

# ANNAGH



2019



# Foreword



It's quite common for people to turn up unannounced at the parish office or to approach me after Mass seeking information about their ancestors who lived in the locality at some stage. Recently, following Sunday Mass, I was approached by a young woman who was accompanied by her friend. She informed me that her father, who had left Ballyhaunis at the age of two, had died a month previously. She had been born in Vienna and had often heard her father speak about Ballyhaunis and its people. The only real information she had was that her grandfather had died and was buried here in 1980. I have to admit that I don't normally entertain such inquiries on a Sunday. However I invited them both to the parish office in my house and we checked the Register of Deaths in the parish office. We found the record of her grandfather's death, David Mulligan of Barrack Street. As I was checking the record I received a phone call from a parishioner who wished to include a relative of his in the list of Mass intentions. I asked him if he knew this woman's grandfather. He said he did and other relatives also. He suggested that she talk to another man who would provide her with further information. Before long we were in the local cemetery searching for her grandfather's grave being assisted by two more local men with great local knowledge, who gave up some of their Sunday afternoon to assist in the search for the grave. In a short time her grandfather's grave was located along with the stone plaque stating that the memorial had been erected by some of his friends as he was the last member of the family to live and die in the locality. In the meantime a man who had been a contemporary of her grandfather happened to be visiting his wife's grave and took her to meet a friend of his who was one of her grandfather's friends who had helped make the funeral arrangements and who had contributed to erecting the plaque in his memory. The following day she met with another man who was able to show her a photograph of her great-grandfather who had played on a local football team. She was then informed about the '*Annagh*' magazine, and some days later a member of the present editorial team provided me with a PDF document of all past issues that contained some social history of her ancestors who had lived in Barrack Street and which I was able to forward to her by email. This young woman returned to Vienna extremely grateful for the assistance she received from so many people. She felt truly at home despite not having spent any of her life here.

Each issue of *Annagh* contains articles and photos that are of interest to the present generation; those living locally and those who are part of the Ballyhaunis diaspora scattered throughout the world. Each issue will also serve as a wonderful resource for generations to come who, like the woman just mentioned, come in search of their roots and will experience a kind of homecoming as they read about their ancestors and view photos of them.

I wish to congratulate the committee on another wonderful production and Sinéad Mallee who does such a wonderful job on the layout and presentation.

To all our parishioners and to our readers overseas we wish you a happy Christmas and every blessing for 2020.

*Stephen Farragher*

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

# Editorial

Welcome to the forty-second issue of the Annagh magazine. We hope that you will enjoy this year's offering: that you will find the written contributions interesting, informative and entertaining; and that the photographs will offer a fair reflection of life in the parish of Annagh past and present.

As years go by it can be difficult to think of something new to say in the editorial. This year, our cover pictures serve as a starting point. The front features a signpost showing Ballyhaunis, the townland of Annagh, and Connacht Regional Airport. On the back is a night-time shot of the Railway Station with the lights of Ballyhaunis in the distance. Both were chosen to represent the related themes of 'direction' and 'journey'. Life's journey can be one in a literal sense for those who find themselves far from their native place. Those who have left our parish of Annagh have travelled in many different directions to far-flung places throughout the world. Similarly, those who now find a home in our parish have come from every part of the globe, under a broad range of circumstances. It is with pride we learn of our parishioners who have done well for themselves abroad. And it is with pride too we reflect on the good name our town and parish has earned in accommodating those forced to leave their own homelands in distant, often war-torn parts of the world.

We live in an age where people are increasingly reluctant to get involved in community based clubs, societies and organisations. The Annagh Magazine Society is fortunate to have a good collection of hard workers who give selflessly of their time throughout the year. In common with all organisations who work for the betterment of our community, we welcome new people and fresh ideas.

This year saw the retirement of Jim Landon from the Annagh Magazine Society. Jim is one of the founders of

Annagh Magazine, having been there at the very beginning in 1977, when Ballyhaunis Junior Chamber first decided to produce an annual magazine by and for the people of Annagh or Ballyhaunis parish. He has been involved continuously since – an astonishing forty-one years' service – working tirelessly in many capacities for the good of the magazine. His colleagues and friends in the Annagh Magazine Society would like to record our huge debt of gratitude and thanks to Jim for all he has done over four decades, and wish him a happy and healthy retirement!

The Annagh Magazine Society would like to thank all those who contributed articles, poems and photographs this year. We would also like to thank our loyal readers for supporting the magazine down through the years. And we must thank our patrons for their generous support, year-in, year-out, whose sponsorship ensures that the magazine remains, once more, at the reasonable price of €10.

To all of you, at home and abroad, we wish you a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every good wish for the New Year.

## *Annagh Magazine Society*

President:	Joe Keane
Chairman:	Seamus Mulrennan
Vice-Chairman:	Paul Waldron
Secretary:	Deirdre Moran
Asst. Secretary:	Noreen Ruane Dalton
Treasurer:	Edward Mulhern
Asst. Treasurer:	John Kilduff
P.R.O.:	Nell Rochford
Committee:	Mike Griffin, Gabriel Smith, Tom Caulfield, Jade Kelly



Members of the Annagh Magazine Society bid farewell to their long-serving colleague, Jim Landon, who retired this year having been involved with the magazine since its inception in 1977. L-R: Seamus Mulrennan, Nell Rochford, John Kilduff, Joe Keane, Paul Waldron, Jim Landon, Edward Mulhern and Deirdre Moran (front).

Reviewing the Year 2019	Mike Byrne	3
A Cribbin Family Reunion 2019	John McNicholas	8
A Great Year for the Grogans	Eileen Lynch	11
St. Vincent de Paul Society		11
A Lifelong Passion for Music	Marian Waldron	12
A Moment in Time	Pat (Gerry) Culliney	14
A Short Forty Years – Tuohy Cup Memories	Tom Caulfield	16
Ballyhaunis Men's Shed Association		17
Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce	Tom Forde	20
A Truly Remarkable Turn of Events	Tom Caulfield	24
Ballyhaunis Boxing Club	Suzanne Mullarney	25
A Year of Firsts	Martin Fitzmaurice	26
Remembering Byrne's Shop on Clare Street	Fintan Lynch	28
Ballyhaunis Harriers Athletic Club	Michael Joyce	31
Ballyhaunis in 1919 / 1920 - The Centenary of the Irish Revolution	Fr Kieran Waldron	32
Weddings	Photo Feature	34
Baptisms, Marriages & Deceased		43
Ballyhaunis Parents & Toddler Group		45
An 18th-century Land Dispute at Cottage and Levallyroe	Michael Kelly	46
Seven Decades of Dedication		48
Ballyhaunis: The Changing Role of a Rural Town	John Higgins	50
Annagh Wheelers 2019	Darragh Delaney	56
Abbey Partnership	Mark Godfrey	57
Austin Biesty's Memories of Home and Abroad	Mike Byrne	58
Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group	Paula Grogan	61
Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee	Martina Gavin	61
Abbey Pattern 2019		64
Ballyhaunis Golf Club	Margaret Dyer	67
Curley's Charity Bottle	Tom Caulfield	69
Ballyhaunis Community Council – Growing and Doing	Fionnuala Parr	70
Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Association	Nicola Nolan	72
Sanctuary Runners – Bringing People Together		75
Ballyhaunis on National TV		76
Gracenotes	Miriam Judge and Liesel Ward	77
Ballyhaunis Community School	David McDonagh (Principal)	79
Christmas Eve in Tennessee	Frank Grealley	81
Farmers Make a Stand	Paul Waldron	82
Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club	Mark Godfrey	84
"Ganley is Doubtful" – St John Henry Newman		85
The Corpus Christi Procession	Gabriel Smith	86
Letters to The Sunday Independent	Murt Hunt	88
Culture Night Notes	Ruairí Ó Broin, Anne Cunnane, Mark Godfrey	91
Finding Edward and Thomas Phillips	Caroline Cantor	92
I Remember...	Poem by Murt Hunt	94
Fine Gael		95
The Parochial Hall and other Ballyhaunis Halls	Fr Kieran Waldron	96
From the Speckled Hill to the Shores of the Baltic	Noel Lyons	102
4th Mayo Ballyhaunis Scout Group		104
Annagh Parish Stations 2019		108
Father Foran's Friary Paintings	Paul Waldron	114
Network Ireland	Caroline Kirrane	119
Ballyhaunis Parish Choir	Martina Kelly	119
Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre	Stephen Grogan	120
Four Generations of the Cruise Gannon Family, Johnstown	Bridget Jensen	122
John McGuire Celebrates his 90th Birthday		124
Fit-for-Life Ballyhaunis	Siobhan Walsh & Mary Henry	125
Ballyhaunis GAA Club		126
Fianna Fáil	Liam Henry	133
Na Brídeoga	Claire Delaney	134
Mrs. Murray of Clare Street	Gerard Cleary	136
Sixty Years a Nun	Murt Hunt	138
Inclusion and Integration in Ballyhaunis	Ola Mustapha	139
National Seminar on Diversity & Integration	Gerry McGarry	140
Mayo SPCA	Lucie Kavanagh	142
Meditation - the 'What' and the 'Why'	John Gerard Murphy	144
The 3,076 Mile Mystery	Sarah Delaney	145
Medugorje - Miracles of our time	Mike Byrne	146
Train Tracks Conjure Memories	Frank Grealley	149
Senior Citizens Christmas Party, Began 2018		151
Death of a Ballyhaunis soldier serving with the U.S. Army (1919)	Michael Kelly	152
Midwest Radio – Thirty Years Broadcasting	Tommy Marren	154
The John West Féile Peile na nÓg	Gabriel Smith	157
Proud to be from Ballyhaunis	Peter McHugh	159
Liam Waldron - Riverbank Simmentals		165
The Gurteen Carrowkeel Grotto 65th Anniversary Commemoration	Mike Byrne	166
A History of the Two Grottos and Marian Shrines	Liam Lynskey	167
Warrant Officer Bernard Cannon RAF, DFM	John P. McGuire	169
Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns	Mary Donnelly	172
Ballyhaunis Gun Club	David Herr (Secretary)	174
Railway Hill Memories	Majella Callaghan	176
Ballyhaunis Faith & Light		177
Heritage Week 2019	Anne Cunnane, Mark Godfrey, Ruairí Ó Broin	180
Scoil Iosa	Kenneth Dennedy (Principal)	182
The Square and Main Street 1903	Photographs from the Lawrence Collection	186
Patrons		190



# Reviewing the Year 2019...

Mike Byrne

## NOVEMBER 2018:

Ballyhaunis Community School quiz team wins the Macra na Feirme School's Shield in Castlebar when they are pitted against the top schools quiz teams from around the district. The winning team is comprised of Merlin Pearson, Josh Webb, Luke Walsh, Conor Kinnarney, Roisín Kerrigan, Abdullah Noor, Rey Benkhelifa, Eimhin Conboy, Dean McGarry, Oisín Greally, Tom Malice and Jakob Jurak... Mary McDonagh of St. Gerard's Crescent is laid to rest after a long illness... Ballyhaunis Beekeepers Association host a very successful afternoon of information and honey tasting at the GAA Centre of Excellence. The afternoon, entitled The West Awake Honey Show, attracts beekeeping enthusiasts from all parts of the western region. Many speakers from both Ireland and Great Britain address the large crowd who attended the day-long event... Ballyhaunis Boy Scouts host a Christmas party in the Parochial Hall in support of the MSPCA... Gurteen residents Orla Loftus-Moran and Aoife Folliard-Murphy are conferred with certificates in Advanced Nursing at NUIG... The death occurs, in Strandhill, Co. Sligo, of the late Gerard Butler. Gerry, as he was affectionately known, served as a veterinary surgeon in Ballyhaunis for a number of years during the 1960s... Great sadness in the village of Tavnaghmore and wider area of Ballyhaunis following the passing of Michelle O'Connor, just ten years after her graduation from Ballyhaunis Community School... Monica Morley of Knock Shrine's Family Centre delivers a powerful talk on bereavement and loss at the annual Mass of Remembrance in St. Patrick's Church... Ballyhaunis Community School stages the popular Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, *The Sound of Music* at the school auditorium... Congratulations to Gillian Donnellan, Holly Browne, Megan Morley, Amy Keane, Tara Coyne and Clodagh Byrne who were presented with their John Paul II Awards by Archbishop Michael Neary on 15th Nov.

## DECEMBER 2018:

Eddie Stones of Emmanuel House, Clonfert, Co. Galway, is in the Parish Church for an evening of Prayer and Healing. Several hundred people from all parts of the west attended the evening. The evening was a huge success where Eddie prayed individually with every person present... The close-knit community of Knox Street are united in mourning this month as beloved friend and neighbour, Pat Byrne dies after a long illness. A native of Johnstown, Pat operated a thriving butcher/grocery business on the street for many years... Residents of Upper Main Street are very saddened when news filters through of the death of Mary Commings of

Cloonlee, Knock, on Christmas Eve. The former Mary Murren was so well known and dearly cherished by her neighbours on Upper Main Street, and also by the many members of the wider community who knew her.

## 2019

### JANUARY:

The year 2019 kicks-off in great style and with great hope and joy too as St. Patrick's Church is filled with parishioners from Ballyhaunis, Knock, Ballinlough, Began and Aghamore for the annual New Year's Day Mass. This is the sixth year of the celebration which brings members of the St. Joseph's Cluster together to celebrate the dawning of a new year. Chief celebrant this year is Knock based Capuchin Friar, Fr. Terence Harrington, OFM... No fewer than four members of Ballyhaunis Town FC were singled out for special mention by the Mayo Football League at the end of the year: Gary Higgins, Aiden McTighe and Dayo Adex were selected for the Premiership Team of the Year, while Aiden Paul Kelly made the cut for the Masters Team of the Year. Gary Higgins is also nominated for the Player of the Year award... The town and parish of Ballyhaunis and beyond is numbed by the tragic death, following an accident, of Anne Grogan, a member of the teaching staff of Ballyhaunis Community School. Anne (35) had been a member of the teaching staff at BCS for over twelve years... The erection of turbines on wind farms at Magheramore/Cregganbrack (Knock parish), Ballykinava and Cloontooa (Claremorris) change the skyline in East Mayo forever. At over 150 metres high the electricity generated by each turbine is connected via high-power cables to the National Grid... Sergeant Maureen Flynn takes up duty in Ballyhaunis. A native of



Some of the wind turbines, erected earlier this year, in the parishes of Knock and Claremorris. Adam Kaczmarek Photography.

Belmullet, Sgt. Flynn comes to Ballyhaunis from Castlebar where she has served for the past while. She joins Sgt. James Mangan and Detective Ken Waldron, together with seven other officers, serving at the Main Street unit. The number of officers now serving at the Ballyhaunis station is nine, a huge increase from a few years ago when the number was down to just two!

## **FEBRUARY:**

The month starts off on a bright note for Ballyhaunis when work gets underway on eighteen new houses at Abbeyquarter, across from Scoil Íosa. The project is being undertaken by Mayo County Council... Cllr. John Cribbin successfully tables a motion, at the monthly meeting of the Claremorris Municipal District, for the banning of posters during the upcoming county council elections to be held in May. His proposal won the unanimous support of all the elected members... Ballyhaunis Railway Station receives the runners-up award in the Connaught category in the Íarnród Éireann Best Station Awards. Ballyhaunis was narrowly beaten to the top spot by Sligo in the Connaught category. The awards were presented at Íarnród Éireann's head office in Inchicore, Dublin, where local Station Manager Matthew Garret, as well as station employee Shane Hughes, were present to collect their well-deserved award.

## **MARCH:**

Clare Street native Dr. Michael Cleary retires from Hazelhill Family Practise, on Upper Main Street... Great excitement in Caulfield's of Upper Main Street this month as a lucky punter wins the tidy sum of €500,000 in the Euro Millions Lotto. After several weeks of speculation as to whom the lucky punter was, the person holding the winning ticket presented for payment at lottery headquarters in Dublin. The winner wished to remain anonymous... Pupils and teachers at Ballyhaunis Community School are treated to a feast of Irish folk and traditional music at its very best when accomplished accordion player Martin Tourish, former member of well-known Donegal folk group, Altan, visited the school. Martin was joined by Altan's lead vocalist, Máiread Ní Mhaonaigh, where a most enjoyable session was had by all those in attendance. The project, supported by the NCH, Dublin, was arranged especially for the music exam classes in the school... Ballyhaunis Town FC make their debut at the top flight in the Mayo Soccer League when they begin their campaign in the Elvery's Sports Super League. The opening fixture didn't go too well for the Ballyhaunis lads, as they came out on the losing end to Ballyheane, by 2-0... Holywell native Sean Finn dies in the United States. Sean, who was brother of the late Joe Finn (Pattenspark) and Mary Healy (Holywell), worked for a good many years as a

driver for Greyhound Buses in New York. He made his final journey to Mayo and was laid to rest in the Parish Cemetery in Ballyhaunis... Miriam McGoldrick, formerly Miriam Hannon from Abbey Street passes to her eternal reward following a brief illness... The Mayo Organic Group deliver a series of classes on organic gardening at the Friary Community Garden... Main Street businessman Brian Phillips takes up the reins as Captain of Ballyhaunis Golf Club; Mary Lyons is new Lady Captain while John P.X. Kelly from Knock is installed as President. John will be remembered as lead singer with local showband, *The Niagra*, which scored a Top 10 hit in 1969 with *The Isle of Innisfree*, with the Knock man on lead vocals... Great sadness among the community of Johnstown as neighbour and esteemed friend, Mary Cleary (née Doyle) departs to her eternal reward... Ballyhaunis native Bernie Coleman, Dublin, is nominated as one of the finalists for International Women's Day. International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic and cultural achievements of women. The former Bernie Keegan, daughter of the late Mick and Mary Keegan, Ballyhaunis, is a most deserving recipient of the nomination as she has been an inspiration to so many people, through her courageous battle with cancer for the past 20 years... Upper Main Street businessman Seamus Caulfield is appointed Manager of the Ballyhaunis Gaelic Football Senior team. Seamus, who donned the red and black of Ballyhaunis for many years himself, is assisted in his new role by a management team of Paul Jordan, Mike Dillon and Brian Mulrennan... And, also on GAA matters, on the last day of the month, Mayo win the National Football League title in Croke Park, with a great win over Kerry. Ballyhaunis man, Keith Higgins, is very much to the fore in helping Mayo to win their first Senior Football League crown since 2001... The newly widened Kilmannin Bridge is opened to traffic. The installation of a new arch, construction of new parapets and widening of the carriageway transform the two-hundred year old bridge, which has been a traffic bottle-neck for years.

## **APRIL:**

Jane Buckley gives a most enlightening talk to students at Ballyhaunis Community School on her work as proprietor and director of JROC, RONOCO, Import and Distribution Company. Together with her sister, Katie, Jane spoke about her journey from being a student at Ballyhaunis Community School to becoming a successful entrepreneur in the dynamic world that is the cosmetic industry, regularly striking deals with household names like Penney's, Boots and many others. Jane and Katie are daughters of Rory and Margaret O'Connor, Doctor's Road... Meanwhile, on the sports front, Ballyhaunis Gaelic Footballers, under their new



management, overcome the challenge of Ballinrobe to win their opening game in the County Intermediate Championship, with a winning margin of 1-9 to 0-7. A great start for sure, on away soil as well! Mary Teresa McHale, Ballinlough, dies after a very brief illness. Deceased was the former Mary Teresa Rattigan from Knox Street... Mary Moylan, formerly Mary Morris from Lissaniskea, Began is laid to rest after a brief illness. Mary was well known throughout Ballyhaunis as she worked as secretary in Freyne's Garage on Clare Street for many years... Members of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns carried out their 'Good Friday clean-up' as part of the National Spring Clean Campaign on 19th April. This year local GAA stars Erin Murray and Keith Higgins lent their support to the massive effort... Ballyhaunis pharmacist Róisín Curley continues to make a name for herself in her successful winemaking business. The Irish Independent's wine correspondent recommended her Saint Romain 1915 Burgundy as one of the top 15 best wine buys in the country for the Easter holidays... Dr. Ronan Waldron, Consultant Surgeon at Mayo University Hospital, is awarded the prestigious Alumni Award for Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, at a ceremony in NUI, Galway. Dr. Waldron is nephew of well-known retired Main Street businessman, John O'Brien.

#### **MAY:**

Ballyhaunis native Fr. Enda Lyons, DD, dies after a brief illness. Born in Knox Street in 1932, Fr. Enda was a renowned theologian and author of many books. Ordained to the priesthood in 1958, Fr. Enda's funeral Mass was celebrated in his native parish by his cousin Fr. Eamonn Conway. The homily was delivered by Archbishop Michael Neary... NUI, Galway, Professor Peter McHugh is elected to Fellowship of the Irish Academy of Engineering (IAE). The distinction has been bestowed on Peter in recognition of his "exceptional career and contribution to the advancement of engineering and economic and social progress in Ireland". Prof. McHugh is son of the late Eddie and Tess McHugh, Main Street... Midwest Radio achieves its highest ever rating in radio listenership in the JNLR Radio Listenership Survey for all radio stations in Ireland, published on 2nd May... Fundraising programme launched for the Parochial Hall: Ballyhaunis Community Council launch their ambitious plan to have the Main Street facility completely transformed and refurbished. The project is to be known as Ballyhaunis Community Hall Renovation Project... Great sadness is occasioned throughout the district this month when two very popular and well known personalities depart to their eternal reward; Michael Brennan from Agloragh, a long-time employee at McGarry's Star Cinema, dies following a brief illness; and Freddie O'Brien (née Fahy), Upper Main Street and formerly of Ballyveal, slips

quietly away, also after a very brief illness... Ballyhaunis man Cllr. John Cribbin is returned to Mayo County Council in the local authority elections... The 19th Ballyhaunis Summer Festival gets underway at the end of the month.

#### **JUNE:**

If the West of Ireland and indeed the whole of the country was basking in sizzling temperatures during May, June and July of 2018, this summer, so far, has been a complete contrast. As we come through the month of June, temperatures are well below average every day, with lots of heavy rain as well throughout the summer weeks, but we live in hope... Upper Main Street native Kieran Benson dies in England. Kieran worked in Dillon's on Clare Street for a number of years before emigrating to England during the 1960s... Popular Midwest Radio sports editor Angelina Nugent announces that she is to leave the Clare Street studio after 20 years of broadcasting to take up a position with Mayo Roscommon Hospice... The death occurs in Chesterfield, England of the late Nora Oakland, formerly Nora Greene from Knox Street, sister of Marcella Keane, Knox Street... Dermot Finnegan wins John P. Kelly's President's Prize at Ballyhaunis Golf Club... Sher Mohammad Rafique dies after a brief illness. Pakistani born Mr. Rafique came to Ballyhaunis in the mid-1970s when he operated the very successful meat processing company, Halal Meats, later to be known as United Meat Packers. In his mid-80s, Mr. Rafique was responsible for the opening of the Mosque on Clare Street, across from the meat plant, to cater for the growing number of Muslim workers who were coming to work and live in Ballyhaunis... Ballyhaunis Fit4life group present a cheque for €900 to Cancer Care West, funds which were raised through the recent 10k Road Race... The car park in front of the Parish Church was resurfaced with tarmac at the end of the month.

#### **JULY:**

Six students from Ballyhaunis Community School travel to Lourdes with the Irish Pilgrimage Trust where they are helping out during the week as youth carers assisting people with special needs. Gillian Donnellan from Clare Street is one of the students travelling. The other members of the travelling party are Amy Waldron (Knock), Aaron Dee (Bekan), Vanessa Henry (Tooreen) and Clodagh Waldron (Aghamore). This is the first time the initiative has been undertaken by BCS and it is hoped to make it an annual project for the school... Marie Connell (née Flatley), formerly of Devlis, dies in Mervue, Galway, where she has lived for the past number of years... Siobhán Herr from Doctor's Road wins Mary Lyons' Captain's Prize at Ballyhaunis Golf Club, and just to keep it in the family, husband Freddy wins the Lady

Captain's Prize to the Men... Meanwhile, also on the fairways down in Coolnaha, Golf Club member Conor Lyons creates a new course record with a 'smashing' round of 65, beating the old record held by Shane Buckley... Moneymore native Margaret Kedian dies in Castlebar after a brief illness... Anne O'Shaughnessy (née Nolan) of Beechlawn departs to her eternal reward, while also in the parish during this month, Mary Plunkett from Mountain slips quietly away to her heavenly reward.

## AUGUST:

Twelve years old Carlagh Mullarney from Gurteen wins bronze medal for Ireland in the 2019 European Boxing Championships held in Tbilisi, Georgia. A large crowd of well-wishers turned out at the Square on Monday, 12th August to welcome the European medal winner back to her home town. Carlagh is a member of the Ballyhaunis Boxing Club... Former Ballyhaunis Community School student Pamela Uba wins the *Best Dressed Lady* prize at the Galway Races Festival. Pamela,



Pamela Uba

a medical student based in Galway, wins a trip for two to the Seychelles plus a €3,000 cash prize as part of her win... Heritage Week takes place in Ballyhaunis with a wide range of interesting topics addressed during the week. Talks during the week included, the life and legacy of the late Sher Rafique, delivered by his son Imran; Building a Hall, delivered by Fr. Kieran Waldron, which looked at the social and cultural history behind the building of Ballyhaunis Parochial Hall and other halls during 1940s and 1950s Ireland; talks on the history of the Augustinian Friary, by Paul Waldron; on the United Irish League in the locality by Michael Kelly and on local Castles by Kevin McGuire... Knox Street native Katriona Smith (née Morley), dies in Dublin following a long battle with terminal illness.

Katriona was daughter of the late John and Rose Morley, Knox Street... The month of August carries on where the month of July went out, wet with temperatures below average. A very, very wet month of August... As Galway's Minors defeat Kilkenny to win their third All-Ireland title in a row at Croke Park, their star forward Ruben Davitt contributes enormously

to the Tribesmen's historic victory. Ruben is son of Garry Davitt and grandson of Patricia and the late John Davitt of Brackloon. A rising hurling star for the future by all accounts... Residents of Gurteen and Carrowkeel celebrate the 65th anniversary of the erection of the well-known Marian Grotto at the entrance to Gurteen village. A large number of residents turn out for the celebration, led by Parish Priest, Fr. Stephen Farragher, while the Rosary was recited from the newer Grotto (beside Bernie and Mary Freyne's, built in 1964) at the end of August... Farmers from many parts of the local region stage a peaceful round the clock blockade at Dawn Meats on Clare Road to protest about the poor prices being offered to farmers for their produce. The protest has gone on for some six weeks in all. There are similar blockades at other meat processing plants throughout the country in the hope of obtaining a reasonable and satisfactory price for their animals.

## SEPTEMBER:

Main Street native John Byrne, brother of Val (Kilkenny) and Mike (Tuam), dies in England... New pharmacy opens for business on Upper Main Street. The new outlet, HealthWest Community Pharmacy, is owned by Castlebar man Ultan Molloy, who also operates HealthWest Pharmacy in Ballindine... Also on medical matters, Donegal native, Dr. Glen Lecky, who has been part of the medical practice at Annagh Medical Centre for a number of years, moves to Abbey Street where he launches his new premises at the former Ulster Bank building, now to be known as The Old Bank Medical Centre... The late Bridget Lyons (formerly Freeley of Knockbrack) is laid to rest in Birmingham, England... Upper Main Street native Kieran Folliard is the subject



Jeff and Mary Nolan, the new owners of SuperValu, Ballyhaunis.



of a wide-ranging interview on Newstalk, in a programme broadcast from his adopted home of Minneapolis, USA. The show, presented by Jess Kelly, introduces the US entrepreneur as 'The most famous Mayo man in Minneapolis'... A milestone day for the retail sector in Ballyhaunis this month when the Ryan family retire from their retail operation, SuperValu, when the business is acquired by husband and wife team, Jeff and Mary Nolan. Jeff, a native of Dublin, while wife Mary hails from Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The late Paddy and Josie Ryan opened what was the first supermarket in Ballyhaunis in 1967, known then as Ryan's V.G. Supermarket. Brothers Willie and Pat Ryan took over management of the store in recent years and continued to run the business with great efficiency and success... The long running protest by farmers outside the entrance of Dawn Meats comes to an end, as farmers are offered a deal, which, it is hoped, will benefit livestock suppliers in the future... As pupils return to the classroom for another year of study, two Ballyhaunis men who will not be returning are Tommy Prenty, Knock Road and Tommy Caulfield, Annagh. The two Tommys have retired from teaching after many years of dedicated service: Tommy Prenty from Gorthaganny National School and Tommy Caulfield, from the teaching staff at St. Louis Community School in Kiltimagh. We wish Messrs. Prenty and Caulfield well in their retirement... Bishop Michael J. Cleary, C.S.Sp. celebrates the 75th anniversary of religious profession. Born in Cussolough, Tulrahan in 1925, he was ordained in 1952, and was Bishop of Banjul (in Gambia, Africa) from 1981 to 2006.

## OCTOBER:

Great sadness throughout Ballyhaunis as news trickles through of the untimely death of James Waldron in Milan, Italy. James, an internationally-renowned fashion designer, is son of Mary and the late Noel Waldron, Devlis... Ballyhaunis native, Nathan Murphy, scoops two awards in the IMRO 2019 Radio Awards, when his hugely popular sports show, *Off The Ball*, on Newstalk, wins Sports Show of the Year, while Nathan himself is awarded the coveted Broadcaster of the Year award, at the Dublin ceremony. Nathan is son of Micheál and Dolores (née Halpin) Murphy, Galway, formerly of



Members of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns committee with volunteers were joined on the 'Good Friday clean-up' this year by local GAA stalwarts Erin Murray and Keith Higgins.

Annagh... Great celebrations in GAA circles in town as Ballyhaunis footballers defeat Burrishoole in the County Intermediate Semi-final, winning by 3-11 to 2-6... Holywell native Tom Grogan is feted in a very special way in his adopted home of Manchester, for holding the distinction of Great Britain's longest serving publican. Tom, a former pupil of Ballyhaunis National School, emigrated to England in 1952, and having been landlord in a number of taverns in south Manchester, opened his own pub, The Albert, in Withington, over 34 years ago. To mark this special occasion, Showcase Television, Manchester, did a special programme on Tom's record breaking achievement on 10th October... Former Ballyhaunis Community School teacher Áine Whelan of Holywell dies after a very brief illness. Áine is laid to rest in her native Tourmakeady... The deaths also occur this month of Philomena Ryan, Brackloon East and Chris Gaffney-Nolan, Ballyhaunis... Ballyhaunis played The Neale in the County Intermediate Final on Saturday, October 19th in MacHale Park, Castlebar. In a close and exciting contest, Ballyhaunis' magnificent run in this year's championship ended in heartbreak when they were beaten by a single point.



Nathan Murphy, double IMRO 2019 Radio Awards winner.

# A Cribbin Family Reunion 2019

John McNicholas



The only photograph of John and Nora Cribbin and their family, taken around 1915.  
Back, L-R: Austin, Jack, Maggie Jane, Mick and Tommy. Middle row: Tony (far left) and Mark (far right).  
Front: Nora, David, Nora (mother), Denis, John (father), Peter and Philip.

If you Google the date August 28th, 1889 you will find that nothing of historical note is recorded as happening anywhere around the world on that day. However, for members of the extended Cribbin (Drimbane) family the date holds particular significance. For it was on that date that a young Ballyhaunis boot-maker, John Cribbin, a son of Thomas Cribbin from Lecarrow, went to the local Parish Church to join in matrimony with his young bride Honoria (Nora) Waldron, daughter of James, and the elder sister of Philip Waldron the noted Irish Scholar from nearby Drimbane village. After the wedding the couple first lived in Abbey Street (the end house next to Trena's) where John ran his own boot-making business until it went out of business some years later. They and their family - the six first-born children - then moved to Drimbane (the property now owned by their grandson Seamus Cribbin and his wife Angela). It was here that John and Nora reared their twelve children.

In the years and decades that followed several of the male members of the family were best known around the Ballyhaunis area as employees of the local Post Office. The father, John, and several of his sons - Austin (Tooraree), Tommy (Bushisland), Jack (Ballinlough, later

Galway), Michael (Drimbane), and Philip (later Longford) - worked in the Post Office as Postal Workers. The other sons - Tony (U.S.A.), David (Manchester), Peter (U.S.A.), Mark (Dublin), Denis (Pattenspark) - and daughters Nora (O'Boyle) (Carrowrea) and Maggie Jane (Geraghty) (Tuam) - moved away from home to take up other employment, and with two exceptions (Mark and Denis were bachelors), start up their own families.

With a twenty-two year age difference between eldest and youngest in the family some of the older siblings had moved on from home before the youngest were born. As a result some may not have known members of their own family. It was certainly true that many grandchildren of John and Nora, of which there were over forty, did not know one another, and in all probability never had met. If the grandchildren hadn't met, the vast majority of the great-grandchildren and beyond certainly didn't.

That is where modern communications came to our aid. A great-grandson of John and Nora, one Graham Cribbin, who is based in England, got an idea about three years ago to set up a Facebook group to reach out to direct descendants of his Cribbin great-grandparents.



Within a very short time of the Facebook page being set up over 150 people, from Ireland, U.S.A., Britain, Canada, Australia and further afield had applied to be members. There followed lots of sharing of items of family interest i.e. copies of old birth and marriage certificates, newspaper articles, photographs, internet records, stories etc., all of which served to bring relatives closer together. So much so that some made direct contact and have visited new found relations in other countries.

It was during one of these visits to Melbourne in 2017 that the idea of holding a family reunion was first mooted. Anne Nolan, a granddaughter of Jack, threw out the suggestion while Mark, son of Philip was on holiday in Australia. He agreed to take on the task of organising a reunion for May 2019 so as to give people time to arrange their travel to Ireland, some for the first time.

Having consulted with other members of the extended family Mark decided that any reunion would have to take place within the county of Mayo. Contact was made with various hotels before Breaffy House Hotel was agreed as the venue for the May Bank Holiday weekend 2019.

Once the date and venue had been agreed the next item on the agenda was ensuring that every descendent of John and Nora was made aware of the event. One person from each line of the family was given the task of co-ordinating re-union bookings within their own family group. They also took on the task of assisting Imelda Cribbin (Melbourne, Australia) who compiled a family tree listing all those born in the extended family from the original wedding day in August 1889 to the most recent birth – a great-great-grandson who was born a couple of days before the re-union. Over 600 names are included and, in chart form, the document



Cribbin cousins. L-R: Terry Cribbin (Manchester/Bushisland), his sister Christina Cribbin Rosenthal (California, U.S.A.), their first cousin Billy Cribbin (Longford) and Terry's wife Jean.

stretched over twelve metres on the wall of the hotel function room. It is intended to issue the family tree in book form when final checking is complete later in the year.

And so, with many hours of preparatory work done, the big weekend arrived. Thankfully, it was one of those weekends when the weather was glorious and Mayo was seen at its best. The hotel on the Saturday evening was a hive of excitement as distant cousins met and traced the family connection. A huge help in this were the excellent identification badges worn by each participant showing their own name and their Cribbin lineage back to John and Nora Cribbin. The buzz around the hotel on the Saturday was amazing as new found family members met and got to know one another.

On Sunday morning a bus tour took place where visits were made to Ballyhaunis town including the original family residence in Abbey St., the Post Office, the Friary, Lecarrow, the Waldron house in Drimbane, the Coen monument and the local Cemetery where respects were paid at various family graves. Special thanks to Paul Waldron and Kieran Connolly (both distant relations) for acting as tour guides on these visits.

The real highlight of the bus tour, however, was the visit to the old Cribbin family home in Drimbane. What was expected to be a flying visit turned out to be a welcome and interesting stop with many photographs taken and memories made. Seamus, Angela and their family, who have restored the old home to its former glory, threw the house open for all to wander about and see where their direct ancestors had come from. Not only that, but they also very kindly provided refreshments for all. I can state, without fear of contra-



A winter scene in Drimbane. The original Cribbin homestead where several generations of the family have lived.





More Cribbin first cousins. Seated: Maureen Mansfield (Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny), Christina Rosenthal (California, U.S.A.), Nora Hollman (New York), Terry Cribbin (Manchester) and Seamus Cribbin (Drimbane). At back, Mark Cribbin (Leixlip, Co. Kildare).

diction, that the main talking point for the rest of the weekend, especially amongst the overseas visitors, was the wonderful welcome received in Drimbane and how much the experience of visiting the family home and seeing old family memorabilia meant. For those making their first visit to Ireland it was a particularly joyous occasion.

The re-union dinner was the special occasion. 180 Cribbin family members and partners assembled in the



The Cribbin Family coat of arms on a cake made especially for the Reunion.

ballroom of Breaffy House for the meal and a great night of socialising, getting to know people, music and dancing, finishing up with a (very) late night sing-song. It was a marvellous occasion to celebrate a proud 130 year family history. Great credit is due to all involved in making the whole re-union weekend such a resounding success.

Hopefully it won't be 130 years to the next one!

*John McNicholas is son of Agnes Cribbin and grandson of Tommy Cribbin. Email: jamcnicholas96@gmail.com*



**The Cribbin Family visit to family home in Drimbane, 5th May 2019**

Back Row, L-R: Michael Cribbin (U.S.A.), David Connolly, Graham Cribbin (England), Sean McNicholas, John McNicholas, Dermot Brennan, Eamon Cribbin (U.S.A.), Mark Cribbin, John Cribbin (Australia), Mike Cribbin (U.S.A.), Sean Mansfield, Brian Dempsey, Kevin Halpin (U.S.A.), Joseph Fahy (U.S.A.), Chris Chesney (U.S.A.), Larry Shields (U.S.A.), Ciaran Connolly, Steve Nolan (Australia), Jeanne Cribbin (England) and Mia Arce Worzella (U.S.A.) (kneeling). Middle Row, L-R: Seamus Cribbin Jr., Dearbhaile Cribbin, Eileen Cribbin, Maureen Cribbin (U.S.A.), Corrine Cribbin (Australia), Elizabeth Nolan (Australia), Erin Zagar (Canada), Anne Nolan (Australia), Shelly Cribbin (Canada), Imelda Cribbin (Australia), Danielle Rosenthal (U.S.A.), Jordan Rosenthal (U.S.A.), Maureen Mansfield, Mary Cribbin, Maria Connolly, Vivian Cribbin (U.S.A.), Christina Twardas (U.S.A.), Angela Cribbin, Susan Shields (U.S.A.), Mairéad Davis, Maureen Robinson (U.S.A.). Front Row, L-R: Simon Kay (Australia), Teresa Dempsey, Ramy Rosenthal (U.S.A.), Christina Rosenthal (U.S.A.), Angela McManus, Nora Meave Hollman (U.S.A.), Terry Cribbin (England) and Seamus Cribbin. Children in Front: Shay, Ryan and Eoin McManus.



# A Great Year for the Grogans

Eileen Lynch

It has been a year of milestone celebrations for the Grogan family, originally from Holywell. In July of this year Mary Austin (nee Grogan), celebrated her 90th Birthday, while her brother Tom became the UK's longest serving landlord, racking up an impressive sixty years behind the bar.

Like many of their Ballyhaunis compatriots, Mary and Tom emigrated from their family home. Mary left for New York on 16th November 1947, and it took her ten days to make the journey. Then, on 15th July 1952, the time came for Tom to swap Mayo for Manchester.

Tom is one of Ballyhaunis' most famous sons in Manchester, starting his career as a publican on the 1st December 1959 in *The Crown* in Rusholme. From there he moved to *The Strawberry Gardens*, then onto *The Little Alex* in Moss Side in 1965. Tom spent several years there before moving to *The English Martyrs Parish Centre* in Whalley Range and from there he purchased *The Albert*



Holywell native Tom Grogan, keeping the customers satisfied at his popular tavern, *The Albert*, in Withington, Manchester, earlier this year.

in Withington, thirty-four years ago. To this day it remains a very popular local for the Irish diaspora, meaning he never lost touch with friends and family, or with the news from home.

Over the years both siblings, along with their families, have made the journey back to visit the house built by their parents, John and Lizzie, in the 1920s, which is still home to the youngest sister, Anne Lynch. In return, Tom has welcomed his nephew Tommie, and great nephews and nieces over to Manchester to teach them how to pull the perfect Pint!

A recent tribute on Showcase TV, 'Irish in the UK', acknowledged the achievement of Tom becoming the UK's longest serving pub landlord, as well as his upcoming 89th birthday in January 2020.

All Tom's family and friends from Ireland, New York and the UK wish him continuing health and happiness, pulling the perfect pint for many more years to come.



Mary Austin and her brother Tom Grogan.



Society of  
St Vincent de Paul

Our Society was founded in Paris in 1833 to help the less well off. We in Ballyhaunis try to continue this work in our small way. We help people who are in financial difficulties due to reduced income, unemployment, sickness or mounting debt in a sensitive and confidential manner.

## St. Vincent de Paul Society

We note that people are especially generous towards our local charity and we thank all who support us financially through our Church gate collection, donations and fundraising activities. A special word of thanks to Gracenotes, Annagh Wheelers and the schools who fundraise for us. Thanks also to the staff of the Friary House for their assistance.

**Our confidential helpline number is 086 264 0969.**

# A Lifelong Passion for Music

Marian Waldron

The Waldron homestead in Derrymore, Ballyhaunis, where my father and his seven siblings were born, is steeped in family history dating back hundreds of years. My father's family, consisting of three sons and five daughters, together with their parents Packie and Maggie (as they were fondly known), lived, as did most Irish families of their time, in a two bedroom cottage.

My father left school at the tender age of twelve to work for the County Council to bring much needed money into the family home. He left rural Ireland for England when he was seventeen years, arriving in the big city of London. He eventually worked his way around England and settled in Manchester where he met and married my mother who comes from Lahardane, Co. Mayo. They had myself and my three brothers and built a life for us, affording us opportunities they could have only have dreamed of from their own beginnings. They never forgot their roots, nor the family left behind them, and always took care of our grandparents ensuring they had the best in life.

My uncle Pete went to New York to join his three sisters that went before him. My father's younger brother Walter and two other sisters joined him eventually where he put down his roots in Manchester. Sadly, just my father, my two uncles Pete and Walter and aunt Nora (Florida and New York,

U.S.A.) are now the only remaining family members.

For the first time in many years, the three Waldron sons came altogether and visited the old homestead this past summer, 2019. It was a poignant visit and one we will come to cherish in years to come, grateful of the memories of them being together again in their childhood home.

My parents refurbished the old family house several years ago and restored it to its former glory, externally. It was featured in the Annagh Magazine at the time, with a great piece of history about our family which was big

news to myself and my cousins in the UK and U.S.A. We learnt a lot through the article! Going inside the house is like stepping back in time and it's hard to imagine how such a large family even fitted in the house! But, those were the times and like many, many Irish families everyone was in the same boat. Once a busy village full of houses and people, it is the only original building left of its time now in Derrymore.



Marian Waldron's second album 'The Next Chapter'.

## Music Career

When deciding to finally take the plunge to join the ranks of the professional singing world,

I wanted my very first release to be for my parents. I recorded my version of "Isle of Hope" and filmed the video for the song along two-hundred miles of the County Mayo coastline. The song itself is about the very first person to enter New York through Ellis Island (where millions of immigrants – from Ireland and all over the world – subsequently passed through in their journey to the New World): an Irish girl named Annie Moore, who arrived from Cork and was then only fifteen years of age. It is a hugely emotive song that tells the story of our parents and generations before them; of the heartbreak of leaving home, of the many who would never see the shores of Ireland again. The video features the family home-place in Derrymore, where my father was born, and also the village where my mother grew up – in essence my beginning. Whilst I have released a number of songs, this is still my favourite and my favourite video. It always tugs at the heartstrings and every audience, whether Irish or not, can connect with the song.

I released my debut album in March 2017, without



The Waldron brothers outside the old family home in Derrymore, during a recent visit home.  
L-R: Pete, Walter and Austin.



The Waldron brothers in the kitchen of their old family home. L-R: Austin, Pete and Walter.



Marian Waldron with Michael Commings of Midwest Radio.

expectation as it was a personal ambition and had been long in the planning. It was with ease I settled on my choice of songs as they are all childhood favourites. My musical tastes are heavily influenced from the long car journeys we had from Manchester to Mayo every Christmas, Easter, summer, and often in between! From listening to Larry Cunningham, Brendan Shine, Margo, Kevin Prendergast, Frank McCaffrey to name a few, Irish Country Music was in the blood. Many was the night we enjoyed the late night sing-songs in my mother's home place, when the accordion was inevitably brought out and the singing would go on late into the night, usually started by my father! Whether the singing came from the Waldron or Murphy side is questionable but, either way,

it has been a life-long passion and embarking on a recording career is something I am overjoyed to have realised.

My passion for music and singing took me into the world of TV and radio and singing in various bands over the last twenty-five years. Also, working on various Irish and Country radio shows down through the years and latterly with Irish TV as a presenter. More recently, over the past two years, I have been performing in New York, Ireland and around the UK.

Having enjoyed chart success in the past two years with several of my singles and with the huge support of Ballyhaunis based Mid-West Radio (and many others) and my Irish PR Noelle Keegan, I am now, this autumn, releasing my second album, "The Next Chapter". I had the opportunity of co-writing two of the tracks on the album, one about my mother (and for all Irish mothers) called "My Irish Mother". Once again the video was filmed in Mayo. Also this year I had the huge honour of presenting my own SKY TV show, "Country Favourites With Marian", which recently finished its second series. I thoroughly enjoyed the show. It was a brand new experience for me and, on the back of its success, I am delighted to be given a third series which we will be filming towards the end of 2019.

It goes to show it really is never too late to dream that dream! Only for Austin Waldron of Derrymore had his dream all those years ago I sure wouldn't be living mine. I am honoured to have been asked to write this piece for the Annagh Magazine and represent my father who is a Patron. [www.marianwaldronmusic.co.uk](http://www.marianwaldronmusic.co.uk)

# A Moment in Time

Pat (Gerry) Culliney



The Square, Ballyhaunis on a Market Day in 1981.

I recently learned that a friend, a good friend, Tom Cribbin, had passed away. Tom was one of the last of the 'cattle dealers' of Ballyhaunis who were in their heyday during the '50s. Making a living in Ireland was tough then, and even tougher in the West of Ireland. What follows are the memories and perceptions of these men through the eyes of a twelve year old in 1955 and put on paper over sixty years later.

But first, a word about Dawn Meats and its origins. Conceived and built by Mickey Webb from Limerick, I remember the day it was dedicated. Among the speakers was the late Bill Mulligan, the Principal of the Boys' School at that time. Yes, I worked there one summer for a whole ten shillings a week. While there were regular full-time workers, it was common to see Eamon Phillips and Dinjo helping out when Mickey needed them. Mickey had two sons, Mickey Jr. and Sean, both of whom passed away as young men. The facility was later purchased by Halal and is now owned by Dawn Meats.

The men in the cattle business of Ballyhaunis were men of character and honesty with a few 'characters' mixed in. A brief profile on them remain in my memory. The Cribbin family, Jack and Tony, following by the next generation, Paddy Joe, John and Tom. Eddie and Shamie Webb who purchased cattle and sheep for the Castlebar Meat Factory. Others included Sean and Thomas Anthony Tighe, Jerry Duffy, the Hession Brothers, Jack and P.J. Moran and Arthur Prenty. Some were involved in the calf trade, selling to the farmers on both fair days and market days in the various towns and villages

around the West of Ireland.

Jack Culliney, my father, 'backed' into the business during the war years. Having left England prior to the outbreak of World War II, he started a taxi business in town. Much of his revenue came from the cattle dealers engaging him to drive to the various fairs. As the taxi business waned in the early '50s, Dad bought a cattle truck to transport for various dealers. He also purchased a small farm in Cloontumper where he stocked cattle and, as they say, the rest is history.

Yes, there were others whose names escape me now. However, the people spoken of were a good cross section of cattle dealers in the west of Ireland. To repeat: strong men of character and hard workers.

## Fairs

Cattle fairs were early morning events and could go on for most of the day. Galway farmers were the earliest with the fair starting at 4 am, over by 8 am. The fairgrounds in Galway City were where the bus terminal is today. Fairs in Gort and Headford were always long days as many hours and deals were struck in the pubs. Glynn's Hotel in Gort was a busy place on fair days. The Mayo farmers were more 'civilized' when it came to the starting time. Ballinrobe, Claremorris, Kiltimagh and Ballyhaunis fair days began around 7 am, but still, long days with later deals settled over a pint of Guinness.

Ballyhaunis Fair Green was across from the Parish Church. The favourite pubs for deals were Paddy Phillips' (always called 'the Cape') and Annie Freeley's



across the street. My brother, Noel, helped at Paddy's, serving Guinness to the customers. Freeley's yard was a holding pen for cattle while the owners transacted their business. There would be a nominal fee for this service. Freeley's is now the Dalgan Restaurant. We also have memories of live cattle loading at the rail station, primarily for shipment to Dublin or perhaps England.

To say there was a skill to buying and selling animals at Irish Fairs – well, that would be an understatement. Today, it would be a great place for marketing/sales folk to learn 'the art of the deal'. In simple terms, it was the skill of getting the other party into a position to close, and then work it so nothing was left on the table. I was lucky enough to observe this and coached on how to do it. Even with all my later education in chemical sales and marketing, I have used many of these early learnt techniques in my career. It is important to remember those men had little formal education, but were absolute 'pros' in the art of negotiating.



*Jack Culliney with grandchildren check the cattle, 1981.*

changed. My guess is, fewer people involved, higher risk and a lot more paperwork. As part of the EU, Ireland must comply with their rules. Brexit and the devaluation of the pound are depressants on pricing. The uncertainty of the UK market and the threat of South American beef imports into the EU add to the concern. The small twenty to forty acre farms of my youth are obviously not economical and much consolidation is taking place.

Over the years, I have lived in New York, Atlanta, Cleveland, Chicago and Tucson. Today we reside in Prescott, Arizona and, yes, it is cattle country. Many mornings while walking my dogs, I tip my cap to the Texas Longhorns staring through the fence and remember...

The physical changes in Ballyhaunis are obvious with some new names over the doors and, unfortunately, some businesses closed. It is the 'invisible' changes that are equally important to acknowledge. I picked 1955 as that one moment in time because that was the year I first left Ballyhaunis. I am lucky that I was able to return frequently to see my parents and family. My sister, Noreen, still lives in our home, my brother John and his family live in Dublin. Most changes have been positive but many of the traditions of the past have been lost. However, those traditions, as part of the town's history, should be remembered. So it is with the Ballyhaunis cattle dealers of the '50s because they were the town's 'band of brothers' in their day and I was fortunate to be among them and share that life.

*Pat Culliney is a native of Upper Main Street and currently lives in Prescott Valley, Arizona, U.S.A.*



*Sean and Erin Culliney, the author's children, make a friend at the Square, on a Market Day in 1981.*

## **Lucks Penny**

One tradition of the cattle fair was what they called the 'luck's penny' – a token sum of money given back to the buyer when cash was paid for the animals. The seller might give the buyer one shilling, two shillings or a half crown for 'luck'. There were those, few in number, that would actually give one penny 'luck's' money and this, many times, would be cause for an argument, subject to further negotiation. During these times, 'cash was king', and one could observe many cattle dealers carrying a large roll of notes (remember, Irish bank notes were not small!).

As with most things in Life, the cattle business has

# A Short Forty Years – Tuohy Cup Memories

Tom Caulfield

Mike Webb was in disbelief when he was reminded that 2019 marks the fortieth anniversary of Ballyhaunis FC's first Tuohy Cup success. Mike captained that team which contained the perfect blend of exuberant teenagers and wily old campaigners. The Webb family is synonymous with Ballyhaunis and Mayo GAA, and Mike went on to serve as a very successful chairman of the Ballyhaunis GAA 2010-2015. Many readers of Annagh Magazine might be surprised to learn that he played quite a bit of soccer with the local side back the 70s.

The infamous 'Ban' had just been lifted and quite a few Ballyhaunis players availed of the opportunity to express themselves in both codes. Indeed Mike remembers many an occasion when he and some of his team mates played a full Gaelic football match in the morning before rushing away for ninety minutes of soccer in the afternoon.

Mike recalls the day back in 1979 when Ballyhaunis defeated Crusaders of Westport comprehensively on a score line of 3-0 to become Mayo Soccer champions. Mike himself scored on the day, the two other golden goals coming from Clar Grogan and Adrian Moran. Crusaders were hot favourites to lift the cup but Mike motivated his team with a story he heard from team mate and Westport native Jimmy Ring. Jimmy told Mike that Westport had the victory celebrations planned and that the champagne was already on ice! When Mike returned home with the cup that evening, his dad Eddie, a GAA stalwart, was not overly impressed and told Mike it would be more in his line to bring home the Moclair Cup!

Mike explained that the majority of players at the time lived within a stone's throw of the Square. They played mostly for fun and it's a testament to their natural skill that they achieved so much success at the highest level of

**Members of the Tuohy Cup winning Ballyhaunis team, 1979, pictured earlier this year at the Square in Ballyhaunis.**

**Mike Webb (left) holds a framed photograph of the Mayo Soccer champions, while Eugene Collum displays one of the trophies presented on that occasion forty years ago.**



soccer in Mayo in the 70s. There was great camaraderie among the players and great evenings enjoyed celebrating many victories. The friendships forged on the field have lasted a lifetime. Sadly, the youngest member of the team and a very talented soccer player, Jeremy Dee, passed away a few years ago following a road accident. The team was managed by Donegal native Eugene Collum who came to work at the Smithwicks Depot in the early 70s. He had just hung up his playing boots and taken over as boss from club founder, the late Alf Hudson.

Well done continued good health to Mike and his team mates and all involved in the historic victory forty years ago.



**Ballyhaunis Soccer Team – Tuohy Cup winners 1979**

Back, L-R: Eugene Collum (Manager), Tommy Caulfield, Teddy Webb, Tommy Moran, Luke Murray, Jeremy Dee, Clar Grogan, Eamonn Murren (Chairman), Jimmy Fleming. Front, L-R: Pat Freeley, Ray Folliard, Adrian Moran, Michael Webb (Capt.), Tom Fitzgerald, Jimmy Ring, Ivan Freeley.



# Ballyhaunis Men's Shed Association

Ballyhaunis Men's Shed is a non-for-profit organisation located in the Friary Grounds. The aim of the shed is to provide a meeting place for men who want to engage in projects to maintain and enhance the local community.

From humble beginnings the Shed has grown with regularly daily attendances. New projects and ideas are currently afoot to assist the town community and local organisations in any way possible. Some of the projects to date have included painting and repairs on communal town facilities. Other examples of ongoing projects include designing and making of picnic benches, flower planters, bee hives, bird and bat boxes and other timber made products.

The Ballyhaunis Men's Shed is always open to new ideas and projects and would be only delighted to assist in the design and making of such items. The Men's Shed is home to any male over the age of eighteen who wishes to enjoy a cuppa, have a chat and maybe reveal a hidden skill or talent to inform and teach its members.

The Shed is open Monday to Friday 10am until 2pm and is always looking for volunteers and people to donate tools and timber for their next big project in 2020.



Ballyhaunis Men's Shed.

If you would like to become a member, have some tools or furniture to donate, then further details are available from the Men's Shed at 087 9327317 or 087 2176401.

Over the last year the Group has purchased some new equipment thanks to the financial support of Mayo County Council and Michael Ring TD. We have made and sold garden benches, bird boxes, prepared bags of kindling and carried out furniture restoration.

**Officers 2019/2020:** *Chairperson* - Jim Goulding; *Treasurer* - Aiden Gaughan; *Secretary* - Stephen Grogan. Follow Ballyhaunis Men's Shed Association on Facebook.

*Below: The Men's Shed undertakes many work projects.*







## Easter Parade 2019

Photos by Fr Stephen Farragher & John Kilduff









# Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce

Tom Forde

Once again it is my great privilege to give you a brief summary of our Chamber of Commerce activities for the year 2019. If I may thank the Chamber team of Anne Cunnane CEO and all the Chamber Executive Committee, the office staff at the Enterprise Centre, and chamber members for all their voluntary support with the various activities, and indeed all the different committee members for their time organising various events throughout the year for the benefit of the Ballyhaunis Community.

Towards the end of last year, we saw the near completion of the Square refurbishment. With just a few more minor adjustments this will complete this phase of the project. I'd like to thank Mayo County Council, Cllr. John Cribbin, our other local councillors and Minister Ring for their support. It is also credit to them that funding has also been secured for the continuation of footpath to the GAA pitch. Most recently we also have been successful in our application to Clár for funding to develop proper lighting and a safe walking area along the bypass. Our long-term objective is to have secure, smarter travel (road markings etc.) continued from the GAA grounds to the Centre of Excellence and maybe on to Knock. This initiative would not just benefit the Ballyhaunis community but the whole region.

## **Derelict premises**

The Old Convent School is a project that we have also been actively working on with Mayo County Council for the past year. Our proposal is to extend the library facilities with high speed broadband access, and also have space for some local clubs that have no permanent home. This would be the first phase of developing this derelict site in the centre of the town for the benefit of the whole community. As the property is in the care of Mayo County Council, and the site is ideal for development, there should be no planning issues. We have submitted our proposal for funding and are hopeful of a successful outcome.

This year also has seen Ballyhaunis Chamber finally get access to another derelict property on Upper Main Street – the former D.H. Burke's premises. The property, which is owned by Mayo County Council, has been left vacant for some time now. You may have seen some of our local artists display here over the recent Heritage Week and Cultural Weekend events in Ballyhaunis. Our plan is to use this space to promote all things from the Ballyhaunis area, with displays from local artists and enterprises as well as information on all the local clubs and activities. This 'one-stop' information centre will be manned to provide locals and visitors with any



information needed about Ballyhaunis and its activities. The Court house has also had a lot of interest generated but nothing has been decided about this site at the present moment.

## **Christmas Lights**

As a Chamber we are actively involved in all events in Ballyhaunis including the Easter Parade, Mayo Day, Summer Festival, Christmas Lights, Culture Night and Heritage Week. With our CEO Anne Cunnane we work closely with other organisations like the Abbey Partnership, Ballyhaunis Community Council, the Swimming Pool committee, Ballyhaunis GAA, to name just a few. We actively engage in all events to promote Ballyhaunis for the best interests of not just the business community but the whole community.

I would like to thank Paddy Phillips, Kieran Jennings (electrician), Enda Caulfield, Padraic Murphy, Anne Cunnane and the team of volunteers for their tireless efforts on ensuring Ballyhaunis Christmas Lights are lit up for the Christmas period. This is by no means an easy task due to the delicate nature of the lighting and the constant battle with the elements. I'm sure you'll all agree that they are fabulous. Also, I would like to sincerely thank Cllr. John Cribbin and Mayo County Council for their support in this effort. On saying this our annual fundraising draw 'Light Up Ballyhaunis for Christmas' will again take place with tickets being sold in local outlets. Again this year there are some fabulous prizes. 'Thank you' to all who contributed and to the business community for their continued support of the Christmas Lights.

## **Festival**

Ballyhaunis Summer Festival took in a full week of activities with all the old favourites: the Inter-pub Quiz, Family Fun Day with Mayo Sports Partnership and the Traditional Fair day (unfortunately, hindered by the weather this year). Added to this was Ballyhaunis Open Photographic Exhibition, Car Treasure Hunt, Table Tennis Tournament, Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club, 5k Run and the inaugural Ballyhaunis 10 Miler, Ballyhaunis Fit4life, Joe Gilmore Film Night, Fun Table Quiz, Ballyhaunis LGFA, Language Coffee Corner and the season opening of Ballyhaunis Swimming Pool. Thanks to all who sponsored, organised and looked after events during the festival as without this help and support the events couldn't possibly proceed.

## **Junior Chamber**

This year also sees the formation of our Ballyhaunis Community School Junior Chamber. With the help of



the transition year students from the Community School and their mentor Bernie Osgood Daly, they have been very active helping particularly with Heritage Week and Culture Night activities. It's great to have their enthusiasm, and their contribution has been so beneficial to the community. We thank you all for all your hard work.

### Integration

Some weeks ago a special seminar on Integration and Inclusion took place in The Centre of Excellence. It was attended by government officials from the Department of Justice and the Department of Rural and Community Development. Ballyhaunis was been chosen because of its diverse cultural population, and because of its many years' experience in welcoming people from many different nationalities. A survey was distributed to a broad sector of the population to get all views on life here in Ballyhaunis and the results are being analysed and discussed with government officials and different agencies to see what needs and facilities are required for Ballyhaunis. It was a great opportunity for us here and a lot of hard work was put in by a dedicated committee in preparation for this event. One good thing that has come from this so far is that, although we were all familiar with meeting each other on a daily basis, there was never a forum where representatives from all the different cultures came together to share their experiences of Ballyhaunis. This seminar gave us this opportunity and the Ballyhaunis Chamber was proud to be one of the local organisations actively involved.

