 11 full/part time jobs operational, with the premises kicking off with a soft launch on May 12. Ballinasloe Omniplex Manager Jamie Harkins stated “We had a busy first weekend and, although we were hoping for it, we were unsure we would get it with the soft opening.”

Jamie Harkins, an Athlone native, is a great fan of film, taking a particular liking to horror flicks, comedies, and the occasional action film.

Starting with Omniplex, just over a week before their launch date, he quickly got settled into his new role and brand-new state of the art facilities. He could sense the buzz from the staff and audiences alike with the new prospect to town and worked well with his team in catering to their eager and enthusiastic customers over the initial few days. “We are all new to this Omniplex but as far as a settling in period it was quick. The staff did Trojan work and really pulled together to



Ballinasloe Omniplex staff Katarzyna Wrobel, Amy Johnston, Matthew Murphy and Richard Geraghty pictured outside the cinema.

make it go as smoothly as possible” stated Jamie.

Regarding this new venture in his career, Jamie Harkins shared “I am excited to be managing the newest Omniplex, everything is state of the art, which is actually kind of funny because the style of the cinema is reminiscent of what I like to call the golden age of cinema. Working in the cinema industry is a passion more so than a job, it’s in the blood, and to be attached to a cinema like this one, never mind one that is brand new, is like living a dream.”

Ticket prices for the theatre start from €8.50 for a child and €10.00 for an adult. The MyOmniPass deal is also available enabling patrons to receive a ticket to every movie featured at the theatre for €14.99 per month, or a Family Pass including two adults and two children for €38. More information can be found on their website at [www.omniplex.ie/cinema/ballinasloe](http://www.omniplex.ie/cinema/ballinasloe).



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Joanne Jordan

A new Extra Mural Education service has begun at the Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre called Mindfulness for Children, providing classes for kids on topics varying from dealing with emotions, remaining composed, learning about the brain and learning self-love and care.

The practice was established by Joanne Jordan, mother of three and a Newtown NS teacher. Approximately six years ago, Joanne discovered the world of mindfulness, helping her to cope with the hectic life of being a working parent. In 2021, she completed a diploma in Mindfulness and Positive Psychology and began teaching adult classes on the subject. Joanne soon realised children were in just as much need of the practise, having researched that it can mitigate effects

of bullying, help enhance focus for children with ADHD, and can improve mental health and wellbeing. She began teaching for children locally in March, taking classes every Friday and hosting ages 6 to 8 between 16:00 until 17:00 and ages 9 to 12 between 17:00 to 18:00.

Approved topics are taught through discussion, art, games and are concluded with gentle meditation. A typical class will begin with children sitting in a circle and sharing one positive moment from their week, helping to train their brains in having an optimistic view of their circumstances.

Following this, a new topic is thrown into the midst to discuss, such as how breathing can help regulate emotions. Art is usually intertwined with the topic and can provide children a means of expressing themselves.

Games and yoga are frequently held to help calm the kids and to enhance their mindfulness learning experience. These classes will help young ones to grow confidence, lead their own journeys and handle tricky emotions and thoughts.

Classes are one hour in duration at a cost of €10 per session, along with a discount for siblings of 10%. The business has just finished its second term, and will be recommencing in September 2023, but keep an eye out on their social media page thejoyofmindfulnessire on Instagram for updates on potential Summer activities.

For anyone interested in joining, you can contact Joanne Jordan at (087) 252 6764.

## RACHEL'S FUNDRAISER

Rachel Goode held a sensational concert fundraiser in Gullane's Hotel to a packed audience, raising much needed funds for the Ballinasloe Social Services.

Accompanying her on stage was Irish singer/songwriter Charlie McGettigan who together performed his iconic Eurovision hit 'Rock n Roll Kids' and many more duets. "I've sung 'Feet of a Dancer' for years, so to sing it with Charlie was a special

moment for sure", enthused Rachel.

Rachel was later delighted to hand over her €1000 donation to the local charity, presenting a cheque to Manager Teresa Coughlan. "Thank you to all who took part and to all who attended the event to make this donation possible for such a great service we have here in Ballinasloe!" Rachel concluded.



Teresa Coughlan and Rachel Goode

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The Ballinasloe Traveller Women's Group were overwhelmed with the community response to their first project, hosting a coffee morning and bake sale to fundraise for Pieta House. In total, the ladies raised €1239.22 for the charity which provides counselling and family support services for those who have been affected by suicide or self-harm.

Established last year by members of Galway Rural Development, the Local Traveller Women's Group have been active in the community, meeting twice a month. The group produced a short film "Life on the Road" a production which celebrated traveller tradition, heritage and culture. Additionally, the ladies made an appearance at the Dublin International Film Festival for the premier of Mincéir to show their support to local traveller activist Nora Corcoran who featured in the documentary.

The coffee morning and bake sale was the first fundraising project organised by the ladies, based on an original proposal to

have an open discussion with the community regarding suicide awareness. As well as fundraising for Pieta House, the occasion aimed to promote the "Hello, How are You?" campaign, encouraging people to engage in these discussions and ask the simple "how are you" question to those of us in distress.

The April event was packed, estimated that in total 160 people came to show their support. On offer were a sumptuous selection of baked treats and cakes by the organisers, along with a free raffle. The team in Ballinasloe were assisted by GRD members of Athenry and Tuam in managing the occasion.

The women raised a total of €1239.22, presented their cheque to Joe Burke of Pieta House going directly towards counselling and family supports provided by Pieta House.

Chairperson Helen Cawley was incredibly grateful for the community response and the donations especially from local businesses, sharing: "Thank God it was a huge success, Ballinasloe town - absolutely proud to be from it. The response that we got was brilliant." Likewise Helen praised the Women's Group for their incredible work delivering the event and their

action in producing all the baked goods. Committee member Anne Marie Fallon was effusive in her praise stating "I want to thank the townspeople, the support they gave, was so generous. I couldn't name them all".

"Massive shout-out to the community of Ballinasloe, we're absolutely overwhelmed with the response we had today" voiced Community Development Officer Karyn Gavin. Karyn particularly emphasised the modest aim of the event sharing: "Our message from today's event is simple - just to say hello, be kind, and talk to people".

The Ballinasloe Traveller Women's Group are looking forward to organising new future events, with plenty more activities planned in the pipeline. The group are happy to welcome new members, who can be contacted at the GRD Offices on Dunlo Street or via Karyn Gavin at kgavin@grd.ie and by phone at (087) 621 7917.



Ballinasloe Traveller Women's Group presenting their cheque of €1239.22 to Joe Burke of Pieta House.

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Local Ballinasloe businesses, startups, and entrepreneurs! are being invited to a highly anticipated networking event hosted by The Pulse Club on June 29th at 7.30pm in Gullanes Hotel for an evening of connection, collaboration, and relationship building. Members of the Roscommon Business Group and the Midlands Business Network (Athlone) have been invited also creating a wonderful opportunity to meet new neighbours, share ideas, and build lasting relationships within the vibrant business community. With the support of BACD, Pulse are creating a free event where local businesses can come together, exchange experiences, and explore potential collaborations. Whether you're a seasoned professional or a budding entrepreneur, this event is tailored to suit everyone's needs.

The evening promises to be a chance to expand your network, discover new opportunities, and connect with like-minded individuals who are equally passionate about business and the community.

To ensure everyone can be accommodated folks must RSVP for this event through the website.

"Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity to make meaningful



BACK ROW: Gary Kilcar, Mike Kennedy. FRONT ROW: Pat Condon, Yvonne Kennedy, Yvonne Hoary, Caroline Lynch and Trish Flynn

connections and strengthen the local business community. All are welcome, so spread the word and invite your colleagues, friends, and fellow entrepreneurs to join us on June 29th at 7.30pm in Gullanes Hotel" sated Convenor of the Club Joe Kenny

For more information and to RSVP, please visit the website [www.pulseclub.com](http://www.pulseclub.com) or contact us directly at Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre on 0909646516.

## PEOPLE OF THE YEAR AWARDS RETURNS

The Ballinasloe People of the Year Awards will return in 2023 for their fourth edition after taking a break during Covid. Organised by Ballinasloe Area Community Development (BACD) Clg, in conjunction with Ballinasloe Credit Union, the awards recognise and celebrate voluntary work of individuals, groups, organisations and schools that contribute to our community and recognise those who achieved excellence or represented their community or activity nationally and internationally.

The Biennial Awards Night will take place on November 16th in the Shearwater Hotel, with Nominations opening mid-September when full details of all categories and how to make nominations will be released.

"Our community and the over 250 active clubs, societies and organisations that make it up, can't function without the huge work and contribution of volunteers and these important awards in are important for us all to collectively take stock and note who the real unsung heroes are, that make it happen day in day out with sometimes little recognition" stated Seamus Duffy, Chair BACD Ltd.

All details will be available through [ballinasloe.ie](http://ballinasloe.ie) or any queries can be done through Lyn Donnelly at [info@bacd.ie](mailto:info@bacd.ie) or 090 96 46516.



2019 WINNERS BACK ROW L-R: Ann Conlon Deeley, Joseph Burke, Adrian Aherne, Noel Madden. FRONT ROW L-R: Helen Harney, Maureen Cahalan, Billy O'Carroll, Michael Ward, Michael Feehily

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Contestants of the Moore Scout and Moore United FC Lip Sync Battle



Leaders John McHugh, Joan Casey, Oliver Coffey, Aiden Sheridan and Elaine Sheridan

The Moore Scouts are going ten years strong, holding regular meetings and preparing for their various overnight outings local and abroad.

Originally formed in 2013, the 5th Roscommon Moore Scouts are a voluntary organisation that cater to young people to develop their life and survival skills. The club currently has roughly 40 boys and girls divided amongst three sections including Beavers for ages 6 to 8, Cubs between 9 and 11, and Scouts from 12 to 15. Additionally, the Moore Scouts have a number of late-teens in Ventures (16 - 18) who meet occasionally for events.

The Scout groups meet every Tuesday at the Moore Community Centre between 18:00 to 21:00 to play a variety of games, develop their team building, and progress on their life skills and badges. Some of the many badges and skills a Beaver, Cub or Scout will build upon include Backwoods, which focus on outdoor survival activities, and Pioneering, focusing on the importance of knots when building wooden spars structures.

Additionally, the club enjoys many outdoor activities for their weekends including hikes of nearby walking trails, overnight camps, and the occasional kayaking activity. Only recently, the Scouts section stayed overnight in the Loughrea Youth Centre, learning a great deal about the medieval town during their visit.

The youth folks are constantly building on their climate awareness, with the Cubs helping Pdraig Kilduff and the Moore Tidy Towns plant trees in the locality and would later join the Beavers to create Scarecrows with Beechlaw Organic Farm for their Environment badge. The non-profit group also hold regular fundraisers, recently duelling with Moore United FC in a lip-sync battle for two nights of entertainment for the community.

Next up is a group camp which will welcome all their age groups to join them in Portlick Campsite (Co. Westmeath) in June. Following this the Scouts and Leaders will be venturing to Wales for a grand international trip in July/August. Included in the itinerary for the visit are Whitewater Rafting, a tour of Anfield Stadium and jumping on the world's fastest zip line at Zip World Velocity 2.

Affiliated to Scouting Ireland youngsters joining can (should they choose) progress up the accredited stages Beaver, Cub, Scout, Venturer, Rover and eventually Leader.

For parents interested in having their youngsters join the Moore Scouts, you can contact them via their Facebook page to discuss fees and registrations. The club are always looking for Volunteers to give a hand at their weekly meetings and outdoor occasions and can be contacted by the same means or by email at moorescouts@outlook.com.



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Ahascragh First Responders along with Claire from the Old Mill Café

Over 70 participants sweated to raise vital funds for training and maintaining the volunteer group's defibrillators in the The Ahascragh First Responders 5k Fun Run, recently.

Starting at the Old Mill Café and trekking past Topline Greens, they then looped the surrounds of Ahascragh.

Chairman Leroy Walker thanked the events sponsors and volunteers on the day, including Ballinasloe Civil Defence for demonstrating a CPR demo and providing first aid cover. The run raised in excess of €1,300.

The First Responders are formed of volunteers from Ahascragh who answer to 999/112 cardiac and Stroke calls within a 5km radius of the village. The emergency workers are trained in conjunction with the National Ambulance Service (NAS) alongside other local groups including the Creagh/Ballinasloe responders and the Eyrecourt responders.

The group has been operating since 2008, originally established by James and Bernie Griffin. With the help of Padraig Glynn and Edel O'Brien, they have trained over 150 volunteers in the area throughout their lifetime, providing

valuable information in the locality to help others when required. The volunteers provide vital lifesaving before practitioners arrive from the NAS upon an emergency, and so far this year have been called out on 9 situations.

Currently the Ahascragh First Responders have defibrillations in Kilglass National School, O'Donnell's Pub, St. Cuan's Church, Killure School and Fohenagh Community Centre. Before the year is out, they hope to raise enough funds to install another defibrillation in the Eglish/Ervilla area to ensure they have the life-saving devices on all routes towards the village.

The committee are always looking for new members, whether to be "On Call" for any tasks or to simply help with the group's day to day operations. For more information you can contact the Ahascragh First Responders on their Facebook/Instagram or on email at [ahascraghfirstresponder@gmail.com](mailto:ahascraghfirstresponder@gmail.com).

## Special Olympian Katie To Represent Ireland At World Games



Katie Dillon, Aughrim, will be attending the World Special Olympics Games in Berlin, competing in the shot put and 100 metre run in June 2023.

We all wish her the very best !

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Ballinasloe Cancer Support Centre have launched a new Reiki therapy service, with Tuam native Louise Furey offering the practise with her rigorous experience in the field.

Louise always had a passion to help and support others on their journey through their struggles in day-to-day life. It was through her own life experience and conflict over many years that led her down the path as both a psychotherapist and a Reiki practitioner. Louise trained as a practitioner in 2014 and has also received a BA degree as a Holistic counsellor and psychotherapist in February 2020.

She found a calling to Reiki during the early stages of the Covid lockdown when her sister was diagnosed with severe breast cancer affecting her brain. Throughout lockdown, she began practising the therapy on her sister who found it relaxing, helping her sleep and relaxing her mind. When the lockdown lifted, she realized her path in Reiki and took the leap, establishing her business in January 2023 in Tuam.

Reiki is a healing technique which uses gentle hand techniques to flow healthy energy from the therapist through the client's body to alleviate any blockages which may cause illness. According to practitioners, some benefits of the therapy include reduction of stress

and anxiety in the body, helping with insomnia, treating depression, boosting morale and clearing negative thoughts, easing physical pain and helping relax a person suffering from illness or disease.

The Ballinasloe Cancer Support Centre, affiliated with the Irish Cancer Society, have begun this therapy at their hub on Cullen's Yard, just off Main Street, running from 10.00 until 14:00 every second week. Information on Reiki can be obtained from their office which is open at these hours every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Louise will also be participating in the Sligo Camino on July 1, a challenging 36km hike from Dromahair Co. Leitrim to Cooloney Co. Sligo, to raise funds for the S centre.

Chairperson Liam Connaire states: "I would like to thank the people who fund us and the local businesses who have supported us. This has led to an increase in our services in the past couple of months and for which we are for every grateful". The centre is run entirely by volunteers and supported by CE Schemes, ensuring all money received is invested into providing services for those who most need it.

A second counsellor has been engaged to allow more members and families in the community to avail of counselling which is in high demand. The centre has established a donation page for those who would like to contribute to their ongoing services at <https://www.idonate.ie/cause/ballinasloecancersupport>.

Bookings are essential for their services including counselling, massage therapy and reiki, and clients are recommended to book early to their office at (090) 964 9767.



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Members of the Brazilian community pictured at their stall



Family and friends of the Indian Community together at the Creagh NS Hall

Creagh National School returned this year with their Intercultural Days, with members of 39 different countries involved in the school demonstrating their unique history, culture, food, clothing and artifacts throughout the occasion.

