



ANNAGH 2016



# Foreword



Earlier this year Pope Francis received the Charlemagne prize for his efforts to promote the European values of peace, tolerance, compassion and solidarity. The president of the European Commission Jean Claude Juncker took part in the ceremony together with the president of the European parliament, Martin Schulz, and Donald Tusk, the president of the European Council.

In his speech President Juncker underlined that Pope Francis personifies the idea that solidarity and compassion are not just fine sounding words but values that require us to take a stand and act. He warned that peace cannot be taken for granted and called on Europeans to face up to their difficulties in order to overcome them and to shape history rather than be carried along by it.

In reply Pope Francis recalled the tragic events that led to the founding of the Union, namely World War II. In a very challenging speech he noted that there is a growing impression that people in Europe had forgotten the great ideals that had inspired the Union. He went on to quote the Jewish writer Elie Wiesel, a survivor of the Nazi death camps, who said that what we need today is a 'memory transfusion', so as not to repeat the mistakes of the past. He called for greater solidarity and dialogue that 'enables us to view others as dialogue partners, to respect the foreigner, the immigrant and people from other cultures as worthy of being listened to'.

Last June the voters of England and Wales voted by a slim majority to leave the Union while the voters of Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to stay. Immigration was one of the main issues that was debated in the lead up to the referendum. The same was true of the recent American presidential election that led to the election of Donald Trump.

Here in Ballyhaunis we have the unique distinction of being the most ethnically diverse community in Ireland, which poses its own challenges with regard to integration. The task of integration is all about unity through diversity and learning to respect the richness of each other's heritage and culture. It is above all about recognising that despite our differences we all share a common humanity. We all have our hopes, our dreams and our fears. What is most encouraging is to see the way that our schools, voluntary and sporting organisations are making every effort to bring about integration through dialogue and respect for differences. There have been many occasions during the past year when this unity in diversity was evident: the Easter parade, Street Festival, the Integration Day organised by the GAA club etc., many of which are captured in this issue of Annagh.

Once again I wish to commend the hard-working committee of the Annagh magazine for this lovely production that in years to come will provide a vignette on what life was like in our community during 2016, a year that was designated a Jubilee Year of Mercy by Pope Francis. To our emigrants, scattered throughout the world, I wish to send Christmas greetings and every blessing for 2017. To all our readers at home and abroad I wish you the gift of peace that the Christ child came to bring on earth, a peace our world badly needs at this time.

Nollaig shona agus athbhliain fé mhaise dhaoibh uilig.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen Farragher".

**Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.**



# Editorial

The Annagh Magazine Society is delighted to bring you the 39th edition of Annagh Magazine. As regular readers of Annagh have come to expect, this year's edition includes a rich variety of articles, photographs and features which reflect the lives, past and present, of people from Ballyhaunis and its environs.

As 2016 was a defining year in a period of commemoration for our nation, Annagh 2016 contains many pieces that reflect on the events of Easter 1916. Our cover photograph poignantly reveals how local and national events are intertwined. Having a local man, Capt. Phelim Carroll, accompany the President during the 1916 commemorations reflects how the local influences the national. Equally, the national also impacts the local as is evident from the back cover. Local events such as the reading of the Proclamation in Clare Court, the 1916 altar in the Parish Church, the production of "Grace and Joseph" in the Parochial Hall and the recent opening of the 1916 Garden of Remembrance developed by the Tidy Towns, all helped us to commemorate 1916 in our own way and threaded us together as a community.

Speaking at an event entitled "Remembering 1916" at the Mansion House in Dublin last March, President Michael D. Higgins concluded *"All of us are invited, then, in this year of 2016, to reach for the ideals and hopes that animated so many of the men and women of 1916 in their struggle for freedom, equality and social justice. Informed by the manifest needs of our times, let us test again these ideals; let us retrieve the courage, the utopianism, of 1916 - and let us add to it, as we craft, together, a new and inspiring vision for the coming generations."*

In this historic year, it is not misplaced to wonder; what would the leaders of the 1916 Rising think if they were to read a copy of Annagh 2016? How are their ideals of freedom, inequality and social justice reflected in these pages?

Leafing through its pages, they would, perhaps, be struck by the variety and richness of the lives of the people of Ballyhaunis and the surrounding areas. The leaders would conceivably comment on the hard work, dedication and success of the many different voluntary organisations, clubs and societies that form the foundation of our community. The cultural diversity evident from the photographs and articles might surprise but, no doubt, please the men and women of 1916.

However, there is more to Annagh 2016 than reflecting on 1916. If a Parish magazine is a tapestry of the local community we live in, then the articles and photographs are its rich fibres. These fibres show no sign of fraying and, indeed, the Annagh tapestry grows stronger year on year.

This year's edition contains many of the features that readers of Annagh enjoy year after year. The ever popular wedding photos are one of the first things people look at as they dip into the magazine for the first time. Over the years, Fr. Stephen's photographs of the Station Masses across the Parish have helped to sustain and, in some areas, revive a tradition that stretches back as far as Penal Times. Articles and club reports are historical documents in their own right reflecting the times we live in today.

Reflecting on 2016 for many people will involve sad memories of having lost a loved one. With the sad passing of Matt O'Dwyer in June, the Annagh Magazine Society lost a former committee member and secretary. Matt served as a committee member for seventeen years and the Society would like to dedicate *Annagh 2016* to his memory.

Two longstanding and note-worthy contributors to Annagh, and great supporters of the magazine over the years, Joe Kenny (Knox St. and Tullamore) and Patsy Cunningham (Upper Main St. and Killarney), also sadly passed away this year. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anam dílis.

The Annagh Magazine Society is indebted to the large number of contributors who sustain the magazine year after year. A big word of thanks also goes to our patrons who, after nearly 40 years, continue to support the magazine.

To the readers of Annagh 2016 the world over, this year's magazine has been "crafted" so you can stay connected to Ballyhaunis, to the parish of Annagh and to its people; we hope that you enjoy it.

**Grahame Cleary**

## Annagh Magazine Society Officers 2016

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**Deadline:** The deadline for contributions to Annagh 2017 is Friday, 6th October 2017.



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In this, our 39th edition of Annagh Magazine, we thank you, the readers, patrons, contributors, articles, photographs and poems, for making this magazine possible. Thanks also to all those who helped get photographs named, or provided assistance in any way. A special Thanks to all our sales outlets for selling the magazine. Please support local businesses and industry.

*– Annagh Magazine Society*

If you wish to contribute an article or photograph for consideration in Annagh 2017 – our 40th issue – email: [info@annaghmag.ie](mailto:info@annaghmag.ie), or visit our website [www.annaghmag.ie](http://www.annaghmag.ie)

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# Review of the Year

MIKE BYRNE

## NOVEMBER 2015

A very special Mass of Thanksgiving is held in St. Patrick's Church in honour of the Sisters of Mercy. Although an historic event with several hundred parishioners in attendance, this farewell Mass was also a poignant occasion. Parishioners gathered to mark the contribution and service of the Sisters of Mercy to the people of the area for 117 years. The chief celebrant is Archbishop Michael Neary and in attendance were many of the Mercy sisters and several clergy who served in Ballyhaunis down through the years... 'Popstars-The 90s' musical is presented by students of Ballyhaunis Community School. Principal David McDonagh was very loud in his praise for the 90 strong cast who took part in this unforgettable show. He spoke of the great sense of togetherness which bonded the entire cast during the rehearsals and the show itself. The students were drawn from all different backgrounds, cultures and religions. In a powerful speech, he said: "The country and indeed the world could learn something here from the values of tolerance and understanding that are synonymous with Ballyhaunis Community School. If people of different religions and cultures could come and sing and dance together, and celebrate their common humanity, rather than focussing on what divides us, then the world would be a better place"... Lana Biesty of Pattenspark, is crowned All Ireland Karate Champion in the Under 12 category... Ballyhaunis Town F.C., who following a sparkling second half display of football, leave their opponents Conn Rangers B reeling, during what were perfect weather conditions at Milebush Park in Castlebar, as Ballyhaunis win the Connaught Gold Premier Cup Final 3-0... Mark and Roisín Curley of Curley's Pharmacy open their new look store on Main Street after many weeks of refurbishment. Brother and sister Mark and Roisín are the third generation of the Curley family to carry on the pharmacy business... At the Mayo Business Awards, family business Fordes' Ltd came out on top as the Retail Customer Service Business Award winners. They beat off tough competition from Cafe Rua in Castlebar, Marrey Bikes in Ballinrobe, and Market 57 of Westport... In his first season competing, eighteen year old Oisín Coffey, Ballyhaunis wins the Junior Class at Birr and District Motor Club Autocross in Ballycummer, Co. Offaly. This results in him winning the overall 5-Star Catering National Loose Surface Autocross Junior Title... Erica Byrne from Gurteen wins the Connaught Under-9 Irish Dancing title. She is daughter of Dolores (née Waldron) and the late Declan Byrne, Gurteen... Two prominent buildings in the town have transferred to Mayo County Council control, namely the former St. Joseph's Convent of Mercy

National School site on Abbey Street and the Court House Building on Main Street... Seamus Caulfield, of Caulfield's Shop on Upper Main Street, appears on the Winning Streak TV game show. Seamus took part in the 'Car or Cash' section of the show and wins the top prize of a new car.

## DECEMBER 2015

A most interesting lecture takes place in the Credit Union building on Clare Street, under the auspices of the Ballyhaunis Heritage Society, entitled, 'Sergeant Lyons, a Ballyhaunis Policeman with an Antiquarian Craze'. Sergeant Patrick Lyons was one of the last RIC sergeants to serve at the Ballyhaunis station. The talk was given by Máire Lohan, a native of Belmullet with strong Ballyhaunis connections, and who published a book on Sergeant Lyons in 2008... A new drop-in centre opens in Abbey Street. The 'Peace of Mind Foundation' Centre is officially opened by Fr. Peter McVerry of the Peter McVerry Trust, and Michael Fitzmaurice T.D. The centre is being facilitated by Gerry O'Boyle, who will run as an Independent Candidate in Mayo in the forthcoming general election to help families fight eviction from their family homes in the West and North West. The newly established Mayo Eviction Free County Group will also have an office at the centre... At the AGM of Ballyhaunis GAA club, Mike Webb steps down as Chairman of the club after five years at the helm. John Higgins is elected as the incoming Chairman... New business, 'Main Street Framing' opens in the old credit union building on Main Street beside Phillips Butchers... Some lucky person is €50,000 richer following their purchase of a €5 scratch card. The winner, who wishes to remain anonymous, purchased the scratch card from Caulfield's Shop, Upper Main Street and claims their prize from the National Lottery... Mark and Roisín Curley along with their mother Rosaleen, of Curley's Totalhealth Pharmacy, Main Street preside over the Grand Opening of their beautifully refurbished shop... Kevin Jordan from Annagh dies in Coventry. Kevin was a long time member and officer of the Roger Casements GAA Club in Coventry where he had lived since 1970. He was laid to rest in his native Ballyhaunis parish... Frank Greally launches his autobiography 'Running Full Circle' in Gill's Bar on Clare Street. A large crowd of friends, relatives and admirers of the former Irish running champion turn out for the occasion...

## JANUARY 2016

As the 2016 year begins, the main item on all news stories is the weather. December 2015 was the wettest December on record, and as the new year begins, heavy



rainfall continues to flood many parts of the country. Many homes are ruined as householders are forced to leave their dwelling places to find respite from the waterlogged homes... Former proprietor of the Central Hotel on Main Street, Therese Cunningham (née Freeley), is laid to rest in Galway, having fought a long and brave battle with a terminal illness... Great celebrations in Carrowkeel as Ita McDonnell (née Lyons) celebrates her 90th birthday. A steady stream of well-wishers gathered at the family home throughout the day on Friday, January 9th to congratulate Ita on the big

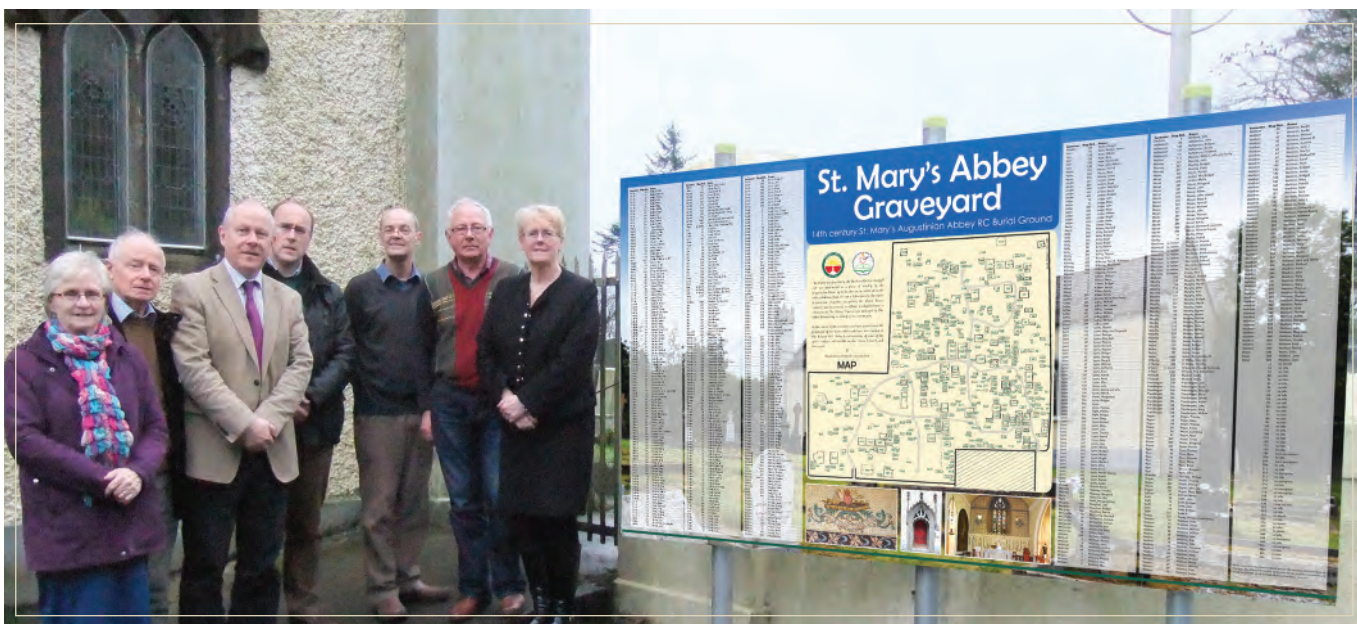


A view of the Friary Walk after Storm Desmond, December 2015.

occasion. A lovely celebration of Mass was held in the family home in Carrowkeel on the day, attended by neighbours, friends and relatives. Chief celebrants for the celebration were Fr. J.J. Cribbin and Fr. Stephen Farragher... The €7 Million building programme begins at Ballyhaunis Community School... Michael Ring TD, Minister of State for Tourism and Sport, officially opens the new state of the art playground and games area in The Maples. The facility contains a playground, multi-use games area/football pitch and a double lane of cricket crease. The facility is designed and is managed by Mayo County Council... The former Hazel Pub and restaurant on Main Street is sold. The new name for the hostelry is The Dalgan Restaurant & Gastro Pub.

## FEBRUARY

Ballyhaunis native, Brother John Augustine (Senan) Forrie dies at the Redemptorist Community, Esker, Athenry. Brother Forrie was son of the late Thomas and Ellen Forrie, Knox Street, Ballyhaunis... General Election on February 28th ends in stalemate with the outgoing Coalition Government losing many of its seats. Dáil is set to reconvene to endeavour to elect a Taoiseach on March 10th.



### Abbey Graveyard Display

The Directors of Ballyhaunis Abbey Trust Ltd. formally unveiled the newly erected 'St. Mary's Abbey Graveyard Display' sign at St. Mary's Augustinian Abbey at a meeting on Thursday, 4th February 2016. The Display, which is adjacent to the graveyard's main entrance, was prepared by a group of Adult Education students as part of a 'Return to Work' Level 4 course undertaken in 2013.

The students undertook to compile, as far as possible, a catalogue of all known marked gravestones in the ancient cemetery, building on the work and maps prepared some years previously by Fr. John O'Connor, Gerry Cribbin and Paul Waldron.

The new display sign has been professionally prepared by graphic designer Sinéad Mallee and enables each of the almost 700 grave details to be located, along with a map, to make the graveyard more accessible for visitors. The Directors of the Abbey Trust thank all the people and organisations involved in putting this worthwhile project into place, which will be of great benefit to the current generation and future visitors.

Pictured are Directors of Ballyhaunis Abbey Trust Ltd. with Mayo County Council officials. L-R: Mary Donnelly, Jarlath Fahey, Paddy Mahon (Director, Claremorris Municipal District, Mayo County Council), Padraic Flanagan (Senior Executive Officer, Mayo County Council), Stephen Grogan, Pat Higgins and Nuala Fitzgerald. Photo by Sinead Freyne.



## MARCH

Ballyhaunis native Brian Flanagan teams up with Riverdance and Lord of the Dance star, Michael Flatley for a recording of 'The Rising'. The piece was written by Brian in memory of the 1916 Rising men and women who sacrificed their lives for Irish freedom. Brian's composition, narrated by Flatley with Brian singing on the chorus, is to be featured in next years film, also called 'The Rising'. A great achievement indeed for the man from Ballindrehid. He is son of Brian and Phyllis Flanagan, Ballindrehid... John O'Shaughnessy of Beechlawn dies at his home. John, a native of Bray, Co. Wicklow, has lived in Ballyhaunis with his wife, Anne (née Nolan), since coming west in 2000. He was the subject of an interview for Annagh '16... Ballyhaunis native son, Patsy Cunningham dies in Killarney, Co. Kerry. Patsy played for the well-known local GAA team, 'Erin's Hopes', in the 1940's, along with such luminaries as Eddie Webb, Vinnie Caulfield, Tony Cribbin and others...

## APRIL

The first weeks of April sees the grand opening of the newly refurbished The Dalgan Bar & Restaurant (formerly The Hazel), on Main Street. Great reviews are being reported in the first few days of business of the new look hostelry. Proprietors of The Dalgan are local entrepreneurs, John Morley from Treenreevagh, Began, and David Murphy of Coolnaha, Ballyhaunis... Ballyhaunis Community School teacher Bernie Osgood and her daughter Rebecca, appear on RTÉ television to tell their great heart-warming story of a successful kidney transplant operation at the Beaumont Hospital, Dublin, in 2010. Bernie, who lives in Ballinlough, donated her kidney to seven years old Rebecca, who had been suffering from kidney failure since she was just two

years old. The appearance on TV coincided with National Donor Awareness week, from April 2nd to April 9th... Ballyhaunis man Frank Browne is named Lidl Ireland Manager of the Month. Manager of the Mayo Ladies Gaelic Football team, Frank led the Mayo ladies to an unbeaten four wins out of four matches in February and went on to qualify for the semi-finals of the Lidl Ireland Ladies NFL, and then progressed to the final with a great win over Kerry in the semis... As the month of April was drawing to a close, Ballyhaunis bade farewell to one of its beloved citizens when Michael Cameron from Knockroe, passed to his eternal reward. Michael, or 'Din-Joe', as he was affectionately known, came to Ballyhaunis 64 years ago when he took up the position of butcher at Cribbin's Butchers, Main Street... Great celebrations in Ballyhaunis and Mayo on Saturday, April 30th when the Mayo Under 21 Gaelic footballers defeat Cork in Ennis to clinch the All-Ireland title in dramatic fashion. Morgan Lyons from Knockbrack played an important role in the county's fantastic victory.

## MAY

Finally, after lots of talk and discussion, a Government is formed on Friday, May 6th. Enda Kenny is elected Taoiseach after attracting sufficient votes for leadership from a group of independent deputies... Great celebrations through the streets of Ballyhaunis on Monday evening, May 16th, when the Under 16 footballers of the local GAA Club arrive to a hero's welcome homecoming after capturing the County Under-16 League, following a great win over Hollymount-Carramore in the final on a scoreline of 1-21 to 2-15. The successful team is managed and coached by the Caulfield brothers, Tommy and Seamus... Ballyhaunis Under-13 and Under-17 Girls travel to the Raheny GAA Club in Dublin for a couple of matches against the underage girls from the Dublin club. Raheny, who were hosted by Ballyhaunis last February, will pay a return visit to the local club again next year. It is planned to make it an annual fixture... Bertie Mulligan from Hazelhill is laid to rest two months after his 90th birthday... The Ballyhaunis Corpus Christi Procession is held on Sunday, May 29th, feast of Corpus Christi. One again, the sun shone brightly on the annual event which this year concluded with Benediction in Beech Lawn Estate.

## JUNE

The annual Ballyhaunis Summer Festival gets underway on Friday, June 3rd and concludes on Bank Holiday Monday 6th... The glorious June sunshine certainly played



The sun shone on the Ballyhaunis Summer Festival Fair Day,  
Sunday 5th June 2016





Ballyhaunis members of the Mayo hurling panel and backroom team with the Nicky Rackard Cup, following their victory against Armagh in June.

Back, L-R: Tom Phillips, J.P. Coen, Dave McConn, Eoghan Collins, Brian Hunt (Capt.), Derek Walsh, Tadhg Buckley. Front row: Keith Higgins, Adrian Brennan, Austin Lyons, Dónal O'Brien, Kieran McDermott.

its part in helping to make the Ballyhaunis Summer Festival another great success. A feature of the festival is the inter-pub quiz on opening night, which saw MacSuirtain's winning the trophy for the second time running... Mayo hurlers make history when they capture the Nicky Rackard Cup at Croke Park for the first time in the county's history. Several Ballyhaunis lads are among the Mayo winning team which beat Armagh by 2-16 to 1-15. Chief marksman for Mayo was Tooreen's Kenny Feeney who scored 1-9 of his sides winning tally. Team manager is Ballyhaunis man J.P. Coen... Fledgling young golfer Paul Hickey wins the President's Prize (Seamus Swift), at Ballyhaunis Golf Club... Joe Finn from Pattenspark dies following a brief illness... Great sadness throughout the parish following the news of Matt O'Dwyer's sudden death during the last weekend of the month. Matt, a former secretary of the editorial committee of Annagh Magazine, was one of the pillars of the local community and was a prominent member of the St. Vincent De Paul Society. Having joined the teaching staff at the Convent of Mercy in the early 1970's, he was part of the first group of teachers who took up duty in the Ballyhaunis Community School, following the amalgamation of the three secondary schools in town in 1977... Citizens of Great Britain vote to leave the E.U. following a vote on whether to stay or to leave on June 23rd.

## JULY

The month of July gets off to a great start for Ballyhaunis Golf Club member Andrew Hickey from Greenwood when he finishes in third place in the Under-18 Boys

Irish Open Golf Championship. Andrew had a double reason to celebrate this week when he became the very first member of the Coolnaha club to play off scratch. This is a unique record for sure, the first player to play off scratch since the club was founded back in 1929. He is son of Jimmy and Mary Hickey, Greenwood... Gurteen man Cormac Phillips retains the Connacht Under-16 Poc Fada crown following a hotly contested battle in the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence. Cormac is son of Paddy and Anne Philips, Gurteen... Long established Ballyhaunis businessman John Forde, The Square, dies after a brief illness. John, who celebrated his 80th birthday in May of this year, was a prominent member of Ballyhaunis Golf Club for many years having held the positions of President, Captain and Secretary... Knock Shrine

celebrates the 40th anniversary of the dedication of the Basilica. Archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Seán O'Malley performs the official rededication ceremony at Knock on July 16th... Colm Collins leads the Clare Senior Football team to victory over Roscommon at Pearse Stadium, Galway, to clinch an All-Ireland Quarter Final place against Kerry at Croke Park. The Clare manager is brother of John Collins from Island... Ballyhaunis native Dr. Donal Delaney joins Dr. Michael Brogan as practising GP at the Annagh Medical Centre on Doctors Road. Dr. Donal is son of Dr. Alan and the late Joan Delaney, Doctor's Road.

## AUGUST

The month of August was a poor month weather wise, taking over where July left off, with rain falling for most of the month... Ballyhaunis GAA Club star Keith Higgins lines out for Mayo for his 50th championship appearance in the green and red jersey as Mayo defeat Tipperary in the All-Ireland semi-final to clinch a place in the final in September. Keith marked the milestone in great style when he was awarded Man of the Match trophy for a superb performance in guiding his county to victory at Croke Park... Local Councillor John Cribbin confirms that the Government has allocated a sum of €795,000 for the upgrading of the Ballyhaunis to Ballinlough road to help prevent future flooding on this stretch of road... The death occurs in London of the late Sarah Frances Halpenny, formerly Tarpey from Barrack Street... Patrons at the 2016 Abbey Pattern on August 28th enjoyed one of the warmest pattern days in a



number of years with glorious sunshine enjoyed by all throughout the day.

## SEPTEMBER

At their September meeting, the 4th Mayo Scout Group report a very successful operation since being established in 2013. Leader John Durkan reports that the numbers in the local group are steadily growing to the 100 mark, an unprecedented number for scouting in Ballyhaunis going back to the origins over 70 years ago... Knox Street native Joe Kenny dies in Tullamore, Co. Offaly. In his mid-80's, Joe was a former vice principal of Tullamore College... Ballyhaunis Community School staff member Siobhán Devine retires after 35 years with the BCS staff. Siobhán, who was dearly loved and respected by all the students who passed through her classroom over those 35 years, was director of the music department where she instilled a great love for music in all her students. She was in charge of the musical direction of All the musicals staged at BCS since the early 1980s... This month Lieutenant Colonel Mary Carroll became the first woman to lead an Irish Defence Forces contingent on a UN mission. She leads the 54th Infantry Group bound for UNDOF peacekeeping duties in the Golan Heights - the war-torn area held by both Syria and Israel. Lieut. Col. Carroll's mother was the former Mary Flatley of Lassany, Ballyhaunis... Former parish priest of Ballyhaunis Canon Joe Cooney celebrates his 80th birthday. Canon Cooney, who spent seventeen years as parish priest here in our parish, celebrated the great occasion at his residence in Knock with neighbours and friends... Ballyhaunis Community School junior hurlers win the Connacht Hurling Blitz at the Centre of Excellence, Began.

## OCTOBER

The month of October begins on a sad note for community and parish as Helen Hoban from Derrynacong dies after a very short illness. Helen was a prominent member of the Ballyhaunis Legion of Mary



The new bridge at Classaghroe which was built September/October 2016.



Seamus Caulfield (second from left), of Caulfield's Shop on Upper Main Street, receiving his winnings from National Lottery official, with Winning Streak presenters Sinéad Kennedy and Marty Whelan.

for over 50 years, and as Fr. Stephen Farragher, PP, said in his homily, she was a great support to this parish in so many ways for so many years... Hundreds of loyal Mayo football supporters gather at the railway station on Sunday evening, October 2nd, to greet and welcome home the gallant Mayo senior team and management who had been beaten by Dublin by the narrowest of margins of one point in the All-Ireland Senior Football Final replay at Croke park, the previous evening... The Ballyhaunis-Brackloon road was re-opened following the construction of a new bridge at Classaghroe... Ballyhaunis Town FC, the local soccer club, win promotion to the Premier League in the Mayo League, when they finish on top of the table to clinch the Tim Hastings Volkswagen Division One trophy. Club striker Keith Robinson is the top scorer in the division with a final tally of 23 goals. A great achievement indeed for the Ballyhaunis soccer club after just a few years of playing competitive football in the Mayo League... Ballyhaunis finishes with a score of 270 marks in the SuperValu National Tidy Towns Awards - an increase of seven marks on last year's score.



Officiating at the opening and Blessing of the 1916 Garden of Remembrance: Fr. Kieran Waldron and Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.



# Weddings



Trisha Finn (Main St.) and Gerry Burke (Eden, Knock),  
who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.  
*Lisa Hynes Photography.*



T. J. Brennan (Lurgan, Brickens) and Celene Kilgallon  
(Dunmadden, Templeboy, Co. Sligo), who married  
in Templeboy Church, Co. Sligo.



Stephen Lenehan (Tooreen) and Marie Ryan (Cork),  
married in Cork.



Sheila Tarpey (Carrowkeel) and Ronán Potts (Dublin),  
who married in St. Patrick's Church,  
Ballyhaunis.



# Weddings





Sean Hunt (Lecarrow) and Alice Duffy (Turloughmore, Co. Galway), who married in Our Lady of Knock Parish Church, Lackagh, Co. Galway.



Sarah Prenty (Knock Road) and Denis Hogan (Nenagh, Co. Tipperary), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.



Sandra Macken (Brickens) and Aidan Crawford (Ramelton, Co. Donegal), who married in St. Therese's Church, Brickens.



Nicola Nolan (Abbeyquarter) and Derek Walsh (Knockbrack), who married in St Patrick's Church Ballyhaunis.







Mary T. Casserly (Kiniska, Claregalway) and Conor O'Loughlin (Athlone), who married in Blackrock Church, Co. Louth. Mary T. is daughter of the former Mary Finnegan, Tullaghane.



Marie Bernadette Conway (Brickens) and Lee Foster (Newcastle, England), who married in St. Therese's Church, Brickens.



Madeleine Dignan (London) and Patrick Noonan (Dungarvan, Co. Waterford), who married in Dungarvan. Madeleine is daughter of Patrick Duignan and Christina Mugan, both originally of Cherryfield.



Lorraine Lyons (Claregalway) and Paul Francis (Claregalway) who married in Claregalway. Lorraine is a daughter of John Lyons, Hollywell and the former Cora McGarry, Drumbane.





Lizzy Gallagher (Bargariff) and Mick O'Shea (Sutton, Dublin), who married in St. Patrick's Church Ballyhaunis.



John Grey (Surrey, UK) and Sabela Sada-Suero (Spain), who married in Galicia, Spain. John is grandson of the late Alice Lyons, Clare St.



Jason Plunkett (Forthill) and Rachel Keaveney (Ballinlough), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.



Elizabeth Rabbitte (Derrylea) and Edward Kee (Belfast), who married in St. Mary's Church Cong, Co. Mayo.





Ann Fitzpatrick (Tully, Carrowbehy) and Gary Allen (Cartron North), who married in Costa Calero, Lanzarote.



Barbara Hannon (Garrafrauns) and Thomas Finnegan (Ballybeg) who were married in St. Patrick's Church, Garrafrauns.

Colm Gallagher (Drimbane) and Annette Queenan (Lahardane, Crossmolina), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Lanardane





Conor Hand (Dublin) and Hope Kudryashova (Dublin), who married in Barberstown Castle, Co. Kildare. Conor is son of the former Mary Griffin of Clare Street, Ballyhaunis.



Deirdre Walsh (Legaun, Balla) and Dominick Lowry (Keebaugh, Brickens), who married in Balla Church.

Diarmuid Cleary, right (Clare Road) and John Aurtande (Norway), who married in Oslo, Norway.







**Donal Delaney (Doctor's Road) and Mary Hopkins (Belmullet), who married in Doolin, Co. Clare**



**Breda Haverty (Clooncan, Ballinlough) and David Hunt (Rathnagussane, Kilmovee), who married in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Kilmovee.**



**Claire Prenty (Knock Road) and Enda Kenny (Urlaur), who married in Saint Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.**



**Colleen Waldron (Abbeyquarter) and Ronan Waldron (Carrownedan), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.**



Donal Grogan (Coventry) and  
Ciara O'Brien (Coventry), who  
married in St. Columba's  
Church, Drung, Co. Donegal.  
Donal is son of Martin Grogan,  
Clare Street.



Eleanor Moran (Derrymore) and  
Kieran Gill (Drumsna,  
Co. Leitrim), who married in  
St. Margaret Mary Alacoque  
Church, Began.  
*Ivan Keaney Photography.*

Ian Prenty (Knock Road) and  
Sarah Curran (Rathfarnham,  
Dublin), who married in  
Rathfeigh Church,  
Co. Meath.







**Claire Muldowney (Doctor's Road) and Douglas Jefferies (Helensburgh, Scotland), who married in Westport.**



**Annita Duffy (Kilmovee) and Ronan Garrahy (Ennistymon, Co. Clare), who married in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Kilmovee.**



**Anthony Carney (Dublin and Australia) and Frances Moran (Swinford and Australia), who married in St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Church, Began.**



**Bernadette Flanagan (Spaddagh) and Étienne Poisson (Cesson, France), who married in Saint Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.**



Katriona Morley (Carrowreagh and Swords, Co. Dublin) and David Smith (Swords) who married in Brackenstown Church, Swords.



Rebecca Dolan (Bekan) and Jason Cunningham (Cloonlough, Ballinlough), who married in St. Margaret Mary's Church, Began.

Ruthanne Cawley (Carrowcarden) and Keith O'Dowd (Enniscrone) who married in Mulranny, Co. Mayo. Ruthanne is daughter of the former Ber Hopkins, Upper Main Street.





# Baptisms    Marriages    Deaths

## BAPTISMS in the Parish – November 2015 to October 2016

Joshua Regan Hayes, Old Racecourse  
Summer Chloe Ecteberg McNamara, Tullaghane  
Zoe Vanessa O'Meara, Claremorris  
Joseph Thomas Malone Finn, Carrowreagh  
Chloe May Finn, Lakehill  
Charlie Michael Reynolds Dolan, Johnstown  
Delilah Rose McDonagh, Tooraree  
David William Collins, Abbeyvale  
Tennyson James Freyne, Canada  
Tammy Marie McDonagh, The Maples  
Noah Patrick Kelly, Esker Pines  
Katie Rose Allen, Tooraree  
Thomas James Webb, Cloonfad  
Emily Elizabeth Lynch, Holywell  
Matilda Pearl Thompson, Manchester  
Emma Irene Kelly, Upper Main St.  
Annie Catherine Burke, Hazelwood  
Ameila Mae Crean, Kiltaboe  
Adam James Connery, Old Racecourse  
Maryanna McDonagh, The Maples  
Austin Liam Murphy, West Yorkshire  
Sylvie Rose Mulrennan, Kiltaboe  
Caoimhe Ann Cameron Canny, Old Racecourse

Kyle Liam Kilbane, Beech Lawn  
Martha Frances Grady, Ballinphuill  
Seamus Daniel Webb, The Maples  
Aoibheann Maria Noonan, Began  
Eamon O'Reilly, Coogue North  
James Thomas Webb, The Maples  
Nicola Medesan, Carrowreagh  
Emilis Ziziunas & Kamile Ziziunaite, The Maples  
Archie Hugh Curley, Greenwood  
Matthew Thomas Jordan, Abbeyquarter  
Molly Rose Nestor, Knox St.  
Valentina Tighe, Manor Brook  
Jason Kamsiyochuwku Nwankwo Ezeokafor, Old Convent  
Tylor Sweeney, Esker Pines  
Conor Damien Waldron, Holywell  
Evie Marie Murphy, Gurteen  
Eliska Valicek, The Maples  
Ellie Marie Higgins, Esker Pines  
Isabella Honora Maise Rabbitte, Derrylea  
Sophie Rose Coen, Lecarrow  
Jack Michael Curley, Foxford  
Elliott Oscar Roche, Claregalway  
Pearce Gerard Corcoran, Australia

## MARRIAGES in St. Patrick's Church

### November 2015 to October 2016

Jason Plunkett, Forthill & Rachel Keaveney, Ballinlough  
Sarah Prenty, Knock Road & Denis Hogan, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary  
Sheila Tarpey, Carrowkeel & Ronan Potts, Dublin  
Nicola Nolan, Abbeyquarter & Derek Walsh, Knockbrack  
Bernadette Flanagan, Spaddagh & Étienne Poisson, Brittany  
Patricia Finn, Main St. & Gerard Burke, Knock  
Claire Prenty, Knock Road & Enda Kenny, Kilkelly  
Colleen Waldron, Abbeyquarter & Ronan Waldron, Carrownedan  
Chantelle McDonagh, The Maples & Thomas McDonagh, Southampton  
Elizabeth Gallagher, Bargariff & Michael O'Shea, Dublin

### Marriages Elsewhere

Sean Hunt, Lecarrow & Alice Duffy, Dublin  
Ian Prenty, Knock Road & Sarah Curran, Dublin  
Donal Delaney, Doctor's Road & Mary Hopkins, Belmullet  
Colm Gallagher, Drimbane & Annette Queenan, Ballina  
Dearbhla Murray, Began & Joe Freeley, Hazelhill



## DECEASED of the Parish November 2015 to October 2016

Michael Coyne, Devlis  
Maureen Cunnane, Scrigg  
Frankie O'Malley, Knock Road  
Dominic (Gerry) Byrne, Clare Court  
Joe Cleary, Gurrane  
Kevin Jordan, Coventry & Annagh  
Bridie Webb, Beech Park  
Josie Smyth, Knox St.  
David Jordan, Clare Court  
Pat Lyons, Classaroe  
John Connolly, Cloonfad  
Marise Hannon, Dublin & Abbey St.  
John O'Shaughnessy, Beech Lawn  
Brendan Quinn, Knox St.  
Seamus Clarke, Devlis  
Mary Judge, Ballinphuill & Castlereagh  
Maureen Bambee, Gurrane & England  
Paul McKermitt, Hazelhill  
Liam Connell, Devlis  
Eileen Waldron, Cave  
P. J. Smyth, Bracklaghboy  
Michael Cameron, Carrowkeel  
Martin McDonagh, Shannon & Tooraree  
Bertie Mulligan, Hazelhill  
Joe Finn, Pattenspark  
Matt O'Dwyer, Ballindrehid  
John Forde, The Square  
Joe Freeman, Ballindrehid  
Michael Lyons, Classaroe  
Sarah Frances Halpenny, London & Chapel St.  
Denis Burley, Classaroe  
Helen Hoban, Derrynacong  
Nancy Jordan, Johnstown  
Willie Armstrong, London & Holywell



## Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee

Firstly, the committee members would like to sincerely thank everyone for the generous contributions made to the annual collection for the maintenance of the cemetery. A special thanks to the diaspora for their generous donations this year. This continuous support ensures the maintenance of the area including new railings at the entrance which will be installed this year.

At the back of the cemetery is a detailed map with location and name of each individual grave. This might be especially useful to visitors to the area or to those interested in genealogy. It can also be viewed on-line at [Irishgraveyards.ie](http://Irishgraveyards.ie). A PayPal facility is also available on this site for those who wish to contribute.

The committee members are John Halpin, Edward Mulhern, Walter Cleary, Tom Finn, Seamus O'Boyle, Martin Gavin and Mary Donnelly.



Bertie Mulligan aged 11,  
as a Boy Soprano in the Parish  
Church Choir,  
1937

Edward and Mary Mulligan (nee Fahy), Hazelhill, 1939.

A new placename stone has been installed on the Knock Road, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1916 Rising. Erected by Michael Caulfield it is inscribed in Irish and when translated reads: 'Bracklaghboy leading to Knockroe, Carrowkeel and Gurteen. Commemorating 1916'.

*Photograph by Sinéad Freyne.*



# 1916 Garden of Remembrance

MARY DONNELLY

On Friday, 11th November 2016 the people of Ballyhaunis gathered in the rain to honour the memory of the people and events of Easter 1916 by opening a special Garden of Remembrance in Bridge Street. Earlier that morning those who lost their lives in the 1916 Rising were remembered and prayed for at the 10 o'clock Mass in St. Patrick's Church.

Events got under way in Bridge Street with a Blessing Ceremony conducted by our Parish Priest Fr. Stephen Farragher, and children from Scoil Íosa then read aloud the 1916 Proclamation. The flag of the Irish Republic was raised by two special local residents - Katherine Connolly Kilbride who is a great-granddaughter of James Connolly, a signatory of the Proclamation, and Joe Keane, one of our most senior residents and veteran of the FCA. This was followed by a rendition of Amhrán na bhFiann by local musicians Richard Waldron, Connie Gildea and Paddy Joe Tighe.

Fr. Kieran Waldron - a Ballyhaunis native, noted historian and author - gave an interesting presentation on Ballyhaunis in 1916, and Katherine Connolly Kilbride planted a yew tree in honour of the seven Signatories of the Proclamation. Students of Ballyhaunis Community School read out their interpretation of what a 2016 Proclamation would contain, and Kay Curley, Chairperson of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns, addressed some words of thanks to the many people and groups associated with this project.

In recognition of the diversity of our population nationally and most particularly in Ballyhaunis, the Chairman of Mayo County Council, Cllr. Al McDonnell, presented a copy of the 1916 Proclamation in Urdu to

Sher and Kausar Rafique as representatives of the local Pakistani community.

As the organising committee, Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns is deeply grateful to all who took part in this ceremony in such a dignified and meaningful way. Our hope is that this Garden of Remembrance will serve as a reminder of the courage shown and the sacrifices made by those involved in the Easter Rising of 1916, and how Ballyhaunis acknowledged these in this the centenary year.



The Proclamation of the Irish Republic, carved in stone, at the entrance to the 1916 Garden of Remembrance.

Officiating at the opening and Blessing of the 1916 Garden of Remembrance:  
Mary Donnelly (Tidy Towns),  
Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.,  
Michael Kelly (Chairman, Ballyhaunis Community Council).





Left: Pupils of Ballyhaunis Community School reading their own version of the Proclamation.

Above: Pupils of Scoil Íosa Primary School reading the Proclamation.

Top & bottom of page: Views of the blessing and unveiling of the 1916 Garden of Remembrance, Abbey Street, Ballyhaunis.

Above: Pupils of Scoil Íosa Primary School reading the Proclamation. Photos by JanaPix.





# Reflections on Ballyhaunis and the 1916 Rising

FR. KIERAN WALDRON

I would like to thank the Tidy Towns committee for inviting me to contribute a little historical reflection on the centenary of the 1916 Rising. I am a Ballyhaunis native with an interest in local history and will be referring to two or three locations in the town as I proceed. The first location is where we stand. I remember this ramp being used to allow cattle access to the river for water. Circus animals too, including elephants, were also brought here to drink. However it is an important place in the history of the town because just below us was the ford that gave the name to *Béal Átha hAmhnais* – the *áth* across the river, the ‘ford-mouth of strife’ or ‘rough, cruel ford-mouth’, according to Dr. Nollaig Ó Muraíle. The fine stone bridge beside us is of recent origin. It was not there when the Augustinian Friars came to the hill above us, six hundred years ago. So they too had to use stepping stones or whatever rudimentary wooden planks they could get to cross the river.

The second location I would direct you to is where the Garda Barracks is today. In 1916 it, of course, was the barracks of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) who, like today’s Gardaí, were all Irish. We can only wonder what it was like for the constables on duty on those days of Easter Week 1916. There were no telephones in Mayo until 1928 but the constables knew there was something wrong - the Dublin papers had not come for two days and there were no trains either. Somebody from England might have brought the Tuesday’s edition of *London Daily Sketch* which had a short report about some sort of a rebellion in Dublin on the previous day. And now a dispatch rider from the Chief Inspector in Castlebar directed all constables to be on the look-out for suspicious movements of the Irish Volunteers. These were to be reported immediately.

The constable on duty would have spent many years quietly serving the community. But this message made him shudder. How would his future years be as an RIC man? Would he last out until his retirement? There might seem to be good-will and friendship to him in the area but there was always the suspicion that the RIC, however friendly they might appear to be, were indeed ‘the eyes and ears’ of the authorities in Dublin Castle.

What happened in Ballyhaunis in 1916? We must remember that the Rising was a highly secret affair, organised largely by a caucus - the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) and the Citizens Army within the

Volunteers. It was so secret that the Chief of Staff of the Irish Volunteers, Eoin McNeill, heard about the plans only on the Thursday before Easter Sunday. No wonder then, with all the secrecy, that the military action was almost completely confined to Dublin. There was no rising in Ballyhaunis. On the Wednesday week after the Rising, just one person was arrested. He was Pilib de Bháldraithe from Drimbane, a *Timire* or travelling Irish teacher, who was dragged from his bed and lodged in Castlebar Gaol. Maybe the Ballyhaunis constables had to make some arrest to please their superiors? In Westport a fortnight later, thirty three Irish Volunteers who went on a public route march were immediately arrested and taken to various prisons in England and Wales. The Ballyhaunis Volunteers also carried out occasional marching and drilling, but the fact that no member was arrested suggests that by 1916 they were relatively inactive.

Though there was no military activity in Ballyhaunis, *bhí baint faoi leith ag Béal Átha hAmhnais leis an éirí-amach ÍmBaile Átha Claith. Bhí Connradh na Gaelige go láidir san áit seo le fada an lá. As an grá don teanga and don chultúir d’éirigh an tír-ghra ba chúis leis an aiseirigh.*

Ballyhaunis had one major connection with Pádraic Pearse, the Leader of the Rising, who read the Proclamation outside the GPO in Dublin on Easter Monday 1916. This brings me to location three. Across the road you can see the now derelict Convent Primary School which was built about 1899. In that school and in the school grounds, in April 1903, Padraig Pearse himself had spent two whole days helping to organise and adjudicate at the elaborate *Feis Mhuigheo*. Pearse later said he was captivated by the organisation of that Feis by the local committee of the Gaelic League, *Connradh na Gaeilge*. In their magazine, *An Claidheamh Solais*, Pearse wrote about the Ballyhaunis event. He said ‘the first Mayo Feis in Ballyhaunis was a thing to be remembered, great in achievement but greater still in promise’. And promise it was because his Gaelic League experience was a seminal influence in his own development as a true lover of all things Irish and contributed to his development as a martyred patriot.

The hope for the Rising was not for final victory over the British Empire. It was to be an aggressive statement of the undying wish for Irish independence and the frustration of the people towards the British Government because of broken promises about Home



Rule for over thirty years. The Rising itself was immediately condemned all over Ireland, because of the violence used and the deaths and destruction in Dublin. You can read about the Mayo reaction and denunciations in the *Western People* of 6<sup>th</sup> May 1916 and especially the resolution of the Castlebar Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) in condemning the Rising as 'sheer madness'. Pearse himself recognised this possible reaction to the Rising in his poem *The Fool* – talking about himself:

*A fool that in all his days had never done a prudent thing  
Never counted the cost, nor recked if another reaped  
The fruit of his mighty sowing, content to scatter the seed.*

And scatter the seed they surely did. We can regret the deaths and the violence that lasted for many years after 1916 but we cannot doubt their integrity or their patriotism.

It was the fifteen executions of the leaders in May 1916 which changed the ordinary people of Ireland utterly. The British bombing of Dublin and the later attempts to force conscription in Ireland led to the Irish Volunteers in Ballyhaunis and elsewhere being re-energised. On the political side, a new party swept the boards in the General Election of 1918. A New Ireland was dawning. But that is for another day! I finish with some closing lines from that poem of Padraig Pearse:

*What if the dream comes true?  
And if millions unborn shall dwell  
In the house that I shaped in my heart,  
the noble house of my thought.  
Lord I have staked my soul,  
I have staked the lives of my kin  
On the truth of thy dreadful word,  
Do not remember my failures  
But remember this – my faith."*



### Opening and Blessing of the 1916 Garden of Remembrance in Ballyhaunis, Friday 11th November, 2016.

L-R: John Condon, County Secretary, Mayo County Council; Dara Calleary, TD; Kay Curley, Chairperson, Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns; Neil Sheridan, Mayo County Council; Mary Donnelly; Katherine Kilbride; Cllr John Cribbin; Cllr Al McDonnell, Chairman Mayo County Council; Sher Rafique; Kausar Rafique; Cllr John Caulfield; Sheila Coll, Mayo Community Futures Office, Mayo County Council and Martina Hughes, Mayo County Council. Pic: Janapix



# Reflections on Commemorating 1916

KATHERINE CONNOLLY KILBRIDE

*Great-granddaughter of James Connolly*

*James Connolly is my great-grandfather and I have always felt very proud to be related to him and his family. This explains my relationship to this great man: **James Connolly** (great-grandfather) married Lillie Reynolds and they had seven children: Mona, Nora, Aideen, Ina, Moira, **Roderick James** and Fiona. **Roderick James** (grandfather) married Jessica Maidment and they had two children: **James** and Ross. **James** (father) married Katherine Davern and they had six children: Jessica, John, Joanna, Roderick, Seamus and **Katherine** (myself). As you can see I am the youngest of my family. So, James Connolly is my Great-granddad.*

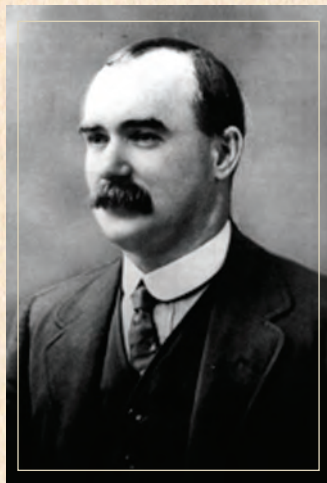
As we know the first three words of the Proclamation are addressed to: Irishmen and Irishwomen. This is a very powerful statement as it is acknowledging that women should be treated equally to men. James Connolly was very strong in his belief that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men. The Proclamation also states that we should cherish all the children of the nation equally. This too was very close to James's heart. He wished that all children should have good health care, plenty of food to eat, decent living conditions and education.

## Nora Connolly

I would like to tell you a little bit about Nora Connolly, who was James and Lillie's second eldest daughter. Nora is my Godmother and I knew her very well. She was born in Edinburgh in 1892 and died in 1981. The family was very poor and before they went to school they were educated at home by their mother, Lillie, and it has been said that Nora could read by the time she was three years old.

When Nora was eight years old, she often saw her father speak in Glasgow at political meetings about his Republican and Socialist beliefs. From then on until she died she remained a devoted Republican and Socialist.

She left school at thirteen and worked in a millinery store and as a dress-maker. In 1910, when she was seventeen, she moved to Belfast for work. While she was in Belfast she was a founder member of the Young Republican Party and of the girls' branch of the Fianna.



James Connolly

She also helped to found the Belfast branch of Cumann na mBan, the women's branch of the Irish Volunteers.

In 1914 Erskine Childers landed a cache of arms and ammunition in Howth, County Dublin. Nora and her sister Ina couriered them to hiding places all over Dublin and their reward was two rifles!

In 1916 Nora, who was twenty-three, and her sister Ina travelled to the North, under the orders of Padraig Pearse, to persuade the leading activists to join the fight. He said to them, "You have the privilege of being the first woman to read this Proclamation. Read it, study it and try to remember what is written and then you will be able to tell the men of the North what you saw, and what will be read at the G.P.O. today at 12 o'clock, and will be posted all over the city".

They had a long journey back to Dublin by train, car and foot. I have many memories of Nora telling me this story in her sitting room in Galtymore Park in Dublin. When they arrived back in Dublin they were very upset to learn that the Rising was over and that the Leaders had surrendered.

They were also told of the sad news that their father,

James Connolly, had been shot and was badly injured. He was in Dublin Castle. Nora and her mother, Lillie, were the last two of the family to see James the night before he was executed. They were all very upset and his last words to them were: "Hasn't it been a full life? Isn't this a good end?" He was executed by the British Army on 12th May 1916.

After the execution Lillie went to retrieve James's personal items such as his wallet, watch etc. She was questioned by a Major Price, who was in the British Intelligence. Price questioned Lillie about her son. "My young son?" She said referring to Roderick (who was



Nora Connolly





James and Lillie Connolly with their daughters Mona (left) and Nora (on her mother's knee)

my Grandad) and was fourteen at the time. "No, I don't mean that son, I mean the other". Lillie said: "I have no other son". Nora remembered then that once, as a joke, she got herself into a Volunteer uniform; and had a photograph taken; and had signed it, "Your soldier son"; and given it to her Daddy. When the wallet was taken, they found the photograph; and they were looking for that son. They never got that photograph back. They were probably still looking for James's other son!

Nora opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921 and volunteered for the Republican forces. She was made Paymaster

General of the Irish Republican Army when her close friend Margaret Skinnider was arrested in 1922. Margaret was the most successful sniper during the Rising. Nora was then arrested and sent to Kilmainham Jail. I have since been to Kilmainham Jail and been inside the cell that Nora stayed in. I often think of how strong and brave all the women were during these times and how they fought side by side with the men, supporting them in every aspect of the war. They were selfless, honest, loyal and steadfast to their beliefs. They certainly are women to look up to and be very proud of.

After the Civil War she worked tirelessly for the Irish Labour Party and served three terms in the Seanad from 1957 to 1969. She would not join the Fianna Fail party but remained an independent. During her time as Senator, she blocked many bills including a church-promoted bill to consign female juvenile offenders to Magdalene laundries.

In 1966, the 50th Anniversary of 1916, my Dad accompanied Nora to Dublin Castle for the celebrations. They bumped into the grandson of William Martin Murphy, who was the founder of the Irish Independent newspaper, anti-Trade Unionist, opponent of the 1913 Lockout and who had publically called for the executions of Sean MacDiarmada and James Connolly. As Nora was going down the grand stairway she accidentally dropped some coins from her purse. The grandson of William



Katherine Connolly with her Godmother Nora Connolly at James Connolly's grave at Arbour Hill on 7th May 1969. Nora is pointing out where her father's name is engraved at the mass grave at Arbour Hill.



Brig. Gen. James Connolly & Kitty Connolly (my mum & dad) at Arbour Hill (1970s)



Martin Murphy, who was coming up the stairway at the same time bent down to pick up the fallen coins and said to Nora, "Whoever would have thought that a relative of Martin Murphy would be down on one knee picking up coins belonging to a Connolly?" To which Nora replied, "Indeed, and who would have thought that a Connolly would ever have had enough coins to be scattered about, anyway?!"

My memories of Nora was of a very kind, loving and caring Godmother. She often came to stay with us and I have lovely memories of spending time with her and listening to her stories. She truly was a great lady whom I was privileged to know.

### **The State Commemorations of the 1916 Rising:**

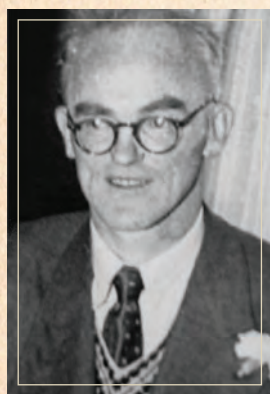
As relatives of James Connolly we were privileged to receive invitations to most of the ceremonies for 1916. It was very special to be able to attend all these occasions with my husband Eugene and son Kevin. As a family, we were also very lucky to have our father, Seamus Connolly (James Connolly's grandson), in attendance at nearly all of these special occasions. Our Dad will be ninety-three in November and we were very grateful that he had the health and alacrity to attend and enjoy the commemorations.

The highlights, for me, were the remembrance ceremonies at: the Garden of Remembrance, Arbour Hill, the Stonebreaker's Yard at Kilmainham Jail and The Easter Parade.

### **Easter Parade – Sunday 27th March 2016**

The parade on Easter Sunday was truly spectacular. It was led by Parade Commander Brigadier General Michael Beary. Fr. Seamus Madigan, Head Chaplain of the Defence Forces, opened the ceremony with a beautiful specially composed prayer of remembrance – 'Sing a new Song for Ireland'. I felt so proud to be Irish on that Sunday morning watching our Defence Forces, Air Corps and Naval Services, along with the Emergency Services march past the GPO. The Dublin Fire Brigade

was led by their mascot Duke who is a beautiful Irish Wolfhound. It was spectacular to watch the flypast by the Air Corps down O'Connell Street and over the GPO. Trails of smoke in the colours of our national flag: green, white and orange followed in the path of the aircraft. This was a particularly significant event to our family as our father had served in the Irish Air Corps and fifty years ago he was one of the



Roderick James Connolly  
(my granddad) - early  
1950s



Descendants laying flowers at James Connolly's grave,  
Arbour Hill, 24th April 2016

pilots in the flypast at the 50th Commemorations! The sun shone brightly that day and I felt that this was a sign from the 1916 Leaders, that they too approved of this wonderful parade and commemoration as they watched down on the thousands of spectators enjoying such a magnificent occasion.

### **Stonebreakers yard in Kilmainham Jail – Thursday 12th May 2016**

The ceremony at the stonebreaker's yard in Kilmainham Jail was very emotional for all our family but especially for our Dad. It was a particularly poignant moment as he laid a wreath in honour of James Connolly who was executed on 12th May 1916. It then struck me that James Connolly was not just a socialist and a revolutionary who died for our freedom but he was also a husband and loving father. Our Dad knew James's wife, Lillie Connolly, his granny very well. He often stayed with her in Belgrave Square after his mother, Jessica died when he was six years old. I love to hear him telling us of the very happy times he spent with his aunts Nora, Fiona and their sisters in a loving and warm family home. Of the times he served tea and biscuits to Nora and Dr. Kathleen Lynn and their husbands while they played Bridge. He told us of happy Christmases he spent there with his father, Roderick and brother Ross. And I knew Dad was thinking of how his Granny Lillie must have felt when her husband was shot. How must his father and aunts have suffered knowing their father was executed? I wonder how my Grandad, Roderick, must have felt as he too fought alongside his Dad in the GPO at just fourteen years of age? Roderick went on to have a political career in the Labour Party: TD for Louth, Financial Secretary and Party Chairman, as well as being



a teacher in the Technical college in Bray. He too was also in the Senate, on the Cultural & Educational Panel. These people are more than historical figures written about in history books – they are our family.

#### **Arbour Hill – Sunday 24th April 2016**

The Military Cemetery at Arbour Hill is the last resting place of fourteen of the executed leaders of the insurrection of 1916. Requiem Mass was celebrated in the Church of the Most Sacred Heart in remembrance of the executed leaders. After Mass, all present walked in procession along the path to the graveside where the fourteen leaders of the Easter Rising are buried. I always find the Guard of Honour by the military Cadets, along the Cherry Blossomed pathway from the Church to the gravesides of the Leaders, very moving. Either side of the pathway was lined by officer cadets, from the Military College, who waited in line with their heads bowed and their hands folded on their reversed weapons. This is the customary manner in which soldiers pay homage and say goodbye to their fallen comrades at their burial.

At the graveside, our family stood beside James Connolly's grave. There were inter-faith prayers for the deceased which were followed by a solemn wreath laying ceremony by President Higgins. Then a minute silence was followed by the piper's lament. Next, the Last Post was sounded and the National Flag was raised to full mast. This was followed by 'Reveille' and finally the National Anthem was played by the Army No. 1 Band. After the ceremony, we as a family laid some flowers at James Connolly's name on the communal grave.

I have many memories of attending this very moving and respectful annual ceremony since I was a young child with my family. It was a very emotional and proud moment for me to stand by my great-grandfather's grave and be part of such a beautiful ceremony, honouring these brave men.



L-R: John Connolly, Margaret Connolly and Brigadier General James Connolly (children of Roderick Connolly) at the place where their Grandfather James Connolly was shot in 1916.

L-R: Brigadier General Michael Beary, Brigadier General James Connolly and Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, Vice Admiral Mark Mellet, after laying a wreath on behalf of the Connolly family.

#### **Acknowledgement**

I would like to pay tribute to Minister Heather Humphreys and her special 1916 committee who planned and organised what were truly spectacular commemorations, ceremonies and events throughout the country. They were all very dignified, thought provoking, thoroughly respectful and imbued with due honour and pride. Each event seemed to hit the right note on every occasion. Our President, Mr. Michael D. Higgins deserves praise and honour as he attended so many commemoration ceremonies across the country and spoke so passionately and with great knowledge about all events and the impact it had on Irish lives.