### Ideal location

We are very lucky in Ballyhaunis. We have a great town with a lot of successful local industries and exceptional employment for a town of its size. The schools in Ballyhaunis and its hinterland are also exceptional. With our geographical location – at the centre of Connacht – with pretty good road infrastructure and our proximity to Ireland West Airport, we have a lot of advantages. Rather than it being a disadvantage to be distant from the bigger urban areas such as Westport, Ballina, Castlebar, Sligo, Galway, Athlone, it is an advantage for somebody working in these areas to look at Ballyhaunis with all its wonderful clubs and facilities and with the cost of housing much more reasonable than the more congested urban areas. As a Chamber, we constantly lobby businesses to invest in Ballyhaunis and try to actively promote all the advantages that Ballyhaunis has as a potential business destination.

As you see from the foregoing a lot of hard work has been carried out quietly over the past year. I'd again like to thank everybody involved for all their hard work. The Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce works tirelessly to promote all things Ballyhaunis for the benefit of not just the business community but the entire community. We welcome everyone – not just businesses – as members. If you are interested in getting involved locally please contact the Chamber at the Enterprise Centre.

On behalf of the Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. May you and your families have a safe New Year.

### 'Handover Day', 16th September 1995, Central Hotel



Next year (2020) marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the hand-over of the site in Hazelhill where the Enterprise Centre now stands. Pictured are Pat O'Neill (CEO, Avonmore Foods plc.) carrying out the official hand-over of the 4.5 acre site to Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce and representatives of its development branch, BRCIE (Ballyhaunis Regional Community Innovation and Enterprise), on Saturday, 16th September 1995. L-R: Peter Cunnane (Chairman, BRCIE), Pat O'Neill (CEO Avonmore plc), Tim Shanley (Treasurer, Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce), Bernie Jordan (Secretary, Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce), Des Mahon (Mayo County Manager), John Durkan (President, Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce). More details on this historic occasion and the events leading up to it can be found in the report from Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce in *Annagh 1995*, pages 12-13.





Padraic Phillips and Michael McNamara



Patsy McCormack & Tom Regan



Teresa Grogan  
Frances Ó Raighne  
and her daughter



Seamus O'Hora & Jarlath Fahey

## Fair Day, June 2019

Photos by Fr Stephen Farragher



Justina Lyons &  
Mary T Griffin



Michael Henry, Hugh & Mary Rudden

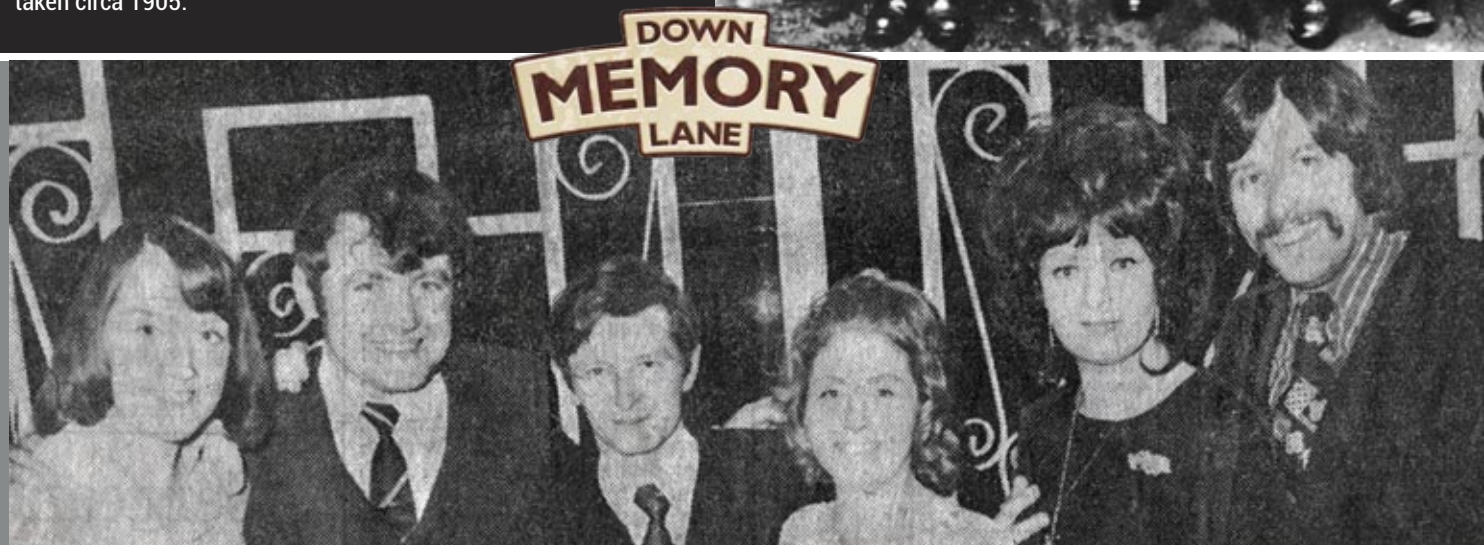




*Above:* Hannons of Abbey Street operated one of a number of Ballyhaunis-based travelling shops that served the community within a large radius of the town. Peter Hannon is pictured here on his circuit of the Logboy district with Mrs. Alice McGuire, Carrickacat.



*Right:* Patrick and Honoria Byrne (nee Mulligan) with their four sons. The Byrnes lived on Bridge St. and had a shop and public house where Nicholson's is now. Eddie Byrne was father of Rita Byrne Webb. Standing, L-R: Michael, John Francis and Honoria (mother). Seated, L-R: Eddie, Patrick (father) and James 'Brodie'. This photograph was taken circa 1905.



*Above:* Among the attendance at the Ballyhaunis GAA Club Dinner Dance 1972 in Claremorris were: Mary Nally, Vincent Freyne, Hugh Curley, Rosaleen Curley, Veronica Freyne and Gerry Coyle. Published in *The Irish Independent*, 28th Dec. 1972.

*Below:* Pictured at the Parish Dinner in the Starland Ballroom, Ballyhaunis, January 1970. Seamus Durkan, Sheila Forde, John Forde, Rosaleen Curley, Hugh Curley, Johnny Biesty. Published in *The Connaught Telegraph*.





# A Truly Remarkable Turn of Events

Tom Caulfield

Bernard Waldron of Cave is a member of a family closely linked with the development of the GAA since its foundation. Through a lifetime of commitment to the organisation, Bernard and his brothers Sean, Tommy and the late Michael (The Minister) have been deeply involved with the fortunes of Ballyhaunis and Mayo GAA as well as Roger Casement's GAA in Coventry. It will be no surprise to learn that Bernard was among the thousands of Mayo fans who made their way to New York at the beginning of May to cheer on the Mayo team in their opening fixture of the 2019 championship campaign.

Bernard Waldron is no stranger to New York: he helped to organise Ballyhaunis GAA club's historic second trip to the States back in 2001 and has attended all of Mayo's four fixtures in the Big Apple since New York first competed in the Connacht Senior Football Championship in 1999. Bernard feels that this most recent trip was by far the best. Ballyhaunis native Helen Moran of O'Donoghue's Pub in Manhattan had gone above and beyond the call of duty to make all the Mayo visitors feel at home. On the Saturday thousands of Mayo fans descended on Times Square for an impromptu sing-song. Locals and other tourists and members of the NYPD joined in as they belted out a selection of Mayo anthems such as *Moonlight in Mayo*, *The Green and Red of Mayo*, *The Boys from the County Mayo* and many more. On Sunday the Mayo team had a convincing win over their hosts in Gaelic Park in the Bronx and the weekend was going to plan.

But nothing could have prepared Bernard and his two travelling companions John Devaney of Coogue and Sean Tighe of Kilkelly for the maelstrom of celebrity status that was about to be unleashed as a result of a chance meeting in Times Square with a young New York lady on the day after the game.

Bernard, Sean and John were not due to return to Ireland for another couple of days. Keen to soak up the atmosphere of the city, the group soon came up against a rather significant problem as none of them had a smartphone or camera. That was where New Yorker Christina Boniello enters our story.

## **We'll find it some day**

The 23-year-old was taking a stroll through Times Square when she came across the three lads. Mistaking the red haired young lady for a Mayo fan, Bernard asked Boniello to take their picture, despite the fact she had no way of sending it to them. The trio weren't fazed though, Bernard insisting "We'll find it someday."

A week later Boniello decided to put their faith to the

test. Taking to Twitter she posted the image, explaining how she met the three Mayo men and that she was seeking help in tracking them down.

"When I was in the city last week, these three Irishmen asked me to take a photo of them, but none of them had phones," she tweeted. "You'll take the picture and we'll find it someday", so if by some strange turn of events anyone knows these guys, here's their photo."



The photo that went viral. L-R: Sean Tighe, Bernard Waldron and John Devaney. (Image: Twitter/@CBones705)

It took less than an hour for tweet to go viral, with the image retweeted more than 5,700 times in a short space of time. The three men were soon identified, with Tweeters around the globe banding together to reunite our three amigos with the woman who captured their special moment.

"Most definitely did not expect to be able to ID these guys as quick as everyone did," Christina tweeted. "I'm blown away by the power of social media."

Upon their return to Ireland, Bernard became the spokesman for the celebrity trio and was interviewed by Ray Darcy of RTÉ, Portuguese National News, CNN and Russian State TV. The three were even tempted to appear with Ryan Tubridy on *The Late Late Show* (but couldn't agree on terms!).

When *Annagh Magazine* interviewed Bernard at his home in Cave in September, Bernard had just been in contact with Christina to wish her a very happy twenty fourth birthday..... and there's now talk of the three men being flown back out to the US for an appearance alongside Boniello on *The Ellen Show*. A Truly Remarkable Turn of Events!



# Ballyhaunis Boxing Club

Suzanne Mullarney

The Ballyhaunis Boxing Club is still operating out of Began Community Centre and has been in existence since 2008. It is a family run club with Martin Peake and Sue Mullarney at the helm. We have a fantastic team of coaches in Vinnie Moran and Peter Maughan who give up their time to bring the club to fruition. We are constantly looking to recruit new talent both young and old to add to our growing numbers.

We have had an unbelievable amount of success this past season with four Irish champions taking titles back to Ballyhaunis. Eoghan Lavin, a Swinford native who travels to Ballyhaunis three times a week, took home a Cadet Irish title and was selected as part of the Irish team travelling out. Eoghan was unfortunate enough to bump into the Russian champion early in the competition but was hailed a hero by his coaches for taking on such an experienced boxer at European level.

We had further success in two local lads Peter Maughan and Clayton Nolan who took home Irish titles to a very proud town over the summer. Grace Moran brought home an Irish title after entering in the 80+ category and going unopposed. It was a very proud day for dad Vinnie Moran.

The icing on the cake this season, however, was Gurteen's answer to Katie Taylor - Carlagh Mullarney - who travelled to Tbilisi, Georgia on the Junior Irish team and secured a bronze medal for Ballyhaunis. She is the first female ever to qualify at European level or successfully secure a boxing medal in the history of the old and new Ballyhaunis Boxing Clubs. It was an event that drew unbelievable attention from locals and the media. Ballyhaunis Boxing Club would like to thank our sponsors, our community, our members and in particular our neighbours in Gurteen who gave Carlagh a homecoming to remember.



Top:  
Carlagh Mullarney with  
Dad Martin Peake.

Above left:  
Clayton Nolan.

Above right:  
Peter Maughan.

Left: Gurteen residents  
came out in force to  
welcome home European  
medalist, Carlagh  
Mullarney.

# A Year of Firsts

Martin Fitzmaurice

If only one thing came out of this article, it would be my wish that there was someone out there who had never played sport and had a little inkling there in the back of their heads to give running a go. It was always there in my head, like a lot of other things, but I never acted on it. Even when I did decide to do something for myself, I would never have dreamed of getting to where I am now. Add to that the number of factors that were involved to get me here. Three of us set up a 'Meet and Train' group in Autumn 2011. I can honestly admit I did not know where it would take me. We met once a week to try to get fit, stretching and doing drills, and invited anyone to join us on a Tuesday evening. Since that time we have developed into a steady group of about thirty members who meet regularly and train together in a fun and leisurely environment – now called 'Ballyhaunis Fit4life'.



He did it! Martin Fitzmaurice after successfully completing his first Dublin City Marathon, 27th Oct. 2019, pictured with his family. L-R: Patricia, Martin, Evan and Roisín Fitzmaurice.

## First Ten Mile Road Race for Ballyhaunis

I had been involved in organising an annual race 'Run West – Ballyhaunis 8k' for eleven years. During that period, a lot of people seem to have taken to the roads all over the country and even our own group were doing 8ks comfortably, while some were going that 'extra mile' and training for half and full marathons. So we decided we needed to up our game. After a meeting at the end of March, it was decided we would up the tempo to a ten mile race on the June bank holiday weekend. There is a

lot involved first time round. You have to get approval for the race and dates from Mayo Athletic Club and Athletics Ireland, decide on an appropriate course, get the course professionally measured, apply for a permit and insurance. There were many obstacles, which I won't go into now, but eventually we only got everything in place about a month before the time. During that time we felt it would be good to use the event to raise funds for a worthy cause and this led me to my next first. I got in touch with Cancer Care West in Galway, who were delighted to come on board. From then on, it was all hands on deck and everyone in our Fit4life group knuckled down with sponsorship, promotion, stewarding, distribution of notices along the course, preparing food, etc. The result was a very successful first ten mile road race for the town and a substantial contribution to Cancer Care West. Thanks to all.

## Series of Firsts

It was never really in my plan to take part in a Dublin City Marathon, but everyone in the group kept assuring me that I should, I could and I would, enjoy it, so at last I caved in and registered this year. I was very apprehensive about the whole thing, worried about being able, the time, the training etc., but so many people kept encouraging me that I would be fine as long as I put in the work. I think it was sold out in March and there was a window in June when you could return your ticket and they would make these extra tickets available to people who had not managed to get registered. Up to the last day, I was tempted to take up the offer, but I held out. From then on the support I got from our group was invaluable. I tried to keep a diary of my general preparations. We started training proper on 20th July with the ten mile course which we used for our road race in June. This is a tough course, but most of us completed it and took it nice and easy. From now on the most important aspect of training was one long run every week. We generally tried to get out twice during the week from now on for short runs – Tuesday and Thursday. The group I trained with met every Saturday morning most weeks at 7 am. In the late summer this was fine, but as the winter moved in and it was pitch dark getting out there, it was another test.

A lot of people do a lot of gym work which is very beneficial, but I had a personal agenda to try to do it on my own terms. So, I developed a drill myself involving one dumb-bell and approximately twenty minutes of planks, squats etc. I probably did this an average of three times per week over the three to four months. I aspired to do it every day, but something got in the way a lot of



the time. But anyway, here are some of my firsts over the next few weeks:

- Saturday, 26th July – First 7 am start at the Centre of Excellence
- Thursday, 8th Aug. – First fourteen miles distance – wrecked after it
- Saturday, 31st Aug. – First sixteen miles distance
- Saturday, 7th Sept. – First eighteen miles distance
- Saturday, 28th Sept. – First twenty miles distance – definitely wrecked after it
- Sunday, 6th Oct. – First three-quarter Marathon in Tarmonbarry

While each milestone was reached, it definitely tested all my stamina, but one thing for certain is that it would have been much more testing without the help and support of the group. There was always loads of banter. We solved Brexit, won the All Ireland and sorted the economy many times over during those endless laps. We shared jokes, stories, food. We travelled together to other road races and enjoyed every minute of it.

I hit another milestone on 10th October when I ran my first seven miles on my own. This might sound odd,

but I was so used to running in company, I could never do any more than two to three km on my own without stopping. So on that week I couldn't link up with anyone and ended up doing a loop near home without stopping for the first time. I was as proud of that as some of the greater distances completed during the training.

I am fitter now than I ever was in my life. Since I started running in 2011, I have only got the flu once and do not get colds. I have formed life-long friendships. I often go out for a run feeling tired and stressed with life, but always came back feeling very refreshed and in good humour. I have run in rain, wind, heat and cold and taken no notice. I have achieved things I never thought possible and enjoyed every minute of it.

At time of writing, we have just completed our last long run – fifteen miles on Saturday 12th October and are now 'Tapering' for the last two weeks. I can't guarantee anything at this stage, but I am now full of anticipation for the big day. I hope nothing happens between now and then. I hope I can make the line and stay injury free. I am so thankful for all the help and encouragement I received to get me here. Not bad for an auld buck... see you at the finish line!

## Ballyhaunis Under-14 Footballers, County Champions 1987



Ballyhaunis Under-14 Footballers, who won the County Under-14 'B' title in June 1987, pictured at the awards ceremony later that year, on 30th Oct., where they received their trophies from inter-county star T.J. Kilgallon.

Back, L-R: Joe Tighe, Aiden Kelly, Aiden O'Boyle, Tommy Leonard, T.J. Kilgallon, Andrew Smyth, Enda Murphy, Fintan Keane, John Greally, Noel Lyons. Centre: Johnny Kelly, Eamon Loughran, David Nestor (Capt.), Pat Tighe, David Burke, Lorcan Higgins, Owen Maughan. Front: Jason Morley (RIP), Darragh Shields, Barry McCrudden, James Coen, Kieran Flynn, John McQueeney.  
*Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh.*

# Remembering Byrne's Shop on Clare Street

Fintan Lynch

Sometime during the 1940s my parents, Bernie and Peg Byrne, bought a retail premises on Clare Street, where Midwest Radio studios are now located. Our family at that time lived where Freyne's lived for many years on Clare Street, across from their garage. As my father was busy in those years as a building contractor, often travelling to work (on bicycle) to many parts of the county and country, my older sisters were given the job of running the shop. Mai, now aged 79, was the first to take charge of the store which she did for a number of years until 1962, when she married Fintan Lynch from Main Street and moved to their new home in Ennis. When she left, Dympna took over from her, running it until 1965, when she too left following her marriage to Ballygar businessman, Frankie Pettit. Brian, my oldest brother, then stood into the breach and operated it for a number of years before going to England where he worked for some time. Then my older brother Dom came along and took to running the store in the late 1960s, and in the early '70s, I joined him in the running of the shop, and continued to do so until around 1976/77, when, after completing the Leaving Cert in St. Patrick's College, I became involved in the family business (now owned by John and Bernie Gill) to help my parents with the running of their grocery/bar operation.

In the following article, Fintan Lynch recalls his own memories of the shop on Clare Street.

**MIKE BYRNE**

I stepped into the Shop for the first time in the summer of 1944. World War II was still raging in Europe. Bridgie Kelly, our maid, had run out of cigarettes, and I volunteered to search the town for her! I got strict instructions, "Don't buy American cigarettes, Woodbines or Players Weights, only Players Please, Gold Flake or Sweet Afton"! It was a tall order, but I was then a very determined ten year old! I started from Jordan's in Upper Main Street, worked my way past Alec Green's, who had stacks of Lucky Strike and Marlborough in the window. Tried Caulfield's, Byrne's, Greally's, Flynn's and all the shops on Main Street without success.



Pictured outside Byrne's shop on Clare Street around 1961/62, were next door neighbours, Mai Byrne and Mary Francis Fitzgerald.

I turned into Clare Street, eventually arriving at the Shop. The left hand side of the Shop was stacked with a great variety of delph-ware, cups, saucers, plates, ewers in large wash basins and colourful chamber pots! Very few homes had running water in those days. I didn't know it then but I was about to meet my future mother-in-law for the first time! Peg Byrne was a beautiful woman with auburn hair, blue eyes, and a broad welcoming, cheerful smile. She knew me because she had worked as secretary to Garvey Solicitors across the street from our shop, and had admired the Fair Isle jumpers my mother had knit for my brothers Bertie, Joe and myself. I asked her if she had any cigarettes, and told her who they were for. She smiled at me, took five cigarettes from under the counter, and put

them into a white paper bag. Meanwhile, a pretty blonde, curly-haired girl peeped around the counter at me, looking me up and down. Peg would have had four daughters at that time, Marceline, Mai, Ann and Dympna. I paid her for the cigarettes, thanked her and ran all the way home to be greeted by a delighted Bridgie!

In the summer of 1958, fourteen years later, home from sea, I paid my second visit to the Shop, on my way to the Star Cinema. I met Mai for the first time. She looked beautiful, fair haired, blue eyes, direct gaze, attractively shaped mouth, slender and very feminine. I purchased twenty Players and a quarter of mixed sweets, chatted for a few minutes and headed for the cinema. I can't recall the movie; my mind was so full of the girl I had just met. That weekend we bumped into each other at the local GAA pitch. I had my camera and took a picture of her.



The next morning, as I leaned against our shop window, I observed Mai turn the corner at Joe Regan's Pub and walk elegantly up Main Street towards Joe Flatley's shop, to buy the Independent for her Dad. My pulse quickened as she crossed the street to enter the shop. She didn't look in my direction. I strolled, as nonchalantly as I could, down to the shop and greeted Mai shyly as she stood at the counter. As we both stood there, fate took a hand in the form of Billy Eagney who was standing behind us. Billy, with a twinkle in his eye, put his two arms around us and crushed us together in our first embrace! He surprised and thrilled us. The next day I couldn't wait any longer, called to the Shop and asked Mai if she would like to come to the cinema that night. She accepted my invitation! We sat in the balcony and, when the lights went down, we folded our arms and held hands right through the movie. When it was over we walked down the steps into the stalls and left the cinema through the left exit door. We stopped and kissed for the first time. It was heavenly!

We met almost every night for the next three weeks, and by then I knew this was the girl I wanted to marry. Sitting in the car, outside the Shop, I expressed my feelings for her, told her I wanted to marry her. She just gazed at me with those big beautiful eyes and said – nothing! I think she was in shock! She told me afterwards, as she walked home her feet never touched the ground, and she couldn't wait to tell her Mum! Mai was eighteen and I was twenty four.

We spent hours in the Shop, sitting behind the counter, talking endlessly. We held hands, kissed when we got the chance, but there were lots of interruptions as Mai had many friends who called to the Shop! Susan Laffey (née Fahy) was her best friend. Kieran and Vinnie Freyne, Mickey and Hugh Curley, Maureen Cleary, Rosaleen Eagney, Una Phillips (née Donnellan) and lots more. Sunday nights were chaotic with more callers from out of town arriving for the dance in the Eclipse Ballroom. I have to admit there were times when I became irritable, Mai being so occupied by others, but I don't think I was rude to anyone!

Then it was time for me to return to my job as Radio Officer aboard ship, which I did just before Christmas 1959. This was a huge wrench, as we had been seeing each other constantly for a year and a half. They were wonderful times and the happiest days of my life. My ship traded between Liverpool and the West African Coast. On arrival in Freetown, Sierra Leone, I saw the mail come aboard, checked with the Purser, and received my first letter from Mai! I read it, re-read it and read it again! I had already written pages from Liverpool before we left port and more on the trip to Freetown. It would



Fintan Lynch, Main Street and Mai Byrne,  
Clare Street, circa 1960.

take ten days before Mai would receive her first mail from Africa. Letters were waiting for me at Takoradi, Accra, Lagos and Port Harcourt, and I posted letters from all of those ports too! All of them received and read in the Shop. It would be another ten weeks before I would be back with my beloved Mai in Clare Street. That time arrived and we had an amazing reunion. My car for the next three weeks was parked almost permanently outside the Shop! Our relationship continued, grew stronger over the next two years as I plied the warm, steamy rivers of Nigeria to inland ports like Sapele, Abonema, Onitsha, Matadi in the Belgian Congo, and Lobito in Portuguese Angola. All the time saving, to leave the sea, get a job ashore and be with my beloved Mai full time. This I did in 1961.

We became engaged on Mai's 21st birthday on 4th May 1961 when I put a solitaire on her finger, behind closed doors – in the Shop, of course! We celebrated with a lovely wild Atlantic Salmon dinner that evening in the Downhill Hotel, Ballina. On the 25th September 1962 Mai locked the door of the Shop for the last time. We married the next morning at 11 am in St. Patrick's Church, honeymooned in Saint Helier, Jersey, returned to Ireland and began our married life together in our new home in Ennis, Co. Clare.

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)



# Byrne Family Reunion



On Saturday, 10th August 2019, all ten members of the Byrne family, sons and daughters of the late Bernie and Peg Byrne, Clare Street, gathered for a family get together – the first time all ten siblings were together for over 41 years. The eldest member of the family, Marceline, who has lived in Marblehead, Massachusetts, U.S.A. for over 50 years with her husband Jack Connell, and family, celebrated her 80th birthday earlier in the year, and the gathering of the clan was a celebration of that milestone. Back, L-R: Mike (Ballyhaunis), Angela (Castleisland, Co. Kerry), Brian (Ballyhaunis), Evelyn (Dublin), Dom and Breege (Dublin). Front, L-R: May (Ennis, Co. Clare), Anne (Dublin), Marceline (Massachusetts, U.S.A.) and Dympna (Ballygar, Co. Galway).



**The Byrne family pictured at the wedding of Dom Byrne and Joan McSweeney in Killarney, 1978.**

Until this year's reunion, this was the last occasion that all ten Byrne siblings were gathered together. Left to right: Angela, Mai, Brian, Anne, Breege, Maeve (Daughter of Marceline), Peg (R.I.P.), Dom & Joan (bride & groom) Bernie (R.I.P.), Marceline, Mike, Evelyn and Dympna.



# Ballyhaunis Harriers Athletic Club

Michael Joyce

I was actively involved in Ballyhaunis Harriers Athletic Club from 1968. Initially, the club had only adult male runners. However, by 1970, it was clear that the town had great young athletic talent emerging and a juvenile section of the club was formed. Most of the people that got involved in this new section of the club were, naturally, parents. In particular, I must mention Rita Webb, Josie Smyth, Bill Campbell and Brendan Byrne. We could also always count on Michael (Ronnie) Curley to lend a hand when required. We also received great support and encouragement from school teachers in the town, many of whom regularly provided transport to sports meetings. My late friend, Matt O'Dwyer, was one of the most enthusiastic and supportive of all.

Success for the club came quickly. Antoinette and Clodagh Byrne, Olive Webb, Sandra Hannon, Virginia Biesty and Agatha Clarke were stand-out performers, winning numerous county and provincial titles and also performing brilliantly at national level. So too were Eddie and Hugh Campbell, Joe Freeley, Eamonn Smyth, Teddie Webb, Noel Armstrong and Breen Keane. However, in my opinion, the greatest natural athletics talent our town ever produced was a young lad – Tommy Moran – who asked me to coach him in the long jump back in 1972.

Tommy had rare and wonderful natural talent and in the Regional Colleges track and field championships, his first ever serious sports experience, he placed second in the long jump and the triple jump. He also won the 100 metres. The following week, at the Connacht Championships, Tommy once again finished second in both events. He also won gold in the 100 metres. The top two finishers in each event at those Connacht Championships qualified to compete in the All-Ireland Schools Championships which took place just a week after the Provincial finals. An athlete could only compete in two events in the National finals and Tommy decided to compete in both the long jump and triple jump, even though he would almost certainly have been favourite to take gold in the 100 metres.

The Morton Stadium in Santry was the setting for the All-Ireland Colleges Track and Field Championships. This was a day that was always buzzing with excitement and great anticipation. Tommy Moran was unfazed by it all and excelled in the long jump, winning the competition with a terrific jump. And there was more to come as Tommy got ready to compete in the triple jump competition – a technically demanding event to which he had only been introduced a few months earlier. It was an event that demanded great speed and special

technique. Tommy was a gifted athlete, blessed with special talent and he won his second gold medal of the day while breaking the Irish College's triple jump record. That was a wonderful day in Santry: a day to be very proud of the home town of Ballyhaunis and to celebrate the two gold medals achievement of Tommy Moran – an athlete who was always a joy to coach.

It would be lovely to see a revival of Ballyhaunis Harriers Athletic Club. I am sure that there are many talented young athletes in the schools all around the Ballyhaunis area who, with a little coaching and encouragement, could be making it all the way to national level and beyond. A Talent ID Day in the Friary Field or up at the GAA Centre of Excellence would be a great start in getting Ballyhaunis Harriers Athletic Club back up and running. I'd be happy to support such an initiative and I know that my life-long friend Frank Greally would also be only too happy to also lend his support to a club revival. Why not take both of us up on this offer? The great New Zealand coach, Arthur Lydiard said: "There are champions everywhere. You just have to find them and nurture them."

## Jim Reeves' Nephew Visits Ballyhaunis



John Rex Reeves, the highly regarded American Country Singer, and nephew of the late, great Jim Reeves, visited Ballyhaunis while touring Ireland this September. He was special guest at the Big Tom Tribute Night in the Oaklands Hotel, Glenamaddy, on 27th Sept. 2019. He called into Gill's, Clare Street, Ballyhaunis some days earlier, on 22nd Sept., with his wife Neva and Julie Healy, one of the organisers of the Glenamaddy event. Seated, L-R: Julie Healy, John Rex and Neva Reeves; Standing: Hugh Rudden.

# Ballyhaunis in 1919 / 1920

## THE CENTENARY OF THE IRISH REVOLUTION

Fr Kieran Waldron

After the General Election of 1918 the elected Sinn Féin members refused go to Westminster. Instead, on 21st January 1919, they assembled for the first meeting of Dáil Éireann in the Mansion House in Dublin. They declared themselves boldly, “as the first Dáil of the Irish Republic”. Many absent deputies were still in jail. For us, a century apart, it is difficult to realise how momentous was this political challenge to the mighty British Empire – an empire which stretched from Australia to India, to half of Africa and all of Canada. The peaceful revolution came from a veritable backwater on its doorstep – part of the island of Ireland.

However reliance on peaceful means was not to be continued. On that same day in January a branch of the Irish Volunteers carried out an unauthorised ambush in Soloheadbeg, Co Tipperary in which two Irish constables were shot dead, guarding a consignment of gelignite for a local quarry. One of them was a Mayo man. The action was regarded as an outrage even by staunch republicans. The ‘political revolution’ would soon turn to be military, cruel and savage. It is easy to denounce outrages in Northern Ireland, forgetting the moral question about all military violence. One can only hope that up-coming centenary commemorations will be sensitive and balanced.

Volunteer military action was infrequent in 1919 in Mayo however, though the Irish Volunteers continued with their drilling. They became known as the IRA only in the summer of that year as Dominic Price notes in his book *The Flame and the Candle: War in Mayo 1919-1924*. However, he records that the County RIC Inspector in Castlebar reported regularly on meetings of such ‘suspect groups’ as the Connradh na Gaeilge (The Gaelic League), Cumann na mBan, and the sixty-eight Sinn Féin clubs in the county.

By 1920 it was to be different, though in Ballyhaunis the activities were still mostly political. This was through the working of the Dáil Éireann Court whereby local solicitors and litigants deserted the official British courts for the Republican Courts. The courts were highly effective in challenging the imperial masters in London. They were tolerated by the British Parliament until September 1920 when the Dáil and its courts were declared illegal entities. Though a Home Rule Bill had been passed as far back as 1914, it was suitably postponed during the 1914-18 War. Yet now, even if the war was over, the Act remained suspended. The UK are still paying for their poor handling of the Irish question in that decade.

### Dáil Éireann Courts

The Ballyhaunis Dáil court sittings were reported regularly in *The Mayo News* throughout the Summer of 1920. They were largely arbitration courts but they did have an enforcing ability. In Ballyhaunis in July of that year, a farmer cycling home from town missed a valuable suit-length which he had purchased that day. He reported the matter to the local Volunteers and was able to give them a pattern of the cloth. They duly carried out their investigation and succeeded in restoring the goods to the owner! In the Claremorris court in July six RIC constables ventured to inspect the proceedings but were directed by the Chairman to remove their caps while the court was in session. He said that only the Irish Volunteers on duty were permitted to wear their caps. The constables duly complied with the order!

The courts were held in local halls – in Ballyhaunis almost certainly in Donnellan’s Hall, Clare Street, and in Moylett’s Hall at the Square. The presiding ‘magistrates’ at the Ballyhaunis sittings in 1920 varied from session to session. The Chairman was frequently Liam D. Coyne, a Ballyhaunis solicitor, aided by Dr. Andy Smyth of Abbey St., Patrick Healy, a farmer from Holywell House, and a local Volunteer, P.J. Waldron of Knox St, a carriage maker.

In a lengthy case before the Ballyhaunis Dáil Court in July two men were tried for causing a brawl in a pub and refusal to pay for their drinks. The Court decided as follows: “we have decided to give a decree against the two defendants for the sum of £5 each with £5 costs. We also wish to point that such cases will not be tried by this court again and any man so conducting himself will be handed over to the Volunteers and they will deal strongly enough with him”.

The courts, without violence, became an eloquent statement that Ireland desired its own government and its own judicial system in settling disputes, punishing misdemeanours and generally keeping the peace. The success of the Dáil Court system may be judged from the fact that, eventually, 900 Parish Courts and 77 District Courts came into operation. In Mayo the amount of business led to the appointment of a ‘President of the Sinn Féin Courts for South Mayo’ in October 1920. This was a Ballyhaunis man, Dr. Michael F. Waldron, who held a doctorate in Laws (LLD).

### And the local IRA?

In his diary recording various events in Ballyhaunis from 1920 to 1950, the same Michael F. Waldron included reference to some military events, including one



of 4th April 1920 in which a Constable Carroll of the RIC was wounded in Bridge Street while a raid was being attempted on the local Revenue Office, then part of Farragher's Hotel (now Delaney's). This incident has been described in an article in Annagh 2016 by Paul Waldron in which the name of Comdt. P. Kenny is given as the leader of the volunteers – all of whom escaped.

More details on that escapade are to be found in a *Mayo News* issue of October 1920 when a malicious injury claim by Sergeant Carroll was heard. He and two other constables were on patrol duty at the Square as early as 2.15am on that Sunday morning. It would appear from this that there was some amount of Volunteer activity in Ballyhaunis at the time. He gave evidence that he saw ten or twelve men about fifty yards away, near the Revenue office. He walked in their direction but when a voice shouted "Halt", he replied "Halt you!" The Volunteers opened fire and he was shot in both legs. His colleagues helped him to the RIC barracks where he was attended by Dr. Crean. He was later moved to Dr. Steevens' Hospital in Dublin where it was found he had between 30 and 40 shot wounds in his legs. Later, he suffered bronchial pneumonia and was not discharged until 10th June. He believed he would be partially disabled for his life. Constable Flynn received only minor injuries. It was an incident that could easily have become a major national incident.

Comdt. Kenny was also involved in the unsuccessful 'Holywell ambush' of 4th August 1920. A military escort was taking some ammunition to Claremorris, but their lorry went off the road and the local volunteers tried to capture it. However, P. Kenny was wounded in the affray and was taken to safe houses nearby, Caulfield's and Healy's, where he was attended by Dr. Andy Smyth.

Dr. Michael F. Waldron refers to two other incidents in September and early October 1920: Captain Glavey with two other Volunteers were killed in Ballinlough on September 14th, and he also refers to a 'sensational visit of party of Black and Tans' on October 9th. In the last months of 1920 the War of Independence was growing in ferocity all over the country. In Ballyhaunis, he records that William D. Coyne, the local solicitor and member of the local Republican Court, was arrested in October, and in December the military arrested J.T. Ruane, John Gilmore, M.J. Rattigan, J. Caulfield, James Rattigan, Pat Healy, T. McNamara and several others.

## The Church and the Revolution

By 1916 the political methods of the great Daniel O'Connell were becoming less favoured. He had accomplished much, including Catholic Emancipation, but he had abjured violence in pursuit of political ends. Now, the gun had replaced political activity in a guerrilla war with many atrocities on both sides: ambushes,

shootings, reprisals and the attacking of RIC barracks. The morality about use of violence was, of course, being raised regularly in the public sphere.

How did the Church engage in this debate? At a Confirmation Ceremony in Ballyhaunis on 11th October 1920 Archbishop Thomas Gilmartin spoke at length on the immorality of violent attacks on all sides. He himself had recently been deeply involved in denouncing an outrageous attack by Crown Forces in Tuam in July 1920 in which the Town Hall and several shops were burned down as a reprisal for the murder of two RIC constables on the Dunmore road. He had made formal representations on the matter to General Macready, the Officer Commanding in Dublin, over their activities. Subsequently, in late 1920 he carried out a world-wide campaign, including communicating with Winston Churchill in the War Office, in attempts to have what he called a 'Truce of God' to halt the developing war.

His lengthy sermon in Ballyhaunis on 11th October was reported in full in *The Mayo News*. He appealed for peace and adherence to God's law and condemned all violence.

*"We have the shooting of police which is murder, counter shooting, reprisals and violence. So at the present time there is a general atmosphere of terrorism. I am not going to give you any advice on politics. There should be no politics in church. I don't care what politics they are, they must be kept within the moral law: 'Thou shalt not kill'. People have no right to take vengeance on innocent people. We are living in very troubled times and people are longing for peace all over the country but, unfortunately, the agents of evil seem to be stronger than the peacemaker. Keep God's law, God's commandments. That is the remedy that never fails. I congratulate this parish for being free from crime. Something occurred in the neighbourhood recently but that was very foolish and I hope there will be no repetition of it. If you carry out unlawful shooting you will get that back yourself. There is a God in Heaven and nothing can happen without his permission".*

The local combatants were, no doubt, urged on by frustration, good faith, courage and even heroism, but the struggle was nonetheless ferocious. There were indeed no easy answers. The Archbishop's attempts in his appeal for peace and a 'truce of God' went unheeded at the time, but a truce was declared in July of 1921, nine months later – only after many more had been killed. The pace of the war continued to increase substantially in 1921 up to the calling of the Truce. Dr. Waldron lists sixteen military engagements for 1921 and twenty nine for 1922. Violence begets violence, 'guns will get guns' they say, and for the duration of the dreadful Civil War from April 1922 to July of 1923, violence continued and he lists no less than thirty episodes in the locality.

But that is another story - for another day!



# Weddings 2019



Conor Mulrennan (Gurteen) and Ciara Traynor (Ballybay, Co. Monaghan), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballybay, 3rd Aug. 2019



Kevin Gallagher (Knock Rd.) and Ruth Walsh (Carrick, Ballinlough), married in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Ballinlough, 28th June 2019.



Matthew Cregg (Ballinlough, Co. Roscommon) and Sarah Mee (Four Roads, Co. Roscommon), who married in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Four Roads, Co. Roscommon, 24th Aug. 2019.



John Lyons (Spaddagh) and Helen Russell (Lincolnshire, England), who married in St. Mary and Michael's Church, Foxford, 20th July 2019.





Clare Byrne (Johnstown) and  
Kenneth Egan (Carrowbeg,  
Kilkelly), who married in  
St. Patrick's Church,  
Ballyhaunis, 4th May 2019.



David Gallagher (Bargarriff)  
and Lydia Leonard (Offaly),  
who married in Ashley Park  
House, 13th Oct. 2018.



Declan Grady (Gorthaganny)  
and Ferne Robinson  
(Whanganui, New Zealand),  
who married in Taupo,  
New Zealand, 16th Feb. 2019.





Adrian Brennan (Gurteen) and Emma Jenkins (Bracklaghboy), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 23rd Mar. 2019.



Claire Kilcourse (Station Rise) and Chris Brown (Queensland, Australia), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 10th Aug. 2019.



Eddie Murphy (Main St.) and Annette Murphy (Moate) who married in Hotel La Zenia, Orihuela Costa, Spain, 29th Oct. 2018.



Éilís Murphy (Coolnaha) and William Hederman (Dublin), who married in Oranmore Lodge, Co. Galway, 1st Mar. 2019.





Jason Swords (Drumaderry) and Laura Devaney (Corofin, Co. Galway), who married in St. Colman's Church, Corofin, 14th June 2019.



Eimear McNeive (Lurgan, Brickens) and J.P. Kirrane (Irishtown), who married in St. Margaret Mary's Church, Began, 14th Dec. 2018.



John Diskin (Killinaugher) and Kristina Kohls (Friedrichshaven, Germany), who married in Munich, May 2019.



Joyce Jordan (Johnstown) and Alan Morrison (Leixlip, Co. Kildare), who married in Puglia, Italy, 20th July 2019.



John Vahey (Cloonfad,  
formerly Main St.,  
Ballyhaunis) and Claire  
Cooney (Mountain Lodge,  
Co. Cavan), who married in  
Breaffy House Resort,  
28th June 2019.



Joseph Kelly (Knox St.) and  
Jade Pettigrew Littler  
(Straford-Upon-Avon and  
Irishtown), who married in  
St. Patrick's Church,  
Ballyhaunis, 28th Dec. 2018.



Michelle Moore (Carrowbeg,  
Ballyhaunis and Grange Rath,  
Co. Meath) and Stephen  
Williams (Sydney, Australia),  
who married in Treviso, Italy,  
on 28th Dec. 2018.







Katie Sloyan (Tully, Carrowbehy) and Joe Waldron (Culnacleha), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 3rd Aug. 2019.



Lorna Kirrane (Knockbrack) and Kevin O'Connor (Cloondergan, Garrafrauns, Co. Galway), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 5th July 2019.



Louise Hickey (Greenwood) and Barry Joyce (Belcarra, Castlebar), who married in St. Margaret Mary's Church, Beken, 31st Dec. 2018.



Maria Coyne (Carnbeg, Aghamore) and Dessie Campbell (Shanvaghara, Knock) who married in St. John the Baptist Church, Knock, 6th July 2019.





Marie Commins (Cloonlee, Knock) and Steve Barcoe (Co. Kilkenny), who married in St. John the Baptist Church, Knock, 21st June 2019.



Marion Glavey (Aghamore) and Andrew Grennan (Monaghan), who married in St. Joseph's Church, Aghamore, 3rd Aug. 2019.



Michelle Brennan (Gurteen) and Darragh Crawley (Carrowbehy), who married in Eight Willows Retreat, Margaret's River, Western Australia, 8th Nov. 2018.



Roisín Flanagan (Ballindrehid) and Adam Campbell (Loughrea, Co. Galway), who married in St. Brendan's Cathedral, Loughrea, 8th Sept. 2018.





Ryan Keane (Coventry, England) and Kirstin Uys (Coventry), who married in Holy Family Church, Coventry, 1st June 2019. Ryan is grandson of Bernard Keane, formerly of Annagh, Ballyhaunis.



Sandra Kirrane (Lissaniska) and Stephen McGing (Westport), who married in St. Mary's Church, Westport, 16th Mar. 2019.



Shane Kelly (Lissaniskea) and Kirsty Jean Godwin (Yorkshire, England), who married in Spanish Point, Co. Clare, 8th June 2019.



Siobhan Quinn (Classaghroe) and John Buckley (Rathcoole, Co. Cork), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 13th July 2019.





Olivia Fleming (Streamstown, Cloonfad) and Jimmy Moore (Lissyconnor, Dunmore, Co. Galway), who married in St. Patrick's Church, Cloonfad, 4th May 2019.



Orlaith Mulcahy (Abbeyquarter) and Stephen Devaney (Coogue), who married in Ballintubber Abbey, 27th July 2019.



Stephen Jenkins (Bracklaghboy) and Helen McGlynn (Dublin), who married in St. Mary's Church, Maynooth, 31st Dec. 2018.



# Baptisms Marriages Deceased

## BAPTISMS in the Parish – November 2018 to October 2019

Teo Gojkovic, Upper Main St.  
Iris Nikolli Farruku & Ilaria Nikolli Farruku, Old Convent  
Albert Junior (A.J.) Madden, Claremorris  
Katie Marie Rogers, New York & Brackloon  
Vejune Emilifja Blozyte, Ballinlough  
Hera & Heron Hysa, Old Convent  
Jocelyn Rose Madden, Newbridge  
Michael John Webb, Station Rise  
Callum John Quinn, Aisling Drive  
Ella Ann Fitzmaurice, Forthill  
Alice Jonio, St. Gerald's Court  
James William Rochford, Old Racecourse  
Janice Ezeokafor Nwafor, Old Convent  
Sultan Olanrew Larry Hameed, Old Convent  
Ameer Patrick Ayinde, Old Convent  
Isabella May Cleary, Cherryfield  
Leighton Noah Tevenan O'Boyle, Ballinlough  
Amelia Grace Byrne, Gurteen  
Sandra Bednarek, Hazelhill Downs  
Elisin Polakova, Upper Main St.  
Michael Joseph Webb, The Maples  
Kathleen Patricia Webb, The Maples  
Cillian James George Feeney, Bridgewater, England  
Harry Michael O'Reilly, Coogue  
Danielle Kit Sidhu, Ballinlough

Jack Thomas Richardson, Larganboy  
Alesha Mary Jordan, Holywell  
Micheál Lorcan Keary, Brussels, Belgium  
James Daniel Powers, Devlis  
Ronán Daniel Potts, Dublin  
Darcie May McDonagh, Tooraree  
Harry John Palmer & Leon Ronald Palmer,  
Melbourne, Australia  
Sophie Clara Da Silva, Longford  
Hugo Jeremy Curley, Greenwood  
Patrick John Keane, The Maples  
Leo McDonagh, Cloonfad  
Alana Catherine Crean, Kiltiboe  
Nathan Regan, Lecarrow  
Daniel James Doyle, The Maples  
Anthony Patrick O'Malley, Derrylea  
Anezka Valicek, The Maples  
Ellen Marie McDonagh, The Maples  
Zoe Allen, Hazelwood  
Andrea Lupinkova, Hazel Lawns  
John James Jordan, Johnstown  
Ruby Caulfield, Tooraree  
Tiarnan Wang Godfrey, Derreens  
Thomas Yuile Ronayne, Clagnagh  
Norah Bridie Burke, Old Racecourse

## MARRIAGES in St. Patrick's Church

### November 2018 to October 2019

Joseph Kelly (Knox St.) and Jade Pettigrew (Irishtown).  
Adrian Brennan (Holywell) and Emma Jenkins (Holywell).  
Margaret Cleary (Gurrane) and William McGinley (Longford).  
Kenneth Egan (Kilkelly) and Clare Byrne (Johnstown).  
Kevin O'Connor (Garrafrauns & New Zealand) and Lorna Kirrane (Knockback & New Zealand).  
John Anthony Buckley (Mallow, Co. Cork) and Siobhán Quinn (Classaroe & Mallow).  
Joseph Waldron (Tulrahan) and Katie Sloyan (Tully, Carrowbehy).  
Christopher Brown (New South Wales, Australia) and Claire Kilcourse (Station Rise & NSW)  
Yvonne Byrne (Knox St.) and Seamus O'Brien (Cootehill, Co. Cavan).

### Marriages Elsewhere

Alan Kelly (Drimbane) and Niamh Dolan (Knockcroghery, Co. Roscommon).  
Orla Mulcahy (Abbeyquarter) and Stephen Devaney (Abbeyquarter).  
John Lyons (Spaddagh & Brisbane, Australia) and Helen Russell (Brisbane, Australia).





## DECEASED of the Parish November 2018 to October 2019

Michelle O'Connor, Tavnaghmore  
Jerzy Smaga, Brookvale Manor  
Mary McDonagh, St. Gerald's Crescent  
Pat Byrne, Knox St.  
Ann McHugh, Devlis Cottages  
Mary Griffin, Tavanaghmore  
Máire Burke, Doctor's Road  
Mary Cleary, Johnstown  
Miriam McGoldrick, Abbey St.  
Sean Finn, New York & Hazelhill  
Annie Heneghan, Tullaghaune  
Mary T. McHale, Ballinlough  
Fr. Enda Lyons, Tuam & Knox St.  
Winnie McDonagh, Mullingar  
Freddie O'Brien, Upper Main St.  
Mary Teresa (Maureen) Delaney, Aisling Drive  
Sher Mohammed Rafique, Clare Road  
Tom Butler, New Jersey & Upper Main St.  
Kieran Benson, Birmingham & Upper Main St.  
Marie Connell, Galway & Devlis  
Mary Margaret Freeley Suhy, USA & Scrigg  
Mary Plunkett, Mountain  
Anne O'Shaughnessy, Beech Lawn  
Katriona Smith (Morley), Dublin & Ballyhaunis  
Norma Frances Forde, Perth, Australia  
Tom Cribbin, Aisling Drive  
Lisa Marie McDonagh, Wales & The Maples  
James Waldron, Milan & Devlis  
Chris Gaffney Nolan, Ballyhaunis  
Philomena Ryan, Brackloon  
Áine Whelan, Holywell & Tourmakeady

## DECEASED from elsewhere (Prayed for at Mass)

Eileen Killian, Rhode, Co. Offaly  
Lena Caffrey, Carnbeg, Aghamore  
Pat Dunleavy, Swinford & Manchester  
John Moran, Ballinlough  
Mary Cummins (nee Murren), Knock;  
formerly Upper Main St.  
Michael Heffernan, Kilkenny  
Ann Grogan, Ballinlough  
Marie Keogh, Dublin  
Dan McMahon, Woodford, Co. Galway  
Noel Moran, Worthing, UK  
Edward Healy, Mullingar; formerly Ballindrehid  
Pauline Chute (nee Henry), Listowel, Co. Kerry;  
formerly Gurteen  
Liberta de Lourdes Soares, East Timor  
Julia Dray (nee McNamara), Scotland;  
formerly Brackloon North  
Paul Cunningham, Ballinlough  
Pat Flatley, Lassiney  
Kathleen Kilgallon, Midfield, Swinford  
John Phillips, Cloonternane, Knock,  
Michael Brennan, Agloragh  
Ann O'Beirne (nee Curley), Collooney, Co. Sligo;  
formerly Main St.  
Fr. Michael Guckian, Dublin & Roscommon  
Nellie Winston, Carrick, Ballinlough  
Callum Casey, Carrownedan, Aghamore  
Nora Oakland (nee Greene), Chesterfield, England;  
formerly Knox St.  
Josie Regan, Loughglynn  
Noreen Quinn (nee Heneghan), New York;  
formerly Tullaghane  
K.D. Ammini Joseph, India  
Tommy Finnegan, Manchester; formerly Knox St.  
Margaret Kedian, Castlebar; formerly Moneymore  
Michael Dillon, Gort, Co. Galway; formerly Tully, Carrowbehy  
Mary McDonagh, Castlebar  
Catherine Enright (nee Hoban), Dublin; formerly Derrynacong  
Liam Nestor, Irishtown  
Dominick Flatley, New York; formerly Ballyhaunis  
Bernie Power, Ennis, Co. Clare  
Vincent McNamara, Cloverhill, Co. Roscommon;  
formerly Tullaghane  
John Byrne, London; formerly Main St.  
Robert Byrne, Wicklow & London  
Elaine Geary, London  
Jimmy Murray, Balla  
Bridget Lyons (nee Freeley), Birmingham; formerly Knockbrack  
Patricia Rattigan, London  
Michael Conway, Ballindine; formerly Holywell  
Joan McLoughlin (nee Sloyan), Coogue South  
Rose McLoughlin (nee Bailey), Ashbourne, Co. Meath



# Ballyhaunis Parent & Toddler Group

Every Wednesday morning during the school term, the Ballyhaunis Community Hall turns into a hive of activity for the youngest people in the town and surrounding areas. Parents, grandparents and childminders rock up the short ramp with pushchairs, double buggies and wriggling toddlers to join the Ballyhaunis Parent & Toddler Group.



Snack time at the Parent & Toddler Group.

The Group was formed in 1999 and was originally held in the Ballyhaunis Rugby Club before moving to the current home in the Community Hall in 2010. Carina Herten and Tzzy Wang volunteered to run the group in 2017. Besides ensuring sessions are held during the school term, they work to publicise the group and seek additional funding and support to keep the group going, as well as arrange special activities for the little ones. The group is supported in part by the Mayo County Council

Childcare Committee. Additional funding from the Communities Integration Fund under the Department of Justice was secured for an outing to nearby Graune Pet Farm.

“This is the only service of its kind in town and has been great for my children to socialize with similar-aged children,” says Tzzy. “It has also been invaluable for me to meet other parents in the area. I’ve made some great friends to whom I can turn for advice and support.”

All are welcome to attend the Parent & Toddler Group. Sessions are held Wednesdays from 10am to 12pm during the school term. A nominal charge of 4 Euros per family covers light refreshments and tea/coffee. Join the Ballyhaunis Parent Toddler Group Facebook page or contact Carina or Tzzy for further information.



Tzzy Wang and Carina Herten, who run the Parent & Toddler Group.



Before departure on the Curlew Mountains Cycle. Members of the 4th Mayo Boy Scouts Troop, May 1990.

L-R: Niall Kelly, Terry Coleman, Derek Walsh, John Cleary, Lorcan Higgins, Mark Gallagher, Kevin Coleman, Jonathan Damron, Mark McCafferty, Paul Nolan, Fintan Byrne, Brian Byrne. Front: Grahame Cleary. Absent from photo: Fergal Kelly and Duncan Hannan.



# An 18th-century Land Dispute at Cottage and Levallyroe

Michael Kelly

A book published in 1786 gives us a fascinating but incomplete account of a local land dispute during the 18th-century. The parties involved were, on one side, the two Dillon sisters of Cottage outside Ballyhaunis and, on the other, their estranged legal advisor, P. R. McDonnell. The book in question is the work of an anonymous 'Gentleman of the county Mayo' and bears the cumbersome title *Memoirs of the late George R. Fitzgerald and P. R. M'Donnel, Esqrs; Interspersed with Anecdotes tending to illustrate the remarkable occurrences of their Lives, particularly those late transactions of the County Mayo wherein those gentlemen were principal actors*. The book may be read online; the land dispute is covered at pages 68-84.



George Robert Fitzgerald awaiting his execution – one of only two images known of him.

Treston. Treston said he represented the Dillon sisters and he challenged McDonnell's right to obtain the rent, suggesting that any lease that McDonnell purported to hold was a forgery. To McDonnell's great surprise, when he looked to the Dillon sisters to support his case, they confirmed that Treston spoke with their authority!

## Showdown at Levallyroe: episode 1

McDonnell immediately went to Dublin and obtained a writ of custodium to enable him to pursue the rents. Then, accompanied by two gentlemen and two servants, he proceeded to Levallyroe, where he explained to an assembly of the tenants the power he had of receiving their rents. During this encounter, he took exception to the insolence of a young man named Denis Dunn, a servant to the Dillons, and had him taken into custody. This provoked the crowd and McDonnell was lucky to make good his escape back home to Castlebar, pursued by tenants 'armed with sticks, pitchforks, rusty bayonets, and such other weapons; even their women filled their aprons with stones, and joined in the chase'. Incidentally, Denis Dunn, a native of Queen's County, died aged 36 on 29 November 1799 and is buried in the Abbey cemetery in Ballyhaunis.

## Introducing James Pallas and P. R. McDonnell

The Dillon sisters, Elizabeth Mary and Jane, had come to live at Cottage taking over lands which the family had previously lost under the Penal Laws but which they had recovered with the assistance of a local man named James Pallas. They also owned land at Cloonlara in Began parish and at Aghamore. For some unknown reason, Pallas then withdrew his support and the ladies turned for help to a well-known Mayo lawyer named Patrick Randall McDonnell, who had made a name for himself in securing legal redress for miscarriages of justice. He promptly obtained a court order granting the Dillon sisters possession of a further portion of the disputed estate at Cottage and Levallyroe. They showed their gratitude to McDonnell by granting him a bond for £600 as well as a lease of part of the lands.

## Enter John Treston ...

It appears that the Dillons were not universally welcome at Cottage, however. Being strangers to the locality, they did themselves no favour by evicting some tenants, notably a poor, sick elderly woman at Feamore. Meanwhile, for a couple of years, McDonnell didn't bother to collect rents from the tenants of the lands that the Dillons had leased to him but when he decided to do so, he was accosted in the vicinity of Cottage by one John

## Showdown at Levallyroe: episode 2

Curiously for a lawyer, McDonnell did not then take the legal route to assert his claim but instead he opted for a show of physical force. He assembled about sixty members of the Mayo Legion, which he then commanded as Colonel, and having prudently called upon several gentlemen to witness his conduct, he advanced openly to Levallyroe, where he took up his quarters. This action attracted great public attention. Among those who hastened to Levallyroe to see what all the commotion was about were two local gentlemen, Messrs. Dillon of Hazelhill and Lung, who were kin of the Dillon sisters. McParlan's Statistical Survey of the County of Mayo (1802) lists John Dillon of Lung as a resident landlord and Colonel Dillon of Hazel-hill as non-resident.

## A deal is brokered ... and broken

The Dillon gents obviously had sympathy for their female cousins whom they regarded as somewhat naïve and helpless. They prevailed upon McDonnell to withdraw from conflict, on condition that the amounts of rents that he claimed were due to him would be lodged either with them or with Mr. Edmond Taaffe of Woodfield, pending the claim being legally vindicated.



They then got the Dillon sisters to agree to this proposal. However, they hadn't reckoned with John Treston's influence! As soon as Treston heard about the deal he quickly persuaded the Dillon sisters to resile from it.

### Tension mounts

McDonnell then intensified the pressure on the tenants to pay up. Some offered him promissory notes which he accepted. Two of them who proved particularly recalcitrant were evicted and their houses rendered uninhabitable. One of the houses was set on fire – although the cause of the conflagration was a matter of dispute – and this incident became the basis of a campaign of vilification against McDonnell. Meanwhile John Treston was enlisting the help of as many tenants as he could to oppose McDonnell in court, but the jury acquitted the latter.

### Further arbitration

At this point another eminent person intervened to try to resolve the dispute. He was Sir Neal O'Donel, third son of Newport Hugh, who renounced the Catholic faith to become a Protestant around 1763, after his Catholic father died. After his renunciation he had become Baronet and purchased the Medlicot Estate, also called Burrishoole Manor, in 1783. Sir Neal called to see the Dillon sisters at Cottage and got their agreement to negotiate terms with McDonnell. McDonnell agreed to this arbitration but once again John Treston thwarted the initiative and when O'Donel later wrote to the sisters at Cottage, they revoked their agreement.

That's where the published account of the affair ends.

### Epilogue

McDonnell's story had a sad ending. He was murdered near Castlebar on 21 February 1786. The notorious duellist, George Robert Fitzgerald of Turlough House, was later found guilty of having procured McDonnell's murder and he was hanged in Dublin on Monday 12 June. Incidentally, John Nolan, landlord at Logboy, was a member of a Petit Jury sworn during the trial of Fitzgerald. It has been suggested that the jury was handpicked by Denis Browne, the County Sheriff, later to be known

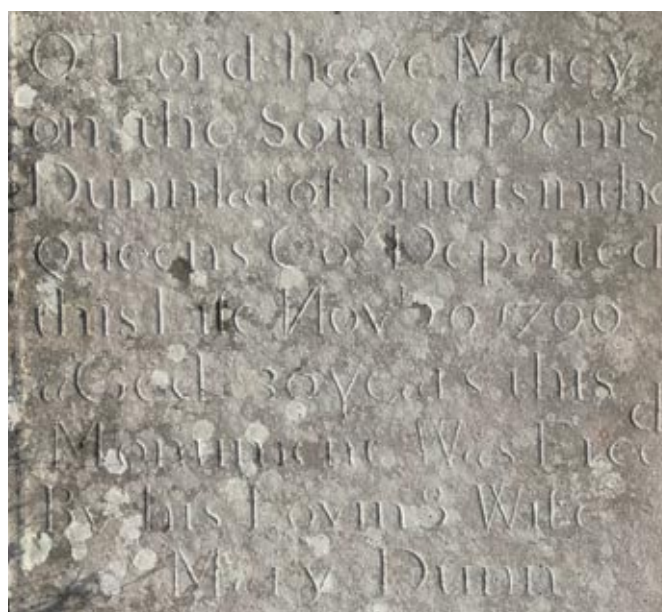
as Donncha an Rópa ('Denis of the Rope'). Browne regarded Fitzgerald (an influential landlord and nephew of the Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry) as a dangerous enemy to be eliminated at all costs, and he did not conceal his happiness when Fitzgerald was executed.

Other members of the jury were John Moore of Ballintaffy (midway between Claremorris and Kiltimagh), with his landlord neighbours, John Joyce of Oxford House and Thomas Ormsby of Ballinamore. Twelve years later, Moore would lead a company of United Irishmen to support the French expeditionary force under General Humbert. It is said that the sight of Moore, one of his hand-picked jurors, siding with the rebels caused Browne to have a secret tunnel constructed from his house (now the Convent of Mercy, Claremorris) to a grove of trees some distance away to provide an escape hatch in case of a rebel victory.

Jane Dillon demised various lands to her sister Elizabeth Mary by way of a series of deeds executed between 1780 and 1790. McParlan's Statistical Survey of the County of Mayo (1802) lists the Misses Dillon as resident landlords. Elizabeth Mary Dillon died on 13 February 1810. In her will dated 9 December 1809 she had appointed James Pallas as 'her residuary legatee and sole executor'. Clearly Pallas was back in favour with the Dillons. Leet's Directory gives James Pallas living at Cottage in 1814. However, it appears that around 1821 the land and house occupied by the Pallas family were by decree of the court ordered to be 'let to the highest bidder for three years' (Freeman's Journal, 18 January 1822, making reference to Cottage otherwise Kilotheby).

James Pallas, on 23 December 1822, appointed his nephew Andrew Christopher Pallas to be his residuary legatee and sole executor. According to local historian Rev M.J. Heaney, writing around 1942, the older generation at that time still recalled members of the Pallas family in the locality.

Eventually the Dillon estate at Feamore went to a Cruise family (of Belgard, Dublin) and then, through marriage, to Dominick O'Reilly of Kildangan, Co Kildare, then by marriage to More O'Ferrall and eventually was sold to the Congested Districts' Board on 13th Jan 1916.