It had been four years since the School has hosted their Intercultural occasion but the celebrations returned with huge enthusiasm and support from staff, students and families. Long-time Creagh NS teacher Mr. Shane Dolan, who is responsible for inclusion and diversity at the school, organised the occasion along with an exemplary committee of students of many cultures ranging from fourth to sixth class.

It was the first time that the Schools Inclusion and Diversity programme encouraged the programming of the event and celebrations to be led by the pupils themselves and proved to be a memorable innovation.

Festivities began on the school grounds on Monday May 8 with the 'Taste of the World' event. Students kicked off their parade of cultures that morning waving their respective countries flags and marching to their national anthems. "It was wonderful to see the pride in the children's faces when they walked up past the school" shared Mr. Dolan. "It was a wonderful event, and I was glad to be involved in it personally." That evening, stalls featuring each of the 39 countries encompassed the hall at Creagh NS including representation from the Indian, Brazilian, Omani, Bangladeshi communities and more, displaying their

history, artifacts, and their fantastic cuisine. In addition, live music performances of a mixture of genres were held in the hall to the delight of the attendees. Along with the foods of the many different cultures, refreshments were provided by the Parents Association of the school.

The following day, a flag ceremony was held outside the school grounds to mark Ireland's 50 years membership in the European Union. Students Eoin and Laura were among the Irish representatives who helped raise the EU flag that day, along with Dominic from Romania, Marlena from Poland, Simanta from Lithuania, and Lucy from France.

Shane, while mindful of the pupils, singled out the huge engagement of the parents, guardians and wider families who through the Parents Association helped really make the event such a success. "There has been food, pictures, costumes, maps, artefacts being delivered and set up in the Assembly Hall since doors were opened that morning and really gave visual and strong sense of how all have embraced the concept" he noted.

Throughout the course of the two days, Principal Áine Bleahane of Creagh NS was grateful to the community's support, stating: "Thank you so much to all the parents and families who have really thrown themselves into this one as well." For all the hard work of organising this event, Áine congratulated Mr. Dolan and the organising committee emphasising that: "We couldn't do it without you and we really do appreciate and celebrate the fact that we are a welcome community full of diversity".


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Buying a home can be one of the more stressful times in a person's life. When you've finally found the home of your dreams (or at least one that you might have some chance of affording), your thoughts will quickly turn to where you can source the funds to buy it.

Like so many people, you may have built up your mortgage deposit by saving in your local credit union. You'll now be happy to learn that Ballinasloe Credit Union is now offering mortgages to their members.

Here are some reasons why a mortgage from your credit union might be ideal for you.

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Credit unions constantly go above and beyond for their members. In fact, Irish credit unions hold a world record for customer (or member) experience! They have been ranked the number one organisation for customer experience in the CXi Ireland Customer Experience study for seven consecutive years.

**2. Your CU will see you for you!**

When you apply to your local credit union, you will be treated as an individual and your credit union mortgage advisor will take time to understand your particular circumstances. Or in more simple terms, your CU will see you for you!

**3. A Mortgage Decision Made at Local Level**

Your mortgage decision will be made at local level, not in some remote banking headquarters. You'll be dealing with people who understand the local area and the challenges faced by local people. Your credit union is happy to accept applications for small mortgages, something your not so local bank may not be as happy to entertain.

**4. You can deal directly with the CU**

When you are applying for a mortgage, you'll be dealing directly with a member of staff who is motivated to make the process as straight forward and stress free as possible for you.

**5. You'll be Supporting Local**

By choosing your local credit union for your next mortgage application, not alone will you reap the benefits of the exceptional member service which credit unions provide, you'll also be giving your business to a not-for-profit community-based institution, that's motivated to help you.

**6. No Vultures!**

Credit unions don't sell their mortgages to so-called vulture funds. Enough said.

**7. Straight Forward, Competitive Rates**

Credit unions offer straightforward, competitive mortgage rates, which are set at local level, so you get a clear picture of your total repayments over the term of the mortgage and highlight how any changes in interest rate may impact these repayments.

Grainne Murphy CEO of Ballinasloe Credit Union states "Whether you're buying (or building) your first home, trading up (or down) or you're thinking about switching your mortgage, Ballinasloe Credit Union is on hand to help. We believe in delivering all the benefits you expect from a financial institution, but with the added personal touch that comes from being part of your local credit union".

For information about a credit union mortgage see their website [www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie](http://www.ballinasloecreditunion.ie) or call 090 9643179 where one of the lending team will talk you through the mortgage process.





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The Ballinasloe and District Soroptimist Club held their Annual General Meeting in Gullane's Hotel reflecting on past activities, and forward plans for year ahead.

The Presidential Chain of Office was handed over by outgoing President Marirose Cullinane to Jane Enright-Mooney, who is now taking her position on the committee. In addition, Mary Courtney has been appointed as Secretary for the Club.

Past President Jane Rothwell made a presentation on what issues and activities are current and next for the Soroptimists. The focus this year is tackling domestic abuse and will be targeted in their upcoming activities and fundraisers.

The Branch were invited to the launch of the Go Purple Day to help raise Domestic Abuse awareness. The Go Purple Day is a joint initiative led by An Garda Síochána, together with domestic



Soroptimist members at the Ballinasloe Garda station for the Go Purple Day

abuse services across Ireland, raising awareness of supports and services available to people who experience domestic abuse and violence and reducing the stigma for those who require support.

The Soroptimists joined the Ballinasloe Lions Club, Cathaoirleach Cllr Evelyn Parsons and the local gardaí at their station in town to commemorate the day, all dressed in purple signifying strength, peace, love and independence.



Outgoing President Marirose Cullinane handing the Presidential Chain of Office to Jane Enright-Mooney

The AGM also resolved to encourage a focus on wellbeing for their membership. The Soroptimists will be holding many activities this season, - hosting a barbeque fundraiser on Wednesday June 14 for Women's Aid. Their barbeque held late last year was a resounding success, and the ladies hope to follow it up with tickets available to members soon.

The annual Public Speaking Competition was another great success, with two girls Aoife Hynes and Amy McDonagh going forward to the Regional Finals held in Ennis. For the 2023/24 year, the Soroptimists in Ballinasloe are set to host the next Regional Finals of the competition just after their local competitions in October/September.

The Soroptimist committee are looking forward to another year of helping women through enablement, empowerment and education. They are always looking for new members so if you are interested in joining the organisation they can be contacted by PRO Maria Finnegan at (087) 288 3907.



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Author Kevin Power

The Ballinasloe Library have numerous activities lined up this Summer, for one hosting Award Winning Author Kevin Power as part of The Art of Reading Book Club, an online monthly book events for library book groups across the country

Given the Art of Reading Book Club hosts a new author with their respective text each month, members of Ballinasloe's Crime Book Club will be reading *White City* by Kevin Power this June before getting the opportunity to meet with the

author in July.

Kevin Power, who is a lecturer in Trinity College Dublin in the School of English, is the author of "White City and Bad Day in Blackrock", winner of the 2009 Rooney Prize for Irish Literature, and has contributed pieces to various national and international papers. Locals will have the chance to meet him at the Library on Saturday July 1 at 14:30, giving readers an opportunity to put their questions to the author.

Ballinasloe's Crime Book Club commenced only last April by Branch Librarian Brid Grehan, who is thrilled with the turnout at the latest meetings. The group meet on the last Friday of every month at 12:00 and, so far, the group have read *Run Time* by Catherine Ryan Howard, and the *Strangers on a Train* by Patricia Highsmith. New members are always welcome to join them for a session.

This June those passing by the Marina will have the opportunity to join the Eco Showboat "Mayfly", along with demonstrations at the library. The Eco Showboat is an art project aimed to raise awareness about climate change. The hosts are currently undertaking a zero-emission tour of the Irish waterways on the Mayfly, a small, converted yacht fitted out with an inboard electric motor charged by a solar array, with the idea aiming to spark climate action throughout the county.

On June 9 at 14:30, Anne and Denis will venture into Ballinasloe Marina to discuss their two-year solar journey on the island's waterways and will then display their studies and observations. At 15:00 Sheila Flanagan will be screening her short film entitled 'Radius 10', a flick which will follow the 10km radius of her home encompassing varying landscapes of wetlands, bog, townlands, and special areas of conservation.



The Mayfly craft at Lough Key

Between 14:30 and 16:30 in the library courtyard, Eco Showboat resident marine biologist Rachel O'Malley will demonstrate some of the creatures that live in our waterways and will educate attendees about endangered species, invasive species and other problems facing fresh water environments.

The following day, kids will have the opportunity to join the Cruinniú na nÓg exhibition being held on June 10 at 10:30 aiming to explore youth creative potential through a wide range of activities including workshops, tutorials and readings. The children who participated in the Mosaic Workshops held at the library during May will have the opportunity to showcase their creative skills and hard work on the occasion.

More events at the library are planned for this Summer. Stay tuned on the Europe Direct Ballinasloe social media pages for further updates on activities coming soon.



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The Darkness into Light 5km walk returned again this year, seeing over 300 individuals joining the nationwide Pieta House fundraiser replicating ones journey through the darkness of mental illness into the light of mental wellbeing.

Darkness into Light is the flagship fundraiser for Pieta House, with over 200 walks taking place nationwide aiming to gather communities to dispel the stigma of suicide, to raise valuable awareness of help available, and to educate the community about the supports Pieta House offer.

A sea of yellow departed the Emerald Ballroom in the early morning of Saturday May 6, where participants wearing their DIL T-shirts were led through the lit streets of Brackernagh and Mackney. Then entering the darkened reflective kilometre along the Ardscoil Mhuire avenue, the dawn strollers reminisced, remembering loved ones lost to suicide, before entering the lively candle-flanked route through Garbally College with accompanying live music played by Frank Kennedy and Ben Parker.

As morning began to slowly dawn, the walkers passed back through Backernagh and crossed the Le Poer Trench beacon illuminated in encouraging radiant yellow. Finishing at the Emerald Ballroom for refreshments, each participant contributed their signatures to the Banner of Hope under the flame of the DIL Ballinasloe candle.

“The people of Ballinasloe have been very loyal to this special event” voiced event chairperson Brian Derrane, acknowledging



The Volunteer team for the DIL Walk Ballinasloe

the support of local businesses with particular gratitude being expressed to Ballinasloe Credit Union for their sponsorship. In addition, Brian thanked the many volunteers who ensured the safety of the event, particularly to Ballinasloe Civil Defence, Ballinasloe Fire Service and his fellow committee members.



Participants of the Ballinasloe DIL Walk departing the Emerald Ballroom

Donations can still be made at [darknessintolight.ie](http://darknessintolight.ie). If you or someone in your circle is in crisis with suicide or self-harm ideation, please call the Pieta House Freephone Crisis Helpline at 1800 247 247 or text HELP at 51444.

## LEGO MANIA FROM MAIN ST.

Salmons Department Store welcome Galway Bay FM Roadcaster & top Presenter Ronan Lardner broadcasting live upstairs announcing new products for the business.

Ronan's last joined Salmons for a live broadcast following the announcement of a new LEGO department. Main Street premier Department store is a one-stop shop for a variety of goods in town including Jewellery, Primary and Secondary Schoolbooks, Toys, Books and Magazines, Petcare, and more. Dermot has been

operating the family-owned business since 1995 which celebrated their 60th anniversary last year.

Friday June 9 between 12:00 and 15:00, Ronan Lardner will be live from Salmons with a great day planned ahead. New LEGO products, along with a host of giveaways and a whopping 25% discount of all selected toys featured in the store.

Stay tuned on the Salmons Department Store social media pages for further updates and giveaways from the live show coming up.

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Methodist Minister Rev. Steven Foster recently moved to the area, living in Woodlawn. This was a very different and significant posting for the ordained minister, offering a whole new series of connections and a new circuit of Methodist churches to look after.

Steven and his family originally bordered North and South, living between Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh and Swanlinbar, Co. Cavan. He trained for the ordained ministry of the Methodist Church in Ireland 18 years ago and has served appointments in counties Fermanagh, Down, Longford, Wexford and most recently Tipperary, looking after the Roscrea, Cloughjordan, Borrisokane and Shinrone churches.

The Methodist churches were established as a critique of 18th century Anglicanism, having a stronger focus on spirituality, the ordinary needs of society, and a commitment to social justice. Steven believes that although the bible should be held in high regard and be respected, verses of the text should not be picked apart to suit ones opinions or agenda. There is currently a wide net of Methodist societies across Ireland, with about 212 churches North and South.

The founder of the Methodist Movement –John Wesley preached as part of his Irish Tour in a mound near where the SVDP Retail premises is, in 1785, members of his congregation built their first primitive chapel on the site after many of their sermons / events they would disperse tea and plum pudding. Thus the area's locale moniker became Tae Lane from the 1820s to 1923 when the street was named Jubilee after the Jubilee of the Holy Family Confraternity !

Our last formal link with the Methodists wound down with the congregation selling their then Chapel House in 1950s near where Divilly's stands today !

For a long time, Steven has been concerned about the place of the traditional church in wider society and the church's responsibility to grapple with the hard questions of attendance and engagement with the real interesting issues in our world. Contemplating on how he should address these problems, the disruption of the pandemic promoted him to step out and move into a new phase setting of ministry.

With the Methodist Minister based in Woodlawn, he is active across East Galway and the city, engaging with various community groups in the area. He also maintains commitments outside the county as Chaplain of Gurteen College in north Tipperary, as well as the Chairperson for the Council on Social Responsibility of the Methodist Church in Ireland, who consider the social issues of our country which the church needs to grapple and speak out upon. Steven has also been active with various programmes in school settings.

In addition, the local minister is the leader of Amach le Dia in the west, a network for LGBTQ+ people of faith. Steven himself became the first openly gay minister of the Methodist Church in Ireland a decade ago and has been active in promoting safe spaces for LGBTQ+ people to exercise their beliefs. Amach le Dia holds regular meetings in the West of Ireland and Dublin offering a pastoral care network, and will be hosting a Sunday morning service on RTE TV on June 4.

In his spare time, Steven is also a referee with Snooker and Billiards Ireland and recently refereed the final of the 2023 Irish Amateur Snooker Championship. Since arriving in the area, he has become a member of Ballinasloe Snooker Club.

Steven's overall aim is to continue to develop expressions



Methodist Minister Rev. Steven Foster

of pastoral care, social justice and spiritual leadership in a changing world. This year, his priority is to get to know as many people as possible and to engage with wider society in its various expressions.

Commenting on this new phase of ministry, Steven states: "I'm very excited about being here. This is a new chapter for me. I've been in a fairly structured form of ministry for eighteen years, so this is different. While feeling very much called to stepping out like this, I've also been nervous too. There are many uncertainties. However, my confidence about it all is based on recognising that there is so much human need. It's as if I can't but take some little risk myself when people live with various challenges. I'm genuinely excited about whatever lies ahead on the adventure."

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Transition year students of Garbally College organised, produced, and performed in their Lip Sync Battle fundraiser in Gullane's Hotel, raising €4,000 for the Ballinasloe Social Services.

The 'Garbally Greatest Hits' Lip Sync battle returned for its second year, organised as part of the school's Transition Year programme. The event saw a wide range of performances by TY students including imitations of modern pop hits and classic rock anthems.

The Ballroom of Gullane's Hotel was a full house on the night, with Transition Year Programme Coordinator Ms Roisin McSharry taking to the stage to commence the contest. Music performances followed suit, with a great selection of songs ranging from One Direction's 'What Makes You Beautiful' to the Elvis Presley hit 'Hound Dog'. During the intermission, Garbally's Trad group played some numbers, while a raffle was held with some fantastic prizes to be won.

Each act was choreographed by Milkshake Dance Academy's Ria Purcell, directed by Mr. Darragh Leonard and featured music from DJ Lucian Brooks. The judging panel consisted of Annette Lynagh of the Social Services, Maura Lyons of the Garbally Board of Management and Stephen Reilly, former principal of Garbally College, each facing a challenging task in selecting the competitions winner.

