

ANNAGH



2020

Foreword



In years to come, 2020 will be remembered primarily as the year of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Living in the 21st century we had come to believe that pandemics and plagues were a thing of the past, forgetting that due to air travel and the general mobility of people today, we are probably more vulnerable in ways than the generations before us.

Early in the New Year word began to filter through of a deadly virus emanating from Wuhan in China. Then in March, our Taoiseach, while on a visit to the USA, announced the closure of schools, churches and a general lockdown of the country and economy in a bid to curb the spread of the virus. In the early stages some of the most chilling scenes on our TV screens came from Bergamo in Northern Italy, as churches were turned into morgues and the lines of army trucks transported the numerous corpses of the dead.

Last week the first breakthrough in the search for a vaccine was announced as one of the large pharmaceutical firms announced promising results in their pilot tests of a new vaccine, offering hope that perhaps we will begin to see the roll out of the vaccine here in the spring of next year.

The most challenging aspect of the past nine months has been the closure of churches and the restrictions on numbers attending funerals of loved ones. There are so many customs and rituals surrounding death and dying in our country that bring comfort and consolation at a time of death that have simply not been possible since the onset of the pandemic. Families were unable to be at the bedside of their loved ones in hospitals and nursing homes in their final moments. On 20th March word filtered through of the death, following a long illness, of Canon Joe Cooney who was parish priest here from 1993 until his retirement in 2011. Some weeks later, on 8th May, the death was announced of Fr J.J. Cribbin, P.P. Milltown and native of Ballyhaunis. J.J. was a gifted footballer, having donned the St Jarlath's College, Ballyhaunis and Mayo jerseys during his footballing career. On 6th July, the death was announced of another Ballyhaunis native, Fr Peter Waldron, P.P. Keellogues. Fr Peter also played football for Ballyhaunis and was gifted with a beautiful singing voice.

On the world stage the past week has seen the election of only the second Catholic to become president of the USA. Joe Biden has Mayo roots and has taken a keen interest in the affairs of our country and has visited here on numerous occasions. His election brings with it the hope of an end to some of the isolationist, unilateral policies of his predecessor, especially with regard to climate change.

In his latest encyclical "Fratelli Tutti" Pope Francis focusses on the need for people to promote solidarity with others: he wants politicians to talk to each other. He takes a strong stand against the 'aggressive nationalism' he sees growing in Europe, the United States and parts of Latin America. On the international stage, the Pope is the only leader whose words command attention and respect.

As we approach Christmas it is by no means clear how, as a faith community, we will be able to celebrate the coming of Christ into our world, whose birth reminds us that no matter what trials come our way, God never abandons us.

I wish to congratulate the Annagh Magazine Society for not allowing the Covid-19 virus to prevent them from collating sufficient material for another wonderful publication. It is looked forward to each year by people here at home and by our diaspora scattered throughout the world, many of whom may not be able to travel home to be with family this Christmas.

Wherever you spend Christmas, I wish you a happy and meaningful season. I pray that 2021 will bring the dawning of new hope for our world and that the experience of the past year will remind us that we are all part of the one human family.

Stephen Farragher
Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.

Editorial

I would like to say thank you to everyone who contributed articles, poems and reports and to those who provided photographs for inclusion in this year's issue. As ever, we are grateful to all of our loyal patrons for their ongoing encouragement and support. We ask our readers to shop local and to support local businesses and industry. A sincere word of thanks also to the members of the editorial committee of Annagh Magazine 2020 for their determination and dedication in bringing this year's edition of our much loved publication through to fruition.

2020 has been a most difficult year for individuals and families and organisations throughout the land and across the globe. Compiling an annual parish magazine brings its challenges and difficulties under normal conditions. In the face of the Covid -19 pandemic and the necessary government restrictions, these challenges were magnified and the difficulties were multiplied. In compliance with government guidelines, our editorial committee was unable to gather in the Parochial Hall for our weekly meetings from early October; our busiest and most frantic period as we prepare the magazine for publication.

However, throwing in the towel was never an option. Annagh Magazine unites Ballyhaunis people wherever they may be and reminds us of who we are and where we come from. For many, Christmas would not be Christmas without their copy of Annagh Magazine. Our core group of ten hardy souls beaver away was determined that Annagh 2020 would be in the shops in Ballyhaunis by early December and would be passed around in your homes all over the world in time for Christmas. It was agreed that we have the responsibility and indeed the privilege to continue the unbroken line of magazines stretching back to 1978 and we are delighted that this year's magazine is our biggest publication to date.

People all across the world have had more than enough to endure this year. Our magazine committee was not going to let down our large family of readers scattered around the globe who call Ballyhaunis home. We are delighted to bring a ray of sunshine into your lives at these very dark times. We hope that the photos and the articles that have been carefully gathered and put together will bring a smile to your face. Maybe a tear will be shed as you recall a story, relive an event or recognise a face from the past.

We remember those who died in the past year including Very Rev Canon Joe Cooney, our former parish priest who penned the foreword to our publication from 1993 to 2011. Canon Cooney was a patron and regular contributor to our magazine and a great supporter of the Annagh Magazine Society during his eighteen years of dedicated ministry in the parish of Annagh. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.*

We send our warmest wishes and a loud message of hope to each and every one of our readers at home and abroad. *Go mbeannaí Dia daoibh agus go dté sibh slán. Béal Átha hAmhnais Abú!*

Tommy Caulfield

Annagh Magazine Society

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Reviewing the Year 2020

Mike Byrne

NOVEMBER 2019:

Former sacristan at St. Patrick's Church, Frances Maye celebrates her eighty-fifth birthday. Frances' successor in the parish ministry, Irene Nunes, together with her family, host a fitting surprise party for Frances at their Knox Street home... Great celebrations in Cashels, Aghamore when local farmer John Cunnane is honoured for a lifetime of dedication to breeding dairy animals. At the 2019 National Dairy Show in Millstreet, Co. Cork, John is awarded the National Recognition Award for his extraordinary contribution to dairy breeding, which has received recognition, not only in Ireland, but also throughout Great Britain and in Germany... Great sadness in the village of Leow as local esteemed resident

Padraig Phillips passes away following a very brief illness. Padraig worked at Waldron's supermarket on Main Street for a good many years... The Post Office on Bridge Street closes its doors for the last time on Friday, 15th November. The postal service transfers to SuperValu supermarket where postal services commence on 18th November. Post Office staff Cathy O'Gara and Jackie Maddern, who have worked at the Bridge Street office for the past number of years, take up duty at the new location... Dublin-based Journalist Craig Hughes, from Hazelhill, Ballyhaunis, breaks the news nationally that a printer costing €800,000 purchased for the Dáil, turned out to be too big for its intended location, and that works to the tune of €230,000 were required to make it fit.



Post Office workers, Cathy O'Gara (left) and Jackie Maddern, pictured at Ballyhaunis Post Office before the close of business at Bridge Street in November, 2019. Photograph by Mike Byrne.

DECEMBER 2019:

Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic footballer Erin Murray is awarded the Connacht Rising Star award of 2019. Erin is daughter of Adrian and Breda Murray of The Clock, Knox Street... Great sadness in Abbeyquarter as news filters through of the death of the late Joan Flynn, formerly of Thurles, Co. Tipperary. Joan was wife of the late Tony Flynn, whose death occurred in May of 2018... Sadness also in the village of Drimbane as cherished mother and neighbour Maisie Sweeney (née Wooley) is laid to rest... Staff members of Tynan Dillon Accountants gather in Athlone for a special event saluting forty years of sterling service by Alex Eaton who joined the



Fr. Stephen Farragher, PP, with local children at the unveiling of the Crib in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, Christmas 2019.



At the end of the annual New Year's Mass in St. Patrick's Church, 1st Jan. 2020, 'seed bombs' containing seeds of Irish wildflowers were distributed by members of Ballyhaunis Tidy Town's Committee, Ballyhaunis Beekeepers' Association and John Paul II Merit Award Recipients. All present were encouraged to plant the seeds in their gardens and fields in the Springtime. Picture shows L-R: Teresa Grogan, Síofra Ní Ráinne, Ann Curley, Mary Donnelly, Maeve Donnellan, Seamus Caulfield, Wiktor Siemionkowski, Tadhg Buckley, Orlaith Coffey, Julia Kelly and Martin Cunnane. Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher.

company back in 1979 at their Main Street office. Staff members from the Dublin, Naas and Ballyhaunis offices of the firm turned out for the special occasion... The final days of the year sees the deaths of Seamus McKermitt, Tiernea, Cornamona and formerly of Hazelhill, Ballyhaunis, and also of Mai Carroll, Drimbane... A light goes out on Upper Main Street on the last day of the 2019 year when Caulfield's shop closes its doors after more than 100 years of family service to the local community. Well-wishers from all parts of the region turn out to the popular Upper Main Street outlet to wish proprietors Seamus and Aisling (née Webb) Caulfield every good wish in their departure from the retail trade.

JANUARY 2020:

The sixth annual New Year's Day celebration of Mass is held in St. Patrick's Church. The celebration brings together members of the St. Joseph's Cluster of parishes, comprising of Ballyhaunis, Ballinlough, Knock, Aghamore and Began. Fr. Stephen Farragher PP, Ballyhaunis, is the chief celebrant on this occasion, where the theme was "The Wonder of Creation"... Ballyhaunis GAA Club stalwart Hugh Rudden is honoured with a GAA President's Award 2020 for over four decades of sterling service and commitment to the GAA both in his native Cavan and in his adopted hometown of Ballyhaunis. Hugh received his award at a gala banquet in Croke Park on February 14th. Hugh came to

Ballyhaunis in 1972 when he took up a teaching post at Ballyhaunis Vocational School... Wiktor Siemionkowski received a Garda Community Youth Award in recognition of his contribution to Ballyhaunis Parish and for being an outstanding role model for young people in our community... Ballyhaunis lady, Owodunni Mustapha is named the Christine Buckley Volunteer of the Year for her dedication in supporting the residents in the Direct Provision Centre (Old Convent). Educated in political science in her native Nigeria, but prohibited from working in Ireland for more than five years, Ola (as she is affectionately known),

committed to give her skills, time, potential and energy to volunteer for the diverse community of asylum seekers living in Ballyhaunis... Parish priest Fr. Stephen Farragher and Ballyhaunis native Fr. Kieran Waldron are present in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome where Knock Shrine participated at a special Mass to celebrate the "Sunday of the Word of God". The Mass was celebrated by Pope Francis; the new pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Knock was solemnly blessed during the ceremony... A number of young members of the local community are nominated for Garda Youth Awards. The ceremony, which takes place in Ballina, gives recognition to young people who have been nominated by the community for outstanding service to their local region... The late Austin Biesty from Pattenspark dies following a very brief illness. Austin, aged 88, was the subject of an interview on the pages of Annagh 2019, detailing his life over the past nine decades.



Wiktor Siemionkowski with family and supporters having received a Garda Community Youth Award in recognition of his contribution to Ballyhaunis Parish and for being an outstanding role model for young people in our community, in January 2020. L-R: Irene Nunes (Sacristan, St. Patrick's Church), Andrzej Siemionkowski (father), Chief Supt. Tony Healy, Geraldine Devine, Frances Maye (Former Sacristan, St. Patrick's Church), Bernadeta Siemionkowski (mother), Norbert Siemionkowski (brother), Wiktor Siemionkowski and Asst. Garda Commissioner Barry O'Brien. Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher.

FEBRUARY

Great sadness throughout the Ballyhaunis district and well beyond as news filters through of the passing of Laura Brogan from Doctor's Road. Wife of Dr. Michael Brogan, Laura was a founding member and conductress of Ballyhaunis ladies choir, Gracenotes, who have won numerous awards over the past two decades under her direction... Gurteen girl Carlagh Peake is recognised at a special ceremony in St. Louis Hotel, Dublin, for her outstanding achievements in the 2019 European Boxing Championships, held in Tbilisi, Georgia. Carlagh secured a bronze medal at the championships, the only Mayo person to win a medal at the European games... Professor John A. Murphy from Lecarrow is laid to rest after a brief illness... Students from Ballyhaunis Community School do themselves, their school and their parents very proud indeed when they present a cheque for €2,130 to Pieta House, the proceeds from a weekend craft fair which they staged in the run-up to Christmas at Supervalu in Ballyhaunis... The residents of Knox Street and the wider community of Ballyhaunis are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Margaret Byrne (née McGuire, Ballykilleen), just a little over one year after the death of her beloved husband, Pat, well known and popular grocer and butcher from Knox Street... Laura Coleman, Mayo Therapy Centre, gives an insightful talk at the library on Clare Street on the subject of Parenting Teenagers and Understanding the Adolescent Brain... The Clock Tavern in Knox Street is the venue for the launch of a booklet comprising of a diary which the late Pat O'Brien of Knox Street wrote during his battle with cancer which resulted in his death on 25th February 2014. Proceeds from the sale of the booklet were presented to the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation. The 'My Story - By Patrick O'Brien' project was co-ordinated by friends of the late Knox Street native... Patrick Freeley, better known as Pa, from Gurteen dies after an illness at the Dalton Home in Claremorris... The month of February will be remembered as a month of lots and lots of rain and many severe storms as well. Much of the west and midlands is covered in water due to continuous heavy rain over a long period of time. As we celebrate the Leap Year on 29th February, Ireland is battered by its third storm in the month as Storm Jorge makes his arrival felt throughout the country!

MARCH

Almost one month after the February general election, no sign of a government being formed as the result ended with both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail having almost the same number of candidates being elected – Fianna Fail 38; Fine Gael 35. Sinn Féin were the real winners in the February contest, returning with 37 TDs elected after

the final count... In the early days of the month the Government meets to discuss Ireland's preparation for the possibility of an outbreak of the Coronavirus which has claimed the lives of over 2,000 victims since it first broke out in China early in the year. Schools, offices and parishes are being asked by the Health Service Executive (HSE) to take precautionary measures to prevent the disease from spreading. Among the measures being advised to parishes is to stop the practise of shaking hands at Masses during the Sign of Peace as well as asking mass-goers to receive the Eucharist in the hand rather than on the tongue... The death took place, on 20th March, of retired Parish Priest of Ballyhaunis, Canon Joseph Cooney. He will be long remembered for the many initiatives he put in place for the betterment of the parish and its administration during his ministry here from 1993 to 2011. He set up the Pastoral Council, started the local parish radio, refurbished the fabric of the parish church inside and out, including the restoration of the stained-glass windows and the organ.



Canon Joseph Cooney, PP Annagh 1993-2011.

One of his outstanding achievements was the construction of the spire to complete the church, as the parish's millennium project. Following his funeral Mass – one of the first offered under strict HSE guidelines – he was laid to rest in the grounds of St. Patrick's Church... On the last day of the month the death toll from the coronavirus in Ireland has risen to 54 while close to 3,000 cases of the illness have been confirmed by the HSE. The death toll from the pandemic worldwide is now over 30,000... Main Street native Commandant John Lyons dies at Ave Maria Nursing Home in Tooreen... and, also on a sad note, the late John Clarke, a native of Hazelhill, passes to his eternal reward at Brookvale Nursing Home here in Ballyhaunis.

APRIL

In the early days of the month, the Coronavirus (Covid-19) continues to dominate news headlines in almost every country across the globe. Some 4,600 people have tested positive with the virus at this point and 137 people have died from the pandemic in the Republic. All schools have been closed across the country for over four weeks now while all non-essential businesses have also been forced to close under government and HSE direction. Due to the continuing effects of this unprecedented pandemic, all householders are ordered to stay at home, unless it is absolutely necessary to go out, like shopping for essentials or to obtain medicine supplies from chemists. In Northern Ireland sixty-three people have died from the Coronavirus while in the UK, the number of those who have died has now risen to 4,934. In the U.S., meanwhile, more than 8,300 people with the infection have died... Clare Street native Teresa Bond dies in the U.K. The former Teresa Griffin was sister of the late Maureen Cleary and Seán Griffin from Clare Street... Sirens and horns roar aloud as Gurteen villagers parade through the village to salute resident Aoife Murphy (née Folliard), a member of the frontline staff with the HSE in Mayo University Hospital, on the occasion of her birthday. Aoife, who has given hours of selfless dedicated service to patients suffering from the Covid-19 virus over recent weeks, has been forced to self-isolate at her home having been diagnosed with the virus herself. A fitting salute for one of our heroes for sure... Pattenspark native, Imelda O'Hanlon dies after an illness in Manchester. Imelda is the third member of the Biesty family to die within two months: brothers Austin (Pattenspark) and Michael (London) passed away in January and March respectively... Members of the Muslim community in Ballyhaunis join with Parish Priest Fr. Stephen Farragher to give a blessing at the

conclusion of Mass in St. Patrick's Church in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic... The 10 o'clock Mass is now broadcast twice weekly (Wednesday and Friday) from the Parish Church on Midwest radio as people throughout the west and the country are unable to attend daily Mass... Monsignor Terence Nolan (78), a native of Cloongoonagh, Tooreen, dies in Texas. Monsignor Nolan was brother to Maureen Nolan, Clare Court. He had just retired as parish priest from his position in San Antonio, Texas, this February, before becoming ill and passing to his eternal reward on Easter Sunday, 12th April... Local couple Columba and Elizabeth Jordan from Annagh celebrate the great occasion of their fiftieth wedding anniversary on the last day of this month.

MAY

As the Coronavirus continues to take up most if not all of the news media these past months, the virus is showing some signs of receding with fewer cases showing positive and fewer deaths. However, schools, churches and all retail outlets of non-essential goods remain closed, some until next month, while churches and places of worship are to remain closed until 14th July, under government order... The death takes place of Ballyhaunis native Fr. J.J. Cribbin, parish priest of Milltown. Son of the late Anthony and Maria (née Byrne), Main Street, Fr. J.J. was ordained to the priesthood in Tuam Cathedral on 21st June 1970. A former Ballyhaunis and Mayo senior footballer, Fr. J.J. helped the Mayo senior side to clinch the National Football League title in 1970 when he scored 2-1 of his side's tally of 4-7 in the final played in Croke Park, on 10th May 1970. Fr. J.J. is buried in Ballyhaunis on the fiftieth anniversary of that memorable encounter. Fr. J.J. was a very charismatic priest who devoted himself to many hours in the confessional and also spent many

hours in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament... Great fears abound in Ballyhaunis and surrounding areas as speculation that Bank of Ireland may not re-open their local operation for business after the coronavirus restrictions are lifted. Several members of the local business community stage a protest outside the bank in the hope that those fears may not come to fruition. Meanwhile, several members of the business community and members of local chamber appear on RTÉ's Drivetime News to air their frustration on national radio at Bank of Ireland's refusal to comment on this speculation. Following representation with the bank's head office by Dara Calleary, TD, the local branch will continue to



Fr. Stephen Farragher, PP, celebrates Mass in an empty St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis. A stark image of life in Lockdown, 2020.

operate, but with very limited opening hours... Galway native Martin Crehan of Devlis passes to his eternal reward after a brief illness. Martin, together with his wife Una, operated a very successful café and takeaway business on Clare Street for many years... As we approach the last days of May, thankfully for four days in a row there has been no reported deaths in the country due to the Covid-19 pandemic... Meanwhile, temperatures across the country are reaching into the high 20s, as Ireland begins to bask in tremendous sunshine - just the tonic that is needed after the long lockdown!

JUNE

The month of June brings brighter news to our country as the death rate from the Covid-19 virus continues to decrease. 8th June sees shops and many retail outlets opening their doors for the first time since lockdown restrictions came into force in the middle of March. While pubs, restaurants and hotels will remain closed for a time yet, normal life begins to return to the main streets of the towns of Ireland. The government announcement has indicated that churches, hotels and restaurants can re-open on 29th June. People over the age of seventy, who have not been allowed to have visitors to their home or to even go out into the public domain, can now return to exiting their place of dwelling. Great relief indeed for the many elderly people who have been quarantined over the past three months... The death takes place in Galway of the late Sr. Dolores Bowden. Sr. Dolores was a long-time member of the staff of the Convent of Mercy Secondary School and later Ballyhaunis Community School where she taught several of generations of students from the 1950s until her retirement in the 1980s. She was laid to rest in Galway... The tragic death occurs in Castlebar of the late Chris Culkeen (following a road accident), formerly of Greenwood, Ballyhaunis. Chris was a well-known gentleman in Ballyhaunis where he worked for many years as petrol pump attendant at B.T. Lynch's on Main Street and later Rochford Motors... Great sadness in the village of Knockanarra and throughout the Ballyhaunis are following the death of Brendan Toolan, who took ill only a few days before his untimely death. Son of the late Jackie and Rita Toolan, Brendan was also predeceased by his brother Donal, in 2017... 27th June 2020 is an historic day in the Republic of Ireland as old rivals Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil join together, along with the Green Party to form a new government. Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin is elected Taoiseach. Former Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar will assume the office of Tánaiste in the new government... 29th June: after almost four months churches and places of worship are allowed to reopen for public services. However, great disappointment when the Taoiseach announces that a maximum of fifty people can be allowed to attend public Masses. Hairdressers and

restaurants are also allowed to open to the public, but under strict 'health and safety' guidelines... Rita's Playschool closes this month marking the end of an era in the history of local education. Started by Rita London in the early 1980s, the Knock Road establishment provided pre-school education to hundreds of children over the past forty years.

JULY

The month of July continues where June has left off, very wet and exceptionally cool for the time of year as we enter the second week of the month... Great sadness in the village of Carrowkeel and surrounding areas as Ita McDonnell (née Lyons) passes to her eternal reward after a very brief illness. Wife of the late Mick McDonnell, who worked in Cribbin's Butchers on Main Street for many years, Ita was a sister of the late Maura Herr, Knox Street... The death also occurs this month of Main Street native Fr. Peter Waldron, PP, Keellogues... William (Bill) Kedian from Moneymore passes away peacefully at Mayo General Hospital. Bill's son Billy was killed while serving with the Irish Peace Keeping Forces in Lebanon over twenty years ago... Great excitement in Began and in GAA circles locally as the multi-million euro Air-Dome is inflated at the GAA Centre of Excellence in Cloonacurry, Began. The development at the GAA centre will include state-of-the-art 4G playing surfaces, a running track and a multitude of training facilities. Knock Road man John Prenty and CEO of the Connaught Council said that, as well as staging many sporting events, the Dome will also stage conferences, concerts, trade exhibitions and will hold up to 10,000 people... Retired Garda Sgt. John Byrne dies at his home in Partry. John (J.K.) served in Ballyhaunis station for a number of years in the 1950s and played football with the local GAA club, lining out with them in the County Junior final in 1956 when they were defeated by Hollymount... Refurbishment of the Community (Parochial) Hall gets into full gear as a major fundraising initiative is launched to help complete the transformation of the eighty year old building.

AUGUST

As the Covid-19 virus continues to attract attention in the national and world stage, the wearing of face masks is now compulsory when entering shops and in all public places... Ballyhaunis pharmacist Róisín Curley is named as a Master of Wine by the Institute of Masters of Wine. Róisín is just one of sixteen wine makers from around the world who have been added to the international organisation's list of wine makers, and the only Irish person to be included on that list. In 2015, Róisín established her own wine making business, *Maison Róisín Curley*, in Burgundy... Ballyhaunis Town FC player Aidan McTigue is applauded for his outstanding bravery for his



Gurteen County Champions! Pictured after their Senior Hurling County Championship victory were Gurteen men, from left: Eamon and Cormac Phillips, Adrian Brennan, Conor and Gearóid Keane. Photograph by Mike Byrne.

involvement of the rescue of a young man from the fast-flowing waters of the River Corrib in Galway city. A native of Lisduff, Irishtown, Aidan is a member of An Garda Síochána, attached to the Mill Street Station in Galway... You just can't keep young John William Burke from Devlis out of the golf news these days: after a most successful season on the fairways around the country, John William is crowned under-12 Irish golfing champion... Also on golf matters, another young sportsman who is rapidly making a name for himself on the fairways of the West of Ireland is Andrew Hickey from Greenwood. Andrew lands the top prize at Castlebar Golf Club's Open Day event, and smashing the existing course record at the Castlebar club with a blistering round of seven under par.

SEPTEMBER

As students return to their classes for the start of another academic year, they face into a very different environment than what they were so used of in the past. After almost six months away from school (schools closed on 12th March), students now have to wear face masks throughout the day and maintain social distancing as well as frequent sanitising and washing of hands. A whole new world indeed! Councillor John Cribbin confirms that funding to the tune of €50,000 has been allocated for the provision of footpaths along the New Road. The new footpath will run from the Community School along the New Road to the Ballyhaunis-Claremorris Road, making it much safer for the many people who use the roadway on their regular walks... Mary Waldron (née Dyer) from Devlis slips quietly away to her eternal home at Brookvale Manor Nursing Home. Together with her late husband Noel (who died in 1997), Mary operated the very successful Spar Supermarket on Main Street for many years... Great joy for many people

throughout Ballyhaunis and the country as public houses are allowed to open once again to the public, six months after being forced to close their doors due to Covid-19... A weekend of great celebrations for the lady footballers and for the senior hurlers in Ballyhaunis as both sets of teams win county titles. The hurling boys defeated their arch-rivals and neighbours Tooreen to win the Mayo County title on a scoreline of 1-15 to 1-12, their first senior title since 2016, in the Tooreen grounds. Meanwhile, the ladies had their day in the sun also over the same weekend when they defeated Breaffy to win the County Shield title in Fr. O'Hara Park in Charlestown, 2-10 to 1-6,

rounding off what was a super weekend for the sportsmen and women of the parish. Well done to all! John O'Sullivan of Cloonfad passes to his eternal reward after a short illness. A native of Bantry, Co. Cork, John was husband of Rita (née Fleming) O'Sullivan, who operated the Wimpy Bar on Bridge Street for many years from the early 1970s onwards... Major funding announced for three Mayo libraries, Ballyhaunis being one of them. The Ballyhaunis library, situated on Clare Street, is to receive €45,000 for upgrade works and roof repairs to the building which opened to the public in the early 1970s... The Ballyhaunis Community Council's fundraising initiative for the Community (Parochial) Hall continues with a "Walk to New York" project. The virtual walk from Ballyhaunis Community Hall to Times Square in New York runs from 19th September to 3rd October and receives tremendous support from local clubs, organisations and from Ballyhaunis individuals around the world in an effort to help raise funds to complete the refurbishment project. A wonderful initiative and a very successful one too. Well done to all who took the steps from Ballyhaunis to Boston, and from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from the Hudson River in Bayonne, New Jersey to the Hudson Bay in Athlone.

OCTOBER

In the early days of the month, the government announces a return to Level 3 of restrictions for the country, following an increase in the number of people being diagnosed with the Covid-19 virus. This means a return to church ceremonies, including Masses, being restricted to live-streaming or radio transmission only. Pubs and restaurants to close again under the new regulations, they will be allowed to serve up to fifteen customers, outside only... Towards the end of October the whole country moves to Level 5 of restrictions in an effort reduce the number of Covid-19 cases... As we sign off on another Annagh Magazine end of year review, with the Covid-19 concerns in the air, we hope and pray that the winter months ahead will be kind to both young and the elderly in our parish and in our country!



Some of 'Jack's Army' in Ballyhaunis watching anxiously during the World Cup finals of 1990. From left: Robbie Herr, Tom McGuire, Helen Freeley, Anne Freeley, Luke Murray, Tommy Eagney, Ivan Freeley and Georgie Hannan.



Taken in Horkan's, Lassiney, c1971.
L-R: John Horkan, Cathal Carroll and Kevin Genovese (son of Anne Horkan, New York and Tom Horkan's nephew).
Pic courtesy of Cathal Carroll.



Left:
Jim Finn
(Carrowkeel) and
Seamus
Mulrennan
(Gurteen), at
Delia Finn's
birthday party in
November 2019.

Right: Michael
Lyons, Lecarrow
(right) greets Pope
Francis on his
arrival at Knock
Airport on Sunday,
26th Aug. 2018.
Sinéad Gallagher
also pictured.



Right: November 2019 was a very special time in the life of Delia Finn, Carrowkeel, when she celebrated the great occasion of her 40th birthday. She is pictured here with family members at her birthday party in the Gateway Hotel, Swinford. L-R: Teresa, Patrick, Anne Marie, Sarah, Delia, Jim, Jimmy Jnr., and Tommy.

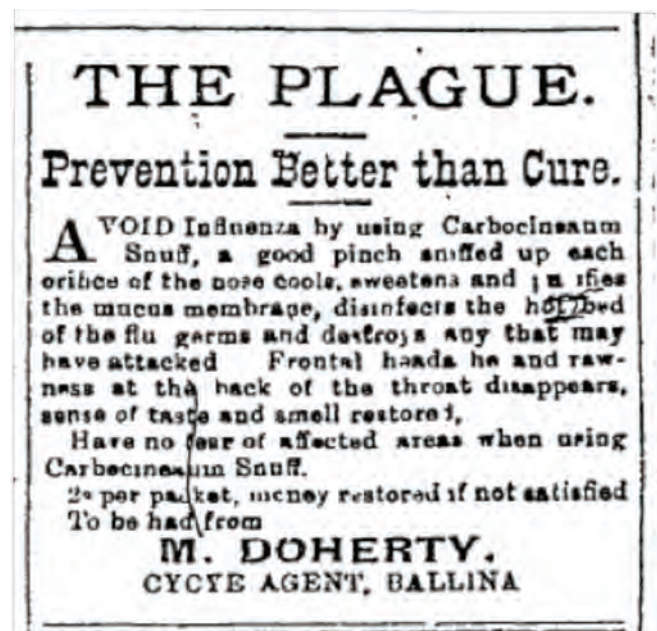


Ballyhaunis and the 1918-19 Flu Pandemic

Michael Kelly

The year 2020 will be long remembered as the year of the Covid-19 pandemic...or will it? A far worse pandemic - the so-called 'Spanish flu' of 1918-19 - barely registers with us today, despite its catastrophic effects a century ago. The Spanish flu was the deadliest pandemic in history. It is now reckoned that as many as 500 million people worldwide (or one-third of the entire population) became infected and that at least 40 million died, far more than were killed by the two world wars combined, and certainly far in excess of the million or so deaths attributable to Covid-19 (at the time of writing). Why did such a catastrophe, which affected all layers of society, fade from memory and history? Well, it occurred in an era of war-time censorship when communication generally was far less sophisticated and instantaneous than it is today, with the result that the true extent of the global impact didn't emerge until years later when there were other pressing problems to contend with. An Irish woman who lived through the pandemic also explained the silence that followed it thus: "People did not want to talk about it because it was so awful, and they dreaded the thought it might come back again."

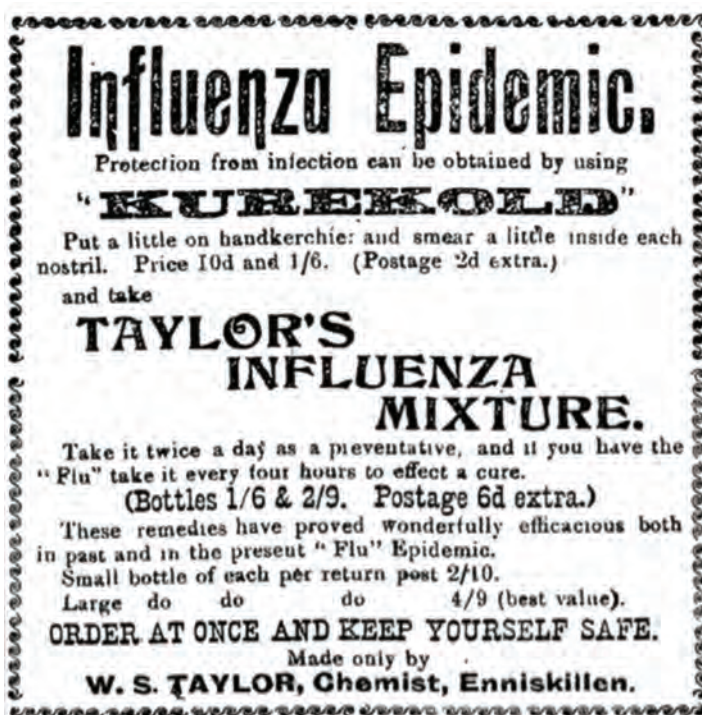
The flu hit Ireland in three waves: (1) June to early August 1918; (2) late September to Christmas 1918; and (3) end of January to late Spring 1919. In the second two waves, 50% of the deaths occurred in the 20 to 40



Another flu remedy advertised in the *Western People*, 1918.

year-old age group, an unusual pattern for a flu. Pregnant women were particularly vulnerable. My own grandmother, who was pregnant in 1918, was so seriously ill with the flu that rumours of her death had circulated. The death toll in Ireland reached 23,000, with some 800,000 people infected, yet the flu seems to have been almost airbrushed from our history until quite recently. As Ida Milne observes in her book *Stacking the coffins: influenza, war and revolution in Ireland, 1918-19* (Manchester University Press, 2018), 'the pandemic represents a curious lacuna in Irish history, for it was omitted from the historiography until the last decade despite contemporary newspapers documenting its arrival and passage'.

Newspapers did indeed record news of the flu pandemic although it can be difficult to get an overall picture of the impact from them. A valuable insight into the impact of the flu in Ballyhaunis is given in an article which appeared in the *Western People* on 29th November 1919, some six months after the crisis was over. It is reproduced in full below, apart from a few words here and there that were indecipherable. Paragraph headings have been added, along with brief extra notes about the individuals mentioned. The identity of the author (who used the pseudonym 'Ballyhaunis Man') is not known but the article certainly looks like the work of the Ballyhaunis scholar, Dr. Michael F. Waldron.



One of the various remedies for flu being advertised in the winter of 1918 (*Western People*, 21st to 28th Dec. 1918)

In Remembrance **BALLYHAUNIS VICTIMS OF INFLUENZA**

'The winter of 1918 will long be remembered in the town and district of Ballyhaunis as one of the blackest and most sorrowful that has passed for many generations. About that time the terrible and fatal scourge of influenza fell like a plague on the people and mercilessly struck down victims on all sides. For weeks the town was enveloped in a pall of fear. Business was practically at a standstill [and it was very difficult] to carry on the daily routine of life. In some establishments the entire staff were laid up. There was scarcely a house in the parish that had not its own quota of sufferers and in numerous cases the tales of suffering and hardship that were subsequently learnt were heartrending and pathetic. Those who were brought into contact with the victims and were intimately acquainted with the conditions and difficulties of the time will not soon forget their experience. It was like a reproduction of the history of the dark and fatal years following the devastating famines'.

Heroic efforts of local clergy

'Throughout the period when the epidemic raged at its height the heroic conduct and efforts of the local clergy and officials were in the highest degree edifying and efficacious. Fr. John Greally CC and Fr. Martin MacEvilly CC not alone ministered to the spiritual needs of the thousands of patients but also aided in supplying the temporal wants of many who, without their timely assistance, would have undoubtedly succumbed. Night and day they were on the move from one house of sickness to another, helping, comforting and consoling, regardless of the risks they ran, and only solicitous of the safety, spiritual and temporal, of their flock. Like true Catholic priests they fulfilled their duties, and more than their duties, unflinchingly to the last with a cheerful confidence which carried with it the inspiration of hope for the best and which illumined many a stricken home where the dark shadows of death and sorrow hovered ominously. In the time of their direst need the people found in these two noble-hearted and self-denying priests their greatest sources of comfort and succour.

Nor must the labours of the late Fr. Nolan OSA be

forgotten. This simple, kind-hearted, gentle poor friar, with the soul of a child and the heart of a lion, flung himself into the work of alleviating the distress around him with a zeal and earnestness that in all probability tended to impact his own health and to shorten his days. Peace to his kindly Irish soul, his gentle hand soothed many a troubled brow; his words of encouragement brought calm to many a tortured spirit. The saintly Father Nolan will long be remembered in Ballyhaunis, where his ashes rest beside the hallowed walls of the historic old Abbey'. [Note: Fr. James Dominick Nolan OSA, Prior of St Mary's Abbey Ballyhaunis from 1915 to 1917, died from throat cancer on 11th February 1919, aged 66; clearly he was ill before the flu outbreak but continued to minister during it].

Medical care by Doctors Crean and Smyth

'And if the fatalities were comparatively only a small percentage of the total number of victims, we have no hesitation in saying that a large share of the credit is certainly due to the herculean exertions and scientific skill of Dr. Crean and his able assistant Dr. Smyth. No tribute that could be paid to Dr. Crean by the people of Ballyhaunis would be comparable to the value of the services that he rendered in the most trying crisis of recent years. Certainly, he did not spare himself; never for a moment deserting his post of duty, and always ready to place the results of his vast experience as a medical practitioner at the disposal of the people. During his long and honoured career as a doctor we doubt if there is a brighter or more meritorious page in his brilliant record than that which deals with his exertions and work in the autumn and winter of 1918.

The credit of so successfully grappling with the dreadful scourge must be shared with our young and brilliant townsman Dr. Smyth, who assisted Dr. Crean in his work, and whose reputation, high as it was previously, gained fresh lustre from the influenza episode. Who could tell how many more would be in their graves today were it not for the skill and care of Drs. Crean and Smyth? The debt of gratitude the people of Ballyhaunis owe them is no light or small one, and there is no one who does not silently, but no less seriously, recognise it. They can certainly feel assured that they carry with them the blessings and good wishes of every man, woman and child in the district'.

Pen pictures of eight local victims

'It would, of course, be impossible to recall from memory and without reference to some written record, the names of those who succumbed to the disease, and by whose deaths Ballyhaunis is all the poorer. But the

following occur to the mind at the moment of writing:

Michael A. Waldron (son of the late Thomas M. Waldron, Knox Street), a young man in the prime of life, of a gentle and charming disposition, with a brilliant commercial career opening out before him. He was extremely popular with all classes, and his death was deeply regretted.

[Note: Michael Andrew Waldron died on 29th Sept. 1918, aged 24].

Roland Scott, a youthful genius in his way; a member of a highly respected family. His many gifts endeared him to the young especially, and he was one of the most talented members of the local Dramatic Society. As a mechanic his ingenuity was securing wider recognition every day, and had he been spared he could in all probability have carved for himself a successful career. His death was felt to be a great loss to the locality and was much deplored. [Note: Patrick Roland Scott, a chauffeur, died on 4th Nov. 1918, aged 38; he was related to the O'Connor family, Clare St.].

Thomas Hunt (son of the late William Hunt, Derrynacong) was one of the most popular and respected young men in a wide radius. He was of a jovial, generous, and good-natured disposition and a general favourite with young and old. He contributed generously to all charitable and national objects and a wide circle of friends and acquaintances mourned over his grave. [Note: Thomas Hunt died on 27th Nov. 1918, aged 32].

George Delaney (son of Michael Delaney Co.C., Knox Street) was a member of the veterinary profession. After graduating with exceptional success, he built up a wide and lucrative practice in his native town. He was generally regarded as one of the ablest surgeons in the West, and had God spared him he would undoubtedly have made an enviable name for himself in his chosen sphere. Socially he was a general favourite, beloved by all who knew him. Even beyond the bounds of his professional work he was an exceptionally well-read and well-informed young man. His premature death was felt to be, in more than one respect, a great loss to the locality and the County. [Note: George Delaney died on 7th Nov. 1918, aged 28; an extensive obituary appeared in the *Western People* of 16th Nov. 1918].

Mrs. Webb (wife of Mr. Michael Webb, Main Street) was a young woman whose many good qualities of head, and heart endeared her to the people of

Ballyhaunis. Her sparkling conversation and sunny disposition won a way into many a heart. Her charitable nature was known far and wide, and her hand was never closed against those who sought her aid in the hour of need. A good wife and a model mother, she left a long family to mourn her loss. [Note: Mrs. Mary Kate Webb died on 9th Nov. 1918, aged 40].

Monica Kenny (daughter of Mr John Kenny, Main Street), a young lady abundantly endowed with many gifts and graces. She was a prime favourite amongst the youth; a ready helper in any entertainment organised for a charitable or national purpose, and a gifted musician, instrumentally and vocally. Of a cheerful, gay and humourous disposition, she enjoyed an exceptional popularity, and everybody felt sad when it became known that this accomplished, virtuous and attractive young lady had passed forever from our midst. [Note: Monica Kenny died on 12th Nov. 1918, aged 23; an extensive obituary appeared in the *Western People* of 16th Nov. 1918].

Martin Lyons (son of Martin Lyons, Kiltabo), a splendid type of young Irish farmer. He made a special study of farming, and was acknowledged as one of the best authorities in all branches of agricultural work for many miles around. With a laudable ambition to excel in his career as a farmer, he studied for several seasons at some of the established training schools in order to get a thorough grasp of the scientific principles underlying farming. The results of his theory and practice, his study and industry were amply demonstrated in his work and experiments on the paternal farm which served as a model for a whole countryside. The death at an early age of this brilliant young agricultural student and farmer was deeply and widely deplored. [Note: Martin F. Lyons died on 10th Nov. 1918, aged 27].

Maggie Byrne (daughter of Dominick Byrne, Main Street) a young woman of brilliant parts and bright promise. Gifted with intellect of a high order, she entered the teaching profession and was progressing rapidly when death cut short her ambitious projects. In all the social activities undertaken of late years she played a prominent part with conspicuous success, and lent her services as an accomplished musician willingly and cheerfully. The death of this popular and charming young lady was regretted by all who knew her. [Note: Margaret Byrne died on 2nd Dec.

1918, aged 23; an extensive obituary appeared in the *Mayo News* of 14th Dec. 1918].

We would like to mention others, did space permit. The pity is that there are so many to mention; so many young, becoming, lovable friends and acquaintances called away just when they were beginning to really live. They are and will be long missed from their own firesides and from wider social circles. May they all rest in peace’

‘Ballyhaunis Man’, 24th November 1919.

Medical practitioners under pressure

If we think that our health service struggled to cope with the initial surge of Covid-19 earlier this year, we should bear in mind just how ill-equipped our ancestors were to cope with the Spanish flu. Many couldn’t avail of the services of a nurse or GP, let alone hope to gain admission to hospital. The pressure on Doctors Crean and Smyth and their colleagues during the pandemic is highlighted by a report of a meeting of the Claremorris Board of Guardians held on Wednesday, 6th Nov. 1918. The Board was desperately seeking cover for Dr. Heneghan of Ballindine who was laid up with the flu. Dr. Maguire of Claremorris couldn’t deputise for him as he himself was already overwhelmed with cases while Dr. Kelly was also sick. Telegrams had been sent to Dr. Smith in Ballyhaunis, Dr. Fitzgerald in Hollymount and Dr. Costello in Tuam but to no avail, with Dr. Smith already

having 300 cases to manage and Dr. Costello also ill. The Board had also received an urgent requisition for medicines from Dr. Crean as his supply was running low ‘owing to everyone around having had influenza’. The Board learned that several policemen from Ballyhaunis had been removed to Castlerea Infirmary, the military authorities having provided ambulances for that purpose. Nurse Cosgrave was nursing flu cases in Ballyhaunis and Nurse Forde had been directed to go to Castlerea for infirmary nursing (*Western People*, 9th Nov. 1918).

‘Twelve coffins in one day ...’

The eight fatalities documented by *‘Ballyhaunis Man’* were just a mere fraction of the many flu-related deaths that occurred in the Ballyhaunis district between October 1918 and April 1919, while many others that were formally attributed to pneumonia may also have been caused indirectly by the flu. Most of the victims were aged under 40. Their civil death records are all readily accessible on the Irish Genealogy website: <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/>

One of the few anecdotes that has come down to us in folklore about the local impact of the pandemic was recalled by the late Máisín Meath of Clare Street: “A nun told us that at the time of the 1918 flu, twelve coffins came in one day to the Friary Graveyard.” Truly a case of ‘stacking the coffins’. What a stark image of the harsh reality of that time.



Waldron Clan
Gathering
2000

Cousins and friends get together at the Waldron Clan Gathering, Easter 2000. Standing, L-R: Vona Moran, Michael Kelly, Catherine Waldron, Jarlath Waldron, Ursula Waldron, Walter Waldron. Front, L-R: Kenneth Waldron, Pado Moran, Gerry Cribbin, Anne Plunkett, Valerie Kelly, Mary Delia Waldron.

Centenary of Ballyhaunis Events in 1921

A Year of Turmoil and Triumph

Kieran Waldron

The situation in Ireland

1920, the second year of the War of Independence, ended with some horrific military incidents throughout the country: the murder of the Lord Mayor of Cork, the burning down of Cork city and the multiple murder of thirty people on Bloody Sunday in November. As 1921 dawned there was a growing sense of apprehension arising everywhere. In West Mayo IRA ambushes at Tourmakeady, Kilmeena and Carrowkennedy led to the loss of many lives. East Mayo was somewhat quieter, but *The Western People* of 22nd January reported that: 'In the past few days, a large party of military from Claremorris entered Ballyhaunis and for hours held up the pig fair and market. They barricaded all approaches to the town and allowed no persons in or out until they had completed an exhaustive search.' As a result four arrests were made: Messrs Cunniffe from Coogue, Jordan from Knock, Moran from Lavallyroe and McTighe from Churchfield. All were conveyed to Claremorris by lorry.

The 'Crown Forces' now contained the dreaded Black and Tans and Auxiliaries which had been imposed by the British Government into the police service, the RIC. The Government's real purpose in that decision can be discerned from a speech by a Lt. Col. Smyth to assembled RIC constables in Listowel, Co. Kerry, on 17th June 1920. The explosive speech was recounted in detail by one of the Listowel constables as follows:

'If a police barracks is burned, or if the barracks already occupied is not suitable, then the best house in the locality is to be commandeered, the occupants thrown out in the gutter. Let him die there, the more the merrier. Police and military will patrol the country roads at least five nights a week, lie in ambush, take cover behind fences, and, when civilians are seen approaching, shout "hands up." Should the order be not immediately obeyed, shoot, and shoot with effect. If the persons approaching carry their hands in their pockets or are in any way suspicious looking, shoot them down. You may make mistakes occasionally and innocent persons may be shot, but this cannot be helped and you are bound to get the right persons sometimes. The more you shoot, the better I will like you, and I assure you that no policeman will get into trouble for shooting any man. In the past, policemen have got into trouble for giving evidence at coroners' inquests. As a matter of fact, inquests are to be made illegal so that, in future, no policeman will be asked to give evidence at inquests.' (*Bureau of Military History*, Witness Statement of J. Mee, WS 379).

Present was a very young constable, a native of Glenamaddy, Co. Galway, Jeremiah Mee. The Colonel's tone was so outrageous that Mee and the Listowel RIC contingent stated they would resign en masse. Mee transcribed the speech in full and published it in *The Freeman's Journal* on 10th July. Henceforward, whatever image the RIC had had as a community service was gone forever. Later, General Tudor, Inspector General of the RIC, visited Listowel and speaking to them 'as a friend', tried to change the stance taken the policemen, but Mee and five others would not relent. On 6th July they left the force, 'without resigning or being dismissed.' The Colonel's speech caused huge outrage worldwide – even in the House of Commons.

