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Vol. 16 Issue 2: June/July 2026

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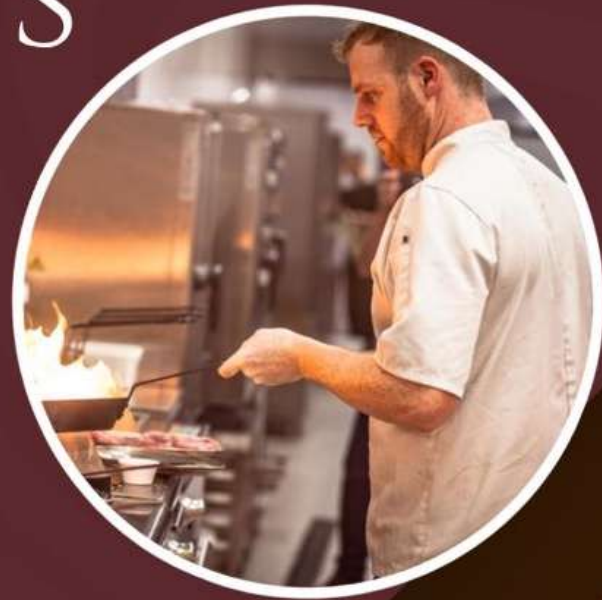
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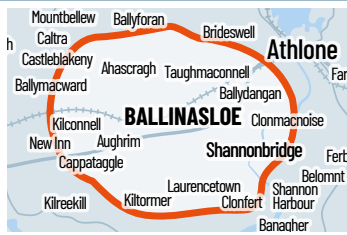
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REAMHRA

Welcome to the read, it would be churlish not to recognise and salute the golden summer of achievements our neighbouring county and many of their club men in Padraic Pearse's are having with all three Connacht Football Trophies sitting proudly already on their Autumn Banquet Tables.

Yes, we were sore leaving Hyde Park, but there was not a GAA supporter in East Galway (or Connacht, I suspect) that could begrudge the Senior win for the scintillating way the Rossies achieved it.

All of us in the community applaud and wish well, a distinguished son of the parish who still holds in high esteem the shaping of his youth in Creagh and in town in the 80s – Shane Killcommins, who has been appointed as President of U.L.

Census figures confirm that there are 1.6 million people living with disability on the island – (North and South) 23 % , nearly one in four – a lot of facilities, disabled access, etc. etc. needed currently and into the future.

However, as the brilliant Dept of Finance report "Future 40" suggests the aging population of the Republic will be at 1.16 m in 2035 and projection modelling in the North suggest 585,000 people over 65 – in total about 24 % of the islands population in less than a decade and growing at speed.

That's 47%, nearly 5 out of 10 of us with some reduced ability and growing, for as a one of the contributors to the report stated at a Disability Forum lately – "as we all age on the Island and live longer, disability or limitations on living will be visited upon many of us", in other words, ability will be one part of our lives but disability could be a significant third!

There is little meaningful debate at national public level but

It is very easy to sit on the fence and always have a problem with what is going on around you. Social media is too readily available for so called "keyboard warriors".

If you want to influence what direction you want something to go, get involved, join a committee and air your constructive ideas on how things could be done better.

It is much easier to come up with solutions once all the options have been teased out in a democratic manner. We all want our town to progress and in progression it does not mean it has to look like it did in the past, the past is now history.

Industry has changed, shopping habits continue to vary. What was top of the shopping list 20/30 years ago is now very much different.

We have a town with excellent infrastructure in terms of Road/Rail/Waterway and Motorways assess to Airports. We have excellent education facilities and within close proximity to third levels Universities.

We have many young families moving back into the area,

What's Inside

LOCAL NEWS	21 New Charity Pumpkin Patch	SPORT
4 Atticora Junction	22 Wildlife Pond at The Glebe N.S.	45 Moore United FC 50th
5 Repair Works St Brigid's	23 Public Speaking Club	46 Moore Community Games
6 St Brigid's Safe Futures Project	24 College of Further Education	47 Community Games Finalists
7 Hotel Site Earmarked	26 New President of U.L.	48 IKKI KARATE: From Tokyo
BUSINESS	36 BARA Singers Celebrate 2	50 Rugby Season Comes to a Close
8 Anti-Social Behaviour Taskforce	37 Local Photographer	51 U18 Soccer Team Undeclared
9 €50m Development Planned	38 Vintage Rally 40th Anniversary	52 Rossie Football Glory
11 Local Car Dealer Recognised	39 Dr Martin Daly TD	53 Camogie Club Croke Park
12 Pulse Club Meet	28 SCHOOL RULE	54 Snooker Club Host Finals
13 Dubarry New Product Range	31 OUT AND ABOUT	55 Swimmers Qualify
14 Credit Union Changes Name	34 EVENTS GUIDE	56 Local Kickboxers
15 Mizen to Malin Cycle Fundraiser	CULTURE	57 Gaelic 4 Mothers
16 Reflexologist Treatments	40 Bord Bia Bloom	59 Community Games Ballinasloe
17 Beauty Room By Maeve	41 Blossom Harp Ensemble	TOURISM & HERITAGE
18 New Retreat Packages	42 Town Band Enjoys Busy Spring	60 Tony Goode High Jumper
19 New Manager For Shearwater	43 Busy Summer Aughrim Centre	62 New Stone Project
20 Brian Brennan Coaching	44 Library Offers Chillout Space	63 1926 Census
COMMUNITY		64 REMEMBERED

Welcome to Ballinasloe Life Volume 16 Issue 2

here locally it should matter for two reasons, 1, we are home to a valued number of youth, adults and elderly who are in some form of dependency care or sheltered living due to their special needs, 2, our last 2022 census had us with a 25% cohort of people living over 65% - when the national figure is closer to 15% .

If you look about at our town and public realm today, whilst there have been some marginal improvements, our universal access to public facilities and buildings is weak.

Who would take an electric wheelchair from the top of Brackernagh out to Creagh Graveyard? if you were not minded using the public restrooms of some fine hotels in our town centre – what public convenience would you use? If your partner was confined to a wheelchair with a temporary stroke or brain injury, which public taxi could you be sure to call that would have the ramp?

The Bus stops, taxi ranks, new paths, cycleways, places to park bike and electric chairs as well decent clean affordable public conveniences where carers and individual can use need to be fast tracked to towns that have the warning light flashing on the dash already.

Looking forward to the summer breeze!
Slán agus Beannacht.

Enjoy the read!
Colm Croffy, Editor.



a multinational workforce bringing new prosperity and new ideas and innovation into everyday life.

My ask is for you to make a difference by getting involved in Community work. Currently there is an ask for new people to come on board on the Christmas Lights committee - yes work needs to start now to ensure our town continues to shine brightly in 6 months time. This is only one example of where you could make a difference.

The Mid Summers festival is on again this year and was a great day out last year and is an ideal opportunity to see many of the different cultures within our community. Last but not least, lets hope there is an improvement in the weather in the weeks ahead to lift our spirits.

Seamus Duffy,
Chairman,
Ballinasloe Area Community Ltd





Atticora Junction Safety Improved

By Colm Croffy

Long-standing road safety concerns at Atticora Junction, where the Taughmaconnell Road L-8608-0 meets the R357 have been improved.

Following sustained representations by Cllr Parsons to Galway County Council, and supported by her allocation of discretionary funding, road safety signage and road marking improvements have now been delivered at the junction.

The measures are aimed at improving driver awareness, highlighting the junction more clearly, and reducing immediate risk for road users.

“Public safety is at the core of this work. The delivery of signage and road markings is an important step forward, but it remains essential that all road users approach this junction with care, reduce speed and remain alert to the conditions.”

Looking to the longer term, Cllr Parsons has also facilitated focused engagement with Galway County Council staff on the next phase of safety works, including junction widening and improved sightlines for consideration and funding application under the Low Cost Safety Programme 2026, and would represent a more comprehensive and lasting safety solution for the junction.

She is continuing to work closely with local area staff and to facilitate engagement with adjoining landowners, including the HSE, to support the progression of the necessary widening works.

“I want to acknowledge and thank the engineering and local area staff in Ballinasloe for their ongoing work and collaboration on this issue. I also want to thank members of the public who actively engaged with me in highlighting and progressing this long-standing safety concern, and to acknowledge the positive engagement of landowners.” she concluded.



Val Colleran MD of UTAH Store in Society Street, pictured in the new section of his Shop dedicated to Mens and Ladies leading top brands of footwear. Some fabulous Summer Shoe and Sandal range in stock now - with super prices, super styles.

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Repair Works Progressing on St Brigid's

By Colm Croffy

Following its designation as a derelict site in 2025, there have been visible improvements to St Brigid's hospital campus since the repair works started this year.

Cllr Alan Harney listed the works carried out to date, including: "the removal of vegetation, the removal of dangerous trees, the securing of entryways and windows at ground floor level, and the replacement of glass at the first-floor level." He expects remedial work to prevent water ingress through the roofs to begin shortly.

Cllr Harney added that: "it's been really important that we improve the overall visual aspect of the St Brigid's Hospital campus as it's such a prominent site on the entry to town from the eastern side. And I've been working with our officials in the council and the HSE over a long period of time now to get the HSE to recognize their obligations as



Cllr Alan Harney with Minister for Tourism Peter Burke, TD at the opening of Banagher Swimming Pool on the Shannon as part of the EU Just Transition Programme

the owners of these protected structures." One of the councillor's key pledges when he was seeking election was to deliver change on the St Brigid's campus.

On the future plans for the campus, the councillor noted that the HSE plans to sell the buildings, but he added that the need to see "concrete proposals" for this. "We know that these buildings and the lands were once such a big employer for Ballinasloe town and beyond", Cllr Harney added, "but equally they provided such important community amenities and facilities for people in the local area. And I want to see those restored once again as part of the overall plan for the campus."

Cllr Harney said that he is committed to engaging with the HSE to ensure that "we get a long-term future for these buildings, and once again make them a key hub for town."

Gradual Progress On Maternity Services

The five outstanding external reviews of maternity services at Portiuncula University Hospital are due to be complete by the end of June.

"With the actions from the initial seven reviews now 99% complete it's important that we ensure that those implementations are sustained into the future. I and I'm sure others will be continuing to raise through the Regional Health Forum", stated Cllr Alan Harney

We know that considerable improvements have been made in terms of governance structures, care pathways, workforce communication, education and training. A number of infrastructural developments are underway at the hospital, including a maternity day assessment unit, enhancements to early pregnancy unit and labour ward and inpatient

ward upgrades.

The new maternity outpatient's department is relocated to one of the former nuns' bungalows; including nine clinical rooms, a dedicated phlebotomy service to make clinical visits more efficient and convenient. The new facility supports both consultant led and midwife led clinics with dedicated car parking available directly outside, ensuring ease of access for women attending appointments.

"Post this June we look to the next phase of the restoration of maternity services. It's crucial that we see the full implementation of all action items to ensure the service is safe and that will help to restore confidence in the services". Cllr Harney concluded.



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Progress Boost For St Brigid's Safe Futures Project

By Colm Croffy

Cllr Evelyn Parsons has welcomed confirmation that Galway County Council is progressing efforts to acquire the former St Brigid's Nurses' Home in Church St, with a view to developing refuge and step down accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic violence.

The proposal was first advanced by Cllr Parsons during the Ballinasloe Local Area Plan process in 2022, establishing a clear enabling basis for the project. In April 2023, the Council confirmed that it had engaged with the HSE regarding potential acquisition of the building. Cllr Parsons has now welcomed the Council's reaffirmed interest to pursue this as the HSE property is prepared for release.

She said this marks an important step forward in progressing a project aimed at addressing a significant gap in housing support services.

"No one should be forced to remain in danger because there is nowhere safe to go," she said. "We owe it to women and children in our communities to ensure that safety, dignity and real protection are there when they need it most."

Cllr Parsons highlighted the scale and urgency of the issue, noting that domestic violence remains at persistently high levels nationally, placing significant pressure on services, particularly in Galway County and midland areas.

"Domestic violence has devastating consequences on women, on families and particularly on children. The effects of Adverse

Childhood Experiences (ACE) are well studied. Exposure to violence and abuse can affect their development. Emergency supports are essential, but it is only part of the solution supports as step down accommodation, refuge places become full, turning people away, and families can become trapped with no clear pathway to rebuild their lives."

She acknowledged continued engagement of Galway County Council's housing and community sections reflecting a clear understanding that housing, support services and community integration must work together to deliver safety and long-term outcomes for vulnerable families.

Cllr Parsons has temporarily called the proposal St Brigid's Safe Futures Project, and used the working title "Tearmann Bhrat Bride", reflecting the concept of sanctuary and protection, while noting that any final naming could change.

She said the project represents a practical opportunity to bring a vacant public building back into meaningful use for the community while delivering much-needed crucial services.

"There is well documented statistics on an escalating need, we have a state owned building, and now there is renewed Council engagement to try progressing it. This opportunity is real, and governmental Depts & state agencies must play their part in

implementation of - and it must be supported to move forward meaningfully."



Cllr Parsons pictured outside St Brigid's Hospital Nurses' Home in April 2023 on confirmation that Council registered interest in acquiring it for supporting women and children escaping Domestic Violence.



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Hotel Site Earmarked For Healthcare

By Colm Croffy

Despite media and online misinformation around the May Bank Holiday Weekend that the Haydens Hotel Site was to be used as accommodation for International Protection applicants, the owners of Hayden's Hotel have said it plans to use the building for healthcare – and Departmental and Local Authority Management confirmed to public reps that no such IPAS plans exist.

Claddagh Ventures Limited was given the green light recently by An Coimisiún Pleanála to make changes to the famous hotel on Dunlo Street, including the additional of nine ground floor bedrooms for a variety of uses.

Tom Coyle, Director, Claddagh Ventures Ltd - the morning after media reports began circulating immediately clarified fully the position of the owners .

“We have been engaging for well over two years with and commenced architectural plans for a health care facility, step-down care facility and ancillary healthcare associated uses at the former Hayden's hotel property. Galway County Council and the HSE will be familiar with this engagement and can confirm same. Independently around that time our company received an interest from a third-party provider relating to accommodation for displaced persons. An application on foot of this was submitted to Galway County Council and the third-party interest recommended the application be appealed to An Bord Pleanála now An Coimisiún Pleanála. I understand this has now been approved.”

He went to on to add “ Claddagh Ventures Ltd has not ever and will not be involved in accommodation provision for displaced persons. Our objectives are to build state-of-the-art healthcare facilities that will provide a range of health services for the wider Ballinasloe and hinterland region, and we continue to work with the HSE in that regard.”.

For clarity he noted “ Claddagh Ventures Ltd are not and will not be involved in accommodation relating to direct provision or related accommodation for displaced persons at the former



Hayden's in the 1960's in it's glory era!

Hayden's Hotel site”.

Sinn Fein TD Claire Kerrane said she contacted the Department of Justice for clarity. “There are no plans or discussions ongoing to use Hayden's Hotel for IPAS accommodation and the Department are not seeking any additional accommodation,” Deputy Kerrane said.

Cllrs Harney, Parsons, and Deputy Martin Daly all issued clarification statements in the wake of the storm of unpleasant commentary and unnecessary fears.

In the background of the fake news story two issues of note were forgotten.


Irish Government made a policy change early in the week at Cabinet on Tue 28th of April to withdraw tourist and commercial accommodation housing IPAS guests. This followed their earlier policy announcement in Nov 2025 that the Department was phasing out this type of emergency accommodation for all IPAS clients.

Secondly most construction professionals agree is that the core structure of the Hotel Complex has deteriorated so vastly in the past decade it has remained closed , that it could not be redeemed or renovated without having been rebuilt from the foundation up.

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Anti-Social Behaviour Taskforce Starts

By Eamon Chin

Anti-social behaviour remains at the forefront of discussion in the town, as recent incidents, growing concern among local businesses, open discussion at the recent MDC attest ; the work of a newly established taskforce continues to add urgency to calls for a stronger response.

In recent months, several reported incidents have sharpened public concern and brought renewed focus to safety in both the town centre and residential areas, with a clear feeling around that recurring issues now require a more coordinated and visible response.

The Ballinasloe Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group has begun its work under the Galway County Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP), having held its first formal meeting in recent weeks.

Those involved in the subgroup include local councillors Alan Harney, Dermot Connolly and Dr Evelyn Parsons, alongside Garda Inspector Declan Rock and Galway County Council Senior Executive Officer Gerard Scully. The wider group also involves representatives from An Garda Síochána, community and youth services, education and family support organisations, and the local business community. Among those representing business interests are Amy Keller and Graeme Gullane, who recently attended a meeting in the town's garda station alongside Garda David Dully and Cllr Harney.

The focus is on identifying patterns and hotspots of anti-social behaviour, improving coordination between agencies and developing both short- and medium-term actions. These include a stronger emphasis on prevention and early intervention, improved communication with residents and businesses, and support for young people and families.

One of the key priorities to emerge is the need for increased garda visibility and the expansion of CCTV. Cllr Harney has said that visible policing in the town centre is essential and that the rollout of CCTV must be prioritised, particularly in areas where issues have been recurring. A public consultation process has

also taken place as part of the wider community safety planning process, with residents invited to share their experiences.

Officials acknowledged the seriousness of the issue at the last meeting and admitted the situation was "difficult to get a handle on" and that they were "quite worried" despite ongoing engagement locally.

Cllr Dermot Connolly said "everyone is aware of what is going on" as he called for additional Garda resources to be allocated to the Ballinasloe division.

"It's getting worse over the last six months. We are the worst-funded local authority in the country. There is a major deficit in our funding stream and staff levels to be able to make any kind of positive difference. It's the people at the coalface who are vulnerable."

Cllr Declan Geraghty described the situation as "out of control" and questioned whether those responsible should be relocated.

"When you see young lads on bicycles firing stones through a person's house, a Galway County Council house, that is serious and it shouldn't be tolerated" stated Cllr Geraghty.



Business representatives to the Task Force - Amy Keller & Graeme Gullane alongside Cllr Alan Harney & Garda David Dully at a recent meeting in the Garda Station.

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€50m Commercial Development Planned For Dunlo

By Colm Croffy

A proposed €50 million commercial development planned for Dunlo has the potential to create several hundred new jobs once all of the units are occupied, according to proposals.



Located to the left hand side of the current Omniplex and Aldi Outlets leading up to Tesco and the new housing units this proposed significant development for the town would close out about 75% of the commercial site.

The plan represents a substantial economic boost for town with food retailing expected to create 80 jobs, the housing projects over 100 jobs, and the offices accommodating upwards of 250 people.

Limehill Esker Ltd has applied for planning permission for a development at Dunlo. The project designed by O Neill O Malley Architects includes a drive through restaurant and two office blocks totalling 30,000 square feet. The proposal involves demolishing a house at the roundabout by the Dunlo Shopping Centre entrance and creating two new entrances onto Harbour Road, featuring pedestrian links to Harbour Road and Dunlo Quay Road.

A spokesman for Limehill Esker stated that there has been significant interest in the office space from companies looking to relocate. This project continues their commitment to completing the shopping

centre, where they have already built 78 residential units and brought in tenants such as Omniplex & Costa Coffee. Tesco and Aldi also operate at the shopping centre.

The plan is for a drive-thru fast-food facility where Carrick's old residence is along Harbour Road – coupled with significant office space in a part of the town where there is already a substantial number of commercial properties and shops.