In the end, Ballinasloe's Spice Girls emerged victorious after delivering an unforgettable rendition of the iconic hit 'Wannabe'. The band of talented students had perfectly captured the spirit of the '90s girl group, complete with neon outfits and synchronised dance moves.

Garbally's TY students did an outstanding job with this fundraiser, raising €4,000 for the Ballinasloe Social Services. Senator Aisling Dolan attended the night and later expressed her admiration for the students' talents and dedication to supporting a local charity.

Transition Year Programme Coordinator Ms Roisin McSharry and Principal Mr Paul Walsh congratulated the students' achievements in raising such funds for a worthy cause. Paul Walsh concluded by commending the occasions organisers and everyone who participated on the night expressing: "thanks to all who supported this special event."



Ballinasloe's Spice Girls, winners of Garbally's Lip Sync Battle



Eamon Chin delivering a speech on the night.

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Olympian and Irish Hockey International Naomi Carroll visited Clontuskert N.S. to congratulate Sixth Class student Cailín Naughten for winning the Ballinasloe Lions Hockey Club 'Design a Crest' Competition. Naomi presented the young student with a club jersey, with her winning crest featuring on the uniform.

Naomi was accompanied on the day by Beverly from the Ballinasloe Lions Hockey Club and, as part of the prize, pupils from Fifth and Sixth class received a special training session from the Olympian.

All the school's pupils were assembled to learn how the Cratloe native became an Irish International with 122 Irish caps to date. They were all inspired by Naomi, picking up many hockey tips and positive mental attitude traits required to excel in sports or life's endeavour.

As well as a Hockey International meet up - Cailín Naughten was later chosen to represent Ireland at the Children's General Assembly in Billund, Denmark this Autumn.

After submitting an online video application, the sixth-class student was one of 80 students chosen to participate in the Assembly across the world. The gathering aims to develop



Olympian Naomi Carroll pictured with sixth class pupil Cailín Naughten, along with Beverly from the Ballinasloe Lions Hockey Club

democratic skills, empower youth and children to initiate change and take action as creative world citizens.

Principal Kate Murray congratulated the young student commenting "We are all extremely proud of Cailín and look forward to following her journey as Irish Ambassador to the Children's General Assembly."

## KILGLASS NS HOST EU TEACHERS' VISIT

Kilglass National School participated in the European Commission's 'Ecological Literacy for a Sustainable Future' programme, inviting nine teachers across their three Erasmus partner schools in Croatia, Romania, and Turkey to showcase a variety of activities and attractions in the locality.

The two-year project sees each partner country take a specific related topic for their mobility week, with Kilglass NS focusing on 'Renewable Energy'. The overseas visitors were welcomed to participate in some workshop projects on the school

grounds including mini-turbines creations and papermaking. The children were proud to showcase the new multi-sensory garden and outdoor classroom, while presenting renewable energy projects.

Each of the teachers were also brought along to Galway Wind Park in Oughterard, the Living Bog in Mountbellew and the new, innovative eco-distillery in Ahascragh. Other highlights included a local guided walk with Johnny Johnson and a music session in An Táin. It was a highly enjoyable and fruitful week for all involved, and the Kilglass staff hope to engage again with their Erasmus counterparts soon.



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Bishop Michael Duignan awarding the Diocese of Clonfert Founding Vision Award 2023 to Colm Allman

Fr Colm Allman is the very worthy recipient of The St Joseph's College, Garbally, Diocese of Clonfert Founding Vision Award 2023, having shown, over the last 50 years, his commitment to St Joseph's College, as a centre of holistic and inclusive Catholic Education, inspired by the wisdom of the Gospel.

Fr Colm's exuberance and involvement in liturgy, folk groups, musicals, dramas, charity work and teaching throughout his time has guided and inspired many young men to grow and be the best they can be, to treat others with respect and dignity and to be mindful of those less fortunate

than themselves.

Practical, down to earth, grounded and closely connected to nature, his great love and respect for the environment is an example to us all. He demonstrates the pride and respect he has for the history of Garbally by maintaining the house, and gardens of Garbally Park, almost single handedly, no small task! Without Colm's devotion to preserving this monument, it would have been lost long ago. He is indeed Lord of the manor!



Seamus O'Brien Award winner Ilya Manning



St Joseph Day Awards 3rd Year winners Evan McKeon, Hugh Dolan and Ciarán Ó Hara



St Josephs Day Awards 6th Year winners Shane Fitzpatrick and Ben Bleahen



**Winners of the St Josephs Day Sports Awards**

BACK, LEFT TO RIGHT: Micheál Hanlon, Niall Jennings, Jack Ryan, Joseph Tierney

FRONT, LEFT TO RIGHT: Darragh O Keeffe, Jason Cunningham, Josh McCarthy, Eanna Caulfield.



St Josephs Day Awards 1st Year winners Conor Jennings, Adam Murray and Conal Nolan



Scoil an Chroi Naofa held their annual Multi-Cultural Day, with coordinators Ms Ann Gilligan and Ms Gemma Kelly being ably supported by the children and parents in its organisation. Deputy Principal Edel Moriarty was grateful for everyone's assistance in bringing their cultural items to share on the day and in particular to

those who provided a beautiful array of food. "It was a great day of learning and celebration of each of the 20 cultures that we are lucky to have represented in our school", commented the Deputy Principal. "The sense of community was heart-warming to see. We are already looking forward to next year."



Clonfert Diocese's Children's Art Competition Launch Art Competition Sponsors Bishop of Clonfert and Galway dioceses, + Michael Duignan, with generous sponsors (sitting left to right), Dermot Salmon (Salmon's Department Store), Fiona Dolan (Hubert Dolan Electrical) and Thomas Gullane (Gullane's Hotel, Ballinasloe), and standing, Kevin Folan, CFO, Ballinasloe Credit Union, John Coughlan (representing Garbally View Nursing Home, Ballinasloe) and John Weldon (representing St. Grellan's Council of The Knights of St. Columbanus) at the launch of the Clonfert Diocese's 2023 Children's Art Competition in Gullane's Hotel, Ballinasloe on Monday 27th March. Details of the competition will be posted shortly on both the Clonfert ([www.clonfertdiocese.ie](http://www.clonfertdiocese.ie)) and CREIDEAMH Faith & Friendship ([www.creideamh.ie](http://www.creideamh.ie)) websites.



Bridge Club President Marie Connolly presenting her Presidents prize to Mary Muldoon & Breege O'Doherty



Caoimhe and Fiadh Ni Luing, grandchildren of Noel and Mary Madden - who benefitted from the Kaftrio drug to treat their Cystic Fibrosis



First Communion Event

Sitting (left to right), Fr. John Garvey PP, Fr. Charles Nijameh, Fr. Bernie Costello (Ballinasloe & Laurencetown), Dr. Dan O'Connell, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick and Fr. Michael Molloy PP (Moore-Clonfad), and standing, members of St. Grellan's (Ballinasloe & District) Council of The Knights of St. Columbanus, John Coughlan (Ballinasloe-Creagh), Francis Donohue (Abbey-Duniry), John Harney (Ballinasloe), Sean Kelly (Clontuskert & Aughrim), Tom Corbett (Ballinasloe-Creagh) and John Weldon (Killure-Fohenagh) prior to a presentation sponsored by St. Grellan's Council by Dr. Dan to parents and guardians of children who will soon present for their First Holy Communion. The event took place in Gullane's Hotel, Ballinasloe, and was attended by more than 150 parents from the greater Ballinasloe area and Clonfert diocese.





Pictured from the left: Margaret Smith, Grace Finnerty, Jacqueline Daly and John Smith, who organised the Gowla/Lunerton Station Bog Walk in memory of Martin Finnerty R.I.P. They raised €1400 to help cancer patients and their families at the East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre.



Pictured on the occasion of Rose Colleran's ( Beagh Brabazon) 90th Birthday Celebrations recently were her and late husband Will's 10 children.  
BACK ROW: Declan, Gerry Liam, Aiden, Niall, Val , front row Colette, Regina, Rose - Birthday Girl, Olivia and Martina .



Alana Devlin, pictured with parents Chris and Christina, after participating in the World Irish Dancing Championships in Montreal, Canada



Donnchadh Duane who earned 4th place in 50m Freestyle U12's Swimming at the National Coummunity Games



Chairperson of Ballinasloe Traveller Women's Group Helen Cawley along with Community Development Office Karyn Gavin and Community Member Ann Marie Fallen.



First place winners of the Ardscoil Sci-Fest Competition Kaitlin and Aoihe



Representing The Pulse Club at the recent .IE digital town Awards: Martina Flanagan, James Coyle, Niamh Creaven Connaghton, Brian Brennan, Honoria Mitchell Black, Eoghan Kenny & Seamus Duffy



Pictured at the Pulse Business Breakfast Meet Up in Gullanes Hotel were: Trish Flynn, Caroline Lynch and Yvonne Hoary

# JUNE EVENTS GUIDE

## JUNE 1, THURSDAY

Irish Conversation Class With Padraig 'Giorcal Comhra'	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom Bsloe
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, Bsloe
Traditional Music.	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge

## JUNE 2, FRIDAY

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Tennis. Club Night. (weekly)	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Music in A Canal Bar. Happy Bar Star	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Music. Down The Road	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

## JUNE 3, SATURDAY

Tennis. Supervised Junior Session (Ages 4-11)(weekly)	11am-12pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Tennis. Supervised Junior Session (Ages 12+)(weekly)	12pm-1pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Music in A Canal Bar. Sean Grehan	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Alex Roe	10pm	Millars Bar, Ballydangan
Music. Kevin and Fiona	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. Red Tape	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Tongue And Groove	9.30pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	Evening	Pearse's GAA Club House

## JUNE 4, SUNDAY

Tennis. Club Beginners Session	10am-11.30am	Bsloe Tennis Court
Tennis. Club Sessions. All Welcome	11.30am-1pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Traditional Music.	6pm	An Táin Bar
Sunday Club. S Dancing. Andy Feery	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Patrick Feeney (Support Andy Feery)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Matt Keane	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. DJ Colm	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Jogn Finnerty	9.30pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	Evening	Pearse's GAA Club House

## JUNE 5, MONDAY

Luke Doherty 5K Walk/Run.	1pm	Curragh Grounds
Tennis. Ladies Night(weekly)	6pm-8pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom Bsloe
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting / Crafts	10.30-12.30am	Gullane's Hotel

## JUNE 6, TUESDAY

Cuidiu Breastfeeding Support Group	10am-11.30am	Youthwork Ireland, Marina Point
Giorcal Comhrá Irish Conv. Circle	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA Club House
Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Tennis. Men's Night (weekly)	2pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	7-8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30 pm	Bridge rooms,
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Walking Club	10.30-12.30am	Running Track,

## JUNE 7, WEDNESDAY

French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie	11am-12pm	Gullane's Hotel
Ballinasloe Knitting Group Meeting	11.15am	Ballinasloe Library
Massage Therapy	10am-1pm	Bsloe Cancer Supp. Centre
Tennis. Club Night. All welcome	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Book Club	3.30pm	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group "Bridge"	11am-1pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Meeting	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar

## JUNE 8, THURSDAY

Irish Conver. Class w/ P. Giorcal Comhra'	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom Bsloe
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

## JUNE 9, FRIDAY

Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Eco Show Boat "Mayfly"	2.30-4.30pm	Bsloe Library / Marina
Reiki Session	10am-2pm	Bsloe Cancer Supp. Centre
Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yard
Music in A Canal Bar. Michael Reagan	Evening	Shearwater Hotel

Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Music. Robbie & Brian	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

## JUNE 10, SATURDAY

Cruinniú na nÓg Mosaic Exhibition	11am-12pm	Bsloe Library
Junior Traditional Music Group	5pm	Pearse's GAA Club House
Music in A Canal Bar. Kora	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Padge Bannett	10pm	Millars Bar, Ballydangan
Music. Trevor Cavanagh	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. The Fuppin Grassholes	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Finnegan's Fury	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JUNE 11, SUNDAY

Sunday Club. Dancing. John Molloy	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Michael English (Support Steve Reilly)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. A One	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JUNE 12, MONDAY

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yard
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom Bsloe
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting / Crafts	10.30-12.30am	Gullane's Hotel

## JUNE 13, TUESDAY

Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Giorcal Comhrá Irish Language Conversation Circle	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA Club House
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	7-8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30 pm	Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, Bsloe
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Walking Club	10.3-12.30am	Running Track

## JUNE 14, WEDNESDAY

French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie	11am-12pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Book Club	3.30pm	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group "Bridge" game session	11am-1pm	Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, Bsloe
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Meeting	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar

## JUNE 15, THURSDAY

Irish Conve. Class w/ Padraig Giorcal Comhra	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom Bsloe
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms,
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Summer Traditional Music	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

## JUNE 16, FRIDAY

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yard
Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Music in A Canal Bar. Sean Brennan	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Music. The Boogie-men	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

## JUNE 17, SATURDAY

Music in A Canal Bar. Amy Brennan	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Music. Ruailé Buailé	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Adrian Rabbittie	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. Shane Moore	10pm	Millars Bar, Ballydangan
Music. Three Men & A Bass	10pm	Brewery Lane

## JUNE 18, SUNDAY

Town Band Show	TBC	Bsloe Town Hall Theatre
Sunday Club. Dancing. Michael Collins	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Jimmy Buckley	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Miranda	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JUNE 19, MONDAY

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yard
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom Bsloe
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting / Crafts	10.30-12.30 am	Gullane's Hotel

## JUNE 20, TUESDAY

Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Giorcal Comhrá Irish Language Conversation Circle	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA Club House
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	7-8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30 pm	Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, Bsloe

Bsloe Active Rtrmt Walking Club	10.30-12.30am	Running Track,
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## JUNE 21, WEDNESDAY

French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie	11am-12 pm	Gullane's Hotel
Massage Therapy	10am-1pm	Bsloe Cancer Support Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Book Club	3.30pm	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group "Bridge"	11am-1pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Meeting	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar

## JUNE 22, THURSDAY

Irish Convers. w/ Padraig Giorcal Comhra	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Louise Morrissey 35th Anniv. Concert		Shearwater Hotel
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom Bsloe
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms, Sarsfield, Bsloe
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Summer Traditional Music	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

## JUNE 23, FRIDAY

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yard
Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Reiki Session	10am-2pm	Bsloe Cancer Supp. Centre
River Festival. The Stunning.	All Day Event	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music in A Canal Bar. Nial Ruthledge	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Music. Brego	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

## JUNE 24, SATURDAY

River Festival. Roisin O & Mark McCabe	All Day Event	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music in A Canal Bar. Sean Grehan	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music. Na Riadoiri	10pm	An Táin Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Padraig Egan	10pm	Millars Bar, Ballydangan
Music. Joe Wynne	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. The Tav Jam Band	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Boogie Man	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JUNE 25, SUNDAY

River Festival. H Green & fionn Curran	All Day Event	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Sunday Club. Social Dancing. Teddy & Cathal Barry	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Mike Denver	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Ollie Rocks	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JUNE 26, MONDAY

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom Bsloe
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting / Crafts	10.30-12.30am	Gullane's Hotel

## JUNE 27, TUESDAY

Ballinasloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Giorcal Comhrá Irish Convers. Circle	8.30pm	Pearse's GAA Club House
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	7-8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30 pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Walking Club	10.30-12.30am	Running Track

## JUNE 28, WEDNESDAY

French Conversational Class w/ Lizzie	11am-12pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Book Club	3.30pm	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group "Bridge"	11am-1pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Meeting	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar

## JUNE 29, THURSDAY

Irish Conversation Class	11am-12	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Ballinasloe Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Summer Traditional Music	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