Inscription on the gravestone of Denis Dunn in the Friary Graveyard. It reads: O Lord have Mercy | On the Soul of Denis | Dunn late of Brittis in the | Queens Co. Departed | This Life Nov 29 1799 | aged 36 years this | Monument Was Erecd | By his Loving Wife | Mary Dunn



# Seven Decades of Dedication

*Many men and women have left our parish over the years to work as Missionaries overseas, some of whom never saw their homeland again. Mary Josephine Mulligan of Hazelhill was one of these, spending seventy-four years of her life as a Sister of Mercy in Brisbane, Australia. As Sr. Mary Aiden she taught for over forty years, and then worked in parish ministry. Here is a brief outline of the career of one of these religious who dedicated their lives to the well-being and education of others, which too often goes unrecorded.*

In 1936 two Brisbane Sisters of Mercy, Mother Norbert O'Regan and Sister Mary Brendan Hayes, were travelling around Ireland seeking young women who might be interested in joining the Brisbane Congregation. When they got to Ballyhaunis they gave their usual talk to the students in St. Joseph's Convent of Mercy School about life as a Sister of Mercy in Australia. When they asked, "Now who would like to come to Brisbane?" it was fourteen year old Mary Josephine Mulligan of Hazelhill who put up her hand. The Sisters must have seen her sincerity and enthusiasm, but as she was so young they arranged for Mary Jo to attend the Missionary Training School in Callan, Co. Kilkenny in 1937. She was there for several months when the Brisbane Sisters opened their own Juniorate in Timoleague, Co. Cork, and Mary Jo then became one of the first residents there.

On 11th November 1938, Mary Jo and three other young women left London on the ship Otranto and arrived in Brisbane just after Christmas. They joined the Congregation as postulants on New Years' Day 1939. Mary Jo was still some months short of her seventeenth birthday. It must have cost her dearly to leave her parents

and eleven siblings. But, having put her hand to the plough, she never looked back, and she was a member of the Brisbane Congregation for seventy-six years.

Mary Jo became a teacher, and as Sister Mary Aiden, she saw a lot of south-east Queensland over the next forty years as she taught infant classes in Roma, Stanthorpe, Maryborough, Gatton, Warwick, Southport,



Sr Mary Jo Mulligan

Ipswich and several Brisbane suburban schools. With her warm manner, welcoming smile and boundless creativity, she was ideally suited for this work. She loved her little charges and they in turn loved her. But in the mid-1970s Mary Jo decided it was time to leave the classroom and she embarked on her 'second career' as a parish worker. From 1975 to 1992, she carried out this

ministry in North Ipswich, Booval and Landsborough. She was one of the first members of the Brisbane Congregation to go down this path, and the first to 'live solo' for the purpose of ministry. Mary Jo loved breaking new ground! Her little home in Landsborough was her kingdom and many a 'comfortable cup of tea' was shared with all who came to her door.

When she died at Nudgee, Brisbane, 30th Oct. 2015 she was 94 years of age and had spent 74 years as a Sister of Mercy. She was sister of Nell and Bernie Mulligan, Galway, Tony and the late Bertie Mulligan, Ballyhaunis.



United Nations. Youngsters at the Ball-Pitch, Ballyhaunis.  
Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek

**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)



1974

## St. Patrick's Billiard Club

1974

## OFFICERS:-

President - Rev Fr. Moran, Chairman - MR. Tony Cribbin  
 Treasurer - Mr Kevin Barry, Secretary - Mr Michael Herr.

SNOOKER AND BILLIARDS STREET LEAGUE, ENTRY FEE 50p.

	<u>Knox St. (a)</u>	<u>Main St. (b)</u>	<u>Upp. Main St.</u>
Billiards.	1 Fred Herr	Val Byrne	T. Dillion-Leetch
"	2 Jack Morley	John O'Brien	Kevin Barry Capt.
Snooker	1. Eugene Collum	Michael Webb Capt.	Pat Curley
	2. Tony Morley Capt	Mike Webb	Michael Curley
	3. Freddy Herr	Tom Cribbin	Tom Curran
	4. John Morley	Willie Cribbin	Charlie Phillips
	5. Tom Mc Cormack	Ted Webb	Bamonn Glynn
	6. Emmet Keane	Alec Eaton	Davy Freeley
	<u>Bridge St. (d)</u>	<u>Clare St. (e)</u>	<u>Annagh St. (f)</u>
Billiards	1 Frank Webb Capt.	Cyril O'Malley	Tom Rattigan
"	2 Brendan Byrne	Bamonn Meath	Sean Freyne Capt
Snooker	1 Cyril Coyne	Vincent Freyne Capt,	Pado Moran
	2 Noel Waldron	John Dillon	Milo Henry
	3 Willie Coyne	J. Kilduff	Brendan Moran
	4 Hugh Curley	Brian Byrne	John Bjeesty
	5 Joe Webb	Bert Curley	Sean P. Tighe
	6 George Hannon	Tom Lyons	Patsy Keane

Draw: Feb 4th AVB Feb 11th AVB Feb 18th CVE Feb 21st DVE  
 " 5th BVF " 12th CVD " 19th AVF " 26th AVC  
 " 8th BVC " 14th BVF " 21st BVD " 28th DVF  
 " 15th AVD " 22nd CVP Mar. 1st BVE

FINAL BETWEEN TOP TWO TEAMS ON TUESDAY MARCH 5<sup>th</sup>Rules

1. In Billiards 1st Player to reach 100 and in Snooker the winner of the frame.
2. Games to be started at 8.30 p.m. but players may arrange their own times from 6 p.m. on.
3. Players claiming "walk-overs" must appear before 10.30 p.m. on the night of the match.
4. In case of a draw between teams, play-offs will be arranged by the committee.
5. Captains should notify their players before their matches.
6. If possible would all players try to attend, and if unable would they contact their respective captains or opponents so as not to cause inconvenience to others. All participants on the teams were members of the club last year.

Any members who are omitted from the list of teams will be included if any of the above players don't play.

FEB. 12 1974



Marita Webb-Shannon (Devlis) attended the Mayo v. New York Football match in New York in May and met up with her former neighbour Tony Moran (Hazelhill) in Central Park.



Tony and Enda Moran (Hazelhill) pictured at work in Central Park, New York.



Above: Details of a Snooker and Billiards Street League, organised by St. Patrick's Billiard Club, in 1974.

Left: Main Street neighbours Tom Cribbin and Alex Eaton contested the 1984 Snooker Handicap Final.



Brothers Tom and Terence McDonagh (Tooraree) with their Uncle Martin and cousin John McDonagh, and their horse Tom, at Derrymore.



# Ballyhaunis: The Changing Role of a Rural Town

John Higgins

Some months ago, I was asked to present a paper to a Cooperation Ireland Conference on Rural Society in Transition which was held in Dundalk. As I prepared this paper from work experiences in many towns throughout the country I decided that the best location to get a real feel for how rural towns are facing this transition in a modern society was to pay a visit to our hometown Ballyhaunis, I did this early one Sunday morning when the town was very much in slumber land which gave me a great opportunity to take photographs along all the main streets of our town and then to consider these in the context of what I remembered about each premises as I cycled my way from Devlis to St. Patrick's College in the early 1960s. This gave me a great indication of how Ballyhaunis, like all rural towns has been changing over the decades. In this regard all too often now we hear the expression "this town is dying on its feet".

I hope that this abridged version of my paper amended to place a particular focus on Ballyhaunis may make us all realise why this is happening and more importantly to bring fresh hope that there is a way forward out of these current needs of our town.

As an example, in looking through my range of recent photographs I recalled when the town had:

- **52 licenced pubs where there are now twelve**
- **15 grocery outlets; there are now two supermarkets and 4 other convenience food outlets**
- **3 banks reduced to one.**

Other examples of generational change show:

- **Most of the local butcher shops have closed**
- **The former AIB bank is now a computer repairs' store;**
- **The former Ford car-dealership is now a fast-food outlet;**
- **The former Hillman car-dealership is now the local Credit Union;**
- **A main builders' providers is now an Asian food market while a second now houses the headquarters of the main regional radio station**
- **A small convenience food store (I used to own) is now an Asian barbershop**
- **The travel agency has closed, because of online booking**
- **Here, as elsewhere, we have seen the arrival and expansion of charity shops.**

## **What has caused these changes in most Rural Towns?**

In an Irish context, town centres have been declining and shop closures have been happening due to many diverse social and economic causes. Some business promoters blame the archaic business rates system for this decline; others point to poor second-generation re-investment patterns and fragmented ownership; others blame the banks and other public institutions for what is often termed "sucking the life out of rural Ireland".

A seldom-mentioned factor, which was indeed local to each town in its manifestation, and which did suck the life out of town centres was the mass movement of business owners and town residents from over-the-shop living and town houses to private residences outside of town boundaries thereby bringing about the downfall of lively evening and night town centres and the death knell of the local evening/night economy and in-town community life. Other societal changes are largely outside the remit and influence of local residents. The recent recession saw many small and medium-sized businesses close due to outside influences. Also licenced premises have been severely affected by changes to the drink-driving laws.

Overall changing consumer preferences and lifestyles mean that we have to apply fresh proactive thinking to how our towns can survive. Small towns will never again return to be traditional trading and market towns of the past as there is a much larger phenomenon sweeping the consumer world which has had and will continue to have, a greater effect. All towns with smaller populations have been adversely affected by the dramatic structural change to the retail industry, evidenced by changing consumer behavior and driven by technology. This is now termed "the fourth industrial revolution" and has brought about a blurring of the real world with the technological world. The current models of retailing no longer have any real purpose and are gradually being consigned to history. In general, rural towns now have too many of the same type of shops. This gradual creeping change is global in its function and is driven by consumer behaviour, enabled through technology and a connected global economy. The fact is that Irish on-line shopping accounted for a whopping €5 billion euro in 2017, a ten-fold increase in a decade. Traditional anchors such as banks, clothing and shoe shops and pubs have been disappearing. Town centers are now being filled by health and beauty businesses – nail salons; tattoo parlours; barber shops and charity shops all offering





The Square, Ballyhaunis, 1973.



customer experiences rather than just products. The discount market is now saturated by pound shops and convenience stores.

### **What makes for a good Town Centre?**

Future towns must now be seen as communities of people who create economic value to the place where they live. The economic health of a town comes from the volume and value of its people. Towns now must start to repurpose themselves from shops and outlets once solely for goods transaction to opportunities for the experiential consumption of services such as differentiated cafes and restaurants, health and fitness centres, beauty services. Towns must now become community convenience centres where the customer will visit for the “quick-buy” and the essential local services. The new generation of shoppers in search of high-end goods will travel to larger retail destinations or more frequently in the future will seek out such purchases on-line.

It is in this context that Ballyhaunis Town Centre should be first and foremost about community where the hustle and bustle, convivial hubbub and optimistic energy and creativity will bring people together to share, to succeed and to have fun. To achieve all this however requires more local job opportunities and increased all-day footfall in the town, combined with well organised and frequent events in the town centre organised by active local leadership.

### **So to Ballyhaunis: The positives**

As I watch from a distance, I am very proud of many recent achievements and community initiatives that are apparent and which I hear about when I get the all-too-seldom visiting opportunities. As I drive under the railway bridge one delights at the thought that The Abbey Trust are keeping the buildings and grounds as a good community resource, a prime example of working in cooperation with Mayo County Council as so too is the recent refurbishment of the Parochial hall, once the alternative cinema under Michael Mc Greal. One notes too the good work of the local Tidy Towns Committee (as a former member I recall driving Frank Leonards Tractor as our float in the parades); the Christmas Lights Committee; Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce and in particular the good work of a handful of young business people who are adapting their business models to meet modern challenges. The strong sporting organisations are also playing key community roles while the GAA Centre of Excellence keeps the town name to the fore.

### **The Challenges**

After more than thirty years working on small town development, I am fully convinced that breathing new life into small rural towns will not happen without the

direct and active weekly involvement of the Local Authority strongly supported by local community activists. This involves intense community and creative planning by the local authority working alongside local leadership. Local Authorities have to take proactive positive action in ensuring that dereliction is gradually erased from our streetscapes. “Putting People First” is a policy of the Department of Local Government and is meant to witness the direct input by each local authority into local towns and communities. Ballyhaunis now needs increased and direct Local Authority involvement.

The challenge for the local community is to come out and offer support to the handful of young business people who are trying to keep the town ‘breathing’. This means that all business people; all those providing professional services; all publicly employed workers need to become the face of this drive to make “our town great again”. Our town has always been noted for the ability of local businesses to generate local jobs. But more is needed. Once again there is a need for this current generation of young adults to “step up to the plate” and take a leadership role in harnessing voluntary input to increase the rate of local job creation. Too often modern societal demands on our time manifests itself in the form of a depleted civic spirit, as people are too tired or too busy to engage in community structures. Thus, we need to nurture local leadership capacity.

Ballyhaunis like many others has become too dependent on being a commuter town whereby we depend on other centres to create the extra levels of employment to survive. A commuting public is a tired public lacking in energy for local community involvement which is needed to once again promote day-long local footfall. Likewise, we need to get more in-town footfall from the commuters who come to Ballyhaunis to find employment. In harnessing volunteerism and in generating local jobs, there is a need for innovation and creativity. Instead of bemoaning how the faces of our town are changing, many towns are harnessing and capitalising on their ethnic diversity, and immigrants are to the fore in establishing new businesses. Most towns have increasingly diverse populations, and ethnic diversity brings new business opportunities, as well as increased levels of entrepreneurship. This is a particular challenge for Ballyhaunis with our diverse ethnic, cultural and social mix and it demands an integrated whole of community response.

In this respect, I refer to such an initiative promoted by Roscommon County Council, with which my company was privileged to be involved. This integrated and incremental planning process led to the establishment of Town Teams in its six principal centres. Each Town Team has been challenged to deliver at least





Main Street, Ballyhaunis, 2019. Photo by Sylwia Buczak.

one specific development hub. These development hubs are in various stages of development. For instance, Ballaghaderreen is working on the establishment of a creative hub; Boyle a tourism hub; Castlerea, a food training and incubation hub. Local authority support both in planning and finances are integral to this development process. This initiative is now being fully supported through the vision of Minister Michael Ring and his department's 'Rural Regeneration Programme'.

A similar opportunity now exists through many central government funding initiatives for Ballyhaunis to commence the process of providing a well-designed town centre plaza centered on the town square. The immediate town center should be a connective space for activities and weekly social events to draw people and

make them crave to be involved in this social space. This will offer a social experience and the opportunity to meet our neighbours in a well-tempered harmonious environment.

In short local-level planning and strengthened community engagement, supported by central government and local authority community funding programmes which are readily available is integral to the future of our town in this prolonged period of transition.

*John Higgins is manager of his own company called JH Public Affairs which specialises in town and community development with emphasis on Social Enterprises. Over the past five years he has worked with small towns in counties Kildare; Meath; Longford; Roscommon and Galway.*

## Ballyhaunis Library

CLARE ST., BALLYHAUNIS

### Opening Hours

Mondays & Thursdays: Closed

Tuesdays & Wednesdays: 12 noon - 7 pm

Fridays & Saturdays: 11 am - 4 pm

*Photo by Adam Kaczmarek Photography*







**Children who took part in the 'Summer Stars Reading Adventure' at Ballyhaunis Library, 2019.**

Also in the photograph are Cllr. John Cribbin, who presented the children with their Certificates and Medals; Eleanor Freyne (Librarian, Ballyhaunis), Mary Gannon, Bridie Wimsey (Librarian, Kiltimagh) and Darina Molloy (Senior Executive Librarian). *Glynn's Photography, Castlerea*

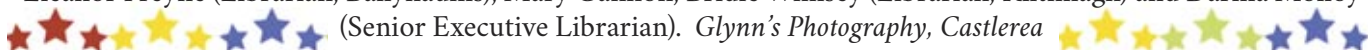






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**Former team-mates and mentors meet up at a recent wedding.** L-R: John Prenty, Paul Walsh, Aidan Fitzmaurice, John Gallagher, Enda Griffin, Kevin Gallagher, Conor Mulrennan, Seamus O'Dwyer, Niall Prenty, Kevin Nestor, Michael Gallagher, Martin Finan.



# Annagh Wheelers 2019

Darragh Delaney

2019 has been another busy year in Annagh Wheelers. We welcomed new members, hosted several events and participated in races and sportives all over the country.

Since 2016, the Club has continued to track total club mileage on a weekly basis with the target to reach a total of 1,000,000kms cycled. If the current rate of mileage continues we are on target to hit the million kilometre mark by the end of 2020. It would be a good year to join our club and be part of the effort.

It was another busy year on the racing front. Earlier in the year we again hosted a round of the Mayo Cycling league. We modified the course this year, so the finish was on the new road in Ballyhaunis. First over the line was Francis Tougher from Cunga Cycling Club with our own Eoin Waldron in second place. Overall Annagh Wheelers finished 4th in the 2019 Mayo League which is a good achievement as there are a lot of larger clubs out there in Mayo. Eoin Waldron moved up to A3 after several solid performances including a 4th at the Cong open race.

We hosted the Mayo Championship race in August. The event was based on 6 laps of Ballyhaunis to Began and back on the Claremorris road. Plenty of hills and feedback from the event was very positive. Winner of the race was Sean O'Malley from Western Lakes Cycling Club. Johnny Kelly won the 'King of the Mountain' competition at the annual Slieve Bloom challenge in September. This was awarded to the cyclist who had the best time for 3 of the events 7 mountain climbs.

Our annual leisure events were a big success again this year. The Tour of Mayo in May attracted over 70 cyclists with all three routes (100k, 160k and 200k) being well supported. The Day of Cycling in memory of Martin Connery, remains a popular event for members of Annagh Wheelers and other local Mayo clubs. Held at the end of August, the event raised €525 in aid of St. Vincent de Paul.

We are always on the lookout for new members so get in contact if you want to get fit and maybe even participate in one or more local charity or sport events.



**Some of the cyclists who participated in the Day of Cycling in memory of Martin Connery, 31st August 2019.**

L-R: Eoin Waldron, Paul Maher, Ger Slattery, Grahame Cleary, Pat McLoughlin, Sean Murphy, Ivan Freeley, Bernard Jennings, Gerry Madden, Jason Byrne, Derek Lynott (Ballina CC), Tom Phillips, Mike Cleary, Johnny Kelly, Billy Phillips, Sean Gallagher, Darragh Delaney, Joe Gallagher. Front L-R: Pat Freeley, Barry Glynn, Albert Morrow (Ballina CC), John McManus (Ballina CC).



# Abbey Partnership

Mark Godfrey



Anyone moving along Abbey Street in recent months will have noticed some shiny new exercise stations in the grounds of St. Mary's Abbey, also known as the Friary.

The stainless steel stations were installed and part funded by Mayo County Council in co-operation with the Abbey Partnership which looks after the day-to-day running of this historic property for the benefit of the community. A substantial donation towards the cost of the installation was made by U.S. based Pat Mulligan, formerly of Devlis. Much assistance in the consultation process also came from Elmer Pieterse, local representative of the Mayo Sports Partnership.

Chaired by Paula Geraghty from Mayo County Council and made up of representatives from local community groups, the Abbey Partnership meets regularly to ensure that the buildings and grounds continue to be maintained while also facilitating various groups who want to use the facilities.

Abbey Partnership staff member Mary Commons ensured the main Abbey building – the Friary Church – was opened daily throughout the summer. A guestbook of comments by visitors from around the country and the world attested to the high esteem in which St. Mary's is held.

The six-hundred year Augustinian history of the Abbey was explained to a large audience during Heritage Week by local historian Paul Waldron. During Paul's detailed presentation we learned about the various historical figures associated with the church, including the Wexford friar and talented artist whose paintings employed local Ballyhaunis people as models.

The Church was again opened for a special Culture Night of performances by local musicians on 19th September.

A monthly documentary film night organised by the Partnership draws a devoted following and we've welcomed people from nearby towns like Ballinrobe, Castlerea and Dunmore to our screenings. We had an especially big turnout for a screening of the films made in 1950s and 1960s Mayo by Brickens cinematographer Joe Gilmore.

Following a visit this summer by Deirdre Cunningham



Pupils from Scoil Íosa Primary School, Ballyhaunis, took part in tree-planting activities in the Friary Grounds during National Tree Week 2019. They are pictured here with members of the Abbey Partnership: Tom Forde, Mark Godfrey, Cllr. John Cribbin, Kay Curley and Pat Higgins.

(Heritage Officer, Mayo County Council) to cast her expert eye over the artefacts in the church, a cataloguing of the historical items is now underway by Kevin McGuire, a local man with a specialist background in genealogy and heritage. Abbey Partnership and Trust members Kay Curley, Pat Higgins and Mary Donnelly are also helping in this project.

Based in the Friary grounds, Ballyhaunis Community Garden is overseen by a sub-committee led by Pauline and Eamon Egan as well as Xanthe Pratt. We hope to enhance and progress Ballyhaunis Community Garden and plots, and there are plans to install a number of new beds for the planting of biodiversity plants. Biodiversity boosts ecosystem productivity where each species, no matter how small, has an important role to play; and greater species diversity ensures natural sustainability for all life forms. The Partnership aims to provide workshops and information on site to encourage the community to pursue this type of garden themselves while also showing the local schools the importance of biodiversity and the value of organic gardening.

The Partnership has done much housekeeping this year with a new document setting out our roles and goals. There is great potential for further use of the Friary as well as cultural and community activities. We'd like to hear your ideas! The Abbey Partnership always welcomes new members, ideas, suggestions.

Email us at [ballyhaunisabbey@gmail.com](mailto:ballyhaunisabbey@gmail.com).

**Chair:** Paula Geraghty; **Vice chair:** Mark Godfrey;  
**Secretary:** Anne Cunnane.



# Austin Biesty's Memories of Home and Abroad

Mike Byrne

For a good many years now, thirty-one years in fact, I have been privileged to listen to Austin Biesty in his home in Pattenspark, sharing his memories of times past in his local area, of Ballyhaunis, and indeed his recollections of times spent working in England during the lean times of the 1950s. Earlier in the year, I decided it was time to put pen to paper and check into the 'mine of memories' which Austin retains so clearly in his memory bank. With great help, and more than a little prompting from his long-time friend and neighbour, Anne Lynch (née Grogan) from Holywell, Austin was more than happy to recount his many memories, stretching back over the past eight decades.

Austin was born in the family residence on April 30th, 1931, a dwelling which has been home to the Biesty family going back as far as the 1840s, and possibly further. He attended Ballyhaunis Primary School where the schoolmaster was Bill Mulligan, and among his school mates were Cyril Foody, Tony Mulligan, Frank Glynn and John Cleary (Drimbane). Those were the days when pupils were obliged to bring in sods of turf to keep heat in the classroom, and also provided a means for keeping your bottle of milk warm for lunch break! After primary school it was on to the Vocational School (or Tech) for two years. The Principal at the Tech at that time was Padraig Forkan. He also remembers a technical school for girls, situated adjacent to Forde's Drapery, where 4D's Off-License is today, before the new technical school was opened on the Knock road in the 1940s.

Casting his mind back to the 1940s, he recalls the dark period of the Second World War, listening to the latest German propaganda report from *'Lord Haw Haw'*, entitled *'Germany Calling'*, beamed over medium wave radio in the house of Jack Waldron from a neighbouring village. Another memory he has from the war years was the voice of Vera Lynn singing *'The White Cliffs of Dover'*, which became something of an anthem of World War II. All houses at that time had to have blacked-out curtains, to conceal the light from overhead aircraft. Food rationing, of course, was a fact of life at that time: coupons were needed to purchase essentials like tea, sugar, bread and flour. There was, however, a sort of flour, commonly known as 'black flour', which was milled in Ballina, so called because there were flecks of bran running through it. It was in the 1940s too that Austin first saw a motor car, a Baby Ford, owned by Dr. Smyth. The first radio came into the house in Pattenspark in the 1940s, operating on a 'wet battery', as radios had to be charged up before the arrival of electricity to the area in 1954. Another big event came



Austin, aged 5, with parents Thomas and Lena Biesty in 1936.



Austin, pictured in his teenage years, taking time out on the family farm in Pattenspark.



in the 1950s when Austin bought his first motor car, a Morris Minor (IZ 8075) in 1958 from J.P. Freyne on Clare Road.

Recalling happy and jolly memories of the 1950s, Austin spoke of the great banter he enjoyed with friends and neighbours at the Holywell crossroads or up at the gate house in the evenings. This is where the real fun time was had by the local community in those days, as up to twenty or more locals would gather for chat and a smoke, that is of course, if there was one to share around! Here is where the news of the day was shared, and the gatherings often included a bit of story-telling. Indeed, story-telling was a big feature in country homes at that time. Peter Mannion from Holywell was a great man to tell a story, maybe not always true, but entertaining nonetheless. Peter, along with others, was a regular visitor to Biesty's home in those days, and he was also gifted with a fine singing voice: *'The Galtee Mountain Boy'*, was his favourite party-piece. Other visitors to the Pattenspark residence in those years would keep themselves entertained with a game of Twenty-five. Card players in those days included Pat Healy, 'Red' Mike Tarmey and Mick Caulfield. Ahh, the good old days of free home entertainment, before the arrival of the 'box in the corner'!

### Pattern

There were quite a few bakeries around the town in those days: Delaney's on Abbey Street, Lyons' on Knox Street, James Waldron's on Main Street, to name a few. A big attraction in the 1950s too was the annual Holywell Pattern, centred around the Holy Well. People would walk for many miles to the Holy Well on the last Sunday of August for a variety of sports, athletics, games etc. Local personalities like Brian McGovern, Mick Tarmey, Paddy Carney and Joe Tarmey did much of the work in order to have the site ready for the big day.

To satisfy the spiritual hunger, there were the Sodality Sundays: the men, women and children, each taking responsibility for their own Sodality Sunday. A favourite pass-time in those years, and into the decades that followed, was a trip to town to one of the local taverns for a game of darts: Bill Campbell's on Knox Street and Phil Hurst's (later the Silver Dollar) on Bridge Street, where Austin's playing partners were usually Brod Caulfield and Tom Regan, Mick Winston and Mick Hopkins, both of whom served their time in Gallagher's for a number of years.

Like many of his contemporaries of that time, Austin went to work in England for the winter months of 1955/56. Working for the first year in Borehamwood outside London, where he worked in a rubber factory making mouldings water pipe seals. His travelling companions on that first voyage were Martin Caulfield



Austin and Joan Biesty

and Willie Joe Boyle from Carrowkeel. The following year, 1956, he went to Chesterfield in Derby where he worked for the winter months (October to March). There were no less than eighteen in the digs, and the landlady was, by all accounts, very fond of stew, as this was the main meal of the day – every day! Indeed, it was an 'imitation' of stew as "you'd have to look very hard to find the meat on the plate"!

One record which Austin recalls very clearly from 1956 was a song called *'St. Theresa of the Roses'*, by Malcolm Vaughan. "I think it was the only record that the landlady had in the house, as she played it non-stop"! Before leaving to work in England, Austin worked for Mayo County Council, where he was earning £3-7-6 a week. Conditions in England were very appealing indeed at that time, where the worker earned over £12 a week, a huge improvement on the council rate at that time. Up at six in the morning to catch the 7 o'clock bus for work heading off for a long day's work. The money was good, but you earned it! It wasn't all work and no play though. Every Sunday night Austin and his house mates would head to the *Irish Centre* for a dance, and meet up with other emigrants who had made the trip across the pond in search of work.

### The Sixties

In the late 1950s Austin's father, Thomas (Sonny), became ill, and passed away in 1960, which brought an end to the winter work in England. He took over the running of the farm and operated it very successfully too, until retiring from farm work a few short years ago. The 1960s for sure was a swinging decade, and among the highlights which Austin recalls from that era were the visits to town – to the *Eclipse Ballroom* – and dancing to the likes of *The Royal Showband*, *The Clipper Carlton*, *Maurice Mulcahy*, *The Royal Blues* and all the top showbands of the time. There was a choice of two





The Biesty siblings photographed together in 2000.  
Back, L-R: Helen, Michael, Imelda and Catherine (R.I.P.).  
Front, L-R: Maura (R.I.P.) and Austin.



Austin with friend and cousin George Delaney.



Old Friends,  
Ann Lynch  
and Austin  
Biesty,  
reminiscing  
on old  
times.

cinemas to choose from in Ballyhaunis during the 1960s, The Star Cinema on Clare Street and the Parochial Hall on Main Street, both of which screened the top movies of the day. Without doubt, the biggest attraction for both town and country folk of this decade was the arrival of Perk's Amusements to the town. There was always great excitement when the multi-coloured lorries, vans and caravans would make their way through the streets to their base at Mac's Hill, now the Clare Street/Bridge Street car park. The popular draw for a brand new motor car was a massive attraction, where one lucky punter went home on the last Sunday night of the carnival with a new car – massive news in the early 1960s throughout the entire East Mayo region. The 1960s was also a significant decade for Austin when he married the former Joan Conway from Brickens in 1966. It was a relationship that began in Alice Lyons' famous sweet shop on Clare Street, a popular meeting place after dances, where countless couples at the time first planted the seeds of marriage. The couple were later to have six children, three boys and three girls, and later again to become grandparents and great-grandparents.

Into the 1970s, Austin began working for his first cousin George Delaney on Bridge Street, and this continued into the late 1980s. Here, he was something of an all-round man, doing the bar, working in the hardware department and doing the deliveries throughout the East Mayo district. Work colleagues at Delaney's in those years included Phyllis Madden, Seamus O'Hora, Davy McGuire (R.I.P.), Billy Toolan, Joe Brennan and Jimmy Hopkins. He was very much involved in parish and community affairs at this time too, taking a very active part in the Town Development and Improvements Committee in the early 1970s. He recalls, at one of those meetings, the committee were trying to come up with a suitable name for the new estate on Main Street (across from the parish church), a project which was the brainchild of the late Canon McGarry. It was proposed and agreed that the name of the estate would be 'Canon Gerard McGarry Estate', but when it was suggested to the late Canon, he said "under no circumstances"! It was later agreed on the name 'St. Gerard's Crescent'! At one of those meetings, Austin recalls suggesting opening up the entrance to Mac's Hill from Bridge Street, in order to allow traffic to flow freely from Bridge Street/Abbey Street to Clare Street, or vice-versa. The proposal was greeted with: "That could never work". A man before his time, for sure!



# Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group

Paula Grogan



Our community group provides 13 defibrillators in outside boxes situated at different locations throughout our parish. It is important that you know where your nearest defibrillator is in the event of an emergency, as often

when a situation arises, panic can set in and trying to remember where to the nearest defibrillator may prove difficult. The defibrillators in our parish are at the following locations:

Abbeyquarter	Scoil Iosa Primary School
Annagh	Joe & Kay Healy
Brackloon	Michael & Rose Nolan
Coolnaha	Ballyhaunis Golf Club
Derrynacong	Hoban's Gateway
Johnstown	James & Caitriona McGuire
Kilmannin	Stephen & Nuala Nolan
Kiltybo	Michael & Rosaleen Kelly
Knock Road	Ballyhaunis GAA Gates
Main Street	St. Patrick's Church
Pattenspark	Austin & Dorothy Biesty
The Square	Carry-Out Off-Licence
Tullaghaune	Shane Burke

The launch of the Ballyhaunis Community First Responder's Group is imminent and this group of volunteers will attend at potential life-threatening emergencies within our parish in the first vital minutes

before the ambulance arrives. Their role is to help stabilise the patient, provide defibrillation if necessary, until the highly skilled paramedics take over the situation. Our Community First Responder's Group will liaise with the National Ambulance Service who will notify the group of any emergencies that arise within a certain radius of Ballyhaunis. Community First Responders Groups are being set up nationwide and help provide vital assistance in their communities where an emergency arises and an ambulance is en route.

Our group also maintains the 13 defibrillators in the parish and they are checked regularly by volunteers to ensure they are in good working order and that the outside boxes are in good repair for the defibrillator units. Overall, the outside boxes have worked well in keeping the defibrillator units dry and none have had to be replaced since our group started. Our group also provide training classes in CPR techniques and how to use a defibrillator.

Our group is very grateful to the following who sponsored a defibrillator battery: Annagh Medical Centre, Ballyhaunis GAA Club, Dolores Byrne & Family, Communicare Healthcare Limited, Curley's Total Health Pharmacy, Dawn Meats Limited, Finn's Footwear, Fitzer's Bar, Major Equipment International Limited, O'Dwyer Solicitors, Scoil Iosa National School, St. Patrick's Church, Western Brand Group Limited.

If you are interested in taking part in a training class and learning an important life-skill of how to use CPR and how to use a defibrillator then feel free to contact [ballyhaunisdefib@gmail.com](mailto:ballyhaunisdefib@gmail.com).

## Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee

Martina Gavin, Secretary

Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee would like to thank everyone for their continued financial support to the upkeep and maintenance of Ballyhaunis Cemetery. This continuous support ensures the Cemetery is maintained to a high standard.

There is a detailed map at the back of the Cemetery which can also be viewed online at [www.irishgraveyards.ie](http://www.irishgraveyards.ie)

There is also a donation link on this website through paypal, giving anyone an opportunity to donate directly to Ballyhaunis Cemetery, just click on "Donate Directly to Ballyhaunis Cemetery".







Pictured at the wedding in Coventry (June 2019) of Ryan Keane, grandson of Bernard Keane formerly of Annagh, Ballyhaunis.  
L-R: Caroline Newey, Teresa Keane, Michelle Molloy, Bernard Keane, Anne-Marie Heeley, Emmett Keane, Martin Grogan, Audrey Montgomery, Mary Grogan and Donna Keane.



**The Levins family of Clare St., Ballyhaunis, had a most enjoyable Gathering at the Salthill Hotel, Galway, on Saturday, 17th Aug. 2019, during which some milestone family birthdays were celebrated.**

Back, L-R: Ronan Henderson, Bridie Levins, Paula Henderson (nee Bredin), Micheal Crawford, Triona Crawford (nee Bredin), Sinead Staunton (nee Bredin), Maria Lyons, Colette Gonzalez (nee Monks), Olive Lyons (nee Levins), Marina Campion (nee Levins), Laura Campion, Josephine Bredin (nee Levins), John Potter, Hannah Potter, Dan Bowden, Kathryn Potter, Barbara Potter (nee Levins), Angela Monks (nee Levins), Tom Bredin, Bridie Levins, Deirdre Campbell (nee Bredin), Fiona Bowden (nee Monks), Caroline Byron (nee Levins).

Front, L-R: Rachel Staunton, Emma Crawford, Tara Henderson, Beatriz Gonzalez, Luke Crawford, Leah Crawford, Amy Staunton, Niamh Campbell, Kieran Campbell. The photograph was taken by Victor Gonzalez. Colette Gonzalez (daughter of Angela Monks, nee Levins) would like to thank Fiona, Paula and Barbara for organising the weekend, and all those who came: "It was lovely for us all to get together and catch up and celebrate".





### Ballyhaunis Community School Debs 2019.

L-R: Shauna Lyons, Ashlinn Tighe, Stephanie Jennings, Lauryn Golden, Ella Dunleavy.

### Ballyhaunis Community School Debs 2019.

L-R: Martynas Plenkais, Martin Huffman, Ben Lynskey, Jacob Ubyck.



## The Station Cat of Ballyhaunis

Have you heard about the station cat of Ballyhaunis? No one really knows who owns this cat and so she has no name. However, we think *BallyPAWnis* would make a fitting title for this train loving feline. She has been hanging around the station for the last three years; she is a friendly cat and interacts well with all the passengers, especially the kids who all love her. She seems to know the timetable inside-out, as she turns up on time for the arrival of each train, where she sits on the windowsill or on the bench to greet the passengers. On hot days she likes to curl up in one of our disused window boxes to sun herself. She is a personal favourite of one of our regular travellers, a local man, who brings her in pouches of cat food almost on a daily basis. She is loved by all staff and passengers alike and hopefully she frequents the station for many years to come.

*This item was published in 'Go Rail', the journal of Iarnród Éireann, vol. 8, issue 4 (2019), in a section titled 'Meet the cats of Iarnród Éireann'. Submitted to 'Annagh' by Kevin McGuire.*





# The Abbey Pattern 2019



A bird's-eye view of Pattern Day in the Friary Field, 2019. Adam Kaczmarek Photography.

The 2019 Abbey Pattern proved to be a great family day out which was enjoyed by the hundreds of people who attended on Sunday, 25th August, on what turned out to be one of the very few 'good' weather days of the summer. Almost 200 medals were awarded to children and adults in almost 50 separate races and activities.



Photo of 'Cooper' by JanaPix

The Dog Show once again attracted lots of interest and, with the help and involvement of Mayo SPCA, promoted positive messages about caring for our animals and those that have been abandoned or mistreated.

Bianca Pretorius, who has been the organiser of activities such as 'Taste of Ballyhaunis', provided this year's Abbey Pattern refreshments which proved hugely successful. This year also saw the continuation of the adult Tug-of-war – which had been revived last year – with teams participating from some of Ballyhaunis' largest companies.

Young people from the Ballyhaunis Foróige Youth Service volunteered to provide Face Painting and help at the gates. Ballyhaunis Ladies GAA volunteered to run the novelty events.

While all of this was going on, the children had a great time trying out the many bouncy castles and fun activities available on the day, including the children's puppet show, face painting and other events. Many thanks to Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. for celebrating the Annual Mass in St. Mary's Abbey.

Finally, the Abbey Pattern Committee would like to express its sincere thanks to all those local businesses and individuals who kindly donated sponsorship for the Pattern and to all those who helped continue the tradition by volunteering and helping out, on the day itself.

This year's organising committee were: **Chairperson** – Stephen Grogan; **Treasurer** – Brendan Donnellan; **PRO** – Joan Flanagan; and Marilyn Winters.





Above: In The Bag! Girls' Sack Race in full flight at the Abbey Pattern, 2019.



A Study in Concentration! Boys' Egg-and-Spoon Race in progress at the Abbey Pattern, 2019.



## ABBEY PATTERN 2019



Ballyhaunis Rugby Club gives it their all to capture this year's Abbey Pattern Tug-of-war title.



There were two teams this year in the Tug-of-war which is always a great spectacle at the Abbey Pattern. Major Equipment and the Ballyhaunis Rugby team battled it out with the Rugby Club dethroning last year's winners in the final pull of five. Both teams are pictured here. Back, L-R: Michael Jordan, Ruairí Jordan, Austin Finn, John Costello, Ruairí Caulfield, John Caulfield, Gabriel Gallagher, Paul Carney, Albert Madden, Luke Walsh, Matthew Mullarkey, John Lyons, Michael Kavanagh, Simon Griffin. Front, L-R: Aidan Healy, Padraig Carney, Rob Lilly, Patrick Gallagher, Fintan Crawley, Martin Walsh, Luke Geraghty, Declan Doyle.



# Ballyhaunis Golf Club

Margaret Dyer

Ballyhaunis Golf Club continues to enjoy the reputation as one of the best nine-hole courses in the West of Ireland. This is due to the hard work and diligence of head greenkeeper Jonathan Kelly and his staff in maintaining the course in tip-top condition: "Ballyhaunis Golf Club only closes when it snows". The officers and members of the Club would like to acknowledge all the work done in enhancing our course by many volunteers who gave generously of their time and resources. This work included the building of two new tee boxes, a practice net with two bays, erection of a wooden enclosure for our bins, strimming of spinneys, watering of greens and new directional signs on the course.

We would like to thank all our very generous sponsors and acknowledge that our club would find it difficult to maintain our competition calendar without such generosity.

In March the golfing year got off to a great start when the Club's Captain, Mr. Brian Phillips, Lady Captain, Mrs. Mary Lyons and President Mr. J.P. Kelly hit their drives off the first tee down the fairway to the delight of a large number of club members. The Timmy Lavin Memorial Cup was won by Karl Coyne's team on that day also.

The Junior Golf Programme was a big success this year with 106 juniors partaking of the coaching lessons every Wednesday over the Easter and Summer school holidays. We now have a junior membership of 43.

It has been another good year for our junior member John William Burke. He achieved a top three finish in many prestigious competitions throughout the year. John William has been specifically invited onto the Connacht under-14 coaching panel for the coming season.



As usual our three most prestigious competitions, Captains' and President's Prizes were keenly contested with the outcomes in doubt to the final putt. The President's (Mr. J.P. Kelly) Prize, held in early June, was won by Dermot Finnegan and Mariette Potgieter. The Lady Captain's (Mrs. Mary Lyons) Prize was won by Siobhan Herr, and the Men's Captain's (Mr. Brian Phillips) Prize was won by Shane Ganley. The Ballyhaunis Masters was won by Keith Higgins and Josie Folliard.



Conor Lyons (centre) receiving his score card from Captain Brian Phillips and sponsor Mark Curley, after breaking the course record with a 59 nett handicap 6.

The annual induction to golf lessons commenced in early May with approximately fifteen adults attending classes on Wednesday evenings from 7pm to 9pm. The tutors were Tom Prenty, Mariette Potgieter and Brian Phillips. Patricia Fitzgerald worked tirelessly ensuring the beginners were at all times aware of any changes to arrangements. As the lessons progressed members were very generous with their time bringing the beginners on the course to practice what they learned in the practice area. We were very happy and encouraged when six beginners joined the Club. We wish them many years of enjoyment with their new hobby. Lessons will commence post Easter 2020. Details will be posted in the local newsletters.

We remember Maire Burke, Marie Connell, Dr. Helen Cleary, Áine Whelan and Tom Fanning Snr., who died during the year. *Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a n-anam dhilis.*

Left: Siobhan Herr (left) receiving her winning prize from Lady Captain Mary Lyons.







Shane Ganley (right) receiving his winning prize from Men's Captain Brian Phillips at Ballyhaunis Golf Club



Keith Higgins (right) receiving his Masters Trophy from Sean Lannon (sponsor).



Best pals since school, these five met up in New York this year for the Connacht Championship, Mayo v. New York game in May 2019. L-R: Fintan Keane, Darragh Shields, Evan O'Dwyer, Brian Freyne and Bernard McHugh.



# Curley's Charity Bottle

Tom Caulfield

There was great rejoicing when the envelope bearing the name "Curley's Bottle" was drawn for the Ballyhaunis GAA 50/50 weekly jackpot of €800 in early September. Apparently, an unclaimed €5 was left on the bar and it was decided to use the money to purchase three envelopes in the GAA Club's weekly fundraiser.

Curley's Charity Bottle has been sitting quietly on the bar of the popular Clare Street hostelry for the past forty-five years and in that time many worthy local and national charities have benefitted handsomely from its proceeds. The Bottle was the brainchild of former Ballyhaunis and Mayo footballer John Doc Healy (R.I.P.) and Curley's proprietor Bertie Curley (R.I.P.).

Today, the bar is run by Ann Curley and the bottle continues to do its valuable work. Already this year Mayo SPCA and St. Anthony's School, Castlebar shared €1,370 thanks to the generosity of the Curley family and their customers. The current designated beneficiary is Enable Ireland and next in line in 2020 will be Western Care Ballyhaunis.

Ann's mother Pauline Webb Curley recalls that the first charity to benefit from the Bottle was the local St. Vincent de Paul Society which received £92 back in 1974. Pauline explained how the proceeds from the bottle have continued to increase every year since.

There have always been close links between the cosy Clare Street establishment and the local GAA club. In the past team selection meetings often took place and tactics were planned over a few pints in Curley's. Games were reviewed and post-mortems held involving GAA stalwarts like Mick O'Connell, Mick Tarmey and Michael Minister Waldron. Indeed the story goes that while players from the famed senior team of the 70s were under instruction to abstain from alcohol, one member of the team was granted a dispensation, an exemption from the booze ban, and was allowed to have two pints per night in Curley's in the week leading up to championship matches!

Curley's Charity Bottle has been a feature of Ballyhaunis life since 1974 and is a testimony to the generosity of the Curley family and their many customers. Long may this Bottle continue to do its amazing work!



**Ballyhaunis GAA**

**50/50**

☐ €2 each  
☐ 3 for €5

Name ..... *THE BOTTLE* .....

Address ..... *C/S Curley* .....

.....

**Weekly Draw**

Stella O'Neill of Ballyhaunis GAA presenting a cheque for €800 to Pauline Curley. Anne Curley is pictured holding the famous bottle. Tommy Glynn and Eamon Murren of Ballyhaunis GAA are also pictured along with Curley's customers Brian Hunt, Liam Gildea and George O'Neill. Enable Ireland is the current charity designated to benefit from the bottle and next in line is Western Care Ballyhaunis.



# Ballyhaunis Community Council

## *Growing and Doing*

Fionnuala Parr (P.R.O.)

Community Hall refurbishment, Local Link Bus services, Mayo Day, Heritage Week, Culture Night, Integration Seminar... it's certainly been a year of activity, development and growth at the Community Council.

Established as an umbrella body for different local community groups and dedicated to the promotion of community development, our organisation was a key organiser of the Heritage Week and the Culture Night. We enjoyed co-operating with other groups like the Chamber of Commerce to run these enjoyable events for the community. It was also very satisfying to host some of the events at the historic St. Mary's Abbey (the Friary) since the Community Council represents the local community on the Abbey Partnership which manages this remarkable property for the benefit of all. The Partnership is the executive body of the Trust that holds the property on a 900 year lease.



Above: Enjoying Mayo Day in the Parochial Hall:  
L-R: Sally Higgins, Una Shields, Cllr. John Cribbin, Breda Burke.

Right: Members of Ballyhaunis Community Council attending Mayo Day in the Parochial Hall on Saturday 4th May 2019.

L-R: Mark Godfrey, Fionnuala Parr, Mary Donnelly, Manar Cherbatji, Kay Curley, Michael Kelly, Evelyn Nolan, Tom Finn, Catriona McGuire, Ruairi Ó Broin.



Aside from our general monthly meetings we also have near weekly meetings of the Community Hall Renovation Committee to drive forward the renovation of the Community Hall (also known as the Parochial Hall) as a comfortable, shared community space. We were very happy to be approved for €230,000 funds from LEADER to help us complete extensive interior works to the hall. The funds were formally announced by Michael Ring, Minister for Rural Affairs, who visited the Hall on Mayo Day, a day of music, food and entertainment which allowed us to launch our refurbishment plans for the hall. Several months of consultations and paperwork were required before we could sign off on our plans and go to tender for a builder to complete the extensive interior works at the Hall. We hope work commences in early 2020 and look forward to a big party next year to relaunch the hall!

Always aware of the various issues over rural transport and rural isolation we convened a series of meetings this past winter to organise some new Local Link bus routes for Ballyhaunis. We collaborated with Sarah Togher at Local Link Mayo and the Transport for Ireland entity. Our meetings drew attendees from Brickens, Knock, Tooreen and Derrynacong among other villages outside the town. We finally celebrated the official launch of the routes in October, when Michael Ring TD visited the town for the Ballyhaunis Inclusion Seminar. Attended by academics, civil servants and politicians from across the country, that event saw the presentation of a survey conducted by the Community Council and the Chamber of Commerce.



In order to efficiently fulfil our role as management body for the Hall we switched our status to register as a charity with the Charity Regulator. We've increased our membership while also getting more things done in the year. It's been gratifying to meet people of all different backgrounds and ages at our monthly meetings. We meet on the second Monday of each month and the meetings are a great way to have a chat and to share ideas and views with people who share the same goal of improvement of our town and surrounds.

**Chairperson** - Mark Godfrey; **Vice-chair** – Michael Kelly; **Secretary** – Mary Donnelly; **PROs**: Fionnuala Parr, Rachel Cleary, Sylwia Buczak; **Treasurer**: Marie Cribbin; Ruairi Ó Broin.

Follow us on Facebook at 'Ballyhaunis Community Council & Tidy Towns'. Write to us at: [ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com)



Kilkelly – Aghamore - Coogue North - Brickens to Ballyhaunis (1st Loop) Currently in operation   adapted to start from Kilkelly		
Stops	Departs	Return
Woodfield (Kilkelly)	09:55	14:50
Kilkelly Village	10:00	14:45
Aghamore & Mountain	10:15	14:30
Coogue North	10:30	14:15
Kilgarraff	10:40	14:05
Ballyhaunis (Supervalu)	10:50	13:55
Brickens	11:00	13:45
Bekan	11:05	13:40
Ballyhaunis (Supervalu)	11:15	13:30

Killiunagher to Ballyhaunis 2nd Loop		
Stops	Departs	Return
Killiunagher & Derrynacong	11:45	15:55
Spaddagh	12:10	15:30
Classaghroe	12:15	15:25
Ballyhaunis (Supervalu)	12:25	15:15

Tullaghaun via Lecarrow to Ballyhaunis (Loop 3)		
Stops	Departs	Return
Tullaghaun	12:45	16:45
Derrintogher	12:50	16:35
Lecarrow	12:55	16:30
Devlis Cottage	13:00	16:25
Ballyhaunis (Supervalu)	13:05	16:20

Above: Local Link Bus Services to Ballyhaunis (route 796), every Friday Free travel pass holders can travel for free. Return fares - Adults: €5; Child (5-18) €3; Under-5s free. Contact Local Link Mayo (094) 900 5150 or email [mayo@locallink.ie](mailto:mayo@locallink.ie) to register for the service.

Left: Providing musical entertainment on Mayo Day: Richard Waldron (banjo) and Michael Nolan (bodhrán).

Below: Three new Local Link bus routes servicing the Ballyhaunis area were launched in October, after much work by the Community Council and local communities. L-R: Kay Curley, Mark Godfrey, Nuala Nolan, Bill Comer, Marian Regan, Padraig Regan, Frances Maye, Mary Donnelly, Michael O'Haire (bus owner), Noel Gavin (bus driver).





At the AGM of Ballyhaunis LGFR on 19th November 2018 the following officers were elected: **Chairperson** - Breda Murray; **Secretary** - Deirdre Browne; **Assistant Secretary** - Ann Cunnane; **PRO** - Nicola Walsh; **Registrar** - Frank Browne; **Child Protection Officer** - Stella O'Neill; **Coaching Officer** - Pat Tighe; and **Fundraising Co-ordinator** - Anne Marie Foody.

Under the management of Justin McDonagh and Michael Cleary, our Senior Ladies battled very hard on the field at Junior level. After only three years fielding a team at this level, these girls have put on some spectacular displays of football for their supporters. This year the girls finished top of the League and, at the time of writing, are through to the League Semi-final which is to be played in November. Michael and Justin furthered their management roles leading the Minor Ladies also. These girls were narrowly beaten by McHale Rovers, Crossmolina, who went on to win the Championship.

Our U-16 panel have endured some tough battles under the guidance of David Delaney, Sinead Coakley Johnston and Anne Cunnane. U-16 training for the 2019 season started on the first week of January. There were high expectations for this team following their successful season in 2018. The girls hit the ground running, winning all their home and away League division 1 matches, with the exception of losses at home and away to Westport. This has secured them a semi-final place in the League against Knockmore, which has yet to be played, where these girls hope to 'settle a few scores with these ladies'. The 'A' Championship campaign began with a first round away match to Knockmore. Unfortunately, it was not their day, and they lost by a narrow margin in a thrilling match. No doubt this team will come back better and stronger next year. Hopes are high for a successful end to the League campaign for this talented group of players who have fielded four players at county level: County Captain Erin Murray, Leah Johnston, Nikita Tighe and Mae Hession.

The U-14 ladies were managed by Mike Henry, Stella O'Neill and Justin McDonagh. Although it was not our year they have gained invaluable experience which will stand to them in future matches. These girls played their hearts out leaving all they could on the pitch during the League, where they played six matches and won four. They then furthered their campaign to a County Semi-final, where they were beaten by Belmullet by the narrowest of margins... one point. This is a young panel who served the U-13 competitions with great dignity

also. Again, we had Mike Henry showcase his managerial skills alongside mentors Justin McDonagh and Michael Cleary. Unfortunately, at this level, it was not our year as we reached the League Quarter-final only to be beaten. Onwards and upwards for this bunch of girls, where their gained experience this year will definitely result in silverware coming our way next year.

## Féile Hosts

June was a significant month for both these groups of girls and management as well, as the Club hosted a Dublin team, Templeogue Synge Street, for Féile 2019. Upon arrival on the Friday evening of the Bank Holiday weekend, it was out to the Centre of Excellence for the first round of games, quickly followed by games on the Saturday morning also, securing a place in the Shield Final on the Sunday, where we sadly lost out to St. Brigid's from Roscommon at Oran GAA Club. Although we left the competition empty handed, our girls gained significant friendships with the delightful young talented players and their management team from Templeogue Synge Street.

U-12s, guided by Aideen Murray and Marie Henry, had a hugely successful year this year. These young ladies successfully progressed to a Shield Final where it went neck-and-neck and, unfortunately, lost out to Kilmoremoy. The girls fought some great battles on the pitch this year and adapted new skills and techniques to the game. There's a great future ahead for these girls with such a range in ages and skills.



Tops being presented to Ballyhaunis LGFA Under-14s.  
L-R: Justin McDonagh, (Mentor); Treasa McDermott (Captain),  
Mike Henry (Manager) and Ja Henry of Harmac Medical,  
Castlereagh (Sponsors).





Gaelic 4 Mothers & Others 2019 on their first ever match against neighbouring rival St Mary's Aghamore.

### Gaelic 4 Mothers & Others

At the end of August our 'Gaelic 4 Mothers & Others' commenced. This is a national initiative developed by the LGFA to encourage participants in the sport for ladies aged 25 and above. It invites participants from both sporting and non-sporting backgrounds to get involved in this non-competitive environment. We were simply overwhelmed with the response we received. Right from the very beginning our numbers have been increasing with many of our players never having held a football before. The fun and enthusiasm this group of ladies displayed has been nothing short of infectious and a joy to behold. At the end of October they played their first ever match against neighbouring rivals St. Mary's of Aghamore who have also recently formed in memory of the late Amanda Lane Niland. Training for this group continues right through the winter between 6.30pm and 8pm, where new members are always encouraged to join and are welcomed with open arms.

None of these games and participation at all levels would have been possible without all members of our fundraising teams, sponsors, Chamber of Commerce. This year saw valuable money raised from varied events including Carol Singing in SuperValu. Another spectacular night was The Big Pub Quiz hosted in The Clock Bar which raised significant funds beyond our expectations. A great night was had by all: it was an event which was talked about for the days that followed. In addition to this fundraiser a very generous donation was made to the U-14 panels and management for Féile 2019 by Harmac Medical and Homecare Medical. These funds prepared these young ladies for the event with sponsored tops and gear kit all for the big occasion. Gratitude must also be extended to all who supported our Church Gate collections, Bake sales and The Shop on big match days at the pitch. All these funds, big and small, ensure that the Club has sustainability going forward and provide the Club with the ability to purchase much needed gear and

accessories for the girls to enjoy the sport.

All of the girls' achievements from 2018 were acknowledged on our Medal Presentation Night in January with all girls receiving medals presented by four-time All Star Keith Higgins in recognition of their efforts, wins and participation in games. All of our successes and achievements are due to the constant support of the entire community and club. All roles in our Club are on a voluntary basis and without each and every one of you it simply would not be possible. Your continued hard work and dedication is always appreciated and will continue to further develop our Club.

We are constantly looking for people to get involved in our Club regardless of your skills, expertise or qualities. If you are interested in joining our Club you may contact us on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/BallyhaunisLGFA](https://www.facebook.com/BallyhaunisLGFA), email us on [ballyhaunisladies@outlook.com](mailto:ballyhaunisladies@outlook.com), or simply contact any of our club officers.

Finally, we would like to wish the entire Club, supporters, sponsors, and all the people of Ballyhaunis a wonderful Christmas and a healthy and prosperous new year.



Under-16 County Representatives from Ballyhaunis LGFA. L-R: Leah Johnston, Nikita Tighe, Mae Hession, Erin Murray (Capt.).





Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Association Senior Panel 2019



**St. Patrick's College, First Year Class, 1963-64.**

**Back row, L-R:** Tommy Waldron, John Feeley, Tommy Moran, Michael Hoban, Kevin Kelly, John O'Brien, Tom Caulfield, Francis Judge, Brendan Cregg. **Third row:** Sean Cunnane, Denis Hannan, Padraig Campbell, Andrew Forde, Padraig Comer, Michael Doherty, Padraig Carney, Tom McManus. **Second row:** John Gormley, Brendan Hopkins, Eamon McDonnell, John Carroll, Dermot Lyons, Henry Byrne, Michael Joyce, Frank Greally, Joe Byrne. **Front row:** Kieran Byrne, John Kilduff, Fr. Kieran Waldron, Fr. Francis McMyler, Fr. Patrick Costelloe, Fr. John Kennedy, Patrick Connolly. First published in *Annagh* 1988.



# Sanctuary Runners

## *Bringing People Together*



The Sanctuary Runners came into being in February 2018 with the aim of enabling Irish residents to run alongside, and in solidarity with, those in Direct Provision. The ambition was to use running to bring people together and to raise awareness of Ireland's asylum system and of the people behind the gates. Initially, the movement focussed on the Cork City Marathon and brought together a team of 200 runners for that run with a quarter coming from Direct Provision centres across Cork and Kerry. Since then the movement has spread to Mayo, Galway, Sligo, Longford, Westmeath, Wicklow, Dublin, Limerick, Kerry and Waterford.

This year 360 Sanctuary Runners, including Irish Olympians Rob and Marian Heffernan, Olive Loughnane and Claire Lambe took part in the 2019 Cork City Marathon. And the Sanctuary Runners also took part in events such as the Great Limerick Run, the Streets of Galway race, the Viking Marathon in Waterford, the Run Killarney races and the Longford Marathon – amongst many others.

The movement has partnered with the Parkrun organisation too and every Saturday morning Sanctuary Runners can be found at runs across the country. The Ballyhaunis Sanctuary Runners was launched in partnership with Mayo Sports Partnership and the group

Sanctuary Runners, Ballyhaunis 2019. L-R: Elmer Pietersen, Nomalanga Sibanda, Graham Clifford, Fahim Sahaboolea, Chipso Chipingwe, Nanzelo Moyo, Precious Lunga, Tracy Cunnane, Ola Mustapha. *Adam Kaczmarek Photography.*

is taking part in an eight-week couch-to-5k programme.

There are now 1,200 Sanctuary Runners across Ireland. Since the initiative began 350 asylum seekers have run in blue tops alongside Irish runners, most of whom had no interaction with Direct Provision previously. Friendships have developed and the groups have bonded. And the running, though clearly of huge benefit to physical and mental health, is secondary. The most important aspect is the act of bringing people together; of disregarding labels such as resident, citizen, asylum seeker and refugee, but instead treating everyone with equality and respect.

The Sanctuary Runners is not a charity – the focus is on solidarity, friendship and respect. It is not a protest movement but rather concentrates on humanity to all. It has been short-listed for a #BeInclusive EU award in 2020, one of only nine initiatives chosen from a long list of 144 projects across Europe. And there are plans to bring the simple, but impactful, initiative to other countries. To find out more visit [Sanctuaryrunners.ie](http://Sanctuaryrunners.ie) or email [info@sanctuaryrunners.ie](mailto:info@sanctuaryrunners.ie)



# Ballyhaunis – on National TV

During the past year and a half, our town has come to prominence on national media – this time in a TV ad for certain processed meat products.

For those who haven't seen it, the opening scene shows a young man, sitting down at breakfast with his parents. He hears his father read aloud from the newspaper how Henry Denny invented the rasher, adding that, "...his sons travelled the world to teach people how to cure bacon". Suddenly, seized with the urge to travel himself, the young man exclaims, "Dad, grab that globe! Spin it! Pick a place!" They spin the globe and stop it randomly at what initially seems to be exotic 'Bali' in Indonesia, but which turns out to be our very own 'Ballyhaunis'.

The young man is last seen sitting at the back of a bus, happily proclaiming to fellow passengers that he is headed for Ballyhaunis! *It can be seen in full at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aIVbyTgJ828>*



## Putting the Mayo Smile into The Daily Mile at Scoil an Duinnínigh, Dublin!



Frank Greally, Athletics Ireland Ambassador for 'The Daily Mile', was greeted with familiar faces from his home district when he went to launch the DAILY MILE along with opening the school's new multipurpose all-weather sports and play ground in the well-established and thriving Gaelscoil in North County Dublin this September. In Olympic fashion, Frank completed a lap of the new sports ground along with racing some of the children on the 50m sprint track.



Above, L-R: Múinteoir Brian Ó Ceallaigh (Bekan), Elaine Webb (Ballyhaunis) and her two children attending the school: Beth and Alex Ní Chondrúin, Príomhoide Nóirín Ní Laighin (Bekan) along with Frank Greally. Maigh Eo abú!



# Gracenotes

Miriam Judge and Liesel Ward

Our choral year commenced once again in the Parochial Hall in September 2018. To be honest, our first evening back to choir is usually one of chatter rather than singing as everyone is busy catching up on the happenings of the summer! We knuckled down to learn some wonderful and challenging pieces over the next few months.

The first competition of the year took us to our neighbouring Co. Sligo for the Sligo International Choral Festival. We performed well and were thrilled to be awarded 1st place in the Female Voice Competition and 2nd place in the Sacred Music Competition. The winning choirs from each competition are requested to perform that evening at the Gala Concert. Gracenotes were honoured to sing *Dulamán*, which is a wonderful piece composed by Michael McGlynn.