The planning application also provides for two vehicular entrances onto Harbour Road together with new pedestrian connectivity to Harbour Road and Dunlo Quay Road, as well as provision for a road setback which would facilitate the development of a cycle lane along Dunlo Quay Road. Planning is also sought for car parking, EV charging spaces and bicycle parking to serve the overall development as part of the €50 million development.

If granted planning, Limehill Esker will embark on the construction of two two-storey office buildings, PV panels at roof level, elevational signage, together with refuse stores and an ESB substation.

A spokesperson for Limehill Esker said that there has already been considerable interest in the office space from companies wanting to relocate there on completion.

Additionally at the centre, construction is about to begin on 49 housing units with an application for a further 74 dwellings in the final stages of the planning process.

Martin Daly T.D. has welcomed the proposal stating that right now “Ballinasloe needs every investment penny it can attract and that he would fully support such plans”.

A decision is due sometime around the 18th June from Galway County Council on the application.



PROPERTY MATTERS

BALLINASLOE HOUSING MARKET REVEALED: WHO'S BUYING, AND WHAT IT SAYS ABOUT THE TOWN

A review of my last 30 residential property sales in Ballinasloe gives a clear snapshot of a market that is both active and evolving. While first-time buyers remain the backbone, there is now a more balanced mix of local movement, investment activity, and new residents choosing the town for lifestyle and value.

Ballinasloe is no longer driven by one buyer type. Instead, it's a layered market—supported by local demand, internal movement, and increasing interest from outside the area.

Across all transactions, the same themes stand out: affordability, quality of life, and strong connectivity to key employment hubs such as Portiuncula Hospital, along with practical access to Athlone Galway and Dublin.

New Buyers - Locals (40% | 12 sales)

The strongest group. First-time buyers with local ties continue to anchor demand, focused on affordability and long-term stability.

New Buyers - New Residents (27% | 8 sales)

A growing trend. Buyers with no prior connection are choosing Ballinasloe for value, space, and lifestyle, often linked to hybrid work or relocation to Portiuncula.

Local Movers (20% | 6 sales)

A stable, healthy market sign—people moving within Ballinasloe rather than leaving it.

Investors (13% | 4 sales)

Selective but active, focused on high rental demand and yields.

COMMENT

- From my perspective, the key story is balance. Strong first-time buyer activity, steady local movement, and rising outside interest all point to a town quietly strengthening its position.
- Ballinasloe continues to offer real value, strong connectivity, and quality of life that is increasingly hard to match.
- If you are thinking of selling, please feel free to reach out—I can advise on where your property sits in today's market and how best to position it for the right buyers.



Kevin O'Flynn
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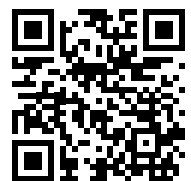
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Local Car Dealer Recognised with Award

By Maria Connolly

Fred Kilmartin LTD was delighted to be named the Connacht Regional Winner at the recent 2026 Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland Electric Vehicle Dealership Awards, recognising the work being done locally to support customers moving towards electric and hybrid vehicles.

Interest in electric and hybrid vehicles has grown significantly over the past three years. Industry figures show that numbers of electric cars in Galway and Roscommon increased from 332 in 2024, to 408 in 2025, and 644 this year to date, mirroring the strong rise in electric vehicle (EV) registrations recorded nationally.

Another sign of demand can be seen in Ford's recent "Win a Puma" test-drive campaign, which generated over 1,000 entries nationwide. Approximately 45 of these test drives were completed in Ballinasloe.

At Fred Kilmartin Ltd, more motorists are now actively considering electric and hybrid options for the first time. Different customers are looking for different solutions depending on their lifestyle and driving needs. Many families are now exploring electric vehicles as a practical and economical second car for school runs and commuting, while travelling salespeople are increasingly attracted to the lower running costs, comfort and technology available across the latest EV models. For farmers and commercial customers, hybrid technology is becoming an increasingly attractive option.

The new Ford Ranger Plug-in Hybrid now offers the practicality, towing capability and durability expected from a Ranger, while also reducing fuel costs and emissions.

There is also growing interest locally in second-hand electric vehicles as more affordable options begin entering the market. Customers are becoming increasingly confident in EV technology, battery warranties and charging infrastructure, particularly as fuel and motoring

costs continue to rise.

Hybrid vehicles also continue to play a major role for customers who may not yet be ready to move fully electric, offering a balance between traditional petrol or diesel driving and improved efficiency.

Ford is currently providing very strong contributions and supports to help encourage customers to make the switch towards electrified vehicles, including 0% finance across selected all-electric models, making EV ownership more accessible than before.

The team at Fred Kilmartin Ltd believes the move towards electric and hybrid motoring will continue to grow strongly across the region over the coming years as more customers experience the benefits firsthand.



The team from the SEAI pictured with Conor Gillespie, Marketing Lead at Fred Kilmartin LTD (second from left), and the current President of the Society of the Irish Motor Industry, Michael Wood (far right).

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Pulse Club Meet at Western Postform

By Maria Connolly

The latest Pulse Club Lunchtime Meetup, organised by Ballinasloe Area Community Development (BACD), took place recently at the impressive Western Postform facility in Poolboy, with a large turnout of local business owners, entrepreneurs and remote workers attending.

The event formed part of the growing Pulse Club initiative, which aims to support local enterprise by creating opportunities for businesses to connect, learn and share experiences in an informal and supportive environment.

Attendees were welcomed by Alan and Olivia O'Grady and their team at Western Postform, who hosted the event and provided a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour of the company's state-of-the-art 40,000 sq ft manufacturing facility. Guests had the opportunity to see first-hand the scale of operations, bespoke production processes and advanced machinery used by one of Ballinasloe's leading manufacturing businesses.

Managing Director Alan O'Grady also spoke about the history and growth of Western Postform, outlining how the family-run business has developed into a recognised industry leader through innovation, quality and strong customer relationships.

A particularly impactful part of the presentation focused on the company's "I Am Here" initiative, which promotes mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. Attendees praised the openness and leadership shown by the company in supporting staff wellbeing and creating a positive workplace culture.

Following the presentation and tour, guests enjoyed lunch and networking, with many commenting on the value of connecting



At the Pulse Club event at Western Post Form : L-R Alan O'Grady (WPF) Niamh Creaven Connaghton (Araya Marketing) Martina Flanagan (BACD), Olivia O'Grady (WPF) Trish Hogan (WPF) Maura Barrett (WPF) Lyn Donnelly (BACD) Joe Glennon (Kickstart Web Design), Honoria Mitchell Black (Araya Marketing) and Brian King (BACD)

with other local businesses and hearing directly from successful enterprises within the region.

BACD thanked Alan, Olivia and the entire Western Postform team for their warm hospitality and support in hosting the event.

The next Pulse Club Lunch & Learn will take place on Thursday 28th May and will be hosted by Coyle & Co Chartered Accountants, focusing on practical financial advice for business owners. Meetings take place the last Thursday of each month and are free to attend.

Businesses interested in attending future events or hosting a Pulse Club meetup can contact Lyn Donnelly at BACD on lyn@bacd.ie or 090 9646516.



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Dubarry Launch New Product Range

By Colm Croffy

With almost 90 years of experience within the apparel industry Dubarry of Ireland, time and time again search for their customers' needs and aim to meet their expectations.

From clothing and accessories to their iconic Irish rooted boots, they value their heritage and strive to maintain this throughout the brand. Therefore, they have created and adapted new products to fit their customer's lifestyles and priorities in all ways, shapes and sizes.



For all dog lovers who care and adore their companion, they have produced a luxurious set of accessories to make sure your dog is as well turned out as you are. Their dog beds offer the world of comfort for dogs of all sizes, while their dog bowls provide them with the nourishment they need after a long walk!

To ensure their tail is wagging, get them out and about with their new matching collars and leads. Crafted for dog owners alike, the choice is yours (and your dogs!) between a rope or leather and a slip or clip lead design. Their Dog accessories are here to give your dog the best of both worlds, whether that's exploring

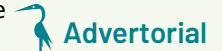
the fields or cozying up beside the stove, the Dubarry team hope for your dogs to feel at home with Dubarry's dog accessories.

As many of their products are made to withstand the rough Irish weather experienced in all seasons, they've listened and have created their new Waterproof Breathable trainers for those who prefer a trainer to a boot when they take on the day.



Engineered to carry you through all adventures, you can bet our new trainers will leave you high and dry! These trainers are built with waterproof technology to keep you going through any match that survives the adverse weather, or a last-minute run to the shop in the rain. The technical performance gives the client the ultimate support along with grip and stability, making them perfect for high-performance activities. Designed with a sporty and agile style, they can be paired with any casual outfit or activewear. If you want a simple black or white, or possibly feel like blending in with nature, they have different colourways for different individuals. Dubarry can cover you in all terrains, in all weather.

Get you and your four-legged friend prepared for the unpredictable Irish summer with their new range of products – made by the Dubarry Team, for you. These will feature within their new Spring Summer 2026 range which is available now through the website ie.dubarry.com while stock lasts.



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Credit Union Changes Name

By Colm Croffy

Ballinasloe Credit Union is entering an exciting new chapter as it officially changes its name to Gateway Credit Union on June 10.

With nearly 60 years of service to the communities of Ballinasloe and Gort, the new-look, merged - credit union has built a strong reputation for trust, local knowledge, personal support, and community commitment. While the name is changing, the credit union assures members that the same friendly, reliable service they have come to expect, will remain in place.

Speaking ahead of the name change, Gráinne Murphy, CEO, said: "This is an exciting time for our credit union, our members, and our wider community. Gateway Credit Union reflects our continued growth and ambition for the future, while staying true to the values that have guided us for nearly 60 years."

Sean Madden, Chairman, added: "Our members are at the centre of everything we do. Although our name is changing, our promise remains the same: to provide a local, trusted credit union service that supports people at every stage of life."

The move to Gateway Credit Union marks a positive step forward, with exciting times ahead for members, staff, and the communities of Ballinasloe and Gort.



The board of Gateway Credit Union. Back row (L-R): Sean Kelly, Aidan Clifford, Brian King, Denis Bartley, Michael Lally and George Francis. FRONT ROW, (L-R): Adrian Ahern, Gráinne Murphy, Sean Madden and Eileen Reddin



Congratulations to Carmel O'Brien, winner of the Ballinasloe Credit Union Members Prize Draw, pictured with Maura Jennings.

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Mizen to Malin Cycle Fundraiser

By Colm Croffy

Niall Mulvihill of Birchgrove, recently undertook an incredible challenge: cycling from Mizen to Malin over six days on a tandem bike to raise funds for Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind. He was joined on the trip by fellow club mates, Paul Joyce and Mary O'Connor.

A guide dog user himself, Niall has experienced first-hand the life changing impact these dogs can have. He was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa (RP) in 2015 while studying nursing in the UK and gradually lost his sight.

Since being matched with his guide dog, Drew, in December 2021, Niall has regained his independence, confidence and sense of freedom. Drew is far more than a guide dog; he is a constant companion, a source of courage, and a true life changer.

Speaking about Drew, Niall said: "The difference a guide dog makes is truly transformative. Drew has given me back my independence, the courage and confidence to do things I never thought possible, even when I was fully sighted. You are never alone when your guide dog is by your side".

If you would like to support Niall and make a donation then please visit Mizen 2 Malin 2026.



Niall Mulvihill, Paul Joyce and Mary O'Connor in Tralee while on the Mizen to Malin fundraiser.



Paul Joyce, Mary O'Connor and Niall Mulvihill setting off on their fundraising cycle from Mizen Head.

New Garda Superintendent Confirmed for Longford

Dunlo Hill native Tomás Waters currently serving as an Inspector based in Loughrea has been announced by the Minister for Justice as new Superintendent and been appointed to Longford Garda Station.

Superintendent Tomás Waters has transferred to Longford from the Galway division, where he was Governance Manager of the Performance Assurance Functional Area.

Tomás Waters a local resident, is the son of the late Garda Tom Waters and Mairin Waters of Dunlo Hill. Locally he has been a valued volunteer member of a variety of sporting and charitable organisations especially Community Games and the Rugby Club where has shouldered a number of key Officer positions.

Superintendent Waters holds a Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Galway in addition to a professional certificate in governance, and previously, qualified from Trinity College in science and property economics. Prior to being promoted to Garda Superintendent, he held the rank of Inspector, and Detective Sergeant. Superintendent Waters has been in the force for just over 17 years. He takes up his new role in Longford with immediate effect.



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Reflexologist For Mother and Baby Treatments

By Maria Connolly

Local woman Sharon Kennedy, originally from Perssepark, has opened a reflexology and wellness practice in Oldtown, Athlone with a focus on mothers and babies.

She was inspired to specialise in working with mothers due to a deep awareness of how much women go through in pregnancy, postpartum, and during early motherhood. "I don't see it as just treatments or therapies. I see it as holding space for women at one of the most tender, transformative times in their lives," Sharon states.

Sharon is the daughter of the late John Holohan, and Ann Holohan. She attended Scoil Mhuire and later studied Hotel Management at Athlone Institute of Technology (T.U.S.) Her interest in hospitality was sparked by working in Hayden's Hotel and she enjoyed the fast pace so much that she spent 16 years in the industry.

She subsequently spent nine years in the motor business, but decided to retrain as a reflexologist at a time when: "life felt like it was moving far too fast...I had experienced reflexology myself and found it incredibly powerful, not just physically, but emotionally too." She adds that the real turning point came with the death of her aunt at just 57. "It reminded me just how fragile and precious our time is."

She qualified as a reflexologist in 2024, and has since trained as a Bio Energy Healer, too. She says her work is: "about gently guiding them back to themselves, helping them feel restored, supported and emotionally held when they need it most. For me, it is a privilege to support mothers in this way because when

a mother is cared for, everything around her begins to shift too."

Sharon's work with mothers also led her to support babies, and she says that they are particularly responsive to reflexology: "They don't question it - they just feel it." adding that many of the babies she supports are often: "struggling in some way - they may be unable to settle, Through reflexology, I use very light,



nurturing touch on the feet...even with the gentlest contact, I often see beautiful shifts - tight little bodies softening, breathing slowing, and a sense of calm beginning to emerge", she states.

Sharon's hope is "to create a space where women feel held, understood and restored, so they can move through motherhood feeling more confident, supported and connected not just to their babies, but to themselves too."

Outside of work, she enjoys going for walks with her two dogs, practicing yoga, and spending time with her family.

SK Reflexology and Wellness is open Monday-Friday 6pm - 9pm and Saturday 10.30am - 2.30pm. To book, please visit her social media pages (Instagram @skreflexologywellness

and Facebook as SK Reflexology & Wellness). You can also call or text on 087 414 3621, or email skwellness24@gmail.com. She also has a Google page under SK Reflexology and Wellness - Bio Energy Healing. Sharon works from home in Correenbeg, Oldtown, Athlone, Co Roscommon, N37 X2K6. She also offers distance sessions for those who can't make it in person.

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Beauty Room By Maeve

By Maria Connolly

Local beautician Maeve Casey is bringing beauty, confidence and creativity to Ballinasloe with the opening of her stylish beauty room, Beauty Room by Maeve, at the Enterprise Hub on Society Street. After beginning her beauty career at The Beauty Bar on Dunlo Street, Maeve took the leap into self-employment following the salon's relocation, a decision that has already proven popular with local clients.

Specialising in nail treatments and nail art, brow shaping and tinting, and professional makeup services, Maeve says it was always important to establish her business in Ballinasloe and build relationships with clients in her hometown.

The daughter of Niall and Nicola Casey of Garbally Drive, Maeve attended Scoil Uí Cheithearnaigh and later Ardscoil Mhuire, where her passion for beauty continued to grow. "Beauty has always been something I loved, so pursuing it as a career felt like a natural step," she says.

Fully qualified with both ITEC and QQI certifications in beauty therapy, Maeve has also completed specialist training in Builder in a Bottle (BIAB) nails and brow services, enabling her to offer the latest techniques and treatments.

Maeve says her past employment has given her valuable hands-on training and confidence in the industry and opening Beauty room by Maeve allowed her to create a welcoming space of her own while continuing to grow her client base locally.

She focuses on nails, brows and make-up as these are the treatments she enjoys most and feels most confident delivering. BIAB manicures have become one of her signature services,

designed to strengthen the natural nail while delivering a polished, long-lasting finish. Clients can also choose nail art or subtle ombré detailing for a personalised look.

Brow treatments are also in high demand, with Maeve offering shaping and tinting designed to define and enhance natural brows. Her popular "eye trio" package, brow shaping, brow tint and eyelash tint is available for €35.



Make-up services are an expanding part of Maeve's business, catering for weddings, debts, communions, confirmations, and special occasions. She offers both soft, natural looks and more glamorous styles, tailored to each client to enhance their features and suit the occasion. Maeve's aim is to provide a relaxing, friendly experience while delivering high-quality results.

"No two days are ever the same, which keeps things exciting," she says. She hopes to continue expanding her services and keeping up with new

beauty trends and techniques. When she's not working, she enjoys spending time with her sister Mia, friends and family.

Operating from the Enterprise Hub has also been a positive step, giving Maeve a professional base and the opportunity to network with other local businesses. Her strong client focus is reflected in excellent feedback, with all Fresha reviews rating her five stars.

Beauty room by Maeve is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 6.30pm and Saturdays from 9am to 3pm. Treatments start from €10 for brow or lash tinting, gel nails from €30, and BIAB removal with a fresh set from €60. Bookings are available via Fresha, Instagram [@beautyroombymaeve](#) and Facebook Beauty room by Maeve.



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New Retreat Packages Offered in Ahascragh

By Maria Connolly

Having travelled all over the world, Caroline Graham has opened her dream lifestyle business reconnecting people to nature. The Feathers Shepherd's Hut is a beautiful retreat where visitors watch ducks and hens from the comfort of their armchairs while they relax. She has also designed two retreat packages for guests, and recently opened a women-only holistic treatment centre.

Caroline, originally from Ahascragh, studied Food and Beverage in Cork, coming home each weekend to work in Gullane's Hotel. She then worked in Germany, London, and on the prestigious QE2 cruise liner. She moved to working on Irish Ferries where she met her husband, Stephen, and they moved to Ahascragh and raised children while Caroline worked in the medical device industry. However, she says that she was "always planning for this next chapter".



Caroline Graham outside The Feathers Shepherd's Hut

With a love of gardening and a large outdoor space, she designed The Feathers "with love and intention...it is nestled in its own secret garden, and offers guests a slice of 'slow living'".

Caroline says that the journey to reach this point "hasn't been easy." She has self-funded the development of The Feathers, and juggled work with higher education to achieve her dream. However, she added that: "I'm finally stepping fully into this hard-earned chapter of creative independence and I can't wait."

The Feathers is available to book on www.airbnb.com as a haven for couples and nature lovers seeking a romantic escape or a "digital detox" (2-night minimum).

However, inspired by the solo female travellers she has hosted, Caroline has also designed a two-night all-inclusive solo retreat that is focussed on empowerment and reconnection. The

package includes vegetarian/vegan dining and curated holistic treatments, allowing guests to focus entirely on themselves. "Once they arrive, every detail is handled - all they have to do is breathe" Caroline notes. The weekend package runs from Friday - Sunday and costs €540, while the mid-week package costs €480.