## JUNE 30, FRIDAY

Ballinasloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yard
Ballinasloe Indoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	Bsloe Social Centre
Music in A Canal Bar. Amy Brennan	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Music. Let's Dance	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

# JULY EVENTS GUIDE

## JULY 1, SATURDAY

Tennis Supervised Junior Session (Ages 4-11)(weekly)	11am-12pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Tennis Supervised Junior Session (Ages 12+)(weekly)	12pm-1pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
The Art of Reading Book Club. Kevin Power "White City"	2.30pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music in A Canal Bar. Happy Bar Stars	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Music. Nightowls	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Live Music	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. Red Tape	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. John Finnerty	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 2, SUNDAY

Tennis Club Beginners	10am-	Bsloe Tennis Court
Session(weekly)	11.30am	
Tennis Club Sessions. All	11.30am-	Bsloe Tennis Court
Welcome(weekly)	1pm	
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
SundayC-.Dancing Liam Mannering	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Declan Nerney (supp. Liam Mannering)	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Musics. Ken solo	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 3, MONDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
Tennis Ladies Night(weekly)	6pm-8pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting/Crafts	10.30-12.30am	Gullane's Hotel

## JULY 4, TUESDAY

Ciorcal Comhrá Irish Conver. Circle	8.30pm	Pearses GAA Club House
Cuidiu Breastfeeding Supp. Group	10-11.30am	Youthwork, Marina Point
BsloeGAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Tennis Men's Night (weekly)	2-9pm	BsloeTenni9s Court
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	7-8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
BsloeBridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Walking Club	10.30-12.30am	Running Track
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge

## JULY 5, WEDNESDAY

Massage Therapy	10am-1pm	BsloeCancer Supp. Centre
Tennis Club Night. All welcome	7pm-9pm	Bsloe Tennis Court
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Book Club	3.30pm	BsloeLibrary
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group "Bridge"	11am-1pm	Bridge rooms
game session		
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Meeting	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge

## JULY 6, THURSDAY

Variety Concert	7.30pm	BsloeTown Hall Theatre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom
BsloeBridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms, S
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Summer Traditional Music	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

## JULY 7, FRIDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
BsloeIndoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	BsloeSocial Centre
Reiki Session	10am-2pm	BsloeCancer Supp. Centre
Music in A Canal Bar. Michael Reagan	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Music. Down The Road	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

## JULY 8, SATURDAY

Art Exhibition "Renewal"	2.30-4.30pm	BsloeLibrary
Junior Traditional Music Group	5pm	Pearses GAA Club House
Summer Party "Up & At It" w/ the Corrigans	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music in A Canal Bar. Eamon O'Neil	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Live Music.	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. Cruiscin	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. Three Men And The Bass	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. BoogieMan	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 9, SUNDAY

Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
SundayC-.Dancing Gavin Gribbin	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Patrick Feeney	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Music. It's Live	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 10, MONDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
Open Music Sessions in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting/Crafts	10.30-12.30am	Gullane's Hotel

## JULY 11, TUESDAY

BsloeGAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Ciorcal Comhrá Irish Language	8.30pm	Pearses GAA Club House
Conversation Circle		
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua	7-8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Aerobics		
BsloeBridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Walking Club	10.30-12.30am	Running Track,
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge

## JULY 12, WEDNESDAY

Bsloe Active Rtrmt Book Club	3.30pm	BsloeLibrary
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group "Bridge"	11am-1pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Meeting	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge

## JULY 13, THURSDAY

Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom
BsloeBridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Summer Traditional Music	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

## JULY 14, FRIDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
BsloeIndoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	BsloeSocial Centre
Music in A Canal Bar. Donie O	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Music. Robbie & Brian	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

## JULY 15, SATURDAY

Music in A Canal Bar. Paul Dowling	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Music. Steve Reilly	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. John Rabbitte	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Beggars Velvet	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Miranda	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 16, SUNDAY

Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
SundayC-.S.Dancing Stuart Moyles	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Kieran Rosney	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Music. Night Owl	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 17, MONDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
Open Music Sessions in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting/Crafts	10.30-12.30am	Gullane's Hotel

## JULY 18, TUESDAY

BsloeGAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Ciorcal Comhrá Irish Convers. Circle	8.30pm	Pearses GAA Club House
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	7-8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
BsloeBridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Walking Club	10.30-12.30am	Running Track,
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge

## JULY 19, WEDNESDAY

Massage Therapy	10am-1pm	BsloeCancer Supp. Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Book Club	3.30pm	BsloeLibrary
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group "Bridge"	11am-1pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Meeting	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
A Summer Night w/ The Country Stars	Evening	Shearwater Hotel

## JULY 20, THURSDAY

Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom
BsloeBridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms,
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Summer Traditional Music	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

## JULY 21, FRIDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
BsloeIndoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	BsloeSocial Centre
Reiki Session	10am-2pm	BsloeCancer Supp. Centre
Music in A Canal Bar. Sean Brennan	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

## JULY 22, SATURDAY

Music in A Canal Bar. Nial Ruthledge	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music. Na Riadoiri	10pm	An Táin Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Sean Crehan	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Music. High Reel	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. Toxic Twins	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. Dave Mills	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 23, SUNDAY

Foraging Workshop w/ Wild Food Mary	2pm-5pm	Battle of Augrim
Music. Tongue And Groove	9.30pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
SundayC-.S.Dancing Michael Collins	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Johnny Brady	9pm	Shearwater Hotel

## JULY 24, MONDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting/Crafts	10.30-12.30am	Gullane's Hotel

## JULY 25, TUESDAY

BsloeGAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom
Ciorcal Comhrá Irish Conver. Circle	8.30pm	Pearses GAA Club House
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	7-8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
BsloeBridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Walking Club	10.30-12.30am	Running Track,
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge

## JULY 26, WEDNESDAY

Bsloe Active Rtrmt Book Club	3.30pm	BsloeLibrary
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group "Bridge"	11am-1pm	Bridge rooms,
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Meeting	3pm	Gullane's Hotel
Traditional Music	9pm	An Táin Bar
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge

## JULY 27, THURSDAY

Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	7-9pm	Emerald Ballroom ]
BsloeBridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge rooms,
Traditional Music.	9pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Open Music Session in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Summer Traditional Music	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

## JULY 28, FRIDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
BsloeIndoor Country Market	9am-1.30pm	BsloeSocial Centre
Music in A Canal Bar. Billy Mac	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Find The Joker	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	10pm	Brewery Lane
Texas Holdem Poker	9.00pm	Joe's Bar
Traditional Music Session	9.30pm	Emerald Bar

## JULY 29, SATURDAY

Music in A Canal Bar. Frankie McDonald	Evening	Shearwater Hotel
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Music. Ruailé Buailé (Lukers Boatyard)	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Colum Carroll	10pm	Millars Bar, Bdangan
Live Music	10pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Music. Kevin and Fiona	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music. DJ Colm	10pm	Brewery Lane
Music. A One	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 30, SUNDAY

Traditional Music	6pm	An Táin Bar
Music	7pm	Fallons Bar, Sbridge
Traditional Music.	9pm	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
SundayC-.S.Dancing Checkers	5pm-7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Country Dancing. Robert Mizzell (	9pm	Shearwater Hotel
Music. Kev And Fiona	9.30pm	Joe's Bar

## JULY 31, MONDAY

Bsloe Men's Shed Meeting	10am-2pm	Men's Shed, Cullens Yrd
Summer camp starts (ages 6-13)	Morning	Pearses GAA Club House
Open Music Sessions in the Old Bar	Evening	Lukers Bar, Sbridge
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Group Aqua Aerobics	2-3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Bowling	10.30-12.30am	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Rtrmt Knitting/Crafts	10.30-12.30am	Gullane's Hotel

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# OUT AND ABOUT



Grainne Murphy, Sean Madden BCU & Carmel Greally with the Ballinasloe Community Games 2023 ~ Girls U12



Chair BCU Sean Madden with Girls Under 10 participants at the Community Games, Ballinasloe



Sean Madden BCU & John Cawley with Ballinasloe Community Games 2023 ~ Girls U8 B



Rhona Jennings & Sean Madden BCU with the Ballinasloe Community Games 2023 ~ Boys U10



Grainne Murphy & Sean Madden BCU Ballinasloe Community Games 2023 ~ Girls U8



Grainne Murphy & Sean Madden BCU with the Ballinasloe Community Games 2023 ~ Boys U8 A



Grainne Murphy & Sean Madden BCU with the Ballinasloe Community Games 2023 ~ Boys U8 B



Grainne Murphy, Sean Madden BCU & Carmel Greally with the Ballinasloe Community Games 2023 ~ Boys U12



Community Games Organiser Carmel Greally and Jim Doherty - 100 years of volunteer services between them

Hospitality and Community Development Group Representatives and members of Ballinasloe MDC and Athlone MDC and Roscommon MDC attended this year's National Suck Valley conference themed around "Inspiring Rural Creativity".

The two-day event delivered an exciting line-up of guest speakers, along with live performances showcasing the talent found in the rural Irish midlands.

With the success of the inaugural Suck Valley Conference last year focusing on rural regeneration in the post pandemic, the follow-up event was organized by Chairperson of Suck Valley Way, Cllr Anthony Waldron, with support from Roscommon Leader and Roscommon County Council. The event served to highlight the potential of Roscommon and East Galway to promote the region for regeneration and rural creativity.

It proved another welcome bridging point between Senior area leaders and Councillors to build on their agreed agenda of work that started in Gullanes Hotel in Spring with inaugural joint meetings of the Councillors and Officials from South Roscommon and East Galway.

Gleeson's Townhouse, Market Square was the venue for day one with guest speakers including Cllr Waldron, Chief Executive of Roscommon County Council Shane Tiernan, President of the Association of Irish Local Government Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, 'Join Our Boys Trust' Founder Paula Naughton and Senator Tom Clonan. The first sessions had a particular emphasis on the performing arts focusing on recognition and funding for music therapy for those with disabilities.

The Abbey Hotel, on day two was kicked off by Galway Cathaoirleach Cllr Michael 'Moegie' Maher and Cllr Anthony Waldron, with an open discussion following regarding Youth Participation in Rural Areas. Irish playwright,

novelist and columnist Michael Harding spoke about the concept of "Belonging" to a region. Other discussions on the day included examining Rural Tourism, the diminishing role of the county council, and protecting rural landscape and community.

Among the representatives of Ballinasloe in attendance included Cathaoirleach Cllr Evelyn Parsons, Cllr Declan Geraghty and Tidy Towns Heritage Officer Pdraig Lyons.

Cllr Parsons was delighted to attend the conference sharing: "Stimulating content and contributions over two days from excellent speakers. Well done to independent colleague Cllr Anthony Waldron for his diligent work in organising this National Conference and keeping a focus on rural regeneration, especially around the Suck Valley Way in Roscommon East Galway."

Pdraig Lyons commented on the unique prospects of developing the Suck Valley region stating he was "Delighted to see the first citizens of Galway and Roscommon sitting side by side fully supporting these new co-operation developments."

Cllr Waldron thanked all the contributors to the conference concluding: "We work closely with our friends over in County Galway at the Ballinasloe Municipal District, and Athlone and Roscommon Municipal District in developing the tourism and the enterprise in the totality of our inter county region".



Some attendees of the National Suck Valley Conference 2023

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Franciscan Sisters at the 80th Anniversary Celebrations of the Portiuncula Hospital

**“Portiuncula Hospital truly does belong to the people of Ballinasloe and the huge catchment area it serves” the 80th anniversary celebrations of the hospital’s establishment was told by a Sister who worked there for many years.**

Franciscan Sisters who served there over the years were special guests at the festivities and they were joined by former and present nurses, medical personnel, staff both indoor and outdoor, as well as friends of Portiuncula over the past eight decades.

**Former matron and administrator at Portiuncula, 100-year-old Sr. Bridget Veale, was among the many Sisters who had trained in Portiuncula before serving in nearly every continent around the world, who came together as special guests for the historic celebrations in Gullane’s Hotel.**

Following mass, celebrated by Hospital Chaplain, Fr. Bernie Costelloe, with Archdeacon John Godfrey presiding, the Hospital Manager James Keane, welcomed everyone to the 80th Anniversary Celebrations of Portiuncula University Hospital, particularly the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood, as well as past and present members.

He said “Today is an opportunity for us all to mark this important milestone in the hospital’s history. For the last 80 years it has been an integral part of the local and wider community in delivering healthcare. Today we acknowledge the significant contribution of the Franciscan Missionaries who were truly a remarkable group of women. In 1942 the sisters had a vision to build a hospital in the community and because of their courage, drive, energy and commitment their dream became a reality with the first building opening in Mount Pleasant in 1943. Their first patient was admitted on 11th February 1943 and later that month the first

**baby was born there. It is now estimated that approximately 103,000 babies have been born in Portiuncula, to date.**

“Portiuncula Hospital was the only Voluntary Hospital in the West of Ireland when it opened as a 36-bed unit in 1945 and patients were transferred from Mount Pleasant. Further extensions were added in 1953 and in the same year the Madonna School of Nursing was opened. The infrastructure has stood the test of time and we are currently upgrading and replacing it with modern accommodation for our patients to meet all the current day requirements” he concluded.



**In 1942, Mother Margaret Keenan and Sr. Bernard Rudden, members of the FMDM’s in Guildford, Surrey, arrived in Ballinasloe to start a foundation. They received the hospitality of the Sisters of Mercy in the town and, opened their first Nursing Home in Mount Pleasant, in two houses. They were later joined by five other Franciscan Sisters; with the help of the then Bishop of Clonfert, Dr. Dignan, “they bargained the price of eight acres of land at Brackernagh for £950 and Portiuncula was on its way!!!”**

Sr. Chad McCollum, a former member of the staff in Portiuncula, said “It is a fact that the hospital would never have happened if the people of Ballinasloe and the surrounding areas had not supported it as wholeheartedly as they did. Again and again over the years, the Sisters, Staff and people of Ballinasloe and its catchment area came together to work and raise funds for the hospital, their generosity, huge effort and sheer hard work in this regard can never be forgotten. The



Three Sisters who were the first students of the Madonna College of Nursing:  
Sr. Sarah Duggan, Sr. Marianne Monaghan and Sr. Cathie Donlon



Sr. Chad McCollum

hospital truly does belong to the people of Ballinasloe and the huge catchment area it serves.

**“I want to pay tribute to the extraordinary group of women who came to Ballinasloe 80 years ago. They were remarkable. They were courageous, strong-minded, feisty, energetic women. Their hearts were bigger than themselves and they brought with them the family spirit of our Congregation, which permeated the hospital and is still there today.”**

Concluding, she said “The Sisters and ALL the staff right through the hospital and those associated with the hospital, laid the foundation for what we have today. To each of you who work in Portiuncula today, we extend our gratitude for the extraordinary service you give. We know that Portiuncula is in safe hands as she begins a whole new era.”

The anniversary celebrations provided a rare opportunity for former nursing sisters and staff members to meet up again, for a nostalgic reunion as Ballinasloe says thanks to all concerned for the service they have given over the last eighty years.



Franciscan Sisters Theresa Sullivan, Elizabeth Gill and Kathleen Lynch at the Portiuncula 80th anniversary celebrations.



Dr. Conor Carr chatting with 100 year old Sr. Bridget Veale

Ballinasloe and its surrounding towns have benefited to the tune of €54,562 from the Galway County Council Community and Support Schemes 2023, out of a total of €273,750 being allocated to voluntary activity across the county.

The Community and Support Schemes 2023 is the fund available to non-profit organisations in Galway to benefit local activity and events. There were three schemes available - economic development, community development and for cultural development, with applicants having a maximum choice of one support scheme.

Grants to individual organisation generally did not exceed €3000, with the exception of some projects.

The €54,562 amount was allocated for voluntary groups categorised under Ballinasloe, which includes 21 surrounding towns, such as neighbouring villages of Killconnell, Aughrim and Laurencetown, along with northern Galway villages of Glenamaddy, Williamstown and Newbridge. A welcome total of €7,400 was distributed to voluntary groups within Ballinasloe town for cultural events, festivals and community efforts.