The Irish Bishops' 'Statement on the Condition of their Country'

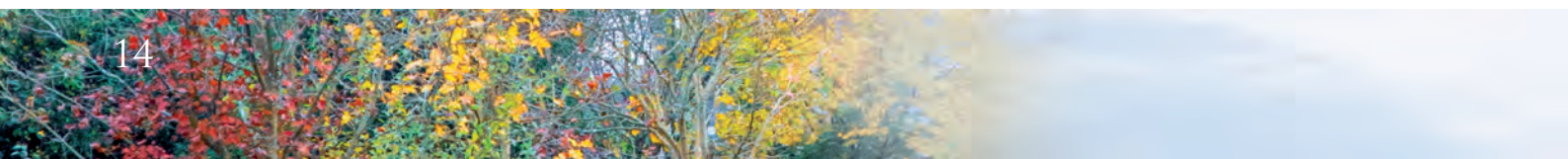
The atrocities subsequently carried out by the 'Black and Tans', in line with the tenor of that speech, were publicly denounced throughout Ireland and particularly by a strong statement, published in a booklet, but now forgotten. It was signed by each of the twenty-eight Bishops of Ireland on 19th October 1920. The bishops said they 'were opposed to all crime', but their statement was devastating in their condemnation of British Government policies. They said:

'On a scale truly appalling have to be reckoned countless indiscriminate raids and arrests in the darkness of night; the burning of houses, town halls, factories, creameries and crops... by men maddened with plundered drink and bent on loot, the flogging and massacre of civilians, all perpetrated by forces of the Crown, who have established a reign of frightfulness which has a parallel only in the outrages attributed to the Red Army of Bolshevik Russia... It is the indiscriminate vengeance of savages, deliberately wreaked on a whole town or countryside, without any proof of its complicity in crime, by those who ostensibly are employed by the British Government to protect the lives and property of the people and restore order in Ireland.'

Coming from such a source, normally so cautious, it was an extraordinary pronouncement.

Activities in Ballyhaunis

In his diary of many events in Ballyhaunis from 1905 to 1950 Dr. Michael F. Waldron, a native of Knox St.,



Ballyhaunis, includes the following military events during 1921:

Jan. 19 th	Nine young men arrested.
Mar. 29 th	Constable Stephens shot and seriously wounded. A night of terror.
Mar. 30 th	Military activity. Business suspended. Markets, fairs prohibited. Curfew from 7pm.
Mar. 31 st	Deputation of merchants to military in regard to suspension of fairs and markets.
Apr. 1 st	Michael Coen, Lecarrow, shot dead. Seán Corcoran shot dead at Crossard.
Apr. 29 th	Michael Curley's residence Crossard burned to the ground by armed men.
May 27 th	Patrick Boland, Cloongoonagh shot.
June 17 th	Attack on RIC barracks.
June 18 th	Round-up by the Military, trench filling. Curfew again from 10pm to 4 am
July 12 th	Markets re-opened.
Dec 8 th	Celebrations connected with homecoming of internees and prisoners.
Dec 22 nd	Constable Slattery wounded.

Only years later did IRA combatants speak openly of their activities. Some may have tended to exaggeration, but others would never reveal their exact participation, more so in regard to their activities during the Civil War of 1922-23. So it is best to search for the truth as recorded by acknowledged historians. For events in Mayo there is no better source than Dominic Price, a historian from Dublin with Mayo connections, whose book *The Flame and the Candle: War in Mayo 1919-24* has been widely praised for its balance and thoroughness of research. There are also the witness statements in the Bureau of Military History Archive now available online.

Knox Street Shooting

For some light on some of the events listed above, the book *The Men Will Talk to Me; Mayo Interviews*, records interviews by Ernie O'Malley with various revolutionaries. His interview with the late Johnny Grealy of Cloongoonagh, Tooreen, includes many references to Ballyhaunis activities. No doubt the most serious and violent actions that occurred in this area were those which occurred in March/April 1921 – namely the attempted murder of one Constable William Stephens in

Knox St. followed by a very violent reprisal. Grealy confessed that it was he who led the attack on March 29th. He refers to a local girl, using her surname only, who was somehow linked with the constable. Such friendships were not uncommon. Young Irish girls befriended, and some had married RIC constables - but these now were different times! Grealy's account is somewhat disjointed in O'Malley's transcription but he said that, 'a girl was supposed to have told Stephens, the Tan, when our fellows called... Kilkenny had a .22 gun and I had a .45 gun. Stephens pulled his gun but it didn't go off and I shot Stephens. I stayed there waiting but the (named) girl did not come down until the man was dying.' Many years later Grealy told a young student to whom he gave a lift in his car that he was the man who 'shot the Tan', as he described it.

A more detailed version of that incident has come to light in *The Western People* of 25th June 1921. A compensation claim in Claremorris Quarter Sessions had been brought by Constable Stephens (or Stephenson) still barely twenty. He was a native of London who, after a delay in his attempt to join the London police, enlisted in the RIC. After one month's training in the Police Depot, he found himself in Ballyhaunis. Local sources say a relative of the girl then living in London had known the Stephens family and introduced him to her family in Ballyhaunis. According to the newspaper account of the Quarter Sessions, Stephens was in uniform but unarmed on 29th March. After 'visiting the house of a friend', he was walking towards the barracks for a roll-call at 9.45pm. He said:

"I heard a click as if the hammer of a weapon and I turned around but saw no weapon. I, however, saw two men in the dip of a doorway. I heard the sound of feet and two shots rang out. One caught me in the leg and the other in the abdomen. I fell and could not rise and, as I was down, two men stood over me and fired. One shot burned my left leg and the other was close to my head. The men went up the street and fired again but none of the shots took effect. A lady came to try to help and brought a message to the barracks. People soon arrived and carried me on a shutter to the barracks. I was attended by Dr. Crean and Dr. Smyth and next morning I was taken to the private hospital in Salthill, Galway and am still under treatment there. At the time I was on a salary of £240 per year."

The bullet in his abdomen was removed but he developed peritonitis. He was only a few months in the force but was now adjudged to be unfit for any occupation in the future. The claimant, who was on crutches, was awarded compensation of £5,500 including costs.

After the shooting there was total chaos. Dr. Michael

F. Waldron recounts that the town was immediately closed down. The event received national coverage. *The Irish Times* of 1st April 1921 reported as follows: 'fearing reprisals for the shooting, many of the residents have fled to the neighbouring towns and countryside.' The report stated that:

'A deputation of the leading merchants visited the military and on behalf of the people of the town disassociated themselves from the shooting of the constable and assured the authorities that no Ballyhaunis men had any part in the attempted assassination. The town is deserted, all business is suspended and the shops have been ordered to close for a week. Fairs and markets have been prohibited and the Curfew will come into force from 7pm daily.'

The Irish Times report added one detail: 'it is said that a young woman rushed to his aid and threw herself over his body as he lay wounded on the footpath, two bullets passing over her.' One surviving local memory of the event says that she may have cried out, "óchón, óchón" - a common cry of a person in grief. If so, it was to have a dreadful consequence.

Reprisal

The IRA generally regarded the shooting of the constable as an act of folly but the inevitable reprisal by Crown Forces followed. In the early morning of 1st April the Crown Forces burst into the Coen household in Lecarrow, one mile from the town, and carried out the horrific murder of a young Michael Coen, only 26 years of age, followed by the violent mutilation of his body. Such an atrocity might echo that speech in Listowel, quoted above, in regard to permissible activity by the Crown Forces. The deed stunned the entire populace. Local people were correct in declaring that 'no Ballyhaunis men had any part in the attempted assassination' and certainly Michael Coen was not involved in any way. He was an innocent victim - indeed a martyr. There has been a question for many years if, indeed, he ever had any significant part in the Old IRA. One well-placed activist from the Began (A) Company IRA, told his family that young Coen 'was never involved with the IRA.' But Tom Forde, a native of Bohola, speaking fifty years later, believed he had been speaking to Michael Coen just days before his death, about a possible IRA mission in Kiltimagh.

Michael Coen was buried in the family grave in Ballyhaunis cemetery with the statement 'murdered by Crown Forces on 1st April 1921'. On Easter Sunday 1971, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of his death, a commemoration event was held before a large crowd and was described in detail by Mick O'Connell in *The Western People* of 17th April 1971. A fine monument, sculpted by

John Gilmore of Knox St., was unveiled in his native Lecarrow by Government Minister Seán Flanagan and blessed by Canon McGarry PP. It was inscribed, 'In Memory of Vol. Michael Coen, IRA.' The 1916 Proclamation was read by Seamus Coen, Chairman of the Memorial committee and a nephew of Michael. Among the speakers were the Minister, Canon McGarry, Anthony Curley, Tom Forde and Senator Dalgan Lyons who pointedly referred to atrocities then becoming more common in Northern Ireland and appealed for political negotiations rather than violence which alone could lead to peace and reconciliation.

Crossard Activities

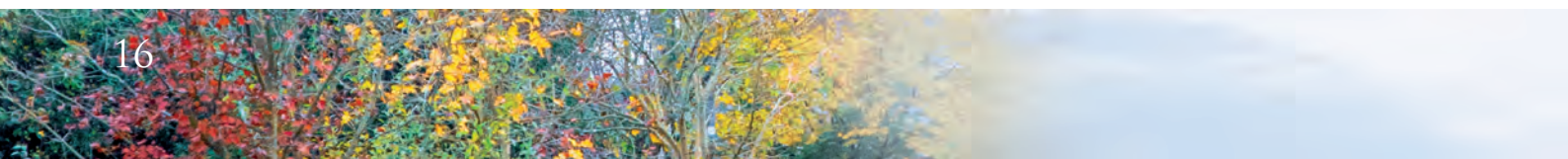
Also on 1st April, the day of the death of Michael Coen, Seán Corcoran, OC of the East Mayo Brigade IRA, was shot dead at Crossard following a shoot-out. The event is covered by Dominic Price in his book mentioned earlier. Corcoran, a native of Kiltimagh was the first IRA commander killed in Mayo. His fellow officer Maurice Mullins, a native of Langanboy, was arrested and court-martialled.

Just four weeks later, the house of the Curley family in Crossard was burned to the ground by 'Crown Forces'. Fr. Hugh Curley's two brothers in Crossard had been actively involved in the struggle. Johnny Grealy, a near neighbour, covers the incident in his interview with Ernie O'Malley. He tells that the Tans, 'took out the two Curley girls from the house and they burned the house.' The Argyll and Southern Highlanders in Claremorris had information that the local company of the IRA were in the general area, including Grealy, Paddy Boland their OC, Padraic Forkan, Austin Kenny and Jim Kilkenny. They had just enough time to escape from a neighbour's house. One month later one of the company, Paddy Boland, was bayoneted and shot dead.

Grealy had words of praise for the support of Fr. Pat Garvey, a native of Glenamaddy, who was then curate in Aghamore. Incidentally, Fr. Pat was my first Parish Priest in Corrandulla, Co. Galway in 1961. He was a wonderful character and often talked to me about those days in Irish History.

Other Military Happenings in Ballyhaunis in 1921

Throughout 1920 and 1921 IRA activity caused the Ballyhaunis area to be supplied with extra police RIC barracks in Crossard, Logboy, Brickens and Aghamore, all of which areas had active detachments of the IRA. Later, resources were withdrawn from these 'Police Huts' and the RIC strength was added to the towns. Apparently, by late June 1921, no word had reached Ballyhaunis about progress being made in Truce negotiations going on in London because *The Western People* of

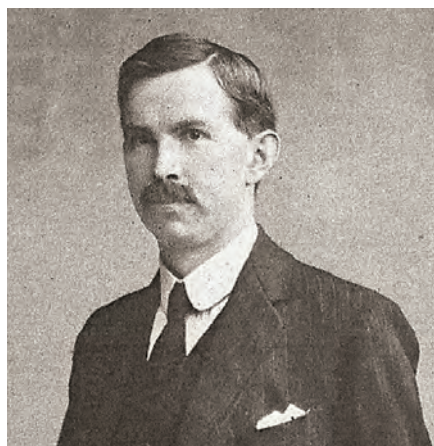




Top left: Detail of the inscription on the Michael Coen monument.
Above: The Michael Coen monument, Lecarrow, as it is today.



Dr. Michael F. Waldron (Knox Street), President of the South Mayo Republican Courts, and chronicler of local events during the War of Independence. Photographed in 1919.



Patrick Moylett, Ballina-born Ballyhaunis businessman and founder of the local unit of the Irish Volunteers in 1914, and of the Roger Casement Sinn Fein Club in 1917. He was the official secret emissary between Dáil Eireann and the British Government in 1920 and 21 whose efforts lead eventually to the Truce being declared on 11th July 1921.



A view of the crowd at the unveiling of the monument in memory of Michael Coen in Lecarrow, on Easter Sunday, 11th Apr. 1971.

18th June reported that, 'in the early hours of last Monday morning a party of military and police from Claremorris commandeered Ardpatrik, a spacious house in Upper Main St., then the residence of Dr. Smyth (site of the present Dr. Noone's house). 'Dr. Smyth got no notice whatever and the troops set to work to remove his furniture. During the day the police barracks (the present Garda station) was vacated and the police are now housed in Ardpatrik'. It was an example of what the English Colonel had forecast in that speech in Listowel quoted above: 'if the barracks already occupied is not suitable, then the best house in the locality is to be commandeered, the occupants thrown out in the gutter.'

In the following issue of 25th June 1921, the paper gives some details on trench filling mentioned above by Dr. Michael F. Waldron and about a 'Round-up by the Military and Curfew again from 10pm to 4 am.' It seems that, during that week, roads were trenched at Knock and Bekan, presumably to hinder movements of the military. On the arrival of troops, available men in the districts were collected and the trenches filled in. The same issue of the paper reported that armed and masked men raided the licensed and grocery business of Mrs. Sarah Coyne, Ballyhaunis (at the Square) and compelled her to hand over the keys of the safe. They took £30 and decamped. It was also mentioned that enquiries were made for her brother-in-law, Mr. William Coyne, Solicitor and County Councillor, but that gentleman was not at home. The report does not state the identity of 'the masked men'. The enquiry about William Coyne might infer that they were Crown Forces in disguise. Troubling times indeed!

As we approach the bloody centenary, so that a spirit of reconciliation emerges, we must seek the truth in telling of the events and thereby derive some inspiration from the idealism of the Irish revolutionaries. The Department of Culture and Heritage recently advised: 'commemoration should not ignore differences and divisions. The goal of inclusiveness is best achieved by encouraging multiple and plural commemorations which remember the past, while ensuring, as far as possible, that the commemoration does not re-ignite old tensions.'

Local priests, particularly the older ones, regularly denounced violence on both sides of the conflict but many of the younger priests supported 'The Movement' as they called it – and were arrested for their efforts. Among those was Fr. Hugh Curley, a native of Crossard and later a curate in Ballyhaunis, who was then CC in Clare Island. He was brought to Galway by gun-boat, because of his 'possession of some documents', as he described it. Fr. Michael Carney, who had been a curate in Ballyhaunis from 1911 to 1913 and was later PP of Aghamore, was arrested in October 1920 as were Fr.

J.W. Meehan in Castlebar, Fr. Michael Morley of Cloonfaghna, Knock, and Fr. Pat McHugh in Aughagower.

Attempts at a Truce – a Ballyhaunis Connection

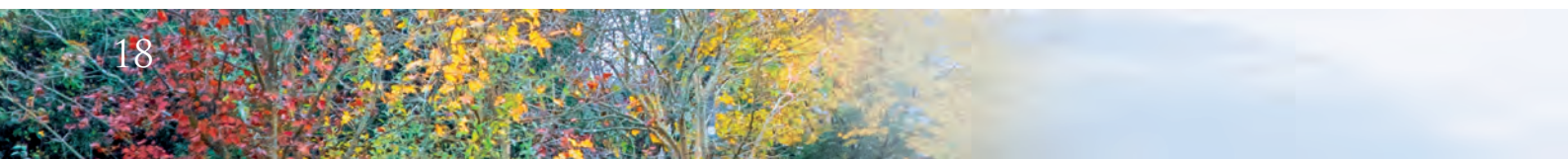
On the non-military front throughout 1921 the unofficial Dáil Éireann Courts continued to flourish in Ballyhaunis as elsewhere – a niggling but powerful political challenge to the masters in Whitehall. In the Ballyhaunis area they were organised by the same William D. Coyne under the South Mayo President of the Courts, Dr. Michael F. Waldron, who presided at his first sitting on 10th October 1920.

In late 1920 strong efforts were being made by several influential figures, including Archbishop Clune of Melbourne, to engage with political leaders in England to stop the violence. Also, Archbishop Gilmartin of Tuam, in late 1920, had been promoting what he called a 'Truce of God', a mediaeval concept which had much beneficial effect throughout Europe in previous centuries. The publicity he received led him to a spell of top-level correspondence with Winston Churchill, the Secretary of State for War. He received much support, especially from people in England.

The Archbishop's efforts, however, met with no obvious success for a truce just then. But the work of one Patrick Moylett, who had a business for several years in Ballyhaunis (now McGarry's shop), was extremely important. It was he who founded the local unit of the Irish Volunteers in 1914 and later became prominent in the Sinn Féin party. Moylett's is an intriguing story: see two lengthy articles by Anthony Jordan and the present writer on Moylett in *Annagh 2013*. At the behest of Arthur Griffith, on behalf of Dáil Éireann, in a sort of back-channel, Moylett had established several secret contacts with the British Government in late 1920 and as late as June of 1921, both in Dublin and in London where he had developed a new business. He has been largely forgotten by most Irish historians.

Recently, however, Moylett's efforts were acknowledged in an acclaimed RTÉ Documentary, *Hawks and Doves*, presented by Michael Portillo, a former British Government Minister. Moylett's Witness Statement to the Bureau of Military History (Witness 767), shows that he was indeed the official secret emissary between Dáil Éireann and the British Government. If he, and other intermediaries working for a truce, had succeeded by the end of 1920 almost one thousand lives could have been saved in the last six months of the war.

On 30th May 1921 he was invited to a crunch meeting in Dublin Castle with the British Government's chief representative in Ireland, Sir A.W. Cope. President



Eamon De Valera feared such a visit was a trap, but Moylett, accompanied by W.T. Cosgrave and four others, walked carefully towards Dublin Castle. If Moylett had not returned by 2pm it had been decided that the Sinn Féin leaders would go to the newspapers to report Moylett missing. It was no trap! The meeting went extremely well. Mr. Cope opened the conversation by saying that they were anxious to meet Mr. De Valera. According to Moylett he said: "we are willing to acknowledge that we are defeated. There is nothing else for us to do but to draft into this country four hundred thousand men and exterminate the whole population of the country - and we are not willing to do that. We are willing to withdraw our whole establishment, from the lowest policeman to the highest judge."

Moylett's efforts on that day were to lead eventually to a Truce being declared on 11th July 1921 when an embarrassed British Government, accused world-wide for dreadful atrocities, finally declared a 'cessation of hostilities.' That, in turn, led to a formal invitation to Mr. De Valera, as President of Dáil Éireann just weeks later, to meet in London with the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George. That July conference in turn led to the Treaty talks in November and December 1921 and the founding of the new Irish Free State. In Northern Ireland eighty years later John Hume was to establish, through the Good Friday Agreement that, in the end, political negotiation and not violence, can bring a solution to the Irish question - however incomplete these agreements may have been.

Just before the Truce, in their June meeting of 1921, the Irish Bishops came back again to the intransigence of the British Government in their dealing with Ireland while, as they said, 'a special government has been given to one section of her people and a parliament of their own (in Northern Ireland) after a year of considerable and intolerable persecution directed against the Catholics of Belfast and the surrounding areas, at a time when the campaign of extermination is in full blast. Unless repression ceases and the right of Ireland to choose her own form of government is recognised, there is no prospect that peace will reign amongst us or that the reconciliation which His Holiness the Pope so ardently desires will be accomplished.'

All the atrocities were not on one side, of course. One would like to think that Irish revolutionaries were motivated by a degree of humanity but, unfortunately, this was not always the case. Such is the nature of war. The real failure was that the British continued to ignore for two years the national mandate achieved by Sinn Féin in the General Election of 1918 and the establishment of Dáil Éireann.

Where was the Triumph in Ballyhaunis?

On 20th November 1921, while the Anglo-Irish Treaty talks were coming to an end in London, a huge public rally of celebration was held in the Fair Green in Ballyhaunis. In his book, *The Flame and the Candle: War in Mayo 1919-24*, the author Dominic Price gives an account of the meeting. The meeting is reported in more detail by *The Mayo News* of 26th November 1920. The paper bore the heading 'An Historic Day in the Life of Mayo'. The star attraction at the event was to be General Sean McEoin, the 'Blacksmith of Ballinalee', accompanied by Commdts. Liam Sears and Tom Maguire, both TDs. A huge throng had gathered at the station to welcome the party on the Saturday but there was great disappointment when the event had to be postponed to the Sunday because of train connections. A bonfire was blazing in the Square and a huge platform erected in the middle of the Fair Green with the national colours. Admission was by ticket only with a charge of one shilling to be paid. Also on the platform were Liam D. Coyne, Chairman of Mayo County Council, Dr. Michael F. Waldron, President of the South Mayo Republican Courts, and four local priests. Some of the speeches on the day were triumphalist and indeed quite inflammatory. Local County Councillor, P.J. Waldron of Knox St, certainly pulled no punches. The Ballyhaunis Celebrations must have pre-dated other celebration throughout the country because, wishing the delegates in London at the Peace Conference great success, he said the three distinguished visitors could go from Ballyhaunis, '...delighted to know that the first blow that was ever struck for Sinn Féin was in this very town.' He compared it to the beginnings of the Land League in Irishtown many years before. He added: 'if the British return to war, they will have war'. No doubt any RIC personnel present would undoubtedly be taking notes of such outbursts. If the Treaty talks did break down and hostilities were resumed, they knew who to contact!

The spirit of triumph was repeated just two weeks later when the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed in London on 6th December 1921. According to *The Mayo News* of 17th December bonfires were blazing from the hilltops. The celebrations continued from the Tuesday to Friday when the Ballyhaunis populace turned out again to celebrate victory and to welcome home the local internees from various prisons, among whom was Felix P. Murray, released from Ballykinlar, Co. Down. The reporter stated: 'In the mind of the youngest child, it will remain a fresh memory were he or she to live to a hundred years.'

But all was not over!

But, although the Truce was in operation since July and the Treaty was signed on 6th December the guns did not

remain silent. The attempted murder in Ballyhaunis of another constable, Michael Slattery, was reported in *The Irish Times* of 24th December 1921. The constable, stationed in Athenry, had come home to Ballyhaunis to be with his wife and family for Christmas, when an armed man entered his house, asking, "are you Slattery?" and then opened fire on him. He was seriously injured and was conveyed to Galway Hospital. This is the last reported military event reported in Ballyhaunis at the end of the war.

Full peace in Ireland was still a long way off. The following years of 1922 and 1923 were to see the dreadful Civil War in which Irishmen alone became both perpetrators as well as victims. Another story for another day!

In conclusion, I wish to thank the following for help in accessing newspaper accounts in compiling this article: Paul Waldron, Maureen Costello and Michael Kelly, also Dominic Price for advice and Joe Keane for local memories of events.



And who were the Ballyhaunis people in the revolution? Perhaps the photograph above of the local veterans of the Old IRA leading the 1916 Commemorative Parade up Main Street on Easter Sunday, 10th Apr. 1966, in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the 1916 Rising, may be of help. It was used on the cover of *Annagh 2015*. By 1966, of course, many of the main participants in the War of Independence had died but those in the leading part of the parade certainly had a part in it. Some of those pictured may have been too young to be directly involved prior to 1921 but they valued whatever contribution they made to the achievement of independence. Looking closely at the picture, one can see the determination on the faces of the leading participants. In line with good military procedure, what is remarkable is that every one of the leading party marches in step – no doubt the result of their well-remembered drill-training exercises while they were in the 'Irish Volunteers.' One person with a long memory in the town says that the local company of IRA were very much hindered in their activities because of the dearth of weapons and especially ammunition, so they spent a lot of time in drill-practice under the control of Mícheál Ó Cleirigh or an ex-British army veteran called McGarry from the Brackloon area.

Comdt. Patrick McNieve (Brickens) and Comdt. Martin Forde (Island), who led the parade, are not in this photograph. The veterans marched in ranks of four. The front line here shows, L-R: Tom Forde (The Square), Jack Kilduff (Larganboy), Dominick Byrne (Derrymore) and John Patrick Jordan (Derrymore). Others in the group include some or all of the following: Patrick Biesty (Addergoole, Knock), John Dunleavy (Addergoole, Knock), Peter Cafferkey (Brackloon North), Jack Clarke (Hazelhill), George Delaney (Abbey St.), Mick Finn (Classaghroe), Michael Fitzmaurice (Lisbane), Tommy Flatley (Upper Main St.), Johnny Gilmore (Knox St.), Michael Freeley (Island), John Greene (Carrowreagh), Roddy Healy (Ballindrehid), Bernie Jordan (Cummer), Johnny Kenny (Brackloon North), Hubert Lyons (Knox St.), Jack Lyons (Ballindrehid), Ned McGuire (Cherryfield), Tom Murphy (Devlis), Patrick Regan (Gurteenbeg), Mick Sloyan (Forthill), Austin Tarpey (Pattenspark), Luke Waldron (Cloonbook), Patrick Waldron (Pattenspark), Patrick McLoughlin, (Addergoole, Knock). *Photograph by Fr Kieran Waldron.*

Bekan (A) Company, I.R.A., 11th July 1921

On the day the Truce was signed, ending the War of Independence

Capt. Martin Forde, Island	Pat Morley, Moylett's, Ballina
1st Lt. Paddy Delaney, Island	Luke Waldron, Cloonbook
2nd Lt. Thomas Kelly, Cloonbulban	Martin Grogan, Bekan
Adj. Thomas Flatley, Ballyhaunis	Thomas Meehan, (U.S.A.)
Q.M. James Carney, Larganboy	Paddy Flatley, (U.S.A.)
John Kilduff, Larganboy	William Tarpey, (U.S.A.)
Patrick Lee, Larganboy	Edward McGuire, Ballyhaunis
John J. Lee, Larganboy	John McGuire, Cloonbulban
John Cunnane, 40 Ferguson Rd., Dublin	William Kirrane, Lissineska
William Cunnane, Larganboy	Michael Maurice, (U.S.A.)
Martin Cunnane, Larganboy	Tom Nolan, Bekan
Martin Kilduff, (U.S.A.)	Bartley Nolan, Bekan
Patrick Fahy, Forthill, Ballyhaunis	Martin Nolan, (U.S.A.)
Michael Hopkins, (U.S.A.)	Michael Horkan, (U.S.A.)
Peter Hopkins, (U.S.A.)	Bernard Lyons, Ballyhaunis
Patrick Hopkins, Larganboy	Michael Lyons, Bekan
John Forde, Larganboy	Michael Finn, Bekan
Daniel Forde, (U.S.A.)	Owen McHale, Bekan
Martin Mullins, Larganboy	Pat Holian, Derrymore
John Carney, Larganboy	Martin Holian, Derrymore
Edward Finn, Larganboy	Pat Johnston, Coolnaha
John Mulkeen, Larganboy	William Flatley, Lassiney
James Feeney, (U.S.A.)	Martin Flatley, Lassiney
Thomas Mulkeen, Larganboy	John Horkan, Lassiney
Patrick Mulkeen, (U.S.A.)	Michael Waldron, Derrymore
Austin Clifford, Larganboy	Michael Flannigan, Ballindrehid
Patrick Forde, Island	Pat Clancy, Cloonbook, Claremorris
Patrick Kelly, Island	Patrick Greally, Cloonbook
Michael Kelly, Island	Thos. Darcy, Bellisker
Martin Beirne, Island	John Caulfield, (U.S.A.)
Michael Freeley, Island	Michael Clancy, Bellisker (Manchester)
Joe Carney, (U.S.A.)	Thos. Flatley, Lassiney
Patrick Moran, Brackloughboy	Martin Cribben, Bekan (U.S.A.)
David Mulkeen, Larganboy	Michael Mulkeen, Carrownedan
Patrick Ganley, Larganboy	Patrick Murphy, (U.S.A.)
Patrick Waldron, Cave, Ballyhaunis	Andrew Johnston, Erriff, Bekan
John Mulkeen, Reisk	Martin Flatley, Derrymore
Martin Kirrane, Cloonbulban	

Last Orders at Caulfield's

Eamon Murren

When Aisling and Seamus Caulfield closed the door of their shop in Upper Main Street for the last time at 6pm on the 31st of December 2019, it brought down the curtain for the last time on one of Ballyhaunis' oldest businesses.

Opened in 1896 by Seamus' grandfather Tommy Mick Caulfield, who ran the shop and egg exporting business until his death, aged 57, in 1927, the business was then continued by his widow Ellen who passed it on to her son Vincent. Vinnie sadly passed away in October 1981 and the mantle was passed on to his wife Kathleen who kept the shop open until 1991. When Tom and Noreen Hopkins took their well-earned retirement from business in 1997, they advised Seamus Caulfield to re-open the shop. It was good advice. Seamus and his wife Aisling (Webb) ran a hugely successful and popular business for the next twenty-two years. Caulfield's was not just a shop: it



Aisling and Seamus Caulfield with their children Saoirse and Conal on their last day of business in Upper Main Street, 31st December 2019.



A picture from 1964, taken outside Caulfield's shows Mícheál Murren holding baby Vinnie Caulfield along with Tommy and Anne Caulfield and Eamonn Murren.

was a meeting place, an advice centre, a newsroom, a collection depot and, long before Donald Trump became president, *Fake News* was rife there, as Seamus frequently dropped a little red herring to spice up the daily news. The closure of Caulfield's was like a death in Upper Main Street.

Monday mornings in Caulfield's were especially important for many. All the weekend sport was analysed and the performance of the Mayo team was often top of the agenda. Sean Waldron, Johnny Biesty, Pado Moran, Jim Lundon, Mícheál Murren, Ber Waldron, Tommy Glynn and Mike Webb were among those offering their expert views.

The closure of Caulfield's leaves the new HealthWest Community Pharmacy, on the site of Mixie Caulfield's, as the only commercial business now operating in Upper Main Street. A big change from my childhood days, when my late mother Gretta (Johnston) ran a shop in our house. Across the road was Mulhern's newsagents and grocery, Shryane's (buttons, zips, thread, fabric and drapery), Hopkins' grocery and fuel, M.A. (Mult) Waldron's insurance broker, Greeley's (which later housed Myra Flatley's hair salon), Lyons' bicycle shop at the top of Doctor's Road, P.D. Freeley's (shop and hackney), Larry Moran's White Horse Inn. Byrne's (known as Aunt Maggie's), Jordan's and Glynn's butchers operated on our side of the street. All gone now. All in the past.

The same story is repeated in small towns up and down the country. Small family-run businesses have given way to multi-nationals, supermarkets and online shopping. But no modern supermarket or online service could ever hope to compare with the service provided over three generations by Seamus, Aisling, Kathleen,



From left: Michael Henry, David Freeley, Mícheál Murren and Dermot Freeley, pictured in Upper Main Street, 1965.

Vinnie, Ellen and Tommy Mick for the past century and a quarter. We wish Seamus and Aisling all the best in their new careers as we say heartfelt thanks for the memories.



A view of the Friary Walk and the Devils River, in the depths of winter 2019. Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek.

A Writer from Knox Street, Ballyhaunis

Anthony Jordan

During my third year teaching in primary school I used to arrive back to my one-room flat in Ranelagh, Dublin, at around three o'clock each day. How I was going to fill the time until social life began in the evenings was a problem.

I started writing a story about a female who discovered, by accident, that she had been adopted as a baby, and the unhappy consequences that followed, when her birth mother refused to meet her. From an early point she took over the story herself. I used to wonder on the way home from school, "where will she take me today?" as the copybooks piled up.

It was exhilarating to create such a real individual. When, after eighteen months or so, it came to an end, I was sad, and felt that I must get it typed in order to show it. I chose to send it to a London publisher, Michael Joseph of Bedford Square. Several months passed until I received it back from Raleigh Trevelyan, the editorial director. His letter read:

September 1971

Dear Mr. Jordan,

I am very sorry to have to tell you that we cannot make an offer for 'Was It For This The Clay Grew Tall.' I think the best thing I can do is to give you a photocopy of part of a report, which includes some fairly direct comments.

What I suggest is that you find somebody who will help you edit the book. If you feel like it after this, I would be glad to reconsider the MS. I presume you must really be a woman. If so, why use the name Anthony?

Sorry to have kept you waiting,

Yours sincerely,

Raleigh Trevelyan

That last sentence about being a woman was reward enough for me. I had indeed created a character, a real person - or rather maybe she had created herself?

The reader's report read:

"This book is something of a freak. In the first place, I find it incredible that it has (apparently) been written by a man. The assumption of a female person - not to my mind, a particularly attractive one - is totally convincing. In the second place, extreme vividness of observation is allied with some amateurishness of execution. Yet the story does grip."

"It might be worthwhile to edit it drastically in

collaboration with the author. It needs cutting by a third - there is a lot that is trivial in it. The book is best when the narrator relates flatly what happened to her; it is worst when she tries to draw philosophical or moral conclusions."

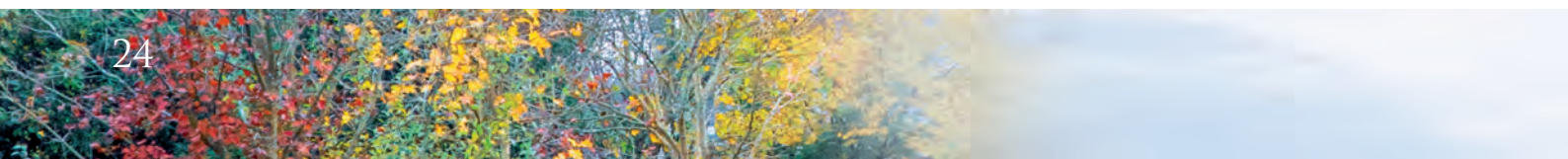
I put the manuscript away and did not attempt an edit then. The memory of what had happened earlier to John McGahern - in the same parish in which I then taught, Clontarf - was still fresh in my mind. He had published a novel - 'The Dark' - that contained direct references to sexuality. When his teachers' union, due to a technicality on his membership, did not defend him, he lost his job. The Irish National Teachers' Organisation decided strategically that it did not want to risk a confrontation with the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid. I could not take such a risk. I was married, had a mortgage and we were again starting a family. I then became a principal teacher and my writing ceased temporarily.

Some years later, through the influence of one of our past students, Christy Brown, I began to write my first biographies. I finished one on Major John MacBride and it was published by Westport Historical Society.

I then wrote one on his son Sean MacBride. It was due to be published by a reputable firm, Glendale Press, which had it typeset and edited before "ceasing to publish". Several publishers then made offers. I chose John O'Connor of Blackwater Press who offered me a two-book contract. Books on Conor Cruise O'Brien and Winston Churchill followed; as did others on W.T. Cosgrave, W.B. Yeats, Jesus and James Joyce and many others.

In 2010 I had published an autobiography called 'The Good Samaritans', which contained lengthy chapters on growing up in Ballyhaunis in the 1950s-60s, going to St Jarlath's College, Maynooth, St. Patrick's Drumcondra and UCD. I also told the story of the unpublished novel there. A good friend, Patrick O'Keeffe, enquired as to the location of the manuscript. I did not know. He told me he had it! He returned it - and I put it away again.

In 2016 I was organising my archive for donation to the National Library of Ireland and rediscovered the manuscript. I read it and relived the excitement it created for me those years earlier. A friend digitised it for me and I commenced the edit that Raleigh Trevelyan suggested all those years earlier. The book now has a different name - 'Tell My Mother That I...' - is shorter, and is published by Westport Books. Surprisingly, the



issues it deals with remain entirely contemporary: adoptive persons' rights, Catholicism, female alienation, abortion and the Samaritans. It was to appear earlier this year but Covid-19 upset that schedule. I feel, however, that now at last, I have been faithful to the lady I last encountered at the entrance to the South Wall at Dun Laoghaire Harbour in south county Dublin.

Anthony Jordan is a native of Knox St. Ballyhaunis and lives at Sandymount in Dublin.



Anthony Jordan and family donating his papers to the National Library of Ireland. L-R: Anthony, Judith, Fiona and Mary Jordan, with granddaughter Lily Moran in front.

His full book list is:

'Major John MacBride' (1991)
'Sean – A Biography of Sean MacBride' (1993)
'To Laugh or To Weep – A Biography of Conor Cruise O'Brien' (1994)
'Churchill – A Founder of Modern Ireland' (1995)
'Willie Yeats and the Gonne-MacBrides' (1997)
'Christy Brown's Women – A Biography' (1998)
'The Yeats Gonne MacBride Triangle' (2000)
'W.B. Yeats - Vain, Glorious Lout' (2003)
'The Quiet Quarter' in *Anthology of New Irish Writing* Edited by Eoin Brady (2004)
'Boer War To Easter Rising – Writings of John MacBride' (2005)
'W.T. Cosgrave 1880-1965 – Founder of Modern Ireland' (2006)

'John A. Costello 1891-1976 Compromise Taoiseach' (2007)
'The Good Samaritans – Memoir of a Biographer' (2008)
'Eamon de Valera 1882-1975, Irish: Catholic: Visionary' (2010)
'Arthur Griffith with James Joyce & W.B. Yeats – Liberating Ireland' (2013)
'A Jesus Biography' (2015)
Chapter on W.T. Cosgrave in *Dublin City Council and the 1916 Rising* (2016)
'James Joyce Unplugged' (2017)
'Maud Gonne's Men' (2019)
'Tell my Mother I... a Novel of Adoption' (2020)

Sheila Conway behind the counter of her shop on Clare Street, in the 1980s. Courtesy Eamon Murren.



Ballyhaunis Community School Puts Best Foot Forward

Mike Finnerty, *The Mayo News*

The first four weeks back at Ballyhaunis Community School has been 'a fabulous month of teaching and learning' while 'nothing has arisen' in terms of cases of Covid-19. That's the message from school principal, David McDonagh, who has been delighted with the way that both teachers and students 'have put their shoulders to the wheel' despite the 'barriers to communication' presented by the need to wear face coverings and obey other public health guidelines to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus.



Ballyhaunis Community School. *Courtesy Sinéad Mallee.*

There are 650 students attending the East Mayo school, with more than fifty teachers working there, and Mr. McDonagh couldn't be happier with the way everyone has adapted so far. "There's no doubt that the atmosphere has changed around the school," he said. "People are a little more cautious and a little more worried. But as the weeks go by, a sort of normal atmosphere is starting to return. It's obviously hard with everyone wearing face coverings, constantly sanitising and adhering to social distancing all the time, but it's still 'more normal' than it was a few weeks ago. The overwhelming sense I've got from the students is that they're delighted to be back. At this stage I've spoken to every single one of them, and there's no doubt that they found it difficult being away from school. It's a huge benefit to them to be able to have face-to-face learning, and to be able to ask a question if there's something they don't understand. There's no doubt that teachers and pupils were thrown in at the deep end with blended learning earlier in the year, but our IT potential has improved significantly in the last six months," he added.

"The spectre of another potential lockdown is hanging over everyone at the moment, but we have

upskilled our students, especially our First Years, and we have worked with the teachers to help them be ready and prepared for distance learning if that happens. Just this week every teacher in the school was given a device, that's an investment of €30,000. Teacher learning has moved on over the years, and lockdown and everything that goes with it has accelerated the process," he continued.

David McDonagh became principal of Ballyhaunis Community School eight years ago, and a €10m refurbishment means that students and teachers now spend their days in a state-of-the-art building with sports facilities to match. As a result, Covid-19 restrictions haven't impacted on the school's Physical Education curriculum in the way it has in some other schools around the country.

"Our PE department has been fortunate in that they have been able to retain their gym," explained Mr. McDonagh, who is a former Davitts and Mayo Gaelic footballer. "I know in a lot of schools, the gym has had to be taken over to be used as a classroom. We've actually taken over a fitness studio in the school for a classroom. With the good weather, most PE classes have been held outside where we have three hard-court areas, an astro-turf, a football pitch and a soccer pitch. So far it's worked very well, but it will be more of a challenge when the weather changes," he reflected.

Most aspects of trying to live and work alongside the virus are likely to be 'more of a challenge' in the winter months ahead, and the Ballyhaunis CS principal admits that one of his biggest concerns is 'the uncertainty for exam year students.' "Whether we like it or not, there's an uncertainty for those students," he said. "We're all driving on but the spectre of another lockdown hangs over everyone."

Overall though, David McDonagh takes great heart from the first month back since schools re-opened and is sounding a positive and optimistic note for parents and students everywhere. "I understand people's concerns, but there are very clear public health and HSE guidelines, and from talking to colleagues I feel that schools are probably one of the safest places people could be at the moment," he said. "So parents should be reassured, and I'd encourage them to make sure that children follow the guidelines outside school. If that happens, the schools will stay open."

Ballyhaunis Community School

Lorna Davis, Dylan Golden, Claire Flanagan, three students of Ballyhaunis Community School share their experiences of life over the past few months.
Thanks to their teacher, Mrs. Anna Henry, for her assistance.



The three BCS students whose contributions are included here.
L-R: Lorna Davis, Dylan Golden and Claire Flanagan.

How the Global Chaos of Covid-19 has affected the lives of Students

Lorna Davis

Who could have guessed 2020 would be the year of major changes straining the very foundations of our society and life as we know it?

Covid-19, more commonly known as Coronavirus, became a reality on Thursday, 12th March 2020 the day our school was closed. Until then, coronavirus was like a joke within the school; we could never have imagined the seriousness of the situation. We were assured the school would be reopening in two weeks but we all thought we would return after the Easter Holidays. Little did we know weeks would turn into months - almost six months to be exact - until anyone would set foot on school premises once more.

My Experience

'The Corona Holidays' were brimming with mixed emotions. At the start the novelty of being away from school was wonderful! I was delighted to be able to catch up on lost sleep, rediscover lost hobbies, and watch plenty of net-flix documentaries and television shows (mostly television shows).

As time marched on and quarantine measures restricted our movements increasingly each day, the

novelty began to wear-off. Now the worry of contracting the coronavirus crossed my mind repeatedly throughout the day as the news anchors and health officials gave lectures on hygiene and continued to shock the nation as the deaths and cases continued to rise daily. The situation was unthinkable: as if it were just a bad dream, something you would read about in books but would never believe could happen. Hundreds of people dying in Ireland from a virus with flu-like symptoms? It seemed ridiculous, completely fictional. Eventually, the 'new normal' of remaining at home became a relentless routine. I took up exercising in an attempt to stay productive and stayed in bed late to make the days less lengthy.

The most exciting part of the day was contacting my friends via the social media app House party. Every night we would chat and play online board games and I would forget about coronavirus and for just a few minutes the world seemed normal. Such a simple activity could put my mind at ease and help me remember the good things in life such as friends. In the midst of the pandemic maintaining a positive outlook on life proved to be challenging. When the world is filled with negativity it can be difficult to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Sadly, the impact of quarantine had a negative effect on the mental health of many young people globally. In Ireland alone a recent report from the Union of Students found that over 30% of students experienced behaviours linked with a major depressive disorder over quarantine, due to overthinking, anxiety, and the stresses of online schooling.

Online School

I did not experience the hardships of many as they continued their exam curriculum online. Thankfully, being in Transition Year, education was not a major priority over quarantine. Our teachers, however, gave us some assignments to keep us 'occupied' such as maths equations, geography projects to complete on powerpoint, and a business module.

Overall, online school was adequate, from the perspective of a transition year who did not really require its resources. Nationally, students had complaints about online schooling. According to a recent survey carried out by philontech, it was discovered that 77% of students disliked online schooling as, with the lack of an engaging class experience, there was a difficulty in adjusting to online learning and 85% of students missed the social experience of school which

online school was lacking.

Thankfully, I was in a non-exam year but although online learning wasn't a major factor for me, my Transition Year experience did suffer.

How Covid-19 effected my Transition Year experience

The invasion of Covid-19 into the country, which caused school closures, had many negative impacts on my experience within Transition Year. Due to the pandemic various valuable courses such as the driving course, where students learned the controls within a vehicle, and had the opportunity of a trial theory test, was cancelled.

Our 'Cycle against Suicide' in which students across the country cycle to raise money for suicide prevention centres was also cancelled. Because of this suicide prevention centres didn't receive funding that could be used by people who are actively struggling with their mental health.

The outbreak also halted community care, an activity in which students actively engage voluntarily in the assistance of members of their community. Here we would have learned how to behave, act and perform tasks in professional working environments. Work experience is one of the many benefits of transition year as it enables students to further develop their Curriculum Vitae for work opportunities in the future. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 all these wonderful activities were cancelled, and we missed out on valuable life experiences. Fortunately, the school was able to reopen eventually but we were unable to catch up on the activities we had missed as our time in Transition Year had come to an end.

For the exam students, however, Covid-19 caused mayhem! One minute the Junior Cert was going ahead and the next minute it was cancelled again! Many of the third years were delighted their exams were cancelled but the Junior Certificate, in my opinion, is an important opportunity to experience the stressful exam environment prior to the Leaving Certificate exams.

Most of the Leaving Certificate students were disappointed to discover their exams would be postponed and the option of predictive grading by teachers became available. This was a very stressful year for Leaving Certificate students as they were faced with the nerve-wracking decision of choosing predictive

grading or waiting to sit the Leaving Certificate at a much later, undecided date.

School Life

Due to Covid-19 the school was forced to initiate stricter regulations to protect teachers and students from contracting the virus, which drastically impacted the morale within the school. Students and teachers must all wear protective equipment such as visors and masks inside of the school and outside when the two-metre social distancing is not attainable. Wearing a mask for most of the school day is quite the chore. Constantly

breathing in recycled air within the mask leads to some minor ailments, from my experience. Wearing the mask causes hoarseness, makes it more difficult to breathe and ruins my clear complexion with dreadful spots! School proved tiring enough at the end of day, but with the mask I am absolutely shattered and ready for bed when school is over. The introduction of the mask has also created a quieter atmosphere within the classroom, as the embarrassment of talking through a mask prevents students engaging in the normal classroom discussions, which has proved to be problematic in talkative subjects such as English.

We must also sanitise our desks before class, which is a reasonable request to prevent spreading the virus onto school materials. To maintain the acceptable distance at lunch, the seating arrangement has been altered: one seat has been

removed to create a gap between two people. This change has made fewer seats available to students at lunch time, which means there are a number of people each day that will struggle to obtain a seat during break time. This can be extremely frustrating if you happen to be one of the unlucky few.