On a sadder note, we were heartbroken that our dear friend and fellow chorister Monica Murphy passed away in December 2018. Monica was a member of Gracenotes since the very early days. She was a much valued alto with a beautiful sweet voice, which she shared with many groups including Cantóirí Béal Átha hAmhnais and Knock Parish Choir where she frequently sang solo. We miss her sense of fun and mischief. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis.*

Towards the latter end of the year we were busy with rehearsals for our Annual Christmas Concert in the Friary. Our friends from the Abbey Male Choir and Ballyhaunis Parish Choir joined us for a wonderful festive evening. Gracenotes were invited to sing in the Thatch Cottage in Kilmovee on December 14th. We had a lovely evening of music with mince pies and mulled wine to finish! We held off till January to have our Christmas party. We were very well looked after by the

Dalgan Restaurant and enjoyed great food and of course a glass or two of wine!

After our Christmas break, we turned our attention to the Limerick Choral Festival. We sang in St. Michael's Church which has amazing acoustics. We were awarded 3rd place in the Sacred Music Section. We finished our day out with a wonderful meal in the Cornstore Restaurant.

The final competition of our calendar year was the Mayo International Choral Festival in Castlebar. We performed in the Female Voice Competition and the Sacred Competition but unfortunately weren't placed in either on this occasion!

We were asked to sing at the wedding of Lorna Kirrane and Kevin O'Connor in Ballyhaunis Parish Church. It was a beautiful July wedding. Lorna is the daughter of our very own Tina Kirrane!

2019 marks the 20th anniversary of Gracenotes! We will have to plan a celebration and report back next year! Finally, we would like to sincerely thank our Choral Director, Laura Brogan who continues to find beautiful choral pieces for us to sing.

## Officers:

Chairperson – Moira Stratford

Treasurer – Eimear Thornton

Asst. Treasurer – Anna Henry

Secretary – Laura Brogan

PROs – Miriam Judge and Liesel Ward

Musical Director – Laura Brogan

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

[www.gracenoteschoir.com](http://www.gracenoteschoir.com)



Brothers Kevin, Justin, Gerry, Tommy, Martin and Michael Joyce, formerly of Abbey St., Ballyhaunis, met up at the New York v Mayo game in New York on Sunday, 5th May 2019. Photograph by Robbie Herr.



## GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



**Congratulations to Mike and Mary Jo O'Grady, Moate, Ballyhaunis, who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on 15th June 2018.**

They were married in Chicago, U.S.A. on the 15th of June 1968. A special celebration to mark the event was held in the Cill Aodán Hotel, Kiltimagh on 15th June 2018, where Mike and Mary Jo were joined by their five children - Martin, Michael, Maureen, Annmarie and Eileen; twelve grandchildren - Chris, Brendan, Emma, Ciara, Nellie, Dean, Tara, Rebecca, Ryan, Conor, Kathleen and Michaela; daughters-in-law and sons-in-law - Eamonn, Kevin, Paddy, Diane and Mary Margaret.



Mike and Mary Jo O'Grady, Moate, Ballyhaunis pictured (above) on their Wedding Day in 1968 and at their Golden Wedding Anniversary Celebration in 2018 (left).

*Their many friends in the Ballyhaunis area wish Mike and Mary Jo many more years of health and happiness.*



# Ballyhaunis Community School

David McDonagh (Principal)



The year 2019 was one of many memorable events at Ballyhaunis Community School and the year that marked the completion of our newly refurbished and extended school campus. We congratulate Ms. Macken on her appointment as Deputy Principal and our best wishes to former Deputy Principal Ms. Morrison who has moved on to her new role as Principal of Sacred Heart School in Westport.

Once again heartiest congratulations to our students and teachers on their wonderful results in this year's State Examinations. Many of the year's highlights had their origin in the extra-curricular activities on offer at Ballyhaunis Community School. The promotion of these activities is an affirmation of our Mission Statement to encourage the holistic development of our students. I would like to thank all teachers and an increasing number of local volunteers who assist in fulfilling this commitment.

What promised to be one of the brightest years in the school's history sadly turned out to be one of the darkest. In January our dear colleague Anne Grogan passed away following a tragic road collision. Her untimely passing had a profound effect on the entire school community which reflected the very high regard in which Anne was held by all. Our loss is huge but pales into insignificance when compared to that of the Grogan and Keane families. Our deepest sympathy to Ciarán, Oisín, Odhran, Áine and to the extended family.

Everybody associated with BCS was deeply saddened to hear of the recent passing of Ms. Áine Whelan in October following a short illness. Áine was a member of the original school staff in 1977 and was a very popular



teacher of PE for over three decades. We extend our deepest sympathies to the Whelan family and to Áine's many friends.

We send best wishes to all readers of Annagh Magazine and especially to our past pupils as we look forward to a new year in confidence that BCS will remain a school that we can all be very proud of for many years to come.



Above: Transition Year and Senior Cycle students enjoyed the glorious sunshine on their trip to the 2019 Ploughing Championships in Carlow.



Left: Sixth Year Boys PE group had the honour of being the first group to play on our brand new all-weather Astro Turf pitch in September. The pitch is an excellent addition to the school's existing Sports facilities.





Our Transition Year students enjoyed a three day trip to Killary Adventure Centre, which included including kayaking, high ropes, rock climbing, archery, cliff diving and of course the legendary Killary Turf Challenge.



Ballyhaunis Community School Student Council members raised €730 for Cancer Care West this year. The school is proud to support this most worthwhile cause.





## *Christmas Eve in Tennessee*

Frank Greally (1975)

*It's the night of Christmas Eve here in the hills of Tennessee  
I'm just twenty-four and lonesome to the bone  
It's coming up to midnight, I know where I'd like to be  
Back in Ireland in the place that I call home*

*And I'd be there in the morning if I'd only scraped the fare  
But I left it all too late and moved too slow  
I just kept on pretending that I didn't even care  
If I missed this Christmas Day back in Mayo*

*There's music on the radio – a country Gospel song  
Like Hank Williams, I'm so lonesome I could cry  
I'm sitting here just thinking how things have gone so wrong  
And how I've just let all this past year slide on by*

*I had lots of good intentions at Christmas time last year  
Told the folks that things were working out real well  
Made it home for Christmas Dinner, joined in the festive cheer  
But the real story was one I could not tell*

*For things had started sliding in these hills of Tennessee  
I was headed down what seemed a lost highway  
The booze and bars brought comfort when depression dived on me  
I was in a fog and could not find my way*

*And I could not share with anyone, not even folks at home  
The way that life was turning out for me  
I was heading back to nothing, but a cabin on my own  
In a place I really didn't want to be*

*I told friends at home tall stories of wild times in Tennessee  
Tonight I know I just was saving face  
But I could not fool my mother, she knew instinctively  
That her youngest son was not in a good place*

*The folks will settle in to dinner soon back where I long to be  
And I'd call them if they only had a phone  
It's a Winter Wonderland outside back here in Tennessee  
But all my thoughts keep drifting back to home*

*I wish I'd levelled with my mother at Christmas time last year  
I can still see the deep pain in her eyes  
On the morning I was leaving and our parting it drew near  
And she knew what I was telling her were lies*

*So I'm sitting in this cabin at dawn on Christmas Day  
Another Christmas Eve now passed and gone  
I wish I could feel better but these blues won't go away  
I'll just sing a song and try to carry on.*

Image: Frank in front of the cabin in the hills of Tennessee, where this song/poem was written.



# Farmers Make a Stand

Paul Waldron

One of the biggest events in Ballyhaunis this year was the farmers' blockade of Dawn Meats on Clare Road. It was one of a series of protests carried out at meat processing plants throughout Ireland to highlight continuing poor prices paid by processors for beef cattle, and the need for transparency and fair-play in the beef industry.

For six weeks during July, August and September 2019 the gates at the Ballyhaunis plant were blockaded continuously, twenty-four hours a day, by farmers and their families. Numbers varied but frequently reached two-hundred, and on some occasions upwards of five-hundred people were present. They came from all parts of Mayo and counties Roscommon, Sligo, Galway and Leitrim, all taking time out of their busy day to stand in solidarity.

The main reason for the protest was base price (i.e. not including various bonus payments) offered by the processors for finished beef cattle. During the past summer and autumn this averaged €3.50 and €3.55 per kg for bullocks and heifers, respectively, falling to €3.40 and €3.45 at times. A study by Teagasc (the state agency providing research, advisory and education services to agriculture in Ireland) concluded that the farmer/producer would need to receive €4.07 per kg simply to break even. It is plain to see that prices, therefore, do not cover the cost of production and farmers have been losing between €120 and €200 on each animal sold over recent months. The beef industry throughout Europe has been suffering a downturn of late, but processors and retailers show no apparent sign of hardship, passing all losses back to the primary producer – the farmer. In 1995 farmers got 40% of the retail price for beef; today they get 19%. Clearly, someone other than the farmer makes money from beef. Furthermore, whatever the farmer is paid for the meat, they get nothing for other consumable by-products of the animal – the 'fifth quarter'. This is sold on by the processor, but none of its value gets back to the farmer's pocket. Little wonder that trust between the producer, processors and retailers is at an all-time low.

## Blockade

It began on Monday, 29th July as a protest organised by Beef Plan, a movement set up in late October 2018 to address concerns in beef farming. This gained momentum day by day and continued for two weeks until Friday, 9th Aug. when it was suspended as a pre-condition to a meeting arranged by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed TD, for the following Monday, and because the processors

threatened injunctions on the directors of Beef Plan. That meeting took place in Dublin on Monday, 12th Aug. between representatives of the farm organisations (including Beef Plan), Meat Industry Ireland (MII), the Department of Agriculture and Bord Bia. Curiously, the retailers were not represented. And even more curiously, price – the farmers' main grievance – was not to be discussed, following direction from the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC)! The meeting lasted twelve hours, followed by talks within each participating organisation through the following week.

At a follow-up meeting on the following Monday/Tuesday, 19th/20th Aug., certain concessions were offered by the meat industry, including: (1) the provision of facilities for weighing animals at plants prior to slaughter; and (2) the broadening of the in-spec bonus to include cattle of O- confirmation and 4+ fat class. However, with regard to weighing facilities, this would be paid-for by the farmer; while the granting of bonuses to poorer grading animals would benefit finishers of dairy-bred stock more than those raising prime beef animals.

Minister Creed said the talks "concluded successfully", while the processors were "pleased" that a "wide ranging agreement" had been reached. Farmers did not see it that way, and the blockades resumed during the week starting Monday, 26th Aug. This time, however, with ongoing threats of legal action against Beef Plan from the processors, it was undertaken by individual farmers acting independently. The processors and the Minister could now claim that these protests were unlawful and not endorsed by any organisation, potentially barring protesting farmers from any further negotiations.

## Meetings

During the Ballyhaunis blockade communication with management at the local plant was kept open and, by Friday, 30th Aug., it was agreed to allow certain numbers of cattle and sheep in for processing on Monday, 2nd Sept. to facilitate the visit of a Chinese inspection delegation the following day. Towards the end of that week plans emerged for a further national meeting on Monday, 9th Sept., though it was unclear if the independent farmers on the protest might be represented. In the end three representatives were selected countrywide, including one man who regularly attended the Ballyhaunis blockade. That meeting in Dublin fell through as MII would not participate until all blockades were lifted. Stalemate ensued. On Tuesday,





One night at the Ballyhaunis Blockade

10th Sept. workers were temporarily laid off at the Ballyhaunis plant.

Through Sat./Sun. 14th/15th Sept. a meeting took place in Agriculture House, Dublin, between MII and the farm organisations, and attended by the three Independent Farmers' representatives. A deal was proposed, details of which were discussed at each blockade the following evening. The positive outcomes from this deal were: (1) The introduction of an in-spec bonus of 8c/kg for cattle between 30 and 36 months; (2) an increase in the in-spec bonus for cattle under 30 months, from 12c/kg to 20c/kg; (3) the in-spec 70 day residency rule reduced to 60 days on the last farm; and (4) the proposed establishment of a Beef Market Task force. Ballyhaunis and other blockades were reluctant to accept the deal because, once again, it did not address the central issue of base price.

The blockade continued during that week, as did negotiations to get a fair base price quotation locally. However, following consultation with management at national level, local plant officials stated that they were not in a position to do so until all protests were stood down.

The Ballyhaunis protest followed others countrywide by standing down on Friday evening, 20th Sept. Further blockades around the country followed suit over the weekend.

### Other issues

The nationwide blockade highlighted issues other than price. Irish farmers raise animals under stringent conditions of welfare, hygiene and traceability, and undergo rigorous evaluation to earn Bord Bia quality assurance status. Yet, there is evidence that meat imported into Ireland – bred and raised in unknown circumstances – is processed here, labelled as 'produce of Ireland', and granted the same status. Also, certain conditions are imposed on beef farming which are of no benefit to producer or consumer, but which give processors and feed producers an edge in the market. The 30 month rule was introduced during the BSE crisis

in the 1990s to prevent older, vulnerable animals from entering the food chain. BSE is no longer a threat, the quality of a beef animal does not deteriorate after 30 months, yet that rule remains in place. Another issue of great concern is the domination by Larry Goodman's ABP Food Group of the offal processing industry in Ireland.

### Appreciation

The blockade got farmers and their families talking to each other. The interaction between all, regardless of age or background, was remarkable, and helped strengthen the resolve to bring fair price and fair play back into beef farming.

Practically every parish in Mayo and many in adjoining counties were represented at the Ballyhaunis gates. Beef finishers and suckler farmers stood together because one depends on the other, and a lift in prices for finished beef animals means a more buoyant trade for everyone back the line to the weanling producer. Numbers might have been much greater; and had they been maybe more would have been achieved, and sooner.

Well-wishers, businesses and private individuals from the locality and across the province showed their support by bringing food and fuel during the six weeks blockade. This was much appreciated and helped to keep everyone fed and warm through the long days and nights. The local Gardaí were very helpful throughout and the advice was much appreciated.

MWR covered the blockade sending correspondents to the gates regularly for updates, while RTÉ television and radio was also present on a number of occasions. The local papers also covered the blockade while Ballyhaunis featured in a number of national papers.

### Challenges

The countrywide blockades this autumn achieved some positive results, but there is a long way to go. Other challenges complicate the situation at the present time: environmental concerns where farming is seen as a major contributor to global warming; the Mercosur deal



which allows for the importation of significant quantities of South American beef into Europe; and the uncertainty surrounding Brexit.

To conclude, here is a quote worth keeping in mind, from Michael Kelly in the Irish Independent, 17th August last: "Irish beef is among the best in the world and accounts for more than one-third of all our agricultural output and more than 20% of total food and drink exports. The agri-food sector provides direct and indirect employment to more than 300,000 people in Ireland. Farming is more than simply an industry. It is a way of life and farmers are the backbone of rural Ireland as well as custodians of the countryside. The excellent reputation Irish farming has for quality produce comes at a price and the simple reality is beef farmers are not getting a just reward for their labour."



## Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club

Mark Godfrey

Busy club nights, tournaments and an ever-growing senior membership are just some of the highlights of the year at Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club. Established two years ago the Club operates out of the Community Hall, also known as the Parochial Hall, which has been a great venue given its central location in the town. The Club runs two nights a week, with Tuesday (6-8pm) reserved

for juniors, and Thursday (also 6-8pm) for seniors. We are lucky to have two dedicated coaches in Shay and Mark O'Reilly, who travel up from Kilkelly each week to help our members to learn or to improve. Some of the senior players who attend are of a high enough standard not to need much help and they're enthusiastically present every Thursday for games which are often of a very high standard. Workers from local businesses, including a large contingent of Eastern European workers, are among our most talented players. We also have some great junior players from various ethnicities with youths from all backgrounds mixing easily in our friendly atmosphere. Uniquely, Ballyhaunis Table Tennis club doesn't charge membership or any other fees of our junior players to ensure that everyone has access to play.

During the year we wrote to various businesses and we thank the companies (whose workers and their families are members) who gave us some support: Western Brand, Major Equipment, AIB and Lidl. Thanks also to Cllr. John Cribbin and to the Mayo Sports Partnership and its local representative Elmer Pieterse. Our main overheads are rent of the hall and insurance. To drum up some more support Club Chairman completed a sponsored cycle from Ballyhaunis to Thurles and collected sponsorship from friends and locals. Thanks also to John Nolan who designed us a lovely new logo.

Winter is particularly busy with queues for tables a common sight on Tuesday evenings. Everyone is welcome, follow us on Facebook or call 0873256133.



Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club members Kealan Henry and Chris Tan representing the Club at a Mayo Sports Partnership event.



## “Ganley is Doubtful”

### *St. John Henry Newman – the Ballyhaunis Connection?*

Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-1890) was canonised in Rome on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2019 in a ceremony that attracted much media attention worldwide. The story of this remarkable nineteenth century churchman has been well told, from his birth into a well-to-do Anglican family, his ordination to the priesthood in that church, his conversion to Catholicism and his eventual elevation to Cardinal. He achieved great fame through his skills as a theologian, orator and writer.

There is a somewhat tentative link with Ballyhaunis, preserved among the papers of Dr. Michael F. Waldron of Knox Street. He wrote about a man by the name of Tommy Ganley from Drimbane, Ballyhaunis who, by his own accounts, played no small part in cultivating Fr. John Henry Newman’s skill as a preacher and orator. Waldron could not establish if Ganley’s claims were true, but at the end of his account leaves his conclusions diplomatically open-ended.

“Tommy (Pat) Ganley of Drimbane, who emigrated some years ago (this was written c.1940, ed.) to America where some of his children were, and died there (it is said), was a very famous man, if the accounts he used to give of his life and experiences in England, where he spent a good many years labouring and gardening, were true. For one of his great yarns was that, while a gardener in the service of the great Cardinal Newman, His Eminence used to consult him on the composition of some of his ‘popular’ sermons.

Sitting in the garden, Tommy smoking his clay *duidín* (pipe), the great churchman would read over the manuscript of a sermon, paragraph by paragraph, to discover whether Tommy would comprehend the matter discussed. If Tommy failed to grasp the meaning, the Cardinal would pencil on the margin, “Ganley does not understand”, as a reminder that the language needed simplification, which would duly appear later on in the revised version when submitted to Tommy. If Tommy said he had no difficulty in grasping the meaning, “Ganley understands” would be jotted down, or in some cases the comment might be, “Ganley is doubtful”.

Tommy maintained that the Cardinal tried out on him the sermons he intended preaching to ‘popular’ congregations in order to insure that he would not

be preaching above the heads of the least intelligent. For if “Ganley understood”, anyone could understand.

Tommy, a small farmer and struggling to live and bring up a family on an uneconomic holding, spent many years in England. He was, when last seen in the district, a broad-shouldered, erect, well-built type of man, with keen eyes, and a luxuriant whitish beard. His dress consisted of a soft hat, a dark skirted coat of heavy material, corduroy trousers gathered up at the knees with two little leather belts, and large, hob-nailed shoes.

It is difficult to get details now about Tommy and his many fantastic yarns about the famous people he claimed to have met, and was intimate with during his travels in England and elsewhere.

If Ganley used to tell the truth he deserves fame as a collaborator of one of the greatest geniuses and churchmen of his age; and if he was not telling the truth, he deserves commemoration as one gifted with wonderful imaginative powers, and the inventor of an exquisite bit of fiction, as delightfully piquant almost as if it were really true.”

Fr. John Henry Newman lived at the Oratory, Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham for most of his life, through the second half of the nineteenth century. At that time there was a huge Irish population in the city, then one of the world’s greatest centres of industry. Many Ballyhaunis people settled there through the last two-hundred years, so it wouldn’t be surprising if Tommy Ganley had indeed found work at Fr. Newman’s residence at some point or other.

There were a lot of Ganley families in Drimbane in years gone by, but there is no-one of the name there now. Research is ongoing into Tommy Ganley’s identity, to establish which family he belonged to. Maybe some of our readers can help?

St. John Henry Newman





# The Corpus Christi Procession

Gabriel Smith

The annual Corpus Christi procession was held on Sunday, 23rd June 2019, following 12 noon Mass in St. Patrick's Church. The Celebrant of the Mass was Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. For 2019, the Parish Pastoral Council formally invited clubs/societies/organisations to take part in the celebration. During the Mass, there was an offertory, where

a representative of each participating organisation carried an item/object or symbol to the altar. The item indicated the significance of the history of the organisation, or the significance of the activities of the organisation. While the items were brought to the altar, a brief citation describing the significance of the symbol was read. The participants were encouraged to wear club colours, for example, jerseys, to add colour and atmosphere. Flowers would normally be given in prior to the event and scattered along the path of the Procession. This year it was decided to create a collage with them in front of the altar.



Following the celebration, there were refreshments and an opportunity to socialise for all in the Community Hall. The following are the names of the organisations and people who participated, along with the symbol of their organisation during the offertory of the Mass on the day of the Corpus Christi procession.

<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Person</i>	<i>Gift</i>
Faith and Light	Bridget Killeen	Boat
Cemetery Committee	Martin Gavin	Candle
Swimming Pool	John Caulfield	Lifebuoy
Quilting Group	Patricia Plunket and Mabel Finan	Quilt
P.T.A.A.	Teresa Healy	Award
Golf Club	Mary Lyons	Golf Club
Defibrillator Group	Orla Loftus-Moran	Defibrillator Unit
Vincent de Paul	Olive Lyons	Poster
Annagh Magazine	Seamus Mulrennan	Magazine
G.A.A. Club	Cathal Conlon	Jersey
Tidy Towns	Connie Gildea	Flower
Abbey Partnership	Eamonn Egan	Booklet
Community Council	Mary Donnelly	Document

Thanks to all who attended and the participants who brought up items during the offertory. Thanks also to the Deputy Principal of Scoil Íosa, Kevin Henry, for liaising with the children who received their First Holy Communion and who assisted with their participation; the many people who helped with the organising of the Procession; the people who helped prepare the Community Hall; and the people involved with the catering and tidying up the Community Hall after.





Stephen Nolan graduated with a Bachelor of Science (Education) Degree in Biology/Physics/Chemistry/Ag.Science (Hons.) from the University of Limerick. He is pictured here with his parents Stephen and Nuala Nolan, Kilmannin, Ballyhaunis.



## 60 Years

Congratulations to John and Meta McNamara, Brackloon North, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 26th September 2019.

*Below:* The Friday Crochet Group completed a project to crochet blankets to give comfort to children who are unwell. They were donated to Mayo Roscommon Hospice and they will be used within the hospice service. Our Crochet Group meets every Friday from 10am to 12 noon. All are welcome – just bring your wool and a crochet hook, have a cuppa and a chat. L-R: Rita Mooney, Kathleen Raftery, Maura Fitzmaurice, Elaine Cowan, Tracey McDermott (Project Administrator), Mary Hunt, Maggie Fitzgerald, Elaine Ellis, Tina Kilduff, Eileen Rattigan. Missing from photograph: Irene Healy and Margaret Allen. *Photo courtesy of Tracey McDermott.*





# Letters to *The Sunday Independent*

MURT HUNT

*Local writer and long-time contributor to Annagh, Murt Hunt, has had many 'Letters to the Editor' published in The Sunday Independent over the years, and has won prizes for lots of them. Here is a selection drawn from those published in the past year.*

## Old Good Fridays

Sir, What a beautiful morning on this Good Friday especially with the newly arrived swallows sitting happily on the ESB wires and the cuckoo singing its head off in the distance. Following with tradition I had to walk outside, on rising, in my bare feet whilst saying some prayers. Such a change from Good Fridays of the past though when crops had to be sowed on the day – of oats and barley – as it was a lucky day to do so, though it was the only work permitted on the day. Fields had to be prepared in the days beforehand to have them ready for the sowing. I was up early to follow my father as he shook the seed by hand saying, “One for the pigeon, one for the crow, one for the grub and two to grow”.

It was up and down that field for hours with the horse and pin-harrow covering the seed, and when I asked was that enough runs, the answer always would be, “Sure give it another run or two”. Of course the job had to be completed in time so that we could make the Good Friday ceremonies, walking again of course. I often wondered how many miles we had covered on those particular days?

No meat allowed in those days except fish, and in some cases dry toast and black tea was the norm, especially with the older folks. No shops open in the towns or businesses of any kind. No nails to be driven under any circumstances as we were told it was the same as driving the nails on Calvary.

Nowadays anything goes on Good Fridays: shops and businesses open, all kinds of work in progress, and the latest development of public houses opening on the day... and the day of fast and abstinence long gone.

I think they were wonderful people to observe those traditions in those far off days, and indeed they were very close to God.

## Two Laws

Sir, So the TDs have come up trumps again and are to receive an increase of €1,600 bringing their annual pay to more than €96,000. And it is set to rise again to €20,000 next year. And they have given themselves wage increases down through the years all hush-hush and brought in overnight. All this taking place while it is being debated whether pensioners will receive a measly rise of €5 in the forthcoming budget, or whether the

government can afford to pay the increase. All this where farmers had to protest outside factories to get their point across that they are losing head-over-heels in the price they are getting for their beef, with an average loss of €100 - €150 per beast from last year. There is also the question of women being denied their full pension because they took time off work to rear their families or look after elderly relatives and so missed out on the necessary stamps needed for a full pension – their loss approx. €150 per week. Nurses, doctors, teachers etc. have had to emigrate to qualify for a liveable wage. Some TDs (i.e. People before Profit) have decided not to accept the rise but they are in the minority. The Taoiseach and some ministers have donated theirs to the state, but can well afford to do so. Sinn Féin, to their credit, have said it is up to the individual to accept or reject the increase but recognise, “they are already well paid and this increase is not justified”. We also have the news that RTÉ presenters are being paid exorbitant salaries. They have been asked by management to take a cut to make RTÉ viable again, but there are very few takers.

Some firms have not paid an increase to their workers and pensioners in many years, while at the other end of the scale money is dished out to those already being paid far too much for the amount of work they do, and the amount of hours they put in. So, in reality, as we already know, there are two laws in this country, one for the poor and less well-off, and another for the upper class. And our TDs turn a blind eye, their main concern at the moment being Brexit, and as their own pockets are being lined, they don't seem to care about the victimised.

## How do we spend it all?

Sir, So the powers that be have finally this week given us pensioners the €5 per week promised in the Budget. Wow! What are we going to do with it all? Sleepless nights will ensue wondering, how in the name of God are we going to spend it all, and what will we spend it on? Some pensioner ladies will be going round the supermarkets with a swagger as they decide whether they should buy more washing powder, fruit, a tiny steak for himself or even a chocolate treat to celebrate the increase. Some men will be thinking of a small bag of coal or briquettes to help keep the house heated. Some of us old codgers may buy a pint of beer or half a whiskey to promote internal heating, backing the €5 increase in a lot of cases.

In truth the big question is, why does the pension increase not kick in at the time of the Budget, as do most of the others like the old reliables, and VAT, and various taxes? Why should pensioners wait six months to get their increase with only six months more



to wait until the next Budget kicks in? I suppose the Government, in its wisdom, would be afraid that if we got the pension increase for the full year we might go off the rails altogether, and they don't want that to happen seeing as us pensioners are causing them so many problems already living in houses that are too big, and living so long and all that.

### Yellow Haired Leaders

Sir, General Custer, killed with all of his command at the Battle of Little Big Horn by an amalgamation of Indian tribes whom he was forcibly trying to move to a reservation, made a massive mistake in dividing his troops into three divisions. He was completely outnumbered and outsmarted. This was probably his only mistake in a successful career as a leader in the American Civil War, but more especially in the Indian Wars where he excelled as a leader who fought with gusto, but also with a lot of luck which deserted him at The Little Big Horn. He was a showy type who liked to demonstrate his authority over his troops, dressing

differently so he could be distinguished from his troops in battle.

He was called "Yellow Hair" by the Indians on account of his long, flowing locks of blonde hair. Now we have two leaders of two of the most powerful world powers who also have yellow hair, but who now are following in the same path of destruction as the original yellow-haired one.

The Indian chiefs accused Custer of 'speaking with forked tongue' (telling lies) after reneging on his promise to finish his campaign against them. Now, once again, our two world yellow-haired leaders are doing the very same thing, and definitely speaking with forked tongues in what they say. They cannot be trusted and both have lied through their teeth in what they say and do. And both have got themselves into predicaments trying to force their authority on their people and countries.

As the Indian chiefs outsmarted Custer in that final battle, so also the other 'yellow-haired' ones may be outsmarted in their final battle of deception and lies.



Local cyclists gather up in Clare Street, mid-1980s. L-R: John Cleary, Bríd Cleary, Gerry Lyons, Margie Phillips, Therese Cribbin, Terry Coleman, Martin Connery.





Maureen Comer and Vona Waldron, outside Brendan Byrne's shop, Bridge St., 1970s.



The Bridge and Abbey Street, Summer 2019.  
*Photograph by Sylwia Buczak.*



Pado Moran, Sean Biesty, Irene and Francie Cruise, Michael Waldron, Phyllis Flanagan, Bernie Waldron. Pictured in the Belmont Hotel, Knock, 2002.



Jean Gallagher, Valerie Kilcourse, Geraldine and Michael Kilcourse with baby Oisín John, baptised at the Easter Vigil, 2018.



Maureen McGuire, Joe Freeman, Vona Waldron Moran, Gerry Cribbin. March 1978.



# Culture Night Notes

Ruairí Ó Broin, Anne Cunnane, Mark Godfrey

Some locals may have been surprised to see lights on in the town's long-closed courthouse in late September this year. Life came back to the old limestone building when a dozen artists moved in to set up for Culture Night, on Friday, 20th Sept. 2019.

Culture Night is an annual all-island public event that celebrates culture, creativity and the arts. Last year Ballyhaunis ran its first Culture Night in the Friary and we were astounded by its success and attendance, so this year we decided to spread the event throughout the town with events and exhibitions and music – in five different venues. The Community Council, Ballyhaunis Chamber and The Abbey Partnership and a plethora of (at this stage) seasoned volunteers set to work.

The Courthouse was transformed into an Art Gallery, by a team of our enthusiastic and imaginative volunteers, to house an exhibition of Art, Photography and Crafts produced by local people. So big was the display that another gallery had to be opened in the old D.H. Burke building on Upper Main Street. Both venues were staffed and open to the public for the entire weekend.

The Community (Parochial) Hall stage featured an afternoon concert starting with the Community School Choir with musicians, singers and dancers from people of all nationalities living in the area. Visitors also enjoyed an extraordinary selection of foods from different nations. The event finished with a fashion show and an introduction to some of the ladies from the Direct Provision Centre showing their beautiful clothes.

Across the road, Araby at The Dalgan, very kindly allowed us the use of their upstairs lounge to host a Poetry Recital enjoyed by all who performed, composed or attended. Down the town we had exhibits in Lyons' Bar window and an absolute gem in Forde's windows on the Square, with beautiful craftwork from the students of the Community School.



Cllr. John Cribbin (centre) performed the official opening of the exhibition of locally produced Art, Photography and Crafts in the Courthouse on Culture Night 2019. Also pictured are exhibiting photographers Jade Kelly and Gerard McLoughlin.

*Photograph by Sylwia Buczak.*

Were we finished there? Oh no we had a fantastic concert in the Friary featuring the amazing talents of local performers. African singing to country to poetry to traditional: few tastes were unsatisfied. They sent us home enormously proud of all that we have in the Ballyhaunis community, but not absolutely exhausted. It did not end there... The session was only starting and we enjoyed plenty more ceol agus craic in the warm hospitality of Fitzer's.

It would be impossible to name and personally thank everyone who volunteered, participated, contributed, performed, exhibited, donated (food, premises, time and effort). Míle buíochas go léir libh.

Please let us know if you or anyone you know (this can include artists, poets, photographers, singers, musicians, cooks, dancers, venues or anyone who would just like to help out) would like to take part next year and we will take Ballyhaunis Culture Night to even greater heights in 2020. Write to us at [ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com) and [ballyhaunischamber@gmail.com](mailto:ballyhaunischamber@gmail.com)



Ballyhaunis Photographic Club whose work was amongst that exhibited in the Courthouse on Culture Night, 2019. Standing, L-R: Sinead Tarmey, Adam Kaczmarek, Jade Kelly, Fionnuala Parr, Mary Finnie, Noreen Ruane Dalton, Joseph Kelly, Rob Finnie, Olivia Ruane Bailey. Seated, L-R: Gerard McLoughlin, Sylwia Buczak, June Duffy, Tony Duffy. Adam Kaczmarek Photography.



# Finding Edward and Thomas Phillips

## BALLYHAUNIS / CLOONTERNANE CONNECTIONS

An Account by Caroline Cantor, Amateur Genealogist

The only photograph I possess of my great-great-grandfather, Edward Phillips, is undated but shows an elderly man, seated and respectably dressed in suit and hat. He is sporting a neat white moustache and beard, and is clasping an umbrella in a typical Edwardian studio pose. His daughter Jeannie, my great-great-aunt, stands next to him. Neither of their expressions gives much away. If anything, I think I see a little sadness in both their faces - maybe Edward's apparent melancholy reflects a hard life, which included the loss of his first wife, possibly in childbirth, twenty years or so before the photo was taken. English census records indicate that



Edward and Jeannie Phillips

Edward was born in 1844 and that in 1871 he was married to Annie. They had a baby son and were living in Mile End Old Town in London where Edward was employed by HM Customs. It seemed a promising start for this young man - a small family and a decent job - but tragically the records show that by the next census in 1881 he was a widower, Annie having died just a few months before that census was taken. Edward was now

solely responsible for his seven children aged ten and under. Though his personal life had been turned on its head, at least he was still employed as a Customs Gauger. By the 1891 census Edward was a Custom House Officer living in Hackney and had married again - to a lady called Maria, an Irish woman who was fifteen years his senior. One can only imagine that Edward married Maria soon after Annie died as he must have been desperate for help in raising the children. Whether or not it was a marriage of convenience, I do hope that they shared a loving relationship and that they drew comfort from one another. The 1901 records show that Edward was still married to Maria, and that at the age of 55 he was now drawing a civil service pension. Two of his adult daughters were living with them in Stoke Newington, the rest of the children having left home, married or, very sadly, passed away in the case of the two youngest sons.

But the census records also hold a clue as to Edward's origins... In the 'place of birth' column in every English census in which he is listed appears the word 'Ireland'. Family stories that he came from Ballyhaunis reached me via an elderly aunt a number of years ago, and those stories also indicated that Edward's father was a farmer named Thomas Phillips and that the family was Catholic. These intriguing hints sparked off a strong desire to track down my Irish roots.

For genealogists, the loss of most of the nineteenth century Irish census records is devastating. Without them, finding any trace of my Irish ancestry has proved to be a slow and arduous task, but one at which I keep plugging away. Occasionally, information pops up unexpectedly on the internet, as was the case for me last year... Probably of no interest to anyone except me and my family, I came across the image of a handwritten document drawn up in 1866 on blue paper by one Thomas Phillips, confirming his son Edward's date of birth in 1844. The Edward in question required this legal paper for his appointment as an Outdoor Officer at the Port of London - surely this had to be my two-times great-grandfather Edward Phillips aged 21, seeking a new life in London with HM Customs after the hardships of a childhood in famine ravaged Ireland? The document indicated that Thomas was from 'Cloonternane', not a million miles from the Ballyhaunis of my family stories. All the names, dates and locations convinced me that this document must relate to my three-times great-grandfather, Thomas Phillips, and his son Edward.



PHILLIPS  
Edward  
62 1818

Co. Mayo, Ireland  
Borough of Limerick  
TO WIT,  
1. Thomas Phillips of Cloonernaun  
in the County  
of Limerick in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,  
do solemnly and sincerely  
declare that my son Edward Phillips  
who has been nominated an  
out Door Officer at the Port  
of London was born the  
second day of August  
one thousand eight hundred  
and forty four, that such  
event was never registered  
in any way & that the  
only document he is  
enabled to produce in  
support thereof is this  
my Declaration  
Thos Phillips

45582

Document confirming Edward Phillips' Date of Birth

This find spurred me on to look further back for more proof of my Irish ancestry. Griffith's Valuation was the first full-scale valuation of property in Ireland, overseen by Sir Richard Griffith and published in the mid nineteenth century. In the absence of census records, I was hopeful that the Valuations would provide some evidence of the Thomas Phillips who had drawn up the document mentioned above. And sure enough, the Valuations included two people (or possibly one

And I make this solemn Declaration, conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the Provisions of an Act made and passed in the Sixth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled "An Act to repeal an Act of the present Session of Parliament, intituled, an Act for the more effectual Abolition of Oaths and affirmations taken and made in various departments of the State, and to substitute Declarations in lieu thereof, and for the more entire suppression of Voluntary and Extra-judicial Oaths and Affidavits, and to make other Provisions for the Abolition of unnecessary Oaths."

Declared and Subscribed at Limerick,  
the 28 day of June one  
thousand eight hundred and sixty-six  
before  
Thos Phillips  
at Hagistown Castle  
M. H. Jordan  
Justice of the Peace for  
County of Mayo  
G. Baskill, Printer and Stationer, 74, South Castle Street.

person with two separate entries) named Thomas Phillips leasing properties in 'Cloonernaun' in the parish of Knock. Though I haven't found definitive proof that Cloonternane and Cloonernaun are the same place, common sense suggests that they are. The Valuations indicate that both land and property were being leased by Thomas, strengthening the argument that he was a farmer. That being the case, could I possibly have found my three times great-grandfather, Thomas Phillips?

Unlike censuses, the Griffiths Valuations only list the head of each household, so there is no way of knowing who lived with this Thomas Phillips in Cloonernaun. But the chances of him having a large family are high. Who was his wife, I wonder? And how many children did they have? Frustratingly, it's impossible to know these things from the available information, but maybe somebody, somewhere knows more. Cloonernaun was clearly a small place at the time of the Valuation, with only fourteen occupiers listed. Interestingly, there are two John Phillips (possibly the same person), and one Henry Phillips also listed in Cloonernaun. Could these be brothers or cousins of Thomas, or perhaps one of them is his father? It seems likely they must be related somehow, doesn't it?

Going further back into the Irish annals, I searched

CLOONTURNAUN. (Ord. S. 92.)											
1	{ a b c d e	Thomas Phillips,	Viscount Dillon,	Land & one cottage,	57	1	6	4 3 0	0 2 0	4 5 0	
		John Cunane, . . .	Same, . . .	Land, house, & offices,				5 11 0	0 7 0	5 18 0	
		Martin Walsh, . . .	Same, . . .	Land and house,				3 7 0	0 5 0	3 12 0	
		Michael Cunane, . . .	Same, . . .	Land and house,				3 7 0	0 5 0	3 12 0	
		Martin Jordan, . . .	Same, . . .	Land and house,				4 13 0	0 5 0	4 18 0	
2	{	Thomas Jordan, . . .	Same, . . .	Land, house, & office,	30	3	34	3 7 0	0 5 0	3 12 0	
		John Murphy, . . .	Same, . . .	Land, house, & offices,				3 7 0	0 5 0	3 12 0	
3	{	Thomas Phillips,	Same, . . .	Land, house, and offices,	14	2	14	10 7 0	0 10 0	10 17 0	
		John Phillips, . . .	Same, . . .	Land, . . .				1 11 0	—	1 11 0	
4	{ a b	Patrick Fitzgerald,	Same, . . .	Land, . . .	13	3	35	1 11 0	—	1 11 0	
		John Phillips, . . .	Same, . . .	Land and house,				3 12 0	0 5 0	3 17 0	
5	a	Patrick Fitzgerald,	Same, . . .	Land and house,	25	1	31	3 12 0	0 5 0	3 17 0	
6	a	Henry Phillips,	Same, . . .	Land and house,	8	5	0	8 5 0	0 10 0	8 15 0	
7	a	John Tymon, . . .	Henry Phillips, . . .	Land and house,	1	3	10	1 3 0	0 3 0	1 6 0	
			Viscount Dillon,	Cloonturnaun Lough (part of).	11	2	2	—	—	—	
Extract from Griffith's Valuation					Total, . . .	155	2	12	57 16 0	3 7 0	61 3 0

Extract from Griffith's Valuation



TOWNLAND.	NAMES OF OCCUPIERS.	Quantities in Detail.	Quality.	Total Quantity in Holding.
Cloonternane	Harry Phillips	13	13	13
"	dillo	5	5	5

Extract from the Tithe Applotment Books

the Tithe Applotment Books. These records were the product of a land survey of the entire country carried out in the early 19th century and were used to determine the tithes due to the Church of Ireland by landowners. There is a single entry for Cloonternane, namely Harry Phillips – surely another potential ancestor?

And this is where the good readers of Annagh Magazine come into the story! Living in Wales I have not yet managed to visit Ballyhaunis or Cloonernaun/Cloonternane to investigate in person, though I am very keen to make the trip in the not too distant future. In the meantime, can anyone reading this shed any light on my Irish Phillips family? Where did Catholics living in the area in the early/mid nineteenth century worship, and consequently where might they be buried? Does anyone have any insight into farming in and around Cloonernaun/ Cloonternane in the mid-nineteenth century? What is Cloonernaun /Cloonternane like now

(a google search doesn't reveal a great deal)? Is it possible that the buildings my ancestors lived and worked in are still standing? And are there people with the surname Phillips still living in the area? Anything that could add to my family's story would be so very gratefully received.

**Please contact me with any information at [carolinecantor@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:carolinecantor@hotmail.co.uk).**

### Postscript

And what happened to that elderly gent in my photo? The picture is just one tiny glimpse of a long and, hopefully, happy life frozen in a single image for posterity. I imagine Edward rising from the chair in the photographic studio with a twinkle in his eye. After doffing his hat to the photographer Edward headed out into a cold, grey London morning, putting up his brolly to shield him and his daughter Jeannie from the rain. And as the two of them walked home arm in arm chatting away, passers-by overhearing their conversation might just have detected a hint of Irish brogue in that old gentleman's voice.

Edward lived a long life, dying of heart failure at the grand old age of 83 in 1927. He is buried in Leytonstone, London in a plot with other members of his and my family. I hope to visit to pay my respects one day soon.

## I Remember...

I remember the corned beef of my childhood,  
And the bread that we cut with a knife,  
When the children helped with the housework,  
And the men went to work, not the wife.

The cheese never needed a fridge,  
And the bread was so crusty and hot,  
The children were seldom unhappy,  
And the wife was content with her lot.

I remember the milk from the bucket,  
With the yummy cream on the top.  
Our dinner came hot from the oven,  
And not from a freezer, or shop.

The kids were a lot more contented.  
They didn't need money for kicks.  
Just a game with their friends in the roadway,  
And the odd time, the Saturday flicks.

I remember the slap on my backside,  
And the taste of soap, if I swore.  
Anorexia and diets weren't heard of,  
And we hadn't much choice what we wore.

Do you think that bruised our ego?  
Or our initiative was destroyed?  
We ate what was put on the table,  
And I think life was better enjoyed.

– Murt Hunt, Lecarrow, Ballyhaunis.



2019 was always going to be a momentous year for Ballyhaunis Fine Gael, and so it proved. The Local Elections were held in all local authorities in Ireland on Friday, 24th May, on the same day as the European Parliament Elections. At our February branch meeting Councillor John Cribbin informed us that he would be putting his name forward to convention in order to seek a nomination as a candidate in the upcoming local elections.

On 8th March the Fine Gael delegates of Ballyhaunis and those of the surrounding branches made their way to the Dalton Inn, Claremorris for the Claremorris Municipal District area local election convention. Government Chief Whip and Minister of State for Gaelige, the Gaeltacht and the Islands, Seán Kyne TD chaired the convention. Three candidates were selected to contest the upcoming local elections: Cllr. John Cribbin, Cllr. Tom Connolly and Cllr. Patsy O'Brien. The large attendance was in total agreement that, even though the three candidates that had been selected were of the highest calibre with proven track records in serving their respective communities, there was a lot of hard work ahead to ensure their re-election to Mayo County Council. On the 17th April former Mayo County Councillor Michael Burke, Ballinrobe, was added to the ticket by Fine Gael Headquarters.

Even though the task of holding onto our council seat in the Ballyhaunis area was made immensely more difficult by the adding of another candidate and by the boundary changes of 2018 the Branch members, with the help and support of many local bodies, set about this task with enormous vigour and determination. Open weekly meetings were held where people of all political persuasions and none attended and contributed handsomely to the running of the campaign.

The Parochial Hall was filled to capacity on Friday, 12th April for the official launch of Cllr. John Cribbin's re-election campaign. Also launched on the night was a trifold election document outlining, pictorially and in prose form, his achievements and the investment he had secured for the area since the last election, thus illustrating the importance of re-electing Councillor Cribbin.

The tally people, press, local and national, civil servants and expectant candidates all descended on the TF Royal Hotel in good time on Saturday, 25th May for the count. As the two ballot papers, European and Local, had to be separated when taken out of the ballot boxes, it added more anxious waiting time for all concerned. It was late in the afternoon when the tally figures confirmed that Cllr. Cribbin had secured 1497 first preference votes and would be, for the fifth time, elected to represent the

Ballyhaunis Area at Council level. Indeed, it was a hugely successful weekend for Fine Gael as our four local candidates in the Claremorris Municipal Area were elected and Marie Walsh, Shrile, was elected an MEP to represent the Connacht-Ulster European Parliament Constituency.

At National level Brexit is still the main issue for the Fine Gael led government with our Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney, leading the negotiations in Europe on our behalf.

Councillor Cribbin is available to meet constituents at his weekly clinic in the Álainn Café and Bar, Bridge St, Ballyhaunis at 10am each Tuesday and by appointment at a time and place of their convenience. John can also be contacted at 087-2920368.

Ballyhaunis Fine Gael would like to wish everybody a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

## Thirty Years Ago



The winner of the Ballyhaunis Rehab Pub Talent Contest in 1989 was Geraldine Coleman, representing Ronan's of Began. She sang a beautiful rendition of 'Song for Ireland' accompanied by guitarist Vinnie Kelly. The Final took place in The Manor House Hotel, Ballyhaunis, on Friday night, 1st December 1989. First prize was two return tickets to London plus £200 spending money. Standing, L-R: Mick O'Grady (Connaught Scaffolding, sponsor), Breege Tighe (Ryanair), Mick Murray (Connaught Scaffolding, sponsor). Seated: Vinnie Kelly, Geraldine Coleman, Anne Ronan.



# BALLYHAUNIS PAROCHIAL HALL.

## APPEAL.

With the cordial approval of His Grace the Archbishop of Tuam, Most Rev. Dr. Gilmartin, it has been decided to undertake in Ballyhaunis the erection of a Parochial Hall, which will be in keeping with the other parochial institutions, religious, and educational.

This decision was reached after mature deliberation at a large and representative meeting of the parishioners, held under the Chairmanship of Very Rev. G. J. Prendergast, P.P., on January 30th, 1939, when executive officers and a Committee were appointed.

For many years the necessity for providing a suitable public hall has been exercising the minds of the clergy and laity, and several praiseworthy attempts have been made from time to time to meet the requirements of the situation, but without satisfactory results.

It would seem to be reserved, in the Providence of God, for the present generation to undertake and accomplish this necessary work—more necessary now than ever before for very obvious reasons.

That this populous and progressive parish needs a permanent centre with adequate facilities for social intercourse, cultural improvement and healthy recreation under responsible supervision and moral guidance admits of no second opinion. The time has come and the opportunity has arisen for filling the gap in our parochial institutions and the public amenities of our town and parish.

The future Parochial Hall will be a feature worthy in every way of the parish and the town—worthy of the best traditions of a Catholic people, their loyalty to the Church, and their generosity.

The parishioners are determined to co-operate with their zealous pastor in this laudable undertaking to the fullest extent of their power, even as they and their predecessors did in the past, when the late Canon Canning of saintly memory embarked on his vast building enterprises.

And, as in the past too, our exiled children will, we feel confident, do their part in helping on the good work for the credit and benefit of their native parish.

In that hope and expectation we earnestly appeal to you to be as generous as you can afford. Your name has been specially recommended to the Committee as that of one disposed to assist a worthy project relating to the Faith, Culture, and Morality of our people.

We sincerely trust that this appeal to your generosity will not be in vain.

It is our desire to start work with as little delay as possible, and the sooner contributions are sent in the sooner this can be done. Subscriptions, which will be duly acknowledged, may be forwarded to Very Rev. G. J. Prendergast, P.P., Parochial House, Ballyhaunis, President, or to any of the following members of the Committee:—

Rev H. Curley, C.C., Ballyhaunis; Rev. T. Burke, C.C., do.; John Dillon-Leetch, Solicitor, do.; Austin J. Crean, Sheriff, do.; Dr. Andrew F. Smyth, do.; Michael O Clery, T.D., Solicitor, do.; James Waldron, do.; Bernard T. Lynch, do.; John Gallagher, do.; Thomas O'Boyle, do.; Peter Hannon, do.; James Byrne, do.; Thomas Coyne, do.; Thomas Cunningham, do.; P. J. Caulfield, do.; Austin Jordan, do.; Michael Curley, Clare St., do.; Patrick Neary, do.; Patrick O'Brien, do.; Michael Griffin, do.; P. P. Waldron, M.P.S.I., do.; Michael Kenny, do.; Thomas Morley, Kilmannin, do.; Thomas Lyons, do.; P. Gill, do.; Patrick Freeley, do.; Michael Curley, M.P.S.I., do.; Albert Madden, do.; J. E. Dynes, Postmaster, do.; Michael Hannon, Toher, do.; Michael Culliney, Mountain, do.; Patrick Regan, Lisbane, do.; Thomas Sloyan, Brackloon, do.; John Freeley, Brackloon, do.; John Fitzmaurice, Junr., Derrynacong, do.; Patrick Regan, Killinagher, do.; Luke Lyons, Clossaroe, do.; Martin McHale, Leowe, do.; Dominick Geraghty, Leowe, do.; James Gildea, Tullaghaune, do.; Michael Mullarkey, Tullaghaune, do.; James Finnegan, Bargariff, do.; Anthony Cribben, Lecarrow, do.; Michael Waldron, Johnstown, do.; Thomas Boyle, Bunadubber, do.; Thomas Freeley, Knockbrack, do.; John J. Coyne, Cherryfield, do.; Patrick Lowry, Drimbane, do.; James Forde, Hazelhill, do.; Patrick Healy, P.C., Holywell, do.; Michael Biesty, Carrowkeel, do.; Bernard Niland, Island, do.; James Caulfield, Bracklaghboy, do.; Thomas Greeley, Annagh, do.; Roderick Healy, Ballindrehid, do.; Francis Waldron, Arderig, do.; Timothy Fleming, Scregg, do.; Jas. Jordan, Devlis, do.; J. Lyons, Coologher, do.; M. Lyons, Spoddagh, do.; Patrick Moran, Coolnafarna, do.; Jas. Dalton, do.; Thomas Murphy, Lurgan, do.; John Healy, Curries, do.; John Eagney, Churchpark, do.; Patrick Waldron, Woodpark, do.; James Freeley, Gurteen, do.

HON. SECRETARIES—**MICHAEL F. WALDRON, LL.D.,**  
**JOSEPH COONEY, P.C., N.T.**

BALLYHAUNIS, June 29th., 1939

1939: An appeal to parishioners asking for help in funding the building of "a permanent centre with adequate facilities for social intercourse, cultural improvement and healthy recreation under responsible supervision and general guidance".

From Dr. Michael F. Waldron Collection.



# The Parochial Hall and other Ballyhaunis Halls

Fr Kieran Waldron (An edited version of a lecture given during Heritage Week 2019)

*Árus Pobail Padraig Naomhtha Béal Áth hAmhnais* – Ballyhaunis Community Hall or Parochial Hall – has given great service and enjoyment to the community for almost seventy years. Sadly, in putting together this account, I must confine myself to the first thirty years of its history as I was out of town for the following forty years! Some information on other halls in the town which preceded it, dating back to 1900, may prove of interest. However, the Parochial Hall was the first purpose-built hall in the town – the previous halls being large, privately owned indoor spaces for entertainment attached to commercial enterprises.

Catholic Emancipation came about only in 1829. In the nineteenth century the main drive for the Catholic Church in Ireland was to provide adequate parish churches – their existing churches were very poor and did not even merit the name of churches on maps where they were listed as ‘RC chapels’. Later, many parishes had up to three or four churches. They were sited every five or six miles of the road for the convenience of the faithful, most of them walking to Mass.

In the twentieth century the thrust was to provide parish halls and voluntary Catholic secondary schools in some of the towns. In Tuam diocese there was a drive in the 1930s, 40s and 50s to build a parish hall in every parish. Both Ballyhaunis and Claremorris, and some other parishes, used their old, disused chapels as halls until new halls were built. But parochial halls of various sizes were being built all over the diocese in the fifty years before 1970. Tooreen Hall was built in 1952 after quite a little controversy over its location – whether it should be sited in Aghamore or in Tooreen.

In putting the following together I am indebted to the great local historian, Dr. Michael F. Waldron (‘Michael P.A.’) whose scrapbook is now available on-line at Mayo County Library, Local Studies section. In a newspaper article of 1931 Dr. Michael recalled a walk he had through the church grounds with Canon Canning PP who had overseen the building of the new church in 1909. The disused church of St. Mary’s was still there, in the present car-park. The Parish Priest talked about another dream he had – to build a parish hall as soon as he could. He felt the stone and building materials of the old church could be re-used for this purpose. Dr. Michael asked where it might be sited and the Canon said: “over there, across the road” – the location of the present hall. At the time an old ball alley with just two walls stood on the site. Canon Canning was hoping the Congested District Board, owners of that site on the Fair

Green, would co-operate with the parish, and asked the writer (Dr. Waldron) not to talk about it for the present.

## Parochial Hall

Canon Canning died in 1921 without accomplishing this part of his dream plan for Ballyhaunis. But when Fr. Geoffrey Prendergast was appointed Parish Priest in 1933 he started a branch of CYMS which did much good work creating cultural study groups and later a parish council – a new venture in those days. On 30th January 1939 a large meeting of parishioners was held under the chairmanship of Fr. Prendergast. A committee was appointed which resolved to build a parochial hall and a formal appeal to parishioners was printed asking for help in funding the enterprise for, “a permanent centre with adequate facilities for social intercourse, cultural improvement and healthy recreation under responsible supervision and general guidance”.

They expressed the hope that, “exiled children will also do their part in helping on the good work for the credit and benefit of their native parish”. The seventy members of the committee are listed on the formal appeal and the secretaries were Michael F. Waldron LL.D and Joseph Cooney N.T. They appointed a very well-known architect, Professor R.M. Butler (Rudolf Maximilian Butler, a German) to draw up the plans. He had designed many churches around the country. It was to be a mass-concrete building and a stone crusher on site was used for the crushed stone. Naturally, it was difficult to heat, but the external insulation, carried out last year, has proved a great benefit in this regard.

The architect recommended the acceptance of the lowest tender received from Messrs. Dyer Brothers of Brackloon for the sum of £2,342 (perhaps over €60,000 in today’s money). The site used was the one Canon Canning had hoped for. This was not without controversy, as a replacement ball-alley, to be sited at the other side of the Fair Green, was never built.

The hall was completed within two years and was opened on 8th December 1940. Its title was *Árus Pobail Padraig Naomhtha Béal Áth hAmhnais*, ‘St. Patrick’s Hall for the people of Ballyhaunis’. So, perhaps, the new name for the hall, Ballyhaunis Community Hall, is not so new at all.

## Opening

The new hall was blessed and officially opened by the newly-appointed Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. Joseph Walsh on 8th December 1940. The opening had had to be



postponed for a week because of the sudden death of the local curate, Fr. Tom Burke. The programme for the evening, printed in Irish, has survived among the papers of Dr. Michael F. Waldron. The evening entertainment was in two parts: a concert of ten items of music and dance followed by a production of the operetta, 'The Bohemian Girl' by William Henry Balfe, presented by the children of the parish under Miss Dyl Eaton (later Mrs. Dyl Hughes). The Archbishop congratulated the children whom, he said, gave them "such a delightful treat to-night".

The Archbishop's address was reported in full in The Tuam Herald of 14th December 1940. In a way, what he said was sort of a mission statement for all parochial halls. He said:

"This is a very important occasion. While the church of course is the outstanding building in every parish, the parochial hall ranks next in importance and significance. A parochial hall should be the centre of parochial life, the centre from which education and instruction and culture will radiate and influence the lives of all for good. Here for instance will meet Muintir na Tíre, and the Parish

Council, whose deliberations will be of great social benefit. Here too the charitable organisations like the St. Vincent de Paul Society can carry out their noble work. Lectures on various topics including agriculture, music and the fine arts and crafts will help the people to foster small industries and to give employment. Finally, a parochial hall ought to be a centre of cultural amusement. May this hall be a bond of charity and unity and mutual assistance at all times".

### Centre of Activity

And so the Parochial Hall began to be a much-used and loved centre of activity almost every day of the year. In the 1940s Miss Eaton continued to present operettas frequently: The Bohemian Girl in 1940, and two in 1945, Il Trovatore and Maritana. Costumes were supplied by the premier costumiers of the time: Messrs. Ging of Dublin. I remember well the thrill of dressing up as a soldier when I took a small part in one of those two productions.

The hall was not generally used as a dance hall though there were occasional céilís. An exception was the local charity dance called the Nurse's Dance in aid of the local 'Lady Dudley Nurse' in the town. McGarry's Hall (then at the Square) provided the venue for all dances, including what they called 'All-night Dances' from 10pm to 4am.

The Parochial Hall was used for concerts, plays, variety performances, lectures and many



### The Parochial Hall – Then and Now

*Top:* An historical photograph showing the front wall of the old Ball Alley, where the Parochial Hall now stands. An early draft of the first Ordnance Survey map shows a 'ball court' on this site as far back as 1837. The alley had only the front wall and one side wall (on the left), so that a ball hit too far to the right would precipitate down the main street unless intercepted by a quick-thinking bystander or dog. Photograph from Dr. Michael F. Waldron collection.

*Above:* The newly refurbished Ballyhaunis Parochial Hall stands proudly at the top of Main Street. Photograph by Sylwia Buczak





The programme for the opening of the Parochial Hall in 1940. Scheduled for 1st Dec., the opening was postponed for a week due to the sudden death of Fr. Tom Burke, C.C., and took place on 8th Dec. 1940.

other purposes including card games, especially whist drives. I remember attending a wonderful lecture here in 1946 on the fortieth anniversary of the death of Michael Davitt.

From its early years the hall began to be used as a cinema. Children from primary schools were debarred except for occasional matinees. Among the matinees I loved as a young fellow was the timeless classic, *The Wizard of Oz*. Remember that magic moment when it turns to glorious technicolour as Dorothy awakes after the drab surroundings of her black and white home in Kansas. I can also remember attending a boxing competition held here on the stage between Ballyhaunis Boxing Club and The Corinthian Club from Dublin, sometime in the forties.

The two other rooms in the building were also in use almost every day. The downstairs room, now divided into two rooms, was the Billiard Room – for men only. We as children, of course, were debarred. But I can still

see its open door and feel the swirl of tobacco-smoke coming out from the crowd of would-be players inside waiting for a game, at sixpence a time.

The first cinema projectionist was Tommy Byrne, followed by Bill Eagney, and the first caretaker was Mike Freeley, later Jim Cox. In recent times an extension was added in the old yard, to include a kitchenette.

Upstairs was the venue for the local library which doubled as a meeting room for various parish societies like Saint Vincent de Paul, The Legion of Mary and various others, including the GAA – the only place in the town then for such endeavours. I was once present here for a 'Rang Gaeilge' in the 1940s, under some survivors of the old Gaelic League, Padraig Ó Gabhláin of Tooreen and Pilib de Bháldraithe of Drimbane.

When Fr. Prendergast was planning the Parochial Hall in the late 1930s, my father, who had run 'Waldron's Hall' in Clare Street from 1931 to 1946, suggested to him that the plan was too small and that somebody would later build a bigger hall in the town. He was partly right in his prediction as the huge Star Cinema in Clare Street (1948) and later the Eclipse Ballroom were built by P.J. McGarry. But the Parochial hall still stands today as it faces a new life and further up-grading – hopefully to be used every day.

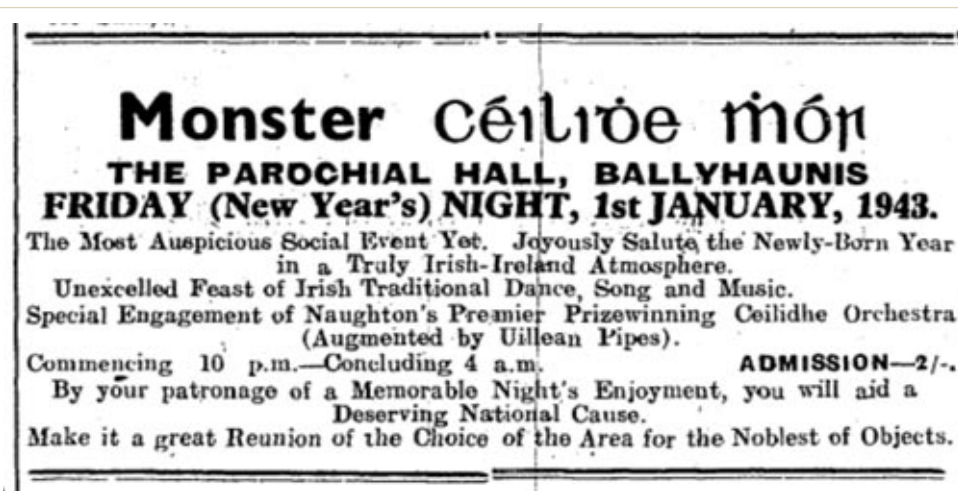
Like all other halls in the country, Ballyhaunis Parochial Hall was adversely affected by the arrival of television after 1961. People now had entertainment in their homes. The Hall was, by then, being used then principally as a cinema – a second cinema in the town. But it closed as a cinema seven years later in February 1968. It was still running two films each week spread over four nights. The final printed monthly programme still survives. By then the cinema screen was a fixed structure which meant that the stage could not be used for plays etc. So, when we were trying to put on some plays in St. Patrick's College in the 1960s, we had to depend on the Scout' Den as a venue.