Within the Economic Development Support Scheme, there was €14,700 distributed to Ballinasloe from the county total of €69,250. Among the successful applicants in this category was the Ballinasloe Fair and Festival who received €2,000 for the supply and installation of a curtain side trailer as a soundstage and for branding, Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds who were allocated €1,400 for the marketing, programming and developing costs of this year's festival; Ballinasloe Area Community Development who received €1,500 for the associated costs of the Tourism sample weekend, and the past Patrick's Day Parade who got €600 for the expenses of this year's parade.

The Community Development Support Scheme saw €26,312 for the Ballinasloe region out of a county total of €103,800. Funding for upgrades of community recreational areas were distributed including €3,000 for an upgrade of equipment at Colins Park Playground in Glenamaddy and €2,500 for Wheelchair Parking Spaces at the Cappataggle Community Association for Recreation and Sport. Additionally, the Tidy Towns groups in Creggs, Ballygar,

Killconnel, Ballinasloe, Williamstown, Newbridge, Aughrim and Glenamaddy were all supported through the scheme for materials, planting and installation of community facilities.

The Cultural Development Scheme was split into three categories focusing on Arts, Heritage and Irish Language, with the region benefitting from €13,550 of the €100,700 county total. As part of the Arts Grants, the Ballinasloe Musical Society received €400 for their staging of the 'Sound of Music'. Among the Heritage projects were €500 for the Battle of Aughrim 1691 site for speaker fees and €1,000 for the Mountbellew Vintage Club for their restoration of a steam engine. No funding was distributed to the Ballinasloe region for Irish Language projects.



## 10<sup>th</sup> Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds 2023

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds takes place over the weekend 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and the organisers are building a list of accommodation providers who would be interested in providing Bed & Continental style Breakfast to musicians and visitors for the weekend. If you have a spare room, house or apartment free in the Ballinasloe town radius, please email [secfeilecheoilarryreynolds@gmail.com](mailto:secfeilecheoilarryreynolds@gmail.com) for further information.



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The Indian Community in Ballinasloe kicked off with their first event of the year BICC EVE-23 acting as a combination of three festivals Easter, Vishu and Eid-ul-Fitr. The event showcased the unity in diversity of the Indian Community in Ballinasloe and surrounds.

The Ballinasloe Indian Cultural Community started small in 2015 with just four families, but has since grown to encompass over 120 families and over 200 members locally. The aim of the group is to cherish social connections and enhance art and culture in the community.

Following a two-year break over COVID, the community returned small in 2022 with their Easter-Vishu-Eid festival. The event unites people of all cultures and religion through Christian, Hindu and Muslim holidays for a fun night of music, dance and storytelling.

The BICC only recently elected a new committee for this year with Aju Abraham as President, Dotty Matthew as Vice-president, Akshai Kurian and Ajin Alex Antony as Secretaries, Devu Sabu and Don Bosco as Joint Secretaries, Ajith Mathew as Treasurer, Shiju Philipose and Priya Susan as Programme Co-ordinators, along with the Executive Committee Members of Ajeesh Joseph, Salu Sabu, Robin Daniel and Jithin John. The group hopes to completely reform their committee every year with new representatives for the community for each period.

The EVE-23 was the first event of the current committee, hosted in Moore Community Hall on April 22 and was a resounding success, becoming the largest Indian programme in Ballinasloe post pandemic. Senator Aisling Dolan inaugurated the event who, along with the BICC committee and Fr. Bernie Costello and Fr. Michael Molloy, lit the ceremonial candle inaugurating the ceremony and the new board.

The highlights of the night included electrifying dance performances by both children and adults representing the rich culture of India. Couple dances, Fusion dances, Songs and



BICC President Aju Abraham lighting the ceremonial candle inaugurating the event.

Instrumental sessions additionally contributed to the vibrant night along with feature act DJ Darshan.

Committee President Aju Abraham was grateful for this community gathering expressing: "We don't get many opportunities to get together, so this event is great in that regard, especially for the kids".

Aju thanked M6 Motors for acting as their major sponsor for the event and for playing a significant role in making the event possible. In summary of their EVE celebration, Aju shared: "This event exemplified how diversity can bring people together and strengthen community bonds."

Although the annual EVE occasion is their largest annual gathering, the BICC will host events in August/September, late in December, and are also hosting online platforms with kids learning activities.

The BICC Committee have also created a Facebook page under "Ballinasloe Indian Cultural Community" where you can find regular updates about upcoming and ongoing activities with the group.

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The Ballinasloe Town Band making their way to the Dean Crowe Theatre in Athlone

The Ballinasloe Town Band travelled to the Dean Crowe Theatre in Athlone to compete in the 55th National Band Championships hosted by the Irish Association of Brass and Concert Bands (IABCB), their first time ever competing in the contest.

The community band is a voluntary organisation comprising of musicians ranging from youngsters to folks in their eighties. Originally formed in 2014, the group take on children and adults providing access to music education in the locality.

Our young musicians ventured to the Dean Crowe Theatre, by coach. Although nervous on the day, the band were well prepared with their three pieces on the day 'Cyclone' by Michael Oare, 'Gold Medal March' by Paul Murtha and 'Ancient Flower' by Japanese composer Yukiko Nishimura.

Twelve bands joined them on the occasion, demonstrating some fierce competition among the players. In the teeth of more established performing bands the Ballinasloe Town Musicians provided a fantastic performance on the day, with adjudicator Michael Ball elaborating high praise for the band's efforts.

The IABCB results ceremony saw the Dublin Concert Band

and Drogheda Brass Bands receive the Top Prizes in the Section one winning titles, the Percussion Section were singled out and came away with the 'Best Supporting Section' Cup across all the bands.



Jenny Schmidt, Danu Flanagan, Rory Kelly, Ryan Kelly, Peter Culleton, Aoibhin Coughlan pictured with Best Supporting Section award.

This was a fantastic achievement for the players and to celebrate, the band spent their time at the following practice session to watch back videos of their performance combined with a pizza party, to the delight of the young members.

During Eastertime the band held a Craft Fair in the Band Hall (the old Parochial Hall on Dunlo Hill). Many came along to support, as well as the youngsters who entered some fantastic hats into the Easter Bonnet competition. Creative skills are not in short supply – as was evident in the variety and quality of the arts and crafts items for sale with the Brothers of Charity contributing some fantastic bonnets. Business was brisk as stall holders sold their items, while the Town Band entertained all Fair goers.

Plans for a new upcoming Summer concert are underway for the Town Band. Rehearsals are ongoing, but dates and times are yet to be confirmed which will be published in the local press, Parish Newsletter and on their Facebook page. Those hoping to get in contact with the Town Band can do so via Martina Doherty at (087) 971 0496 or by email at ballinasloetownband@gmail.com.



Brothers of Charity crafting Easter Bonnets for the fair.

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'The Sound of Music' held in the Town Hall Theatre, was the first production to be staged by the local Musical Society since 2019. It was a resounding success with all five performances sold out, members of the Society were briefed at their recent AGM.

Secretary Greg Blackwell told the meeting it was busy year for the society with members taking part in the annual Zombie Walk along with providing refreshments at the turning on of the Christmas lights event in November.

Auditions were held in October for The Sound of Music and Chairperson Frances Leahy spoke of the great turn out of both children and adults on the day. She thanked the members of the cast who worked so hard to bring this much awaited show to stage. After a forced break of nearly 4 years it was great to see the society back in the Town Hall Theatre and entertaining audiences.

Thanks were extended to Ballinasloe Credit Union, the society's main sponsor along with all the patrons and sponsors whose continued support is vital to the running of the society. Committee member Gerard Sweeney presented the accounts on behalf of Treasurer Ellen Egan who was unable to attend and he advised the meeting that the cost of staging 'The Sound of Music' was close to €47,000, highlighting the importance of audience support/ticket sales, the continued support of our patrons and sponsors, along with some fundraising to cover extensive costs.

Thanks also were extended to the Gullane family for their continued support in providing space for meetings and rehearsals in the run up to the show.

A huge team of people work together in a voluntarily capacity to stage any show - Stage crew, Costumes, make-up and hair & front of house teams along with the committee give of their time to ensure all runs smoothly. Thanks were extended to everyone that helped in any way over the months preceding the show and during the week itself.

Formal congratulations were extended to Gerard Sweeney on his recent election to Vice-president of AIMS (Association of Irish Musical Societies) and Gerard was also made an honorary life member of the society at the launch of the show in February.

As this year is the centenary of the Society, founded in 1923, the committee are planning a celebratory concert on Saturday October 21st. Details of this concert will be announced over the coming months.

The committee elected for the coming year were: President-Maureen Donohue, Joint Chairpersons- Frances Leahy & Lisa Whyte; Secretary-Greg Blackwell; Treasurer-Ellen Egan, Committee members: Eithne Blackwell, Gerard Sweeney and Jacinta Keane.

The new committee will start meetings shortly to decide on the 2024 show and the fun starts all over again!

Former Relays and indeed Ballinasloe Musical Society member - Patrick Byrne: no stranger to the Midlands light Opera, Musical and Theatrical tradition who has been nominated for Best Actor in the AIMS Awards.

Over the past few decades, Patrick graced many a production in Town Hall Theatre, Ballinasloe, but was nominated for his towering performance as " Rob" in Sunshine in Leith with the Birr Stage Guild in nearby Offaly.

We will know how successful he is on the night of the 22nd of June when the nominees will get their Gongs in Killarney.

Pictured here with Brian Derrane as the Bishop in The Field, in the Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre in 2010 !!

Former Ballinasloe Musical Society longtime Director Paul Norton was nominated for Best Overall Director for the show RENT with the Galway Musical Society!



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Artist Sean Kelly

Local painter/creative Sean Kelly recently collaborated with German artist Wiltrud Dull for a joint-exhibition held in the Library, displaying a unique selection of their talents and offering an insight into their creators motives.

Sean Kelly from Portnick, had a strong interest in painting early in his years but found it difficult to maintain a living in the craft. He was awarded a scholarship in the National College of Art in 1964 but curtailed his studies after two years due to economic issues.

Instead, he trained as an architect, working as a first assistant planner for Roscommon County Council for several years before running his own practice from 1969 to 1990.

Among his more notable achievements are drawing up the template for the foundation stone of N.I.H.E Limerick, now the University of Limerick, and the stained-glass windows in Creagh Church, Ballinasloe in collaboration with the Late Patrick Pye.

Sean also worked for a period of time as a computer aided



Sean Kelly and Wiltrud Dull together for the "A Dull Moment" exhibition.

designer in the 90's, being invited to help establish foundation modules and lecture for education centres at Athlone IT and Roscommon VEC.

In 2007, he joined the Property Registration Authority and later was elected to their committee for the selection and purchase of artwork of their new Government Offices in Roscommon. It was this project that acted as the catalyst to lead him to return to the study of Art and Design at the Galway-Mayo Institute of technology and graduate with a Bachelor's degree in 2018.

In the past decade, Sean held an exhibition in Kilrush and had his work showcased twice before in Ballinasloe. Following his GMIT graduation showcase, he had one of his paintings from his DeProfundis collection bought by the State for inclusion in the national collection.

Sean's previous latest joint exhibition was hosted in Ballinmore at the Solas Gallery in 2022 collaborating with Sligo artist Pat Gillen.

About six years ago, Sean met Wiltrud Dull through a mutual friend in the village of Cross in Loophead, County Clare. Wiltrud is a German artist, now based in Woodford, who in her retirement has picked up painting and has showcased her work in many solo exhibits across the country.

The duo remained in contact through their shared fondness and ideals in the craft and in the last year Wiltrud approached Sean proposing a joint-exhibition of their work.

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A total of 52 paintings were on display in the church gallery of the Library. Their work shared a lot of similarities, with a strong emphasis on technique and use of acrylics and watercolours, although Sean Kelly is “happy to work in any medium that communicates to the public” he states.

The local artist is a staunch believer in having free exhibitions, welcoming an audience to his shows at no cost. “You are getting a performance for free” he emphasised, “whether you like it or dislike it.” Furthermore, Sean maintained the idea that he, as the artist, must be available throughout the exhibition to present and answer any questions regarding his

work, remaining in situ at the Library Gallery until the final day.

The event was a success for the pair, seeing visitors from all across the country and snapping up the works at very modest direct to artist prices.

Next up for Sean Kelly is an exhibition in Ballinrobe on June 16, along with some miscellaneous design work for sculptures. For the moment, he continues to take submissions and spend the days easy in his quasi-retirement. Sean can be contacted by (085) 862 7046, and a collection of his art can be found at [www.seankellyartist.wordpress.com](http://www.seankellyartist.wordpress.com).

## LIVESTOCK MUSIC FESTIVAL EDITION 2

East Galway’s youngest Festival - the family-centred “LiveStock” music festival is just around the corner, bringing to Aughrim a treat of activities and performances of Ireland’s top and emerging artists.

Organisers Cormac Jennings and Sharon Sweeney are keen to have their own interests and influences reflected in the festival, weaving their strong environmental ethos into its fabric. The event will be hosted on the Cormac’s organic farm on the naturally rolling Liskelly landscape and will be bedecked with feature pieces of local, national, and international artists.

Taking place from July 1 to 2, it will cater to music fans with a wide range of genres including funk-rock, jazz fusion, traditional Irish to reggae. Along with headliners Jiggy and Overhead the Albatross, attendees can expect electrifying performances from Barefoot Magicians, Staff Party,

Alessandra, Tung in Cheek, and many more.

Activities for the young uns include - storytelling, iron smelting, art exhibitions and life-sized board games - all building on the feed back from the first edition last year.

Tickets are limited -(this is not Glastonbury!) but some are still available at €125 for the weekend and €70 for the day, but U-14s can be brought along for free when accompanied by an adult. More information and bookings can be made to [www.livestockfestivalgalway.com](http://www.livestockfestivalgalway.com).



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The Battle of Aughrim 1691 Visitor Centre has reopened, chronicling the events of one the bloodiest conflicts of Irish history. In addition, walking tours will be available along the Aughrim trail this Summer and along with some events organized by the local history group Cath Eachroma 1691.

The Battle of Aughrim was fought between the Irish Jacobite army of James II against the Williamite Forces of William III in July 1691. The savage encounter was decisive in ending the rebellion of James II in Ireland and resulted in over 7000 people being killed on the surrounding fields.

Ronan Killeen has been appointed acting as curator for the summer since the reopening. The attraction revisits the battle through an audio-visual experience, offering interactive displays and information boards for an educational and recreational tour. Visitors get the chance to wear the uniforms and wield the weaponry of the 1691 soldiers, relieve their stories and take some pictures with the available photo stands.

The opening times for this Summer are from Tuesday to Saturday 10:30 to 16:30, and Sundays from 14:00 to 17:00. The cost is €5 for an adult, €2 for under 12s and €4 for a senior or student. For more details and bookings, you can contact Ronan at (090) 967 3939.

In addition local heritage consultant Michael Riddell will be hosting walking tours along the Aughrim trail, bringing visitors to the destinations where the key episodes of the battle were fought including Kilcommadan Hill, St. Ruth's Bush and Fort, and the ruins of Aughrim Castle.



Participants of the wild foraging walk in the field of Aughrim

The surrounding fields take about 2 hours 30 minutes to traverse over sometimes rough terrain, with suitable clothing and footwear being advised. Times are dependent on Michael's availability but typically are taking place in the morning. It's recommended giving a week's notice for bookings. Michael can be contacted at (087) 816 0971 for more details.