The social aspect of school has been compromised by the new rules. I am now in fifth year and in my class there are third year students who decided to skip transition year and continue their studies. Due to the present circumstances it is much more difficult to begin conversing with the past third year pupils as the worries of coronavirus prevent students from socialising with new people and making new friends.

With coronavirus as our new normal I am worried about my future. Will I have exams, or will they be based on the predictive grading system carried out by my teachers? Will I ever experience a normal school day without a mask before I leave the school?



A sign of the times.

My Social Life

The virus has also had a significant impact on my social life. Usually my summers would be filled with outings but because of quarantine I was unable to participate in activities I love. During the summer I always visited my cousins situated in various counties throughout the country. We would spend a few nights in each county and enjoy the scenery with long walks along the shore, cycling around towns on rented bicycles, trying out new restaurants and generally socialising.

I would also meet up with my friends frequently and we would arrange sleep-overs, shopping trips, cinema outings: anything to escape the boredom of staying at home all day. Spending time with friends outside of the stressful school environment was the highlight of my summer.

Although Covid-19 ultimately ruined all my summer plans it has made me realise how I took everything for granted. Now that I have experienced a quarantined summer, it has made me more appreciative of the simple things such as enjoying a hot day on the beach.

Overall, I am quite content with my school experience under the new regulations of Covid-19. Unfortunately, we must adjust to the dreaded 'new normal' within our daily lives as a means of keeping safe. I understand that although the new school rules are monotonous, they have been put in place for our protection and the safety of others.

The virus will remain active for quite some time in our country and globally. The cases will continue to rise and we will be worried. However, we must remember that, although the times are challenging, life is short and we must try to enjoy every second no matter what the circumstances are. The quote, "We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope" perfectly sums up our situation. We must remember that the pandemic is not permanent. Hopefully, in the near future, these troubling times will be a distant memory we can recall in disgust as we resume our normal socialising habits once more.

Life in School During Covid-19

Dylan Golden

Thursday the 12th of March 2020 was a day no student or teacher would ever forget. It was the day our principal announced that our school would be closing with immediate effect until Easter due to the increasing outbreaks of Covid-19. When I heard the announcement, I couldn't say I was shocked: having



A socially distanced fifth-year English class in Ballyhaunis Community School, 2020.

watched the news I had seen the cases rising every day in Ireland. However, receiving news that the school was closing was an eye-opener for me and confirmed the reality of the danger of Covid-19. Almost immediately the atmosphere in the school became panicked. Some teachers were in deep discussion with each other; some made an effort to assure us that everything would be 'okay'; and some were running from class to class collecting the email addresses of students to ensure they could communicate with them during the lockdown. Most students were unsure what to feel or think, but I feel deep down we were all apprehensive of the situation. I can surely speak on behalf of all when I say that clearing out our lockers was not easy. People were weighed down by books and buses were full to the brim. This made me thankful I had called my dad to collect me instead of taking the bus.

Easter arrived and there was no talk of the schools reopening. Many students participated in the online work, even though they had to struggle with internet problems. However, there were some who chose to blatantly ignore the work given. It felt as though I was getting more work than I had been getting while in school, but this could have been because I was out of my usual school routine. If I were to start schoolwork at 9 every morning and finish at 4, then I would have been sure to get it all done. However, I can admit I became lazy and my schedule was a mess.

Working online was difficult. It was a nuisance that whenever I didn't understand something, I had to email my teacher, who might not get the chance to reply until hours later as everyone was working at different times. I didn't struggle with using Microsoft Teams as most of us teenagers are more experienced with technology than the older generations. However, I did not enjoy learning from home at all. I'm easily distracted and I was getting distracted all the time at home. It made me very unproductive as I would procrastinate for most of the

day and was then required to work into the night to ensure my homework was completed. For this reason, I am glad to be back in the school environment.

Isolating

Working online was also very isolating. There was little communication, only submitting assignments and emailing the teachers from time to time with a question. I missed the school environment, the classroom and my friends. Although I lost touch with a few friends over lockdown, I am extremely grateful for those with whom I communicated on a regular basis and formed even closer bonds with.

Summer wasn't as depressing as lockdown. Restrictions were starting to be lifted and we could meet with our friends while outside and social distancing. I felt elated to be around my friends again, although it felt as though my social skills became a little rusty during lockdown. When we heard the Junior Cycle exams had been cancelled, we were all extremely relieved. We wouldn't have to stress about studying and we wouldn't be at risk of getting Covid-19 in the crammed exam rooms.

Throughout most of the summer, I spent a lot of time with my family. I am so thankful I have a good relationship with them, or summer would have been a nightmare. I learned to appreciate things like music, books and nature during this time. I found a new love for gardening and I spent many hours outside in the fresh air. I'm lucky I kept myself busy during summer or it could have seriously affected my mental health.

Returning to school in September was terrifying. As a Third Year going straight into Fifth Year, it was daunting to be entering a year with different people. I felt sad leaving some friends behind as they journeyed into Transition Year, but I felt confident with my decision to go into Fifth Year. It's hard enough to go into a year with new people, never mind all the safety precautions discouraging people from mixing. I was worried this would be a barrier and make it difficult to make new friends. It felt as though I was a first year again - going blindly into a new environment with new people. However, I got through the first day and I felt more positive about the days to come.

Life in school was very different to previous years. We were always required to wear a face covering, except when eating lunch. Wearing face masks is the biggest nuisance of all, especially for someone with glasses like myself. My mask must be positioned perfectly to ensure the air escapes through the mask without fogging up my glasses. At times we suffer from headaches or stomach aches from wearing them for too long. However, one thing most of us are suffering from is blemishes on our

skin. While all of these are annoying, we understand masks must be worn to protect ourselves and others.

It's also very odd having different breaktimes to other years. Seeing all the empty seats in the canteen creates a sad and eerie atmosphere. We are required to sit two seats apart in the canteen to ensure social distancing is taking place. This is quite irritating as this creates a limited number of seats for everyone. I have a friend in Third Year I don't get to see at all throughout the day because of the staggered break times. This means we can only talk online when we get home from school and this is frustrating for us both.

Life in the classroom is much different to how it used to be. There is a quiet atmosphere in almost every classroom. This is probably a result of wearing the face masks and practicing social distancing in the classrooms. It's quite daunting to speak in class with the mask on. This is because we are usually asked to repeat ourselves several times before the teacher can understand what we're saying as our voices are a bit muffled. Every student is sitting a metre apart in the classroom. This limits our communication with each other, which the teachers are probably enjoying! The last four classes in the afternoon are a killer. I can speak on behalf of all the students when I say that no one enjoys facing the last few classes as we are all wrecked by the end of the day.

In conclusion, life now is very different than it was six months ago. Some of us were naïve enough to think we would be back to school after a few weeks and that Covid-19 would disappear. Personally, I have changed since then. I have grown as a person, discovered new hobbies and interests and have learned to value the important things in life, like happiness, friends and family.

Pressure During the Pandemic

Claire Flanagan

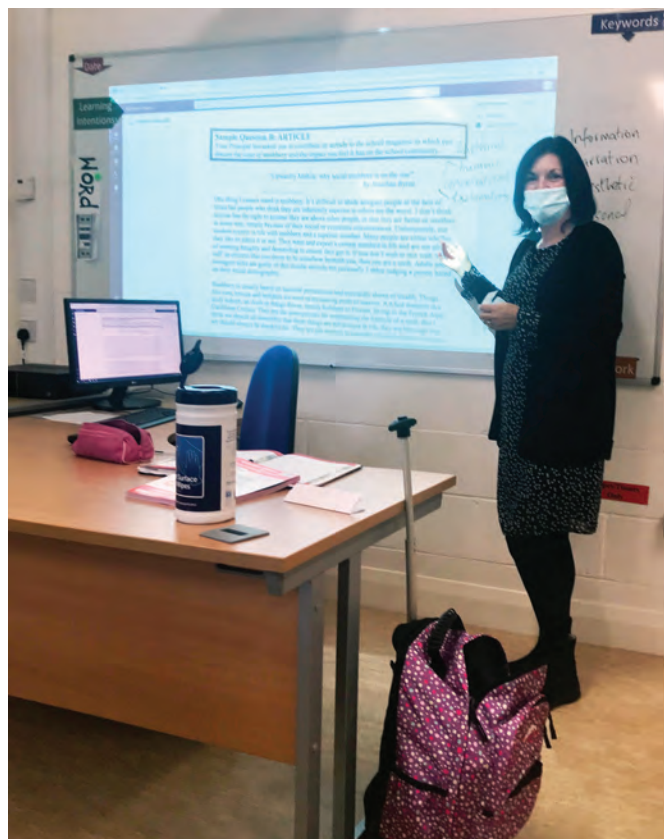
With the first coronavirus case in Ireland reported on the 29th February 2020, I knew it was not going to be long until I was learning from computer screens. From the 12th March 2020, life in school was going to be different for some time. I thought it would last two or three weeks, but I never thought it would be six months. Some students were panicking about their Leaving Certificate examination, some were worrying about online learning, while others were concerned about the debts!

For me, I was really enjoying school in Transition Year and I knew I would miss the social aspect of it. I kept positive and hoped it would only be two weeks and I would be back after Easter, but those hopes soon

dropped after two weeks of cases rising across the region, with 1,040 cases reported on 16th April. Seven of my classmates and I were due to go on a trip to France but that plan was soon put to bed, with only essential travel allowed to and from the country; and with 5,497 cases reported on 14th April in France, I was not too eager to travel.

The time slowly passed by and I went through the months of April and May with little happening. Of course, I had online learning to keep me occupied, although some students had difficulty with the technological aspect of it. Microsoft Teams became my best friend throughout lockdown, with me checking in every morning for new assignments. Transition Year students were not a priority, but the teachers kept me on my toes! I never thought I would say this, but I was glued to the news and thrilled as the news at 5.30 approached with the daily figures.

One Monday evening in August, after months of binge watching 'Only Fools and Horses', there was finally hope along the lines of schools re-opening. Newly elected Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, delivered positive news for students and teachers outlining that we would be able to return in September. I can only imagine that it was a stressful time for school management and staff to get preparations in place and, in my opinion, they delivered.



Mrs. Anna Henry in the classroom

Although it was different for everyone, I settled back quite quickly. With approximately 640 students and fifty teachers in the school, everyone had to co-operate. Once I got in in the morning, I sanitised my hands and applied my face covering. I thought everyone would mess with them, but everyone knows what is at risk if they do not contribute. Juniors use the main entrance, while seniors use the front door. These different rituals help to keep us socially distanced as much as possible. New locker rules were also introduced, which involves going to your locker as little as possible - in the morning, after lunch and in the evening. I am very grateful to even get a locker this year as some schools do not have this facility.

Each year has a designated area with the teachers moving between classrooms and designated seats in each classroom for contact-tracing. We must sanitise our desks and hands before sitting down for each class. We are also very lucky to have P.E. every week which we all look forward to.

Staggered breaktimes were also introduced with Second Years, Transition Years and Fifth Years all doing a 2-3-4 class system and First, Third and Sixth Years doing a normal 3-3-3 system. Although I do not see friends in other years as much, social distancing is taken more into account, but I also get first to the sausage rolls on a Friday!

I also take the bus to and from school each morning and evening. So far, our bus has not been reduced in capacity but we must sit beside the same person each day. Face coverings are worn by all and hands are sanitised getting on and off.

Another key aspect of my life that has been affected is my social life! Summer nights out were looking highly unlikely for young people, but some kept their hopes up. Others were not seeing the positive side of it with a significant rise in calls to Jigsaw and Samaritans helplines during March and May. Gradually getting back to normal, some things have changed with summer Sundays now in garages and kitchens! The long-awaited return to sport came on Wednesday, 4th June after Government and the GAA were both happy to give the go-ahead. Running the roads day in, day out was finally going to pay off, and so it did with a Roscommon Junior A County title under my belt with Éire Óg Senior Ladies.

Overall, after a long six months, I feel everyone is delighted to be back interacting with each other. Many people have found it a struggle, but others have realised that lockdown was a much needed break from their busy lives and has given them time to sit back, relax and think about what is going on. We must "Step up and step back - go one step further to keep each other safe."

Autumn Stations 2019

Photographs by Fr Stephen Farragher, P.P.



Margaret and George Hannan, Drimbane, 12th Oct. 2019

Standing, L-R: Iona Hannan, Isla Waldron, Cinta Molloy, Kevin Molloy, Dymphna Grealley, David Hannan, Margaret Hannan, Joan Harrington, Gabriel Smith, George Hannan. **Seated, L-R:** Padraig Kelly, Kathleen Kelly, Angela Cribbin, Seamus Cribbin.



Tom and Breda Waldron, Cave, 18th Oct. 2019

Back, L-R: Ciarán Waldron, Phillip Cunnane, Paul Waldron, Tony Waldron, Brendan Morrissey, Isla Waldron, Nuala Nolan, Patricia Waldron, Aoife Nolan, Erika Webb, James O'Brien. **Centre, L-R:** Padraig Waldron, Noel Raftery, Anne O'Brien, Mary Morrissey, Dymphna Grealley, Rita Morris, Marie Cribbin, Bernard Waldron, Bernadette O'Brien, Niamh Waldron, Oliver Cribbin, Bridie Waldron, Martha Gallagher, Sean Waldron. **Front, L-R:** Cian Waldron, Robin Waldron, Margaret Raftery, Breda Waldron, Tommy Waldron, Pakie Waldron, Lorraine Allen, Jim McLoughlin, Breege McLoughlin, Ann Byrne, Mary Sweeney, John Morris.

Autumn Stations 2019



Mike and Mary T. Griffin, Devlis, 26th Oct. 2019

Standing, L-R: Mike Griffin, Mary T. Griffin, Marian Higgins, Sally Higgins, Jaroslav Drannik, Cezary Drannik, Francis Cuniffe, Mary Donnelly, Pat Higgins, Ita Fahey, Jarlath Fahey, Moira Delaney, Una Shiels, Pat Power, Elma Kilbride, Marie Winston, Faith Kayange, Michael Kayange, Tommy Winston, Fr. Stephen Farragher.

Seated, L-R: Mairéad Griffin, Davina Morris, Monica Carroll, Oisín Higgins, Betty Coen, Eoin Higgins, Breda Burke, Ben Halpenny, Darragh Halpenny, Mary Elwood, Philip Kayange, Molly Connolly.



John Joe and Gabrielle Lyons, Knockbrack, 9th Nov. 2019

Standing, from left: Teresa Grogan, Bernie Boyle, Nuala Higgins, Bernadette Lyons, Mary Higgins, Kathleen Egan, Frances Gaffney, Ann Murphy, Tina Kirrane, Joan McNamara, Mary Finnegan, Bernie Lyons, Mary Walsh, Micheál Lyons, Agatha Higgins, Kevin Higgins, Sheila Magee, James Lyons, Jimmy Walsh, Austin Boyle, Patrick Higgins, Padraig McGee, Therese Dillon, Brendan Higgins, Frank Lyons, Gerry Lyons, Kevin McNamara, Liam Lyons, Pat Gaffney, Pete Higgins, John Finnegan.

Seated, from left: Mary Lyons, Mary Donnelly, Shauna Lyons, Róisín Lyons, Joseph Lyons, Gabrielle Lyons, John Joe Lyons, Grace Lyons, Ciara Lyons, Aoibheann Lyons, Elaine Donnelly, Vincent Higgins, Jimmy Donnelly, Fr. Stephen Farragher.

Derrykin Lake – July Evening

Christina Johnston, Beka

Our minds weren't on the foot-cocking that sultry July afternoon; the air as still as the breaking dawn. Thomas remarked, "It will be a perfect evening for Derrykin; the perch will be there in shoals." I was so enthused by his optimism that I began to gather speed with my wooden rake.

Worms were already gathered, soft rain having loosened the soil making these wriggling creatures ready for the taking. We had hidden a jam jar full of them in the shade under the great beech tree.

Mother called across the meadow, "Tea is ready", and we responded immediately to her announcement. It wasn't just the buttered bread dipped in scallions straight from the soil and the dripping, hot, juicy rhubarb pie. It was the passport for our journey to the lake.

We carefully checked the simple bamboo canes, making sure the gut hook was secure and the homemade cork float was fit for action. Our journey took us west through the fields to Greenwood village, stopping there for the Lyons' and Murphys. We then took the sand road north for Reisk village where the Grogans joined us; their house, the last dwelling before the lake. The master fishermen, the Sloyan brothers, whistled happily ahead. We passed a large clump of gorse and around the corner gleamed Derrykin, resplendent and pure in the evening sun.

Murmuring midges disturbed the stillness of the fragrant air, and a grey heron peered inquisitively across from the tall bullrushes. Mild terrain ran down to the water's edge where the six of us formed a jagged line, our banter full of optimistic foreboding. Two of the more adventurous members of our group climbed a heathery turf bank overlooking a point called 'Reilly's Hole', where the fish were reputedly much more abundant. Concentration was focused on the bobbing corks in anticipation of landing our first catch. Like the first score in a football match, the proud angler was hugely lauded for skilfully taking a magnificent perch to the grassy bank. We beheld the wriggling captive with pride and pity, admiring his innate beauty.

To cool the nerves, the pack of ten Carroll's cigarettes was passed around, followed by mouthfuls of fizzy Cidona from the giant brown flagon. The rich smell of tobacco, its blue smoke curling skywards, scattered the midges, now biting more acutely than the fish. There was no trace of boredom or restlessness; our contentment was palpable.

Suddenly, a gutsy shout from the turf bank rang out, "Stand clear!" It was Paddy landing a leaping young pike onto the withered heather. Immediately, we abandoned

our gear to inspect this magnificent speckled catch, heaping praise on Paddy, the astute angler. I marvelled at the pike's perfect teeth as he desperately struggled to break free. There followed a sort of stunned silence and an empathy and admiration for this magnificent specimen of nature. Paddy gazed gravely toward us: "We don't eat pike. Maybe we should let him go?" So young, he could enjoy many more happy years here. The responding cheers could be heard down at the lower lake in Cloonacurry. Then, with a gleeful swish of his tail, he darted through the reeds to relish his regained freedom.

Reflecting on that magical evening with vivid and lovely emotion, remembering the strong bonds of friendship, our simple knowledge and empathy are so clear and memorable. Our way home took us through verdant meadows teeming with buttercup, wild rocket, dandelion and daisy. The thrush's final chirpings ushering the dusk, and the moon appearing over Feeney's Hill.

Paradise in the craggy terrain of East Mayo.



Andrew and Brendan Johnston (Erriff), after Confirmation and First Communion, respectively, with their hound 'Jackie', circa 1948.

Erriff Fadó



Johnston brothers Richard and Andrew (Erriff) coming from the bog near Knock, circa 1945.



Above: Next-door neighbours Richard Johnston and Seamus Lyons (now in New Jersey, USA), relaxing on the turf-barrow, circa 1972.



Left: Paddy Johnston, Erriff, in the early 1950s attending Knutsford Agricultural Show, Cheshire, England.

From Ballyhaunis to Baghdad and Back Again

I'll drive a 1957 Bedford lorry,
cream cab, chrome grill and silver container for cargo.
Behind the seat, a wooden box lined with silk
for my spy glass, dagger and monocle.
I'll keep my atlas beside me.

Baghdad is far away so the trip will take a long time.

I'll keep to myself. I'll pack rations:
hard-boiled eggs, bread, butter, *Calvita* Cheese,
good quality, long-lasting sweets from Mrs. Murren's,
red lemonade, ginger nut biscuits and a pile of sacks.

I've seen Baghdad in the pictures in the Parochial Hall.
I love the way the sun filters on the cobbled streets,
the gold perfume bottles, the rugs, jewellery and lamps
in the market stalls. I can almost smell the spices:
cinnamon, cardamom, cumin and baking bread.

You can get none of these in Ballyhaunis,
and nobody ever bakes in the streets.

I've read about flying carpets, and genies appearing
from magic lamps when stroked, granting wishes.
A good detective, with the help of a monocle and spy glass
will find the real thing hanging carelessly in a market.

Some treasure is hidden in caves;
finding the cave will be the challenge.
It often happens, while sipping sweet tea in a street stall,
a good detective overhears thieves reveal the location
and secret password. *Open Sesame* doesn't always work.

Once inside the cave I'll fill my sacks quickly.
Thieves, though they don't mind stealing,
don't like being robbed.

If I hear them coming, I'll wield my dagger
and dance a reel, kicking my legs high in the air,
and sing *Peigín Leitir Mór*.

Terrified, the thieves will run for their lives,
thinking I'm the ghost of the cave.

This will give me time to fill the lorry,
make my escape and head back to Ballyhaunis.

I'll decorate the town with gold and emerald jewels.
Main Street will glow, the spire of the church will sparkle.
I'll offer flying carpet rides from the Friary to The Mile Bush
and everyone will have a wish.

By Anne Hughes Irwin of Galway and formerly of
Knock road, Ballyhaunis.

Published in *The Galway Advertiser*, 10th Sept. 2020.

Ballyhaunis Gun Club

David Herr

*"The Wildlife of our Country is not ours to dispose of as we wish.
We are the guardians for generations to come"*

Ballyhaunis Gun Club goes from strength to strength every year and this year has been no different. Under the difficult circumstances we still managed to pull together and proceed with our projects.

We had a very successful year in relation to our conservation projects, which consisted of rearing and releasing 150 pheasants, 100 ducks, eight goslings, and assisting in the preservation of the curlew. We constructed new pens and erected feeder hoppers for the birds in different areas.

Curlew numbers have been declining across Ireland over the years. To try and rectify this, there have been a number of projects put in place across the country to help with preservation and to increase numbers. The Ballyhaunis-Tooreen area is one of these projects and has returned great results with an estimated nineteen chicks having fledged. Although the number may seem small, it is a great boost to the area and numbers are going in the right direction. Vermin control plays a huge part in giving ground-nesting birds a fighting chance, and indeed all the other wildlife in our countryside.

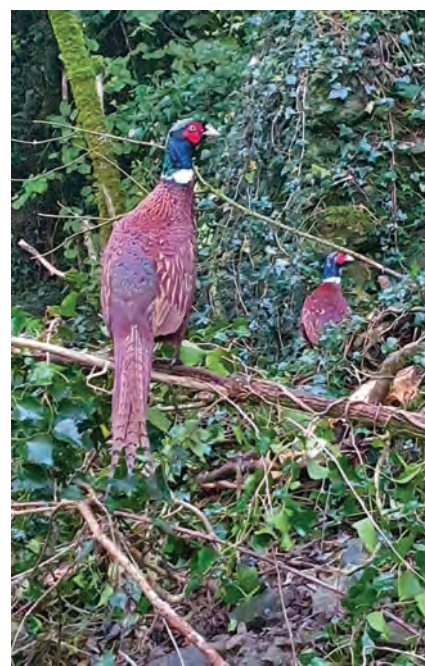
It was also a busy year on the Clay Shooting front. We held a couple of Open Shoots throughout the year while adhering to government guidelines. Great days were had and the grounds were in great shape with very competitive sporting clays and down the line events.

I would like to thank all our members past and present for helping out with all our projects and shooting events, and also the farmers and landowners.

Anyone interested in getting involved in club activities can contact any of the club officers or members of the Club.

Club Officers: **President** - David Jackson; **Chairman** - Padraic Waldron; **Secretary** - David Herr; **Treasurer**: Ciarán Waldron.

*Top right: A male Pheasant, reared under the auspices of Ballyhaunis Gun Club.
Centre right: Curlew, part of the Club's successful conservation project.*



Left:
Attending the
Ballyhaunis Gun
Club Christmas
Party, 2019,
L-R: Liam Lyons,
David Jackson,
Bernard Waldron,
Ciarán Waldron,
Gerry Burke,
Mark Kelly,
John Grealley,
Padraig Kiely,
Paddy Purcell,
Jack Lannon,
Padraig Waldron,
Tom Waldron.
Far left: David Herr,
Adrian Lilly,
Brian Higgins,
David Healy.

Christmas in a Pandemic - Let's Mind Ourselves

Lucie Kavanagh

Minding our mental health during the Christmas period can be difficult. Minding our mental health during Christmas in a pandemic is going to be that little bit more complicated.

Christmas is never easy for everyone (or sometimes indeed, for anyone). There are the 'normal' stresses – money, presents, shopping, guests and, of course, the need and pressure to please everyone. But layers above that there are people who find Christmas difficult, often unbearable. Anyone who has suffered bereavement, mental health difficulties, loneliness, isolation, marginalisation or financial hardship will know what this means. Every year there are people who dread the early hints of Christmas as October moves into November and every year there are people counting down the days until January.

As we all know, the first signs of winter bring the first subtle demands – start spending! Time to stock up on presents, think about meals and food, plan for parties and generally get our houses in order. This builds and builds into the frenzy that is December when, during normal years, queues of traffic, people in shops and festive mayhem keep us running around, dripping our hard earned cash everywhere that we can and then...

...comes January when we get told to stop spending, stop eating and start doing some serious penance to make up for it all.

Let's have a think about it all this year. It has not been easy. This year we are all in that place of having had a difficult year. Every worry, every hard event in our lives has been heightened by the fact that we are restricted. We couldn't visit loved ones in hospital. We lost earnings. Everything had to be juggled at home – education, transport, looking after family members and even just the everyday errands became that bit more difficult. So why add to the pressure?

We could choose not to buy into the subtle messages this year. We could plan to keep things simple. We could look around us for the struggling local business and craftspeople just about staying afloat and help by doing as much of our present buying with them. We could have the conversations at home now about what we need this Christmas – internally as well as externally. Do we need to save money so the new year won't bring added pressure? Do we need peace and rest? Do we need (if possible) a change of scenery? Do we need to just do as little as possible and take the pressure off, or do we want extra festivity and if so, how do we do it safely and in a way that feels comfortable for each person in the household?

Come January, do we need to say to ourselves to NOT buy into the diet culture? If you indulge a bit extra over Christmas, you'll be back eating normally in the new year. That's enough. Our bodies find their own ways to detox and adjust. If you exercise, do it because you enjoy it and feel good after, not because you feel you "have to." Parents are told never to use food as a reward or punishment with their children and that's the same for all of us. You don't have to "earn" it. It's not a "sin" to enjoy something sweet. We have enough pressure in our lives at the moment. Stay healthy, stay well, and don't listen to anyone or anything that tells you that you aren't good enough. You've lived through a global pandemic for almost a year... Of course you are.

If you are struggling at this time of year, please reach out. There's Pieta House 1800247247, the new HSE textline 50808, Shine (phil@shineonline.ie), Aware 1800804848, just to name a few, and of course your own GP and the people around you. It might take a bit of searching to find exactly what you need but there is also someone who will hear parts of your story and say "me too" or be there just to hear you.

Our ancestors used this time of year to look inwards, take stock and keep themselves safe and warm for the harsh winter season. The winter solstice was and is a celebration of light and a reminder that there are brighter days to come. Let's hold on to that and mind ourselves this Christmas season.



Noreen Byrne (left) pictured on her wedding day in 1957, with her sister Hannah. Noreen, formerly of Bridge Street, married Tony Golden in the University Church, Dublin and the wedding celebration took place afterwards at the nearby Russell Hotel. Courtesy Rita Byrne.

Bringing Bread to Ballyhaunis

Willie Broderick in conversation with Seamus Mulrennan and Tommy Caulfield

On Monday, 22nd June, as Covid-19 restrictions were being relaxed, Willie Broderick met with Seamus Mulrennan and Tommy Caulfield in the clubhouse of Ballyhaunis GAA and chatted about his life and times.

Willie was born in the year 1953, the fourth of eight children born to Bridie and Malachy Broderick and he grew up on the family farm at Clooncoose, a few miles from Castlerea, Co. Roscommon. He attended the local two-teacher national school at Cloonbonniffe where he was taught by Ms. Mary Canny from Dunmore and schoolmaster Tom Neary. Willie spent a short time at Castlerea Vocational School before starting his working life as a very young teenager in the bakery run by the Dyar family on Castlerea's Main Street.

As soon as he was old enough Willie applied for his driving license and, in no time, was on the roads of Mayo, Galway, Sligo and Roscommon working as a bread deliveryman for Dyar's. During his years on the road Willie recalls that towns like Ballyhaunis, and even smaller villages, used to be full of grocery shops. In Ballinlough Willie remembers delivering to Keaveney's, Fitzmaurice's, O'Connor's, Donnellan's, Mitchell's, Stanley's and Fleming's. He also delivered to Martin and Johnny Murphy on the Station Road and Dunning's shop, run by a Donegal man, as well as Paddy Walsh's, where The Tap is now located. In those days Willie also called to two shops in Ballinlough with the name of Waldron over the door, run by Paddy and Bridie Waldron.

Ballyhaunis

There was a similar story in Ballyhaunis in those distant, bygone days. Arriving from Castlerea, Willie recalled the businesses he supplied. Before he got under the railway bridge his first stop was at Winston's before moving on to Hannon's, Cunningham's and Lyons' in Abbey Street. Desmond Fitzgerald and Cyril Coyne in Bridge Street were next before turning down Clare Street to the grocery outlets of Grogan's, Byrne's, Alice Lyons and the travelling shop run by Tommy Flatley. Then onto Herr's, Kitty Mitchell and Jordan's in Knox Street before proceeding to the town's Main Street where he delivered to brothers Padraic and Anthony Waldron, Ryan's VG, Noel Waldron's Spar, Mayo footballer Tom Fitzgerald's Mace, later run by Bob Flynn. James Lyons would also take a few loaves on occasion. Further up the town's

principal thoroughfare Willie supplied the travelling shops of Byrne's and Pakie Caulfield's (Halpin's), and Tess Kelly's shop next-door. In Upper Main Street Willie reminds us that all of the shops he supplied are no longer in business: gone are Jordan's, Caulfield's, Hopkins' and Mulhern's as well as the travelling shops of Mixie Caulfield at the top of the town and Gus Caulfield in Carrowkeel.

The van may have been emptied of bread each evening on the return journey to Castlerea, but Willie's day's work was not complete. Like an early form of courier service, Willie always had to stop in Ballinlough with an item for delivery from one of the shops in Ballyhaunis. It may have been a tin of paint from one of the hardware stores or a prescription from the chemist or maybe a delivery from Fred Herr's Wholesalers.

Other bread men

Of course, Dyar's were just one of the many bakeries serving Ballyhaunis in the 1960s and 1970s. The drivers of these bread vans were daily visitors to Ballyhaunis and were considered part of the fabric and a vital cog in the business life of our once bustling town. Many of these drivers are remembered fondly by the town's folk. Willie rhymes off the names and memories come flooding back: Tommy Roddy (Dyar's), Joe Duggan and Alan McDonagh of Hanley's, Frank Cunnane from Castlerea delivered for Kelly's of Kilcock, Paddy Gavin of Ballina was deliveryman for Duffy's of Ballina (Knutty Krust!). Tony Morley delivered for Holsum of Charlestown while Paul Walsh and Martin Conlon were among the drivers who worked for Mack's of Kiltimagh where Paddy Dunne also was based. Mack's Bracks and Dunne's Buns! Willie finally recalls the name of Jimmy Keane who delivered for

Gallagher's Bread, a man of small stature but a larger-than-life, popular and well-liked character. From our own town Oliver Levins worked for Boland's and Edward Fitzgerald worked for a short time for Scott's Bakery. Paddy Ryan also worked as bread deliveryman for Boland's before opening the VG supermarket in Main Street in the 1960s. This list of breadmen who served Ballyhaunis is not in any way definitive, but it does help to give a flavour of the changes that have been wrought in the past fifty years.

Willie worked for over twenty years as a 'Bread Man' until the Dyar family suddenly decided to cease business and close down on 4th April 1987. This decision came out of the blue for Willie



Willie Broderick (left) receiving a presentation from Pat Kelly, Delivery Service Unit Manager, on the occasion of his retirement from An Post after 11 years of service.

and his colleagues who were shell-shocked by the decision, as there had been absolutely nothing to indicate that the popular brand was to suddenly disappear from the shop shelves. Maybe Mr. Dyar had a premonition of Ballyhaunis in the year 2020 and foresaw a different type of world, where his customer base of small shops with their personal touch would be a thing of the past.

Like most youngsters growing up in Ireland in the 1960s Willie followed the showbands all around the province and he has many particularly fond memories of dancing in marquees in places like Loughglynn and Ballygar. It was at a dance in Ballinlough in 1972 that Willie met Sheila Sloyan, his wife-to-be and the young couple were married two years later. They settled in Brackloon North and were blessed with five children, Alma, Sharon, Cathy, Emma and Kenneth.

Post Office

After finishing at Dyar's in 1987 Willie held a number of positions before moving on to the postal service where he worked for eleven happy years before his retirement in 2019. Given his background in the bakery business, it is not surprising that Willie soon landed a job with Kelly's Bakery. Kelly's were based in Kilcock, Co. Kildare, and Willie collected his daily supply of fresh bread each morning in Frenchpark from a much bigger truck, before continuing on his route. A year later Willie started work for Mick Murray and Haulie Grady at Connacht Scaffolding. The scaffolding business was taking off in Ireland at the time and Willie worked alongside Pat Murphy for a year in the very busy scaffolding depot at Gurteen.

Willie also had a stint as night porter at Knock House Hotel around the turn of the millennium. He remembers clearly the events of 9/11 when a terrorist attack brought down the Twin Towers. A number of New Yorkers were guests at the hotel at the time and were naturally very distraught by the attack. Willie recalls that their plans to return to New York were delayed for over a week due to tightened security measures in the wake of the atrocity. Willie noted that he found it difficult to believe that it's almost twenty years since that fateful day in New York. He has found that the months and years just seem to slip away and, as if to prove his point, Willie reminded the two interviewers that the longest day of 2020 had already passed. His next career move took him to Gallagher and Sons where he worked in their hardware business on the Clare Road for about five years.

On the first day of December 2008 Willie began working for the postal service. Initially, the position was a temporary one and he expected to work for about six weeks, but a full time position opened up and he continued working as a postman for eleven years until his retirement on 25th Oct. 2019. At first Willie and his colleagues



Willie and Sheila Broderick with their children, from left, Alma, Sharon, Kenneth, Cathy and Emma, pictured at Willie's retirement function at The Dalgan Restaurant, Ballyhaunis.

worked from the rear of the post office on Bridge Street but later moved to the brand new An Post Delivery Service Unit on the Clare Road. He worked on a number of different routes both in the town of Ballyhaunis and around its hinterland. He enjoyed this new line of work immensely and many elderly people who lived in more isolated lives looked forward to his arrival each morning and often invited him in for a cup of tea and a chat. Through his work Willie got to know many people and also developed a great knowledge of the by-ways and back roads in the area. A lot of his time working as postman was spent delivering mail in the Kilkelly-Urlaur-Aghadeffin area and he singled out Noel Fagan of Kilkelly Post Office as the individual who was most helpful when he had any issue with names or addresses.

Among the many colleagues who worked with Willie in the postal service were Joe and Helen Byrne, Dom Murphy, Gerry Plunkett, Alan Quinn, David Madden, Michael Connolly, Val Kenny, Geraldine Flynn, Emily Murphy, Liam O'Boyle, Liam Lyons, Tom Murphy, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Chris Brennan, Liz Flanagan, Alan Hunt, Noel Heneghan, Cian Griffin, Pat Kelly and John Joe Kelly. Willie also remembers with sadness the day in June 2017 when his friend Tomás Cribbin passed away suddenly while delivering mail in the town.

Willie is now happily retired and enjoying life with Sheila, his wife of forty-six years. His big interest is gardening and, of course, playing the role of doting granddad to his five wonderful grandchildren. Like the rest of us, Willie is coping as best he can with lockdown and looks forward to a time when things will return to normal.

Willie Broderick was happy to spend an hour in the company of Seamus and Tommy and share his story with the readers of Annagh Magazine. We wish Willie many more years of health and happiness in the company of his loving family.

A First Communion Group, 1950s.

At the back: Triona Mulhern (Upr. Main St.).
Front, L-R: Gerry Cleary (Drimbane), Bernie Joe Lyons (Skeaghard), Tom and Mary Cunningham (Upr. Main St.), Mary and John Halpin (Main St.).



Congratulations to Patricia and Martin Fitzmaurice, Derrynacong, who celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary this year. Patricia (née Lyons from Erriff) and Martin (formerly of Gurteenbeg) married in the church of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Bekan, 29th September 1995.



Left: Mike Griffin was the winner of the Ballyhaunis GAA 50-50 Draw in February 2020. He is pictured here receiving his cheque from Tommy Glynn, Ballyhaunis GAA. L-R: Mary T. and Mike Griffin (winners), Patrick Phillips (ticket-seller) and Tommy Glynn (Ballyhaunis GAA).

Right: Tony Cribbin and Frankie Dillon. Courtesy Benny McCarrick.



Curley's Bar Fundraiser 2020

In July 2020 Ballyhaunis GAA Clubhouse hosted a very special fundraising raffle organised by Ann and Pauline Curley and the Curley family on behalf of the Haematology Patients Comfort Fund, 'Claddagh Ward', University College Hospital, Galway (UCHG). In attendance were Nurses Majella Coffey and Grainne Keaveney from UCHG to accept the cheque for €1,325 raised by Anne Curley and family. Majella and Grainne and all the nurses and doctors, medical staff and carers in our hospitals and nursing homes were thanked for their generosity, care and wonderful work at the frontline particularly during the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Curley's Bar in Clare Street has been fundraising for the best part of fifty years on behalf of many very worthy causes and through their famous Charity Bottle sitting on the bar, they have contributed thousands of pounds and euro to various charities and organisations over the years. Ann Curley thanked Ciara Buckley of *Memories Thru a Lens*, who donated a magnificent framed Mayo



Ann Curley presenting a cheque for €1,325 to the Haematology Patients Comfort Fund, UCHG. L-R: T.J. McCarrick, Benny McCarrick, Majella Coffey (UCHG), Ann Curley, Shane Healy, Grainne Keaveney (UCHG), Sean Gildea, Ciara Buckley.

GAA jigsaw photograph as the super prize, which was won by Paddy Murphy of Bracklaghboy, Ballyhaunis. Ann also acknowledged the contribution of Ballyhaunis GAA players Shane Healy and Sean Gildea who raised €400.

Ann Curley congratulated the lucky winner Paddy Murphy, Bracklaghboy, and thanked everyone who contributed to this very worthy fundraiser.



Society of
St Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVP) is the largest voluntary charitable organisation in Ireland. In addition to providing direct assistance to those in need and caring for the homeless, the Society promotes self-sufficiency, enabling people to help themselves. Any assistance offered by the Society is given in a non-judgemental spirit, based on the needs of the individual or family seeking help. The Society respects the dignity of those who contact us, offering assistance and advice when sought, while assisting them towards long-term self-sufficiency.

St. Vincent de Paul Society

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded in Ireland in 1844. During its history it has helped people in need through a Famine, a War of Independence, Civil War, two World Wars and several economic recessions. The year 2020 has brought its own particular difficulties and challenges for all. We are most grateful to all who have continued to support our work.

Ballyhaunis Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society would like to remind readers of Annagh Magazine that help is available for families and individuals in our local area by calling 086 264 0969. All communication is treated in strictest confidentiality. If you prefer, you may contact the SVP Regional Office in Galway on 091 563233.

Our confidential helpline number is 086 264 0969.

1920s Choir



Above: A group, possibly the Abbey Choir, taken in the late 1920s in front of the Priory. Only four have been identified: Fr. Mansfield (second from right in the back row), Eddie Byrne, Bridge St. (centre of back row), Agnes Fitzgerald (Mrs. Neil O'Donnell) is beside him. P.J. 'Bawn' Rattigan is seated at extreme right. Courtesy Rita Byrne.

Below: An autumnal scene on the Dalgan riverside walk. Courtesy Edward Mulhern.



Hanging Tough in Lockdown

Darran Conlon

Lockdown brought a lot of challenges for families like ours with young children who found themselves practically under 'house arrest.' School, sports and play dates came to a sudden halt. In our house we endeavoured to fill the vacuum by establishing a routine that involved home-schooling with fun, fitness and fresh air. Thankfully we had the space and ability to do so.

Inspired by TV shows such as *Takeshi's Castle* and *Gladiator* we were fortunate to have a homemade obstacle course in situ! Throughout the Covid crisis it became a daily feature of Life in Lockdown for the Conlon children.

The course itself is made up mostly of poles, pallets and ropes. While the climbing grips, rope and net were purchased on-line, the majority of the components were lying around or sourced locally. Combined, they form a challenging course of jumps and climbs which provides a fun, full body workout.

Inevitably, there was inter-family rivalry for the fastest time. But, I am happy to report we have Niamh U6; Katie U8; Cathal U10; Fionn U12 and Siobhán Ladies Champion with Dad holding the 2020 Course record!

As competition grew the participants were keen to improve and family gym sessions were held to prepare. As the saying goes, "*Mens sana in corpore sano.*" Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body. This certainly proved to be the case as the Conlon family came through lockdown fitter and reasonably sane! The obstacle course remains in use and I am looking forward to retaining the title in 2021.

Hanging Around. Cathal on the bar, Fionn crossing the monkey bars, Niamh on the climbing rope and Katie on the rings.



Pull Up Competition.
Sometimes the lion must show the hyenas who he is!



Hanging Tough.
Fionn (12), Cathal (10), Katie (8) and Niamh (6) hanging tough during the Covid Lockdown in March 2019.

Hannon Family Reunion 2019

Paul Hannon (son of Patsy Hannon)



Hannon Family Reunion 2019

Back, L-R: Oliver Hannon, Martin Hannon (Longford), Rory Hannon, Paul Hannon, Martin Hannon (Ballaghaderreen), John Kelly, Sean Hannon, Gretta Hannon, Fiona Hannon, Karen Brady, Ann Horan, Mike Horan, Dylan Ó Hanain, Pauline Doherty (Scott), Sorcha Hannon. *Front, L-R:* Bernie Hannon, Sandra Hannon, Rita Keane (Scott), Mary Hannon Brady, Hinsley Hannon McCarthy, Hinsley McCarthy, Peter Hannon, Teresa Hannon, John Hannon, Pauline Hannon.

On 7th September, 2019 descendants of Peter Hannon and Bridget Scott Hannon, late of Abbey Street, Ballyhaunis, held a family reunion. The Hannon Family are long established in Ballyhaunis for many generations. Peter Hannon was a prominent businessman in the town and had his business premises in Abbey Street. The family are originally from Togher, outside Ballyhaunis, and the Scotts are from Elphin, Co. Roscommon.

The reunion commenced with 7.30pm Mass in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, where deceased members of the Hannon Family were remembered and prayed for by Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. Following Mass the reunion continued in 'The Dalgan', Main St., Ballyhaunis, and was attended by over thirty people, which included Hannon and Scott family members from all over Ireland and abroad. A wonderful night was had by all with many interesting stories and fond recollections of the Hannon and Scott families. It was a great opportunity for the families to get to know each other better.

One of the highlights of the night was having the opportunity to hold a Senior Mayo Football All Ireland winning medal in your hand. This medal was won by Fr. Martin Hannon (son of Peter Hannon, Abbey St.) in

1936. Mayo beat Laois 4-11 to 0-5 on the day. Fr. Martin went on to serve in the missions in Nigeria but, unfortunately, died from malaria there in 1944 at the age of twenty-nine. His family is very proud of his achievements in his short life.

Later in the evening John Hannon (son of Patsy Hannon, Abbey Street) entertained family members with his rendition of the works of James Joyce and W.B. Yeats. Hannon family members from Tuam, Longford and Ballyhaunis all spoke of their delight in getting together and rekindling old stories and memories from the past. John Kelly (Scott family) also spoke of his delight in gathering with cousins from both the Hannon and Scott sides. Family trees were discussed and drawn up, corrected and revised and old photos were displayed on the TV screen in the function room throughout the night.

Finally, all who were there vowed to meet again and continue this reunion event in the future for those present and the younger generations coming up. And lastly, I would like to thank George Marquez (Manager) and his staff in 'The Dalgan' for their help in organising this event: they couldn't do enough for us.



Martin Hannon (seated centre), on a Maynooth College football team in the 1930s.



The cake created for the Hannon Family Reunion.



All Ireland Football Medal 1936 (front and back), won by Fr. Martin Hannon (1914-1944)



Thomas J. Carroll of Knox Street West, Ballyhaunis, visited Tiger Kingdom Centre in Chiang Mai city, Northern Thailand in October 2019.



Traditional musicians and dancers performing at the Abbey Pattern 1974.

The musicians are, from left: Paddy Lyons (Gurrane) fiddle, Dominick Rushe (Erritt) tin whistle, Frank Jordan (Fairymount) flute, and Pat Gildea (Johnstown) accordion. Dancers include Deirdre Forde (Reisk), Patricia Hopkins (Upper Main St.) and Patricia Curran (Main St.). Boys include Tom Moran (Devlis) on stage and Michael Regan (The Square), far right. **Photo Liam Lyons Collection.*



An Irish Ales Brewery Dinner Dance group, 1977.

Standing, L-R: Joe Coonerty (Manager), Maura and John Forde (Kiltimagh), Flann and Serena Moroney, Eugene and Una Collum, Mary Walsh, Murt Hunt. Seated: Betty and Michael Finnegan, Mary and John Regan, Peg Byrne, Freddie Herr, Anne Hunt. **Photo courtesy of the Liam Lyons Collection.*

* Photographs courtesy of the **Liam Lyons Collection** at Mayo County Library. See www.mayo.ie/library/local-history/publications-photographs and click on Mayo photographs. Copies of these photographs can be ordered by emailing info@liamlyons.com



A Pavement Art Competition was held along Main Street in conjunction with "The Ould 'Haunis Fair" in August, 1971.

First place in the under-8 category went to Peter McHugh (Main St.), pictured here at centre with his winning entry. Others pictured here are, clockwise from left: John Cox, Enda Moran, Christy Barrett, Martina Levins, Vinnie Caulfield. Angela Cox, Mary Majella Maguire, Mary Flanagan (Roscommon), Margie Phillips, Geraldine Finnegan, Flavia Curley, Paschal Keegan, Jacqueline Dwane, Claire Griffin, Grace O'Connor, Bridget Griffin, Orla Phillips, Eithne Griffin, Joan Keegan, Noelle Keegan and Seamus Webb. Others placed in the under-8 category were: 2nd S. Griffin (Clare St.) and 3rd Karen Keane (Knox St.). The winners in the under-10 category were: 1st Billy Phillips (Main St.), 2nd Patrick Cox (Knox St.) and 3rd Joan Connell (Devlis), as reported in the *Western People*, 28th Aug. 1971.

**Photo courtesy of the Liam Lyons Collection.*



Anne Riordan (Claremorris) and Joseph Hosty (Levallyroe) pictured on the occasion of their engagement in 1973, attending The Amateur Drama League Dance in Breaffy House Hotel. *Photo courtesy of the Liam Lyons Collection.*

* Photographs courtesy of the Liam Lyons Collection at Mayo County Library. See www.mayo.ie/library/local-history/publications-photographs and click on Mayo photographs. Copies of these photographs can be ordered by emailing info@liamlyons.com



Ballyhaunis Town Development Annual Dinner 1970.