She has also designed a 24-hour Mother-Daughter retreat, an idea born out of her personal experience. "I lost my mother to cancer when she was just 56, leaving a huge void," Caroline says. "I often wish we'd had a place like this to simply be together. I inherited my love of baking and gardening from her; every time I teach children to plant seeds or bake with a mother and daughter, I am passing on her legacy."

Her Mother-Daughter retreats (from 13+) start from €300, and include a programme of bread-making, foraging, cacao ceremony, and Reiki. If guests would like to do additional baking instead of a different activity, Caroline will try to accommodate this.

Guests can also avail of Nature Spirit Holistic Therapies, a female-only treatment space in Caroline's home. As a graduate of the Obus Academy, she combines professional Holistic Massage and Reiki Healing with "herb magic" from her garden. Treatments are also available to women in the community by appointment only. Caroline says that she is "thrilled to grow this wellness space, passing on the healing traditions that have been shared with me".

To book a treatment, retreat you can contact Caroline on 086 065 8243, or carolinegraham@gmail.com. You can also book via the link on her Facebook pages: "Nature Spirit Holistic Therapies" and "The Feathers Retreat." She is also on Instagram: [@thefeathershutandretreat](https://www.instagram.com/thefeathershutandretreat).

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New Manager For Shearwater Spa & New Suites

By Maria Connolly

Local woman **Eilis Sweeney** is the new Manager of Shearwater Spa, combining the role with her pre-existing job as Leisure Manager at the hotel. She is pleased to present two new suites at the spa designed to aid rest and recovery.



Eilis Sweeney, Manager of the Shearwater Spa and Shear Fitness, outside the new spa facilities.

Eilis, who attended Ard Scoil Mhuire, says that she has “always” had a passion for fitness. She started her career at the Shearwater, beginning as Gym Instructor, before moving to Aura Leisure in Tullamore, and then establishing her own exercise studio in Croffy’s Yard.

When the opportunity came to move to England in 2016, she joined her now-husband in Christchurch, Dorset, and began working as a Health and Fitness Manager for Fitness First. The chain operates 45 fitness clubs nationwide, and Eilis progressed to a General Manager role, supporting clubs across the country.

Eilis, her husband, and her daughter Róisín moved back to Ireland in 2024 to be closer to family, and she returned to working at the Shearwater. She says that she’s invited to bring all the knowledge and experience that she’s gained abroad “back to my hometown, and to contribute to its growing health and fitness community.” She adds that she’s really impressed by the facilities Ballinasloe has for fitness already: “with a wide range of boutique gyms, running clubs, and fitness groups catering to all individuals”.

Eilis acknowledges that: “the leisure industry is fast-paced and highly competitive, requiring constant innovation and high standards”, but she adds that the team of 30 staff members “make my role incredibly rewarding. It is a fantastic facility, and we are proud to see both locals and visitors enjoying it. The sense of community here is truly special.”

That innovation is evident in the Shearwater Spa’s newest suites, which are designed to support optimal recovery and overall wellbeing. The first suite features compression therapy systems, which Eilis says: “are particularly beneficial for athletes and individuals with circulation concerns. These systems help to increase blood flow, reduce metabolic waste, and enhance oxygen delivery throughout the body.” The suites are not suitable for everyone, but guests are screened before use. “The treatment itself is simple and relaxing,” Eilis notes.

The second suite offers a private infrared sauna and cold plunge experience. Eilis adds that: “the sessions are fully exclusive, allowing guests to enjoy complete privacy. The cold plunge can be adjusted between 3°C and 15°C, while the infrared sauna operates at a more comfortable 60°C - lower than traditional saunas - allowing for longer, more enjoyable sessions.”

Both treatments are booked by room, and provide a personalised experience. All bookings include access to the Shearwater’s gym, pool, and relaxation suite before or after the session. Prices range from €20 to €30 per person depending on session length, and discounted rates are available for local sports teams. Group bookings are also welcome, and Eilis is happy to assist with arrangements. She adds that the Shearwater is proud to support a range of local sports clubs, “including Ballinasloe Rugby, Ballinasloe GAA, Pádraig Pearses, and Cappagh.”

The Shearwater’s facilities are available from 6am - 8pm Monday to Friday, and 7am - 7pm on weekends. Bookings can be made through the website, www.shearwaterhotel.com, under the Spa section, or by calling (090) 963 0521.

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Brian Brennan Coaching Celebrates Five Years

By Colm Croffy

This year marks five years of Brian Brennan Coaching, a milestone that reflects five years of commitment, growth, and community. What began in uncertain times has matured into a structured coaching service built on consistency, accountability, and long-term progress.

In July 2020, Brian made the bold decision to leave his job in Dublin and return home to Ballinasloe, determined to build something meaningful locally. Originally set to open in January 2021, circumstances forced him to adapt and pivot online, ensuring both new and returning clients could begin and continue their journeys with structure and support.

From the start, returning clients became the backbone of Brian Brennan Coaching. Their loyalty and trust helped shape the gym's supportive environment, where showing up and putting in the work is celebrated. Many original members from 2021 remain active today, a testament to the strong community that has formed.

"I can't take all the credit! The people around me are the ones who show up and do the work. If I'm honest, our success comes down to trust. People choose to come back and be part of what we've built. There's a saying I've always believed in: if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together. Everything we've achieved has been a shared effort, and that's what makes it last", states Brian.



From day one, the focus has gone far beyond fitness. Brian Brennan Coaching is more than a gym, it's a coaching community where members are empowered to take charge of their own journey. Each person benefits from a structured, supportive environment designed not only to foster physical progress, but also to build discipline, resilience, and self-

respect through consistent effort.

"My motto is simple: Constant and Never-Ending Improvement, we focus on Progress, not Perfection. It's not just a gym, it's a place where people come in, do the work, and leave better than they came, whatever that means to them", Brian explains.

Over the years, Brian's philosophy has evolved from an intensive 12-week model to one built on continuity and ongoing support. Brian took client feedback seriously and recognised that lasting coaching is about more than teaching, it's about being a steady

guide through life's changes, whether that's career shifts, family commitments, injury, or recovery.

This isn't a session-based gym; it's a continuity community. Each month, members themselves nominate the ACE of the gym, someone who demonstrates Achievement, Consistency, and Excellence, both inside and outside the gym. That could mean hitting personal bests, reaching life milestones, or even earning a promotion at work.

Like any journey, it hasn't been without challenge.



"I will challenge you, and that approach doesn't suit everyone. The standard has always been the same, to deliver a structured coaching service that offers real progress for those ready to commit. There's

pride in doing things the right way, even when it's not the easiest option". notes Brian.

As the business steps into its sixth year, the goal remains the same: to keep improving the service, strengthen the community, and contribute to Ballinasloe's growth. The message stays simple: Show up. Do the work. Keep improving.

Check out for further info on programmes and courses on Follow Brian online @brianbrennancoaching on all sites.


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Rosie Finnerty (First Member) pictured with Brian outside the gym located at the bottom of Saint Michael's Square



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New Charity Pumpkin Patch For Vintage

By Maria Connolly

Ballinasloe and District Vintage Club is delighted to announce an exciting new event: The Ballinasloe Pumpkin Patch, a unique community endeavour organised in aid of LauraLynn's hub in the town.

LauraLynn is Ireland's children's hospice, caring for children from birth to 18 years of age. Established in 2023, it has two community hubs in Ireland, one of which is located in the



Ballinasloe Enterprise Centre in Creagh. From this base, the charity operates a multi-disciplinary Community Team, providing specialist hospice care for children with palliative care needs and their families across Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.

This new project will begin in early summer with a working field day, where club members and guests will use a wide range of vintage tractors and

implements. The field will be ploughed, harrowed and cultivated

in the traditional way, showcasing the machinery and farming methods that have played such an important role in Irish rural life. Once the ground is prepared, a more modern machine from Beechlawn Organic Farm will sow the pumpkin seeds.

Over the following months, club members will grow and care for the crop until it is ready for harvest in October, when the main family event will take place. Everyone will be invited to visit the pumpkin field and enjoy a Halloween and vintage machinery experience. The club hopes to create a fun, spooky and welcoming atmosphere for children and adults where they can view vintage displays and collect their very own family pumpkins.

All proceeds from the event will go to the town's LauraLynn hub. The funds will help LauraLynn continue to provide holistic care, free of charge, in the child's own home. Ballinasloe and District Vintage Club is proud to support this service and looks forward to bringing the community together for this special event.



Ballinasloe Social Services enjoyed another social outing for Day Centre attendees, made possible by an AIB Community Fund grant, with dinner in Gullane's Hotel followed by BARA Singers' 20th anniversary concert at the Town Hall Theatre.

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East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre

By Colm Croffy

In the heart of Ballinasloe, the East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre offers something invaluable to those affected by cancer: a place of understanding, care, and connection. Serving individuals and families across the region, the centre provides a welcoming, confidential space where no one has to face their journey alone.

The services available go far beyond practical support. From information, counselling and complementary therapies to support groups and wellness programmes, the centre focuses on the whole person, emotional, physical, and psychological wellbeing. All services are provided at cost to those who need them, and every service is delivered with compassion and respect, tailored to meet the needs of each individual who walks through the door.

What makes the centre truly special is its strong sense of community. Staff and volunteers work closely together to create an environment that is both professional and deeply personal. Many who come to the centre describe it as a place of comfort, where they feel heard, supported, and empowered.

As demand for services continues to grow, so too does the importance of community support. Fundraising, volunteering, and local awareness all play a vital role in ensuring the centre can continue its work.

The East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support Centre stands as a reminder that even in the most challenging times, support, kindness, and community can make a profound difference.



Members of the voluntary Board of East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support, recently elected at their AGM. (L-R): Helen Clinton, Chair; Karen Smyth, Secretary; Paul Doherty, Director, and Danielle Tully, Director. Absent are Maeve Carty, Treasurer; Sheila Harney, Vice-Chair, and Anna Mitchell, Director.

None of this would be possible without the commitment of the staff, volunteers, and the voluntary board, who work behind the scenes to keep the centre running. At their recent AGM, the Board of Directors was elected for East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support. Members are: Helen Clinton, Chair; Sheila Harney, Vice Chair; Maeve Carty, Treasurer; Paul Doherty, Director; Danielle Tully, Director; Anna Mitchell, Director, and Karen Smyth, Secretary.

The EGM Cancer Support Centre is based in

Brackernagh and is open Monday to Friday, 9am – 4pm. Walk ins are welcome.

We will update readers with full report of AGM and highlights of last year of operations in next edition.

Nature returning to Wildlife Pond at The Glebe N.S.

Students at the Glebe National School have been enjoying planting native plants at the pond beside their school. It was developed last year within the walled orchard of Aughrim's 200-year-old rectory thanks to a grant from Hare's Corner.

The children have been harvesting rainwater, seeking out soil, sticks, stones and plants, then watching as new habitats are created and biodiversity returns.

The Glebe NS is located at the heart of a unique eco-campus that includes Aughrim Climate Action Park and the Rectory Garden Project. With these outdoor classrooms on their doorstep, students learn to support

biodiversity through regular gardening lessons, nature trails, tree planting and wildflower walks.

The Glebe NS is a co-educational school with a caring ethos and excellent staff-student ratios. It is currently enrolling students in all classes for September. For further information see www.theglebens.com or email theglebens@gmail.com.



Pupils from The Glebe National School during a gardening lesson.



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Public Speaking Club Joins Toastmasters

By Colm Croffy

The Public Speaking Club have been holding their meetings in the Enterprise Hub on Society Street every fourth Thursday of the Month. The group are delighted to announce that bi-monthly meetings will now take place on every second and fourth Thursday, beginning at 7pm each night.



At the first inaugural General Meeting recently, the committee was elected, taking over the reins from the original steering committee of the Public Speaking Group. The incoming committee comprises of: Siobhan Keenan Fitzgerald, President; Brian King, Secretary/Treasurer; Chris Collins, Vice-President of Education; Brendan Harding, Vice-President of Membership; Brian Derrane, Club PRO, and Pat Hillary and Trevor Wood as Failte Officers.

The members were delighted to wish Siobhan Fitzgerald best wishes as she prepared to compete in the final of the International Speech contest in Tralee at the Toastmasters Rose Conference for District 71 (UK and Ireland).

The International Speech contest is the pinnacle of Toastmasters competitions, and the Rose Conference is the annual flagship event



Toastmaster Siobhan Fitzgerald (centre), with Chris Collins (left) and Brian King (right) as she prepared to compete at the final of the Toastmasters International Speech Contest in Tralee

of District 71 Toastmasters. Members from across Ireland and the UK come together for three days of inspiration, workshops, contest finals, and networking. While Siobhan didn't place in the top three of nine, she enjoyed and benefited from the experience.

There is an open invitation and open-door policy at the Toastmasters Club for members of the public, both locally and further afield, to

attend the meetings. These meetings would appeal to anyone who wishes to overcome their nerves, gain inner confidence to speak up during meetings, present better at work, to pass their interview, or speak at a wedding or public event.

Remember, the meetings take place at 7pm every Second and Fourth Thursday of the month at the Enterprise Hub, Society Street, Ballinasloe. For further details contact fitzsiobhan@hotmail.com.

Frank Owens Launches Memoir

Raised on a small Roscommon farm, Frank Owens has since worked and performed in some of the world's brightest cities. His memoir, *To Be Frank*, charts an extraordinary life shaped by music, fashion, and chance encounters.

Frank will be familiar to older readers from his time performing in *Minnie Sullivan's* in Ballinasloe in the eighties, as well as further afield in *Paddy Mac's* and *Cryan's* in Country Leitrim. Having honed his musical



skills locally, he subsequently performed all over the world and as far away as China and Australia before moving into music promotion.

The memoir also charts Frank's experiences working behind the scenes at Miss World beauty pageants, and how he balances family life with his peripatetic business life. The famous piper, Neileadh Mulligan, describes the book as: "a living, breathing story...that offers both insight and enjoyment."

Frank will be launching the book in Gullane's Hotel on Saturday 6 June at 8pm, with music of course to follow!

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College of Further Education Erasmus+ Trip

By Colm Croffy

Eleven students and four staff members from Ballinasloe College of Further Education (BCFE) recently returned from a highly successful Erasmus+ trip to Finland.

Stage 1 and Stage 2 Early Childcare Education and QQI Level 5 Healthcare learners took part in an immersive five day educational experience hosted by Eduko Vocational College in south-east Finland.

The fully-funded trip, organised through the Erasmus+ programme, offered students a unique opportunity to experience how vocational education and care services operate in one of Europe's most highly regarded education and healthcare systems. Students were warmly welcomed by staff and learners at Eduko Vocational College and participated in a varied programme of professional observation, cultural exchange and hands on learning.

For students studying Stage 1 and Stage 2 Early Childhood Care and Education, one of the most memorable aspects of the trip was the opportunity to observe a Finnish forest preschool, a key part of Finland's early years education model. In this setting, children spend the majority of their day outdoors, regardless of weather conditions. Learning in the forest preschool centred on child led play, exploration and independence.

Participants were struck by the calm, confident manner in which children engaged with their surroundings and by the strong emphasis placed on trust, freedom and respect for the natural world. "I would highly recommend Erasmus+ to anyone, it is a unique experience which opens your eyes to new perspectives and cultures", said Dylan Cooney, a Stage 1 Childcare student from Kiltormer.

Meanwhile, Healthcare students visited a dementia care unit, where they spent the day engaging with residents and staff. The visit offered invaluable insight into Finland's person centred approach to elderly care. Learners had the opportunity to assist residents with daily activities, while also focusing on emotional connection and dignity in care. Throughout the day there was music, laughter and even dancing, creating a warm and joyful atmosphere that highlighted the importance of social interaction in healthcare settings.

One of the students on the trip, Joana Santos from Esker Hills in Ballinasloe, said: "My experience in Finland helped me deepen my understanding of the importance of person-centred care in a nursing



BCFE Stage 1 and Stage 2 Childcare students, and QQI Level 5 Healthcare students, on their recent Erasmus+ trip to Finland.

home setting... My perspective has changed. I realized that (person-centred care) can truly be achieved when the focus is on people rather than productivity or profit."

The success of the Finland mobility has reinforced BCFE's commitment to international learning opportunities. The college is preparing to welcome its first Erasmus+ healthcare student from Finland, who will spend time both on campus and in a local healthcare placement. The college also hopes to organise additional Erasmus+ trips in the future and are currently exploring future Erasmus eligibility for learners in the Accounting, Legal or Estate Agency stream, as well as Horticulture and Make up courses.

This Erasmus+ trip proved to be a transformative personal journey for all involved, one that will influence students' careers, perspectives and ambitions for years to come. It was made possible through funding and support from Leargas, Ireland's national agency for managing international and national exchange programmes in education, training and youth.

To see what courses are currently available at BCFE, visit www.fetchcourses.ie You can also contact Ballinasloe College Centre Manager, Bernie, on (087) 763 6260 for more information.

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Former Creagh NS Pupil New President of U.L.

By Colm Croffy



Shane Kilcommins, formerly of Creagh on the morning of his announcement as the 6th President of University of Limerick.



University Of Limerick appoints Professor Shane Kilcommins as President. Prof Shane Kilcommins with his wife Maria (left) and UL Chancellor Brigid Laffan.

Shane Kilcommins a native of Creagh was formally appointed to be the sixth President of the University of Limerick in April.

Professor Kilcommins has previously held the role of provost and deputy president at UL and has served as acting president at the university since 2024, following the fallout of a controversial property deal.

The university said that, as acting president, he provided leadership during a “period of institutional challenge, representing the university in national fora and working to restore effective relationships with key stakeholders, while maintaining a clear focus on the University’s academic mission”.

The appointment was warmly welcomed by UL Chancellor Professor Brigid Laffan, who said that “the Governing Authority has great confidence in Professor Kilcommins’ judgment,

integrity and understanding of the responsibilities of leading a public university at a time of significant change in higher education nationally and internationally”.

The route of a football mad Creagh pupil- to becoming a President of one of Ireland’s newest Universities needs a bit of explaining -

“I just hoped to get to go to third level education. This was breaking new ground in my house as neither of my parents had that privilege. I finished my degree in Law and European Studies in 1994 at a time when there was not a lot of opportunity - I would have liked to practice as

a solicitor, but it was at that time very difficult to break in to such a career. A PHD scholarship was offered in the UK, and I took it. It led me on a journey towards lecturing” Shane explains.

“I had great teachers in Creagh NS. and received a fantastic foundational education that really stood to me. Teachers like Mr Broderick, Ms Hynes, Ms Power, Ms Broderick and Mr Johnston were really committed. Mr Broderick and Mr Johnson also put a huge amount of time in to coaching football teams. They were good coaches (I only appreciated that when I stopped playing!), and we were always competitive. Creagh school was a country school when I went there in the 1970s and early 1980s - but the standard of teaching I received was first rate, and I have wonderful memories of my time there. Like with many other schools, the teachers in Creagh School performed a huge service - they kept a candle of education and hope alight at a



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time of economic underdevelopment, high unemployment and high emigration. I also remember that my class was a mix of my year and the year above me. The students in those classes were naturally very, very talented with great abilities That talent pipeline - which was always there - has continued right up to the present. "states Shane.