## Other Halls in Ballyhaunis

Cultural activities in Ballyhaunis did not start in 1940! The town was a vibrant place in the years since 1900 with a strong Gaelic League branch and many other parish organisations. There were no less than ten other halls in use in the past hundred years – seven of them prior to the building the Parochial Hall in 1940.

**The New Hall or The Gaelic Hall**, circa 1900. This was most likely the large room in the Convent Primary School. The Gaelic League made use of this hall and it was the site of the famous Feis Mhuigeo of 1903 and many concerts and cultural events.





From *The Connaught Telegraph*, 19th Dec. 1943

**The old St. Mary's Church**, c.1910-1920. Fr. Michael Carney, CC showed silent films there about 1915.

**Donnellan's Hall**. At the rear of the present Gill's Bar, Clare St., c.1910-30. Used for meetings, general entertainments and probably some hearings of the republican 'Dáil Courts' in 1920 and 1921.

**Lynch's Stadium** (Lynch's Garage, Main St.) staged International Boxing, Ireland v Germany on 6th Nov 1933. Other international boxing tournaments were held outdoors in the Friary Grounds against Italy and France and in The Star Cinema against England in the 1940s and 1950s.

**Conway's Hall**, Barrack St. (Later Gallagher's stores). General entertainments and Travelling fit-up companies, including several plays of William Shakespeare in 1930 and 1931 by Anew McMaster's company which included Mícheál MacLiammóir, Hilton Edwards and Coralie Carmichael.

**Moylett's Hall** (later 'McGarry's Hall'): a large room over McGarry's shop in Main St., c.1915- 1950. It was a popular venue for all-night dances, concerts etc. It may also been used as a venue for Sinn Féin Courts in 1920-21.

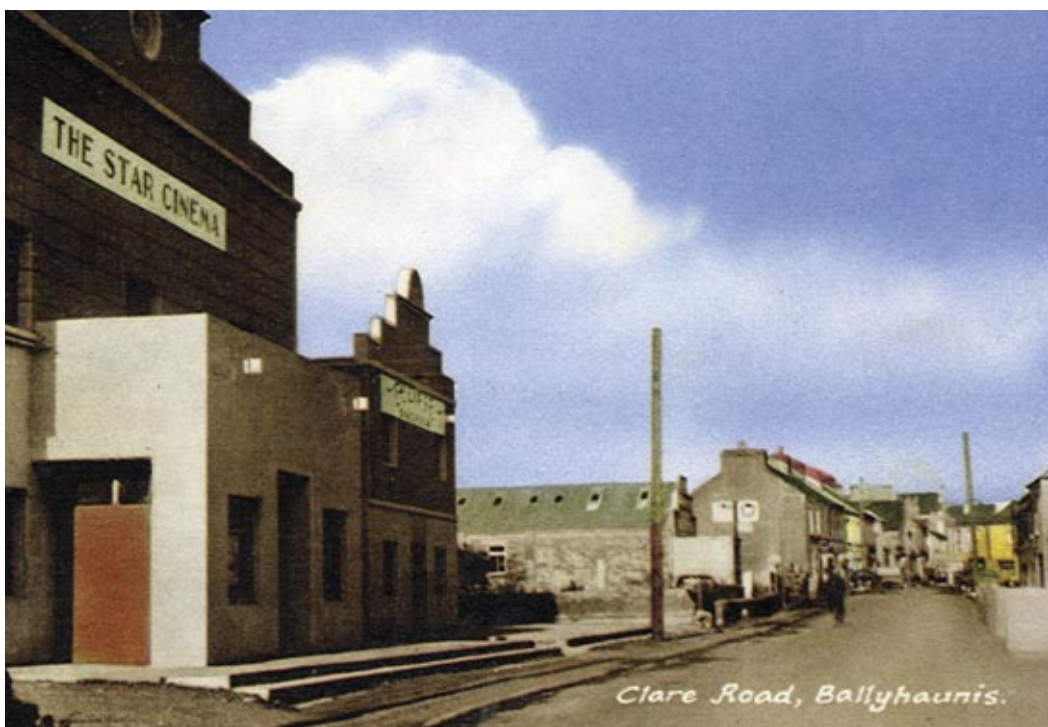
**Waldron's Hall**, Clare St., 1931-46. Originally a market house. My father James Waldron had bought the interest of a Mrs. Mary Donnellan in these promises – a spacious building

with two floors with a store downstairs for his business in Main St. Later on it became Dillon's Hardware shop and now is the site of Mid-West Radio. It housed a cinema with tip-up seats, the services provided by Mr. Caslin from Charlestown. Some may remember the extension to the building, used as the projector room, which protruded out over the footpath below. Also, there were many concerts, operas and plays there and it was a venue for the Boxing Club on occasions. The operetta 'Pearl the Fisher-Maiden' was produced here in 1935. The cinema was forced to close after 1940 when war-time petrol rationing made it impossible for the projectionist to travel.

**The Star Cinema** c.1948- 2002. Built by P.J. McGarry, this was ultra-modern in 1948 and served many great years as a cinema. It hosted the Radio Eireann Light Orchestra in May 1950 in its first concert in Ireland outside Dublin.

**The Eclipse Ballroom** c.1950-2010. Also built by P.J. McGarry, this was later known as the Starland Ballroom, and later still as the Midas Niteclub, and finally as Monsoon until its closure about five years ago.

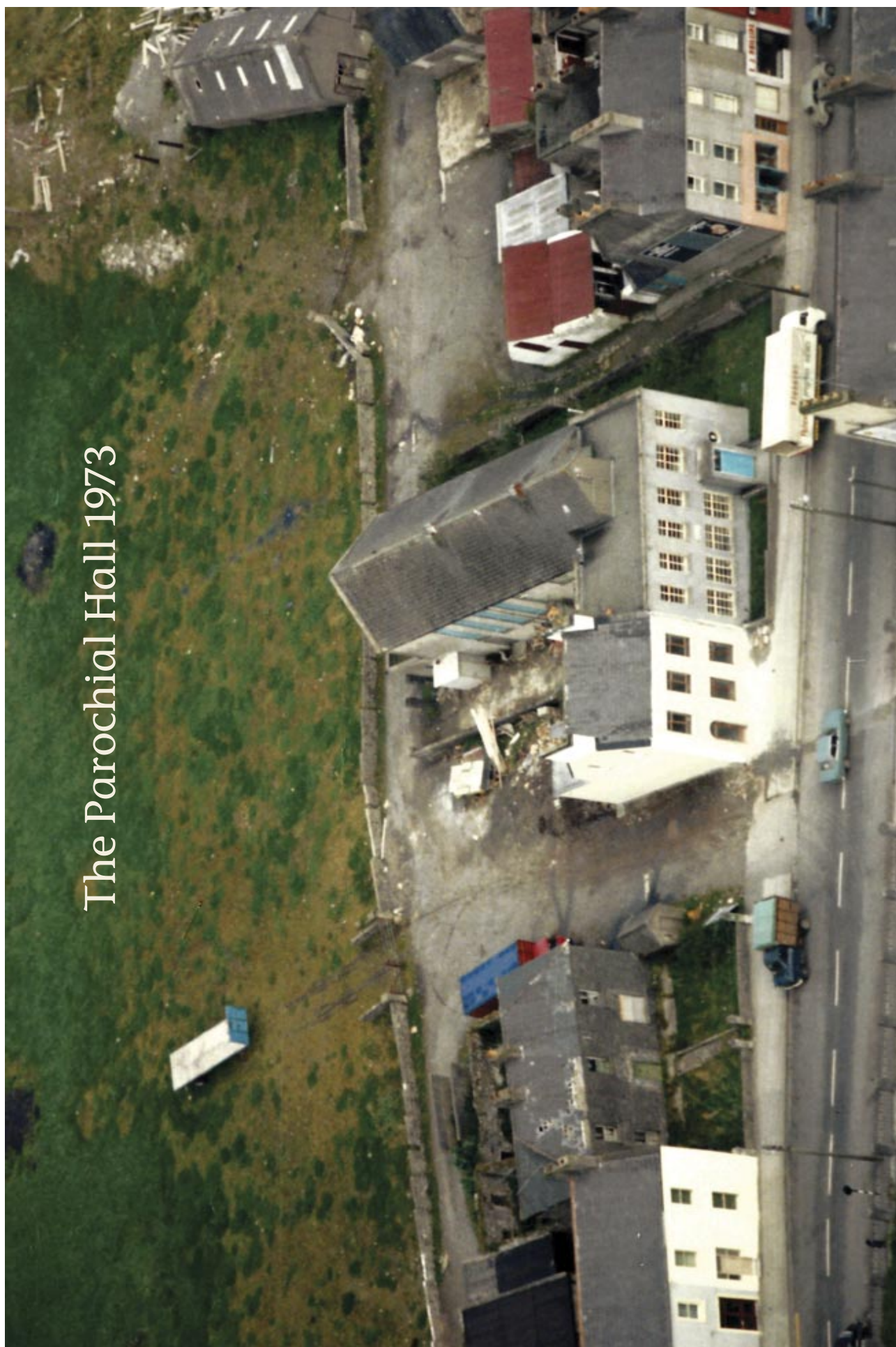
**The Scout Den** c.1950-1975. Built under the direction of Seamus Durkan, with various extensions added over the years.



The Star Cinema and Eclipse Ballroom in the 1950s, Clare Street, Ballyhaunis.



## The Parochial Hall 1973





# From the Speckled Hill to the Shores of the Baltic

Noel Lyons

It is many years since I first put pen to paper for a contribution to *Annagh* magazine with a satirical piece on the odour from a local factory. I formally presented the poem to fellow thespian and superb writer James Cribbin, who rather legalistically informed me after reading it (perhaps with regard to local sensitivities) that he couldn't guarantee publication, but assured me at least that the committee would enjoy it. I would have considered that the artistic merit could well overcome the whiff of controversy as the subject matter had already been published in a national Sunday publication which avoided legal challenge, and its frivolous nature could well be regarded as mere satire even to the sensitive.

Needless to say it never saw the light of day and, to add insult to injury, I never had the original manuscript returned. In my naivety I thought such actions could only occur regarding nuclear missile designs in Moscow or Washington. I did register an informal objection with the maestro of invective at a later date when he requested another possible contribution for a later issue. He did question possible pejorative 'metaphors' I could have accidentally included (in the committee's defence) but also assured me that other writers had had their efforts rejected early in their careers. I did not expect him to refer to James Joyce, Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw but nevertheless knew he was actively encouraging me when he said that if it could be found, they could send it, perhaps, to Sotheby's for valuation on my behalf in its original form.

I defended myself graciously for my lack of effort in the interim suggesting that my meagre attempts could perhaps leave a sour taste, or even turn a stomach or two, as my odourless effort historically had been consigned to the offal skip and not even deemed adequate for recycling. He was not for turning, it seemed, when I felt I had to up the ante. I informed him fully in the knowledge that only a fellow scribe could begin to understand, that I had hit the wall. That is the infernal black hole or vacuum called writer's block. Creativity, I reminded him, cannot grow in a vacuum. Politicians can circumvent this problem with ease as they project endless waffle in a vortex that is utterly meaningless and devoid of any sense, reason, or comprehensible imagery. I just about managed to dodge his Berlin Wall defences in time to state, "stop, the page is blank". Done, dusted, battle over.

His next move, in soccer parlance, was a side-step of nanosecond proportions and would be worthy of George Best. It immediately got my aerial up and, as some might

rudely suggest, achieved the impossible. He silenced me.

He simply stated that he would provide the subject matter. A topic about him that he could not personally contribute. I was perplexed, intrigued, confused definitely, but nevertheless, as with his superb contributions over many years to *Annagh Magazine*, he had me hooked and was reeling me in slowly and painfully. He started with the calm purring of a gentle steam which continued to gather pace and power to the rapids descending to an almighty waterfall. His irresistibility fermented his amazing storytelling capability that I could never expect to emulate. He informed me that Gerry Cribbin, the talented historian and member of the *Annagh* Committee, had (then) recently returned to university to acquire a qualification in local history. This was a bait he knew I could not resist as my admiration is huge for all who would make a herculean effort of intelligence, discipline and interest to succeed. He then continued by informing me that he too was intending to enter university, but added "hopefully not for a while yet".

He was skilfully applying layers of fog on the chessboard. The match was descending into a competition between Kasparov and Mickey Mouse and I was struggling to provide an audible squeak. I sought the answer to the riddle of entrance to this university and wondering which amazing faculty could cope with such genius. Perhaps Philosophy, Literature or Humanities could challenge him before he reduced them to bafflement? He cleverly informed me in a most astute manner, while capturing his lapels as he was wont to do, how he intended to bypass miniscule requirements of entry such as matriculation or boring academic shackles such as Leaving Cert., which a chess move that could put any King in peril. "I am donating my body to science so I shall be entering university and, as I said, hopefully not for a while yet".

The plot thickened as he informed me of the many obstacles with which he had to contend in order to achieve his objective. It must be difficult to bypass matriculation, I dared to think, but kept the zip on the lip. "I cannot die at Christmas, at a weekend, or on a bank holiday". "Why so?", I bravely uttered. "Because there's no one home to take me in", he nonchalantly replied. "It is so strict on this that I may have to turn up early and say 'here I am, can you show me to my room'".

I foolishly enquired as to how one needed to apply for this noble contribution to third level education. He had his homework done and continued to regale me with an experience of a visit to his doctor – Dr. Alan Delaney



– a man of talent, wit and wisdom who had read Jimmy’s articles over the years and, like myself, would possibly be suspicious of entrapment and not wish to be an involuntary contributor to the wonderful articles in Annagh Magazine. He replied to his request with dismay. The bould James, with confident assurance that the university would be in receipt of an excellent specimen and with the persuasive skills of Thatcher and Churchill combined, eventually persuaded him of his sincerity and, it appears, his body has been spoken for. We trust he delays his departure for a long time to come.

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## Across the Baltic Sea

Little did I ever consider that my humble poetry would every carry me across the Baltic Sea to perform on Latvian Television. It started with a phrase from my Latvian family that Latvian lyrics could not be translated to English. Mana musa Skarleta Mukane explained that many tried but failed. She then presented me with a long translation of a song called ‘Mema Dziesma’ by Raimonds Pauls (a prolific composer of huge fame in Eastern Europe). The title alone was a contradiction itself. It means ‘Mute Song’. The myriad of metaphors took time to come to grips with but I kept considering that Aodhagán Ó Rathaille’s and Antaine Ó Raifteirí’s poetry had given me enough practice in translation. The chorus of the mute song became.

*“Feed the flame, Ignite the fire,  
Until you find your voice.  
It’s yours and yours alone, no other choice  
It’s yours just yours and only in your voice”.*

We followed through with other folk songs of love and homeland but were kept busy with other efforts. We founded the Latwest Association 2014 to give support to local immigrants in Mayo and surrounding regions. We got involved with the Irish Latvian Chamber of Commerce and the Latvian Foreign Ministry organising delegations from councils, business and universities, promoting interaction between both countries. With the aid of Mayo County Council and others we also got involved in cultural exchanges bringing dancers, choirs and musicians on the trips and linking with diaspora groups here.

Gunars Meijers, a Latvian singer and songwriter of some fame in Latvia, accompanied one group and was pleasantly surprised at our translated songs. He has composed and recorded nineteen albums of his music in Latvia and offered them for translation.

The result to date has been the recording of my first album called ‘Angels in your Eyes’, with music by Gunars Meijers, lyrics by Skarleta Mukane and Noel Lyons. I have performed on Latvian TV on two occasions with my introductory phrase of “Es esum, Noils, Es esmu Irs, Es esmu Jauns un tracs”, meaning “I am Noel. I am Irish. I am young and crazy.”

I have seen Latvia’s beautiful country and met astonishing people whose history of occupation and oppression mirrors Ireland in many ways. I had the pleasure of writing a song commemorating the 100th anniversary of their freedom in 2018. It tells our story too.

*The tears of our children were frozen  
In silence while wearing the chain.  
In silence our truth it was spoken  
Our spirit enclosed in its pain ...”*  
*Chorus*  
*Lift up your voices Latviaia.*  
*Sing out together in freedom’s hurrah.*  
*Send out your message and let it ring*  
*Together as we sing.*  
*Songs of our fathers lit every fire*  
*Drying our tears of freedom’s desire.*  
*Let the world hear our every cry*  
*Brevibu Latvia (Freedom to Latvia)*

Our most recent group of visitors was a choir from Viesete who performed on the album ‘Angels in your Eyes’ and on TV. They learned that Mayo is a tourist gem as we toured Knock, Turlough House Museum, Ballintubber Abbey, Lough Lannagh, Croagh Patrick, Achill Island, The Sheefrey Hills, Delphi, Ashleigh Falls and Cong, followed by a tour of Dublin Castle, Trinity College and Temple Bar. They performed in St. Colman’s Church, Claremorris to a standing ovation.

Our future projects are varied and interesting where we hope to bring more tourist business directly into Knock Airport. We will be translating a Latvian book about Ludwig Van Beethoven and his friend George Browne, a Limerick born soldier who became Governor of Riga. We are currently seeking an Irish distributor for a Latvian manufacturer which sells internationally in Scandanavia and continue translating and performing Latvian hit songs.

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Album: **Angels in Your Eyes** by Noel Lyons available from skarletam@gmail.com



# 4th Mayo Ballyhaunis Scout Group



The 4th Mayo Ballyhaunis Scout Group have had another very busy year. All sections have had great opportunities to experience all things, Scout related. Our group is thriving at the moment: Fiona Cassidy, Aoife Folliard, Aoife Carroll, Mary Hickey and David Squires joined us as trained leaders and we welcomed them with open arms. They have completed their first year.

Eight new members are currently going through their training to become leaders which will undoubtedly enhance our group even more. Sadly, we have said goodbye to John Durkan, John Walsh and Kevin Carney – all of whom will be greatly missed.

Our current project, along with keeping the group open, is to find a long term home for the group. Thanks to Kenneth Dennedy, Principal of Scoil Íosa, and the Parochial Hall for allowing us to use their facilities for our group to meet.

I would like to thank our volunteer leaders for giving so much of their time to the group. Thanks also to our local community who continue to support us in so many ways.

**Marion Feeney, Group Leader,  
4th Mayo Ballyhaunis Scout Group**

*Following are reports from each of our sections:*

## 4th Mayo Beaver Group

Our Beaver Group of twenty-four six to eight year-old boys and girls learned a lot and enjoyed a variety of activities in the 2018/2019 season. Weekly meetings were held on Monday evenings in Scoil Íosa. We were delighted to be joined by five new Beavers and five new Leaders who were invested at a special ceremony in December 2018.

The activities were varied and involved getting out into the great outdoors as much as possible! In October we had our annual Halloween Camp Fire along with the Cubs and Scouts. For our Christmas outing we had an action packed trip to Castlebar for bowling and laser tag – plenty of teamwork and competition!

In February, along with the Cub group, Beavers planted an area at Erritt Lake with native Irish trees on the National Trees on the Land initiative ([www.treeson-theland.com](http://www.treeson-theland.com)) and great work was done by all, followed by a fun walk around the loop trail at the lake. As spring came around, we had a day out at the nearby Cloonfad Scenic walk and built some great shelters. Thanks especially to Tony Johnson for all his preparation work on this, much appreciated!



A 'Bug Hotel' constructed by members of the 4th Mayo Scout Group.



Hallowe'en Camp Fire.





4th Mayo Scout Group all ready for the Easter Parade 2019

The full 4th Mayo Scout Group participated in the Easter Parade in Ballyhaunis with their banners they made on the theme of climate change – doing our bit to raise awareness and reflect on what it means to each of us.

In May we had an idyllic overnight stay in Cong at Lakeland House. The weather was great and the children got to hike and explore the area in the sunshine. In June we had a trip to Lough Key and spent a fun few hours on the Zipit line where the kids tried out their skills and had a blast despite the rain! Unfortunately, the conditions were too bad to camp as planned. To make up for this, we had an overnight with the Beavers and Cubs in the Ox Mountains in September. Everyone really enjoyed the hike, the amazing scenery, BBQ and camp-fire until long after dark. A taste of more to come!

The children earned a number of badges throughout the year by learning about each subject and completing activities including hillwalking, camping, first aid and air badges. The children showed their enthusiasm for every activity and worked together in small groups to complete their tasks with great creativity!

During the year we had visits from Astronomy Ireland for some star gazing; the MSPCA who told us about all the great work they do with animals in the locality; Evelyn O'Connor who facilitated a session on water safety; and Sharon Cameron from Mayo County Council who taught us about recycling.

Thanks to all the children, their parents for their support and to the Group Leader, Marion Feeney; Beaver Leaders: Edel Conway, Paul Damron, Aoife Carroll, Aoife Folliard, Mary Hickey, Fiona Cassidy and David Squires, for all their time and commitment throughout the year. Thanks to Tony Johnson,

Quartermaster, for his work in the background to prepare for outdoor activities and camps. Last but by no means least we were lucky enough to have John Durkan, one of the founder members of the current 4th Mayo Scout Group, share his vast knowledge and skills with us throughout the year: for this we are very grateful. We will all really miss him as he retires from 4th Mayo Scout Group.

Looking forward to many more adventures in the year ahead!

**Anna Patterson,  
Beaver Group Leader.**

#### 4th Mayo Cub Group

The Cub Scout section had a very busy year in 2018/2019. We had 27 Cubs this year, ages ranging from eight to eleven years old. Cub Leaders were: Tina Squires, Eamon Monaghan, Paul Carney and Mairead Murphy Damron. Here is a snapshot of our Cub Scouting year.

Early in October we planted spring flowers in the Friary Field. The Cubs enjoyed planting the bulbs and getting muddy! They loved making our town look pretty and having a connection with the community. We had a Halloween party in the Friary field, where we had a campfire, sang songs and roasted marshmallows!

During November and December the Cubs were working up to a level 2 in First Aid this year. We had the Order of Malta in to give a demonstration. They learned many skills that will come in handy for our mountain hikes. Astronomy Ireland assisted us with a fantastic interactive star gazing night. We learned so much about the planets and constellations.



In February we participated in the National All Ireland Tree Planting Day. Erritt Lake was our chosen site where we planted over 200 trees within all sections of our group. During March we had an informative talk from Mayo Mountain Rescue. The Cubs got to hear and see what it is like to be stretchered off a mountain and how to do a mountain hike safely. We had weekend activities in Cloonfad Woods building survival shelters. We had a busy April, attending the Marine Institute in Newport where the Cubs had an interactive tour of all the facilities. The use of the lab equipment and knowledge we gained about the fish was fantastic.

The Easter Parade was an exciting day out as the Cubs had made Globes representing the theme of our float for Climate Change and Environmental Awareness. During May we went camping in Cong and had strenuous hikes around the picturesque town and Ashford Castle. Water



Members of the 4th Mayo Scout Group with leaders, hiking in the Ox Mountains.

safety and kayaking classes took place in Erritt Lake. The Cubs loved these outdoor pursuits. During June we had a wonderful day out in Lough Key Forest Park at the Zipit Centre! The fun and skills the Cubs learned that day were unbelievable.

## Forde's Win Two Awards



While on a visit home to Ballyhaunis from Perth, Australia, Henry Forde accompanied his nephew Tom to the Barry Group Awards night held in Citywest Hotel, Dublin. Not only did Forde's Limited/4D's Carryout Express Off Licence win 'West Region Store 2019', but also won the national title 'Carryout Express Store of the Year 2019'... A great result for a small store in the West of Ireland. Tom and Marie Forde (Directors) wish to thank all the hard working team here at Forde's Limited for their support, dedication and loyalty to help make this happen, and a special thanks to all our customers for their continued support. L-R: Ger Donnelly (Area Manager, Carryout), Brent Pope (Carryout Brand Ambassador), John Forde (Wexford), Tom Forde (Forde's Limited/4D's Carryout Express Off Licence) and Henry Forde (Perth, Australia), brother of the late John G. Forde, The Square and Clare Street.





Mrs. Agnes Freeley (Ballindrehid) and Mrs. Mary Regan (Tooraree), outside the Parish Church, with the Tudor Inn in the background.



Kathleen Hunt (right) celebrating Bastille Day, 14th July 2019, with Anna Mae McHugh at the French Embassy. Anna Mae is a powerhouse welcoming over a quarter of a million to the 46th National Ploughing Championship this year to Carlow. Kathleen Hunt is from Larganboy but now lives in Ranelagh, Dublin.



Congratulations to John and Mary Frances Cleary, Clare St., who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary earlier this year, 2019. John Cleary (Clare St.) and Mary Frances Creighton (Barnaheker, Aghamore), on their wedding day in Knock, 1969. Photograph by Seamus Mallee, Knock.



Knox Street neighbours met up to celebrate Kieran Moran's birthday earlier this year. L-R: Robbie Herr, Jon-Jon Morley, Dónal Moran, Enda Moran, John Finnegan, Kieran Moran.



Pictured holding the New Ireland Assurance National League Cup, are Diarmuid O'Connor, Captain of the Mayo senior team, National Football League champions, 2019, and Martin Fitzmaurice, local New Ireland Assurance rep. Taken at a Community Day event in The Neale, Co. Mayo, 22nd Sept. 2019.





# Annagh Parish Stations 2019

Photographs: Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.



**Sean Waldron, Cave, 23rd Oct. 2018**

Standing, L-R: Sean Waldron, Bernard Waldron, Nuala Nolan, Paul Waldron, Bridie Waldron, Tony Waldron, Lorraine Allen, Ciarán Waldron, Patrick Waldron, Thomas Halliday, Paul Sykes, Erica Webb, Marie Cribbin, Padraig Waldron, Jim McLoughlin, Paddy Kearns, John Morris, Mary Sweeney, Breda Waldron, Patricia Waldron, Mary Morrissey, Margaret Monaghan. Seated, L-R: Tom Waldron, Kathleen McBride, Mary Sykes, Ann Halliday, Mary Sykes. Front, L-R: Niamh Waldron, Mary Halliday, Cian Waldron, Robyn Waldron, Brigid McLoughlin, Mary Margaret McBride, Ann Marie Delaney, Rita Morris, Oliver Cribbin.



**Joe and Marcella Keane, Knox St., 27th Oct. 2018**

Back, L-R: Mary Jordan, John Jordan, Kieran Moran, Margaret Byrne, Dorothy Durkan, Catherine Morley, Margaret Johnston, Irene Nunes, Tony Morley, Luke Walsh, Stella Keane. Front, L-R: Adam Walsh, Cian Walsh, Marcella Keane, Joe Keane.





**Marian and Padraig Regan, Killinaugher, 2nd Nov. 2018**

Group 1: Standing, L-R: Aidan Dermody, Damien Hayes, Emma Loftus, Laura Regan, Sheila Joyce, Martin Fitzmaurice, Malcolm Hudson, John Connolly, John Joyce (far right). Seated, L-R: Padraig Regan, Marcella O'Neill, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Marian Regan, Geraldine Connolly, Marie McGee, Maureen Comer, Murt Hunt, Mary Hunt, Riona Joyce, Sinéad Regan with Ciara, Alan Regan, Deirdre Diskin, Mary Elwood, Bridie O'Boyle, Isobel Cox. Front, L-R: Ben Hayes, Josh Hayes, Aaron Jordan, Killian McGee, Aoife Regan, Kyle Hayes.



Group 2: Standing, L-R: Colin Jordan with Matthew Jordan, Mark Regan, Tom Fitzmaurice, Kevin Carr, Ann Horan, Michael Horan, Joe O'Neill, Michael Kenny, David Regan, Kevin Diskin, Kenneth Horan, Billy Comer, Michelle Keane, Joe Diskin, Emily Joyce, Tom Regan, Breege Kenny. Seated, L-R: Veronica O'Neill, Lisa Regan with Sofia Hayes, Ben Hayes, Tracey Regan, Caroline Regan.





**Tommy and Eavan Caulfield, Annagh, 13th Apr. 2019**

Standing, L-R: Kay Healy, John Griffin, Teresa Griffin, Emer Gallagher, Angela Doherty, Tommy Caulfield, Rita Webb, Sean Caulfield, Patrick Caulfield, Saoirse Caulfield, Aisling Caulfield, Orla Keane, Katie Keane, Helena Caulfield. Seated, L-R: Elizabeth Jordan, Mary Margaret McBride, Kathleen McBride, Eavan Caulfield, Kathleen Caulfield.



**George and Stella O'Neill, Woodpark, 22nd Mar. 2019**

Standing, L-R: Daniel Tarpey, Austin Biesty, George O'Neill, Kevin Morley, John Campbell, Bridie Morley, Dorothy Biesty, Lisa Morley, Siobhán Morley, Kitty Morley, Frank Lyons, Martin Mellett, Finola Mellett, Laura Walsh, Niamh O'Neill, Katelyn Walsh, John Joe Walsh, Sinéad O'Neill, Karen Morley, Eileen Lynch, Mary Waldron, Doris Carney, Ann Lynch. Seated, L-R: Gabriel Morley, Megan Morley, Tadhg Morley, Noreen Fahy, Catherine Waldron, Mary Caulfield, Noreen Caulfield, Alocoque McManus, Aisling Walsh, Helen Biesty, Julie Walsh, Bernie Campbell, Margaret Tarpey, Mary Tarpey, Stella O'Neill. Front: Brian O'Neill, Dylan Harrison.





**Joe and Mary Rochford, Gurteen, 30th Mar. 2019**

Standing, L-R: Mike Byrne, Maya Phillips, Tara Phillips, Helena Byrne, Ann Phillips, Marie Brennan, Martin Keane, Jacinta Flynn, Liam Lynskey, Aoife Mulrennan, Seamus Mulrennan. Seated, L-R: Brigid Lynskey, Mary Henry, Mary Freyne, Mary Rochford, Joe Rochford, Rita Rochford.



**Martin and Patricia Fitzmaurice, Derrynacong, 12th Apr. 2019**

Standing, L-R: Tom Fitzmaurice, Tom Lyons, Teresa Fitzmaurice, Kieran Fitzmaurice, Paul McGuire, Mary Ryan, Mary Waldron, Aidan Dermody, Deirdre Diskin, John Henry, Mary Hunt, Jessica Kelly, Jackie Lyons, Emma Lyons, Geraldine Lyons, Brendan Kelly, Gillian Donnellan, Michael Morley, Megan Morley, Susan Hoban, Mary McGuire, Enda Lyons, Gretta Henry, Lisa McGuire, Geraldine Connolly, Michelle Ryan, Jonathan Ryan, John Connolly. Seated, L-R: Evan Fitzmaurice, Róisín Fitzmaurice, John Fitzmaurice, Marion Regan, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Martin Fitzmaurice, Mary Feeley, Mike Feeley, Ann Marie Morley, Ciara Morley, Mary Reidy.





**Ita McDonnell, Carrowkeel, 11th Oct. 2019**

Group 1: Back, L-R: Fr. Stephen Farragher PP, Paul Biesty, Dan Tarpey, Joe Kelly, Pat Kelly, John Biesty, Stephen Biesty, Robbie Herr, Gabriel Morley, Martin Cunnane, Freddie Herr, Martin Scally, Siobhán Herr, Assumpta Biesty, Gina Biesty. Middle row, L-R: Ann Biesty, Josie Cunnane, Amy Conroy, Majella Coffey, Orla Coffey, Bridie Morley. Seated, L-R: Amy Clancy, Helen Biesty, Sadie Cameron, Joanne Morley Walsh, Ita McDonnell, Dolores Biesty, Margaret Tarpey, Kathleen O'Boyle, David Herr. Front, L-R: Daniel Coyle, Robert Walsh, Jack Walsh, Ita Herr, Anna Ó Meadhra, Kathleen McDonnell.



Group 2: Back, L-R: Fr. Stephen Farragher PP, Noel McDonnell, Collette McDonnell, Sarah Herr, Christina Herr, Michael Herr, Breda McDonnell, Jimmy Mulryan, Emma Donnellan, Cathy Slattery. Front, L-R: Niamh Mitchell, Aoibhe Mitchell, Cian Mitchell, Enya Mitchell, Mary Mulryan, Helen Mulryan.





**Kathleen and Mary Margaret McBride, Annagh, 4th Oct. 2019**

Back row, Standing L-R: Sean Waldron, Tommy Caulfield, Katie Damron, Patricia Ní Shúilleabháin, Kay Healy, Orla Doyle, John Doyle, Mairéad Damron, Angela Doherty, Shane Flanagan, Peter Flanagan, Teresa Griffin, Eavan Caulfield, Sean Caulfield. Centre, L-R: Caroline Darcy, Paula Grogan, Maureen Hunt, Sean Flanagan, James Flanagan, Grace Gallagher, Norma Jean Folliard, Kathryn Flanagan, Emer Gallagher. Front, L-R: Elizabeth Jordan, Mary Margaret McBride, Kathleen McBride, Columba Jordan, Delia Flanagan.

### **The cast of Arsenic and Old Lace produced by Fr. Kieran Waldron, St. Patrick's College, Ballyhaunis 1966**



Standing, L-R: Micheál Murren, Brendan Cregg, Paddy Judge, John Cribbin, Pat Glavey, Paul McCluskey, John Halpin. Seated, L-R: Pat (Junior) Connolly, Francis Moore, Patrick Healy, Frank Grealley, Denis Hannan, Joe Byrne, Tommy Gilmore. First published in Annagh 1991.



# Father Foran's Friary Paintings

Paul Waldron

Amongst the outstanding features of the Friary Church (St. Mary's Abbey) are its many oil paintings. These are all the work of Fr. Edward A. Foran, O.S.A., Prior here from 1907 to 1914. He spent only seven short years in Ballyhaunis but in that time produced a collection of art that would be the envy of any institution in the country – religious or secular. In addition to the fourteen 'Stations of the Cross', ten of his paintings can be seen at the Ballyhaunis foundation. Some are original compositions, while others are copies of Old Masters, yet each of them shows the touch of a true artist, and are as colourful, vibrant and life-like today as when first painted well over a century ago. Most of them were executed in 1910, though the only one actually dated bears the year 1912.



Fr. Edward A. Foran, O.S.A. (1864-1938), photographed c.1895 (courtesy of the O'Doherty family).

Of particular interest to Annagh readers will be the fact that the faces in the paintings belong to Ballyhaunis people! In all of the Augustinian houses where he ministered (both in Ireland and England) he always sought out 'models' locally for his paintings.

Those who knew the Ballyhaunis 'models' in later life, say they were invited to the Priory where Fr. Foran made detailed sketches, later transposing the images to the paintings on which he was working. Some faces can be seen over and over in different paintings and in different roles. In at least one case the same 'model' was used twice in the same picture, with his face shown from different angles.

## The Paintings

Mounted in a magnificent carved wooden, gilt frame, the painting "Saints Augustine and Monica at Ostia", hung for many years over the side door. It shows the founder of the Augustinian Order and his mother, St. Monica. The models for this painting were Norah Gilmore (Knox Street) and Paddy Smyth (Main Street). Sometimes Fr. Foran

deliberately 'aged' a face for artistic purposes, and this is what happened here: the models for the mother and son in this picture were then aged eighteen and twenty-five, respectively! The original painting, of which this is a copy, is "L'Estasi di Ostia" or "The Ecstasy at Ostia", by Johann Scheffer von Leonhardshoff, and it now hangs in the Louvre, Paris. Ostia is the port of Rome, at the mouth of the River Tiber, and it was here that St. Monica died as she and her son returned to their native North Africa from Milan, after Augustine was baptised there in 387 AD.

"The Stations of the Cross" series features brother and sister Paddy and Nellie Smyth, (Main Street), as Jesus, and his blessed mother. Some recall that members of the Webb family (Bridge St. and Main St.) were subjects for the Roman soldiers.

"The Baptism of St. Augustine" and "The Vision of Christ to St. Clare of Montefalco, O.S.A." adorn the ceiling of the church. Paddy Smyth and Norah Gilmore appear again in "The Baptism of St. Augustine" and, although the others haven't been identified conclusively, one is almost certainly Thomas Smyth of Abbey Street (recognisable in family photographs). St. Clare (c.1268-1308), a native of northern Italy, was an Augustinian Nun who had a number of visions of Jesus Christ in her lifetime. The model in this case is said to have been Norah Smyth, sister of Paddy and Nellie.

People remembered seeing Fr. Foran on scaffolding, lying on his back, painting these particular pictures.

This would suggest that the canvas was attached to the ceiling boards first, and that they were painted in-



Saints Augustine and Monica at Ostia, posed by Paddy Smyth (Main St.) and Norah Gilmore (Knox St.)



Paddy Smyth (Main St.), a few years after featuring in Fr. Foran's paintings (courtesy Noreen Kean)





Tom Smyth of Abbey St. (born c.1857), as depicted in 'The Baptism of St. Augustine' and from a family photograph.

The Baptism of St. Augustine, on the ceiling over the main aisle. The old, bearded man looking on from the background looks remarkably like Thomas Smyth (Abbey St.), as he appears in old family photographs.

situ. It seems likely, however, that he used this method just to add finishing touches, having painted them on an easel before fixing them to the ceiling.

"The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary" is located to the right of the Mother of Good Counsel side-chapel. It is said to be a copy of "The Assumption" by Bartolome Esteban Murillo, a seventeenth century Spanish painter who died (ironically, in light of the above) after falling from a scaffold while painting an altar piece in Cadiz. The model for this painting was Monica Flynn (Main Street). This was originally on the ceiling of the old Lady Chapel where the roof was flat, and was badly affected by damp even in Fr. Foran's time. In 1937 it was moved to its present location where the original damage is still evident.

"The Taking Down from the Cross" is the only one of Fr. Foran's Ballyhaunis paintings to bear a date – in this case the year 1912. It is now situated to the left of the main altar, though, until the 1940s renovations, was

behind the main altar, when that altar was near the main door on the West gable. Paddy Smyth features twice in this – as Jesus Christ – and, with his face 'enhanced', as Nicodemus. His sister Nellie is Our Lady, while John Farragher (Bridge St.) is the soldier taking down the body of Jesus, at the top of the cross.

Over the side door at the present time is a painting with a curved top: "Jesus Meets His Blessed Mother". Its original location is not known but it was later moved to the sacristy, where it rested until moved to its present location. The models here, as in the Stations of the Cross, were Paddy Smyth and Nellie Smyth as Jesus and his mother. Two Greally sisters of Knox Street, along with a number of other local women are included too, though their exact identities have been forgotten.

One of the great treasures of the Friary is the painting of "Our Mother of Good Counsel", now displayed securely behind bullet-proof glass over the altar in the Mother of Good Counsel aisle. Though not explicitly stated in the Friary Archives, it may safely be said that this is the work of Fr. Foran. From old photographs it is clearly not the Mother of Good Counsel painting





The Vision of Christ to St. Clare of Montefalco, O.S.A., on the church ceiling. The model for St. Clare is believed to have been Norah Smyth (Main St.), later Sr. Mary Sacred Heart of Ballinrobe Convent of Mercy.

venerated here in the late nineteenth century; and it is known that Fr. Foran did paint a number of copies of this particular painting for other Irish Augustinian houses. In the late 1940s this painting was crowned and adorned with precious stones and gold from wedding rings and other jewellery donated by the people of the Ballyhaunis, the parish of Annagh and surrounding parishes.

Until recently there were three paintings in the Priory (the Friars' house): "St. Thomas of Villanova, O.S.A., Helps the Poor", which used to be near the main door of the church. St. Thomas (1486-1555) came from Villanova in Spain and was Archbishop of Valencia. His memory lives on in Villanova College, an Augustinian educational institution in North America famous for its athletics. "The Right Rev. John Hutchinson, O.S.A. (1936-1897), Vicar Apostolic of Cookstown"; and "The Most Rev. Stephen Reville, OSA (1944-1916), Bishop of Sandhurst", both of which were once in the organ gallery, were works of Father Foran's brought to Ballyhaunis after his time here.

Other known paintings of Fr. Foran's include: "Stations of the Cross" in Grantstown Augustinian Church, Callan Augustinian Church and in Horeswood Parish Church, all in his native Co. Wexford; "Our Lady and Child" and a portrait of Norah Gilmore of Knox Street, both in private ownership.

### The Models

The different local faces in Fr. Foran's Ballyhaunis paintings could still be pointed out by the older generation down to recent times.

The Smyth family of Abbey Street and Main Street are well represented in all of Fr. Foran's Ballyhaunis work. The family's connection with the Abbey goes back to the late eighteenth century when an ancestral uncle, Fr. John Smyth, O.S.A., a native of County Wicklow, came to the Ballyhaunis house, and served as Prior here from 1795 to 1799. A hundred years later two Smyth brothers lived in the town with their families: Tom in Abbey Street; Pat in Main Street. Through their close affiliation with the Friary, the families became friendly with Fr. Foran, who eventually asked some of them to act as models for his paintings.

Paddy Smyth (Main Street), was born in 1884 and was about twenty-five years of age when he posed as St. Augustine in the painting "Saints Augustine and Monica at Ostia" and also, apparently, in "The Baptism of St. Augustine", on the ceiling. In the "Taking Down From The Cross", Paddy appears both as Jesus Christ and – with features enhanced by the artist – as Nicodemus, the aged pharisee who, with Joseph of Arimathea, brought Jesus' body from the cross to the tomb. Paddy



Mother of Good Counsel, painted by Fr. Foran and adorned later with precious stones and gold from wedding rings and other jewellery donated locally.



was a butcher by profession with his premises on Lower Main Street, now Cribbin's. He died at the residence of his daughter, Dr. Noreen Kean, Claremorris, in 1968.

Paddy's sister Nellie Smyth was ten years younger – having been born in 1894 – and appears as Our Lady in the “Stations of the Cross”, “Jesus Meets His Blessed Mother” and “The Taking Down From The Cross”. Nellie married Edmund Kelly of Churchfield House, Knock and died in the early 1960s in Ballaghaderreen where she lived with her son Pat.

It is thought that at least two other members of the Smyth family are featured in the paintings. Norah Smyth (born 1892), a sister of Paddy and Nellie, is believed to have been the model for St. Clare of Montefalco, one of the paintings on the ceiling. She went on to become a nun, joining the Mercy Sisters. As Sr. Mary Sacred Heart, she spent most of her life in the Ballinrobe Convent, and died there in the early 1970s. Paddy, Nellie and Norah were children of Pat and Honora (nee Forde) Smyth, Main Street. Their first cousin, Vincent Smyth – born 1895, son of Thomas and Maria (nee Dillon) Smyth, Abbey Street – is thought to feature in one or more paintings, but this has yet to be verified. In later life he joined the Carmelite order and spent most of his clerical career in Whitefriar Street, Dublin.

The painting of “The Baptism of St. Augustine” includes a number of characters obviously based on locals: only Paddy Smyth and Norah Gilmore can be identified with certainty, but the face of an elderly, bearded man, looking on from the background, bears a remarkable resemblance to Thomas Smyth (born c.1857) of Abbey Street, (father of Fr. Vincent and uncle of Paddy, Nellie and Norah Smyth), as can be seen in old family photographs.

Norah Gilmore, from Knox Street, was in her late teens when she posed as St. Monica (mother of St. Augustine) in “Saints Augustine and Monica at Ostia”. Norah was born in 1892, daughter of Pat and Julia (nee Henry) Gilmore. In her late teens she qualified as a National Teacher and secured a position in Gortnadeeve N.S., near Glennamaddy, Co. Galway. She married James O'Doherty, who taught in the same school, and they moved to Dublin in the late 1950s. The family still have two of Fr. Foran paintings: one, a portrait of Norah herself, painted about 1912 when she was twenty; the other, a painting of Our Lady and Child, given to them by Norah's brother John Gilmore (a local historian of great note, and a devotee of the Friary), who was given it by the painter. The O'Dohertys remained close friends with Fr. Foran and kept in contact with him up until his death in 1938. Norah Gilmore O'Doherty died in 1982.

John Farragher, was born in 1896, son of John and Helen (nee O'Malley) Farragher, proprietors of the



The Taking Down from the Cross, near the main altar. In this detail Paddy Smyth features both as Jesus Christ, and as Nicodemus, the old man on the right. Nellie Smyth is Our Lady, while John Farragher is at the top of the Cross.

Dudley Arms Hotel (now Delaney's Hardware) in Bridge Street. He was in his early teens when immortalised as the man taking the body of Jesus Christ down from the cross in the crucifixion scene near the main altar. He later became an Augustinian Friar and died at the Ballyhaunis house in 1953.

Monica Flynn of Main Street was the model for Our Lady in the painting “The Assumption of The Blessed Virgin Mary”. She was born in 1884, daughter of Conor and Catherine (nee Morris) Flynn. The Flynn's had a drapery shop and bar on Main Street, where Phillips' clothes shop is today. One local, who knew Monica well in later years, recalled that she had a “very angelic countenance” and used to play the organ in the Friary. She never married and died at her Main Street home in the 1950s.

Two of six Greally sisters, daughters of James and Bridget (nee Nolan) Greally who had a business premises on Knox Street, are known to have acted as models in the Stations of the Cross, but their exact identity remains to be confirmed. The six were Mrs. Anne Marie Folliard (Coolnaha), Mrs. Nora Caulfield (Main St.), Mrs. Margaret McGreal (Westport), Delia, Lizzie and Ellen Greally. It is believed that two of the last three named were most likely to have been those featured, and possibly Mrs. Caulfield.



Ellie Mullins, who lived all her life beside the Court House, was said by some to be included in one or more of the Fr. Foran paintings. Miss Mullins' father Robert (a native of County Meath) was Clerk of the Court, and an ex-R.I.C. man. Ellie herself was born in Longford in 1884, where her father was then stationed.

Another local woman said to be featured in the paintings, and in "Jesus Meets His Blessed Mother" in particular was Aggie Gilmore, a first cousin of Norah Gilmore. Her parents – Pat and Anne (nee Morris) Gilmore – had a public house on Knox Street too, where Maureen Tarpey's was in later years.

### The Artist

Edward Foran was born in 1864, at Dunbrody, Co. Wexford, not far across the River Suir from Waterford City. His father was a Waterford man, and his mother was Eleanor Butler. He attended the local national school, after which (in the late 1870s) he went to Dublin to serve his time to the grocery business. The shop where he worked was situated near John's Lane, and close to the Augustinian church there where he regularly attended Mass. He became a member of the Confraternity of the Cincture there, and, in due course, decided to join the order as a priest.

He started his noviciate in 1885 having had special tuition in different subjects to make up for his lack of post-primary education. It came to light early on that he was a gifted painter. He was sent to Rome and, while here, got permission to study art under the direction of an Italian master. In 1891 he was ordained, and was posted to the Augustinian Priory in Hythe, in the south-east of England. Along with painting, Fr. Foran had a great interest in history and spent much time researching in libraries and archives in England and Ireland. His particular fields of interest were the history of the Augustinian houses in Ireland and England, and the lives of the Augustinian saints.

Having spent some years in England, in 1907, he was transferred from St. Monica's, Hoxton Square, London, to Ballyhaunis. With an unbounded energy he directed his exertions towards the restoration of the "old Abbey", and the continuation of the work started by his predecessors, Fr. Robert Dore in the 1830s, and Fr. James Anderson in the 1870s. He started renovating the church in January 1908. He restored and roofed the Lady Chapel which had been in ruins for generations (the western half of the present-day side-aisle). He moved the main altar from the East to the West end, at the main entrance (it was restored to the East end in the 1930s renovation), and moved the sacristy to one side of the Lady Chapel. He added quoins to the external walls and erected a new bell-tower at the north-east corner.

When clearing out the Lady Chapel, he removed the old O'Gara altar (erected in 1739) and had it placed in the (new) sanctuary. In one of the vaults, the entrance to which was behind one of the statues in the old sanctuary, he found an old tabernacle dating back to the penal times, though the whereabouts of this are now unknown. In all this work, Fr. Foran was both architect and contractor.

In 1914 he left Ballyhaunis for St. Monica's, Hoxton, and later was assigned to St. Augustine's, Hammersmith, also in London. In the early 1920s he returned to Ireland, as prior in New Ross, and later in Cork. In 1930 he represented the Irish Province of the Augustinian Order at a Eucharistic Congress in Carthage, North Africa (where St. Augustine had been bishop). From 1936 to 1938 he was back in Hythe, his first appointment.

As a painter, he didn't confine himself to religious art: when the centenary of the 1798 Rebellion was being celebrated, he painted pictures of the Battle of the Rock (Hill of Oulart) and the Battle of the Three Rocks, both of which took place in his native Co. Wexford. He also designed the 1798 memorials which can be seen to this day in New Ross and Oulart, Co. Wexford. He was a member of the Institut Heraldiq in France, and of the Academy of Arts in Ireland.

He died suddenly on a visit to Limerick on 5th October, 1938, at the age of seventy-four years. In accordance with the rule of the Augustinian Order, he was buried where he died, and found his last resting place in St. Laurence's Cemetery there.

Father Foran's paintings are a magnificent legacy and they serve as a memorial to the tremendous work he undertook to maintain and enhance this historic foundation.

### Acknowledgements

Thanks are to the following (some now since deceased, RIP) who gave information for this article: Chris O'Doherty, Dublin (daughter of Norah Gilmore); Dr. Noreen Kean, Claremorris (daughter of Paddy Smyth), J. T. Smyth, Dublin (grand-nephew of Norah Smyth), Cecily Garvey Moran, Máisín Meath, Josie Smyth, Gerry Cribbin, Carmel Johnston, Margaret Johnston, Anne Marie Delaney, Mary O'Dwyer (all Ballyhaunis). Thanks to Fr. John O'Connor, O.S.A. (Dungarvan) for some of the photographs, information on the subjects of the paintings, and for providing biographical details on Fr. Foran which comes largely from 'An tAth. Eamann O Fuaráin, O.S.A. (1864-1938)' in "An Sagart", Geimhreadh 1994, 16-18, by Fr. Seamas S. de Vál, P.P., Oulart, Co. Wexford.

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# Network Ireland

Caroline Kirrane

I joined Network Ireland – Mayo Branch two years ago and currently sit as Events Manager on the committee. Network Ireland is a progressive, dynamic organisation supporting the professional and personal development of women. The Mayo Branch is a sub branch of Network Ireland. Network Ireland is a non-profit, voluntary organisation with over 1,000 members over fifteen branches throughout Ireland.

Our members are made up of diverse group of women from budding entrepreneurs, SME owners, charity organisations, and state bodies; self employed, employees and people scaling back from the workplace into retirement. All members bring something different to the branch.

Network Ireland provides a forum in which new and established business women and women employed in business can develop professional and personal contacts to ensure that their contribution and influence is recognised as a vital force in business and in society. Network Ireland offers support, mentoring and confidence building for women, in particular those starting in business or returning to the workplace.

Events are held each month throughout Mayo and members are free to attend any of the other Branch Events throughout the country. Events are free to all members and are a fantastic way to network, learn and socialise with likeminded people.

Further information can be obtained from Network Ireland-Mayo Branch or make contact with Caroline Kirrane of APP Kirrane Auctioneering 094-9630240.



Caroline Kirrane (Managing Partner, APP Kirrane Auctioneering), Lisa Morley (Office Manager) and President of Network Ireland - Mayo Branch - Anne Conlon (All About Sales), attending a business convention in The Mount Falcon Hotel, Ballina.

## Ballyhaunis Parish Choir

Martina Kelly

Ballyhaunis Parish Choir resumed practices in September after the summer break. We always welcome new members at any time during the year and can be found rehearsing on Monday evenings from 7 - 8pm in the Parish Church. We sing on the first and third Sundays of the month and at other special ceremonies such as Confirmation which took place earlier this year.

Choir members are also available to sing at funeral services, and should anyone need to avail of this service, details can be had from the local undertakers.

Sincere thanks and gratitude are expressed to our Musical Director, Moira Delaney. Moira works tirelessly, forever sourcing new music, teaching it to choir members and ensuring it is perfect before it is

performed. Thanks and gratitude are also extended to the organists and soloists who also perform during the year. If you'd like to see us perform some of our Christmas repertoire, why not come along to the Friary on Sunday 15th December, where we will perform along with Gracenotes and the Abbey Male Voice Choir.

**Chairperson:** Michael Kelly

**Treasurers:** Frances Mulhern and Ann Curley

**Musical Director:** Moira Delaney

**Assistant Musical Director:** Ita Fahey

**Organist:** Ludmilla Burchovski

**Secretary:** Martina Kelly





# Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre

Stephen Grogan

2019 saw Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre continue its development as a community organisation, providing a range of family support activities and opportunities in the local community from its office at St. Mary's Abbey.

The Family Resource Centre was started in 2004 and is based in the Friary House at St. Mary's Abbey. The Family Resource Centre is focused on providing practical support, information and opportunities to all families and people in our community and works with other organisations and state agencies to improve the quality and range of services available in the Ballyhaunis Area.

The Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre is one of seven such centres in Mayo, with over 120 FRCs operating in different towns and areas throughout the country. Funding for the FRCs comes from the Tusla the Child and Family Agency through a three year funding agreement, which enables Ballyhaunis FRC to continue its work with some degree of certainty into the future.

The Family Resource Centre also employs a Family Support Worker – Geraldine Glacken, who provides parenting courses and individualised programmes for families greatly increasing the range of supports and services that the FRC can provide, ensuring that families in Ballyhaunis can access the same family support service available elsewhere in the county. Congratulations to Geraldine on the birth of her son earlier this year and we look forward to her return at the start of 2020.

While providing help and advice to individuals remains one of our core activities the FRC continues to run and host a range of adult education courses. We organise computer courses throughout the year as well as providing a venue for a number of other adult educational programmes that are run in partnership with outside agencies. The Senior Alert Programme continues to be operated by the FRC, as does the Sunday morning food bank run in conjunction with Tesco and Food Cloud, with just-before-date food being collected and distributed to families in Ballyhaunis.

The Family Resource Centre has worked with a number of community based groups helping them with funding applications and other types of assistance. Other more established community groups are also supported and use the Family Resource Centre office in the Friary House for their own meetings and activities.

2019 marked the tenth year of our Community Pre-School service which is based next to our office at St. Mary's Augustinian Abbey. The Community Pre-school

caters for children aged over three years and three months providing a free Monday to Friday childcare service during school term under the Government's National Free Pre-school Year scheme. The Community Pre-school has proven extremely popular with local parents and the quality of the service provided by its dedicated staff has been recognised at both county and national levels.

The family resource centre also operates another childcare service in the town, with the 'Greater Tomorrow' service based in the Old Convent Asylum Accommodation Centre, funded by Tusla. Both services provide high quality childcare and employ a number of local childcare staff.

2019 saw the departure of our Childcare Services Manager – Ms. Patricia Kelly – who now manages the Little Acorns childcare centre in Brackens. Patricia was responsible for starting our two childcare services and in building them up over the last ten years. Barbara Murphy and Hina Rehman have now taken over her responsibilities.

Some of other the activities which have taken place this year include the very popular Crochet Group who meet every Friday morning, the 'Fáilte Isteach' English language classes along with summer camps and cookery classes. The Family Resource Centre also offers a community internet service and help with printing. A counselling service continued this year and we hope to maintain this into the future.

The Family Resource Centre provides an outreach office to Mayo Citizens Information who attend once per month to answer questions and help people find out about their entitlements and rights. The Money Advice Bureau also provides a similar service. The FRC Office also helps individuals with their queries, filling in official forms and understanding their entitlements with many people being helped in this way over the last year.

A great deal of the work of the Family Resource Centre depends on the participation of volunteers in both our management committee and in the activities themselves.

The Family Resource Centre is controlled by a board of directors made up of people living in the Ballyhaunis community, for 2019 the officers were: Seamus Grogan (Chairperson), Manar Cherbatji, Marie Jordan and Mary Morrissey.

The FRC is always seeking people living in the town who would like to join the FRC board, so feel welcome to discuss this any time with the staff or directors – your involvement would be invaluable.



## A LETTER OF THANKS FROM RESIDENTS OF THE OLD CONVENT DIRECT PROVISION CENTRE.

Dear the Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre Manager,

I am an asylum seeker and have been living in Ballyhaunis for the last four and a half years, in the Old Convent Direct Provision Centre.

A few months ago I was invited to participate in the various activities organised by the Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre.

There, I met wonderful and warm people who were very welcoming and supportive. The people there come from a wide range of backgrounds, but all created a welcoming, safe and vibrant community in which I was happy to be a part of.

The activities were managed by Tracey McDermott who is a very professional and energetic woman. She does her work to a very high standard and always with lots of care and attention. She is always ready to help, support or give advice and is very much loved by all. She has supported and motivated me and this, no doubt, had a profound effect on me as I found a person to whom I can reach out and who can provide the support that is very much needed to many people of the Old Convent Community.

The existence of this organisation makes a profound difference on a large number of people in the Ballyhaunis community, and beyond. Therefore, this centre should continue to grow and develop so its diligent members will be able to continue to have such a positive effect on the people who use its services.

The knitting and art classes that took place there were very well organised and I was happy to take part in them, as they allowed me to connect with other people.

By taking part in the organisation's activities I discovered its importance. It is very much needed for Ballyhaunis. Life is very difficult, and it is helpful when you know that you can come in to the Family Resource Centre and be surrounded by people who can understand you.

Thank you for making me feel welcome and a big 'Thank You' to Tracey who, even after working hours, made sure I am alright and offered constant support and attention.

Albina, Dalia, Tom Makhlis



The Family Resource Centre at St. Mary's Abbey.



Junior Baking  
Finalist

**Jessalyn Jennings of Began**, a member of the Brickens Foroige Club, competed in the finals of the Aldi Foroige National Junior Baking Competition 2019. She went through to the Regional finals after taking one of the two places in the Mayo Finals in The Park Hotel, Kiltimagh. She then had to bake her cake from scratch in front of the Judges in the Regional Final held in Moate Community School. She took one of the two places which put her through to compete in the National Finals at this year's National Ploughing Championships (17th to 19th September).

Not only did Jessalyn represent her Foroige Club, she represented her County. The young baker was tasked with baking the perfect Chocolate Fudge Cake. She baked every day over the summer in preparation. Her brothers and sister can highly recommend her cakes as they don't even give them time to cool... and all that's left are crumbs!

Jessalyn is daughter of Colin and Collette Jennings, Began, and granddaughter of Tina and the late Seamus Waldron, Abbeyquarter, Ballyhaunis. Her family are extremely proud of her accomplishments, as are her many friends who wish her well in the future.



# Four Generations of the Cruise Gannon Family, Johnstown

Photographs courtesy of Bridget Jensen, Valhalla, New York, U.S.A., daughter of Elaine McGuire Jensen, daughter of Bridie Gannon McGuire, daughter of Mary Cruise Gannon, daughter of Bridget Morrisroe Cruise.

Mary Cruise married Peter Gannon and had seven children:

1. Patrick Gannon, went to England.
2. Michael Gannon, went to England.
3. John Gannon, went to England. Killed in a work related accident.
4. Mary Kate Gannon went to U.S.A. Married Ed Donaghue. She died after childbirth.
5. Bridget/Bridie Gannon went to U.S.A. Married John McGuire and had five children.
6. Thomas Gannon went to U.S.A. Had five children.
7. James/Jim Gannon went to U.S.A. in the late 1960s. Unmarried.



Mary Cruise Gannon (standing) with her mother Bridget Morrisroe Cruise (died 1930 aged 91).



Jim Gannon with his mother Mary Cruise Gannon.



Above: Mary Cruise Gannon with dog 'Gager'.



Left: Bridie Gannon McGuire and Margaret Gannon Hoban (sitting in the cart).





Top  
L-R: Margaret  
and Michael  
Gannon,  
Mary Cruise  
Gannon,  
her grandson  
Bobby  
McGuire and  
her niece  
Margaret  
Gannon  
Hoban.

Below:  
Bridie Gannon,  
from her  
passport.



Marion Waldron (singer) and Noelle Keegan



### Gurteen Nursing Neighbours - Leading the Way!

Neighbours, Orla Loftus Moran (left) and Aoife Murphy, of Gurteen, were both recently accredited as Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs): Orla in 2018 and Aoife in 2019. ANPs are experienced, expert Registered Nurses who can manage complete clinical care for their patients. They are highly skilled and competent to assess, investigate, diagnose, and prescribe medications for patients. To date, there are only two hundred and forty ANPs out of the total Irish nursing workforce which is greater than 65,000. The village of Gurteen is unique to have two ANPs living there. Aoife is currently working as an ANP as part of the Respiratory team in Mayo University Hospital. Orla works as an ANP in General Practice with Dr. Diarmuid Murray in Knock and Ballyhaunis.