L-R: May Freeley (Upr. Main St.), Nora Sweeney (Abbey St.), Anna Morrissey (Devlis), Rita Wall (Devlis), Matilda McQueeney (Main St.). **Photo Liam Lyons Collection.*

Ballyhaunis Engaging Youth BEY Project, Foróige

Sharon Naughton

The Ballyhaunis Engaging Youth (BEY) Project, organised under the auspices of Foróige, is in its infancy, having been set up in June 2018. Over the past two years we have seen the project develop a strong foothold in the heart of the community thanks to the positive attitude, drive and enthusiasm of young people, volunteers and staff.



Our older teens enjoying the world of Virtual Reality at the BEY Project.

The project works with young people aged between 10-24 years of age offering a wide variety of services such as programme-based activities, individual work, school holiday initiatives, educational support as well as referral to other agencies.

In February of this year (2020) Professor Ursula Kilkelly officially launched the newly named youth service – The BEY Project. The launch was very well attended by agency representatives and community members. It was a great opportunity for young people to showcase their work and unique talents.

Throughout the year young people have participated in a variety of interest-based programmes and projects such as song writing, computer programming, film making, community art projects, mini

enterprise, health and wellbeing, cookery programmes, etc. The young people have also participated in a range of science, technology, engineering, arts and maths (STEAM) programmes and have attended events throughout the country that showcase such initiatives. The project has established a very proactive Youth Committee, responsible for overseeing decisions of the service and organising events for all members of the youth service, as well as community fundraisers and initiatives.

The project works with older teens, offering support in preparation for employment, life coaching, preparation for Driver Theory Test, and accredited courses such as First Aid and Accenture Training.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, groups were facilitated online from March to July. During this time young people engaged in an array of programmes and interventions such as arts and crafts, quizzes, comic book creations, cookery, talent shows and much more. Facilitating youth work online was hugely successful thanks to the ingenuity and enthusiasm of staff, and volunteers, but most of all the young people who engaged each week.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported the service and contributed to a very successful two years of programmes and interventions. For more information on the service please follow us on social media or contact Laura or Sharon on 0867791878 or by email laura.cox@foroige.ie or sharon.naughton@foroige.ie.



A group of young people taking part in an Art and Crafts workshop earlier this year.

Corpus Christi Procession 2002



The Corpus Christi Procession 2002 passed along Knock Road that year, led by Fr. James O'Grady, C.C. (left) with a large congregation of parishioners, young and old.

Keeping the Dream Alive

Michael Goulding

According to research one of a group of stories thought to be written by Aesop, a Greek storyteller, was 'The Tortoise and the Hare', where the saying 'slow and steady wins the race' originates. And on that basis I'll continue telling my story. But in order to go forward, I must first return to the past. In my first articles for this publication in 2016 and 2018 I touched on my dreams of pursuing a career in the arts, and that is as relevant today as it was then.

Drama and Choir

Between primary and secondary school I had the opportunity where, with a bit more self-belief and confidence, I could have perhaps made a career from acting or singing. It does, however, seem a bit strange to write that: Me? A singer or an actor? If memory serves me right, the acting opportunities came before the other, with a youth theatre workshop. It taught me some of the techniques required to be an actor and a radio presenter, one of them being the art of improvisation and, I must admit, I think I have used this ever since in all walks of life. I probably only attended the classes for a couple of months which, I suppose, was a small step in the right direction. Some of the students in my class appeared in some TV programmes on ITV and BBC as extras. Unfortunately for me fate would leave me yearning for my big break for some twenty-odd years.

There was one teacher in my primary school who tried her very best to teach me the art of singing. I think it was an effort to distract me from playing the class clown. One of her phrases regarding the use of the shape of a person's mouth was, "Open your mouth from north to south, east to west is never the best." Give it a try!

Trying to recollect this next story which could have been a lot easier if circumstances had played out differently. Since discovering my love of singing, I wanted to do whatever I could to progress and have my voice classically trained. From asking Mum and Dad, they can't remember how I came to join this choir, but anyway, one night Dad drove me about half an hour from home to a school hall, where I was met by the choirmaster and the choir. According to research this choir was "one of the finest boys' choirs in the world" and "prided itself on producing the finest voices." It is

noted that it toured the world, with some performances winning prestigious competitions and subsequently producing many high quality soloists. The choir would be comparable to the drama classes: while I enjoyed the practical work while attending, the homework let me down because I very rarely practiced. I had the opportunity to sing at a choral event and was thrilled to have been selected – finally my talents had been recognised. However, this exciting prospect was short lived as it clashed with a holiday to Ireland. Shortly after that I got bored with the choir and something told me that I didn't really fit in, and I closed the door on my singing career.

It would be fair to say we all have moments in our lives to reflect on the 'what ifs?' Although I would hardly remember any of the choirboys' names, I did remember the choirmaster and obviously the name of the choir. So I did some googling hoping to see some type of an 'X Factor' success story, or a group on

Facebook that might bring back some memories. Unfortunately, no. This headline dated back prior to Scotland Yard's investigation 'Operation Yewtree', and told a story of abuse that took place by the choirmaster and one of the choristers. My mouth went dry, my body shook, a sense of emotion filled my stomach and a bigger question of 'what if?' filled my mind.

What if, I tried to sing with more effort? What if I did my singing homework? What if we didn't have the holiday to Ireland booked? What if...?

Lights, Camera and Action

Since the article in Annagh 2018, I've been blessed and truly lucky to work on some more fantastic television programmes. Due to the current circumstances studios were closed for a couple of months this year. However, some have recently recommenced filming.

The biggest programme of the year on TV nationally, which then went on to international acclaim due to the bestselling book by Mayo woman Sally Rooney, was 'Normal People'. It gave readers and viewers alike a sometimes explicit insight into the lives of its two main characters as they progress through school and college. I was lucky enough to appear as an extra in one of the



Michael Goulding, on his graduation from the Open Training College in 2019 with a BA in Professional Social Care.

episodes and be in the company of Paul Mescal (of ‘Ballyhaunis’ fame) and Daisy Edgar Jones. Paul had recently appeared on TV as the lad in the Denny advert and gave Ballyhaunis a mention, something that has been shared in groups and on pages on social media ever since. He had also recently graduated from the prestigious LIR National Academy of Dramatic Art where he appeared in numerous plays, musicals and films. He was also a footballer playing at minor and under-21 level for his native Kildare. It has to be one of the highlights of my career so far, not only because it was filmed in neighbouring County Sligo, but ‘Normal People’ is the game changer in Irish TV and Film because everything about it was fantastic, and I think it is fair to say that no one would ever have dreamt how successful it would become.

Other TV and film work took me across to the Sunny South East to film a new UK TV series with some well-known faces in it and a great storyline. It promises to be one of the must-see shows of 2021. Other projects included ‘Evidence of Evil’, which reconstructed the true story of a double homicide for CBS America. Something more light-hearted followed with a TV advert for Discover Ireland filmed in County Leitrim. In Troy Studios in Limerick I filmed what promises to be the next global hit with some international film and television actors, and early indications are that it’s going to be even bigger than ‘Game of Thrones’.

Obviously I’d love to delve more into behind-the-scenes descriptions of the programmes I’ve acted in,



Photographed during the filming of a *Discover Ireland* advert in County Leitrim.

however, because they are scheduled to be screened in the not too distance future, I think I would be ending my own career prematurely by talking out of shop. As I began this article with the quote ‘slow and steady wins the race’, I think and hope that 2021 is going to be a year where I bring the hare and the tortoise, not rushing to the finishing line, just journeying along into the unknown.



Congratulations to James Sloyan, Brackloon North, who celebrated his ninetieth birthday in May 2020. Hopefully, there will be many more years to come. He is pictured sitting on his Zetor 2511 tractor – recently restored – which he bought new in 1973.

1984 - Ballyhaunis Tourism Brochure

Services

Shopping

Visitors will find the modern well-stocked shops will cater for their every need in Ballyhaunis. It is worthy of mention that on Thursday all shops close but on Saturday late night shopping is available.

Post Office

Bridge Street.
Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday to Saturday.

Telephone Kiosks

The Square, Abbey St. and in the Post Office.

Garda Barracks

Main Street.

Churches

(R.C.) St. Patrick's Parish Church, Main St.
Sunday Masses: 8.30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 11.30 a.m.
St. Mary's Augustinian Friary, Abbey Street.
Sunday Masses: 8.30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 11.30 a.m.
(Church of Ireland) Ballinlough and Crossboyne, Claremorris.

Banks

Bank of Ireland, Square and Ulster Bank, Bridge St.
Business Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 10 a.m. - 12.30 p.m., 1.30 - 3 p.m.
Tuesday 10 a.m. - 12.30 p.m., 1.30 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Taxis

Edward Mulhern, Clare St. Phone: 249.
Michael Griffin, Clare St. Phone: 213.
William Eagney, Clare St. Phone: 46.
David Freeley, Upper Main St. Phone: 222.

Dry Cleaning

Abbey Dry Cleaners, 4 Hour Service.
Phone: 264.

Meals & Accommodation

The Central Hotel, Main St. Grade B.
Phone: 30.

The Harp and Shamrock Restaurant, Main St.
Starland Restaurant, Clare St.

Wimpy Bar, Bridge St.

Snacks are available in many of the bars and lounges in the town.

Many Guesthouses and excellent Bed and Breakfasts are in the area.

Full details from Dillon Travel, The Square.
Phone: 21 or 269.



Other Useful Junior Chamber Publications
Local Telephone Directory and Services Guide.
Annagh-Ballyhaunis Magazine, will give the visitor an insight into the social and economic life of the area.

COMING WEST? COMING WEST?

MAP OF
CO. MAYO



How to get there

By train On the main Dublin-Westport line.
By road From Dublin via Mullingar and Roscommon
From Cork via Limerick and Galway
From Belfast via Monaghan and Carrick-on-Shannon.
By bus On main Derry-Sligo-Galway Expressway Service.

This leaflet has been sponsored by Electrical & Pump Services, Ballyhaunis. Phone: 226.

All the people mentioned have also helped with sponsorship which has made this leaflet possible.

Designed and Printed by Mallee & Co., Knock, Co. Mayo.



BALLYHAUNIS
Co. MAYO

Introduction

Dear Visitor,

Faillte to Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo which lies in the centre of Connacht—one hour journey from Galway, Sligo, Westport, Carrick-on-Shannon, Ballina, Roscommon and Athlone.

The town is situated in a fine angling district, with one hundred and ten fresh water lakes within a ten mile radius containing abundant pike, perch, roach and bream. (see map).

Founded around St. Mary's Augustinian Friary, Abbey St. in 1348 the town has grown and expanded rapidly in recent years, as a glance at the services and amenities will show. You are indeed most welcome in the area and hopefully you will return again in the future because beidh faillte romhat.

LOCAL PLACES OF INTEREST (See Map)

St. Mary's Augustinian Friary, Abbey St. (1348) An archeologist's dream with beautiful carved windows, doors and stone crosses.

Old Church Sites

Kilnallagh—an original Patrician Church.
Ulraur Abbey—Dominican Monastery beside Ulraur lake.
Kilronan Church and graveyard and Holywell on the shores of Mannin Lake.

At Mannin Lake can be seen—Cashels, Souterrains and Ringforts.

Ogham Stones—can be seen at Bracklaghboy.

Amenities

Shooting

The area around the White Lake Shooting Grounds, Coolnaha is rich with Duck, Goose, Pheasant and Snipe. (See Map). Ballyhaunis and District Gun Club hold Clay Pigeon shoots regularly.

Golf

Ballyhaunis Golf Club situated on the Ballyhaunis/Sligo road is one of the finest all-weather nine hole golf courses in the West of Ireland. (See Map). The newly built Clubhouse has full bar and refreshment facilities. Green Fees—£1.50.

Swimming Pool

Situated at Clare St. The Swimming Pool is open from 11 to 1 p.m., 2 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. from mid June to September.

Sport

The town has a G.A.A., Soccer and Rugby pitches where games are played regularly.

Recreation

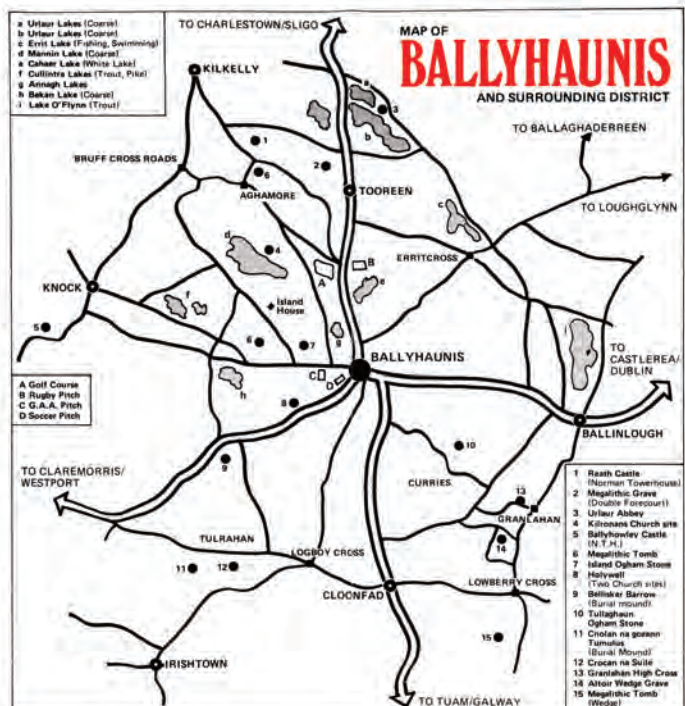
The town has twin cinemas, a dancehall, many singing pubs, bars and comfortable lounges to cater for the needs of the area's many visitors. Top class food is served in many premises.

Entertainment

Star Twin Cinemas, Clare St.—Films nightly. Dancing on Saturday nights in Starland Ballroom. Visitors can relax in the Lounge bars, many of whom provide cabaret, dancing, darts etc.

For details

Details of amenities can be got from Dillon Travel, The Square. Phone: 21 or 269.



A Ballyhaunis tourism promotional leaflet from the early 1980s.

Printed by Mallee & Co., Knock.

Courtesy Edward Mulhern.



Ballyhaunis Post Office Dinner Dance, held in the Continental Hotel, Kiltimagh, 26th Oct. 1979.

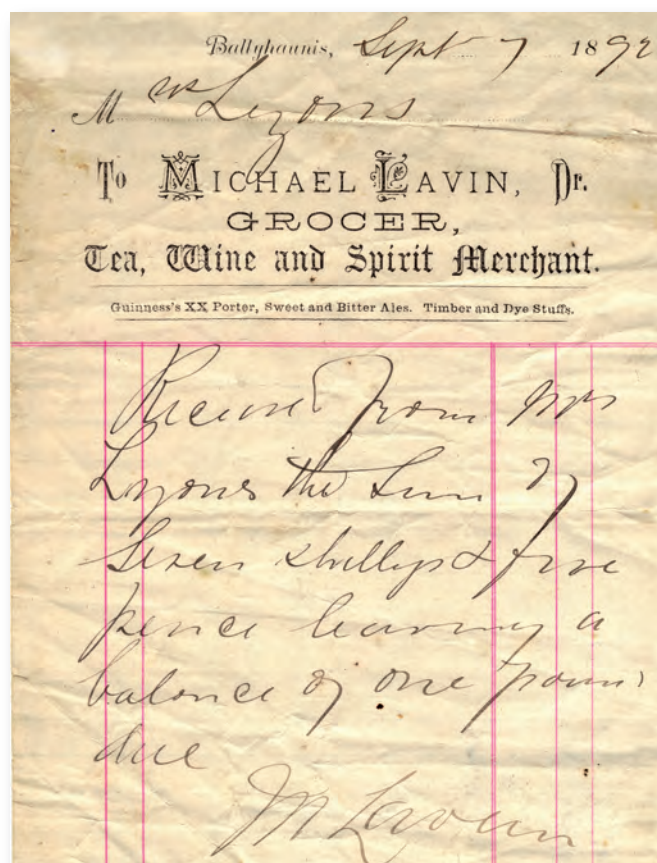
Standing, L-R: Christy Higgins, John Joe Kelly, Gabriel Caulfield, Anne Cribbin, Billy Lyons, Joe Byrne, Patricia Heaney, Michael Lyons, Paddy Higgins, Eamon Dwane, Margaret Finnegan, Breege Duggan, John Cleary, Anne Caulfield, Ailish Prendergast.
Seated, L-R: Joe Fitzmaurice, Majella Martin, Mary Greene, Johnny Henry, Paddy Brennan, Bridie Brennan, Mary Staunton, Lucy Beirne.
Front: Breidín Houston, Teresa O'Donnell, Eileen Waldron.

Photograph courtesy of the Liam Lyons Collection at Mayo County Library. See www.mayo.ie/library/local-history/publications-photographs and click on Mayo photographs. Copies of these photographs can be ordered by emailing info@liamlyons.com



Above: A group of golfers photographed on 11th June 1953.
L-R: Mrs. Mary Lyons ('The Eagle Bar', Bridge St.), Mrs. McCormick, Mrs. Josie O'Brien (Main St.), Ms. Lucy Flynn (Main St.).
Courtesy Florence Mannion.

Right: A receipt, dated 7th Sept. 1892, from Michael Lavan, who had his grocery and bar business on Bridge St. where Cribbins' house/barber shop and the takeaway premises next-door are today. Courtesy Gerry Lyons.



Ballyhaunis Golf Club

Margaret Dyer

After a promising start to the golfing year with a very successful Winter League, things came to an abrupt halt with the announcement in mid-March, by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, that Ireland was to go into lockdown. All of a sudden the fairways were out of bounds and, instead of the usual Sunday fourball, we were faced with the prospect of a lengthy lay-off from a sport which many would consider a safe activity even in times of a pandemic.

The golfing year resumed in May under strict regulations and guidelines from the GUI. An interesting outcome of Covid-19 was a renewed interest in the game of golf with an upsurge in applications from young sportspeople to join the golfing community. An injection of new members is always a welcome occurrence and they applied themselves to the onerous task of mastering the sport with dedication and determination.

The Junior Golf Programme was a big success again this year with sixty-four juniors joining as members of the Club. Coaching lessons were held every Wednesday over the summer school holidays. The junior programme usually begins during the Easter school holidays. Keep an eye on our facebook page for all information regarding these lessons.

Beginners Golf classes throughout the summer months were further evidence of the growing popularity of the sport. There were twenty-five people attending golf lessons every Monday evening from 7pm to 9pm with the majority joining as members of the Club. If you think you would like to try out golf, the beginners' classes are a wonderful opportunity to try out this great game. The classes start in May each year.

This year the Captain Padraic Duffy's, and Lady Captain Maria Campbell's, prize days were held on the same day. Paul Hickey won the Captain's prize and Catherine Johnston won the Lady Captain's prize. Winners of the President's prizes were Fiona Prenty and Eoghan Collins.

We would especially like to thank all of our very generous sponsors who continue to support our competition calendar year after year. This year was no exception.

John William Burke represented Ballyhaunis Golf Club as a Junior across the length and breadth of the country with many successes. His biggest success this year was being crowned U12 Irish Champion earning him entry to the Tournament of Champions which was played at Royal Portrush Golf Club.



Congratulations to Andrew Hickey on his golfing achievements this year especially on scoring 7 under par at Castlebar Golf Club breaking their course record. He recently broke his home course record shooting 64 in the President's (Mr. Tom McGuire's) prize. Andrew currently plays off a plus 2 handicap. We look forward to Andrew's future successes.

The future looks bright for Ballyhaunis Golf Club as we head towards a new year. While no one can predict what will happen, especially in these uncertain times, we look forward with confidence that Ballyhaunis Golf Club is well equipped to withstand any challenges that may arise. We have a wonderful facility – why not consider joining? Phone 0949630014 for further details.

We remember Canon Joseph Cooney. We also remember Mr. Enda Cleary, Kiltimagh, who died during the year. Enda was husband of Dr. Helen Cleary past Lady Captain and President of our club.

Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha dhílse.



Fiona Prenty, winner of the President's Prize (Tom McGuire).
Glynn's Photography, Castlerea.



Tom McGuire, President,
Ballyhaunis Golf Club
2020.



Eoghan Collins, winner of the Captain's Prize (Padraig Duffy).
All images by Glynn's Photography, Castlerea.



Michael Lavin presenting the Timmy Lavin Memorial Trophy and sponsorship cheque to the Officers of Ballyhaunis Golf Club. L-R: Michael Lavin, Padraig Duffy (Captain) Tom McGuire (President) and Maria Campbell (Lady Captain).



Paul Hickey, winner of the Captain's Prize (Padraig Duffy).
Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh.



Left: Maria Campbell, Lady Captain, Golf Club 2020.



Right: Catherine Johnston, winner of the Lady Captain's Prize (Maria Campbell).



Padraig Duffy, Captain, Ballyhaunis Golf Club 2020. All photographs by Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh.

It is forty years since Paddy Waldron of Knock Road, Ballyhaunis, passed away on 5th Sept. 1980. Paddy made an enormous contribution to the GAA at Club, County and National level. From his father Jack (Ballyhaunis and County footballer in the 1910s) he inherited his great love of Gaelic Games and from an early age he became deeply involved with them. As a pupil of Coolnafarna National School he came under the influence of the Principal Jimmy O'Dwyer, a former Ballyhaunis and Mayo Senior footballer, and then, as a student of St. Jarlath's College in Tuam, his great love and ever-abiding interest in all things Gaelic really flourished.

He was very much to the fore in re-organising the Ballyhaunis Club, as a footballer and as a mentor to up-and-coming young players. He played his noble part in the provision of the new Club grounds at the Knock Road in 1966. He served as Honorary Secretary of the Club for many years and was elected Chairman in 1956, a position he held until 1973. He was Chairman of the Mayo Minor Board in the 1960s and early 70s. For nearly thirty years he served as Ballyhaunis Delegate to the East Mayo Board and the Mayo County Board. Paddy was also Public Relations Officer of the County Board and, shortly before his untimely death at the age of 51, he had the distinction of serving as the Mayo Representative on the Central Council of the GAA.



Paddy Waldron and son James

Hugh Rudden Receives GAA President's Award 2020

Tommy Caulfield

Hugh Rudden was chosen as one of the recipients of the 2020 GAA President's Awards (Seán Ó hÓráin) in recognition of his outstanding contribution over a lifetime of commitment to the GAA. Hugh received his award at a special banquet at Croke Park on Friday, 14th Feb. 2020. Hugh's many friends in Ballyhaunis GAA and throughout the country are delighted for Hugh and congratulate him on this on this well-deserved and prestigious award.

Hugh's earliest involvement with the GAA goes back to his childhood in Cavan where his love for the organisation was nurtured at a time when the Breffni County were the country's footballing kingpins. Hugh grew up in a family of eight children in Bawnboy in west Cavan and played football for his local Templeport GAA club. As a young lad he remembers listening in a neighbour's house to Mícheál Ó hÉithir's commentary as Cavan lifted All-Ireland titles in 1947, 1948 and 1952. After leaving school Hugh trained as a carpenter and played football where-ever work took him in counties Donegal, Wicklow and Wexford. That passion for football and the GAA which was instilled in those early years has stayed with him - and wherever his working life took him, across Ireland or indeed in London, the GAA was a constant companion.

In 1961, like so many other young Irish people of his generation, Hugh took the boat to England where he played football with the St. Joseph's GAA Club in Ealing, London, and also served as club secretary for seven years. Hugh returned to Ireland in 1969 to train as a teacher of Woodwork and Building Construction. He re-joined his native Templeport club, became club secretary and helped out with the building of modern dressing rooms and shower facilities.

Hugh qualified as a secondary teacher and, in 1972, was appointed to a post in Ballyhaunis Vocational School where colleagues included the local GAA club's treasurer Mícheál Murren and club players Jim Higgins, Aiden Kelly and Vinnie Healy. His fate was sealed! Within days of arriving in Mayo Hugh was training school and club



Hugh and Mary Rudden with their sons Brendan and Colm at the GAA President's Award at Croke Park, 14th Feb. 2020. L-R: Brendan Rudden, John Horan (Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael), Hugh, Mary and Colm Rudden. Photo: Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile

underage teams. He also enjoyed success as a player with Templeport in Cavan winning a County Senior League medal in 1975 and a Mayo Masters (Over 30s) medal with Ballyhaunis in 1978. Hugh became manager of the Ballyhaunis senior team in 1980 and guided the club to a County Intermediate League title in 1981. He was also elected club chairman and served his first term in this role from 1980-84. A second term would follow from 2000-04.

In addition to his role as club officer and manager, Hugh was also a member of the Mayo senior football referees' panel and served the association at both divisional and county board level. He was chairman of the County U-21 Board 1985-89 and chairman of the East Mayo Board 1990-97. Hugh also was selector with Mayo teams at Junior and U-21 level and was appointed Mayo Coaching Officer 2008-12.

Hugh is also very well respected as a GAA administrator for post primary schools. As teacher in Ballyhaunis Community School he coached many school teams to Connacht B success at senior, junior, juvenile and First Year level. Many of these players would go on to represent their counties both at underage and senior level, most notably Paul Earley, Tony Morley, David Nestor, Fergal Kelly, Ian Daly, Stuart Daly, Caoileann Fitzmaurice, John Bermingham, John Prenty Jr., David Fitzgerald, Alan Freeman, David Kenny and Fergal Boland. One of the highlights of Hugh's lifetime of

involvement with GAA came in 2006 when, as President of Mayo GAA, he watched past pupil Keith Higgins captain the Mayo U-21s to All-Ireland victory. Hugh was also instrumental in setting up the first Ladies Gaelic Football Association (LGFA) team in Ballyhaunis Community School. Having first become involved in post primary schools GAA in the early 80s, he went on to serve Connacht Post Primary Schools GAA as vice chairman (1998) and chairman (1999-2001) before becoming secretary from 2002 to the present. He also served as secretary for All-Ireland Post Primary Schools GAA 2002-04 and is current treasurer of All-Ireland Post Primary Schools GAA.

Commitment

Ballyhaunis GAA is grateful to Hugh for the role he played in developing our clubhouse, grounds and facilities to their current high standard. The physical impact of his commitment to Ballyhaunis GAA is evident in the role he played in developing these over a ten-year period which resulted in the impressive facilities being completed in 2008. Back in 1998 it was felt that the club's facilities were no longer adequate. The club identified an urgent need for new dressing rooms and a new clubhouse at the grounds. As chairman of the club's Development Committee Hugh spearheaded the fundraising and planning of the project which came to fruition in May 2008 with the opening of our current impressive clubhouse and facilities which are among the finest in the county.



Hugh Rudden (centre) is presented with the Education Award by Maolmhuire Tynan (left), Head of Public Affairs AIB, and Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael, John Horan (right) during the GAA President's Awards at Croke Park Hotel, Dublin, 14th February 2020.



Hugh Rudden – always ready to do his best for our national games.

During his time as chairman of the Ballyhaunis GAA club Hugh was always interested in helping others and reaching out to the local community. In this regard he invited local businesses in the town to get involved in a major fundraising drive back in the 1980s to assist the Rehab Organisation. Many memorable and fun-filled nights of great entertainment took place as funds were raised and local pubs did battle with each other to be crowned Ballyhaunis Quiz Champions.

The Ballyhaunis GAA Clubman of the Year 1981 has no plans to step back any time soon and continues to give 100 per cent to the GAA. On big match days Hugh is ever present on the gate at Elvery's MacHale Park. His wealth of knowledge and experience gained as chairman of Ballyhaunis GAA Grounds Committee serves Hugh well as he travels the country dispensing advice to clubs as member of the National Grounds Maintenance Work Group and he continues to be very busy as member of Connacht Council's Hearings Committee.

We have just about managed to scratch the surface of Hugh's involvement with his beloved GAA. None of this, of course, would be possible with the support of Hugh's wife Mary and sons Colm and Brendan. Brendan is a former Ballyhaunis Footballer of the Year and All Ireland medallist with Mayo Juniors back in 2001.

Ballyhaunis GAA is lucky to number Hugh Rudden among its membership and we are delighted that he was honoured at the highest level. When he has time on his hands he also serves on the club's executive and as club trustee. On his night off he can be found enjoying a pint in Gill's while selling 50/50 envelopes for the club's weekly draw!

Hugh joins Johnny Biesty to become only our second clubman to receive the prestigious President's Award. Congratulations Hugh from your many friends in Ballyhaunis GAA.

Nora Hawkes Celebrates her 100th Birthday

Nora Duggan was born in Cahir, Louisburgh in 1920. Immediately after graduating from UCG in 1942 she spent two years in Ballyhaunis teaching the Convent of Mercy Secondary Top class (an extension of primary school which prepared students for the Intermediate Certificate Examination). She lived in Clare Street with the Smyth family during her time here. During the Emergency, as the war years were known in Ireland, many essential items were in scarce supply and had to be rationed. Many of the local young men joined the LDF. Nora also played her part in preparing the country to deal with any invasion or threat of hostility. She, along with Bridget Mary Caulfield (Halpin), Nurse Greene (Gilmore), Mrs. Smyth and many others joined the local Red Cross under the supervision of Dr. Smyth.

After school, Nora spent her evenings taking walks and enjoying the fresh air. She also enjoyed boating on Annagh Lake and playing the occasional game of golf. During her two years in Ballyhaunis she met her future husband, Denis Hawkes (from Cork), and made many lasting friendships. After an absence of forty-seven years Nora visited Ballyhaunis once again in 1991, at the



Ballyhaunis Class group from the Secondary Top (7th and 8th Class) 1943.

There was no secondary school at that stage. Teacher Miss Nora Duggan (Louisburgh) seated at centre. The only students identified so far are: Back, second from left: Lena Finn (Gurteen), third from right: Mary Kelly (Johnstown); extreme right: Mary Carroll (Drimbane). Front, second from right: Mary O'Brien (Main St.).

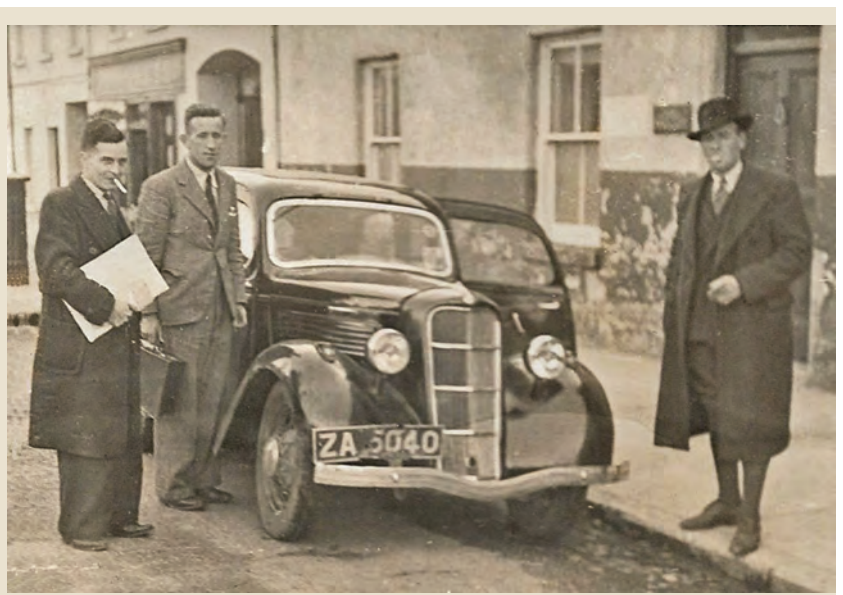
invitation of her good friends Mrs. Gilmore (since deceased, RIP) and Micheál Smyth. She wrote an article for the Annagh Magazine that year entitled 'Ballyhaunis Revisited', recalling her working life and happy times in the East Mayo town.

Annagh Magazine Society joins Nora's many friends in the Retired Secondary Teachers Association in sending very best wishes for continued good health and happiness to Nora on the occasion of her 100th birthday.



Nora Hawkes (née Duggan) celebrating her 100th birthday.

Taken in Ballyhaunis, circa 1944. On the left is Michael A. Waldron ('Milt'), Knox St. and Upper Main St.; in the centre is Denis Hawkes, a Cork native, then pensions officer in Ballyhaunis; the man on the right may be Johnny Gilmore, Knox St.



The following item appeared in the RSTA Newsletter, May 2020:

The Retired Secondary Teachers' Association (RSTA) salutes, with affection, our colleague, Nora Hawkes of Limerick RSTA, in this her centenary year (13th June 2020). We admire Nora as a pioneer in education. She served as principal in an Askeaton co-educational private secondary school for thirty years. Noted as an innovator, her skills both in education and administration were formidable. A well-deserved retirement held no appeal for Nora's spirit of adventure and passion for education. She headed to Tanzania at the age of seventy-one and taught English, Maths and Choir for four years. While there she lived in a hut without air conditioning, window screens or phone service. What a wonderful example of resilience and strength!

We honour Nora, an elegant lady and keen gardener, who can be found at times pushing her wheelbarrow among her flowers and shrubs. Our warmest wishes, Nora, on the occasion of your 100th birthday.

Nurse Bridie Green (later Mrs. Gilmore), at left,
and Nora Duggan (later Mrs. Hawkes).



A Change for the Worst

Murt Hunt

What a terrible time we are all going through at the moment with this awful virus. It has us all living in fear of our lives, cocooning, not touching, staying two metres apart, washing hands and not touching face, nose, eyes, and not being able to attend Mass and funerals.

What a change from years ago! Being from a rural area and living on the farm, I remember attending fairs where the practice was spitting on one's hand and slapping another man's out-held hand before making a deal for buying or selling a beast. The whole town would reverberate with the sound of hand-upon-hand as deal after deal were transacted. Men also often spat on their hands as it was a sign of getting on with whatever task they were facing or job they were doing.

Farmers went to the bog and cut turf and the cutter spat on his hands as he fired sod after sod to a spreader who caught the wet turf sods with his bare hands, and often rubbed his face with dirty hands to ward off midges who were a particular source of annoyance. Bog water was often boiled in an old rusty kettle to provide a tea break and the (usually) egg sandwiches often fell on the ground and were scooped up greedily by hungry bog workers before a family of ants took over. Potatoes were sown by hand in drills and when the job was completed the usual way of getting hands clean was by rubbing them off your work trousers. It was the same with pulling beet, carrots, turnips and so on. No gloves in those days, and the only masks were those used by

youngsters at Hallowe'en.

Most farmhouses had no running water and washing facilities consisted of a barrel placed under a down-pipe from the roof of the house, and the drinking water came from a well. A cow was kept for the milk for the house and there was not much sterilising involved. The hands also came under more pressure with the manual handling of cattle, pigs and other animals. At the end of a long, strenuous day's work the hands would get a good washing with carbolic soap and water before the family rosary was recited.

Of course, the recent popular custom of 'high fiving' by youngsters has come to an end with this dreaded virus. Wash and disinfect your hands is the new norm, and keep your distance from friends you have known all your life.

We have come through world wars, plagues and famines, where so many have lost their lives and so many were lucky enough in this country to emerge unscathed, but this new menace has no respect for anybody. So many are dying each day worldwide, with no remedy available in the foreseeable future.

There is, however, the revival of many people praying to God again, a habit much neglected by so many people for so many years.

This is one of a selection of letters Murt Hunt has contributed to The Sunday Independent.



Mary Freeley, Scregg and New York.



Murt McHale and Michael Freeley, both of Scregg. Photograph taken in England, 1960.



Maureen Lyons, Spaddagh, and Arthur Costello, Galway, on their wedding day, 1964.



Jim Freeley (Scregg) and Bridget Agnes Burke (Currislustia, Ballinlough), on their wedding day in Brooklyn, New York, 1925.



Luke Freeley, Scregg, in 1951.

Photos courtesy of Eileen & Kevin Lyons Spaddagh, Ballyhaunis.



Top left: Jimmy Quinn (left) and Pat Lyons, both of Classaghroe, cocking hay in 1984.

Centre left: American visitor John Cruise with his aunt Nora Cruise, Arderry 1975.

Centre right: Nora and Pat Cruise, at their fireside in Arderry, 1975.



Above: Pat Cruise (right) shows his nephew John Cruise how to shake out hay, Summer 1975.

Bottom right: Mary (right) and Nora Cruise in the kitchen of the Cruise family home, Arderry.





**Coolnafarna National School.
Girls' class, late 1950s.**

Back, L-R: Noreen McHale, Eileen Freeley,
Mary Walsh, Maeve Lyons, Bernadette Regan.

Centre, L-R: Anne Fleming, Mary Lyons,
Mary Hunt, Anne Walsh.

Front, L-R: Josephine Waldron,
Bridget Moran, Noreen Brennan.



Coolnafarna National School. Boys' class, late 1950s

Back, L-R: Gerald McNamara, Bernie Joe Lyons, Eamon Brennan, Tom Higgins NT.

Centre, L-R: Michael McNamara, Tommy Grogan, Richard Grogan, Thomas Moran, Pat Moran, Kevin McNamara.

Front, L-R: Eamon McNamara, Jimmy Lyons, Tommy Clifford, Michael Lyons, Liam Waldron, Bernie Ruane.



Last orders please! Enjoying a farewell drink on the last day of trading in Hannan's Bar and Electrical shop, Bridge Street (1980s), were Tom Cunningham (Abbey St.) and Mike Byrne (Bridge St.).
Courtesy Mike Byrne.



Members of the Ballyhaunis Apostolic Work Society doing a take on 'The Clancy Brothers' in a Fancy Dress contest in the 1960s. Only two have, so far, been identified, Morley sisters Kit Freeley (back left) and Peg Byrne (front right).



Eugene Carney, Island, taken in Byrne's Bar, Clare Street in 1988. *Courtesy Mike Byrne.*

1920 - A Student's Tale

Séan Cribbin, Knockbrack and Leixlip (Grandnephew of the late Tom Raftery)

Imagine you were born on the second last day of 1900. When you are nearly fourteen the First World War begins; and ends when you are nearly eighteen with 22 million dead. Soon after in 1918 a global pandemic appears - the Spanish Flu - killing 50 million more people before its end in 1920. Ireland in 1920 was a dangerous place. It was under British rule, experiencing a tumultuous year of disruption and bloody, armed conflict. Mid-September a young man named Tom Raftery, my granduncle, left his family's farm of twelve acres and his home in Greenwood, Began, setting out to make his mark on the world. Tom was undertaking studies at St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin to become a national school teacher. He was born in 1900, the second eldest child of Thomas Raftery b. 1871 (ex. Ballynastockagh, Logboy) and Mary Kenny b. 1864 (Greenwood). Tom had four siblings - his older brother John (Jack) b. 1898; Catherine (Mrs. Kate Freely, Knockbrack) b. 1903 who was my grandmother; Mary (Mrs. May Murphy, Devlis) b. 1904; and Michael (Mick) b. 1908, an All-Ireland Junior winner with Mayo '33, League winner '35, and with Galway, All-Ireland Senior winner '38, League winner '39, record holder of eight university football Sigerson Cup winning medals, including five-in-a-row, and represented Connacht on three Railway Cups football teams.

In 1923, Tom became the first teacher in the Raftery family. His sister May and brother Mick qualified in the same profession a few years later. At the time, the weekly wage of a national school teacher was about four pounds. May Murphy, my godmother, was the last teacher who taught in Coolnafarna National School prior to its closure in 1972 when she retired. My three siblings and I numbered within the school's last eleven pupils whom she taught.

Tom Raftery died on the 14th of April 1926 aged 25, after succumbing to serious injuries received in controversial circumstances playing in the Junior County final for Ballyhaunis against Ballina two days earlier. (See 'Tom Raftery - A Tragic Death Recalled' in *Annagh* 2006, pages 89-90).

**"Education is not the filling of a bucket,
but the lighting of a fire."**

William. B. Yeats

My great-grandmother Mary was credited as the driving force behind her children's education. It is thought that she and her husband Tom saw the only way to prevent their children from seeking emigration from Ireland was through education. The legacy of their foresight and

sacrifices had also "lit a fire" within their direct offspring, including their own three children. Eighteen school teachers and one lecturer has stood at the top of a class imparting knowledge to students during the last one hundred years, since Tom Raftery took his first step away down his boreen to become a teacher.

**"All I want is an education,
and I'm afraid of no one."**

Malala Yousafzai

(The youngest ever Nobel Prize winner)

**"Every great dream begins with
a dreamer,**

**Always remember, you have within you
the strength, the patience,**

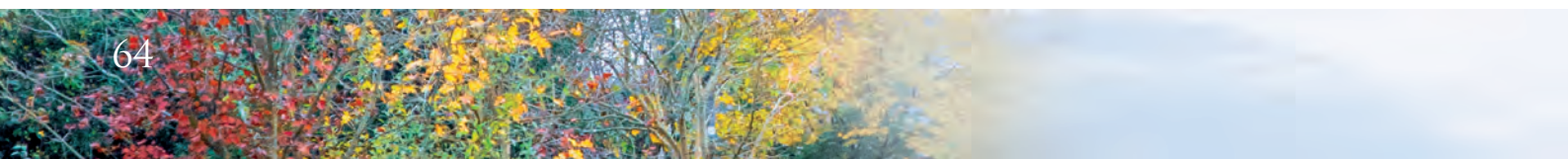
**And the passion to reach for the stars to
change the world."**

Source unknown

Bloody Sunday: 21st November 1920

During the bitter Irish War of Independence in 1920 Michael Collins, the then Minister of Finance of Dáil Éireann, doubled as director of the Irish Republic Army Intelligence Section. He was a very astute director who established an extensive counter intelligence network throughout Ireland. He had a select 'squad' of men who carried out assassinations on his orders alone and that of his two deputies, Richard Mulcahy, IRA Chief of Staff and Dublin IRA Brigadier Commander Dick McKee. Collins' intelligence network in Dublin City had recruited personnel within the very heart of the Royal Irish Constabulary and British intelligence sections in Dublin Castle, the centre of British rule in Ireland, who daily passed on valuable information to the Volunteers (IRA). Winston Churchill, Secretary of War and Minister of the Air since January 1919, put a bounty on Collins' head of £5,000 in March 1920. The assassination of Alan Bell, a banker, on Collins' orders by the 'squad' on 26th March prompted Churchill's action. Bell had identified and confiscated £18,000 of Irish government monies that had been deposited in dummy accounts within different Dublin banks.

Churchill later would describe him as follows: "Michael Collins was a man of dauntless courage. He was an Irish patriot, true and fearless. We hunted him for his life, and he slipped half a dozen times through steel claws, fierce conditions and moving through ferocious times, he supplied those qualities of action and personality without which the foundations of Irish



S. Binick's T.C.
Dumcondra.
Dublin.
19/9/20

Dear mother,

Just a few lines to let you know I arrived safely, and am just settling down, & getting to know the place.

I thought it awfully quiet for the first day, and hardly slept any at all for the first night, on account of the noise of the trams, and motors but on last night I slept fairly well.

I have a lovely little bed in a corner all to myself

and feel quite comfortable.

It was true for P. Carney about the tea. It is horrid stuff, no sugar, and a very smoky taste.

When I arrived in Ballaghadereen, I met a fellow, Ruane from Kilmaghy, a very nice chap whom I slept with in Castlebar, and so I was not so lonely in my journey coming up.

Any of the Lyons's did not meet me, as they had promised, but I managed to get my counter

taken to the College very easily and cheaply 1/-.

We did not do much study yet, as we are not yet provided with all the books we require, but we are getting them very handy from the second year fellows.

The Dean read out all the rules & regulations for us to day, which are very strict, but it is a lovely place here, much different to Greenwood.

When we came off the train in Dublin there was a horrible crowd on the platform all hurrying or running to be in a hurry.

I suppose ye are hard at work. Harvesting. We are having lovely weather here just now, just the sort that would suit father for the work.

I have not much time now to write a great deal more as the bell has gone for dinner (a good meat dinner) but will not be long till I write again.

Hoping father, John, Kate, Mary & my old bedmate Mike and all and yourself also.

I remain, Dear mother
Your loving son
Tom.

St Patrick's J. B. Mr Thomas Raftery
 Dictation 1 Drumcondra. Drumcondra
 J. B. County Dublin
 Drumcondra 4/10/1920 B
 County
 My dear father,
 Dictation dear me
 Dictation Just a few lines
 to let you know I have not forgotten your
 Dictation kindness to me in supplying me with the
 money which I required to get the necessary
 books and copies get the necessary
 and Dictation I never thought it would
 really cost as much as it did. On the
 Sunday after I came up, I got a few handy
 enough from some of the second year fellows
 but when I had to buy books & copies out
 through the city, they cost a little.
 On the following day
 after coming up (Saturday) we were allowed out
 through the city to get the books we required,
 and on that day I went to Hanleys, where
 B. Kenny told me go, and got a pair of
 boots like the pair he showed us for 38/-.

I did not see any of the
 Lyons's since I came up, but Pat Barney met Patrick
 one Sunday, and he told him he would come to
 visit me soon.
 We had to be up this morning
 at 6 o'clock, had to attend mass and then come
 in and do an hour study before we got
 any breakfast. The only thing that stands for
 us is that we get a good meat dinner and
 can also have a good tea when we are
 allowed out the city on Saturdays.
 I suppose ye have all the
 harvest clapped and straightened now we had
 two very bad days Saturday & Sunday and were
 not able to go out at all on account of the
 rain.
 If you find it convenient maybe
 you would send me a little money as I am
 nearly spent up. Thanking you for your kindness
 in the past and hoping ye are all well
 Dictation I remain Dear Father
 Dictation Your Obedient & Loving Son
 Dictation I Dictation Ymr

Tom Raftery's second letter, 4th October 1920.

nationhood would not have been re-established."

Sunday morning, 21st November 1920, was a decisive date and time in the armed struggle between the British Crown forces and the Volunteers. Under the leadership of Collins his new guerrilla warfare tactics and his 'squad' assassinations were effective. Through intelligence received Collins knew that some eighteen to twenty British Intelligence officers based in Dublin Castle were posing a serious threat to IRA operations and personnel. They had knowledge of the inner workings of the IRA and, importantly, knew identities and could recognise by sight some of its network of Volunteers and informants. Collins, however, knew that this valuable knowledge was within the heads of the 'Cairo Gang.' These officers were given this nom-de-guerre later, as they often met in the Cairo Café at 59 Grafton Street. They had also mostly served in intelligence operations in the Middle East during the First World War prior to their arrival in Ireland. Collins' informants believed that targeted assassinations of high ranking Sinn Féin and IRA personal was one of the next steps to be taken by the 'Cairo Gang,' who knew them by sight, in order to stifle IRA activity. Collins prevented this military action by striking first, targeting thirty-five individuals, including a mix of intelligence officers and their informants, on Sunday morning, 21st November 1920. During this targeted military action twelve British agents and two auxiliary policemen were killed that morning and six others were wounded, one of whom later died of his injuries. The Volunteers had one soldier wounded and captured, Frank Teeling. He later escaped from Kilmainham Prison, Dublin City in February 1921. Even though a majority of the assassinations were aborted, the resulting aftermath of this pre-emptive strike virtually crippled British intelligence efforts within the capital. Their surviving officers and informants feared to move about Dublin City as they knew that their identities were known to Collins' 'squad.'