There is rarely a day that passes that he does not hear a foreign direct investment company speaking about the talent of graduates at UL. " This is as it should be, but it is not surprising. I was conscious of this rich seam of talent from my days in Creagh school. It was a great school, and I was very grateful for the education that I received there. Though opportunities were not as they are today, having such an excellent education at national school ensured that we all had the best chance of reaching our potential. That was such a gift, and we owe those great teachers a debt of gratitude." He asserts.

Growing up in Creagh was also very special. It was smaller than the town, "you could learn and play in a very innocent and safe environment (before transitioning to the brighter lights of the town). Though I probably look back on that time with nostalgia and rose-tinted glasses, it did feel like a really strong community", he recalls.

He lectured in the UK after completing his Ph.D. , then came home and started lecturing in WIT (now SETU) for three years, before moving to UCC (14 years), moving to U.L. Uni in 2014, lecturing in Evidence Law, Criminal Law and Jurisprudence. " I have taught thousands of students at this stage - I have always loved the lecture hall: the energy and talent of young people is infectious,

and it is such a buzz as a teacher to see them going on to develop their careers and fulfil their abilities. I fell into leadership when I came to U.L. - but there is also a buzz in developing the potential of staff and creating an environment in which they can excel", he notes.

Shane went on to explain -"U.L. is my alma mater, and I also met my wife here. So it has a special affinity for me, and I was delighted to come back here to work. U.L is an essential public good - it has created life enhancing opportunities for 140,000 or so graduates and it is an economic engine in the mid-West of Ireland. We are tasked with ensuring that this public good is fostered and maintained into the future".

He does still come home to catch up with his Mum and family - "Ballinasloe is a noble, old town - it has a great history and a rich tradition. When my father was in hospital, I would walk around the town every night - I forgot how old it is. It was lovely to have had this time, and to appreciate its oldness. I have spent most of my adult life in Cork, but I am very proud that I come from Ballinasloe. It has been very good to my parents and permitted them to make a life for their children", he states.

" The last year has been hard for my mother, after my father became ill and passed away. My sister's (Emma) illness has also been difficult for her. Her great joy was her shop, Jorenas. She was passionate about this and really enjoyed the staff and the excitement of running a business. The people of the town and the broader hinterland have always been really good to her, permitting her to have that joy for over 30 years" explains Shane.



UL President Professor Shane Kilcommins, Meath ladies football star Mary-Kate Lynch and special guest GAA President Jarlath Burns at an event on Campus to celebrate the achievements of the GAA Club on the Plassey side Campus, some months ago.

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Clonfert College Celebrates Its First St Joseph's Day By Eamon Chin

On a bright and summery day recently, Clonfert College marked a significant moment in its young history with the celebration of its first St Joseph's Day as a unified school community. The occasion brought together students, staff and invited guests for a day of reflection, celebration and recognition, blending long-standing traditions with a new shared identity.



Winners of the College's Hurling Awards. Pictured with Pat McDonagh are Darren Grenham, Conor Jennings, Daniel Mooney and Principal Pauric Hanlon.

Clonfert College, which opened its doors in September last year following the amalgamation of Garbally College and Ardscoil Mhuire, is still in its foundation year. The celebration of St Joseph's Day, traditionally associated with Garbally, now forms part of a wider effort to bring together the heritage of both schools in a meaningful and inclusive way.

The day began with a special Mass, described as an important and reflective occasion in the life of Clonfert College. The ceremony was attended by the school's co-patron, the Bishop of Clonfert Michael Duignan, alongside Bishop Emeritus John Kirby, priests of the diocese and the Sisters of Mercy.

Fr Iomar Daniels celebrated the Mass, while the school's choir and musicians enhanced the ceremony through music and song. In his address, Bishop Duignan reflected on the importance of tradition and continuity during a time of change. He noted that while Clonfert College represents a new chapter, the roots of the two former schools remain central to its identity.

"The roots of this new College have not disappeared in the

amalgamation," he said. "They are still very much alive and active today, nourishing the new reality of Clonfert College that is taking shape in the life of this College community."

As the day continued, attention turned to celebrating student achievement at the school's awards ceremony. Local entrepreneur Pat McDonagh, founder of Supermac's - whose connection to the town dates to the opening of the first restaurant in 1978 - was welcomed as special guest. In addition to presenting awards, McDonagh took part in a fireside-style discussion with Student Council Presidents Mary O'Grady and Alex Dolan, offering students a candid insight into his own journey.



The Winners of Clonfert College's Camogie awards. (L-R): Pat McDonagh, Caoimhe Naughton, Éabha Curran and Ellie Ryan with Pauric Hanlon

Speaking about the challenges he faced along the way, he emphasised the importance of resilience, taking risks and learning from setbacks. The ceremony also included the presentation of the Founding Vision Award to Phillip Costello, recognising his contribution to school life and his

commitment to the values and ethos of the school.

The day's events reflected both continuity and change, honouring long-standing traditions while shaping a new shared identity for Clonfert College. As Bishop Duignan noted, the roots of the college remain strong, and from them, a new chapter in education in Ballinasloe is steadily taking shape. To see all the award winners and the Principal's remarks, please visit the Clonfert College Facebook page.

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Creagh N.S. Enjoy Lego League Event

By Maria Connolly

Fourth class in Creagh National School had a fantastic day at the first Lego League Showcase Event at ATU Galway. As part of the Uearthed project, the children explored how technology can help pupils learn about and protect the past. They confidently presented their projects and enjoyed seeing the creations from schools across Galway. The class also got a tour of the robotics lab at ATU Galway, making the day even more exciting and inspiring. The Creagh N.S. Sports Quiz team represented the school proudly at the Cumann na mBunscol All-Ireland Sports Quiz Final in Tullamore recently. Competing against some of the best school teams in the country, the boys finished in an excellent 5th place overall in Ireland. They showcased fantastic knowledge of GAA and sport in general throughout the competition. It was a tremendous achievement and a credit to the boys' hard work, teamwork and enthusiasm for sport. Meanwhile, the school's footballers enjoyed a wonderful day in Croke Park as part of the Allianz Rewards Pitch Day. The boys had the



Pictured are the Creagh National School Boy's football team at Croke Park recently.

opportunity to play matches on the hallowed turf against schools from Killarney, Gorey and West Clare. It was a fantastic experience for all and one the children will remember for many years to come.



Pupils from fourth class at Creagh National School at the first Lego League event in ATU Galway.



Boys from the Creagh National School football team at Croke Park.



The Creagh National School Sports Quiz team together with teacher Mark Ronaldson.

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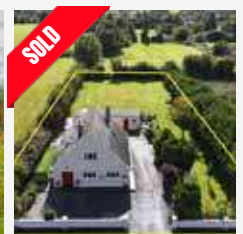
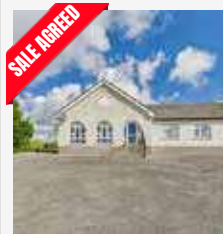
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SHREK CAST AND CREW



Pictured are the Cast and Crew of Shrek which as we go to print had just been nominated for five awards by the Association of Irish Musical Societies. The nominations are for : Best Ensemble, Best Visuals, Best Female Singer for Hannah Wright, Best Comedian for Patrick Byrne, and Best Comedienne for Emily Ui Cheallaigh.



Karen Breen - our gifted musician who took home a haul of medals from the County Fleadh, with her colleagues the Mc Dermotts!



Attendees at the recent launch of "What Matters to Me", an exhibition of babies' toddlers' and early years' creativity. L-R: Jen Hesnan, Gretb Creative Youth Coordinator; Liz Keane, Galway County Librarian; Orlando Henihan, Barnar Theatre Company; Kenneth Nally, Department of Education and Youth; Brenda Ivers, Gretb Adult Education Officer responsible for Youth, and Stacey Ford, Catriona Ryan and Geraldine Dolan, Galway Childcare Committee.



The Ballinasloe GAA Under 17 team. The club are again able to field a team at Under 17 and Under 19 level.



Toasting the new Coffee Dock in Salmons Store, Main St. was John Boland , one of the first customers to try the fab new Bewelys range of Coffees and Teas



Cousins Tommy Greaney and Nicole Greaney who came first place with their group in the recent Roscommon Fleadh. They will be competing in the Connacht Fleadh in July.



Bridge Club Presidents Prize May 2026
Angela Lyons presenting her presidents prize to the winners Mary Courtney & Adeline Naughton L-R Mary Courtney, Angela Lyons President, Adeline Naughton



The children from St Catherine's National School, Aughrim and St Gabriel's National School, Kilconnell, who made their first holy communion recently.



The U12 Girls Relay team, who competed in the recent Galway County Outdoor Championships



The community came together for a recent bingo night in aid of Scoil an Chroi Naofa. The event raised over €6,500 for the school.



Teachers at Scoil an Chroi Naofa dress up for World Book Day.



Alex Cunningham and Odhran Hurley, who won a silver medal in the U60 paired event.



Martin Sibanda and Enda Kenny at the final of the Men's Spring League.



Scoil an Chroi Naofa at Cumann na mBunsocil in Cappataggle.



The student council of Scoil an Chroi Naofa on a recent visit to Dàil Èireann.



SUPERMACS PAT MCDONAGH & PRINCIPAL OF CLONFERT COLLEGE, PAURIC HANLON PRESENT AWARDS.



5th Year Academic Award winners (L-R): Gerard Dolan, Niamh Curley and Oliwier Florek with Pat McDonagh and Pauric Hanlon. Absent from photo are Aodán McDonagh and Victoria Plaksy.



3rd Year Academic Award winners (L-R): Eamon Tully, Lorcan McKeigue, Aoibhe Moore, Ethan Thomaidis, Ria Garvey and Carly Feury with Pat McDonagh and Pauric Hanlon.



Ladies' Football Award Winners: Leah Farrell, Ribh Fournet, Caoimhe Flanagan with Pat McDonagh and Pauric Hanlon



Pat McDonagh, Pauric Hanlon, and First Year Academic Award winners (L-R): Ronan Harney, Teegan Fahy, Jessica Galvin, Burham Muhammed, Abdelrahman Yunes, and Miah Russell.



Pat McDonagh, Pauric Hanlon, and 2nd Year Academic Award winners (L-R) Éabha Curran, Dearbhail Nolan, Maeve Campbell, Liam O'Fathartha and Isabel Valiyaparampil. Absent from photo is Anneliese Godfrey.



Founding Vision Award: Phillip Costello. The winner is pictured alongside Fr Iomar Daniels and Pauric Hanlon.



Padraic Concannon, daughter in law Marcieide Da Silva Concannon and son Colin Concannon at the Daybreak Store of the Year Awards 2025/26. Their store in Ahascragh won the overall prize.



Aoife Greaney (8), from Kiltomer, who came first place in her category at the recent Tuamgraney Harp Competition, held in Co Clare.



Malachy Barry, whose father, also called Malachy Barry, was from Clontuskert and was a renowned marathon runner, competing in the 1948 All-Ireland marathon and finishing second. Malachy recently completed his first marathon in Manchester, finishing in three hours 42 minutes.



Congratulations to Godfrey Gibbons on his victory for Ireland at the Ballindenisk International Competition recently in Cork.

JUNE EVENTS GUIDE

June 1, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 2, Tuesday

Breastfeeding Sup.Grp.	10am - 11.30am	Youth Work, MarinaPt.
Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 3, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Meeting	3pm	Gullanes Hotel
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

June 4, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel
Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

June 5, Friday

Yoga w/ Ju	7.30am - 8.30am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin Bar
The Flynns	10pm	Brewery Lane

June 6, Saturday

Frank Owens Book Launch	8pm	Gullanes Hotel
The Incredible Grease Brunch	Doors open 2pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Meet The Fawkers	10pm	Brewery Lane
Rhythm n' Keys	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar
Live Music	10pm	JJ Killeens

June 7, Sunday

Social Dancing: Checkers	5pm - 7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Trad. and Folk Music	6pm	An Táin
Live Music	6.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Pa Shiel	6pm - 8pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	7pm	JJ Killeens
DJ	8pm - 11pm	Brewery Lane
Country Dancing: Patrick Feeney	9pm	Shearwater Hotel

June 8, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting session	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 9, Tuesday

Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 10, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

June 11, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel
Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

June 12, Friday

Yoga w/ Ju	7.30am - 8.30am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin
Robbie	10pm	Brewery Lane

June 13, Saturday

Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
3 Men & a Bass	10pm	Brewery Lane
Shead	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar
Live Music	10pm	JJ Killeens

June 14, Sunday

Social Dancing: Andy Feery	5pm - 7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Trad. and Folk Music	6pm	An Táin
Live Music	6.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Pa Shiel	6pm - 8pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	7pm	JJ Killeens
DJ	8pm - 11pm	Brewery Lane
Country Dancing: Derek Ryan	9pm	Shearwater Hotel

June 15, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting session	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 16, Tuesday

Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 17, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

June 18, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel
Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

June 19, Friday

Yoga w/ Ju	7.30am - 8.30am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin
DJ Colm	10pm	Brewery Lane

June 20, Saturday

Midsummer Multicultural Festival	1pm - 5pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Red Tape	10pm	Brewery Lane
Fionnán Seale	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar
Live Music	10pm	JJ Killeens

June 21, Sunday

Social Dancing: Michael Collins	5pm - 7.30pm	Shearwater Hotel
Live Trad. and Folk Music	6pm	An Táin
Live Music	6.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Jukebox John	6pm - 8pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	7pm	JJ Killeens
DJ	8pm - 11pm	Brewery Lane
Country Dancing: Mike Denver	9pm	Shearwater Hotel

June 22, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting session	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom

Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 23, Tuesday

Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 24, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

June 25, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel
Adult Book Club	11.30am	Bsloe Library
A Summer Night w/ Country Stars	7pm	Shearwater Hotel
Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

June 26, Friday

Yoga w/ Ju	7.30am - 8.30am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin
Down The Road	10pm	Brewery Lane

June 27, Saturday

Queen, Queen Tribute Band	8pm - 1am	Lukers, Shbridge
Beggars Velvet	10pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar
Live Music	10pm	JJ Killeens

June 28, Sunday

Live Trad. and Folk Music	6pm	An Táin
Jukebox John	6pm - 8pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	6.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Live Music	7pm	JJ Killeens
DJ	8pm - 11pm	Brewery Lane

June 29, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting session	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

June 30, Tuesday

Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

LOCAL CAB FIRMS

BRADY TAXIS* / GERARD BRADY ✈ **089 439 3066**

Mon. to Wed	7am - 11pm	Sat.	1pm - late
Thur.	7am - 6pm	Sun.	11am - 11pm
Fri.	7am - late		

JIMMY MCGUIRE **087 629 6718**

Mon.	9am - 6pm	Wed.	9am - 1am
Tues.	12pm - 1am	Thur. to Sun.	9am - late

SEAN COLOHAN* ✈ **087 218 5094**

Mon. to Fri.	8am - 5pm
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MUHAMMAD ABDUL **087 907 3009**

Mon.	9am - 1pm	Sat.	2pm - 2am
Thur.	2pm - 1.30am	Sun.	9am - 1pm
Fri.	2pm - 3am		

✈ *Airport/longer runs: please pre-book.

JULY EVENTS GUIDE

July 1, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

July 2, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel
Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

July 3, Friday

Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Milksake Academy "Pulse"	7.30pm	Town Hall Theatre
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin
The Flynn's	10pm	Brewery Lane

July 4, Saturday

Milksake Academy "Pulse"	7.30pm	Town Hall Theatre
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
DJ Colm	10pm	Brewery Lane
Trevor Cavanagh	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar
Live Music	10pm	JJ Killeens

July 5, Sunday

Live Trad. and Folk Music	6pm	An Táin
Pa Shiel	6pm - 8pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	6.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Live Music	7pm	JJ Killeens
Live in the Marquee: Rod Stewart Tribute Act	8pm	JJ Killeens
DJ	8pm - 11pm	Brewery Lane

July 6, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting session	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

July 7, Tuesday

Breastfeeding Sup.Grp.	10am - 11.30am	Youth Work, MarinaPt.
Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

July 8, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

July 9, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel
Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

July 10, Friday

Yoga w/ Ju	7.30am - 8.30am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin
Down The Road	10pm	Brewery Lane

July 11, Saturday

Let Loose Girlie Day Party	2pm - 6pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge

July 12, Sunday

Anchormen	10pm	Brewery Lane
Charlie Byrne	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar
Live Music	10pm	JJ Killeens
Live Trad. and Folk Music	6pm	An Táin
Pa Shiel	6pm - 8pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	6.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Live Music	7pm	JJ Killeens
DJ	8pm - 11pm	Brewery Lane

July 13, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting session	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

July 14, Tuesday

Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

July 15, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

July 16, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel
Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

July 17, Friday

Yoga w/ Ju	7.30am - 8.30am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin
Robbie	10pm	Brewery Lane

July 18, Saturday

Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Beggars Velvet	10pm	Brewery Lane
SheaD	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar
Live Music	10pm	JJ Killeens

July 19, Sunday

Live Trad. and Folk Music	6pm	An Táin
Pa Shiel	6pm - 8pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	6.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Live Music	7pm	JJ Killeens
Robbie	8pm - 11pm	Brewery Lane

July 20, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting session	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

July 21, Tuesday

Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

July 22, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

July 23, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel

July 24, Friday

Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Yoga w/ Ju	7.30am - 8.30am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin
Pa Shiel	10pm	Brewery Lane

July 25, Saturday

Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
DJ Colm	10pm	Brewery Lane
Rhythm n' Keys	10pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar
Music	10pm	Fallons Bar
Live Music	10pm	JJ Killeens

July 26, Sunday

Live Trad. and Folk Music	6pm	An Táin
Jukebox John	6pm - 8pm	Brewery Lane
Live Music	6.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Live Music	7pm	JJ Killeens
DJ	8pm - 11pm	Brewery Lane

July 27, Monday

Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Bsloe Act.Retire. Knitting session	10.30am - 12.30pm	Gullane's Hotel
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	10.30am - 12.30pm	Emerald Ballroom
Bsloe Active Ret Aerobics	2pm - 3pm	Coral Leisure Centre
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom

July 28, Tuesday

Learn English w/ Fáilte Isteach	11.15am	Bsloe Library
Bsloe Act.Retire. Aerobics	7pm - 8pm	Coral Leisure Centre
Bridge Club	7.30pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield
Bsloe GAA Bingo	8pm	Emerald Ballroom

July 29, Wednesday

Social Bridge	11am - 1pm	Bridge Rooms, Sarsfield Rd
Crafty Girls Craft Group	11:15am	Bsloe Library
Baby Rhyme Time	11:30am	Bsloe Library
IKKI Karate	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Live Trad. and Folk Music	9pm	An Táin
Live Music	9.30pm	JJ Killeens

July 30, Thursday

Yoga w/ Ju	10am - 11am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Ciorcal Comhrá	11am - 12pm	Gullanes Hotel
Adult Book Club	11.30am	Bsloe Library
Board Game Evening	7pm	Bsloe Library
Beginners Tennis	7pm - 8pm	Bsloe Tennis Club
Bsloe Act.Retire. Bowling	7pm - 9pm	Emerald Ballroom
Trad & Folk Session	9pm	Gibbons Pillar House Bar

July 31, Friday

Yoga w/ Ju	7.30am - 8.30am	Upstairs at Jorena's Shop
Indoor Country Market	9am - 1pm	Social Ser.Centr.
Men's Shed Meeting	10am - 2pm	Cullens Yard, Main Street
Parent & Baby Group	10:30am - 12:30pm	Family Resource Centr.
Free Play Lego	3:15pm - 4:15pm	Bsloe Library
Live Music	9pm	JJ Killeens
Live Music	9.30pm	Lukers, Shbridge
Find The Joker	10pm	An Táin
DJ Colm	10pm	Brewery Lane

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BARA Singers Celebrate 20th Anniversary

By Maria Connolly

To celebrate 20 years of making music in Ballinasloe BARA (Ballinasloe Active Retirement Association) Singers took on an ambitious programme of music for their annual fundraising Songfest, held recently in the Town Hall Theatre.