Pictured in front of the old Gannon homestead in Johnstown are John McGuire (husband of Bridie Gannon McGuire) with daughters Elaine McGuire Jensen and Maureen McGuire O'Connor during their trip to Ireland in 1982.



# John McGuire Celebrates His 90th Birthday

John McGuire is the son of Bridie Gannon McGuire, who was born in Grallagh (Johnstown), Ballyhaunis. She immigrated to the U.S.A. in 1922, married John McGuire Snr. and had five children: John, Brud, Bobby, Maureen and Elaine.

John turned 90 on 20th June 2019. His children Ann, Eileen, John, Trish, Tim and Marie organised the party to mark the occasion. There was food, music, and much merriment enjoyed by the approximately 156 people in attendance. His sons John and Tim provided entertainment with presentations on family, career and a life well lived. John grew up down the port in Elizabeth, New Jersey and served in the United States Marine Corps, then the Elizabeth Police Department. He was honoured by both of these groups at the gathering.

Willie Lynch's band played many fine tunes and accompanied John on the song *'That Old Irish Mother of Mine'* in tribute to his mother, since the party coincided with the anniversary of her death.

His mother, Bridie Gannon McGuire, was the daughter of Mary and Peter Gannon. Mary and Peter had seven children: Patrick, Michael, Jack, Tommy, Mary Kate, Bridie and Jim. Their offspring span the globe – U.K., Australia, U.S.A.

So, Hello from the USA from the descendants of the Gannons who were once part of the land in Ballyhaunis! And to all the people who remained behind, and to the new people, we wish you health, happiness and all good things!



John McGuire (seated, in green shirt) with family on the occasion of his 90th birthday. Included are John Verde, Matthew Verde, Joe Jensen, Bridie Cleary, Jimmy Jensen, John McGuire (the birthday boy), Owen McGuire, Grace Grande, Krystyna Krupinski, Marie McGuire Krupinski, John Gannon, Ann McGuire, John J. McGuire III, Trish McGuire Grande, Timothy McGuire, Patrick McGuire, Patricia Krupinski, Corinne Grande, Katie Verde, Billy McGuire, Kristjen Kjems, Colleen McGuire Kjems, Eileen McGuire Verde, Megan Verde, Christine McGuire Andrews, Sean McGuire.

Below right: Megan Verde and Eileen Grande kissing their Pop, John McGuire on his 90th Birthday.





# Fit-for-Life Ballyhaunis

Siobhan Walsh & Mary Henry

Fit-for-Life Ballyhaunis consists of walkers, joggers and runners. There are various levels of fitness in the present membership and new members are always welcome. Fit-for-Life is an excellent way to get into being more active. Lots of people who have never run before have benefited from joining Fit-for-Life. We meet on Tuesday evenings at 7pm and Saturday mornings at 9am at the ball-court in the Friary Grounds. Please contact our Facebook page Fit-for-Life Ballyhaunis for any queries.

This year has seen an increase in new members joining and participating in races for the very first time. On Easter Saturday in the Kilmovee 10k over fifteen of our members walked, jogged or ran across the finish line, some achieving personal best times followed by well-deserved tea and some homemade treats.

On June Bank Holiday Monday, Ballyhaunis Fit-for-Life group hosted the inaugural Run West 10 mile run which was a tremendous success. We decided to raise some money by hosting this event and Cancer Care West was our chosen Charity. This race replaced the annual 8k race which had taken place over the last eleven years. There was excellent support and welcome refreshments from householders along the course route. Following the run, homemade refreshments were enjoyed by all at Ballyhaunis Rugby Club. The event received positive feedback and was enjoyed by all who participated. A donation of €900 was presented to Cancer Care West on 17th June.

The following day, Tuesday, 4th June the Mayo AC 5k series came to Ballyhaunis. Some members participated but most helped on the evening with registration and marshalling.

Run for Ollie 10k in Milltown was another race that many members attended on 15th June. Another



Participants in this year's Dublin City Marathon which took place on Sunday, 27th October, along with supporters. Back, L-R: Paul Damron, Trevor Kelly, David McConn. Centre, L-R: Gerry Kirrane, Martin Fitzmaurice, Phillip McGoldrick, Patricia Waldron, Lisa McConn, Elaine Patterson, Natasha Kelly, Janette Webb, Alma Gallagher, Mary T. Griffin. Front, L-R: Justin McDonagh, Tracy Cunnane, Siobhan Conlon, Karen Clancy, Eileen Donnellan, Caroline Mc Dowell, Mary Niland, Mary Henry.

enjoyable event with great hospitality and raising money for a very worthy cause.

The Achill Half Marathon has become a regular fixture in our diaries and on 5th July a large number from Ballyhaunis Fit-for-Life travelled to participate in this challenging run, some running a half marathon for the very first time.

Over the summer many of our members have been busy training for the upcoming Dublin City Marathon on 27th October. This has involved taking part in half and three-quarter marathons in Galway, Swinford and Tarmonbarry. Overall it has been a busy year and we look forward to another successful year ahead with the Run West 10 mile already at planning stage.

As you read this article you may think this group is for runners only. However, there is a place for all levels of fitness, whether you are walker, jogger or runner. Maybe you want to go out and jog a few miles. Maybe you just want a bit of company and a bit of craic as you run, walk or jog. Whatever your reasons you can be assured of a warm welcome. Looking forward to seeing some new faces in the coming year.



Left: Fit-for-Life Ballyhaunis hosted the inaugural Run West 10 Mile run on the June Bank Holiday Monday this year, and raised funds which were presented to Cancer Care West on 17th June 2019. L-R: Philip McGoldrick, Aidan Dermody, Elaine Doyle (Cancer Care West), Maria Kneafsey (Mayo AC), Siobhan Walsh, John Joe Hoban, Elaine Patterson, Karen Clancy, Martin Fitzmaurice, Patricia Waldron, Mary Henry, Susan Hoban, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Liz Walsh.



# Ballyhaunis GAA Club

## Senior Football

2019 will go down as a memorable year in the annals of the Club's history. Team Manager Seamus Caulfield and his selectors Paul Jordan, Brian Mulrennan and Mike Dillon, along with physio Aoife Murray and Jason McGoldrick on stats, worked tirelessly with the lads throughout the year. The efforts began to pay off when we won the Padraig Prendergast Memorial Cup by defeating Davitts in the annual competition between the two sides in August.

Incredibly, a fantastic run in the league with nine wins out of ten games was not sufficient to secure promotion, with the Club beaten into third place by a single point. The year also ended in heartbreak in the championship when we lost out to a very fine side from The Neale, again by the narrowest of margins, on intermediate final day at Mayo GAA headquarters in October.

In spite of these disappointments the Club can look forward with confidence to the future with a fine cohort of emerging young talent who will undoubtedly bring many years of entertainment and excitement to the followers of Gaelic football in the parish. We would like to thank Fr. Stephen Farragher for chronicling with photographs all of our ups and downs on the pitch over the past year and we would also like to thank our many supporters at home and abroad for their loyalty,



encouragement and sponsorship.

**Senior Football panel:** Neil Carney, Adrian Phillips, Brian Hunt, John Cunnane, Jack Coyne, Conor Freeley, Keith Higgins, Mark Phillips, Eoghan Collins, Joe Sutton, Damian Egan, Sean Herr, Cyril Collins, Kieran Kiely, Kevin Byrne, Patrick Caulfield, Callum Gardiner, Morgan Lyons, David Cunnane, Brian O'Neill, Cormac Phillips, Patrick Kiely, Liam Herr, James Cribbin, Eamonn Phillips, Sean Gildea, Jason Coyne, Jack McGoldrick, James Lyons, Conor Keane, Morgan Lyons, Eamonn Phillips, Darren Coyne.

**SEAMUS CAULFIELD**

## Minor Football

At the start of the year Emmett Keane and Martin Keane were appointed joint managers of the Ballyhaunis Minor Football team. In spite of the difficulty with low numbers, we felt it was critical that Ballyhaunis field a team at this very important grade of competition. The panel of players was drawn from all eligible Under-16 and Under-18 players in order to make up the numbers to field a 13-a-side team. Our first training session was held on 27th February with 21 players in attendance.

We started the Division 5 League campaign in March with a fractious four point loss to Tourmakeady, but things improved from there with four wins on the spin,



### Ballyhaunis Senior Football team 2019

Back, L-R: Neil Carney, Cormac Phillips, Damian Egan, James Cribbin, Kieran Kiely, Eamonn Phillips, Sean Gildea, Kevin Gallagher, David Cunnane, Adrian Phillips, John Cunnane, Kevin Byrne, Patrick Kiely, Mark Phillips, Sean Herr, Patrick Caulfield, Brian O'Neill.  
Front: Morgan Lyons Jack McGoldrick, Keith Higgins, Liam Herr, Conor Freeley, Jason Coyne, Eoghan Collins, Joe Sutton, Callum Gardiner, Jack Coyne, Cyril Collins, Conor Keane, Brian Hunt. *Photograph by Ciara Buckley*





**Ballyhaunis Minor footballers with management and former Galway star Ja Fallon.**

Back, L-R: Simon McDonagh, Cian Walsh, Diarmuid Phillips, Shawn Morley, Jason Rheinhardt, Luke Walsh, Jack McGoldrick, Ethan Keane, Josh Webb, Emmett Keane. Front, L-R: Dara Rattigan, Aiden Sloyan, Kevin Durkan, Conor Keane, James McDonagh, Marty Keane, Ja Fallon.

against Louisburgh at home and then three away wins at Achill, Westport B and Shrule-Glencorrib. That left us with a League semi-final to play against Louisburgh which we won comfortably by 12 points. The League final was set for the famed Malachy Forde's Field in Carramore versus Tourmakeady on 6th May. A super first half display had us 5 points up at the interval but the dream died with a disappointing second half performance and Ballyhaunis 8 points adrift at the final whistle.

Further training sessions ensued even though our next outing would not take place until the 21st August in the East Mayo semi-final. Pitched in against a strong team from Swinford, we gave our best display of the year when coming from 5 points behind at half time to win by 4 at the end leaving us to face the old enemy, Aghamore, in the final. Again, we put in a very good first half, but things fell apart after the re-start and Aghamore ran out comfortable winners.

The Championship began and we knew we would not have it easy. And we didn't. Well beaten by Islandeady before a Louisburgh concession, we went to Shrule to play a winner-takes-all match to make the semi-final and took a comprehensive victory home on a score of 2-21 to 0-8. We met Hollymount-Carramore, managed by Mayo County Board Chairman Mike Connelly, in the championship semi-final on their pitch on the 4th September and we again came out second best.

As two novices in the world of team management, Martin and Emmett would like to thank the Club senior players who helped with training. In particular we would like to thank Pa Kiely and Cormac Phillips who gave up several Saturday mornings to drill the lads. In addition,

Kevin Gallagher, Joe Sutton and Eoghan Collins all gave their time and four time All Star Keith Higgins came out on the wettest night of the year to lend a hand. If I have missed anyone in that list, I apologise but we are grateful to all the senior players for their help. Thanks also to John Higgins and Peter Healy and other officers of the Club for their help during the year.

We would also like to thank Mary Prenty for setting up a day with Seamus Burns at the

Centre of Excellence. The lads were put through a Strength and Movement Test followed by an excellent training session with Galway football legend, Ja Fallon. More thanks to Aoife Keane who washed hundreds of dirty jerseys and put up with a dirty mood every now and again!

Finally, we would like to thank the young players who worked with us for their commitment through the year. There was a core group of dedicated players who never missed training and, although we sometimes had only the bare 13 getting on the bus, we fulfilled all fixtures. These lads threw everything into their team and, though they didn't always win, they held their heads high if things were going the wrong way and they always played the game with honour and respect.

We would invite more parents to get involved and anyone assisting with underage teams will appreciate this.

To sum up we had 36 training sessions and played 12 matches over the year. We played in a League Final, an East Mayo Final and a Championship semi-final.

Hon the Town!

**Minor Management:** Emmett Keane and Marty Keane. **Minor Panel:** Kevin Durkan, Danny Hill, James McDonagh, Shaun Morley, Simon McDonagh, Jason Rheinhardt, Cian Walsh, Joshua Webb, Kian Burke, Ethan Keane, Conor Keane (Capt.), Eoin McDonagh, Jack McGoldrick, Danny Murray, Diarmuid Phillips, Dara Rattigan, Aidan Sloyan, Luke Walsh. **Minor Player of the Year:** Jason Rheinhardt.

**EMMETT KEANE**





Above: Ballyhaunis Under-11 Football team.



Right: Paul Finn of Finn Footwear presents a set of Jerseys to Under-12 team Captain Mark Feeney.

## Bord na nÓg

2019 marked another very busy season for our underage players. Training took place on Thursday and Friday evenings with the emphasis as always on fun, fair play and participation by all children. Anyone who called to our grounds on training evenings would be most impressed with the dedication and skill shown by all our underage players.

A very busy year began with our trip to Dublin in February. We received a very warm welcome from our host club in Donabate and after some excellent football we headed to Croke Park for the Mayo v. Dublin League fixture.

Our Under-6, Under-8 and Under-10 teams participated in Go Games throughout the summer with local clubs from the East Mayo area. Our Under-12 team did extremely well in their Spring League, winning all of their matches and likewise in the Summer League they

also finished very strongly. In the Under-11 Autumn League Ballyhaunis showed fantastic skill and determination and came out overall winners winning a very impressive 8 out of 8 matches.

None of the underage activities in our club would be possible without the ongoing support of all our coaches and parents.

Looking forward to many more magical football moments in 2020!

**BRENDAN DONNELLAN**  
(CHAIRMAN, BORD NA NÓG)

## Underage Hurling

As a result of the funds raised by the 2019 Club Wall Planner and calendar, which was well supported by sponsors in the community, the Club was in a position to invest in training equipment for the underage hurling teams.

On the 6th April 22 young hurlers played Day 1 of Tain League in COE competing against Castlebar, Gort and Carrick. On the 13th April in Day 2 of the competition they played against Easkey, Ballyvary, Claremorris and Cois Fharraige. On the 5th October they contested Day 3 of this competition.

On Wednesday, 1st May 2019 Ballyhaunis played Claremorris in the first round of the Under-12 County Championship. This was the first time the Club was represented at this level in six years. They went on to play five further



Ballyhaunis Under-12 Hurling team





The Ballyhaunis hurlers who played with the Mayo Under-13s: Ethan Kilbane, Evan McNamara and Jake Powers.



Sean Griffin (left) receiving the Hurling Player of the Year Award 2018 from Darran Conlon, Team Manager. Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher.



Jimmy Connor (left) of Tooreen Hurling Club pictured with Cormac Phillips who won the Mayo Poc Fada competition beating club mate Donal O'Brien into second place.

games against Tooreen, Castlebar, Ballina, Westport and Caiseal Gaels before claiming the Under-12 C County title on Sunday, 29th September.

In June 2019 Scoil Íosa won the Vinnie Judge Shield. The majority of the team is made up of Ballyhaunis players and the team is trained and managed by senior goalkeeper, Donal O'Brien.

Great credit is due to all the Underage Hurling coaches for the work they do which resulted in the great progress made throughout 2019. In particular Pierce Higgins who led the underage revival several years ago.

This year saw Kevin Morley over Under-6s, Hugh McKermitt over Under-8s and Tadhg Buckley over the Under-10 team. The Under-12 management team consisted of Trevor Kelly, Darran Conlon and John Burke.

The Club would like to acknowledge the hard work of the players, their coaches and the ongoing support of the parents involved.

## Senior Hurling

The Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling team had joint captains Adrian Brennan and Ciaran Kiely. Tadhg Buckley and Darran Conlon were joint managers with a support group of Peter Higgins, Kevin Morley, Hugh McKermitt, Pierce Higgins, Trevor Kelly and Gary Conway. EPS and Gurteen Kitchens sponsored a set of jerseys and a supply of 150 sliothars for the season.

In early April a depleted Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling team played Tooreen in Round 1 of the Genfitt League in Ballyhaunis, without any dual players. After an admirable performance the 15 players come up just short on a score line of 1-11 to 0-16.

Two weeks later Ballyhaunis defeated Castlebar in Round 2 of the Genfitt League away from home on an impressive score line of 4-13 to 0-7.

On 3rd May Ballyhaunis beat Westport 4-9 to 2-7 to qualify for the Genfitt League Final.

Ballyhaunis defeated Tooreen in the League Final on a score of 2-14 to 0-14 to win the Genfitt League Cup at the end of May.

The 28 Players involved in the Genfitt Panel throughout the four games were: Hanan Iqbal, Donal O'Brien, Adrian Brennan, Mark Phillips, Fergal Lyons, Sean Gildea, Luke Cribbin, Thomas Dillon, Calum Gardiner, Sean Griffin, Jason Powers, James Lyons, Stephen Hoban, Aidan Morrisroe, Eoghan Roe, Ciaran Kiley, Cormac Phillips, Cyril Collins, Jason Coyne, Morgan Lyons, Eamon Phillips, Adrian Phillips, Shane Healy, Ryan Kilbane, Fergal Walsh, Gearoid Keane, Kieran McDermott, Calum Brehony.



As the season progressed, Austin Lyons, Jack Coyne, Eoghan Collins, Pa Kiely, Brian Hunt and Keith Higgins joined the panel in time for the Championship. Round 1 was away to Tooreen on the 21st July when Ballyhaunis lost on a score line of 16 points to 12. One week later, the team had to settle for a 1-13 to 2-10 draw at home to Castlebar. The next match was on the 11th August winning away to Westport 17 points to 11. This left Castlebar and Ballyhaunis to contest the semi-final held in Tooreen on the 15th September. Unfortunately, Ballyhaunis lost 11 points to 10. One week later Ballyhaunis played Westport in the B Final, again losing out on a score line of 4-15 to 2-13. This brought the season to a disappointing close.

**DARRAN CONLON**

## TG4 'Go Gasta' - Village rivalry



Photograph shows the victorious Ballyhaunis GAA team in GoGasta, L-R: Leah Johnston, Gearóid Keane, Alma Gallagher, Michael Regan, Clare Higgins (Capt.), Peter Healy.

*Go Gasta* is a new TV show on TG4 that pits two nearby villages against one another in a gruelling obstacle course/race that is littered with different challenges along the way. The race runs from one village to another with the fastest, fittest and strongest team winning on the day.

On Bank Holiday Monday, 28th Oct. 2019, TG4 were in Ballyhaunis to record a selected team from Ballyhaunis GAA taking on a team from the neighbouring Tooreen Club. The route took the runners from Dawn Meats GAA Park, Ballyhaunis, through Tooraree, Annagh, Carrownedan and around the back of the Golf Club and on towards Tooreen. With help from lots of enthusiastic supporters along the way our Ballyhaunis team emerged victorious after a fun-filled day of great excitement. The programme will air on TV on Sunday, 22nd Dec. 2019, the last show in the series.

## Weekly 50/50 Draw

Ballyhaunis GAA Weekly 50/50 Draw is our principal fundraiser and is the lifeblood of the Club. We have given out over €40,000 in prizemoney to our 52 lucky winners in the past year. Ballyhaunis GAA Club would like to thank everyone who supports our Club by playing 50/50. Our friends living away from home can also play 50/50 every week and be in with a chance of winning a guaranteed minimum jackpot of €800 by playing online and following the link on our Facebook page:

Purchase online here

[https://game.smartlotto.ie/game/supporter\\_home/608](https://game.smartlotto.ie/game/supporter_home/608)



Team manager Seamus Caulfield pictured with Keith Higgins moments after the final whistle sounded in this year's Intermediate County Final at MacHale Park.



## Sinéad graduates in Chicago

Dr. Sinéad Chambers graduated in May of this year (2019) with her PhD in Interdisciplinary Leadership from Governor State University in Chicago, USA. The younger daughter of Maureen and Gerry Godfrey, Tulrahan, Sinéad attended Logboy N.S. and Ballyhaunis Community School. She went to Chicago in 2002, but always kept in touch with her many friends from school.





Vincent Keane of Annagh (left) and Dermot Eagney of Clare St. met up in New York for the Mayo Championship game, May 2019.



Billy Phillips (Doctor's Road) and Michael McDermott (Ballindrehid) pictured climbing the Reek this year.  
*Photograph: Fr. Stephen Farragher.*



Bringing the silverware back to Ballyhaunis! The Gem Costcutter, Bridge St., Ballyhaunis, was the proud recipient of 3rd Place in the Costcutter Large Format Store of the Year Award 2019 in City West Hotel, Dublin. This was awarded during the Barry Group Annual Awards where the Group acknowledge the top performing stores in the Costcutter symbol division. L-R: Paul Roche (Head of Inside Sales), Jim Barry (Managing Director), Stephen Carney (Gem Costcutter, Ballyhaunis) and Edwina Lucey (Sales Director).



Pictured at the Rugby World Cup in Japan, October 2019.  
Francis Salmon (Knock and London), Thomas Moran (Ballyhaunis and New Jersey), John Dillon Leetch (Ballyhaunis and London) and John's son Conor, with the rugby cup



Old friends meet this summer.  
Maeve Waldron, Noelle Keegan and Joan Munnick (nee Keegan).  
Photograph taken 27th May 2019





John Cleary, Thomas Lyons and Sean Waldron pictured with the Canon Henry Cup in Dillon's Bar, The Square, 1964.



Vinnie and Rita Caulfield, Upper Main Street. Photograph taken 1925 at the site of present day Annagh Medical Centre, Doctor's Road.

*Right:*  
Alice Lyons with her grandson John Gray, and Bill Eagney with his grandsons Daragh and Diarmuid Eagney, pictured at Mac's Hill, August 1984.

*Below:*  
A painting by local artist Johnny O'Shaughnessy of an old building in the townland of Annagh.



Eagle-eyed photographer Seamus Hora took this photograph in his back garden in Abbeyquarter, 28th June 2019. This is a Sparrowhawk, a bird of prey species once quite rare but now numerous in the district.





2019 has proven to be a very busy year for the Fianna Fáil Party in Ballyhaunis and throughout county Mayo. Our Deputy Leader, Dara Calleary, has continued the work of rebuilding the party throughout the country, meeting with all units of the organisation and formulating party policy ahead of the General Election that is expected to take place in Spring 2020. Moreover, Dara was appointed National Director of Elections for the 2019 Local Elections. Fianna Fáil not only increased its representation in Mayo, but nationally as well, to remain the largest party in local government winning 279 seats. That represented a gain of twelve seats. Crucially too it saw the party win new seats across Dublin. For the first time in two decades the party is the biggest group on Dublin City Council and Fianna Fáil, with the support of Independents, hold control of Mayo County Council.

Locally, Cllr. John Caulfield was comfortably re-elected to Mayo County Council – this time in the re-established Swinford Municipal District which includes parts of rural Ballyhaunis, Aghamore, Kilmovee and Kilkelly. John continues to hold regular clinics at Dara Calleary's office on Clare Street, Ballyhaunis.

Unfortunately, our candidate for the Claremorris Municipal District, Michael Carty, was unsuccessful in his bid to win a seat. We thank Michael for the huge efforts made and for his ongoing commitment to the party.

Lisa Chambers TD was appointed National Director of Elections for the European Elections and Fianna Fáil won two seats – in Dublin, where Barry Andrews will take up his position after Brexit, and in Ireland South, where former TD Billy Kelleher won a seat. Unfortunately, we failed to win a seat in the Connacht-Ulster-Midlands Constituency. Deputy Chambers has also been to the fore as the Party's Spokesperson on Brexit.

Dara Calleary TD continues to operate a weekly clinic from his office on Clare St., Ballyhaunis. A staff member or Dara himself attend every Friday from 10.30am-12.30pm. Enquiries can be made by calling Dara's Ballina office on 096 77613.

Finally, we extend our sympathy to all those in the parish of Annagh who were bereaved in 2019 – may the soul of the faithful departed rest in peace.

## GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



Left: Emmett Keane and Teresa Hopkins on their Wedding Day, 26th June 1969.

Above: Emmett and Teresa Keane celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary with their family. L-R: Aoife, Ethan, Dearbhla, Amy, Sarah, Emer, Alison, Niall, Emmett Jnr., Emmett, Teresa, Shirley and Fintan Keane.



# Na Brideoga

Claire Delaney

It was another action packed year for the players of Na Brideoga Camogie Club. There was little time to languish in the successes of 2017 as 2018 training commenced back in February. The cold and frosty evenings do little to deter the local 'camogies' from picking up their hurls and getting back out on the pitch.

As always Féile was not far from the minds of the U14 players, club and management, and the campaign to compete in and defend the All Ireland Féile title began. This year saw Féile come to Connacht and Na Brideoga were proud to host Knockananna Camogie Club. We now know that to host Féile is no small undertaking, and it was due to the hard work of many club members and their families, and huge support from the local Ballyhaunis, Tooreen, Aghamore, Began, Gorthaganny businesses, that we can look back and confidently say it was an amazing weekend and experience for all involved. As always our Féile Team and Management left no stone unturned in the preparation stage. When the weekend arrived the players approached it with their usual focus and concentration. When the camogie players come together to compete they form a



determined and strong circle - perhaps because they have now played together for quite a number of years.

Na Brideoga faced Crosserlough and then Cappataggle in the initial stage beating both teams with strong performances. This was followed by our home match, playing Knockananna in Tooreen on the Saturday morning and claiming victory in front of a passionate and supportive Na Brideoga/Tooreen sideline. From there the team headed to Athlone in order to prepare for the semi-final against St. Mullins. After an exciting and tough game of camogie Na Brideoga claimed their place in the final. The Final saw Na Brideoga go head-to-head with Causeway of Kerry whom we had knocked out at the semi-final stage the previous year. Despite the Na Brideoga team playing outstanding camogie it was not to be their year and Causeway took the title. But never fear – planning has begun for 2019!

Na Brideoga Camogie Club would like to take the opportunity to say a massive THANK YOU to all of our sponsors who supported us, and the club members who helped make Féile 2018 the success that it was.



**Na Brídeoga, Under-16 team: Galway Championship (Div. B) and Connacht seven-a-side winners.**

Back, L-R: Geri-Maye Henry, Aoife Doherty, Aoibhean Crawley, Emily Coffey, Carragh Burke, Claire Flanagan, Roisín Lynskey, Niamh Duffy, Laura Madden, Lilian Keane, Erin Murray. Front, L-R: Caoimhe Delaney, Niamh Greally (Capt.), Saoirse Delaney, Ellen Tenor, Emer Delaney, Aiobhean Lynskey, Kate Tenor, Eabha Delaney, Laoise Greally, Niamh Mooney.



Na Brideoga makes a very substantial contribution to the developing and flourishing Mayo Camogie Teams. This year saw the U14 Mayo Camogie team, captained by Na Brideoga player Róisín Lynskey, compete in the All Ireland U14 Division 4 competition. The panel was made up by the three Mayo clubs. Na Brideoga's contribution to the team included: Róisín Lynskey, Saoirse Delaney, Ellen Tener, Caoimhe Delaney, Emer Delaney, Lillian Keane, Rebecca Klein, Alice Curran, Gerri-Maye Henry, Niamh Mooney, Emily Coffey, Aoibhinn Lynskey, Niamh Duffy and Caragh Burke. The competition is held over one day and the teams play five matches in total. The Mayo team progressed from the group stages after winning three out of three matches against Carlow, Westmeath and Donegal. In the semi-final they defeated a strong Wicklow team to gain a place in the final. The final required the team to work together and deliver a strong performance in order to defeat Kerry and win Michael Kennedy Cup.

Mayo U16 camogie saw history made in 2018 as the team competed, for the first time, in the All Ireland U16C Championship. The team included a strong Na Brideoga contingency: Hannah Tener, Dearbhla Glavey, Niamh Greally, Megan Henry, Eilish Duffy, Ellen Tener, Erin Murray, Aoife Doherty, Caoimhe Delaney, Emer Delaney, Saoirse Delaney, Aoibheann Crawley, Claire Flanagan, Lillian Keane, and was captained by Na Brideoga player Meabh Delaney. They secured victory in the group games against Kerry and Carlow and drew with Tyrone. A loss to Roscommon meant we would then meet our Roscommon neighbours in the semi-final. The semi-final was a fierce and competitive match but the Mayo team won by a point. The final saw Mayo play a very strong Carlow team who have been in this final for the previous three years. Despite the team playing outstanding camogie it was not to be on this occasion and Carlow were deserving winners.

Underage Camogie is also alive and well with training for U6s, U8s, U10s, and U12s. The U12s also won the Galway Plate competition in Galway this year.

The Junior team started the League in March. The team is quite a young team as some older girls had moved or were working away leading to the younger players being called upon. We were defeated by Craughwell in the first game but went on to secure a win against Portumna. We needed a win in the third game to reach the semi-final, but Sarsfields proved too strong on the night.

The Championship commenced in July with a win over Craughwell by a point. This was followed by a defeat to Turloughmore, meaning we would need to beat Sylane to reach the semi-final. This was achieved and at the time of writing this piece we wait to play Liam

Mellows in the Galway semi-final.

As a club we represent Mayo in the Connacht competitions. At the time of going to print the Junior team played in the Connacht Junior B final against Pádraig Pearses. A brilliant performance by Amy Mulkeen saw her awarded Player of Match. The team delivered a determined and strong performance from beginning to end and Na Brideoga are the Connacht Junior B Champions. Captain Aoife Lilly was delighted to accept the cup on behalf of the Na Brideoga team.

Camogie continues to develop and grow at club and county level. There is a huge contingency of players from around the parishes who consistently represent club and county. They do so with fierce pride and passion and are wonderful ambassadors of camogie. The support that is given by individuals and sponsors is so very much appreciated by the club and players and we want to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to all of you.



Bridie Howes (nee Judge) pictured with Adrian Boyle, Carrownedan, at her home in Denver, Colorado, USA earlier this year. Bridie and her twin sister Mary Theresa Judge left their home in Agloragh, Ballyhaunis for the U.S.A. at Christmas time, 1948, seventy-one years ago.

Both celebrated their 92nd birthday earlier this year. Her visitor Adrian brought a set of rosary beads from Knock to both of the sisters.



# Mrs. Murray of Clare Street

Gerard Cleary



Mrs. Molly Murray, Clare Street (aged 92) in May 1990.

For as many as three generations of children growing up in Clare Street from the 1940s to the late 1970s the presence of Mrs. Molly Murray added excitement, curiosity and fear in equal measure. A widow since the mid-1930s, she lived above her shop between Eagney's and Dalton's – later the annexe to the Central Hotel. She sold Raleigh bicycles, paraffin oil, delft-ware, some dry food stuffs, but most importantly, boiled sweets. It was very difficult to know exactly what was on offer because everything was piled high (above a child's head height) all over the surface area of the shop. There may have been a counter but I don't remember one, and there was no access to it. There was a narrow passageway from the shop door to a room at the back of the shop.

She allowed only one child at a time into the shop and we had to keep our hands joined together, as in prayer, so that we didn't touch anything. To gain entrance you had to knock on the shop-door with your hand. The greatest crime was to tap the window with a coin – this would send her into a huge rage as she feared her plate glass window would shatter.

In the 1960s we used to play 'spinning tops' on the road and occasionally the whip would fly out of your hand and hit Mrs. Murray's window. Everyone would disappear immediately but for days afterwards she would interrogate the children to find out who had been the culprit. She told us she had 'black babies' upstairs in her house and we all believed her, as we did in Santa Claus. (Perhaps here I should offer some cultural perspective. In the fifties and sixties charity boxes in aid

of African children were common on shop counters. These boxes had images or little models of black African children who were known as 'black babies'.)

We believed she ate nettles and she regularly threatened to put the 'Widow's Curse' on people who meant her harm. She had no electricity in her house and used candles and oil lamps.

Even though we were afraid of her she was popular because she sold loose sweets by the one penny. She would make a funnel with newspaper and fill it with gobstoppers and lozenges. She once gave me an exquisite pair of snakeskin high-heeled shoes for a secondhand fundraiser for the Scouts. They were her wedding shoes from the 1920s. It was hard to reconcile the 'Miss Havisham' type woman she had become to an earlier stylish bride.

Shops used to close for a half-day on Thursdays and Mrs. Murray would then cycle out the Clare Road to Began to visit her brother Phil who lived in the original homestead. Later on he came to live in town with her above the shop.

When Canon McGarry instigated the town stations he had to convince certain people to host them. On such a mission to Mrs. Murray she boldly told him, "Business houses couldn't be giving cups of tea to people". He failed in his mission. I often think had Maeve Binchy been born in Clare Street then Mrs. Murray would have been globally immortalised. [gpcleary@gmail.com](mailto:gpcleary@gmail.com)



Tom Greally, with sons Tom and Frank, Devlis.





Des Folan. Photo Adam Kaczmarek



Sara McMahon, Communications Manager, and Patrick Buckley, Managing Director, EPS at the Energia Family Business Awards. Electrical and Pump Services Ltd. (EPS) was named the Manufacturing and Engineering Family Business of the Year at the inaugural Energia Family Business Awards at Dublin's Mansion House on 24th May 2019. The company, which celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year, also took the Silver award in the Fastest Growing Family Business category. EPS was founded in Kanturk, Co. Cork in 1968, and came to Ballyhaunis in 1976, setting up in Clare Street under the management of Tadhg Buckley. The current EPS premises in Pollnacraoghy was opened in 1984.



Michael Doherty of Athenry, Co. Galway and Ballyhaunis, in U.N. Veteran's uniform, pictured during the Ballyhaunis Easter Parade.



Pictured with Michael Doherty (Athenry and Ballyhaunis), in U.N. Veteran's uniform, on the occasion of Ballyhaunis Easter Parade, are L-R: John McCrudden, Eamon McNamara and Billy Nestor.



Terry Maughan, Cherryfield, with pony and sulkies.  
Adam Kaczmarek Photography.



# Sixty Years a Nun

Murt Hunt

When my sister, Sr. Kathleen, called to the house on 30th August 2019 I was so happy to see her and hear from her that she had just been to Knock for a Mass and to meet two other nuns for dinner in Knock House Hotel. I had known there was a special occasion coming up but it had slipped my mind when it was to take place.

The occasion was that the three nuns were celebrating sixty years in religious life on that day. They were school friends and decided to join the Mercy order together on the one day in 1959. For Sr. Joan Fahey, Sr. Mary Concannon and Sr. Kathleen Hunt it was the fulfillment of a dream they had since their schooldays.

My sister Kathleen had spent some time in Brockton, U.S.A. where she had joined another sister Margaret (R.I.P.) in working for the telephone exchange in that city. They had two comfortable jobs, were very good to my parents, sisters Carmel, Geraldine (R.I.P.) and myself, and the parcels would arrive from them every Christmas and Easter with clothes and goodies for myself and the rest of the family. I was so delighted when Margaret came home in 1955 and bought me a bicycle for my birthday. For a young lad at the time it was like winning the lotto! Margaret came home some years later and married her childhood sweetheart Joe Fahey (R.I.P.).

I was so delighted also when Kathleen came home in 1959 and helped out on the farm for a while with turf and hay etc. But she broke my little heart when she

announced, one day to us all, that she was entering the Mercy Convent in Westport. I cried for a week when she did. I later realised that it was God's plan and that we were blessed to have a nun in the family.

She was so good and such a consolation to me when my wife Anne (R.I.P.) passed away in 1994. She looked after my kids and also looked after my mother during her illness, as well as continuing her teaching duties in the convent. She taught in Westport, Ballinrobe and Ballyhaunis convents during her teaching career.

During their early years in the convent their vow of poverty would not allow them to take money from family members. But that all changed when the convents got cars and they checked the rota to see whose turn it was to drive next. And they got to go on holidays at home and abroad and take the odd gift or birthday present.

Most of the convents are closed now as the numbers joining have decreased, but the three who joined in 1959 have got lovely apartments now to enjoy their well-earned retirement, and still come together regularly to have a meal and a laugh, and to talk of their days as young postulants. I know I am not alone in wishing them many more happy years of health and happiness. To my sister Kathleen, thank you for all your kindness and help to my family, especially during my wife Anne's (R.I.P.) illness and after her death.



Friday, 30th Aug. 2019, was a special and memorable day in the lives of the three Sisters of Mercy, Sr. Mary Concannon from Brickens, Sr. Joan Fahy from Ballyhaunis and Sr. Kathleen Hunt from Lecarrow, when they celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of their profession to the Mercy Order. To mark the occasion, the Sisters gathered at the Church of St. John the Baptist, Knock for the celebration of Mass. Knock Shrine Chaplain, Fr. Paul Bennett, Chief Celebrant, offered prayers of thanksgiving for the many years of dedicated service to the Sisters of Mercy. Pictured are L-R: Sr. Mary Concannon, Fr. Paul Bennett, Sr. Joan Fahy and Sr. Kathleen Hunt.



# Inclusion and Integration in Ballyhaunis

Ola Mustapha

In recent times the Ballyhaunis community has seen a change in how people from diverse backgrounds participate in events held locally. However, a group of residents that hasn't seen this inclusion process centred around them, are the Asylum Seekers living in the Direct Provision Centre in the community. Integration is a personal journey, and how an individual chooses to integrate is better worked out by them. Inclusion, on the other hand, remains the job of the community, its representatives, local councils and perhaps the national government.

To this end, a support group was formed by the residents themselves earlier this year called The Ballyhaunis Inclusion Project. The aim of this group is to foster a cordial relationship between the community and those in the DP centre. The group comprising of Celesta Khosa, Ola Mustapha, Rispa Mwangi and Fathi Mohammed have held a series of events in the community including an Intercultural Day held on the 20th of July 2019 in the Parochial Hall. The event was well attended by people from different parts of the country. It was sponsored by South West Mayo Development Company through the AMIF fund and supported by Midwest Radio, Castlebar Community Radio, Claremorris Community Radio and Bridgestock Care Limited. The event featured a fashion parade, traditional dance, Irish dancing, hip-hop dancing, local food, artwork display, henna painting, face painting, etc.

The event was featured in the Connaught Telegraph and pictures were taken by Alison Laredo and Adam Kaczmarek Photography.

The event was anchored by volunteers from the Ballyhaunis Inclusion Project.



Rispa Mwangi, Celesta Khosa, Ola Mustapha, Fathi Mohammed of the 'Ballyhaunis Inclusion Project'.  
*Adam Kaczmarek Photography.*



Sadia Shoaib (centre) assists as youngsters contribute to a piece of artwork celebrating inclusion and integration.

*Adam Kaczmarek Photography.*



# National Seminar on Diversity & Integration

## ‘BALLYHAUNIS HELD UP AS AN EXAMPLE OF A TOWN THAT HAS EMBRACED DIVERSITY’

Gerry McGarry

Ireland has changed greatly over the past fifteen years with 12% of the population now non-Irish national. Our own town of Ballyhaunis was found to be the most diverse in the country in the 2016 Census, with migrants from 20 different ethnicities making up more than half of the population. Ballyhaunis has had a direct provision centre catering for around 500 asylum seekers since the year 2000 and stands apart from the national story: residents of migrant origin from across twenty ethnicities comprise 60% of our town's population.

This diverse resource can be developed to benefit all the community and ensure a sustainable future for the I.T. generation. Multi-lingual Ballyhaunis can play a lead role in areas such as call-centres and financial services catering for global markets.

Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration David Stanton and Minister for Rural Affairs Michael Ring attended the National Seminar on Diversity and Integration in October hosted by the Connacht Centre of Excellence in Began. “Ballyhaunis is indeed a town that has embraced diversity in a positive and inclusive manner and has been a destination for migrants from a variety of countries over many years.

Ballyhaunis has enjoyed a successful history of intercultural engagement,” Mr Stanton said.

The seminar, which heard from speakers such as former Cork senior hurler and footballer Seán Óg Ó hAilpín, was organised by the Department of Justice and the Department of Rural and Community Development.

The event was supported locally by: Ballyhaunis Businesses and the wider Ballyhaunis Community, Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce, Ballyhaunis Community Council, Students from Ballyhaunis Community School and Foróige Ballyhaunis, Scoil Íosa Ballyhaunis, Ballyhaunis Tidy Town Committee, Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence and Ballyhaunis GAA.

Speakers on the day included Minister Michael Ring TD, Minister David Stanton TD, Ann Cunnane, Mark Godfrey, Celesta Khosa (Ballyhaunis Community), Ballyhaunis native Dr. Orla McGarry (Lecturer and Postdoctoral Research Fellow, School of Political Science and Sociology, NUI Galway), Tom Forde (Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce), Imran Sher Rafique: Seán Óg Ó hAilpín (Fijian-Irish hurler and Gaelic footballer), Gerry Lyons (Chairman Ballyhaunis GAA) and Peter



Cork GAA Legend Seán Óg Ó hAilpín, Guest Speaker at the National Seminar on Diversity & Integration, with youngsters from Ballyhaunis GAA Club. Photograph by Jana Jurakova (JanaPix).



Hynes (Chief Executive, Mayo County Council).

Speaking at the event, Minister Ring said, “Ballyhaunis is a tremendous example of a mixed community, living, working and co-operating together to create a fantastic place for people to live and bring up families”.

All costs for the day, including a fantastic meal for 250 prepared and served by residents at Ballyhaunis Direct Provision, were carried by Government. The seminar on 18th October was the first stage in a serious regeneration for our town. There will be a follow-up ‘Day 2 Seminar’ in the New Year which will review the ‘Day 1’ recommendations, present a number of new opportunities and agree a way forward. There is a bright future for ‘Diverse Ballyhaunis’. That future will require the interest and support of all the community. We have an amazing opportunity. It’s now dependant on all the Ballyhaunis community acting together.

*Ní neart go cur le chéile.*



Devlis native Dr. Orla McGarry (School of Political Science and Sociology, NUI Galway) spoke at the National Seminar on Diversity & Integration.

## Michael Nolan Celebrates his 90th Birthday

*We feel so blessed to have a Dad like you.  
You are kind, supportive, loving and true.  
You are always there to lend a hand,  
Around the house and on the land*

*From early childhood you were there for us  
You never let us down, never caused a fuss.  
Denise and your family were always number one  
To us you were always second to none.*

*Your endless skills, you shared with all,  
Mechanic, builder, farmer, endless DIY,  
that was your call.  
Afternoons on the lake, fishing for trout,  
Your way to relax followed by cards and a  
glass of stout*

*Your family, friends and neighbours all agree  
A finer man for your age, you would not see  
We wish you many more years of joy.  
Happy Birthday to our favourite boy!*



Congratulations to Michael Nolan of Togher who celebrated his 90th birthday on 5th Oct. 2019. Michael and his wife Denise had the popular ‘Lantern’ public house in Knox Street through the 1970s and 80s, and also ran a successful undertaking business. A native of Mountain, Forthill, he has lived in Togher for the past two decades and his many friends wish him many years of health and happiness. Pictured are: Denise and Michael Nolan (seated) with their family (L-R), Michael Jnr., Stephen and Christina.



# Mayo SPCA

Lucie Kavanagh

It's been another busy year at the Mayo SPCA Shelter in Ballyhaunis. Throughout summer and winter our volunteers work as hard as ever to provide care and keep up with the constant needs of animals in the community.

This year has been particularly difficult for cats. Throughout the county and indeed country, we are finding colonies of feral cats in desperate need of help. People complain about them but unfortunately, feral cats don't just happen. Many were once pets who were abandoned or lost, not neutered or spayed, who went on to breed generations of kittens who grew up wild to breed in their turn. Life is terribly hard for these cat colonies. Most are wiped out through illness, accidents or fights. Without intervention they continue to breed and the suffering becomes a vicious circle.

Rescues like MSPCA can help cat colonies by organising TNR projects (Trap-Neuter-Return). The cats are trapped humanely, neutered and spayed and then returned to their colonies where quite often people feed and watch over them. They can then live out their lives in peace – no more fights, no more breeding and suffering kittens and, in return for food, they will help their neighbour humans with the rodent population. Sometimes a TNR scheme will also rescue kittens that may still be able to be domesticated and rehomed. TNR schemes are very costly and funds are always needed to keep them going.

Our key message to people is to PLEASE PLEASE neuter and spay your cats. This kitten season we were inundated with requests to take unwanted kittens and sadly, rescues can't keep up with the demand. We also took in so many kittens that were found abandoned, often too young to be away from their mothers and sick or injured due to being alone at such a young age. Whether a cat is your pet or a stray you are feeding, please ensure it cannot breed. If you need help catching the cat to take to the vet, we can help with that. We are desperate to stop the dreadful suffering of abandoned and unwanted kittens. It is so needless and horrible to witness.

Speaking of hard to witness, we had some very tough cruelty cases this year. Miles and Angel are two examples. Miles, a beautiful Collie, was found so weak

with hunger that he couldn't stand up. Little Angel and her brother, gorgeous Lurcher puppies, were found close to death in horrific circumstances and, very sadly, Angel's brother Gabe didn't survive despite our best efforts. Happily, Miles and Angel were both rehabilitated and rehomed. Both found very loving homes and are now living the happy lives they deserve. Rehabilitation like this takes huge work. Starving animals need very careful refeeding in order not to overwhelm their fragile



Miles – before



Miles – after

systems. They need heat, constant care and reassurance. Then they need very gradual reintroduction to the outside world and people. We are very grateful to the vets who help us in these situations and come to tend to the dogs who can't be brought out of the shelter. We are also grateful to the people who cook and bring special food at these times and we are so happy when we see these poor dogs begin to come around. Their first outings outside on grass is magical to see and the updates we receive from their homes are precious to us.

Our work at the shelter and throughout the county is very varied. It can range from direct care of the animals in the shelter to organising foster homes, rehoming and home checks, vet visits, transport of animals to assisting people who have lost their pets or who come across animals in need of assistance. May we take this opportunity to remind people of the importance of your pet being microchipped and wearing ID... not only is it a legal requirement but, in the event of the animal going missing, makes all the difference to get them home quickly and safely. Added to this is the need to keep ensuring we have the money and people to keep these things going.

We have a lot of people to thank because they make the work so much easier: the vets that help us, the Guards, Laura Mulligan, our wonderful Dog Warden and



the fabulous shelters in England who help us to rehome dogs throughout the year. We must add a huge and special thank you to our volunteers. MSPCA wouldn't exist without volunteers. Whether you come into the shelter to work with the animals, help us to fundraise, help with admin or bring us donations of food or bedding... thank you most sincerely. We are also very grateful to the young people who get involved in their school holidays or weekends... they are so gentle and good at helping our rescue animals to love and trust and we appreciate their input very much. Another huge thank you goes to the people who foster and adopt our rescue animals... we love your updates and we love how happy you make the animals and the future you give back to them.

We are constantly looking for help with fundraising as it is vitally important to keep us running. We are very grateful for the grant we get from the Department of Agriculture, but outside of this we rely on money raised from fundraising events. Our costs can be immense, particularly when difficult situations like cruelty or neglect cases or the current cat crisis occur. The difficulty is that the people volunteering in the shelter are needed there and so, a fundraising team of people would help us greatly. If a few people in each town could possibly commit to organising one event in their locality each year, that would be an event that we could rely on and we would provide all support and advertising required. We are very grateful to everyone who fundraises for us and no event is too small... whether it's a quiz, walking in the mini marathon, holding a cake sale or sale of work, we appreciate everything that raises much needed funds for us.

Thank you all for your support in 2019!

## The Abbey Male Choir

Eamon Murren

Once again it was a busy year for our Choir. We sang at the annual concerts in our Spiritual Home that is the Friary. We also performed at a number of weddings. We sing at the second and last Sunday of each month at Mass in Ballyhaunis. New members are always welcome. As always, we are indebted to our choir Conductor and Musical Director Moira Delaney and our organist Paula Donnellan.



Fergal Kelly (Mayo Under-17 Selector) in Croke Park at the All-Ireland Football Semi-final, 2019.



Eamon Murren in Croke Park at the All-Ireland Football Semi-final, 10th Aug. 2019.



# Meditation - the 'What' and the 'Why'

John Gerard Murphy

I remember one evening many years ago, I overheard my Uncle on the phone. He was chatting to his friend who was enquiring as to what I was up to these days. "To be truthful, I haven't a clue", my Uncle said, "he's doing something called meditation. Couldn't tell you what it is but it's better than sitting around doing nothing".

There is a sense that meditation is sitting somewhere, quietening the mind and entering quickly and simply into a state of peace. However, for most of us, sitting and quietening the mind is not easy. We get agitated, restless, we always have to do something or be somewhere else. But before we can look to what meditation is, we must first explore where this restlessness is born.

## The Pursuit of Happiness

I think it is safe to say that we are all seeking happiness, but not just temporary happiness, we are seeking continual, permanent happiness. Nobody wishes to be unhappy. We may look for it in misguided places perhaps, but still we are looking for that happiness.

Happiness is mortgaged out to external factors - when the weather is good, we're happy. When the stock market is down, we're unhappy. When fun Friday is here, we're happy. When misery Monday is here, we're unhappy. Such a volatile existence. No wonder we are restless, agitated, constantly chasing happiness here, there and everywhere. And yet, even when we speed up our chasing of happiness, we never seem to find it, it is always temporary. Perhaps we are not looking in the right place.

In this quest for continual happiness, there is one ever-present factor - our 'selves'. We are in everything we do and everywhere we go - we can run to every corner of the Earth and yet we cannot outrun our 'selves'. If we are to find permanent happiness, then surely it can only be found in the only permanency we know - within our own self. We are in pursuit to know everything from the subatomic level to the event horizon, but ask ourselves the question, 'Who am I?' and we have no idea.

## The Journey Inward

First we must understand that our whole conditioning in society is centred around the body and the mind. We work the body and mind to try and define who we are and carve a place in society. We cling to name, reputation, body beautification, possessions, all sorts of body-mind attachments. But if we took away every label, possession, everything we think we are, what remains?

### Who am I?

The simplest question but the hardest to answer. The

only way we have a chance to know the answer to 'Who am I?' is to go beyond the body and mind and experience another state of being. So let's explore this a little.

### I am not the body

Firstly, I am not the body. The body has its own intelligence that functions beyond our input. We are not responsible for the circulation of our blood, the digestion of our food, cellular rejuvenation - our body looks after that for us and independently of us. We may pick up a banana, peel it and place it into our mouths, we start to chew and we think, 'I am eating a banana'. But what do you do beyond chewing? Somehow that banana becomes us; it is no longer a banana. Our body accepts what we put into it, breaks it down, distributes the useful nutrients around the body and gets rid of what is not needed. That banana has become a part of our body. And yet, 'I' did none of that, it was done for us, by this body we have. Perhaps this helps to clarify what I mean by, 'I am not the body'.

### I am not the mind

This is where the complexity arises. We are so consumed and lost in thought that life passes us and we barely notice. You may have heard of Descartes who coined the expression, 'I think therefore I am', defining existence as thought. But have you ever experienced a moment of no thought, a beautiful sunrise perhaps and you felt you were not there... you just melted into the moment? And then the moment ends, mind comes flooding back and once more you are lost in thoughts. But for that moment, 'mind' was not there - but 'You' still existed.

So how can we separate ourselves from thoughts. Please try this little experiment:

*'Close your eyes and wait for your next thought to come. When it comes, open your eyes.'*

If you have not tried it already, stop reading and give it a go. Was there a moment you were waiting for a thought? Who is the one waiting in silence for the thought? Or the same question another way, 'Who am I?' There is no answer to this question exactly as anything you can think of is of course the mind, so let's call it 'Awareness' for now. This is the part of us which is aware of thought, which knows we are thinking but is not of thought itself. 'Awareness' is the key to that permanent peace, that place of stillness that is inside us all.

### The Clear Sky

'Awareness' is beyond body and mind, it observes thought without prejudice or judgement. Thoughts are like clouds and 'awareness' is the clear sky - it may be

covered by clouds but just beyond them, clear sky remains. Thoughts have no life of their own, it is only when we feed them that they grow. So instead of feeding thoughts, we learn to relax into awareness, letting clouds float on by until only pure sky remains. This learning to relax into awareness is called meditation.

### **Meditation – the Benefits**

Meditation offers the techniques to allow us catch a glimpse and experience clear sky. With consistent meditation, the benefits are numerous - we notice

reductions in stress, fatigue and improvements in health and wellbeing. It helps us to not get lost in 'chasing a living' at the cost of not experiencing 'life'. It is a fast paced world, but we can learn to '*make haste slowly*', where we remain active in the world but with a still mind – and perhaps then, we may come to know, 'Who I Am?'

If you are interested in meditation, visit [www.lecarrowfarm.com](http://www.lecarrowfarm.com) to find a list of ongoing meditations and retreats.

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## The 3,076 Mile Mystery

Sarah Delaney

In a moment, the clear raging hot water begins to spiral into a brown hue, and with every stir, the colour grows darker, and the memories pour into my head.

I cautiously take my first sip of tea, knowing it will be far too hot, but proceed regardless because I simply cannot wait to delve into the flavor of the past which constantly daunts me.

Three sips in, I recall the innumerable times I spent in the homes of strangers to whom I was related, or with whom my parents had grown up. We sat in the comfort of their sitting room and were served a carefully crafted pot of tea – the only way Irish people know to entertain guests. As my parents conveyed a story with every sip, I moved farther to the edge of my seat, brewing with questions for them. This curiosity only grew with every trip to the small town in Ireland.

As the tea cools to a reasonable temperature, I rise from the couch to search for a Cadbury chocolate bar. If I am lucky enough to stumble upon one of my dad's clever hiding spots, I can enjoy this taste of my motherland. Every time a relative visits from overseas, we excitedly await their arrival, hoping they will be accompanied with more memories in the form of chocolate to indulge in.

I dip the bar into my tea, and indulge in the more clear memories of my relatives, the times when I could remember all of their names and begin to comprehend the conflicts and separation within my family. These relatives were so close yet so far, which only augmented my fascination with them.

When the chocolate melts, I vividly recall my realisation that facetime calls on birthdays and holidays would never mean as much as spending time with my family. On my last bite, memories flood into my brain of the years my parents began to leave my sister and I behind on their journey across the Atlantic.

Now, my tea is lukewarm. I can quickly gulp down the recollections of my feelings of disunity with my distant family. My sister hated our annual trips, but I valued them more than my parents realised. After months of careful persuasion, I made the trip I had made every year for fourteen years, except this time I was on my own. Alone, because my curiosity never ceased. Alone, because being away from Ireland left a hole in my heart that could not be filled with even the best mug of tea.

I could never quite point to something specific when my friends asked why I would never stop talking about this place that I had merely visited. Sometimes I explained it was the nights spent with my uncle in my family bar until all hours of the night. I returned every night to learn more about the interesting characters who frequent it, and about my parents through stories from their childhood friends.

To others, I claimed that it was every night spent in my grandmother's living room, learning to play the fiddle or the tin whistle. I explained that it could be the fostering of my love of music, with every family event turning into a concert and every late night at the bar a sing-song.

But as I savor the last sip of cold tea, I realise that I am on a never ending journey to define the mystery of this culture which defines who I am, despite where I was born and raised. 3,076 miles from my home in New Jersey lies another life of mine, several turns along bumpy, winding roads past stone walls and green fields.

My quaint, chipped mug returns to the shelf, gleaming as it waits to be filled so I may make the 3,076 mile journey yet again.

*Sarah is daughter of George Delaney and Louise O'Connor, formerly of Ballyhaunis and currently Bayonne, New Jersey, U.S.A.*



# Medugorje - Miracles of our time

Mike Byrne

For over 38 years now, the Mother of God has been appearing on a daily basis in Medugorje, an obscure little village, hidden beneath the shadows of the mountains of Bosnia Herzegovina; its geographical location remote, once unknown and unheard of outside the local region. It was home to the very, very poor, simple population of about 200 people, which has since risen to something in the region of 4,000 inhabitants. Since Our Lady's first apparition to six young children on June 24th, 1981, millions and millions of pilgrims from all over the world have been coming here, having heard of the many miraculous cures and healings – physical, spiritual and emotional – that have been taking place here over the years.

Last September, I travelled to Medugorje along with my cousin Brian Byrne from Cloonfaughna (now residing in Dublin), for what I think was my 23rd visit to this little piece of Heaven on earth. My first visit there was back in September, 2000, about a month after selling the family business on Clare Street due to the ongoing effects of Multiple Sclerosis, not to mention the worsening condition of depression, which was my lot for some three years! That first visit to Medugorje nineteen years ago I recall very well. Having got an invitation to go there shortly after moving from Clare Street to Gurteen, I immediately declined the offer. I was just so utterly depressed, with such a feeling of emptiness, I just didn't want to go anywhere, or indeed see anybody. I was in the bedroom for most of the time, with the curtains pulled, in my own world of darkness. However, after much encouragement from my wife, Helena, I agreed to go.

After one week in Medugorje, where daily Mass, prayer and socialising at night, with ballad sessions and lively gatherings in the local hostleries, were part of the package, I came home completely renewed, completely free from depression. The morning after I came home, I put the anti-depressants in the bin. After three years, I knew I would never need them again!

## Miracle

In the two years that followed however, the physical symptoms of MS continued to worsen: frequent bouts of double vision, body getting weaker and other factors as well. In April, 2002, I went again to Medugorje, days after having had the third MRI Scan since being diagnosed in 1997, when I was informed by the neurologist in Beaumont Hospital that the condition was deteriorating rapidly, and it was necessary to start injecting myself with a drug called Betaferon, to slow down the condition. As I had planned on going to

Medugorje soon after this appointment, I remember asking the lady consultant if I could wait until I came home, as I didn't want to begin this procedure away from home in a foreign country. "By all means, but you must come straight back to me when you come home, we must start you on this treatment immediately", she stated. At that time, I would have suffered relapses from the MS condition at least every two months. I never saw that lady ever since that day seventeen years ago. On the day after coming home, I experienced what I could only describe as a miraculous sensation going through my body, I knew at that instant that I had been cured of MS. It was five years later, I went for another MRI Scan, for an unrelated matter, and when I got the result back from the doctor, it indicated that the Multiple Sclerosis was no more. After that, there was no more double vision, no more weakness, it was a Medugorje Miracle!



Medugorje visionary, Vicka, deep in prayer.

On a visit to Medugorje about 12 years ago, I remember sitting in the seat at Mass in St. James's Church, and I couldn't help observing a gentleman who was sitting next to me, he kept taking a little statue of Our Lady out of his pocket and repeatedly kissing it. At the dinner table down at our residence later that afternoon a woman sitting opposite me said: "Mike, did you see that man beside you kissing the statue of Our Lady during Mass?" "I did, why?" She replied: "That man came here to Medugorje suffering from Multiple Sclerosis, and he went home completely cured". How remarkable, two men sitting shoulder to shoulder, living a little more than 10 miles apart, whose lives were transformed in this little village in Eastern Europe. Later on during the week when I encountered the same gentleman, I enquired about his experience and he confirmed to me that he had indeed been cured here of the illness which had almost left him a cripple for life. "What part of the country are you from?", I enquired.

“From County Galway, a small village, you probably haven’t heard of it – Dunmore!” I meet Joe regularly now at Knock. He gets the bus from Dunmore to Our Lady’s Shrine where he quietly gives heartfelt thanks to Our Lady for his miracle. When we meet, there are few words, just a wave and a joyous exchange of smiles. No words needed!

Last August the 30th Annual Medugorje Youth Festival was held where over 50,000 young people from around the world gathered, including many from Ireland. This was the first Church approved youth festival held in Medugorje. In May of this year, the Vatican formally authorised pilgrimages to Medugorje for the first time. Pope Francis’ Envoy to Medugorje, Archbishop Henryk Hoser, had this to say to the large gathering of youth at the August festival: “Medugorje should be seen as a living, dynamic reality with over 700 vocations so far recorded there”, adding that the center’s importance was summed up by “The presence of people coming here, praying here, being transformed here, and returning to their countries with the Gospel spirit which they breathed here”. In relation to the Vatican’s current position on Medugorje, the Papal Envoy said, “The Holy See’s position has crystallised clearly and has two aspects: the pastoral aspect, which is fully accepted, and the doctrinal aspect, meaning study of apparitions”. He concluded by saying that, “The fact that apparitions are still continuing is the main obstacle to a final ruling, since it’s hard to decide on something that hasn’t finished. For now, the question of recognising the authenticity of the apparitions remains in the hands of the Secretariat of State”.



Joan Biesty with daughter Helena and granddaughter Clodagh Byrne, Medugorje 2008.



**Ballyhaunis F.C., pictured 21st Sept. 2019, having beaten Ballyhean, 1-0.**

Back, L-R: Paul Nolan, Tony Basista, Pat McGee, Michael Marigliano, Jarlath Carney, Samson King, Hamood Althobhaney, Chris McTigue, Dean McGarry, Jefferson Barbosa Rocha. Front, L-R: James Clarke, Dayo Adex, Andrew Cunnane, Robert McCormack, Cathal Carney, Tommy Cunnane, Gary Higgins, Stephen Nolan. *Photo Adam Kaczmarek*



# 'The Tech' 1973

Ballyhaunis Vocational School, 'The Tech', 1973. For more information see 'The Tech' by Patricia Waldron, in *Annagh* 1984, p. 72; and 'Revisiting the New Tech, 1941', in *Annagh* 1989, p. 17.