Gaelic Athletic Association, Croke Park Grounds, Drumcondra, Dublin City

Just one-hundred years ago, on the afternoon of Sunday, 21st November 1920, at 3.15, referee Mick Sammon, a Kildare man from Clane, threw in the ball to start a senior challenge inter-county football game in Croke Park between Tipperary and Dublin. The game was to start at 2.45pm but due to the crowds outside it was delayed. Despite the palpable tension and a sense of danger within the city that afternoon about 5,000 supporters attended the game. Crown forces believed that this game was how Collins IRA 'squad' had planned to evade detection and possibly escape the city. They were right. Some Volunteers were in the crowd

with that idea. Croke Park was surrounded by Crown forces made up of personnel from the R.I.C. (police), Auxiliaries (para-military police with ex-army officers) and members of the dreaded Black and Tans, just after the game started. On approaching Croke Park at about 3.25pm the Crown forces suddenly opened indiscriminate fire on the teams and supporters. Their claim that they had been fired upon first has been disputed. Croke Park was mostly enclosed by a wall. As they tried to escape the murderous gunfire directed at them a number of the dead were shot down from the top of this wall, including children. Seven people were shot dead and five more would die later that night from their wounds. Scores more were wounded and injured. Two people were trampled to death in the stampede to get to safety. One fell to his death off the wall onto railings. A Dublin player returned home safely still toggled out in his playing attire and football boots.

Most notable among the dead were one woman, Jane Boyle 26 (Dublin) who was due to be married a week later, and who was buried in her wedding dress; and three children, Jerome O'Leary 10, William Robinson 11 and John William Scott 14, all from Dublin. The following are the other innocent victims of this fateful event: James Burke 44 (Dublin), Michael Feery 40 (Dublin), James Matthews 48 (Dublin), Patrick O'Dowd 57 (Dublin), Joe Traynor 21 (Dublin), Daniel Carroll 30 (Tipperary), James Teehan 26 (Tipperary), Tom Hogan 19 (Limerick), and Tom Ryan 27 (Wexford). Two players were shot on the football field, both from Tipperary: Michael Hogan 24, corner-back, who was killed, and Jim Egan, centre-half back, who survived his injuries. The Hogan Stand in Croke Park was named in memory of Michael Hogan.

It was estimated that around 228 rifle and revolver, and fifty machine gun bullets (from an armoured car) were fired by the combined Crown forces in under two minutes. No British Crown or IRA personnel were injured or killed in Croke Park. There was outrage from the international community, as well as from more liberal British people, at the massacre and wounding of so many civilians. As a consequence of this, the public looked more favourably on the Irish nationalist objectives of Independence for Ireland. This added more political pressure on the British Government to resolve the conflict. Bloody Sunday was a rallying call for the people of Ireland to the nationalist cause.

Late on Saturday, 20th November, two high ranking Volunteers, Dublin IRA Brigadier Dick McKee (a senior intelligence officer) and Vice-Brigadier Peadar Clancy, had both planned the Sunday morning actions with Collins and others in Vaughan's Hotel, Parnell Square. Along with an innocent man, Conor Clune from Clare with no connection to the IRA, they were arrested at their hideout in 36 Lower Gloucester St. on foot of

information passed to Dublin Castle via a phone call by an Irish man, Lance Corporal James 'Shankers' Ryan, a military policeman, on Sunday morning at 2am. Ryan had seen McKee enter the address. Ryan was shot and killed by Volunteers from the 'squad' on Collins' instructions on 5th February 1921.

The three men, McKee, Clancy and Clune, were shot by Crown forces allegedly trying to escape from Dublin Castle on the night of 21st November 1920. It is more likely that the three men were killed in reprisal for the British deaths that morning. Their deaths marked the end of 'Bloody Sunday', 21st November 1920. Thirty-one people had woken up that morning with no premonition that their lives were to end violently in Dublin City before the day's end.

"My one intention was the destruction of the undesirables who continued to make miserable the lives of ordinary decent citizens. I have proof enough to assure myself of the atrocities which this gang of spies and informers have committed. Perjury and torture are words too easily known to them. If I had a second motive it was no more than a feeling such as I would have for a dangerous reptile. By their destruction the very air is made sweeter. That should be the future's judgement on this particular event. There is no crime in detecting and destroying, in wartime, the spy and informer. I have paid them back in their own coin." *Michael Collins.*

**"Those who make peaceful revolution impossible,
make violent revolution inevitable."**

John F. Kennedy

In May 2011 Queen Elizabeth II, the commander in chief of British armed forces, made a first official visit by a British monarch to Ireland since it won its Independence from English rule in 1921. She visited the iconic Croke Park Stadium on the 18th May. This visit was a powerful diplomatic gesture of reconciliation by her Majesty and the Gaelic Athletic Association on behalf of the people of Ireland and England. Queen Elizabeth II entered Croke Park via the Hogan Stand before stepping out onto the pitch. Later that evening, at a State banquet in Dublin Castle, Queen Elizabeth II opened her televised speech by addressing those present in Irish. She made reference to "Being able to bow to the past, but not be bound by it." She also added: "To all those who have suffered as a consequence of our troubled past I extend my sincere thoughts and deep sympathy."

"The most important things are the hardest to say. They are the things you get ashamed of, because words diminish them." - Stephen King

St Patricks Y. C.

Drumcondra

Sunday night 21:11:20

My dear mother,

Just a few lines
to let you know I am getting along alright.
We will be down again at the practising
schools this week but I do not mind.

I thought you might be uneasy when you
hear or read of the work that is going
on here especially during today, but you
needn't be uneasy as it is nearly time
now that I should be able to mind myself.
Only for having to prepare my notes for
the practising schools next week I would
be gone to the football match at Croke park
which is not very far distant from the
college. I suppose you will read all about
it in the newspapers. However you needn't
mind as I am quite safe. Thanks - God.

I was expecting a cake
from you but I am afraid you will
not be able to send any now on account
of the trains. For the same reason I am
afraid I will not be able to get home
at Christmas.

Hoping y^r are all well
as this leaves me at present "thank God"
and trusting you will not be uneasy.

I remain Dear Mother.
Your ever Affectionate Son.
Yours. Good. bye.

St Patrick's I.B.

Drumcondra.

27 - 11 - 20

My dear Mother,

Just a few lines to let you know I am getting along alright and am just after completing a hard week's work in the practising schools I got a fairly good report again this time. "Preparation for work, good." Teaching very satisfactory!

I received the cakes & butter on Tuesday evening and was very pleased to get them especially the butter as I couldn't manage the soup we do get with our bread for lunch. It is almost as thick as stirabout and bees very salty sometimes.

We will not feel the Christmas running in now. The only thing I am afraid of is that there will be some upset in the trains by the time we are prepared for going home. I suppose ye were uneasy when ye heard of what occurred at Croke Park on last Sunday but I was so fortunate as to remain away.

More than half of the fellows from the College were at the match, yet only two of them hurt their ankles in getting over the high wall that surrounds the Park. A good many of them lost their hats & topcoats in trying to get away but were very lucky otherwise.

We had a very wet day here on today Saturday but the weather is not near as cold now as it was. The worse time of the year for bad cold weather here is February & March. I did not get the ganssey yet. They are very dear. You wouldn't get a good one for much less than £2 and I have only 30/- now as I had to get soles on my shoes.

Hoping ye are all well & in good health. As this leaves me at present "Thank God" and thanking you for sending me the cakes.

I remain "Dear Mother
Your Loving Son. Tom."

Tom Raftery's
fourth letter,
27th Nov 1920

The Life and Times of a G.P.

Dr. Tommie Joyce in Ballyhaunis, 1951-1984

Martin Joyce

On 24th September 1950, the goal in the dying minutes that propelled Mayo to victory in the All-Ireland Football Final also resulted in Dr. Tommie Joyce relocating his family to Ballyhaunis for the next half century.

Our father Tommie was a native of Ballinrobe, as was his father Bernard, a draper and for forty years a Mayo county councillor, and chairman from 1945-50. His mother Bridget Walsh was from Balla. Her brother Richard ('Uncle Dick') was the Old IRA organiser for Mayo in the War of Independence, a publican, local historian, county councillor and a TD from 1927-1951.

Tommie was born in 1917, the eldest of three and the only boy. He was the first in his family to obtain a third level education, paid for by his Uncle Dick. He graduated from UCD medical school in 1941, and followed this with internships at the Mater Hospital. He then gained his initial general practice experience as a locum in Tourmakeady in the Mayo Gaeltacht, where having good Irish was a pre-requisite.

There were no permanent GP positions available in the West, so, in late 1943, at the height of the Second World War, Dr. Tommie decided to work in the UK. Britain was severely short of medical staff during those years. He became assistant to an Irish doctor from Skibbereen, Dr. Liam O'Regan, who was based in Ormskirk, Lancashire. Tommie chose this position, from the many advertised in the Irish Medical Journal, because of its proximity to a hospital.

Early in 1944, through Dr. O'Regan, Tommie met Angela Swarbrick, who was from Ormskirk and a medical student. She was nineteen and from a family of six, including a young half-brother. Her father Henry had died when she was four, from tuberculosis contracted in the trenches of the Somme in the Great

War. He left behind a widow, Theresa, and five children under the age of six, one of them just six weeks old.

Tommie and Angela married in Ormskirk in June 1946. Before then, he had brought her to Ballinrobe to meet his family, and they returned to Ormskirk with something worth its weight in gold in post-war Britain - four pounds of butter. Food staples were rationed for several years after the war. The butter proved invaluable for the wedding cake and other offerings on the day.

Life Journey

Tommie knew he wanted to go back to Ireland, and to Mayo if possible. First, he returned alone in September to study midwifery at the old Coombe Hospital for three months, acquiring knowledge he would soon put to good use. Angela joined him in early December.

After some time spent in Ballinrobe in 1947, a short-term locum position came up in Newport and he moved there, staying in lodgings, while Angela alternated between Ballinrobe and Ormskirk. She eventually joined him in Newport. Their first child, Mary, was born in Castlebar in September 1947. In November, Tommie was offered the permanent position of sole GP to the 1,344 inhabitants of the island of Arranmore, off Donegal, and he, Angela and baby moved there before Christmas. They were on their life journey together at last.

We don't know what discussion our parents had before moving to this beautiful island which had no running water (there was a well), no electricity, and where English was not generally spoken. Angela came from a home with all the basic mod cons of the time, so it would seem an unlikely fit for her. But she had a wonderful sense of adventure and she fell in love with the island and the people. With the assistance of an excellent midwife, Tommie delivered everyone



Tommie and Angela at their wedding reception in Ormskirk, Lancashire, in 1946.

born on Arranmore for the next three years. Hospital births were a rarity then. Their second-born, Brigid, was born on the island in 1949.

Much as he appreciated island life, Tommie's dream of Mayo lived on. It remained just that until September 24th 1950, when Mayo were playing Louth in the All-Ireland Football Final, seeking to emulate the heroes of 1936 who had won Mayo's first ever All-Ireland. The whole country was listening breathlessly to Micheál O'Hehir's commentary on the wireless. Mayo were trailing by two points with ten minutes to go when the Flying Flanagan, law student Mick Flanagan from Castlebar, pounced on a loose ball, rounded the Louth goalkeeper and punched the ball to the net for the winning score. When that happened, Dr. Andy Smyth, the long-time GP in Ballyhaunis, became so excited that he suffered a heart attack, and died instantly. It was tragic. He was only sixty.

In due course Tommie applied for the vacant position, was appointed and moved to the town in February 1951. It was the biggest medical practice in Mayo without a nearby hospital. Tommie did not mind that - he was happy to be back in his native county.

On the day before their departure from Arranmore to Ballyhaunis, the islanders organised a farewell party, but Dr. Tommie was unexpectedly called to the far side of the island, as a birth was imminent. It was a long trek on foot (there were no cars), and he had to spend the night in a chair, waiting for the baby to come. This was by no means an uncommon occurrence. When he returned in the morning, Angela had everything packed for the boat to the mainland. On the pier, the baby's father, a fisherman, rushed off a boat to thank and pay him - "five pounds for the government and a pound for yourself!"

Ballyhaunis

Another eight of us Joyce children were born in Ballyhaunis between 1951-1963. Growing up on Abbey Street was idyllic in its innocence. We had the Friary field and woods (the 'plantation'), snow-sledging, tree-climbing, the river, almost traffic-free streets, our pals, and, most of all, each other. We made our own fun, like all the children in the town, and enjoyed the monthly



The Joyce family at the Silver Wedding Anniversary celebration in 1971. Back, L-R: Gerry, Thérèse, Martin, Brigid, Justin, Anne. Front, L-R: Kevin, Michael, Angela, Tommie, Mary, Tom.

Tuesday cattle, sheep and pig fair, with its attendant stalls centred on the Square filled with exotic goods (we thought), despite being known as the 'cheap jacks'. We bought catapults there, and you could get a good penknife too, for simple pastimes like carving your name.

The Corpus Christi procession down the Friary avenue, and the May procession through the town, with their rituals, flowers, colours and scents, were annual highlights, as was the Abbey Pattern.

Street rivalries were an obsession, and there was many a stand-off across the river between the Abbey Street and Knox Street gangs. The disputes were usually over mutual allegations of 'robbery' of bonfire material, consisting of old tyres and logs. We were mainly the Timoneys, Hannons and Joyces, while they were mostly the Herrs, Morans and O'Briens. Donal Moran was rumoured to be deadly accurate with his slingshot, enough to give you the shivers, but we never saw it in action. The poet of rural Ireland, Patrick Kavanagh, wrote: *Homer's ghost came whispering to my mind. He said: I made the Iliad from such a local row.* They had slingshots back then in Greece, too.

Certainly, it could be said we led lives of heroic, albeit unconscious, belief in ourselves and our home turf. The world then seemed open to infinite possibilities. We were sent outdoors every day by our mother, with the injunction just to be back on time for meals.

Our house in Abbey Street was small, made even smaller by having a surgery and a narrow, often smoke-

filled, waiting room at the front (where Mayo Sports Partnership is now), yet we never felt cramped. We bounced off, and learnt from, each other in a very lively way, while our parents looked on in amusement: Mary v Brigid, Michael v Martin, Anne v Thérèse, Justin v Gerry (maybe not so much) and Kevin v Tom, the rivalries were strong, the arguments intense; but underneath it all Tommie and Angela were inculcating loyalty. To this day we siblings are close, despite being scattered around Ireland and the UK (Mary), the Netherlands (Thérèse), USA (Kevin) and Japan (Tom). Ballyhaunis of the late '50s, the entire '60s, and the '70s for the youngest, is a deep and happy memory in all our hearts.

We know now how different life was for our parents, and the things they shielded us from. Money was scarce: fees for medical card patients were low and on a fixed salary basis, not 'per item' until 1972, and payment was often delayed. Many patients, especially country ones, had little money and so they paid in kind - cabbages, bags of potatoes, rabbits, chickens (sometimes live, in a shopping bag), turkeys, geese, pheasant, snipe (not much meat on that), assorted fish, fresh eggs, including, occasionally, large duck eggs - all appeared in the house, some on a very regular basis. We remember fowl hanging under the stairs to mature. The pheasant was only ready to cook when it began to smell. Mother was a great cook, she knew how to prepare everything, and she supplemented it with vegetables and fruits from her organic garden in the backyard. We also had the best of milk, delivered daily from the cows owned by the Byrnes of Clare Street, another family of ten.

Workload

We were numerous and therefore expensive to educate, as free secondary school education, taken for granted nowadays, was only introduced in 1967. The four girls boarded at St. Louis' School in Balla, the six boys all went

to St. Patrick's College, as it was known then, becoming the Community School in Tom's day. University education later, for most of us, was a further strain on finances. For all our growing years, the house on Abbey Street was rented. Tommie and Angela could only afford to build their own, more spacious, house on Doctor's Road in 1974, after more than twenty years in the town, and when all but Kevin and Tom had flown the nest.

Telecommunications were primitive: our operator-assisted phone number (later it was dial-up) was Ballyhaunis 5-0 and everyone knew it by heart. Well, it wasn't difficult. We were amused when a TV crime show called 'Hawaii 5-0' came on. It was not as busy or as lively as our house! We had 'murder' every day ourselves and did not require any additional drama.

Most of all, medical practice was a very hard profession in those days, with few structures or precedents to help the rural GP. In an era when tuberculosis was rampant, there were no doctors' co-operatives to ease the workload, and no understanding by patients that individual doctors, working alone and largely unsupported by the medical authorities, could not be a 24/7 service. But that was what was expected. Tommie and the town's other doctor, Eamon Waldron, covered each other for half a day per week, and that was it. Later, when the workload became too much, Tommie set up an appointments system at the dispensary on



(Top) Artist's impression from 1960 of, clockwise from top left, Mary, Brigid, Thérèse and Anne.

(Bottom) The four sisters in the same positions, at Doctor's Road, Ballyhaunis, in 1981.



Upper Main Street, for certain days. Some patients were bewildered at the novelty of it. We were amused that his name plaque said Dr. TB Joyce - Thomas Bernard of course, not the highly infectious disease.

Apart from residents of the town, Dr. Tommie's practice extended in all directions, as far west as the Yellow River, halfway between Knock and Kiltimagh, out to Kilmovee in the north, south to Cloonfad over the Roscommon border, and as far as Ballinlough in the east, not including the village, which was served by Dr. Waldron.

Tommie must have dreaded the name Kilmovee. Often enough, an emergency call would come from there in the middle of the night, entailing a 24-mile round trip. Sometimes on the same night he would get a second callout to a house he had passed on the way there. It was a tough working life, but he was utterly dedicated, he knew his patients well, and he never failed to answer a call. He often said that every call was an emergency until you got there and found out. He frequently went to bed on Sunday afternoons because of exhaustion due to sleep deprivation.

One of the challenges he faced was the poverty and general hardship endured by so many, and which often only doctors were privy to. Sometimes Tommie would have felt more like a counsellor or social worker than a general practitioner. At the Christmas just two months before he died, he was called out in the middle of the night, and, rather than a medical emergency, it turned out they needed him to stop a fight.

Despite being a passionate republican, he was under no illusions about the impoverished reality for so many in De Valera's Ireland. But he was gregarious and perceptive, and he valued the time spent listening to stories from the many households in and around Ballyhaunis. Quite often he could find a connection between the story being told and the ailment being treated. Sometimes patients were just lonely, or needed someone on whom they could unload a burden, so he was always welcome company. In his later years we heard many a tragic or amusing story, with the names and locations withheld to protect confidentiality.

Passions

Apart from medicine, Tommie's twin passions were fishing and horseracing. He and Angela attended the Galway races each year, and in later years he travelled to Cheltenham, with Angela going a couple of times. From 1958, when most of us were very young children, and two not born yet, we camped and rented a caravan for several weeks each summer at Cahir on Lough Mask, near his home town of Ballinrobe, and, without really trying to, we learnt swimming, boating, fishing and rock

scrambling, as no doubt Tommie and Angela intended. This continued through the '60s until it ended in 1972.

On Saturday, 30th July 1966, Tommie caught four beautiful wild brown trout in the hugely popular Lough Mask Annual Fishing Competition at nearby Cushlough, which also attracted top international fishermen. This catch qualified him for the Final on the following Monday. It was a big deal for him and for us. The fact that England won the World Cup on the same day was neither here nor there. We had our priorities right, and ravenously consumed the delicious fish. The other main fish in the lake, pike, was never eaten by us, but German families on holiday loved it.



Tommie and Angela celebrate their Silver Wedding Anniversary at the Central Hotel, Ballyhaunis, on 19th June 1971.

Angela loved bridge, gardening and watching snooker. The precision of the latter appealed to her strong mathematical mind, while the challenge of bridge, where every pair plays every other pair, and organising the table sequence with odd numbers can be tricky, made it almost inevitable that she would become tournament director for competitions in Connacht, a position she held for many years. Angela's regular bridge partner was Dr. Eamon Waldron, and later Teresa McGrath (in Claremorris), Martin Connery and Kathleen Cribbin, three nights a week. For a number of years, on Sunday nights, she and Tommie hosted friends at the house for various card games, including solo, 25 (or the longer version, 110). Players included Michael Curley, Fred Herr, Jack Morley, Mido Cunningham and Dr. Waldron.

Sense of Place

In retrospect, both our parents, in their different but complementary ways, and the town of Ballyhaunis too,

gifted each of the ten of us something enduring - a rooted sense of place and a grounding in what really matters in life - family, loyalty, discipline, dedication, unselfishness, tolerance, kindness, and much more besides. Like our parents, the town was greater than it knew. They and it, allowed us to flourish because we were enabled to grow in different ways, each according to his or her own passions and inclinations. We took it for granted then, but not now.

Like his predecessor, Dr. Smyth, Tommie died young, succumbing to a heart attack in February 1984 at the age of 66, just months before the retirement he was looking forward to and so richly deserved. He always said he did not want a lingering illness as doctors were the worst patients - they knew what was possible and always suspected the worst. It took us a long time to get over his sudden death. Does one ever do so?

Angela continued to live a fruitful life despite her loss, fully engaged with the community and a few close friends, and performing, we know, many unheralded acts of kindness, until she passed away in January 2004 in her 80th year.

None of the ten of us has lived in Ballyhaunis since 1981, yet the town draws us back inexorably, *boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past*. Except for Anne, who sadly died in 2003 of breast cancer, at the age of 51.

In 2000, Angela returned from a visit to Thérèse and her family in the Netherlands with an oak acorn in her pocket, which she had picked off the ground in an English rose garden in Zeeland. Wondering if it would grow, she planted it in the vegetable patch of her organic



Six Joyce brothers at New York v Mayo, All-Ireland first round match, in the Bronx, New York, 5th May 2019.
L-R: Justin, Michael, Martin, Gerry, Kevin, Tom.

garden on Doctor's Road, so that she could monitor its progress. At the time of her passing over three years later, it was about three feet tall.

With the agreement of the Abbey Partnership committee and the Community Council, we dug it up carefully, and, in a small ceremony on 16th October 2004, on what would have been Angela's 80th birthday, and in the presence of a small group of friends and council members, we re-planted the tree beside the gently-flowing Dalgan, at the bend on the riverside walk behind where the seat is now.

The oak tree is flourishing and is our tribute to two wonderful parents and a magical time growing up in Ballyhaunis.

Doctor Tommie – The Lighter Side of Life

Martin Joyce

Dr. Tommie Joyce had a wealth of stories, and should have written a book. He probably would have, if he had lived on to his retirement. He was a lively and entertaining raconteur and his anecdotes reflected the changing *mores* of the times, from the '50s through to the '80s. Here is a short selection.

Examining a patient's chest with stethoscope:

"I see you cycled in to the surgery today." "How do you know that, Doctor? Is it the way I'm breathing?" "No, I see the clips around your trouser legs."

After examining a female patient there comes a social enquiry. "Can you give me some advice, Doctor? My young lad has lately started using very bad

('expletive') language. Have you any idea where he is picking it up from?" (*With a straight face*): "No idea at all, Mary."

Brandy Glass Trick

Dr. Tommie was fond of practical jokes and was adept at sleight-of-hand with cards and coins. He had a glass cabinet in his surgery with a brandy glass prominent at the front. It had a double glass bowl, between which was sealed a brandy-coloured liquid. The glass looked half full although there was nothing in it. One day a patient came in, one who frequently declared, unconvincingly, that she never touched a drop. She spied the brandy glass and remarked, "Oooh Doctor, I know what you're up to. But I won't tell a soul." "Would you like a drop?"

he asked. "Go on, then," she replied. He chuckled at the expert way she knocked it back and then at the way she cursed him. They both burst out laughing.

The Miracle at Knock

Knock was part of Dr. Tommie's practice. Being the local doctor and a practising Catholic, he was on occasion asked to authenticate miracles. Two doctors' verifications of what was alleged to have occurred were required to progress the authentication process. On one occasion a patient seemingly had the skin on his face, which had completely wasted away, fully restored after attending Knock for a week on pilgrimage. Tommie examined the patient carefully and pronounced: "No miracle. This patient wore a mask until he arrived here. His condition is such that exposure to the air has healed his skin. God is a perfectionist. If He were performing a miracle, He would have given him his nose back."

Killing Two Birds

In the early days, when some patients did not understand the concept of doctor's time off, Dr. Tommie would be accosted by patients on his way to and from Mass at the Abbey on Sunday morning. To avoid this, he took to hearing Mass from the sanctuary of the sacristy, with the priest's ready understanding of the problem. He would then make his escape a minute or two before the Mass ended.

On one occasion, an out-of-town patient figured out this stratagem and was waiting for him on the avenue. "Doctor, I have a terrible pain in my side, will you see me now in the dispensary?" "When did you get this pain?" asked Tommie. "Oh, last Tuesday, but I thought I'd wait to come in to town till today for Mass, and kill two birds with *the wan shtone*." "I see," said the doctor coolly, "if your health is a weekend affair for you, why should I be concerned? You can come to see me tomorrow at 10am, when the dispensary opens." "But I'll be working then," complained the patient. "So will I," replied Dr. Tommie.

Finnegan's Wake in Ballyhaunis

Dr. Tommie knew his patients well and this knowledge was often critical to their treatment. In the era when it could take days to get the result of a blood sugar test, he was called to the house of a man who had slipped into a coma.

The patient was a diabetic, and if he had inadvertently overdosed on his insulin, or conversely had not taken it at all, a coma was the condition he could end up in. The local priest and the neighbours were already gathered in the house and were preparing for the worst. Dr. Tommie had to decide: do I give him a shot of insulin or do I give him a shot of glucose? He turned to the priest and said, "We're either going to have a death or a resurrection," and he then proceeded to administer a shot of glucose.

Knowing the man to be diligent, he reasoned that he never missed his injections and was more likely to have overdosed it.

The glucose worked - fast. Within a couple of minutes the man sat up, looked around at the priest and the gathered crowd, and shouted, "What are ye all doing in my house? Get the hell out of here!"



Dr. Tommie displayed this satirical cartoon of himself in his surgery for many years.

A Tourmakeady Tale

While working as a locum in the Mayo Gaeltacht in the early '40s, Dr. Tommie is called out to treat a man who has fallen off his bicycle and broken his leg. It is a hot July day and haymaking is in full swing. "Why did you fall off?" asks Tommie. "It's my heart, doctor." After examining him, Tommie says, "*Bréag amach is amach is é sin! Is de bharr go bhfuil tú ró-ólta gur thit tú den rothar*" (you're lying, you fell off the bike because you're drunk). "Oh, please don't tell the wife, she'll kill me for breaking my leg in this weather, and...". The man went on talking, while the doctor saw to his leg. Tommie was amazed at how articulate and fluent he was, and said, "Where did you learn to speak Irish like that?" The man related how he had worked on building sites in America for a few years. They all spoke English at work, but, when they clocked off, the Spaniards went off to the pub speaking Spanish, the Italians speaking Italian, the English speaking English, and "...we Irish were damned if we were going to go off speaking English, so we spoke Irish. We had competitions in pubs translating Shakespeare into Irish so that the Bard would improve our way of speaking."

The Irish Folklore Commission was busy going around the country at the time, recording the last remnants of Irish folklore for preservation, and they soon came across this marvellous linguist. He was invited up to Dublin where they did many recordings of him.



The Lyons and Flanagan families, Ballindrehid, June 1927

L-R: John Lyons 'Scout', Margaret Lyons (née Kerins)[mother], Joe Cunnane and Nora Cunnane (née Lyons), Nora Flanagan (née Egan), Tom Flanagan, Jim Flanagan [son], Delia Flanagan (née Lyons), Della Lyons [neighbour]. Children: Tom Flanagan (2 years), Seamus Flanagan (4 months). *Courtesy Delia Flanagan.*



Flanagan and Eagney families, c.1925.

Mrs. Catherine Eagney, Coolnaha (seated at centre) and her brother Tom Flanagan (Ballindrehid), with her son, daughter-in-law and grandsons, and Tom's grandson. Left to Right: Tommy Eagney, Mick Eagney, Tom Flanagan with grandson Tommy Flanagan, Catherine Eagney (née Flanagan), Tom Eagney Snr., Mary Eagney (née McGrath) and Austin Eagney. *Courtesy Delia Flanagan.*

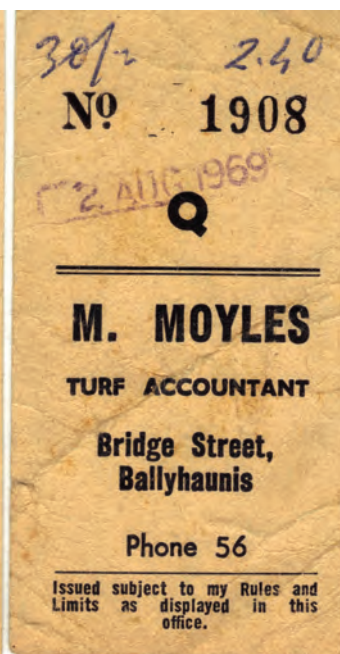
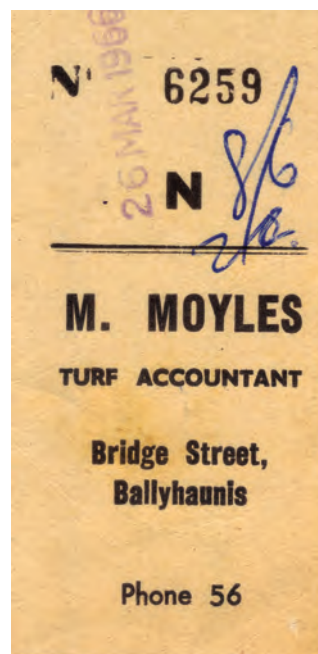


Tom Flanagan, his wife Nora (née Egan)[seated] and their children Michael and Tommy. The woman standing at left is Mrs. Tarpey, Tom's sister. Photograph taken circa 1895.
Courtesy Delia Flanagan.



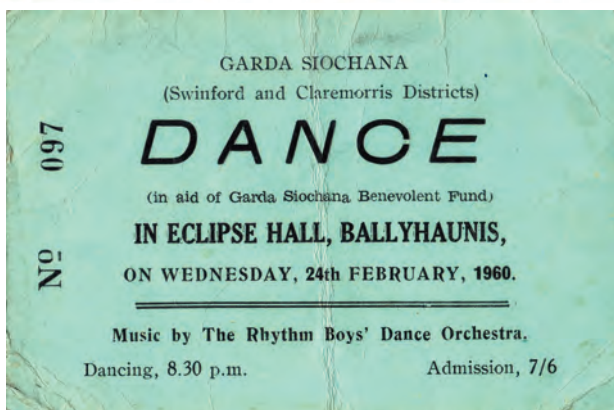
A group of youngsters who all grew up beside each other. Taken on a sunny summer's day, in Donnellan's yard, Clare Street, in the late 1960s.

Back, L-R: Pat Donnellan, Jacqueline Dwane. Front, L-R: Padraic Flatley, Paul Donnellan, Garvan Dwane, John Flatley.
Courtesy Garvan Dwane.



Above left: Ticket to the Ballyhaunis Football Club Annual Dinner Dance, 1978.

Above right: Betting slips from May Moyles' Turf Accountants, 1966 and 1969. Courtesy Thomas Lyons.



Below left: Garda Dance ticket 1960. Courtesy Thomas Lyons.

Mayo SPCA, Pattenspark

Lucie Kavanagh

At the Mayo SPCA shelter, we are not alone in saying that it has been a very strange year. Right from the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic, we were affected by the loss of our annual fundraisers such as church-gate collections, supermarket collection days, pop-up shops and then, the summer events of dog shows and festivals. The money that we would normally raise has been a huge loss to us over what has been a very busy year, especially over the lockdown period when we weren't able to re-home any of the animals from the shelter.

Fundraising hasn't come to a complete standstill and we are very grateful to the individuals who managed to run small fundraising events for us – socially distanced cake sales, sponsored shaves, online sales of donated items and, at the time of writing, our wonderful Maureen Higgins is about to do the Womens' Mini Marathon in Ballyhaunis for us. All such efforts are so appreciated and if anyone can think of and carry out anything like this to raise money for us we will help promote it and it will be so beneficial to the animals in our care.

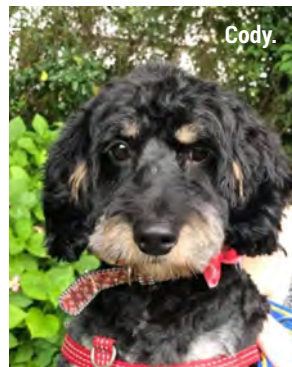
We also thank everyone who came to us with donations of food throughout the year and the businesses like Horkan's (Castlebar), Pet Stop (Castlebar) and Tesco (Claremorris) who kept food bins going for us, and all who donate to them.

We would also like to thank our wonderful volunteer team who kept coming and working throughout the year. At times we had to keep to a skeleton team who had to work very hard to keep everything going, and we are so thankful that they did.

As always, we have hundreds of stories from the gorgeous animals we have taken in throughout the year. The most well-known is our warrior, 'Conal', who spent weeks avoiding capture around Ballyhaunis. The people of Ballyhaunis were an enormous help, following all directions about not approaching him and keeping us informed as to his whereabouts. It was a fantastic day on 11th August when we saw the by now famous photo of Marian carrying him out of the Community School grounds (with thanks again to Gerry Glavey who helped to secure and mind him until she got there). Conal is now in his forever home with his gallivanting days behind him.

As always, this year's kitten season was as busy and heart-breaking as ever and we

again issue our plea to everyone to please, please neuter and spay your cats, whether they are your pets or feral cats that you feed (we can help to trap them). It allows the adult cats to live in peace and good health and decreases the numbers of suffering and unwanted kittens. One of our first sad examples this year was in early June when a kitten was found, thankfully alive, having been retrieved from



the river. Two cats in the sanctuary, already nursing their own litters, adopted little 'River' and this beautiful, blended family all grew up together in the safety of the cattery.

On the positive side, we had more enquiries from people who wished to trap and neuter cats in their area and then let them live out their lives in safety. While resources can be in very short supply for Trap Neuter Return operations, it is very encouraging to see people wishing to help and taking care of cats in their locality and we continue to help as many feral cat colonies as we possibly can.

As always, we thank everyone who has offered loving homes to our cats and kittens. The mother cats especially, having reared their families and been spayed, can now have a chance to relax and enjoy life.

Re-homing isn't always easy and we are very grateful to everyone who kindly offers when we post our beautiful animals. We have to be very aware of the individual needs of a cat or dog and then look at what each person can offer and the routine and needs of the families we speak to. Some dogs in our care, like Cody, can have very specific individual needs and will take a long time to find the perfect home, but we never give up and the longer a cat or dog spends in our care (or a foster home if possible), helps us to get to know them and the sort of life that they will be best suited to. There is nothing more rewarding than receiving updates from our former residents and their families and to see how well they are doing.

We would like to thank the dog warden, Laura Mulligan, for her great work with us throughout the year. We are now taking dogs out of the pound to re-home and we would also like to thank Marie who looks after them so well for the five days.



A delighted Cónal, happy in his new home.



How Many Died Today?

We don't know when it started; don't know where it will end
They say it came from China, from here – the known world's end
But the strangest part of all, and this I hate to say
The only ongoing question is, "How many Died Today?"

We tried to live a normal life, when lockdown did begin
Not more than three kilometres, and no visitors allowed in
We watched the news near constantly, the updates always grey
But ultimately the headline was, "How Many Died Today?"

One could not see her parents, 'cause they were eighty-three
Or go to town for shopping, it was banned until stage three
And one could not attend, to put his cousin 'neath the clay
'Cause he was number eleven, only ten allowed today

We learned about the front-line staff, their commitment full and true
They tried to keep us all alive, as much as they could do
And tragedy at nursing homes, where old people did lay,
As they made their parting breath, all we could do was pray

I hope someday when this does pass, as pass it surely will
We'll contemplate a deeper life, the year that time stood still
And if I live to be 100, I hope no one again will say
We will listen to the news to hear, "How Many Died Today?"

By Martin Fitzmaurice,
during Lockdown, 30th May 2020.

Pat O'Brien's Story

Tommy Caulfield

Before he died in 2014, Pat O'Brien had been keeping a handwritten daily journal outlining his battle with cancer, his treatment and his hopes for recovery. Pat's friend Aiden Hill passed the diary on to me. One couldn't but be struck by the unshakeable faith displayed by Pat in his diary along with the beauty and honesty of this moving story.

In these pages a picture of Pat emerges. We see the terror and fear we all display when faced with our own mortality. But we also see the humanity of the man in spite of his struggle. We witness his concern for those patients who were suffering even greater pain than himself and we see his unwavering faith in his God. We see his kindness and gratitude towards his carers and his appreciation for all the many friends who accompanied him along the path of his final journey.

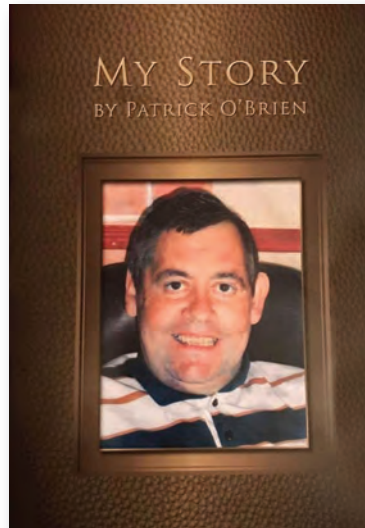
In spite of all the suffering and pain, Pat's sense of humour, bravery and fortitude of spirit shine through these pages. And this is how we remember Pat.

I felt that the diary deserved to be published and shared more widely in booklet format. The proceeds could be used as a little fundraiser for Mayo-Roscommon Hospice Foundation with a launch function attended by Pat's friends in his local, The Clock in Knox Street.

I typed up Pat's script and it ran to about 2,000 words and planned to contact his brother John and sister Bibi for permission to proceed. But like everything else, these plans came to nought... until I visited the Ballyhaunis graveyard over Christmas 2019 and came upon the O'Brien plot where the entire family now rest. This was the impetus I needed to get the ball rolling again. I enlisted the help of Robbie Herr and we contacted Martina Jennings, CEO at The Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation about our plans.

The fundraising event to launch 'My Story', the inspirational diary by the late Pat O'Brien, was a great success and very well attended. The event took place in The Clock, Knox St. on Friday night, 28th Feb 2020, and all proceeds were donated to the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation. The event was held to coincide with the sixth anniversary of Pat's passing following his brave battle with cancer. Martina Jennings, CEO of the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation and recently announced Mayo Person of the Year for 2020, was in attendance along with many of Pat's friends, neighbours, classmates and relatives.

The organisers of the launch were very pleased at the huge turnout on the night and the very many donations and messages of support received from Pat's friends



Friends of the late Pat O'Brien who attended the launch. From left: Tom Eagney, Eamon Murren, Jarlath Henry, Cathy Slattery, Kevin Henry, Robbie Herr, Michael Henry, Martina Jennings (CEO Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation), Tommy Caulfield, John Durkan, Alan Henry, Brendan Morrissey, Helen Reapy. Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher.



throughout the country and abroad. The high level of support for this special fundraiser may be seen as testimony to the high esteem in which Pat and his entire family were held by the local community. Pat's late parents Paddy and Theresa and his late brother John and sister Elizabeth (Bibi) would have been so proud of their youngest son and brother. May their gentle souls rest in peace.

Copies of the diary were distributed following weekend masses at St. Patrick's parish church in Ballyhaunis in early March. The organisers would like to sincerely thank Fr. Stephen Farragher and his parishioners for their support and generous donations. Thanks also to Pat's close friend Tom Eagney of Eagney

Insurance who made a very thoughtful donation to the Mayo SPCA in memory of Pat and his beloved pet dog Grouse. Pat and his faithful childhood companion were inseparable. A plaque in memory of Pat and his best friend was unveiled at the Mayo SPCA, Pattenspark in April. Pat passed away on 25th Feb. 2014.

Members of the Fundraising Committee: Tommy Caulfield, Eavan Webb, Robbie Herr, Aiden Hill, Brendan Morrissey, John Durkan, Tom Eagney, Eamon Murren.

If anybody would like to receive a copy of Pat O'Brien's 'My Story' please phone 086 8117487.

Memories of Primary School Days

Sr. Mary T. Ruane

My Primary School days were spent in a small country school in Derrylea only a short distance from my home in Johnstown, Ballyhaunis. This was in the 1940s and, as it is now 2020, I had to dig deep to search for the outstanding memories I have had in that period of my life. I do not remember my first day at school but the memory of my first teacher Mrs. Higgins is very vivid in my life. She was a very special person, motherly and kind and she and her husband Johnny gave us values which influenced me all my life and, hopefully, that I passed on to my own pupils in later life.

Recently, I was listening to an interview on Mid-West Radio. The interviewee, who was a teacher, was organising a competition where he invited children to write their thoughts about their favourite river or stream. This could be expressed in writing or through art or poetry. Immediately, the river which flowed just beside our Primary School came to mind: my memories of it are many and precious. It was a significant feature in the landscape and sustained us in our good days and not-so-good. At lunch-break we rushed to its banks to let off steam. The boys sailed their little paper boats on its waters, while other tried to catch fish. On the other side of the bridge the girls watched their shadows come and go in the water. We picked flowers – bluebells, primroses and buttercups – which we put into vases and placed on window sills. During the month of May we adorned the May Altar which took centre place in the classroom. On Friday afternoon we had a needlework class so the ritual of washing our hands in the river was very important as we prepared for the most enjoyable class of the week.

During these Covid-19 days there is time for reflection. In my imagination I sit beside the school river and watch it as it flows on its journey. Time changes everything. I think of all the people who walked through the doors of Derrylea School and who congregated at the river. We were happy and free and we shared friendships, stories, fun and laughter.

After Primary School all of us went our separate ways – some as far away as Australia and New Zealand. Today, I remember all of them with fondness because, wherever they went, they sowed the seed of faith and are our proud ambassadors. Some have gone to their eternal reward but they have left behind a rich legacy of good works for future generations.

As I continue to reflect on our school river, I am reminded of Derek Ryan's song 'Life is like a River'. It ebbs and flows, it winds through the rough and the smooth and leads on to where nobody knows. I remember too all who shared the water of the school river with us: our wonderful parents, relatives, neighbours and friends. We owe them a deep debt of gratitude for leaving us a wealth of goodness, kindness, faith, learning, hope, song, music, storytelling, love of nature and care of the earth and, above all, love of God and neighbour. They are the unsung heroes and they have done us proud.

I conclude with a quote –

'Time is like a river.

You cannot touch the same water twice

*because the flow that has passed will never pass again,
so enjoy every moment of your life!'*

Pauline Curley Remembers

...in conversation with Eamon Murren

I was born in Main Street on 11th Oct. 1934. My father was Michael Webb, a native of Loughglynn, and my mother was Mary Regan from Ballaghaderreen. I had nine sisters: Bridie, Monica, Josie, Cora, Leonie, Carrie, Margaret, Marie and Celine. I also had four brothers: Eddie, Seamie, Joe and Frank. Sadly, all have gone to their eternal reward, except for my youngest sister Celine who lives in Dublin.

My father was a butcher and cattle dealer. He had his first shop in Bridge Street, where Fitzgerald's shop was later situated. He bought the premises in Main Street for the princely sum of £300. Up to that time the property housed a bank. As my father was gone to fairs a lot of the time, he employed a butcher, John O'Brien from Balla, to run the shop. John worked with us for many years. My mother also helped-out in the shop, but with fourteen children to look after, she had her hands full.

I remember attending the Mercy Convent National School. At that time all of our teachers were nuns. Among the names I can recall are Sr. Mechtilde, Sr. Agnes, Sr. de Ricci. In secondary school we were taught by Maura Griffin, Mary Dyer and Nora Duggan along with the nuns. Some of my school friends were Etta Fleming (Lannon), Mary Glynn, Bernice Grogan, Alice McManus, Mary McBride and Mary O'Boyle. We played the usual games for the time such as hopscotch and sometimes on a Sunday we would walk to Annagh Lake or cycle over to Castlereagh. Our neighbours in Main Street were Dillons, Waldrons, Cribbins, Lyons, Faheys, Lynchs, Flynns, Byrnes, Flatleys, Caulfields and Eatons.

In 1956 I married Bertie Curley and moved into Clare Street along with Bertie's

parents Michael and Catherine. We had six daughters: Mary Keane (Sallins), Bennie McCarrick (Abbeyquarter), Patricia Connell (Claregalway), Flavia Culliney (Bekan), Valerie (Island) and Ann (Clare Street). I can remember filling my first drink in Curley's Bar over sixty years ago.

It was a glass of stout. Back then the bars did not have the same range of drinks that are served nowadays. We bottled and labelled our own Guinness. This was done every Thursday when the bar used to close from 2pm until 5.30pm when the Galway bus would arrive. As well as the pub, we had a grocery and we also sold electrical goods. At that time Curley's was also the CIE bus stop in the town. Various goods that arrived on the bus would be left in with us for collection. In those early days we only had a six-day licence. However, we bought another six-day licence at a cost of £234, which included solicitor's fees. The two six-day licences were the equivalent of a seven-day Licence.

I made many new friendships with my neighbours in Clare Street. Among my new close friends were the Regan, Grogan, Conway, Fitzgerald, Lyons, Freyne, Cleary, Griffin, Glynn, Byrne and Donnellan families, and in particular my great friend Maisín Meath and family. Sadly, Ger Donnellan and Bridie Levins are my only surviving friends from the old stock.

My husband Bertie passed away in 1986 at the relatively young age of fifty-seven. Bertie preferred to be on the road with his Fruit and Veg business rather than standing behind the bar. A few years after Bertie passed, our youngest daughter Ann took over the running of the bar and now she is the boss!

Some years ago I took a computer course with the late Sister Treasa in the convent



Pauline and Bertie Curley.
Taken in Castlereagh, 1955.



Pauline Curley pictured with great-grandchildren
Leah Culliney and Mollie Keane.

national school. I am now comfortable with WhatsApp, emails, Facebook, Facetime and so on. This has enabled me to keep in close contact with family and friends and has been a lifesaver especially during the recent lockdown and pandemic of 2020 which has curtailed our free movement. The new communications technology also allows me to get my daily Mass online, which is very important to me.

Prior to the arrival of Covid-19, I was still enjoying helping out in the bar. Unless a vaccine is developed soon, I am afraid that my days behind the bar are numbered. But after sixty-four years in the bar business maybe it's time that Ann pensioned me off!