One particular brilliant enterprise that particularly struck me was the 'Flags for Schools' initiative where the Defence Forces presented the Irish Tricolour and the 1916 Proclamation to over 3,300 primary and special schools in the country. This initiative was a great way to get young children engaged with the 1916 commemorations. Through the delivery of the National Flag to every primary school in the country, children could gain a greater understanding of the work of the Defence Forces and the importance of our National Flag and bring the history of 1916 alive to a new generation. It would help to remember the great sacrifices of the men, women and children who fought and died in 1916, and afterwards, so that this flag could be flown by our people.

#### **James Connolly's Legacy to his family**

I feel that my great-grandfather's legacy to our family was his equal treatment of all people, both men and women regardless of creed, race or colour. Also, to respect everyone as exemplified in his response when asked if he had any message for the members of his firing squad, James Connolly replied: "I respect any man who does his duty according to his lights (beliefs)."





# Comdt. Patrick 'P' Kenny

**"One of the most outstanding men in Mayo in the Fight for Freedom"**

*(Major General Michael Kilroy)*

PAUL WALDRON

Those who travel regularly from Ballyhaunis to Claremorris will have noticed that, in recent months, the monument at the crossroads in Cloontumper has been cleaned and refurbished. The monument, in the form of a Celtic cross, was erected in 1949 to the memory of Comdt. P. Kenny who was wounded nearby while leading the Holywell Ambush of 4th August, 1920, and also to the memory of his comrades of the 4th Battalion South Mayo Brigade, Old IRA.

Probably only a small number of the thousands who pass this way every day would have noticed the monument in recent years, and fewer still would have been aware of who or what it commemorates. That all changed this past summer when one local man made a call to MidWest Radio drawing attention to its dilapidated condition, and seeking further information on its story. Cathal Carroll is a native of Ballinlough, Co. Roscommon, but has strong links to Ballyhaunis: He is married to the former Cathy Webb of Main St. and they live at Carrowreagh; while his mother was the former Mary Flatley from Lassany, where he spent much of his childhood. His grandmother Kate Flatley (née Cunnane) was born in the townland of Began, not too far from the site of the monument, and she told Cathal many times about the Troubled times and those for whom the monument was erected. Last Summer (2015) Cathal spoke with MWR presenter Tommy Marren and, during the show, several people rang in with details of the monument's history, while others offered to help give it a much needed face-lift. More about the monument later, but what about the man?

## Leader

Patrick Kenny, better known as 'P.', was born in Cloonbook, Ballyhaunis on the 26th of Sept. 1887, son of Patrick Kenny and Mary Mullarkey. He was the second youngest of twelve children, most of whom emigrated.

Little is known of his childhood years, but from a young age P. took an interest in all aspects of Gaelic culture. At the Mayo Feis of 1903, which took place in Ballyhaunis, he was one of the prize-winners in the Irish Dancing competitions when only sixteen years of age. He was an accomplished traditional fiddle player too and much in demand to play at dances and functions in the locality. An all-round athlete too, he was a skilled Gaelic footballer and founding member of St. Patrick's Football Club, Ballyhaunis in 1910. He was a regular member of the Ballyhaunis team for the rest of that decade. Indeed

he played on the Ballyhaunis team who were county champions in 1918 and went on to represent the county in the All-Ireland series.

P. Kenny and his younger brother Austin, better known as 'Aut', joined the Irish Volunteers shortly after they were formed in 1913, and from the very beginning were central to the development of the Republican movement in Mayo. They came in contact with Patrick Moylett, the Ballyhaunis based businessman and associate of Arthur Griffith, as early as March

1915, when recruitment for the Volunteers resumed and training commenced in earnest following the split with the Redmondite Volunteers the previous year.

P. Kenny's profile in the Volunteers quickly grew and he soon became well-known and trusted to all the leaders at headquarters and around the country. Maj. Gen. Michael Kilroy, at the unveiling of the Kenny monument in 1949, spoke of Kenny's role in keeping the Nationalist flame alive in the early days: *"After the Rebellion in 1916, when most of the principal leaders had been executed, and the remainder of the leaders, together with a large number of the rank and file were imprisoned, the organisation was naturally at a low ebb. To find men of Comdt. Kenny's ability, tact and courage was the first great essential for the revival of the movement."* It was Kenny who sheltered the Galway patriot Liam Mellowes when the latter was on the run after the Rising, and later successfully conducted him through a British cordon back to his home in Galway.

He must have had exceptional leadership qualities. In 1917, when the Mayo Brigade and its Battalions of the Volunteers were formed in Mayo, P. Kenny was appointed O/C Claremorris Battalion. As Maj. Gen. Kilroy said, *"When Comdt. Kenny was requested to help organise the Irish Volunteers he set about the work with the enthusiasm of a born patriot. The high standard of his battalion was proved later, clearly demonstrating the amount of energy he put into his job."* Amongst those under his command were his brother Austin, and their nephew Patrick McNeive of Lurgan, Brickens. (Another nephew, Willie McNeive, saw action in the G.P.O. during the



Patrick 'P' Kenny, who played on the Ballyhaunis football team – County Champions 1918.





Comdt. P. Kenny, pictured back row, third from left with a group of East Mayo IRA Volunteers, 1921. His brother Austin and nephew Pat McNeive are included. Back, L-R: Pat McNeive (Lurgan, Brickens), Austin Tarpey (Pattenspark), Patrick Kenny (Cloonbook), Joe Taylor (Clooncagh, Aghamore), John Forde (Larganboy), Luke Taylor (Clooncagh, Aghamore), Sonny Biesty (Holywell), Dom Byrne (Derrymore). Front row: Jack Kilduff (Island), Austin Kenny (Cloonbook), Michael Devaney (Clooncan), Jim Kilkenny (Crossbeg), Michael Nolan (Kilgarriff). Courtesy of Tom Byrne. Names supplied when this photograph was published previously, from another copy, in *Annagh* 1981, p.43.

rising, and is the subject of an article on page 34 of this publication.

Comdt. Kenny was prominent in establishing the Sinn Féin courts, and led a party of Volunteers who prevented the holding of the 'Petty Sessions' courts in Claremorris in 1919.

#### **Excise Office Raid**

One of the operations led by Comdt. Kenny is still recalled locally. In the early hours of Sunday, 4th April 1920, he led a daring raid on the Customs and Excise office which then occupied part of Michael Foudy's premises in Bridge St. (present day Delaney's Ltd.), opposite the Post Office.

Three policemen were returning to barracks in Ballyhaunis by bicycle from duty in connection with ongoing land trouble on the Lord de Freyne estate in Erritt, Co. Roscommon, when they noticed a light in the vicinity of the Bridge St. office. They surprised an outpost of the raiding party who ordered them three times to halt. On failing to do so, they were fired upon, and the policemen returned fire. About a half dozen shots were exchanged in all. Two of the policemen were injured – Sergt. Edward Carroll and Const. Ryan – both shot in the legs, while the third, Const. Flynn, was uninjured. The raiding party made their escape across the river, and most spent the following weeks moving from one safe-house to the next. A bullet, embedded in the jamb of the door of the Railway Hotel was found to have come from a police service revolver and attracted much interest for some time after.

#### **Holywell Ambush**

Just four months later Comdt. Kenny led a party of Volunteers who ambushed the British Army at Holywell on 4th Aug. 1920. A consignment of ammunition was being transported along the Ballyhaunis-Claremorris road accompanied by a small force of military. Not far from Cloontumper crossroads (on the Ballyhaunis side) the lorry swerved and went in over the ditch. Some of the soldiers set up an armed guard on the lorry while the others went on to Claremorris for assistance. Word got around and a small party of local volunteers decided to try and capture the ammunition.

Unfortunately the action misfired as Kenny was shot and seriously wounded. His comrades carried him to the Caulfield family home nearby where his wounds were cleaned up. The injured man was kept on the move to avoid capture and, from Caulfield's he was carried to Pat Healy's where he was treated by Dr. Smyth. He moved from one safe-house to the next and eventually reached Castlebar Infirmary. Ever wary of capture, he was soon moved to the Workhouse Hospital, and then to Galway Hospital where he eventually recovered.

The following year, despite still suffering from his injuries, P. Kenny led the 4th Batt. IRA in an attack on the RIC barracks in Ballyhaunis in the early hours of Friday morning, 17th June 1921. The police returned fire and the raiders withdrew around 3.00. There were no casualties.



## National Army

Following the Truce, and then the Treaty in 1922, those who had fought together over the previous five years found themselves on opposing sides and the tragedy of Civil War ensued. Comdt. Kenny took the pro-treaty side. He joined the National Army and was stationed in The Curragh.

Some years later, when the Civil War was over and the country starting to recover some semblance of normality, he returned home to Cloonbook. There he lived in the family home with his brother Austin and they worked the farm together. Austin was taken ill at an early age and died in a Galway hospital in 1929 at the age of 38. P. continued to farm, and for some time too worked for Flanagan's of Brickens, driving an egg-lorry.

It was difficult for those who went through the Troubles to adjust to everyday life once again. During the War of Independence there was the feeling that they were 'all in it together'. Knowing one's own life was constantly under threat was difficult enough, but imagine having responsibility for the lives of all those in your command, as Comdt. Kenny had? The subsequent Civil War saw former friends and comrades take opposite sides, and in some cases enmities that were never fully made-up. Some coped better than others and found their own way of dealing with all they had gone through. During the 1930s and 40s P. Kenny got on with life in his native place, and was well thought of in the community. One of his last public appearances was at a Gaelic League Concert in the Parochial Hall in the early 1940s where he danced a reel on stage. When he finished he received a rapturous round of applause; he saluted the audience and then left the stage.

Sometime towards the end of May 1946 he left a note on the door of his house in Cloonbook to say he wasn't at home, or that he'd be back at a certain time – a common enough practise in country areas at the time. Nothing was heard from him until two months later, on 9th July, when his body was recovered from the sea about two miles north-east of the Baily Lighthouse on Howth Head, Co. Dublin. Three days later, following an inquest, his body was brought to Tulrahan Cemetery for burial and later that month, on 24th July, Solemn Requiem High Mass was celebrated in Began Church for the repose of his soul, organised, as a newspaper notice states, "at the request of his old comrades at arms".

The tragic death of Comdt. Kenny stirred those comrades into action and, just over a week later the Western People of 3rd Aug. reported that "Members of the Old IRA (South Mayo Brigade) are planning to erect a monument to perpetuate the memory of the late Comdt. P. Kenny". At a meeting in the Parochial Hall, Ballyhaunis, chaired by Dr. A. Smyth, a committee was appointed to make all necessary arrangements.

## Memorial

Fundraising proceeded at a steady pace and just two and a half years later the monument was completed and put in place in early April 1949. The *Irish Press* of 9th Apr. 1949 gave it prominence on its front page and describes it thus: "Executed in Irish limestone by Messrs. John Gilmore, Monumental Sculptors, Knox St., it is in the form of a Celtic cross eight and is feet high. The shaft of the cross bears the figure of an Irish Volunteer standing at ease." The inscription reads: **Ar son na hÉireann | Go ndéanaidh Dhia trócaire | Ar anam | Phadraic Uí Coinnigh | Cluain-Buac | Ceann-Phort | Óglaigh na hÉireann | Agus | Ar a chomrádaí dilse | I mbuidhin Muigheo Theas IV | A fuair bás | Ar son Róisín dhubh | A gComrádaí agus a gCáirde | A thóg an leacht seo.**

The monument was unveiled on Easter Monday, 18th April 1949 and the day's events were well covered in the local press the following weekend: it was the main front page story of the *Mayo News*, and a detailed account of the day's proceedings, including lengthy transcripts of all the speeches, was published in the *Western People*.

Mass was celebrated at 10 o'clock that morning in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, by Fr. T. J. Jennings, C.C. for the deceased members of the 4th Batt. IRA. Afterwards, a parade led by the Castlebar F.C.A. Pipers' Band marched the three miles out to Holywell. Pride of place went to the surviving members of the battalion, wearing their medals and badges, under the charge of Vice Comdt. Dominick Byrne, Capt. Martin Forde and Lieut. Thomas Flatley. Ballyhaunis F.C.A., under Lieut. James O'Dwyer, formed a Guard of Honour.

A crowd of hundreds assembled at the monument for the unveiling ceremony which commenced at 12 noon. The memorial cross was blessed by Fr. Michael Godwin, C.C., Brickens, who afterwards led a Decade of the Rosary in Irish. Master of Ceremonies, Dr. Smyth, introduced Major General Michael Kilroy, who unveiled the monument. Maj. Gen. Kilroy was O/C of the 4th Western Division Old I.R.A., leader of the West Mayo Flying Column who carried out the Kilmeena and Carrowkennedy ambushes, and later Fianna Fáil T.D. (1927-37) and Chairman of Mayo County Council. During his lengthy oration Maj. Gen. Kilroy referred to the early years of the republican organisation and the many challenges faced by the men and women of that time, adding that it was hard for the present generation to appreciate the difficulties they encountered in defeating the forces of the crown. He said the selection of Comdt. P. Kenny to organise his district in the early days of the Irish Volunteers was a wise one, and he described Kenny as "one of the pluckiest men in the West of Ireland." He continued, "I remember some of his exploits in





The newly refurbished Kenny Monument at Cloontumper.

*the early days, the telling of which brought both surprise and delight to his comrades who were not then quite so numerous as they were in later years. Thanks to his organising ability, forethought, example and patriotism, he soon had his battalion in splendid condition. He was the spearhead of the movement in this area". He finished his oration by praising*

those who erected the monument. "It is a splendid gesture to so noble a character. If the people of Mayo desire to serve their country faithfully they cannot do better than cherish the memory of Comdt. P. Kenny and the movement which he served so faithfully. I would suggest you will not get a better example of true patriotism and unselfish motive anywhere in Ireland."

Other speakers on the day were Senator Sean T. Ruane (Kiltimagh), P.J. Waldron PC (Knox St.) and Lieut. Thomas Flatley (Lassany), who read the 1916 Proclamation. Proceedings were brought to a close with the sounding of The Last Post, by Gus Lanigan, after which the Castlebar F.C.A. Band played the National Anthem.

### Thanks

Thanks are due to Cathal Carroll for bringing the monument to public attention once again; to Martin Gavin (undertaker and monumental sculptor), who cleaned the cross, revealing the craftsmanship of its maker, Johnny Gilmore of Knox St.; and to Paul Lyons of Carrownedan and proprietor of Built2Last (Loughrea, Co. Galway) who made and installed new railings around it, and his father Billy Lyons who laid the concrete. Thanks also to Mooney and Kirrane for laying the tarmacadam, and to Jimmy Finn who further cleaned up the site. All work was carried out and materials supplied on a voluntarily basis. Cathal also wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Paddy Ruane, Micheál Waldron and John Clancy (all of Cloonbook), Johnny Mullarkey (Bohogue), Liam McDonnell (Granlahan and Kildare) and Tommy Marren (MWR). Thanks also to Tom Feerick (Mayo County Council) for all his assistance in this project.

As this is an ongoing project any further information would be gratefully received by Cathal Carroll at (087) 2042653.

### Clare Court 1916 Commemoration

Musicians who performed at the Clare Court Commemoration 1916-2016.

L-R: Michael Nolan, Nuala Forkan, Johnny McGarry, Mary Grealley, Paddy Joe Tighe, Anne Marie Foody, Connie Gildea.

Photo: Fr. Stephen Farragher





# Commemoration of the Easter Rising 1916-2016

BALLYHAUNIS ACTIVE RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

So... we made it happen!

It just wouldn't have been right to ignore this most important event in the history of our country – Ireland – and leave all the commemorations to the politicians and RTÉ, so the members of the Ballyhaunis Active Retirement Association got together to plan our own.

Where to start though?

What do you need for such an occasion?

Well, first a date – as close to the original 24th April as possible; then a venue and a time that suits as many people as possible; A programme, food, refreshments, guests, decorations, musicians, poetry, participants, a photographer, a video camera, period costumes, a Proclamation and Patrick Pearse!

What a strong and fearless force was our little 'Grey Army' when marching together, and, before we knew it, it was 2pm on Wednesday, 20th April 2016.

We had secured Clare Court Communal House for the day, the sun was shining, the tricolours and flags were flying, the kitchen was stocked with a wonderful variety of both sweet and savoury food – professionally provided by the Oak Café – there was an ample supply of various liquid refreshments – provided by members and friends – and we were ready and waiting for our invited guests.

And WOW did they come – drawn, I should think, by the rousing music provided by our talented musicians. As the numbers swelled, so the chairs diminished, and stout efforts were made to commandeer further supplies. Armed with welcoming drinks and congenial chat, participants relaxed and time passed quickly until, at exactly 3pm, the sounds of the Piper were heard in the land, and in the midst of the gathering strode Patrick Pearse aka Tom Colleran in full regalia with Proclamation in hand, to halt, wheel and turn at the appointed place, to read the Proclamation of the Irish Republic to Poblacht Na hEireann!

The silence was broken when the reading was finished, with both cheers and applause throughout Clare Court and Ballyhaunis town itself, and this was followed by the playing and singing of our National Anthem. After this there was a quiet time of recollection while listening to a record by the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem, which was made for the 50th Commemoration of the Rising, and was acquired in Bulawayo, Rhodesia (Africa) in 1966 by Pat and Maureen Higgins, and brought back to Ireland on their return ten years ago. It was a wonderful mixture of

music, song, poetry and drama and a truly Irish remembrance of the day.

When the record finished, various members of the Active Retirement Association read poems inspired by and associated with the Rising. Yeats' 'Sixteen Dead Men' and 'The Rose Tree' (Maureen Higgins), Pearse's 'The Rebel' (Pat Brady), Plunkett's 'The Presence of God' / 'I See His Blood upon the Rose' (Celia Lyons), Sister Columba's 'Who Fears to speak of Easter Week' (Roslyn Finnegan). They were followed by Father Kieran Waldron who provided some of the historical context of the Rising, its immediate aftermath and its impact on the West of Ireland, while throughout the afternoon, Father Stephen Farragher acted as professional photographer of the event.

Richard Waldron (Piper) leads Tom Colleran, who played the part of Padraic Pearse, and Maureen Higgins, holding the Tricolour aloft.



From 4pm until 6pm, food and liquid refreshment was served while our wonderful musicians, to whom we are immensely grateful, kept the gathering entertained with music, song and dance.

Hopefully we helped provide a memorable Commemoration of the event which (in the words of the song) *"sparked the flame, a raging fire it soon became, and from that fire of destiny, there rose a nation proud and free!"*



Amongst those who read at the commemoration were, L-R: Rosaleen Finnegan, Celia Lyons and Pat Brady.  
Photographs Fr. Stephen Farragher



Fr. Kieran Waldron gives the historical context of the Rising, its immediate aftermath and its impact on the West of Ireland.



# The Began man who fought in the GPO in 1916

MICHAEL KELLY

It was late afternoon on Friday of Easter Week 1916 when, with the GPO now blazing out of control, Pearse and Connolly finally decided to evacuate the building. A small party of volunteers led by The O'Rahilly went ahead to try to reach Parnell Street and link up with Ned Daly's Four Courts Garrison. To clear the way, two of the party used their axes to break open a heavy side-door. When this was done, one of them discovered that his rifle was missing - presumably it had been picked up by another volunteer in the confusion. The only replacement he could find was an old German Mauser for which he had neither ammunition nor bayonet, so The O'Rahilly told him to stand down. The rest of the group then dashed out and crossed Henry Street into Moore Street. It turned out to be a suicide mission.

The group came under heavy fire from a British Army barricade blocking their exit at the Parnell Street end. While charging this barricade The O'Rahilly was mortally wounded and died in a doorway hours later. Several of his men were also killed or injured in the assault. The volunteer who was obliged to stay behind, thus, fortuitously avoiding a similar fate, was a 20-year-old Mayo man who was born and reared just a few miles outside Ballyhaunis. His name appears on the GPO Roll of Honour as Liam McNeive. 'I often wondered who swiped my rifle', he later mused. 'In view of the fate of the others, I concluded it was my guardian angel.' Who was this young man and how did he find himself centre-stage in one of the most iconic events in modern Irish history?

## Lurgan and Land War lore

Willie McNeive was born in the townland of Lurgan at the southern (Brickens) end of Began parish on 22 July 1895, son of Peter McNeive and Kate Kenny. Kate was a sister of Comdt. Patrick ('P') Kenny, a local leader in the War of Independence (who is the subject of a separate article on page 29 of this issue of Annagh). Kate was just 18 when she married Peter in Ballyhaunis Church on 8 May 1888. Willie, the second youngest of their five children, was baptised in Began Church on 28 July 1895. He attended Brickens (Ballinvilla) National School and helped out on the home farm as a youngster.

Growing up, Willie would have heard tales of local Fenians and Land Leaguers. In June 1879, what became known as 'the Lurgan Cross riot' had occurred not far from the McNeive home when a crowd of over 600 people, including Willie's father probably, frustrated the efforts of a process server, backed up by RIC officers, to

serve writs on tenants of the local landlord, Nolan Ferrall. The degree of agrarian unrest in the district at that time was evidenced by the death threats issued to several local tenants to discourage them from paying their rents without first securing a reduction from the landlord. Matters came to a head two years later, in November 1881, when the landlord's bailiff was murdered near Lurgan. The retelling of tales from those Land War days may well have inspired some nationalistic fervour in young McNeive.

## Emigration to Liverpool

His father died when Willie was still a youngster and so, at the tender age of 16, he had to take the emigrant boat to England to earn a living, like many of his generation. Arriving in Liverpool in 1911, Willie soon secured employment as a labourer. His interest in the Irish cause intensified when he began attending the Duke Street branch of the Gaelic League in Liverpool where political issues of the day such as the Home Rule Bill were also threshed out. Shortly after the launch of the Irish Volunteers in November 1913, he became a founding member of a company in Liverpool and, when the split occurred in the Volunteers later on, he went with the minority who opposed John Redmond. He was also sworn into the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB).

## With Pearse at O'Donovan Rossa's grave

Remarkably, the defence of the GPO was not the only iconic event in Irish history that Willie McNeive played a part in. The previous year he was present when Pearse delivered his famous oration at the grave of the veteran Fenian, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, in Glasnevin cemetery on 1 August 1915. That came about because Willie was among the Liverpool Volunteers chosen to accompany the body of O'Donovan Rossa on the final leg of its journey, from Liverpool to Dublin, en route from New York.

How did the Liverpool Volunteers come to be involved? The story goes that the IRB wanted to avoid O'Donovan Rossa's coffin touching British soil on its journey home, so it was arranged that when the American liner bringing the remains home reached Liverpool, the Dublin boat would draw alongside it in the Mersey and the coffin would be transferred there. However, that plan was scuppered by bad weather so fifty Liverpool Volunteers, including Willie McNeive, were mobilised to carry the coffin in relays, a distance of two miles to the Dublin boat's berth so that it never left Irish shoulders. Willie was then part of the contingent



that accompanied the coffin across the Irish Sea and right into the Pro-Cathedral in Dublin for a memorial service on 27 July. It was then removed to City Hall for three days lying in state and on 1 August an enormous crowd followed the funeral to Glasnevin Cemetery. It was a brilliantly choreographed propaganda exercise, culminating in Pearse's famous graveside oration which made a big impression on Willie and his colleagues.

### Gun-running

Back in Liverpool, Willie resumed training manoeuvres with the Volunteers. Although they had to move from their premises in Duke Street when the landlord objected to their military-style drilling, they quickly started up again in the basement of Cahill's Tailors & Outfitters in Scotland Road, where arms training was introduced. Willie's colleague, Frank Thornton, later recalled those heady days in Liverpool: 'The training of the Volunteers continued despite innumerable difficulties and, of course, being closely watched by the British Authorities all the time.' Thornton said that they bought guns and ammunition both from local stores and from soldiers but they also stole some: 'These guns and ammunition were got to Ireland by diverse routes. In some cases funerals took place, where, instead of a corpse, the coffin was filled with either arms or ammunition!'

### Organising the Kimmage Garrison

Willie McNeive was a tall, strapping young man who commanded respect among his colleagues in Liverpool. Despite his youth he was soon promoted to Lieutenant. At that time there was growing concern about the position of Irish men in England due to the threat of conscription. Indeed Willie himself had been approached by recruiting officers one Sunday morning in late 1915, but told them bluntly that he was an Irishman and that his country was not at war with anyone. By doing so he had, in his own words, 'side-stepped the nearly certain honour of a little plot of ground in a place called Flanders', a fate that actually did befall his second cousin who worked with him in Liverpool. In any event, plans were quickly made to relocate the entire Liverpool Company to Dublin and Willie was sent ahead to organise accommodation.

On 15 January 1916, Willie duly reported to Irish Volunteer Headquarters at 2 Dawson Street, Dublin and



Castlereagh-born Fr Michael O'Flanagan beside P.H. Pearse at the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa on 1 August 1915

there met Bulmer Hobson and Barney Mellows, brother of Liam, and made a case for the establishment of a camp for the Liverpool men and others who would soon be arriving from Britain. Hobson, then a major figure in the Republican movement although he would be sidelined before the Rising, was not in favour of the plan. Hearing that, Count Plunkett had offered a disused mill on his property at Larkfield, Kimmage, which was already being used as a base by the Volunteers, Willie went out to inspect it and while conditions there were less than ideal, he felt that it could be made suitable for their purposes. He then approached Eamonn Ceannt, the officer in charge of finance and equipment, to have it kitted out but was informed that no funds were available.

Undeterred, Willie purchased a supply of blankets from his own resources, and thus, made a start in getting the Kimmage camp ready. Willie himself and two other members of the Liverpool Unit were the first occupants. He appointed one of whom, Paddy Caldwell, to take over as quartermaster. Soon they were joined by scores of returning emigrants, including a certain Michael Collins. As the numbers increased, the conditions at Kimmage gradually became intolerable due to the lack of funding. In an effort to redress that, Willie sought an appointment with Thomas McDonagh, who then personally inspected the camp. The upshot was that Capt. George Plunkett, a younger brother of Joseph Mary Plunkett, was appointed camp Commandant and thereafter conditions improved greatly. The camp later became known as the Kimmage Garrison. On St. Patrick's Day 1916, the members paraded in Dublin when the salute was taken by Eoin McNeill and P.H. Pearse. On Holy Thursday, Pearse himself addressed the men at the camp but they still had no inkling of what was in store for them the following week.





Walter Paget's famous painting, *Birth of the Irish Republic*, depicts the scene in the GPO shortly before evacuation with Pearse and the wounded Connolly in the foreground and Volunteers fighting the flames in the background.

## The Rising

Willie McNeive almost missed the Rising. On Easter Monday morning, having read Eoin McNeill's counter-manding order in the Sunday Independent the previous day, he and a pal set off to the races at Fairyhouse. As they sauntered across O'Connell Bridge in the glorious sunshine a car pulled up beside them and Barney Mellows shouted out to them that the Rising was on after all. The pair quickly made their way to Liberty Hall where they were assigned to a first-floor window overlooking the quays. Rifles in hand, they watched anxiously as a group of British Lancers approached. 'We turned our faces to the wall, said an act of contrition and waited for the order to shoot,' Willie recalled. To their relief, the order did not come and the soldiers marched by. That evening they were ordered to commandeer a lorry and remove ammunition and supplies to the GPO, so instead of joining his Unit in Jacob's biscuit factory as planned, Willie ended up in the GPO. 'One of the greatest thrills of my life was when I looked up and saw the tricolour of the Irish Republic flying over the GPO. It brought tears to my eyes,' Willie said later.

Willie's Kimmage colleague, Paddy Caldwell, later provided an eyewitness account of events in the GPO: 'On entering the building one of the first men of prominence that I saw was Tom Clarke. He said: "There are rifles here if any of you want them, but there is no ammunition for them". I looked at them and decided that it was better to use the shotgun with which I was more familiar.' It probably was one of those redundant rifles that would save Willie McNeive's life the following Friday.

The scene in the GPO on the Friday as it was being evacuated after The O'Rahilly's ill-fated sortie was also described by Paddy Caldwell: 'Jim Connolly was on an iron bed with his foot bandaged. Some members of the Cumann na mBan were attending to him. I was told to stand by the bed to assist in carrying him.' In the meantime, Paddy was asked to assist another injured colleague towards a house in Moore Street but they had to retreat: 'When we got back to the Post Office we found that it was for all practicable purposes completely evacuated by the Volunteer garrison. William Pearse brought us to an exit door facing Henry Place and Patrick Pearse was standing at this door at the time and he instructed us to make a run for it into Henry Place. The wounded man was taken across first. Patrick Pearse went across soon after and I followed immediately behind him and joined two Volunteers who were behind a barricade in Henry Place.'

Walter Paget's famous painting, *Birth of the Irish Republic*, depicts the scene in the GPO shortly before evacuation with Pearse and the wounded Connolly in the foreground and Volunteers fighting the flames in the background.

According to Paddy Caldwell, the last man to leave the GPO was either Willie Pearse or his colleague Capt. W.M. Reilly, although that distinction has also been claimed for others. The following day, from the new temporary headquarters in Moore Street where the GPO evacuees including Willie McNeive were now trapped, P.H. Pearse ordered a general surrender to avoid further bloodshed.



## Frongoch – where a love story began

After the surrender, Willie McNeive was interned in Frongoch, where he became friendly with a fellow inmate, a printer named Joe Stanley, who had served as Pearse's press agent during the Rising. When Joe was visited in Frongoch by his sister, Jenny, he introduced her to Willie McNeive and the pair immediately hit it off. After his release on 24 July 1916, Willie continued to see Jenny. Her brother Joe, still in Frongoch, was pleased enough to hear of the relationship. In a letter home to his wife on 23 November 1916, Joe wrote: 'I got a letter from Jenny today ... she is pulling a line with Willie McNeive, who I knew and liked very well here and was released. He is a fine type of lad, rather like Mick McDunphy in build and appearance'. Joe repeated this opinion in replying to Jenny herself that same day: 'Willie is a fine chap and I formed a great liking for him here. Tell him I hope he will be able to beat me at 'draughts' when I get home'. McDunphy, incidentally, was married to another of Joe Stanley's sisters. He would later serve as Secretary to the President under both Douglas Hyde and Seán T. O'Kelly and was also Director of the Bureau of Military History for many years. Willie McNeive meanwhile went on to marry Jenny Stanley.

## Republican activities, 1916-19

On his release from Frongoch, Willie had resumed his Republican activities, helping to reorganise C Company, 2nd battalion of the Volunteers, under Capt. Sean Colbert. As a member of the IRB circle, headed by his fellow survivor of the GPO siege, Michael Collins, he cooperated in the sourcing and distribution of arms. Between 1 April 1918 and 31 March 1919, he was back on home territory in Mayo helping to organise the Volunteers at Logboy, Began and Ballyhaunis, under Micheál Ó Cléirigh, later a TD. In this period, he secured arms and ammunition for the Ballyhaunis company. He also organised the Volunteers at Kingscourt in Co. Cavan and acting as Sinn Féin election agent at Virginia he helped Arthur Griffith to victory in the East Cavan by-election in 1918.



Willie McNeive in a group photograph of survivors of the 1916 GPO action taken in Croke Park in 1938.

Willie McNeive was a nephew of Comdt. P. Kenny, who is featured in an article on page 29.



## Epilogue

Over a five-year period, 1914-1919, Willie McNeive had first-hand experience of key events in modern Irish history and he interacted with some major revolutionary figures. He participated in the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa, he tackled

Bulmer Hobson and Thomas McDonagh over logistical arrangements, he fought in the GPO with Pearse, Connolly, Clarke and the rest, and he soldiered with Michael Collins before, during and after the Rising. Although he took no part in the War of Independence or the Civil War, back home in Lurgan his older brother Pat was actively involved in both and was interned for a period during the Civil War. (I am grateful to Pat's grandson, John McNeive, for his assistance in preparing this article). Willie McNeive died in Dublin on 30 May 1981, aged 85, and was buried in Deansgrange cemetery. He was predeceased in 1979 by his beloved wife, Jenny. It is only fitting, in this centenary year of the Rising, that his remarkable story should once again come to light and be publicised in his native district.



Willie McNeive with his daughter, Vivienne, on her wedding day in 1948



# Annaghgeddon

DARRAN CONLON

Friday 11th March 2016 will go down as a night to remember for anyone who was present in the McWilliam Park Hotel for the Ballyhaunis GAA Club "White Collar Boxing" fundraiser, "Annaghgeddon".

The parish of Annagh relocated to Claremorris for the night as 37 Boxers, 600 Ballyhaunis spectators, 85 local sponsors, family and friends all gathered under the one roof to show their support for the boxers, the Club and the cause. And what a success it was!

White Collar Boxing is a fun way for adults to try their hand at boxing. It was developed in New York where the "white collar" wearing, Wall Street elite would cut short their lunch break to go to the legendary Gleason's Gym to work out with some real pros.

It's challenging physically but just as much mentally. It's also fun, but you still get punched in the face! They say "Everyone has a plan until you get punched in the face" so it's how you react that you test your character. Over Christmas week 2015 that's what 37 Ballyhaunis people signed up for. The vast majority of them never put on a pair of boxing gloves in their life. They were motivated to help the Club, support the charity in memory of Jason Morley, get fit, and lose weight and a combination of them all. Over the next six weeks, they learnt a lot about themselves and each other; they got fitter and lost weight. They raised a significant amount of money for the Club and the charity in the process.

## Training

Training started on the 14th January with the "sign up" in the Clubhouse. To "toe the line" is a boxing phrase. It means stepping up to the mark and when our novice pugilists signed their name on the dotted line, they were making a commitment to themselves and to the event. Of course, due to various issues of work, family, studies and injuries, the line up changed over the weeks but the steady core remained steadfast throughout.

The boxers met twice a week in the Ballyhaunis Boxing Club Gym in Began, where they were put through their paces by Darran and David Conlon, John and Tom Lyons and Michael Regan. Tracy Cunnane of TC Fitness generously opened her doors for additional fitness classes of Kettle Bells, Metafit and Boxercise. Rumours mounted of participants hanging punch bags in their sheds, doing extra sessions and early morning runs. Very soon, the show began to take shape with rumours of fantastic sparring sessions emanating for the Began gym! The excitement was building week on week and it became apparent that Don King would not be required to sell this production. Thanks to a training run "launch" from the GAA Club to the main sponsors Supermac's in Main Street and to a publicity "Weigh In"

night at Epic Night Club, the full house sign was up at the venue. Everyone knew this was going to be a great night and they were not disappointed.

Whitecollarboxing.ie staged the show bringing all the glitz and glamour of Las Vegas to Mayo for a night! Then the lights dimmed and flashed, sirens wailed before music exploded and the two teams paraded from a smoke screen into the ring to a rapturous reception by the capacity crowd. This was hairs standing on the back of the neck stuff!

The MC introduced each boxer from the Red and Blue Corner who had their local sponsor emblazoned on their vest. 16 bouts. 32 boxers. Each fight better than the next. The standard was set in the first contest between Rory "The Nigerian Nightmare" Nestor and David "Red Breast" Squires which at the end of the night was awarded "Fight of the Night". If people had been expecting pitter-patter, they got fireworks!

## Bouts

Andrew "The Giant" Henry and Ross "Carnage" Carney ensured that the standard would continue in a real ding dong battle. Eoin "The Draft Dodger" Butler and Ollie "Chop Chop" Cleary showed it could also be a thinking man's game, with some nice footwork and counters which resulted in Eoin writing an account of his experience in the Irish Times. Lisa "Lawless" Webb and Aoife "Killer Queen" McDonagh surprised people with their level of skill and intensity. Kevin "Thunder Bolt" Morley and Ken "The King" Carrick was a Mayo/Dublin battle to set the tone for what was to come later in the year. Gareth "The Gunner" Delaney and Shay "Snappy Chappy" Walsh pitted two local characters together.

The next bout between Will "The Boot" Nestor and Pa "Prime Time" Keane showed that the best of friends could be the worst of enemies for three rounds. Paul "Ding Dong" Damron cut a night off a stag trip to tackle six foot four inch Gary "Twinkle Toes" Byrne. Thomas "Spud the Masher" Murphy and Conor "No Nonsense" Nolan went toe to toe at each other for three rounds. David "Haymaker" Hannon and Ross "Rollercoaster" Nolan showed great movement for two big guys. Hughie "The Head" McKermitt, a late replacement for the injured Nathan Murphy, took on Kieron "The Dublin Dazzler" O'Neill, a close friend of Jason Morley.

Next up was Eilis "The Knock Out" Nevin and Aisling "Ash the Bash" Tarpey who showed their fitness throughout an entertaining contest. John "The Rooster" Burke and Mark "Boom Boom" Patterson delivered on what was billed as the fight to see. Frank "The Tank" Browne and Trevor "Cockney Boy" Kelly entertained



and showed what they had learnt over the previous weeks. Seán “The Assassin” Griffin and Paul “Slippers” Finn had the crowd on their feet at several times throughout their fight.

Finally after several hours of entertainment Peter “Hurricane” Healy and David “The Bullet” Burke was the fitting bout to bring the card to a close as it displayed the skills, courage, heart and determination shown by the thirty boxers before them. The crowd knew they had been treated to something special. The hardworking subs, who missed out on being part of the bill, Cyril Collins, Pierce Higgins, Seán Conway, Gary Conway and Nathan Murphy were introduced to the crowd.

Then the Supermacs “Champion of Ballyhaunis” was announced. A champion possesses all the virtues we find admirable. Those of hard work, dedication, being a team player yet possessing single minded determination, coming up with ideas, promoting the event, selling the tickets, getting in the sponsorship, delivering on the night, being a leader, a trier, a doer. John Burke was duly crowned “The Champion” and was presented with his belt by the manager of Supermac’s and the Club’s own three-time All-Star, Keith Higgins.

Thanks to the fantastic support of the local business community, the Club raised much needed money for their ongoing grounds improvements. Through the online donation website, mycharity.ie, the boxers, those in attendance on the night, and indeed Ballyhaunis people the world over, raised €4,000 for the Mater Hospital Foundation. This was in memory of club man Jason Morley who passed away from Sudden Adult Death Syndrome in January 2012 and was a fitting tribute to a sadly missed Ballyhaunis man.

The Annaghgeddon Committee consisted of Darran Conlon, Patrick Keane and William Nestor. On realising the scale of the event Ballyhaunis GAA Club Chairman, John Higgins, led from the front along with finance chairman Robbie Herr. Everyone in the Club immediately rolled in to help in the organising of what was a fantastic and memorable Club event.

Practically every household, business, club and society in Ballyhaunis was represented on the night and as such it was the inspiration for the Go Ballyhaunis movement which has the same aims of community pride and improvement. This shows how a community working together towards a noble common goal, can achieve great things.



In the Blue Corner – Back, L-R: Trevor Kelly, David Burke, Kieron O'Neill, Andrew Henry, Paul Finn, Aisling Tarpey, Gary Byrne, Aoife McDonagh, Conor Nolan, Ollie Cleary, John Lyons, Ross Carney, David Conlon.  
Front row: Patrick Keane, Ken Carrick, Ross Nolan, Shay Walsh, David Squires.



In the Red Corner – Back, L-R: David Hannon, Eoin Butler, John Burke, William Nestor, Seán Griffin, Frank Browne, Paul Damron, Peter Healy.  
Front row: Gareth Delaney, Rory Nestor, Kevin Morley, Lisa Webb, Eilís Nevin, Tomás Murphy, Hugh McKermitt.



Presentation of proceeds from Annaghgeddon to the Mater Hospital Foundation in memory of Ballyhaunis Clubman Jason Morley.  
L-R: John Higgins, Pierce Higgins, Frank Browne, Becky Morley, Trevor Kelly, Darran Conlon, Tony Morley, Kevin Morley, Sean Griffin, Cyril Collins.



# A Homecoming

ANTHONY J. JORDAN

I have given talks about my biographical subjects in most of the Universities around Ireland, and also in London, Manchester and Paris. I have spoken in the National Library of Ireland on *'Why James Joyce put Arthur Griffith in Ulysses'*. I spoke several times in Dublin's Mansion House and the National Museum, and in a host of other venues around Ireland. I enjoy public speaking. It's akin to an actor being on the stage, giving a performance and getting a buzz out of it.

Last September I was invited to an all-expenses week in Chicago to give two lectures on Major John MacBride. They were commemorating the 1916 Rising early and the organising committee felt that the many Mayo folk living in the 'Windy City' would appreciate it. I agreed to travel but then became somewhat apprehensive about the long journey to a city I knew little about. When the moment came and the travel agent in Chicago phoned me to make a specific booking with Aer Lingus, I balked and cancelled the trip. A lady friend to whom I told the story did not mince her words commenting, "So, you funk'd it". I had not heard that word used since I lived in Ballyhaunis and attended St. Jarlath's College many years ago. But I agreed with her, I did funk it.

The next invitation to speak I received was in Ballyhaunis, my home town, on *'Leaders of the 1916 Rising'*. Surely I would have no difficulty with that? Why on earth could I possibly have any difficulty in accepting such an invitation? All I had to do was get the train from Dublin and do the talk and spend the night in my family home on Knox St? That was how it would appear to everybody except me. However, I had a specific reason to approach the invitation with caution, even extreme caution. This was to do with a new biography I was about to publish.

Writing biographies is a strange phenomenon. You research the character in detail over a matter of a year or two trying to find out what makes him/her tick, trying to understand your subject. You study how others may have written about the character. Then the evil day comes when you have to start writing, composing a 'life and times'. But you may well ask, 'why should that cause you to ponder cautiously over accepting an invitation to speak on 'Leaders of the 1916 Rising' in Ballyhaunis?' I have never articulated my thoughts on the subject previously, to anyone, deciding that the readers of Annagh 2016 would be the first recipients to hear cause of my anxiety.

You see the subject of my new biography was somewhat different from the MacBrides, John and Sean, Conor Cruise O'Brien, Winston Churchill, Christy Brown, W.B. Yeats, Maud Gonne, W.T. Cosgrave, John

A. Costello, Eamon de Valera, Arthur Griffith etc. I had previously written about. The title of my new book was *'A Jesus Biography 2015'*. I had not planned it this way but there it was. Now I had been into all aspects of the life and times of Jesus and, despite the fact that the book was what I termed quite accurately as a 'Mayo Biography of Jesus', there was one aspect of it which made me cautious about speaking in Ballyhaunis; mo ait dhuchais, mar a deirtear. Here I am afraid I must digress back a few years.

It was September 2011 and Mayo was in the All Ireland Final again. I was searching for a ticket. I saw an advertisement for our local Parish Church in Sandymount that Sean Freyne, Emeritus Professor of Sacred Scripture of Trinity College, was to speak in the parish at the weekend on his latest book on Christology. Sean and I went back many years to the golf links at Coolnaha and also as footballers with St. Jarlath's College and Mayo Minors. I attended Sean's presentation but he had no spare tickets. We had a long talk and I mentioned that I had earlier attempted a book on Jesus but had not quite finished it. Sean was an enthusiastic man and urged me to finish it and send him the manuscript. I had a particular difficulty which I explained to Sean. He recommended me to read a book on Jesus by another Ballyhaunis man, Dr. Enda Lyons, a native of Knox St. like myself. This I did and it was the catalyst which enabled me to finish my own book. Alas, by that stage, though Mayo was again in for the All Ireland, Sean had died. I attended his funeral Mass in Rathmines and described it as, a Mayo occasion with the red and green flag draping his coffin as the choir and congregation sang 'The West's Awake', as the coffin came down the aisle, en route to Kilkelly.

Dr. Enda Lyons' book, *'Jesus: Self-portrait by God'* contained one sentence, "The Gospels were written by believers for believers", which answered all the interrogations that had formed in my mind about completing my own book. But you might well ask, what has that got to do with my speaking in Ballyhaunis? While researching my new book, I had naturally become very familiar with the Four Gospels. One event in the life of Jesus which came into my mind then, and which was contained in Matthew, Mark and Luke concerned Jesus coming back to his home town of Nazareth to speak. Mark records that the locals listened to Him but then they began to doubt Him, saying "This is the carpenter, surely, the Son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph and Jude and Simon? His sisters, too, are they not here with us?" And they would not accept Him. And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is only despised in his own country, among his own relations and in his own house". Matthew adds that the locals in the synagogue became enraged at



Him: “they sprang to their feet and hustled him out of town; and took him up to the brow of the hill their town was built on, intending to throw Him down the cliff, but he slipped through the crowd and walked away”. As my granddaughter Lily Moran would say, “Phew!”

While I was not in any way comparing myself to Jesus, I was somewhat anxious that I too might get a rather animated reception from the neighbours, with whom I had gone to school, joined the boy Scouts and played football. I was also aware that the top of the Friary or Convent Hills would be quite suitable for ‘throwing him down the cliff’. Then I wondered whether my neighbours would be as currently familiar with the events at Nazareth as myself, since it was a long time since we had studied the Gospel stories together with Mrs. Fahey, Bill Mulligan and Sean MacNicholas in the Boys School? In the event, I decided to take the risk of accepting the invitation as I was assured that some of my close relatives would be present in case of dire necessity.

On the night in question, I was carefully escorted by Fr. Kieran Waldron and Fr. Stephen Farragher and by Ms. Orla Phillips. I was surprised that the venue, near where McGarry’s Dance Hall on Clare St. had been, was a modern building and new to my eyes. As the audience came in, I was very pleased to see among them many familiar faces from my youth; Jim and Pat Higgins, Patsy Keane and Sean Waldron from Cave, Pauline and Gerard McGarry from Devlis, Paul Waldron whose mother

came from my mammy Delia Kedian’s village of Moneymore, Tom McCormack from Clare St., Roderic Maguire from Claremorris, and Aiden Clarke; as well as friends from Westport and Castlebar. Joe Keane, my next door neighbour from Knox St. and whom I regard as one of the most informed people in Ballyhaunis on local historical matters, also honoured me with his presence. Two radio people asked me for permission to record the talk. My niece and nephew, Jacinta Flynn and John Jordan, also attended. I surreptitiously presented Jacinta with a copy of my Jesus book, not intending that it would be mentioned that evening.

I never did think about the events of Nazareth that night but relished the welcome and reception my talk got and the series of questions elicited. Of course the Chair for the evening understandably could not resist the temptation of referring to my latest book, much to the amusement of the congregation. Afterwards we retired to Bertie Curley’s pub, which had been the point of departure by bus for boys of my generation lucky enough to go to boarding school at St. Jarlath’s College in Tuam. There we reminisced over bygone days and people in the town we had loved so well.

*Anthony J Jordan’s Memoir is called ‘The Good Samaritans; Memoir of a Biographer’ and like most of his books, including ‘A Jesus Biography 2015’, are available on Kindle.*



*Photo courtesy of Frankie Mulligan*

St. Mary's Boys National School, early 1950s.

Back row, L-R: Davy Lyons, Donal Hynes, Seamus Coen, Nicholas Kelly, Michael Caulfield. Third row: Unidentified, Pat Moran, Frank Clarke, Peter Waldron (Main St.), John Dillon, unidentified, Andy Johnston, Jimmy Mulligan, Paddy McNaught, Tom Rattigan, Kevin McMorow, James McManus, Patsy Flanagan, Mick Henry, Peter Waldron (Derrymore). Second row: Tom Dillon Leetch, Micky Byrne, Kieran Freyne, Michael Byrne, Steve Hannon, Chris Mannion, Donal Baker, Richard Waldron, unidentified, Henry Madden. Front row: Walter Grogan, Mike Webb, unidentified, Harry Benson, Jarlath Moran, Tom Barry, unidentified, Joe Freeman, Gerry McGarry, unidentified, Joe Webb, Sean Tarpey, James Regan, Brian Flanagan.



# Annual Friary Mass

This year's annual Mass in St. Mary's Abbey took place on Sunday 28th August 2016. Mass was celebrated by Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. and a good crowd was in attendance. The Friary looked very well on the morning of the Mass and the flowers arranged by Teresa Healy of Johnstown were beautiful. Every year Teresa kindly donates the flowers from her garden and arranges them so professionally on the morning of the service.

The annual Mass couldn't take place if people didn't help out and take part on the day. Many thanks to Brian Phillips for reading, to the Abbey Male Choir and Moira Delaney who always help make the Mass so special each year and to Ludmila Burcovschi who played the organ on the day. Thanks also to our Altar Servers, Padraic McHugh and Victor Siemionkowski who have served at the Mass for the last few years, and to Seamus O'Boyle, our Eucharistic Minister.

A word of thanks to the Abbey Partnership for their co-operation in helping organise this yearly Mass and to the staff of the Family Resource Centre. Finally, thanks to Paula Grogan who has helped co-ordinate this event over the last few years.



Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.



Musical Director Moira Delaney (left), and Ludmila Burcovschi (organist) with members of the Abbey Male Choir, L-R: Eamon Murren, Seamus Grogan, Luke Murray, Brian Hunt, Tommy Grogan, Pat Feeney, Brendan Morrissey, James Reidy, Frankie Dillon, Mike Byrne.

## Buckley Family Reunion

Included are: Joe Keefe, Denis Buckley, John Dolling, Jim Overall, Gemma Scott, Jack Scott, Caroline Nimmo, Glenn Nimmo, Lucia Mendonca, Sarah Rees, Sam Rees, Eileen (Buckley) Rees, Ben Keefe, Stephen Overall, Bernadette (Buckley) Keefe, Esther Roberts, Úna Buckley, Joanna Keefe, James Overall, Matthew Overall.

Missing from photograph: Maura (Buckley) Overall, Marie McLoughlin, Dolores Buckley.





# Frongoch Centenary, Easter 2016

KEVIN GREENE

There is a small village in North Wales called Bala, which is overlooked by most people. Bala boasts a lake which is home to a unique species of fish, and other than that it is an unremarkable place, at least nowadays. Not many people are aware of Bala's crucial role during the last century, in shaping the history of two nations - Wales and Ireland.

A hundred years ago, the world was a turbulent place. The year was 1916, and Britain and Europe were in the throes of the Great War - World War I. An end to the war was nowhere in sight, the Bolsheviks were just forming plans for the Russian Revolution, and in the midst of this turmoil, something happened in Easter of that year in Ireland.

Between April 24th and April 29th 1916, the Easter Rising shook Ireland and caused a stir in London. As a result, England sent in the British Army; thousands of troops, artillery and a gunboat which sailed up the Liffey into the heart of Dublin to strike at the head of the rebellion, ultimately crushing it. With the Rising suppressed, the British needed to do something with the prisoners they had taken; and their answer was to bring them from Ireland, to deposit them in a prison in North Wales - at Frongoch, near Bala.

About 1,800 Irish prisoners, out of the 3,500 captured by the British, were detained in internment camps including Frongoch. Frongoch itself was converted from an old whiskey distillery initially into an internment camp for German prisoners of war from the Great War. In 1916 however, the Germans were relocated to make room for the Irish prisoners after the suppression of the Rising. The prisoners listed as having been detained in Frongoch read like a Who's Who of Irish historical figures. Michael Collins, Sean T. O'Kelly, W. J. Brennan-Whitmore, Joe Clarke

and Arthur Shields went to Frongoch and their internment there changed Irish and Welsh history. One hundred years later, and the repercussions are still being felt today; which is where I came in.

My journey to Frongoch in Easter of this year was a sort of pilgrimage for me. I had to see this place where, a century ago, the history of my homeland changed forever. When David Lloyd-George took over from H. H. Asquith as Prime Minister, he ordered the immediate release of the Irish detainees, and the camp was quickly deconstructed not long afterwards. A hundred years on, where the prison camp once stood, there is now only a commemorative plaque and green fields where barbed wire fences once stood. The site of the prison camp itself is now occupied by a school, and apart from the small plaque on the side of the A4212 road to Trawsfynydd nothing else remains of the camp itself. That is not to say that this site or its history have been forgotten.

Over the Easter weekend at Bala, the local community turned up to mark the centenary of Frongoch and also to mark the centenary of the Easter Rising which had precipitated the decision of the English to detain so many Irish prisoners here without even the pretence of a trial. The celebrations drew Welsh people from all over Wales; it also drew Irish people in droves.

I attended the memorial celebrations, and witnessed the speeches and music from the bands which played, among other songs, the Irish National Anthem. The celebrations included a memorial service to mark those heroes of a century ago whose dreams caused so much

change, and also a march in which Welsh, Irish and even a few English people stood shoulder to shoulder, united in memory of countries that had been divided a century ago.

One hundred years before, a handful of men stood in a field outside this tiny village and dreamed of a united Ireland. In 2016, I stood where they had once walked and saw their legacy. I felt connected to Ireland's history, and connected to home.

As a child of two countries living now in Wrexham, North Wales, I may live a long way from Ballyhaunis, the place I was born; but this Easter past reminded me to always look West and to remember my home.



The Frongoch Memorial



Kevin and Blodwen Greene



# A Fair Day in Ballyhaunis, 1971

In 1971 RTÉ Television broadcast a programme called 'Fair Day' with scenes from Cattle, Sheep, Pig and Horse Fairs held in Ballyhaunis and Balla (Co. Mayo) and Elphin (Co. Roscommon). Produced by Charles Scott, the commentary was written by Wesley Burrowes (of Riordans, Bracken and Glenroe fame) and delivered by Bill Golding ('Rory' from Wanderly Wagon). Ballyhaunis is by far the best covered of the three, and many local members of the farming community and dealers from far and near are featured.

The full programme can be watched on Youtube or on [www.thatsfarming.com](http://www.thatsfarming.com).

Here is a small selection of stills from the programme. The Annagh Magazine Committee would be interested to hear from anyone who can identify others in the programme.

This was one of the last Fairs held in Ballyhaunis. Through 1971 plans were being made to have a Livestock Mart based here. Two years later, Ballyhaunis Livestock Mart was opened at Kilmannin, and the first sale took place on 6th Feb. 1973. It closed permanently in Autumn 2002.



A view down the Main Street



The Fair Green, Ballyhaunis

Below left: Mick Carney (Mountain) and Jim Crinnigan (Forthill)

Below right: Martin Hession (Coilmore, Claremorris) and John Regan (Carrowkeel)







A view taking in the Fair Green houses.



Bob Biesty (Pattenspark)



Jim Healy (Holywell)



Peter Gallagher (Derrintogher)



Sean P. Tighe



Larry Moran, Publican (Upper Main St.)

Stills from 'Fair Day' 1971



# Stills from 'Fair Day' – Ballyhaunis 1971



Martin Murphy (Lissaniska) and Seán Connell (Drimaderra)



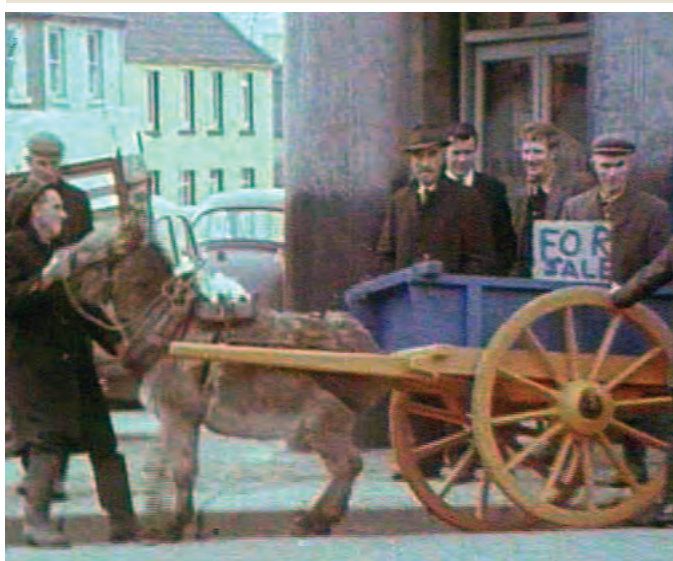
Tom Maughan (Tooraree). Sr. Enda on extreme left



John Regan working at Joyce's stall. John Lyons (Spaddagh)



At the Custom Gap. Paddy Lyons (Redford) at right

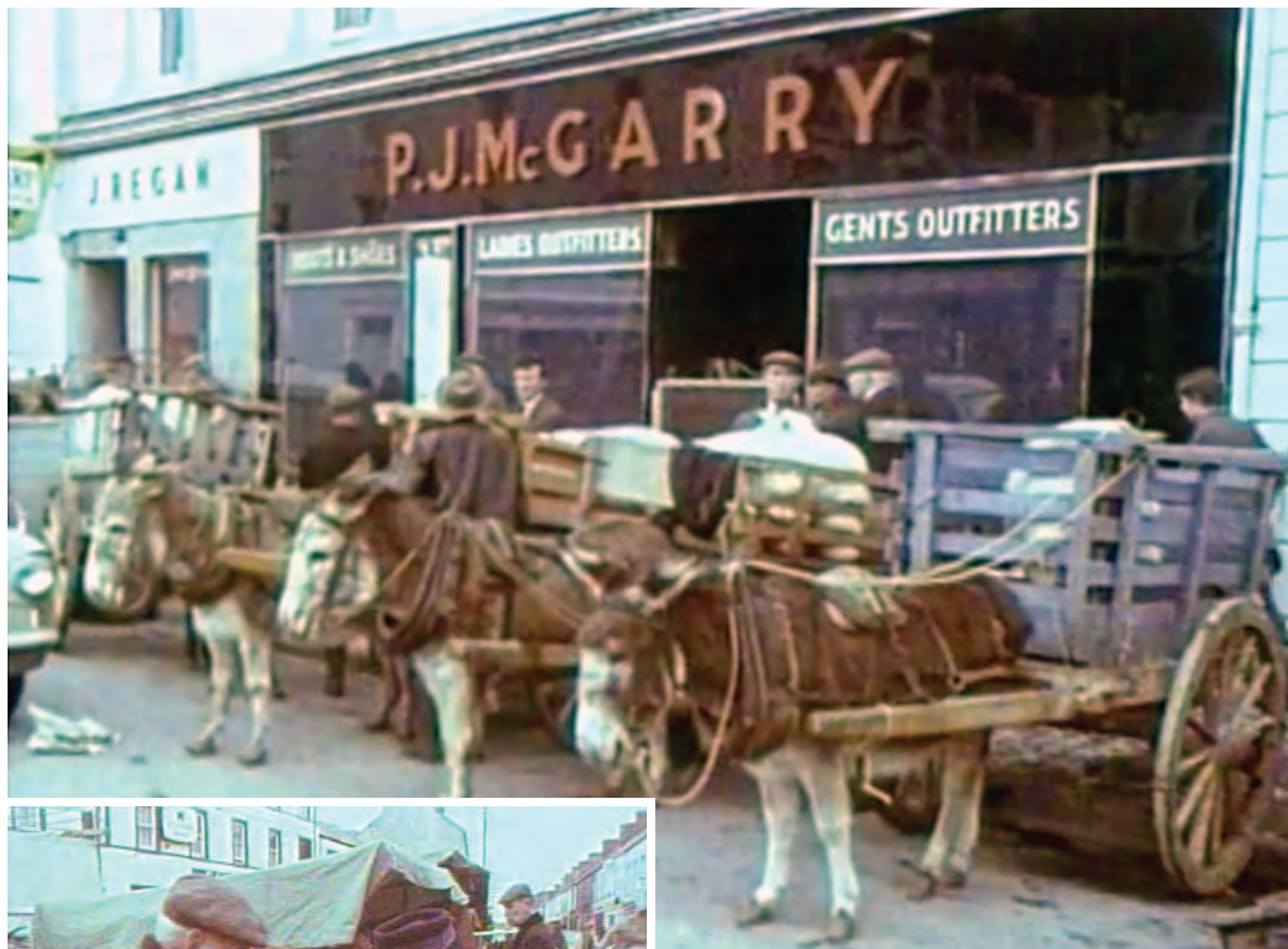


Jack Coyne (on left). Tom Niland (second from right).  
Eddie Caulfield (extreme right)



Tim Melvin (Ballindrehid), Roddy Healy (Ballindrehid),  
Pake Morris (Lissaniska)





Sheep for Sale out of the cart at the Fair Day in Ballyhaunis



Buying cabbage plants.