# Train Tracks Conjure Memories

Frank Greally

A lovely photo of Ballyhaunis Railway Station taken by Sylwia Buczak reminded me how those same train tracks took me away from home to work in the Post Office in Dublin away back in 1970 – the start of what has turned out to be something of a nomadic life.

I had been to the big city a few times – once to run a three-mile race on the famous track in Santry where, in 1958, Herb Elliott broke the world mile record with a time of 3:54.5. And an hour before I sat down to write this piece for Annagh Magazine, I went for a walk and a jog around the track in the Morton Stadium. Memories of that night long ago, when I first set foot on what was then a cinder surface, came flooding back.

I remembered too the August night in 1970 when I led the field a merry dance in a 10,000 metre race there and set an Irish Junior record of 30 minutes 17 seconds that will have been 50 years on the record books in 2020. It's hard to take that one in; difficult to get my head around the fact that five decades have slipped by since that night in Santry.

There was a lovely innocence about my running back then. I knew no limits and I was always going full tilt – taking on more senior runners regardless of their reputations. I think I lost that innocence when I took up an athletic scholarship to East Tennessee State University in 1972. Running for a university cross-country team became more a job than a joy and I greatly missed Eddie Hogan, my coach back at Donore Harriers in Dublin. However, running has given me a good life and after 37 years as editor of Irish Runner magazine I am now in a new role with Athletics Ireland, promoting The Daily Mile to Primary Schools all over Ireland.

## Homecoming

And it was a privilege and a pleasure to return home a few months ago to deliver a talk in the Augustinian Friary about the proud history of Ballyhaunis Harriers Athletic Club. It was a case of double joy for me when Ruairí Ó Broin and Anne Cunnane invited me back to perform a little poetry and singing slot in the Friary for Culture Night in September.

My father, Tom Greally, worked for many years on the farm at the Augustinian Abbey. I served Mass in the Friary and worked on the land with my father saving hay and milking cows. My father used to ring the daily Angelus and Mass bells and it was lovely to be able to sing a song in his memory on Culture Night.

It was a night when I thought, too, of my mother Kathleen Greally (I sang a song for her too) and I went down the church to sit in the seat that she used to occupy at Mass and Devotions. I also remembered my only



Ballyhaunis Railway Station at night.  
*Photograph by Sylwia Buczak.*

brother Tom and thought about him far away in Australia. Tom was an Augustinian priest for 25 years and he is now happily married and living in the Blue Mountains near Sydney.

My late and great friend Pat Cribbin is always on my mind when I visit the Friary. My dear boyhood pal is buried in the Friary graveyard and I visit him there every time I come home. When we were young – about 16 – Pat would call to our house in Devlis on his way home from work in Jim Connell's furniture factory. He'd hold forth, sometimes for hours, on his favourite sports: boxing and running. Back in those days Pat was a mould-breaker and sports fanatic – and one of the closest friends I ever had.

One evening Pat invited me to join him on a run around a two-mile lap that skirted his home village of Lecarrow. The first night, I managed to run half a mile





Above, L-R: Pat Cribbin, Frank Greally, Tom Greally, Michael Joyce.

Left: Kathleen Greally, Devlis, with sons Tom and Frank

before stopping for breath, after which Pat, the original meet-and-train motivator, coaxed and cajoled me the rest of the way. Little did I suspect, as I staggered to the finish that night, that for decades to come running would in one form or another be central to my life.

## Belief

The late Mick Nestor also played a pivotal role in identifying that I had a talent for running and then convincing me that if I trained hard and made the best of my natural talent, the sky was the limit. Mick Nestor was an eternal optimist, a lively and engaging character who, at the time, was regarded by some in Ballyhaunis as a 'blow-in'. Within a few a few months of his arrival



Tom and Kathleen Greally, Drimbane and Devlis.

in Ballyhaunis he had set up as a barber on Bridge Street and revived the boxing club that years earlier had enjoyed much success, even hosting an international tournament in the Friary Field. From our first meeting, when I turned up for sparring practice, Mick seemed to believe in me. He soon figured I was unlikely to make a world or even a Mayo boxing champion, but right from the start he maintained I had the talent to become a distance runner worthy of the name. I'd sit in the big swivel barber's chair and Mick, the eternal optimist, would playfully spin me around while talking big dreams. "You have a great little fighting spirit," he'd say. "I can see you going all the way to the Olympics."

Earlier this year I was talking with the legendary Christy Moore after a singing session in Dublin and I asked him where he lived when he worked for a while in the bank in Ballyhaunis. "I had a flat over a barber shop owned by a man called Mick Nestor," Christy said. "Did you happen to know him?" I told Christy that had I not known Mick Nestor, I have no idea what direction my life would have taken. One thing I do know for sure is that I would never have fully discovered or put a full value on my running talent. It is amazing what can happen when someone believes in you and helps you believe in yourself. Mick Nestor was such a man.

During the bank strike of the late 1960s, Christy Moore left the bank, never to return. He took a different road as a singer and songwriter – a road that led to great success and fame. And Christy still talks with great fondness about his time in our town.

Isn't it funny how a photograph can prompt so many memories. Some day soon I'm going to take the train to Ballyhaunis and back to Dublin – if only for old time's sake.



# Senior Citizens Christmas Party, Bekan



*Above, L-R: Bernie Lyons, Eileen Morley & Dave Jackson, Bekan.*

*Below: Kay & Tom Mannion, Cloonacurry*



*Above: Ann Staunton, Lissaniskea; Mary Shannon & Bridie Nolan, Cloontumper; Eddie Higgins, Treanrevough.*

*Top right: Kate Tighe, Larganboy.*

*Right: George & Cathy Dee, Brackloon West.*

*Below: Bríd & Joe Nolan, Cloonbook; Fr Brendan McGuinness, P.P. Bekan*



*Above: Tony & Teen Carney, Bekan.*

*Far left: Pat & Sean Walsh, Drimaderry.*

*Below left: Babe Lyons, Cloonfaughna and Lil Jordan, Lissaniskea.*

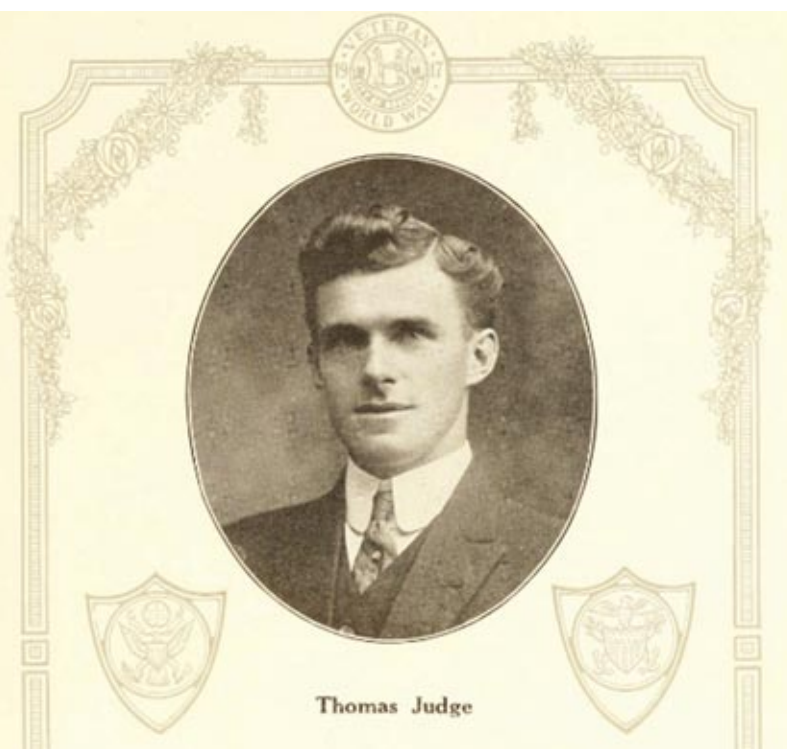




# One-hundred Years Ago

## Death of a Ballyhaunis soldier serving with the U.S. Army

Michael Kelly



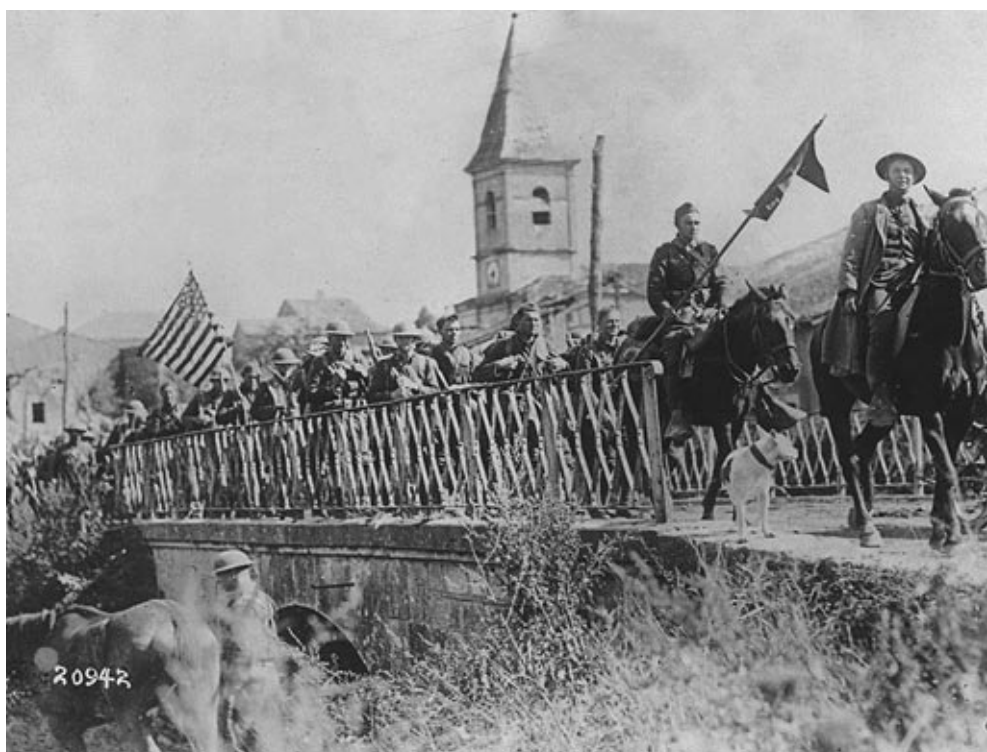
The various commemorations of the First World War over the past five years have served to highlight the extent of Irish participation in that conflict. Over 200,000 Irish soldiers fought with the British Army and up to a quarter of them were killed, including several from around Ballyhaunis. What we tend to overlook is that Irish soldiers also served with the American forces in France towards the end of the war and some of them also lost their lives. I was reminded of this recently when browsing through a copy of the *Mayo News* from 100 years ago. In the issue of 14th February 1920, it was reported in the Ballyhaunis Notes that an Anniversary Mass had been celebrated in the Parish Church the previous week for Thomas Judge of Carrowreagh, who had died in France in 1919 while serving with the US Expeditionary Force there. I decided to try to find out more about him.

### Thomas Judge (1888-1919)

Thomas Judge was born at Carrowreagh, Ballyhaunis, on 4th March 1888 to Thomas Judge and his wife Mary (née Lyons). He was only 13 when his father died of pneumonia on 28th March 1901, aged 54. Less than a week later, the 1901 census was taken and it records the following members of the Judge family in Carrowreagh: Thomas, his widowed mother Mary, his two older brothers – Murtagh and Owen – and his grandmother, Mrs. Bridget Lyons.

In September 1910, when he was 22, Thomas Judge, like many of his neighbours, took the emigrant boat to America. It appears that a maternal aunt, Mrs. Bridget Minnehan, who was living in Brockton, Massachusetts, had come home on holiday and brought Thomas out with her. At that time, the city of Brockton, some 25 miles south of Boston, was a popular destination for young emigrants from the greater Ballyhaunis district. When his brother Owen joined Thomas there the following April, he was part of a contingent of sixteen more emigrants from the Ballyhaunis area, of whom seven were destined for Brockton.

Today, Brockton may be known as 'The City of Champions' – thanks to its native boxing legends, Rocky Marciano and Marvin Hagler – but a century ago it was widely known as 'Shoe City', owing to the concentration



U.S. troops returning from the St. Mihiel front.

of footwear manufacturing there. In the year that Thomas Judge died, for example, 13,000 people were employed in 39 different shoe factories in Brockton. Little wonder then that young Irish emigrants, who had little or no employment prospects at home, might seek to make a new life in Brockton. However, it wasn't with a footwear company that Thomas got a job but with the Brockton Gas Light Co., where he was employed up to the time he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1917.

On being shipped to France, Thomas saw action in several of the engagements that the U.S. troops were involved in, and he was wounded during the action at Saint-Mihiel, a town in the Meuse Department in north eastern France. It was here, in one of the first U.S. solo offensives in the war, that the American Expeditionary Force under General Pershing had attacked the retreating Germans.

It was while recovering from his wounds in hospital that Thomas was taken ill with pneumonia (like his father before him) and he died on 7th February 1919. He

was 30 years old. He had survived the first great catastrophe of the 20th century, billed as the war to end all wars, only to succumb to the second, the notorious Spanish 'flu.

The city of Brockton lost 97 soldiers in the First World War. A memorial service for Brockton's war dead was held at the City Theatre on 26th/27th May 1919. The Brockton World War Victory Association prepared a booklet for the occasion which contained an entry on Thomas Judge, including the portrait reproduced above. It tells us that Private Thomas Judge (Truck Co. B, 2nd Artillery Corps) was born on 4th March 1888 in Ballyhaunis, County Mayo, Ireland and was educated at Brackloon School. He had arrived in Brockton on 6th October 1910 and had resided at 72 South Fuller Street in the city. He had attended St. Patrick's Church and was a member of the Division 5 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and, in fact, was the very first member of that organisation to lose his life in the service.



A family get-together in the Cunnane home, Lissaniskea, 1974. Anti-clockwise, from front: Molly Murray (Clare St., Ballyhaunis), Phil Cunnane, Paddy Niland (Island), Philip Cunnane, Delia Cunnane, Mary Niland (Island), Margaret Cunnane Colleran (Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath), Gillian Cunnane.



# Midwest Radio – Thirty Years Broadcasting

Tommy Marren



Paul Claffey in Studio.

The links between Ballyhaunis town and Midwest Radio go back to a cold frosty morning on November 25th, 1985 when Castlerea natives Paul Claffey and Chris Carroll began radio broadcasting from a room at the back of the stage of Midas Nite Club in Clare Street.

Prior to that famous day Paul – who had been running the Nite Club for a number of years – continued to struggle to get people to attend the venue. Bands who performed there on a weekly basis were finding it impossible to get national airplays of their songs and therefore nobody knew what band released what! One Sunday night during the summer of 1985, *Chuck, June and the Gamblers* played at the venue to literally a handful of people. After the gig Paul told Chuck that Midas was no longer a viable proposition and that he was going to close the doors. Chuck suggested to Paul that a radio station might be the answer, but Paul told him that he had already tried a radio station in Castlerea some years previously, and that it wasn't a success. Then Chuck said something that Paul Claffey would never forget which was, "Were you playing the type of music the punter wanted?"

That question ended up being Paul Claffey's eureka moment. He headed back to Castlerea and mulled over Chuck's question for a few days and then decided to engage in some unscientific research! Paul headed off to the local psychiatric hospital and, between shifts, asked staff members this question: if there was a radio station set up, what type of music would they listen to? Names like Big Tom, Larry Cunningham, Margo, Brendan

Shine and more came rolling off their tongues and the dye was cast!

Setting up a pirate radio station wasn't cheap even in those times, and there wasn't a whole pile of potential investors around the area. However, Paul had a chat with local DJ Chris Carroll who indicated an interest in going into partnership with him. They had to beg and borrow to come up with the princely sum of £3000 in order to purchase the transmission and studio equipment that was required. Once the money was secured the services of Gerry Reilly from County Cavan were engaged and within a couple of weeks the 'cackling' of a medium wave radio transmitter had kicked into life at an abandoned cottage in the townland of Spaddagh two miles north east of Ballyhaunis town and Midwest Radio was born! For the next three and a half years Midwest Radio went from strength

to strength and due to its popularity its hours of broadcasting were increased and extra staff employed – such was the appetite for what Paul Claffey, Chris Carroll, Gerry Glennon, John Duggan (R.I.P.), Michael Neary and others were delivering to an ever-growing audience.

As pirate radio prospered around Ireland and more stations surfaced the Government decided it was time to provide a more structured system and by 1988 plans were put in motion to introduce legalised local radio. Sadly, for Midwest Radio it meant saying goodbye and closing down. If there was any hope of getting a licence Paul and Co. knew they had to toe the line and an emotional farewell night took place in Midas Nite Club, Ballyhaunis on Friday, 30th December, 1988,



Midwest Radio's Clare St. Studios opened in September 2003.





Chris Carroll in the early days of MWR.

culminating in a closing down concert attended by 1500 loyal listeners. At the stroke of midnight the three years of music, craic and news came to a grinding halt.

However, there is always light at the end of the tunnel and on 21st April 1989, following a rigorous application process and oral hearing, Midwest Radio were awarded the broadcast licence to cover County Mayo. On Monday, 24th July 1989 Abbey Street, Ballyhaunis was a hive of activity as the clock ticked towards 10 a.m. on that sunny Monday morning. Sligo man Adrian Eames had the distinction of being the very first voice to be heard on the station that morning and the first song to be played was from local singer/songwriter Kevin Prendergast – namely 'My Old Home in Mayo' written by Michael Commins. For the past thirty years Midwest Radio has continued where it left off on that December night in 1988. The station boasts numerous national awards for its news, sport, current affairs and entertainment programmes with Paul Claffey being inducted into the Broadcaster's Hall of Fame at the PPI Radio Awards in 2014.

The premises in Abbey Street served the station well between 1989 and 2003. However, due to staff expansion it was decided to move the station to a new state-of-the-art broadcaster centre in Clare Street, in the former home of Dillon's Hardware. The broadcast centre was opened in September 2003 by Mayo native Mary Davis who, at that time, was CEO of Special Olympics, Ireland. The first day at Midwest Radio's new home was one of celebration and joy but, ironically, turned into an emergency that night when news filtered through from North Mayo of a major landslide that had started to cause havoc to a vast geographical region between



Staff outside the old MWR studios on Abbey Street (1990s).  
L-R: Rebecca Dolan, Caitriona McGuire, Bernie Muldowney, Angelina Nugent, Bernie Greally, Mary Raftery, Martin McHugh, David Cawley.

Belmullet and Cornboy. Another typical day in broadcasting at Midwest Radio!

Even though Midwest Radio is seen more as a regional than local station due to the large listenership they enjoy in Roscommon, Galway and Sligo, it is fair to say that Midwest Radio's links to Ballyhaunis are deep. From those humble beginnings in 1985 Ballyhaunis always was and always will be considered the home of Midwest. Geographically, Ballyhaunis is in the heart of Connacht, hence the reason to be able to attract listeners from other counties.

Over the years many Ballyhaunis people have been employed across a variety of roles within the station. From advertising sales, broadcasting, receptionist and technical staff the people of Ballyhaunis have played their part in making Midwest the success story that it is.



## Ballyhaunis Livestock Mart 1973



Ballyhaunis Livestock mart, not long after it first opened on Tuesday, 6th Feb. 1973. Sales were originally held on Tuesdays but moved to Saturdays in the late seventies. It closed in Autumn 2002. For more details see 'Farming in Ballyhaunis', by Tony Flynn and Paddy Laffey, in *Annagh* 1979, pp. 8-10 'Closure of Ballyhaunis Livestock Mart' in *Annagh* 2002, p. 93.



# The John West Féile Peile na nÓg

Gabriel Smith

The Féile Peile na nÓg is a festival of Gaelic football and Ladies Gaelic football at Under 14 level, involving teams from across the Gaelic Athletic Association. It is a huge sporting event in the GAA calendar of events. A core aim of the tournament is to promote a philosophy whereby every player has the opportunity to participate and play in their respective tournament at a level acceptable to their age, skills and strengths. The draw for the 2019 football competitions were held at a meeting of the Connacht Féile committee at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence on the evening of Wednesday 3rd April in the presence of National Féile Committee chairperson Brendie O'Brien, Connacht Féile officers and members of the Connacht Council. The launch of the competition was on Monday 27th May.

The National competitions were then held in various clubs across Connacht on the weekend of Friday 28th to Sunday 30th June 2019. It has been documented that it was "the largest ever underage Gaelic Games gathering ever witnessed in Ireland". Prior to the weekend competitions, there were several meetings and roadshows in various clubs in Connacht to ensure the success of the event. This year was the largest ever Féile held to date and there would be 857 games played in the competition from 28th to 30th June.

The competitions were composed of host and visiting teams. Host teams were drawn from the host region, namely, in this case, the five counties of Connacht. Ballyhaunis GAA Club hosted Templeogue Synge Street

of Dublin. During the competition, the Club held one first round game, two Shield quarter finals and two Shield semi-finals. The Ballyhaunis team were in the same division as Kilmovee Shamrocks, Kinawley Brian Borus and Templeogue Synge Street. The visiting teams participating were determined by the results of internal County Féile na nGael competitions. Both host clubs and visiting clubs from various counties and abroad were graded into their respective divisions.

The divisions were comprised of 16 teams - 8 host Clubs, and their 8 visiting teams. In the boys' competition, there were twelve divisions and in the girls' competition, there were ten divisions. Since 2014, Féile na nÓg introduced both Cup and Shield competitions in each division. To facilitate this, each division of 16 teams were divided into four groups, A to D, of four teams - two host clubs and their visiting clubs. Each team played each other team on a round robin basis. On completion of the group games, teams were ranked first to fourth. Teams ranked 1st and 2nd proceeded to the Cup quarter finals, while teams ranked 3rd and 4th proceeded to the Shield quarter finals. This meant that each participating team was guaranteed a minimum of four games - three group games, and either a Cup or Shield quarter final.

After the knockout quarter finals, the semi-finals and finals took place in each of the Cup and Shield competitions. In the boys' football tournament, there were 104 host teams. These 104 host teams hosted visiting teams from across the 27 non-hosting counties,



Attendees at the John West Féile na Peil Regional Launch at Connacht Centre of Excellence, Cloonacurry, Began, Co. Mayo, 27th May 2019. Included are: Liam McDonagh (Connacht LGFA President), Marie Hickey (President, LGFA), Gerry McGovern (Connacht GAA President), Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael John Horan, Peter Rooney (John West: sponsors), Brendie O'Brien (Chair of the National Féile), John Prenty (Secretary, Connacht Council), Eugene Lavin (GAA Development Coach).

*Photograph by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile.*



plus Britain, Europe, North America and Australia. In the girls' football event, there were 72 host teams and visiting teams travelling from across Ireland, Britain and North America. On Friday, 28th June, 176 visiting teams arrived at 91 venues throughout the province of Connacht. As well as Ballyhaunis GAA Club being a venue for the tournament, our neighbouring clubs of Aghamore, Eastern Gaels and Tooreen were also designated venues. There were 352 teams – 208 boys' football teams and 144 LGFA teams – who played two first round games. The team from Western Australia competed for the first time in the Under-14 boys' competition. On Saturday, 29th June, each team travelled to a neutral venue for the quarter final of the Cup or Shield competition. On Sunday, 30th June, the semi-finals and finals were held.

There were 16 final venues with the Connacht Centre of Excellence hosting 18 finals between the Cup and

Shield competitions. The Connacht COE was also host to 14 first round games, 18 quarter finals and 22 semi-finals. In order to ensure success of the competition, one must recognise the enormous logistical operation and co-ordination of the organisers which included the Connacht GAA President, Gerry McGovern and the Connacht GAA Secretary, John Prenty of the Connacht Council, Michael O'Connor, Secretary Féile 2019 and the administration in Croke Park. It is also important to compliment the hard work and dedication from those people involved in coaching and managing the teams in all the clubs at the early stages prior to the National finals and then to qualify for the event, the organisation of the host towns who would host clubs from various parts of Ireland and the world, the clubs and club officials preparations, the people in administration, stewards and volunteers on the days of the event at all the venues and the grounds staff at the venues.



**Picture taken at bonfire on Walshe's Hill, Johnstown, 1981.**

Back, L-R: Colette Rattigan, Mary Ruane, Mary Walshe, Colette Byrne, Bernie Jordan, Noreen Ruane, Eithne Byrne (hidden)

Centre: Colette Jordan, Anne Marie Waldron, Caroline Walshe, Elaine Walshe.

Front: Joe Healy, Pat Healy, James Walshe, Marie Healy, Declan Byrne.

# Proud to be from Ballyhaunis

Peter McHugh

I was at a meeting recently, at a talk by the former Secretary General of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, who had overseen the massive developments in Irish industry over the last thirty years, and his opening statement was: "Irish people can do anything!" I believe this is absolutely true, but even more to the point, having grown up in Ballyhaunis, I believe that "Ballyhaunis people can do anything!" I think that one only has to look at the range of achievement of people from Ballyhaunis in business, sport, academics, travel, politics, music, arts, etc. Ballyhaunis people have influence in the world, way out of proportion to the town's small size. Why is this and what is it that life in Ballyhaunis gives to people, and that, in fairness, is common across the west of Ireland? Maybe it is the desire to succeed; the realisation that a person has to give things a go; the realisation that things don't come easy? I always reflect on the attitude I experienced while at Brown University in the USA, if difficulties came up, many American students would say, "you Irish guys are so sensible and are able to take things so well and carry on". I think we had learned not to have an expectation of what life would deliver more than what we were prepared to put into it ourselves.

## Home

I was born in 1965 and I grew up on Main Street, Ballyhaunis, where my mother (Tess McHugh, née Kelly) ran a small shop and my father (Eddie McHugh) ran a battery business out of his workshop across the road on Barrack Street. Sounds strange now to say battery business, but at that time (1960s, '70s and '80s) batteries for cars and machinery were very much a product in their own right that could be repaired, recharged, replaced and even rebuilt (which he did regularly). Later, technology moved on and batteries required less attention (if any at all, in most situations). But in those times people came from far and wide to get batteries repaired, and I can yet remember how grateful so many of them were for him to apply his unique skill at repairing batteries quickly, developed over the years, to get a car, tractor or piece of heavy machinery moving



Our shop 'Kelly's' on Main Street in the late 1980s.

again. I can recall many wonderful days working with him in his workshop (the Garage as we called it) and witnessing his amazing technical ability to make and repair things, and his absolute love of all things automotive. A regular topic of discussion was how great it would be to have electric cars powered by electric motors and batteries; and of course he was ahead of his time. He would be in his element nowadays with the actual widespread emergence of electric cars and in particular where battery capacity and range is the key technological challenge for this growing industry.

My mother, of course, ran the small shop every hour God gave. She loved her own home and never travelled to any great extent but had an enormous positive influence on the very many people she welcomed into the shop, and for a chat over a cup of tea in the kitchen. Certainly she was the fount of wisdom and the main guiding light in our house, and everything I have done (to the extent that I have achieved anything of value) came from her vision and encouragement.

At that time Main Street was a very busy place with busy households and a large number of children all growing up together, and especially on our block of houses, from our house at one end (where Eddie Murphy's Menswear is now) up to Tighe's shoemakers





Tess, Peter and Eddie McHugh, bachelors graduation, UCG, summer 1987.

at the other (that subsequently housed the Credit Union for a number of years). Times have indeed changed in the street, with people tending to live outside the town resulting in more lock-up premises on the streets; Ballyhaunis is no different to most West of Ireland towns in this respect.

### Education

I believe that the Ballyhaunis schools gave us an excellent education, all the way from Sr. Carmel's 'Baby Class' in the Convent up to Leaving Cert in the Community School. We may have been living in a small town but I don't think the education was small-town. I recall the teachers we had imparting a real sense of the importance of education and of the value of the information given to us, and expanding our outlook and giving us a glimpse of what was achievable beyond our school years and beyond the local geographical boundaries. Along the way I was part of two firsts that made a very big impression on local education during my time: I was in Jim Lundon's first sixth class in Ballyhaunis Boys National School on his arrival in Ballyhaunis as Principal in 1976, and the following year I was part of the first first year class in the newly opened Ballyhaunis Community School, that transformed secondary school education in the town and region. Wonderful to see the school going from strength to strength, having gone through at least two major extensions and refurbishments over the years, and becoming one of the largest schools in the county.

In 1983 I went on to do a BE degree in mechanical engineering at UCG in Galway. I loved the undergraduate student years in Galway. The course included a work placement at an engineering company, Donnelly Mirrors, in Naas, Kildare, who designed and manufactured automotive rear-view mirrors for high profile brands including Renault, Rover and Jaguar: this

was a brilliant opportunity to see how a manufacturing company worked. However, while studying in Galway I certainly had got the academic bug and knew, coming to the end of my undergrad years, that I wanted to do further study and research. Being honest, another motivation was the jobs market in Ireland in the late 1980s; those were very lean years for employment in Ireland for workers and graduates of any type, and I recall that only one of our mechanical engineering graduating class of 1987 (about 25 people) got a job straight away in Ireland (and that was in a heavily state-supported enterprise in the Gaeltacht), with the remainder going overseas. I remember that the construction of the Channel Tunnel between England and France was a big draw and an employer of many Irish engineers at that time.

Contrast the 1980s situation with the present where industry is crying out for engineers and computer scientists, and where we are practically at full employment, at least in terms of the overall national figures, but of course where we are faced with other challenges resulting from industrial and commercial success (notwithstanding the 2008 downturn) in housing, hospital overcrowding and broadband limitations, etc.

The engineering education at UCG gave me a real interest in developing new engineering technology and what motivated me most was what could be achieved in mechanical engineering design using computer simulation, or computer modelling as it is also referred to. Even by the 1980s computer based engineering design had come a long way, where computer simulation could quite reliably predict, for example in an engine, when a component (con-rod, etc.) would fracture or when the maximum cylinder temperature would reach a critical level, along with many other important engineering design parameters, without having to rely completely on expensive and time consuming experimental laboratory testing, hence speeding up the whole process of designing and producing new engineering technology and products. Computer simulation was set to grow hugely in importance with the rapid and massive increase in computer power that happened over the subsequent decades. And its influence has spread much more broadly than just engineering design, and applies to everything controlled by the laws of nature (mathematics, physics, chemistry, etc.). A very good example is weather forecasting; a national pastime of us Irish is to give out about the weather forecasters (mostly because the weather isn't the best a lot of the time) but I'm sure people can't help but notice how reliable and accurate forecasting has become in recent years, for

example in tracking storms (people will certainly remember the Beast from the East snowstorm in 2018); the accuracy that is now possible is largely down to highly developed computer simulation run on modern high-performance computers.

## USA

Anyway, coming to the end of my time in UCG I had developed a very strong interest in further education and research in computer modelling. The USA beckoned; having the best Universities in the world for this and, of course, the hugely exciting prospect of going to America! In 1987 I won a scholarship to study engineering at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, USA, one of the Ivy League Universities, and I spent the next four years there earning my PhD in mechanical engineering, on a project funded by the Ford Motor company using computer modelling to develop new lightweight aluminium alloys for the automotive industry. Whatever about moving from Ballyhaunis to Galway, going to America was a whole different ball game altogether, but a fantastic opportunity for someone in their twenties, as I was at the time. Without a doubt they were fantastic years: a wonderful environment at Brown University in the midst of some of the brightest people from around the world, both lecturers and fellow students, better weather than Ireland, and that whole American positivity thing – “you can be whatever you wanna be” – expressed again more recently by Obama “Yes we can!” In the years that have followed I have frequently gone back to the USA to remain in touch with that positivity – to “soak it up” – and I know that this is a view that is shared by many people who have spent time in the USA.

I have to give enormous credit to my parents and my mother in particular, for fully encouraging, supporting and helping me to get to University in the USA. Once I said that this is what I wanted to do there was never a question or doubt raised about it in any way; quite the opposite in fact, even though that with me being an only child it was a huge sacrifice for them and her in particular. In this and for very many years before and after, I have to acknowledge the support given to my parents and myself by my cousin Margaret Byrne (née Hopkins), her father Jim Hopkins (RIP) and all the Hopkins family, and our wonderful neighbours on Main Street, in particular our immediate next door neighbours Kathleen Finn (RIP) (who my mother, and I by consequence, referred to only through her formal title of Mrs. Finn until the day she died) and the Halpin family. As I was growing up I developed a great fondness for our next door neighbour Jack Halpin (RIP) and was fascinated by his tales of travels and foreign exploits, and similarly with Joe Greene (RIP) up the street who was never lacking in interesting and entertaining conversation.

In relation to travel, during the USA years I got a great chance to travel myself and it is a brilliant time to be doing this in one's twenties. The research project brought me all over the USA including New Orleans, Chicago, Dearborn (Michigan, home of Ford), Arizona, New Mexico, and a long stay in La Jolla California at the University of California San Diego, using the San Diego Supercomputer Centre for my computer modelling, and further afield to Mexico and Japan. My research supervisor at Brown (Professor Robert Asaro) was an acknowledged expert and got lots of invitations to present at conferences and give lectures, but he was a senior academic and becoming too busy to handle all of these trips, so he used to send me, and I certainly wasn't complaining!

## Returning

I had a number of job opportunities when finishing the PhD in 1991, with Ford in Michigan, with IBM in New York State and at the Los Alamos National Labs in New Mexico (famous for developing the atomic bomb in the 1940s), all of whom wanted to develop their computer modelling capabilities, but I decided to come back to Ireland to a lectureship in UCG that had opened up at that time. It was a big move to come back, and at that time was something that very few foreign students studying in the USA did, with most people wanting to stay in the USA to avail of the many opportunities and to make their fortune. But I do not regret the move back one bit, for all kinds of reasons, first and foremost being that I met my future wife Tina within a few months of returning and also professionally in that from the late 1990s Irish industry began to develop more rapidly (due in part to government incentives to attract large multinational companies) and funding for research in the Universities became more available which made engineering research in Ireland possible at a world-class level, so we could begin to get close to what was being done in the USA, the UK and western Europe. I do have to say though that I had a crisis of conscience when, a few months after coming back, I was approached by the University of California Santa Barbara to take a lectureship with them as they were expanding their engineering research and teaching; I can still recall a phone call with their Head of Department in Santa Barbara from my office in UCG around December 1991, with him basking in lovely (still in December!) California sun, and with the rain “machine-gunning” off the window of my office in Galway – saying no to that opportunity was a tough one!

But, as I said I have no regrets, settling back in Ireland, and Galway in particular, has given me a wonderful life, for which I am very fortunate and thankful. I have found the academic life very rewarding,



having the opportunity to teach students and (hopefully!) make a positive impact on the next generation of Irish engineers, and having the opportunity to do research into new engineering technologies that directly fuel industrial development. I have had and continue to have the good fortune to work with excellent colleagues at NUI Galway (name changed from UCG to NUI Galway in 1997), including Dr. Patrick McGarry, son of Gerry and Pauline McGarry, Devlis, who is one of our star researchers in engineering, and also the very best of students, including many excellent students from Ballyhaunis and the locality, who have very definitely distinguished themselves both as students and in their subsequent careers (so keep them coming!). Oh, and by the way something I have to say, as my wife and family can certainly confirm, the working hours are very long, all year round, despite some common misconceptions!

## Travel

The nature of the job means substantial travel, and in common with many colleagues, I have travelled a lot over the years, to conferences and international research project meetings, to showcase and promote what we are doing in Galway to increase the University's international reputation, to network and learn, and to see the state of the art and bring it home for the development of our own teaching and research. A University's international reputation is all the more important now with increasing significance and visibility of international University rankings and league tables, a topic that is proving challenging for Irish Universities at present due to lack of state funding for higher education relative to other countries, as has been reported in the media, although NUI Galway has done consistently well and risen in these rankings over recent years. And additionally, this travel, reputation building and the generation of top quality research publications, is essential for lecturers to be able to compete for and win national and international research funding, which in turn directly pays for the generation of our own PhD graduates; without this funding there would be very little opportunity for students to go on to do PhDs in Ireland.

Travel for me has included the mainland USA, Alaska, Mexico, the UK and Europe; to western European countries (France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Austria, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and Sweden) and (slightly) more far flung locations such as Poland, Slovakia, Croatia, Romania, Estonia. In travelling through some of the eastern European countries, you can't but be struck by the beauty of the surroundings, combined with the huge effort the people are making to be welcoming and to open up to the western world and to economic development, after years behind the iron curtain. And of course we have welcomed large number

of eastern Europeans to Ireland, and indeed to Ballyhaunis, over the last twenty years or so, who have contributed greatly to Irish society.

Travel is certainly great, but this very much depends on one's circumstances, and in the 2000s in particular the travel did put pressure on Tina and our young family; for her and their patient support and understanding I am extremely thankful.

## Germany

Having said this though, a highlight of the early years was definitely a sabbatical year that I took in 1996, where Tina and I lived in Germany, before the children came along (first in the southwest in the city of Freiburg, and later in the northwest in the city of Aachen). Having had the USA experience I decided to go to Germany to learn from their world-renowned excellence, innovation and efficiency in engineering, and to bring this back to my teaching and research in Galway. Certainly these were clear to see in the institutes and Universities that I visited, and I brought back lots of great ideas and information that have been extremely useful in the years since. I have to admit that at the time we did find living in Germany a bit intense; a large population meaning a high population density and a good deal of regimentation to manage society, that on the face of it creates a perception of seriousness in the people. On both fronts, population density and the regimental society, this was very different indeed to us and the Ireland of the 1990s, but of course this is changing now. One clear memory we have is the complete social unacceptability of the Irish concept of "ish" in timekeeping, as in "we will see you at eight-ish" – in Germany, simply not a runner! And I can recall one instance where Tina and I were invited to dinner at a friends' house; we had missed the tram and so we turned up at the appointed time, plus an "ish", and when we arrived they just didn't know where to look, and we were told that next time (if there was going to be a next time) they would pick us up! But of course, people are people the world over, and once you get past surface perceptions, we found them lovely, genuine people and we have forged lasting friendships and acquaintances, standing the test of time and distance. The time in Germany allowed us to explore central Europe: lush countryside, mountains, forests, lakes, and real snow! Particular memories are hiking in the Black Forest mountains beside Freiburg and driving to Italy on the motorways (in our Irish 1994 Ford Mondeo 1.6 shaking and rattling trying to keep up with the Mercs and Beemers on the no-speed-limit Autobahns – think Michael Schumacher/Louis Hamilton), and through the fantastically engineered alpine tunnels (such as the 17km long Gotthard tunnel) from Switzerland into sunny north Italy.

## MedTech

Coming back to the economic situation at home, as mentioned above, certainly from the late 1990s, industry in the West of Ireland began to develop. As part of this, the region, and Galway in particular, has benefited hugely from the growth of the medical technology (MedTech) industry. What started out as a strategic move by the government to attract in an industry that could replace the micro-electronics industry that had been dealt a serious blow by the closure of Digital in Galway in the early 1990s, has grown from strength to strength with the arrival of companies such as Boston Scientific, Medtronic, Abbott, Johnson & Johnson, etc. to the extent that Ireland and the West of Ireland in particular has become one of only four 'Global Hubs' of this industry across the world. As an example of its impact and economic importance, people will be familiar with the coronary stent, the tiny wire-mesh metal tube used to treat coronary artery disease through the angioplasty procedure, and it is an amazing fact that 80% of all of the coronary stents used across the world are made in Ireland, and the MedTech industry alone makes up for 10% of all Irish exports annually.

Because of its growing importance, from early on I specialised my research in MedTech to meet a growing need for computer modelling in the analysis and design of medical devices. In doing so I was only one of many engineers who applied our mechanical, materials or electrical engineering training and skills in the new area of 'biomedical engineering' that was emerging internationally in the 1990s, and that has since become a particular focus of expertise for us in Galway in research and engineering degree programmes. Of particular research interest to me has been the coronary stent, that has been revolutionary in saving lives as a permanent metal implant in the heart, leading up to the present day where biodegradable stent technologies are currently in clinical trials, where the stent will dissolve harmlessly into the artery wall and blood stream once it has performed its task of opening the previously blocked artery. Beyond developments such as this, the next big frontier in MedTech is the incorporation of micro-electronics to generate 'smart' medical implants that can stream data to continuously monitor the performance of the implant and give early warning of a developing problem that normally would go undiagnosed until much later.

## Progress

Over the years I have been fortunate enough to be able to progress up through the ranks at NUI Galway to the level of Professor (Professor of Biomedical Engineering, since 2007), and since 2016 I have had the privilege of being the Head of Engineering at the University. Like in



L-R: Peter McHugh (Main St.), Paul Waldron (Devlis) and James Waldron (Devlis), at Regan's house in Methuen, Massachusetts, Autumn 1987.

many other professions, as you progress up the ranks you become more involved in leadership and management, and it is no different in academia, and as Head of Engineering my responsibilities include managing people and guiding the strategic development of NUI Galway's engineering education into the future, across all of the disciplines (Civil, Mechanical, Electronic, Biomedical). Naturally, we want to attract the best and brightest to NUI Galway engineering, including from Ballyhaunis! And also we need to continually develop what we teach and what we research to make sure that our future graduates can be ahead of the curve in terms of employability and in the skills that industry need. And on this point, you will see graduates of the future having broader combinations of strong fundamental engineering skills and innovation and business skills, to enable them to succeed in an increasingly unpredictable and fast changing industrial and technological world.

In recent years I have had the honour of being awarded membership of the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) and the Irish Academy of Engineering (IAE), in recognition of work done and achievements over the years in engineering research and teaching. This is all great of course, but my children bring me back to earth and make it clear to me what's what; when I was elected to the RIA I was describing what it was about and my daughter told me to "get over yourself Dad!" Having duly "gotten over myself", I have found that membership of these organisations has opened new doors and presented new and interesting opportunities. The RIA is interesting in that it is an all-island body with membership across all academic disciplines (science, engineering, medicine, social science, arts, history, languages, etc.) and this gives a great perspective on what is happening in research and higher education, and what the main achievements and challenges are, across all areas. It also has a very useful function in giving advice to government on higher education development, and



through this I have developed interactions with some senior civil servants in Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation, and the Department of Education and Science, and this certainly helps in getting a sense of what is coming down the line in government policy. Also, through these organisations you meet interesting people that you wouldn't normally encounter; recently at an IAE event Tina and I met Brendan Parsons who was being inducted into the IAE for his lifetime of work as an Irish and UN diplomat, and his wife Anne, lovely friendly people, and who in their 'day job' are none other than the 7th Earl of Ross and Lady Anne of Birr Castle in Offaly. Best summed up by our daughter: "You meet the most random people, but very cool".

### On reflection

Looking back over the years, my early life in Ballyhaunis, the times overseas, and having settled in Galway, I can definitely say that I have been extremely fortunate. We live in a lovely community in Galway, and Tina and I have two wonderful children Sarah and Simon, now 21 and 18, and both in college, with Sarah studying pharmacy in TCD and Simon studying mechanical engineering here at NUI Galway (and yes, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree...). I think Sarah has inherited my mother's great ability to connect with, understand and talk to people, and Simon has inherited my father's technical and artistic ability, plus of course many more great things from Tina's side! I brought most of my father's tools from Barrack Street to Galway, and it is wonderful to see Simon using them now in his own workshop in the garden shed creating the next generation of craftwork, of which my father would be very proud.



Tina, Sarah and Peter McHugh, on Sarah's 21st birthday, Galway, 2019.



Sarah and Simon McHugh at the Cliffs of Moher, 2019.

I am writing this article a few weeks after the tragic passing of James Waldron that has shocked and saddened us all and I want to include a mention of him. James and I were born on the same day (well almost – he was born June 5th and I on June 6th) and we were friends from when we were young. We were regular visitors in each other's houses, especially for the years when the Waldron family lived on Main Street. We shared a great interest in art and crafts that entertained us for hours, and from early on it was clear to see that he was destined for great things. Of course, as the record shows, he was a fantastic success in fashion design, settling in Milan and working for many of the great fashion houses of Europe, and designing for movie stars and famous musicians (including the Spice Girls, etc.). Even though we followed very different careers, we kept in contact and he was very welcoming if ever a research trip brought me to Milan. We met up again this year, during his time back in Ballyhaunis this summer, and had a great chance to catch up. Subsequently, I was delighted to hear about his new job back in Milan and his excitement about that, and so it was such a shock to hear of his sudden and untimely passing. He was such a genuine and generous person, with no agenda whatsoever, only the ever burning desire to generate beautiful designs and help and mentor others. He was a perfect ambassador for "Ballyhaunis people can do anything!" He will be very sorely missed, and sincerest sympathies to his mother Mary and brothers Martin and Paul, and the wider family.

To finish up, I believe that Ballyhaunis is a fantastic place to be from, and I am always proud to say that I am from Ballyhaunis, and I believe that my upbringing in the town has given me both ambitions and values that have served me very well in life, and for that I am very grateful indeed.

# Liam Waldron - Riverbank Simmentals

## National Hall of Fame Award Winner 2019

Liam Waldron of Scrigg, Ballyhaunis, was the 2019 recipient of the Irish Simmental Cattle Society National Hall of Fame Award earlier this year. Established to acknowledge those who have dedicated their lives to promoting their particular breed of cattle, horses or sheep, this year's National Hall of Fame Awards ceremony took place in May at the Sheraton Hotel, Athlone with over four-hundred guests in attendance.

Liam, who owns the Riverbank Simmental herd, was chosen by the Irish Simmental Cattle Society and fellow breeders for this year's award in recognition of his contribution, dedication and commitment to the breed over many years.

Having seen Simmental cattle at various shows and witnessing the ability of the breed commercially, Liam decided to start his own pedigree Simmental herd almost thirty years ago. After detailed research and careful consideration, he established the Riverbank herd in 1990 with the purchase of a heifer, Lowland Kersey, from Gerry Donnelly of Ballinasloe, Co. Galway, bred by Jackie Hennessy of Co. Limerick. Further purchases followed from the Drum and Gortin herds at Roscommon Simmental sales in the following years as Liam continued to build his herd. He used all A.I. in the early years including such bulls as Hurtig, Gretnahouse Supersonic, Dirnanean Nuggett and Enfield Benz.

Liam has regularly shown cattle at various club shows and in national classes and has been a keen supporter of society sales. He was also a keen supporter of the National Test Centre at Tully. In fact he topped the performance test at Tully on two occasions: with Riverbank Pedro (2004) and Riverbank Rover (2005). He also topped the sale at Tully in 2010 with Riverbank Atlantic, a Glebefarm Tyson son out of a Marblehill Liam dam, Riverbank Primrose. This bull was later purchased by Brian Boyle, Riverstown Simmentals, Dundalk, Co. Louth as a pedigree stock bull.

Another of Liam's major contributions to the breed is the passion and belief in the Simmental breed which he instilled in his neighbours, the Neenan brothers of Coolnafarna. Anywhere that Fearn and Limehill cattle are being shown, Liam is never too far away willing to help and encourage.

A regular at all Western Club events, Liam has established a vast number of lifelong friends through his involvement in Simmental cattle, all of whom congratulate him on his great achievement.



Liam Waldron (right), Riverbank Simmentals, receiving the 2019 Hall of Fame Award from Minister Kevin 'Boxer' Moran.



Riverbank Atlantic (son of Riverbank Primrose, below), born 2009, and pictured here at thirteen months old. Shown here by Mark Neenan with Liam Waldron (owner) at right. He was sold at Tully in 2010 to Brian Boyle, Riverstown Simmentals, Dundalk, Co. Louth as a pedigree stock bull.



Riverbank Primrose. Born in 2003, her grandmother was one of the foundation females of the Riverbank Herd established in 1990.



# The Gurteen Carrowkeel Grotto and Marian Shrine

## 65th Anniversary Commemoration

Mike Byrne



Residents of Gurteen and Carrowkeel turned out in great number on Friday evening, 23rd Aug. 2019, to mark the 65th anniversary of the erection of the well-known Marian Grotto which stands at the entrance to the village, on the main Ballyhaunis-Knock road.

After a Rosary Procession from the Marian Grotto from the lower end of Gurteen (beside Mary and Bernie Freyne's), erected in 1964, to the better known one situated on the main Knock road, and led by parish priest Fr. Stephen Farragher, Gurteen native Liam Lynskey gave a talk on the history and the background to the story of the erecting of the Grotto in 1954. Liam's father, the late Willie Lynskey, together with a number of other residents, came together and devised a plan to have the structure in place before the closing of the Marian Year of 1954.

The other grotto, and indeed, less well known one, but just as splendid at the same time, was built by Gurteen native Mike (Yank) Freeley (died 1992) a few years after returning from the United States to retire in his native village with his wife, the former Delia Brennan (died 1998), who also hailed from Gurteen.

At the conclusion of the procession, a great night of feasting and celebrating continued well into the early hours, attended and thoroughly enjoyed by the villagers of Gurteen and Carrowkeel, bringing the curtain down on what was indeed a most memorable and worthwhile anniversary celebration. Marian hymns were performed by the children from the Gurteen/Carrowkeel areas, conducted by resident Marie Henry.



Fr. Stephen Farragher blesses the Grotto with its Marian Shrine looking resplendent.

# A History of the Two Grottos and Marian Shrines

Liam Lynskey

The story of the two grottos or shrines in Gurteen begins way back in 1854. On 8th December of that year, Pope Pius IX issued a dogma on the Immaculate Conception of Mary. To commemorate this event, one hundred years later in September 1953, Pope Pius XII, inaugurated the Church's First Worldwide Marian Year to start on 8th December 1953, the 99th anniversary of the issuing of the dogma.

Soon afterwards the people of Carrowkeel and Gurteen decided they would like to mark the Marian year of 1954 by erecting a shrine in the locality. Mike Freeley, brother of Paddy Freeley (Gurteen) and Willie Lynskey, father of Liam Lynskey, were asked to investigate designs for the proposed shrine. Later, at a general meeting for the residents of the two villages held in Henry's house, Willie Lynskey showed a scale model of a shrine, made from cardboard and plaster of Paris to those at the meeting and this design was agreed to. It was also agreed to fund the project by asking each family in the two villages to contribute one pound. The sum collected would be about £40 or a little over €1,500 today. When word of the project got out, people from the locality, living away, wished to be associated with this and some extra monies were collected.

To find a suitable site was the next task. After reviewing several locations it was agreed that the current location was the most suitable. At that time there was a simple T-junction where the Knock Road and the road into Gurteen met. An approach was made to the Prenty family who owned the land on both sides of the junction about the possibility of obtaining a site for the Shrine at this location. This was given freely by Mrs. Kate Prenty at the time. She was the grandmother of John and Tom Prenty, Knock Road. An additional piece of ground on the other side of the junction was also gifted to the project by the Prenty family which allowed the road to widen out to meet the Knock road and provide much better visibility for road users in all directions.

Everyone got to work on the site straight away and several tons of soil had to be removed to level the ground as the site was on a gentle rise. These were the days before tractors or diggers, so all work carried out was done by several men with shovels, horses and carts. The most popular horse and cart used in this effort belonged to Pake Caulfield in Carrowkeel whose brother Gus had a travelling shop at the time. His family used big horse and carts for their retail business and had a large cart with steel multi-leaf suspension. The excess material

cleared from the site was used to fill in a sandpit in the field where Enda Caulfield's house is now located. Hard work and lots of man-power saw the work completed on time.

The walls on both sides of the road were built with stone and mortar and lasted well for fifty years. The concrete case for the statue was made by Willie Lynskey who had returned from Birmingham after a career working for Sir Robert McAlpine. The statue for the shrine was purchased from Mary and Paddy Freeley's shop in Main Street, where MacSiúrtáin's public house is now located. The wall beside the shrine contains a money box for offerings towards maintenance and a compartment to store a car battery which was used to provide lighting in the enclosure. A bronze plate with the inscription which reads "Erected by Sacred Heart Sodality Gurteen and Carrowkeel Marian Year 1954" was placed below the enclosure.



Marian Prendergast (nee Brennan) and Liam Lynskey, both born in Gurteen in the Marian Year 1954. Liam delivered a talk on the history of both grottos in Gurteen.

The Shrine was blessed by Archdeacon Geoffrey Prendergast P.P. on the 8th of December 1954. The Rosary was said there on the day by the very large crowd that attended.

In the following decade Ireland changed significantly with the introduction of rural electrification and greater availability of machinery. Then in 1964 two Gurteen natives, Michael Freeley and Delia Brennan, who had spent their working lives in the U.S. where they married, had reached retirement age. They came back to Gurteen and built a new house where Mary and Bernard Freyne now reside. They decided to build a second shrine or



grotto at the entrance to their house. This team led by Mike Freeley included John Brennan, Mike Freeley, Pake Murphy and Willie Lynskey who again designed and did the concrete work. This grotto had electric lights and was an impressive sight on dark nights.

In 2004, to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Marian Year a new stone face was put on the shrine at Knock Road by a team led by Carrowkeel native Jimmy Finn who had returned home after a distinguished career of almost thirty years in Manchester and Leeds working in the construction and stone masonry businesses, along with the help of some local labour. The townland sign, giving the name Gurteen and the Irish form, An Goirtín, was built into it. A beautiful display of flowers and shrubs was planted by Enda Caulfield. It looks very impressive and makes a very attractive entrance to the village.

Through the years both grottos have been well maintained and tastefully decorated with flowers and shrubs. A special mention in this regard must go to Mary Henry and Enda Caulfield for the unheralded and constant work they have done through the years to keep both grottos looking so well and admired by all who pass by them.

Today we salute the faith, vision, enterprise and hard work of past generations and hope that present and future generations will continue to preserve and enhance the unique inheritance that we now possess.



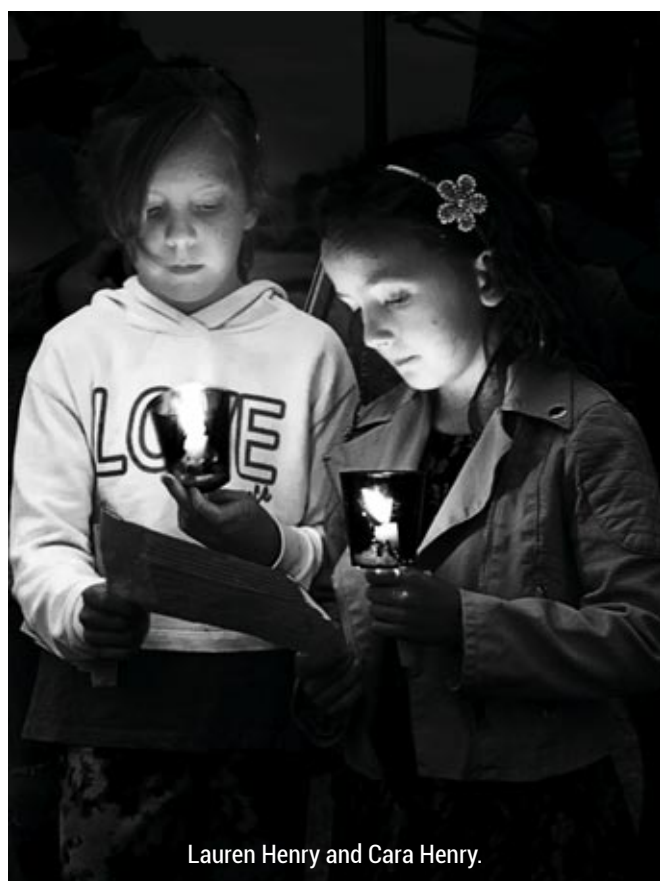
Jarlath and Milo Henry.



Mary Henry, Marie Brennan and Carol Keane.



Mary Caulfield (Carrowkeel) and Pauline Henry (Gurteen).



Lauren Henry and Cara Henry.



Members of the Caulfield family from Carrowkeel: Bridget Mary Chilvers with her brothers Greg and Michael Caulfield.

# Warrant Officer Bernard Cannon RAF, DFM

John P. McGuire

This is a story about my uncle Bernard Cannon, a Warrant Officer and radar operator during WWII from Bolton, Lancashire, who was a night fighter in the British RAF with 604 Squadron from 1940 to 1945. Bernard's father, my maternal grandfather, Thomas Cannon had emigrated from the village of Knock, County Mayo in the early 1900s moving to Bolton, Lancashire. He was employed at the Bolton Gas Works as a labourer as well as owning a rooming house where some of his fellow workers from County Mayo lived.

Bernard's grandfather was Pat Cannon, a blacksmith from Leitrim who had gone to Knock on Pilgrimage and decided to stay and make rosary beads for the Pilgrims. He bought the piece of land next to the Gable wall.

On a visit to my uncle Bernard in the 1980s, my son Michael had asked him to send him a letter describing what it was like to shoot down a German plane using Radar, a newly developing technology, in 1940. Bernard wrote several letters in response. I have included his responses here to give a better understanding of the enormous risks involved for these air crews on both sides because for many their first flight could also be their last one.



Bristol Beaufighter.

Uncle Bernard penned graphic descriptions of some of his wartime flying experiences. At the time he was on night fighter patrol flying in an RAF *Beaufighter* as the Radar Operator with Pilot F. O. Geddes. In the letter, he described the shooting down of a German Luftwaffe Junkers 88 Bomber. A short burst of cannon fire was usually enough to down most of these heavily loaded bombers. He was using the newly developing technology of Radar which enabled them to shoot down enemy planes without actually seeing them. The original stories are contained in Uncle Bernard's official RAF logbook where he documented all of his flying times and events. There is also a short description called, "The Airmen's Stories" on the Battle of Britain London Monument which can be accessed at <http://www.bbm.org.uk/Cannon.htm>.

In September 1939 World War II began when Germany invaded Poland, whereupon England declared war on Germany due to the existence of the Anglo-Poland Pact where both countries had agreed to mutual protection signed just the year before. My uncle Bernard Cannon, who was living in Bolton, Lancashire, enlisted in the Royal Air Force (RAF) in June 1940, even though he had initially volunteered to join the British Navy. The Navy proved too slow in their response to take him up on his offer. Once inducted, Bernard was assigned to an airborne radar course and posted to 604 Squadron at Gravesend, having neither flown an aeroplane nor ever having been on board one before!



Warrant Officer Bernard Cannon  
RAF, DFM, in dress uniform.

By using triangulation with a ground station, the radar operator on board was able to give the pilot a running commentary to direct him to the enemy aircraft, and when they got close enough together he would tell the pilot to fire the cannons on their fighter plane, most often a Bristol Beaufighter.

604 Squadron was noted for its pioneering mastery of radar controlled night fighting. The Pilot and Radar Operator assigned to night patrol would go out in search of enemy bombers such as the German Heinkel He 111, one of the most numerous of the German bombers or the Junkers 88 considered by the Germans as too fast to be intercepted. They stealthily tried to shoot them down by surprise on their way to their targets.

Between the 28th Nov. 1940 and the 23rd Nov. 1941, Bernard and his pilots were responsible for destroying six Junkers 88s, two Heinkel 111s and damaging two other Junkers 88's. For his dedicated bravery and service, he was awarded the DFM, Distinguished Flying Medal, by King George VI at a ceremony that took place at Buckingham Palace. My mother Mary (nee Cannon) McGuire had the distinct pleasure and honor of accompanying her brother. Bernard went on to distinguish himself in the RAF and would go on to become one of the survivors of the Battle of Britain, the



JUNE 1941					Time carried forward :- 52.40 100		
Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)	Flying Times	
						Day	Night
JUNE 2 <sup>nd</sup>	14.55	2190	F.O. GEDDES	NIGHT TEST	SET EXCELLENT	.55	
JUNE 4 <sup>th</sup>	15.00	2190	F.O. GEDDES	" "	" "	.45	
JUNE 4 <sup>th</sup>	19.30	2187	F.O. GEDDES	" "	HAD TO SWIM. ENGINE TROUBLE	.5	
JUNE 4 <sup>th</sup>	01.35	BEAU P 2190	F.O. GEDDES	FIGHTER PATROL	INTERCEPTED HEINKEL III. 8 MILES S.W. OF A.E. OF WIGHT. PATROL TANK EXPLODED AND PLANE WENT DOWN IN SPIRAL DIVE. SOME RETURN FIRE.		2.
JUNE 6 <sup>th</sup>	15.00	2187	F.O. GEDDES	NIGHT TEST	SET O.K.	.45	
JUNE 8 <sup>th</sup>	15.00	R. 2200	F.O. GEDDES	NIGHT TEST	SET AND MOTHER O.K.	.45	
JUNE 10	22.15	2190	F.O. GEDDES	NIGHT TEST	NO AIR PRESSURE. BRAKES FAILED	.20	
JUNE 11 <sup>th</sup>	13.10	R. 2190	F.O. GEDDES	PRACTICE.	SET FINE. POOR SIGNAL FROM M.	.20	
JUNE 12	12.05	BEAU P FIGHTER P.	F.O. GEDDES	NIGHT TEST	SET EXCELLENT. GOOD SIG. FROM M.	.50	
JUNE 14	17.55	BEAU P.	F.O. GEDDES	" "	SET FINE.	.55	
JUNE 14	00.20	BEAU P R. 2190.	F.O. GEDDES	FIGHTER PATROL.	INTERCEPTED HEINKEL III. SERVE AHEAD. ONE LONG BURST FIRED AT BANDIT. E.M. CAUGHT FIRE AND DIVERED EASTWARDS WHERE HUGE EXPLOSION WAS SEEN FROM 15000 FT. NO RETURN FIRE.		2.
					RAIDER DESTROYED		
TOTAL TIME ...						59.20	104.4

Pages from Bernard's log book, June 1941

air war which changed the course of the history of the Second World War.