Down the years I have seen very many changes in the pub trade including the smoking ban, changes in drink-driving laws and competition from off-licences. These changes have brought their challenges and have made business more difficult for the country's vintners. I fear that Covid-19 could be the last nail in the coffin for many pubs. However, our health is the most important thing and we should all follow the guidelines to ensure the safety of everyone. Thank God I still enjoy good health and, who knows, I might be back behind the bar at Curley's in 2021. Never say Never!

My best wishes to all readers of Annagh Magazine at home and abroad.



Jason Coyne B.Ed, pictured with his parents Noreen and Paul, Ballyveal, at his graduation from Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, 25th Oct. 2019.

Right:
Paddy Godfrey
(Moate) with
three
granddaughters,
all members of
the Ballyhaunis
Junior Ladies
Football team:
Laura Godfrey,
Gemma and
Niamh Foody.



Curley's Pharmacy Celebrate 85th Anniversary in 2019



The staff and management of Curley's Pharmacy pictured on the 85th anniversary of the Main Street business on 25th October 2019:
Back, L-R: Eamon Curley, Madeleine Nolan, Bernie Flaherty, Róisín Curley, Laura Davey and Mark Curley.
Front: Mary Niland and Mary Gurren.

Monday, Dec. 26th (St. Stephen's Night):

SECRET OF MY SUCCESS

Thursday, December 29th:

Robert Taylor, Barbara Stanwyck

THE NIGHT WALKER

Here is a thriller with a difference. Avarice and blackmail all help to keep your interest

Sunday, January 1st:

Paul Newman, Sophia Loren, David Niven

LADY L

(Technicolor/EastmanColor)

Directed by Peter Ustinov—this is definitely an adult film.

Persons under 18 not admitted.

Thursday, January 5th:

Tom Tryon, Harry Carey, Dan Duryea

GUNFIGHT AT SANDOVAL

(Technicolor)

The story of a real man "Texas John Slaughter," who died in 1921 with many gunfights to his credit!

Also: **DARBY O'GILL AND THE LITTLE PEOPLE**

THE STAR



CINEMA BALLYHAUNIS

PROGRAMME

for

Nov. 27th - Jan. 5th

ALL FILMS SHOWN ON
WIDE SCREEN OR CINEMASCOPE

Doors Open, 8 p.m.

Performances Commence, 8.30

ADMISSION:

BALCONY 2/6

PARTERRE 1/6 1/-

PATHE NEWS

Horold, Team.

What was on at the Star Cinema, Ballyhaunis sixty years ago - Christmas 1960.

Sunday, November 27th:

Stanley Baker, Peter Cushing,
David McCallum

VIOLENT PLAYGROUND

A series of unexplained fires, a series of unexplained murders. These all add up to make an exciting and action filled film!

Thursday, December 1st:

Gregory Peck, Vincent Price

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

A film to be seen again and again!
From that best selling book by A. J. Cronin

Also: **ALONE IN MOSCOW**
Interesting story!

Sunday, December 4th:

Gene Kelly, Natalie Wood, Claire Trevor

MARJORIE MORNINGSTAR

(Technicolor)

Excellent film which should please everyone

Also: **TORMENTED**

Thursday, December 8th:

James Booth, Lionel Jeffries, Shirley Jones

THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS

(Technicolor/CinemaScope)

They love for fun and murder for profit!

Also: **SAVAGE GUNS**
Good Western!

Sunday, December 11th:

John Payne, Dan Duryea, Myron Healy

RAILS INTO LARAMIE

Good Action Western!

Also: **KIDNAPPERS**

Thursday, December 15th:

Richard Widmark, Karl Malden,
Richard Boone

HALLS OF MONTEZUMA

These men hated each other, above all they hated the Japanese.

An enjoyable, exciting film!

Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy
GOLDEN AGE OF COMEDY

Sunday, December 18th:

Stanley Baker, Herbert Lom,
Peggy Cummings

HELL DRIVERS

Tough action fare. An ex-convict has to fight for his survival every inch of the way!

Also: **FOLLOW THE SUN**

Thursday, December 22nd:

Cary Grant, Eve Marie Saint, James Mason

NORTH BY NORTHWEST

(Technicolor/CinemaScope)

Story by Alfred Hitchcock. You're sure to enjoy this greatest of all spy films with it's excellent comedy!

Fit-4-Life Ballyhaunis

Mary Henry

The Fit-4-Life group is perfect for someone who wants to get fit or is already doing some walking or running but would like to train with others. We meet every Tuesday evening at 7pm and Saturday mornings at 9 at the ball court in the Friary Grounds. It is a fun and friendly environment where you can meet new people and make new friends.

Again, this year we saw an increase in numbers. Some of the new members were seasoned runners but we were also delighted to see beginners and walkers join us. The experienced runners slotted in with runners of similar fitness level while the beginners were mentored throughout late winter and early spring. Over the last number of years, the Kilmovee 10k, which takes place on Easter Saturday, has been our first race of the year, so this was set as the goal for the beginners' group. Through some testing weather conditions they turned up every Tuesday and Saturday, gradually building from jogging for a couple of minutes at a time to eventually being able to run a 10k. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions, we had to stop meeting to train as a group in early March. However, our goal remained, and virtual training continued. On Saturday, 20th April all of the beginners completed a 10k run. This was a fantastic achievement and congratulations to all.

During the month of June over twenty of our members took part in the Irish Life GAA Healthy Clubs Step Challenge. The challenge was aimed at getting people more active with the club posting the most steps winning a €2,500 voucher for their local GAA club. Over the month over 13 million steps were posted by the group. Unfortunately, we were pipped at the post by Portumna GAA Club. We were very disappointed not to win as everyone put in a huge effort. However, the consensus was that it was very worthwhile and gave many people the motivation to get out and moving.

At time of writing many of our members are taking part in the 'Walk to New York' challenge to raise funds for our Community Hall (Parochial Hall). The goal is to collectively clock up the 4,940 kilometres distance from Ballyhaunis to New York.

It has been a quieter year than we had hoped for, but we continue to meet in small groups on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings while maintaining social distancing. Check out our Facebook page to keep up to date with any changes due to the current Covid situation. We look forward to getting back to normality as soon as it is safe to do so, but in the meantime dust down those runners and take that first step. You will not regret it.



Top: Martin Fitzmaurice (left) and Phillip McGoldrick taking part in Attymass Half Marathon on World Half Marathon Day, 15 January 2020.

Centre: Taking part in the Belleek 10k, Dec. 2019, were, L-R: Elaine Hunt, Mary Niland, Liz Walsh, Johnny Cribbin, Patricia Waldron.

Right: Fit4Life Marathon 2019 Participants from Ballyhaunis Fit-4-Life in the Dublin City Marathon. Back, L-R: Gerry Kirrane, David McConn. Centre, L-R: Martin Fitzmaurice, Phillip McGoldrick, Elaine Hunt, Trevor Kelly, Paul Damron. Front, L-R: Eileen Donnellan, Caroline McDowell, Janette Webb, Mary Niland, Natasha Kelly, Karen Clancy. Kneeling: Mary Henry, Patricia Waldron, Siobhan Conlon.



Keith Higgins – The Dual Star

Mike Finnerty, *The Mayo News*

A few months have rolled by since the Ballyhaunis hurlers brought the T.J. Tyrrell Cup back the road from Tooreen to spend its first winter in the East Mayo town since 2016. The story of how the day was won by Ballyhaunis was beautifully told, as always, by our own Michael Commins in *The Mayo News*, and his accompanying interview with Ballyhaunis manager, Pierce Higgins, underlined just what the win meant to him and his comrades. Time pressure and space constraints over the last few weeks prevented us from expanding a little more on another angle of that evening at Adrian Freeman Memorial Park. But it would be remiss of us not to return to the topic before our attention turns elsewhere.



Keith Higgins in action for Ballyhaunis during the latest Mayo Senior Hurling Championship Final against Tooreen.

Photograph by Ciara Buckley.

Anybody lucky enough to have seen Keith Higgins play hurling in the flesh will know how good he is when at the peak of his powers. When he's had time to work on his skills, his striking, his timing and his touch, he is a wizard with the small ball most days he goes out. And his performance in the most recent County Hurling Final was a reminder of just how special a talent he is; a dual player without equal in Mayo for as long as anyone can remember.

It didn't matter that the wind howled and swirled all evening, or that the rain spat down for most of a match that crackled with intensity from start to finish. Or that Tooreen's backs tried to give as good as they got from

the opposition number 11 all through. The 35 year-old Ballyhaunis playmaker just carried on regardless; spraying passes, splitting the Tooreen defence with piercing runs, bringing others into the game and nailing points to beat the band. Keith finished with nine points (seven from frees) but that didn't tell half the story of his influence. He took the game to Tooreen every chance he got and backed from nothing.

A few moments, in particular, stand out. One was in the first half, when he won a ball in front of Tooreen's David Kenny, another outstanding dual player and a fine hurler in his own right. But there was nothing he could do once Higgins changed direction quickly, throwing Kenny off the scent with a subtle swivel of his hips, before turning on to his left hand side and drilling the ball over the bar from some forty-five metres out on the left wing. It was a score of rare and natural beauty. Later in the evening, when the game hung in the balance, Higgins won a ball on the right wing, threw it on to his hurley, and drove hard at the Tooreen goal, with a few defenders in hot pursuit. He held them off for as long as he could, before they closed in and fouled him. Moments later he popped over the resulting free. Job done.

When the final whistle sounded, Higgins celebrated like he'd just won his first county final all over again. You'd never have guessed it was his thirteenth time to win this competition with Ballyhaunis! But this one was special. Late that night we got a text from a man who knows his Mayo hurling better than most. "Is Keith the best we've ever seen?" he asked rhetorically, knowing the answer already. The same man had hinted before the game that Higgins was ready to deliver a big display. How right he was!

We all know how good of a Gaelic footballer Keith Higgins has been over the years and continues to be for both club and county; his four All-Stars and collection of medals and trophies speak for themselves. He is one of Mayo's all-time greats and has never let the side down from the Knock Road in Ballyhaunis to Croke Park. But watching him hurl so brilliantly with his club, his friends, his life-long team-mates, and alongside his brother, Pierce, a few weeks ago was something truly magical and special. And it was a reminder that we may never see his likes again.

When the time does come for Keith Higgins to walk away from it all, like Ciaran McDonald, we'll say we were lucky to see him do his thing. And we'll miss him when he's gone.



A group of young men from Ballyhaunis, pictured in a New York ballroom in the early 1960s. L-R: Sean Connolly, Tommy Fleming, Tony Greene, John Morley ('Dolly'), Neil O'Donnell, Tommy Rattigan and Tom Barry.



Joe and Della (Byrne) Weissenberger, 1958. Joe Weissenberger's passing on November 2nd, 2019, after a long illness, left a huge void with his family, friends and everyone who knew him.



◀ Left: Michael Naughton (Belisker) and Jim Mulkeen (Cloonacurry) in Ronan's, Bekan, in the 1980s.

▶ Right: Mark Phillips, Doctor's Road, who graduated from Mary Immaculate College, Limerick this year with a B.Ed (Hons.) degree, is pictured with family members. L-R: Billy, Cait, Mark, Adrian and Katie Phillips.

▼ Below: Joe Keane, Knox St., celebrating his 97th birthday in September 2020, pictured with his wife Marcella and three of their grandsons Luke, Adam and Cian Walsh.



Above: Joe Regan (The Square), on his last day in business, with Dymphna Greally (Drimbane).



Let Us Pray...

Kevin Henry



Interior of St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, with Covid-19 social distancing arrangements in place.
Photograph by Wiktor Siemionkowski.

After a few false dawns, and amid much confusion surrounding what was or wasn't to be allowed in terms of numbers and the re-opening of churches, Monday June 29th was the day the doors of St Patrick's church were once again opened to the public, having been closed since March. The government's decision to allow worshippers to attend church in person was greeted with relief and delight by the faithful throughout the country. The decision had been well flagged in advance and the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) collaborated with Fr Stephen to discuss how we could best comply with all the restrictions and guidelines so that parishioners could once again participate actively and presently in the celebration of mass. Creative thinking and careful consideration of the guidelines were required as we tried to navigate what was new terrain for all of us. We had to strike a balance between what was desirable, and what was achievable; we were very conscious that actions such as limiting the numbers that could attend, distributing communion at the end of mass at the back of the church and only allowing communion to be taken in the hand, would not be welcomed by everyone. The alternative was for the church doors to remain closed and for mass to be available only by broadcast, on parish radio or on the webcam. (Incidentally, both of those services have

proven to be invaluable during the Covid months, allowing people to engage with religious services remotely and retaining their connection with the church and parish. We are fortunate not least in having a Parish priest who is very much up-to-date with technology, and who knows how to put it to advantageous use for the good of the parishioners.) While other parishes wrestled with the limitations imposed by the Covid restrictions, and many of them were forced into the difficult decision to remain closed, we forged ahead and prepared to open on the appointed date.

It was evident that a good number of people would be needed to facilitate the proposed arrangements for re-opening; fortunately, the great spirit of volunteerism is very much alive in our parish, and when the call went out for ushers and sanitising personnel to put themselves forward for service it was met with a very positive response from across the community. Students from BCS participating in the John Paul II awards programme swelled the numbers further. We now have a crew of over 50 people who serve as ushers, sanitisers, readers and Ministers of the Eucharist – it is thanks to these volunteers that the people of Ballyhaunis and surrounding areas as well as visitors can enjoy the opportunity to attend mass in person safely. We got

expert advice on how to sanitise the church- we sourced a fogging machine from local suppliers Communicare and the church is fogged every evening with a mist spray that contains over 70% I.P.A. so every surface the mist lands on is sanitised. This ensures the church is clinically clean and safe for mass each day. After mass, volunteers clean and sanitise the seats and areas that may have been touched during the mass so that the church can be safely visited and used by worshippers during the day.

At the time of writing, the restrictions allow a maximum of 50 people inside the church for mass (that number includes the priest, sacristan, musicians, readers and ministers of the Eucharist). Safe social distance of 2 metres between people who are not from the same household must be maintained, and face coverings must be worn at all times. Holy Communion is distributed at the rear of the church as people leave at the end of mass; others who were not in the church but who may, for example, have listened to the mass on parish radio, have the opportunity to receive communion at the rear of the church once all mass-goers within the church have received. Many parishioners who would have been daily mass-goers in the pre-Covid days kindly elect not to attend mass in person so that others may do so; the fact that they can receive communion at the end of mass possibly makes the decision to do this that little bit easier.

Probably the most difficult aspect of being an usher is having to close the doors of the church well before mass

starts, because we have reached our maximum permitted attendance. Having to turn people away at the door, sometimes even on the occasion of a death anniversary, is a part of the role that nobody relishes. Our sincere hope is that those whom we may have to turn away do not take any offence; we have no choice but to apply the regulations, in the interests of public health.

As chairperson of the Parish Pastoral Council, which coordinates the work of the volunteers, I am extremely grateful to all those who so willingly give of their time and energies to facilitate the holding of mass in the parish. The willingness of people to put their hands up and step into whatever breach needs to be filled is truly uplifting, and makes the task of organising the weekly rota very straight-forward. We appreciate that at times parishioners will be frustrated at the disruption that the restrictions create, but we are more fortunate than many others and if we all adhere to the official advice, we will hopefully get through it safely.

Subsequent to the completion of the above, in mid-October the restriction levels across the country were revised and raised to the highest level (5), so once again we are back to where we were pre-June 29th. We have no way of knowing when attendance at mass will be permitted again, but we do know that when the time comes, we will once again do everything in our power to facilitate it in our church. In the meantime, mass can be accessed on parish radio (105.2 fm) and on the parish church webcam.



On Tuesday, 14th January 2020, An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar requested Uachtarán na hÉireann Michael D. Higgins to dissolve the 32nd Dáil and announced that the 2020 general election would take place on Saturday, 8th February. We, in Ballyhaunis Fine Gael, like everybody else, thought that this would be the big 'political event' of the year, but what followed in the weeks and months since February, both politically and health-wise, has had a massive effect in all our lives. Words and phrases like 'cocooning', 'flattening the curve' and 'social distancing' were not known or used during the canvass. On Saturday, 29th February the first confirmed case of the Corona Virus in Ireland was announced by the National Public Health Emergency Team and our lives and everything we took for granted have been changed dramatically since that date. On the political front another big event was to take place on Saturday, 27th June when Fine Gael entered into Government with Fianna Fáil and the Green Party. It was the first time in the history of our country that the two main political parties came together to form a government. Like the health issues in 2020 this political move has had a major effect on the supporters of both parties and could change how we live politically from here on.

The election in itself was very different for the Fine Gael faithful in the sense that, for the first time in over sixty years, the Kenny name would not be on the ballot paper as former Taoiseach Enda Kenny officially called time on his Dáil career. This created a major challenge for the Fine Gael party throughout Mayo to hold on to its two seats. The party activists on the ground in the Ballyhaunis area, led by Cllr. John Cribbin, in no small way contributed to securing two of the four seats available. Outgoing TD Michael Ring topped the poll taking the first seat and former Mayo footballer Alan Dillon took the final seat for the Fine Gael Party. Michelle Mulherin, Fine Gael's third candidate, even though not successful on this occasion, contributed handsomely with

her first preference vote ensuring Fine Gael got 39.51% of all first preferences cast, thus paving the way to winning two seats.

In adherence with Covid-19 restrictions Ballyhaunis Fine Gael and the branches in the surrounding areas cancelled all meetings in March. Local Councillor John Cribbin informed the branch members by text in June that Michael Ring TD, Minister for Rural & Community Development, had allocated the sum of €168,000 to develop the former convent school in Abbey Street as a Workplace Hub. This is to fund Stage 1 of this project. The branch was also informed by Cllr. Cribbin in September of two more projects for which he had secured funding. €35,000 was granted for the upgrade and extension of footpaths on the L1910 Ballyhaunis-Irishtown road. This funding will be used to extend the footpath to Ballyhaunis Cemetery. €45,000 was secured for Ballyhaunis Library. He said this funding was to be used on roof repair work. The branch would like to commend Cllr. Cribbin for his tireless work in 2020, especially during these difficult times.

Cllr. Cribbin, the officers and branch members of Ballyhaunis Fine Gael would like to express our gratitude to our frontline workers, local and nationally who have, on a daily basis since this pandemic reached our country, put their own lives at risk to keep us all safe. Your professionalism and desire to help your fellow citizens in extremely difficult situations is something to behold. Míle Buíochas.

Local Councillor John Cribbin is available to meet constituents at his weekly clinic in the The Oak 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 and Healthy New Year.

A picture capturing all the beauty of an East Mayo bogland scene.

Photograph by Anne McNamara.





In festive spirit, Christmas 2019.
Photo by Adam Kaczmarek Photography



Norbert Siemionkowski and Sara Kaczmarek meet after finishing primary school 2020. He is holding a photograph of them in exactly the same place eight years before, when they started school together!



Páidí, born 2nd May 2020, son of Colm Gallagher (Drimbane) and Annette Queenan Gallagher (Lahardane).



Right:
The Brennan sisters, formerly of Clare St., Ballyhaunis: the surviving members of a family of ten. (L-R): Angela, Kay and Ita. This photograph was taken in 2015 on the occasion of Kay's ninetieth birthday.

Right: Former Ballyhaunis resident, Pamela Ashley Uba, who was crowned 'Miss Galway 2020'. Photo by Adam Kaczmarek Photography



A Townland in Mayo

Michael Griffin

One hundred years from freedom and the lands,
so precious, so sacred, almost gone.
In Davitt's hard-earned hinterland, three generations is all it's taken.
So vibrant, so free, so typical of a townland in a nation reborn.

Paddy Bowler, Grandad Michael and Grandad John,
from that emancipation built a life from where we all have come.
A reflection of townlands and hamlets everywhere in rural Ireland.
Hard and bleak but sustainable and full of joy.

From each home, the generations emerge
to all corners of the world and some stayed... but few.
Ten interwoven houses in our time, now desolate,
three families and two welcome newbies.
But no school bus, no picking of berries as they meandered home.
In a generation, those laughing children's voices have disappeared.
The few acres that remained, still sustainable,
still successful but for the few, not the many.
From that dreary schoolhouse at Derrylea, they all emerged,
some battered and bruised, some fired with a love of learning,
to take a path through convent, the brothers and Tuam.
Some chose a freedom to roam Sydney, New York, Boston,
Birmingham, Newark, Beverley, Manchester.
Most of all Manchester.

From the end of that boreen, countless Connells emerged, strong and defiant.
No blackthorn stick could crush those boys and girls.
Two doors down, Lyons girls, London, Nottingham and to link to those neighbours
as two new Mancunian dynasties were born.
Also, Cullineys, next field over, they all merged in a 1950s Moss Side village.
No Irish, no Blacks, no dogs they said but that did not matter to those pioneers,
their minds and bodies freed from any historic shackles.
They forged new lives, new families,
remarkable and varied lives impact the world from a small sod of Mayo soil.
We are proud of each and every one,
the measure of success so warped and varied in this 21st century.

They broke out and broke the mould.
The priests, nuns, teachers, builders and demolition,
civil servants, writers, missionaries, mechanics, fitters and more.
Yes, more teachers, police, broadcasters, footballers.
We coached, we led the entrepreneurship,
a network of achievement from this small sod.
A greater achievement of those who stayed perhaps?
As the bog exhausted and extinguished
like the thousands of fires it lit in those homes.
Some derelict, some still standing,
a testament to a century of change,
of growth and above all departure.
One or two endure, they have earned the new normal
and yes it's comfortable and rewards those who stayed.
One hundred years of freedom, one hundred and fifty on the land.
It had rewarded those who stayed
and given the lessons and memories
to those who spread around the world.
On quiet, dark winters evening, we regale each other with the times we spent,
those simple, joyous times but they mean the world to us all.

Happy Memories of our Irish Home

Michael Griffin

This poem 'An Irish Townland' is broadly about the changes to one townland in Ballyhaunis – Redford – over the last fifty to 100 years.

I am 58 years old, born in Manchester to Irish parents Bridie Lyons from Redford and Michael Griffin from Ballymoe. I am the eldest of six lads who all still live and work in and around Manchester. Our parents both emigrated to Manchester, where they met in the 1950s. Every year after they left they visited 'home' with the six lads in tow. So we would spend the six weeks' holidays, like many Irish immigrants, with our grandparents John and Margaret Lyons in Redford.

The contrast between the streets of our city and the quiet village of Redford was always clear. We were so lucky every summer to spend six weeks in the West of Ireland with the free run of the farm. It was our playground, exploring the woods, the stream and the fields away from the house where our imaginations could devise many unique games and competitions. Yes, competitions as we were all sportsmen, as were our cousins and our neighbours' children who came to join in our games. When I look back at those times there must have been twenty or more kids together at any one time... certainly enough for a full scale football match. Our cousins, the Coggins family from Granlahan, were permanent playmates. Another family of six five boys and the one girl amongst the twelve of us - Theresa, God help her!

Other 'English' visitors to the village were Michael and Charmagne Colvin who also brought another army of their cousins, the Coens... both families second cousins on our grandfather's side. We were joined again by the Ruane family from the next village of Johnstown, second cousins on my grandmother's side, and the Waldron and Connell lads from the village.

We were also enrolled to 'help' around the farm, hay making, the dreaded days in the bog, and the more pleasant task of attempting to milk a cow, or putting the hens in at night with Granny. Those long, lazy, summer days and evenings when the sun never seemed to set.

We enjoyed the many trips out with our parents to Galway, Enniscrone and the seemingly endless visits to family around the local area and in the Ballymoe area where our Dad was from. In fact, when I heard the Saw Doctors song 'Galway and Mayo' about driving on those winding roads, pointing out the landmarks, I thought it was about our Mam and Dad and our childhood.

As we grew into our late teens and early twenties, as brothers we were drawn back to Ballyhaunis for a week or more either side of Galway Races. By the early '90s our parents had bought a holiday home in Johnstown and the



Michael Griffin and Jo Johnston

five lads from Manchester, still with a gang of friends and cousins around, enjoyed race week in Galway. We also explored the nightlife around Ballyhaunis and the area: the Dance Hall, then Midas, Billy Nestor's and many pubs in Ballyhaunis including my Dad's 'local' Paddy Delaney's. Our other social base was Granlahan and Ballinlough. The White House was our meeting point, or Fitzgerald's or Reynolds' in Granlahan, then onto The Tap or Fitzmaurice's, and every Sunday the queue for the Don Arms in Castlerea for more dancing and craic, not forgetting the chicken in a basket.

The six lads and their families still visit and use Johnstown as a base as we explore the West. We retain our love for the area, and I certainly feel more like a local returning than a holiday-maker in the pubs in Ballyhaunis and Ballinlough. One of my best sporting memories was watching Michael Glavey's team play in Croke Park, an amazing achievement for a small rural parish.

Our family, and now my mother's fourteen grandchildren, retain our love for the area. My mother still has her house in Johnstown. My father passed away in Redford in 2003. He died with his working boots on, hanging a gate: tough at the time but, on reflection, an appropriate way for him to go... a working man to the last.

Maybe I have rambled on a bit, but I am just trying to convey my connections to Ballyhaunis and Redford. I hope my poem and brief outline of my connection to Ballyhaunis are of interest to Annagh readers everywhere.

Lyons (Redford) & Ruane (Johnstown) Family Photos



A reunion of the Ruane family, Johnstown.

Standing, L-R: John Caulfield, Marie Caulfield, John McNamee, Cathy O'Brien, John Jennings, Jimmy Morrin, Paul Coggins, Helena Morrin, Seamie Ruane, Thomas Ruane, Padraic Ruane, Barry Bright (Australia), Ann Glavey, Bernie Kelly, John Concannon, Ciaran Glavey, Paddy Godfrey, John Carroll, Yvonne Duffy, Brian Duffy. *Seated, L-R:* Mary Teresa Jennings, Peggy Rogers, Teresa McNamee, Eileen Morley, Noreen Coggins, Sue Bright (Australia), Bridie Ruane, Tom Ruane (Australia), Sr. Mary T. Ruane, Angela Godfrey, Nora Teresa Concannon.



Above left: Taken in Dublin in the late 1950s. L-R: Mary and Bridie Lyons (Redford), Deirdre Wall (Devlis), Nancy Duffy (Moate).

Above right: Lyons sisters of Redford. L-R: Kathryn Robinson and her mother Mary Robinson (née Lyons), Noreen Coggins (née Lyons), Babe Griffin (née Lyons), Teresa Boyle (née Coggins). Taken in Manchester, November 2019.



Bottom left: Paddy Lyons (Redford), late 1960s. *Bottom right:* Patrick J. Ruane (USA).





Left: Nora and Mike Ruane. The child is Doris Ruane. Standing, John Ruane (USA). John, Nora, Mike and Patrick J. were brothers and sister of Tom Ruane (Johnstown) and Margaret Lyons (Redford).

Above: Family get-together. L-R: Bridie Griffin, Noreen Coggins, Bridie Colvin, Teresa Boyle.

Connacht Darts Champions 1984

The Vintage Inn, Knox St., Ballyhaunis



*Back, L-R: Michael Hunt, Michael Plunkett, Martin Caulfield, John Morley.
Centre L-R: Dermot Sullivan, Martin Cunnane, Sean Munroe, Gerard Doherty, Hugh Carney, Michael Morrin,
Roger Kenny, Eamon Canny, Charlie Doherty (prop. The Vintage Inn). Front L-R: Joe Burke, John Daly, Tom Callaghan.*

A Year in Sport - 2020

Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Association (LGFA)

Aideen Murray

A message from Chairperson Breda Murray and Secretary Anne Cunnane

It was a short season in 2020 but to say we made the most of it would definitely sum up this year. From U-12 right up to senior level, it is evident that Ballyhaunis LGFA has grown from strength to strength and we have no doubt that it will continue to do so.

We would like to thank the management and selectors of each team grade. Your commitment and the time you put into ladies' football in Ballyhaunis have been incredible, and it is evident as the trophy cabinets in each and every home expand year-on-year.

We are a small club and many of our managers and backroom teams double up to form the Ballyhaunis LGFA committee. We would like to sincerely thank each and every one of you for your dedication and support over the last number of years: it is truly appreciated.

Committee: Breda Murray (Chairperson), Edel Kinsella (Vice-chairperson), Anne Cunnane (Secretary), Deirdre Browne (Asst. Secretary), Aideen Murray (PRO), Stella O'Neill (Child Protection Officer), Justin McDonagh (Development Officer), Tracy Cunnane (Fundraiser), Anne Maire Foody (Fundraiser), Michael Cleary, Mike Henry, George O'Neill, Hugh McKermitt, Frank Browne, Ciara McKermitt, Orlagh Gildea, Sinead Coakley Johnson, Conor Kinsella, Katelyn O'Sullivan and Tadhg Morley. And a special thanks to Sinead for taking some fabulous photos of the teams throughout the season and some of which are featured in this magazine.

As coaches/mentors and backroom teams working together, you took all the different pieces (and personalities) and built working teams. Your hard work and dedication have inspired our girls to become the talented players that they are, which is evident not only by the trophy case but by watching them play such outstanding football on the field, all the while making wonderful memories. You have tirelessly given your time and energy to Ballyhaunis LGFA and there are not enough words to describe our appreciation for all you do. We would not have been able to accomplish all we have without this support.

To Ballyhaunis GAA officers: Chairman Gerry Lyons, Secretary Peter Healy and Treasurer Tomás Murphy, we sincerely say 'thank you' for your on-going support of Ladies Football and for always being at the end of the phone or email.

A special thanks to Pete Higgins who always does an

outstanding job of looking after the GAA grounds and managing training and game times. This is not an easy task with so many different age groups and disciplines – Gaelic football, hurling, ladies football – and we are all always catered for.

Thank to John Higgins and Tommy Caulfield for looking after the registration during what has been a very strange year.

To all our players, we are so proud of not only your achievements and the fantastic players that you are, but the manner in which you conduct yourselves on and off the field. Ballyhaunis LGFA are honoured to have you as part of our club.

The Ballyhaunis LGFA wants to also thank our amazing sponsors this year. Without these businesses and individuals we wouldn't be where we are today. A special word of thanks to our local councillor John Cribbin whom we must mention as having always supported us each step of the way.

To our Covid-19 Supervisors also, a special thanks. Your commitment to ensure our teams and club were compliant and adhering to the rules/regulations was second to none.

Again, our sincerest thanks as we look forward to our next season.

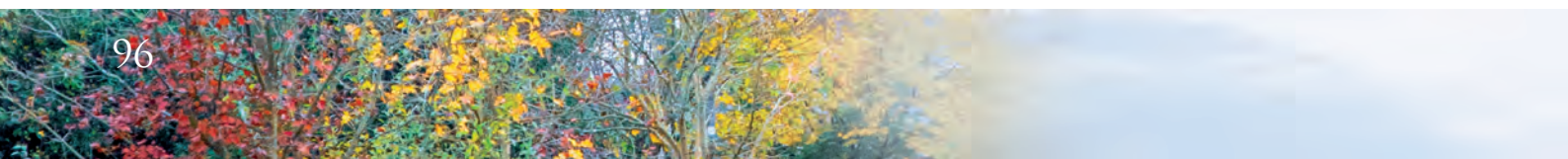
Ballyhaunis U-12 Ladies

The U-12 girls, like every other team in the country, had a very disjointed season given the pandemic circumstances. Numbers at training were excellent and grew week-on-week under the fantastic guidance of Hughie McKermitt, Orlagh Gildea and Katelyn O'Sullivan. With these fantastic numbers and much improved skill levels throughout the year the future is very bright for this age group. They competed well in games against Moy Davitts, Kiltimagh, Swinford and Charlestown. The biggest factor in this year's campaign is that these ladies really enjoyed the fun, further developed their skills and made great friendships.

Panel: Rebecca Clancy, Saoirse McKermitt, Abbie Gildea, Melissa Clarke, Emma Caulfield, Jorja Hession, Ava McCormack, Katelyn McLoughlin, Emma Swanick, Amy Waldron, Eva Boyle, Erin Higgins, Lilly Thompson, Sara Brennan, Alice Curran, Ruth Cunnane, Ava Neary, Grace Heneghan, Roisín Heneghan, Emily Moore, Nicole Forde.

Ballyhaunis U-14 Ladies

This year has been action packed for this bunch of



ladies. After an extremely successful group stage campaign, the U-14s finished second in the table. We secured a county cup semi-final position, however unfortunately, this was the final hurdle for the U-14s as they were beaten by Kilmoremoy. The skills, stamina and most importantly the friendships between these girls is something that was very evident this year. The future is excitingly bright for these ladies and we look forward to it unfolding.

Panel: Alisha Allen Forde, Melissa Clarke, Grainne Waldron, Jorja Hession, Erica Byrne, Gabriele Bacyte, Orla Smith, Sinead O'Neill, Sophia Marques, Emma Henry, Jovana Drobic, Katie Madden, Roisín Henry, Leah Nyland, Kate Damron, Tara Philips, Lucy Philips, Amy Clancy, Kayleigh Roddy Cullen, Sarah Gill, Rebecca Clancy. Managers: Aideen Murray and Conor Kinsella.

Ballyhaunis U-16 Ladies

The U-16s took off to a flying start in what was a short year. We secured a Cup semi-final place by beating Davitts 4-12 to 0-4, Castlebar Mitchells 5-3 to 1-7 and Breaffy 2-18 to 5-6. With home advantage in the semi-final, unfortunately we were on the wrong side of the score line and lost out by a single point in what was an absolute nail-biter of a game. The women gave it their all this year and we thank them for their commitment.

Panel: Jessica Henry, Sophia Marques, Chanel Marques, Alannah Hession, Katie Madden, Jessalyn Jennings, Chloe Kirrane, Saoirse Waldron, Grainne Waldron, Erica Byrne, Eva Henry, Sinead O'Neill, Sarah Ronayne, Kate Doyle, Treasa McDermott, Rebecca Lyons, Megan McGuire, Nikita Tighe, Geri Maye Henry. Management team: Mike Henry, George O'Neill, Stella O'Neill and Tadhg Morley.

Ballyhaunis Minor Ladies

Due to the strange circumstances this year, there was no Minor league so the championship was played on a league basis. The team narrowly lost to St. Mary's and St. Bridget's while beating Moy Davitts in the qualifying rounds. The team qualified for the Minor B Shield final which was played under lights in Aghamore against Moy Davitts. After a great performance by the panel of girls, Ballyhaunis came out on top beating Moy Davitts once more 5-15 to 0-5. This was a remarkable achievement by this group of girls. Again, we want to thank the management and the girls, together with their families for their commitment. 2021 will be mega as each one of these ladies are minor again next year.

Panel: Leah Johnston (Captain), Eva Henry, Kate Doyle, Laura Madden, Geri Mae Henry, Nikita Tighe, Rachel Cleary, Erin Murray, Sarah Roynane, Alannah Hession, Katie Madden, Treasa McDermott, Kate Delaney, Saoirse Waldron, Laura Godfrey, Chanel Marques, Kate Mannion, Hannah Clarke, Mae Hession. Management team: Michael Cleary,



Justin McDonagh, Sinead Coakley Johnston, Anne Cunnane.

Ballyhaunis Junior Ladies

The last three years for these ladies have been very exciting and this is down to a team that has developed and grown up together. Back in 2017, the decision was made to form a junior team and, that same year, they reached the county final but lost out, after a thrilling encounter, by a single point. 2018 started with a Bang and these ladies won the Connaught 7s, a first for the Ballyhaunis LGFA. In 2019 another county final was reached and luckily the ladies were on the right side of the scoreline and were victorious in what was another thrilling win in Swinford against Davitts. 2020 has brought its challenges for all sporting codes, but that didn't stop the Junior ladies and again another County Shield trophy was won. With the average age of 21, it is evident that the future is so bright for the club with these ladies and those coming through the underage rankings. It has been a great year, we have made great memories and most importantly have enjoyed every minute of it. A massive thank you to the management, players, their families and all the supporters along the way.

2020 Shield panel: Aoife Conway, Rachel Cleary, Niamh Murray (Captain), Shauna Murray, Aibhinn Herr, Mae Hession, Niamh Foody, Siofra Murray, Brenda Krusinova, Leah Johnson, Erin Murray, Niamh O'Neill, Gemma Foody, Katelyn O'Sullivan, Laura Godfrey, Fiona Freyne, Laura Madden, Roisin Lyons, Hannah Clarke, Kate Mannion, Lauren Walshe, Chloe Ryan, Edel Kinsella. Manager: Justin McDonagh; Selectors: Sinéad Johnston and Michael Cleary; Liaison Officer: Anne Cunnane; First Aid: Tracy Cunanne and Ann Marie Foody.



Rachel, Michael and Olivia Cleary.



Murray sisters - Niamh, Siofra and Erin.

Gaelic for Mothers and Others Ballyhaunis LGFA

Gaelic for Mothers and Others was a way to introduce mothers and other women to play Ladies Gaelic Football, and to say it has been a fun-filled experience would be an understatement! After an awesome 2019 season these ladies were unfortunate that there was no 2020 season. However, it did not stop them from getting outside and putting on the football gear. If home-schooling and working from home wasn't enough, these ladies created a fantastic video showing off their footballing skills during the lockdown period. What we can take from this group are the benefits it brings to players with the chance to get to know each other beyond age group and section. It helps to strengthen connections between club members. A GAA club is so much more than just a collection of teams – it's all about community. The GAA-4-MAOs is an embodiment of the community spirit of Ballyhaunis LGFA.

If you are interested in joining us for the 2021 campaign, be sure to keep up to date on our social media outlets.

Panel: Jane Buckley, Olivia Burke, Carol Clancy, Edel Conway, Tracy Cunnane, Elaine Doyle, Samantha Gildea, Joanne Hoban, Sinead Johnston, Sinead Lilly, Joan Monaghan, Eibhlin Murphy, Aoife O'Brien, Sinead Prendergast, Caroline Smith, Claire Vahey, Joan Burke, Bernie Canny, Samantha Cleary, Anne Cunnane, Aoife Curran, Joan Gavin, Claire Higgins, Olivia Jennings, Rachel Jordan, Ciara McKermitt, Margaret Monaghan, Breda Murray, Anna Patterson, Sarah Ryan, Eimear Tarpey and Sandra Waldron. Mentors: Frank Browne, Deirdre Browne, Ciara McKermitt and Tracy Cunnane.



Ballyhaunis Under-14 Ladies Gaelic Football team 2020.



Kilcourse sisters - Edel and Brenda.



Ballyhaunis Under-12 Ladies Gaelic Football team 2020, with mentors Orlagh Gildea and Hughie McKermitt.



Ballyhaunis Junior Ladies Gaelic Football team 2019 and 2020, with management Justin McDonagh, Michael Cleary, Anne Cunnane and Tracy Cunnane.



Ballyhaunis Junior Ladies Gaelic Football team 2020.

It's Time Ewe Retired!

The ewe pictured here has a sprightly step and lively demeanour that belies her age, for she is twelve years old, and brought her twenty-sixth lamb into the world this March (2020).

'Mama Breadski', as she is known, lives on the farm of Peter Concannon at Lecarrow, just outside Ballyhaunis, where she was born in 2008, daughter of a purebred Border Leicester ewe and a purebred Texel



ram. She had her first lambs – twins – at two years of age and has bred successfully every year since.

Having given birth to seven sets of triplets, two sets of twins, and a single lamb, she has mothered a total of twenty-six lambs over ten seasons – surely something of a record.

The triplets photographed here – two rams and a ewe – were last year's crop, fathered by a Blue-faced Leicester X Suffolk ram, and were just two days old when pictured enjoying their first trip outdoors into the early spring sunshine of 2019. Both ram lambs were sold as stock rams, as have many of her other sons, due to their excellent conformation and vigour, while the ewe lamb too has been retained for breeding.

A good set of teeth is vital for any ewe to lead a healthy, productive life – the better she eats, the better she feeds her lambs. 'Mama Breadski' has all her own teeth and, although still fit and nimble, has now entered a well-earned retirement.

Lockdown 2020

We're all alone, when we want to walk,
We use the phone, if we want to talk,
Complete lockdown is the price we pay,
Until this dreaded virus goes away.

Social gatherings, out of bounds,
Schools are empty, not a sound,
Children bored, they can't socialise,
Far more serious than they realise.

No more visits to the local hairdresser,
Her head will soon be grey, God bless her,
No more bingo, or games of cards,
We're all confined to our own backyards.

Parks are closed, no games to play,
Gates are locked by the GAA,
Weekly lotto put on hold,
Promoters grounded so they can't be sold.

Government orders, "we stay at home",
To our neighbours house, we dare not roam,
Families only combined to walk,
Alone for others, no stop to talk.

Grandchildren too must stay away,
They're told come back another day,
They'll tell the story in years to come,
Confined to home with Dad and Mum.

Trade and business too must stop,
Except the chemist and grocery shop,
Marts and markets must all close down,
An eerie silence in village and town.

We spare a thought for our friends away,
They can't come home, abroad they'll stay,
Yours truly too must stay at home,
And talk to friends by telephone.

Murt Hunt

The Stations of the Crossbar

My sister, our friend Rita and I
are "doing the stations"

I feel holy
seeped in the sorrowful mysteries.
I ponder the pictures of Calvary,
with downcast eyes.

At station four
Mary kneels beside her fallen child
I stop, bow my head
clasp my hands,
feel her sorrow,
pure as Brackloon spring
pious as the blue mist
on the hills around Annagh Lake.
Warm tears rise, like jewels
in my sad innocent eyes.
I glance around to see if any
of the old women in scarves
who are still praying have noticed,
experts on holiness.
They haven't.

At station five, my sister
meets her boyfriend, Johnny Boland,
and makes a date for later,
at Kenny's shed.

"C'mon" she says.
At station 7 we leave.
On our way, we buy ten *Afton*.
on Rita's daddy's book at Mulhern's.

Johnny is leaning on the handlebars
of his bike, waiting.
She hops on the crossbar
they circle around.
We sit on the top step of the shed
and coughing and spluttering
smoke the *Afton*.

"You're not tellin' on me and Johnny Boland"
"Not if you don't tell about the cigarettes"
"No more stealing apples from Curley's"
I say, still holy after the morning.

Anne Hughes-Irwin, Galway
(formerly Knock Road, Ballyhaunis)

The Humble Bike

Fintan Lynch

The first practical bicycle, as we know it today, was invented by an Englishman named John Kemp Starley in 1885. He called it the 'Rover.' I was first introduced to the bike by my mother Sarah when she equipped the whole family, including my father, with our own bicycles! She could do this because she sold bicycles from our shop on Main Street, Ballyhaunis, and made a good living out of it. My mother, Bertie, Joe and myself would set off on a Sunday after dinner and cycle down Knox Street, out into the country as far as Cave, turn around and cycle home again. Mum lead the way, followed by her three sons! I am sure we looked like Mother Hen and her three chicks! It was in the 1940s during World War II and there were very few cars on the road. My father B.T. never cycled his bike! He was a motor dealer, a driver, aged fifty-two, and he would have deemed cycling a bike very much beneath his dignity!



Fintan Lynch (left) and Joe Greene, pictured near Cave Bridge, August 1944.

I didn't become 'serious' about cycling until 1952. I was a very keen GAA footballer playing both on junior and senior teams for St. Jarlath's College, Tuam. Then an event occurred which changed my sporting life completely. Val Byrne, Frank Fahey and I were picked for a Mayo minor trial in Charlestown, in which we played. We were chosen for the final trial which was to take place in Ballina the following week. Unfortunately, transport which we were promised would pick us up in Charlestown never turned up! At midnight I had to call my brother Joe to pick us up in Charlestown. He was none too happy as he was about to go out on a date! On the way home I 'swore' I would never again kick a football for Ballyhaunis! A few days later I went on my first 'training spin' and, on a fine Monday morning, set off down Main Street, turned left into Knox Street and was overtaken by John Coyne in his black Ford Prefect

as he carried the post from Ballyhaunis to Kilkelly. John was a 'slow' driver who drove around 20 mph and I slotted in behind him and stayed with him as far as the Ballyhaunis Golf Club. But then he started to pull away from me as I tired. At that time I was riding a fixed sprocket and a 52T chainwheel which meant that, to keep up with John, I had to pedal very fast! As he pulled away from me he blew the horn and waved! I continued on into Aghamore and turned left at Bruff Cross for Knock and home to Ballyhaunis. I had completed my first 'training stint'!

Bicycles and their riders could be quite glamorous! I remember Mary Dyer and her younger sister Mildred arriving in from Coolnafarna on their 'High Nellies', freewheeling down Abbey Street, across the Clare Dalgan into Bridge Street with their naturally blonde tresses blowing in the breeze, their shapely ankles pedalling rhythmically until they arrived outside Tom Forde's shop where they elegantly alighted, parked their bicycles and entered the shop. They caused quite a stir! Mary Tarpey was another lady cyclist, who was going out with my brother Joe at the time, and she cycled up Main Street, looking very pretty in a beautiful outfit, as she headed for her home in Bekan. She must have been quite fit because her cycle was mostly up-hill and it was four and a half miles to her home.

In September 1952 I went to Dublin and immediately joined St. Vincent's Cycling Club which was a small club with about ten members at that time. We concentrated on twenty-five and fifty mile road races and grass-track racing which were usually held in Iveagh Grounds. My training consisted of sprinting in the Phoenix Park with Seamus Kennedy – I learned a lot from Seamus – and cycling as far as Enfield and back, which was just fifty miles. I did that three times a week. One frosty Saturday morning as I cycled down the quays I had a close encounter with a double-decker bus when I slipped on cobble-stones, slid across the road into the path of the oncoming double-decker; brakes were slammed on and it came to a sliding stop within inches of me! As I looked up at the driver, he just good-humouredly grinned down at me! I picked myself up, checked the bike for damage and continued on my trip to Enfield. I cycled to school every morning and one morning at the traffic lights where Georges Street meets Aungier Street I was hit a glancing blow by a Morris Minor and sent sliding across a wet road, luckily in the direction of where the traffic was stopped. The Morris Minor kept going! My most unusual encounter happened when I was coming home from a date around eleven o'clock at night on a dark summer evening. I had just passed through Aghamore

and was taking it easy as I had no light and it was hard to see ahead. WHAM! My head slammed into the belly of a horse that had been standing in the middle of the road! He didn't hear me coming and I didn't see him! We both got one helluva fright! He screeched and took off down the road, bucklashing in a mad clatter of hooves, emitting large explosions from his rear end. While I could hear him galloping in the distance I gingerly picked myself up, feeling pain in my left ankle and right knee, knowing they were skinned. The head wasn't very clear either, but I was able to feel that the bike was undamaged, eased my leg over the bar and slowly pedalled my way homewards.