For those unaware – the group is in essence a community choir of active retired, interested in cross community interaction through musical events and participation.

Past Songfests have included tributes in song and story to some Irish people who have made a musical difference including Jimmy Kennedy, Percy French, and James Joyce.

This year was the turn of Margaret Burke Sheridan, a little girl from the West of Ireland who, despite achieving international fame, is somewhat forgotten in her own country. With the help of author Anne Chambers' book 'La Sheridan: Adorable Diva' and John Allen's tribute in the Music Ireland Journal a biographical script was written and interwoven with appropriate music.

The script was married with the voice of incredible local soprano Rachel Goode, the Ballinasloe Town Band, and the Grey Lake String Quartet, and Margaret's remarkable story was retold.

Marie Power, who founded the group, said that: "Music is the great universal language that opens doors to friendship and communication. BARA singers gives people the opportunity to stay active and be involved in their community."

Over the twenty years, BARA Singers have participated in dawn choruses, festival sing-outs, cross community events with other choirs, and they regularly perform in local care homes. Marie said: "Our door is always open for anyone to join us or link up with us in a local arts community activity," and they look forward to many more years performing.

They have raised over €20,000 for a variety of local worthy charitable causes since they began. This years chosen charities were Laura Lyn and Care and Repair. We will publish

representatives from the group handing over the final amounts in our next edition,

The group are always looking for new members, their Rehearsal zone is usually in the Town Band Hall on Dunlo Hill and you can find out more about them through the Facebook page BARA Singers.



Members of the BARA Singers at their 20th Gala Concert in Town Hall lately



Members of the BARA Singers Rehearsing in the Town Band Hall for their last sellout Anniversary Concert

Jorena Health & Gift Shop

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Local Photographer Features in BBC Springwatch *By Maria Connolly*

Footage from Jack Kelly, an Aghrim-based wildlife photographer and cinematographer, has been selected by producers of iconic nature show, Springwatch, for this year's twenty-first season of the programme.

Jack, from Tristane, Aghrim, is the son of Sean Kelly, who played for the All-Ireland winning Kiltomer team, and Deborah, who worked for many years in Portiuncula Hospital. He attended St Augustine's in Clontuskert, before going on to Garbally College. Despite always having a passion for photography and cinematography, he chose to study Marine Biology in college in GMIT. However, he found that while he "loved" being out in the sea, "when it came to writing research papers and such, the drive just wasn't there." Following the pandemic, he asked himself: "how can I be around animals as much as possible and use cameras?", which led to his current work as a wildlife cinematographer and cameraman.



In recent years, Jack has been working with basking sharks. "The west coast of Ireland is considered to be the best place on the planet to see huge gatherings of these animals. They have some very unique behaviours that are not yet understood fully," he states. He is regularly in touch with producers at National Geographic, the BBC, and Irish production companies, and Springwatch were interested in featuring him in this year's programme. "It's a real privilege to be able to say some of my own footage has made it to programmes like that," Jack says. "Some of the best TV presenters, naturalists and camera operators alike started on Springwatch. I grew up watching programmes with the likes of David Attenborough who turned 100 in May." He hopes it will open up new doors of opportunity.

Amazingly, Jack is self-taught and never studied photography formally. "I remember taking a photo on my first ever mobile phone back in 2009 maybe, from a moving car, of a house with a red door nestled in a wooded area surrounded by trees. Whether

it was luck or not, the shot came out perfect. From then on, I was always fascinated with viewing the world through the lens of a camera and the storytelling journey you can bring people on."

His best advice is: "To just start. Take whatever camera you have and just go and shoot something. I learned about different exposure settings by taking photos of flooded fields on our family farm." In the local area, he recommends the waterways around Ballinasloe for bird photography, and the woods in Garbally, Woodford, or Ballygar. "Ireland has so much wildlife", he adds.

Jack has a bucket list of locations to visit, including the Galapagos Islands, famous for inspiring Charles Darwin for its biodiversity, the Raja Ampat archipelago in Indonesia, which has over 1,500 islands, and Antarctica. He would also love to film: "the Great White shark underwater without a cage". He's filmed "Oceanic white tip sharks" in Egypt. Once described by the great French naturalist

Jacques Cousteau as: "the most dangerous in the sea", the Great Whites are a species that he has his eyes set on.

When not working, Jack is: "big into keeping fit... a musician, and singer-songwriter. I do love to travel also where my camera and drone will nearly always join." When not travelling for work he is still based at home in Tristane, Aghrim, and still helps out on the family farm.

Springwatch is showing for three weeks until June 12. To see more of Jack's work, find him on Instagram @mr_jackelly and TikTok (@mr_jackelly), on Facebook as Jack Kelly, and online at www.mrjackkelly.com.

When not working on wildlife shoots, he is available for a range of camera work, weddings, music videos, photo-shoots, commercial and event work etc. Email: Mrjackkellyfilm@gmail.com for any enquiries.

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Eyrecourt Vintage Rally 40th Anniversary

By Maria Connolly

Eyrecourt vintage rally celebrates 40 years in 2026, and the event on June 21 promises an exciting and busy day for all concerned. The event was the brainchild of Michael Hogan and Philip Larkin, who decided while returning from a rally in west Cork that they could bring something similar to their own backyard: a rally celebrating the vintage and classic heritage of the western midlands.



Members of Ballinasloe Vintage and District Club, stewarding at the Eyrecourt Vintage Rally.

Over the past 40 years, the rally has become a staple of the vintage scene and has inspired generations of enthusiasts. Its legacy is the strength and depth of the movement in this area and the resultant rallies that have been born in local areas as a direct result of Eyrecourt's success.

Five of the original founding members still sit on the rally committee today, now joined by newer members who were children - or not yet born - when it all began. The rally has grown to span three generations of families.

This year's event puts Massey Ferguson centre stage, with a special celebration of the Banner Lane production years. Alongside this, the vintage and veteran classes will feature a number of rare marks drawn from private collections. Add to that the 4x4 section, pre-1980 commercials, and Eyrecourt's



Brian and Carol Derrane with daughter Lorna in full festive Vintage Costume of the Edwardian Era - enjoying the fun at the Rally some years ago!



Brendan Hogan with his family at the Eyrecourt Vintage Rally.

ever-popular working arena - where historic timber sawing, earth moving, and crawler exhibits bring the past to life - and you have a packed programme.

The ever-popular children's area returns, with Quiltemach Pet Farm and An Fuinseog Wood Crafts among those to delight younger visitors, reflecting the event's growing reputation as a true family day out. The organisers look forward to welcoming everyone on June 21 for a day of fun, heritage and history, with plenty of time to catch up with family and friends over food, tea and coffee.



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Art Competition for Midsummer Festival

As part of this year's Midsummer Multicultural Festival celebrations, Ballinasloe Lions Club in partnership with Galway Rural Development are running an art competition for national school children with the festival on the theme "Our Culture, Our Community."

Winners will be announced during the festival and will receive prizes. The winning entries will also go forward to feature in the nationwide Lions Club art competition. All artwork will be showcased during the festival and prizes awarded across the different age categories.

The inaugural Midsummer Multicultural Festival took place last summer and was a huge success, uniting people from different cultures living in and around the town and showcasing international food, music, song and dance. Now the festival is returning for a second year on Saturday June 20. This year's event will also include a family fun run, sensory activities, and an ice cream truck!

For further information please contact kgavin@grd.ie or see Advert on Page 25 of this publication for full details on the festival.

Dr Martin Daly TD Working for Ballinasloe

By Maria Connolly

Since being elected to Dáil Éireann, Dr Martin Daly TD has placed a major focus on Ballinasloe, working closely with local communities, organisations, schools, healthcare services and Government departments to ensure the town receives the attention, investment and representation it deserves.



A key priority has been direct engagement. Dr Daly has met extensively with representative bodies and organisations across the town including the Family Resource Centre, Ballinasloe Social Services, Youthreach, Galway Rural Development/SICAP, the Galway Regional Drugs Task Force, Canal House, local school communities, sporting organisations and community representatives.

Following these engagements, Dr Daly established the Ballinasloe

Task Force, bringing together representatives from different sectors to create a coordinated approach to the challenges and opportunities facing the town. A detailed submission has been made directly to Government outlining the key priorities for the town.

Healthcare remains one of Dr Daly's principal areas of focus, particularly regarding Portiuncula Hospital. Over the past year, Dr Daly has met with consultants, frontline healthcare staff, nurses, management and hospital representatives to discuss ongoing pressures, staffing challenges, patient care and future service development at the hospital. These issues have also been repeatedly raised at Dáil and Committee level. Alongside this work, Dr Daly continues to liaise directly with the HSE and HSE Estates regarding the future of St Brigid's Hospital.

In terms of education, significant progress has been achieved, with Scoil an Chroí Naofa advancing to tender stage after more than twenty years. DEIS Plus status has also been secured for the school, bringing additional educational supports and resources. Ongoing engagement continues with local schools regarding educational disadvantage, special education supports and future development needs.

Community safety and anti-social behaviour are issues which continue to be raised regularly with Dr Daly. In response, he has met with An Garda Síochána, local stakeholders and Government. The Minister for Justice has also visited the town to discuss community safety concerns and wider social challenges affecting the area. Dr Daly has also continued to support initiatives aimed at improving community safety, youth engagement and social supports across Ballinasloe.

Economic development and employment growth remain another key area of focus. Dr Daly is continuing to liaise with the IDA and relevant agencies regarding enterprise initiatives and

opportunities for Ballinasloe, with the objective of attracting investment, supporting employment growth and ensuring the town is included in future regional development opportunities.

In addition to strategic work at Government level, Dr Daly maintains a strong local presence through regular constituency clinics held every Monday and Tuesday in Ballinasloe. He provides assistance to individuals and families across a wide range of areas including healthcare, housing, planning, social welfare, pensions, education, farming matters and local authority issues.

Alongside this work, Dr Daly continues to actively support local sporting, cultural and community organisations and has attended numerous local events and initiatives throughout Ballinasloe and the wider area.

Current ongoing work includes:

- ▶ Portiuncula Hospital services and maternity care advocacy
- ▶ Engagement with consultants, frontline staff and management at Portiuncula Hospital
- ▶ Engaging with HSE and HSE Estates regarding St Brigid's Hospital projects
- ▶ Ballinasloe Task Force coordination and stakeholder engagement
- ▶ Work relating to anti-social behaviour and community safety
- ▶ Engaging with An Garda Síochána and relevant agencies
- ▶ IDA and enterprise engagement regarding investment and employment opportunities
- ▶ Educational supports, DEIS advocacy and school development projects
- ▶ Weekly constituency clinics and community casework.

Dr Daly and his team are always happy to assist where possible and can be contacted on (087) 682 7029 or by email: martin.daly@oireachtas.ie. Appointments can be arranged directly through the office.



Members of Ballinasloe retired nurse's group with Dr. Martin Daly on a trip to Leinster House.



Local Groups Participate At Bord Bia Bloom

By Colm Croffy

A collaboration of the Celtic Eye Art Group, the Karst Farming Network (Regenerating The Rocks EIP), St. Hilda's Services Athlone, the Irish Wheelchair Association Athlone, Athlone's Men's Shed, and primary schools in Taughmaconnell and Castlesampson, are participating at Bord Bia Bloom 2026.



L-R: Theresa Dempsey, Nicola Bowes, Paula Sharkey from the Celtic Eye Art Group, with Kerrie Gardiner, Bord Bia Bloom Show Gardens and Horticulture content Manager.

They are exhibiting in the Postcard Garden section with their design "Yellow Meadow Kingdom", celebrating the yellow meadow art present in the Karst landscape of South Roscommon.

The project represents community engagement spanning counties Roscommon, Westmeath and Galway. Groups came together in a positive and creative way to highlight a magical hidden gem. Their garden and art

design is a celebration of the unique Karst landscape, focusing on biodiversity, ecosystem engineers, native plants, mythology, heritage and community.

The Celtic Eye Art Group are delighted to continue their work with the Karst Farming Network (Regenerating The Rocks), who were awarded a European Innovation Partnership (EIP) in 2025. The farmers who have worked this landscape down through the

generations are the true artists of this landscape, and continue to enhance and protect the unique Karst landscape of South Roscommon.

Members of the Celtic Eye Art Group, Nicola Bowes, Paula Sharkey, Rosemary Carty and Theresa Dempsey, recently attended the Bord Bia Bloom welcome event hosted by Tirlán Country Life in Co. Kilkenny, sponsors of the Postcard Gardens. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet other 2026 Postcard Garden participants and special guest Bláthnaid Treacy.

Ann Hill, a member of the Celtic Eye Art Group, said that she is "honoured to be with this group for the last five years in highlighting the importance of protecting our landscape, our Culture and our heritage."

The Celtic Eye Art Group featured their first Postcard Garden design in the 2024 Bord Bia Bloom, in collaboration with the Úí Máine Kingdom Group, St. Hilda's Services Athlone and the Irish Wheelchair Association Athlone. They are delighted to feature again in 2026 with these organisations, and it is even more special to have the local schools involved too.



L-R: Paula Sharkey of the Celtic Eye Art Group, Blathnaid Treacy, RTE Presenter/Broadcaster, and Nicola Bowes, also from the Celtic Eye Art Group.

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Blossom Harp Ensemble Winning Ways!

By Maria Connolly

Local traditional group, Blossom Harp Ensemble, are celebrating their recent win at the Tuamgraney Harp Festival. The competition is the only one dedicated to harp groups in Ireland, "so it's a kind of All-Ireland competition" says Elisabeth Affolter, the founder of the ensemble.

Elisabeth, better known as Lizzie, was born in St. Servan (close to St Malo in Brittany). She is a well-known figure in musical circles in Ballinasloe and has a connection with Ireland dating back to the late 1970's, touring with a Breton group, An Delen Dir. She has been playing the harp for about 50 years and moved to Ireland in 2010 to take up a teaching role with the Irish Harp Centre in Castleconnell, Co Limerick. She started her own harp school in late 2012.

Having first settled in Co Clare, Lizzie decided to move to Ballinasloe in 2019 for various reasons. "I had more students in Ballinasloe than in Clare; the roads were very bad in winter, and I had to pay rent for rooms where I was teaching. Altogether, I realised that it would be better for me to buy a house in Ballinasloe and teach at home."

She wasn't impressed with her earliest visits to the town, however. "Honestly, when I visited houses here in 2011, I found the town sad and grey, which is why I bought in Clare. But by 2019, the town was so changed. There was more culture, the new library had been built, there were lots of events in the Town Hall Theatre and Moore Community Centre, as well as four trad music sessions a week", she explains.

Lizzie founded Blossom Harp Ensemble in 2013 and currently includes seven members ranging in age from eight to 16. Members of the ensemble were also successful in solo competitions at Tuamgraney. Sarah Cunningham from Mountbellew received second place in the solo event, while Aoife Duane received first place in the Novice category, with Muireann



Some of the members of Blossom Harp Ensemble together with Adjudicators and harp builder, Brian Callan, at the Tuamgraney Harp Competition. **BACK ROW (L-R):** Anna Eggersberg, Adjudicator, Corinna Hewat-Dawn, Adjudicator, Eoin Muldowney, Sarah Cunningham, Breege Clarke, and Brian Callan. **FRONT ROW (L-R):** Molly Kenny and Farragh Clarke.

Clarke of Offaly coming third in the same category. Molly Kenny from Offaly also won first prize in the group competition with her mother and cousin.

Molly Kenny (8) has been playing the harp for two and a half years, and says: "It makes me feel happy and excited when I play with the other harpists, it's very relaxing when we play our slow tunes together." She was "delighted" to win the Tuamgraney competition, and "proud of myself and the other harpists". Meanwhile, Eoin Muldowney (14), says that he "enjoys being in the ensemble and playing tunes with people I know. Playing with others helps develop my harp playing...I like that I can relax when playing the harp." Elisabeth echoes her students' sentiments, saying that, for her, "playing with others is the most important thing".

The ensemble also recently took part in the Navan Choral and Instrumental Festival recently secured first place in the under 20 section, picked up two Adjudicators' special mentions as well as runners up in the individual with Noreen Murphy.

They will spend the summer preparing for autumn events, including National Harp Day on October 17, when they will be playing in Moore Community Hall.

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Town Band Enjoys Busy Spring

By Colm Croffy

The Town Band are enjoying a busy spring of engagements and fundraising events. At the Band's table quiz in Gullane's Hotel, the modest crowd enjoyed the wit of Quizmaster, Niall Clarke, and the challenge of the questions set by Kevin Duffy. The victorious team were Anthony McGuinness, Barry Power, his daughter Emma, and his sister, Cait Power.

The band then played to a packed hall in St. Brigids GAA Club in Kiltoom at St Brigid's Springtime Concert. This was the second part of a reciprocal arrangement between the Band and St. Brigid's Choir, who guested at the Band's Christmas concert in December.



The victorious team of Anthony McGuinness, Barry Power, his daughter Emma, and sister, Cait Power.

The Annual Golf Scramble took place over two days recently at Ballinasloe Golf Club under ideal golfing conditions. The overall winners were the team

comprising of Claire, Anne and Joe Staunton, with the Ladies prize going to Catherine Owens, Anne Greene, and Regina Power.

The Band also played at the Celebration Concert recognising twenty years of the Ballinasloe Active Retirement Association (BARA) Singers. This anniversary songfest also featured The Grey Lake Quartet, and the fabulous soprano voice of Rachel Goode.

The proceeds of the event were generously donated to the Town Band.

Looking forward to the summer months, in June of last year, the Town Band opened the inaugural Midsummer Festival and they are delighted to have been invited to play at the event again this year. The Festival will take place on Saturday June 20. The Band will continue practising through June and July and will play outdoors locally over the summer, before taking a well-deserved break in August.

The band are always recruiting for members of all ages. If you have played an instrument in the past and wish to get back to music now is a great time to contact Bandmaster Frank Kennedy on (087) 990 4651 or Chairperson, Damien O'Neachtain on (087) 418 6536. A special recruiting drive will take place in September for those with no music experience.



Some members of the Town Band, who accompanied the Barra Singers at their recent Anniversary Town Hall, Concert

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Busy Summer Ahead For Aughrim Centre

By Colm Croffy

The Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre has been reopened this May for the 2026 summer season. The centre will welcome visitors till Sunday 27 September.

Following a highly successful 2025 season, Galway County Council has once again worked in close partnership with the Cath Eachroma Community Group to deliver an exciting and engaging programme of events for the year ahead. This continued collaboration reflects a shared commitment to celebrating, preserving, and promoting the rich heritage of the Battle of Aughrim and the wider East Galway region.

The Cath Eachroma Community Group, through its dedication and volunteer-driven approach, continues to serve as a powerful example of how grassroots community engagement can thrive when guided by passion, historical awareness, and a strong sense of local identity. Working together, the council and community partners remain focused on ensuring that the centre's legacy is protected, respected, and thoughtfully re-imagined for future generations.