Cath Eachroma 1691 (The Voluntary Battlefield Heritage Group) are organizing two events this Summer, one a once-off foraging walk taking place from the Visitor Centre on July 23 between 14:00 and 17:00 hosted by Mary, a wild food forager, chef, and educator from County Offaly. This workshop will offer an opportunity to discover what food sources would have been available to those on the march in 1691, as well as which plants would have been used for medicinal purposes. Bookings are essential and can be made to (087) 184 9661 or email at [catheachroma1691@gmail.com](mailto:catheachroma1691@gmail.com)

The history group are also inviting submissions for a group exhibit entitled 'On Our Doorstep' for Heritage Week in association with the Ballinasloe and District Heritage Group and Group 8. Artists are encouraged to submit work on the theme of the 1691 Battle of Aughrim, inspired to interpret the events in their own image. For full details of the brief, you can contact [ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie](mailto:ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie).



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Presenter Avril Nic Gabhainn with County Singer Philomena Begley



Rachel Goode as Folks and Country Blues Artiste of the Year



Emma Donohue with her Crystal as "Gene Stuart Musical Inspiration"

Some glittering talent of Ballinasloe was on display at the 11th Annual Hot Country Awards at the Hillgrove Hotel in Monaghan, with classically trained Soprano Rachel Goode coming home as Folks and Country Blues Artiste of the Year and Country Singer Emma Donohue earning her own Galway crystal for the "Gene Stuart Musical Inspiration" award.

Local Media personality Avril Nic Gabhainn also had a role in the award ceremony, acting as the Hot County TV Presenter for the event. Great fun was had by all on the night, with some great photos taken by Free Lance Acclaimed Photographer - John Finnerty, who recently had his photograph of Nathan Carter used by An Post on a stamp in the "Keep it Country" Issue.

### BARA SINGERS



Co-ordinator and longtime Musical Director BARA Singers, Marie Power, acknowledged the generous spirit in Ballinasloe which helped them raise €2,050 from their annual Songfest for Parkinsons Association. "This money will benefit services in the greater Ballinasloe area administered by the Galway Parkinsons Association Huge thanks too to all who helped" stated Marie.

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Local Women's Rugby superstar Beibhinn Parsons is on track to make history, becoming our town's first Olympian at the Paris Olympics in summer 2024 when she and the Irish Women Seven's Squad sealed an Olympic qualification after defeating Fiji 10-5 at the France Seven's in Toulouse recently.

As a Creagh NS student, Beibhinn started her career playing for the Ballinasloe RFC's Mixed Under-11s, being only one of two girls to play for the team. The prodigy athlete then led her team at Ardscoil Mhuire to glory with an All-Ireland Girls Seven's title and at the young age of 16 was the youngest player, male or female, to make her international debut for the Irish Rugby Football Union. Beibhinn played wing for Connacht with Blackrock College RFC, and followed with her current involvement in the Irish Women Seven's team.

She is now preparing with her team in anticipation for the Rugby Seven's Competition next year, taking place at the Stade de France in Paris.

Beibhinn found that, throughout her years in the



Beibhinn Parsons on her winning day in Toulouse, accompanied by her parents Evelyn and Vincent, her sister Sally and her brother Jack.

sport, her teammates acted as her main sources of inspiration, including her Ballinasloe Seven's colleague Aoibheann Reilly. Furthermore, throughout her upcoming years, the senior girls she trained with helped inspire her love and passion for the game.

Prior to the latest World series, she and her teammates trained extensively at the IRFU high performance centre. She is apparently "living on cloud nine" following their victory, with this triumph bringing her one step closer to living her childhood dream of being an Olympian.

Naturally the team's primary goal is to come home with the gold medal, therefore they have returned to training as they always have at the IRFU centre. The team will continue practicing throughout the year along with participating in some friendlies, with the Australian Women's team set to arrive for some play-offs by the end of the Summer.

For the moment, Beibhinn hopes to keep things simple, with nothing much changing in her day-to-day life. Although the prospect of being an Olympian is a personal dream of hers, the humble athlete will only accept the prestigious title after the big competition next year.

Along with her Rugby career, Beibhinn tries to keep up her studies at Dublin City University. Currently she is engaged in her first year in Communications, finding radio and podcasting to be very interesting. The undergraduate studied Biomedical Science for two years but felt it was too demanding to maintain both her intensive studies in medicine and her professional career in Rugby. "This year has been very difficult" said Beibhinn, "but the University has been very helpful and understanding for my unique circumstances".

One of her primary reasons for staying motivated and persuing the sport is the idea of her acting as an idol for young girls in the locality and beyond. "Just the thought of being a role model for them brings me joy" Parsons shared. Beibhinn was only recently appointed as the Ambassador for Coral Leisure, being an ideal representative for the sports company brand spanning nine locations nationwide.

Next up for the Seven's team is their three-week Euros tournament, along with their Hamburg Championship Series taking place this June. For the moment, it is back to routine for Beibhinn, training as she always has and representing Women's Rugby at home and abroad.



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The newly founded Ballinasloe Cricket Club have been gathering regularly and training for upcoming competitions on the town's Fair Green, the same location where Ireland's first Cricket Team gathered to practice nearly 200 years ago in 1825.

Postings of this event on the Life Social Media pages brought about remarks from local historian Steve Dolan who has researched and written extensively on Cricket in Galway and provoked Jane Leslie whose grandfather, Frank Kempster, who was from Ballinasloe, played on the Green as a young man in the 1870s and played for Ireland twice. His brother, Jack, also played and was one of the team's best bowlers ..... underarm!!

She like Steve and a great many others we thrilled to see cricket flourishing in town again.

The current Cricket Club has only been established in the past year, with members of the local Indian community to the fore-out of a love of the sport. The club trains every Tuesday afternoon in the Fair Green and sees about 40 players involved, although many members work in healthcare and cannot always make the time commitments.

The squad have been especially active lately, competing in the Connacht League against many worthy adversaries in Athlone and Galway. The Cricketers recently competed against Athlone in a hard ball competition but lost the game, just short of 17 runs.

Ballinasloe was Ireland's first ever Cricket club, being founded in 1825 under the patronage of Lord Dunlo,

made up of the gentry and professional classes. Their team trekked all the way to the city capital to Phoneyx Park and defeated Dublin in 1828. The sport was played regularly on the Fair Green throughout the century, but gradually declined in the 1900s, among other Cricket clubs, following the infamous ban of 'foreign' games by the Gaelic Athletic Association.

The Cricket Club hope to fundraise for a better facility as the current grounds are not ideal for playing the sport with a hard ball. The Committee are considering options and locations for a suitable pitch. Such a ground will enable the Cricket players to play at a professional level, growing and strengthening the club in the Connacht league.

For the moment, the players continue to practice extensively for a variety of competitions this Summer season. The club are always looking for more sportsmen to join them to build the team, and anyone interested in joining can contact coach Shijo George at (089) 423 5926.



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Interim Committee: PRO Collum Ward, Chairperson Bernie Donnellan, Treasurer Gary Kilcar, Secretary Krystal Donnellan, and Youth Officer William Martin.

The Committee and trustees gathered first with Keagan and Interim GAA Handball Manager Tom Moloney facilitating the prospect of having a community gathering to gauge interest in reinstating the club.

A second public meeting followed soon afterwards held in Gullanes Hotel, with strong interest in the revival project being demonstrated. Among the priorities for the revitalised club was making the sport accessible to younger generations who will carry on the future of Handball in the region.

A passionate group of advocates, old and young, gathered in Gullane's Hotel to discuss the revival of the Derrymullen Handball Club, with the attendees proposing means of getting the local once loved sport on its feet again.

The sport of Handball has had a long history in Derrymullen, with the club being founded in 1920 playing on a 60x40 Court. The facility in the region was of a high standard, enticing legends in the sport including World Champions Jack Kirby and Joey Maher for sensational games of handball.

In 1986, the Committee decided to put up a smaller 40x20 court as they were restricted in space. Regardless the group operated well for a few decades, but unfortunately local interest gradually died in the years before the Covid pandemic and the club was disbanded by its Committee.

However, following a review of handball activity throughout the county, Outgoing President of GAA Handball - Dessie Keagan got in touch with the Derrymullen representatives to revitalize the game in the locality. Upon a recent visit by the head office, Dessie Keagan remarked how great the facility was and emphasized what an asset it had to be to the county.

An Interim Committee was appointed at the meeting, with Bernard Donnellan as Chairperson, Gary Kilcar as Treasurer, Collum Ward as PRO, Krystle Donnellan as Secretary and William Martin as Youth Officer.

"I want to get the club back up and running" outlined Interim Chairperson Bernard Donnellan, "I want to get youth in it and let it have a bit of a future". Interim Krystle Donnellan thanked Pierce Lawlor and Secretary Brian Mulcahy of the Galway County Board for their assistance in organising the meeting and acting as an intermediary between the Derrymullen crew and the head office.

First task for the Committee is to refurbish and reopen their current facility in Derrymullen and get the word out about the new Club. The Committee are encouraging the wider businesses community of to inform their customers about these developments and to potentially respond to any sponsorship bequests that they may commit to the cause.

June 10th is key date for Operation Transformation at the Alley where volunteers will mount a big clean up and clear out day.

Players past or present or people just interested should contact Krystal Donnellan at 085 342167 for further information.

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Another busy few months at the Ballinasloe Golf Club commenced with a wonderful win from Isaac Oliver in the Munster Boys U16 Amateur Open in Newcastle West GC.

The upcoming golfer was met with fierce competition nationwide on the Limerick grounds but managed to persevere on the day. Oliver scored a gross of -1 under par on the day and a grand total of 70 points.

Committee Member John Donnellan stated "It is never easy to take a major title down South. Well done from the Fred Daly Team, Team Management and everyone at Ballinasloe Golf Club. Your continual hard work and commitment has brought this success. All at the club are delighted for you." The

committee also congratulated Charlie Mooney who finished with a brilliant second place finish in the Connacht Boys' Amateur Open in Ballinrobe GC.

Several Hole-in-ones have been recorded in the months past, setting pace for the Summer ahead. Senior Captain Andy Fenton had a miraculous achievement landing his ace at the 8th on their Wednesday Senior competition, hit across 185 yards and fighting against a 20 yard breeze. Just before, Fergus Finneran recorded another with his 5 iron at the 17th hole on the local course, and earlier Dr. Vincent Parsons hit his own on the 3rd, with some eyewitnesses speculating it was a no bounce, slam dunk.



Snr Captain Andy Fenton on the 8th following his Hole-in-One



Munster Champion Issac Oliver receiving his trophy

A new Captain's Prize and Order of Merit prizes were awarded to the Juniors recently. The golfers competed for Tom Cafferky's delayed captain's prize, with Niall Conneely seeing the first-place title and Issac Oliver the gross title. Among the standings for the Order of Merit 2022 was juvenile Eamonn Tully and junior Liam Tully in first, juvenile Senan O'Hara and Martin Tully in second, and Junior Evan McKeon in third.

Various new competitions and series are underway for the golfers, with the club's ladies, mens and juniors making steady progress in the Inter-club competitions. The Ladies Get in Golf series is seeing good attendance with participants enjoying lessons from Mark Staunton, which is to be followed by on course practise.

Many events are on the horizon including further 9 and dine occasions, the Festival of Golf from June 12 to 18 June, along with Ballinasloe hosting the Connacht U16 Boys' Open championship on July 17 and the Connacht Inter-Club Finals on July 22 and 23. For anyone hoping to get involved with activities for this season, you can contact their office at (090) 964 2126 or by email at ballinasloegolfclub@hotmail.com.

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Under 14s captain Aaron Treacy who was selected for the upcoming Kennedy Cup in Limerick

The Ballinasloe Town AFC Under-14s squad have been busy, reaching the semi-final of the Division 1/2 Cup after a convincing 5 goals to 1 victory over Craughwell.

Tyler Ward and Callum Conway each came home with two goals for themselves, along with Eoghan Dunne who scored a fantastic goal himself.

Unfortunately the boys were not as lucky in the final, with Mervue United beating them 1-nil. Regardless, there were some fantastic performances on the day, with Adam Loughlin coming close to scoring with a brilliant 25 yard drive just hitting the crossbar, and goalkeeper Patryk Nowicki making some excellent saves on the day.

The U14s have also been making an impression for themselves, with team captain Aaron Treacy being selected for the upcoming Kennedy Cup Tournament to be held in Limerick. In addition, the club's U13/14s squad and management will make their way over to the Netherlands for the Brabant Boys Cup in June, making a showcase of their talents against roughly 100 other teams across the two day tournament.

Many Ballinasloe athletes have been showcased at a county level this season, with Ty Finnerty and Paddy Ó Connell playing for the Galway Football Association team in a brilliant semi-final win over the Wexford League by 3 goals to 2, with Ty contributing with a super goal.

In addition, U13s Fionn Duffy, Adam Lloyd, Eanna Colleran, John Kelly and Callum Conway all represented the Galway League, beating Donegal by 2 goals to nil in Éamon Deacy Park. Kelly and Colleran went on to represent the county at the Centre of Excellence in Dublin, displaying their skills developed from the local Town AFC to a national audience.

The Clubs Men's Senior and Reserve teams have just finished their season. For their last game, the Senior team reached the final of the Roscommon Premier Division Cup Final but were beaten by Ballaghaderreen on a 1-nil scoreline. The Reserve team were more fortunate, retaining their Roscommon Division 1 status after a tremendous 3-2 victory over Glen Celtic.

Club stalwarts Gary Egan and Mike Lynch have received the tremendous honour of representing Ireland in the Dia Euro Futsal Cup this summer in Poland. The Club Ladies team are preparing for the forthcoming season in the Roscommon League and are hoping to attract additional players for the coming season.

Closing off the Summer is the Annual Summer Youth Camp at the Curragh Grounds, hosted for kids from ages 6 to 13 years old, from August 7th to 11th between 10:00 and 14:00 daily. Cost is €80 per child and €65 for each additional child. Children must bring a packed lunch and drink, zip tops, football and water bottle will be presented to each player. All participants well in advance must preregister before the opening day, and all enquires can be sent to Sonya at (086) 397 4519.



The Under 14s following the Division 1 & 2 Cup 1/2 final against Mervue United.



The Under 15s who reached the Cup Final played in Éamon Deacy Park, unfortunately being bested by Merlin Woods FC by a 3 nil scoreline.

## FUNDRAISING WALK FOR SOCCER PLAYER LUKE



Ballinasloe Town AFC are organising a 5km sponsored Walk/Run supporting club member Luke Doherty who was diagnosed with Hodgkins Lymphoma late last year.

The Doherty family have been actively involved with the soccer Club for years, with Luke himself playing since the young age of six and currently a competitive player for the U13s/U14s. His parents, Louise and Vinny, have developed strong affiliations to the club, with Vinny acting as a coach and an organiser for their annual summer camp. His uncle Michael played as an excellent goalkeeper for Ballinasloe, and his grandfather Pdraig served as the former chairman for the Town AFC.

The walk will depart the Curragh grounds on the June 5 Bank Holiday at 13:00, with all

encouraged to come along and show solidarity with Luke and his family. Refreshments will be available for all participants at the Soccer Clubhouse immediately after the 5km walk/run.

The Town AFC will be donating 50% of proceeds raised to Luke's family of which 30% will be donated to the 2 charities hugely helpful to them- namely "Clionas Foundation" and "Aoiheanns Pink Tie", 25% to St Theresa's Childrens Ward in Portiuncla with the remaining 25% to the National Children's Hospital in Crumlin.

Any further enquiries and requests for sponsorship cards can be made to Joby Kelly at (087) 631 7817.

Additionally donations can be made online at [www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/lukedoherty5k](http://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/lukedoherty5k).



**The Ballinasloe U18.5 Squad**

**BACK ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT):** Eanna Kelly, Ronaun Sheerin, Adam Canning, Gearoid Markham, Hugh Killeen, Aaron Cunningham, Lochlann Mechan, Tiernan Finn, Sean Power, Leo O Connor, John O'Brien. **FRONT ROW:** Ronaun Kelly, Joseph Tierney, Bartek, Shane Fitzpatrick, Joseph Freehill, Ksawrey Wiecek, Shane Mc Dermott.