Heading home after a few pints!

### MAY FAIR

The May cattle, sheep and horse fair in Ballyhaunis usually one of the largest and most successful from the farmers' point of view and this year's fair, held on Friday last, proved no exception. There was a very large supply of stock on offer and buyers, many of them from the North of Ireland, were present in large numbers. Consequently current prices were well maintained and an early clearance was effected. Average prices were: Bullocks, 3 years old, £90 to £120; 2 years old, £80 to £90; yearlings, £45 to £54; milch cows, £80 to £100; springers, £95 to £125; suck calves, £25 to £35; fat sheep, £7.50 to £10; lambs, £7.50 to £9.50, and ewes, £5.50 to £7.50.

A report of prices at Ballyhaunis May Fair 1971  
(from *The Western People*, 22nd May 1971).



# Ballyhaunis Christmas Lights

The onerous task of looking after the Christmas Lights falls to a few enthusiastic locals who endeavour to improve and enhance the town's features each Christmas. Other towns see the merit in this and as business owners, it's important that we create a festive atmosphere that draws people to our town and encourages them to shop locally. Christmas is such a wonderful time of year and this is our time to give back to the community, to thank them for their support throughout the year by ensuring Ballyhaunis is beautifully lit for the festive period.

2015 saw the beginning of our vision for the Christmas Lights Project which we predicted would take a number of years to achieve due to its expense which is in the region of €23,000 - €25,000 per annum. Our goal is to upgrade all the old lighting that was in place and to invest in modern features and crossings. 2015 saw us purchase new Shooting Star features and LED lights for the trees.

In 2016 we will continue to upgrade and purchase new LED street crossings for the town, along with fixing 14 existing obsolete features that have been in storage in the Enterprise Centre for a number of years.

We do all of this to help promote Ballyhaunis over the Christmas period. The turning on of the Christmas Lights is a popular event each year amongst families who come to enjoy music in the Square, and of course Santa's official visit to turn on the Christmas Lights and distribute treats to the crowd. Other events include the blessing of the Crib, Santa's Grotto and Christmas Fair.

Local businesses are encouraged to enter the best dressed Christmas themed window, with the Christmas Perpetual Shield as the prize.

Again this year we will be conducting the "Light Up Ballyhaunis for Christmas" campaign to help raise funds. There are some excellent prizes up for grabs: €500 Ballyhaunis shopping voucher; 500 liters of Home Heating Oil from Top Oil / Martin Delaney Oil; a €300 voucher for Corrib Oil; a €300 voucher for Homeland; and vouchers for Curley's Total Healthcare and Curley's Jewellers. Tickets are on sale in local retail outlets and keep an eye on our Facebook page Ballyhaunis Xmas Lights for updates on all Christmas activities.

We would like to sincerely thank all our sponsors, Mayo County Council and our Councillors for all their help and allocation of funding for the Ballyhaunis Christmas Lights again this year. Without your help and support we would be unable to erect Christmas Lights in Ballyhaunis. We would also like to thank our volunteers for all their help with the Christmas activities, we rely on you each year and you are always there to support.

We would also like to sincerely thank the businesses who are on standing order continually supporting the Ballyhaunis Christmas Lights and to all businesses who kindly contribute each year. With all that said we would like to wish one and all a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

*Ballyhaunis Christmas Lights Committee*

## Mayo Day in Ballyhaunis

Saturday 30th April saw the first Mayo Day in Ballyhaunis. We were blessed with fine weather and a fantastic day was had by all. There was a variety of 20 stalls in the Square along with music by Tempo, Irish Dancing by the Mary Elwood School of Dancing. The town was awash with Mayo flags and bunting and the atmosphere was electric. An old photographic display of Ballyhaunis was held in the Ballyhaunis Court House along with an old video of a Ballyhaunis Fair Day.

All the businesses came on board flying flags and bunting, creating wonderful window displays and also having fantastic Mayo Day special offers. Some of the publicans had trad music sessions and restaurants served traditional Mayo food. TCs fitness also held a Mayo Day 5K run with each participant wearing a Mayo jersey. Ballyhaunis Bouncy Castles and a face painter

were on hand to entertain the younger crowd.

Mayo Day is an initiative of Mayo County Council and they contacted the Ballyhaunis Chamber to run events and we would like to sincerely thank them for their help and support and hopefully it will continue again in 2017.





# Annagh Quilting Group

PATRICIA PLUNKETT



Annagh Quilting Group. L-R: Maura Fitzmaurice, Anne Kelly, Helena Byrne, Gertie Finan, Patricia Hunt, Patricia Plunkett, Mary Carty, Mary Lyons and Josephine Moss. Missing from photo: Eileen Culliney, Mairead Murphy and Kathleen Raftery.

In September 2015, when the dark winter nights were approaching, two Ballyhaunis ladies decided to put the feeler out to form a quilting group for socialising and sharing ideas. Patricia Plunkett and Helena Byrne had both previously attended some quilting demonstrations with Samantha Byrne from Doctor's Road; but when Samantha and family returned to her homeland in USA, little did she know the seed she had sown.

Within a couple of weeks, the Annagh Quilting Group was established and so began the wonderful art of quilting. Many of the ladies who attended the classes had never tried their hand at sewing previously, let alone make a quilt. However, 'never say never', and Patricia and Helena guided and helped the group and, before long, some masterpieces were developing!

Early in January, when Patricia saw that the group was gaining confidence, she suggested that they make a quilt together and enter it into the Festival of Quilts at the NEC in Birmingham. Each group member made one or two 'blocks' which were pieced together and quilted. The result was a beautiful colourful quilt entitled 'Windows of our World', as it resembled stained glass windows.

In August of this year, Patricia, along with another group member, Mairead Murphy, made the trip to Birmingham and were delighted when they discovered that the group's quilt was chosen by the judges to be

exhibited. Not only was this quilt exhibited but Patricia's own quilt, the "Missouri Star" was also selected for exhibition.

On their return it was decided to have a raffle for both quilts with the money raised would go to charity. As some of the members are involved with the Meals-on-Wheels in Brickens, it was decided to donate the proceeds to this worthy cause.

As September drew in again, the group could hardly wait to get back into the swing of things again and classes have resumed in the Friary House on Thursday nights. The first project is to make individual cot quilts to cover incubators for the Premature Baby Project which takes place in November. The quilts will firstly serve as a cover for the incubators and then, when the babies are mature enough to make the trip home, they will keep the quilt. Each week when the members meet, they are keen to show each other the development of their projects. It is so fulfilling and inspiring to see the new ideas and techniques that are being produced.

Everyone agrees that the Quilting Group not only serves as a craft night but also a very sociable outlet. The tea break is always welcomed for a catch up and all too soon the class is ended for another week, but not without everyone getting their "homework" to do!



# The 1916 All-Ireland Senior Football Final – The Local Connection

PAUL WALDRON

We should not let this year pass without remembering that one hundred years ago Mayo played in their first All-Ireland Senior Football Final – on Sunday, 17th Dec. 1916.

Two Ballyhaunis men played with Mayo on that day – Jack Waldron at full back, and George Delaney at mid-field. Another well-known Ballyhaunis business man, Tom Forde, who came to the town in the 1920s, played for the county in the Connacht Final of that year.

In *The Road to 51: The Making of Mayo Football*, James Laffey describes how a severe frost left the pitch at Croke Park scarcely playable on the day of the Final, despite the fact that a coating of straw was laid on it the night before. The Mayo team stayed in a hotel near Dublin Castle and, according to one reporter, “crept on their hands and knees” towards Croke Park “slipping and floundering” on the icy streets on the morning of the match.

Wexford were an exceptional side in those years and beat Mayo 3-4 to 1-2, making it two victories back-to-back. They beat Kerry in the 1915 final having lost to them in the finals of 1913 and 1914; and went on to beat Clare in 1917 making it three-in-a-row. 1916 saw the smallest crowd at an All-Ireland Football final since 1901 with an estimated 3,000 people in attendance, compared with 27,000 at the previous year’s final.

Afterwards, the Wexfordmen’s Association in Dublin hosted a reception for both teams in Conarchy’s Hotel, Parnell Square, and erected a banner reading: “Hard luck, Mayo; Better Luck Next Time”.

**Jack Waldron** was born, reared and lived all his life in Abbey Street. He was a blacksmith by trade and with his brother Paddy operated a forge first in Abbey St. and

later in Clare St. He was one of the first non-Ballina players to play for Mayo in the Championship. He captained the Ballyhaunis Senior team from 1915 until his retirement in 1922 and, in 1917, was appointed Captain of the Mayo Senior team. In later years he and his wife operated a school supplies shop in Abbey St.

**George Delaney**, a native of Baslick, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon, came to Ballyhaunis around 1905 to serve his time with Michael Delaney of Knox St., an extensive merchant (and distant relative). Later on he spent some years in Ballina and played with the renowned Stephenites club. He returned to Ballyhaunis in the 1920s and bought the premises on Abbey St. that is still in the family.

**Tom Forde**, a native of Cortoon, Kiltimagh, played with various clubs through the 1910s and with Ballyhaunis in the 1920s. He first lined out at full-forward for Mayo in the 1916 Connacht Final. He came to Ballyhaunis in the mid-1920s opening a drapers shop on Main St. In 1929 he purchased the premises on the Square establishing the business that continues in family ownership under the proprietorship of his grandson and namesake. He was appointed as Chairman of the Mayo County Board in 1938.

Taken in Castlerea in 1966 to commemorate the Connacht Final of 1916, Mayo v. Roscommon.

L-R: Barney Durkan (Ballina), Jack Waldron, Jimmy Reilly (Balla), George Delaney, Tom Forde.  
(First published *Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Past and Present*, 1981, p.14.)







A group of schoolboys accompany a circus elephant up Main St., Ballyhaunis, 1966. *Photograph by Fr. Kieran Waldron.*



St. Patrick's College, Ballyhaunis, Junior Connacht Champions, Tuam Stadium, 1964.

Back. L-R: Fr. John Kennedy, John Austin Murphy, Christy Freyne, John Carroll, Joe Robinson, Eamonn Freeman, Mike McQueeney, Brendan McGrath, Peter Sweeney, Michael Travers, Fr Paddy Costelloe. Front row: Bernie Glavey, Al Madden, Ned Curley, Tommy Judge, Val Rattigan, Des Lyons, Patrick Halpin, Paul McCloskey, Martin Regan. *Photograph courtesy of Fr. Kieran Waldron.*





#### St. Joseph's Convent Primary School, Fourth Class, 1988-89

Back, L-R: Sinéad Nevin, Máire Gildea, Denise Biesty, Elaine Webb, Mary Teresa Kelly, Miriam Lilly, Caroline Barrett, Sandra Walsh, Pauline Madden. Middle row: Noelle Biesty, Genevieve Flanagan, Catherine Rabbite, Sinéad Rabbite, Catherine Higgins, Eithne Byrne, Mairéad Costello, Elma Kilbride, Geraldine Maughan, Mrs. Marie Byrne. Front row: Clodagh Lyons, Deirdre O'Connor, Shirley Keane, Regina Moran, Carol Ann Cameron, Veronica Regan, Valerie Kilcourse.



#### St. Joseph's Convent Primary School, Fifth Class, 1988-89

Back, L-R: Caroline McNamara, Barbara Plunkett, Olga O'Connor, Sinéad Byrne, Áine Fahey, Natalie Collum, Imelda Flynn, Josephine Waldron. Middle row: Julie Clibbins, Tara Caulfield, Hilary Mooney, Helen Maughan, Denise Byrne, Marie Healy, Sharon Murphy, Miss Mary Staunton (Teacher). Front row: Angela Flanagan, Alma Gallagher, Una Butler, Tara Higgins, Eibhlin Murphy, Maria McGarry.



# Annagh Wheelers Cycling Club

DARRAGH DELANEY

Our club is a small group of cyclists who like to ramble the countryside on our bikes at every opportunity. The club is in existence since 1990 and participates in leisure cycling, touring, road racing, time trials and some mountain biking. New members are always welcome. Presently we have 29 members from Ballyhaunis, Knock, Granlahan and Claremorris and the surrounding areas.

A regular Sunday morning group cycle starting at 9.00am in Ballyhaunis occurs throughout the year, this is an à-la carte spin with riders going for as long as their ability or time available allows. This is a sociable cycle and the group stays together, it is a good way of introducing riders to group cycling.

A mid-week evening group spin and a Friday night team time trial take place in the summer months. The time trial or T4, to give it its proper name, puts teams of four against the clock. Generous handicaps apply which means that all teams have a chance of winning on the night.

2016 has been a very successful year for the club. We started off with the target that we could cover 100,000 kilometres of cycling in one year. As it turns out we are heading towards 150,000 kilometres when you add up what all members have done. Not a bad total from a relatively small club.

We have also had some success in many competitions and event throughout the year. David Delaney and Darragh Delaney featured well up in the West of Ireland duathlon series. Darragh finished in 5th place, taking the over-40 prize, and David was just behind him in 6th place. Ger Slattery had top 10 finishes in national road races. He came an impressive second place in the Ballivor Grand Prix A4 event. Johnny Kelly took the A4 prize in the Mayo road racing league. He won the opening event in Ballina and took second at the home event in Ballyhaunis. Darragh Delaney assembled a team for the Humbert Challenge and they won the team prize finishing with the best time overall. In September, Ger Slattery was the first A4 in the Connacht Championship hill climb. David Delaney won the Shrute/Glencorrib duathlon fundraiser in July.

Club members also travelled abroad to a few training camps and cycling holidays over the year. This type of holiday is getting very popular and most destinations now have proper bike hire so you don't need to worry about travelling with your bike. Be prepared though for plenty of hill/mountain cycling. One experienced group of club members travelled to southern Spain where they

climbed the summit of Pico del Veleta, the highest paved road in Europe at 3,400 metres. Other interesting cycles included a group cycle to Croagh Patrick which took in a climb of the Reek and, one member, John Guilfoyle, even cycled to Dublin to watch Mayo play in Croke Park.

We like to participate in all local organised club or charity cycles. This year we had big numbers taking part in events in Claremorris, Ballaghaderreen, Castlebar, Ballinrobe, Westport, Hollymount, Tuam and Cong. Club members also participated in multi-sport events like Gaelforce, Race2glory and we had participants at Manchester, Dublin and Galway marathons so we more than just a cycling club!



Club members on their bikes in Tenerife. L-R: Eamon O'Malley, Ivan Freeley, Sean Gallagher, Johnny Kelly, Pat Freeley, Joe Gallagher, Mike Morris.

We also hosted two of our own events. In May we held our annual Tour of Mayo and in September we had our Day of Cycling in memory of Martin Connery which raised over €500 for the local St. Vincent de Paul. Both of these events are scheduled to happen again in 2017 and we would love to see you participate in one or both of them.

While cycling is at the core of the club we did have some success in other areas. Club member John Madden took home a county minor title in football and Tom Phillips was part of the back room staff who helped Mayo win their first Nicky Rackard Cup title in hurling. Finally, Sean Murphy had some great success in the road running scene.

We are always on the lookout for new members. You can get more info about joining on our website [www.annaghwheelers.com](http://www.annaghwheelers.com). Remember, we cater for cyclists of all abilities.



# 4th Mayo Scouts - Progress Report 2016

JOHN DURKAN, GROUP LEADER (OUTGOING)

In June 2016, Scouting Ireland announced that its membership had passed 50,000 for the first time with more groups opening all over Ireland. The national membership is broadly broken evenly into four main sections - Beavers, Cubs, Scouts/Ventures/Rovers and adult leaders. Each section is broadly made up of equal numbers of male and female scouts and leaders. After a period of decline at the end of the last century, scouting in Ireland has reinvented itself and is going from strength to strength.



Members of the 4th Mayo Troop Scouts.

The reformation of the 4th Mayo in 2013 filled a gap in scouting in Mayo. With the reformation of the 4th Mayo, numbers crossed the one thousand mark for the first time in the County. The initial intention was to mark the passing of the 4th Mayo in 2013 - the year of The Gathering. It quickly became apparent that there was interest in forming the 4th Mayo.

Scouting Ireland was invited to the Abbey Pattern on Sunday 1st September 2013. Adults from not just Ballyhaunis town, but the surrounding areas gave their contact details to the officers present. Caroline Chambers (20th Snugborough), the then County Commissioner, assisted by the 1st Mayo Castlebar and the 24th Mayo Swinford, talked to interested parties and prospective leaders on the day and remarked, "you will have no problem starting scouts here", and so it proved to be. Gradually, over the coming months, a group of adults, many of them former scouts and guides from all over Ireland and the UK, started to meet with a view to devoting a year to training, organising and visiting other established groups to become fully acquainted with the demands of running a scout group in the present era.

The leaders set September 2014 as the start date for the registration of young scouts. The inaugural meeting was held in the Rugby Club on the first Monday of

October. The first investiture was held in the Abbey on Sunday, February 22nd 2015, which happened to be International Founders Day. The target for the first year was sixteen Beavers and sixteen Cubs. It was recognised that a scout section would have to be built up gradually as young members progressed through the ranks. The first year of operations proved to be very successful and in the year gone by, the target of twenty-four young people in both the Beavers and Cubs was reached. A small scout section was formed and is expected to grow over the coming years. The feeling among the leaders is that, despite the emergence of a waiting list, twenty-four young people in each section is appropriate and manageable for a town the size of Ballyhaunis. The leaders come from all over East Mayo and West Roscommon and similarly the young scouts travel in from the surrounding villages and townlands. Some scout groups have an uneven mix of male and female members, but not so in the 4th Mayo. Among the leaders, adults of all ages work together, running meetings and outdoor activities. Currently, the number of adults actively involved in the group is adequate.

The setting up of a group of any sort, particularly a young group, is challenging in today's environment but thanks to a remarkable group of adults, the task was made easy. The following members are deemed to be 'founding leaders' - Kevin Carney, Paul Carney, Maria Coll, Edel Tucker Conway, Mairead Murphy Damron, Paul Damron, John Durkan, Marion Feeney, Kathryn Flanagan, Fiona Freyne, Stephen Grogan, Susan Hill, Jana Jurakova, Tony Johnston, Ursula O'Grady, Mark O'Malley, John Walsh and Karen Whelan. All the leaders have completed their training and all have become invested scouts. Joanne Finn is to be invested this year. A special welcome to Anna Kaczmarek who has just joined the 4th Mayo. In addition to traditional scouting activities, the scouts interact with many organisations ranging from the local bee keepers association to visits from Astronomy Ireland. The end of year annual camp is, as always, the highlight of the year.

Thanks to the Ballyhaunis Rugby Club, Scoil Iosa Ballyhaunis, The Abbey Trust and the Family Resource Centre for their help and co-operation over the last three years. Thanks also to Mayo County Council and our local Councillors for their help and support and a special thanks to John Cribbin and Richard Finn.

The original group of leaders remain actively involved. However, inevitably, some people had to drop out and some have joined. The 4th Mayo welcomes and encourages adults to get involved. Currently, meetings are held in Scoil Iosa on Mondays. The Beavers run from 6.30pm-7.30pm and the cubs run from 7.30pm-8.30pm.



# Madcap Weekends Back-and-Forth to Ballyhaunis

ROBERT KELLY

*This article is all about mad cap weekend trips back and forth to Ballyhaunis, the people we met, the things that happened, the many connections made, the bizarre coincidences met - all true - and, surprisingly, some are even fit for print.*

## A Hot Journey

My brother Aidan and I were lucky to get parking on the Ballinlough Road. We were in plenty of time so we went around the corner to O'Connell Street. There we met the rest of the crew and told them where the car was parked. They nodded, they knew that Bachelor's Walk was the main road to the West and, to Ballyhaunis folk, it was known as the Ballinlough Road. It was a beautiful day and the car was roasting and, to make matters worse, we ran into traffic on The Quays and we were stuck at a standstill with the sun beating down on us. Some opened windows to let the heat out whilst others closed them so the heat wouldn't come in. We finally got some open road. I was driving with Aidan in the front, Noel Morley, RIP, behind him and Vinny Healy behind me. Unfortunately I cannot, for the life of me, remember who the third person was in the back. I started foostering about with the dashboard controls and said out loud "Do you think I should turn off the heater?" There was an explosion from Vinny behind me and, innocent reader, I'll spare your blushes with the full unadulterated account of what was said and instead give you the toned down version. It went something like, "Oh golly gosh, had you the heater on this whole time? And here I am sitting with perspiration and feeling quite faint, would you be a kind fellow and mind awfully turning the heater off and if you don't you're nothing but a big meanie!" The car erupted with laughter and even Vinny had to join in, he knew he'd been had. We all knew that he'd get me back before the weekend was over.

## Weaving our way West

Five of us, a Morris Minor heading West one weekend. Paddy Robinson, who owned and drove the car, and his brother John, who were both playing for Aghamore. Noel Morley, Aidan and myself were playing for Ballyhaunis. The Robinsons lived near Noel so we all travelled together. It was a tight fit for five men, and then you had to factor in football gear, walking out clothes and some lad bought laundry home for Mammy to do also. I thought of what you should never do in a spacesuit, ah but there was no room. But it would be worse coming back, you had all of the above plus home cooking and the Robinsons brought back a bag of spuds and of course the clean laundry came back as well. On

the way out the real Ballinlough Road, Paddy was zig-zagging the car across the road. I thought this is not good Paddy we have only started our journey, what is wrong? I knew something was up but it was so tight I couldn't see out the back window. Then at the last turn before you come to the straight road leading into Ballinlough, Paddy put the foot to the floor. Slowly we picked up speed and as the car reached top speed every nut and bolt was rattling and groaning. As passengers we would have done the same but we had no room.

I was sitting behind Paddy and out of the corner of my eye I saw a top-of-the-range car with its sunroof down, easily overtaking us. Ah the penny dropped! Paddy's weaving across the road was to stop this fellow overtaking him. He kept abreast with us and took in the view, a Morris Minor with its tongue out, a driver with his foot flat to the floor and tongue out as well and four other peasants trapped inside. With a sneer on his face, he tipped the accelerator and he was gone. When we reached Ballinlough he was already far gone on the Castlerea road, the long way around. We turned right using the short cut onto Williamstown Road into Ballymoe. We were going across the bridge into Ballymoe when Paddy let out a shout - our friend was behind us again. Round two, back-and-forth, our stomachs playing catch up with Paddy's weaving but on the next straight we were easily overtaken again. However this time the sneer was replaced by a puzzled look. Were these the same cretins that tried to race him earlier, and how did they get in front of him? He zoomed ahead, saying that yes they are the same clowns, I see the same bag of spuds. He went off into the distance, out of our lives leaving us choking in his exhaust fumes, five of us, the Morris Minor, the home cooking, the laundry and the bag of spuds.

## Down in Cahir

My wife Eileen is from Cahir, a heritage town in South Tipperary with a Norman castle on the River Suir. When Eileen's parents were alive and the children were young we spent a lot of time down there. I began to hear stories about a man they referred to as the fat traveller, a commercial salesman who was a legend in his own lunchtime. He would spend two to three days each month in Cahir but our paths hadn't yet crossed. Now in Ireland I've yet to see a town with a more convenient football pitch than Cahir, it's the equivalent of walking from the Square to the swimming pool. I went to see a match one evening there and I caught a loose sideline ball. I couldn't resist a squeeze, followed by a hop, a toe tap and then a kick back to where it came from. This



voice boomed out "Hey Kelly, you couldn't kick snow off a rope". Everyone laughed, myself included. My secret is out I thought. Then one of the locals said to me that the fat traveller had shouted that. How does he know me I thought? I scanned the crowd and there, a big lollipop smile on his face, bold as brass was Doc Healy. Now it made sense. Both of us were surprised to see each other and when we got to talking sure didn't Doc know my father-in-law Jim well. Doc had got to like the town and would spend a couple of days each month catching up on his paperwork as he got a good deal from the Hotel Manager, who coincidentally was from Kilmaine. We got to talking about old times and Doc reminded me of when we got a lift home with three Hollymount players who we happened to be playing on the Sunday. Worse of all, we had to get the lift back to Dublin with them after us losing to them.

On the first leg of that journey we were both wary as the fellow driving was a hokey driver and, as Doc said, he wouldn't trust him to go to the well for a can of water. I let my guard down just outside Ballinlough and closed my eyes just as we crossed the Mayo border and a worse road. The car wobbled a bit and I woke with a start. "We're in Mayo now" said one of the boys and I replied "I hope we don't go too far into it" Doc said he gives a wry smile every time he's on that stretch of road, there the lads thought I meant I didn't like Mayo but Doc knew full well I meant that wouldn't crash. Then I recalled some years later another time when Doc drove myself, Aidan, Noel Morley and a fifth person I can't remember late one evening from Ballyhaunis. We stopped en-route to a dance in the Midlands where one of the big bands were playing and we were pretty late heading for Dublin because some of the crew had a close encounter with the opposite sex. Not me, mind, at that time I was as pure as the driven snow. Later, like Mae West, I drifted. When we came to Mullingar, the milkman had been around and Doc came to a halt, put money on the window ledge and took a bottle of milk and away with us. Doc laughed as I told the story. "You made short work of that milk", and I agreed that we did things then that we wouldn't do nowadays.

At half time, Doc headed back to the hotel, the match wasn't up to much but I stayed with the local lads. They said you'd a great talk with the fat traveller, do you know him? I told them we played football together and they told me to take a flying leap, there's no way he played football, he's got furniture disease. I had to ask, what's furniture disease? "His chest is falling into his drawers!" We laughed but I told them in truth Doc, in his prime, was some player, fourteen stone and when he tackled you, you stayed tackled. I always thought being tackled by Doc was like falling over a bike, if the handle bars didn't get you, the pedals would, if Doc's elbows didn't

get you his knees would. They were still sceptical but I told them he played for Mayo and he's got something not one of them watching and not a single player on the pitch nor anyone in the town of Cahir have and that's an All Ireland medal. They still scoffed so I didn't say anymore but I returned the following month with proof. The next time Doc arrived in Cahir, well the children would stare, the men tipped their hats and gave way on the footpaths, the women would throw themselves at him... well perhaps I'm losing the run of myself but you get my drift. Doc was so pleased with his new found respect that he began to spend an extra day a month in Cahir.

### **Motorbike Adventures**

Noel Morley was a pavilion passenger on my motorbike as we tried to hire a car one Saturday morning to head back home for a match. That day there wasn't a car to be found in Dublin. A friend of ours worked in a car hire place that was near Westland Row (now Pearse Street) Railway Station and he tracked down the last car in the county out in Dun Laoghaire. He said we had only twenty minutes to get there or else he was renting to someone else. I'd only been to Dun Laoghaire once and that was on the bus so it was a tall order to remember how to get there and find the office on Marine Road all within that time frame. We broke speed limits and traffic lights but we made it. I had a full licence but couldn't drive. Back then you could get a licence without doing the test and on the last day before they changed that, I joined the long queue and escaped that ordeal. Noel on the other hand could drive but he hadn't a licence. So Noel became Robert and Robert became Noel. The plan was to return on the Sunday night, leave the rental car parked up outside their office and deposit the keys in the letterbox and then I'd collect my motorbike that I would park in a nearby laneway.

About two years later I found myself working full-time in the Fire Station in Dun Laoghaire and I realised that I couldn't have parked the motorbike in a worse possible place that weekend, the laneway led onto Moran Park where all the winos congregated. It would be unwise to park an empty tin can down there never mind a motorbike so I was blessed. Many years later after numerous reinventions the car hire place became a petrol station. I was getting petrol one day when I was greeted by the owner Noel Reinhart. I had got to know Noel through his family's butcher business in Dun Laoghaire as they did a lot of business in the station. Now this is where coincidences appear once again. Some years later Noel's son Kurt was playing in goal for Ballyhaunis and his wife, Sinead, is a daughter of PJ Moran and my nephew Fergal is married to Claire, another daughter of PJ's. PJ was the captain of Ballyhaunis in 1958.



## What's Left?

There's nothing as nice on a fine summer's evening being out by a football pitch watching an Under-16 match in the Ted Webb tournament. There is a refreshing honesty of endeavour and purity of those games, with no short kick outs, no mass defences, and as for sweepers they don't even have a brush. Another man who used to enjoy those matches was the late Ned Kneafsey from Derrymore whom I used to meet up with. This particular evening Mayo were playing Galway. In the first half everything Mayo touched turned to gold and everything Galway touched turned to lead. So, at half time Mayo had a great lead. We sat back, we were going to enjoy the second half, no pressure, stress free, it was so nice to beat Galway but it didn't turn out that way. Everything Galway touched turned to gold and Mayo couldn't do anything right, slowly and slowly that lead was being whittled down. Galway got a goal, now it was a white knuckle time. Ned said to me did you time it? I hadn't but a young fella beside us, no more than nine or ten, said he had. "So what's left?" The young fella lifted up his arm, pulled back his shirt sleeve, looked at his new watch and went into a trance. He was doing calculations whilst we were waiting. Ned would look at him then take a quick glance at the match, have another look at the timekeeper, look at me, then back to the match again, then back to this young lad again. I was finding this all very funny. Ned wasn't and lost his patience "Well, well what's left?" he shouted. The young lad came out of his trance and said "there's either five or ten minutes left" "For God's sake!" said Ned "I'm worse to have anything to do with you" He tossed his head away and returned to the match; for the record there were two minutes left and Mayo won by two points. I said thanks to the young lad, I realised he hadn't yet mastered the timepiece on his wrist. I thought of the saying praise the young and they will flourish. Ned was still muttering to himself "five or ten minutes left in a tight match, I never heard an answer like that, five or ten minutes, and us playing Galway!"

## 1966 World Cup Result?

As it's sometimes goes, now for something completely different. Well this is completely different but it deserves inclusion. Brendan Kennedy is a good friend of mine and we're talking about the 1966 World Cup and even though it's fifty years ago we can still remember what we were doing that day. Brendan is a third generation Dubliner and he swears this story is true. His father and grandfather worked in the old CIE and every year they hired a train through the CIE Social Club and packed it with the families and friends of colleagues and went non-stop to Claremorris and then onto buses headed for Knock. The train was so packed that you couldn't move a sweet from one side of your mouth to the other but

Brendan said they would look forward to it so much. Other than a few days in Bray that was their annual summer holidays. There was no Celtic Tiger then he said. I said down the west there was not even a fat mouse - a lot of people worked for jawbone hire: no money paid and only the food you ate. This particular year they discovered that the excursion to Knock was going to clash with the World Cup Final. Brendan was fourteen years old and he was in to all classes of sport, this was a bummer, some hothead wanted to ring FIFA and get them to move the Final but he got nowhere. So they went to Knock and as they were going through their paces word came through that England were one goal up. England got another but then West Germany scored and then a second to draw the match so it was extra time but by this time they were on the train. They would be in a cone of silence all the way to Dublin non-stop. The adult men had bets on the match and now that it had gone to extra time there would be a whole round of new bets. Brendan can remember his grandfather saying, "England will win, playing at home against the old enemy, if they have to cheat they will, so I'm not changing my bet", and how wise he was. Then going through Ballyhaunis one of the men had a brainwave. He got a big piece of cardboard and wrote "match result?" and held it up to the window going through Castlereagh station so the guard could see it. The guard gave him the thumbs up and they relaxed. They knew the guard would ring Roscommon station and they would have a sign up with the match result. And that is exactly what happened: the guard at Roscommon station was there with his flag and a sign with the match result. Well to be more precise with a match result for the sign said... Elphin 2-9 Strokestown 1-11.



Dr Seán T. Ruane, who graduated from Dublin Institute of Technology with a PhD in Tourism. Dr. Ruane is son of Kathleen and the late Victor Ruane who lived in Holywell through the 1980s. He lectures at the Shannon College of Hotel Management.





Niamh O'Neill, receiving her All Star Outstanding Achievement Award from Brendan Chambers (Vodafone C&C Cellular, sponsors) at the Mayo Athletic Sports Awards. Niamh won five All Ireland medals this year: two for Ballyhaunis Community School, two for her club – Claremorris AC, and one representing Mayo at the All Ireland Community Games. She has also been selected on the Irish Schools Combined team for an International in December. Niamh is a daughter of George and Stella O'Neill, Woodpark, Ballyhaunis and attends Ballyhaunis Community School.



Ballyhaunis Man Raises Sam Maguire  
Aubrey Johnston, formerly of Coolnaha, got the opportunity, earlier this year, to get hold of Sam Maguire. He trains the Junior GAA team in St. Pat's, Donabate, County Dublin.



Above: Dr. James J. Browne, President NUIG, presenting former Ballyhaunis Community School student Cian Henry with his Excellence Scholarship Award from NUIG in recognition of his outstanding Leaving Cert results. Cian is studying Engineering. He is son of Alan and Niamh Henry, Annagh, Ballyhaunis.



John Morley and David Murphy, proprietors of the newly opened Dalgan Bar & Restaurant, Main Street, making a sponsorship presentation to members of the Ballyhaunis branch of Mayo SPCA. L-R: John Morley, Jimmy Connor, Marian Biesty, Nathalie Couling, Paul Harvey, Rose Harvey, David Duffy, with Choco, a rescue dog.

Right: Like so many other families from Ballyhaunis, the Flynns have spread to all corners of the country and the globe over the years. Earlier this year, they got the chance to all meet up for a very rare occasion at the first round of the Connacht Championship in London.

(L-R:) Imelda (Cork), Maria (Dublin), Kieran (Jersey, Channel Islands), Colm (Kildare), Yvonne (Sydney, Australia) and Claire (Galway) met for a great weekend together and met more people from Ballyhaunis that weekend than they had met for years.





# A Ballyhaunis Coup in 1950

FR. KIERAN WALDRON

On 31st May 1950 Ballyhaunis was the venue for a prestigious concert by the Radio Éireann Light Orchestra - its first ever visit to any venue outside Dublin. Cities like Cork, Limerick and Galway had to wait for many a year for such a concert. The recent RTÉ Concert Orchestra's visit to Knock Basilica prompted me to explore how its predecessor came to Ballyhaunis in 1950. How did Ballyhaunis manage to pull off such a coup?

The orchestra had been founded only two years previously (1948), so Ballyhaunis was quick off the mark in seeking the possibility of such a concert. I was away in boarding school at the time so I missed the excitement in Ballyhaunis, but I had a vague knowledge of family connections with the event. My late uncle, Larry Freeley, a virtuoso pianist in his own right, was thought to be the one who concocted the idea - one of his many brainwaves. Also my sister Eithne had also some part in the planning arrangements.

On the off-chance, I telephoned and emailed RTÉ to see if they had any records. The first reply was not surprising - they had nothing. However, the Senior Archivist followed up to say that a most interesting file of correspondence had indeed been unearthed. They gave me permission for its use in this article while acknowledging permission of 'RTÉ Archives 2016, Radio Éireann Documents Collection'.

## Ballyhaunis to the Fore

A visit to the County Library gave me sight of some articles written by the late Mick O'Connell, the local reporter for The Connaught Telegraph at the time. Both sources provided a vignette into the vibrant life of the town over sixty years ago. It was clearly a town marked by hope and endeavour. No wonder that Mick O'Connell's full page article on 27th May 1950 was headed 'Ballyhaunis to the Fore'. Just two years earlier it had celebrated in fine style the sixth centenary of the founding of the Augustinian Abbey with accompanying celebrations, including International Boxing, a Gymkhana, and a 'Grand Celebrity Concert' with Question Time broadcast by Radio Éireann. Some other developments included the purchase of a Town Park on the Clare Road, and successful representations to Government and local authority in connection with telephone services, street lighting and work on roads and the Fair-Green. All the projects were within the ambit of the 'Town Improvements Committee' which had recently taken over from its predecessor. Incidentally, I well remember a town 'Rag' parading that float through the town in 1948 which had satirised a meeting of the previous committee where the participants were portrayed lying over a table - all sound asleep. It had its effect - the committee promptly resigned!

And now in May 1950 the town was celebrating a



Ballyhaunis Town Improvements Committee, with others, pictured outside the Star Cinema, before the recital, 31st May 1950.  
L-R: Jack Halpin, Jack Dillon, Pat Margett (Galway), May Moyles, Seamus Durkan, Eithne Waldron, Jack Eaton, Denis P. Sweeney, Fred Dunne, Maura Durkan, Rosaleen Garvey, Sgt. Pat Nally, Larry Freeley, Petie Hannon.



Ballyhaunis Carnival Week with a 'Monster Rag', several All-night Dances, a Tug of War, a Men's Night and a Ladies' Night as well as Children's Fancy Dress. In the midst of all this, on the Wednesday night, was a 'Grand Celebrity Concert featuring the Radio Éireann Light Orchestra, 'supported by a galaxy of top-line artists' and followed by what was advertised as a 'grand Radio Ball' in the Parochial Hall, dancing 10pm to 3am, with dress optional. Music would be by Bert Flynn and his Orchestra and 'members of the RÉ Orchestra and other artistes would be in attendance'!

The proposed venue for the concert was, of course, the spacious, newly-erected Star Cinema in Clare St. owned by P.J. McGarry. Its size and amenities were way beyond anything in the county at the time. This perhaps was the main inducement floated before the radio bosses.

### **Ambitious**

It was a daunting project. Many locals considered the proposal too ambitious but the matter was resolutely pursued. In such matters, of course, it is useful to have a friend in court, so the first letter in the RTÉ file of 28 pages, dated 31st March 1950, was a personal letter addressed to 'Dear Sheila'. To my surprise and delight it was written in longhand by my own sister, Eithne Waldron, the secretary of the Ladies' Committee. What a joy to discover it! She was writing to a family friend, Sheila O'Brien, then Chief Announcer at the station. Sheila was sister of Fr. Pádraig O'Brien who had been a classmate and life-long friend of my brother Jarlath. Eithne even nominated Tuesday 30th May as the date in mind and suggested that perhaps Joseph McNally, a well known tenor, or Charles Kennedy might take part.

The letter was duly passed to the Director of Music, Fachtna Ó Hanracháin. Before any decision was taken, Síle Ní Bhriain was directed to telephone my sister to confirm that the local committee would be willing to accept responsibility for 'all the expenses involved, including those of a singer'. In those days there was no such thing as sponsorship and the committee were quite aware they were taking on a major enterprise. But they were not to be put off and accepted responsibility for the funding. In correspondence after the concert, Larry Freeley wrote that 'making a profit out of the concert was our least worry, and I can assure you that we all felt it a great privilege to have the members of the orchestra and the other artistes as our guests, especially so when this was their first public appearance outside the studios'.

At this stage the correspondence from Ballyhaunis changed to typed letters and Seamus Durkan, as secretary of the Town Improvements Committee, took over most of the correspondence with Radio Éireann with regard to details, being helped from time to time by the assistant secretary, Larry Freeley. His work was

certainly thorough and business-like. As part of the preparations, Denis Sweeney, the then Chairman, and Larry Freeley paid a visit to Radio Éireann Studios, then housed in the upper storeys of the GPO in O'Connell St, Dublin. The Music Director stated that there would be twenty-two musicians and some others involved. It was agreed that they would travel by train rather than by bus as had been earlier contemplated. He had contacted CIE about costs to find that the fare per head would be 28/6 – one pound, eight shillings and sixpence.

### **Preparations**

Seamus Durkan's first estimate of expenses for transportation, hotel accommodation, meals, rent of hall and piano would be about £60. It sounds very little now but according to price index experts, his figure in present terms would amount to €2,275 – and his estimate was to prove to be conservative. It was a major financial risk, so Seamus naturally enquired, if the concert were to be broadcast, might there be a contribution from Radio Éireann?

There was no reply to this point, but on 27th April the Director confirmed the date for the concert would be Wednesday 31st May. It had taken just one month for the courageous decision to be made. Dermot O'Hara would be the conductor. They had selected Joseph McNally as soloist and the orchestra Leader, Jack Cheatle, would offer to be a violin soloist. His fee would be 'three guineas' and this was agreed by committee. Radio Éireann enclosed a list of suggested items for the programme and they needed to know the size and capacity of the hall. The concert would have to begin at 8pm sharp as the concert would be broadcast from 8 – 9pm.

Seamus Durkan replied that the concert would be two and a half hours, including some variety items during the interval 'in order to give the orchestra a rest'. He estimated that the Star Cinema could accommodate up to 1,000 people and he attached a sketch of the stage, with dimensions. Interestingly, the train would be a slow mover, leaving Dublin at 10.30am to arrive in Ballyhaunis at 3.30pm approx. They would return on the morning train at 10.45am. He added: 'the committee wish to express most sincere thanks and gratitude for your kind co-operation in this matter'.

Tickets were already being booked with Eithne Waldron by phone at Ballyhaunis 23, and admission prices were to be five shillings (reserved) and other seats would be at four, three and two shillings. The day before the concert the Director wrote to say he was glad to hear that the grand piano had arrived and he thanked the committee for their agreement to pay the fee for the accompanist, Eileen Braid. He added: 'I should like to thank you and your committee for the satisfactory



manner in which you have dealt with all preliminary arrangements and I trust that the concert itself will prove very satisfactory'.

And so, on 31st May, the members of the Town Improvements Committee were at the railway station in force to greet the musicians and to transport them and their instruments to the Star Cinema for a rehearsal.

### Most successful

And how did the concert go? Here we turn to Mick O'Connell's report on 10th June which was headed: 'Radio Éireann Light Orchestra, Tremendous reception in Ballyhaunis'. He listed the concert programme - light classical, operatic and Irish music. Items included were popular pieces like 'Flight of the Bumble Bee, Blue Danube, Hungarian Dances, Schubert's Serenade', etc. Sung items included 'The Lark in the Clear Air' and 'The Bard of Armagh'. The local input during the interval included Joe Kelly, accordionist and two Galway artistes, Pat Margett (xylophone), and the young comedian, Foggy Spelman. This part of the concert also won 'rounds of applause' according to the report.

After the concert, the local chairman, Denis P. Sweeney, thanked and complimented the orchestra and the soloists. Dermot O'Hara, the conductor, in a brief address, complimented the audience and hoped that the committee would have them back in Ballyhaunis in the near future. Later, in a memo to the Music Director he wrote: 'the members of the orchestra and myself were treated with the utmost courtesy and the arrangements for both the presentation of the broadcast and the accommodation of the orchestra were carried out in a most satisfactory manner'. However he commented that the introduction of the variety items during the interval lasted for over an hour and he felt this type of thing was unnecessary and proved exhausting for the audience. He noticed that the cheaper seats were not as well patronised as the dearer seats and was told that there was an impression abroad that 'the type of programme would be too high a level for simple tastes'. This, he felt, could have been countered had Radio Éireann announced the programme beforehand. Over-all he felt that the concert in Ballyhaunis had been most successful and 'it is to be hoped that arrangements can be made for a more extended tour of the provinces'.

His comments about vacant seats had, of course, financial implications. Radio Éireann asked the committee to share their Balance Sheet as this might act

## Ballyhaunis Town Improvements Committee

### BALLYHAUNIS

31st Mar 1950

Main St,  
Ballyhaunis,  
Co. Mayo.

Dear Sheila,  
as secretary of the ladies committee, I have been asked to write to you, re having the Radio Éireann Light Orchestra, give a recital here at a concert, on Tuesday night 30th May, during our carnival week. We would like to have a good soloist and are wondering if you would suggest someone — would Joseph Mr. Kelly or Charles Kennedy come? It was hoped that it would be possible to have all, or part of the programme broadcast. I would be glad if you would let me know about the matter, within the next few days, as, there will be a meeting on Tuesday night next, to try & build up the final programme. Also let me know the conditions under which they would come and the number in the orchestra. Perhaps I should mention that our hall is capable of holding, from twelve to four hundred people.  
 Hoping you are well, and that you will succeed in persuading the director of broadcasting, to fall in with our little plans.  
Yours sincerely,  
Eithne Waldron

The letter from Eithne Waldron, secretary, Ballyhaunis Town Improvements Committee, that set the ambitious project in train, dated 31st March, 1950

as a guide for such concert organisers elsewhere. It is also of interest to us now. The amount spent on accommodation was only £21 but apparently some members of the party were accommodated in private homes. Padraig Ó Raghallaigh, the radio presenter, for instance, stayed overnight in my family home on Main St. The overall cost, including travel, hotel, rent of hall and piano, advertising and performing rights fee, amounted to £110-13-6. (€ 4,197 in modern terms). The admission fees amounted to £67, or €2540. There was indeed a considerable shortfall, but this presumably was to be made up by local fundraising and profits on the week-long carnival.

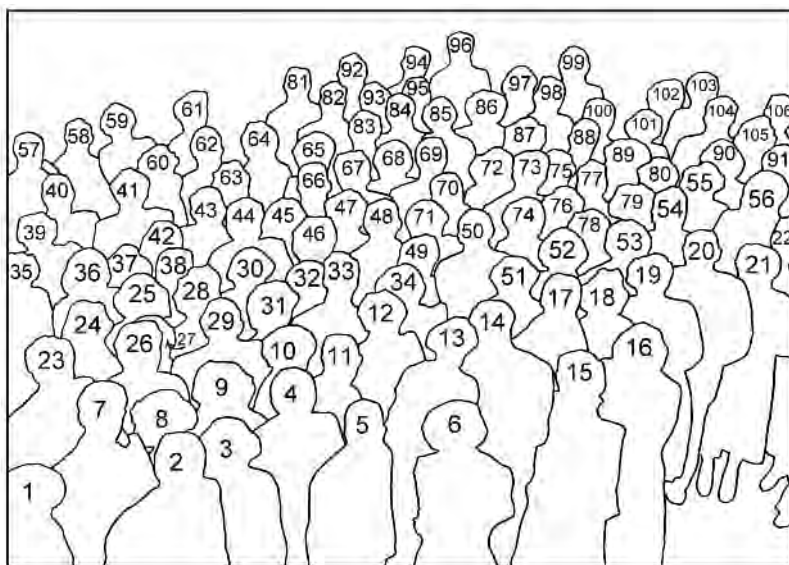
### Worthwhile

Despite the shortfall, the file contains several letters about a possible future concert. The feeling was how worthwhile the entire experience had been for Ballyhaunis. The committee said this would depend on the cinema being available on a Sunday night, that the concert should not begin before 8.30 or 9.00pm and that there be a very short or no broadcast. It was felt that broadcasting the concert had reduced the size of the



audience. Though correspondence continued in regard to a second concert for almost a year no suitable date was ever determined.

The achievement of being the first town in Ireland to host a visit of the Light Orchestra was certainly a matter of civic pride and gave a boost to morale in the area. The event was flawlessly organised through the enterprise and great self-belief on the part of the people. No doubt the energetic Town Improvements Committee of the time deserve special praise. The fact that they had over-all responsibility for all development projects, not just for matters of business, but also for the cultural, social and sporting requirements of the town, was a major advantage in the project being so successfully completed in the space of two months.



Some of those who attended the 'Radio Ball', held in the Parochial Hall, Ballyhaunis, following the Radio Éireann Light Orchestra recital in the Star Cinema, 31st May 1950. Fifty-nine have been identified out of 104. See key above. The Annagh Magazine Society would like to hear from anyone who can identify others.

(4) Seán Lambert, (5) Paschal 'Foggy' Spelman, (6) Kit Keane, (7) Eddie Webb, (8) Noreen Webb, (9) Leonie Webb, (10) Carrie Webb, (15) Kathleen Waldron (Morley), (16) Mary Greene (Fitzgerald), (17) Jack Halpin, (18) Bridget Mary Halpin, (19) Bridie Foudy, (20) Mikie Foudy, (21) Angela O'Malley, (22) Dr. Dermott Waldron, (31) Bridie Hannon, (32) Rita Mulligan (Dunne), (33) Petie Hannon, (34) Mercy Flatley, (35) Teresa Griffin, (36) Maureen Cleary, (39) Renee Flynn (Coffey), (40) Paddy Freeley, (43) Bill Eagney, (44) Madge Neary, (45) Jo Eaton, (46) Patricia Waldron, (47) Eithne Waldron, (48) Kevin Greene, (49) Una Donnellan, (50) Larry Freeley, (51) Hannah O'Dwyer, (52) Sheila Dillon, (53) Mollie Concannon, (54) Tom Concannon, (56) Joe Greene, (57) John O'Brien, (58) Seán Mullins, (59) Carmel Smyth, (61) Maura Durkan, (62) Tommy Byrne BDS, (63) Mrs. Bridie Byrne, (65) Mary Dillon Leetch, (69) Joe Regan, (70) Paddy Maguire, (71) Maura McGreal, (72) Sally Regan, (73) Fred Dunne, (74) Dora Forde, (77) Tommy Walsh, (80) May Moyles, (84) Bill Baker, (85) Mrs. Baker, (86) Josie Smyth (Coffey), (90) Rosaleen Garvey, (98) Eddie Fitzgerald, (100) Eileen Fitzgerald, (104) Jimmy Curran, (106) Gerard McDonagh.





# Ballyhaunis Roots

BELINDA WEBB-BLOFIELD

Spring is always the best time to visit anywhere, so it was fortunate that I was invited to Ballyhaunis last April. My trip - to see my Webb cousins and my aunt, Peg Greene - coincided with a long yet scenic drive to Limerick to attend a family gathering of cousins organised by John Webb O'Rourke and Gerry Webb. The one thing we all share, apart from DNA is that we are all keen 'gardeners' of the family tree.

Some travelled from as far afield as Australia and Canada, and even Ballaghaderreen! I had missed the first such gathering, held in Ballyhaunis in 2013, but I was assured a good time was had by all, with plenty of photographs taken in the town and outside St. Patrick's Church.

But my interest isn't just cousins: I was especially pleased to meet those who had known my Dad, Val Webb (1948-2007), when he was a young boy growing up in Ballyhaunis. In 1964 he left his home-town and never returned. He was just sixteen years old. But Ballyhaunis never left him - and Mayo certainly didn't.

When I was a child there were occasions when I heard him declare that he was a 'Maigh Eo' man, so it seemed to me appropriate to inscribe those very words on his Portland stone memorial in Manchester's Southern Cemetery.

## Gathering

This second Gathering included the banter one would expect between those from Maigh Eo and Luimneach, although my ears were finely attuned to those who shared my Dad's 'West of Ireland' timbre, confirming that it is my Dad's voice I miss most of all.

I'm not sure he would have attended this gathering had he still been alive as he didn't express a particular interest in genealogy. He was, however, a keen sports fan, and one for the gee-gees. He would have been sorely tempted by how the gathering kicked off on the day - with The Webb Cup being played for at Thomond Park by Shannon RFC and Kilfeacle RFC, the latter winning 21/13. The Cup was donated by Mickie Webb, from the Limerick side of the family, in memory of his brother Sean who died young.

After the match I was introduced to Michael Webb, Ballyhaunis's Main Street butcher, whom, I was glad to note, had been good pals with my Dad when they were children, although without knowing that they had also been cousins. Michael's wife had the genealogical bug and, after learning who my father, his father and grandfather were, gladly declared that I had provided a missing piece of the family puzzle as there had been a query over the Webbs in Charlestown, the home-town of my grandfather.

## Roots

My grandfather, Alfred Webb, was brought up in Charlestown from his birth in 1886 until 1902, when the death of his father, Edward (1833-1902), saw him move to Ballyhaunis. He moved in with his cousin, Michael (b. 1872) and Michael's first wife, Mary-Kate Kenoy. He lived there until he married Delia Tully in 1925.

Delia's parents were Patrick Tully and Catherine Carey who hailed from Galway, and moved to Tooraree in 1904, when their first child, Matthew, was just a baby. My aunt Peg told me that Delia's parents had met on a market day in Monivea. The year in which my great-grandparents moved to Ballyhaunis is also notable for being one of hunger in Galway; over 24,000 people left Galway between 1901 and 1911, albeit a decrease on previous decades. My aunt shared more recollections which I squirrelled away to note down as soon as I returned to England. I also enjoyed learning more about her own children - my cousins now in Paris, New York, and Dubai.

I have been researching our family tree since 2000, and had gleaned most of the information from census, birth, marriage, and death records, as well as confirming bits of information conveyed by my Dad. However, it was my first visit to Ballyhaunis, with my two younger sisters, Abigail and Laura - in 2000 - that really sparked my interest. It was on this visit that our uncle Kieran (1940-2014) informed us that my great-grandfather Edward had been thrice married. He hadn't 'researched' this, it was simply passed down, presumably by my grandfather Alfred. I was intrigued enough to want to verify the claim, and had indeed found it to be true.

Edward Webb was born in Loughglynn, in Roscommon, to Thomas Webb and Eleanor Grady. Edward's parents were married in February 1827, and so far this marriage record is the earliest that I have found. Other genealogists tell me that I should count myself lucky to have a record at all, given the tight constraints against Catholic record-keeping at that time.

Edward's first marriage was to Bridget Doherty, which produced five boys who each of whom went to work in the mines in Wigan, North West England, and from where one later proceeded to New Zealand. When Bridget died Edward married my great-grandmother, Margaret Higgins (1864-1887), from Cashel, Charlestown, the daughter of Atty Gavahan and James Higgins. Margaret was just twenty-two when she gave birth to her only child, my grandfather. Not long afterwards she became ill and died. Edward then



married for the third time, to Anne Casey. This union produced a further six children – many of whom emigrated to Philadelphia: Frank Webb, the youngest of these six, continued there as a butcher and Martin Edward became a chauffeur to a private family before serving in the US forces.

Whilst most of his half-siblings emigrated, thereby leaving a paper trail to research, there is little information on Alfred. The same cannot be said for his father. Thanks to the digitisation of the petty session court records from the nineteenth century, I read that Edward sometimes let his cattle take a little wander on the public highway, or on other men's land. What is clear from these historical records is how organised rural Mayo was. I learned from the extensive dog license records for instance, that shortly before his death, Edward registered a collie. Such information helps to add 'colour' to what are often mere numbers – clothing history from the family wardrobe.

### Origins

The main question at the second Webb gathering was the same, probably, that had been floated at the first gathering – why had three connected Webb families of cattle dealers and butchers 'suddenly' arrived in Loughglynn? Or had they been there for much longer but simply undocumented?

Webb is an English occupational surname, meaning weaver. Whenever it is suggested that our ancestors may have been weavers there are ructions, as though it's a step too far to imagine that butchers and cattle dealers may once have worked at looms – not realising that such a trade would have required great physical strength. And should this be true, my own family proves the adage that many of those who arrived in Ireland centuries ago became more Irish than Irish themselves.

At the gathering, I had certainly not expected to also hear of my grandmother Delia, sister of Matt and Patrick. Delia was young and slight compared to her husband, yet made of strong stuff. They had over fourteen children together – some of whom died as infants – Rita, Edward, Kathleen. After her husband died in 1957, Delia worked even harder. I'm told she was a woman who always looked on the bright side. Again,



Alfred Webb (1886-1957).



Val Webb as a boy in Ballyhaunis, c.1959.

such a little snippet of information is priceless, and I could never hope to find such a trait documented in official records. Perhaps we should, at the death of someone close, record a few extra words on that final certificate, such as 'so-and-so was an optimist', or 'so-and-so was known for their distrust of authority, but was always friendly and helpful to his/her neighbours'.

### Emigration

My Dad was the youngest boy, perhaps barely remembering his oldest brother, Patrick, who left Ireland for Manchester before he was born. Patrick was quickly followed by his sister, Molly; although those who left did return now and then to see their mother. I have a copy of a photograph of my aunt Molly on a return home, clearly a follower of fashion, as she stands next to her mother – the sharp contrast

in lives apparent for all to see. Molly worked as a perfume girl in the Lewis's department store in Manchester city centre, and was always impeccably turned out. Molly had also left Ballyhaunis before my father was born, but introduced herself to him in rather odd circumstances. It was 1968 and my Dad was now in Manchester having moved there from Edinburgh. He had gone along to the Manchester Royal Infirmary for a sinus wash, of all things. It was a routine procedure. However, later that night he was found on the floor of his room in a pool of blood. He had suffered a massive internal haemorrhage and was rushed back to the same hospital, and into intensive care. It was touch-and-go for a while. It was on his twenty-first birthday – February 1969 – that a glamorous woman walked up to him bearing a birthday cake. "I'm Molly, your sister..." she said. "Sure, I know who you are," he replied. But what no-one could tell their youngest brother during his long hospitalisation was that their mother had died. The doctors feared it would set back my Dad's recovery, although he was finally discharged into the care of another sister, Teresa Heap (now Bingham), with whom he lived for a year. He then found work with John Kennedy's and met my Mum, and seven children followed: Sean, myself, David, Abigail, Laura – and the twins: Thomas and Patrick. My Dad had something in



common with my Mum (whose own mother hailed from Mitchelstown, Cork), in that they were both nine years old when their fathers died. My grandfather Alfred was 72 when he passed away. A few years earlier he had suffered an accident at M.J.'s Ballyhaunis meat factory injuring his leg which became infected and eventually left Alfred as an amputee.

On our trip 'home' in 2000, my uncle Kieran (1940-2014) wasted no time in taking us to meet Bridie Hannon (nee Webb). At this my Dad was particularly pleased. He had spent a fair amount of time in Hannon's shop and, with Bridie, and her daughters, would sing a little ditty about their 'Valley dear...', of which Sandra Hannon and Anne Sharkey (nee Hannon) reminded me at the gathering. As a teen he had also been on the road selling calves with their older brother, Martin Hannon. I recently enjoyed a long chat with Martin, and he recalled yet more information about my Dad. We both concluded that it had been 'an awful shame' my Dad never returned home for a visit, given how well liked he had been.

## Home

Like many other emigrants, my Dad had occasionally talked to us as infants about going back home. The truth is, he spent 'all the time working', and then in his early fifties when he could have at least considered a visit, he was diagnosed with a nasty case of Crohn's Disease, and would be in and out of that same hospital he had endured all those years earlier. He had seen little opportunity to return home and, to be honest, he wasn't a great one for raking over the past. I still know very little about his early life, though I know that he served as an altar boy at St. Patrick's. As an adult he saw his faith as a wholly private matter and would only rarely visit the Holy Name Church on Oxford Road, Manchester, with us – despite me and my older brother, Sean, singing in its choir each Sunday.