This collaborative approach has delivered tangible results. Visitor numbers increased by 20% during the 2025 season, with similar growth anticipated in 2026. Feedback from visitors has been very positive, with increased attendance reflecting a growing public interest in the centre's programming. In particular, the success of the Summer Series has demonstrated a strong appetite for high-quality, heritage-based cultural initiatives within the local community and beyond.



Emily Dickinson, Consultants, John Neary Tourism Officer, Galway County Council, Cllr Dr. Evelyn Parsons at the Community Consultations in the Rectory last month.

showcased a traditional music session hosted at the visitor centre, highlighting the vibrant and creative traditional music culture of East Galway.

Galway County Council launched a new website for the centre, enhancing accessibility and visitor engagement. A new online booking facility will be introduced as part of this development, making it easier than ever for visitors to plan their visit and engage with the centre's events and offerings.

Meanwhile the consultants appointed to undertake the EU Just Transition funded feasibility study on the future development of the site had a very busy series of consultative meetings in the Rectory early last month; in the hope of capturing community and local ideas for the development of the centre and battlefield.

Tourism Officer John Neary confirmed to the different workshops and public that it is envisaged that the Report will issue towards the end of August.

The 2026 season promises to be a busy and rewarding summer at the Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre, continuing its role as a focal point for heritage, culture, and community collaboration in County Galway.

Opening hours are: 10.30am - 4.30pm Tuesday - Saturday, and 2 - 5pm on Sundays. The new website address is: <https://battleofaughrim.info/>



Staff and volunteers at the Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre. Pictured left to right are: Ronan Killeen, Galway County Council; Joseph Treacy, The Cath Eachroma Community Group; Joe Tully, The Cath Eachroma Community Group; Breege Lynn, Galway County Council; George Geraghty, The Cath Eachroma Community Group



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Library Offers Chillout Space To Exam Students

By Maria Connolly

Ballinasloe Library celebrated its 10th anniversary of the library opening on in the old Convent recently. Kids and adults joined in with free face painting, Lego, and, of course, plenty of books. The library has also been a "My Open" Library since 2022, offering access to the library 365 days a year, from 8am to 10pm.

The Leaving Certificate exams begin on June 3 and staff want to offer some extra support during the period. Students can enjoy free herbal teas, fruit, water and healthy snacks in a designated chillout area, complete with couches, blankets, and beanbags for much-needed rest. June is a vibrant, busy month in the library. Children everywhere are eager to start their summer holidays (and the staff can't wait either!) marking the start of the Summer Stars Reading Adventure. This national programme encourages children to read for fun and to take part in exciting activities in the library. Parents and children are invited to pop into the library to sign up, collect their reading booklet, and receive some Summer Stars goodies. Speak with the Children's Book Club Librarian about her secret stash of books! She keeps all the best ones for the summer, and children can even become book reviewers.

On the Thursday 2 July the library is running a 'Flowers: Make and Do' Summer Stars craft event. Children will use real wildflowers to make beautiful creations. A new Summer Stars Picture Book Storytime is running at 11.30am every Friday, alongside free-play Lego for 5 years or older. Staff have also gone a bit crazy - they want the children to colour in the tables. Pop along to see why! Every week there is also free-play Duplo at 11am on Wednesday mornings. For the older teenagers and adults, the library have a new Board Games Evening every Thursday from 7pm.

For Cruinniú na nÓg, on Saturday 6 June, Irish artist Aidan Courtney will be welcomed for a comic book workshop. Aidan, a Clare-based cartoonist, writer and artist, is the founder of a publishing company dedicated to Irish-language comics for children, and the workshop promises to be both creative and great fun.

Two wonderful exhibitions are running in the Gallery. In June, The Irish Patchwork Society, Western Branch, is displaying their beautiful work for the month. Sarah Loughnane is then exhibiting her colourful acrylic paintings in July.

Book clubs are for everyone, whether you have never read a book before or if you devour three before dinner. The library offers a Kid's Book Club (9 years to 12 years), Adult Book Club, Crime Book Club, and a Golden Years Book Club.

If you want to join or would like to run your own in the library, come in to speak with staff. Book clubs are brilliant for meeting new people, stretching the imagination, and trying new things.



Staff at Ballinasloe Library celebrating the 10th anniversary of the library on Society St. (L-R): Mary Healy, Gaby Walsh, Joe Jennings, Heather Duke and Brid Grehan.

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Moore United FC 50th Anniversary

By Maria Connolly

Members of Moore United FC past and present and others from the community recently came together to celebrate 50 years of the club in their home at Falty Park. It was founded in 1975 with its first competitive match in January 1976. The club has now completed 50 seasons in the Roscommon and District league.

The celebrations included the official opening of the new sand-based pitch, which was funded by CLAR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais). The club also has a new walkway funded by the Gateway Credit Union. Fr Gormley blessed the pitch, and club founder Pat Higgins and Joint Club President, Tommy Grenham, cut the ribbon to open the new facilities.

On the day, the club commemorated players from the original team and their manager. The first official squad were presented with a celebratory coin, while long-serving member Mike Burns was presented with a lifetime involvement award.

A great crowd attended with delegates from the Connacht FA and Roscommon and District league delegates present, while Athlone Town made representations at the event. Current players Kayleigh Shine and Hannah Welsh were in the crowd,



Tommy Grenham and Pt Higgins cut the ribbon to inaugurate their new pitch.



Moore United FC squad from 1975. Missing from the photo are Sean Finn and Tommy Kelly.



The current Moore United FC Committee. **BACK ROW (L-R):** Thomas Naughton, Mike Burns, Tommy Grenham, Jimmy Greene, Fergal Duffy, Declan Duffy, Sean Desmond Barry Johnson and Ivan Colleran. **FRONT ROW (L-R):** Kate Mitchell, Mary Shine, Kimberley Naughton, Paula Keegan, Sarah Whyte and Bernie Dolan.

alongside veteran Athlone Town's Groundsperson John West. Elected representatives Councillor Valerie Duffy and Councillor Alan Harney attended.

Chairperson Fergal Duffy addressed the crowd with a speech about the future direction of the club, and MC for the day, Ivan Colleran, thanked all involved and those who helped organise the run up to the event. The Moore Committee, and those who organised and produced the club promotional video were especially singled out. CE Scheme members, Paddy Feehily and Brian Mullins had the grounds in spectacular condition for the day and were warmly thanked by the attendees.

The day also saw the launch of a magazine documenting the history of the 50th year, which is available to order from Committee members. Historians Maureen Duffy and Moira Duffy did fantastic work by putting the magazine together.

Once all daytime events and activities finished, the night saw people take to Millars Bar and Loru's Restaurant in Ballydangan, and Joint Club President Gerry Kelly cut the celebratory cake. Moore United FC looks forward to another great 50 years.

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Moore Community Games Track and Field Event

By Maria Connolly

More than 90 youngsters took part in the annual Moore Community Games track and field event at Falty Park recently. There were outstanding performances across events ranging from sprints and middle distance races, long jump and hurdles, to long puck, shot putt, javelin and ball throw. Competitors ranged in age from pre-school to under-16. Grace-Rose Dolan (12) was the winner of the Finnerty Cup for best overall performance at under-14 level.

Several of the competitors will take part in the Roscommon Community Games County Finals in Ballyleague (track events) and in Castlerea (field events). Last year the club enjoyed success in individual running (2 medals), relays (3 team medals) and long puck (2 medals) competitions at county level.

The Community Games are indebted to Moore United FC who provided the venue, and Groundsman, Brian Mullins, who ensured the pitch was in excellent condition for the afternoon's events.

Earlier in the year, Moore Community Games organised a design-a-crest competition and the



Eanna Loughnane, who designed the winning Moore Community Games crest.



Grace-Rose Dolan, who was the winner of the Finnerty Cup for best overall performance at under-14 level at Moore Community Games track and field day.



Girls Under-12 (100 metres): Hannah Killeen (gold), Isabelle Whyte (silver), Alannah Grehan (bronze) and Aoibhinn Whyte (bronze).

winning design, created by Éanna Loughnane (10), was selected by an independent adjudicator as the club's crest for the future. The club recently purchased a new gazebo and the crest is featured prominently on it.

Meanwhile, more than 100 local youths took part in the local art competition, while 70 competed in the local handwriting competition. Many of the winners and runners-up will compete in the Roscommon Community Games finals in June.

The club appreciates the support from this year's sponsors Ballinasloe Credit Union, M6 Motors and Greene's Forge. Long-standing committee member Aidan Cruise, of Cruise Crane Hire, contributed handsomely towards the purchase of new hurdles.

The Moore Community Games Committee (2026) is: Chairperson: Suzanne Greene; Secretary: Lisa Collins; Treasurer: Sean O'Rourke; Communications/Schools Liaison: Emer Grehan; Child Liaison Officer: Aisling Jamison, and Committee members: Aidan Cruise, Liam Dolan, Sinead Grenham, Patrycja Kasak, Angela Killeen and Aine Loughnane.

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Taughmaconnell Community Games Finalists

By Maria Connolly



The girls' swimming relay team who competed in the County final.



The U13 Indoor Soccer team winning the Connaught final.

in Athlone recently, and the area had strong representation at the County Swimming competition, including individual swimmers and a girls' relay team. Two quiz teams also entered the County Quiz, with one team achieving an excellent 5th place finish. Children also competed in the County Talent Competition in both Solo Music and Solo Singing categories.

Taughmaconnell has a long-standing tradition of participating in the Community Games, with records showing the local branch in operation since at least 1978.

The 2026 events began in March with an Art and Model Making competition. A total of 42 children aged between five and thirteen took part. First and second place winners in each category have now qualified for the County Art competition, which will take place in June.

This was followed by Track and Field Day, which saw almost 80 children participating. It was a fantastic day, with events catering for U8 through to U16 age groups. Children who qualified for County Track events will compete in Ballyleague on May 30, while those in field events will compete at County level on June 5.

Taughmaconnell has also been particularly successful in indoor soccer. The U10 Boys team and U13 Girls team both won County finals and progressed to the Connaught Finals. The U10 Boys won their semi-final but were narrowly defeated in the final, while the U13 Girls won both their semi-final and final. At the time of going to press, they were preparing for the national final in Longford. Taughmaconnell participants have also been active in other disciplines. Children competed in the County Gymnastics event

organisers hope to expand the programme in 2027 to include handwriting and possibly chess.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of volunteers. The committee are always looking for new volunteers, who must be Garda vetted. If you live in Taughmaconnell and would like to get involved, please contact taughmaconnell@communitygames.eu.



The two Taughmaconnell quiz teams who competed in the County Quiz final.

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IKKI KARATE: From Tokyo to Ballinasloe

By Maria Connolly

Members of IKKI Karate marked a major milestone in the club's history with a special Kobudo seminar held in the Emerald Ballroom, coinciding with the club's 50th anniversary.



Attendees at the recent IKKI Ballinasloe Kobudo session. **BACK ROW (L-R):** Kieran Egan, Colin O'Connell, Henry Taggart, Ross Banks, Christopher Lynskey, Donal Monahan, Claire Harte, Leo Mulvany, Tony Dolphin, Jade Goldbey, Cathal Duane, Aoife O'Grady, Eoghan Duane and Roisin McCauley. **FRONT ROW (L-R):** Nik Aimal, Conor Coughlan, Kyle Burke, Conor Murray, Cian Coughlan, Roisin Ward, Conor Dolan and Denise McEvilly.

Kobudo, a traditional martial art closely linked to karate, originates from the ancient Ryukyu Islands of present-day Okinawa, Japan. The discipline focuses on the use of traditional hand weapons and has been practised by IKKI karate members for almost five decades.

The May seminar was delivered remotely online from the headquarters of the Itosu-ryu Karatedo International Federation (IKIF) in Tokyo, Japan, giving local students a rare opportunity to train directly with one of the organisation's leading instructors.

The event was led by Shihan Ayumu Oda, Secretary General of the IKIF, who has visited Ballinasloe on several occasions. Participants described the seminar as a unique and valuable learning experience.

IKKI Ballinasloe currently practises five traditional Kobudo weapons, with the Bo staff remaining the most popular among students. Association club instructors emphasise the safe and controlled teaching of all weapons techniques as part of their long-standing training programme.

The seminar highlighted the strong connection between Ballinasloe and the international karate community, reflecting the club's continued commitment to preserving and promoting traditional Itosu-Ryu karatedo and Kobudo.

As IKKI Ballinasloe celebrates 50 years since its foundation in 1976, the club continues to go from strength to strength, combining traditional values with modern training methods and international links. The success of the seminar demonstrated the dedication of its members and instructors and reinforces the club's reputation as one of the region's leading martial arts organisations, while inspiring the next

generation of karate and Kobudo practitioners.

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Rugby Season Comes to a Close

By Maria Connolly

As another successful season ends, the rugby club look back and reflect on their 150th year with immense pride and joy.

Many celebrations took place throughout the year, which culminated in the gala ball in the Shearwater, attended by over 250 members past and present. The President of the IRFU (Irish Rugby Football Union), Dr. John O'Driscoll, was the guest of honour. It was a tremendous success with people of all ages gathering to celebrate this milestone. It was great to see so many faces from the past who helped make the club the success it is today return for the occasion.

On the field of play, the club again had great success with the senior team who had been promoted from Junior C to the A in two seasons. They consolidated their position with a third-place finish in the league, a super achievement for their first season back in the top flight.

The Men's senior seconds also reached the Ard na Gregg Cup Final where unfortunately they succumbed to Buccaneers. All the underage teams performed extremely well in their respective leagues and cups, and many brought home silverware in the form of plates and bowls.

The girl's game continues to grow and get stronger each year. The Under-18's won their league while the Under-16's won the double (league and cup). The club also had three players selected for the Ireland Under-18 Six Nations squad: Roisin Power, Roisin O'Sullivan and Anna McDermott. Everyone involved in the club will be watching their progress closely.

The club recently held their end of season awards and fun day. Each team was honoured and presented with prizes for Player of the Year and Most Improved Player. Medals were also presented to teams that had won honours over the season.

The club's players and coaches now take a well-deserved break but behind the scenes work will continue on the pitches, and the club may get a lick of paint.

Looking forward to welcoming new faces and old in September – watch the Club's Socials.



(L-R): Claire and Jonathon Quinn attended the Ballinasloe RFC 150th Anniversary Gala Ball



The Mannion family attended the Ballinasloe RFC 150th Anniversary Gala Ball (L-R) Andrew, Noel, Fiona, Jack, Collette and Stevie



The McCann family at the Ballinasloe RFC 150th Anniversary Gala Ball (L-R): Mike, Annemarie, Anna, and Niamh

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U18 Soccer Team Win Galway League Undefeated *By Maria Connolly*

Development works on the latest stage of the club's development plan are due to commence at the club grounds soon. The next phase consists of the installation of a state-of-the-art 500lux LED floodlight system that is up to TV broadcast standard.

Meanwhile, the Club History Subcommittee of Johnny Walsh, Michael Riddell, Joey Walsh and Chairperson Bjorn Manning are extremely busy working on a book celebrating 75 years of soccer in town. They expect to launch the book later this summer.



The under 12 girls who played against a Halewood boy's team as one of the three games played for the recent 30th anniversary celebrations of the Halewood and Ballinasloe exchange.

On the pitch, the club are currently nearing the end of the season and it has been an eventful one to date. Both Senior squads did well. In their first season in the Galway League, the Senior Ladies' squad

reached the semi-final of the Galway F.A. Championship Cup. Meanwhile, the Men's Senior squad just failed to secure a promotion play-off game but they have reached two club finals. They will meet Cam/Dysart FC in the Roscommon Shield Final and will face either Clonfad or Moylough in the Roscommon 1st Division Cup final.

The season is also coming to a close at underage level. At under-9 and under-10 level, both squads performed very well in the 'Tempo Cup' tournament in Limerick, with the under 10's finishing in the top four out of 24 nationwide teams.

The under-11 squad reached the Final of the Kevin O'Power Cup. At under-12A level the squad reached the quarter final of the Connacht Cup. The under-12B squad finished in second place in the league and

won promotion for next season.

The under-13C squad have had a fantastic season in their first year together, securing promotion for next season. They finished level with Craughwell United at the top of the table, but lost out to them in the playoff match. The under-13A, under-13B, and under-14C squads are all



Ballinasloe Town AFC Under-18 team, winners of the Galway league. **BACK ROW (L-R):** Kyle Keighery, Jack Brogan (Captain), Jayden Doherty, Dylan Caulfield, James Connolly, Lorcan Higgins, Calum O'Connor, Conor Cruise Maloney and Eoghan Dunne **FRONT ROW (L-R):** Patryk Nowicki, Matthew Blaire, Eanna Nevin and Feidlim Curran.

in contention for league honours and/or promotion.

The boys' Under-18 team won the Galway League title and narrowly lost out in the semi final of the Galway divisional cup. They were unbeaten all season in their league campaign. The Under-17 squad need a win in their last league game to retain their status in their division but they did manage to reach the semi-finals of their divisional cup.

In their first season, the Under-21's had a great cup run and reached the semi-final. They also finished in third place in the league.

The club committee and everyone associated with Ballinasloe Town AFC are extremely saddened at the passing of Club stalwart and long time club Officer Brendan (Skinner) Fahy. Everyone associated with the club wishes to express their deepest condolences to the Fahy family and to Brendan's niece, Ellen Egan, who is the current club Treasurer.

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Lions Club Golf Scramble

The local Lions Club are holding a Golf Scramble at Ballinasloe Golf Club on June 5 and 6. The two-day event promises fun, friendly competition, and community spirit, while raising funds for local charitable and community projects supported by the club.

Teams of three can enter for €60 per team, with players able to choose the day that suits them best. Tee times will run from 2pm to 4pm on Thursday, June 5, and from 12 noon to 2pm on Friday, June 6. Organisers are encouraging early booking as tee times are limited.

Raffle tickets will also be on sale throughout the event, with a range of fantastic prizes kindly sponsored by local businesses and supporters. The Lions Club has thanked all sponsors and volunteers for their continued generosity and support.

To book a tee time, contact William Duthie on 087-9970110. The Lions Club greatly appreciates the public's continued support and looks forward to welcoming teams to Ballinasloe Golf Club for what promises to be a successful and enjoyable event.





Pearses Players Help With Rossie Football Glory

By Maria Connolly

Roscommon GAA are enjoying great success recently, winning the Connacht Minor, Under-20, and Senior Championships with strong Pearse's players on all panels.



Roscommon supporters – including members of Padraig Pearses GAA – stand on steps in Times Square, New York City, before Roscommon GAA's Match against New York in the Connacht Championship.

In the Minor championship squad are Jack Brooks, Enda Browne and Dylan Goode, and Coaches Padraig Kelly and Niall Carty nurture the rising stars. At Under-20 level, Keelan Kelly is Vice-Captain, with Adrian Murphy in management, while the club have six representatives at Senior level: Caelim Keogh, Conor Ryan, Eoin Colleran, Declan Kenny, Ronan Daly and Paul Carey.

The club organised a memorable trip to New York for the first round of the Connacht Championship, and all who were part of it had an enjoyable few days in the Big Apple.

In Ladies' football, four players were part of the Roscommon minor panel that captured the Connacht A Championship for the first time since 1992. Esme Halpin, Laura Glennon, Chloe Mulryan and Lily Finneran, were the names etched in the history books. Three club players were part of

the Under-16 panel who secured Connacht B honours recently - Kate Canning, Grace Barron and Isabella Downey.