Ballinasloe Rugby Club's 18.5 boys finished their season on a high with a 50 to 21 victory over Oughterard in the Bowl final played at the Galwegian RFC club grounds.

The squad arrived on the grounds in the bright sunshine and immediately raced into an early lead when captain Shane Fitzpatrick scored under the posts, along with Joseph Tierney who added some extras.

Soon after, Ballinasloe was reduced to 14 on the ground with a man in the bin. Oughterard took advantage by hitting back hard in an attempt to level matters. Further tries were made by Tiernan Finn and Lochlann Mechan, before Oughterard ran the length of the field to challenge Ballinasloe's lead at 21 to their 14. Regardless before the first half ended, Fitzpatrick added another try and Tierney converted to leave the score 28 to 14.

The second half continued similar to the first, with Oughterard closing the gap earning another 7 pointer. However, while

Oughterard were down a man themselves in the bin, Ballinasloe went all out in their performance with the outstanding Fitzpatrick adding two further tries and Sean Power and Ksawrey Wiecek scoring one of their own. The entertaining game ended 50 to 21 for the local lads, with them coming home with a trophy of their own for such an accomplishment.

In other historic news, the march of successful female rugby seems to be assured with the underage girls blazing their own trail. The Ballinasloe U14s girls made great strides by coming from behind and winning the Connacht Cup finishing 17-14 against Westport at the Galway Sportsground.

**Club President Pearse Keller** congratulated the team stating "We couldn't be prouder of these brilliant

girls and their hard earned win over a super Westport team. To Lyn and Steve, your outstanding coaching and team building has borne fruit. Some of these girls only came to play Rugby when they participated in Give Rugby a Try earlier last year."

The U14s would later return to their old national schools, promoting the game and encouraging new members to give the sport a go this Summer. In addition, the young players made trips to the clubs many sponsors, Murphys Total Health Medical Hall, Bistro 18 and Michelle and Gareth McAllister of Ahascragh Distillery who laid out a celebratory lunch in their honour at the Old Mill Shop and Café in Ahascragh. The team later presented Michelle & Gareth with their own initialled Ballinasloe Girls Rugby jackets.

If you would like to pick up Rugby yourself this Summer, you can contact the club at [ballinasloerfcmedia@gmail.com](mailto:ballinasloerfcmedia@gmail.com) or by Jacinta at (087) 245 9138.

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The Ballinasloe Basketball Club OAKS are approaching their 10 year anniversary and are hoping to return to regular training sessions after a drop in attendance resulting from Covid.

Founded in 2014, the Men's club has welcomed many members from Ballinasloe, Athlone and surrounds over the years. The club tends to prefer competing in friendlies and meet occasionally to play and share their enthusiasm for the sport.

The club is supported by two coaches presently - including Rytis Markauskas, a medical manufacturer working in Galway, currently living in Ballinasloe. Rytis is well qualified in playing and coaching the sport, having practiced with many Irish national teams. He is joined by Thomas, a loyal coach to the club who similarly has plenty of experience in teaching the game.

The team supports 5-6 people who are currently relied upon as if they lose a player, they are forced to cancel their events. Rytis expressed his ambition for the club, hoping to return to regular meetings on a weekly basis. The last time the team met was for a play-off session in mid-January but have not gathered since. The group aims to have 10 male players before they can return to regular practice sessions. They currently do not have a membership fee but are hoping to find sponsorship to help increasing operational costs.

The Club OAKS currently practice in the

Drum Community Centre in Athlone, roughly 20km from the outskirts of Ballinasloe but are hoping to establish a more practical base for people in the town, scouting a number of venues which would be ideal to play in.

For this year, the club aims to build the skillset and experience of their players before competing in League games. The squad offers some great training by their qualified coaches, along with a fantastic outlet for exercise. Discussing the interest in Basketball in the region, Rytis surmised: "Irish people are much into their own sports and we respect that, but this is another opportunity for a new experience and a prospect to meet people".

Currently the club are only supporting seniors over 18, but they do hope to have the liberty to teach the sport to underage and girls/ ladies in future. If you would like to join the club, you can contact Rytis at (089) 473 5566. Or checkout their fbook page BasketballClubOAKS.



Rytis Markauskas



Basketball OAKS Players

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The Ballinasloe and District Tennis Club are offering their facilities for the Summer ahead, with club members and the public gathering on sunny days with clear skies for a variety of occasions and court activities.

The club held their official open day of their courts, inviting players of all ages to practise on their new all-weather pitches. A plethora of activities and food were available for attendees to enjoy, and competitions were had for the chance to win Free Membership. Cathaoirleach of Ballinasloe Municipal Council Cllr Evelyn Parsons tied together the occasion to encourage more people to use the facility and officially opening it to the public.

Night time activity has resumed on the courts following their installation of new Modern LED floodlights. Evening gatherings were briefly delayed as they waited for an ESB Connection, but Club Nights are now resumed for all-every Wednesday and Friday from 19:00 to 21:00, every Monday for the Ladies Night between 18:00 and 20:00, and every Tuesday for the Mens between 19:00 and 21:00.

Taking advantage of their new facilities, the club held a Shield tournament on the grounds organised by Emily Riddell and Josh Judge. Great fun was had by all on the occasion, with photos captured by Robert Riddell. Robert and Emily would go on to compete in the Wilmer Tennis Burr Open, making a fantastic display for themselves. The duo won all three of their games 7-3, 7-2 and 7-1, guaranteeing their spot in the semi-finals.

In addition to their night-time activities, the club are offering a variety of other events this Summer. Junior Supervised sessions will be offered for ages 4 to 11 between 11:00 and 12:00 and ages 12 and above from 12:00 and 13:00 every Saturday. Further club gatherings will be held every Sunday for beginners between 10:00 and 11:30 and all else between 11:30 and 13:00. A Mixed Singles Ladder is currently ongoing, and members can contact Diarmuid at (083) 361 2563 to be included.

Players of all standards are welcome for these activities and the courts are open to all, with members availing of the facility for free. For more information on the club's upcoming activities and their contacts, see <https://ti.clubspark.com/Bsloetennisclub/>.

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The East Galway Hunt Pony Club have a busy few weeks ahead in anticipation for their upcoming Irish Pony Minimus Championships, with the young pony handlers training hard in a variety of categories for these national competitions.

The two-day Minimus Championships are held annually for U12 competitors, this year taking place in Kilkenny. The event consists of a variety of disciplines in three stages, the first being a two minute swim, the second a running cross-country covering a kilometre distance, and the third a cross-country pony ride.

The Championships can present a number of challenges to overcome for the riders. One of the primary challenges of participating in the riding event is having to dismount from the pony to manoeuvre the slip rail barrier and remount unaided.

The competition works based upon a points system, meaning there are no eliminations for mistakes, but rather your total score is deducted. The overall winner is the competitor with the most points after participating in all three disciplines.

In preparation for the Minimus, the East Galway Hunt Pony Club held an Intro Fun Competition last April. The swimming phase was first held at the Coral Leisure Ballinasloe centre, followed by a cross-country run along the Fair Green, and culminating in the arena-event riding phase on the Ballinasloe Showgrounds. The event offered experiences for all levels, including the novice minis, the under 10s, the under 12s and the over 12 participants.

Not only was it a great occasion to practise, but the young pony riders also had a great deal of fun and bonded with one another on the day. The event was organised by the local club and attracted competitors from all regions around the country, including the nearby Irish Pony Club districts. The official Irish Pony Minimus Championships are soon to follow, due to take place between June 17 and 18.

For the moment, weekly rallies are ongoing held on the Showgrounds every Friday night at 19:00 practising show

jumping, horse trails and tetrathlons. New members are always welcome and all levels are catered for. For further information about club's activities, you can follow the East Galway Hunt Pony Club on social media or contact (087) 274 1869 or (086) 826 7540 for more information.



Young Ashley completing a jump at the Ballinasloe Showgrounds



Young Rose after finishing her Cross Country race at the Intro Fun Minimus Competition in Ballinasloe



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Loreto Bernal Belenger who won the Bronze Medal for U17 Long Jump

The Ballinasloe Athletics Club made a strong impression at the Galway Outdoor Athletic Championships, with Lillie Browne, Alice Moloney, Luke Mongan and Freddie Browne all improving their personal bests.

“It is not easy going to compete in such a big competition coming from a small club” PRO Dawn Slevin noted, “but our amazing Athletes did brilliant and we are all so proud of them.”

Loreto Bernal Belenger earned a Bronze Medal for the U17 Long Jump. Loreto played with the local club for a period of time as an exchange student from Spain, but has only recently returned to her family city of Huesca.

Dawn Slevin congratulated the Spanish athlete stating: “We would like to say a very special thank you to Loreto for being a part of our club. We will miss you very much and thank you so much, you are amazing.”

For the moment, Tuesday training sessions resume for their Summer gathering at the Dunlo Running Track from 18:00 to 19:00 practising long jumps, turbo javelin, and sprints. The club currently has roughly 27 athletes and accepts ages 7 to 17.

As numbers are limited to the amount of coaches they have available, the committee are encouraging any parents to spare some time and give a helping hand for their Tuesday activities. All coaching courses are paid by the club, and for more information you can contact them at (087) 676 9876.



Lillie Browne, Alice Moloney, Luke Mongan and Freddie Browne who all earned new personal bests.

## FIT TOWNS DONATE TO ROAD RUNNERS



Fit Town Ballinasloe recently donated to the Road Runners Club to help defray some of the costs associated with the Couch to 5k road race.

Such proceeds were integral for the voluntary Running Club to host their Couch to 5k event this year, as well as supporting the day-to-day activities of their group.

Fit Town Ballinasloe was originally set up in 2016 to approach local societies aiming to establish programmes or activities to include the community. The Couch to 5k was born from this initiative and they helped support and advise the Runners

along the way.

Denise Boland, Committee Member, expressed the groups’ gratitude “On behalf of the group I want to thank Marion and Fit Towns Ballinasloe for all their support along the way. Keep up the good work” she stated.

The Road Runners hold regular training sessions every Tuesday and Thursday gathering at 7:20 pm on the Dunlo Running Track, as well as Saturday morning sessions starting at 08:00 am. The group participate in numerous 5k series across Galway including in Skehanagh, Craughwell and Loughrea, as well as members representing the town in the occasional international series including in Madrid and Budapest.

For more information, you can reach out to the club by the Ballinasloe Road Runners Facebook page or by email at ballinasloeroadrunners@gmail.com.

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The U13 boys at Hyde Park for the Galway vs Roscommon SFC semi final.

The season is now well underway, the pitches are drying up, getting firmer and the many Ballinasloe GAA teams are busy with their league campaigns and hectic training schedules.

The past few months were busy for the club, especially for their U15 female footballers who were crowned Féile Div 3 County Champions. The squad, comprising of 23 players, travelled to Menlough for the first round of their competition. The girls played three group games with a strong start besting Naomh Mhuire, a close loss against Menlough, and a great closer game defeating Tuam Cortoon.

The girls were through to the semis the following day in Oranmore, paired against St Furseys for a thrilling game. The young players dug deep during extra time and pulled through, earning a fantastic win that sent them to the final.

The U15s squad only had a short rest before being brought back onto the pitch for their rematch against Menlough for the championship title. After a frantic first half, falling behind at a four point deficit 12 minutes in, the girls composed themselves and powered through, earning a final score of 2.04 to 0.07. By the final whistle, the girls

were flat on their feet, but the energy rush from winning a féile final soon had them jumping in a victorious frenzy.

Club PRO Damien Clarke praised the team voicing: "Needless to say the club is very proud of them and wish them all the best in the next round of the competition." The team will go on to represent Ballinasloe GAA in the regional finals in July.

Clubs activities are being set this Summer with their annual CUL Camp is taking place July 10 to 14, joint with their hurling and football teams.

Tickets for their weekly Club Lotto Jackpot are also available at €2.00, drawn every Friday evening and now standing at a massive €10,000. Bookings for the CUL Camp and Lotto tickets can be made at ballinasloe.gaa.ie.

Fixtures for both hurling and football are published on the Ballinasloe GAA social medias or by SMS updates at the request of Damien Clarke at (086) 170 424.

Ballinasloe GAA is always open to new members, boys and girls, with training programmes in hurling and football from Under 6s up to minor or senior grades. It's never too late to start, and for further information or enquiries you can contact Club Secretary Stephen Kerr at (087) 231 2273.



The Ballinasloe U15 Girls Féile Dix 3 County Champions

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Ballinasloe, the hidden gem of Ireland, recently hosted a remarkable Tourism Weekend “Something For Everyone” that left participants in awe.

With over 200 enthusiastic attendees, the event showcased the town’s vast potential as a future tourism destination.

From invigorating guided bog walks to captivating historic tours, the itinerary catered to diverse interests. A scenic boat cruise allowed visitors to soak in the breath-taking landscapes of the meandering Suck, while a delightful whiskey tasting in the new Distillery in Ahascragh added a touch of indulgence.

Most keynotes of the towns and unique hinterland offering were proffered – the rich tradition of music and dance was on display in The Pillar House Rambling House, and again at the Lismany Boardwalk; the magnificent stretches of the Ui Maine Way along the Canal bank to the Monastic and Romanesque epicentre of Clonfert and of course the Battlefield experience of Aughrim were all folded into a smorgasbord mix.

Co Ordinator for the Project, Lyn Donnelly, explained how the fledgling tourism group emerged from the Leader supported Feasibility Study in Spring of last year and had gotten some wonderful support from Hidden Heartlands by way of mentoring and business support to work up some early deliverable projects. The Group then focused on a Familiarisation Showcase event to platform some of the main attractions the town and hinterland have on offer.

“As one of the first Tourism networks-community led but with significant private sector and hospitality sector engagement in the Hidden Heartlands, we have been on a steep learning

curve to pull this together and to remind locals, operators of the Hospitality trade and the wider tourism stakeholder community that these activities can be enjoyed year round by individuals, families, groups and that for slow off grid tourism with amazing good value – our Town can be a good destination point for adventure, culture or just leisure” explained Lyn.

The plan going forward to is redevelop the Maps, information bulletin boards, on line visual presence with the new imagery and to use the valuable feedback gained and the marketing metrics to bundle packages with accommodation and tour providers in the coming months.

This well-rounded experience left participants yearning for more, while simultaneously solidifying Ballinasloe’s reputation as a must-visit location. As the town continues to leverage its rich offerings, the future of Ballinasloe as a flourishing tourism destination looks brighter than ever.

Project Chair Brian King commended and thanked the Weekend Project partners - Galway County Council Tourism Officer, Paddy Mathews and team at Hidden Heartlands for their co-operation and support partnership. “I have to acknowledge and thank Ballinasloe Credit Union and Galway County Council for their welcome sponsorship of the weekend, all our trade partners, our activity groups and the wonderful members of the Project Working Group who have beavered away at this since last Autumn” stated Brian.

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



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The discovery by deep-sea explorers of the wreck of a World War II Japanese transport ship, the *Montevideo Maru*, which was torpedoed off the Philippines in 1942, killing nearly 1,000 Australian and other prisoners of war aboard, means the final resting place of a Ballinasloe native is now known.

Edward Caulfield Kelly was an agricultural inspector on New Ireland island, Papua New Guinea, where he was taken prisoner by the Japanese after they invaded in January 1942.

In June the Japanese rounded up the prisoners to board the *Montevideo Maru*, which was to take them to the Chinese island of Hainan. On 30 June, she was sighted by the US submarine *Sturgeon*, near the northern Philippine coast. Unaware that it was carrying prisoners and civilians, the *Sturgeon* fired four torpedoes, causing the vessel to sink in under

Lieutenant. E. C. Kelly. R. D. F.



Photo and profile of Edward C. Kelly, *East Galway Democrat*, 2 October 1915.