Anyone who knew my Dad would always say he was quiet – but he was just economical with

words; he saw very little point in small talk which he could find terribly draining. He was an avid news hawk, however, and read up to three newspapers a day, and then in the evening he would watch each news programme. He certainly kept up with the Irish press, regularly bringing home the Irish papers. There were times when he would point to a picture, an advert or a social event that appeared in the paper, and declare them to be Webb cousins from back home.

Even as an infant, I knew that we wouldn't be 'going home'. In response to his wistful remarks, my Mum would declare us to be English, and that was that, which only had my Dad reinforcing his Irishness, keen to express his strong patriotism. And so 'The Troubles' were alive in our own home. But, whilst our Mum was ultimately loved by all of us, most of us were firmly on 'his side'.

## Work

I still find it deeply sad that my Dad had not been able to take his education further. He left school at thirteen, which would be seen as an obscenity today. And then leaving at sixteen, because there was little work at home, and what work there was wouldn't have paid very much. He knew Manchester and the whole of the North West of England better than I ever will. One week he could be laying pipes in Derbyshire, another week in Leigh. He even worked away in London, returning home at weekends. My Dad was relatively happy with a simple life. I recall him once saying it wasn't so much where you lived, but how you lived, and he instilled in us a strong work ethic. He also got on with people from all cultural backgrounds. Had he returned to Ballyhaunis in his later years he would have felt comfortable, if a little puzzled perhaps, with its mix of cultures.

A year or so before he was admitted into hospital for the last time, he was at his sister Teresa's house. His older brother, Patrick, was there also, in much finer health than his younger brother, although they had both outlived



Taken in Ballyhaunis circa 1968.  
L-R: Molly DeLuce (Webb), Delia Webb  
(née Tully), Christine DeLuce.



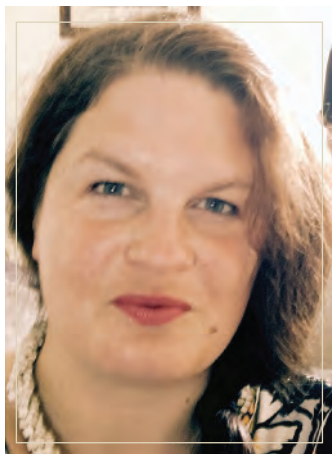
Val Webb 1973.



another brother, Michael, who had served in the British Army, but who died in 1979. And then the untimely death of their brother Joseph, a singular character whom I never had the chance to know. It was clear that my Dad had a lot of respect for his oldest brother, and there were a few laughs when Patrick recalled his childhood, running through fields in a desperate bid for freedom

from the classroom, but when Patrick remarked that they had worked their fingers to the bone... and for what...? my Dad simply replied that he, at any rate, had been happy doing it at the time; it was clear that he had valued the work far more than the weekly pay packet and that it offered no benefit to regret it all now.

As I write this for the magazine of the parish in which he grew up, I wonder what he would think of it. I think he would be pleased, really; and I suppose I also have an eye on the future generations of Webbs who may find this piece in time for some future gathering – perhaps my nieces and nephews will one day travel to Ballyhaunis together to ‘root around’: Keenan, Kaylen, Thomas Valentine, Ella, Caleb, and Kya – and they will learn something more about my Dad than mere geography and numbers. And perhaps too, I felt I needed to close a circle of sorts in writing this – in order to answer the question – what became of Val Webb? He was a good man - a man who carried Ballyhaunis within him.



Belinda Webb Blofield.



Kieran Webb, Bricks, died 2014.



Aunt Molly DeLuce Webb, Manchester, aged 85.



At the Webb Gathering 2016, Limerick. From Left: Jackie Webb, Peter O'Keeffe, Sandra Hannon, Sean Webb.

If you have any pics of Val Webb from his childhood, copies would be most gratefully arranged. Please contact Belinda Webb-Blofeld [belwebb@hotmail.com](mailto:belwebb@hotmail.com)



Simon Morley, Woodpark, with his ewe which took second place in the 'Groville All-Ireland Ewe Champion' competition at Swinford Agricultural Show 2016.



Cheering for Mayo - Síofra Ní Raighne, born July 2016, daughter of Frances Uí Raighne (nee Grogan, Knockbrack) and Cíarán Ó Raighne, Loughrea, Co. Galway.

## We all need a laugh....

*This lady went to her doctor one day and the doctor said Mary what is wrong with you Mary said I don't know the doctor said that makes two of us Mary said well doctor when I get up every morning and look in the mirror I look very pale and sickly looking the doctor says there is nothing wrong with your eyesight*





**Abbey Pattern 2016.** Photos by JanaPix





# Lodgings and Digs

EAMON MURREN

The recent opening of the splendid 'Mulberry Lodge' B&B on Knock Road by Stephen and Nuala Nolan got me thinking about the lodging houses and 'digs' that were in Ballyhaunis back in the 1960s and 1970s.

In Upper Main Street, we had Kate and Carmel Waldron. My own father Johnny who came to work in CIE in the 1940s stayed in Waldron's. Indeed, he only had to hop across the road to get a wife in my mother Gretta Johnstone. Tommy Freeley, Ballindrehid, had started distributing beer for what was to be Irish Ale Breweries in the 1960s. Tom's first depot was the old Kenny's sheds in Upper Main Street. Many of the drivers hauling the beer from Kilkenny stayed in Waldron's. So too did drivers from C & C. The other man I remember staying in Waldron's was John 'Doc' Healy who worked in Gallagher's. I can still remember Doc leaving to go to the U.S. with the Mayo team in 1963. It was a big thrill for a young lad to have a Mayo footballer living across the road.

In the 1970s, Mary Durr kept boarders in Upper Main Street. Among them was Roger Cawley (Bank). Roger, like my father, didn't have far to go to get his wife – a short walk up the street to capture Ber Hopkins. Also in Mary's was John 'Scobie' O'Neill (Bank). Scobie was one of the first to streak in Ballyhaunis. This got him an immediate transfer out of town. Syl Murphy (Bank) was another, as was Terry Coleman (Teacher), to stay with Mary.

Further up the street, Mrs. Levins kept some boarders.

The first coloured man I ever saw was a vet who came working for Gerry Butler and I think he stayed with Mrs. Levins. Others to stay there were Miss Ralph (Teacher) and Bridie McLoughlin.

In Clare Street, Kathleen Smith kept a lot of boarders. Among them were Dorothy Durkan (Post Office), Eileen O'Dwyer (Post Office), Teresa Lynskey (Teacher) and Annie Kennedy (V.G.).

Down the Street, Alice Lyons kept people. Fred Herr, I think, stayed with Alice when he worked in McGarry's. Johnny Regan, who worked in Cunningham's, stayed for many years in Lyons's as did Paddy Laffey. Mrs. Glynn, of chip shop fame, also kept boarders. I remember the Central Hotel using Dalton's house for guests if they had an overflow in the hotel. Pauline Curley tells me that when Kitty Healy (Hairdresser) came to town first that she stayed in Dalton's. Today, the evergreen Bridie Levins, with here beautiful 'Avondale' Guest House is the only one still operating in Clare Street.

In Knox Street, Mrs. Callaly (where Fitz's pub is now) kept boarders. Among them: Dorothy Durkan, Mary Haughey Freeley and Christy Ruane. Across the road, Jack Morley's pub was an unofficial lodging house. I remember Eugene 'Donegal' Colum stayed there for a good few years and a Kilkenny man, Tom Jones, who worked in skin and hide in Ballinlough. The same Tom, like his Welsh namesake, was big into music and had a band.

In Abbey Street, Brenda Moran kept guests. I believe Paddy O'Dwyer (Solicitor) and Denis Sweeney (Dentist) stayed here when they first came to Ballyhaunis. I remember Eric Gibson (Ulster Bank) staying there in the late 1960s. A couple of doors from Moran's was Peg Mullins who also kept boarders.

The other boarding house in Abbey Street was run by Lily and Tony Morley. People who stayed there included Hugh Rudden, Christy Ruane and Cork man John Ring (Post Office). I'm not sure if Mrs. Burke, mother of Bridie Levins, kept boarders or not but she did I think have a restaurant.

Other people to run B and B's that I remember were Margie Gallagher (Knock Road), Martina Gallagher (Knock Road), Breda Burke (Devlis), Margaret Hickey (Milebush) and Mrs. McNulty (Knox Street). Flan Moroney stayed in McNulty's. Also in Knox Street, Forkan's ran a B & B.

I don't recall any boarding houses in Main Street apart from the Central Hotel. Nowadays, Val's Bistro, Main Street caters for guests looking for a place to stay.

I'm sure I have left out some boarding houses. I hope mentioning the ones I have will bring back some memories.

## *Golden Wedding Anniversary*



Kay Fitzmaurice, Lisbane and John Walsh, Drimaderra, on their 50th Wedding Anniversary in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.





Ballyhaunis Lady Golfers  
in the 1950s.

Back, L-R:  
Kathleen Cunningham,  
Pat Flanagan (née  
Doherty), Sheila Hoare,  
Josie O'Brien, Madge  
Neary, Mary Dillon-  
Leetch, Molly Jordan,  
Mrs. Andy Egan,  
Sheila Dillon.

Front: Mrs. Tom Lyons,  
Dora Forde, Lucy Flynn,  
Unidentified,  
Mary Dillon,  
Madge Fahey.

*Courtesy of Susan  
Laffey, Abbey St.*



*Left:*  
Michael Daly, as a  
young boy with his  
uncle Laurence  
Cunningham, and  
donkey and cleeves.

Taken outside  
Campbell's, Murrisk,  
at the foot of the  
Reek, 1955.



*Right:*  
Michael Lyons  
(Treenrevough)  
1885-1965 and his  
wife Ellen  
(née Clancy)  
1894-1979.

*Right:*  
Taken in Treenrevough in the  
1950s, L-R: Tom Barrett (U.S.A.),  
Tom Morley with Micheál McHugh  
standing on chair, Mike McHugh,  
Joe Lyons, Tom Finn, Ellie Lyons,  
Nell Barrett (U.S.A.).  
Michael Lyons seated.



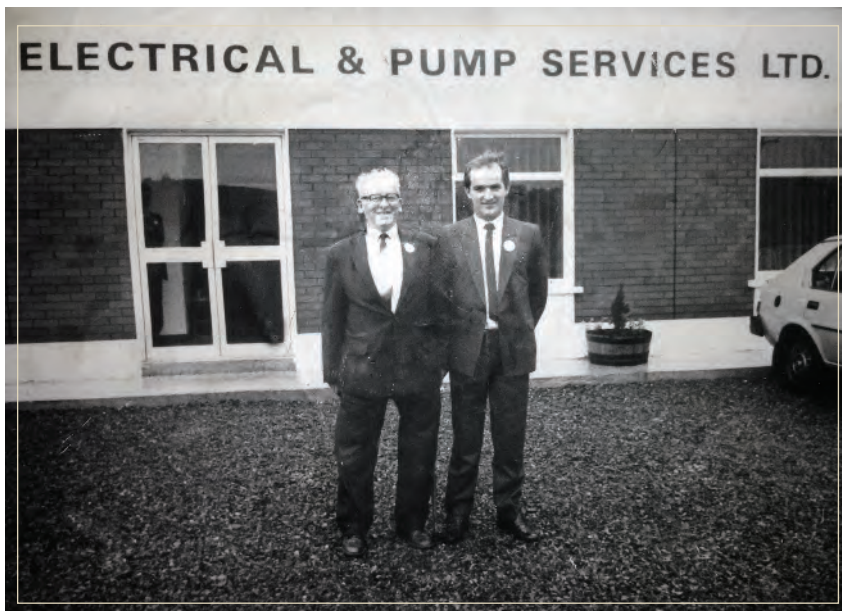


Tadhg Buckley retired this summer as Managing Director of EPS Group. Having given forty-eight years service to the water, wastewater and pumping systems industry, he worked his final day in the EPS office on 8th July 2016.

EPS started in Kanturk, Co. Cork in 1968. Tadhg moved to the West of Ireland, firstly to Galway in 1972, and finally settled in Ballyhaunis in 1976. It was here where he met and married his wife Kay (nee McNamara of Tullaghane) in 1978 and went on to have five children.

The current EPS premises in Pollnacraoghy was opened in 1984, replacing the previous premises in Clare St.

Pictured right: Tadhg Buckley with his father Patrick, outside EPS on the opening of their present premises in October 1984.



The Buckley family, on the day Tadhg retired from EPS Group, 8th July 2016.  
L-R: Tadhg Jnr., Ciara, Tadhg, Kay, Sarah, Shane.



Daniel and Jack Buckley supporting Ballyhaunis at the Connacht Hurling Final, 2016.



Tadhg with some of his siblings at his retirement party in Dalgan Restaurant, 5th Aug. 2016. L-R: Maudie Twomey, Betty O'Connor, Sean Buckley and Tadhg Buckley.

## EPS won two awards this year

EPS was announced as the Green Awards 'Green Technology Award' winner for introducing the revolutionary Nereda® Technology to the Irish wastewater treatment market at a gala ceremony which was held at the Double Tree by Hilton, Dublin on Thursday, 13th April. EPS was named as one of Ireland's 'Best Managed' companies in the Deloitte Best Managed Companies Awards Programme in March 2016. EPS was one of 70 companies to re-qualify for the Deloitte Best Managed status.



# Summer Reading Adventure

PHOTOS: GLYNN'S PHOTOGRAPHY, CASTLEREA / BALLYHAUNIS



The presentation of certificates and medals for the Summer Reading Adventure which took place in Ballyhaunis Library during the months of July and August, 2016, by Mary Gannon (Senior Executive Librarian). Included are children from the local schools and Librarians Eleanor Freyne, Bridie Wimsey and Mary Gannon.







The presentation of certificates and medals for the Summer Reading Adventure which took place in Ballyhaunis Library during the months of July and August, 2016, by Mary Gannon (Senior Executive Librarian). Included are children from the local schools and Librarians Eleanor Freyne, Bridie Wimsey and Mary Gannon.



All Ireland Winners! First year students following their win in the Junior section of the National Student Enterprise Awards, held at the Croke Park Convention Centre in April. L-R: Anne Phillips (Bank of Ireland), Bernie Osgood (Teacher), Joshua Webb, Cian Walsh, Kevin Durkan, Jason Reinhardt, Merlin Pearson, Anne Marie Beirne (Bank of Ireland), Keith Higgins



# Ballyhaunis Community School

## National Student Enterprise Award Winners

Five of our first year students arrived back from Croke Park on 21st April with an All-Ireland! Although not for their footballing skills, the five lads competed against their peers on the National stage as they represented Mayo at the National Student Enterprise Awards with their product 'The Story of My Life – 50 Year Diary'.

They won their award for their idea of a 354 page, fifty year diary which you can fill with memories in one handy volume. It is A5 in size and each year contains six pages, three for pictures and the other three for text. The lads, Cian Walsh, Kevin Durkan, Joshua Webb (all Ballyhaunis), Merlin Pearson (Granlahan) and Jason Reinhardt (Cloonfad), are the five shareholders in their company which has seen the diary selling very well.

They came first in the Junior Section of the competition and won the Intellectual Property Awareness Award, which co-incidentally is the same category that Jack Clooney won for his 'Sila Lights' product, when he represented the school last year. The lads initially won the Mayo Awards on the 1st March. They were guided by their business studies teacher Ms. Bernie Osgood and mentor Peter Hopkins of Moy Valley Resources.

Of the 22,000 students from 620 secondary schools that took part this year, teens from 76 student enterprises won a place at the National Final to demonstrate their businesses and inventions for the judging panels on the day.

The students and Ms. Osgood would like to thank everyone who helped and supported them throughout their journey. The diary retails at €25 and can be purchased directly from the school and in 'The Shop' on Main Street. It can also be bought on-line through Amazon.com and directly from their Facebook page – 'The Story of My Life 50 year diary'. Well done to all concerned.

## Awakening 2016

Our students were invited to be part of the Awakening 2016 which took place in Breaffy Arena on Thursday, 5th May. 389 students from 12 post-primary schools took to the stage to perform at this concert of contemporary and church music. All the proceeds raised were donated to Pieta House. This event took place at the start of a very important weekend for Pieta House with the Darkness into Light walks taking place across the country.

The young people were so impressive in so

many ways and the 30 students from BCS were an absolute credit to themselves and our school and they helped to make Awakening a night no one will ever forget. Well done in particular to Ms. Siobhan Devine who prepared these students in learning the songs for the concert. It was with pride that Ms. Devine watched her former students, Ms. Siobhan McHugh and Ms. Maura McHugh, conduct the choir on the night; while not forgetting another former student, Fr. John Kenny, who was MC for the evening. It was a proud evening for Ballyhaunis CS present and past students.

*Ms. Orla Macken*

## 1916 Commemorations

As part of the Ireland 1916 commemorative programme, schools across the nation celebrated the centenary of Easter 1916. 100 years ago heroic civilians sacrificed their lives for the independence we have today.

**THE PROCLAMATION OF**  
**Ballyhaunis Community School**

**TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.**

We the pupils of Ballyhaunis Community School are proud to stand here today in 2016 as citizens of the Republic of Ireland. We remember the past generations who sacrificed their lives and fought for our freedom. This bravery has inspired us at Ballyhaunis Community School to play our part in forming an equal Ireland for future generations. Even though we have achieved so much over the past 100 years, we still have a long way to go.

**These are our aspirations for Ireland for the next century:**

It is our wish that Ireland will stop losing its people to emigration, let us bring home our emigrants and work together to ensure that our country can provide everyone with the highest opportunity to reach their full potential.

We believe that everyone should have a place to call home, somewhere they can feel safe with a roof over their heads. We want homelessness to stop and to ensure that nobody is hungry.

We demand a better healthcare system in our country and pledge to end hospital waiting lists and provide quality care for everyone both young and old. We aspire to protect and cherish our elderly and ensure they feel valued in our society.

We as students believe that the children of Ireland deserve the best education possible. In this great nation that was once known as 'The Land of Saints and Scholars'. May we encourage talented people within our country to fulfil all their hopes and dreams.

We believe that everyone is equal – young and old, male and female, strong and weak, rich and poor regardless of race or religion. Everyone must be treated equally and given the same opportunities. We want everyone to be accepted and included in our society just the way they are, as we are all unique and individual.

We reach out to our fellow Irish people across the world and we ask you to unite with us in protecting and developing our Irish culture, language, dance and music, as we pass on these traditions to future generations.

We also feel a great responsibility in caring for the environment, we as Ireland's stewards must help to stop climate change. All of us need to act now to protect our planet for future generations.

One hundred years ago, men, women and children of 1916 had many dreams of the future of our country. Their passion, determination, and love of country allowed them to take the first steps in the establishment of the great nation of Ireland that we know today. Thanks to their sacrifice we now can negotiate with other countries if we have a problem. We don't need to act through violence anymore.

We must abide by the legacy left behind by our ancestors and ensure that Ireland will be a place of peace, equality and justice for all.

**Signed on behalf of the 2A history class 2016.**

RACHEL DILLON	TARA COYNE	EGIS ARAVICIUS	AOIBHE COGGINS	DARREN MAUGHAN
HOLLY BROWNE	FIONA CRAWLEY	WINNIE ALLEN	GRAINNE DELANEY	CLODAGH CONWAY
AARON DEE	GRAINNE BYRNE	SOHEAB ARSHAD	GILLIAN DONNELLAN	ALI SAKKAR
GRAINNE COLLINS	EIMHIN CONBOY	SAHAR ARSHAD	DANIEL COYNE	KYLE COOKE
MOLLY CURRAN	AOIFE CARNEY	CLODAGH BYRNE	LILLY RIDLEY	MARY CARR
				MATTHUE MULLARKEY



Fortunately for us, we were born into a free and equal state. On the 15th of March 2016 we had the privilege to gather together as a school community to celebrate those who risked their lives for our freedom.

We are so lucky to have a student body enriched with many talented traditional Irish entertainers who performed for us on the day. We had performances from the All Ireland winning Aghamore set dancers, and also Ellen Phillips, Lauren Osgood-Daly, Gaby Murphy and Eleanor Harrison who played a tune on our national instrument, the harp. Transition year students put together an insightful presentation on 'Ballyhaunis and the 1916 Rising', while two Leaving Certificate students, Laura Mulkeen and Eoin Morris recited the poem 'Easter 1916' by W.B. Yeats.

We were also joined by a local history enthusiast, Joe Byrne, who gave a very enjoyable and informative talk on the rising.

The class of 3B recited the Proclamation of the Irish Republic as read by Padraic Pearse on the steps of the G.P.O in 1916. This was followed by the new Proclamation of Ballyhaunis Community School. This was composed and read by the class of 2A. It was based on the original Proclamation, but adapted to the ideals and values of 2016.

Our celebrations continued with a brief history of our tricolour by Chloe Ryan. This was followed by the raising of the flag by two senior student council members, Claudia Glavey and Padraic Duffy. Our

commemorative afternoon came to a close with the entire school body rising and proudly singing our national anthem, 'Amhrán na bhFiann'.

*Shauna Murray, Joanne Coffey and Chloe Ryan*

### A Tribute to Concepta Moran

Tributes can be difficult to construct. Essentially you are attempting to sum up a person's life or career in a few short words and it is nigh on impossible to do them justice in such a fashion. Add into the mix a person who eschews such platitudes in her own life and would be aghast at the notion of a tribute and you have a very difficult assignment. So Concepta if you are reading this, my apologies but the occasion could not pass without recognising your immense contribution to BCS for over two decades.

Concepta arrived in BCS in 1993 as a teacher of Maths with a background in Special Educational Needs. Concepta was a teacher of considerable talent and insisted on high standards and ensured that all students were afforded the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their ability level. When she moved into the role of Deputy Principal in 1999 and assumed the responsibility of timetabling she brought the very same values to this pivotal role. Resource hours were always properly distributed and the student's interests were paramount in her thinking.

In more recent years as teacher allocations came under increased stress due to severe cutbacks, Concepta's skills were truly tested but she was never found wanting. Each year she produced a timetable which invariably ran smoothly but it was always a timetable that protected the more vulnerable students. I have no doubt in my mind that many students graduated from BCS during her time as DP having achieved positive outcomes that can be directly related to Concepta's commitment to serving all students irrespective of ability. This is a profound legacy and it is one that Concepta can justifiably be proud of.

Concepta's organisational skills and attention to detail are second to none. A large bustling school such as BCS



Ballyhaunis Community School choir who took part in Awakening 2016.

Back, L-R: Jack Deegan, Diarmuid Keane, Sean Doyle, Peter Buozaki, Evan Fitzmaurice, Liam Foody, Grainne Robinson, Gabrielle Murphy, Aoife Nolan, Sive Duffy. Front row: Aaron Dee, Eimhin Conboy, Eleanor Harrison, Aoibheann Gallagher, Courtney Mulhall.





Members of the cast of "Popstars of the 90's" in full voice!

requires a huge amount of regulating and one must have their finger firmly on the pulse. I must confess that Concepta made it look very easy. Everything was anticipated, problems were solved before they arose and the school operated like clockwork. Teachers trusted her and they were allowed to go about the most important business in any school, teaching and learning, safe in the knowledge that all extra and co-curricular activities were catered for and everything would be as it should be.

Concepta has a terrific facility to absorb and retain information. Though not from the area, she built up an encyclopaedic knowledge of Ballyhaunis, its hinterlands and its peoples. She used this information wisely and compassionately. Her position as DP allowed her to be privy to information about families that may be having some issues or difficulties. I know at first hand of interventions that Concepta made to assist these people to ensure that people were cared for and they were looked after. These acts of kindness and generosity were done in a way that didn't attract any attention and Concepta would have it no other way.

Concepta possesses an irreverent sense of humour which brightened up even the most arduous day. Renowned for speaking her mind, she had a quick wit that often defused a stressful day or occasion. She never took herself too seriously and was always quick to find humour in a situation. This was an invaluable gift in what is a highly pressurised role and it allowed her to operate at a high level for her 15 years as DP.

When I took up the role of Principal in the summer of 2013 Concepta was an invaluable support to me. As

outlined above she had a comprehensive range of tasks but she was never too busy to offer advice and her judgement was rarely off the mark. I would like to take the opportunity to thank her for her support and to wish her the very best of health and happiness in the years to come. I have no doubt that with Concepta's fondness for travelling and touring it will be a very active retirement!

*Mr. David McDonagh*

### **"Popstars the 90's" – Musical**

This year the senior students of BCS got the opportunity to showcase their talent when we performed the hilarious comedy "Popstars the 90's". It was boyband versus girlband in this hilarious new musical produced by David Spicer. Packed with pop smash hits from the 90's, songs like "Hit me baby one more time" by Britney Spears and "Saturday Night" by Whigfield all made an appearance and got everybody up on their feet.

This production was a team effort and it required endless hours of rehearsals from both teachers, students and cast members. Auditions were held in the school music room both during and after school. After much deliberation the lead roles were assigned. Now there was no turning back. Lines were learnt, songs were practised and dance moves were perfected in the weeks that followed. Chorus groups were chosen, dance partners were matched up and that's when the craic really began! Mrs Devine was all hands on deck with afterschool practices to perfect our voices. During rehearsals friendships were consolidated, strong bonds were formed and even some "sparks flew".





As part of their John Paul II Award, BCS students organised a Prayer Service in Knock Shrine for pilgrims in honour of the Year of Mercy.

The weekend before the musical was an overwhelming one, as most of the cast have never set foot on the big stage before. We spent all day Saturday perfecting our voices with our second and third year pit choir who provided harmonies for the three nights our musical was showcased. The highly anticipated dress rehearsal finally arrived on Sunday and at 3 o'clock everyone arrived at the school dressed in character! The dress rehearsal went relatively well but we all realised that we had to pull up our socks to make this musical a success!

We showcased our production on the 19th, 20th and 21st of November for three nights only. All nerves were completely forgotten about and the shows were a huge success. There wasn't a spare seat left in Ballyhaunis on these three nights. We got a brilliant response from the audience every night and everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy the production!

We would like to thank the backstage crew, and everyone who helped to produce this musical. We would especially like to thank our music teacher Mrs. Devine, director Mrs. Henry and chorographer Hazel Llyod; without their encouragement, drive and dedication this musical would not have been a success!

*Aoibheann Gallagher, Orna Hession  
and Róisín Hussey*

### **Our Year of Mercy Pilgrimage**

As part of the John Paul II awards, we organised a prayer service in honour of the Year of Mercy. This project was part of our Papal Cross Award. Firstly, we decided on a suitable theme, and proceeded to arrange

the prayer service according to this. We chose prayers relevant to the theme of Mercy and allocated students from our school which had volunteered to read at our prayer service. We then, with the help of our music teacher, put together a collection of music that was sung by our school choir and other volunteers. We brainstormed ideas as to how we could make our prayer service unique and important to us, which is when we had the idea to use the letters of "Year of Mercy" to spell out significant meanings for people to take into consideration during this special year of mercy. For this, we asked our woodwork teacher, Mr Quinn, for help as to how we would go about making the signs. Another idea we came up with was to use stones as a symbol of people's burdens to carry with them during the pilgrimage to Knock. The significance of this was for the pilgrims to be able to leave their worries and troubles in the sacred space in Knock and for them to leave worry free and refreshed. In order to make these stones distinctive we painted red and silver crosses on the stones. Finally, we travelled to Knock the evening before the prayer service to set up the sacred space in the Blessed Sacrament chapel.

We thoroughly enjoyed this project and feel we benefitted immensely from it. It was a great opportunity for us to have ownership of the prayer service and we got to choose the readings, music and the artwork and make it appealing to people our age. We would like to thank Fr. Farragher, Ms. Macken, Ms. Devine and Mr. Quinn for their help with making this project a success.

*Sive Duffy, Megan Morley and Rebecca Finn*



Thurs. & Fri January 23-24  
*William Holden, Edmond O'Brien, Alexis Smith*  
**THE TURNING POINT**  
 The breaking of a gangster syndicate. Dynamite.

Sun. & Mon. January 26-27  
*Norman Wisdom, Jennifer Jayne, David Lodge*  
**ON THE BEAT**  
 Norman the Copper who becomes a "Cropper". Hilarious.

Tues. January 28  
*Charles Laughton, Abbot & Costello*  
**MEET CAPTAIN KIDD**  
 COLOR  
 They're raising Cain on the bounding main. Also: **NAKED GUN**

Thurs. & Fri. January 30-31  
*Jackie Gleason, Katherine Kath, Diane Gardner*  
**GIGAT**  
 COLOR  
 Make a date with one of the greatest comedians. Laughter galore.

PAROCHIAL HALL  
 Cinema  
 Ballyhaunis

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Programme  
 for  
**JANUARY 1964**

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The Management reserve the right to refuse admission and alter the Programme.

All Films shown on Panoramic screen  
 CINEMASCOPE INSTALLED  
 Doors Open 8 p.m.  
 Programme commences 8.30 p.m.

**ADMISSION : 1/6 & 2/3**  
 PERFECT HEATING

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Lyons Printer Ballyhaunis



Above: Micky Webb (right), Robert Burns and 'Mannequin'.  
 Winner of the Oliver Dixon Trophy at the Claremorris Show, August 1974.

Left: 1964 Cinema Card. Courtesy of John Higgins.

Thurs. & Fri January 2-3  
*James Stewart, Maureen O'Hara, Fabian*  
**MR. HOBBS TAKES A VACATION**  
 SCOPE & COLOR  
 Stewart has turned to comedy, and he's good

Sun. & Mon January 5-6  
*Kirk Douglas, Jeanne Crain, William Campbell, Claire Trevor*  
**MAN WITHOUT A STAR**  
 A real stout tough Western.

Tues. January 7  
*David Niven, Mitzi Gaynor*  
**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**  
 Sparkling comedy of married life, and never a dull moment.

Thurs. & Fri. January 9-10  
*Bobby Darin, Sandra Dee, John Lund*  
**IF A MAN ANSWERS**  
 COLOR  
 Tip for the single ladies to get their man. Good comedy.

Sun. & Mon January 12-13  
*Richard Egan, David Farrar, Diana Baker*  
**THE 300 SPARTANS**  
 SCOPE & COLOR  
 Have you heard of "Thermopylae"? This is it. Glory.

Tues. January 14  
*Cliff Robertson, Dolores Dorn, Beatrice Kay*  
**UNDERWORLD U.S.A.**  
 The name is enough for you.

Thurs. & Fri January 16-17  
*Laurence Harvey, Janet Leigh, Frank Sinatra*  
**THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE**  
 Communist brain-washed. It's worth seeing

Sun & Mon. January 19-20  
*Ronald Lewis, Ann Todd, Chris Lee*  
**TASTE OF FEAR**  
 A real thriller detective. See it from start

Tues January 21  
*Sergei Bondarchuk, Zinaida Kirienko*  
**DISTINY OF WAR**  
 War drama. Also: Abbot & Costello



Above: Damien Webb (right) in action for the Mayo Minors versus Roscommon in 1984. Damien, son of Marie and Frank Webb, Devlis, passed away in 1996 aged 29. He is always remembered by his family and many friends.

Left: Tommy Glynn and Tommy O'Malley, taken in Upper Main St., 1980s. Photograph courtesy Tommy Caulfield.





# Go Ballyhaunis

EVAN O'DWYER

Like every town in the West of Ireland we have not been immune to the pressures that the recession has brought over the past ten years. Ballyhaunis has been hurting like everywhere else. We have had to persevere in order to keep our doors open and now that the economy is improving, the question is what do we do to help ourselves? This was the backdrop to the idea that became Go Ballyhaunis.

The story began in Claremorris when Ballyhaunis GAA committee members arranged a very successful white collar boxing evening called Annaghgeddon. The night was hugely successful with the ballroom in the MacWilliam Park hotel full to capacity. It was remarkable to see such a great community spirit that evening. Everybody who was anybody and everybody else turned up that night to support those brave souls who entered the ring to support their local community.

Once that evening was over, it became apparent quite quickly that there was a lot of opportunity for business people in Ballyhaunis and the wider community to start talking to each other in a way that may not have happened for some time and so Go Ballyhaunis was born.

The first meeting of Go Ballyhaunis took place in Gareth Delaney's in Abbey Street on the 29th March 2016. There were forty two people present. This came just as a result of people texting around to see whether we could start talking and whether we could do something to help ourselves, rather than moaning about our plight or looking for hand-outs.

There was a great buzz that evening as the new ideas started to gain momentum. By the end of the meeting we had our now famous logo created. The name Ballyhaunis with the heart, speaks for itself. The colours are that of our own town which all of us know.

Almost at once it became apparent that the best way to talk to each other aside from sitting down and sharing ideas was to embrace social media. A Twitter account was established straight away and many of the businesses in town quickly took to Twitter. We all began to promote each other's wares on social media; momentum gathered very quickly and a Facebook page was also created.

All the participating businesses began to create their own social media presence and everything that we are doing became publicised by other businesses in town. Our banner with the Ballyhaunis logo did the rounds of all of the participating businesses and everybody had their picture taken in front of their business. These photos were then circulated on social media and the whole concept became so popular in such a short space of time that copy-cat ideas began to spring up including



Some local business people attending a Go Ballyhaunis meeting. L-R, from top: Simon Cunnane, Edward Mulligan, Anne McNamara, Fiona McNamara, Anne Cunnane, Evelyn O'Connor, Seamus Caulfield, Gareth Delaney, Evan O'Dwyer, Rosaleen Harrison, John Jordan, Peter McGuinness, Brendan Kelly, Emmett Keane, Peter Feeney, Brendan Grogan, John Higgins, Tom Dillon, Melissa Connaughton, Mary T. Griffin.

in Ballycastle in North Mayo.

The ingenuity of the project caught the imagination and before very long there was national press and media focusing on the town in a way that they had not previously. We had an interview on prime time Newstalk radio to explain what was happening. The *Sunday World* came to town. They explained that their view of Ballyhaunis was the meat factory, the diverse community and in recent years Eddie Murphy. They were delighted to learn that there was much more to the Ballyhaunis story than this.

With kind assistance of Peter McGuinness in Homecare Medical, meetings were held regularly in the training room in Tooraree. As Summer arrived, people were taking off on holidays and the banner began to travel the world. Dónal Byrne of Big Red Barn was seen waving the Ballyhaunis banner in Sydney Harbour, Australia. Ann McNamara proudly displayed it in





The Go Ballyhaunis inaugural Soapbox Derby held during the Ballyhaunis Summer Festival in June 2016.

Lanzarote. Keith Higgins and An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, had their photo calls in Ruislip as Mayo faced London in the first round of the Connacht Senior Football Championship. The greatest coup of all, however, was to have Nathan Murphy from Newstalk Radio hold aloft the Ballyhaunis logo while commentating on the European Soccer Championship Final in Paris this summer.

We have embarked upon an adventurous plan of trying to reinvigorate the centre of town step by step. In order to do this we have teamed up with Fleetwood Paints to improve and use some of the derelict buildings by power hosing and repainting them one by one and thereby lifting the centre of the town and breathing life back into some buildings that have remained shoddy and sleepy for some years. This project is on-going and will continue through the work of volunteers into the future and until it is complete. The opening day of this project coincided with Mayo Day and brought a large crowd to town. Our special logo was created by Clive Connaughton for the occasion.

We also had a very successful Soap Box Derby Day. This was very well received by all of the participants and by the large crowd that gathered in support. The seeds have been sown for a more expanded Soap Box Derby next year as the competition heats up.

There are very many challenges ahead in trying to maintain the momentum that began with such enthusiasm. It is our hope that, as part of the Go Ballyhaunis project, we will continue to have events into the future to make sure that everybody understands that there is more to Ballyhaunis than stereotypes. This is a great town with great people and great businesses that are now finding their voice and helping ourselves to promote all that is good about the town.



Members launch the Go Ballyhaunis logo. L-R: Evan O'Dwyer, Simon Cunnane, Gareth Delaney, Mike Griffin, Pat Ryan.



Nathan Murphy commentating for 'Off the Ball' on Newstalk at the European Championships Final in the Stade de France.



# Gracenotes

MIRIAM JUDGE & LIESEL WARD

So what exactly do we do every Thursday night at practice? We prepare for concerts, competitions and sometimes weddings. We learn harmonies in 4, 6 and 8 parts and of late we have become quite multi-lingual! Our repertoire includes pieces in Russian, Yiddish, French, Italian, Latin, Irish, Spanish, Finnish as well as English – just for a breather!

Again, we have had a busy year which started in September 2015, when we resumed rehearsals. We had short preparation time for our first concert of the year in Clifden's Christ Church during the annual Clifden Arts Festival. In October, we were privileged to be invited to sing at the wedding of our own Helen White's daughter, Annette, in Curry, Co. Sligo.

We took some fun time out of one of our rehearsals to record "Walking On Sunshine" for our very dear past member Marge Hierons who now resides in South Africa, for her surprise 50th celebrations. We sang at the Mass for the Mercy Order in Ballyhaunis Church in November which was a very special occasion. We joined the Abbey Male Choir, Scoil Íosa Choir, Community School Choir and the Parish Choir for this wonderful celebration. Our first competition of the year was in Sligo for the International Choral Festival where we came second in the Four Part Choir Competition.

Sadly, also in November, we lost one of Gracenotes' founding members and wonderful friend, Frankie Ralph O'Malley. She is sorely missed and we think of her often, especially as we head out on stage to perform. We extend our sympathies to her family. May she rest in peace.

Christmas in the Gracenotes calendar was a busy one. We launched our Christmas festivities with our annual concert in the Friary in aid of St. Vincent de Paul. This year we were delighted to be joined by the Abbey Male Choir and Scoil Íosa Children's Choir. We travelled as far as Kilmovee for an intimate Christmas Concert in The Thatch. We hopefully anticipate this year's concerts!

The long nights of January provided us with time to prepare for the Limerick Festival of Church Music. We

were thrilled to be come second to Cappella Lyrica conducted by Maria Judge, aunt of our soprano, Miriam Judge!

In April, we were invited to perform in a concert at Dunmore along with The Galway Gospel Choir, Croí Nua and Dunmore choirs. We were delighted to have to have the esteemed Mark Duley for a vocal workshop. He put us through our paces in his enigmatic style! It was a most enjoyable and wonderful learning experience for us.



Back Row: Agatha Higgins, Sarah Lawrence, Marayde O'Brien, Mairead Quinn, Eimear Thornton, Moira Delaney, Liesel Ward, Geraldine Collins  
Middle Row: Martina Kelly, Leanne Walsh, Xanthe Pratt, Margaret O'Grady, Ita Fahey, Una Shields, Siobhan Coyne, Margaret Monaghan  
Front Row: Anna Henry, Moira Stratford, Tina Kirrane, Bridie Giblin, Ann Lyons, Mary Dawson, Monica Murphy, Maureen Thornton, Mary Hannah O'Connor  
Conductor: Laura Brogan

We travelled south in May to the Cork International Choral Festival. There we took part in both the Female and Sacred Competitions. However, the choral standards were exceptional and we came home empty handed. It must be added that we had a great weekend all the same!

We extend our thoughts and prayers to the families of those that are no longer with us – Jim Keogh, brother of former member Breege Kenny. We also extend our condolences to Agatha Higgins on the death of her beloved father, Jim Clarke. Our special thoughts and prayers are with Olivia Cuniffe on the sudden passing of her baby boy, Rian.

We rounded up our choral year with a fantastic summer party, hosted by our fabulous conductor, Laura Brogan. We truly appreciate all her hard work during the year and for finding unique pieces for us to enjoy.



And a final “note” before Annagh Magazine 2016 goes to press, Gracenotes were awarded First place in the Female Voice Competition at the City of Derry International Choral Festival on October 22nd. We performed 'Agnus Dei' and 'How Do I Love Thee' and were very satisfied with our performance on the day!

### Gracenotes Officers

Chairperson – Moira Stratford; Treasurer – Eimear Thornton; Assist. Treasurer – Anna Henry; Secretary – Laura Brogan; PROs – Miriam Judge & Liesel Ward; Musical Director – Laura Brogan.

Ordinary Committee Members: Geraldine Collins, Mary Dawson, Agatha Higgins, Martina Kelly, Maureen Thornton.

## Kilkelly Centenary Celebration 2016

A Mass was celebrated in St. Celsus' Church, Kilkelly on Saturday, 23rd April to commemorate the members of the East Mayo Brigade, who unselfishly lost their lives fighting for freedom during the Irish War of Independence. Fr. John Maloney, the local curate, gave a beautiful sermon recounting the events of that time and reflected on the death and suffering of the Irish volunteers, who were ultimately fighting for a lasting peace and a United Ireland.

People gathered from all over to mark the 100th anniversary of the Rising and the war that followed. The entire congregation was serenaded by beautiful Irish

music throughout the Mass, performed by the Rattigan, Warde and Maloney families.

Following the Mass, a ceremony was held at the monument at Cloonturk, Kilkelly. Sean Egan delivered a brief history of the Rising and the local people who were involved in the war thereafter. The Tricolour was raised and the Proclamation was read by Seamus Maloney as everyone reflected on those famous words written by doctors, teachers, lawyers, poets, authors and all varieties of learned men and women.

To conclude the ceremony, a wreath was placed at the foot of the monument by Kathleen Moran, a family member of one of the volunteers, and local piper Eugene Henry played “The Men of the West”. The event was a huge success and the work put in to organising it was palpable. Here's to the next hundred years!



Pictured at the Kilkelly Centenary Celebration, L-R: Alex Eaton, Tom Waldron, Anne Eaton, Jimmy Hunt, Seán Egan, Brian Waldron.

### First Holy Communion 1940s

A Ballyhaunis First Holy Communion group, late 1940s

Back, L-R: Tom Freeley (Gurteen), Joseph McGuire (Ballindrehid), Michael Duignan (Cherryfield), John Lyons (Devlis), Michael Cleary (Drimbane). Third row: Jimmy Finn (Carrowkeel), Michael Regan (Clare St.), Liam Baker (Main St.), Willie Biesty (Carrowkeel), Mick Ruane (Curries). Second row: John Morley (Knox St.), Kieran Webb (Fair Green), Tommy Biesty (Pattenspark). Front row: Teddy McMorro (Devlis), Ven. Archdeacon Geoffrey Prendergast, P.P., Hugh Curley (Main St.).





# How Times Have Changed... and most of them not for the better

JAMES HUNT

Some of my earliest memories are of times when people had very little by way of earthly goods and possessions, and in this year of 2016 when we are celebrating the centenary of 1916 maybe we should reflect on how times were sixty years ago.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s there was no electric light, running water, poor housing, very few cars and no machinery to speak of. Everything was done the hard way because there was no easy way and yet people were very content and happy with their lot. They had little money back then but then little was needed as there were no bills because everything you had you owned, and if you could not afford it, you did not have it. The other side of that coin was that few others had much either and yet they were happy.

There was no pressure back then because everyone was laid back and there was plenty of help in rural Ireland. If you can just imagine, there was no hospital bed crisis as very few were sent to hospital as almost everything was taken care of in the doctor's surgery. If you needed hospital back then you stood a very poor chance of recovery. Just imagine, there was no flu vaccines, no antibiotics and people were given very few tablets as they were oft times told they did not need them. People smoked: many were chain smokers and many had a night cap of brandy, whiskey or punch at bedtime. They ate lots of fatty foods and plenty of salt and yet we are told nowadays that such things are very bad for you. There was no word of cholesterol, high blood pressure, and viruses were unheard of, not to

mention depression and being stressed out. Suicide and murder were not at all common place.

People worked long hours saving hay, saving turf and all the other household chores and yet Sunday was a day of complete rest when they visited their neighbours and family friends. They walked to Mass and indeed everywhere else - hail, rain and shine. People back then served their time to whatever trade they chose and they knew the trade inside-out. Serving your time was very important and you did not set up in your trade until you knew your trade. Sons learned from their fathers how to sow, mow and harvest crops, and the ladies in the house learned to bake, sew, darn socks, knit and crotchet and cook and deal with linens and all house clothes.

The older generation had lots of cures for different ailments for their people and livestock. If you think of it there were no computers, mobile phones, very few radios, no TVs or all that we have today. How did they manage? And yet they had time for everyone, and time to relax. Nowadays, despite all we have we are not content and we have so much (maybe too much). How much do we really need? We have washing machines and launderettes and all kinds of gadgets and are we any better off? In those days there were no regulations, penalty points, drink driving ban and very few of the laws we have today. Maybe it is backwards we are going instead of forwards! Think about it. There were no answering machines or [www.this](http://www.this), that or the other, just people with pen and paper anxious to help out. Where has it all gone wrong in so many ways?

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## Ballyhaunis Parish Choir

KAY HEALY

Our choir sings on the first and third Sundays of every month. We are also available, when requested, to sing at Funeral Masses. We also participate in the Broadcast Mass on Midwest Radio. We extend a very warm welcome to three new members who have joined our choir, and would love to see more recruits in the coming months.

To our Musical Director Moira Delaney for her continued and consistent dedication we say a "Mile Buíochas". Sincere thanks to our organists, musicians and soloists, who enhance our performances with their musical talents.

We practice on Monday Nights at 7 o'clock in the

Choir Gallery of St. Patrick's Church. Please come and join us.

On 26th June 2016, we learned of the sudden death of our Chorister and loyal friend Matt O'Dwyer R.I.P. We miss you greatly Matt but we are assured you still enjoy the laughs and camaraderie with your Heavenly Choir. To his beloved wife Geraldine, son Séamus, daughters Máire and Claire and extended family our heartfelt condolences. "In ár gCroithe go Deo."

Chairperson: Michael Kelly; Secretary: Kay Healy; Joint Treasurers: Frances Mulhern and Maureen Thornton; Musical Director: Moira Delaney; Organist: Ludmelia Burcovski.



# Celebrating Forty Years of Major

EIBHLÍN MURPHY

When John and Mark Murphy started manufacturing trailers and buckets in 1976 for their own plant business, little did they know that forty years later, their engineering firm would have expanded into a multi-million pound international business.



Taken at the Ballyhaunis Trade Fair in 1984. John Murphy introducing Major Slurry Tankers to An Taoiseach Garret Fitzgerald TD  
L-R: Garret Fitzgerald, John Murphy (Major), Gerard McGarry, Patrick Murphy, John Dillon, Paddy O'Toole TD, Senator Jim Higgins.

From those small beginnings in County Mayo, their reputation under the Major Equipment banner spread like wildfire. Customers would call and ask them to manufacture specific items and it wasn't long before their manufacturing prowess included cattle handling races and equipment, transport boxes and safety frames, to name but a few. Then in 1979, when EU development funds prompted investment grants for cattle throughout Ireland, there was a growing demand for slurry handling equipment because millions of gallons of slurry were being created from slatted yards following the huge increase in livestock. All this slurry needed handling efficiently. From here in 1984 spawned the now famous range of Major Slurry tankers, seen in many international markets and leading the competition in terms of quality, performance and reliability.

Likewise, in Ireland there was a growing demand for amenity grass cutting machinery for parks, sports fields and leisure facilities and Major developed their own topping and maintenance products that have found favour for many amenity and local authority applications around the world. Today, Major grass-

cutting products have evolved into world-beating specifications in grass cutting and collecting operations globally. There's a saying that the Irish can grow grass better than anyone else in the world and if a machine works in Irish conditions, then it will work anywhere. What a great testament to a manufacturer's testing ground?

Major's Managing Director, John Murphy said, "We have listened to our customers and we have become really good at developing and testing products that stand the test of time. We aim to become bigger and better, and we are focusing on the niche markets that the big boys seem to avoid. Our product acceptance is gaining momentum in the newer markets we are operating in where customers now ask for Major Equipment by name."

2007 brought a change in the company when John bought his brother, Mark's shares, and Mark established the very successful Agrispread with his three sons. Currently, Major Equipment Ltd. has over 300 dealers, the largest market being in the UK. Several new products are under development and the reputation in the ground-care and amenity markets are creating a big demand in local authority and governmental institutions as far away as Australia and New Zealand. In mainland Europe, regional offices have been established to handle sales and service enquiries in a growing market. In the agricultural sector, where Major slurry tankers and application machinery have created a very strong,



Major won the Gold Medal in the Agri-Engineering awards for their Cyclone Mower at the National Ploughing Championships. These awards recognise and reward outstanding innovation in the Irish agricultural sector.

L-R: Julie Sinnamon (CEO Enterprise Ireland), Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD, Eibhlín Murphy, Anna May McHugh (NPA), James Maloney (Irish Farmers Journal).





Major Staff. L-R: Martin Keane, Áine Lecky, Eoin Murphy, Josephine Gallagher, Sue Pierce, John Murphy, Mary Duffy.

competitive reputation, focus is now spreading to other machinery in the Major Equipment arsenal.

One of the challenges faced by Major these days is the recruitment of staff. "It's extremely difficult to get skilled welders and fitters; there is a shortage of these skills in our industry," explained John. "We are also looking for support staff for our European operations, where language skills are key, but these too are difficult to come by," said John.

Major Equipment has become a world player, having

developed a reputation for good, strong, reliable equipment that works and keeps on working. As a testament to this reputation, the Major Cyclone Mower was recently awarded the Agri-Engineering gold medal at this year's National Ploughing Championships Innovation Awards. With a sound focus on design and manufacturing to create the very best products today, just imagine what the company and product range will be like in forty years from now?



Finn Moore on his Christening day with his uncle Patrick and aunts Claire and Michelle, Derrylea.



Finn Moore on his Christening day with his parents Leah and Jonathan Moore, Ballykilleen



# Mayo SPCA 2016

MAUREEN HIGGINS

September 2016 - This morning I met a living skeleton – covered in sores and tormented with mange – barely able to stand. This little dog we've called Saoirse and she was found abandoned. I must also make mention of tiny little skin-and-bone Cara, found dumped on a roadside – petrified and unable even to stand! But in spite of their dreadful condition I know they'll recover because they have been rescued by Marian Biesty and are currently in the care of the Mayo SPCA.

This small Animal Shelter has been in existence for 15 years and during that time has saved the lives of countless cats and dogs, who had been lost, dumped, starved and neglected. Managed and run by Marian Biesty and her team of volunteers, this little branch of the SPCA has only managed to exist at all because of the kindness and generosity of the Biesty family who have allowed it to be accommodated on their farm just outside Ballyhaunis. For all these years they have accepted the comings and goings of dogs, cats, vets, volunteers, rescuers, fosterers and members of the public, either surrendering or hoping to adopt an animal.

The shelter, which has a 'no kill' policy, has grown over the years and now, thankfully, consists of a cattery (currently home to more than 70 cats and kittens and with a waiting list for admittance), six dog kennels, a cat isolation unit, dog treatment unit, kitchen, laundry and small office. There is also an exercise area where puppies (and blind Fawn) can safely run around and play.



Puppies and Kittens in the care of Mayo SPCA

All of this has been achieved with the help of membership fees, various donations, grants, fund-raisers, dog shows, pub quizzes, jumble sales, market stalls, mini-marathon sponsorship etc. and the goodwill of individuals and businesses. However, without the 24/7 devotion and care of Marian and the generosity of her family, there would be no Mayo SPCA. In the course of one year the shelter has taken in and cared for

hundreds of dogs and cats, engaged vets to treat them, fed them, had females spayed and males neutered, groomed animals when needed, provided medication, bedding and toys. The dogs are walked (morning and afternoon), puppies are played with and kittens cuddled!

In the Ireland of today – which is sadly recognised as the 'Puppy Farm Capital of Europe' – the welfare of animals is often of little consideration, and while indiscriminate breeding of dogs and cats is allowed to continue, the plight of hapless animals will continue to be a tragic consequence. Unless more can be done to educate the public about the necessity to spay and neuter, then more and more demands will be made on animal charities which are already stretched beyond breaking point. The future of organisations like the Mayo SPCA lies in the hands of the Irish public and the generosity of those who care and are prepared to share their time and their hearts with those who have no voice.

There are so many people to be thanked and recognised for their part in keeping the shelter running. Without our wonderful fosterers who collect, take in and care for the animals that there is no room for in the shelter, we could not exist. Our thanks go also to the Gardaí and the Dog Wardens for their help and cooperation. Thanks also to the young people – the school children and college students, the transition-year helpers, Foróige Club members and the school Principals that allow us to speak to their classes. Many of these schools independently raise funds for us. Thanks also to the Junior Council and the incredible volunteers who are there day after day – walking dogs, cleaning their kennels, feeding them, caring for them and the cats and kittens, playing with them, entertaining them – giving them back their lives – on behalf of the animals we say THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU and please keep caring.

If there are people out there who would like to find out more about the Mayo SPCA, or who would like to help in any way, please go to our website which is [www.mayospc.ie](http://www.mayospc.ie), check us out on Facebook or contact us by phone: 086 8032592. You will be made very welcome!





# Mary Monaghan Celebrates her 100th Birthday

JOSEPH BYRNE

Mary Monaghan was born Mary Ruane on the 23rd of September 1916 in the village of Moate, Ballyhaunis. Daughter of John and Mary Ruane, she was eldest sister to Bridie, Josephine, Gertrude and John Pat Ruane. In August 1949 she married Andrew Monaghan whom she met through a friend who had married Andrew's cousin Pa Mannion. Mary left Moate and moved to Andrew's village of Blain, Esker, Athenry, Co. Galway where they farmed the land together until Andrew's passing in 1992.

Mary took a keen interest in all agricultural matters and, to this day, she is still Honorary Vice President of the Athenry Agricultural Show. She was also involved in the ICA for many years and has been to An Grianán many times with other members. Many examples of her craftwork are still in her home.

Mary has been a lifelong member of Fianna Fáil attending umpteen party meetings down through the years. During one of the recent cold winters Mary moved to Lavallyroe to live with her late sister Gertrude Loftus. Mary now resides in the Ave Marie Nursing Home, Tooreen, where she has no shortage of company with a number of her nieces and nephews living in the area.

All of her family members, from Ballyhaunis and Athenry, and many friends gathered at the Ave Marie Nursing Home on Saturday, 24th September, to celebrate Mary's 100th Birthday. The party was a wonderful occasion, and Mayo Deputy Dara Calleary, Fianna Fáil, was in attendance to present Mary with the President's letter and cheque to mark her milestone birthday.



(Top) Dara Calleary T.D. presents Mary Monaghan with the Presidential letter and cheque marking her 100th Birthday.

(Centre) Mary Monaghan with her nieces, nephews and families.

Back, L-R: Patricia Loftus, Clare Byrne, Eamon Ruane, Helen Byrne, Paddy Ruane, Margaret Forde, Sean Ruane, Mary Cleary, Michael Carroll, Laura Brogan.

Front: Christina Ruane, Joey Joyce, Mary Monaghan, Áine Joyce, Ciarán Joyce, James Brennan, Michelle Cleary.

(Right) Mary Ruane and Andrew Monaghan, on their Wedding Day in 1949.





# Seasonal Work as a Domestic

MARY KILROY

*It has been about three years now since I began transcribing my grandmother's letters. The letters from her (Mrs. Onnie McGuire, Gurrane) and other family members were saved in a non-descript box since my mother's (Delia A. McGuire) leaving in 1924. Somehow they survived intact despite all the many moves that our family experienced. Within the family there was a certain amount of reverence accorded to the contents of the reliquary.*

*What follows is a narrative that includes the letters following my mother's history of employment and her budding relationship with my father. I was quite surprised to come upon the former, suggesting my mother must have been coached by a mentor to save those letters of recommendation.*



Ma and Dad in their early courting days, enjoying some leisure time of a Sunday.

In the short window of about six years from when she landed on the 'Shores of Milk and Honey' until she began her courtship with my father, my mother undergoes a radical shift in her relationship to work. No longer is it the heavy, back-breaking, stooping, hauling, toiling in the fields; her life as a domestic is full of make-believe, far removed from the frivolity of the Roaring Twenties and the time of the Great Depression when the rest of the country was barely eking out a daily existence; her life was full to the brim self-absorption.

She did, however, have a plan on how she would set in motion two important major capital outlay projects. One that she spoke of often was a donation to her local parish church, in Logboy. A letter of appreciation, dated

8<sup>th</sup> Apr. 1930, follows from Fr. Patrick Ruane, Curate at the time.

*My Dear Miss McGuire,  
I wish to apologise for my neglect in answering your letter and thanking you for your Contribution to Logboy Church. Well! I sincerely thank you and pray that God may reward you and make your future prosperous. Hope you are very well. Again renewing my sincere thanks. I wish you success and ever blessing.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Patrick Ruane*

The gift was to be used to purchase a statue of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in memory of her beloved father who was taken in 1918. A small plaque remains at the base of the statue on the left side of the altar at St. Mary's to this day. She also had a tall Celtic cross erected in his memory in the Friary Cemetery in Ballyhaunis. There is a note of permanence as she creates these two memorials to her father who was taken so young from his growing family and whose family at the time of his passing lacked the means to erect any type of memorial in his honor.

My mother, Delia A. McGuire, at the age of almost 16 years, arrived in New York from Gurrane, Ballyhaunis, aboard the *Laconia* on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1924, where she was met (it is assumed) by her first cousin Marian Waldron. During the next ten years she will find employment among the many families of old and established wealth.

Within the container of saved letters are ones of recommendation and others requesting her services. I have included a sampling of each and some background information about the authors, including the following, written from 391 Marlborough Street, Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> 1927.

*Dear Delia,  
I hope you are having a satisfactory summer and have enjoyed the sea-bathing as much as you anticipated. Now I hope you are planning to come back to me by October 1<sup>st</sup> which comes on a Saturday. Of course, I do not wish to inconvenience Mrs. Seeberger and if this date should make any difference in her plans you will write and tell me and I am sure we can arrange satisfactorily to suit both of us. You will be pleased to know that the entire house has been cleaned and now we are getting ready for the winter season.*

*Let me hear from you soon  
Sincerely yours  
S. A. Mason –*



S. A. Mason was an elderly single woman from a very wealthy paper-manufacturing family. She was in her late eighties when she employed my mother for the winter season, negotiating directly with my her regarding her employment availability. Miss Mason had spent most of her summers travelling abroad away from the oppressive summer heat of the city. The Mrs. Seeberger mentioned above was the wife of a Chicago real estate developer. The family summered on Cape Cod, MA, at Pine Winds in 1927 and Bourne in 1929. Mrs. Louis A. Seeberger of Pine Winds, Brewster on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, wrote a character reference for my mother, dated Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> 1927:

*Delia Mc Guire has been employed in our summer home since May nineteenth as second maid. She is an excellent waitress, quiet, quick and observing, and a neat parlormaid. She adapts herself quickly to new surroundings, and has a reliable memory. She is intelligent and refined, willing and respectful, and invariably courteous.*

*Gertrude B. Seeberger*

The 1928 Brookline, MA street directory finds my mother living at 56 Walnut Place working as a domestic in the home of Dr. and Mrs. Reginald Fitz. Here is a reference from Mrs. Fitz, of 'The Mountain, Manchester, Massachusetts', dated Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup> 1929:

*Delia Ma guire has been in my service for two years. First as a second maid, and for the last three months as parlor maid and waitress. She is an excellent worker, clean, thorough and neat, quiet, and honest.*



My grandmother Onnie McGuire in the field across from her home in Gurrane.