Back in the saddle

After two years studying in Dublin I qualified as a Marine Radio Officer and joined the S.S Irish Pine in Dublin for my first trip in October 1954. I spent seven years at sea working with various companies. I returned to Ballyhaunis in 1961, married the girl of my dreams, took her to Ennis, Co. Clare where I started work as an Aviation Radio Officer in Shannon Aeradio about six miles outside Ennis. I was picked up, very conveniently, each morning by a staff minibus and dropped home in the evening. In 1979, at the age of forty-five, I decided to get back up on the bike again, and bought a nice, light racing bike! It was twenty-five years since I last rode a bike! It was tough going for the next two or three weeks when I started cycling in and out to work. After a few months I was joined by two other fellows from Ennis, two from Quin, one from Shannon town and even one from as far away as Limerick! A trend had been set! In 1987 one of the fellows suggested that we should form a team and train for the 1988 Maracycle from Dublin to Belfast and back! So, the following March, after getting our training schedule from Co-operation North, we started to prepare for the two-day event. It was very tough going. Four and five days a week on the road and

increasing distance each week over the three months period until we reached the 100 miles. At fifty-four I was never fitter! On 24th June five of us travelled to Dublin in a minibus owned by a colleague, who also drove to Belfast, providing backup. It was a beautiful, sunny morning, starting out from Dublin at 8.15 a.m. Two of the guys took off at pace, they wanted to be first into Belfast! I just wanted to get to Belfast! There was a great friendliness and joviality among the cyclists. As we pedalled along, overtaking and being overtaken, I met lots of people, chatted about where we came from, where we were staying in Belfast, and general 'bike talk'. I stopped in Dundalk and had a light salad meal at the 'feeding station.' Back on the saddle again and with a flowing south westerly wind I arrived into Belfast at 3.15 p.m. The only thing that didn't work out too well for us was our accommodation in Belfast! One of the lads, who had a sister married in Belfast, booked us all into a large dormitory type bedroom, over a Chinese takeaway which didn't close until 4 am! Tired as we were after the first leg, we only got a few hours' sleep before facing the cycle back to Dublin! An overcast, misty morning didn't dampen our spirits as we set off for Dublin at 9.20 am, stopped for a meal in Dundalk, cycling against a fairly stiff wind we arrived in Dublin at 5pm. It was a most



Fintan Lynch (on bike)
with neighbour Billy Flatley,
at Loughglynn Sports, 1953.



Maracycle: departing from Dublin
24th June 1988.



Ready for the road, 2020.

enjoyable cycle and, with sponsorship, we were able to give a few quid to Co-operation North for their exchange programmes both north and south of the border.

When my eldest son Bernard told me the other day that he had acquired a racing bike and was getting back into the cycling at age fifty-six, I couldn't believe it and was delighted!

At eighty-six I am still cycling – albeit only one or two miles around town! So, if you want to reach a ripe old age and be relatively healthy, then GET UP ON YER BIKE!



NCF Co-Op Function 1980

Pictured at a North Connacht Farmers Co-op function in 1980. L-R: George and Kathy Dee, Joe Greene, Eileen and Noel Grogan, Siobhan and Jack Greene. **Photo courtesy of the Liam Lyons Collection.*



Macra na Feirme Dinner, Churchfield House, Knock 1974.

A group of ladies who attended the Macra na Feirme dinner in Churchfield House. From left: Josephine Groarke, Bridie Carney, Mary Waldron, Joan Biesty, Anne Biesty, Mary Healy, Maureen Finn, Una Phillips. **Photo courtesy of the Liam Lyons Collection.*

* Photographs courtesy of the **Liam Lyons Collection** at Mayo County Library. See www.mayo.ie/library/local-history/publications-photographs and click on Mayo photographs. Copies of these photographs can be ordered by emailing info@liamlyons.com



Ballyhaunis Golf Club Ladies Captain's Prize 1992.

Standing, L-R: Mary Kelly, Kay Lyons, Deirdre Cleary, Kay Fanning, Mary Webb (Lady Capt.), Anne Mahony, Carmel Howley, Cáit Webb, Barbara Dillon, Joan Delaney, Josephine Tighe. Seated, L-R: Kay Buckley, Norrie Dillon, Laurena Freeley (prizewinner), Mary Frances Cleary, Fiona Prenty, Babie Snee. Courtesy Cáit Webb.



From left, John Webb (Devlis), Eddie Webb (Main Street) and Tony Greene (Knox Street), during Ballyhaunis GAA club's trip to New York, 1981. Courtesy Mike Webb.



Relaxing in Tony Greene's home during the Ballyhaunis GAA club trip to New York, 1981. From left: John Lyons (Skeaghard), Eddie Webb (Main Street), Jack Greene (Carrowreagh), Tony Greene (Knox Street), Thomas Jordan (Knox Street). Courtesy Mike Webb.



Ballyhaunis CHAMBER

Tom Forde

Once again it's a great privilege for me to deliver the annual report on the various activities the Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce has been involved in over the past year. I would like to thank The Chamber Executive for once again electing me President of Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce for the year 2020. Also, Anne Cunnane CEO, the office personnel and business community and other members. Thank you all for your support throughout the year.

Executive Committee: President: Tom Forde; Vice-president: Mark Curley; Hon. Sec.: Alison McDermott; Hon. Treasurer: Mike Griffin; PRO: Martin Fitzmaurice; Committee: John Dillon-Leetch, Tom Colleran, Paddy Phillips, William Nestor.

2020 has been a year we will not easily forget. Every club, society, business and individual has been affected by Covid-19 Pandemic in some way or other. As a result of this a lot of activities that the Chamber would be involved in have been cancelled this year including the Easter Parade, Mayo Day, Annual Summer Festival, Heritage Night, Culture Night, and, as I write this report, some of our Christmas activities look likely to be affected by Covid-19 also. However, besides all that, the Chamber has continued with many different activities for the benefit of the Ballyhaunis Community and its hinterland.

Ballyhaunis Community Vision

Earlier this year Minister Michael Ring granted €168,352 towards our Ballyhaunis Community Vision Project under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund. As I mentioned last year, this is an important project for the development of Ballyhaunis and its surrounds, involving the development of the Old Convent School building and its grounds. Described as a turn-key project, the fact that the site is in the hands of Mayo County Council, and that there are no planning issues, this project is ready to commence once the go-ahead is given for development. This funding will initially be used to draw up plans and carry out a feasibility study on the site for the proposed development.

We hope to redevelop the former school building as a state-of-the-art library, and to include a work hub to support the community and small local enterprises, by providing them with workspaces offering all the necessary facilities for them to work effectively. High speed broadband capability and state-of-the-art computer and work facilities are envisaged.

It is hoped to create a new plaza joining the community hub with the swimming pool car park by means of a pedestrian bridge linking both sites, and to restore the River Dalgan riverside walk. We are also making provision in the plans for local clubs without a permanent base to have their own facilities, such as the Local Crafters and the Ballyhaunis Boxing Club.

We were hopeful to have secured substantial funding that would enable us to make a meaningful start on this project, but with the uncertainty over the past year it will probably take longer than we would like. I would like to thank Minister Ring for granting us funding to start this project. When you see the amount granted it is encouraging to see that our government regards this as a beneficial project for the community of Ballyhaunis.

Bank issues

2020 has also seen a lot of our businesses locked down while others, though able to remain open, had business activity severely disrupted, over the summer months in particular. Many voiced concerns that our local Bank of Ireland branch remained closed during this vital period, causing major distress and inconvenience to local customers and businesses. People had to travel to Castlerea and Claremorris, where branches remained open. The Chamber, along with other concerned groups, were involved in a campaign to highlight our concerns in this matter through social media, our local press, Midwest Radio as well as national media, voicing our anger over the decision to keep the branch closed when so many people relied on it to remain open. When Ulster Bank closed its Ballyhaunis branch in 2017, Bank of Ireland was quick to reassure the community that they were here to offer full banking facilities. However, only a few months later, they withdrew the cashier facilities making the branch cashless, thus forcing many of its customers – on whose footfall our local businesses depend – out of town to carry out their basic banking requirements. You can understand our frustration.

Since then our Chamber has made numerous attempts to have a meeting with the decision-makers of Bank of Ireland, but to date they have refused all requests. Hopefully, common sense will prevail and full banking facilities will be restored to the branch, along with full working hours.

Support

Our Chamber is fortunate to have a strong working relationship with our local and national representatives

as well as key personnel in Mayo County Council. We liaise with all parties for the continued development of Ballyhaunis and its facilities for everyone's benefit. Projects such as The Square refurbishment, footpaths to the GAA grounds, the bypass lighting and footpath works, are all being developed or completed over the past year with funding secured for the completion of the remaining projects.

Along with our CEO Anne Cunnane we are very active with many organisations and liaise on different committees locally including Ballyhaunis Social Housing, The Swimming Pool, Darkness into Light, Abbey Partnership and BRCIE Ltd. We are there to support to all local clubs and organisations.

At present plans are at an advanced stage for the Christmas Lighting in town for 2020. With businesses being severely affected this year we are depending on the generosity of the general public to raise the vital funds necessary so that Ballyhaunis is well lit up and looking festive this Christmas period.

Thanks

I would like to thank Anne Cunnane who is working on the annual Christmas Draw and a Go-Fund-Me page to raise the funds necessary this year. Also, Paddy Phillips for all his hard work; Michael O'Boyle and his team for

erecting and maintaining the Christmas Lights; Mayo County Council and our local representative Cllr. John Cribbin, who is always on hand to support and advice; the businesses that support the Christmas Draw; the businesses and general public who help financially with their annual contributions. The Christmas Lights is a community effort and one that we can all be proud of. There is no planned official switch-on this year due to government restrictions, nevertheless, the show will go on and the lights will be as fantastic as other years.

I would like to thank BRCIE (Ballyhaunis Region and Community of Innovation and Enterprise) and its chairman Tadhg Buckley, for all their support to the Chamber over the years. We are fortunate to have a very active Chamber organisation and without the support of BRCIE we would not be in a position to carry out the vital work needed to ensure Ballyhaunis and all its organisations have the support and facilities necessary.

I wish to close by wishing you all a very happy, peaceful and safe Christmas.

For some 2020 will be a year that may be remembered for all the negative reasons, but it's important to bear in mind that we have a lot to be positive about too!

Merry Christmas everybody!

Ballyhaunis Family Support Project

Geraldine Glacken

The Family Support Project has been up and running in the Family Resource Centre since May 2016. During this time, a large number of parents and families have received support through one off chats and sign-posting, short pieces of work to address specific issues, in-home family support to learn new skills for improving family life, or common sense parenting courses. In 2020 things were done differently to before, with face-to-face meetings and groups being replaced by phone support, WhatsApp video calls and Zoom. The benefits of engagement did not change, however, and many families were supported in bringing about sustainable change in their homes and improve family relationships.

There is no denying that 2020 has been a challenging year – for all of us. I repeatedly say that parenting is one of the toughest jobs going; add to that the stress involved in a global pandemic, and I think it's fair to say that a degree of panic and chaos ensued. Routines went out the window, and daily rows erupted about the dreaded home schooling. What is important to know is that no-one got it 100% right, everyone had bad days, and everyone has

his or her own individual stresses and worries. When we stop comparing ourselves to others, we start to focus on what we can change in our own lives.

What I will say is this - if you, or someone you know, is struggling with parenting at the moment, whether it has come about as a result of Covid-19 or not, then reach out. The earlier you look for help, the earlier things will change. Feel free to contact me directly on 086-0470587 or at g.glacken@mayofamilysupport.ie. I may not always have the solution, but I will help in any way I can.

Help is available online on Parenting 24-7 website, www.tusla.ie/parenting-24-7; on 'Mayo Parenting' Facebook page, and 'Mayo Child & Family Support Networks' Facebook pages. The Mayo Primary Care Child and Adolescent Psychology services have also developed a series of Parent Information Talks, which are available on YouTube. They look at attachment anxiety, resilience and self-regulation for children and are well worth a listen.

Stay safe, and look after each other.

Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre

2020 has been a traumatic year for the entire Ballyhaunis community, not least for those families who have suffered the loss of loved ones. Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre has also, like so many other organisations, been caught up in the turbulence that the Covid-19 virus has brought about. However, we have striven to continue our work as best we can as a community organisation providing a range of supports and opportunities for the local community from our office overlooking the town.

The Family Resource Centre was established in 2004 and is based in the Friary House at St. Mary's Abbey. Ballyhaunis Resource Centre focuses on providing practical support, information and opportunities to all families and people in our community. We work with other organisations and state agencies to improve the quality and range of services available in the Ballyhaunis area.

Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre is one of seven such centres in Co. Mayo, with over 130 such centres operating throughout the country. Funding for these centres comes from Túsla (The Children and Family Agency) through a three year funding arrangement, which enables Ballyhaunis FRC to continue our work with some degree of certainty into the future.

The Ballyhaunis Centre also employs a Family Support Worker – Geraldine Glacken – who provides parenting courses and individualised programmes for families. This greatly increases the range of supports and services that we can provide and ensures that families in Ballyhaunis can access the same support services available elsewhere in the country.

While providing help and advice to individuals remains one of our core activities, we have not been able to run and host a range of adult education services on account of the Covid-19 situation. When the restrictions in place are lifted, we will continue to organise courses and provide a venue for other adult education programmes that are run in partnership with outside agencies.

The Senior Alert Programme continues to be operated by the Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre 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 Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre has worked with a number of community based groups helping out with funding applications and other types of assistance. Other more established community groups are also



supported, although it has not been possible for them to use our office this year for their own meetings and activities.

2020 marks the eleventh year of our Community Pre-School Service which is based next door to our office at the Abbey. The Community Pre-School caters for children aged over three years and three months, providing a free Monday-Friday childcare service during school term under the government's National Free Pre-School Year Scheme. This service has proved extremely popular with local parents and the quality of the service provided by our dedicated staff has been recognised at both county and national levels.

We also operate another childcare service in the town. This the Greater Tomorrow service, located in the Old Convent Asylum Accommodation Centre, again funded by Tusla. Both services provide high quality childcare and employ a number of local childcare staff. A brand new pre-fabricated building, from which this service is run, has been installed this year.

2019 saw the departure of our long time Childcare Services Manager, Ms. Patricia Murphy. Patricia was responsible for starting our two childcare services and in building them up over the past ten years. Patricia now manages the Little Acorns Childcare Centre in Brickens and her responsibilities have been taken over by Barbara Murphy and Hina Rehman.

A great deal of the work at our FRC depends on the participation of volunteers in management and in the activities themselves. Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre is controlled by a board of directors made up of people living in our community. The Officers for 2020 were: Seamus Grogan (Chairperson), Manar Cherbatji, Marie Jordan and Mary Morrissey. We welcome people living in the town or parish who would like to join the FRC board, so feel free to discuss this any time with Stephen, Tracey or any of the directors. Your involvement would be invaluable.



Old Convent Parents Multi-Agency Support Group

One of the positive things to come out of Covid-19 was the emergence of a multi-agency group to support the families in The Old Convent Direct Provision Centre, Ballyhaunis. Originally, the group came together to support families through Covid-19, but because it was such a success, we decided to remain in place for the foreseeable future. The group is made up of a resident parent in the centre with representatives from South West Mayo (SICAP and Welcoming and Including New Communities (WIN) Projects), Mayo Sports Partnership, Tusla, Mayo County Council (Community and Integrated Development Student), Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre and Ballyhaunis Engaging Youth (B.E.Y.) Project. Some of the activities undertaken by the group included:

- Running weekly art/ poetry/ baking activities and competitions for children in the Centre during lockdown.
- Developing promotional material to ensure parents in the Centre have up to date information about services which are relevant to them.
- Organising many sporting activities inside the Centre and in Ballyhaunis for the community as a whole.
- Running the 'Recycle & Donate a Bike' initiative.'

Through kind donations, we received around forty-five second-hand bikes, which were fully serviced and matched to a child in the Centre. Thank you to everyone in the local community and beyond who made this initiative such a success.

- Facilitating a bike safety camp to equip children with new skills in relation to cycling.
- Together with partners in Ballyhaunis FRC, Mayo Sports Partnership and BEY project, providing and/or funding summer programmes designed to ensure that young people participated in programmes that were both fun and educational.
- Accessing funding to support various initiatives including bike repairs, purchase of Art supplies, purchase of helmets, vouchers for local shops, and supports for families with the costs of children returning to school in September.
- Facilitating programmes to promote inclusion in the community of Ballyhaunis.
- Responding to individual and collective needs of the residents as they emerge, which we continue to do.

If you would like to contact the group, or inform us of a support need in the centre, you can contact Geraldine on g.glacken@mayofamilysupport.ie, or 086-0470587.



Thank You all, we have reached our goal for bikes!

Families in the Direct Provision Ballyhaunis wish to express their thanks to all the people that donated second-hand bikes to them over the summer months. Over forty-five bikes for children and adults were kindly donated from all around Mayo. Thanks to the drop off points - Mayo House Castlebar, Claremorris FRC, TC's Fitness Ballyhaunis, Westport FRC and Castlebar Bike Clinic. Thank you to the multi-agency groups who came together to make it happen, including Mayo Sports Partnership who supported the initiative.

Pictured are some of the bike recipients, Sarah, Giovanni and Hend, with Celesta Khosa (Mayo County Council) back left, and Tracy Cunnane (Mayo Sports Partnership) back right.

Right:
Crib in Gurteen,
Christmas 2019.
Photo by JanaPix

Below:
The Gurteen Grotto,
lit up for Christmas
2019.
Photo by JanaPix



Centre right: Celebrating
Ballyhaunis' victory in the
Mayo Senior County
Hurling Final this year.
L-R: Mark, Adrian,
Diarmuid and Billy
Phillips, Doctor's Road.

Left: Former Logboy
National School students
who were part of the
Ballyhaunis squad that
won the Mayo Senior
County Hurling
championship this year.
Back, L-R: Kieran Kiely,
Jason Coyne and
Damien Kedian.
Front, L-R: Jack Coyne
and Adrian Brennan.
Missing from photo is
Patrick Kiely.



Pictured following Ballyhaunis' victory in the Mayo
Senior County Hurling Final this year.
L-R: Mary T. Griffin, Marie Brennan, Helen Kiely,
Martina Kedian, Anne Phillips, Kathleen Lyons.

Welcome to our Cocooning Cottage Corner!



The residents of Clare Court, Ballyhaunis, were not idle during the first pandemic lockdown of 2020. Thanks to the wonderful weather, gardening was a most pleasurable pastime and proved to be not only therapeutic but also very good exercise!

Residents of Clare Court spent many sun-drenched happy cocooning hours busy in our little gardens through spring and early summer, enjoying the craic – while observing the social distancing guidelines!

Ode to Cocooners' Gardens

'Twas the spring of 2020 with the frost still on the ground
And the gardens were all quiet - sure you couldn't hear a sound.
But the days were getting longer and we all were making plans
To get out and about and travel and resuscitate our tans.
And the pubs would all be humming
and the craic would be just great
And the stores would all be open to get out and shop till late

But then THE VIRUS came along and all our plans were changed
And all the pubs were locked and barred and most things rearranged.
As we were the Cocooners sure we had to stay at home
So we moved into our gardens as we weren't allowed to roam.
And we dug and sowed and planted for we had to get it right
And our gardens came alive again and brought us through the night

So we now all have green fingers for we've got the gardening bug
And we now embrace our plants and flowers
– cos they're safer than a hug!

By Maureen Higgins



Some views of the beautiful gardens in Clare Court.



Cónal's Tale

Eavan Webb (Mayo SPCA)

During the Covid Lockdown of 2020 Mayo SPCA was kept extra busy dealing with calls from anxious dog owners enquiring about their missing pets. I was invited onto Ballyhaunis-based Midwest Radio on a number of occasions during the summer to talk about the spate of dog thefts that swept the nation along with the corona virus pandemic. One particular story from the year gone by that captured the attention of lots of people in Mayo, and further afield, is the story of Cónal, a one year old brown and white male stray, who appeared on the streets of Ballyhaunis in early July.

Many who noticed the stray dog contacted Mayo SPCA at Pattenspark, Ballyhaunis. Most were people who love animals. Their story was always the same: *He was alone and terrified. Maybe somebody dumped him? What can we do?* Our advice went along the following lines: Many such dogs are not really straying, but just someone's best friend that may have gotten lost because they got scared and ran away. Remember that a stray dog is most likely frightened and could be sick or injured. That means the dog could behave unpredictably. Also, a terrified dog could be dangerous. After all, you don't know how the animal came to be a stray. The dog may have been mistreated in the past and now associates being around people with abuse. If the dog appears at all threatening, don't approach him. Ask yourself how you would like your pet dog to be treated if he or she went missing. Stray dogs are helpless and if humans cannot help them, then who will? Their lives depend on us.



Gerry Glavey of Ballyhaunis Community School with the stray – his wandering days over.

Clearly, we needed a plan. I discussed the situation with Marian Biesty, Kennel Manager at Mayo SPCA and Laura Mulligan our Dog Warden in Co. Mayo, and we came up with our strategy. Marian and Laura knew from experience that rescuing this fellow from the streets could take weeks rather than days. Patience would be needed. Rome wasn't built in a day!

Part of the plan involved taking to social media. These days most people are on Facebook



Marian Biesty and Eavan Webb of Mayo SPCA playing the Waiting Game

and many have Twitter accounts. We decided to post on Facebook, and on mainstream lost-and-found pets websites where worried owners may be heavily monitoring, waiting at home for news of their missing pet. We invited people to report any sightings of the dog on the loose and, if possible, to send in photographs to Mayo SPCA Facebook page. We asked people not to approach the dog or attempt to feed him.

Pattern of Movements

Within a few days we were able to establish a pattern of his movements which tended to focus on the area around Kilmannin, Pollnacraoaghy and Carrowreagh. He was particularly fond of visiting Catherine Morley's home at the turn-off for Ballaghaderreen and this is where we decided to set up a feeding station to reassure him and attempt to win him over.

But he wasn't content to confine himself to this part of the parish. Hazelhill, Tooraree and the Knock Road were calling! He became a frequent visitor to the yard of Henry's Hazelhill Timber Products. Regular updates from Alan Henry and Mike Henry kept us informed of his whereabouts. We responded to each of these sightings, but in spite of all our best efforts the crafty canine remained at large.

At this stage we were quickly learning the entire Dos and Don'ts of how to capture a stray dog. And so, the game of cat-and-mouse continued. The days were turning into weeks and we were becoming re-acquainted with the fields and hills surrounding Ballyhaunis that we hadn't trekked since childhood.

Finally, on Tuesday, 11th August, five weeks to the day since the first report, we received the phone call we were waiting for. Gerry Glavey, caretaker at Ballyhaunis Community School, was very busy preparing for the school's re-opening and had managed to coax the dog



Marian Biesty of Mayo SPCA with Cónal, safe and sound.

into the school's courtyard. Marian Biesty and I immediately responded and within ten minutes we had our elusive fugitive in the back of the Mayo SPCA van. He was exhausted and he just surrendered. He had had enough of life on-the-run. But the weeks on the loose had taken their toll. It was evident that he was malnourished and was limping badly. Had he been struck by a vehicle? He needed help and was brought straight to the sanctuary in Pattenspark where he was checked over by our on-call vet. Good news! Nothing broken. He was clearly nervous and distressed in his new and unfamiliar surroundings. It would be some time before we would win his confidence. He wolfed down some food before falling into a deep sleep in his clean and comfortable quarters.

Once again, I was invited onto Midwest Radio to share the good news. Midwest had been very helpful and had played an important role in chronicling this epic tale and bringing about its successful and positive conclusion.

Our new celebrity guest became the centre of attention at the animal sanctuary and was named 'Cónal' by the staff. The name Cónal is of Irish origin meaning "strong like a wolf". It's a prominent name in Irish history and legends, borne by a number of kings and heroes. It's a name he had earned and deserved.

Cónal spent a few weeks recuperating and building up his strength at Mayo SPCA. He quickly bonded with Padraig, a volunteer and walker at the sanctuary. Padraig decided to adopt Cónal and he is now enjoying life at his new Forever Home.

Ode to my Father

Gerry Carney

*What can I say of 90 years?
Of blood and sweat, smiles and tears
Now in reflection of the past
The years draw in, the memories last.*

*From just a boy he worked the land
Nature's wish was his command
Or walked for miles to make a pound
Spread the turf or dig the ground.*

*Friend to many, foe to none
A pint or two when day was done
He trod the boards lest we forget
The Bull McCabe is living yet.*

*He taught us wrong was never right
And helped us through the darkest night
When loved ones bade their last goodbye
A time to live, too young to die.*

*He was there in '51
And joined the cheer of battle won
When red and green won every round
And Sam Maguire was Mayo bound.*

*His mighty hands are idle now
They swung the scythe and steered the plough
They built the sheds and saved the hay
When work was work, back in the day.*

*Storyteller, singer, friend
The sacred past that you defend
Is part of all I say and do
And lessons that I learned from you.*



Tony and Teen Carney, Began, on their wedding day.

Ballyhaunis Faith & Light

December 2019 – November 2020

Covid-19 played a big part this year in preventing our organisation from hosting our Fiestas.

We were invited to a wonderful Christmas Fiesta at the Tennis Club, hosted by Castlebar Faith & Light, on Sunday, 8th December 2019. Our friends from Dunmore were there to join in the celebrations as were Santa, Mrs. Claus and Mrs. Brown. We had a brilliant afternoon of dancing, singing, lots of chat and, of course, great food.

We celebrated our Valentine Faith & Light Fiesta in Clare Court Community Hall on 23rd February 2020. The focus of the Fiesta was God's Love for each of us and all the ways we can show His love – a smile, saying hello, a thank you and doing little acts of kindness for one another. Little did we know that it would be our last Fiesta for the year and our ways of communication and gathering would change so much.

WhatsApp has helped us to stay connected with our friends both locally, nationally and internationally.

We really miss meeting all our Faith & Light friends and would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas. Stay safe and well. Hopefully, we will be able to celebrate together in person at a Faith & Light Fiesta sometime soon in 2021.

Thanks to Fr. Stephen Farragher for his continued support and for adding some lovely photos to our report.

*Julia Kelly, Orla Phillips,
Geraldine Dwyer, Anne Lyons*

Christmas Party, 8th Dec. 2019



Valentine Faith & Light Fiesta

in Clare Court Community Hall, Ballyhaunis,
23rd Feb. 2020.



Ballyhaunis Town Football Club

Jarlath Walsh and Brenda Krusina

The 2020 AGM of Ballyhaunis Town Football Club was held on the 31st of January in the Friary House at which the following officers were elected: Chairman - Jarlath Walsh; Vice-chairperson - Chris Pratt; Secretary - Elaine Carney; Treasurer - Linda Page; PRO - Richie Crinnigan. Management Committee Members: Jonathan Powers, Brenda Krusina, Tom Colleran, Michal Krusina, Adam Kaczmarek.



This is our eleventh season in the Mayo League since the club was reformed. Ballyhaunis played in the Super League for the second season after winning a relegation play off with Straide and Foxford at the end of last season to stay up. The Teams in the Super League for 2020 are: Westport Town, Castlebar Celtic, Ballina Town, Manulla, Ballyglass, Swinford, Glenhest, Claremorris, Ballyheane and Ballyhaunis Town.

Sadly, we said goodbye to manager Tommy Page at the end of last season after eight very successful years at the club winning various cups and getting the club up to the Super League. We parted ways with him last season and Karl the season before. They are both great football men and Ballyhaunis Town F.C. owes them a huge debt of gratitude for all they achieved here. They are always welcome back at the club. We spent some time looking for a new manager after Tommy's departure late last year, and early in the new year we appointed Darren Conway from Carrick-on-Shannon as manager with James Clarke as assistant manager.

As the start of the League coincided with the Covid lockdown in mid-March it was postponed indefinitely, much to the disappointment of all at the club. There was a shortened, reorganised league format put in place in July due to Covid with each team playing each other once and just nine games instead of the usual eighteen games home-and-away format. At the end of the nine games the bottom five teams play each other to see which two are relegated and the top five teams play each other to see who wins the league and who are runners up. Who was to know what lay in store for all? It was 16th August before we played our first League game of the season at home to Ballina Town.

As we write this article it is early October and we have played eight League games and are second from bottom with five points. However, there are only three points separating the bottom five teams. When you read this our fate will have been sealed for another season and hopefully we will still be in the Super League barring a second total lockdown which could cause the league to be called off completely. This could occur at any time;

we simply just don't know.

Darren Conway stepped aside temporarily due to domestic and work pressures in early September and since then James Clarke has taken on the role of team manager. We thank Darren for his time with the club and, who knows, we may see him back some time in the future but in the meantime James is doing a sterling job in very difficult times. We thank him for stepping up to the plate and taking on the role of manager. It is a difficult job in normal times but in these new times we are living in it is particularly tough. Team captain for the season is James's nephew Gary Higgins who has played brilliantly for the club. In his absence, Aiden McTigue and Pat McGhee, two other great stalwarts at the club for the past number of years, stand in as captain. It is great to see most of the team carry on from season to season and every year a few new faces are added. We wish James and all the lads all the best for the rest of the season and our hope is to play in the Super League again in 2021.

Thanks

It has been a strange year for the club and we have had to play behind closed doors for a period as well. Most of our income stream has disappeared this season, as it has for all sports and voluntary clubs and organisations. It is very challenging because we still have to pay the regular bills, and we mention this to highlight the support of the people of the town who come to the games, and also the shops and businesses who sponsor signs at the pitch, home games, kits, footballs, etc. We thank you most sincerely because without you we would not be able to continue.

We thank our two main sponsors, MacSiúrtáins Bar (Stephen Nolan) and Rochford Motors (Liam Rochford), and we urge everyone to always try and support local shops and businesses in Ballyhaunis because they are called on to support every club and organisation and they have never let us down and they are really struggling in these horrible times.

We thank all the people of Station Rise for putting up with the disruption and noise caused by matches and training. Thank you for all your support for the club since it was started back in 2009 by one of your own - Brian Kilcourse.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to Austin Lyons who works at the pitch and goes above and beyond the call of duty in doing so. He keeps the pitch cut and marked and does a host of other tasks at the

grounds. Well done Austin: we would be lost without you. Thanks also to Austin's supervisor Ann Moran. A big thank you for all you have done at Station Rise in the past few years.

We would also like to thank all who have helped out in any way with the club over the past year and also with the underage game which is led by Brenda Kilcourse.

We would love to see new faces at the club for next season. All are welcome to attend our AGM at the end of January each year. We are always looking for new club officers and management committee members and people to run/coach our teams. We usually have monthly meetings held in the Friary house. We thank Stephen and Tracey for facilitating this.

The club can be contacted by talking to any committee member. For more information contact Brenda Kilcourse. Her contact details are below.

Underage

The 2020 Season will be a very memorable season. This season we started football in July! Those were very uncertain times. We did not know week-to-week how we would fare out. Thankfully, with co-operation from parents, coaches, players and volunteers, we managed a fun-filled season.

On 19th July we kicked off our underage season with our U13 team taking to the pitch with great excitement, enthusiasm and pride. The U13s had a very enjoyable season of football. The lads played their hearts out week after week, providing their parents, friends and coaches with heart-warming entertainment.

The 2020 season is ongoing at the moment. We will

see our U12, U13 and U14 teams taking part in both the Mayo Cups and Trophies in the coming weeks. We wish them every success.

Our U10 team is expanding year-on-year. Unfortunately, due to Covid the regular Blitz throughout Mayo did not take place. The kids enjoyed getting back playing with both old and new friends. Next Season will commence at the end of February.

The underage would not run without the dedication of our many volunteers. We would like to give a special thanks to Johnny Powers, Michal Krusina, Brenda Kilcourse, Tracey Cunnane, Paul Smith, and Taiwo Ayinde.

Aside from club participants missing the football season, local residents in Station Rise and the walkers around the Friary grounds sure did miss the action. It was mentioned to committee members how wonderful it was to hear the club up and going again: children laughing, supporters cheering, coaches encouraging and the referee's whistle blowing.

The club is looking to expand year-on-year. This year we had planned to start an U10 girls team. However, due to Covid this was not feasible. We are seeking more volunteers to help with developing the club. If you could volunteer some time to help develop the club for our local children, please contact Brenda at (086)3950743 for further information.

It only remains for all of us at Ballyhaunis Town F.C. to wish all the people of Ballyhaunis and surrounding areas a very happy, holy, healthy and safe Christmas and, hopefully, we will see the end of Covid in 2021.



Ballyhaunis Town F.C. Underage Group

Presentation night in the Parochial Hall in November 2019 with Michal Krusina (extreme left) and Paul Smith (extreme right).
Photograph by Brenda Kilcourse.



Ballyhaunis Town F.C. 4th October 2020.

Back, L-R: James Clarke (Manager), Pat McGhee, Michael Waldron, Sam Olabude, Deane McGarry, Jamil Kezze, Jarlath Carney, Carlos Perez, Alex Talmo and Cathal Carney.

Front, L-R: Aiden McTigue, James Reynolds, Michael Tighe, Andy Cunnane, Hamood Althobhahey, Gary Higgins (Capt.) Dayo Fabunmi, Tommy Cunnane.

Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek.

Time

by Nessa Ruane-Dalton (age 13)

The timid little girl that doesn't dare to speak a single word,
Is something rather extraordinary, even though it may sound absurd!
No one thinks much of her, or praises her now and again,
but little do they know the voice of an angel she has within.

The timid little girl that hears the others sing horribly out of tune
"My darling has the best voice", the mothers and fathers boastfully boom.
She never got picked for school plays and always remained shy,
But suddenly the fear inside slowly started to die.

The timid little girl opened up while taking her time,
She didn't care what anybody thought of her, and sang whatever came to mind,
Everyone was speechless and didn't have a single word to say,
They would never have known the beautiful voice within, until this very day.

That courageous woman has now gone very far,
She plays in the world's biggest stadiums with her old Sigma guitar,
Sometimes you don't expect much from the weird and the unexpected,
But they are the ones who will go far, that's why everybody should be respected.

Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns

Mary Donnelly

This has been a year like no other for Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns! We wound up 2019 with a very enjoyable Christmas party in Áine Cribbin's Annagh Bia on 9th December, exchanged Christmas greetings and promised to resume with renewed gusto in the New Year. As we were preparing to kick start our activities in March Covid-19 struck, scuppered all our plans and confined most of us to our homes for weeks on end! There was no Good Friday clean-up on 10th April, no Litter Action League throughout the summer, no hanging baskets adorning the streets, no National Tidy Towns Competition 2020. To say we missed all our activities is an understatement but our WhatsApp group kept us in touch and gave us a few laughs until restrictions were eased in July and we managed to plant a few flowers in the tiered planters in the Square and in the 1916 Garden.

Footpaths

Nevertheless there is progress to report on some of the projects we have in hand. We met with Conrad Harley and Pdraig Flanagan of Mayo County Council in late August and presented a number of issues that need attention. New footpaths have been on our agenda for meetings with Conrad and Pdraig for some time and we are happy to see great progress on Doctor's Road where the first phase is nearing completion. Work is expected to commence on a new footpath on Knock Road before the end of the year, and a brand new footpath has been installed in Abbeyquarter.

The old presbytery in Upper Main St. and the riverbank adjacent to the swimming pool remain on the 'to do' list for 2021.

We had new inserts printed for the wildlife information panels around the Friary walk and new perspex fitted - our thanks to the Rural Social Scheme team for their work on this project.

Town Well

The old town well in Bridge Street is receiving a facelift with new capping on the wall, cleaning and painting, and a plaque erected to commemorate its history. This well was the town's only source of fresh water for centuries until the inauguration of the public

water supply in 1933. We extend thanks to Delaney's Hardware for sponsoring the necessary materials, continuing the tradition started by the late George Delaney who cleaned and maintained the well for many years. Thanks are also due to Annagh Magazine for financial support and to our Rural Social Scheme team for carrying out the work.

Illegal dumping

We are constantly vigilant for illegal dumping and we have reported several incidents to Mayo County Council's litter warden who has been very efficient in investigating the sites and following up. Meanwhile

Mike Griffin continued his tradition of litter picking on Sunday mornings throughout the summer. Well done Mike!

Thanks

We extend sincere thanks to Cllr. John Cribbin for his allocation of funds again this year and for his ongoing support for Tidy Towns. We acknowledge his constant efforts to bring about improvements in Ballyhaunis and the surrounding area. We also acknowledge funding received over the past two years by Minister Michael Ring at the Dept. of Rural and Community Development and we are hopeful that his successor Minister Heather Humphreys will be as well disposed to Tidy Towns Committees!

Thanks also to all the local volunteers who carried out litter picking and clean-ups in their own local areas. We invite them to join us in Tidy Towns when we will hopefully resume our activities in 2021.

Tidy Towns Committee

Chairperson - Kay Curley.

Hon. Secretary - Mary Donnelly.

Hon. Treasurers - Moyra Patterson & Frances Mulhern.

P.R.O. Teresa Grogan.

Committee: Ann Curley, Mike Griffin, Frances May, Nell Rochford, Gabriel Smith, Merrilyn Finn Winters, Mary Higgins, Breeda Burke, Úna Shields, Caitriona Varley, Connie Gildea.



This planter at The Square contains white bacopa, red begonias and trailing nepeta.

Me & Eugene McGee

Robert Kelly, *formerly of Hazelhill*

All my life I disliked Eugene McGee. Well, from 1964 to about eighteen months ago. I disliked him intensely. I wouldn't listen to him on the radio, I wouldn't look at him on the television, I wouldn't read his newspaper articles. I blanked him out of my life. But I made one exception: that great Offaly team he was manager of. I looked at them, I admired that team - very skilful, no hatchet men in their ranks - and of course, as a Mayo man, I took delight in their 1982 All Ireland win, a win that halted the expected Kerry march to five-in-a-row. So, you are probably asking why I disliked Mr. McGee so much if I liked his team, so skilful and clean. Well let me take you back to 1964.

I wasn't long in Dublin. I started playing for the Civil Service Club whose home ground was in Islandbridge by the Phoenix Park. It was a beautiful Sunday morning in early March, a day stolen from July. We were playing UCD, a team that went on to become the best club side in Ireland, maybe even the best team in the land, but that was in the future and they were only beginning that journey at this stage. So, we had a chance. Actually, more than a chance. We beat them that day and beat them well. I was playing centre half back and was having one of those days that, no matter where I went, the ball would follow and drop into my arms. I was enjoying it as, believe me, I had plenty of those other days, those days when no matter how hard you try, nothing worked for you.

Now the man I was marking, No. 11 for UCD, was getting frustrated, angry at everything - the ball, the pitch, the day, with himself. But mostly with me, and he let me and all around know it. One ball cleared midfield and bounced invitingly towards the two of us. We raced and I got to the ball first, the No. 11 crashing into me. I staggered, kept my feet, didn't go down and managed to clear the ball. He too staggered but he went down, calling for a foul. He wasn't best pleased, calling me a dirty player and that I'd pay for it. It didn't wash with me or the referee and I told him there was nothing in it, to grow up and stop throwing his toys out of the pram. Not an appreciator of sarcasm, this lit a fuse and his ranting earned him a rebuke from the ref. for the choice language and conduct.

For the next ten minutes I got every ball I went for as the No. 11 had forgotten the ball altogether, playing me instead, eager to do me a mischief. Aware of this, I avoided his crude digs. I was too quick and kept out of trouble. Of course, this couldn't last. I lost sight of him and, when up for a particular ball, he came flying through the air, studs at hip height, years ahead of Eric Cantona.

He caught me mid-thigh, I fell to the ground in absolute agony, my game over; in fact it was over for the next two months. I could hardly walk for the next month, never mind play football.

Lying there in pain, fearing my leg was broken or worse, I heard the ref. admonish the No. 11. Citing dangerous play, he sent him off and asked his name. Hearing the name, I never forgot it - Eugene McGee.

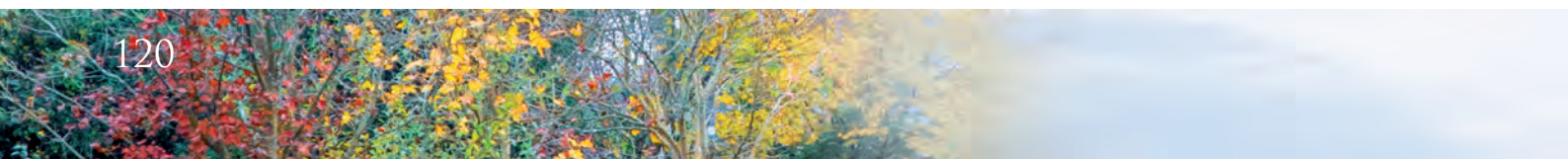
Injury

I was helped from the pitch to the clubhouse, helped into my clothes and brought to the Mater Hospital, where I spent four hours being examined and sent for x-rays. The attending doctor was an Ireland Rugby player whose name escapes me, a giant of a man with huge hands. I explained what had happened and he said I was lucky that I was in the air. If the leg was planted and with the force of the blow, I would've had a broken femur. As it was, I had deep internal bruising - and deep internal bruising requiring a course of physiotherapy, twice weekly. This meant two mornings a week and so two days off work a week, and with a job in jeopardy and the mounting medical bills, I had to forego the treatment and let nature, time and painkillers do their work. Time dragged on. I hobbled around for about two months, struggling at work. My boss at the time, a former Wexford hurler, had sympathy. I suppose he was in his late forties, ancient in my mind back then, and every so often his own war wound, a dicky knee, would pop out and he would get it back in with a banging of his fist. Seeing me limping around, he would give me a wry smile. Sure weren't we two owl Gaels altogether, except I wasn't that old.

Somehow, I did my time, nature working its slow magic and all the while thinking terribly nice things about a certain Eugene McGee. Down through the years the pain would rear up and niggle now and again until, in 2012, the top of the femur broke, right where it joined the hip, and I had to get a total hip replacement. Those nice thoughts and Eugene went with me to the operating theatre.

Meanwhile Eugene McGee went on to organise that UCD team to become almost unbeatable in the club scene. County players struggled to make the subs bench for them. He then took over Offaly, culminating in that famous victory over Kerry in '82. It always amazed me how a man who could do such a criminal act on the pitch himself, could train a team so skilful and clean. It just didn't make sense to me whatsoever.

Well, the years rolled by and in 2014 Eugene wrote a



book about his life and the following Christmas my grandchildren gave me a present of said tome, ignorant of my dislike for the man. They pointed to where he had signed the book, where he had put his mark. I thought to myself, it wasn't the first time he had left his mark. Of course I thanked them but the book was put aside, out of sight, unopened, unread, unloved. Then about eighteen months ago, I happened upon a man being interviewed on the radio and it took me a while to realise it was Eugene McGee talking about his book. I was ready to turn off the radio when I was stopped in my tracks. He began to speak about a time he was sent off twice in the same match, for UCD against the Civil Service in Islandbridge. It was a Sunday morning and his team were missing four or five players whose Saturday night had gone on too long. Unable to field a full fifteen, he himself had to fill in. He said he loved football, loved organising the teams but was hopeless at playing, but he'd do a job and fill in at corner back. He said he made sure those missing revellers never got near the panel again, putting down a marker that UCD would take things seriously and get their act together. But that morning he had to make do with fourteen players and himself. Then their star player was sent off in the first half. Struggling to keep up with the play, dragging and pulling his men to survive throughout the match, Eugene was given a second yellow card by the ref. who'd had enough in the second half. Asking for his name, the ref. thought he was pulling a fast one, sure hadn't he already sent off Eugene McGee, their No. 11, in the first half. Sure enough the

No. 11 had pulled a fast one. Wasn't he a county player with a big match coming up the following Sunday and couldn't afford the suspension. So, he gave the wrong name, confident Eugene wouldn't tog out again anytime soon, little knowing of Eugene's impending second half dismissal.

So it dawned on me, I had the wrong man. The grudge and blame harboured for Eugene McGee was misdirected. He was innocent of the crime, and it now all made sense how I couldn't reconcile the player I encountered in Islandbridge with the teams he would nurture with skill, panache and fairness. I took down his book, read and enjoyed it, but all the while I couldn't shake the feeling of guilt I had, how I had blamed him all those years. The feeling made little sense as I couldn't have known, but it was the way I felt, so I rang the *Longford Leader* to try and get his number. I was told they would pass on my number and message but, as time went by, I hadn't heard back. And then I heard the news of Eugene's passing at his son's wedding. So that was it. Maybe he never got my message; maybe he was too busy with his son's wedding. I don't know. But I am writing this to make amends, to set the record straight. In the meantime, I have enlisted the services of Morse, Columbo, Miss Marple and Poirot, all of whom are on the case to track down the guilty party, the No. 11, the county player who gave the false name, so we can have a laugh and remember our carefree youth... and maybe I'll stamp on the cretin's toe as I'm leaving!

Dear Rod Garden...

Christina Johnston, Erriff and Began

I called it the forest of my dreams
Dear 'Rod Garden' of the willowed streams.
I know its every waking sound
Which most, in Springtime, would abound
With bluebells, briars, bright buttercups,
Elder, wild fern and forget-me-nots.
More birds were there than I can name
Wren, Green Linnet and Chaffinch tame
Reed Bunting nesting near rush clumps green
On turquoise eggs, song thrushes preen.
Wild Willow stumps begin to shoot,
Their tough roots crush my wellington boot.
In mid-July their tall rods proud,

Hide gawkish fledglings with their shroud.
My father waited till the last,
And then, with penknife deft and fast
Singly, he did each rod detach
For cotters proud, their roofs to thatch.
If I was raised in fair Belize
Whose forests sap the Equator's breeze,
My child's blood could not swell each vein
Like this, fair 'Rod Garden', Nature's reign.

In memory of Judy Blackhead's 'nest' – my father's name for a Reed Bunting.

Written in 1999 about my daily rambles in our Rod Garden as a ten year old.

(Rod gardens were a feature of many farms in times gone by. Willow or sally trees were cultivated there to produce rods for a variety of uses, mostly to make scallops for use when thatching roofs – staple-like 'pins' used to keep the straw or reeds in place).



Sean Cunnane, Carrowkeel, and Kayleigh Heneghan, Knock, who married in the Church of St. John the Baptist, Knock, 13th March 2020.



Lisa Tighe, Acres, Aghamore, and Brendan Robinson, Meenlaragh, Gortahork, Donegal, who married in St. Joseph's Church, Aghamore, 31st December 2019.



Ailee Burke, Devlis, and Daniel Jordan, Carnbeg, who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 20th December 2019.



Gerry O'Boyle, Carrowreagh, and Mary Tevenan, Glenamaddy, Co. Galway, who married in Ballyhaunis, 21st August 2020.

WEDDINGS

Emma Niland, Aghamore, and Pauric Miskell, Cloonfad, who married in Mulranny Park Hotel, 18th October 2020. Pictured with their daughter Hayley Miskell.



Bryan Forde, formerly of The Square, Ballyhaunis, and Sandra Clear, Portlaoise, who married in Holy Cross Church, Ratheniska, Portlaoise, 22nd August 2020.