Eoin Colleran, was selected for the Electric Ireland GAA Rising Stars Team of the Year after his performances for University of Galway in the Sigerson Cup, a competition he finished as top scorer from play. Eoin was named at wing-forward in a star-studded line-up of some of the best up-and-coming talent in the country.

At junior level, five of the young club footballers played half-time exhibition games during Roscommon's great wins over Mayo and Galway in the Connacht Championship. Aoibhinn Whyte and Cian Donnelly played in Castlebar, while Cillian Mulvey, Conor Dolan, and

Danny Brady got to play in a full house in the Hyde and see their heroes lift the Nestor Cup. The Under 10 girls also got to represent Pearses at the Ladies' match between Roscommon and Louth, and formed a guard of honour for the teams at half-time. Cumanna nBunscoil Ros Comain are to be praised for organising these half-time mini games.

Underage training has returned, with Camogie for U8's, U10's, and U12's taking place on Mondays at 6.30pm. Hurl Og's are also back. The hurling and camogie nursery is for those born from 2019-21. Training takes place on Wednesday evenings at 6pm. Red Tigers and Red Lions Football Academy for boys and girls continues every Saturday morning in the club from 10am to 11am. All are welcome to come along and join the fun and games.

The club recently hosted seven local primary schools for a football blitz as Gaeilge. 170 local students took part along with helpers from club TY's and their excellent Irish group. Maith sibh go léir!

Finally, the club are hosting SafeTALK training for suicide prevention on Thursday 18 June at 7.30pm in the clubhouse. SafeTALK prepares participants to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. All welcome to attend with pre-registration details on Facebook.



Pearses' representatives on the Senior Roscommon Football panel, shortly after winning the Connacht Championship. L-R: Conor Ryan, Declan Kenny, Ronan Daly, Caelim Keogh, Eoin Colleran and Paul Carey.

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Camogie Club Enjoys Croke Park

By Maria Connolly



The Under 12 Camogie team in Croke Park. **BACK ROW (L-R):** Kallie Garvey, Aoibheann Nevin, Abbey Clancy, Emily Clarke, Katelyn Kennedy, Hannah Burns, Emilia Noone, Cara Coone, Milla Dillon, Chloe Burke, Mila Lyubin, Caoimhe Garton, Abigail Monaghan and Sadbh Friel. **FRONT ROW (L-R):** Fiadh NiChonghaile, Saoirse Johnston, Molly Casey, Leah Flynn, Roisin Goode, Freya Noone, Grace Walsh O'Connell, Eloise Monaghan, Alma Bloomfield, Willow Cormer, Grace Ward and Paige Stephens.

The day wouldn't have been possible without the hard work and organisation of the Under 12 coaches: Conor Noone, Lisa Casey, Conor Johnston and Avril Flynn. Cumann Camógaíochta Beal Atha Na Slua Committee thanked the generous sponsors who supported the trip: Ballinasloe Credit Union, 3A Composites, Paul Flynn Construction, Cornmarket, Murphy's Total Health Medical Hall, Dubarry, Dolan's Centra, and Supermac's.



The Under 12 team arrive at Croke Park with their coaches (L-R): Conor Johnston, Avril Flynn, Conor Noone, and Lisa Casey.

The 2026 season is in full swing with matches for all teams underway in the various leagues. New members are always welcome, and the club encourages players of all ages and skill levels to join their vibrant and energetic community.

The Under 12 girls from Ballinasloe Camogie Club represented their club with pride in the recent Camán to Croker event.

This was a fantastic opportunity for the young players to experience the thrill of playing in Croke Park and to compete against teams from across the country. The girls played their hearts out in their three matches on the iconic pitch. Following the blitz, the club did a tour of Croke Park where the players got to go behind the scenes and see where they will hopefully get to prepare for matches representing their club and county in the future.

Training times are as follows:

- Under 7 and Under 10: Tuesday at 6pm
- Under 12 and Under 14: Wednesday at 6pm and Sunday at 11am
- Juniors: Wednesday at 7pm
- All training sessions take place at the Clonfert College, Mackney Campus pitches (Eircode H53 CP40).

For further information, please contact Michelle on (085) 704 7434 or message the club on Facebook: (<https://www.facebook.com/BallinasloeCamogie>).

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Snooker Club Host County Finals

By Maria Connolly

Spring is in the air, temperatures are rising and daylight hours are increasing but it's still all fun and games in the Snooker and Social Club.

The club recently had the pleasure of hosting the County Championship Finals, a testament to the incredible facilities available in the Emerald Ballroom.

Eight players convened at the club to decide a County Champion. The matches were played in a "best of 5" frames format. A high standard of play was exhibited from morning onwards and was a joy to watch. After many intense sessions, "Local Hero" Paul Keighery and "The Athenry Assassin" Donal Foran approached the green baize for the deciding match.

Paul had played impressively all day long and show his talent with a 44 break in the second frame. However, Donal had already shown his mettle in the semi-final where he scored a 65-break followed by a 67-break to get into the final. He played with a fluid and natural style that was a pleasure to watch.

Paul Keighery reached the final, and congratulations to Donal Foran, eventual County Champion 2026. This is Donal's seventh County

title. Mike and Christopher of Dolan's Service Station were thanked by the Club Officer for providing fabulous refreshments on the big day.

If you would like to join the snooker club, it is open 5-9pm Monday - Friday in the Emerald Ballroom (side door), or check out socials!



Thomas O'Connor and grandson Luke enjoying the snooker during the Galway County Championships, which were recently held in Ballinasloe.



Paul Keighery and Donal Foran, who contested the Final of the Galway County Championships.

Athletic Club's Success

By Maria Connolly

The Galway County Outdoor Championships in Dangan was a fantastic day of athletics, with the Athletic Club proudly represented across a wide range of events.

Alongside the podium finishes, the club also recorded many impressive 4th, 5th and 6th place finishes, highlighting the depth of talent coming through.

Among the standout performances were: Gabriella Lubowicz, who won silver in the U12 Girls 60m Hurdles, Alex Cunningham and Odhran Hurley, who claimed silver in the Paired 60m event. Alex also added another silver medal in the U11 Boys Long Jump, and the U11 Boys Relay team of Will Noone, Joshua Sweeney, Odhran Hurley and Alex Cunningham, took home a well-deserved bronze medal.

The championships proved to be a hugely successful and enjoyable day for the club, with every athlete contributing to a fantastic team effort. Congratulations were extended to all involved.



Gabriella Lubowicz, who won silver in the U12 60m hurdles.



The U11 Boys Relay team, who won silver at the recent Galway County Outdoor Championships.



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Swimmers Qualify For Regional Championships

By Maria Connolly

Ballinasloe Swim Club continues its success with four swimmers qualifying for the Connacht and Leinster Regional Championships at University of Limerick and the National Aquatic Centre, Blanchardstown.

"We are very proud of their achievements," Head Coach, Fiona Flynn, explains. "Hard work and dedication is paramount in sport, especially swimming, with a lot of hours in and out the pool required."



Members of Ballinasloe Swimming Club.

The club have a busy summer ahead with Junior AquaSprint league swimmers having made finals in June in Castlebar. Congratulations and good luck to them all have been offered by the Committee, Officers, members and parents.



Caoimhe Lohan and Maeve Campbell, who have also qualified for the Connaught and Leinster Regional Championships.



Abigail Monaghan and Jack Connaughton, who have qualified for the Connaught and Leinster Regional Championships.

New Sports Hub Coordinator Welcomed

Galway Sports Partnership and Galway Rural Development have welcomed Michael Callaghan as the town's new Community Sports Hub Coordinator.

The Ballinasloe Community Sports Hub aims to increase participation in sport and physical activity by strengthening links between clubs, organisations, schools, and the wider community. It focuses on creating inclusive opportunities for people of all ages and abilities, particularly those facing barriers to participation. The initiative is delivered through Galway Sports Partnership, funded by Sport Ireland through the Dormant Accounts Fund, and supported by Galway Rural Development, demonstrating a strong collaborative approach



The new Ballinasloe Community Sports Hub Coordinator, Michael Callaghan.

to community wellbeing and social inclusion.

Michael brings over 10 years' experience in the fitness industry and a strong passion for community engagement. He has seen first-hand the positive impact physical activity can have on physical health, mental wellbeing, and social connection.

Speaking about his new role, Michael said: "I am very grateful to take on the role of Community Sports Hub Coordinator. I am excited to begin working with the people of Ballinasloe and the wider community and to build on the strong sense of community spirit that already exists."

Michael is committed to ensuring everyone feels welcome and has the opportunity to participate, regardless of background or experience. He looks forward to working with local clubs, groups, schools, and residents to develop programmes shaped by community needs and delivering lasting impact.

For more information on the Community Sports Hub, contact Galway Sports Partnership at galwayactive@galwaycoco.ie.



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Local Kickboxers Qualify for World Championships *By Maria Connolly*

Five fighters from Wolfpack Kickboxing Ballinasloe have qualified for the World Championships, marking a major milestone for the growing local club. Wolfpack K1 Kickboxing, led by 5th Dan Black Belt Leon Parsons, continues to go from strength to strength since relocating to Ballinasloe in 2023.

Leon began his kickboxing journey in 1990 and opened a successful club in Athlone in 2009, which produced multiple Irish, European and World champions. However, that club was forced to close during the second COVID-19 lockdown.



Cian Silke winning in his category at the Irish Open.

Since moving to Ballinasloe, Wolfpack has developed into a thriving community hub, catering for all ages and abilities. The club runs "Wolfcubs" classes for children aged 6 to 12, while teen and adult sessions cater for members from 13 up to 60 years of age and up.

While success in competition continues to grow, Leon said the real impact of the club is seen in the personal development of its members. "You see confidence grow week by week," he said.

One of the young members who qualified for the World Championships, Jake Rigney Ford, echoed these sentiments, saying: "Being part of the Wolfpack Kickboxing Club means more to me than just training; it's a place where I feel stronger inside and out. Every session pushes me a little further, helping me build confidence, learn discipline, respect and how to believe

in myself. My coaches Leon and Cian and my teammates support me which makes me feel like I belong. Kickboxing has shown me that I'm capable of more than I think and that confidence is something I will carry with me, not just in the club but in everyday life."

Two of the club's senior fighters who qualified for the World Championships in Madrid this November also spoke about what their achievement. "Representing our club and our town on an international stage means everything to us. We've put the hours in, and we're proud to represent Wolfpack," said Joseph Donoghue. Cian Silke added: "Wolfpack has changed my life — from starting just to keep fit, to competing at national and now international level at the world championships. The

club has giving me the opportunity to start coaching. I'm grateful and proud to be part of Wolfpack."

The other two fighters to qualify were 10-year-old Arina Lisko, and Cillian Holohan. Arina said: "Wolfpack has given me the courage to take on competitions that once felt impossible. I'm truly grateful to Leon and



The members of Wolfpack Kickboxing Club who have qualified for the Kickboxing World Championship. Pictured from left to right are: Joseph Donoghue, Cian Silke, Jake Rigney Forde, Arina Lisko and Cillian Holohan.

Cian for teaching me skills that will stay with me for life. Wolfpack means so much to me, and I'm very proud to represent my club and Ireland at the World Championships." Cillian's mother, Sheena Breathnach, added "As Cillian's mam, I'm so grateful that we found this club with such supportive and enthusiastic coaches. Qualifying for Madrid is a massive achievement for Cillian."

Fundraising events and sponsorship drives will take place in the coming weeks and months to support the team as they prepare to compete on the world stage in Madrid. If you would like to donate, there is a GoFundMe page available: <https://gofund.me/b01a49a4a>. The club is located in the Emerald Ballroom, just across from the library, and trains every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Check out their social media platforms on Facebook ([wolfpack.Ballinasloe](https://www.facebook.com/wolfpack.Ballinasloe)), Instagram ([wolfpack_kickboxin_ballinasloe](https://www.instagram.com/wolfpack_kickboxin_ballinasloe)) and TikTok ([@wolfpack_kickboxing](https://www.tiktok.com/@wolfpack_kickboxing)) for more information.



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Gaelic 4 Mothers and Others 10th Anniversary

By Maria Connolly



The Gaelic 4 Mothers and Others group at a recent match.



The Gaelic 4 Mothers and Others team.

The Ballinasloe Gaelic 4 Mothers and Others (G4MAO) squad will be celebrating their 10th anniversary this summer. The team, which was set up by Kathryn Gibbons in 2016, has gone from strength to strength over the years and has proven to be a fun way of participating in sport while getting to meet others within the community.

The aim is to introduce mothers and other women to Ladies Gaelic Football. Mothers often drop their kids to training and call back to collect them, but the Ladies Gaelic Football Association wants to change that. The initiative allows women to play in a fun, non-competitive and social environment. It has taken off right across Ireland and even spread internationally. Provincial festivals are organised in each province on a yearly basis, and there has also been one National Festival.

Laura Howley played Gaelic football when she was younger and she was advised by friends in Dublin that she should consider joining G4MAO when she was relocating to Ballinasloe. She said it has helped her make friends easily in a town where she didn't know people. "It's been one of the best things I've done for myself. I have a group of friends in Ballinasloe now that I never thought I would have...it's a really good community, and it's just good to get out and meet people." She also appreciates the flexibility of the sport, which meant that she could miss training

sessions if her children were sick when younger without guilt: "there isn't the pressure of [competitive] training, you can just turn up next week". Laura has also become involved on the governance side and taken up a role of Assistant Treasurer with the club.

Breda Cleary also played GAA competitively when she was younger, and still plays competitive soccer. She appreciates the fun and

social element to G4MAO, which allows her to switch off from soccer: "I don't worry about the [G4MAO] games and if I can't make them, I don't feel bad." She also said that G4MAO attracts women who don't play or attend soccer and she has: "made a lot of friends through it".

Although both Breda and Laura were experienced players before joining G4MAO, Breda said that the club is welcoming to new women who've never played Gaelic football before. "It's very easy, it's not very strict. We'll always help new people and show them what them to do."

The group trains every Wednesday at 8.30pm at St Teresa's pitch. If you would like to join, please call (087) 950 9561.



Ballinasloe G4MAO players (in orange bibs) at a match against Mountbellew G4MAO.

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Clontuskert Rounders Prepare for a Busy Summer *By Maria Connolly*

Clontuskert Rounders Club was established in 2025, following a series of successful introductory training sessions, which laid solid foundations for the club. 2026 marks another positive step forward, with qualified coaches now in place and preparations well underway for the season ahead.



Two members of Clontuskert Rounders enjoying a game.

Training resumed in February this year with indoor sessions, and the club extends sincere thanks to Kiltormer GAA for the use of their excellent facilities, which proved invaluable during the winter and early spring.

For the summer, outdoor training is now taking place at Clontuskert Pitch. Adult training for those aged 16 and over takes place on Friday evenings from 7pm - 8pm. These sessions focus on fun, fitness, and providing a relaxed social outlet.

Trainer Darina says: "it has been brilliant to see how quickly the players have improved and grown in confidence. Some of them had never played rounders before, but after just a few short weeks, they're getting stuck in, learning new skills, and really seem to be enjoying themselves at training."

Her sentiments were echoed by club member Claudia, who says that she had never played rounders before, but: "I was hooked from the very first training session. Rounders is more than just a game; it's a brilliant way to stay active at any age while having genuine fun."

Juvenile training, for those born from 2011-17, takes place on Sunday mornings 11am - 12pm. Over the coming months, younger members will have the chance to participate in GAA competitions and Go Games, helping to develop their skills and confidence in a supportive and enjoyable environment. Under 9's

player, Thomas, says: "I love going to rounders training because I get to see my friends and play matches together. Training is really fun".

This year the Club are excited to take part in the Multicultural Festival in Ballinasloe at the Fair Green on Saturday 20 June. Hopefully people will come along and meet some of the coaches and find out more information.

Naughton Agri Hire Ltd (Alan and Laura Naughton) and Whitethorn Retail Management have been applauded and thanked by the Club Committee for their generous sponsorship of jerseys for both juvenile and adult teams. Their support ensures players are well equipped as they take to the field this season.



Pictured are the Clontuskert Rounders youth players in their jerseys sponsored by Alan and Laura Naughton of Naughton Agri Hire Ltd.

The club is currently welcoming new members of all ages and abilities. Whether you are new to rounders or returning after some time away, you will find a warm and inclusive atmosphere at Clontuskert. For further information or to get involved, please contact Club Secretary, Darina Cooke, on (087) 770 3880.



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Community Games Ballinasloe

By Colm Croffy

The Community Games have been very successful this year, with swimmers and the Under-13 Rugby Sevens team from Ballinasloe both qualifying for National Finals. Other events are still being held at local and County Stage.

The annual sports day took place recently in Duggan Park and despite the inclement weather, a large number of children aged 3 - 14 turned out to participate. There were many very impressive performances but most importantly, the children enjoyed themselves. All of the winners now go forward to represent Ballinasloe in the County Finals, which take place in Gort at the GAA pitch on Sunday May 31. The organising committee thanked the Duggan Park committee, all the people who helped on the day, and their valued sponsors, Ballinasloe Credit Union.

The art, model-making, and handwriting events were being judged at the time of going to press. The County Finals for those events will be held in Mountbellew in June.



Girls who competed in the Ballinasloe Community Games with Ballinasloe Credit Union Chairman, Sean Madden.

Ballinasloe Coral Leisure and the Community Games Swimming crew hosted a very successful and well-organised meet of the Swimming County Finals. Local swimmers did the town proud by winning

gold medals in the Boys' and Girls' squad events, and in three individual finals. The next stage is the National Finals, which will be held in Kilkenny on July 4 and 5.

The town's Under-13 Rugby Sevens are following in the

footsteps of successful Community Games rugby teams throughout the years. They beat Dunmore comfortably in the Galway County Finals before beating Drumshambo in the Connaught semi-finals, and having a convincing win over a fancied Coolera side to take the Connaught title. The National Finals, which were held in Gormanstown College, took place at the time of going to press. Watch this space for more news from them, and from the National Swimming Finals.



Competitors at Ballinasloe Community games with Ballinasloe Credit Union CEO Gráinne Murphy and Chairman Sean Madden.




Chairman of Ballinasloe Credit Union, Sean Madden, with some of the competitors at the Ballinasloe Community Games.



Pictured with participants at the recent Community Games are Ballinasloe Credit Union CEO Gráinne Murphy and Chairman Sean Madden. Ballinasloe Credit Union sponsor the games.

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Tony Goode A Champion High Jumper

By Colm Croffy

Although not-widely remembered today, Ballinasloe was the home of a family of stellar athletes who dominated Irish cycling and athletics in the 1920's and 30's. The five boys of the Goode family held over 20 Irish titles and over 100 Connacht titles between them, while their sister was also a champion cyclist. One brother alone, Tom, won over 70 of those Connacht titles, and the family were so prolific that they were actually registered as their own sports club, The Goode Cycling and Athletics Club. The second youngest- boy, Anthony, was a renowned high-jumper.



Anthony Goode, noted high jumper

He was born in 1910 to William Goode and Bridget Reilly of Moher, and first came to national attention when he jumped over 5ft 9" (1.75m) in the 1928 Youth Championships of the Tailteann Cup, despite being only 5ft 7" (1.70m) in height. His remarkable jump also beat the World Champion, Harold Osborne of America, into second place. Harold was so impressed by Tony's performance

that he became Tony's coach, demonstrating his own jumping techniques.