Another request for my mother's services during the winter season came from another wealthy matron – Mrs. Matilda Sargent Wiley, of Forest Avenue, Swampscott, Massachusetts. She had previously employed my mother during the winter, as the reference to her children, Jim and Betty implies. But as the address on the envelope suggests my mother is already working for the Tylers in what would become for her a year-round position.

*Miss Delia Mc Guire*

*Care of Mr. F. B. Tyler*

*255 Clinton Rd.,*

*Brookline, Mass.*

*September 22, 1930*

*Dear Delia –*

*I am writing to see if you will come back to me for this winter. I wrote to you about two weeks ago care of your friend Mrs Byrne in Dorchester but as I had not heard from you I called her on the phone to day and she gave me your address.*

*Jim is at school so Betty and I will be alone and we would like so much to have you with us again –*

*I am going in to the apartment a week from tomorrow Sept. 29, and Betty and I would both love to have you come back to us if you care to. You can write me a letter.*

In 1930 Mrs. Sargent Wiley lived in the family summer home on Forest Avenue in Swampscott, MA. Mom's first cousin Margaret Morley became Mrs. Sergeant Wiley's maid in 1930 when my mother took the full-time position with the Tylers.

### **Tyler home**

It appears that my mother's employment with the Frederick B. Tyler family at 255 Clinton Rd. in Brookline, MA was a period of consistency from 1930 to 1934. The family was at the height of their prosperity and their home was on a quiet residential street in a suburb of Boston. The family business was in the wholesale fruit provisions market.

In the summer of 2015, I made it my business to locate the house where my mother spent her longest tenure of employment. It was a warm summer's day and, after snapping a few photos of the exterior house, I noticed a car in the driveway and decided to knock on the opened screen door. I introduced myself to the current owner, Susan, and told her of my project. I was interested in walking in the footsteps of my mother, as she might have moved in the space 90 years previously.



Susan graciously offered a grand tour of her high-ceilinged voluminous home. It was effortless to imagine my mother moving in and around the spacious rooms serving, cleaning or tending the four working fireplaces. I was really curious about where the help's rooms were and what they looked like. Since the outside gave evidence of dormers on the third floor, that is where the rooms were located for the help, with a tub holding center stage in the large bathroom. Susan showed me where a back staircase that led to the kitchen was uncovered during a renovation of a second floor shower stall.

I mentioned the composition of the Frederick Tyler family to Susan as we were winding up my visit. We were in the kitchen and I mentioned that there were three sons in the family and within the cache of family letters was a note from a grateful young boy thanking my mother for sending him a batch of brownies when he was away at camp. Susan eyes lit up and she left the room to return offering me a brownie that she had baked the day before! A totally awesome synchronistic moment coming full circle to an unexpected walk in an archival moment. Here is that letter from Philip, the eldest of the Tyler boys, written at 'Pasquaney', Bridgewater, New Hampshire, August 15<sup>th</sup> 1932:

*Dear Delia,*

*I am terribly sorry not to have written sooner to thank you for the wonderful birthday cake and brownies. It was awfully nice of you to send them both to me, especially for my birthday. We are having a great time up here this summer. Teddy and Roger are getting along just grand and like camp very very much. Ted has gone out on a camping party and will not be back until Friday. Hope everything is going well at home.*

*Best to you,*

*Phil*

It's a few days after my tour and I can't escape thinking of my mother's approach to her new home beginning her time with the Tylers. Accompanied by her first cousin Mary Waldron she would have entered by the back door. The Fitzmaurice sisters would have anxiously anticipated her arrival and would have the teapot scalded to make a fresh cup of tea for the company. Just imagine my mother finishing her drop of tea and being given the tour of her new workplace. Used to living in a sparse cottage in Gurrane, at 255 Clinton Rd. she must have been dazzled by the number of rooms with 14 foot



"Pine Winds", Brewster, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where my mother worked in the summer of 1927.

ceilings. It must have taken her days to create a mental map of the living space.

It was in the Tyler family home that my mother was the newest member of the help. The other two were sisters, the Fitzmaurices – Katherine aged 26 and Josephine aged 24 at the time of the 1930 U.S. census. The sisters were also from Mayo, about fourteen miles north-west of Ballyhaunis, from the town of Kiltimagh, which was also only ten miles or so from Derrymore on the Knock Road, where my mother's Aunt Delia and her oldest daughter Mary Waldron came from. It would appear that cousin Mary may have handpicked the older Fitzmaurice sister when the former was ready to leave the Tyler household to create her own home and family in Medford, MA. Mary was also my mother's sponsor in coming to the States. Timing is everything in life, or so the saying goes!

It would appear, by all accounts, that my mother was very happy during this period of the twenties and the very early thirties, as time moved along. It was in late winter, March 1930, when Auntie May was allowed to enter the country. She had her character letter from the local parish priest since 1929, but because of the state of the economy in the U.S. at the time, the number of immigrants allowed in was drastically cut. The reunion of the two sisters must have been a joyous one for both. Maybe in some way, with her sister here, my mother may have felt more secure in her own person, secure enough to begin what would become a lengthy friendship.

#### **By the sea**

The summer holidays at the beach must have fulfilled a great longing of my mother's to be at the sea. Although



my grandmother spent some holidays at Salthill, Galway in later years, it is hardly likely that the life in Ireland at the time would have allowed my mother any time to be refreshed by the salt air before her crossing. Before I get ahead of myself, let me turn back the clock to those tranquil days in the 'country.' Who wouldn't enjoy summering in the leisurely summer communities, the best vistas the blue bloods could choose?

Those communities where the families spent summers were on the shoreline north of Boston. Families moved their households including the help to summer locations such as Beverly Farms and Prides Crossing, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Ipswich and Marblehead where there were exclusive clubs such as Myopia Hunt Club (Hamilton) and Ipswich Country Club (Ipswich). These seaside oases offered relief from the oppressive heat emanating from the sizzling sidewalks and paved streets in the down-at-the-heels city of Boston.

It is not until the summer of 1931 that there is physical evidence of my mother at Manchester-by-the-Sea. The first saved letters are to my father (James Kilroy) when she writes, *"Hope you are having a good rest and not working too hard."* He is working in the city far away from the cool winds sweeping off the ocean. She continues rubbing salt into the sweaty brow of my father, *"Just to say 'Good Mornin' as I no you will be in dream land when you see this coming in, but I hope you have a good sleep and you sure need it a lot."* She is relentless in letting him know the leisurely way she spends her days. *"You better have a good sleep and come out to supper if you wish and if not why dont you see the horse show with your sister and I will see you after the Mission at the Dance, which is not a very nice place to spend the evening after attending the Mission."*

### Courtship

The help, donning their summer uniforms, would have a more relaxed way of life in the country or by the sea. My mother began dating my father in and around 1930. There is correspondence dating back to the summer of 1931. On the back of a postcard she writes, *"Hello J. Just got your welcome letter today. Glad to no you got home safely. It has been very mean hear sence. Just pouring rain. But we are having a fine rest, sleep, eat & rest. Hope you get my letter and hope to hear from you soon. Not a thing new from hear. Love from Delia."* It is not clear whether my father owned a car at this point. If he didn't he would have been able to travel to the North Shore via train leaving from North Station in Boston.

There is a running commentary following these initial notes and cards regarding the state of my mother's spelling. A slight digression might offer a clue. My

father's father died when my father was five years old and his youngest sister Mary was an infant. His older sister Delia, barely a teenager herself, had undertaken the journey to the States, having been sponsored by the Archdiocese of Boston to serve as a domestic in one of the many growing Irish parishes serving the burgeoning Irish community in Boston. Conditions in his native Barnacurra, Ballygar were extreme and similar to my mother's own experience of growing up having lost her father at a young age. Both of their mothers were left widows in their early thirties, left to raise their young children on their own. The difference in the two families is that my maternal grandmother had a close relationship with her sister, Aunt Delia, and brother, Uncle John, who were within walking distance of each other and who offered their own children to support their Aunt Onnie. It is not clear whether my paternal grandmother was the recipient of similar familial generosity.

My father's access to formal education might have been limited, but he and his siblings were registered at St. Patrick's National School in Ballaghelea when it was opened in 1896. A law had just been passed in 1891 mandating compulsory primary school education for all children. It took a while for the law to be enacted in the rural areas. According to an article published in *Annagh*, 2012, written by my first cousin John P. McGuire, the McGuires were educated in the National School in Derrylea. I recall a story my father shared about a local priest at Tohergar parish who tutored my father's two older brothers and sister before the school was opened. My father also might have been a self-taught speller or more likely he attended night school programs held in the Boston Public Schools which were created to educate the growing immigrant community.

My mother continues the correspondence in a letter where she describes a leisurely existence in the exclusive haven of Manchester-by-the-Sea, while my father is weathering the grindstone in the midst of the Great Depression in the city.

*My Dear Jim,*

*Jus a line hoping you got home safely to the lovely spot called Roxbury and I hope you are not late or feel too tired. Well I had a very nice time at Celia's house and Jimie came back and took us home at 10:30 P.M. They came in and Celia made tea for her & Jimie we had none. So I stayed at my sisters last night and I had a fine sleep till 12 oclock today. Had a lovely Breakfast at 10 A.M. and went back to bed again till 12 A.M. then got up and had a fine lunch and came back and went to the beach and stayed there till 6 P.M. it was wonderful on the beach today. The water was swell and Peg, Bridie and Briage was there so I was not alone. So*



*I am all dressed for supper now and it is late so I am writing this before I go supper, I expect to meet my Sister and Delia Peg is also going to the Dance*

*Tomorrow I plan to stay in till lunch time and take my supper and stay on the beach till 8 P.M. as I guess that will be the same for the rest of my vacation. So I will draw my letter to a close.*

*With Best Wishes*

*From your friend*

*Delia A. McGuire*

*To James Kilroy*

On the back of another postcard written in July of the following summer of 1932, she writes, "Dear James, I am sure you will think me awful as I did not mail yesterdays card till today. I stayed on the beach till 7:30 last night, It was very warm hear, and I am all ready going down Now it is just 9:30 A.M. everything is fine, hope everybody is well there. Hope Irene is better of her cold. Write soon Love from Delia". Talk about rubbing salt in the wounds of the downtrodden, and she is relentless! The Irene referred to is my father's sister Delia's daughter, Irene Frye. My father lived with his sister for ten years before he got a room of his own in Roxbury, MA.

Auntie May writes from 'the country' – Hale St., Beverley Farms – in June, 1934, to my mother who is already at home visiting with her mother.

*My dear Sister,*

*I hope this note finds you all well as at present I am fine*

*Well Delia I hope you are happie and good to the family and I hope you are enjoying your-self. Well I had a letter from Peg and she is fine She has left the Job and is staying at Medford and is sailing one week from today, so I wrote to her and I will send Mattie a card.*

*I havent heard from Jim since I came down east I guess he is fine, I suppose he finds it hard enough to write to one of us.*

*I also wrote to C. Waldron and invited her down...Well its nice and warm here now I havent gone swimming yet I will be very careful, dont worry. Jimmie is fine and we have lots of fun going for rides I must take some pictures soon, I didnt see Lena yet I will call on her and Bridie some evening. Not a think new from here be good to all and make them happie.*

*Will close for now Celia asked me for your address.*

*With Love to Mother Julia Delia*

*Luke X Mary*

*Love to Martin tell him write.*

It appears from this letter and the many others that were authored by Auntie May that she had her own invented spelling due to her lack of enough years of schooling to make her a proficient speller, just like my mother. Yet the meaning was conveyed and ultimately the goal of all written communication is to convey meaning. The bond that is evident between the sisters is deepening reminding the reader that the sisters shared an inseparable connection bound to their mother that grew and flourished throughout "all their born days," an expression used often by my mother.



Above: Jenna Cunningham, 11 years old from New York, daughter of Gail Cunningham (formerly Garrity) from Cloonacurry, Knock and Joe Cunningham from Lisacul, Ballaghaderreen. Jenna has achieved some amazing dancing results this year including 1st place in her region and 3rd place in the North American Irish Dance Championships. Both competitions had approximately 100 competitors.

Jenna will be competing in the World Championships in Dublin next April and we wish her the very best of luck.

Below: Jenna with her siblings Conor, Liam and Claire Cunningham pictured here in New York proudly supporting Mayo in the 2016 All-Ireland final.





# 'See You At O'Boyle's Hall!'

MICHAEL KELLY

Although it was Christmas Night, a night when most people tended to stay home with their families, a capacity crowd flocked into O'Boyle's dance hall in Manhattan for the first annual ball of the Cavan & Mayo Ladies on Monday, 25th December 1916 (music by Professor Clancy, admission 25 cents). No wonder the popular proprietor of the hall, Anthony O'Boyle, 'wore his most genial smile, highly delighted with the great success of the affair'. Since emigrating from his native Ballyhaunis a decade previously Anthony had done well for himself. Having started off working as a plasterer, he later had success in the liquor business and by 1915 was in a position to take over and manage one of the oldest Irish dancehalls in New York. Thanks to contemporary newspaper reports, we have a window into happenings at O'Boyle's Hall a century ago.

## Mayo's mecca in New York

O'Boyle's Hall, which was located at 446, West 54th Street (between 9th and 10th avenues), had been a popular rendezvous for Irish immigrants for more than two decades. Formerly known as Celtic Hall, its opening back in 1892 was said to have ushered in 'a golden age of Irish music' in New York. When Anthony took it over he revitalised the place. One of the first functions held there under his stewardship was one organised by the Ballyhaunis Girls in April 1915 and it was a big success, judging by a press report: 'Truly, O'Boyle's Hall is, under its new management, the pleasure palace of the West Side. May success ever crown the efforts of the sterling Anthony! Young Mayo has at last found its Mecca, and Mayo in New York will soon be finding its way to Anthony O'Boyle's Hall at West Fifty-Fourth Street'. In November 1915 it was reported that 'important alterations were recently made in the hall for the comfort of its many patrons and Mr Anthony O'Boyle ... has other improvements underway ...'

## Social clubs

There were so many Irish immigrants in New York in those days that they were able to organise their social activities on the basis of county associations and often these were broken down further to groupings at parish and half-parish level, and various combinations of these. Every Saturday, the pages of the Irish American newspaper, *The Advocate*, were brimming with adverts for social events organised by all these groups.

O'Boyle's Hall was popular with immigrants from all parts of Ireland but, not surprisingly, those from Mayo, and especially from districts around Ballyhaunis, tended to favour it. Thus in April 1915, in addition to the function run by the Ballyhaunis Girls, we find that

O'Boyle's Hall hosted the grand annual ball of the Claremorris & Castlerea Social Club, whose president was John Coffey of Carrowbehy. One of the attractions that night was the presence of John's brother, popular boxer Jim Coffey, who was then regarded by many as the best 'white hope' to challenge the dominance of champion Jack Johnson. Next up at O'Boyles in 1915 was the Grand Annual Ball of the Began & Logboy Boys' and Girls' Social Club held on 22nd May and this was followed on Saturday, 19th June, by the 10th Annual Ball of the Hollowell Men's Association (the more familiar spelling today is Holywell). Later in the year the Kilkelly and Aughamore Ladies' Association held their second annual Apron and Necktie Party (these were very popular at the time) on a Saturday night in November while the Ballyhaunis Boys and Girls had their 8th Annual Ball there on Saturday, 20th November. We have some accounts of all these functions from the pages of *The Advocate*.

## Began and Logboy function, 22nd May 1915

According to the advance publicity, the Began-Logboy function was expected to attract crowds from all over the West of Ireland: 'This Saturday night at O'Boyle's Hall will be 'a hummer' for all the boys from Claremorris, Ballyhaunis, Ballinlough, Castlerea, Ballindine, Willamstown, Dunmore, Milltown and every town and village in the province of Connaught will join in the great program of dance music discoursed by Prof. McIntyre's Orchestra at the ball of the Began and Logboy boys' and girls'. This was followed by a promotional ditty:

*Hurrah for the Began exiles  
And the folks from staunch Logboy,  
To-night they'll meet with winning smiles,  
And hearts proud, filled with joy.*

*Roscommon, Sligo, Leitrim too.  
Will join them there, I know.  
With Galway's cohort brave and true,  
To dance with sweet Mayo.*

## Recalling Land War events

According to the reporter for *The Advocate*, the Began-Logboy ball was timed to celebrate the anniversary of a famous Land War event at Logboy some three decades earlier when locals had been mobilised to successfully resist attempted evictions. He wrote: 'Well, on Saturday evening, May 22nd, the Mayo exiles in



Greater New York will gather at O'Boyle's Hall to celebrate, by holding a grand annual ball, the historic day when the men and boys of Began and Logboy defeated the forces of misrule and tyranny. Yes, the fame of Logboy goes back to Land League days when the manly men of that staunch townland nobly defended their homes against the invading army of police and emergency men sent to carry out the evictions, and well did the sons of Began aid their neighbours in resisting the sheriff's army of home destroyers on that eventful occasion'.

He finished off his promotion of the Began-Logboy ball with the following appeal: 'Come and hear some of the old veterans of this famous battle tell the story of the people's victory; come and enjoy yourselves dancing with the jolly Mayo boys and girls, who will trip the light fantastic to the great programme of Irish and American dance music discoursed by McIntyre's Irish Volunteer Band. See the Began and Logboy dancers go through the four- and eight-hand reel; hear the "Connaught Man's Rambles" played on the pipes by a Ballyhaunis man. Come and listen to a lad from Claremorris sing about the "Logboy billy goat and the Peelers."

#### Eyewitness to eviction attempt

The reporter in question, almost certainly, was John P. Raftery (1875-1952), a regular commentator on Irish social events for *The Advocate* at that time. A native of The Square, Claremorris, he was a staunch Nationalist and in later years, as the regular Chicago columnist for *The Advocate*, he often recalled the Land War era. Even though he would have been only a teenager at the time it seems he was an eyewitness to some of the Logboy events, as he recalled in 1944: 'It is 50 years or more since a number of evictions were to take place in a place called Logboy, County Mayo. Daniel Crilly was then South Mayo's representative in the British Parliament. The evictions never took place and thereby hangs a story that never has been told in its interesting entirety. I had a small job to do on that day and it worked out as a pal and myself figured it. We might have committed murder, but it did not turn out that bad, yet it surprised two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary and they never could tell how it happened. I wonder if there are any of our Mayo Irishmen in New York or elsewhere who remember the Logboy evictions attempt, or how the several hundred police that left Claremorris never reached Logboy on that occasion?' Sadly, he does not enlighten us further. After that digression in history, let's go back to O'Boyle's Hall in 1915.

#### New dance crazes

In common with most New York dance venues of the day, O'Boyle's had two halls operating on dance night, one for Irish music and one for American music. The

Began-Logboy ball was deemed a success, according to *The Advocate* the following week: 'Even though the weather was inclement a good crowd of Connaught folk made merry at the affair in O'Boyle's Hall on Saturday night. Professor James M. McGrath, who is now supplying the music for this Hall, had an excellent program on tap and all the boys and girls enjoyed themselves tripping the light fantastic. There was plenty of Irish and American dancing to suit all present and everything went off in good shape'.

**GRAND ANNUAL BALL  
OF THE**

**Began & Logboy Boys & Girls  
Social Club**

**At O'BOYLE'S HALL,**  
446 West 54th St. (formerly Celtic Hall).

**SATURDAY EVENING, May 22.**

**Musical by PROF. MCINTYRE.**

**Tickets, Including Wardrobe, 25 Cents Each.**

**OFFICERS**—J. Duffy and Miss M. McGuire, Presidents; T. McGuire and Miss M. Curran, Vice-presidents; P. Fitzmaurice and Miss D. Morley, Treasurers; T. Murphy and Miss M. Fitzmaurice, Rec. Secys.; J. Carney and Miss D. Byrne, Cor. Secys.; J. McGuire and Miss S. Carney, Fin. Secys.; D. Murray and Miss N. Byrne, Sergt.-at-Arms.

**TRUSTEES**—B. Finn and Miss D. Feely, M. Mullins and Miss M. Creighton, J. Fitzmaurice and Miss D. Carney, J. Murphy and Miss M. Mullany.

**ARRANGEMENT COMMITTEE**—T. Boyle, Miss W. Murphy, P. Mullins, Miss E. Lyons, M. McGrath, Miss E. Carney, J. Mullins, Miss D. Murray, J. Prendergast, Miss M. Flatley, P. Costello, Miss M. Cunnane, P. Comber, T. Cooney, Miss P. Murray, Miss K. McGrath, J. O'Boyle, Miss K. McHugh, M. Mullens, Miss A. Boyle, F. O'Boyle, Miss M. Robinson, T. Carney, Miss M. Nixon, P. Niles, Miss M. Glynn, P. Norton, Miss K. Touhy.

Advert for Began and Logboy function, 22nd May 1915

The reporter went on to comment on the dancing: 'One of the pleasing features of the night was the dancing of the eight-hand reel by the Young Mayo Dancing Class. There were also some good novelty dancers present who gave a first class exhibition of the latest thrillers in fantastic evolutions. The "Adriatic fandango" is the newest stunt in modern Terpsichorean art, and this will be one of the magnetic attractions at the Tyrone Ladies' shirtwaist and novelty dance to be held this Saturday night at O'Hara's Halls, No. 125 West 100th street. The "Buckowina glide" and the "Carpathian hop" are also among the latest sensations. Both of them were done justice to on Saturday night by the famous Keltimagh novelty team, who will make their next appearance at the Tyrone ladies' affair this Saturday evening'. ('Tripping the light fantastic' and 'the Terpsichorean art' were phrases commonly used by journalists – and understood by their readers! – to refer to dancing).



### Holywell function, 19th June 1915

The Holywell function got less coverage but an advertisement for the event gives us the names of the organisers. According to *The Advocate*, 'this will be a great rally of the friends from Hollowell, notwithstanding that it is midsummer. O'Boyle's Hall is a cool place on summer evenings and the boys and girls can enjoy themselves in the merry dances without any discomfort'. Not surprisingly, Anthony O'Boyle rendered them every assistance to ensure the success of the function. After all, many of them hailed from his own native district of Carrowkeel and his brother James was president of the Association.

**TENTH GRAND ANNUAL BALL**  
**OF THE**  
**Hollowell Men's Association**  
**TO BE HELD AT**  
**O'BOYLE'S HALL (Formerly Celtic Hall),**  
**446 West 54th Street.**  
**SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 19.**  
**Music by OUR FAVORITE.**  
**OFFICERS—James O'Boyle, Pres.; Michael Regan, Vice-pres.; Patrick**  
**Mullaney, Treas.; Stephen Flynn, Secy.; John Fitzmaurice, Rec. Secy.; Jos.**  
**Kane, Floor Mgr.**  
**ARRANGEMENT COMMITTEE—Peter McPadden, Peter Carroll, Wm.**  
**Morley, Stephen Tormey, John Bestey, Michael McGrath.**

Notice of Hollowell ball, 19th June 1915.

### What became of O'Boyle's Hall and its proprietor?

O'Boyle's Hall remained a popular dance venue for several years afterwards. In the spring of 1917, for example, *The Advocate* reported: 'This season, O'Boyle's Hall ... has proved to be one of the most popular Irish resorts for social affairs. Every night in the week there is a party, a social or a benefit going on there'. In those pre-Welfare State days, anybody who fell on hard times had to rely on social solidarity to tide them over, and so benefit functions were a regular occurrence at O'Boyle's.

By 1922, local groups from the Ballyhaunis district were still gravitating towards O'Boyle's Hall. On 16th December of that year the First Annual Dance of the Began and Logboy Men was held there with music by the famous American-born piper, Tom Ennis (1888-1931). A special feature on the night was a 'hornpipe and reel exhibition' by prize-winning dancer Miss Helen Charles, a recent arrival from Claremorris. She had performed at the same venue a week previously, with Ennis again providing the music. Her talent had been

spotted by Anthony O'Boyle himself when he saw her dancing aboard ship on his way back from a visit to Ireland at the end of October. Anthony O'Boyle seems to have relinquished control of the Hall to Tom Ennis soon afterwards. In 1923 it became known by the rather unwieldy title of 'Tom Ennis' Pleasant Hour Hall (formerly O'Boyle's) but the name later reverted to the old name of Celtic Hall.

Anthony Owen Boyle was born on 20th November 1879, one of twelve children of Anthony Boyle (1851-1916) and Cecelia Regan (1852-1922) of Knockroe, Ballyhaunis. He had arrived in New York in 1906 (the surname form 'O'Boyle' seems to have been adopted in America). By 1922, when his widowed mother died, eight of the family were in the US.

Taking stock of the year 1916, Anthony and his family would have regarded it as one of mixed emotions – there had been two family weddings and a family bereavement that year. The weddings were in the first half of the year. His sister Margaret got married on Sunday, 30th April, just as news was filtering through of the revolutionary events in Dublin the previous week. A fortnight later it was the turn of Anthony himself to 'take the plunge'. On Wednesday evening, 17th May, at St. Peter's Church in Yonkers, he married Mary Ellen

McHugh. His brother, James, was best man. Given his profile in Irish social circles, Anthony's wedding got some press coverage: 'After the marriage ceremony the happy couple, escorted by a host of friends, motored to their new home at 434 West Forty-eighth street, New York, where Professor McNamara played the wedding march amid showers of rice and congratulations'. Two months after his wedding Anthony got the sad news from home of the death of his father, aged only 64.

Anthony O'Boyle himself died in New York in May 1928 after a period of illness. He was only 49 years old. He was survived by his wife and six young children and his seven siblings. The funeral cortege from St. Peter's Church to St. Mary's Cemetery, Yonkers, was reported to be the largest seen in that vicinity for several years. Ironically for a man who had hosted so many benefit functions in his time, his own family would soon be the object of one. The following January it was announced that 'plans are being completed for a great big benefit at Four Province Halls in aid of the widow and six small children of the late Anthony O'Boyle of O'Boyle's Hall, 446 West 54th street. A great many patrons of the old-time rendezvous have promised to attend'.



# The Maples Recreational Park

SINEAD FREYNE

The Maples Recreational Park was opened on Friday, 29th January 2016 by Minister of State for Tourism and Sport, Michael Ring, T.D. The facility, located in The Maples housing estate, is a fantastic new space which contains a new double lane Cricket Crease, a Multi-use Games Area and a children's playground. The state of the art facility is designed, managed and funded by Mayo County Council and is open to the entire community free of charge. The whole community is encouraged to use this new space – but not to abuse it!

The background to this development follows an identified need for a cricket practice area and to provide increased inclusive opportunities for participation in the Ballyhaunis area. An application was made by Mayo Sports Partnership to Sport Ireland for Dormant Account funding towards a Community Sports Hub. Funding of €90,000 for the Ballyhaunis cricket practice area was secured following Mayo Sports Partnership's

successful application. Collaboration with the parks superintendent, Peter Gill, of Mayo County Council ensured that the cricket crease, the first of its kind developed by a local authority in Ireland, could be added to the recreational amenities already opened at the Maples in 2015.

Despite the very cold evening there was a large attendance including enthusiastic local children and their parents trying out the new impressive facilities. There was also representatives from Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns, the Family Resource Centre, Fr. Stephen Farragher and Ballyhaunis Parish, Ballyhaunis Cricket Club members of the Pakistani, Indian and Syrian communities, and other community organisations within the town. Also in attendance were members of Mayo County Council, Mayo Sports Partnership, Cricket Ireland and Sports Ireland.



Minister of State  
Michael Ring, T.D.,  
opening The Maples  
Multi-use Games Area.

Knockbrack ladies at Derek and Nicola Walsh's wedding earlier this year. L-R: Kathleen Egan, Anne Lyons, Mary Finnegan, Tina Kirrane, Joan McNamara, Kathleen Cribbin, Agatha Higgins, Mary Walsh, Teresa Grogan, Bernie Lyons, Kay Higgins and Frances Gaffney.





# Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group – Fundraiser 2016

PAULA GROGAN

Believe it or not, it is seven years since our group was formed and a big fundraiser undertaken to purchase the ten defibrillators located throughout our parish, ten outside boxes for each defibrillator, train four volunteers in Instructor Training with the Irish Heart Foundation, and purchase the necessary equipment to demonstrate CPR training classes. Each defibrillator battery has a seven-year life span, so throughout the past number of years, our group has been aware that a big fundraiser would be necessary in 2016 to replace the existing ten batteries.

For our Fundraiser 2016, our Committee agreed to organise a house-to-house collection with a letter delivered to as many houses as possible, explaining the background to our fundraiser and how the existing batteries would become obsolete in the autumn if they were not replaced. We also approached local businesses asking if they were interested in sponsoring the full battery price for one of our batteries. For this sponsorship their business would be advertised at each location where a defibrillator is located, as well as having six members of their staff trained in CPR techniques and in defibrillator use by our four instructors.

Once again, the local community in Ballyhaunis unanimously supported our house-to-house collection and were very generous in their donations to our cause. Our committee would like to thank every household who contributed to our fundraiser, as without this support our group would not be able to operate and provide the services to our community. The local business community also stepped up to the plate and we received many offers wanting to support our cause and offering the full sponsorship cost of a new battery. We also received generous donations from other local businesses and we want to thank them sincerely for their contributions. Our group is very grateful to the local business community for their generosity as we are aware how often they are asked to sponsor/support local community groups' causes, and we all acknowledge how important it is to support our local shops and businesses.

Our instructors held a demonstration in Scoil Íosa National School on their Sports Day in June 2016 to fifth and sixth class pupils. The students were fascinated to hear how the defibrillator located in their school porch works and they participated enthusiastically in the CPR techniques. We want to thank Scoil Íosa, the Principal, Kenneth Dennedy, teachers, Ciara Byrne and Dónal O'Brien and all of the children. The pupils participated in two fundraisers – Jersey Day and a Cake Sale – which helped raise €825, their highest ever sum for a charity cause!



Curley's Totalhealth Pharmacy. L-R: Madeleine Nolan, Mark Curley, Bernie Flaherty, Ned Curley.



Finn Footwear. Paul Finn and Ann Breslin.



Annagh Medical Centre. L-R: Denise Kavanagh, Dr. Glen Lecky, Mary Jo Hora, Dr. Michael Brogan, Ursula O'Grady, Dr. Donal Delaney. Missing from photo, Marian Feeney.

## Thank You

A big thank you to all the people who offered assistance in distributing our letters and who also collected the donation envelopes on behalf of our group.



You helped play a large part in our fundraiser and we could not have done it without you!

We want to sincerely thank two local families in our community who generously contributed the full price of a battery to our Fundraiser 2016 in memory of a deceased family member – ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

Many thanks to St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis who gave very generously to our cause and also thanks to Mary Donnelly in the Parochial Office for secretarial services and advice. Our local Mayo County Councillor, John Cribbin, heard about our Fundraiser 2016 and generously donated grant money to our cause for which we are very grateful. In total, our Fundraiser 2016 raised a fantastic sum of €14,133.50, which was double our target and a great achievement for everyone involved. Our ten defibrillators will now be powered for the next seven years; and the monies raised will help with the insurance, training and maintenance costs of running this invaluable service.

We also received a number of suggestions from local people of possible future fundraising ideas and whilst we undertook our house-to-house collection, businesses sponsorship and school fundraisers for our Fundraiser 2016, we will certainly keep these other ideas in mind for the future. Our group looks forward over the coming months to training many of you in the use of CPR/AED so that if, and when, required, a life may be saved. #POWER OUR DEFIBS

### Sponsors

Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group would like to acknowledge publicly the following for their generous sponsorship towards the purchase of batteries for the ten defibrillators in our area: Annagh Medical Centre, Ballyhaunis GAA Club, Dolores Byrne & Family,



Dawn Meats. L-R: Karen Clancy, Paul Ruane (General Manager), Celine Murray, Denis Canny, Mairead Ganley, Tommy Carroll, Joan Conway, John Collins (Financial Controller), Roger Ryan.



O'Dwyer Solicitors. L-R: Elaine Silke, Caroline Dillon, Laura Conway, Laura Glennon, Evan O'Dwyer, Grace O'Connor, Conor O'Dwyer, Geraldine Henry, Laura Murphy.

Communicare Healthcare Limited, Curley's Total Health Pharmacy, Dawn Meats Limited, Finn's Footwear, Fitzer's Bar, Go Ballyhaunis, Major Equipment Intl. Limited, O'Dwyer Solicitors, Scoil Íosa Primary School, St. Patrick's Church, Western Brand Group Ltd.



Scoil Iosa Primary School. Sixth Class students with Teachers, Kevin Henry, Samantha Cleary and Principal, Kenneth Denny.



## Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group - Fundraiser 2016



Major Equipment International Ltd. Back, L-R: Brendan Farrell, Eibhlin Murphy, Sean Donnelly, Mary Duffy, Alex Kolchanov and Ian Doherty. Front: Martin Keane, Josephine Gallagher, Áine Lecky, Denise McGuire, Susan Pierce and Martin Walsh.



Fitzer's Bar. L-R: Sean Henry, Gary Allen, Ann Fitzpatrick-Allen, Billy Nestor, Rita Madden, Marian Feeney holding Olivia Feeney, Johnny O'Shaughnessy. Front: Lauren, Evan and Mark Feeney.



Communicare Healthcare. L-R: Mark Kelly, Rosaleen Kelly and Michael Kelly.



Ballyhaunis GAA Club. L-R: John Higgins, John Cunnane, Eamonn Phillips, Kealan Kilgallon.



### Active Retirement Association

Members of Ballyhaunis Active Retirement Association  
Back, L-R: Connie Gildea, Celia Lyons, Rosaleen Finnegan.  
Front: Maura Fitzmaurice, Breege Hanley and Kathleen Healy.



# Busy Year for Ballyhaunis Community Council

MARK GODFREY

Excellent work is also being done by the existing active sub-committees of the Ballyhaunis Community Council (BCC), which continues to operate as an umbrella organisation promoting community development. BCC chairman Michael Kelly also welcomes the recent establishment of the new organisation GoBallyhaunis, and hoped for co-operation with the group.

Possible improvements to the town's Parochial Hall are a major focus of the BCC's current work: an engineer's report on the building has been obtained outlining some of the work that needs to be done while BCC has made an application to the EU-funded LEADER programme for funding of potential refurbishment works. This is being done with the cooperation and support of Fr Stephen Farragher. The Community Council has separately participated in public consultation events in Ballyhaunis leading up to the new LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 which allocates a total of EUR11.1 million to County Mayo.

BCC in September hosted a meeting of Community Futures Eastern Network Group, an important county network that also includes the towns of Charlestown, Kilkelly, Swinford and Carracastle/ Rooskey. The collective was set up by Mayo Community Futures (MCF), explains BCC secretary Mary Donnelly. "Under MCF communities come together to work on projects that are common to all, while sharing ideas and maximising resources," she explains.

Two community workshops have been held since late last year to gather ideas and prioritise choices for a Community Futures Action Plan for Mayo which is near completion. Local organisations like the Ballyhaunis Chamber, the Community School and the local Foróige Club have had input into the plan.

The Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns Committee – which also operates under the Community Council umbrella - has meanwhile made significant progress in year two of its three-year plan with flower beds on approach roads completed and work scheduled to commence this year on the construction of a footpath and lighting on Doctor's Road. The Tidy Towns representative on the BCC, Kay Curley has also welcomed a new footpath and lighting installed on Knock Road as far as the GAA pitch – something the Tidy Towns group campaigned for along with Ballyhaunis GAA Club.

Encouragingly, Ballyhaunis was awarded 263 marks in the National Tidy Towns Competition 2015 - an increase of 4 marks on last year. Also, a very successful Good Friday clean-up took place on 25th March, explains Kay. Encouragingly, Clare St this year took

second prize in the Cleaner Community Campaign 'Sweep your Street' competition. Knox Street has been selected for 'Sweep Your Street' 2016, and efforts are being made to improve the appearance of vacant houses and rundown buildings in Upper Main St. On behalf of the group Kay extends thanks to Councillor John Cribbin for his continued support in all their endeavours, to Mike Griffin for his Sunday morning clean-ups and to the RSS workers who help with grass-cutting, and planting and watering the floral displays. Thanks are also extended to Western Proteins for providing colourful flower planters on Clare Road.

Speaking for the Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group, Marie Cribbin – who was also re-elected BCC treasurer - reported that training in the use of the defibrillators is ongoing throughout the year; all instructors have been retrained and Darren Conlon has joined the team of instructors having received full training. A big fundraising drive was held earlier this year to replace batteries for the defibrillators which expired in August. Likewise, businesses in the town have been asked to sponsor a battery in return for training of six members of staff. Also, Scoil Iosa generously agreed to donate the proceeds of a fundraising event in the school.

Also under the BCC umbrella: the ongoing restructuring of the entity which holds the town's historic Augustinian abbey in trust. The Community Council is the vehicle for community representation on both the Abbey Trust and a new Abbey Partnership which will consist of working groups focused on certain aspects of the property. A meeting of the Trust is being planned to formally establish the new Partnership is planned, explains Pat Higgins who represents the Trust on the BCC.

Meanwhile, the Trust has set up a bank account and Facebook page while Vincent Caulfield has been appointed as a project worker to gather and archive historical information about the Abbey where it will be accessible to all. Pat thanks Stephen Grogan and Seamus O'Boyle for their work in securing the future of the Abbey.

If you'd like to contact or be part of Ballyhaunis Community Council please email [ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com)

## We all need a laugh...

*This man went to confession he had been stealing timber from a yard and the priest said to him can you make a novena to which the man replied if you have the plans I have the timber*





4th Mayo Troop Ballyhaunis, Summer 1945. Back, L-R: Paddy Forrie (Assistant Scout Master), Paddy Waldron, Paddy McGuire, Gussie Forrie, Paddy Mulligan, Mickey Gavin, Bertie Curley, Seamus Durkan (Scout Master). Middle row: Joe Lynch, Vincent Donnellan, Cyril Foudy, Albert Lyons. Front row: Joe Greene, Johnny Foudy, Fintan Lynch, Michael Donnellan. Photographer Jack Halpin.



Paddy Forrie and Kathleen McColter's wedding group, 1st July 1953. Back, L-R: Mark Waldron, Fintan Lynch, Brendan Burke, Tommy Smith, Paddy Waldron, Joe Keane (hidden), Thomas Forrie, George Delaney, Joe Lynch. Seamus Durkan, Albert Lyons. Front Row: Bertie Curley, Rosaleen Garvey, Mercy Flatley, Paddy and Kathleen Forrie (Bride & Groom), Delia Forrie & Thomas Smyth (Bestman & Bridesmaid).





# SEA TIGER



Vol. III, No. 9

III Marine Amphibious Force, Vietnam

March 1, 1967



**FOR HEROISM**—Marine Cpl. Patrick Gallagher, of County Mayo, Ireland, is congratulated by General William C. Westmoreland, commander of U.S. Forces in Vietnam, for receiving the Navy Cross.

## Wins Navy Cross

# Marine drops on grenade to save comrades' lives

By GySgt. Ron Harwood

**DA NANG**—A citizen of Ireland, who threw himself on an enemy hand grenade to save the lives of two fellow Marines and lived to tell about it, was awarded the United States' second ranking medal for heroism, the Navy Cross, Feb. 19.

The combination of raw courage and the traditional "luck of the Irish" was too much for the odds-makers as not only was no one killed—there were no injuries resulting from the Viet Cong grenade attack.

Corporal Patrick Gallagher, 22, of County Mayo, Ireland, was a member of "H" Company, 2nd Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, taking part in Operation Hastings when the action occurred.

Early on the morning of July 18, 1966, his company was set in defensive positions near Can Lo. Gallagher, along with three other Marines, was in a foxhole near the company's perimeter.

Suddenly, one of several enemy soldiers who were attempting to infiltrate the position, threw a grenade into the hole. Gallagher kicked the grenade out of the area where it exploded harmlessly.

Another grenade followed and this one landed between two of Gallagher's fellow Marines. Unhesitatingly, he threw his body on the grenade to absorb the expected explosion and save his comrades' lives. It failed to explode and the three Marines with him were ordered out of the hole.

While they were scrambling to safety, two more enemy grenades landed in the position and exploded—still no one was injured.

Gallagher then rolled off the grenade he was lying on, picked up (Continued on Back Page)

## Gen. Westmoreland decorates surgeon

**DA NANG** — Navy Captain Harry H. Dinsmore, the doctor who removed a live 60mm mortar shell from the chest of a Vietnamese soldier, was awarded a Navy Cross here Feb. 19 for that operation.

Chief of Surgery at the U.S. Naval Support Activity hospital here, he volunteered to perform the operation, knowing full well the dangers to himself should the round be detonated.

The patient, Private First Class Nguyen Luong of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, was medevaced into the hospital on the night of Oct. 1, 1966.

When X-rays showed the danger of the situation, Dr. Dinsmore immediately took charge and performed the delicate operation—successfully removing the round

whose impact fuse was partially activated.

General William C. Westmoreland, commander of U.S. Forces in Vietnam, presented the award, the Nation's second highest for heroism, to Dinsmore in ceremonies at the III Marine Amphibious headquarters here.

## New FLSG-A CO

**HOA KHANH**—Colonel George C. Schmidt, Jr., assumed command of the Force Logistic Support Group "Alpha", February 8.

He succeeds Colonel Robert R. Weir, who will assume duties as the 3d Marine Division's Supply Officer, a post formerly held by Schmidt.

Present at the ceremony was Brigadier General J. E. Herbold, Jr.

## Operation Scholarship launched by 1stMarDiv

By: MSGT G.E. Wilson  
**OPERATION SCHOLARSHIP**, a 100,000 dollar educational fund drive, will be launched March 1 by the 1st Marine Division, according to an announcement by Major General Herman Nickerson Jr., commanding general of the division.

"The money will be used for the future education of children of the 1st Division Marines and Navyman killed in action," said the drive chairman, Sergeant Major J.H. Johnson.

"All units under the operational control of the 1st Marine Division are being given the opportunity to participate in this worthwhile project," Johnson said. He noted that any child of any Marine or Navyman who has served with the 1st Marine Division—including attached units—are eligible to receive the scholarship funds.

"We are not confining the drive to Marine and Navyman in Vietnam," the sergeant major pointed out. "Anyone, anywhere in the world, may contribute."

"Civilians who may wish to help the Marines help themselves may take part in the campaign," he pointed out.

In Vietnam sergeants major and first sergeants of all units in the division have been designated as drive chairmen and collection agents for their units.

of OPERATION SCHOLARSHIP, and banked in Saigon until the drive is completed.

**OPERATION SCHOLARSHIP** funds will then be turned over to the 1st Marine Division Association Scholarship Fund Committee which administers the distribution of the funds to deserving children who apply for the money.

Membership in the 1st Marine Division Association is open to any Marine or Navyman who has served in or been attached to the 1st Marine Division in the past or present.

"That means," Sergeant Major Johnson said, "that members of the Ninth, Fourth, Twelfth, Thirtieth and Twenty-Sixth Marine Regiments now under the operations control of the division are eligible to participate in the drive and—if they wish—join the 1st Marine Division Association."

Any money donated to the fund drive may be sent by check or money order to the Custodian, OPERATION SCHOLARSHIP, 1st Marine Division, C/O PPO San Francisco, California, 96602.

Marines in Vietnam may contribute through their unit representatives or direct to the custodian, Sergeant Major Johnson pointed out.

Collection boxes have been planned for all clubs in the 1st Marine Division area for anyone



## Marine casualty on Operation Deckhouse VI

A Marine wounded during Operation Deckhouse VI, is medevaced by a helicopter of the 1st Marine Division.

The Sea Tiger newspaper from 1967 which shows Cpl. Patrick Gallagher receiving his Navy Cross medal from General Westmoreland, Commander of U.S. Forces in Vietnam. March 2017 will mark the 50th anniversary of Cpl. Gallagher's death in Vietnam. RTÉ Radio is currently producing a radio documentary on Corporal Gallagher which should be ready by the end of this year. An online petition to have a U.S. Navy ship named after him is ongoing. Please read the full story at [www.patrickgallagherusmc.info](http://www.patrickgallagherusmc.info) and consider adding your name to the petition. It is hoped to present the petition to the US secretary of the Navy at some point next year.





## Ballyhaunis Sports Stars in Action

Photos by Ciara Buckley







Michael and Denise Nolan and family, Togher, Christmas 2015. Michael and Denise celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary in December 2016. Back, L-R: Tomás Concannon, Christina Concannon, Stephen Nolan (Jnr.), Nuala Nolan, Stephen Nolan, Leigh Nolan, Conor Sweeney, Shane Nolan, Gary Nolan, Conor Nolan, Lydia Concannon, Aoife Nolan, Michael Nolan. Front: Michael Nolan (Jnr.), Denise Nolan, Dayton Nolan, Kelly Todd, Rhys Nolan, Elaine Daly and Conor Nolan (Jnr.), Jackie Dockery, Madeline Nolan, Michael Nolan (Snr.). Kneeling: Alex and Ryan Nolan.



Patrick Nolan, Mountain, Forthill (1893 - 1983). Member of the East Mayo 4th Battalion I.R.A. (Brackloon Division), with medals received for his part in the War of Independence 1919-1921.

## *Diamond Wedding Anniversary*



Michael and Denise Nolan, Togher, celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary (60th) in Tuam Cathedral with their daughter Christina Concannon and grand-daughter Aoife Nolan.

## **Ballyhaunis Library**

CLARE ST., BALLYHAUNIS

### *Opening Hours*

**Mondays & Thursdays: Closed**

**Tuesdays & Wednesdays: 12:00pm - 7:00pm**

**Fridays & Saturdays: 11:00am - 4:00pm**





# Stations in the Parish of Annagh

Photographs by Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.



## Brigid and Liam Lynskey, Gurteen, 6th Nov. 2015 (Gurteen)

Standing, L-R: Ann Nestor, Cathal Phillips, Mary Rochford, Carol Keane, Orla Loftus-Moran, Paddy Phillips, Donal Moran, Jacinta Flynn, Michael Flynn, Liam Lynskey, Mary Freyne, Bernard Freyne, Jarlath Henry, Seamus Mulrennan, Katie Moran, Joe Rochford, Brigid Lynskey, Mary Henry, Marie Brennan, Michael Brennan, Milo Henry. Seated, L-R: Mary Mulrennan, Aoife Mulrennan, Mike Byrne, Helena Byrne, Mary Henry, Sarah Jane Lynskey, Robert Duggan, William Lynskey, Desi Palovi, Pa Freeley. Kneeling, L-R: Tony Nestor, Martin Brennan, Martin Keane, Cara & Marie Henry, Róisín Henry, Jessica Henry, Eva Henry, Michael Henry, Cormac Henry, Áine Phillips, Lucy Phillips, Tara Phillips, Maya Phillips, Ellen Phillips, Maud Henry, Mary K. Phillips, Ann Phillips. A special feature of the night was that Maeve (Liam & Bridget's daughter) read one of the prayers on Skype from New York (inset).



## Willie and Sheila Broderick, Brackloon North, 7th Nov. 2015 (Brackloon/Derrylahan)

Standing, L-R: Adrian Finn, Emma Broderick, Alma Broderick, Martin Finan, Bridie Sloyan, Michaela Fitzmaurice, Michael Fitzmaurice, Yvonne Finn, Gareth Finn, Michael Keane, Stephanie Coffey, Mary Ryan, Dara Sloyan, Ann McNamara, Lisa Morley, Sharon Broderick, Martin Cullen, Phil Ryan, Kenneth Broderick, Michael Sloyan, Mary Finan, Bernie Sloyan, Kathleen Cox, Sean McNamara, Meta McNamara, Angela Reilly, Thomas Dunne, Denis Sloyan. Seated, L-R: Thomas Dunne, Lisa Fitzmaurice, Sandra Dunne, Willie Broderick, Sheila Broderick, Sarah Dunne, Mairéad Murphy, Margaret Kenny, Maureen Devaney, Kitty Sloyan, Jimmy Joe Sloyan, Cathy Broderick-Dunne.





**Padraig and Kathleen Kelly, Drimbane, 13th Feb. 2016 (Drimbane)**

Left to right: Joan McLoughlin, Kathleen Kelly, May Carroll, Mary Kelly, Michael O'Malley, Maura McLoughlin, Bernie O'Malley, Mary T. Griffin, Martha Gallagher, Mary Walsh, Dympna Grealley. Back, standing, L-R: Kieran Kelly, Paul Kelly, Padraig Kelly, Alan Kelly, Seamus Kelly, Gabriel Smyth. Second row from back, R-L: Tom McGeough, Margaret Byrne, Noreen Cribbin, Angela Cribbin, Margaret Hannon. Third row, L-R: Rachel Grealley, Noreen Culliney, Maura Fitzmaurice, Patsy Grealley, Ann Kelly. Fourth row, R-L: Betty McGeough, Denise McGeough Kelly, Monica Carroll, Caroline McGarry, Alisha McGarry, Padraig Kelly, John McGarry, Stacey McGarry. Front: Nessa Kelly, Conor Kelly, Oisín Kelly, Luke Kelly, Tara Kelly.



**James Reidy and Mairéad Quinn, Doctor's Road, 19th Feb. 2016 (Doctor's Road)**

Standing, L-R: John Reidy, Katherine Kilbride, Peg Byrne, Eddie Campbell, Margaret Campbell, Mary Prenty, Imelda Quinn, Eugene Kilbride, Mary Keane, Cormac Reidy, Helen Healy, John Mooney, Annie Quinn, Johnny McCaffrey, Jim Reidy, Kevin Kilbride, Shane Healy, James Reidy, Cormac Quinn, Corrie Quinn. Seated: Róisín McCaffrey, Mary Murray, Maureen Thornton, Lile McCaffrey, Mary Rudden, Pat Grogan, Freya Quinn, Mairéad Quinn, Kathleen Quinn, Dara Healy.





**Pat and Kay Curley, Hazelhill, 20th Feb. 2016 (Hazelhill)**

Standing L-R: Bronagh McCarthy, Eileen McKermitt, Ann Madden, Mary Cleary, Mary O'Dwyer. Seated L-R: Pat Curley, Willie Ryan, Marion Feeney, Mark Feeney, Lauren Feeney, Peter Feeney, Evan Feeney, Aibhe Donnellan, Joe Freeley, Caitriona Swan, Caragh Swan, Sarah Curley, Patricia O'Connor, Joan Biesty, Helen Biesty, Laurena Freeley, Hazel Curley, Matthew Curley, Kevin Curley. Kneeling, L-R: Jonah Swan, Kay Curley, Olivia Feeney, Tom Donnellan, P.C. Curley, Alan Curley, Sean Donnellan, Brendan Donnellan, Dale Swan.



**Jimmy and Mary Goulding, Doctor's Road, 18th Mar. 2016 (Doctor's Road)**

Back, standing, L-R: Julie Gallagher, Siobhán Gallagher, Jenny Glynn, Liam Gallagher, Breege Halpin, Seamus Grogan, John Kilduff, Matt O'Dwyer, Billy Phillips. Seated, first row from back: Mary Elwood, Helen Hoban, Noreen Kilduff. Seated, second row from back: Kathleen Raftery, Irene Healy, Dorothy Durkan. Third row from back: Pat Raftery, Pat Devine, Clare Hannon. Seated on right side, L-R: Orla Phillips, Margie Phillips, Noel Goulding, Geraldine O'Dwyer, Eileen Nestor, Anne Goulding, Moira Gallagher. Seated, front row, L-R: Una Phillips, Patricia Grogan, Geraldine Devine, Michael Goulding, Maura O'Dowd, Jimmy Goulding, Frances Maye, Mary Goulding.





Una Phillips, Main St., 19th Mar. 2016 (Main St.)

Standing at Back: L-R: Declan Phillips, Michael Goulding, Richard Phillips, Cathal Phillips. Seated on the perimeter, L-R: Phyllis Phillips, Maureen Flanagan, Wictor Siemeonkowski, Frances Maye, Noreen Moran, Mary Elwood, Breege Halpin, Chris Finn, Laura Grealy, Ger Donnellan, Jimmy Goulding, Marguerite Moran, Sarah Phillips, Michael Phillips, Eddie Murphy, Tom Finn, John Halpin, Cáit Webb, Una Phillips. Seated, centre: L-R: Ann Marie Flanagan, Tara Phillips, Clodagh Phillips, Muireann Phillips, Laoise Phillips, Áine Phillips, Ann Phillips, Margie Phillips, Pauline Egan, Mary Goulding, John Morley, Orla Phillips, Cillian Phillips.

## AUTUMN STATIONS



Bernie and Jim Quinn, Classaroe, 3rd Sept. 2016 (Classaroe/Spaddagh)

Standing, L-R: Patricia Quinn, Patrick Gilroy, Peggy Gilroy, Billy Comer, Martin Cannon, Teresa Cannon, Kevin Durkan, Catriona Quinn, Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. Seated, L-R: Darren Quinn, Carol Quinn, Stasia Carney, Siobhán Quinn, Maureen Durkan, Maureen Comer, Jim Quinn, Bernie Quinn.





**Joe and Veronica O'Neill, Killinaugher, 9th Sept. 2016 (Killinaugher)**

Standing, L-R: Tom Fitzmaurice, John Connolly, Billy Comer, Lisa Regan and Kyle Jordan, Joe Diskin, Tom Regan, Michelle Jordan and Matthew Jordan, Damien Hayes, Des Ruane, Pdraig Regan, Dominic Crilly, Bronagh Crilly. Seated, back row, L-R: Danielle Hudson, Kevin Diskin, Maureen Comer. Seated, second row, L-R: Marian Regan, Deirdre Diskin, Geraldine Connolly, Mary Hunt. Seated, front row: L-R: Joe O'Neill, Josh Regan, Veronica O'Neill, Aaron Jordan, Tracey Regan and Ben Jordan



**Bridie Levins, Clare St. 23rd Sept. 2016 (Clare St.)**

Standing L-R: Patricia Fitzgerald, John Cleary, John Potter, Eddie Campion, Laura Campion, Maria Lyons, Oliver Campion, Alicia Byron, Caroline Byron, David Byron, Nuala Fitzgerald. Seated L-R: Pauline Curley, Olive Lyons, Martha Grogan, Mary Frances Cleary, Catherine Potter, Ann Gallagher, Gillian Donnellan, Paula Donnellan, Barbara Potter, Maeve Donnellan, Hannah Potter, Corinne Flatley, Marina Campion, Bridie Levins, Vincent Levins, John Gill, Bridie Levins, Bernie Gill, Maureen Finn, Geraldine Donnellan, Maureen McCambridge.





**Ann and Paddy Phillips, Gurteen, 30th Sept 2016 (Gurteen)**

Standing, L-R: Seamus Mulrennan, Michael Henry, Joe Rochford, Mary Fitzgerald, Brigid Lynskey, Brian Phillips, Eamonn Phillips, Cormac Phillips, Shay Phillips, Martin Brennan, Michael Brennan, Cathal Phillips, Jarlath Henry, Paddy Phillips, Donal Moran, Jarlath Phillips. Seated, back row, L-R: Paddy Fitzgerald, Sadie Cameron, Pa Freeley, Phyllis Phillips. Seated, second row from back. Bernard Freyne, Mary Henry, Mary Freyne. Third row: Mary Rochford, Aoife Mulrennan, Mary Mulrennan, Carol Keane, Una Phillips, Mary Fitzgerald. Fourth row: Mary Henry, Claire Moran, Aleesh Phillips, Michael Flynn, Jacinta Flynn, Dolores Byrne, Anne Cunnane. Fifth row: Mike Byrne, Áine Phillips, Clodagh Byrne, Jessica Henry, Eva Henry, Mary Kay Phillips, Marie Brennan, Maud Henry and Lauren Henry. Second row from front, L-R: Róisín Henry, Ann Phillips, Aoife Murphy, Kirsty Alder. Front row: Emma Henry, Maya Phillips, Lucy Phillips, Tara Phillips, Erica Byrne, Alex Byrne.



**Tom and Eileen Rattigan, Lecarrow, 7th Oct. 2016 (Lecarrow/Curries)**

Standing, L-R: Teresa Brogan, Peter Concannon, Hannah Kelly, Mary Costello, Mary Folan, Peggy McInerny, Eleanor Murphy, John A Murphy, Tom Ryan, James Walsh, John Gerard Murphy, Teresa Healy, Michelle Walsh, Mary Lyons, Phil Lyons, Michael J. Lyons, Michael Rattigan. Seated, L-R: Aoife Ryan, Martin Sheehy, Kathleen Cribbin, Cillian Magee, Marie Magee, Breege Cribbin, Nuala Higgins, Edel Ryan, Barry Cribbin, Eileen Rattigan, Mary Cleary, Tom Rattigan, Noreen Ryan, Collette Ryan, Barbara Sheehy, Chris Brennan, John Cleary, Mary Hunt, Mary Margaret McBride, Edel Murphy, Kathleen McBride, Bob Fahy, Kieran Connolly, Rosie Connolly.





**Dan & Mary Tarpey, Carrowkeel, 14th Oct. 2016 (Carrowkeel)**

Standing, L-R: Pauline Mitchell, Lorraine Biesty, Fiona Biesty, Paul Biesty, Albert Madden, Audrey Biesty, John Daly, Sinéad Morley, Bridie Morley, Gordon Biesty, Gabriel Morley, Bernie Biesty, Sheila Potts, Shirley Tarpey, Ann Cunnane, Paul Cunnane, Majella Coffey, Stella O'Neill, George O'Neill, Sadie Cameron, Helen Biesty, John Biesty, Helen Biesty, Ann Marie O'Boyle, Ita McDonnell, Josie Cunnane Jimmy O'Boyle, Ann Biesty, Ronán Potts, Aisling Tarpey, Collette Mooney, Mary Ryan, Josie Corr, Alan Goggins, Michelle Cosgrove, Margaret Mooney, Brendan Mooney. Seated, L-R: Mary Tarpey, Dan Tarpey, Margaret Tarpey, Stephanie Tarpey, Sinéad O'Neill, Chloe Mulrennan. Kneeling, L-R: Cian Mitchell, Michael Byrne, Aoibhe Mitchell, Enya Mitchell, Danny Byrne, Niamh Mitchell.



**Mary Ryan, Derrylahan, 21st Oct. 2016 (Brackloon/Derrylahan)**

Standing, L-R: Johnny Fleming, Bernie Sloyan, Mairéad Murphy, Teresa Moylett, Meta McNamara, Maureen Devaney, Jimmy Joe Sloyan, Margaret Kenny, Bridie Sloyan, Rachel Scully, Emily Coffey, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Mary Finan, Kitty Sloyan, Michael Sloyan, Shane McDermott, Mary McGuire, Martin Finan, Rachel McDermott, Ava McDermott, Paul McGuire, Willie Broderick, Sheila Broderick, Sean Coffey, Frances McDermott, Michael Keane. Seated, L-R: Mary Ryan, Michelle Ryan, Marty McDermott, Emer Moylett, Mary Moylett, Elena Coffey, Jonathan Ryan, Ann McNamara, Margaret Fleming, Fiona Naughton, Chloe Naughton, Stephanie Coffey, Ann McDermot, Bobby McDermot, Ann Keegan.