**The following letter written by Bernard was addressed to my mother, Mary:**

"It was the 8th of July 1941, we took off at one hour past midnight and picked up this chap on Radar up in Wiltshire near the Somerset border, he had turned to port about 8 miles north of Bristol with a 4 ton load (of bombs) for that City. We were at 24,000 feet at the time, a 2 second (burst of cannon fire) was enough to set him on fire from end to end in no time. All the crew were out, four, and gone in 10 seconds. We followed the plane down to about 1,000 feet where it broke in half. Two of the crew walked into the nearest village or town, it was a very small town called Thornbury with population of about 12,000. They gave themselves up at the nearest Police Station at 2AM. The Home Guard rounded up the other two, one in a barn the last one in a ditch with a busted ankle. They were later transferred to a prison camp in Cumberland, now Cumbria, where they were held until released over 4 four years later."

*For them the war was over, they were the lucky ones.*  
*Author's comment.*

Bernard's letter addressed to my son, Michael, dated March 3rd, 1982:

Dear Michael, "Herewith a short story, 'One man went to war.' November 28th 1940, took off from Middle Wallop airfield at 7:45PM in darkness. Picked up by radar, Junkers 88 (German Bomber Plane) over English Channel, Pilot fired all four guns at Bandit one gun (Browning Machine Gun) jammed. Hits on port engine which set on fire Bandit fell away towards the sea, was found in the morning on the Beach at Bournemouth. First aircraft in history to be destroyed through the use of Radar. Congratulations from Churchill to both of us."

Like many former military personnel my uncle Bernard very rarely spoke about his wartime experiences. I do recall that he once said that he never tried to make friends with aircrew from the Bomber Squadrons because their life expectancy was so short, for some their first bombing raid over Europe was their last.

I remember that my Mother told me that during the early part of the war she told Bernard that she thought England would lose the war. He responded that he was working with a secret weapon and that England would win, that weapon was radar and it did help win the Battle of Britain.

Many of the airmen were from eighteen other countries, such as Poland, France, Canada and Ireland. One of those airmen was Paddy Finucane, a native Dubliner, who moved to London and became an RAF Wing Commander. He bravely distinguished himself by earning a DSO, DFC and two bars. After joining the RAF at 17 he became their leading "Ace." He was shot down over the French Coast on his way back to England and crashed into the English Channel. He had shot down a total of 32 enemy planes.

Another letter Bernard wrote stated that, "Paddy Finucane landed at Middle Wallop (Airfield) on one occasion, he had three bullet holes in his engine, I was asleep in bed at the time having been flying during the night, 14th March 1941, the night we destroyed a Heinkel 111 just after midnight. Paddy got a great sendoff when he took off the day after he 'landed' at Wallop. He stayed overnight for engine repairs. After he had been hit off Le Touquet, France, three of his fellow pilots wheeled round and shot the machine gun post to pieces, both soldiers at the same time."

As Winston Churchill famously said on 20th Aug. 1940: "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

My uncle Bernard was one of Churchill's few.

**References:** *Cover of Darkness* by Roderick Chisholm (1953). Bernard Cannon mentioned on page 48. *Night Fighter* by C.F. Rawnsley & Robert Wright (1957). Bernard Cannon mentioned on page 28.



W/O Bernard Cannon ready for flight patrol.

## The Ballyhaunis Under-16 Gaelic Football team, County Champions 1984



Back, L-R: John Durkan (Selector), Paddy Phillips, Neil Cruise, David Fitzgerald, Martin Maughan, Joseph Webb, Paul Clarke, Noel Phillips, Joe Tighe, Ger Lyons (Selector). Centre, L-R: Tom McDonagh, Ray Sloyan, Vincent McNamara, Brian Murray, Val Byrne (Capt.), Seamus Caulfield, Ger Winston, Michael Cleary, Tony Morley. Front, L-R: John Keane, Tomás Connolly, Thomas Ruane, Tony Cribbin, Martin O'Grady, Eddie McLoughlin. Absent from photograph: James Coyne and Kieran Morley. Four years later many of these players were on the Ballyhaunis Intermediate team which captured the County Title in 1988.





Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns Committee members with Sharon Cameron (Environmental Awareness Officer, Mayo County Council), Pat Ryan and Ray Darcy (Super Valu), Mark Godfrey (Chairman, Ballyhaunis Community Council) and John Cribbin MCC at the launch of the Mayo Keep Cup in Super Valu in April 2019. L-R: Ray Darcy (SuperValu), Sharon Cameron (Environmental Awareness Officer, Mayo County Council), Mary Donnelly, Mark Godfrey (Community Council), Pat Ryan (SuperValu), Nell Rochford, Frances Mulhern, Una Shields, Ann Curley, Mary Higgins, Kay Curley, Valentina Obakpolor, Cllr. John Cribbin, Falilat Oladibubo.

Members of the Tidy Towns Committee continued their efforts to clean up and enhance the town and surrounding area during 2019. Outdoor activities kicked off with our annual Good Friday clean-up as part of the National Spring Clean Campaign in April. This event goes from strength to strength every year, and this year our two local GAA stars Erin Murray and Keith Higgins lent their support to the many groups who did trojan work cleaning up their local areas. A massive amount of rubbish was collected and we are very grateful to all the volunteers who took part.

We entered the revamped 'Spring into Litter Action' competition with Mayo County Council, which this year takes account of the work done during the Good Friday clean-up. We met on Monday and Wednesday evenings for an hour or two throughout the summer picking litter, planting flowers, weeding etc. We have been informed at the time of writing that we have won a major prize, and we are invited to the presentation of awards night in Westport on 24th October.

## Mayo Keep Cup

There is great emphasis on the use of re-usable and compostable products, and moving away from single use plastics of all kinds. Many people may not be aware that

most of the takeaway tea/coffee cups we get in shops and filling stations are not recyclable as they contain plastic. To encourage the use of re-usable cups we hosted a very successful launch of the 'Mayo Keep Cup' in April. Our thanks to Sharon Cameron, Environmental Awareness Office with Mayo County Council for supplying the cups, and to Ryan's Super Valu for facilitating the launch in their store.

## Biodiversity

Our hanging baskets and other floral displays throughout the town enhanced the streetscape with vibrant colour and have been much admired. In keeping with our motto of caring for our environment we are advised to include plants and flowers that are particularly beneficial to bees and other pollinators. Some of our members attended a very informative Growing for Biodiversity workshop in Kilmaine, where planting techniques that protect the natural habitat for insects and other wildlife species were demonstrated. We also attended a sustainability workshop hosted by Balla Tidy Towns which dealt with the serious impact our wasteful use of energy resources is having on our planet, and the steps we all need to take to opt for renewable alternatives.

Our Chairperson Kay Curley attended Climate Fest Mayo held in Castlebar in September. Climate Fest was a day of talks, workshops, performances and conversations aimed at helping us to make simple changes to our day-to-day life that will help tackle the climate emergency. The message of the day was that we can all help by 'acting locally and thinking globally'.

### Litter Fines

In conjunction with Ballyhaunis Chamber, we have regular meetings with Mayo County Council officials: Conrad Harley, Area Engineer, and Padraig Flanagan, Head of the Municipal District, to discuss various projects and bring local issues to their attention. Top of our list is usually the problem of illegal dumping, and we understand that the installation of cameras in certain problem areas is proving successful. We are informed that 76 litter fines have been issued in the Ballyhaunis area over the last 18 months. The Litter Warden has also been busy responding to reports of illegal dumping and calling to households checking on the presence of bins.

### National Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudicators visited Ballyhaunis on 20th July and we are very pleased to have been awarded 295 marks - an increase of 8 marks on 2018. The report is very positive on the work of our committee and the efforts made by many business and property owners in the attractive presentation of their buildings. The overall standard of houses and residential areas was described as very high with good quality landscaping, and hope was expressed that more and more of the derelict premises will be brought back to life. The Friary grounds are again described as a wonderful amenity for the town with plenty of people strolling, jogging or walking their dogs on the day of the visit. They also provide an abundance of flora and fauna, as indicated on the information panels along the path.

### Thanks

We extend sincere thanks to all who support the work of our committee; the voluntary helpers who take to the roads and streets of their local area with bags and litter pickers on a regular basis picking up litter; to our Rural Social Scheme team who look after the hanging baskets throughout the summer, hanging them, watering/feeding them and taking them down; to all who contribute to our annual church gate collection and our mite boxes in the shops and pubs.

Special thanks to Cllr. John Cribbin for his allocation of funds again this year and his ongoing co-operation and support. We congratulate John on his re-election as a member of Mayo County Council earlier this year and we acknowledge his initiative in proposing a motion to

have the Claremorris Municipal District declared a poster free zone in the lead up to the local elections. Hopefully he has set a precedent for all future elections!

We also acknowledge the support of Pat and Willie Ryan over many years as proprietors of Super Valu, and we wish them every success with their future plans. We wish the new proprietors, Jeff and Mary Nolan, every success in their new venture, and we look forward to their support in improving the appearance of our town and its environs.

### New Members

We welcome new members to join us at any time; there is much more to Tidy Towns than litter picking and planting flowers, especially with the current emphasis on recycling, composting, biodiversity and pollinator friendly planting to name but a few. We have monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of the month in the Community (Parochial) Hall, and everyone is welcome to attend.

### 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, Mike Griffin, Frances May, Nell Rochford, Gabriel Smith, Mary Higgins, Breeda Burke, Una Shields, Caitriona Varley, Connie Gildea.

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## Gala B.E.S.T. Award for Murphy's



Murphy's Gala, Dublin Road, Ballyhaunis, was one of seven Gala convenience stores from throughout county Mayo awarded the Gala B.E.S.T. Award for excellence in retail at the 2019 Gala B.E.S.T. Awards, following a comprehensive and independent assessment process under the firm's 'Business Excellence Standards Tool' (B.E.S.T.) programme. The awards ceremony took place in the K Club and was MC'd by TV presenter Síle Seoige. Pictured are Dom and Geraldine Murphy, proprietors.



# Ballyhaunis Gun Club

David Herr (Secretary)

The wildlife of our country is not ours to dispose of as we wish. We are the guardians for generations to come. The abundance of wildlife this season is a credit to all who participated in the release of geese and pheasant, breeding projects and feeding. Without their help we would not have such a good population of wild fowl.

Ballyhaunis and District Gun Club's activities include Clay Target shooting: practice and open shoots are held throughout the year, with teams competing in both local, County and Provincial Clay Target Shoots. This past year we hosted a variety of events:

## **Longest Tail Competition**

Longest Tail – Padraic Waldron

Heaviest Bird – David Herr

Best Presented Bird – Paul Sykes

## **Team Shoot Vermin**

Winners: David Herr and Padraic Waldron.

## **Christmas Turkey Shoot**

1st Mark Kelly                      3rd Liam Lyons

2nd Ciarán Waldron              4th Padraic Waldron

## **Eamon Burke Memorial – Top shot**

Winner – John Greally

Game release, preservation and conservation are ongoing events, but predator control is an unending task as the mink population is always on the increase. Mink are detrimental to most wildlife as are the grey crow and the magpie. Game and songbirds' nests and young are always under threat.

Our club is once again anxious to control the vermin of the area. We will be very happy to assist anybody who has fox, grey crow, magpie or mink problems on their land. Please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Club if you are pestered by vermin.

A pilot project started by the Club involves the rearing and release of Greylag Geese and Canadian Geese: the birds will be monitored to see how they adapt.

Ballyhaunis Gun Club wish to thank all our sponsors throughout the year: Delaney's Hardware, Phillips Menswear, Forde's Off-licence, Ryan's Supervalu, Keith Revins Tyres, Cunningham's Londis, The Clock Bar, Gareth Delaney's Bar, Homeland, Rochford Motors, Herr's Shop, Dawn Meats and Kieran Mills.

Anyone interested in getting involved in club activities can contact the Secretary, David Herr, or any member of the Club.

## **Club Officers:**

**President** – Liam Lyons

**Secretary** – David Herr

**Chairman** – Padraic Waldron

**Treasurer** – Ciarán Waldron



Padraig Kiely (right) who competed in the Irish Championship for Pointers and Setters on Grouse. Forty-two dogs from Ireland, England and the Isle of Man started. Twenty-one were called back for the second day. Padraig came second overall with his Irish Setter bitch, Ballinahemmy Rose (pictured below), making her a Field Trial champion. He was presented with his prize by Hugh Grady (left).



David Herr (left) receiving his prize for Heaviest Bird, and Padraig Waldron winning the overall competition with Longest Tail at Annual Longtail Competition 2018.



Paul Sykes (right) receiving prize for Best Presented Bird at the Annual Longtail Competition 2018, from David Herr.



John Greally (right) being presented with the Eamon Burke Memorial Cup for the Top Shot, by David Herr, with Padraic Waldron (left).

## Badminton Ball – late 1970s



Back, L-R: Declan Shields, Jimmy Walshe, John Higgins, Alan Delaney, Eamon Dwane.  
Seated: Mary McDermott (Bank of Ireland), Breda Burke, Rosaleen Curley.



# Railway Hill Memories

Majella Callaghan

When I was about four or five years old, I developed a fear of dogs. I kept teasing a neighbour's dog, in my innocence, until one summer's evening when the dog came up and snapped at me. I will never forget the fear this instilled in me. Unfortunately, no one came to the rescue as I had walked up to that particular neighbour's house when no one was around. The dog had lightly brushed on my hand with its teeth and I kept looking at the slight red welt and swelling it had caused. I burst into tears and ran home as fast as I could, barely able to explain to my mother what had happened with the aftershock.

This incident caused me to develop a fear of dogs even though whenever I visited my grandmother's home – the late Bridget Judge, Ballinphuill, Ballyhaunis – their sheep dog was always so gentle and playful with us. Luckily, from spending school holidays on my grandmother's farm, my uncle encouraged me to lose my fear of dogs by encouraging me to help feed his sheepdog

and never to approach or tease her when she was eating.

I remember a particular time when one of my uncle's dogs had five pups, all black and white in colour, back in the 1970s. When visiting one Sunday afternoon, my brother and I plotted together, after our usual squabbles, and decided to bring them for a spin in the wheelbarrow to our favourite place on the Railway Hill on my grandmother's farm in Ballinphuill. Initially, my brother was reluctant, but he finally relented and off we went on our way. The pups, squealing in their confinement of the wheelbarrow, enjoyed playing and teasing each other in such close proximity en-route. We enjoyed the adventure more than our travelling companions in the beautiful setting of the Railway Hill.

Luckily, today was one of the many sunny days we always associated with our summer holidays there. Looking around us at the calm and beautiful scenery – the green fields like a patchwork quilt all around us, dotted with houses here and there. As it was a Sunday, we were unable to hear the hum of conversation from the blacksmith at the old forge near the main road, and the odd hammer and clang from the tools as he went about his day-to-day work.

We navigated our way in one piece, taking turns to push the wheelbarrow carefully over the bumpy green fields so as not to unduly disturb its canine inhabitants. We avoided disturbing the livestock, watching us en route in their still and silent manner, remembering our grandmother's admonishment not to do so, and arrived at the Railway Hill panting from the effort of climbing up to it with our travelling companions. We used to get so much pleasure out of playing with them. The farm's sheepdog decided to join us for part of the way but decided to make her way back to suit her own routine.

Once we arrived, we took the pups out of the wheelbarrow and lay on the grass. As they were so young, they just sat on the grass squealing and playing with each other and us teasing them. All whilst keeping a tight eye to make sure none of them accidentally rolled down the hill. We watched the cars speeding along on the main road either going into the town visible from our perch on this local landmark, or going back towards county Roscommon. This was sheer bliss, more for us than our travelling companions, as we were getting away from living in a small town and having to help out in the hum-drum and routine of the family grocery shop.

Reflecting back now, it was mindfulness in action as we always took our time to have a good look around and drink in everything from our peaceful and calm surroundings. Today, we could not take the time out to



Mary, Patricia and John Callaghan with their uncle Tom Judge.



*Above: Bridie Callaghan (nee Judge), the author's mother, on the Railway Hill, Ballinphuill.*

*Below right: Majella Callaghan with her grandmother Bridget Judge.*

dare each other as to who would make it home first as the pups would have to be put back in the wheelbarrow to make the journey back.

This day was one of the good times we remember, because it reminds us how much the Railway Hill meant to all of us growing up, including my mother and her family before us; and the sense of peace, stillness, safety and fun it always embodied for us as captured in the many photographs of our childhood albums.

From time to time, when we all meet up as a family, we often recount our days on the Railway Hill including the time we brought the pups over to it in the wheelbarrow. Looking back, not only did I overcome my fear of dogs in this beautiful setting, but we had the fun and frolics on that particular day to bring the five pups to see our magical place there.







1.



2.



3.



3.

3. February 2019: We wrote the names of our loved ones on a heart and planted a bulb.

4. Students from our local Community School are invited to help with our fiestas to share their friendships and their talents.



4.

## Ballyhaunis Faith & Light Group

– November 2018 to 2019

Our group has gone from strength to strength since our first 'Fiesta' in April 2018. Since last year's Annagh publication our group has enjoyed many wonderful 'Fiesta' (gatherings), not always on our own but joined by our Faith & Light friends from Dunmore and Castlebar. We met groups from all over Ireland when attending the National Day in Athlone, November 2018, and in 2019 we attended the Dunmore Regional Day in April, the National Pilgrimage to Knock in May and the Western Regional meeting in September held in Westport. Our group also took part in a number of parish events – Holy Thursday Ceremony and Corpus Christi Procession. We held a Church Gate collection in March, and we would like to thank all who supported it.

Our group designed and created our very own Ballyhaunis Faith & Light Banner, with special thanks to Julia and Geraldine for their creativity. It is a beautiful piece of work and it got its first airing on Holy Thursday night.

In May we heard the sad news of the death of Jean Vanier (RIP), who set up the L'Arche Communities and had a strong link with the Faith & Light Communities. He will be dearly missed by both communities, though he will live on in his truly inspirational writings. Geraldine, from our group, made a return visit in September to Trosly, in France where Jean Vanier lived. She travelled with members from the Castlebar Faith & Light group.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who has helped us in any way over the past year. A very special word of thanks to Fr. Stephen, our Chaplain, who is always so supportive. Anyone interested in getting to know more about our Faith & Light Group contact Orla – 086 0858122, Julia – 086 0764709, Geraldine – 086 1730445, Anne - 087 6892848

*Here are photo of some of our Fiestas during the past year:-*

1. November 2018: The theme of our Fiesta is "In November, we remember".

2. December 2018: "Faith & Light" Christmas Party with Dunmore. Friendships and support from other "Faith & Light" Communities are welcome.



6c.



6a.



5a.

5a & 5b. Holy Thursday 2019: This year members, their families and friends take part in the washing of the feet ceremony at the "Mass of our Lord's Supper". They also took part in the Offertory procession and one of our members read the "Beatitudes of Inclusion."

6a. In May we took part in our national "Faith & Light" pilgrimage to Knock Shrine. Celebrant was Bishop Brendan Kelly of Galway and the homilist was Fr Stephen.



5b.





7.



8.

7. Faith and Light Summer BBQ, Clare Court, July

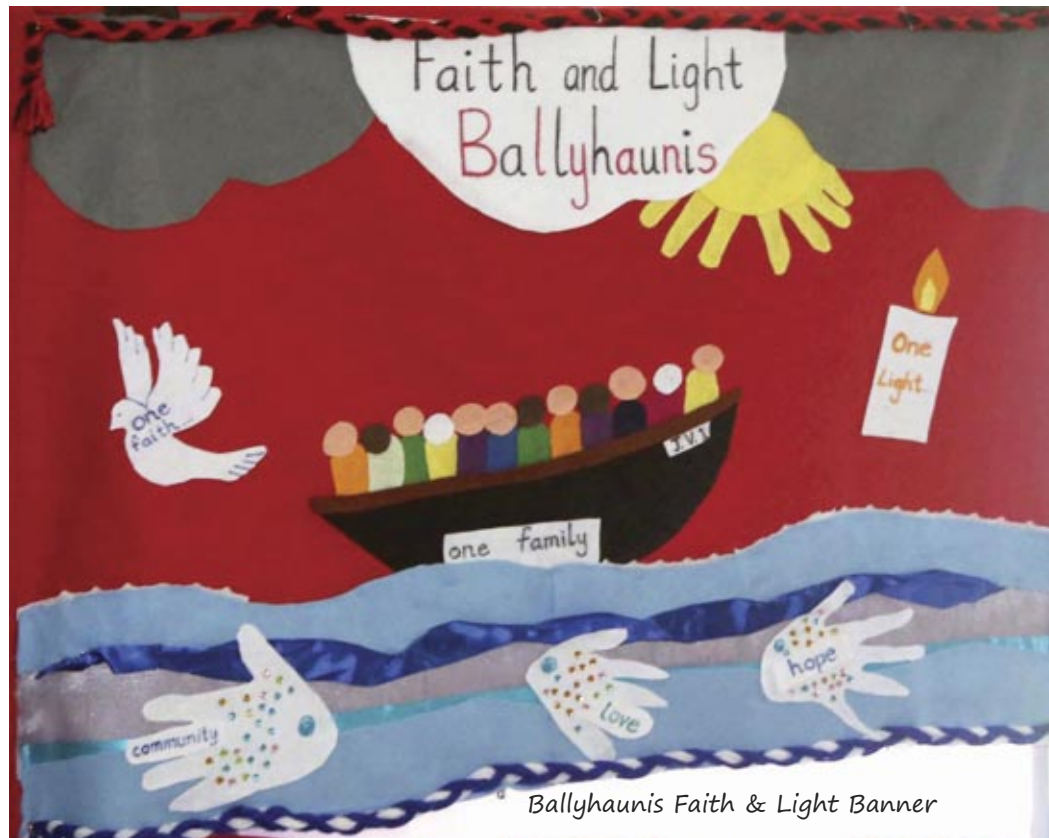
8. Members from the western region gathered in the Atlantic Coast Hotel in Westport. Celebration of Mass was followed by a buffet and music.



9. October 'Halloween' Fiesta at Clare Court.



9.



Ballyhaunis Faith & Light Banner



9.



# Heritage Week 2019

Anne Cunnane, Mark Godfrey, Ruairí Ó Broin

Who knew about Midwest Radio's masts in an isolated cowshed in Ballyhaunis' rural hinterlands? Or of the toy truck sold in Germany with 'United Meat Packers Ballyhaunis' on its carriage? And what about the classically trained Augustinian Friar who painted Biblical scenes on the walls and ceilings of the Friary using locals as models?

Locals certainly got to see the town through a different lens during Heritage Week 2019 when speakers from different walks of life shared some fascinating insights with the public. Running this year from August 17th to 25th Heritage Week is an annual nationwide set of hundreds of events encouraged and promoted by the Heritage Council in Ireland.



At the presentation on the history of MWR, during Heritage Week 2019, were, L-R: Gerry Glennon (MWR), Tommy Marren (MWR); Anne Cunnane, Mark Godfrey and Ruairí Ó Broin (Heritage Week organisers). *Photograph: Sylwia Buczak.*

First up in Ballyhaunis were broadcasting duo Gerry Glennon and Tommy Marren who detailed the establishment thirty years ago of Midwest Radio. Hosted very graciously on Monday evening by 'Araby at the Dalgan', the evening was replete with anecdotes from Midwest's history in the town, with both men afterwards staying on to share refreshments and more memories with an audience of avid MWRfm listeners.

Wednesday evening was a double heading with local historian and archivist Fr. Kieran Waldron speaking about the history of the Parochial Hall, as well as the social history of Ballyhaunis at the time it was built, in the 1940s. He was followed by Imran Rafique, who told how his father, the late Sher Rafique, came to Ballyhaunis

in the late 1970s to build what would become at its peak one of the largest meat processing firms in Europe. Farmers and meat factory workers came from afar to pay tribute to Mr. Rafique and to reminisce with members of his family.

Heritage Week concluded with a fascinating line up of speakers and topics on Friday evening at St Mary's Abbey. The building's 600 year history was outlined by local historian Paul Waldron, who was followed by genealogist Kevin McGuire whose topic covered remnants of the earlier, pre-Norman, history of Ballyhaunis. We also heard from 'Irish Runner' publisher Frank Greally who reflected on his childhood athletics exploits in the 1960s, while historian Michael Kelly talked about the local presence of the United Irish League, a lesser known offshoot of the Land League, from our 19th century history of agrarian tenancy reform.

Heritage Week in Ballyhaunis came about when, in early summer, a group got together from Ballyhaunis Community Council, Ballyhaunis Chamber and the Abbey Partnership to co-ordinate a programme of events to celebrate and acknowledge various aspects of the heritage of our town and parish. We decided that we would host a series of talks on a variety of topics

relating to Ballyhaunis and to present an exhibition of the work of artists, photographers and craftspeople from the area.

All events were well attended and made us, as organisers, think just how great a community we are here and how interesting and noteworthy our town is.

Collaboration and camaraderie between the groups was excellent and we look forward to repeating the feat next year. Suggestions of topics we should cover are welcome: please email

ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com or  
ballyhaunischamber@gmail.com.



Mrs. Kausar Sher Rafique with sons Imran and Arfan, daughters-in-law and grandchildren, who attended Imran's presentation on the life and times of his father, the late Sher Mohammad Rafique, during Heritage Week, 2019. L-R: Imran Sher and his wife Aneela I., Umar (Imran's son), Mrs. Kausar Sher Rafique, Kishwar (Arfan's wife), Hayder Mikhail and Adam S. (Arfan's sons) and Arfan S. Rafique. Photograph: Fr Stephen Farragher.

Pictured at the Heritage Week presentations in the Parochial Hall on Wed., 21st Aug. 2019. L-R: Pat Curley, Fr. Kieran Waldron (who spoke on the history of the Parochial Hall), Gerry McGarry, Thelma Monaghan, and Tom Finn. Photograph: Fr Stephen Farragher.



Margaret Nestor with son and Anna Kaczmarek in July 2019. Photo by Adam Kaczmarek Photography



Rosaleen Curley and Nora Sweeney (Abbey St.), in the late 1970s.



# Scoil Íosa

## *Ní neart go cur le chéile*

Kenneth Dennedy (Principal)

Ar son chuile duine í Scoil Íosa ba mhaith liom Beannachtaí Na Féile a bhronnadh chuig gach duine I bParóiste Béal Atha hAmhnais agus thar lear. Go raibh míle maith agaibh go leir ar son an méid tacaíochta a bhronntar ar ár Scoil arís í mbliana.

As we come to the end of another calendar year we take a look back on what has been another eventful one at Scoil Íosa academically, socially, and in terms of sporting pursuits.

### Sports News

Sport continues to form a very important facet of life at Scoil Íosa with, as ever, 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, 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: 2019 saw further success for our school in the primary schools cross-country competitions. In the East Mayo Championships, held in Swinford in mid-September, our senior boys' team emerged as champions in the team event by some distance. In the individual competition John William Burke finished in the silver medal position while Tom Donnellan also finished among the individual medals. A special mention also to Joshua Maughan who finished among the individual medals in the Junior competition. As a result of this excellent performance our Senior boys' team qualified for the county finals with John William, Tom and Joshua qualifying for the individual competitions.

The County finals were held in Beleek, Ballina on 26th September in difficult weather conditions. The team put in a great performance to finish in first place securing our first ever county title. In the individual competition John William Burke finished among the medals. As a result of this achievement, the boys qualified for the Connacht Final held in Moyne College, Drumlish Co. Longford on 13th October. In another outstanding performance, the boys finished in fourth place with John William Burke once again finishing in the medals. Several of the team will remain in place for the 2020-2021 season which gives us great hope for an even better future. Well done to Kevin Henry and the team.



Scoil Íosa Athletics team, 2019.



Teacher Dónal O'Brien and pupils demonstrate the finer skills of hurling to the Ambassador of Hungary, His Excellency Mr. István Pálffy, during his visit to Scoil Íosa on 9th May 2019, to celebrate Europe Day.

**Daily Mile Initiative:** The school has continued to participate in the 'Daily Mile' initiative which we signed up to in the 2018/2019 school year. This is an extremely beneficial pursuit given that it provides for all children to engage in physical activity during the course of the school day, regardless of ability. As a non-competitive activity the aim is firmly on active participation with the aim of promoting exercise as a means towards developing a healthy lifestyle.

**Gaelic Football:** 2019 proved to be a very competitive one for our various football teams. Teams competed in Mini-7s Boys and the Cumann na

mBunscoil Boys competitions. In the Mini-7s competition we were once again drawn to play Began N.S. and Gaelscoil Uilig De Búrca. The competition was very competitive with our boys' team acquitting themselves well throughout. We defeated the Gaelscoil with a fine performance and played very well against a strong Began seven before narrowly losing out. There were a few goal chances which, if converted, would have changed the outcome of the game but, alas, it was not to be with Began advancing from the group. The performances of the teams have been encouraging and should augur well for further competitions scheduled for this school year.

After the success of the format last year the main Cumann na mBunscoil competition was once again played as a blitz format in The Connacht Centre of Excellence. Our team was drawn this year with St. Aidan's N.S., Kiltimagh and Foxford Central N.S. After a very competitive outing both our boys' and girls' teams qualified for the B division County semi-finals where our boys played Breaffy N.S., Ballina with the girls playing against Gaelscoil na Cruaiche, Westport. Once again both teams played very well with some exceptional individual performances. Unfortunately, both teams were narrowly defeated. It was, however, a very satisfactory year overall in the further development of football in Scoil Íosa. Sincere thanks to Kevin Henry and Michelle Flatley for their hard work in preparing and mentoring the teams.

**Girls Football Panel:** Basmali Shawi, Victorija Anisovaite, Ellie Gibbs-Harris, Ellen Murphy, Ava McCormack, Alana Mongan, Amanda Hamane, Lana Spajic, Shifa Naveed, Arfa Nawaz.

**Boys Football Panel:** P.J. Greally (Capt.), Nathan O'Toole (Vice Capt.), Alexander Leva, Fionn Conlon, Wayne Maughan, Andrei Leva, Cillian Caulfield, Tom Donnellan, Ismail Naseer, Oskar Chojnacki, Seamus McDonagh, Stanislovas Vaitiekus, Reliance Arku, Darren Quinn, Adnan Khan, Jason Powers, Sultan Noor, Jamie Nolan, Jack Nolan, Cian Moran, Eamon Monaghan, Liam Hill, John William Burke, Kyle Burke, Josh Kavanagh, Jake Powers, Alex Byrne, Mark Feeney, Adam Kelly, Ethan Kilbane, Brandon Sweeney.

**Hurling:** This school year overall was a very positive one for the school hurling team. We were very fortunate to have large numbers throughout the year coming from 4th and 5th class and these were ably led by our only 6th class representative, P.J. Greally. The school entered the annual 7-a-side competition, the Vincent Judge Tournament, and were able to field two teams for the year's main competition in the 9-a-side and 7-a-side (development team).

**7-a-side:** The story of the day here was the brilliance



Scoil Íosa Girls' Mini-7s football team.

of our 4th class goalkeeper. Fionn Conlon, coming back from a spell on crutches, was unable for the demands of outfield and so demonstrated his prowess in goals keeping Ballyhaunis in some games and being the difference between winning and losing in others. Other notable performances on the day came from Ethan Kilbane, Reliance Arku and our defensive pillars, Tom Donnellan and Cillian Caulfield.

**9-a-side:** On the 10th May a strong Scoil Íosa team participated in the 9-a-side competition. On the day, the boys came away with three wins and two losses. This was especially impressive considering the team was made up entirely of 4th and 5th class boys. At no stage did these boys look out of their depth against 6th class boys from around the county. Player of the day here was Tom Donnellan cutting out countless amounts of opposition attacks supporting goalkeeper, Jake Powers.

**7-a-side development.** This was a first for Scoil Íosa – to field a second team. What was even more impressive was the fact that the boys only lost one game, their first, and performed superbly throughout the day providing plenty of food for thought for next year. Many boys stood out here but most notable was Adnan Khan playing his first ever hurling games. He showed how the skills in cricket clearly overlap with hurling as he played stellar hurling all day.

**Vincent Judge Tournament:** As has become the norm, the school team signed off for the school year with the Vincent Judge Tournament and came away with the shield. One can only hope that the silverware is a sign of things to come for a very promising group.



## Choir

The Scoil Íosa Children's Choir, under the direction of Miriam Judge, has continued to excel during their 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 Midwest Radio.

## First Communion 2019

On Saturday, 11th May 2019 the following pupils received their First Communion: Skaiste Aleksunaite, Auguste Armonaviciute, Samuel Balik Novak, Alice Curran, Abbie Gildea, Erin Higgins, Anna Kelly, Matas Kucinskas, Mariah Mongan, Alan Pezda Sadowski, Maja Szoda, Jakub Sarissky, Arunas Vaitiekus, Edward Allen, Terry Collins, Cathal Conlon, Declan Daly, Séan Donnellan, Michaela Maughan, Jake McNamara, Eileen O'Toole, Karl Rattigan. The group was prepared by their teachers, Maria Coyne and Sharlene Ruane.

## Confirmation 2019

On Saturday, 9th February, Archbishop Michael Neary visited the parish to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to the following pupils: Julia Buczak, Gabrielle Bacyte, Oscar Chojnacki, Maeve Caulfield, Oskar Dorosz, Aishat Tolani, Ashe Egbe, Sarah Gill, P.J. Greally, Jasmine Jurakova, Paulina Koralewska, Seamus McDonagh, Padraig Murphy, Fernanda Nunes, Lucy Phillips, Ava Padfield, Nathan O'Toole, Stanislovas Vaitiekus, Victorija Anisovaite, Reliance Arke, Alex Byrne, Greta Ciutaite, Shane Flanagan Trias, Mark

Feeney, Adam Kelly, Arnas Krizka, Ethan Kilbane, Dorian Sabo, Lana Spajic, Ausrius Vaitiekus, Kyle Burke, Magdalena Manke, Vejune Blozyte, Amanda Cleary, Joshua Cunnane, Caspar Dorosz, Alisha Allen Forde, Erik Holmok, Josh Kavanagh, Wayne Maughan, Ava McCormack, Chantelle McDonagh, Alex Paluba, Jake Power, Darren Quinn, Daniel Solovy, Sylwester Ubych.

## School Staff 2016/2017

Kenneth Dennedy (Principal), Kevin Henry (Deputy Principal), Dónall O'Brien (Assistant Principal), Geraldine Fahy, Anne Durkan, Olivia Burke, Sheena Flanagan, Marian Byrne, Ciara Richardson, Lisa Watchorn, Michelle Flatley, Joanne Forde, Ciara Byrne, Sharlene Ruane, Elaine Brady, Annie Kelly, Miriam Judge, Samantha Cleary, Emily Worden, Diane Marigliano, Aisling Toal, Karen Nolan, Maria Coyne, Tara Cusack, Róisín Prendergast-Freeman (SNA), Marian Nally (SNA), Marina Coyne (SNA), James Cullinane (SNA), Carmel Cassidy (Secretary), Mary Dillon (Secretary).

## Board of Management

James Reidy (Chairperson, Patron's Nominee), Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. (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). This Board remains in office until 2nd December 2019.



Scoil Íosa Hurlers





Children from Scoil Íosa, Ballyhaunis, who received their First Holy Communion in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, on Saturday, 11th May 2019, photographed with Rev. Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. and their teachers Sharlene Ruane (back left) and Maria Coyne (back right) at Ballyhaunis church. *Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh.*



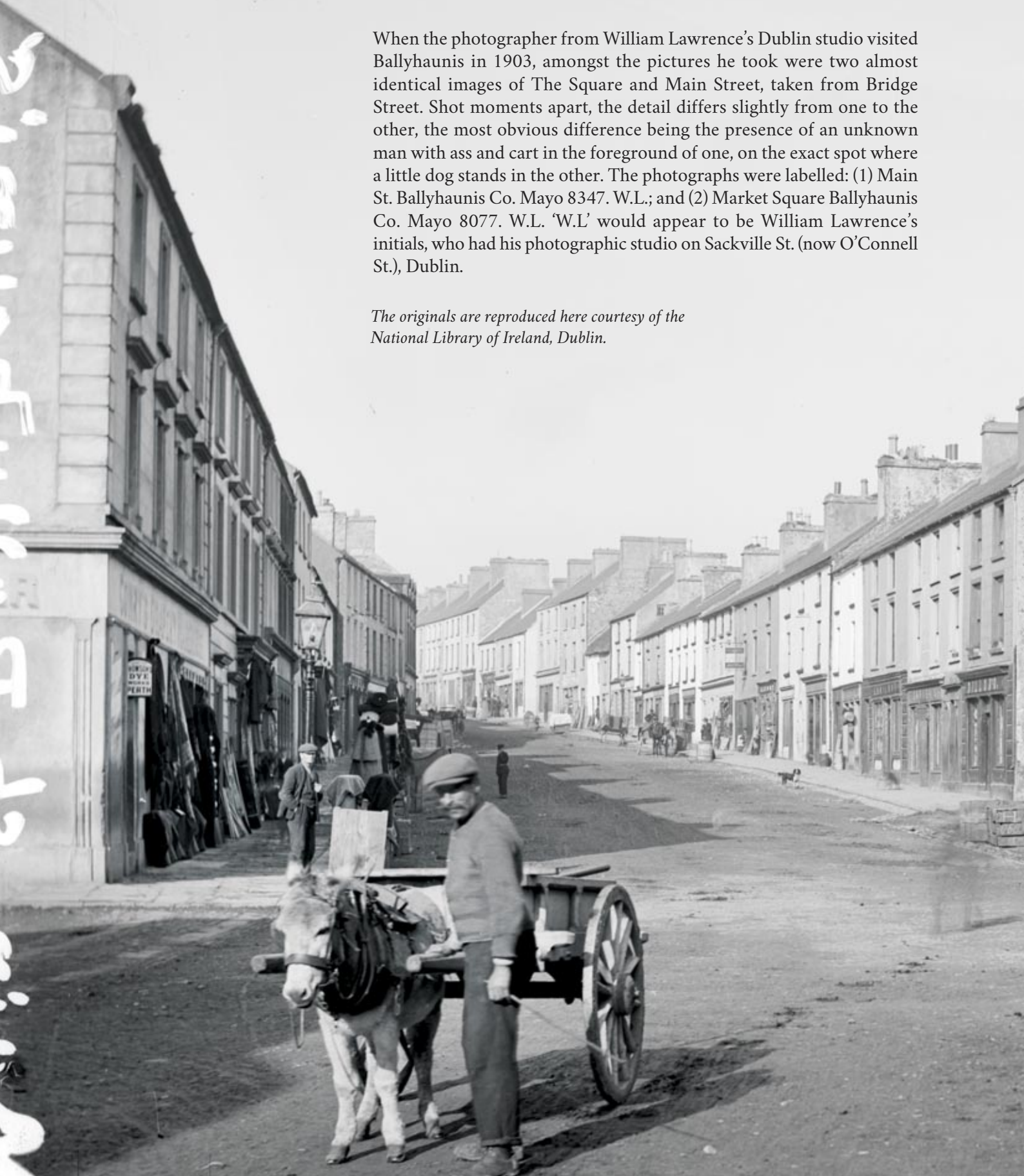
Children from Scoil Íosa, Ballyhaunis, who received the Sacrament of Confirmation in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, on Saturday, 9th Feb. 2019, pictured with Archbishop Michael Neary, Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. and their teachers Donal O'Brien, Michelle Flatley and Ciara Byrne. *Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh.*



# The Square & Main St, Ballyhaunis, 1903

When the photographer from William Lawrence's Dublin studio visited Ballyhaunis in 1903, amongst the pictures he took were two almost identical images of The Square and Main Street, taken from Bridge Street. Shot moments apart, the detail differs slightly from one to the other, the most obvious difference being the presence of an unknown man with ass and cart in the foreground of one, on the exact spot where a little dog stands in the other. The photographs were labelled: (1) Main St. Ballyhaunis Co. Mayo 8347. W.L.; and (2) Market Square Ballyhaunis Co. Mayo 8077. W.L. 'W.L.' would appear to be William Lawrence's initials, who had his photographic studio on Sackville St. (now O'Connell St.), Dublin.

*The originals are reproduced here courtesy of the National Library of Ireland, Dublin.*



MAIN ST. BALLYHAUNIS. CO. MAYO. 8347. W.







*Top left:* The side of Dillon's, The Square, showing one of the cranes (and associated hut) for weighing produce on market day. A woman looks out from the top right window.

*Below:* Houses on the north side of Main Street, from today's Paddy Phillips' to the takeaway (formerly Lynch's). The two thatched buildings were where the two story part of Val's Bar and Bistro is today.

*Bottom of page:* The second image of the Square and Main St. from the Lawrence Collection. Some ghostly figures of people and dogs appear: this is because they moved during the long exposure required of the particular camera in use.



Main St & Square  
1903



*Above:* Houses on Main Street (north) from the former Lynch's to Lyons' Shop and Commercial Hotel. Another of Ballyhaunis' hotels, Morley's Hotel, can be seen in the photograph below







**Pictures from the early days of Ballyhaunis Twinning with Guilers, Brittany**

Back, L-R: Bernie Freyne, Frank Loughran, Jimmy Fleming, Rita Mooney, Mary Waldron, Dolores Jordan, James Waldron, Noel Waldron, Pauline McGarry. Centre, L-R: Noreen Ruane, Mary Ruane, Rosaleen Curley, Sheila Conway, Lily Hynes, Iris Lynch, Yvonne Loughran. Children in front include Sinéad Curley, Liesel Mooney, Niamh McGarry, Patrick McGarry, Maria McGarry, Roisín Curley, Hilary Mooney.



L-R, Back: Pauline McGarry, Iris Lynch, Dolores Jordan, Lily Hynes. Front: Patrick McGarry, Niamh McGarry, Liesel Mooney, Roisín Curley, Sinéad Curley, Rosaleen Curley, Sheila Conway.



L-R, Back: Mary Ruane, Sheila Conway. Front: Liesel Mooney, Sinéad Curley, Rosaleen Curley, Roisín Curley.



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Brackloon School & District Reunion Group	
Bridge Club, Clare Court. Thursdays at 8.00pm	
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Carroll's Bus Hire (Cathal and Cathy)	Mob: 087 2042653
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Caulfield, Tommy & Eavan, Annagh, Ballyhaunis	
Caulfield's Grocery and Newsagents, Upper Main St.	9631400
Claire Fontayne, Womens Fashion Clothing, Bridge St. <a href="mailto:info@clairefontayne.ie">info@clairefontayne.ie</a>	
Coffey, Gerry, Auctioneer/Valuer. <a href="http://www.gerrycoffey.ie">www.gerrycoffey.ie</a>	9643600
Cold Call Refrigeration Ltd., Seamus Coffey, Station Rd., Ballindine, Co. Mayo. <a href="mailto:service@coldcall.ie">service@coldcall.ie</a>	Tel: 9364464
Colleran's Pharmacy, Bridge St.	9630028
Community School, Knock Rd. <a href="http://www.ballyhauniscs.ie">www.ballyhauniscs.ie</a>	9630238
Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence, Began. <a href="http://www.connachtgaa.ie">www.connachtgaa.ie</a>	9630335
Connacht Rigging Services (Georgie Hannan), Drimbane	Mob: 086 2532601
Connacht Scaffolding Ltd., Knock Rd.	Tel: 9630198, Fax: 9630336
Connolly, Kieran, Lecarrow	Mob: 0872625254
Corrib Oil Filling Station, Devlis	9632999
Cribbin, Cllr. John, Fine Gael	Mob: 087 2920368
Cunniffe Construction, Tooreen	Mob: 087 2612838
Cunningham's Londis Plus, Foodmarket, Abbey St.	9649035 / 9630730 / 9630162
Curley, Pat & Kathleen, Hazelhill	9631827
Curley's Bar, Clare St.	9630077
Curley's Jewellers, Bridge St.	9632799
Curley's Total Health Pharmacy, Main St. <a href="mailto:curleys@totalhealth.ie">curleys@totalhealth.ie</a> , <a href="http://www.totalhealth.ie">www.totalhealth.ie</a>	Tel: 9630110, Fax 9631191
Dara Calleary TD (FF) Clare St., Ballyhaunis & Ballina office	096 77613
Dawn Ballyhaunis, Clare Rd.	Tel: 9632400, Fax: 9630561
Delaney's Ltd., Hardware, Paint, Household, Gifts, Bridge St. and Hazelhill	9630296
Delaney's, Gareth, Select Bar and Lounge, Abbey St.	9630024
De-Luxe Cleaning, Carpets, Upholstery, etc. (Prop. Vincent Higgins)	9630284, Mob: 086 1038288
Dillon-Leetch & Comerford Solicitors, Main St.	9630004
Donnellan's Joinery, Undertakers & Funeral Home, Clare St.	9630045
Dr. Glen Lecky, Old Bank Medical Centre	9630752
Eagney Insurance Services Ltd., Bridge St.	Tel: 9630793 / 9630794, Fax: 9630795
Elwood School of Irish Dancing (Mary Elwood)	086 2337193
Emo Burke & Coyne Oil, Coolnaha	9632665
EPS Group Ballyhaunis. <a href="http://www.epswater.ie">www.epswater.ie</a> <a href="mailto:info@epswater.ie">info@epswater.ie</a>	9633500. Fax: 9630761
Express Scaffolding, Tully, Carrowbehy, Castlereagh. <a href="mailto:kevinwebb@gmail.com">kevinwebb@gmail.com</a>	Mob: 087 2898042



Fahy Opticians & Contact Lens Centre, Main Street. jarlathfahy@gmail.com	9630212
Farragher, Fr. Stephen, P.P., Parochial House	9630006. Mob: 087 9210305
Fastway Couriers (Frank Burke)	Mob: 087 2163008
Fianna Fail Cumann, Cllr. John Caulfield	096 77613
Finn Footwear Specialists (Ballyhaunis & Kiltimagh). finnfootwear@gmail.com	9381970 / 9630141
First Choice Credit Union Ballyhaunis. www.firstchoicecreditunion.ie	9630998 / 9633965
Fitzer's Bar, Knox St.	9631974
Fitzmaurice, Martin & Patricia. www.newireland.ie	Mob: 087 2455989
Flanagan Motors, Tooreen, Car Sales & Repairs. www.flanaganmotors.ie	9649433, Mob: 087 2545950
Fleming, Seamus & Annette, Lavallyroe, B&B	Mob: 087 7643727 / 086 8848333
Flogas Ireland, Clare Road	9630166
Forde's Ltd., The Square (The House for All the Family). Embroidery & printing specialists.	9630013
Freeley, Terence, Braga, Portugal	
Freyne Family, Clare Road.	
Garvey Moran, C., Knox St.	
Gavin, Martin, Undertakers, Funeral Home, Headstones & Grave Care, Knox St.	9633448, Mob: 087 6324586
Gem - Costcutters (Newsagents, Toys, Jewellery, Grocery), Bridge St.	9630840
Gill's Pub, Clare St. (Props. John and Bernie Gill)	9630039
Glynn's Photography, Doctor's Road	9630026 / 9620094 (Castlereagh)
Godfrey Mark & Tzyy Wang, Derreens	Mob: 087 9777899
Goulding, Jim & Mary, Doctor's Road.	9631272
Greene, Tony & Pauline, Box 127, Sholola, PA 18458, U.S.A.	Tel: 0019144712548
Griffin, John, Orthodontist, Upper Main St.	9630534
Griffin, Mike, Taxi Service, Clare St. / Devils.	9630213, Mob: 087 9047466
Grogan, Austin, & Sons, Concrete Products, Cave	9630072
Gurteen Kitchens Ltd., Gurteen. www.gurteenkitchens.com.	Tel: 9630797, Fax: 9630751, Mob: 086 8244386
H.E.R. (Photo Supplies Ltd), Kilmannin Business Centre. helenfreeley@gmail.com	Tel: 9633389, Fax: 9633476
Halpin, John & Breege, Floral Occasions (Teleflorist), Main St.	9630012, Mob: 087 6883383
Hazelhill Family Practice, Hazelhill. Hazelhillmedctr@eircom.net	9632170 / 9632171
Hazelhill Timber Products Ltd., Europallets. alan@hazelhilltimber.ie	Tel: 9630094 / 9630250, Fax: 9630825
Healthwest Pharmacy, Upper Main St. Ballyhaunis@HealthWest.ie	9630766, Text: 085 2546630
Helen's Launderette, Barrack St.	9630841
Heneghan's Carpets & Furniture, Main St.	9630770, Mob: 087 2245661
Henry, Anna & Kevin, Ballindrehid	
Herr Robbie, Ballyhaunis	
Herr, Fred, Grocer, Knox St.	9631305
Higgins, Pat & Sally, Devils.	
Homecare Medical Supplies, Tooraree. www.homecaremedicalsupplies.ie	9633800
Hunt, James, Photography, Kilmovee. hunt.jms@gmail.com	Mob: 086 0680702
J.G.'s Barber Shop, Barrack St.	Mob: 087 2450079
Janapix Photography, Ballyhaunis. www.janapix.com	Mob: 086 1775352
Jennings, Bernard, B.D.S., Dentist, Knox St.	9630315
Joe Doves. Professional Dove Release, Hazelhill	Mob: 087 9931931
John Higgins Auctioneer, Main St. www.johnhigginsauctioneers.com	9631372, Mob: 086 8292603
Johnston, Margaret, Knox St.	
Jordan, Oliver, Annagh	
Jordan, Colette & Assoc., Architectural Eng. & Energy Consulting. hello@colettejordan.ie	9373232 Mob: 086 8366944
Jordan's Windows & Double Glazing, Clare St.	9630641
Kay's Beauty Salon, Knox St.	9630065
Keane Kitchens Ltd., Kitchen/Bedroom Furniture, Clare Rd. www.keanekitchens.ie	9630038
Keane, Joe and Marcella, Knox St.	9630751
Keith Revins, Tyres, Batteries, 24hr breakdown service, Clare Rd.	9630573, Mob: 086 256 9155
Kelly, Padraic, Bar Furniture Manufacturer, Abbeyquarter	9630089
Kieran Whelton Motors, Knock. www.kieranwheltonmotors.ie	9388371
Kilduff, John, Derrynacong	
Kirrane Bros., Seamless Gutters, Fascia, Soffitt. Ballyglass, Ballyhaunis.	9646079, Mob: 086 3858922
KPS Colour Print Ltd, Knock. www.kpscolourprint.com	9388231
Life Pharmacy, Main St., Knock	9376968
Lilly, John Joe, Plant Hire, Johnstown	9630352
Loughran & Burke, M.V.B., M.R.C.V.S., Upper Main St.	9630017
Lyons, Michael G., Agricultural Contractor, Cloonfaughna, Knock	9880249
Lyons, Michael, Coach & Minibus Hire, Lecarrow. lyonsbushire@eircom.net	9630347, Mob: 086 2338419
Lyons, Tommy, Publican, Main St.	
MacSiurtain's, Live Music & Sports Bar, Main St. (Prop. Stephen & Nuala Nolan).	9630854, Mob: 086 2457001
Madden, Gerald, Snooker Tables, Gurteen. www.maddensleisure.com	9630228
Main Street Framing. Picture framing service (Prop. Edward Mulligan)	9632692, Mob: 087 6738964
Major Equipment Intl. Ltd. www.major-equipment.com, info@major-equipment.com	Tel: 9630572, Fax: 9630788
Mallee, Sinead. Graphic Designer, Knock. sineadmallee@gmail.com	Mob: 087 2204296
McGarry Development Consultants, Engineers, Architects, Clare St.	9630170
McGarry's Ladies Wear, Main St.	9630084
McNamara Car Dismantlers, Knockbrack	9630439, Mob: 087 2615828



McNamara, Eamon, Car/Tractor Repairs (24-Hour Service)	9630386, Mob: 086 6061739
Melissa Beauty Therapy, Knox St. (Prop. Melissa Connaughton)	Mob: 086 3779617
Midwest Radio, Clare St. www.midwestradio.ie	9630553 (Ads), 087 9004141 (Text requests)
Moran Coaches & Minibus Hire, Knock Rd. moranscoaches@yahoo.ie	Tel/Fax: 9630346
Moran, Deirdre, Devlis	
Moran, Donal, T.V. Systems, Knox St.	9630569
Moran, Kieran, Building Services, Knox St.	9630079
Moran, Tommy. Sweets, Ices, Fancy Goods, Fuel Merchants, Main St.	9630493
Morley, M.J. & Sons. Electrical & Plumbing Cont. Boiler/Pump Repairs, Lissaniskea, Began	9380315, Mob: 087 6116372
Morley, Tony. Exterior and Interior Decorators, Pollnacraoaghy	Mob: 086 2648673
Mulberry Lodge Guest House, Upper Main Street. www.mulberrylodge.ie	Mob: 086 3858929 / 086 2457001
Mulhern, Edward and Frances	9630249, Mob: 087 6961579
Mulrennan, James & Sons, Ltd., Fitted Kitchens/Bedrooms (Keane Kitchens). mulrenns@gmail.com	Mob: 086 8535661
Murphy & Sons Autosales Ltd., Service Station & Shop, Dublin Rd. Tel: 9630307, Fax: 9631440, Mob: 0872490634	
Murphy Carpentry & Building Services Ltd., Knock Rd.	Mob: 087 6446734
Murphy, Eddie, Menswear/Formal Wear, Main St. www.eddiemurphy.ie	9630651
Murphy, Paddy & Mary, Knock Rd.	Mob: 087 7161335
Murray, Diarmuid Sr., Medical Practitioner, Clare St.	9630324
Murray, Diarmuid, Jr., Medical Practitioner, Knock Medical Centre	9388385
Murren, Eamon, Hazel Court	
Nestor & Co., Accountants, Dalgan House, Oakmount Ave.	9632000
Nestor's Corner Bar, The Square	9631011
Nicholson's Bar, Bridge St.	9630357
Nico Café, Knox St.	Mob: 087 3979363
Nolan, Madeline & Mike, Derrymore	
Noone, Dr. Caroline, Hazelhill Family Practice. hazelhillmedctr@eircom.net	9630091
Noone, Dr. Patrick & Moira, Ardpark. hazelhillmedctr@eircom.net	Mob: 085 1580407
Nour Foods, Quality Halal Irish Meats, Clare St.	9632765, Mob: 086 3880017
O'Brien Motor Factors, Knock	9388211
O'Connor, Fr. John O.S.A., Duckspool House, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford	
O'Dwyer Solicitors, Bridge St. www.odwyersolicitors.ie	9630011
Order of Malta, Knock	Mob: 087 2515422
Our Lady's Shrine, Knock. www.knockshrine.ie, info@knockshrine.ie	9388100
Parochial Hall, Main St. Available for Meetings/Events. For bookings contact Mike	Mob: 087 9047466
Patterson, Noel, M.R.C.V.S., Knock Rd.	
Phillips Clothes Shop, Dalton St., Claremorris	9372020
Phillips Menswear, Main St.	9630368
Phillips Shoes, Main St. www.phillipsshoes.com	9630368
Phillips, Eamon. High Class Victualler, Main St.	9630381
Phillips, Paddy. Publican, Main St.	9630118
Post Office, Nolan's Supervalu, Newpark, Ballyhaunis	9630230
Rochford Motors. Main Mitsubishi/Seat Dealers, Knock Rd. www.rochfordmotors.ie	9630350 / 9630163
Ruane Dalton, Noreen, Johnstown	
Scoil Iosa Primary School, Abbeyquarter. iosaballyhaunis@gmail.com	9630310
Seven Oaks B&B, Knock Rd. Contact Martina Gallagher. sevenoaksguesthouse@gmail.com	9630605
Sonas Nursing Home, Knock	9317000
St. Mary's Accommodation, Main St., Knock	9388119
Supermacs, Main St.	
Nolan's Supervalu, Newpark, Ballyhaunis	9630359
TC's Fitness, Abbey St., B'haunis. Personal Training, Group Classes, Adults, Kids, Krav Maga FB: TC's fitness	086 0618126
The Clock Tavern, Knox St.	9630344
The Courthouse Accommodation & Val's Bar & Bistro, Main St. www.courthouse.ie	9630068
The iClinic, The Square. Computer and Phone Repairs	9631983
The Old Ground Restaurant, Main St., Knock. (Props: Michael and Thelma Morley)	9388957
The Shop (above Fordes Ltd., The Sq.). School Books, Novels, Party Balloons, Stationary.	Mob: 087 6475075
Timoney, Martin. RECI, Electrical Contractor, Carrownedan.	Mob: 087 2398402
Tynan Dillon & Co., Chartered Accountants, Clare St.	9630261
Ulster Bank, The Square, Claremorris	9362423
Valerie's Ladies & Gents Hair Salon, Barrack St.	9630681
Waldron, Anthony, Excavation Contractor, Clagnagh	Mob: 087 4141462
Waldron, Austin, Derrymore	
Waldron, Fr. Kieran, Devlis	
Waldron, Pearse & Paula, Vermont, USA	
Walsh Seamless Gutters, fascia and soffit	Mob: 087 2213553 / 087 2763256
Webb McLeod, Olive, Devlis & Co. Antrim	
Webb, Carole, Devlis & London	
Webb, Edward, Devlis & Dublin	
Webb, Mike & Cait, Main St.	
Webb, Olive, Devlis & London	
Webb Shannon, Marita, Devlis & Kiltimagh	
Western Brand Group Ltd., Knock Rd. www.westernbrand.ie Info@westernbrand.ie	Tel: 9630069, Fax: 9630834
Winston, Gerard (Top Oil), Devlis	Mob: 087 6793990



## Disclaimer

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the Annagh Magazine Society. While every care has been taken to ensure that the information contained in this magazine is up-to-date and correct, no responsibility will be taken by the Annagh Magazine Society for any errors which might occur.

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 2020 is Friday, 9th October 2020. 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 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.

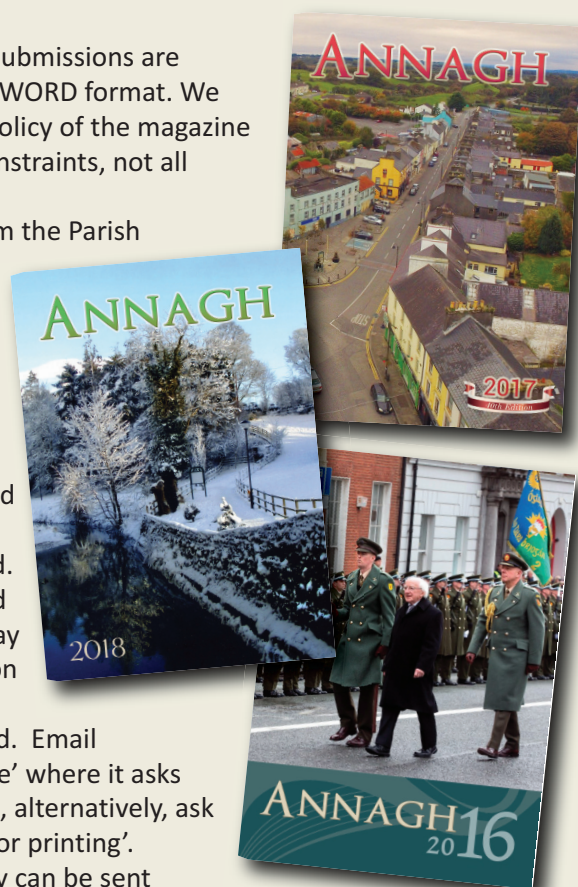
The earlier in the year that material is submitted, the better.

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, if it's an original photo. The contributor's name will be published only if this is requested. Photographs sent digitally 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. Resolution determines the sharpness / clarity of the image, and low resolution pictures will appear blurry and pixelated when printed. Email photographs directly to [info@annaghmag.ie](mailto:info@annaghmag.ie) choosing 'actual size' where it asks for the 'image size' (max 3 at a time). For Wedding photographs, alternatively, ask your photographer to email it at large file size: 'high resolution for printing'. 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.



Visit our website at  
[www.annaghmag.ie](http://www.annaghmag.ie)

## Cover Photographs

**Front Cover:** This photograph of a signpost on the N83 (Tooreen road) was taken by June Duffy of Cartron South. Note: the parish of Annagh takes its name not from the townland of Annagh indicated here (a little over a mile north of Ballyhaunis) but from what appears to have been an old name for the Patrician church site in Churchpark, Holywell. The townland of Annagh was actually in the parish of Aghamore until the boundary changes of 1893 when it transferred to Annagh parish. The Irish 'Eanach' is said to mean 'marsh, swamp, fen or wet meadow', which makes the background of our cover photograph even more appropriate.

**Back Cover:** Taken by Sylwia Buczak, Hazelhill, this photograph shows Ballyhaunis Railway Station at night, looking westwards towards the town.





[www.annaghmag.ie](http://www.annaghmag.ie)  
Ballyhaunis Parish Magazine

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