The additional help paid off, as Tony jumped over 6ft 3" (1.9m) at a subsequent meeting in Co Cork. The feat prompted one journalist to describe him as "possibly Ireland's greatest high jumper", on the basis that he must be the only athlete in the country able to jump so far above his own height.


Tony also won the Irish School's Athletics Championships in 1930. Unfortunately, his high jump career ended prematurely after a riding accident resulted in permanent damage to one of his ankles. Following his retirement from athletics, he took up hockey, golf and rugby, and excelled in all three sports.

Like so many people at that time, the Goodes had a family farm and Tony worked on it. However, the family also had a sandpit, and Tony used to drive one of the lorries. He married Mary Phelan in the late thirties and they had two children, Antoinette and Elizabeth.

He died at only 42 and was buried with his parents in Creagh cemetery. However, the location of his grave was unknown for many years and only found recently. The headstone was illegible, with inscriptions dating back to the 1700's and the family have now erected a new headstone. They would like to thank Evelyn Donnellan of the Ballinasloe District and Heritage Society for help in locating the grave.



Anthony's daughter, Tone Goode, with her son David, at Anthony's grave.




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New Stone Project For Heritage Group

By Colm Croffy

Ballinasloe & District Heritage Society has had a number of their projects come to a successful completion whilst others are now ramping up for delivery in the second half of the year.

Brid Mercer gave the final presentation in the Spring 'Town Talks' series to a full house in the Church Gallery, Ballinasloe Library. Her engaging talk on the Trench family and the Woodlawn Estate was enjoyed by all in attendance, including many members of the Woodlawn Heritage Group.

The holding of the National Famine Commemoration in the Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna, the first time for it to be held in Galway, was an opportunity for the community in Ballinasloe to remember its famine history. Society members contributed to story boards produced for the commemorative programme and Padraic Kilduff spoke at an event in the Workhouse Centre on aspects of the famine in town.

The Society was also involved in the development and launch of the new Wonder Wander Heritage Trail for the town's Architectural Conservation Area.

Schools, businesses, community groups and representatives all contributed to the development of this fantastic new community led walking trail designed for locals and visitors alike.

The Wonder Wander Trails are an initiative of the National Built Heritage Service and they worked on the project in partnership with the Galway County Council Conservation Officer Anne Marie Cusack, Studio Myco and James Grieves Architects. The map was launched in the library by Cathaoirleach of the Municipal Area, Cllr Peter Keaveney and the maps are available in the library, or can be downloaded from buildingsofireland.ie. Shops will be

given QR code stickers for their windows to promote the trail and members of the Heritage Society will give a guided walking tour using the trail map during National Heritage Week in August.

A new community heritage project telling the story of Ballinasloe limestone and its importance to architectural, industrial and social history and heritage locally, nationally and internationally, commenced with a research and discovery meeting in Gullane's

Hotel in May. The project is a partnership between the Galway County Heritage Office, the Heritage Society and the artist collective Group 8.

Building on the success of the "Forged in Fire" project there will be a number of strands including an exhibition of historical research coupled with an artistic response through creative media, a podcast documentary, photography competition, workshops with a master stone mason and engagement with schools. The project will also see a new limestone sculpture commissioned to be situated the town to celebrate the legacy of 'our speckled land'. Anybody that

would like to contribute to the project in anyway can send an email to ballinasloehistory@gmail.com

Submissions are also now sought to the same email address for Volume 3 of *Hostings: Journal of Ballinasloe & District Heritage Society*, edited by Damian Mac Con Uladh. Submissions can take the form of an outline of an article in 150 words that you propose to write, or a photograph that can tell a story about some aspect of Ballinasloe's rich history and heritage. "Hostings" will be published in November.



Pictured at the final of the Town Talks Summer Season were
L-R Joyce Little Campbell, Paraic Kilduff, Presenter Brid Mercer,
Conor Johnson, Cathal Lucas, Zara Little Campbell.

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Ballinasloe in the 1926 Census

By *Damian Mac Con Uladh*

For family history enthusiasts, last month's release of the 1926 Census – made available exactly 100 years after it was taken – has provided hours of fascination. Offering a unique snapshot of life in Ireland a century ago, the records allow people to trace ancestors, uncover forgotten stories and, in some cases, reconnect with long-lost branches of their family tree.

The 1926 Census, the first undertaken by the fledgling Irish state, differs significantly from the earlier 1901 and 1911 censuses, particularly in the level of detail it recorded. Alongside the usual questions on name, age and occupation, enumerators also asked for a person's place of birth down to townland or town level, the name of their employer and the total acreage of agricultural holdings. For many family researchers, these additional details have helped break through long-standing "brick walls" in their genealogy research.

Turning from individual family stories to our own locality, what picture does the 1926 Census paint of Ballinasloe?

The population of Ballinasloe Urban area stood at 5,249 on census night – a slight increase from the 1911 figure of 5,195 and 6.4% higher than in 1901.

One notable feature of the census was a significant gender imbalance, with women accounting for just over 40% of the town's population.

Just over one in every eight residents lived in the town's lanes, many of which branched off the main streets. Interestingly, the lane population of 697 people was exactly the same as that recorded in 1911. Within a decade many of these lanes had been emptied as new housing estates were built, meaning the 1926 Census likely represents the final detailed record of the lanes and their people.

In religious terms, Ballinasloe was overwhelmingly Catholic, accounting for 96.5% of the population. The remainder comprised 138 Church of Ireland members, 35 Presbyterians, 11 Methodists and one Christian Scientist – an Australian-born commercial traveller. One of the most striking demographic changes revealed by the census is the sharp decline in the town's Protestant population, which fell by 65% from 515 people in 1901 to 185 in 1926 (these figures come from the published 1926 Census returns, which do not correspond to those on the 1926 Census page).

Another remarkable finding concerns the town's largest institution: St Brigid's Hospital. On census night, the institution – then known as

1926 census Return showing the author's Jennings and Cahill ancestors on Society Street

Ballinasloe District Lunatic Asylum – accounted for almost one-third of the town's entire population. The census recorded 1,002 males and 733 females living there, a total of 1,735 people including patients and resident staff. Those returns also reveal that this population lived across 810 rooms.

Unlike the 1901 and 1911 censuses, which identified hospital patients only by initials, the 1926 records provide their full names, opening another avenue for family historians.

The census also provides details of St Joseph's Industrial School, commonly known as the Convent Orphanage. It recorded 84 girls aged between six and twenty years.

Meanwhile, recently established in Garbally Park, St Joseph's College had 121 residents on census night, including six priests, two teachers, six farm workers, 13 servants and 94 students. Its census return is particularly distinctive because it was completed entirely in Irish, although the transcription by the National Archives unfortunately contains errors. Have you found your family yet? Search at <https://nationalarchives.ie/collections/search-the-1926-census/>.

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Brendah Fahy – a Lifetime Soccer Supporter

A huge void was left in the heart of Beechlaw, Town and indeed the wider Soccer fraternity with the passing on the 4th of May of a former secretary of the Roscommon and District Football League, Brendan Vincent “ Skinner “Fahy.

Described as a “legend” whose “tremendous work and unwavering commitment” allowed the game he loved to thrive in the region in a heartfelt and moving graveside eulogy, delivered by long time Committee member Johnny Walsh.

Brendan Fahy served as secretary of the RDFL between 1980 and 2004, making him the longest-serving secretary in the league’s history.

Brendan was very professional in his work and set an example for future secretaries. He was known and liked by just about everyone involved in the game, both locally and at national level

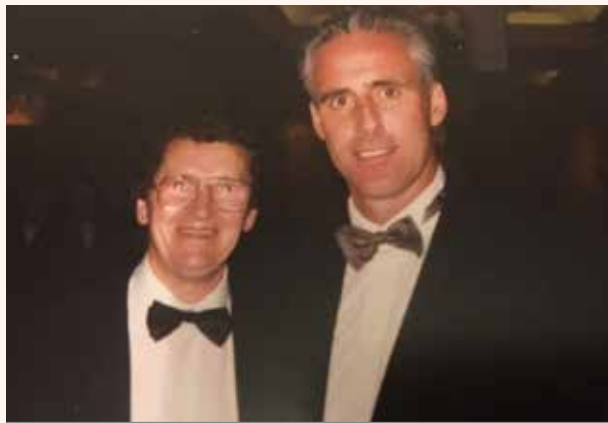
He was a true soccer legend who dedicated over 50 years to promoting and developing the game.

In the 1970s, Brendan Fahy was involved with Dubarry Apache, where he served in a variety of roles, including chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and PRO.

Following the amalgamation of Ballinasloe Town AFC and Dubarry Apache in 1988, he continued his tireless work, serving a term as joint chairperson. Over the years, he took on numerous responsibilities within the club, including the roles of secretary, assistant secretary, and treasurer.

Brendan last served as a club officer during the 2022/23 season and, in recognition of his immense contribution, was honoured with life committee membership of Ballinasloe Town FC in recent years.

Apart from serving as secretary of the RDFL for 24 years, he also served as fixtures secretary and registrar. He was also a



Skinner Fahy and Captain Fantastic Mick McCarthy

prominent figure within the Connacht Football Association, serving as a league delegate from 1989 to 2004, and as a member of the FAI Junior Council from 1990 to 2004.

He also served as chairperson of the Connacht Referees Committee from 1997 to 2004, was a member of the FAI Referees Committee from 1993 to 2004, a Roscommon Youth League

Committee member from 1997 to 2004, and Connacht Youth and Schoolboys FA Secretary from 2001 to 2004.

It is no exaggeration to say that soccer in Ballinasloe, across the Roscommon League area, and throughout Connacht would not be the thriving sport it is today without the tremendous work and unwavering commitment of legends like Brendan “Skinner” Fahy.

He followed the men in green – at home and abroad long before it became popular and mainstream before the Charlton Era.

He was also an avid student of history and in later years undertook a MSC in History in NUIG and was very keen on local heritage.

Predeceased by his father Patrick Fahy, Mother Mary-Ellen Fahy (nee Goode), his brothers Tom, Paddy, Natie, Michael, Gerald, Tony and Terence and his sister Mary.

Brendan will be sadly missed and remembered by his nieces, nephews, relatives, neighbours and his many friends, to whom we offer our sympathies.

Peter Pearson, Former Mount Owner Dies

The Ballinasloe Fair & Festival Committee wishes to acknowledge with sadness the recent passing of Pater Pearson, former owner of the Mount Hotel during the 1970s.

Peter and his family were great friends and supporters of the Fair & Festival throughout that time, generously sponsoring and supporting many events. Their contribution formed part of the strong community spirit that has always been at the heart of the festival.

We extend our sincere condolences to Michael’s family and friends at this sad time.

As the committee continues preparations for the 2026 Ballinasloe Fair & Festival, scheduled to take place over the first two weekends in October, 4th–11th, they remember with gratitude those, like Peter Pearson, who helped shape and support the festival through the years.



Making a presentation to Mr & Mrs Pearson on them retiring from the Mount in the mid 70s

BACK ROW L-R - P. Kilduff, D. Connolly, M. Phelan, D. Scannell, L. Scott, Cllr T O Baoill

FRONT ROW L-R C. Derrane?, D. Scannell, Mrs. O Pearson, Mr.

B.Pearson, Paul Dooley Chair of the Fair and Festival

Kind and Generous Wille Dolan

All were hugely shocked with the very unexpected death of one of the towns most respected retired businessmen - Wille Dolan on the 15th of April last.

Brideswell native - Wille moved to town in the mid-90s from running his own licensed premises in Roscommon to purchase the legendary O Beirne Gift Store, aside the famous Hayden's Hotel .

He had modern, innovative ideas for how he wished to develop the premises into a neighbourhood convenience store and did so alongside his wife Mary and team with aplomb till the early 2010s. In the intervening years before official retirement Wille was a much loved Senior Bar Manager in the Shearwater Hotel.

As well as running his own business and helping raise his family he got involved energetically in the sporting, cultural and business life of the community.

He was a loyal, dedicated member of the Golf Club, assisted on Committees and with events. Equally he was a very popular and generous card player and could be found in one or two tavern card schools or in later years as a hugely gregarious and committed member of the Bridge Club. He served as President for a year and was a hardworking officer on Committee for many more.

He was heavily involved in many community projects in Beechlaw/ Poolboy and was always one of the first residents of that area to put his shoulder to the wheel when the health or sustainability of his immediate neighbourhood was encroached. He was passionate on the hustings for those he trusted, not alone



Wille Dolan

with his vote but with his endorsement.

For over a decade he was one of the most helpful, witty and fun-loving volunteer drivers for Ballinasloe LIFE moving between teenage students, the middle stretchers and the new teenagers with skilful ease.

For many Wille, was one of life's great characters. He always had a smile and sense of fun that whilst mischievous - war never harmful A brilliant community man who always made himself available to help, others - people; organisations - no matter he was a huge giver.

Wille was also one of the worlds proudest Roscommon men. He basked in the Blue and Yellow wherever it fluttered. When he wanted to wind us up in the town centre, he would regale us with tales of the Roscommon Town Festive Lighting and indeed the famous Easter Parade (which when in business in Roscommon, he was instrumental in establishing). He loved seeing the maroon and white coming out second from the neighbourly jousts in any code !!

Above all else Wille being a caring husband, parent, grandparent for those he mattered the most to was key to so much of his natural gift of kindness.

To his wife Mary, sons Robert, Eoin, Alan and Colin, daughters Majella and Irene, son-in-law Ruan, daughters-in-law Marian, Caitlín and Katie, grandchildren, relatives and friends we offer our deepest sympathies.

Frank McRory Obituary

Frank McRory Obituary Frank Mc Rory was born in Kinlough, Co. Leitrim in 1945, the second oldest in his family, with an older sister Agnes Rose, and two brothers, Tom and Eugene.

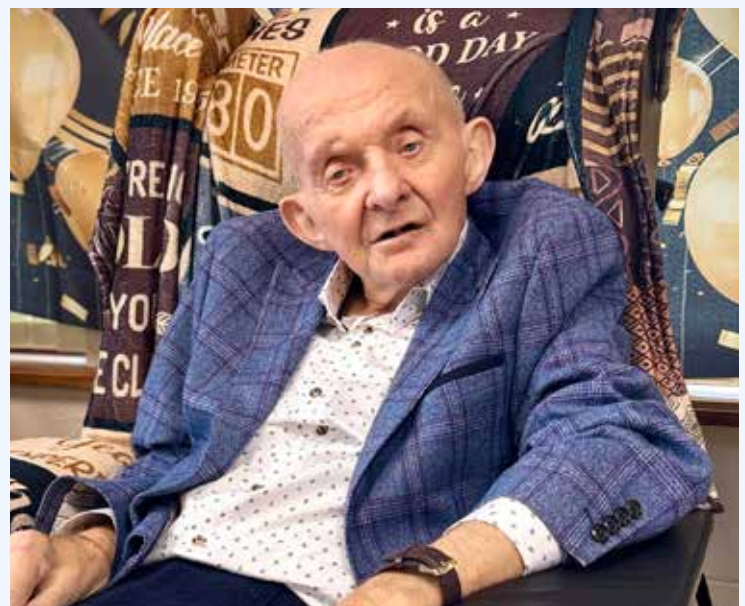
He spent his early years with the Brothers of Charity (now known as Corlann) in Kilcornan, Clarinbridge where he made lots of lifetime friends.

Frank moved to Ballinasloe in 1984 where he quickly settled and became part of the local community, and got to know all his neighbours. He loved to help in St. Michael's Church, helping with basket collections and handing out mass bulletins. He always believed in supporting local businesses, and he became a familiar face in the local shops, post office and restaurants.

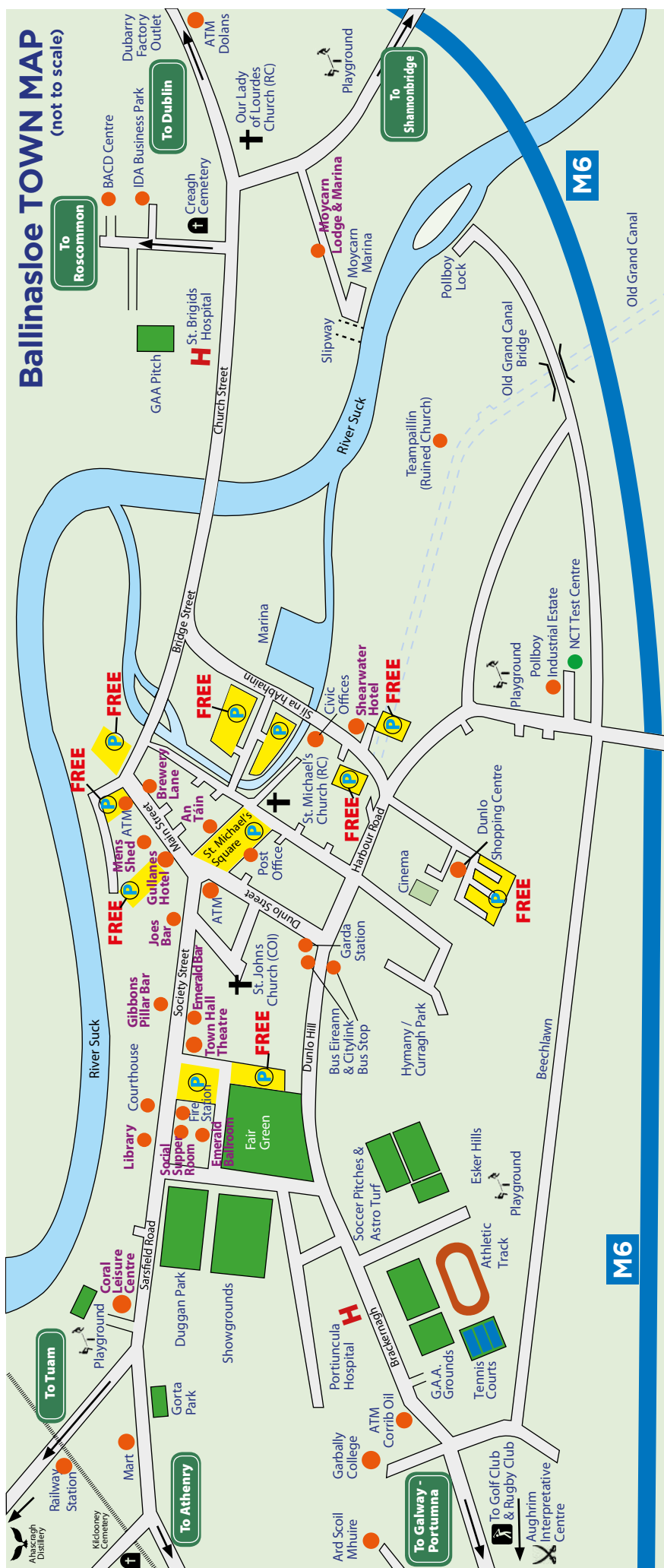
Frank celebrated his 80th birthday earlier this year. He passed away recently, surrounded by his family and dear friends in Avalon, Cleaghmore.

Frank had a wonderful life in the town, which he made his second home. He will be dearly missed by all his family and friends in Rainbow and Avalon.

May he rest in peace.



Frank Mc Rory



Ballinasloe History Walk

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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