**Mary and Jimmy Donnelly, Ballinphuill, 22nd Oct. 2016 (Ballinphuill, Knockbrack, Skeaghard)**

Standing, L-R: Deirdre Hennelly, Róisín Lyons, Shauna Lyons, Michelle Lyons, Mike Griffin, Siobhán Lyons, Mary Finnegan, Vincent Higgins, Frances Gaffney, Kevin McNamara, Mary Walsh, Pat Gaffney, Kathleen Egan, John Lyons, Joan McNamara, John Joe Lyons, Bernadette Lyons, Morgan Lyons, Ann Murphy, James Lyons, Gabrielle Lyons, Gerry Lyons, Nuala Lyons, Kay Donnelly, Grace Lyons, Austin Boyle, Mary Nestor, Liam Lyons, Bernie Boyle, Marian Higgins, Mary Goulding, Jimmy Goulding, Jennifer Donnelly, Fiachra McLoughlin, Brian Fitzsimons, Teresa Grogan. Kneeling and seated, L-R: Fr. Stephen Farragher, Brendan Donnelly, Frank Lyons, Orla Donnelly, Evanna McLoughlin, Michael Egan, Johnny Goldrick, Mary Higgins, James McLoughlin, Kathleen Cribbin, Mary Donnelly, Tara McLoughlin, Carol and Maria Fitzsimons, Jimmy Donnelly, Siún Goldrick, Mary T. Griffin, Claire Nestor and Elaine Donnelly (on Skype).



**Richard and Mary Waldron, Gurteenmore, 29th Oct. 2016 (Gurteenmore, Gurteenbeg, Lisbane)**

Standing L-R: Michael Lyons, Gerry Plunkett, Padraig Kennedy, Ann Kennedy, Paul Maguire, Bernadette Gower, Michael Crowe, Catriona Crowe, Mary Finnegan, Benny Waldron, Sheila Waldron, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Anita McDermott, Celia Waldron, Mary Maguire, Patricia Plunkett, Paul Waldron, Patsy Flanagan, Michael Nolan, Mary Teresa Naughton, Kieran Fitzmaurice, Eileen Morley, Trevor Kelly, Natasha Kelly, Oisín Kelly, Tadhg Kelly, David Gower, Rian Kelly, Eddie McDermott. Seated L-R: Ann Flanagan, Brenda Lyons, Margaret Kenny, Val Lyons, Dearbhla Gower, Mary Waldron, Richard Waldron, Rose Nolan, Maureen Devaney, Jimmy Joe Sloyan, Kitty Sloyan, Teresa McMenamon.



# Ballyhaunis Town Football Club

JARLATH WALSH

The AGM of the Ballyhaunis Town Football Club was held on the 28th of January 2016 at The Friary House, and the following officers were elected: Chairman - Jarlath Walsh; Vice-Chairman - Chris Pratt; Secretary - Elaine Carney; Treasurer - Linda Page; PRO - Richie Crinnigan; and Committee members: Tommie Page, Karl Briem, Ken Carrick, Brenda Krusina, Giles McDonagh, Mohammad Cherbati, Paul Nolan, Michel Krusina and James Clarke.

Tommie Page and Karl Briem were re-elected Managers for the season at the first Meeting of the new Committee.

This is our seventh season in the Mayo League since the Club was reformed. Ballyhaunis played in League 1 of a 4 division revamped Mayo League format for the season, namely Super League, Premier League, League 1 and League 2. There were seven teams in our division: Ballyhaunis Town, Ballina Town B, Moyvilla, Crossmolina, Manulla B, Castlebar Celtic B and Conn Rangers B, with teams playing each other three times throughout the season. We had to play some of our early home games in Urlaur due to our pitch being unplayable and we are very grateful to Mick Carroll for his co-operation and help for that. Indeed we had an epic battle against Conn Rangers B there that saw us go out of the Divisional Cup early on in the season in a game that went to sudden death penalties. We had an excellent League overall losing only three games and drawing three out of eighteen played.

We have scored the second highest number of goals scored in all the divisions in the Mayo League for the 2016 season with 65 (Snugboro having scored 67) and Jamil Kezze (25) and Keith Robinson (30) contributing around 55 of those between them - what a season for the two lads!

We won the League on Sunday, 9th Oct. by one point on 39 points beating Conn Rangers B at Station Rise, with Crossmolina finishing second on 38.

As I said earlier we were knocked out of the Divisional Cup by Conn Rangers B, but got through to the semi-final of the Premier Gold Cup which was played in Milebush Park, Castlebar, on Sun. 16th Oct. Unfortunately we were beaten by Killala 3-2 after extra time, on penalties.



## Thanks

We would like to say a huge thank you to our managers, Tommie Page and Karl Briem for all they have achieved on the field since they came to the Club: a lot of hard work and commitment has gone into the team.

A big thank you also to Aiden McTigue who has been a brilliant Captain for the season and who always led by example, and each and every one of the squad for their dedication and commitment in every game and also in training all year.

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to our main sponsor Liam Folliard at Epic Bar for his constant support and generosity, and to all the pubs who hold our 50/50 draw. To all the businesses who have advertising hoardings at the pitch, to all the people of Ballyhaunis and surrounding areas who support our church-gate collection and our various other fundraising events throughout the year. To our loyal supporters (and they are growing in number) who come out every week to support the lads, and to our photographer Ciara Buckley who does a tremendous job in all codes in the town, is a great friend of the Club and is responsible for all our photographs on Facebook throughout the year, and also our photographs for the Annagh Magazine... Thanks Ciara.

We would like to say a big thank you to Yarik and Ryan Worden, our Physios, and to Kaitlyn Clarke our First Aider for keeping the lads injury free all season. We would also like to thank Stephen Grogan and Tracey McDermott for the use of the Friary House for our meetings and courses throughout the season. We would like to thank Enda Lyons who has done a tremendous amount of work at the pitch all season, and also Eugene Freeley for all his work there also.

We started our 50/50 draw last Christmas and it is going from strength to strength since thanks to Brenda, Michel, Paul Nolan, Elaine, Richie, Ken, Tommie, Karl, James and all the rest who sell tickets every fortnight.

## Growth

We now have Underage Soccer at the Club thanks again to Brenda, Paul Nolan and Michel Krusina and all the rest who help out with it. We are hoping to enter an underage team next year in the Mayo League and will be looking for all the boys and girls in the area to get





Ballyhaunis Town F.C. Tim Hastings Volkswagen League 1 winners 2016, pictured at Station Rise, 9th Oct. 2016. Back, L-R: Tommie Page (Manager), Paul Nolan, Pat McGee, James Cribben, Cathal Carney, John Cunnane, Keith Robinson (and son), Jarlath Carney, Shane Crinnigan, Richie Crinnigan, Michael Waldron, Jamil Kezze, Kevin Byrne, Karl Briem (Manager). Front, L-R: James Clarke, Ken Carrick (and son behind James and Jarik), Jarik (Physio), Dayo Adex, Robert McCormack, Conor Mooney, Aiden McTigue (Captain), Giles McDonagh and Joey Neenan.

involved. We will be advertising this in the schools early in the New Year.

We hope also to enter an Under-19 team in the Mayo League next season and at present we are entering a team in the Masters Mayo League.

Our wish at the Club is to expand our range of football to cater for young and old, boys and girls over the coming years and to do that we will need the help and co-operation of more people and parents alike. We are always looking for extra committee members and people to coach our underage teams. Anyone interested in getting involved in the Club in any capacity – and we love to see new people come and join us – can come to our AGM at the end of January 2017, contact us through our Facebook page 'Ballyhaunis Town F.C.', our Website [www.ballyhaunistownfc.com](http://www.ballyhaunistownfc.com), any Club officer, committee member or our Secretary Elaine Carney, Classaghroe, Ballyhaunis.

We wish all at the Club, our supporters, sponsors and all the people of the Ballyhaunis area a very Happy Christmas and good health and prosperity for the year ahead.

Ballyhaunis Town F.C. Captain Aiden McTigue and our main sponsor Liam Folliard with the Tim Hastings Volkswagen League 1 Winners' Trophy after the game on the 9th Oct 2016 at Station Rise.





# Ballyhaunis Bridge Club

GERARD MCLOUGHLIN, VICE-PRESIDENT

2016 has been yet again another enjoyable and successful year for the Bridge Club with just under fifty members turning out on Wednesday and Thursday nights to play Bridge. The 2015/2016 bridge season culminated in May with the playing of the President's Prize, the final competition of the season. President Dorothy Durkan presented her prize at her President's Dinner on May 13th which was held in Val's Bar. Winners of this year's prize were Mary Walshe and she partnered Michael McTigue. They proved to be worthy winners on the night.

Other prize nights that took place during the year were: The Memorial Cup, played in memory of all deceased members of the Bridge Club, and sponsored by Nestor & Co. The A.I.B Cup, was sponsored by A.I.B., Claremorris. Flanagan's Pub and Restaurant (Brickens), Finn's Footwear (Ballyhaunis and Kiltimagh), First Choice, Ballyhaunis Branch (Credit Union), were all sponsors of various nights throughout the year. The Club deeply appreciates and is extremely grateful to all our sponsors for their kind generosity.

The A.G.M took place on May 18th. Officers for 2016/2017:

President-Rita Lundon;  
Vice President/Secretary - Gerard McLoughlin;  
Treasurer - Kieran Jenkinson.

The Club was deeply saddened this year by the death of three members: Josie Smyth who passed away in January; Michael Cameron (Dinjo), who was also a founding member of the Bridge Club; and Matt O'Dwyer, who passed away in June. The Club extends its deepest and heartfelt sympathy to the Smyth, Cameron and O'Dwyer families on their very sad losses.

In 2017 the Bridge Club will celebrate fifty-five years in existence, something the Club is both proud of and excited about - a fine achievement.



Winners of the President's Prize: Michael McTigue and Mary Walshe (pictured right) with Dorothy Durkan (President). In the background, Donal Geraghty (Tournament Director).

The 2016/2017 Bridge season commenced in September with Bridge being played on both Wednesday and Thursday nights starting at 8pm in the Communal House, Clarecourt. New members are always welcome and Bridge classes will commence after Christmas. For more information contact Ger (087) 6466293.

Finally, Ballyhaunis Bridge Club members wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas and health and happiness to one and all in 2017.



## Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee

Firstly, the committee members would like to sincerely thank everyone for the generous contributions made to the annual collection for the maintenance of the cemetery. A special thanks to the diaspora for their generous donations this year. This continuous support ensures the maintenance of the area including new railings at the entrance which will be installed this year.

At the back of the cemetery is a detailed map

with location and name of each individual grave. This might be especially useful to visitors to the area or to those interested in genealogy. It can also be viewed online at [Irishgraveyards.ie](http://Irishgraveyards.ie). A PayPal facility is also available on this site for those who wish to contribute.

The committee members are John Halpin, Edward Mulhern, Walter Cleary, Tom Finn, Seamus O'Boyle, Martin Gavin and Mary Donnelly.



# Tales from a Biscuit Tin

JAMES CRIBBIN

When Seamus Mulrennan called and suggested that I make a few notes of my recollections of 'Hurricane Debbie' I was not in a position to help him as I had never made an acquaintance with Debbie. Although I had no advance information of her tempestuous arrival I had given her a wide berth by leaving the country a week before she stormed into town. Anything I would have to say about that lively lady would be based on hearsay and quotations from the few paragraphs I read about her in the English Press. The last time Mr. Mulrennan called his request was a modest one; he just wanted a photograph for publication in "Annagh". As it happened the place was in a state of 'chassis' and rather than go upsetting the place further I resorted to an easy way out by taking a framed photograph that was hanging on the wall and giving it to him. It was not a case of take your pick, he had 'Hobsons Choice'.

Nowadays, there is no excuse for not having photographs on demand with little devices to take pictures and put them on display the instant after they are taken and store them for the future. Every picture tells a story, but how many of the pictures taken today will be telling stories a century from now, and will they attract as much attention as photographs taken a century or more ago?

I have before me a biscuit tin filled with photographs. I have blown the dust off the lid opened the box and taken a trip down as they in Irish 'boithrín na smaointe'. Some of the photographs evoke amusement, some sadness and one or two come back to haunt me or taunt me, but all of them tell a story with an echo from the past. I wore a dickie bow just once in my life and lo and behold there was a photograph taken of the event. When I started to let this photograph tell its story, it prompted me to let another photo tell its story, and another. Dean Swift wrote a piece called 'Tale of the Tub'. I beg your indulgence while I pick out a few photographs and let them tell 'Tales from a Biscuit Tin'. The dickie bow picture was taken in the Eclipse Ballroom at a New Year's Eve Ball which was organised by the Ballyhaunis Junior Chamber. The photograph was submitted by somebody for publication in Annagh. With other photos it was handed about at a committee meeting for consideration

by the then members which included Johnny Biesty and Yours Truly. Mr. Biesty, on looking remarked, "I thought you were a Socialist". It is true that I was once a card carrying member of a trade union, attended meetings, listened to speakers who could talk all day without saying anything and would be happier out on the cobbles carrying a placard than working. The most profound statement I can recall from those days was made by a quiet spoken Kerryman, "We will all be satisfied when we are all being paid a shilling an hour more than everybody else".

There is a photo here which shows that I was not destined to be a socialist. It shows me dressed in swaddling clothes in my father's arms beside a horse that had been taken from the stable to take part in a symbolic 'handing over of the reins'. It is true what is said about a picture: it can speak a thousand words. I was not aware of the existence of this photo until I visited my Aunt Bea who was a nun in New Zealand.



Handing over the reins

In her convent in Dunedin she went through what little earthly possessions she had found and handed me the photo that she had in her possession for over forty years. I had never been further from home yet more things in it reminded me of home than anywhere else I had been in the world. While having tea in the convent with the nuns, one of the nuns went to a cabinet, took out a record, put it on the record player, and loud and clear, across came Kevin Prendergast singing 'Far Away from the land of the Shamrock and Heather'. Having landed at Christchurch Airport, I took a stroll around that beautiful city and found myself looking at signposts pointing to Tuam Road, Dublin Road, Omagh Road. As I left by bus for Dunedin, I noticed that most of the vehicles had registration numbers with the letters IZ and four digits just like Mayo up until the end of the 1950's. As we drove along, I left my eye on oncoming traffic looking to see a vehicle with reg. no IZ 8847, the number of the first tractor we had back home. Getting off the bus at Dunedin, I noticed a statue of Robbie Burns. I went to read the inscriptions at the base: mostly quotations from his writings. One of them read, "Will ye nay come home no more".

It is far from swaddling clothes I am in this





Togged out for a lot of digging Down Under.



Laughing behind my back.

photograph. The man with his shirt on was a bit more accustomed to a bit of heat than I was, having been born and raised in a warmer European island than I was. He was from Cyprus and worked as a landscape gardener. We were planting trees and shrubs on property belonging to my brother Pat. I had an interest in how the trees were growing and made enquiries from time to time. When Pat and family were here last August I enquired as to how the trees were. I was told that they had grown too well dwarfing nearby houses and interfering with overhead cables and had to be cut down and were cut up for firewood by a lady with a chainsaw. The post woman delivering the mail enquired what was to be done with all this timber. 'It was available to anybody to take away as firewood, "would she be interested?'. She would be delighted. When she came to collect she was not impressed with Pat's chainsaw and went to her vehicle and took out a chainsaw with blade about a yard long. "That's a saw", said she and went to work with the confidence of a lumberjack, or should I say a lumber Jill! Those Aussie Sheilas are tough cookies, and observant as well. I remember one of them insisting

that she knew I had no wife or partner. "How can you be sure?" "Your shirt's not ironed". It's true a woman's work is never done when it becomes a man's responsibility.

Now this photo showing my brother Pat and sister Margaret laughing behind my back has me puzzled. I cannot recall the location. It seems to be an open air event in the outback where there was no need to bring an umbrella unless it served the purpose of a walking stick. The young lady using a fallen tree as a vantage point would suggest that it was not taken at Flemington race track on Melbourne Cup Day, and even if I say so myself, I think my decorum would be appropriate for that event. But what are the siblings smiling at behind my back? Reflecting on what the brother said to me about me taking to the country like the rabbits, it is possible that they were expressing satisfaction at how well I was settling in. The Guinness ad says they are only 250 years into a 9000 year lease. I am only three photographs into a biscuit tin packed to the brim but I will have to put the lid back on or we will be here till the cows come home.

## St. Vincent de Paul Society

St. Patrick's Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Ballyhaunis, tries to continue the work of its founder in its own quiet way. We help people in financial difficulties in a sensitive and confidential manner.

**Our confidential helpline number is (086) 2640969.**

Our sincere thanks to all who support us financially through our Church gate collection, donations and fundraising activities. Thanks also to the staff of the Friary House for their help.

Last June saw the death of Matt O'Dwyer. His sudden passing left a sense of loss not only in St. Vincent de Paul but in the wider community. As a member since 1971, Matt had a deep insight into the delicate and sensitive workings of our Society. He was for many people the eyes, ears and voice of SVP in Ballyhaunis. We express our sympathy to his wife Geraldine, son Seamus, daughters Maire and Claire. Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.



Society of  
St Vincent de Paul





Neighbours from Derrynacong, Killinaugher, Gurteenmore, Lisbane and Brackloon gathered to welcome Brian Hunt home to Derrynacong with the Nicky Rackard Cup. Back, L-R: John Joe Hoban, Mary Finan, Margaret Kenny, Marian Regan, Carmel Regan, Pdraig Regan, Michael Hunt, Martin Finan, Brian Hunt, Tommy Fitzmaurice, Mary Hunt, Bill Comer, Julie Kelly, Michael Sloyan, Joe Diskin, Deirdre Diskin, Geraldine Connolly, John Connolly, Maureen Comer. Front row: Martin Fitzmaurice, Stephanie Coffey, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Austin Lyons, Mary Waldron, Evan Fitzmaurice, Richard Waldron, Anne Kelly, Jason Kelly, Conor Kelly.



*Above and below:* Views of the crowd who attended the unveiling of the Coen Memorial in Lecarrow, Ballyhaunis, on Easter Sunday, 11th Apr. 1971. The memorial was erected in memory of Michael Coen, Lecarrow, who was killed near his home by British Forces fifty years earlier, on the 1st of April 1921. It was fashioned in limestone by Johnny Gilmore, monumental sculptor, Knox St., while the base and wrought iron surround was laid by Messrs. Joseph Eagney, Building Contractors, Curries. Prior to the unveiling ceremony, Mass for the repose of the soul of the deceased patriot was celebrated in St. Patrick's Parish Church by Very Rev. Canon J. G. McGarry, D.D., P.P. Afterwards a parade, headed by St. Joseph's Silver Band (Castlerea) and the Raheen Pipe Band (Elphin), and which included members of the Old I.R.A., the Fourth Mayo Scout Troop and Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club, and a large contingent of locals, young and old, marched the mile and a half to the memorial site. The memorial was blessed by Canon McGarry and unveiled by Sean Flanagan T.D., Minister for Lands. Other speakers included Senator Dalgan Lyons, and local members of the Old I.R.A. Thomas Forde and Anthony Curley.





# From the Far Side of the World

TOM FOU DY

My name is Tom Foudy and I'm writing this from the small town of San Matias, in the mountains of western Mexico. The area is located in the state of Baja, which is just south of California in the U.S. San Matias is an isolated town in a mountain valley that's cooler and much less humid than the coastal towns. It's a long way from County Mayo, about 5,000 miles. The question now is how did a Ballyhaunis native finish up here, on the far side of the world?

I was born on Clare Street in Ballyhaunis in 1936, in the house where Gill's Pub now stands. My father's name was Denis Foudy, and his father, Michael, had an egg exporting business on Bridge Street, where Delaney's Hardware is now. My mother was Mai Donnellan prior to her marriage to my father. Over the years my parents had seven children, five boys and two girls, which was a typical Irish family at that time.

Growing up on Clare Street was a pleasant experience despite the cold, cloudy, rainy, windy weather that was often the norm, but when sunny, warm summer days came, it was glorious. There were lots of kids on Clare Street then. Apart from my family and my uncle Johnny's family, there was Frank Glynn, Eddie Fitzgerald, the Robinson's, Michael Smith, Bertie Curley, the Griffin's, the Meath's - Eamon and Masheen, the Mulhern's and the Dalton girls; so we had lots of friends to play with.

For the younger generation reading this, it was a totally different time. There was no T.V., no smart phones; as a matter of fact, there were very few real phones in town. There was no central heating, only the fireplace in the house. We had a radio on a stand in the living room, but the reception was intermittent with a buzzing interference a lot of the time; especially if Mayo were playing in Dublin. I often think back and wonder how my mother managed with seven children with no heated water in the house except what you boiled in the kettle. Imagine all the dishes and pots to wash as there was no dishwasher. There was no washing machine for clothes and no dryer. Most of the cooking was done over an open turf fire in large cast iron pots. We ate mostly stews, bacon and cabbage, and lots of potatoes. To us kids that was normal food and it tasted great; and it was probably much healthier than today's processed foods. By the way, there were no cokes or soft drinks, usually a glass of milk. Soft drinks were usually a treat that we had on special occasions.

## Clare Street

My grandmother, Mollie Donnellan, who came from County Galway with her husband, Patrick Donnellan, started the business on Clare Street; unfortunately

Patrick fell off a horse jumping over a stone wall, and seriously injured his back and was basically an invalid for the rest of his life. So Molly had to raise two children and run the business until her daughter, Mai, married my dad. Molly was a great Irish patriot during the Black and Tan era; I heard stories of guns and ammo hidden in our house while she was serving drinks to English soldiers at the bar.

We had many things to do as kids on Clare Street. The boy's would play football in a field across from Robinson's and we would spend hours jumping over the river Clare from the high bank to the low bank, about 10 feet wide across the water. Also in the spring we would do a lot of fishing for trout in the river, which was crystal clear then.

We would also take a few terriers and hunt rabbits in Hazelhill, which had lots of rabbits at that time, or we would take the greyhounds and hunt hares. On cold, frosty nights in winter, we would take buckets of water from the pump by my house, throw the water on the street, and have a 50 feet sheet of ice that we would run up to and slide the full length. We would do that for hours at night, paying no attention to the cold. So you can see all year we had something going on.

One of the greatest excitements of all was when County Mayo won the All Ireland Final. On the big day at around 5 or 6 in the morning, cars from Westport, Castlebar, Claremorris started coming through Ballyhaunis on the way to Dublin. All the boys would get out of bed and go to the corner waving Mayo flags and shouting 'Mayo, Mayo!' at the cars coming by, blaring their horns. We were so excited. After they won, through the late evening when they were returning, it was even wilder as we were the first town in County Mayo. I still remember that time as clear as if it was yesterday, even thought it was over 60 years ago. I could write many other highlights of my childhood in Ballyhaunis, but I would need a hundred pages, so I will move on to leaving Ballyhaunis.

## Moving to Manchester

In 1952-1953, the economy in Ireland was poor. My four brothers had gone to Manchester to work and later my father left also. My sister, Mary, had trained as a nurse and was going to England; so my mother was home on Clare Street with me and my younger sister, Rita. Then she made the brave decision to sell the business and move to Manchester to be with her family. One of our neighbours on Clare Street, a local builder, Bernie Byrne, purchased our house; so we started packing up to go to Manchester. My uncle, Jack Morley, drove us and our luggage to the train station in November 1953 to get the



train to Dublin and then a ship across the Irish Sea to Liverpool. I remember I was excited about going to a big city, but my mother was very anxious about the move she was making and leaving all her lifetime friends in Ballyhaunis behind.

When we got to Dublin it was pouring rain and the regular taxis could not handle our luggage. So, we finished up with a large horse powered coach that could handle our trunks and off we went to the docks late at night. It was like a scene from a Dicken's novel. The overnight voyage across the Irish Sea was uneventful. My mum had gotten a cabin so we got some sleep. In the morning in Liverpool we were transported to the train station to catch a train to Manchester, where my brothers met us and we went to a temporary residence. My brother, Denis, was closing a deal on a house in Charlton; a nice part of the city.

After we settled in to the new house, I got the first of several factory jobs I had in Manchester. I enjoyed my time there, but knew I wasn't going anywhere working in factories, so I followed my brother, Cyril, who was in Toronto, Canada. Cyril had told me in a letter that I would make much better money and have better opportunities in Canada. So after getting my visa processed by the Canadian government, I got ready to go to Canada. Johnny Lanigan came to the station in Manchester with my mum and me. It was a sad departure for me and my mother. The last time I saw her alive, I was leaning out the window and she was waving to me and looking very sad.

### Canada bound

Again, I was at the Liverpool docks, this time getting on an emigrant ship sailing to Montreal. I was 19 years old and I was adventurous and excited to be going to Canada. I was assigned to a cabin of six people, all going to Canada to start a new life. There were three Englishmen, and two Scots. They were nice people and we all got along well. The next morning I went up to the deck and found we had crossed the Irish Sea to Belfast Docks to pick up more emigrants. We then sailed south on the Irish Sea which was calm and everybody thought they were great sailors, not getting sea sick. But, when we went around the South of Ireland and into the open Atlantic, everything changed. I was lucky and had no problem, but for three or four days the dining room was only half full as we ran into rough seas. Finally, to everyone's relief, we sighted the Canadian coast and proceeded up the St. Lawrence River to the city of Quebec.

At Quebec, Canadian immigration came on board and processed us on our way up river to Montreal; so when we got there we would just get off and be on our way. I had no problems with immigration and got off at

Montreal and proceeded to the rail station for a train to Toronto. Going into the station I had a funny incident. As I walked up to a large glass entrance door, I started to reach to open it and it slid up, it was an automatic door. It gave me a scare as I had never seen one before, so I entered and stood to one side watching people come and go. I was fascinated!

My brother was waiting for me at the station in Toronto with his girlfriend, Bridie Walshe, from the Kilkelly area. They later married and had a large family. Bridie sadly passed away this September after a lovely 60 year marriage. She was truly a lovely lady.

Cyril had an apartment and a job waiting for me where he worked, so I got off to a quick start in Canada. Living in Toronto was a big change from Manchester. Manchester still had a lot of damage from World War II and was smoggy and drab. Toronto, on the shore of Lake Ontario with trees everywhere, was a lovely city and had a lot of Irish immigrants and Irish clubs. I met my first wife, Jane Gaw there; a Scotch-Canadian girl. During our marriage we had three children, Tom Jr., Denise and Mary. Like Manchester, I enjoyed my time in Toronto except there was a lot of job insecurity in the factories. Layoffs were common with the seasonal business in Canada and I also did not like the cold winters.

On New Year's Day 1963, I was watching the Rose Bowl Parade from Pasadena, California. Outside it was cold and snowy, and on the T.V. screen girls were wearing bikinis and guys were wearing shorts and had their shirts off. Wanderlust set in and I decided to go to Southern California. I just had to convince Jane and she agreed. I lined up a tentative job in Los Angeles, got some money in my savings and got through the immigration process to the U.S.

I arrived in Los Angeles, unlike the poor Irish immigrants that came through Ellis Island, on a jet plane with a brand new suit and a good stash of money in my wallet. I rented a Hertz car and immediately got lost in the sprawl of LA. I got caught in a flow of traffic and by pure luck I got to the motel where I had booked a room.

I had supermarket experience in Toronto, so the next morning I went to three different chains and filled out



Tom Foudy with his wife, Lupita, and daughter, Bertha, on a recent visit to Ballyhaunis.



applications. At one of the supermarket chains the personnel manager said he would hire me when a new store opened in two weeks. He asked me if I needed cash and if I did, he would help me out. I was really surprised and told him so. He said, "The reason I want to help you is you sound just like my parish priest and he's a really good friend."

### Los Angeles Police Department

Within a week, I was working and stayed in the supermarket business. Once I had my U.S. citizenship processed I decided to join the Los Angeles Police Department. I had gone to an adult high school program at night to earn a high school diploma which was a requirement to be hired. Later, I went to a junior college to further my education. Being a policeman in a big American city is a challenging occupation. We had very tough training at the academy in all aspects of police work, including intense physical combat training, firearm training, crisis intervention, and hostage situations. However, I got through it all, but out of our starting class of 125 only 75 graduated.

On the average day, when you drive out of the station in your patrol car, you have no idea what's going to happen; from a call for a robbery in progress in a liquor store or a bank, to settle a family dispute, or arresting a drunk driver who had driven over a fire hydrant and had water gushing 50 feet in the air. Family disputes were potentially very dangerous because one or both parties were usually drunk or doped up, and there was always the danger that they had guns. Anyway, it would take a book to cover all the thousands of incidents I handled



Tom Foudy as a police officer with the LAPD.

with my partners, but I survived okay without getting seriously hurt.

When my career with the Police Department ended, I retired to a small town, San Felipe, in Baja, Mexico. I'd been there on fishing trips many times and I loved the warm water and great beaches. Plus it wasn't expensive like California, so Jane and I retired there. Sadly, after ten years of retirement, Jane was

diagnosed with cancer and it was too far advanced for treatment. On Thanksgiving Day 1999, she passed on, in a Los Angeles hospital. She was a very devout Catholic and I know she went straight to heaven like a rocket.

Time passed and I purchased a piece of property in a mountain valley, 1 and a half hours from San Felipe. It has good soil, good water, and electricity. I have a great garden with over 50 various fruit trees: grapefruit, oranges, lemons, pomegranates, and much more. I've since remarried, and my present wife, Lupita was actually a friend of Jane and me. She has a daughter and a son, now working in the United States. So here I am, on the far side of the world and a long way from Ballyhaunis. I live in peace and contentment and with this digital age I'm in touch with the world.



Left: Eddie Biesty, Knox St, in the uniform of the Local Security Force (LSF), outside St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis. Taken during 'The Emergency' 1943/4.

Right: Mary Biesty Smith, Knox St., as 'Black Magic' in a Fancy Dress Parade at the Convent of Mercy, 1943/'44.





# Ballyhaunis Fit for Life

KAREN CLANCY



The aim of Ballyhaunis Fit for Life is to keep fit by walking or running and achieving one's goals. Each member supports and encourages each other along the way. Through this, we have built many great friendships and gained comrades. Each member is equal to each other. Our main registration takes place in January, but we are open to new members at any time of the year. Whether your goal is to run/walk a 5k, 10k or half marathon or just get fit, everyone is catered for. We greatly encourage walkers to join us also.

What a year 2016 has been for us here at Ballyhaunis Fit for Life. From our registration on a chilly January evening, through the nice crisp Spring and the unsettled Summer months, we have travelled the main roads, side roads and even bog roads of Ballyhaunis and surrounding areas. We have created routes to cater for everyone from 5k, 10k and 21k on our Tuesday evening and Saturday morning runs/walks. Goals were set for the year ahead and some races picked out for us to take part in. Some of these goals were to take part in a 5k or 10k and run the distance without stopping, up to completing a half marathon.

One of the first outings of the year was a trip to Craughwell. We had a good group take part, some for the first time and each achieving their own goal, on the day. The next race we took part in was the Kilmovee 10k. This is always a very popular one within the group. It is well organised from registration right down to the goodies afterwards. This route is an ideal start for anyone taking part in their first 10k. The next big outing for many was the Achill Half Marathon and 10k in July. This event is again well organised and a lot of peoples main achievement for the year.

Some members took part in the Summer 5k series, organised in conjunction with Mayo AC, with one race taking place on our 5k route. Many members took part in other 5k's to half marathon's - local and national - including the Women's West of Ireland Mini Marathon, Castlebar.

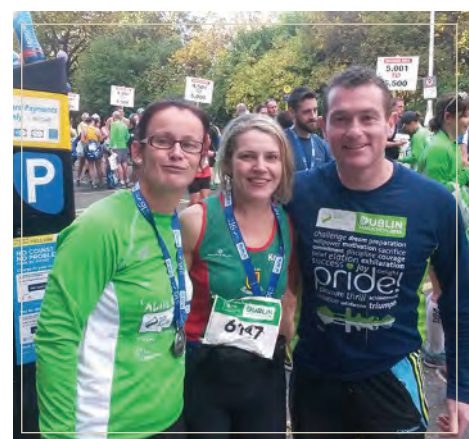
In September, the annual Ballyhaunis 8k/Mayo AC was held.

Despite the turnout being small, it was a successful afternoon. The 8k route is a testing one, but at the end everyone was delighted with their completion. This year a category was introduced for Fit for Life members. The day was very well organised with some members overseeing the registration down to post-race refreshments. We thank everyone for their help and assistance on the day - Ballyhaunis Rugby Club, the local Garda, sponsors, stewards and local Councillor, John Cribbin and anyone else who assisted in any way to make this event a success.

In October, we completed the three-quarter marathon in Longwood, Co Meath. This was great preparation for the big day - the Dublin City Marathon. When I joined BFFL in July 2013, I wanted to complete a 10k with comfort. With help and training, this was built up to half marathons, and this year, the Dublin City

Marathon, 26.2 miles, which I completed alongside Justin McDonagh and Tracey Cunnane. The training was tough at times but the end goal has become reality. We covered many miles from Ballyhaunis to Knock, Aghamore and Claremorris. I would not have been able to undertake this without the help, support and encouragement of the girls and lads of the group. A huge 'thank you' on my part to you all.

Ballyhaunis Fit for Life meets every Tuesday evening at 7pm and Saturday mornings at 9am at the Ball Court, Friary Grounds (across from Londis). So pop on your runners and hi-vis clothing and come along and join us. If you have any queries or questions, please contact Martin on 087-2455989.



Tracey Cunnane, Karen Clancy and Justin McDonagh, Dublin City Marathon, 30th Oct. 2016.



Fit for Life members. Back, L - R: Deirdre Keary, Joe O'Gara, Ciara Fitzmaurice, Justin McDonagh, Martin Fitzmaurice. Centre: Tracy Cunnane, Eileen Donnellan, Elaine Patterson, Liz Walsh, Mary Henry, Mary Donnelly, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Mary Teresa Griffin. Front: Karen Clancy, Patricia Waldron, Caroline McDowell, Mary Niland.



# Ballyhaunis GAA Community Day 2016

DARRAN CONLON



The parade of teams at Ballyhaunis GAA Community Day

The Ballyhaunis GAA Community Day took place in the club's grounds on Saturday 27th July 2016. This was the second such occasion after the inaugural event on the 30th May the previous year. That day was the successful compilation and planning initiated by a Ballyhaunis Bórd na nÓg meeting weeks previously. On that night the well-known Caulfield brothers, Tommy and Vinnie, called a meeting of all stakeholders with the aims of promoting the games, increasing participation, community integration, parent involvement, and ensuring the provision of equipment.

The then club President, Gerard McGarry, and Vinnie Caulfield had already been involved in integration efforts in the club and town for some years. An event such as this appeared the ideal opportunity to showcase the great work been done by the club and bring the games to the attention of those not familiar with the GAA in the hope of attracting new members.

Over the following month these aims were focused around ensuring the fun and enjoyment of young players and so attracting new members. Plans were put in place to host a "Family Fun Day" with a special effort to attract the families of foreign origin now resident in the town. And so it was. The 2015 Community Integration event was covered by local journalist Eoin Butler who penned a feature for The Irish Times newspaper. That article was the second most downloaded article on the papers

webpage coming second only to the marriage equality referendum. As a result of Eoin's account, there was huge national and international media interest on the club, with members fielding questions and interviews from outlets as diverse as The Farmer's Journal, the BBC and the Right Hook talk show. This highlighted the interesting story unfolding in Ballyhaunis GAA and community.

## Pride of Place Awards

In addition, Mayo County Council was present at the inaugural event and once they saw what the club was doing, they invited us to be their representative in the National Pride of Place Awards. That is a 32 county local authority competition which showcases the work of communities around the island, under various headings. Mayo County Council felt that Ballyhaunis GAA Club representing Ballyhaunis town was an ideal candidate for the Pride of Place, Communities Reaching Out category.

This all coincided with approaches from two independent documentary crews from The Guardian newspaper and RTE. They were enquiring about our 26 teams and 600 players that have, amongst its membership, children of Brazilian, Latvian, Polish, Lithuanian, Russian, Bulgarian, African, English, Pakistan and Syrian origin, and were asking were we going to run a second integration event!



As it happened we were, but now we knew we had to deliver! As before a committee was formed, consisting of club Chairman John Higgins, club Secretary Patrick Keane, club Treasurer John Collins, Bórd na nÓg Chairman Tommy Caulfield, hurling representative Darran Conlon, ladies representatives, Deidre Browne, Stella O'Neill and Breda Murray, and former club President, Gerard McGarry. As this was going to be a much larger undertaking the club needed all hands on deck and we were not disappointed. Representatives from every team and section of the club rolled in behind the cause.

### **Local Contributions**

The club also recognised the importance of involving outside people and utilising their knowledge, contacts and expertise. Stephen Grogan from the Family Resource Centre, Betty Koinange, a former asylum seeker and now a refugee residing in Ballyhaunis, Maurice Lutumba an asylum seeker from the DR Congo who lives in the Convent accommodation centre, and club coach and Scoil Íosa teacher, Kevin Henry, all contributed greatly to the planning of the event. Local employer, Dawn Meats learnt of the occasion and immediately wished to support the ongoing Integration work of the club.

And so by 2.30pm on the day of the event, club stalwarts Pete Higgins, John Joe Hoban, Gerry Lyons, Robbie Herr and Tommy Glynn were already under pressure manning the carpark such was the large volume of enthusiastic family members and excited new comers arriving at the grounds.

Proceedings commenced when the Pride of Place judging panel were met by club Chairman, John Higgins and his executive committee. They were given a tour of the facilities and were informed of the recent club success while being introduced to the clubs county representatives and Cup winning teams. Following this a set of jerseys were presented to Vinnie Caulfield and the U-12 Football team by local sponsor, Apache Pizza.

Then the M.C., Martin Fitzmaurice, gave the signal and 100 players from the club's U-8, U-10 and U-12 teams were led onto the pitch by 30 members of the Foxford Brass and Reed Band. This resulted in a rapturous reception from the large crowd in attendance many of whom were visiting a GAA grounds for the first time ever.

The players waved flags of the many home nations of club players and community members who make Ballyhaunis such a cosmopolitan town. After a lap of the pitch they came to a rest under the main stand where a large "Give Respect Get Respect" Flag, gifted from Croke

Park, was unveiled and Amhrán na bhFiann was sung by the Abbey Male Choir under the guidance of conductor, Moira Delaney.

Over the next hour the girls and boys displayed their hurling and football skills as they contested the Mick O'Connell and Joe Webb Cups, to the delighted and sometimes fascinated onlookers. This entertaining spectacle was achieved due to the planning and coordination of the various coaches and mentor including Paul Smyth, Pat Tighe, Justin McDonagh, Pierce Higgins, Sean Griffin, Gary Conway, Johnny Burke, Brendan Donnellan, Eamon Monaghan, Tom Lyons, Kevin Henry, David Burke, Jonathan Powers, Vinnie Caulfield, Tommy Caulfield, Brian and George O'Neill which allowed three simultaneous games to take place.

Following the games, onlookers and excited kids were invited onto the pitch to "Have A Go" under the expert tutelage of football coaches, Eugene Lavin and Tom Byrne, hurling coach Adrian Hession.

### **Presentation**

While that was going on, the various dignitaries and Pride of Place Judges were brought into the clubhouse where a presentation on the history, ongoing work and future plans of the club were delivered.

This was all overseen by representatives of various integration bodies, including Neil Sheridan of Mayo County Council Integration Unit and Denis O'Boyle, the Connaught Council GAA Inclusion Officer, who both expressed their admiration for the club's enterprise. The evening was brought to a close with music from Paddy Joe Tighe and friends and an entertaining display of Irish Dancing by the fantastic Elwood School of Dance.

Throughout the event a D.J., Face Painter and Mascots added extra entertainment and amusement. The "Master Chef" volunteers manned the Dawn Meats BBQ and canteen ensuring no one went hungry.

Integration in Ballyhaunis town or club is nothing new. It is something that is going on for decades since the arrival of Pakistani families with the meat factory. With the addition of new arrivals from Asia, Africa, Europe and beyond this interaction continues. Integration happens every day in Ballyhaunis GAA but on the 30th May 2015 and the 27th July 2016 we just got to showcase it and put our town, club and community under a positive light. The National Pride of Place Award winners are to be announced in a Gala Banquet in Belfast at the end of October. Don't bet against Ballyhaunis GAA Club lifting the 'Communities Reaching Out' Award.



# The Card I Sent To You

SEAMUS HORA

*"It was always my ambition, to write a country song, something nice and catchy, so you could sing along"*

That ambition was achieved on the 25th June 2016 when, for the very first time, Noel Grogan (Mid-West Radio) introduced David Godfrey's new song 'The Card I Sent to You', written by Seamus Hora.

It all began back in early May when I came across a couple of verses which I had put together and about which I was undecided what to do. I thought what harm could it do to ask the advice of the professionals? I made a phone call to David Godfrey, a very popular local artist. He brought the script with him and imagine my amazement when two weeks later when he arrived with guitar in hand! I sat back and listened as David brought new meaning to the few simple verses and put his stamp on a song which you would think was written specially for him. Recording was made in Frank McCaffrey's studio, Westport.

The proof of its popularity can be measured by the many times you the listeners requested it on Mid-West



Singer and Songwriter – David Godfrey (left) and Seamus Hora.

Radio. It's now October 1st and, thanks to your continued requests, and to the presenters at Mid-West Radio, it's receiving lots of air play. I even hear it being played as I write this.

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## Ballyhaunis Swimming Pool

AGATHA HIGGINS, SECRETARY

The start of the Summer season always means the opening of our local Swimming Pool. Thanks to Mayo County Council staff for any painting and repairs that were needed and a big thank you to the staff of EPS Ballyhaunis for being on hand to help us out at short notice.

We organised lifeguards and a caretaker for the season and eventually we were ready to open our doors. The pool was filled and opened on 17th July 2016. Thanks to Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. for giving it his blessing.

Unfortunately, unlike other years, we only had a small number interested in availing of the Irish Water Safety course, which we hold every year. Because the course is expensive to run we had to cancel it this year.

As usual we had our final day Gala with the usual swimming events which also included many novelty races. We presented two overall trophies on the final day. Vanessa Whelan received the trophy for best attendance, and Ava McCormack received a lifeguard t-shirt for a very close second place. The trophy for most improved

swimmer went to Emma Caulfield. To add to the excitement we rounded off the day with a kids' party, so everybody went home very happy. Congratulations to all winners and best of luck in 2017.

We would like to thank our lifeguards/office staff: Martin Mulkeen, Jessica Carroll, Sarah Kelly and Gary Higgins.

After twenty-one years of being involved in the running of the Ballyhaunis Swimming Pool, both Marie Jordan and I would like to thank all the lifeguards, caretakers, Mayo County Council, EPS and most importantly our swimmers, both children and adults, who availed of this great facility. We feel that, after this number of years, it's time to hang up our hats and hand over the reins to younger blood.

Every year we have looked forward to opening the pool, watching so many children getting so much enjoyment and at the same time learning a very valuable life skill at this great facility.

We wish the next Committee the very best of luck, and many great years of safe and happy swimming.



During the past year our Committee has been busily engaged in enhancing the appearance of our town and surrounding area, and furthering the aims and objectives of our 3-year plan. We have had our regular monthly meetings, additional meetings with Mayo County Council personnel and Ballyhaunis Chamber, several outdoor work evenings picking litter throughout the town, sweeping in Knox St., planting flowers - all in a voluntary effort to make Ballyhaunis a better place.

Nearing the end of the second year of our 3-year plan considerable progress has been made in a number of areas. Foremost is the construction of a footpath and lighting on Doctor's Road which has just commenced at the time of writing. This was one of the recommendations in the National Tidy Towns adjudicator's report in 2014 which we selected as one of the objectives of our 3-year plan. Subsequent discussions and co-operation between Mayo County Council, Tidy Towns, Cllr. John Cribbin and the local residents group have happily borne fruit! Our campaign for a footpath and lighting on Knock Road as far as the GAA pitch is ongoing, and we are supporting a campaign to have footpaths and lighting installed on the bypass road.

Our Good Friday clean-up on 25th March this year was a tremendous success, inspiring many groups to carry out major clean-ups in their own local areas. Our thanks to all who took part, and to Mayo County Council for disposing of the vast amount of rubbish collected. Thanks to Ryan's Supervalu for supplies of equipment, e.g. high viz vests, litter pickers etc.

Our efforts in the Cleaner Community Campaign

2015 were rewarded with 2nd prize in the 'Sweep your Street' competition for Clare St. Knox Street was our selection for this year's competition and the results have not yet been announced. Mike Griffin assisted by Brian Alves undertook the annual Sunday morning street cleaning throughout the summer - our thanks and appreciation to them.

In addition our floral displays, e.g. hanging baskets, containers etc. brightened up the streetscape during the somewhat dismal days of summer! This year we had some extra helpers on board when the beaver scouts helped to plant the petunias into pots! Thanks to our Rural Social Scheme team for their work in watering and feeding the flowers.

## National Tidy Towns Competition 2016

In the National Tidy Towns Competition 2016 Ballyhaunis was awarded 270 marks - an increase of 7 marks on last year. Increased marks were awarded in five of the eight categories in the competition with marks remaining at last year's level in the other three. Adjudication took place on 14th July in Ballyhaunis. The report contains a healthy balance of favourable and unfavourable comments with a number of questions and suggestions thrown in for good measure. The adjudicator observed many nicely presented traditional buildings and a high number of freshly and brightly painted premises in the streetscape. Hanging baskets, floral displays and murals on back lanes received favourable mention. On the other hand dumping and littering at the bottle banks, traffic congestion at the Square and some dilapidated buildings drew criticism.

The full report is on the Ballyhaunis Life website, or ask any committee member.

We extend sincere thanks to all who support the work of Tidy Towns in various ways, our local helpers and sponsors, all who supported our fundraising event in April and all who contribute financially. We are grateful to Cllr. John Cribbin and Cllr. John Caulfield for allocations of funding, and to Mayo County Council staff who are always very supportive.

## Tidy Towns Committee:

Chairperson - Kay Curley; Hon. Secretary - Mary Donnelly; Hon. Treasurers - Moyra Patterson and Frances Mulhern; P.R.O. Teresa Grogan; Committee: Ann Curley, Carmel Delaney, Mike Griffin, Brendan Grogan, Frances May, Nell Rochford, Gabriel Smith, J. T. Smyth.



Cleaner Community Awards 2016.

Back, L-R: Peter Hynes (CEO Mayo County Council), Cllr. Gerry Murray, Karen Ruane, Cllr. Richard Finn, Cllr. Tom Connolly, Cllr. Patsy O'Brien. Front row: Cllr. John Cribbin, Teresa Grogan (Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns), Cllr. Michael Holmes (Chairman of Mayo County Council), Kay Curley (Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns), Pat Curley (Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns).





Daytime and night-time views of the 1916 Memorial Garden, 11th November 2016







Proprietor of The Shop, Main St., Ballyhaunis, Georgina Costello (right) and staff member Mary Murphy were delighted to have sold a €500,000 winning ticket in the National Lottery Draw on Saturday, 20th February 2016. Photo: Sinead Freyne.



Eoghan Lavin of Ballyhaunis Boxing Club who won his second consecutive National Championship Boxing Title, on 2nd April 2016 at the National Stadium in Dublin. L-R: Ryan Peake, Martin Peake, Eoghan Lavin and Vinnie Moran.



Pictured is Carmel Brady, Line Manager, Western Care Ballyhaunis Day Services, being presented with a cheque for €1,647.96 from a group of ladies who made approximately 700 St. Bridget's cross, which were sold at Masses on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday leading up to St. Bridget's Day, 2016. They sold all crosses made, and would like to thank everyone who bought a cross or donated money, for their generosity. Carmel Brady of Western Care, on receiving the cheque, thanked everyone involved for their work and raising funds for Western Care Ballyhaunis. The group of ladies would especially like to thank Mike Mullarkey, Tullaghane, who collected, tied and cleaned the rushes used in making the crosses, and also Carmel Delaney and Julia Byrne, Western Care Service Users, who helped to make some of the crosses. Back, L-R: Orla Phillips, Mary Murphy, Carmel Brady, Frances Mulhern, Ann Burke, Bríd Nolan and Olive Lyons. Seated: Ann Heneghan, Carmel Delaney and Mike Mullarkey.



Above: Attending cookery classes in Clare Court. Back, L-R: John Cleary, Johnny O'Shaughnessy. Front: Brian Byrne, tutor Joanne Walsh (Morley) and Sean Freyne.

Left: Amy Greally, Tully with her Dance Teacher Mary Elwood. Amy was Preliminary Champion in her age group at the Mini Connachts, 2016.



# Ballyhaunis Chamber

SUE MCMILLAN

Ballyhaunis Chamber is a private limited company entitled Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce Limited and has been in existence since 1981. It is run by a Council Executive on a voluntary basis and is made up of members of more than fifty businesses. The following are the Council Executive: Sue McMillan - President, Mark Curley - Vice President, Alison McDermott - Hon. Secretary, Michael Dee – Treasurer, Eddie Murphy Jnr. – PRO, Tom Forde, John Dillon-Leetch, Mike Griffin, Paddy Phillips, Paul Finn, Lisa Finn and Paul McDermott.

We are affiliated to Chambers Ireland, whose services include providing Certificates of Origin, Chamber HR (a complete HR Management Service), information and training programmes, a Chambersafe Programme, affinity deals, access to the Irish Business Bureau in Brussels, networking opportunities and lobbying.

Ballyhaunis Chamber is also a member of the Mayo Chambers Alliance which is made up of other business organisations within the County. Together we lobby the government on issues for the County such as broadband, and roads. As part of Mayo Chambers we are a member of the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC). This means all chambers and relevant groups are working together to get proper connectivity and infrastructure from Limerick up to Sligo and further in order to attract investment to match that in Dublin and Cork. We are also a member of the Community Futures Eastern Network whereby we meet with other towns like Swinford, Charlestown, Kilkelly, Knock and Carracastle to discuss ways in which we can come together to help each other to promote our towns.

Ballyhaunis Chamber's primary purpose is to represent Ballyhaunis and the business community in many areas. It focuses on issues such as developing the Ballyhaunis Courthouse as a one stop shop for tourism, rejuvenating the Square and the Convent grounds. It looks to improve issues of pedestrian crossing and to replace trees on Main Street. The Chamber is also concerned with reviewing the speed limits, the sewage system, the introduction of a stimulus package for rural towns, rates, shopping campaigns, gift vouchers initiatives and secretarial services.

Ballyhaunis Chamber has a number of Facebook pages and websites including Fit For Life Ballyhaunis, Ballyhaunis Summer Festival, Ballyhaunis Shopper's Guide, Ballyhaunis Farmers Market, Ballyhaunis Christmas Festival, Ballyhaunis Chamber and Ballyhaunis Life. The reason for these websites and pages are to promote events, campaigns and promotions for

the town of Ballyhaunis. All these sites and social media accounts are updated voluntarily by Executive members.

Ballyhaunis Chamber also completes and administers the following projects and events: Ballyhaunis Summer Festival, Ballyhaunis Christmas Lights and Christmas Activities, Mayo Day, Farmers Market, Smarter Travel, Community Futures Renewal, Footpaths and Lighting to Ballyhaunis GAA Pitch and long term onto the Centre of Excellence and Knock, Ballyhaunis fit4life, Ballyhaunis 8k, Ballyhaunis 5k, Ballyhaunis Walking Group. We work closely with the Community Council and the Tidy Towns on many of these issues.

With that said there is still a need to change; for more of us to work together for the betterment of our town. If you mentioned Ballyhaunis Chamber to anyone in Ballyhaunis the response may still be "What can the Chamber do for me?" - this needs to change. What the town needs to hear is what we can do together. It's not about any one organisation or individual but for all of us to come together: organisations, businesses, the community alike can improve our town. It is up to us, you, to be actively involved, contributing anything we can, such as personal talents, ideas and a little time. If you come to the table wondering what you can get out of it, you will be disappointed. But if you come to the table willing to contribute what you can, everyone will reap the rewards.

Our town is rich in business experience and expertise which has been passed on for generations. If everyone shared that expertise with fellow business people in the town, it would be for the betterment of all. Someone once said, "If everyone contributed something that cost them nothing – we would have the most progressive town in Ireland". This is so true.

Ballyhaunis has substantial industrial employment and a great majority of this workforce are not natives of Ballyhaunis or of Ireland. It might be a thought that this substantial employment and the increased population would sustain the traditional traders but unfortunately this is not the case. There is no evidence that the workforce have any responsibility to the local traders and to the social heart of the community. The challenge for Ballyhaunis is to build a new community, to include and integrate all of its residents. That cannot be achieved if the existing 'social core', the shops and traders, decline further.

The Chamber of Commerce and its members are willing to face the challenge and to join with all of the Ballyhaunis people in the work of re-building a new community which will include all residents. Ballyhaunis



has a reputation based on the successful integration of the early immigrants 40 years ago. Now the integration and inclusion challenge is much greater.



**Ballyhaunis  
CHAMBER**  
IN BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS

So you have sat and read this...has it made you think? Has it made you think that in 2017 you might join us and bring your ideas to the table? The Chamber and the Executive cannot do this alone. This message has been said time and time before. Before you criticise that nothing is ever done, or that the buildings look a disgrace, or the road parking is dreadful, or about the empty shops, come and join us in a positive way. Come and take a look at the new plans that have been submitted for the Square, at the ideas for the Old Court House, at the list of services available at the Enterprise Centre, at the large employment generated by the factories in the area, at the huge amount of small businesses you may not know exist on your doorstep. Positive thoughts make positive actions. Contact us on 0949630311 or [ballyhaunischamber@gmail.com](mailto:ballyhaunischamber@gmail.com)

## A Day in the Bog

The scent of the bacon  
From the cast iron pan;  
The sweetest of tea  
Brewed in the sweet-can.

The tiny skylark  
Without effort he flew,  
Soaring and soaring  
Disappearing from view.

The hare with ears pricked  
Observing the scene;  
The corncrake call  
From meadows so green.

The curlew cried out  
In so many ways;  
Indication of weather  
For upcoming days

The pealing of church bells  
Announced the midday;  
Far distant whistle  
Said trains on the way.

Yes, those were the sweetest  
The rest was a slog.  
Just a few memories  
Of a day in the bog.

*Seamus Hora*

## 80th Birthday Celebration



Above: The Byrne sisters (Derrymore): Josephine, Margaret, Della, Attracta and Patricia with friend Lilly Quinlivan (standing) at Della's 80th birthday celebration

Below: Della and her husband Joe, who also celebrated his 80th birthday



Della and Joe with five of their six children and eight of their sixteen grandchildren.



# Class of '86 Reunion

The Thirty Year Reunion of the Class of 1986 took place on Saturday night, 26th Mar. 2016, in MacSiúrtáin's, Main St., Ballyhaunis.

There was a great turn-out with over fifty members of the class who attended Ballyhaunis Community School from 1981 to 1986 in attendance on the night.

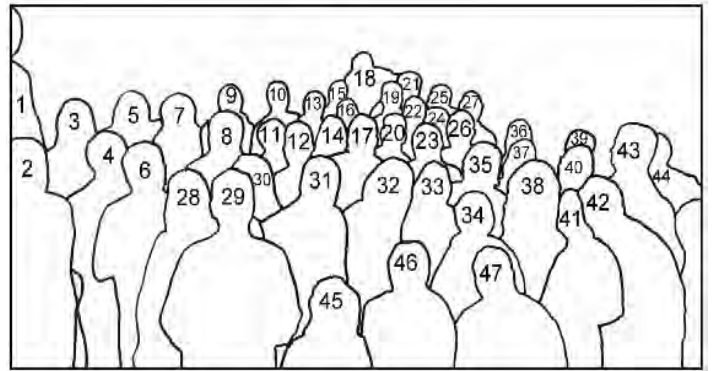
Of the three ten-year reunions so far, this was the best attended by far, with many former classmates travelling from far and wide to be present. Old acquaintances were renewed, and memories recalled. All agreed it was hard to believe thirty years had elapsed since we all went our separate ways from the Community School. There was a wonderful collection of photographs from those years on display, and many more pictures were taken on the

night. The reminiscing went on into the early hours of the morning.

Great credit goes to the organisers Deirdre Moran and Valerie Hurley who worked tirelessly to contact each and every one who was in that year at any stage from 1981 to 1986.

Our deceased class members were remembered on the night: Ambrose O'Malley (Carrowkeel, Brickens), Adrian Hunt (Reisk) and Johnny Murphy (Cartron North). May They Rest in Peace. On the night over €600 was raised for Cystic Fibrosis charity in memory of Ambrose.

Find Class of 86 Reunion on Facebook.



Top photo: L-R: Patrick Noone, Mary Nolan, Deirdre Moran, Anne Marie Godfrey, Terry Sweeney, Mary Henry, Austin Hopkins, Fiona Cassidy.

Centre left: Valerie Hurley and Deirdre Moran.

Below: Class of '86 Reunion. 1. Sean Gaffney, 2. Enda Greally, 3. Bernie McDonnell, 4. Gerry Winston, 5. Pauline Naughton, 6. Liam Walsh, 7. Fiona Griffin, 8. Peter Feeney, 9. Paul Waldron, 10. Alan Biesty, 11. Padraic Culliney, 12. Tommy Byrne, 13. Austin Hopkins, 14. Anne Marie Godfrey, 15. George Flanagan, 16. Patricia Lyons, 17. Sean T. Ruane, 18. Gerry Madden, 19. Michael Cleary, 20. Brian Murray, 21. Richard Kelly, 22. Patrick Noone, 23. Martin Grennan, 24. Bronagh McKermitt, 25. Michael Comer, 26. Jarlath Hunt, 27. Seamus Coffey, 28. Fiona Cassidy, 29. Vinnie McNamara, 30. Colette McNulty, 31. Terry Sweeney, 32. Noreen Ruane, 33. Mary Henry, 34. Mary Nolan, 35. Valerie Hurley, 36. Fiona Grogan, 37. Catherine Morley, 38. Anne Cunnane, 39. Seamus Cox, 40. James Coyne, 41. Kay Stenson, 42. John Ruane, 43. Marcus Forkan, 44. Vincent Salmon, 45. Davina Rattigan, 46. Deirdre Moran, 47. Raymond Sloyan.





# Pat Raftery – The Killinaugher Craftsman

JOE DISKIN AND PAUL WALDRON

Back in the late 1920s a group of men working on the main drain that divides the townlands of Killinaugher from Clooncan (and County Mayo from County Roscommon) made a remarkable discovery. They came across a number of metal objects which had been dumped there many years before. Included were recognisable farming and household implements, along with some more unusual items that, on further examination, turned out to be parts of guns, clocks and locks of different types.

Some of the older local men in the work crew immediately made the connection with a blacksmith named Pat Raftery who ended his days in a little stone house that once stood not too far away - in a place known as 'The Woodeen', on the Clooncan side of the drain.

By then he was over thirty years dead, but with this discovery memories of Pat Raftery were revived and stories told of his gifted craftsmanship. Luckily, some of the younger folk at that time took heed, and so stories that might otherwise have been lost have been passed down to the present day.