Lieutenant Kelly who is eldest son of Mr. E. J. Kelly, Imperial Hotel, Ballinasloe, received his Commission in the R. D. Fusiliers early in the month of August. He has not yet reached his 20th year, and was a student of Belvedere College, Dublin, but received his chief education at St. Joseph's College, Ballinasloe, subsequent to which, he studied at Skerries, Dublin. His Collegiate course was very successful.



By Philomena and Martina Burns

11 minutes. In total, 1,054 people died on the vessel, including Kelly.

Kelly was born on 29 December 1895 on Dunlo Street, the eldest of three sons of Edward J. Kelly and Margaret Kelly née Caulfield, who

ran the Imperial Hotel (where the Deli Store and Hair Gallery are now).

He was educated at the Pines, Creagh (then the location of Garbally College), and Belvedere College, Dublin.

After the outbreak of the First World War, he received his first commission in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. He later went to the front in France with the 7th Royal Irish Rifles. In July 1916, he was wounded and hospitalised, suffering from shellshock as well as other injuries.

In November 1916, he applied for a transfer to the Royal Flying Corps. By the following April, he was with No. 45 Squadron, flying over the Western Front, in a variety of aircraft, including the Sopwith 1½ Strutter and Nieuport.

MV Montevideo Maru, around 1941. Wikimedia Commons.



Right: Edward C. Kelly's death notice, *Irish Independent*, 28 Nov 1945. His family only learned of his fate after the war.

**'KELLY' (Kavieng, New Ireland)—Lieut.-Colonel (Reserve) Edward C., eldest son of Edward J. and the late Margaret Kelly, Ballinasloe, and brother of Father Antonine, O.F.M., Dublin, and Christopher Kelly, Land Commission, Ballina, lost at sea in June, 1942, when the prison ship Montevideo Maru en route from Rabaul to Japan was sunk by Allied action. R.I.P.**

In April 1917, he survived his first crash. Undeterred, he continued and on 9 May, he scored his first aerial victory, destroying a German Albatros D.III. During May 1917, he was to achieve five aerial victories. Kelly's last victory came on 28 May, when he shot down an Albatros D.V. But Kelly had a rough landing and was again hospitalised.

In 1918, Kelly transferred to Egypt for pilot instruction. He joined No. 144 Squadron, assigned to the RAF's Palestine Brigade, flying DH.9 bombers. However, he was wounded again and in September 1918, returned to Base Depot, Middle East. In 1920, Kelly resigned his commission on the grounds of ill-health.

Kelly then applied for a position in the British Colonial Office and in March 1920, he embarked for the Federated Malay States (now Papua New Guinea), where he took up his new role as agricultural inspector, overseeing the shipping of copra (the dried, white flesh of the coconut from which coconut oil is extracted). He remained there until 1942, when he was taken prisoner.

*\* Philomena and Martina Burns are from Magherafelt, Co. Derry. Their grandmother Kate Kelly Devane was Edward C. Caulfield's first cousin. Damian Mac Con Uladh and Declan Kelly assisted them research with information about the Kelly family and the Imperial Hotel.*

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It was the summer of 1985. The weather was bad and Ireland was in the depths of an economic recession. Reports began to circulate that statues had been observed to move at various Marian grottos around the country. Could it be that these phenomena were miraculous manifestations, or were they merely optical illusions? The jury is still out. Whatever the explanation, the people of Ballinasloe remained decidedly unimpressed because they had what could trump any collection of mobile plaster saints you'd care to name: a moving monument!

In the 1830s the Earl of Clancarty brought down a group of Ulster Presbyterians to work on his estate. Their numbers grew, and in 1845 they built their own church in Society Street, despite the opposition of the Earl who was strongly averse to the establishment of nonconformist places of worship. By the end of the century Ballinasloe could boast the largest Presbyterian congregation in the West of Ireland. They had been joined in 1872 by a coreligionist born in Cookstown, Co. Tyrone, some 26 years previously. His name was William Rutherford who had just qualified with medical degrees from the Queen's Colleges of Belfast and Galway. He was destined to spend the next four decades in general practice locally, during which time he earned the reputation of a highly respected member of his profession and became immensely popular with all classes and creeds.

Following his death in 1911, the townspeople, having decided to commemorate his memory with a public monument in limestone, commissioned a sculptor, William Kennedy, to execute the work. Unveiled two years later, it was initially located at the junction of Dunlo Street, Main Street and Society Street where it seems to have formed the base of a gas lamp. Its front included a watering trough for animals, and at the rear was a drinking fountain. An inscription above the trough read as follows: "Erected by the people of Ballinasloe and neighbourhood in memory of William Rutherford M.D.



F.R.P.C.E. He laboured unselfishly in their midst for 40 years. A sincerest friend, an eminent physician, public spirited and upright citizen. OBIT July 22, 1911."

"The art work," according to Dr. Christy Cunniffe, "consists of a rich mix of Celtic Revival work that includes the use of interlace, strap-work, crocketing and a number of other medieval decorative devices. The inspiration for this is based very much on late Romanesque art. Rope mouldings and simple chevron devices adorn the outer frame while a carved

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Society Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway, Ireland.



head very much in keeping with what was used in the early thirteenth century forms a centre-piece.”

After a number of years it came to be regarded as a traffic hazard at its original location and was re-sited at the southern end of Dunlo Street, remaining there for at least half a century until another move was on the cards, this time to the Town Hall car

park. Its sojourn there was comparatively short before its re-location to the present site at the top of the Harris (Burma) Road. Has the Rutherford memorial finally come to rest, its wandering days consigned to the pages of history? It would be foolish indeed to answer yes to that question, for once a monument gets itchy feet there's no telling where it might end up!

## BALLINASLOE TOWN HALL THEATRE SUMMER CONCERT

Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre's Voluntary Committee are delighted to announce a summer variety concert to raise funds for the continued transformation of the historical building.

The line-up includes renowned Irish Folk singer Eleanor Shanley alongside the phenomenal Rachel Goode and Sarah Corcoran. A variety of local groups will take the stage including In Step Stage school, Slua Drummers, Milkshake Dance & Performance Academy, Blossom Harp Ensemble and more. The concert will take place on Thursday 6th of July. There truly will be something for everyone on the night.

Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre Chairperson, Máire Hughes said "Since January, Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre has already welcomed over 6,000 people through its doors for a variety of exciting events. We are delighted to be hosting a summer concert that will not only bring the community together but also raise much needed funds. The building has always been a cultural hub and a meeting point for the people of Ballinasloe. Alongside the concert, our "BUY A PANE OF GLASS" campaign is wrapping up in a few weeks. We would encourage people to be a part of this legacy; to help us to ensure that Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre is around for generations to come, continuing to foster talent, inclusion and a sense of community."

The "BUY A PANE OF GLASS" campaign will come to a close

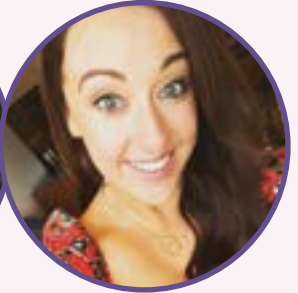
### THREE CHANTEUSES FOR SUMMER CONCERT



Rachel Goode



Eleanor Shanley



Sarah Corcoran

in the coming weeks. Thanks to the generous support of local businesses and individuals, the campaign is nearing its target, welcoming donations from across Ireland and the world including the US, the UK, Switzerland and Greece. The committee is inviting locals to be a part of this important project.

All proceeds from the Summer concert and the Buy a Pane of Glass go towards the continued development of the Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre including restoration of the building's exterior; new state-of-the-art stage lighting; and new windows and doors. This is a major project and a substantial investment in the future of the Arts in Ballinasloe and East Galway.

With limited availability and tickets selling fast for the Summer Concert, visit [ballinasloetownhall.com](http://ballinasloetownhall.com) for more information.

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Buoyed up from interest, spiked by some wonderful photos from the Gerry Devlin Archive on St. Patrick's Day and a large and representative attendance to a public meeting and local memorabilia / family heirlooms display in Gullane's Hotel, the steering group formally set out on a journey of discovery at the formal public incorporation meet up last month.

The meetings was informed that the Steering Group, chaired by Charles Doherty, worked since Archaeologist Fiona Maguire's scintillating presentations in the Library on the Finds of the Big Dig to get to his point.

From the surveys taken up at the workshop tables Charles reported it was clear that there was sufficient momentum and need for a formal group to be empanelled to take the project on a more structured basis.

The new Ballinasloe and District Heritage Society plan is to create a framework and forum for local individuals and groups to add to the knowledge and understanding of our past. The new fledgling organisation aims to be a 'broad church' where the various aspects of the town's heritage, be it industrial, archaeological, architectural, social, musical or cultural can be aired and celebrated.

"We are taking a 'walk before we can run' approach with some initial 'walks and talks' style events with an eye to a possible Ballinasloe Heritage week in due course, and the ultimate goal of creating a permanent space in the town to act as a gateway to our rich heritage and history, for locals and visitors alike" states new Chair, Conor Johnston.

Conor lives in Creagh, married to Lisa with two children, Saoirse and Éann, and works in Finance - currently Retirement and Investment Manager with Cornmarket.

His own grá' for the area's heritage comes primarily from his family, where there are deep roots in the town and surrounding areas His Nana and Grandad Johnston's house in Birchgrove was formative listening to the tales from the store. "Grandad



Newly elected principal officers of the Ballinasloe and District Heritage Society  
**L TO R:** Zara Little - Campbell, Treasurer, Conor Johnston Chair and Abbie MC Gowan Secretary.

would tell me stories from his time as the signal man in the train station and its role as a hub of trade for the Mid-West. Two of my prized possessions are a small number of old pennies and tuppences that were in the till the day Johnston's shop closed and my Grandad's CIE hat" he recalls.

In his history teacher Mum's home in Kilconnell the Grandparents Farrell would regale him with many hurling matches retold before running around the ruins of Kilconnell Abbey with his brother.

"My mother Pat was a history teacher in Garbally and there are many professional historians that went through, crediting her with igniting the spark for their future in that profession and my father has been involved in social and cultural heritage activities over the years. So really, I have been immersed in it" states Conor.

The committee elected were Conor Johnston, Abbie McGowan, Zara Little-Campbell, Fiona Maguire, Brid Lyons, Sean Tully, Michael Riddell, Charles Doherty, Colm Croffy, Liam Kildea, more co-options are expected after their first meet up in the Men's Shed on Wed 7th June at 8.00 pm - for anyone with an interest.



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**RETIREMENT OF JOHN DUNNE**

At a function organised by St. Grelan's Football Club to mark John Dunne's retirement after nearly forty years as Secretary of the Galway Football Board.

Front row, l to r: Grelan Deeley, Tony Broderick, Mary Coughlan, John Dunne and his wife Posie, Sean Keeley, Willie Tully.

Back row, l to r: Michael Walshe, Sean Tully, Mattie Ganly, Joe Keogh, William Goode, Brendan Greaney, Patsy Geraghty.



**Ballinasloe Table Tennis** team receive their trophies in the Whigham Hall in 1955. Front row, l to r: Michael O'Connor, Tony Kelly, Michael Kelly (caretaker), Michael Murphy, Dr. Karl McDaid. Standing, l to r: Rory O'Connor, Liam Keller and Frank O'Meara.



**BRACKERNAGH STREET LEAGUE WINNERS 1953**

Back row l to r: Johnny Geraghty, Paddy Greally, Noel McCann, Sean Mullins, Sean O'Dwyer, Vincie regan, Martin Clarke. Front row l to r: Martin Beckett, Tony Finn, Sean Greally, John Finn, Eric Rankin, Georgie Geraghty, Tom Rankin, Frankie Walsh. In front: Michael O'Connor, Cyril Dunne.



Taking a half-time break during the Connacht senior football final in Castlebar in the early fifties were Referee Patsy Geraghty (centre) with two of his umpires, Michael O'Connor (on left) and Patsy Keane. All the officials, including the other two umpires, Paddy Kelly and Joe Scarry, were all from Ballinasloe.

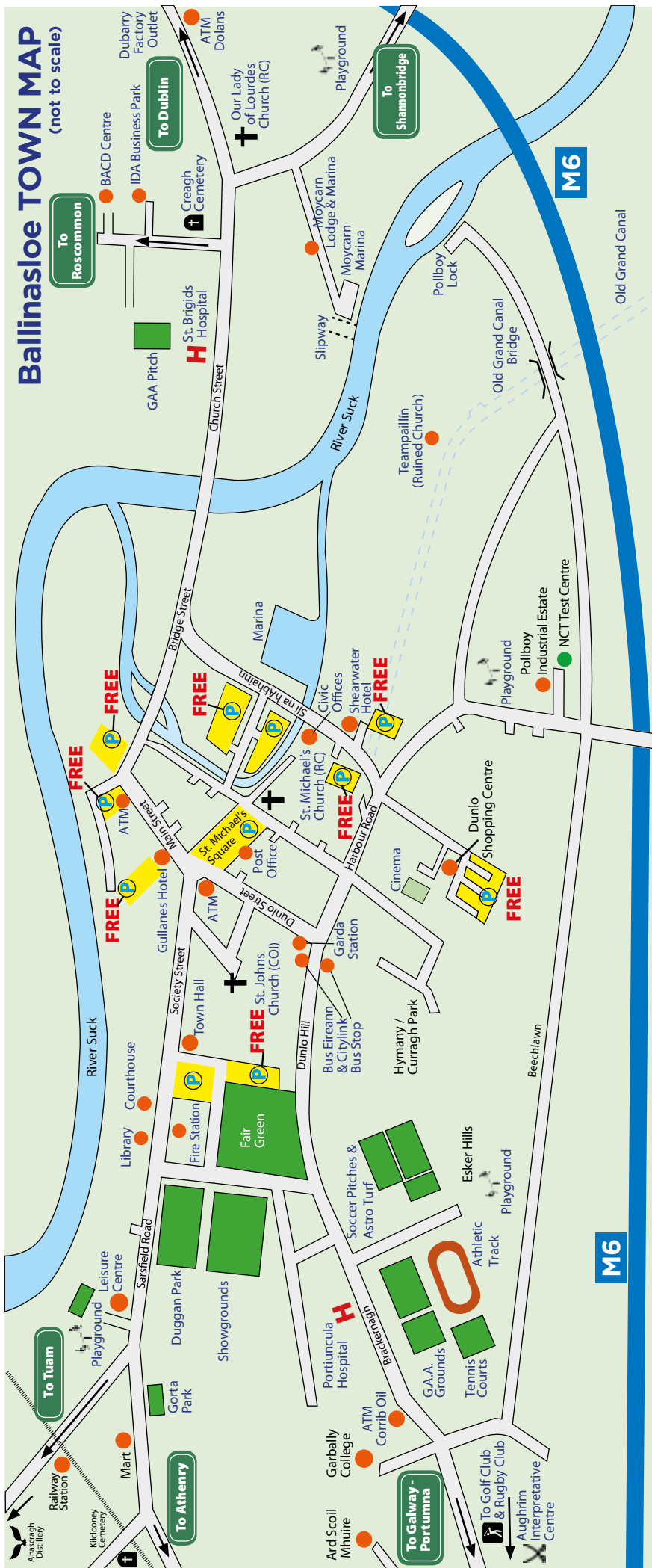


**BALLINASLOE MINOR HURLERS-EAST BOARD CHAMPIONS 1955**

Back row, l to r: Tomas O Baoill, Maurice Madden, Ollie Farnon, Sean McGilloway, Jim Black, Rory Lillis, Seamus Kenny, Vincent Raftery, Sean Meade, D. Fahy, Louis Finn, Tommy Kelly, Eddie Fahy (capt.), Joey Naughton. Front row, l to r: P.B. Ryan, Freddie Gordon, Pat Joe Lally, Brian Kelly, Gerry Carrick, Vincent Coffey, Liam Cunnane.

# Ballinasloe TOWN MAP

(not to scale)



## Ballinasloe History Walk

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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