## Tradition

Pat Raftery was a native of Doonmacreena in the parish of Kilvine, between Irishtown and Garrafrauns, on the Mayo side of the River Clare-Dalgan. He was born sometime around 1835, long before parish registers were kept in Kilvine and so nothing is known for certain of his parents or of any brothers and sisters he had. He grew up not far from historic Doonmacreena castle, now a ruin but once a stronghold of the Blake family. The Rafterys had a long tradition in blacksmithing. *Griffith's Valuation* shows that a Michael Raftery had a forge in the townland of Creevard, close to Doonmacreena, in the 1850s. The Folklore Essays from Irishtown N.S. in the Schools Folklore collection (1938) include an interesting account, written by one E. Raftery of Knockadoon (not far from Doonmacreena), of the forge then operated by the writer's father Michael Raftery (then aged 65 years), no doubt a descendent of the earlier Michael:

*"My father is a blacksmith and owns the local forge in Knockadoon. He says that as far as he remembers all his people were blacksmiths also. They lived beside the river Clare, in Doonmacreena, but about thirty years ago my father got a new holding in Knockadoon and he built a forge there. There are very few things made of iron that he cannot make, but his principal work consists in shoeing*

*horses, asses and mules, shoeing wheels, making ploughs and scufflers and making axles for carts. He also makes harrow pins and slanes. He makes a lot of iron gates both plain and fancy during the winter months. His most dangerous job is shoeing young horses and mules."*

The writer goes on to describe somewhat different work carried out by earlier generations of Raftery blacksmiths, back in revolutionary times:

*"My great-grandfather also made pikes. It was easy enough to make the blade, but to sharpen and temper it was the hardest part of the work. The person that wanted the pike supplied him with the handle which was made of ash and about ten feet long. My grandfather used to make pikes and fix old guns for the men in the district. Every evening he took away all the weapons for the yeomen often came at night and searched the forge when everybody was in bed."*

With such a tradition behind him it's not surprising Pat Raftery chose this particular trade. No doubt there wasn't enough work to keep more than one blacksmith in Doonmacreena so he had to seek his fortune elsewhere. He must have come to Killinaugher as a young man: he was certainly here by 1854. Why he chose Killinaugher is now not known. The first edition Ordnance Survey map (1837) offers a clue – it shows a building marked as a blacksmith's forge about where Raftery later lived in Killinaugher, so maybe he came here first working for, or serving his time with a previous blacksmith whose name is now lost to memory?

The earliest found written reference to Pat Raftery is in the Valuation Office Field Books, which were compiled for Killinaugher and the rest of the parish of Annagh in 1854. These show that his home and his forge were one building: his tenement is described as a forge with a valuation of two shillings and sixpence, but the valuator noted that he *"lives in front part of the house"*. This building, and a house belonging to Anthony Grogan (with the same valuation), were held 'rent free' and were on the property of Pat Anthony Grogan, who had a total of thirteen acres of land.

A later reviser of valuations drew a line through the entries for Pat Raftery and Anthony Grogan, referring to their houses as 'cabins', showing they were valued too low for rates. That's why they are not even mentioned on the published 'Griffith's Valuation' for Killinaugher.

The Grogan and Raftery houses stood on land now owned by Tommy Fitzmaurice, close to the junction of



the road leading into the Diskin and Connolly homes.

Pat Raftery was married, but only his wife's first name is known – Mary. They had a one son Jack, as far as is known, and he was disabled to some degree. Sometime probably in the 1860s the family was evicted from Killinaugher, under circumstances now forgotten, and moved a short distance across the townland and county boundary, to that small stone house referred to earlier, in a place known as 'The Woodeen' at the western end of Clooncan. That house – in a very isolated spot – is marked in the 1895 Ordnance Survey map.

### Craftsman

Those who knew Pat Raftery described him variously as a blacksmith, a whitesmith, and a gunsmith. Others knew him simply as 'The Smitcheen'. He cut turf in Connolly's bog and used this in his furnace. First, he would kindle the fire until it was red-hot, then it was quenched and the charcoal re-kindled for heating the iron he was working on. He made and repaired all types of metal objects for the local community – household fittings and implements, farm tools and machinery – but was also able to build and repair guns, locks, clocks and watches. All accounts make it clear that his skill with finer metal-work set him apart from other blacksmiths. As it would be discovered many years later, he was also a capable stone-worker.

In her submission to the Schools Folklore Collection in 1938, Harriet Hurley of Clooncan wrote about Pat Raftery:

*"Once upon a time there lived an old man by the name of Pat Raftery. He came from Dun Mac Creana into Clooncan. He set up a little industry. He was a gunsmith by trade. People came ten miles to get guns repaired and cleaned. He also made spinning wheels and implements for the farm. He made his living on the little industry. When he got old and was unable to work, the landlord evicted him. He was a blacksmith and a whitesmith, and made locks and keys. A man gave him an order to put his name on a cart, and the smith cut the letters out in a solid piece of cold iron. The man refused to pay the fifteen shillings demanded by the smith, so the smith brought him into court. When the judge saw the work he said he could*

*not understand how this critical work could be done so cheaply, and gave him a decree for the money."*

The last bit of information above can be backed up with evidence recently found in the Ballyhaunis Petty Sessions Court Order Books: Pat Raftery 'of Clooncan, Co. Roscommon', brought Lawrence Grogan of 'Killinaher' to court as "The defendant owes the complainant the sum of fifteen shillings and four pence for work and labour performed in the year 1873 as a blacksmith". Edward C. Wynne, Esq., J.P., who presided on the day (8<sup>th</sup> July 1873) issued a "decree for fifteen shillings and four pence, with costs, five shillings, or in default distress warrant to issue" in favour of Raftery.

When he got older Pat Raftery lost his sight, which must have been a terrible blow for someone who depended on it so much for his livelihood. His son Jack was able to lead him to the bog to work on the turf, and

guide him home again in the evening, but he was unable to continue with the fine metal work for which his eyesight was necessary.

### Legacy

One of those young men making the drain around ninety years ago was Michael Diskin of Killinaugher. He was born many years after Raftery died, but heard much about him from the older generation. Michael's son Joe, who has a keen interest in local history, gathered together his father's recollections and those of neighbours, to write a short article entitled 'The

Clooncan Blacksmith' for 'Profile Magazine' in 1995. He has continued the research since, and further interesting facts have emerged.

Of all the discoveries to do with Pat Raftery, one could be classed as an extraordinary coincidence. Joe Diskin and the late Sean Biesty worked as caretakers in the Friary Grounds during the early 2000s. They installed gravelled pathways through the old cemetery and maintained the grounds in pristine condition. While keeping the cemetery in trim they cleared off grass and soil from many old flagstones and other grave-markers. One day Joe came across a small, upright grave-marker, almost lost in the vegetation beneath the trees at the bottom of the hill, close to the edge of the cemetery, near the present-day playground. It was a sandstone flag,



The gravestone in the Friary Cemetery, made and inscribed by Pat Raftery.



roughly rectangular in shape, and with a most peculiar iron fitting on top. It was soon apparent that the stone was inscribed, but because it had sunk into the ground, it had to be lifted up and re-set before the full inscription could be made-out. With careful deciphering, the stone yielded up its secret – the grave was that of one Thomas Raftery who died in 1861 aged 18 years.

The last two lines of the stone, sunk for many years into the ground, stated clearly that it was made by none other than Pat Raftery of “Kilinner”. How extraordinary that this monument should have been discovered by possibly the one person who knew most about the man in question?

The inscription was hard to make out because of the peculiar phrasing and spelling, but it reads:

**THE / Lord have <sup>mercy</sup> on / THE so<sup>ul</sup> of THO<sup>s</sup> /  
RAFTERY WHO dE / PARTED ON THE 3<sup>rd</sup> / OF  
EPRIL AGE 18 Y / THIS dun BY PT RA<sup>F</sup>T<sup>R</sup>YE / OF  
KILINHER 1861**

The iron fitting on top, it transpired, was a letter ‘H’. The maker forged from iron the letters IHS, a symbolic monogram of Christ, and fitted them in holes neatly bored into the top of the stone, and kept in place by lengths of beaten lead. The letters ‘I’ and ‘S’ must have rusted away. This is the only visible gravestone in the Friary Cemetery with a Killinaugher inscription.

Pat Raftery died in Clooncan on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 1894. His death was registered by his widow Mary, who gave his age as 58 years, and his occupation (peculiarly) as landholder. This would put his year of birth at about 1835. Thomas Raftery, commemorated on the stone, if he died in 1861 aged 18, would have been born around 1843 and was more likely to be his brother than son. What became of his wife Mary, or their son Jack is not known. There is no trace of them in the 1901 or 1911 census, either in Clooncan or Killinaugher. The house in The Woodeen was eventually knocked and the stone used in the construction of the bridge on the Killinaugher-Clooncan road, which was built by Tom Fitzgerald and Pat Lyons of Croy, Clooncan.

Like his famous namesake *Raifteirí an File*, Pat Raftery left his birth-place with very little but his God given gift, to earn a livelihood amongst people to whom he was at first a stranger, yet who came to recognise him as a man apart. The Smith was born just around the time the Poet died in 1835. Both ended up blind, with very little in the way of worldly goods, but both are remembered now when many of their contemporaries are long forgotten.

## Ballyhaunis FINE GAE

2016 was another busy and fulfilling year for the local Fine Gael branch. The dissolution of the 31st Dáil and the confirmation of the General Election date, 26th February, sparked the branch members into action. The highlight of the election campaign was on the 10th February when our local candidate An Taoiseach Enda Kenny, his wife Fionnuala and his canvassing team came to visit and meet the people of Ballyhaunis and the surrounding areas. It was gratifying to see such a large gathering in the town that day to meet and greet our Party Leader. His poll topping success on election day was secured by the huge vote he received from the Ballyhaunis area. Many of the local branch members were present in Dáil Éireann on the 6th May for the historic occasion of witnessing the re-election of a Fine Gael Taoiseach.

The Ballyhaunis Fine Gael Branch in conjunction with all the surrounding branches wishes to acknowledge and express their gratitude to the local Fine Gael councillor, John Cribbin, for his efforts in securing €1,000,525 in funding in the current year, for numerous local schemes and projects. Councillor Cribbin is available to meet constituents by appointment at a time and place of their convenience. He can be contacted at 087-2920368.

Ballyhaunis Fine Gael would like to wish everybody a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Cllr. John Cribbin viewing footpath works at Doctor's Road, Ballyhaunis.



# Local Launch of 'Running Full Circle'

SINÉAD FREYNE

Gill's Bar, Clare Street was the venue for the Mayo book signing of Frank Greally's autobiography 'Running Full Circle', on Thursday, December 10th 2015.

Frank thought that if there were 10 or maybe a dozen old comrades present at the Clare Street hostelry for the hometown launch, he would be satisfied indeed. But, just after 10 p.m., standing space was at a premium as old friends, school colleagues, cousins, former neighbours and old running partners, filed into the bar for a rare night of reminiscing and celebrating, as the Irish middle distance running champion rekindled old acquaintances with his Ballyhaunis pals, well into the night. All came to support Frank Greally with the publication of a very personal, warts-and-all account of his life that took him from running on the country roads around Ballyhaunis to magazine publishing, via Tennessee.

Following some time chatting and signing copies of his book, Mike Byrne warmly welcomed the author to town. He proceeded to tell those in attendance a little bit about Frank's journey and declared the book "as good a book as I have ever read". Mike then invited Frank to say a few words. "It means a whole lot to me, all the people who have turned up tonight. I am overwhelmed", he said as summed up how he was feeling to be back in the West and Ballyhaunis for a few days. He had started running only when he was 16 or 17 and "running had changed our lives. I don't know what I'd be doing otherwise". The 'our' being his friends Pat Cribbin, who had introduced him to running around Lecarrow, childhood friends Michael Joyce and Padraig Keane from Ballinlough. Padraig and Frank would later move to Dublin and both would represent Ireland on many occasions. Frank was delighted also to see Pat's brother Johnny Cribbin in attendance as Pat had moved to Birmingham and would



Pictured in Dublin in November, 2015 at the launch of 'Running Full Circle'. L-R: Oliver Concannon, Kevin Healy, Frank Greally and Dom Byrne.

later lose his life tragically in a road accident on his way to work.

He regaled the gathering with stories of his youth when "Tom Short, Darby and Tom Fitzgerald were my heroes as I watched them play football". He remembered Mick Nestor who ran Ballyhaunis Boxing Club, Joe Freeley and Michael Curley, who he said was the "epitome of fitness and to think of where it (running) took me from humble beginnings". He worked for a few years as a Junior Postman in Ballyhaunis Post Office, and fondly remembered Chief Clerk Johnny Henry, Eamonn Dwane, Donal Fitzpatrick and Myra Fitzgerald.

But Frank Greally's life has not been all about running and when he took the US scholarship route in 1972 in the hopes of Olympic glory, it didn't go to plan.

It started off well – he had two good years in the US and two not so good. Tennessee was a big culture shock and as a result of the twin demons of depression and alcohol, he would fall through the cracks of the collegiate system. He came back to Ballyhaunis "carrying a lot of baggage with feelings of shame and disappointment - useless emotions".

## Thank You

The Ballyhaunis launch of 'Running Full Circle' was, in a sort of way, a 'thank you night'. Thanks to the friends who helped him along the way, in particular, the fundraising efforts organised for him when he first bade farewell to his hometown over 45 years ago. A night,



Author Frank Greally pictured with neighbours and relatives from Drimbane at the launch of his autobiography in Ballyhaunis in December 2015. L-R: Seamus Cribbin, Angela Cribbin, Frank Greally, Patsy Greally, Dymphna Greally, John Stephen Greally, Anne Kelly, Seamus Kelly



especially to say thanks for coming through a life fraught with frustration and disappointment. Life has been tough for Frank, but life has also been good to the former post-boy. Over 35 years ago, Frank founded 'The Irish Runner', Ireland's only dedicated running magazine, and today, with Frank in the editor's role, the magazine has become one of the most successful sports publications in the country.

When you read this book you will find out how he got through it all and found balance and peace, finding his way back to the primal joys of running. This story is also about the importance of taking care of one's mental health and getting rid of "useless emotions" that drag the spirit down. His message is very clear to anyone experiencing the storms of life to "never give up".

Following on from a successful book signing assignment in Galway city the previous day, demand was brisk indeed at Gill's for Frank's new book, and for a photo and signature as well from the man, whose hometown book launch was an occasion to savour and remember for some time to come. A little rendering of Sean Keane's beautiful ballad, "Home", had the house in full voice behind the man whose homecoming was greeted with applause and appreciation.

Published by Ballpoint Press, *Running Full Circle* is on sale in most good book stores around the country and also through Athletics Ireland.

## From Ballyhaunis to there and back 1925 - 2016

DOM MURPHY, IN CONVERSATION  
WITH JIM LUNDON AND EDWARD MULHERN

Our story begins exactly one hundred years ago when Roe Brothers, Main St., Boyle, became a main Ford dealer on October 14th 1916. In 1925, Mr. Jennings, Postmaster at Ballyhaunis Post Office, bought a 1925 New Model-T Doctor's Coupé, registration IZ 581 from Roe Brothers. He bought it to drive his wife to Coolnafarna National School where she was a teacher. Research has found that ownership records of cars between 1920 and 1930 have been lost in the Motor Taxation Office in Castlebar, for one reason or another.

We don't know how long Mr. Jennings had the car in Ballyhaunis but the next owner was the Irish American Oil Company in Dublin. Years passed and on 15th September 1973, the car was registered in the UK. Records from 1988 show the owner to be Francis Knox from Billingham. In 1989, Skipper of Darlington, main Ford dealers, thanked owner Stephen Billau for allowing the car to be used at a car exhibition. In 1991, the owner was Trevor Greenlagh, Blackpool, while in 1998, the owner was Barry Dockworth-Clark. In 2000, it was put up for auction by the Windmills Collection.

In Ballyhaunis, Dom Murphy, Dublin Road, saw it advertised in a motoring magazine. Having bought a ticket in Dillon's Travel Agency, and travelled to the UK, he bought it, got it shipped to Belfast Docks and brought it back to Ballyhaunis. He recalls that the first of its many admirers was Eddie Mulhern.



Ford Model T, IZ 581, which was first bought by Mr. Jennings, Ballyhaunis Postmaster, in 1925.

Four years later, in 2004, Dom and his wife Geraldine attended the Connacht Veteran Vintage Car Day in the Downhill Hotel, Ballina. The son of Mr. Jennings, a Ballina based dentist, recognised the car that he played in as a child. He even identified a mark that he had put in the car all those years ago and in doing so had completed the circle of ownership from his father's time!

So, the 1925 Model-T Doctor's Coupe has now returned to Ballyhaunis in its old age where it is loved and cared for at Murphy and Sons Autosales and all the Murphy family.



# Letters to *The Sunday Independent*

MURT HUNT

## Visiting the seaside

Sir, I was at a good friend's funeral during the week. He was an elderly man of 88, whom I shall call "Tom" and I got to know him from buying greyhounds from him; which proved to be very good winners in turn. I had no contact with him in recent years, and seeing his death on the internet, I decided I just had to go to his funeral. Gifts brought to the altar included a button accordion, with which he used to entertain neighbours and friends, and a carving of a pair of greyhounds.

He was a very comical and funny man and could turn any conversation into a cause of merriment and laughter. He had so many yarns and stories to relate, not all of which were true, but enthralled and captivated so many audiences.

The priest in his homily told us "Tom" met his wife in England at an Irish dance and they were married shortly afterwards. They had one son and worked there until they came home to Ireland to retire. There he took up his passion of rearing greyhounds. His favourite pastime was to take his beloved wife to the seaside and walk hand in hand barefoot in the ocean waves. He told his wife many times that this was his idea of Heaven.

He and his wife went back to England for their diamond jubilee last April, and met up with old friends there. He was in good health but suddenly got ill last week and died in hospital. His wife visited him the night before he died and he took her hand and said "Dear, I am going to the seaside."

She replied "Of course we will go, when you get better and come home from hospital."

"No, my dear" he said, "this time I am going on my own." In that way he was telling her his time was up and he was heading for the great beach in the sky. What a lovely story of 60 years of married bliss and love and caring for one another.

## Going strong at 100+

Sir, Having heard so much debate recently about the older generation and how, in the eyes of certain people, they are costing the state so much more each year by living longer and getting too much pension, and not enough in the eyes of certain others; it was certainly so enlightening and entertaining last night to see that beautiful documentary on RTE entitled "Older than Ireland".

What a wonderful programme encapsulating the thoughts and memories of people who have attained the ripe old age of 100 years. To listen to old people of mostly 100+ relate how they came through the Black and Tans era and the Civil War as well was so poignant.

It was littered with wit and good humour by so many of those interviewed and though many were showing their age physically, their minds were on a par with people of a much younger calibre. Their stories of their first kiss, of

sneaking out to dances and, more especially, of the American wakes, where they bid farewell to family and friends never to be seen again, were both funny and sad.

Those people have contributed so much to Irish society and will go down in folklore, especially after the wonderful documentary; even though a certain element would begrudge them their OAP and cheque from the President on attaining the marvellous age of 100 years.

## Technology

Sir, What with all the modern technology one would think that we would all be happy and satisfied with business transactions such as paying bills. However, when a person told me the other day that she had terrible trouble paying her insurance bill, it threw a different prospective on technology for me.

Seemingly, she got her 2016 car insurance quote in the post and, as it was up a good bit from 2015, she rang the firm to see could she get it for less money. It took her a long time to get through, as she was instructed to press one of five buttons to get the department she wanted; on pressing number one she was instructed to choose one of five more options to get through to an operator. Would you believe she was then told all the operators were busy and she was put in a queue, until eventually she got talking to an operator.

Having got a slight reduction, she proceeded to write a cheque for the amount and sent it off to the firm as she had done, without fail, for many years. She was, therefore, so astonished when the cheque was returned a few days later with the instructions "payment by credit card only".

She had to go through the same rigmarole again to get talking to an operator, only to be told she should have been told on her previous call "credit card only". She told the operator she had not, or never had, a credit card but he had no sympathy and told her to use a friend's or neighbour's card and recompense them. She was terribly upset and put out by these events and had to pay the phone bill for the calls after waiting over 45 minutes to get through.

I am sure several more people have come across this problem with insurance firms and other financial institutions. I personally have seen elderly people completely bamboozled in banks as they struggled to understand how to use an ATM to lodge and withdraw cash. Technology?

## Keeping one's trap shut

Sir, With all the controversy recently as a result of comments and allegations made by various people here and abroad, it seems one has to think twice anymore before speaking at all in case one says the wrong thing.

On reading of these allegations my mind wandered back to when I was a youngster many moons ago. I loved going to the fairs in our local town with my dad. There



was always so much to see and hear, with the buying and selling of various animals, the hand slapping involved in the selling and buying and the getting a few pennies from friends and relations "for the young lad". I loved all the chat, good natured craic and camaraderie that passed among friends; and the buying of glasses of porter for my dad and coffee and cream buns for myself.

However there was one man whom I detested meeting and would try and guide my father away from his company at every opportunity. His salutation to my dad at us meeting at every fair would be "Arra howya Hunt, and how is your wife and my family?"

This used to drive me wild and half demented every time. Even though he was a big frame of a man, I thought if I was a bit bigger and older I would be having a go at him. I could not understand why my dad did not do so, instead of joining his company for a drink. On querying my father, the answer always was "Sure don't take any notice of him", and when I went home and told my mother all she would do was laugh.

I put up with these allegations for a few more fair days, until I suddenly realised all this was harmless banter between two good friends, with no slight meant or taken from either party. However, I wonder how all this would be taken in today's touchy world. It would probably be the cause of an assault or of "going up the steps" of the courthouse.

A changed world indeed but it is so much better to do as it says in the song, "Say nothing at all" and, of course, to heed the old adage "A closed mouth catches no flies".

### **Pass the parcel**

Sir, On turning over a stone in a garden or field one can occasionally find a colony or "nest" of ants or "pismires" as they are sometimes called. They can leave one enthralled as they hurry up and down, back and forward in their busy routine, brushing against one another (their way of messaging each other) as they hustle and bustle to and fro. Their response to being disturbed is to bring their tiny eggs on their backs to safer headquarters in the labyrinth of tunnels underground. Their energy is beyond belief in their never ending movement to and fro.

I have seen examples of this laborious work over the last few weekends. No, I did not disturb so many nests of ants to do so, but I have watched several gaelic football teams on TV, and the movement of the various teams of footballers is so very much like the movement of the ants.

The new mode of playing used now by many of the teams is to chase persistently up and down the field, sometimes with the ball, sometimes without it, as they play the new game of gaelic football (a cross between soccer, rugby and, more especially, basketball). Like the ants, the players brush off other players also with a message, "Don't come near me again or you will be carried off". Even the goalies are involved now in the chase up the field as they take the long distance free kicks. One would think the players were sparing their expensive boots as they contin-

uously handpass the ball.

Like the ants, when one is removed for whatever reason, another will immediately take his place in the movement to and fro, and continue on the boring movement (pass the parcel) that is now part of our so-called native game. As the ants carry the eggs on their backs, so also do the footballers as their opponents do their best to jump on their backs for a spin.

God be with the old kick and catch and highly skilled game of gaelic that we all loved so much and that was so much admired by the older generations. In the olden days, if one did not stay in their allotted position on the field of play, they would immediately be taken off for not obeying the orders of the manager.

Now one's job (no matter what position one is selected in) is to chase endlessly up and down the field to the point of exhaustion, and to pass the ball back as often and as far back as is possible to a team mate, even to the goalkeeper.

### **The day of the orator is gone**

Sir, Listening and watching into the Dáil and Seanad debates, I am beginning to think that the day of the orator in Ireland is gone. How often we see T.D.s and Senators standing up in the chambers to deliver a speech and proceeding to read it out of a sheet or sheets of paper. It seems most of them are not able to ad lib a speech anymore.

When I was a young lad, my greatest delight was to cycle into my local town at election time to hear candidates from different political parties deliver the most eloquent and wondrous speeches ad lib, usually from the back of a trailer or parked lorry. The tone was sometimes loud and sometimes the speaker was heckled, but the criticism, if any, was usually answered in an intelligent manner and from the tip of the tongue, not read from a sheet of foolscap.

We have all heard of Daniel O'Connell and how he was considered one of the best, if not the greatest, Irish orator of all time; no sheets of paper in front of our Daniel, you can count on that. Well, I have heard potential Dáil candidates from lesser known parties of my day put candidates from the bigger parties to shame with the content and nature of their speeches in the square of my hometown all those years ago.

Many of our sitting members, and indeed the opposition, now, when reading from their sheets of paper, are not able to respond to criticism and get flabbergasted and worked up to the point of losing the cool if asked to elaborate. Ad lib means "to speak or act without preparation", but how many of today's speakers can do so?

To make matters worse, many of those written speeches are not even written by the people concerned, but by others acting on their behalf. There are, of course, a very small few members who are very capable of ad libbing a speech and capable of answering questions, but on the whole my orators of old would put most of them to shame.



# Remembering Corporal Thomas Kirrane

GERARD MCLOUGHLIN

Corporal Thomas Kirrane was born in the parish of Began in the townland of Cloonbulban in 1880. He was the eldest of ten children born to William and Bridget Kirrane. By the time the 1901 census was taken Thomas had bade farewell to Cloonbulban and to Began, sadly he was never more to return home to his native birthplace.

Thomas emigrated to England and in doing so wrote himself into history. He enlisted in the 8th Bn 16513 East Lancashire Regiment, Bolton and subsequently ended up in France where sadly he lost his life on April 10th 1917 at Flanders aged 37. He was interred at Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery, Wancourt. His name is also engraved on the wall at the Mayo Peace Park Castlebar.

Over 100 years have passed since Corporal Thomas Kirrane left Began and, on April 10th last, the 99th anniversary of his death Corporal Kirrane was finally remembered in his native birthplace at the graveside of his parents and brothers.

Kieran Jenkinson and Bill Kirrane, both grandnephews of Corporal Kirrane, unveiled a plaque in memory and in honour of their heroic granduncle at the grave of his parents in Began Cemetery, ensuring that a forgotten son is remembered forever more. Fr. Brendan McGuinness, P.P. Began, led a Memorial Service in memory of the late Corporal. Other members of the Kirrane family were in attendance and they were joined by members of the local community.

2017 marks the centenary of the death of Corporal Thomas Kirrane and it is planned to mark the occasion.

Kieran Jenkinson is grandson of Patrick Kirrane, Bill Kirrane is grandson of Billy Kirrane. Patrick and Billy were brothers of Corporal Thomas.

L-R: John Wright (Australia, grand-nephew), Bill Kirrane (London, grand-nephew), Michael Kirrane (London, nephew), Mary Jenkinson (Annagh, niece), Maria Fitzmaurice (Williamstown, grand-niece), Kieran Jenkinson (Claremorris, grand-nephew). John Wright has written a book of poetry titled "Cloonbulliban" in which he depicts his memories of childhood days spent at ancestral homestead. Photograph by Ger McLoughlin.



The recently renovated Kirrane family home in Cloonbulban



Members of the extended Kirrane family and friends gathered at Began Cemetery to remember Corporal Thomas Kirrane. L-R: Patricia Prendergast, Mary Jenkinson, Aisling Fitzmaurice, Frances Griffin, Nadine Fitzmaurice, Carla Griffin, John Griffin, Maria Fitzmaurice, Sean Griffin, Fr. Brendan McGuinness P.P. Began, Lorraine Griffin, Áine Griffin, Bill Kirrane, Kieran Jenkinson and Gerard McLoughlin.





# Ballyhaunis Golf Club

MARGARET DYER, HON. SECRETARY

Ballyhaunis Golf Club situated on the Ballyhaunis Tooreen road in Coolnaha is a mature 9 hole course with excellent drainage capability that makes it playable all year round. This is a huge advantage compared to other courses which struggle to stay open in winter time.



The club hosts weekend competitions which are reasonably well supported. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our generous Sponsors without whose support we would find it difficult to maintain our Competition Calendar.

The Club hosted a Junior Programme on Wednesdays for the summer months which was well attended and will hopefully produce the club members of the future.

Congratulations to Andrew Hickey on his achievements this year. Andrew has become the first Scratch Golfer in the Club's history and has recently been selected on the Irish U18 panel. Well done to the Jimmy Bruen team who reached the Connacht semi-final but were beaten by Roscommon and to the Connacht Shield team who were in the Connacht final and narrowly beaten by Curra West.

Like most Golf Clubs in the West of Ireland our club is struggling financially with a sharp drop-off in membership especially playing membership. The club organised a very successful fundraising drive throughout the summer months, selling tickets for a €1500 heifer throughout the province and beyond. Thanks to all who supported and especially to those who gave of their time selling tickets. Congratulations to Jonathon Powers who bought the lucky ticket.

Our aim for 2017 is to organise a major initiative to encourage both past and new members to join the club. We urgently need new members to take up the game and get involved in the club which is an excellent facility for any area to have. Beginners lessons will be organised so people can "have a go" and maybe some will "get the bug" and take up golf which is a game for life.

## Thanks

Thanks to all members who helped with the running of the club during the year. Special word of thanks to Head Greenkeeper, Jonathan Kelly and his crew for presenting the course in excellent condition at all times. It is fair to say that our course rivals any course in the west of Ireland in terms of quality and playability. Also many thanks to our two Captains, Claire Lannon and Tony Grennan for their time and effort in 2016.

We remember John Forde (Past Captain/President), Bertie Mulligan (Past Captain) and Matt O'Dwyer who died during the year. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anam dhílis.



Breege Folliard, winner of the President's Prize to the Ladies at Ballyhaunis Golf Club, with Seamus Swift (President 2016).  
*Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh/Ballyhaunis.*



Above:  
Paul Hickey,  
winner of the  
President's Prize  
at Ballyhaunis  
Golf Club, with  
Seamus Swift  
(President 2016).

Nuala Fitzgerald  
(right), winner of  
the Lady Captain's  
Prize at  
Ballyhaunis Golf  
Club, receiving her  
Prize from Claire  
Lannon (Lady  
Captain 2016).

*Glynn's  
Photography,  
Castlereagh/  
Ballyhaunis.*







Members of the Ballyhaunis Golf Club Connaught Shield Team who were defeated by Curra West G.C. at the Final of the Connaught Shield Competition held at Ballyhaunis Golf Club. Back, L-R: Brian Phillips, Liam Lynskey, Karl Coyne, Andrew Hickey, David Hannon, Eoghan Collins, Shane Buckley, Tommy Moran, Michael Lyons. Front row: Tony Grennan, John Burke, Martin McDermott, John Doyle, Paul Hickey, Barry Freeman, Tom Fanning Jnr. Glynn's Photography, Castlerea/Ballyhaunis.



Presentations to Dr. Helen Cleary and Pat Curley at Ballyhaunis Golf Club for their years of dedicated service to golf, Provincially, Nationally, and Internationally, and to Ballyhaunis Golf Club.

Above: L-R: Seamus Swift (President), Claire Lannon (Lady Capt.), Dr. Helen Cleary, Tony Grennan (Capt.).

Below: Claire Lannon (Lady Capt.), Pat Curley, Tony Grennan (Capt.), Seamus Swift (President). Glynn's Photography, Castlerea/Ballyhaunis.



Above: Ballyhaunis Golf Club member, Andrew Hickey, who finished third in the Under-18 Irish Open Championship in July 2016. Andrew also became the first player in the club's long history to play off a Scratch Handicap this year.



**AA Meetings** (Alcoholics Anonymous) **Sun. 8.30pm**  
Venue: Family Resource Centre,  
Friary Grounds, Ballyhaunis.

**Al-Anon** (Family Support Meetings), **Sun. 8.30pm:**  
Venue: School Iosa Primary School.  
Abbeyquarter, Ballyhaunis.

[www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie)  
Connaught Telephone Service: 091-767777  
[www.al-anon-ireland.org](http://www.al-anon-ireland.org)





**Easter Parade 2016**  
 Photos by Fr. Stephen Farragher





2016 will go down as a year in which the Fianna Fáil recovery continued unabated both at a National and at a local level. The party performed well in the February General Election where much of the ground lost in 2011 was regained indicating that the party is recovering the confidence of the electorate. Our performance in Mayo can only be described as spectacular with Fianna Fáil securing half of the available seats in the Mayo constituency despite the presence of the sitting Taoiseach as a local candidate. Having two TDs of the calibre of Dara Calleary and Lisa Chambers, both holding major opposition portfolios, is a fine achievement for both the local Fianna Fáil organisation and for Fianna Fáil voters across the Mayo constituency. When the presence of Castlerea native and Belmullet based Senator, Dr. Keith Swannick, is added to the mix, Fianna Fáil now enjoys our largest parliamentary representation in County Mayo since 2002.

On a local level, Cllr. John Caulfield has continued to work for and to deliver to the Ballyhaunis area. His availability and accessibility remains a major asset for the local Fianna Fáil organisation. The recent opening of Deputy Dara Calleary's constituency office in Clare Street affords our party a major presence in Ballyhaunis and is proof, if such were needed, of the combined



Members of Michael Waldron Comhairle Ceanntair Fianna Fáil who attended the Cáirde Fáil Presidents Dinner in Dublin. L-R: Cllr. John Caulfield, Mary Caulfield, Kenneth Dennedy, Uachtaráin Fianna Fáil Micheál Martin TD, Larry Warde, Mary Warde, Marian Maloney, Jimmy Maloney, Breda Waldron and Tom Waldron (Chairperson Michael Waldron Comhairle Ceanntair).

commitment of both Deputy Calleary and Councillor Caulfield to Ballyhaunis and its environs.

Nationally, Fianna Fáil has adopted a responsible approach to Parliamentary affairs, putting certainty in Dáil proceedings above personal or party gain. In the spirit of 'New Politics', we have agreed to facilitate the stability of the country by providing conditional support to the government as long as the policies pursued in major economic areas are consistent with Fianna Fáil policy. This has allowed the party to influence government in several important areas, chief among these being the suspension of water charges, the delivery of a fairer deal for rural communities and the improvement of rural infrastructure including the maintaining of Knock Airport as a major facet of such infrastructure. While this policy is scheduled to continue

for three budgets, this is of course contingent on government policy being broadly consistent with important core principles of Fianna Fáil policy on Health, Education, Rural and economic policy which of course remains to be seen.

Deputy Dara Calleary can be contacted at (096) 77613 and Councillor John Caulfield at (087) 3134446.

**Michael Waldron Fianna Fáil  
Comhairle Ceanntair officers –**  
 Chairperson: Tom Waldron.  
 Secretary: Lorainne Lowry.  
 Treasurer: Hugh Rudden

*Left: Pictured outside Deputy Dara Calleary's newly opened constituency office in Clare St., Ballyhaunis:  
 L-R: Bernard Waldron, Dara Calleary TD and  
 Cllr. John Caulfield.*



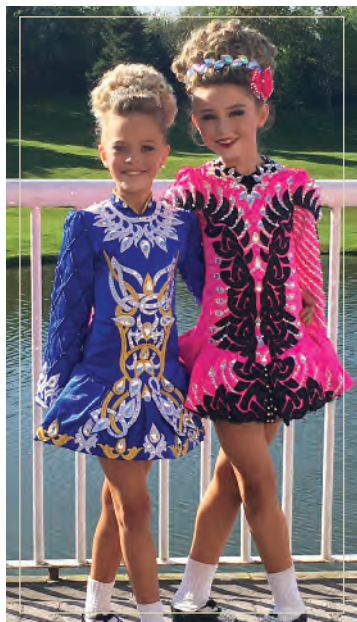


# Elwood School of Dancing

Dancers of all ages currently attend classes with Mary Elwood in the Parochial Hall, developing their dancing skills while having fun and making friends. Many dancers enjoy considerable success in regional, national and international competitions.

The Elwood School of Irish Dancing also provides entertainment at many festivals and events in Ballyhaunis and around the county.

Good dance friends Emma Colleran from Urlaur and Leah Guilfoyle from Greenwood who dance with the Mary Elwood School of Dancing are pictured here enjoying their day at the CLRG Irish National championships held in Dublin in May 2016.



Erica Byrne from the Mary Elwood School of Irish Dancing pictured at the CLRG (Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha) All Ireland Championships held in Killarney in October 2015. Erica was placed fourth in this competition which included top dancers from America, UK, Australia and Mainland Europe as well as Ireland. Erica, who is from Gurteen, Ballyhaunis, is the current Under-9 Connacht champion, and has held the Connacht title for the last three years.



*Right:* Dancers from the Mary Elwood school of Irish Dancing who perform at local events and parades throughout the year. Some of these also compete at Feiseanna. Included are Ellen Phillips and Derbhla Freeman. Lucy Phillips, Maeve Caulfield, Erica Byrne, Ciara Fitzmaurice, Leah Elwood, Leah Guilfoyle, Maia Phillips, Alesha McGarry, Lauren Gallagher, Lucy Flanagan, Daragh Mulrennan, Aoibhinn Gallagher, Lauren Lyons.



*Left:* Mary Elwood School of Irish Dancing beginners' class, Sept. 2016. Cillian Caulfield, Laoise Greally, Lauren Groarke, Eala Greally, Cíara Dooley, Michelle Ryan, Síofra Forde, Marissa Collins, Mary Elwood (Teacher), Harry Elwood, Grace Gallagher, Lauren Gallagher, Lily Gallagher, Daragh Mulrennan, Leona Fanning, Ella Gallagher.



# My First Memories of Ballyhaunis

FRANK LACKNER

I arrived in the United States at the age of six after emigrating with my parents and sister from Austria in 1950. We were refugees from an Austrian area in Yugoslavia, which is now Slovenia, called Gottschee that had existed among the Slovenian people for 600 years. During World War II, in 1941, the families in the villages of Gottschee were relocated to an area known as Rann on the Sava, where I was born in 1943.

Our family first lived in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. I attended grades one through three at Our Lady of Good Counsel. Although I was unable to speak English when we first arrived, I quickly learned the language while attending school. Three years later our family moved to Ridgewood, Queens. Ridgewood was where I grew up, attended Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Grammar School, Bishop Loughlin High School in Brooklyn and St. John's University in Jamaica, Queens. At the age of twelve, I got my first job as a newspaper delivery boy while attending High School and during my University years I worked part-time in a local neighbourhood supermarket named Trunz.

It was at Trunz that my co-workers and I became friendly with one of our local customers, Della Byrne Weissenberger. Della shopped with her two small children Tommy and Linda. Della Byrne was born in Derrymore, Ballyhaunis, and had arrived in the United States in 1953 at the age of 17. A few years later she met and married a wonderful hard working policeman named Joe Weissenberger.

At the Trunz delicatessen counter we had a custom of offering children a slice of bologna whenever their parents were purchasing sliced meats and cheeses. When Della's children were asked if they wanted a slice of bologna for a snack, little Tommy would invariably ask for a slice of roast beef instead. Of course, we were not allowed to follow up on his request but we thought it was quite humorous for him to ask for a better slice of meat.

Shortly thereafter, Della's sister Josephine immigrated to the United States and lived with Della and her family in their small apartment on Catalpa Avenue. When Della's two sisters, Patricia and Attracta, decided to immigrate to America in October 1963, it was necessary for Josephine to find a place to live for herself and her two sisters as there would not be enough room at Della's apartment.

Luckily, Josephine found an apartment for the three of them that was located four houses away from where I lived with my parents at 64-10 Madison Street. Patricia and Attracta arrived on a Thursday in October and I met them for the first time that Saturday. I'm not sure about 'love at first sight' but there was a definite

attraction when I first saw Patricia. Although we lived so close to each other and would occasionally meet, it was not until we were both at a beach party in Far Rockaway, Queens the following summer that we began going out on dates. That night we walked the Far Rockaway boardwalk and played various games of chance at the kiosks set up along the way as the ocean surf pounded against the shore and the moon glistened across the water. I asked Patricia to accompany me to a movie theatre in Manhattan the following day. At that time all the newly released blockbuster movies were only shown in the Manhattan, New York theatres. The movie, 'It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World', was hopefully no indication for Pat of what was to come, although it did set the tone.

While serving active duty training for six-months in the military at the end of 1964 into 1965 in Fort Dix, New Jersey and Fort Jackson, South Carolina, Patricia and I corresponded often. Upon my completion of active duty I had a five and a half year commitment of reserve duty remaining with the military. Soon after returning home we became engaged with marriage plans following. Our wedding on October 1st, 1966 with a honeymoon in Bermuda, was followed with a first visit home to Derrymore for both of us the following year. After Patricia left her apartment where she had lived with her sisters, the youngest of the family, Margaret, joined Josephine and Attracta a year later to live at 61-48 Madison St.

## First Irish Visit

Travelling to Ireland was the first Trans-Atlantic flight for me; since my immigration to the USA aboard the U.S.S. Washington in 1950 was a ten-day crossing of the Atlantic to New York. Patricia and I flew on Aer Lingus and enjoyed all the amenities that were offered to us at that time including meals, drinks and snacks. As we approached Shannon airport, I will always remember how green everything appeared on the ground below and how all fields seemed to have a square look due to the stone fences surrounding them.

Upon arriving at Shannon, we were greeted by Pat's mother and father, May and Dom, and brother, Tom. We did not get to see Pat's brother, Gerry until many years later because he and wife Julia were raising their family in London. May had flown over to the U.S. for our wedding and would continue visiting the U.S. for her daughters' weddings and eventually spending the winters with us until she was into her nineties.

Dom loved a good joke and realised that since I had been raised in city surroundings I was probably not very familiar with farming. On the ride home he would



point to a cow in the fields and indicate that it was a good-looking horse. When he was teaching me how to milk a cow, he would jokingly tell me that you have to sit behind the cow to do so. In turn, I would ask him 'how do you get the cow to sit on that little stool?'

I have fond memories of seeing beautiful green fields for the first time as we travelled by car from Shannon airport to Derrymore. It was great to see so many pastures with an abundance of cattle, sheep and, at times, horses. The lambs were very frisky and I was told how they were able to leap off the ground a few inches or so and jump straight up in the air. I wasn't sure if this was another way to get one up on the city Yank or if it was true. On that first car ride to Derrymore we stopped for breakfast at Glynn's Hotel in Gort. A meal stop in Glynn's became a tradition for us during subsequent trips back to Ireland.

### **My First Pub Visit**

My first visit to a pub was a new adventure for me and I was not sure of what to order. I asked for a beer that was popular in the States called Schaefer and to my surprise the bartender actually had cans of that brand available. Being new to the pub scene in Ireland, I was unaware of the great taste of Guinness but once acquired, it is one that I have never lost.

On Sundays we attended Mass at St. Patrick's church in Ballyhaunis, followed by a visit to Paddy Phillips' for a few pints. The Guinness was good! Without realising how strong it was and how easy it went down, after that third pint, I began to feel no pain. Then back to Derrymore where I missed May's delicious dinner because I was sound asleep.

I recall going to town in the evening to have a pint at Paddy Phillips with the family. We would sit in one of the rooms in the rear of the pub and always had great conversations during the course of the evening. It was interesting when the bartender announced "last call" at 11.00 p.m. For me, this was considered quite early to be closing the pub because in the U.S. most bars stayed open until 4.00 a.m. However, "last call" here in Ballyhaunis always meant that you could order your last drink and stay until you finished it. Sometimes the Garda would knock on the back door and check to make sure there was no more liquor or ales being served after the 11 p.m. curfew began.

### **Fair Days**

Of course, Fair Day in Ballyhaunis was something that I was not familiar with but was eager to participate in to see how the buying and selling was conducted. After an early wake up call, I joined Tom, Dad and a neighbour to walk the seven or so cattle to be sold at the Fair Green in Ballyhaunis. The cattle were lined up on

the side of the road in single file as we walked along guiding them to town. The men wore wool suit coats that were, and still is, the custom. I, on the other hand, wore a cardigan sweater that really separated this Yank from the locals. My sister-in-law, Marguerite, mentioned that I looked more ready for a game of golf than a fair day in Ballyhaunis.

When we arrived at the Fair Green, the cattle were directed to a large holding to wait for the buyers. Since we had arrived early, we had an opportunity to put the cattle along an enclosed fence where it was easier to keep them together in a small group until the buyers made their rounds. Other farmers who arrived later had to keep their cattle in a group in the middle of the holding area. The farmers knew how to secure their cattle in one group without tying them together.

Dom and the neighbour went to meet friends, leaving Tom and I to watch the cattle. With very little effort, Tom was able to keep his cattle in place by simply using a stick to tap the one on the right and then the one on the left to keep them together. Soon Tom asked me to keep an eye on the cattle because he had to go somewhere in town. He handed me his stick and I felt this would be an easy task because I had observed what he had done. So there I stood behind the cattle. With my stick, I tapped the one to my left and then the one to my right and within a minute I was staring at an empty fence in front of me. The cattle sensed that whoever was controlling them had no idea what they were doing. They disappeared and melted into the crowd of other cattle. 'What do I do now?' I wondered. 'Tom is not here and I can't distinguish one from the other.' Within a few minutes, Tom returned and saw my predicament. He had no problem finding his cattle and within a few minutes he returned them all to the empty space in front of me.

Soon, buyers were coming around to our group and the bargaining began. The buyers always offered less than what the seller was demanding and eventually they came to an agreement somewhere in between the two offers. Often the buyers would walk away to another seller only to return later with a better offer. There were never any papers signed when an agreement was reached. A sale was finalised when buyer and seller spit into their own hands and shook on the deal they had agreed upon. This was known as 'wetting of the deal'. It was not very sanitary, but it was a gentleman's agreement that sealed the deal and was the custom to do so. The intense bargaining back and forth between farmer and buyer often resulted in a few extra pounds in the seller's pocket. When the bargaining was complete and all the cattle sold, it was time to relax at the local pub with a few pints that were paid by the few extra pounds received in the bargaining procedure.



This type of bargaining between buyers and sellers would eventually come to an end. A few years later I attended a cattle auction in New Ross, County Wexford, with a friend, James McDonald, the husband of one of my wife's friends, Sarah Curran with whom she had shared a flat in Dublin and who was originally from Kilkenny. James had brought his cattle by truck to the auction weighing station where they were grouped before being brought inside. A large scale displayed their weight electronically and was posted overhead for all to see. Then the buyers would bid on each group with an auctioneer leading the bids. I made a tremendous effort to see which person was bidding but only the auctioneer was able to determine this. The bidding was often a slight nod of the head, a movement of a finger or a touch to the face. As hard as I tried, I could not see anyone making any bids but the bids and the sales were made.

### Highlights of our Visits

When visiting Ballyhaunis and many of the nearby towns, I always experienced the warmth and friendly atmosphere of the people. That is where the charm of the towns existed. Storeowners and clerks, as well as anyone you met along the streets or in their shops, stopped and talked to you. The Post Office was a place where everyone met on Fridays to catch up with the local news and collect his or her pension.

While shopping in Ballyhaunis one day, the storeowner suddenly turned off all the lights in the store and shut the front door. A custom, that I believe still continues today, to do so out of respect for the deceased when a funeral procession is proceeding through town to the Church where the Mass would be held.

Kiltimagh town was very interesting because almost every building was painted a different colour. It was where Patricia attended commercial school and May had gone to school there as a young girl. May recalled that when she was a child she remembered when the first automobile was being driven through town. She claimed that the children were able to run faster on the sidewalk than the automobile was able to move on the street. She also recalled when the first airplane flew overhead as surprised field workers looked skyward.

Bekan School, which later became a Community Centre, was where Patricia and her siblings attended as children. It was a four-room schoolhouse where low infant and high infant boys and girls were separated into two of the rooms. From 1st class onwards, boys and girls were separately housed in the other two rooms. Opposite the school, at St. Margaret Mary's Church, the Byrne family children were baptised, received First Confession, Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Of course, my first visit to Ireland was also the first time that I tasted 'poteen', Irish homemade whiskey.

Uncle John Flatley offered us a taste that could also have been referred as 'White Lightning' or 'Premium Gasoline'. Either would have been a correct description. Until then, Guinness was strong but there was no comparison, a few sips of the fiery liquid and all your pain was gone. While visiting Uncle John and Aunt Nancy's house in Carramore, I met Patricia's first cousins for the first time. Some of them were shooting at crows that were harming plants growing in the fields. They had a lot of fun teaching the Yank something about growing up on a farm. I learned quite a bit that afternoon especially how accurate they were with a gun.

We also visited Uncle Andrew Flatley, and Aunt Nora at their shop in Knock. It was well stocked with groceries, but especially the sweets and cakes that the family liked. There were more Flatley cousins to enjoy meeting. Just down the road at Aunt Mary Flatley's was a warm welcoming tea that she always had for us. We sat in front of a big fire that had boiled the kettle. Along with her beautiful china, she served bread, jam, biscuits and cake. The kitchen was next to the front room, a shop where Uncle Tom had worked as a tailor for many years before his death.

Ballyhaunis has continued to be a place that we visit almost every year to enjoy meeting with relatives and friends. Our children Frank and Steven, and Steven's wife, Kelly, along with nephews, nieces and acquaintances have visited the town, especially when May was alive. Someone would always stop by for a cup of tea and a chat. Since the passing of Dom, May, Gerry and his wife Julia, our annual visits to Ballyhaunis are sadder but full of fond memories.

Ballyhaunis is a bit quieter now. Over time we have seen the closure of the Friary, the Convent, the Technical School and St. Joseph's Secondary School. Gone also is the Fair Green where the animals were sold on Fair Days.

However, Ballyhaunis continues to change and grow.



Conor Waldron on his Christening in Ballyhaunis. He is son of Damien and Janette Waldron, Melbourne and Holywell.



## A Meitheal in Brackloon Bog



Paddy Phillips and his granddaughter Caoimhe pictured some years ago, taking a walk along the back of Main St. (North). Buildings visible belonged to the former B.T. Lynch's, Val Byrne's, Sonny Phillips', Billy Nestor's premises.



Three former Smithwicks (Ballyhaunis) employees met in James Lyons' Bar, 1st July 2015.  
L-R: Eugene Collum, Seamus McGuire and Tom Egan.



Above: L-R: Noel Sloyan, Mick McDonagh, Mick Regan, Jimmy Joe Sloyan (standing), John Fitzmaurice, Jimmy Ruane, in Brackloon Bog.  
Below: Mick Nolan, Oliver Davitt, Paul Nolan, Tommy Fitzmaurice.



L-R: Joe Burke (Coogue), Brian Hunt, Mick Nolan, Maut Caulfield (Coogue)



*Right:* The surviving members of the O'Connell family, who were brought up in Devlis, gathered together in Strandhill, Co. Sligo in August 2016 to celebrate Marie Howard's 80th birthday.

L-R: Annette Connolly (Galway), Dymphna MacCana (Spiddal), P.J. O'Connell (Vancouver Island), Marie Howard (Sligo), Helena Lang (London), and Martin O'Connell (Galway). Their parents were Garda Martin and Helena O'Connell who lived in Devlis, Ballyhaunis for nearly thirty years before retiring to Barna, Co. Galway in 1960.



*Left:* Frank Browne was presented with the Lidl National Football League Manager of the Month award for February 2016, in association with the Irish Daily Star. He is pictured receiving his award from Jenny Madden, Store Manager at Lidl, Roscommon. Frank is Manager of the Mayo Ladies Senior football team, and is married to the former Deirdre Murphy, Bridge St., Ballyhaunis.

*Below:* Eamon Leon O'Reilly, born May 2016. Eamon is the son of Cathal and Máire Ivanna O'Reilly and grandson of the late Eamon O'Reilly (Woodpark) and Ann O'Reilly (nee Lyons of Brackloon North). Despite a strong Dublin connection, Eamon loves to sport the green and red of Mayo!



Canon Joseph Cooney, retired P.P. Annagh, celebrated his 80th birthday earlier this year with family and friends. He is pictured with Joe Kennedy, founder of Kennedy Construction Group, Mayo Man of the Year 2010 and Chairman of Ireland West Airport Knock.







*Right:* Maura Naughton, Carramore, Ballyhaunis, who was conferred with an MSC in Regenerative Medicine from NUI Galway on 24th Nov. 2015.

*Left:* 'Two Milos' For many years now, in the town of Ballyhaunis, any reference to 'Milo' could only have been assumed to mean Milo Henry, native of Gurteen but long-time resident of Knock Road/Hazelhill. That all changed on the 1st of January 2016 when Sharon and Aidan Paul Kelly (also a Hazelhill native) had a son whom they named Milo. As the picture shows, the elder Milo was happy to 'pass on the baton' to the most recent to bear the name - and the youngster appears quite happy to take it on, hopefully for as long as and longer than 'the original Milo'.



*Above:* Sean Biesty (Carrowkeel), James Waldron (Woodpark), Pat Biesty (Carrowkeel) and Dan Tarpey (Carrowkeel).



*Riverdance and Lord of the Dance star, Michael Flatley with Ballyhaunis songwriter Brian Flanagan (Ballindrehid), rehearsing 'The Rising', composed by Brian and recorded by himself and Michael Flatley during the year.*



*Left:* Noel McGuire of Johnstown, serving with Ballyhaunis Fire Brigade, attending to a bog fire in 2015.

*Right:* Kieron O'Neill with Conor Morley. Kieron, from Lucan, ran the Dublin City Marathon 2016 and raised over €4,000 in aid of SADS Mater Heart Foundation in memory of his dear friend Jason Morley.





# Scoil Íosa

KENNETH DENNEDY, PRINCIPAL

*Ar son chuile duine i Scoil Íosa ba mhaith liom Beannachtaí Na Féile a bhronnadh chuig gach duine i bParóiste Béal Átha hAmhnais agus thar lear. Go raibh míle maith agaibh go leir ar son an méid tacaíochta a bhronntar ar ár Scoil arís i mbliana.*

As we come to the end of another calendar year we take a look back on what has been an eventful one at Scoil Íosa academically, socially, and in terms of sporting pursuits.

## Sports News

Sport continues to be a very important facet of life at Scoil Íosa with the emphasis being put on accessibility for all pupils and mass participation. As well as taking part in a number of coaching initiatives over the course of the year including Basketball, Football, Cricket and Soccer and Dance, Scoil Íosa entered teams in a number of sporting competitions with varying degrees of success over the course of the year. These included Gaelic Football (Boys and Girls) Hurling, Camogie, Soccer, athletics and basketball.

**Athletics:** The school entered teams in both the Junior and Senior sections of the Mayo Schools Cross Country competition. At the East Mayo heats, our senior boys' team of Kian Burke, Eoin Ryan, Clayton Nolan, Micheál Finn-Richardson, Brian Sweeney and Michael Maughan qualified for the county final in the team event while Kian Burke and Erica Byrne qualified for their respective finals in the individual competition.

Team members: Kian Burke, Brian Sweeney, Eoin Ryan, Clayton Nolan, Micheál Finn-Richardson, Michael Maughan, Kyle Burke, Padraig Murphy, PJ Greally, Adam Kelly, Mark Feeney, Josh Kavanagh, Erica Byrne, Maia Phillips, Laura May Allen, Nikita Cleary, Austeja Arminaviciute, Kaitlyn Maughan, Lucy Phillips, Sarah Gill, Maeve Caulfield, Amanda Cleary, Aishat Rasaq, Fernanda Da Costa Maidana.

**Gaelic Football:** 2016 proved to be a very competitive one for our various football teams. Teams competed in Mini Sevens Boys and Girls and the Cumann na mBunscoil competitions. Our Mini Sevens Girls team qualified for the area final where after a close match they were eventually pipped by Balla NS by the narrowest of margins. In the main Cumann na mBunscoil competition our team played three close matches eventually being beaten by Westport NS who went on to win the competition. The boys team endured a tough year with hard fought matches against Ballinrobe, Westport and Claremorris Boys National School. They acquitted themselves well in the Mini Sevens competition narrowly missing qualification for

the area semi final. The team also reached the semi final of the B division where they were defeated by Scoil Raifteirí Castlebar

Girls Football Panel: Rachel Cleary, Hannah Clarke, Erin Murray, Arooj Azhar, Annie Naveed, Maeve Donnellan, Martynka Ubych, Lorna Davis, Holly Gallagher, Maia Phillips, Erica Byrne, Nikita Cleary, Tara Phillips, Chloe Henry, Noor Sharif.

Boys Football Panel: Thomas Maughan, Shaun Morley, Sean Caulfield, Hassan Naseer, Guilherme Rodrigues, Kian Burke, Padraig McHugh, Auredas Armonavicius, Saad Asif, Ethan Cooke, Brendan Cullen, Míchéal Finn-Richardson, Yordan Kirchev, Patrick McDonagh, Clayton Nolan, Yazan Rahmani, Eoin Ryan, Mohid Shadid, Mike Wiktor, Aadil Rizwan, Colm Rattigan, Brian Sweeney, Daire Caulfield, Kian Morley, Ahmed Naveed, Adam Noone, Mammoon Shabbir, Adam Walsh, Jason Lyons, Martin McDonagh, Aadal Ashraf.

**Hurling:** The Scoil Íosa hurling team once again performed extremely well this year reaching the county semi final where they clashed with St. Patrick's NS Westport. The meeting was a close fought one with the lead changing between the teams several times before ending in a draw at full time. A combination of tiredness and bad luck led to our team losing out narrowly and experiencing disappointment at the final whistle. Westport went on to record a comfortable win in the final. The team experienced a similar situation in the sevens competition where they lost their final to a very strong Tooreen team. Notable mention must go to Erin Murray who dominated in all games she played in, showing that she had no problems competing with the boys and giving a magnificent display of skill.

Hurling Panel: Shaun Morley, Erin Murray, Auredas Armonavicius, Padraig McHugh, Clayton Nolan, Eoin Ryan, Míchéal Finn-Richardson, Kian Burke, Saad Asif, Brian McHugh, Yordan Kirchev Evan McNamara, Colm Rattigan, Hassan Naseer and Cian Morley.

**Camogie:** This year Scoil Íosa entered a team in Cumann Na mBunscoil Camogie competition. This was a new departure for the school and one in which they performed exceptionally well. We look forward to the further development of the game in the coming years.

Team: Rachel Cleary, Hannah Clarke, Erin Murray, Arooj Azhar, Annie Naveed, Maeve Donnellan, Martynka Ubych, Lorna Davis, Holly Gallagher, Maia Phillips, Erica Byrne, Nikita Cleary, Tara Phillips, Chloe Henry, Noor Sharif.

Thanks to Kevin Henry and Michelle Flatley for





Scoil Íosa Basketball Team with coach Stella O'Neill

coaching the football teams and to Dónall O'Brien for coaching hurling.

**Basketball:** Basketball has continued to flourish in Scoil Íosa over the past year with weekly coaching sessions taking place under the tutelage of Finola Mellett and Stella O'Neill. The main competition once again this year was the Della Lynch Memorial Tournament hosted by Cloonfad NS. Scoil Íosa was defending the title won last year and after a hard fought competition, emerged victorious by a narrow margin edging out Sacred Heart NS Williamstown.

**Basketball Squad:** Maeve Donnellan, Erin Murray, Lorna Davis, Hannah Clarke, Karen Morgan, Julia Grabiasz, Lana Biesty, Rachel Cleary, Arooj Azhar, Annie Naveed.

### Choir

The Scoil Íosa Children's Choir under the direction of Miriam Judge has continued to excel during the monthly participation in the Liturgy in St Patrick's Church. The choir has enjoyed very positive feedback from the public particularly relative to the high standard of performance during the Masses broadcast by Mid West Radio. This year the children were also performing guests at the annual Gracenotes recital held in the Friary. Once again they acquitted themselves very well and proved to be excellent ambassadors for the school.

### First Communion 2016

On May 14th 2016 the following pupils received their First Communion: Casper Dorosz, Greta Ciutaite, Alisha Allen Forde, Magdelene Manke, Ava McCormack, Vejune Blozyte, Viktorija Arisovaite, Amanda Cleary, Ebumolyn Adeleye, Jake Powers, Ethan Kilbane, Kyle Burke, Shane Trias Flanagan, Arnas Krizka, Alex Byrne, Darren Quinn, Alex Paluba, Josh Kavanagh, Ausrius Vaitiekus, Sylwester Ubych, Wayne Maughan, Adam Kelly, Joshua Cunnane, Reliance Arku, Mark Feeney. The children were prepared by their teachers Stella McGrath

and Ciara Fitzmaurice with staff member Anne Durkan delivering the Parish Preparatory Programme.

### 1916 Commemoration

The pupils and staff of Scoil Íosa took a full part in the Centenary Celebrations marking the 1916 Easter Rising. As well as from a curriculum focus where emphasis was placed in class work on the 1916 Rising its heroes and personalities, the children marked the occasion by being part of three formal ceremonies. First of these was the presentation of the Tricolour to the school by Irish Army officers led by

Lieut. Brian Daly. The children were given some background on the Tricolour and, after reading the Proclamation of Irish Freedom two pupils, Maeve Donnellan and Lana Biesty accepted the flag on behalf of the school. Following on from this presentation, the whole school took part in a flag raising ceremony on Tuesday, March 15th which was designated as Proclamation Day. After reading of the Proclamation by a number of our pupils representing the various backgrounds and cultures of the children attending our school, and the whole school singing Amhrán na bFhiann, the flag was raised by two pupils, Karl Rattigan (Junior Infants) and Lana Biesty (6th Class). As a conclusion to the commemoration of this landmark event in our history and culture the pupils of Fifth and Sixth classes, accompanied by their teachers Ms. Flatley, Mr. O'Brien, Ms. Byrne and Mr. Dennedy, attended the local ceremony held at the newly developed Ballyhaunis Memorial Garden in November where pupils from Scoil Íosa read the Proclamation.

**School Staff 2016/2017:** Kenneth Dennedy (Principal), Kevin Henry (Deputy Principal), Aisling Toal, Geraldine Fahy, Yvonne Tully, Anne Durkan, Olivia Burke, Sheena Flanagan, Marian Byrne, Ciara Fitzmaurice, Lisa Watchorn, Michelle Flatley, Joanne Forde, Dónall O'Brien, Ciara Byrne, Sharlene Ruane, Elaine Brady, Annie Kelly, Miriam Judge, Samantha Cleary, Deirdre Rushe (shared with Logboy NS), Róisín Prendergast-Freeman (SNA), Marian Nally (SNA), Marina Coyne (SNA), Carmel Cassidy (Secretary), Mary Dillon (Secretary).

**Board of Management 2016/2017:** James Reidy (Chairperson, Patron's Nominee), Fr. Stephen Farragher (Patron's Nominee), Kenneth Dennedy (Principal/Secretary), Anne Phillips (Community Nominee), Alan Henry (Community Nominee), Ciara Fitzmaurice (Teachers' Nominee), Eddie Murphy (Parents' Nominee/Treasurer), Eileen Donnellan (Parents' Nominee).





Children from Scoil Iosa who received their First Holy communion, with Rev. Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. and their Teachers Stella McGrath and Ciara Fitzmaurice.



Come on Mayo! Scoil Iosa Junior Infants with teachers Olivia Burke and Elaine Brady.



Pupils of Sixth Class, Scoil Iosa, held a 'Jersey Day' and a Cake Sale in aid of the Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group through which they raised €825. They are pictured making their presentation to Orla Loftus Moran and Paula Grogan of the Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group.



## *Ballyhaunis Summer Festival 2016*





# Welcome to the Girls from St. Joseph's 1963 to 1968

RITA MEALLY

We had a very memorable and enjoyable Leaving Cert. Class reunion on Saturday 18th June 2016. Old friends reminisced about our school days at St. Joseph's Convent Secondary School, Ballyhaunis, during the years 1963 to 1968. It was 48 years since we had all left school and, for most of us, since we had last met each other. There have been many changes and different experiences in our lives since that time.

The planning started some months previously when Cora and Frances had met and it was mentioned that it would be nice to have a class reunion, for all those students from 1963 to 1968. It was not known how many people would be available or able to attend as it was organised at short notice. Cora and Frances set about finding contact telephone numbers for as many people as possible. A notice was placed in one of the Mayo newspapers with a class photo and a contact telephone number. A date was eventually set for the 18th June 2016. Arrangements were put in place and a venue was decided upon, The Arch Bar & Bistro, Claremorris.

The day arrived and I was the first person to arrive at the restaurant. It was known on the day how many people were going to attend our little function – seven in number. They were Carmel Freeman, Maureen Tighe, Monica Cribbin, Cora Hussey, Mary Teresa Hopkins, Frances Cunniffe and Rita Murphy. As the people started to arrive, each of us was exclaiming “Oh, where is the blonde hair gone?” or “Where is the black hair gone?” or

“I would hardly know you, you have changed so much!” or “you have not changed a bit!”

The venue was such a great choice as the menu, cuisine and ambience were excellent. Cora and Frances had arranged and planned the celebration with the staff. Banners, bunting, balloons and a beautiful white tablecloth were put in place. The menu was on a banner penned with ‘Welcome to The Girls from St. Joseph’s ’63-’68.’ Cameras and smartphones were in use constantly.

It was emotional, exciting and thrilling reconnecting with friends from the past. There was such chatter for hours that we were all exhausted trying to catch up with all our lives and experiences. We had good reminiscences and varied perspectives on our years in St. Joseph’s and all the teachers, classrooms and subjects.

There are two people who are no longer with us and have sadly passed away and were fondly remembered on the day, Carmel Regan and Etta Healy.

We all agreed that rather than wait for the 50th we should have a class reunion annually, so our next function is being planned to take place in August 2017 in Galway. If there is anyone from the class or who knows someone from those years, please contact me: 087 2675939 or email: [rita.meally@hotmail.com](mailto:rita.meally@hotmail.com).

Looking forward to a bigger number in attendance next time!

The Class Reunion photo taken outside the Arch Bar & Bistro, Claremorris.  
L - R: Carmel Spellman (Ruane), Maureen Reilly (Tighe), Rita Meally (Murphy), Monica Cribbin, Cora Barrett (Hussey), Mary Teresa Judge (Hopkins), Frances Murphy (Cunniffe).





## Intermediate Certificate Class of 1966



Inter Cert Class 1966, St. Joseph's Convent Secondary School, Ballyhaunis.  
Back row, L -R: Maureen Kelly, Teresa Healy, Veronica Cunnane, Mary Walsh, Rita Murphy, Bernadette Waldron, Patricia Griffin, Eileen Egan. Second row: Sheila Roche, Anne Murphy, Cora Hussey, Etta Healy, Mary Teresa Hopkins, Monica Cribbin, Frances Cunniffe, Maureen Tighe. Front row: Geraldine Corcoran, Helen Keane, Mary Carmel Greally, Imelda Hopkins.



Jim Morley left his native Clagnagh in 1920 and emigrated to Chicago. His grandson Matthew Kelley, of Chicago, visited the ancestral homestead in Clagnagh this summer, 2016



## 90th Birthday Celebration



Ita McDonnell, celebrating her 90th birthday, January 2016, with Fr. J.J. Cribbin, P.P., Milltown, Joanne Walsh (Morley) and her twin boys Jack and Robert. Ita's late husband Mick McDonnell worked for many years in Fr. Cribbin's family's butchers business.



Ita was joined by family, neighbours and friends at a special Mass in her home in Carrowkeel, celebrated by Fr. J.J. Cribbin, P.P. Milltown (left) and Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. Annagh.



Above: Connacht Champion on the double. Cormac Phillips had much to celebrate last July when he won the Under-18 Poc Fada Connaught title in the Cooley Mountains, Co. Louth. Representing Mayo. This was Cormac's second year capturing this crown having won the Connacht U-18 title at the same venue in 2015. He is son of Paddy and Anne Philips, Gurteen.

Right: Joe Hosty outside the family home, Levallyroe, 1950s.



This photograph was taken around the very late 1950s or early 1960s. L-R: Patricia Freeley with her father P.D. Freeley of Upper Main St., Ballyhaunis, Annie Freeley (Hazelhill, sister of P.D.), Catherine Freeley (Hazelhill, mother of P.D. and Annie) and Dick Burke (son-in-law of Catherine Freeley). Dick Burke was married to Mary Freeley. He was first elected to the Dáil in 1969 and was appointed Fine Gael Chief Whip. He was Minister for Education (1973-76), and served two terms as Ireland's European Commissioner. He passed away earlier this year.







Above: Pictured is Dr. Donal Delaney (right) with Dr. Michael Brogan at Annagh Medical Centre, Doctor's Road. Dr. Donal joined the Medical Centre this summer where he has taken up partnership with Dr. Brogan who has been GP here since 1980. He is son of Dr. Alan (retired) and the late Joan Delaney. Donal qualified in Medicine in York, England, in 2010. *Photograph by Mike Byrne.*



Nellie and John Joe Fitzmaurice, Forthill, 1983.



Enjoying the sunshine on the Friary Walk,  
L-R: Peg Byrne, Úna Shields, Breda Burke, Mary Higgins.



Clare St. next-door neighbours, in 1974.  
Frank Glynn (left) and Brian Byrne holding baby Brian Byrne.



Etta Lannon and Joe Hosty



Mark and Roisín Curley of Curley's Pharmacy, pictured at the newly refurbished store on Main Street. Mark and Roisín are proud to continue the third generation of the Curley family serving the Ballyhaunis and East Mayo region. *Photograph by Mike Byrne.*



# My Artistic Journey So Far...

MICHAEL GOULDING

'The word is mightier than the sword', according to research was first coined in early 7th century BC, however in the past few hundred years 'word' was replaced by 'pen'. It's probably as true today as it ever was.

At the beginning of 2016 I started to compose a drama based on the lives of Joseph Mary Plunkett and Grace Gifford. With 2016 the centenary of the Easter Rising, I think it was the song 'Grace', written in 1985 by Frank and Seán O'Meara, that first encouraged me to research the lives of these two prominent figures of Irish history.

From an early age I've always been interested in the arts, from singing to acting and everything else in between. My earliest memory was playing the part of a soldier in my primary school's nativity play. In my local parish hall I remember playing the son of a distraught mother because I had a pan stuck on my head, and then performing in various concerts and musicals. Even a stint at a Drama School and in a renowned choir for a few years didn't give me the drive to continue professionally.

## Arriving in Ballyhaunis

In 2000 the family and I (Mum Mary and Dad Jimmy) moved from Manchester to Ballyhaunis. I think it could have been the live episode of *Coronation Street* in December 2000 to celebrate forty years of the television soap that encouraged me to pick up the pen. That's exactly what I did, but obviously not knowing how or where to start I decided to write the idea I had in my head down on paper. It was for television – a drama set in the West of Ireland called 'Westlives', not to be confused with a band 'Westlife', just a play on words. Like 'Heartbeat' or 'Ballykissangel' it offered a light hearted depiction of life in a village on the west coast. It was a project that I would write a few pages of stories, then leave for a few months and continue editing and rewriting. In the years that followed I read books on scriptwriting by the people who know how, but never really using my imagination to fulfil writing and finishing a script.

It wasn't until a friend of mine, John Corless, facilitated a writers' workshop in Claremorris through the Local Community Radio there. The station wanted to produce some short radio plays to fulfil a part of its criteria of showcasing local talent from the community. The workshop was something I thoroughly enjoyed and my thanks to John for his encouragement during and ever since – to use your imagination and think from a different perspective. Writing the play wasn't always easy because sometimes new writers make the mistake of

wanting a particular character or some line of dialogue or something that just doesn't suit the genre of the play and sometimes it might be left on the cutting room floor as the saying goes. After editing the script several times, 'Pillow Talk' came to fruition. It was great to see something that you've enjoyed working on finally complete. The play was about a father and son's strained relationship. It had a similar basis to the television series by Galton and Simpson, 'Steptoe and Son', one of my favourite comedies. 'Pillow Talk' was finally recorded a few years after the final script edits had been made and it was great to hear my work on Claremorris Community Radio.

## Writing

Since then the writing bug had firmly taken hold of me. In 2015 I wrote a play for the Claremorris Fringe Festival entitled, 'The Last Waltz'. It told the story of a couple Agnes and Basil who were celebrating their wedding anniversary. Agnes had developed Alzheimer's and Basil was doing his best caring for her every need, although he did seek solace with Agnes's sister Beryl. It truly was heart-breaking researching this play as some of my family members have developed Alzheimer's and I wanted the story to be as true to life as possible but not to over dramatise as it is something that many people live with. I had two wonderful actors from Kiltimagh star in my play – Joan King played Agnes and Seamus Corry played Basil. It was another defining moment in my writing career, as in a few years I'd gone from radio to the stage.

With 'Pillow Talk' and 'The Last Waltz' they were fictional ideas that ran away with my imagination, whereas 'Grace and Joseph' had to be as close to factual as possible. I did a lot of research online, hired books from the library and centenary newspapers all aided me in composing the script. I just wanted to give an insight into their lives, what drove them to be so passionate about the Easter Rising and how much they loved each other. I gave it to some friends from Claremorris Musical Society and they said if you are producing it I want to be in it, which obviously was encouraging to hear as I didn't know what they would say. When the play was cast I was so blessed to have the wonderful acting talents of Vivienne Lee as 'Grace Gifford', Séamas Mac Eachmharchaigh as 'Joseph Mary Plunkett', Séamus Corry as 'Roger Casement', Ronan Egan as 'The English Captain', and John Morley as 'The Priest'. I did have a line or two in it myself as 'An English Solider': they were the shortest and easiest lines to remember. I don't think it would have possible to write this play if it wasn't for the song 'Grace', in one of the final scenes the character of



'Joseph' performed a wonderful rendition where he and Grace married in Kilmainham Gaol.

### Ballyhaunis performance

The play was performed 16th April 2016 in the Parochial Hall Ballyhaunis as part of a weekend of commemorations of the 1916 Rising, through music, song, drama and dance. On Friday evening Half A Breakfast Theatre Group – Vivienne Lee, Richie Heneghan, Séamas Mac Eachmharcigh, Brian Murphy, Mary Dempsey, John Coyle and myself – performed in the one act play 'Guests of the Nation' by Frank O'Connor. That was followed by music by duo Evan Fitzmaurice, Jack Deegan, soloist Michael Lyons. The Ballyhaunis Balladeers – Connie Gildea, Michael Plunkett, Pat Lyons, Eddie McDermott, Richard Waldron, Anthony Waldron, Paul Waldron and Paddy Joe Tighe. Dancing was provided by Mary Elwood School of Dancing – Lauren Lyons, Emma Colleran, Leah Guilfoyle, Daragh Mulrennan, Aoibhinn Gallagher and Lucy Flanagan. MC on the night was Pat Higgins.

On the final night 'Grace and Joseph' was performed on the first part of the evening. Entertainment by Grúpa Ceol, Ballyhaunis Community School students accompanied by Siobhán Devine; Ellen Phillips (harpist), Seán Freyne and friends, Sean Nós Dancers; Ronan Egan (baritone). Mary Elwood School of Dancing: Ellen Phillips, Dearbhla Freeman, Leah Elwood, Emma Colleran, Maria Phillips, Lucy Phillips and Leah Guilfoyle. Finally, the Abbey Male Choir, under the musical direction of Moira Delaney and accompanied by Paula Donnellan – Alan Henry, Eamon Murren, Brendan

Morrissey, Brendan Donnellan, Brian Hunt, Frank Dillon, George Hannon, Michael Byrne, James Reidy, Séamus Grogan, Jimmy Walsh, Luke Murray, Michael Grogan, Pat Feeney, Paul Donnellan, T.J. McCarrick, Tommy Grogan, Vinnie Healy and Vinnie Kelly. M.C. on the night was Orla Phillips.

Refreshments were provided by Noreen Kilduff, Mary Goulding and Julie Gallagher. Lighting and sound by Brendan Nugent and stage construction Jim Goulding. €650 was raised for both Western Care Association (Local Services) and Cancer Care West.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported and those who participated in this community event.



Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, Friday 16th October 2015, Golden Wedding Anniversary of Mary and Jim Goulding, Doctor's Road, Ballyhaunis, with Fr. Martin O'Connor, P.P. Ballindine and Irishtown.



### Golden Wedding Anniversary

At their celebratory meal at Knock House Hotel, Back, L-R:

Liam Gallagher, Michael Goulding, Mark Gallagher, Julie Gallagher, Paul Goulding, Catherine Goulding, Matthew Goulding. Front: Jim Goulding, Siobhan Gallagher, Mary Goulding



## *Easter Sunday Night 1916 in Ballyhaunis*

This is the front page of the programme for a 'Grand Dramatic Entertainment' in aid of the Augustinian Abbey Renovation Fund to be held in Ballyhaunis, on an historic night - Easter Sunday 1916. It is preserved in one of Michael F. Waldron's scrapbooks.

"The Shaughraun" was a play with a Nationalist theme written by Dion Boucicault in the 1870s. The 'New Town Hall' was established by Patrick Moylett upstairs in his premises on Main St. (now McGarry's), and later came to be known as 'Moylett's Hall'. Patrick Moylett's role in setting up the Irish Volunteers in Ballyhaunis and his important input into the War of Independence nationally was detailed by Fr. Kieran Waldron in 'Centenary Ireland: Ballyhaunis in 1913-14' and by Anthony Jordan in 'Some Political and Military Events around Ballyhaunis 1914-22, both in *Annagh* 2013.



## *Fr. Tom Kilkenny - 70 years in the Priesthood*



Fr. Tom Kilkenny from Gorthaganny celebrated seventy years in the priesthood on the 15th Aug. 2016 at Dalgan House, Columban Fathers, Navan where he now resides. He spent most of his working life in Japan.

He is pictured above with his nephews and nieces who travelled long distances to celebrate the Seventieth Jubilee of his ordination. L-R: John Roddy (Ballaghaderreen), Paul Roddy (Westport), John Kilkenny (Malta), Bernadette Lucey (Manchester), Patricia Conboy (Aghamore), Fr. Tom, Mary Roddy (Ballaghaderreen), Monica Berry (New York), Tom Kilkenny (Manchester).





Rita and Ray Connolly and their thirteen children, at their daughter Jennifer's wedding. Rita was formerly Waldron from Bracklagh, Ballyhaunis. Back, L-R: Patricia, Rita, Ray, Robert, Kevin, Sheila. Front row: Maureen, Colleen, Kathleen, Ray Snr., Jennifer, Rita, Ann, Bernadette and Mary.



The Carney family, Cloontumper, 1940.  
L-R: Mary, Bridie, Helena and John.



The Mannion Family, Lisduff. L-R: Tony Pledger (groom), Bridie Mannion (bride), Sean Mannion, Celia (Ciss) Mannion Egan, Charles Egan (butcher in Webb's in the 1940s)



Bridie Carney Cameron (Cloontumper)(front right) and her four generation family: Carol Ann (daughter), Stephanie (granddaughter) and Christopher (great-grandson), and her sister Mary Cunnane.



Rita Waldron (Bracklagh) and Mary Cunnane (Bridge St.), young immigrants to New York, Christmas 1951.



# Tóstal Heritage Brackloon, Ballyhaunis 2016

## Tar éis na cosáin ár sinsear

SÉAMUS KENNY



Tóstal Brackloon Heritage Day Trip to Glasnevin Cemetery.

L-R: Paddy Joe Tighe, Joe Hosty, Teresa Markham, Marion Regan, Patrick Brady, Seamus Kenny, Seamus Mulrennan, Eileen Mulderrig, Martin Finan, Rita Mooney, P.J. Higgins, John Fitzgerald, Margaret Fitzgerald, Emma Broderick, Paul Morley, Willie Broderick, Margaret Kenny, Michael Waldron, Liam Lyons, Deirdre Diskin, Sarah Kearns, Helen Lenihan, Dearbhla Gower, Maureen Higgins, Bridie Kearns, Mary Lyons, Paul McGuire, Lilly King, Helen Murphy, Mary Finan, John Morley, Riona Burke.

The 1916 celebrations throughout Ireland this year provided an inspiration for all to reflect on the heritage and effects of the Easter Rising and the eventual formation of a country able to take its rightful place among the nations of the world. As part of the Community Tourism Diaspora initiative, the Tóstal 2016 festivities were inspired by the spirit engendered by the 1916 celebrations and two heritage day events were duly organised. On Saturday 27th of August 2016, a 'Heritage day-trip' to Dublin was organised primarily to visit sites in Dublin that were related to those who fought for greater liberty for an Irish nation. On the 15th of October, a successful 'Heritage day' was organised in the Augustinian Abbey in Ballyhaunis to celebrate the heritage and culture that influenced the 1916 Rising and noting local participation in the fight for Irish freedom. The organised events were supported under the auspices of the Brackloon Reunion Group and related sponsorship.

### Heritage Day Trip

The heritage day excursion to Dublin had an early start of 7.45am. The first stop on the bus journey to Dublin was a visit to the Kilbeggan Distillery in County Westmeath to experience the grand tour of this famous whiskey making facility that has been part of the fabric of a changing Ireland for many years. For those interested, a glass of Kilbeggan whiskey offered a worthwhile liquid tonic for the journey ahead, while more refreshments were served in the Pantry restaurant before the touring party continued their journey to Dublin.

The first stop in Dublin on a warm pleasant August afternoon was to visit the 'Garden of Remembrance' in Parnell Square at the north end of O'Connell Street. The Garden was opened in 1966 and commemorates all those Irish people involved in various uprisings for the fight for Irish Freedom. Everyone took the short walk to the iconic GPO (General Post Office) in O'Connell Street to visit the centre of the Easter Rising in Dublin. The guided tour of the recently opened GPO museum gave a moving experience of the fighting in Dublin and an



insight into what our capital city was like before and after the rebellion.

On leaving the GPO, everybody travelled to the famous Glasnevin cemetery. Here we gained a valuable insight into this unique Victorian burial area and the final resting place of the men and women who helped shape Ireland's past and present. The tour included visits to the many graves of great Irish leaders such as Daniel O'Connell, Charles Stuart Parnell, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, Countess Markievicz, Eamon De Valera, Michael Collins and some civilians involved and affected by the 1916 Rising. Our tour guide offered a unique, memorable and sometimes humorous insight into the dramatic events that shaped the Ireland we know today. Graves of people such as Maud Gonne, Brendan Behan, Arthur Griffith and Fr. Michael O'Flanagan and many more were also visited. We left the famed cemetery with a sense of awe and respect for those who served their country politically, socially and culturally in different times.

The final stop in the capital city was a visit to the 'Irish National War Memorial Gardens' in Islandbridge dedicated to those Irish soldiers who gave their lives during the Great war of 1914-1918. The return journey included a visit to the Bloomfield House Hotel in Mullingar where Ballyhaunis native, Ronan Byrne and his staff, prepared a fine three course meal for the touring party. It gave all the participants time to relax, converse and enjoy a lovely dinner in the spacious and elegant dining room. Everyone arrived back safely in Ballyhaunis later on Saturday night with thoughts and memories of a great day while others continued the festivity at the White House Hotel in Ballinlough where there was music, dance and song. A day shared, a day to remember.

### **Tóstal Heritage Day 2016**

The heritage day was organised to celebrate the everyday life of the people of the district in the early 20th century and acknowledge the local influences linked to Irish rights and freedoms in a changing Ireland. The celebratory event enabled the local community and visiting diaspora to immerse themselves in local history engendered by the spirit of the 1916 commemorations.

The acclaimed historical biographer Anthony J. Jordan, a native of Ballyhaunis, opened the proceedings of the heritage day with a presentation in the fantastic surroundings of the Augustinian Abbey. Anthony, a noted biographer of many historical figures in recent Irish history, looked at the life of John McBride, Maud Gonne and the influences in Mayo of the 1916 Easter Rising, especially noting the life of Ballyhaunis native Michael Moylette and the local volunteers. From a heritage perspective, he also reminded the interested

congregation of his life growing up and travelling the road to Brackloon and Carrowbehy, passing Brackloon School and visiting and playing in Brackloon ball alley in times past. The memorable presentation was followed by music provided by the Ballyhaunis Community School musicians, Vanessa Henry, Declan Henry, Clodagh Waldron, Sarah Keane Higgins, Jack Deegan, Evan Fitzmaurice and Nathan Coll. Traditional Irish dance provided by Ellen Phillips, Derbhla Freeman, Amy Greally, Maeve Caulfield, Leah Guilfoyle, Lucy Phillips, Mia Phillips, Cathy Greally and Emma Colleran of the acclaimed Mary Elwood School of Dancing. Noted local musicians and guests such as Michael Nolan, Paddy Joe Tighe, Richard Waldron, Denis Igoe, Patsy Finan, Martin McHugh, Ann Marie Foody, David Courtney and Billy Lyons added to the musical ambiance of the day.



Enjoying the Heritage Day in the Friary, Ballyhaunis. L-R: Bea O'Grady (Castlebar), Dymphna Joyce (Castlebar), Billy Lyons (Aughamore), Anne Lavelle (Breafoy), Mary Corcoran (Castlebar), Noline Beckett-Crowe (Castlebar), Margaret Kilgallon (Ballaghaderreen), Ultan Courtney (Historian), Seamus Kenny (Skerries) and Margaret Kenny (Brackloon).

The song and dance was followed by an excellent presentation by Ultan Courtney, a noted family historian with links to Ballyhaunis, who focused on capturing our heritage through the stories of the ordinary and often forgotten people who helped to build and shape who we are today. The presentation related to his family history with links to such places as Dublin Castle, Kilmainham Gaol and back to Brackloon, Ballyhaunis. The presentation included memorable musical interludes provided by Ultan's son, David Courtney. The events in the Augustinian Abbey concluded with a presentation by local historian Billy Lyons on the famed Holywell ambush in Ballyhaunis during the fight for Irish Independence. Later that night, the music, song and chat continued in Phillips' Bar in Ballyhaunis in another day and night to remember.

One of the features of the Heritage Day was the



presentation area prepared to acknowledge the efforts of our leaders and local diaspora in times past to enable our country to take its place among the nations of the world. There was specially prepared demonstration from the Douglas Hyde centre in Frenchpark, Mayo Genealogy Group, Ballyhaunis Community School, Kilmovee Heritage group, Oliver Hannon's heritage trains, Patricia Plunkett embroidery, Bernadette Quinn's knitwear and the many local contributors of old machinery, memoirs and pictures associated with our shared and colourful history. The event also proved a fantastic opportunity for many people to attain localised heritage publications that were available as part of the Charity Book Sale. Refreshments were provided on the day by the Oak Bar while Michael from Kiltimagh provided a traditional dish of bacon, cabbage and potatoes sponsored by Cunningham's Londis Store and Philips' Butchers of Ballyhaunis.

The successful Heritage events could not have taken place without the valued support and sponsorship of many people. This year's organising Brackloon Reunion committee, primarily comprising of Marion Regan, Mary Finan, Seamus Kenny, Kathleen Henry and Patricia Plunkett, were ably assisted by Orla Philips, Tom Waldron and Michael Nolan in preparing the successful Heritage Day. The organising committee wish to thank and acknowledge the support of Deirdre O'Gara and the Douglas Hyde centre, the Kilmovee Heritage group, Ballyhaunis Community School, Tom Waldron, Cathal Carroll, Patricia Plunkett, Bernadette Quinn and the many other individual contributors. The Committee also

wish to acknowledge the support for the charity book sale provided by the Annagh Magazine, Glór Aghamore, Kilkelly/Kilmovee magazine, Echoes of Ballaghaderreen and Brusna publication.

From an operational perspective, the organising Committee wish to thank our sponsors, Mayo County Council, IPB Insurance, Fáilte Ireland, Ulster Bank, Dillon-Leech & Comerford Solicitors, Donnellan's Joinery & Undertakers, Major Equipment International Ltd., Phillips' Butchers, Senator John O'Mahony and Phillips' Bar for their valued support. The committee wish to thank the many participants and presentations on the day by Anthony J. Jordan, Ultan Courtney and Billy Lyons. A special word of thanks to Stephen Grogan and the Friary Resource Centre for assisting and facilitating the successful Heritage day. Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.



The Tóstal Brackloon touring party enjoy the G.P.O. Museum.

L-R: Sarah Kearns, Joe Hosty, Riona Burke, P.J. Higgins, Bridie Kearns, Paul Morley, Seamus Mulrennan, Mary Finan, Helen Lenihan, Mary Hurley, Mary Jo Hora, Bernie Quinn, Maureen Higgins, Seamus Hora, Mary Ryan, Teresa Markham, Deirdre Diskin, Marion Regan, Paddy Joe Tighe.



A group of children who attended a Kids Camp in Krav Maga self-defence, delivered by TCs Fitness, Abbey St., Ballyhaunis.





Seamie and Bridie Webb, Bertie and Pauline Curley, Frank and Marie Webb, at a function in the 1970s.



Right: Vivienne Lynch and Maria Webb outside B.T. Lynch's Main Ford Dealers, Main St., Ballyhaunis, late 1950s.



Above: Tommy Webb and Dave Freeley in the 1970s.

Centre: Robyn Sarah Waldron, daughter of Packie Waldron and Lorraine Allen.

Far Right: Gerry Cribbin with Rex, in his white Ford Cortina, 1985.  
Courtesy of Robert Kelly.



Left: Martina and Frank Harten on the celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary in New York 1st Oct. 2016. They are photographed with their son Frank Jnr. and daughters Tricia and Deirdre. Martina was originally Lyons from Began, and is sister of Seamus Lyons. They were joined in the celebration by Martina's five sisters which included Eileen and her husband Eugene Dalton from Claremorris.





Above: Corpus Christi Procession, Abbey St., 21st June 1936. Included in front are Bernard Byrne and Thomas Coyne, both of Bridge Street. First published in Annagh 1984.

Below: A Street Race on Abbey St., 1927. First published in Annagh 1984. Both images courtesy of the Durkan family.







Old friends meet. L-R: Claire Smyth (Main St.), Carmel Waldron (Main St.) and Mercy Flatley (Main St. and Sydney, Australia). Taken July 2004.



Above (centre): Errol Gill, Mount Temple, Co. Westmeath, formerly of Clare St., Ballyhaunis, graduated from Garda College, Templemore, March 2016. He is currently stationed in Blanchardstown Garda Station.



Above (right): Dillon Campbell met Keith Higgins at the Mayo v. London match earlier this year. Dillon is grandson of Bridget and Michael Daly, Clare Court.



Centre (left): Grandmother Ann O'Reilly introduces Baby Eamon Leon O'Reilly to his Dublin cousins Tommy and Anna O'Reilly for the first time. Eamon is the son of Cathal and Máire Ivanna O'Reilly and grandson of the late Eamon O'Reilly (Woodpark) and Ann O'Reilly (nee Lyons of Brackloon North).

Centre (right): Dillon and Megan Campbell had fun meeting the London Rose in London. They are grandchildren of Bridget and Michael Daly, Clare Court.

Left: Kevin Waldron, ex Ballyhaunis and London footballer, now playing with Ferbane, after winning Offaly Junior A final this year, 2016. Kevin, who is son of Paddy and Tess Waldron of Redford, played twenty years ago for Ballyhaunis in the 1996 Mayo County Junior final. Kevin played midfield in both games.



Nathan James Glynn born to Steven and Amber Glynn, California, in August 2016. Nathan, and his brother Cameron, are grandsons of Patsy and Jenny Glynn, Doctor's Road.



# Ballyhaunis GAA Club

PATRICK KEANE, SECRETARY

At the time of writing both our Senior Football and Hurling teams are in championship action. With the county team contesting an All-Ireland Final replay in October, an inevitable back log of fixtures occurred. And so, it's been a long year for everyone involved in GAA clubs right across the county. Our Senior Hurlers are contesting a Connacht Intermediate Final replay, while our Senior Footballers are fighting to remain in senior championship football for 2017. Special mention this year must go to our Minor football team which amalgamated with Eastern Gaels for the year and, in doing so, won the County 'B' Minor Championship. Success also came in the form of a County League Title for our Under-16 Football team and also competed in an East Mayo final. Once again, we feel indebted to all of our active club members, players, mentors and coaches. Without all of the hard work and time put in by these volunteers it would be impossible to field so many teams across all codes and to make Ballyhaunis GAA a place to be proud of and for teams to compete to the best of their ability.



## Under-6 & Under-8 Boys Football

Great progress has been made for our club youngsters on the first rung of the ladder. Numbers at Under-6 and Under-8 level continue to grow at a pleasing rate. Our players took in part the East Mayo league this year and competed in eight games throughout the summer months. A huge amount of good work has been done at this age group by numerous parents and mentors. Without the commitment and effort of these volunteers the club would not be in such an enviable position for fostering young talent. A huge thanks to the following who have contributed throughout the year: John Burke, Darran Conlon, Brendan Donnellan, Eamon Monaghan, Martin Finnegan, Tom Lyons, Pdraig Murphy, Tommy Curran, Paul Finn and Tomas Murphy.

## Under-10 & Under-12 Boys Football

Training commenced in early April and soon enough this talented group of players competed in several East Mayo 'Go Games'. The 'Go Games' format allows all players to get an opportunity to play in various positions where they can hone their skills. Sincere thanks to the management of David Burke and Jonathan Powers this year. Training for the Under-12s commenced in April and they competed in the Spring League winning two out of four games. There were huge signs of improvement when we finished top in the Summer League.

## Under-14 Boys Football

This group of dedicated young players put in a massive effort on the field of play this year. They were successful in numerous league matches and will progress very nicely onto the Under-15 team under Paul Webb. The

Under-14s were ably managed by Brian Murray and Kurt Reinhardt – two long-standing members of the club.

Panel: Jamie Allen, Sean Caulfield, Tyler Coyne, Kevin Durkan, Conor Keane, Yordan Kirchev, Simon McDonagh, Sean Morley, Asad Munir, Diarmuid Phillips, Eoin Ryan, Aidan Sloyan, Joshua Webb, Kian Burke, Tommy Cleary, Nathan Cribbin-Noone, Daniel Hill, Oisín Kelly, Thomas Maughan, Pdraic McHugh, Matthew Mullarkey, Daniel Murray, Haroon Shabbir, Cian Walsh.

## Under-16 Boys Football

Our U16 footballers enjoyed a most successful year, ending up as county league champions and unbeaten in a run of nine games. This fine team were runners up in the East Mayo final, losing out by the narrowest of margins to Moy Davitts.

Members of the successful U-16 panel: Neil Carney, Patrick Caulfield, Jack Coyne, Eoin McDonagh, Ethan Keane, Pierce Nestor, Luke Walsh, Conal Caulfield, Cormac Phillips, Darren Maughan, Simon McDonagh, Conor Keane, Uneeb Nasseer, Daniel Murray, James McDonagh, Jack McGoldrick, Haroon Shabbir.

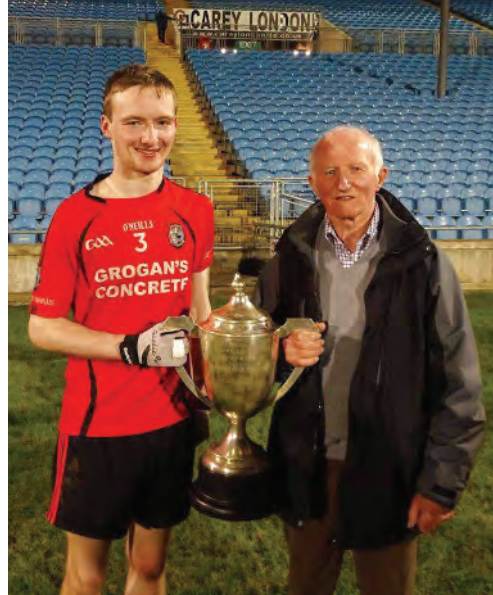
The boys were managed and coached by former senior club players Tommy Caulfield and Seamus Caulfield.

## Minor Football

Early in the year a decision was made by mentors and officers of Ballyhaunis and Easter Gaels GAA clubs to amalgamate at minor level for 2016 due to insufficient numbers for our neighbouring club to compete at this age category. The marriage of the two clubs proved successful for the entire year culminating in a historic County 'B' Championship victory over Belmullet in McHale Park, Castlebar. Following decent runs in the spring and summer leagues, it was down to the big stuff in September. Ballyhaunis Gaels topped their group in the championship with three straight wins over Bonnickonlon, Swinford and Knockmore. There was a score to be settled and a place in the final at stake when we welcomed Kiltimagh to Ballyhaunis in the semi-final and, although it was a hard tussle, a four-point cushion saw us through to compete for the Michael 'Minister' Waldron Cup against Belmullet. Michael Waldron is fondly remembered for his love for Gaelic Football and taking particular interest in the successful development of underage teams. On a final score line of 2-12 to 1-10 we proved to be deserved champions after heroic displays all over the field. The journey for this group of young men continues in the Connacht Championship and a mouth-watering East Mayo 'A' final with rivals Aghamore is also on the horizon.

Panel: Callyn Murphy; Brian O'Neill, John Cunnane (Captain), Darren Coyne, Patrick Caulfield, Jack Coyne,





Sean Waldron presenting the Michael Waldron Cup to Ballyhaunis Gaels Minor Captain, John Cunnane.



The Ballyhaunis Gaels Minor Panel with the Michael Waldron Cup after winning the Minor 'B' County Title. Back L-R: Eoghan Collins (Management), Paul Jordan (Management), James Reynolds, Darren Coyne, Piarais Caulfield, Neil Carney, Eoin Morris, John Madden, Callyn Murphy, Calum Gardiner, John Cunnane (Capt.), Michael McGarry, Sean Herr, William Nestor (Management), Tadgh Morley (Management). Middle row: Brian O'Neill, Uneed Naseer, Kealan Kilgallon, Liam Herr, Jack Coyne, Eamon Phillips, Patrick Caulfield, David Cunnane, Williams Ganley, Oisin Henry, Zouhir Rahmani. Front row: Cathal Carney, Cormac Phillips.

David Cunnane, Cormac Phillips, Calum Gardiner, Cathal Carney, Michael McGarry (Eastern Gaels), Kealan Kilgallon (Eastern Gaels), Liam Herr, Eamon Phillips, John Madden (Easter Gaels), Neil Carney, Sean Herr, Oilskin Henry, Eoin Morris (Eastern Gaels), Piarais Caulfield, Zouhir Rahmani, James Reynolds, Williams Ganley (Eastern Gaels), Uneeb Nasser. Management team: William Nestor, Paul Jordan, Eoghan Collins, Tadgh Morley.

### Senior Football

It has been a sporadic year in terms of fulfilling fixtures in both league and championship for our senior team this year due to the involvement of the county team in the All-Ireland Final replay. The seniors competed in Division 1C this year and although there are still three games to be played at the time of writing neither relegation nor promotion from the division is a possibility. In the championship we ran Ballaghaderreen very close, outplayed by a very strong Knockmore team which has since reached the county final, and unfortunate not to do better against Kiltane away from home. The team is currently fighting for survival in senior football and must do it all over again with neighbours Claremorris having initially drawn. The winner will retain their senior status for 2017; however, the losers will have another bite of the cherry against Ballinrobe.

Panel: Adrian Phillips, Brian Hunt, Keith Higgins, Patrick Kiely, Jimmy Cribbin, Ryan Worden, Eoghan Collins, Niall Prenty, Kevin Gallagher, Kevin Byrne, Cathal Carney, John Cunnane, Jason Coyne, James Lyons, Morgan Lyons, Declan Doyle, Conor Freeley, Kevin Nestor, Liam Lyons, Stephen Nolan, Eamon Phillips, Stephen Hoban, David McNamara, Brian O'Neill, Calum Gardiner, Ciaran Griffin, Brian Mulrennan, Mark Phillips, Sean Gildea, Sean Griffin, Rory Nestor, Stephen Shanaghy.

Management: Fergal Kelly, John Prenty, Padraig Regan, Paul Jordan.

### County Football Representatives

Well done to all the club players who represented Mayo this year. Keith Higgins (Senior), Morgan Lyons (Under-21), John Cunnane (Minor), Jack Coyne, Cormac Phillips and Patrick Caulfield (Under-16).

### Hurling

2016 was a memorable year for Ballyhaunis Hurling. The Underage Development continued and each Wednesday evening saw 50 plus children ranging in ages from 3 to 13 years taking to the pitch to learn this ancient art. Ballyhaunis GAA Club fully embraced this renewal and sanctioned the purchase of additional helmets, hurleys and training equipment to meet the demand. The Under-8 and Under-10 teams acquitted themselves and the club proudly in matches against Caiseal Gaels, Westport, Claremorris and Ballina. Tadgh Buckley and Stephen Carney are coaches to the U-10 team. Pierce Higgins, Darran Conlon, Trevor Kelly, Tadgh Morley, Gary Conway, Paul Kelly, Pete Higgins, Kevin Morley, Brendan Donnellan, Hugh McKermitt, John Burke and Tom Lyons, amongst others, have all been on hand throughout the year to assist in underage training.

Unfortunately, from Under-12 to Under-21 level the Club could not field teams. The Hurling Committee met with parents and the Club officers and an arrangement was put in place for a "Permission to Play" agreement between Ballyhaunis GAA Club and Tooreen Hurling Club. This agreement was a most welcome development as it allows all Ballyhaunis teenagers who wish to play hurling to continue to do so without compromising their club affiliation. This forward thinking is to be commended as it ensures the future viability of hurling in the area for the benefit of all concerned and draws on the spirit of cooperation between the two clubs, going back three decades.

Cormac Phillips continued to display his prowess at U-16 level by being a leading player on the Mayo U-16 team which competed in the Celtic Challenge competition. He also successfully defended his Mayo and



Connacht U-16 Poc Fada titles, coming second in Ireland and also making the leader board in the adult section in the process.

### Under-21

At U-21 level the Ballyhaunis hurlers had a big input into the Mayo team that reached the All Ireland 'B' final. The final took place in Thurles on the 10th September where Mayo took on Meath in the curtain raiser to the Galway versus Tipperary 'A' final. The team was coached by Adrian Brennan and Donal O'Brien and had Mark Phillips, Jason Coyne, Cyril Collins, Ryan Kilbane, Shane Healy, Calum Gardiner, James Lyons and Morgan Lyons on the panel. They put in a valiant display against a fancied and physically strong Meath side that just pulled away in the last few minutes to clinch victory.

Ballyhaunis GAA Club ran a supporters bus for the "Trip to Tipp." This was a memorable visit to the "home of hurling" for our young players. Present in the stand, among the Ballyhaunis supporters were proud parents, Anne and Gerry Lyons. This was a homecoming for Anne who is a native of Thurles. Her grandfather, James Maher, was one of a small local committee which ensured the purchase and development of the iconic Semple Stadium. Her father, Michéal, lined out there for Tipperary in the following years and now she returned to watch her two sons, James and Morgan, wear the Mayo Jersey in an All-Ireland Hurling Final, across the road from her family home.

### Senior

At senior inter-county level, the club was again well represented in what was an unparalleled year for Mayo Hurling. Having been relegated from Christy Ring to Nicky Rackard in 2015, the Mayo team were determined to get back to that level. Manager, J.P. Coen, assembled a strong Ballyhaunis team around him of Derek Walsh, Dave McConn and Tom Phillips. He named Brian Hunt as captain and the team included Eoghan Collins, Austin

Lyons, Kieran McDermott, Donal O'Brien, Adrian Brennan and Keith Higgins. After a good league campaign, the lads went into to Nicky Rackard with great confidence and reached the All-Ireland Final in Croke Park against Armagh. Thanks to tremendous displays by all involved, captain, Brian Hunt, lifted the Nicky Rackard cup aloft. Ballyhaunis was the scene of a great homecoming that night where hundreds of people assembled at the Square to welcome the Mayo bus. Just a week later the team were back in action where they defeated Down to secure their promotion to the Christy Ring competition for 2017.

At club level the Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling team secured yet another county final appearance following victories over Westport, Tooreen and Castlebar. The final, against local rivals Tooreen, was a hard fought affair which went to a replay with Ballyhaunis emerging victorious for the third year in succession. The team subsequently beat Oran of Roscommon to reach the Connacht Intermediate Final against Ahascragh Fohenagh. Ballyhaunis matched their Galway opponents with the game finishing level 2-13 to 0-19. At the time of going to print the replay had yet to be decided.

"In an enlightened gesture – In their desire to see the spread of hurling in the county – the Tooreen Hurling Club offered their assistance to Ballyhaunis GAA Club to start hurling training in Ballyhaunis at underage level."

That's a direct quote from the "Godfather" of Ballyhaunis hurling, Pete Higgins, which appeared in Annagh Magazine in 1989. It's an interesting article outlining the work of the passionate hurling people in the area from the two neighbouring clubs. Three decades later, Pete has become the "Grandfather" of Ballyhaunis hurling and spends his Wednesday evening in the nursery section of the grounds with the "tots" carrying hurls as big as themselves!

Utilising much different training methods and



Ballyhaunis club man and Mayo hurling captain, Brian Hunt, lifts the Nicky Rackard Cup in Croke Park



Ballyhaunis U-16 County League Champions with their managers, Tommy Caulfield and Seamus Caulfield. Conal Caulfield, Barry Cribbin, Neil Carney, Soheab Arshad, Ethan Keane, Luke Walsh, James McDonagh, Uneeb Naseer, Pierce Nestor, Patrick Caulfield, Cormac Phillips, Jack Coyne, James McDonagh, Jack McGoldrick, Daniel Murray, Darren Maughan, Conor Keane.





The Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling Panel 2016 – County Champions 2016 and Connacht Finalists.

Back, L-R: Jack Coyne, Kieran Kiely, Fergal Lyons, James Lyons, Patrick Kiely, Austin Lyons, Eoghan Collins, Tadhg Buckley, Kieran McDermott, Sean Gildea, Shane Healy, Mark Phillips, Stephen Hoban, Jimmy Cribbin, Callum Gardiner, Ryan Kilbane, Sean Herr.  
Front, L-R: Adrian Phillips, Damien Keadin, Sean Griffin, Adrian Brennan, Brian Hunt, Dónal O'Brien, Keith Higgins, Luke Cribbin, Pierce Higgins, Eamon Phillips, Kevin Morley, Peter Healy.

vocabulary, he combines that with Senior Manager. He is joined in that role by many of the U-12 team of 1989, be it in a player or selector capacity. John Joe Hoban is his trusted lieutenant along with Derek Walsh, Darran Conlon, Hugh McKermitt, and stats man, Gary Conway. Frank Browne and J.P. Coen help out once their Mayo assignments are complete, adding valued inter-county management experience to the backroom team. From that U-12 team of 28 years ago, Pierce Higgins, Peter Healy and Tadhg Buckley are still performing at the highest level and are central players in the team.

The “enlightened gesture” shown by Tooreen almost three decades ago has obviously paid dividends over the years, with both clubs vying for supremacy and consequently raising the standards year on year. This raising of the bar has resulted in both clubs acting as feeders for the successful County and Community School teams of late and are closing the gap on Galway for a coveted Connacht Intermediate Club Hurling Title. Tooreen and Ballyhaunis are linked through friendship, work, business, family, marriage and school. However, that is always forgotten for an hour or so when the county final comes around!

A special acknowledgement to two of our hurlers who are dual stars at the highest level. This year saw Morgan Lyons line out for the Mayo U-21 teams in both codes. Unfortunately, he wasn't successful on his “home” pitch in Thurles but he did play a vital role in the magnificent U-21 All Ireland Football victory. Keith Higgins is a proven star on both senior inter-county teams. His perfectly timed dispossession of an Armagh player won plaudits from hurling critics at the highest level and shows the skill set that this All Star possesses in both codes.

The Hurling Committee consists of Donal Moran,



Happy U-8 Hurlers!

Pete Higgins, and Darran Conlon. They wish to acknowledge the kind sponsorship of Tadhg Buckley of EPS who provided hurleys to the juvenile and senior hurling teams at the start of the season. They wish to give their sincere appreciation to Scoil Íosa Principal, Kenneth Dennedy, and schoolteacher, Dónal O'Brien for their continued support in the development of the game. Thanks to all the coaches, mentors, helpers and parents who have come to training and matches throughout the year. There is no doubt that if the home practice is encouraged, the future is bright for hurling in the club and county.

The committee want to invite as many children as possible to enjoy the game. All coaches are vetted and qualified and the necessary safety equipment is provided. So, if you have never tried hurling before please make contact with one of the coaches and we hope to see this progress being continued in 2017.





The U-13 panel and mentors celebrate winning the Division 1 county title.

### Ladies Football

Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football picked up where they left off in 2015 and enjoyed another successful, and indeed, historic year on the playing fields in 2016. The club won its first ever Mayo Championship when the U-16 team captured the county title defeating Castlebar Mitchells in October. The second county title soon followed when the U-13 team won the Division 1 county title. The club also continued its growth and development by fielding a minor team for the first time this year and announced plans to field a Junior team in 2017.

In February we welcomed Raheny LGFA to our club to play a challenge match at U-14 level. The Raheny club and mentors enjoyed our hospitality before travelling onto the match between Mayo and Dublin in the National Football League. We reciprocated the visit in May when almost 50 players travelled to Raheny to play two challenge matches against our hosts. We then travelled onto the LIDL Ladies National Football League Final in Parnell Park.

Off the field of play the club also had a very busy year with numerous fundraising events and the launch of its dedicated Facebook page. All in all we can look forward to a busy and hopefully successful 2017.

### Under-10

At this age group it's all about development of the skills so there are no leagues just a few blitzes. We attended the Connacht blitz which was held in the Centre of Excellence in Began. The girls played well and enjoyed their day. All clubs that took part in this were entered into a draw to appear at half time in the Ladies Connacht Final which was held in McHale Park. Our club was the lucky one, so we played Corofin at the half time. This was a wonderful experience for the young girls. Like other clubs we struggle for numbers at this age and would encourage girls to come and try the sport.

Panel: Sinead O'Neill, Alisha Alysward, Tara Phillips, Lucy Phillips, Laura Dillon, Sophia Marquis, Emma Henry, Roisin Henry, Kelly Ronan, Emma Caulfield, Ava

McCormack, Nicole Allen Forde and Alisha Allen Forde.

Management: Niamh and Stella O'Neill.

### Under-12

The U-12 girls started their campaign back in March with a grading league. They acquitted themselves very well and finished in third position, which placed them in Division 2 for the proper league. This started in May and we had some excellent matches as all teams were of similar standard. They qualified for the semi-final against Moy Davitts and the game ended in a draw. However, in the replay, with a few injuries, the girls were beaten by four points. All in all, it was a good year for the U-12 girls; they now go on to join the U-13s for their league.

Panel: Channelle Marquis, Rosie Ganley, Saoirse Waldron, Chloe Mulrennan, Eva Henry, Jessica Henry, Rebecca Lyons, Nikita Tighe, Sarah Ronayne, Chloe Kirrane, Aoife Hughes, Vanessa Whelan, Megan McGuire, Miah Phillips, Isabella Cox, Sinéad O'Neill.

Management: Stella and Niamh O'Neill

### Under-13

The U-13 squad had a very successful season. Following an unbeaten league run they qualified to meet Crossmolina McHale Rovers in the county quarter final. Overcoming this hurdle they then defeated Westport in the semi-final by a score line of 2-7 to 2-4, setting up a county final against Kilmoremoy. The Ballyhaunis ladies proved too strong capturing the Division 1 county title on a scoreline of 3-10 to 1-7.

Panel: Chanel Marquis, Rachel Cleary, Saoirse Waldron, Bernadette Staunton, Mae Hession, Nikita Tighe, Erin Murray, Kate Mannion, Kate Delaney, Laura Madden, Jessica Henry, Laura Godfrey, Leah Johnston (Captain), Hannah Clarke, Maeve Donnellan, Rosie Ganley, Aoife Hughes, Chloe Kirrane, Sarah Ronayne, Megan McGuire, Rebecca Lyons, Eva Henry, Chloe Mulrennan and Isabel Cox.

Management: Mike Henry, Pat Tighe and Justin McDonagh. Liaison: Sinead Coakley Johnston.



### Under-14

The Ballyhaunis U-14 team had a very successful league campaign this summer which culminated in them qualifying from their group to play Kilmaine in the county semi final, a game which they won. They went onto play Burrishoole in the county final but, after a pulsating game, Ballyhaunis lost by a single point. The future looks very bright for this enthusiastic and talented group of players.

Panel: Aoife Carney, Rachel Cleary, Kate Delaney, Eilis Duffy, Amy Gildea (Captain), Jessica Henry, Mae Hession, Leah Johnston, Kate Mannion, Aine Phillips, Bernadette Staunton, Saoirse Waldron, Hannah Clarke, Lorna Davis, Maeve Donnellan, Laura Godfrey, Ruth Henry, Laura Madden, Chanel Marquis, Erin Murray and Nikita Tighe.

Management: Mike Henry and Pat Tighe. Liaison: Sinead Coakley Johnston.

### Under-16

2016 was an historic year for the club as the U-16 team were the first ever team to win a Mayo Ladies Championship. After a decidedly mediocre league campaign, the girls rallied for the championship, put their heads down, worked hard and got their just rewards. Following wins over St. Mary's Aghamore in the quarter final and Hollymount in the semi final, they beat Castlebar Mitchells in the final.

Panel: Aoife Conway, Niamh Smith, Sheena Roddy, Lauren Walsh, Holly Browne, Niamh O'Neill, Shauna Lyons, Niamh Foody (Captain), Erin Murray, Leah Johnston, Siofra Murray, Gemma Foody, Cait Phillips, Laura Godfrey, Amy Keane, Rachel Dillon, Ciara O'Grady, Rachel Cleary, Laura Madden and Aine Phillips.

Management: Michael Cleary, Paul Smyth, Gerry O'Connell, Gary Conway, Frank Browne. Liaison: Annette Regan.

### Minor

2016 was also an historic year for the club at minor level as it was the first time the club lined out at this grade. Even though all of the players are eligible to play again at this grade next year, the club progressed to the county semi final. However, after an excellent performance, they were beaten by eventual champions and Mayo LGFA stalwarts, Carnacon.

Panel: Aoife Conway, Olivia Cleary, Megan Regan, Laura O'Connell, Aoibhinn Herr, Katelyn Concannon, Chloe Ryan, Helen Gallagher, Roisin Lyons, Marina Carney, Lauren Walsh, Sheena Roddy, Niamh Smith, Holly Browne, Niamh O'Neill, Shauna Lyons, Erin Murray, Niamh Foody, Gemma Foody, Siofra Murray, Leah Johnston and Cait Phillips.

Management: Michael Cleary, Paul Smyth, Gerry O'Connell, Gary Conway, Frank Browne. Liaison: Annette Regan.

### Ladies County Football Representatives

Under-14: Erin Murray (Player), Justin McDonagh (Bainisteoir).

Under-16: Aoife Conway (Player).

Minor: Katelyn Concannon (Player).

Senior: Frank Browne (Bainisteoir), Derek Walsh (Backroom).



The first Minor Ladies team fielded by Ballyhaunis LGFA.



The successful U-16 panel celebrate winning the first ever ladies county title for Ballyhaunis LGFA.



# PATRONS

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## Disclaimer

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Some photographs have had to be reproduced smaller than hoped for, due to poor quality of original image supplied. Regrettably we could not include all photographs submitted due to large volume received.

## Some Guidelines for contributors of articles and photographs:

If you wish to contribute an article or photograph for consideration in next year's magazine, you can contact Annagh by email at [info@annaghmag.ie](mailto:info@annaghmag.ie), or visit our website [www.annaghmag.ie](http://www.annaghmag.ie)

**Deadline:** The deadline for contributions to Annagh 2017 is Friday, 6th October 2017. The eventual inclusion of any article is subject to the discretion of the Editorial Committee.

### Articles

Articles should not exceed 4000 words. Hand-written or typed submissions are acceptable. Articles submitted by email or on CD should preferably be in WORD format. We cannot accept material in Microsoft Publisher format. It is the policy of the magazine not to include obituaries or memoriam notices. Due to space constraints, not all photographs or articles can be guaranteed inclusion.

The list of baptisms, marriages and deceased comes directly from the Parish Registers. The deceased list includes everyone whose funeral Mass takes place in the Parish Church.

The earlier in the year that material is submitted, the better. All work done on Annagh Magazine is done on a voluntary basis. New members, or any help you can give, will be most welcome.

### Photographs

All photographs should be fully named and dated, if possible, and the owner's name included on the back. The contributor's name will be published only if this is requested. Photographs sent digitally, by email or on CD, should be in jpeg format, and scanned at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi. If they are any smaller, it may not be possible to publish them at an appropriate size. Photographs should not be imbedded in WORD documents: they can be sent separately as jpegs. Captions should be typed at the end of the article, with clear reference(s) to the relevant photo(s). Photographs will be returned as soon as possible once the magazine goes to print.



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## Annagh 2016 Front Cover Photograph

Ballyhaunis native, Captain Phelim Carroll (left), accompanies the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, on his official presidential duties at the Garden of Remembrance and the G.P.O. to commemorate the 1916 Rising in Dublin. Capt. Carroll was the officer in charge for the Heads of State Guard of Honour Ceremonies on both occasions. He is son of Cathal and Cathy Carroll (née Webb), and attended Scoil Íosa National School and Ballyhaunis Community School where he completed his Leaving Cert in 2003. Also pictured is Lt. Col. Michael Kiernan, aide-de-camp to the President. *Photo courtesy of INM/Irish Independent*

### Back cover

*Top left:* The flag of the Irish Republic is raised at the new 1916 Garden of Remembrance by two local residents – Katherine Kilbride who is a great-granddaughter of James Connolly, a signatory of the Proclamation, and Joe Keane, one of our most senior residents and FCA veteran. Also pictured is Michael Kelly, Chairman of Ballyhaunis Community Council. *Photo courtesy of JanaPix*

*Top Centre:* Tom Colleran, as Padraic Pearse, reads the Proclamation of the Irish Republic during the 1916 Commemoration organised by Ballyhaunis Active Retirement, in Clare Court Communal House.

*Top Right:* The altar and sanctuary of St. Patrick's Parish Church commemorating the 1916 Rising.

*Bottom:* The cast of 'Grace and Joseph', a play by Michael Goulding performed by Half A Breakfast Theatre Group, on 16th April 2016 in the Parochial Hall as part of a weekend of commemorations of the 1916 Rising. L-R: John Morley as 'The Priest', Séamus Corry as 'Roger Casement', Vivienne Lee as 'Grace Gifford', Séamas Mac Eachmharaigh as 'Joseph Mary Plunkett', Michael Goulding as 'an English Soldier', Ronan Egan as 'The English Captain'. *Photos courtesy of Fr. Stephen Farragher*





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Ballyhaunis Parish Magazine