Ellie McDonagh, Ballyhaunis, and James McDonagh, Ballyhaunis, who married in St. Anne's Church, Shanvaghara, Knock, 17th August 2020.



WEDDINGS



*Karl McManus, Churchpark,
and Rhonagh O'Brien,
Athenry, who married in
Ballintubber Abbey,
18th July 2020.*



*Lisa Carney, Classaghroe, and
Damien McGuinn, Loughrea,
Co. Galway, who married in
St. Patrick's Church,
Ballyhaunis,
15th November 2019.*



*Yvonne Byrne, Knox St.,
and Seamus O'Brien,
Cootehill, Co. Cavan, who
married in St. Patrick's
Church, Ballyhaunis,
25th October 2019.*



Fintan Byrne, Doctor's Road, and Vanessa Whyte, Birr, Co. Offaly, who married in Castlebar. Pictured with their daughter Rachel.



Aisling Robinson, Huntsfield, and Shane Morley, Arderry, Aghamore, who married in St. Mary's Church, Tooreen, 31st December 2019.



Siobhán Shanaghy, Larganboy, and Bryan Staunton, Westport, who married in the church of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Began, 29th December 2019



Comdt. Phelim Carroll, Carrowreagh, and Sara Butash, Vermont, U.S.A., who married in St. Patrick's Church, Glencullen, Co. Dublin, 5th September 2020.

Baptisms Marriages Deceased

BAPTISMS in the Parish – November 2019 to October 2020

Anastasia Rozbroj, Clare St.
Mason Gabriel Flanagan, Manor Brook
Eileena Maria Maughan, The Maples
Tadhg Martin Lilly, Johnstown
Ellis Frances Marigliano, Old Racecourse
Alfie James Walsh, Curries
Liam Matthews, Old Racecourse
Amber Rose Mongan, Cherrivale
Keelan Tom Kennedy, Scrigg
Lena Marceneak, The Maples
Brajan Danilczuk, Hazel Lawns

Sean Martin Waldron, Upper Main St.
Fionn Tom McGuire, Johnstown
Sean Gearóid Buckley, Bracklaghboy
Daniel Ellis Freeley, Oranmore, Co. Galway
Lukas Jacob Arbergs, Glenbrook, Knock
Brendonas Strelkauskis, Cloonlee, Knock
Darcy Michaela Waldron, Abbeyquarter
Katie Marie Walsh Coogue South
Noah James O'Meara, Claremont, Claremorris
Dáire Jack Devaney, Kilclooney, Milltown
Michael Edward Delaney, Headford Rd., Galway

MARRIAGES in St. Patrick's Church November 2019 to October 2020

Lisa Carney (Classaroe) and Damien McGuinn (Galway).
Jenita McCormack (Station Rise) and John Maughan (Castlebar).
Ailish Burke (Devlis) and Daniel Jordan (Carnbeg).

Marriages Elsewhere

James McDonagh (The Maples) and Ellie McDonagh (Tooraree).
John G. Murphy (Lecarrow) and Tara Eastwood Lyons (Lecarrow).
James Collins (Castlebar) and Winnie Allen (Tooraree).



Above: Friends Siofra and Zoe making plans for the annual Knockbrack bonfire.

Left: Santa and some of his elves took the time to touch-down in Ballyhaunis on Christmas night 2019. Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher.

DECEASED of the Parish November 2019 to October 2020

Padraig Phillips, Leow
Tom Niland, Island
Margaret Mullarkey, Carrigaline, Cork & Aghamore
Maisie Sweeney, Drimbane
Joan Flynn, Abbeyquarter
Helen MacDermott, Galway & Abbey St.
Mae Carroll, Drimbane
Austin Biesty, Pattenspark
Kieran Ruane, Curries
Laura Brogan, Doctor's Road
John Austin Murphy, Lecarrow & Dublin
Margaret Byrne, Knox St.
Patrick (Pa) Freeley, Gurteen
Elizabeth (Lily) Rabbitte, Derrylea
Canon Joseph Cooney, Ballyhaunis & Knock
John Lyons, Beech Park & Main St.
John Clarke, Hazelhill
Valentine (Val) Lyons, Spaddagh
Annie Rogers, Ballybeg
Canon J.J. Cribbin, Milltown & Main St.
Martin Crehan, Devlis
Bridie Finnegan, Derrintogher
Rosemary Coffey, Edinburgh & Cherryfield
Ellen Coyne, Devlis
Ita McDonnell, Carrowkeel
William (Bill) Kedian, Moneymore
Donal Rogers, Aghamore & Ballybeg
Mary Waldron, Devlis & Main St.
Mary McDonagh, Tooraree
John McNamara, Brackloon North

DECEASED from elsewhere (Prayed for at Mass)

John Brogan, Ballindine
Peter Murphy, Cork & Aghamore
Philip Fitzmaurice, Tonragee, Cloonfad
Geraldine Holden (née Waldron), Manchester;
formerly Cherryfield
Mary Davis, Limerick
Maurice Caulfield, Crosshaven, Cork;
formerly Upper Main St.
John Meehan, Coventry
Ana Maria Nunes, Brazil
Fiona Cribbin, Dublin
Peggy Burke, Killala
Michael Kirrane, London, Cheshire; formerly Began
John O'Malley, Westport
Ellen (Nellie) Mulkeen, Cashel, Ballinlough
Daisy O'Neill, Boyle
Mary Donnelly, Milltown
Irene Carty, Fairymount
Helen MacDermott (née Lynch), Galway;
formerly Abbey St.
Jimmy Gyves, Manchester

Alacoque Fleming, Ballinrobe
Teresa Ryan (née McGee), Birmingham;
formerly Brickens
Paul O'Toole, Headford
Kathleen Jordan, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath
Bill Flanagan, Roscommon
John Brennan, Curry, Co. Sligo
Mary Feerick, Clonbur
Seamus McKermitt, Clonbur; formerly Hazelhill
Mae Browne, Cashel, Ballinlough
Mary Gartland, Navan
Phyllis Nolan, Tooreen
Paul Moran, Bracklaghboy
Fr. Tommy Curran, Letterkenny
Sr. Máire (Isidore) Cahill, Galway;
formerly Convent of Mercy, Ballyhaunis
Bridie Fahy, Cloonbook
Peggy Guilfoyle, Greenwood
Patrick McGinty, Manchester & Ballycroy
Jim McDonagh, Ballindine
John Ruane, Foghena, Ahascragh, Ballinasloe
Michael Biesty, London; formerly Pattenspark
Teresa Bond (née Griffin), Kent, England; formerly Clare St.
Eileen Muldoon, Coogue
Imelda O'Hanlon (née Biesty), London; formerly Pattenspark
Sr. Therese Finn, St. John of God, Perth, Australia
Msgr. Terence Nolan, San Antonio, Texas; formerly Tooreen
Sally Maaz, Ballyhaunis
Angela Collins (née Sloyan), Lavally, Tuam; formerly Forthill
Paddy Mangan, Ballindine
Christina Waldron, Dublin; formerly Liscat, Knock
William Hartnett, Kerry
Frank Clarke, Colwyn Bay, Wales; formerly Hazelhill
Eileen Morley, Stockport, England
Seamus Connolly, Dublin
Mary Hopkins, Langanboy
Sr. Dolores Bowden, Galway;
formerly Convent of Mercy, Ballyhaunis
Brendan Toolan, Knockanarra
Canon Peter Waldron, Retired P.P. Keellogues, Ballyvary;
formerly of Main St.
Maureen Quilter, Lixnaw, Co. Kerry
Catherine Monaghan, Drumskinney, Co. Fermanagh
Anne Burke, Mayfield, Claremorris
Teresa Reilly, Cartron North, Tooreen
Rev. Fr. Paddy Gilligan, Retired P.P. Cong, Cross & The Neale
Tony Finnerty, Ballinrobe
Bride Cheeseman, Athenry
Ann Doherty, Crossboyne
Hamad Farooq, Cherrivale
James Maughan, Castlereagh
John Sullivan, Cloonfad; formerly Bridge St.
Rita Walsh (née Folliard), Roscommon; formerly Cooloughra
Patrick Joseph (P.J.) Reilly, Finea, Co. Westmeath
Dorothy Collins (née Morley), Chicago; formerly Knox St.
Dominick Reilly, Cartron North, Tooreen
Fr. Colm Kilcoyne, Castlebar
Jim Naughton, St. Gerald's Crescent
Gerard Finn, Milton Keynes & Derrinabrick, Ballaghaderreen
Paddy Ann Freyne, Dublin



Quarantine Queens Cook up a Storm

Geraldine Collins



Cáit Webb with one of her famous lemon cakes.

2020 will go down in the annals for one reason in particular: Corona Virus and specifically Covid-19 raged, bringing illness and suffering to every corner of the world. It is thought to have originated in China and initially most people in the Western world thought that it would be contained there and would not rear its ugly head on our side of the world. But rear its ugly head it did, and it arrived on our shores slowly but surely. We listened in horror as the numbers went from single figures to double digits and beyond. We tuned into daily news bulletins which soon changed to hourly bulletins. We educated and informed ourselves on the statistics and symptoms of the condition. Yet, lockdown came swiftly, suddenly and it seemed without warning. Many people were feeling shocked, stunned and scared and it has been said that our Taoiseach's address from government buildings to announce the lockdown will be burned on our minds as deeply as when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, or when Princess Diana was killed tragically in 1997, or when the Twin Towers in New York City were targeted in 2001. As the days, weeks and months went by and it was apparent that there was not going to be a quick fix, we tried to adjust our lives to the new way of living. Lockdown gave people the chance to take stock of their lives, gave new perspective on those lives and what was really important in the grand scheme of things.

In March it seemed social media was embarking on a different tack than heretofore. Lots of platforms were promoting kindness and generosity, and were using their influence to inspire people to look out for each other and revert back to values and traditions that seemed to have all but disappeared.

SHARE A RECIPE

At that time, I received a request on social media from a friend asking me to share a recipe with her and with twenty other acquaintances of mine (if I had them!) with

a view to building a bank of recipes. I did just that. However, the friends I contacted quickly realised there would be more benefit to sharing recipes with each other in a private WhatsApp group and, in truth, the process online was also rather complicated for some of us who were not hugely technically minded, to say the least. A suggestion was made to compile a cookbook to raise funds for a charity and it grew organically along the way and finally developed into an e-cookbook. An e-cookbook, or electronic cookbook, is a publication which is purchased online, and the buyer has to download the book to their computer; they also have the option to print it, if they so desire. This was a low-cost venture as we wanted to make as much money as we could for our chosen charity. As it turned out, there was demand for hard copies from the public as many of our supporters did not have the means to download or print their own copies. We realised that we needed to publish hard copies and engaged a printer in Co. Donegal to print 150 copies, which Eamon Monaghan duly collected, and lo-and-behold, they sold quite quickly. Our book had recipes ranging from basic snacks to sophisticated main meals. We endeavoured to choose a broad range of recipes to encourage children and adults alike to take up cooking and to create something they had never tried before. Eventually, we met in the Parish Church car park while being socially distant of course. A quick discussion ensued and we resolved to raise much needed funds for Cancer Care West.

So, who are the Quarantine Queens? If you google Quarantine Queens (and I am not suggesting you do!), you will find many interesting answers. However, it is fair to say that the Ballyhaunis Quarantine Queens are a much tamer bunch of women who have no particular expertise or qualifications in terms of cooking, except that we are individuals who cook for our families almost every day. We are choral singers, golfers and friends from Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo and Co. Galway. Some of us also work together professionally. Another dear friend of mine from Co. Meath was also drafted into the group as she has a great love for cooking and baking, and would have lots to offer in terms of culinary experience. Our common ground is that we were all missing our hobbies and also missing the interaction with friends that those interests provide; and we all love food. Some of us have a passion for collecting recipes and for buying recipe books. People who buy cookery books seek to keep learning. We have surprised ourselves at our openness to influences and ingredients from all around the world. This is reflected in the recipes chosen for the cookbook. One of the first recipes to be shared was for a lemon cake



Gerry Glennon of Midwest Radio samples some of the Quarantine Queens' baking. *Back, L-R:* Aoife Keane, Margaret O'Connor, Margaret Monaghan, Máiréad Quinn, Jenny Glynn, Geraldine Collins, Cáit Webb. *Front:* Sara Keane, Kate Monaghan and Gerry Glennon.

which had been shared many times over the years by Cáit Webb, Main Street. Traditionally, members of the local golf club have donated bakes to feed the masses on important competition days. The lemon cake was always popular because of its lightness and flavour. Having received the recipe from Cáit in the early 1990s, I decided to share it with the group and, within a short time, the cake had been baked, adapted, and lauded as the perfectly simple recipe that anyone could make - even those with limited experience. Subsequently, there were requests from others to share their so-called signature dishes.

ENTHUSIASM

Frequently, we hear homemakers remark that the daily chore of cooking for family has diminished any enthusiasm for trying new foods and experimenting with new recipes as we are often time-poor. Time was one ingredient we had in abundance during lockdown in 2020. Our project gave us a renewed enthusiasm and excitement for cooking and baking. New dishes were tried and tested. Breads and cakes were baked, distributed and enjoyed. Shout-outs and call-outs were made for strong flour, wholemeal flour, cardamom and yeast. People's gardens were raided for rhubarb and herbs. There were stampedes to the supermarket when the word got around that those much sought after products were in store. The bush telegraph is alive and well in the West albeit in a digital sense. We spoke almost

daily on what we wanted to achieve regarding the book and its contents. Every request was greeted with enthusiasm and hard work despite most people leading very busy lives. Each person was asked to provide three recipes, but the editorial committee received many more than that and not all made the cut. The book was organised into different categories and a concerted effort was made to keep the instructions simple and clear. We also promoted our campaign on social media and boy did we have fun doing that?! Lots of us were catapulted out of our comfort zones and onto the screens, but it's safe to say that no media moguls have come running to beg us to join their ranks! We roped-in members of our families, young and old, male and female, to make little cookery videos in a bid to generate interest. Some of these took hours to make and some took days to finish. Some were very professional and others not so much. The youngest chef who appeared online was six year old Daniel Buckley whose great-grandmother had contributed a family recipe to the book, and his video was viewed over 18,000 times! Our oldest chef was a mere 86 years young. One of our contributors even held a ladder for another who was hell bent on collecting elderflowers in a bid to make elderflower cordial. All of our videos can be seen on YouTube under the title 'Quarantine Queen's fundraiser'.

Like most projects, getting the right people on board makes the difference between a waste-paper basket and

a book. Thanks to our chief cook and bottle washer Martina Kelly who helped to organise the recipes and was responsible for the layout of the book. Thanks to Jane Buckley for organising the social media side of the project when it became evident that we needed some help. Thanks to Siobhán O'Connor Herr who kept the lines of communication open for people who were having difficulty downloading the book and who also answered any queries on Facebook. Thanks to Pat Glynn for taking photographs of the contributors and for travelling to Galway to photograph the handing over of the cheque. We are indebted to SuperValu, Londis and especially to Sarah Herr for allowing us to promote and sell the book on their premises. Sarah was the first person to offer to sell hard copies of our book. Thanks too to Mid-West Radio and Tommy Marren who gave us huge publicity which helped enormously to generate sales. The biggest thanks of all has to go to the people of Ballyhaunis and surroundings who supported Cancer Care West by buying our e-book. We approached some local businesses to contribute and they were most generous with their substantial donations and we thank them sincerely and acknowledge their altruism.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks has to go to my lovely friends Kay Buckley, Jane Buckley, Mary Hayes Casey (Co. Meath), Jenny Glynn, Anna Henry, Aoife Keane, Martina Kelly, Margaret Monaghan, Margaret O'Connor, Siobhán O'Connor-Herr, Mary O'Toole (Co. Galway), Máiréad Quinn, Eimear Thornton, Liesel Ward and Cáit Webb who rolled with me on this project. Each and every one of them put their hearts and souls into our venture. The smallies who promoted our project online with their wonderful videos were Sara Keane, Kate Monaghan and Daniel Buckley from Ballyhaunis, Sarah

and Hannah Briody from Co. Meath (Jenny and Pat Glynn's granddaughters), Rachel and Louise Ward (John and the late Rita Mooney's granddaughters). The octogenarian who delighted us with her expertise on how to make and decorate a Gateaux Diane was Mrs. Margaret Hayes from Co. Meath, and her granddaughter Julianne started the ball rolling with the first video demonstration and, in doing so, gave some of us the courage to try our hand at videography. Emma Herr and Caoimhe Henry who are neither smallies nor octogenarians also contributed videos.

When Jane Buckley and I set up the 'idonate' page in my living room one Sunday in May, we discussed what target we might hope to achieve. Given the precarious state of the Irish economy and the fact that many people had lost their jobs during the pandemic, a target of five thousand euro was aspired to. We are beyond proud and yet humbled that we managed to raise €15,850 for Cancer Care West which was beyond our wildest dreams. It is our genuine hope that this money will go some way towards helping them with the fantastic work they do in Connaught. Anyone who has ever been in that zone of coping with a cancer diagnosis will know the good work they do and the excellent service they provide. When speaking to Dave O'Donnell of Cancer Care West at the handover of the cheque, I was astounded at the amount of fundraising needed to keep the doors of their residential facility in Galway open.

All the women involved became firm friends throughout the period of the lockdown. It gave us a focus and distracted us from the scary news on the television, radio and online. Luck was with us, as all our families were well and safe during this horrendous time for our country. We put all we had in terms of energy into the project and it kept us busy for months. It has been said that the sun shone brighter and the birds sang sweeter during this initial lockdown. (Whether you actually believe that or not is another story). As for myself, I smile and feel a warm, fuzzy glow inside when I think of the whole experience and the difference our efforts made for Cancer Care West.



Geraldine Collins (left) and Jenny Glynn (right) present a cheque in the sum of €15,780 to Dave O'Donnell of Cancer Care West, proceeds of the Quarantine Queens' cookbook fundraising campaign.

Ballyhaunis Language Café

Mark Godfrey

The Ballyhaunis Language Café was born out of a series of circumstances, encounters and events. It was the summer festival of 2019 which started it all when a notice inviting those who'd like to learn or practise a language was circulated and drew a group of the curious to the Parochial Hall.

That first gathering was an exploratory exercise, an attempt to tap something positive from the town's multiculturalism. The many nationalities here, after all, represent a dozen or more widely spoken tongues, among them Arabic, French and Spanish. And so we came to meet the Francophone manager of Supermac's, since returned to Mauritius, who joined us to speak French. And the doctor from Cuba, Raquel, who chatted with us in Spanish and English about practising medicine in Ireland and her homeland, while a couple of craft candle-makers from Kilkelly have been our humorous German speakers. It's been equally rewarding to meet the steady trickle of less likely locals from townlands and villages around Ballyhaunis who have learned languages at home and now have someplace to listen or speak.

The diversity of the original group that met in the summer of 2019 presented our original challenge. How would we organise a group with ten different native languages? We ended up speaking in English the *lingua franca* of most of those present. Some WhatsApp surveying suggested that a common thread was the wish to learn some Irish. So we started with basic lessons during weekly evening gatherings in the corner tables of cafés in the town. Thursday lunch-times the French speakers met for an hour to speak. Fridays were the turn of the Spanish speakers. A long-time resident of Ballyhaunis and France, Paul, was our anchor with his native levels, but the conversation *en Français* is enlivened by several locals who with time and effort have mastered the language. Conversation flows through random topics, just as in any conversation.

After the March lockdown ended in the Summer of 2020 we moved our classes to Friday evenings at the Parochial Hall, starting with French and Spanish at seven before switching to English at eight. Helping new arrivals to Ballyhaunis with their English has been a mutually rewarding experience for everyone. From being the couple that lives upstairs in a terraced Ballyhaunis house became a passport of insights into life



in provincial Brazil in a family of Italian *émigrés*. The English corner has also offered plenty of Croatian and Polish impressions of Irish life. And multilingual Mohammed from Somalia told us matter-of-factly in English and French about traversing North Africa to get to a refugee camp in Greece and from there to northern Europe.

There's a potential in the renovated Community Hall (the Parochial Hall) for the English conversation café to offer social outings and interaction. Some of our most eager speakers are older local people living alone who come for coffee and a chat. For locals and people from other nearby towns – we have members from Charlestown, Claremorris, Kilkelly and Cloonfad – we are a platform to help realise the many unfulfilled ambitions to speak the Spanish started on a summer holiday, the French learnt at school, the Irish – languages without a place or a purpose to practise.

Seachtain na Gaeilge, our big public event before the first Covid lockdown, was the start of an Irish learning programme that is waiting in readiness for the end of restrictions. The enthusiasm of that gathering tells us there's a will to grow our native tongue. Those classes will be delivered by a teacher from by Conradh na Gaeilge.

As we sit at home and watch French TV shows and listen to Spanish podcasts, we will miss our friends from Guatemala who moved to Galway in the Autumn of 2020. Likewise, the aforementioned Raf who has returned to Mauritius.

We are a friendly group, your language ability doesn't matter, a curiosity or a willingness to learn will suffice. There is no judgement, but many highlights. Like the conversation in Spanish about life in Cuba and Central America. Or the French chat about the French way of running a town and keeping the streets clean.

Our gratitude goes to Mayo South West Development Co. for agreeing to sponsor our fee for use of the hall. And to Merylyn for always being there to make the coffee and tea.

We're always open to new members. Look for us on Facebook at 'Ballyhaunis Language Café' or contact 087 9777899.

The Story of Martin Waldron

Bekan-born veteran of the US Civil War

Michael Kelly

I first came across Martin Waldron's story while researching my own Kelly family tree. My father, who was blessed with a great memory, had many anecdotes about Kellys in earlier generations who had emigrated to far-flung places around the globe from our townland of Lissaniska, some 9km west of Ballyhaunis. He knew, for example, that four of his own father's siblings had settled in Philadelphia in the late nineteenth century; indeed contact with them had survived into his lifetime and only ceased when the last one died in the 1940s. He had tales of an earlier emigrant, his grandfather's brother and a Fenian activist, who ended up in Melbourne in the 1880s. Eventually, I managed to trace them all. But there was one elusive female Kelly emigrant. According to my father, "she went out to a place called Des Moines, Iowa", but the lack of further details, even a first name or a date, meant that there was little prospect of ever tracing her. Then one day a family from Des Moines visited Ballyhaunis...

Waldron Clan to the rescue

The inaugural Waldron Clan Gathering was convened in Ballyhaunis in 1997 and, my wife being a Waldron, we decided to attend. It was a well-organised

affair with many participants coming from overseas and exhibiting detailed family trees. A particularly well-researched presentation was brought by the Robb family of Des Moines, Iowa who had traced their Waldron ancestry back to the townland of Reask in Bekan parish. Their great-grandfather was Michael Waldron (1835-1908), who is buried in the Abbey cemetery in Ballyhaunis. Several of Michael's children had emigrated to Iowa, including the Robbs' grandfather, James Waldron (1879-1969), but they were not the first Waldrons from Reask to settle there. The way had been paved for them by their uncle, Martin Waldron, who was one of the pioneer settlers in that territory in the wake of the American Civil War.

The Robbs' exhibit gave a full account of Martin Waldron's story. It interested me because it was the only example of local emigration to Iowa that I'd encountered, apart from my father's vague lore about the Kelly woman. The Robbs also brought a fine photograph of Martin Waldron with his wife and three children. It had been taken in a studio in Des Moines in the 1880s. When I saw the photo caption I could scarcely believe my eyes. Martin's wife was none other than the elusive lady of our family lore - Bridget Kelly of Lissaniska!

Reask roots

Martin Waldron was born in the townland of Reask (sometimes spelt 'Reisk') in Bekan parish on 28th October 1838, the eldest son in a family of eight born to Thomas Waldron (c. 1797-1885), a native of Coolnaha in the neighbouring parish of Aghamore, and his wife Bridget Finn. From accounts of that period, we can imagine the hardship that the family must have experienced during the bleak years of the Great Famine 1845-52. Being the eldest son, Martin might have been expected to take over the family farm but instead he opted to take his chances on a 'coffin ship' to America. He survived the perilous Atlantic crossing and arrived safely in New York on 9th June 1858 on a ship named Columbia from Liverpool. Soon afterwards he pitched up in the city of Cincinnati in Ohio. Of Martin's siblings, two brothers and a sister also emigrated to America. His brother Michael and sister Bridget remained in Reask. He married Honora Prendergast, while Bridget married a neighbour, Thomas Forde. Members of both their families would later cross the Atlantic too. Incidentally, a former Annagh Magazine Society member, the late Martin Forde of Island, was descended from Bridget and Thomas.



Martin Waldron with his wife Bridget (née Kelly) and three daughters in Iowa in the 1880s.

First stop: Cincinnati, Ohio

Cincinnati became a major destination for the Irish who fled the Great Famine and its aftermath. It offered employment opportunities on the riverfront, digging for the Miami and Erie Canal, and on railroad construction. Irish immigrants, being predominantly Catholics, were not universally welcome there, however. In the 1850s Cincinnati was a stronghold of the Native American Party, an anti-Catholic political movement popularly labelled the “Know Nothings”. However, the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861 transformed the mood of the city and soon Irishmen were forming the backbone of Ohio military regiments. Martin Waldron’s early years in Cincinnati are undocumented but at the outbreak of the war he was one of the many Irish who joined the Union Army. On 9th July 1861 at Camp Dennison, Cincinnati, he enlisted as a private in Company B of the Eighth Ohio infantry. One of Martin’s brothers is believed to have fought on the opposing Confederate side during the conflict, which would not be a unique occurrence. The same thing happened within another local family of Famine-era emigrants, the Murray brothers of Logboy, whose story was recounted in Annagh 2014.

While many Ohio Irishmen were fighting in the Civil War, hospital ships staffed by Irish nuns were travelling along the Ohio River caring for and ferrying wounded soldiers to Cincinnati. However, it was far away from Cincinnati that Martin Waldron would see battle action which would have a lasting impact on his life.

Battle of Fredericksburg

In December 1862, Martin Waldron and his Ohio comrades found themselves stationed some 500 miles from home near the city of Fredericksburg in the state of Virginia. They were part of the Union Army of the Potomac about to confront the Confederate forces under the wily General Robert E. Lee which had taken up a virtually impregnable defensive position on the hills south of Fredericksburg. On 13th December 1862, the Union army launched a series of frontal assaults on Lee’s stronghold but was repulsed with staggering casualties - 1,284 killed and 9,600 wounded - more than double the Confederate tally. The heaviest losses were sustained by Thomas Francis Meagher’s famous Irish Brigade during the final charge. The battle was a complete disaster for the superior Union forces - a case of ‘snatching defeat from the jaws of victory’, as Abraham Lincoln famously and scathingly put it. One of the wounded was Martin Waldron, who sustained severe gunshot wounds to his thigh and side. For three days he was treated in a field hospital before being removed to the Campbell Hospital some fifty miles away in Washington DC. There he spent five months recuperating before being assigned, in

August 1863, to the Invalid Corps. He received an honourable discharge, while serving as a corporal, in July 1864.



*The Battle of Fredericksburg, December 1862.
(Photo courtesy of Library of Congress).*

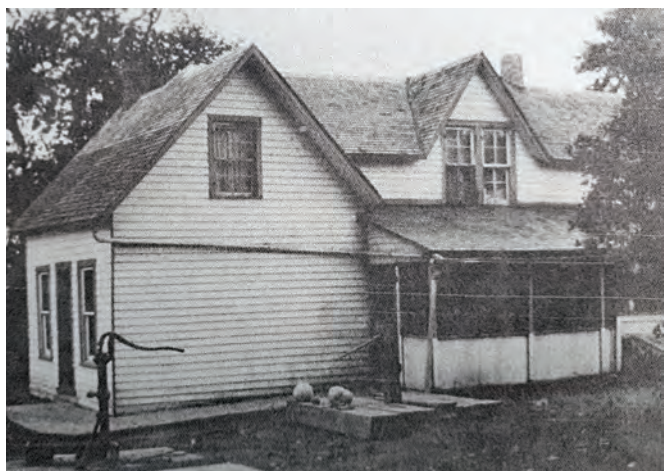
Marriage ... and a stint in Kentucky

It is not clear when Martin Waldron got to know Bridget Kelly back home in Cincinnati. They may have been acquainted even before leaving Ireland since Bridget’s mother hailed from Martin’s home place of Reask. In any event, they were married in St Xavier’s Church, Cincinnati on 13th December 1864. They settled for a while in nearby Kentucky where their first two children were born in 1865 and 1867. Sadly, the first-born died within a month. On 16th May 1868 in Brooksville, Kentucky, Martin declared his intention to become a US citizen. He must have recovered reasonably well from his harrowing war experiences because about this time he and Bridget took the brave decision to move out further west where there were new farming opportunities in the State of Iowa 600 miles away.

Farming in Iowa

By August 1870 Martin and family had settled near Des Moines, Iowa. After a stint as a farm labourer in Jefferson county, Martin got his own farm in Lee township, Madison county, a place made famous by the 1990s novel and movie *The Bridges of Madison County*. At the time the Waldrons settled here, the American Mid-West could still be described as ‘wild’ in the sense that there was a lot of post-Civil War banditry going on, particularly in the neighbouring state of Missouri, home to the notorious outlaw, Jesse James. The action soon spilled over into Iowa. On 3rd June 1871, the Jesse James gang rode into the town of Corydon, some seventy miles south of Des Moines, where they robbed the bank, their first raid in Iowa. Two years later, the same gang robbed

a train near Adair, Iowa, some forty miles from the Waldron home. Such local episodes of excitement were the least of the Waldron family's worries, however. Martin and Bridget had to contend with the day-to-day challenges of farming life in a strange new environment while raising their growing family. In all they had eleven children but only five would survive them, suggesting that life on the American prairie was no more a bed of roses than life back in Ireland.



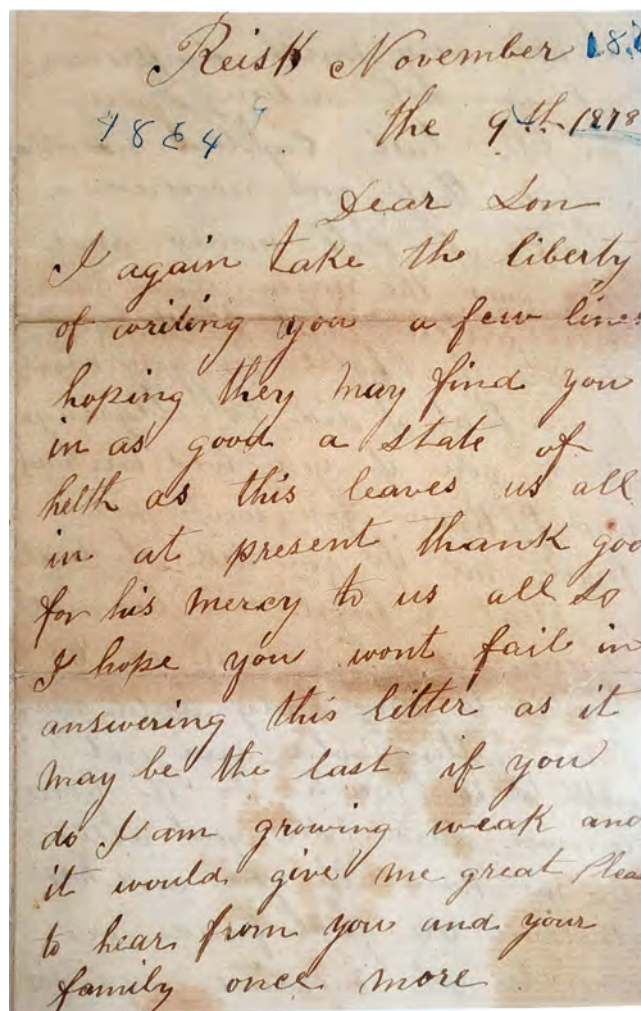
Martin and Bridget Waldron's home in Des Moines, Iowa.

Letters from home, 1878

Martin and Bridget did not lose touch with the families they had left behind in Began. There survives a poignant letter dated 9th November 1878 which Martin received from his father, Thomas, in Reask. Thomas, who was then eighty years old, was concerned that he hadn't heard from Martin for eighteen months. His letter, which was penned for the frail old man by his nephew, Patrick Forde, enquires about various family members in America and conveys bits of news from home. Patrick added his own note in which he states that four of his own siblings were then working in England and were all doing well despite the economic decline over the previous decade. The two letters have echoes of the song Kilkelly Ireland. At this time, Ireland too was in the middle of economic crisis with growing fears of a repeat of the Famine. It spawned the Land League and the Land War and it was probably what prompted Patrick Forde to join his uncle Martin in America soon afterwards. We find him in Iowa in July 1880 living with Martin and Bridget and their three young daughters, Julia, Annie and Agnes, and an adopted son James, aged 20.

'A worthy citizen'

As the years went by Martin experienced various health problems arising chiefly from his war injuries and these increasingly limited his ability to do manual work during the 1880s. Finally, in May 1895 he suffered a



Extract from letter to Martin from his father in 1878.

stroke which resulted in complete paralysis of his left side. The loss of his wife Bridget, who died in February 1901, must have been a severe blow but Martin himself survived for another four years, passing away on 16th November 1905 at the age of 72. Despite his incapacity in later years, he had remained a stoic, cheerful, popular figure, as recalled in his obituary in a local newspaper: 'The cheerfulness and patience with which he bore his affliction seemed to increase the love and respect in which he was held by his friends and neighbours, who deemed it a pleasure to spend an hour with him. Even the little school children as they came by loved to linger by his side'. His Irish roots and his allegiance to his adopted land were reflected in his coffin being draped with the flags of both countries: 'As his body lay prepared for his last journey, on his coffin lay entwined two flags, one the bonny green flag of his native isle, where the early years of his life were spent and where he imbibed the faith he practiced and many other noble virtues which enabled him to be a worthy citizen of the country of his adoption. The other the Stars and Stripes he so faithfully followed with the army of the Potomac'. (Winterset Madisonian, 30th Nov. 1905).

The story of Martin Waldron is a remarkable one of survival against the odds, of resilience in the face of great challenges, including the Great Famine, a treacherous Atlantic crossing, a brutal Civil War, chronic health problems and an unfamiliar environment on the American prairie. For assistance in fleshing out his story, I am grateful to the Robb siblings of Iowa - Anne, Barbara, Jim and Patricia (for researching their Began roots and bringing Martin's story back home); to John Washburn of Des Moines (a direct descendant of Martin Waldron who provided me with Martin's military service and pension record); and to the Waldron Clan Association, now sadly in abeyance, for providing a valuable forum for family history research for several years.



Five daughters of Martin Waldron and Bridget Kelly in the 1890s.

Waldron Country of Iowa, U.S.A.

Anne Robb and Patricia Robb

Like many Irish in the mid-1800s, most of the children (Kate, Patrick, John, and Martin) of Thomas Waldron and Bridget Finn of Reask (sometimes spelt 'Reisk') in the parish of Began emigrated to America. Only Michael, our great-grandfather, and his sister, Bridget, remained in Ireland. However, unlike many other Irish immigrants, these Waldrons did not stay in the big cities of America's east coast.

By 1860, according to the United States Federal Census, Kate and her husband Martin Riely were living in Harrison County, Kentucky with her brother Martin living next door. Patrick and his wife, Catherine Hartford were living in Warren County, Iowa. John and his wife, Mary McNally were living in Atchison County, Kansas.

Martin Waldron, after serving for three years in the Union Army during the U.S. Civil War, married Bridget Kelly, from his home parish of Began, Co. Mayo, in 1864 and moved to Iowa five years later. He first settled near his brother, Patrick in Warren County, Iowa, but then bought a farm in neighboring Madison County, Iowa where he lived the remainder of his life. Martin and Bridget had ten daughters, five of whom lived to adulthood. Sadly, both Patrick and John Waldron died in the 1870s. Patrick had no children, and although John had three children, only one (James) lived to adulthood. After his father's death, James came to live with Martin and Bridget Waldron in Madison County. In time, he married Ellen Doud and moved to a farm near Granger in Dallas County, Iowa.

During the next wave of Irish immigration in the late 1800s and early 1900s, many of the children of the

siblings who stayed in Reask – Bridget Waldron (who married Thomas Forde) and Michael Waldron (who married Honora Prendergast) – came to America. Frequently, their initial destination was to their relatives living in Iowa. At least five of the Fordes and nine of the Waldrons came to Iowa. Most eventually married, settled somewhere in the state, and raised their families.

In the early 1920s, the families began organising Waldron reunions. As shown by the 1923 newspaper clipping published in *The Winterset News*, there were eighty-two descendants of Martin and Michael attending this reunion, and they had created an association whose officers were put in charge of developing the reunion for the following year. Although John's son James died in 1917, newspaper reports of the 1928 reunion noted that John's daughter-in-law (Mrs. James Waldron) and her children were in attendance at that reunion. (See *Annagh* 2017, pages 130-131, for a photograph taken at the Waldron family reunion in 1927 with over fifty in attendance).

The reunions were held at Greenwood Park in Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa. The eighty-one acre park, which opened in 1894, was Des Moines' first city park. It has wooded, rolling hills, nature trails, tennis courts, picnic tables and shelters making it a popular place for family gatherings.

The Waldron reunions provided a way for the many descendants of Thomas and Bridget Waldron of Reask, County Mayo living in Iowa (USA) to celebrate their shared heritage and culture, to exchange family stories, to honor the memories of relatives who had passed, and to meet those new to the family.

Waldron Family of Iowa, U.S.A.



Above: The five surviving daughters of Martin Waldron and Bridget Kelly, circa 1886. L-R: Anna Marie, Bridget Alice, Margaret Frances, Julia and Agnes Celia.

Right: Some of the younger generation and the Waldron family reunion (circa 1925) in Greenwood Park, Des Moines, Iowa. Descendants of Martin Waldron and Bridget Kelly, and of Michael Waldron and Honora Prendergast. Back, L-R: Jim Tiernan, Jim McCarthy (holding Robert Waldron), John Tiernan. Front, L-R: Lola Miller, Mary Waldron, Frances Waldron, Mary McCarthy, Eleanor Collins.

Right: Many Fordes and Waldrons of Reask joined their uncles in Iowa, including (from left): Thomas Forde, James Forde and James Waldron.



The Ballyhaunis Connection

Racehorse owners Rich and Susannah Ricci with a Ballyhaunis group, taken at the George Hotel, Cheltenham on Tuesday, 15th Mar. 2016, the day the Riccis' runners, trained by Willie Mullins, produced three winners on the opening day of the Cheltenham Racing Festival, including 'Annie Power' in the Champion Hurdle.

Amongst the Riccis' many racehorses was one called 'Ballyhaunis'. Mrs. Ricci explained that she chose this name as her mother was a friend of the late Mercy Flatley and spent holidays at the Flatley family home (and café) on Main Street many years ago.

L-R: Shane Tighe, Mike Grogan, Susannah Ricci, Pado Cunningham, Rich Ricci.

2020 was an eventful year for Fianna Fáil in Mayo. The party was bitterly disappointed to lose our second TD at the General Election in February but very pleased to return Dara Calleary for a fourth term. Dara played an integral role in the subsequent government formation talks which resulted in returning to government for the first time since 2011. The party membership, after a lot of thought and debate, gave the green light for an historic coalition with Fine Gael and The Green Party and we are happy to see a big Fianna Fáil influence in Budget 2021, particularly in areas such as health, housing and education.

Covid-19 has had a devastating affect on Ireland and while political offices were closed to the public during 'Lockdown' Deputy Calleary and his team continued to

provide sterling service to the people of Mayo with advances in technology such as Teams and Zoom becoming a new way of conducting political activism and service.

The office on Clare Street, Ballyhaunis, will reopen in the New Year with social distancing measures in place – in the meantime Deputy Calleary is available via phone (096 77613), email (dara.calleary@oireachtas.ie) and Facebook.

We wish all our friends and supporters well in these testing times and we think of those who have gone to their eternal reward – may they Rest in Peace. We would also like to wish everybody a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous and Healthy New Year.

End of an Era



In June of this year (2020) Rita's Playschool closed, marking the end of an era for pre-school education in Ballyhaunis. Launched by Rita Lundon in the early 1980s, it has played a central role in the community life of Ballyhaunis and surrounding districts for the best part of four decades.

The Knock Road playschool set high standards that never waned over the years. It was a happy place where children learned many important and valuable social skills that would serve them well in later life. Most of the children went on to attend St. Joseph's Convent Primary School and St. Mary's National School, and their successor, Scoil Íosa, where Rita's husband Jim was Principal for many years. On retirement Jim regularly assisted in the Playschool, and between them Rita and Jim have contributed enormously to education in Ballyhaunis during the last forty years and more.

Remarkably, with the passing of years, Rita was delighted to welcome the children of some of those who themselves had attended the playschool in the 1980s and 1990s!

The parents, former pupils of the playschool, and the wider community wish Rita good health and happiness in the times ahead.

Eva Grace Kilcourse on her last day of playschool at Rita's Play School in June 2019, with Rita and Jim Lundon (left) and Mary Cleary (back, right).

The Dancing Butcher



Above: A quiet Main Street at the height of the first Covid-19 Lockdown, May 2020.



The name Webb has been synonymous with the butchering business in Ballyhaunis for generations. When Tommy Webb closed his business in Bridge Street in January 2020 after years of service to the local community, it was a sad day for our town. Tom's father Seamus ran a thriving butcher shop on Main Street as did his uncle Eddie on Lower Main St. Eddie's son Michael carried on this tradition and ran a very successful business until his retirement a few years ago. Webb's Butcher Shops were known far and wide for their excellent meat products and friendly greetings. They were places where people met, lots of topics were discussed and one's custom was greatly appreciated. In Tommy's own words, once the Ulster Bank closed, the Post Office moved to a new location, and parking spaces on Bridge St. were reduced by half, footfall declined and customer numbers weren't strong enough to make the shop viable and keep it open long term. Our town is now the poorer at the closing of these family shops.



Irish National Masters Cycling Championship 2020 Well done to Ballyhaunis cyclist, Pat Freeley, who came fifth overall in the Irish National Masters Cycling Championship, which took place on 13th September 2020 at the Windy Gap. Pat is a member of the local Annagh Wheelers cycling club.



Tommy Webb (left) with Seamus Henry on his last day of business in his butcher shop on Bridge Street, 2020.

Ballyhaunis Sports Hub

Tracy Cunnane



Participants in the Operation Transformation Walk organised under the auspices of Ballyhaunis Sports Hub.

Ballyhaunis Sports Hub, a community sports and physical activity initiative, is a collective of progressive sports clubs and other local organisations who want to work together to improve the sports offered in our local community. The hub will operate within the existing structures of the Mayo Sports Partnership. It will provide information, support and advice on a wide range of sports and physical activities to make it easier for people in disadvantaged areas to get involved and engage in a more active and healthier lifestyle. Its main aim is to increase the number of people of all ages participating in sport and physical activity in our community.

Since November 2019, when I took on the role as co-ordinator, we had many plans that had to be put on hold in March once Covid-19 came and the lockdown came into effect. With many people off work and school, outdoor recreation such as walking, running, cycling has increased in participation all over Ireland. Studies from Sport Ireland revealed a substantial increase in the numbers walking, as can be seen everywhere, so we hope the trend will continue as we adapt to our 'New Normal.' Hopefully, 2021 will bring us our Community Games, Gaelic-4-Girls and more.

Our clubs and organisations have now returned to training and activities. Anyone seeking advice can contact Tracy Cunnane, Ballyhaunis Sports Hub co-ordinator, at 086-0618126, or Mayo Sports Partnership at 094-9064360.



Mayo Sports Partnership
Comhpháirtíocht Spóirt Mhaigh Eo
— SPORT IRELAND —



Those who took part in the Active 55s-plus Go for Life Games, Communal house, Clare Court, Ballyhaunis.

A Year of Good Things

Frank Greally



Frank Greally with his granddaughter Hayleigh Bone (11), at the launch of 'Gratitude Road', a walk from Ballyhaunis via the Coombe Women & Infants University Hospital, Dublin, to The Morton Stadium in Santry, Dublin. Fifty years ago, on 18th Aug. 1970, Frank set a 10,000 metres National Junior record of 30:17 in The Morton Stadium. *Photo by Eoin Noonan/Sportsfile.*

It's been a year of good things for me to celebrate and I had plenty of time to think about what a wonderful and fulfilling year it has been as I walked on 'Gratitude Road' from Ballyhaunis to the Old Coombe Hospital; a thirteen-day journey that brought me in many ways full circle.

I started my journey on 'Gratitude Road' from Scoil Íosa on Monday, 6th September and finished up in Dublin on Saturday, 19th September. I received a lovely send-off from friends in Ballyhaunis, and Frank Fahey from Hollymount, a one-time regular visitor to Murt Hunt's house in Lecarrow, accompanied me every step of the way to Dublin. Frank has a company, Fitwalk Ireland, and he took two weeks out of a busy schedule to join me for the entire walk. Joe Freeley released a flight of doves to set me on my way and I remembered the great days of my youth when I travelled with his Dad, Mide Freeley, to sports all over Connacht. Willie Coyne was also there to see me off and that prompted a memory of the send-off Willie and Rita Webb organised for me in the Parochial Hall back in September of 1972, a few days before I left Ireland to take up an Athletic Scholarship at East Tennessee State University.

Midwest Radio - Joe Byrne and Michael Commins - also gave me terrific support for my walk on 'Gratitude Road' which was also a fundraiser for the Coombe Hospital. I was born prematurely in the Old Coombe Hospital and my brother Tom was also born there. My mother lost two babies, a boy and a girl, in home births. My brother Tom told me that my mother brought me home on the train from Dublin wrapped in a blue and white blanket. I can only imagine what it must have been like for my parents back in that challenging time.

When I was six, my brother Gerard was born at home but he only survived a few days. I remember his cries and the sound of new life in our house that was followed by silence and grieving, and then a prolonged silence that deeply affected me for many years. I dedicated my walk on 'Gratitude Road' to the memory of my brother Gerard as I feel his spirit still helps guide me through life.

Ballyhaunis was my come-back-to base for the first week of the walk and I will be forever grateful to Johnny Cribbin, his wife Breege and family for accommodation, good food and the marvellous company they provided for me and my Dublin friend Feidhlim Kelly. It was a very special experience for me to be staying in the family

home once occupied by Joe and Nellie Cribbin and family. It was a house that always rang with laughter, stories and good cheer and Johnny, Breege and their family are continuing that great tradition in their home nearby.

One evening, Johnny Cribbin and Feidhlim Kelly went for a run around the road circuit where the late Pat Cribbin and myself used to train and I accompanied them on a bike. That too was a rare and wonderful experience.

The ruin of the old house in Devlis where I spent my childhood also prompted many memories as I passed. One day I walked up what will always be known to me as John Hunt's Hill and started to write a new song that has yet to be finished. I will share the first verse here:

Hills of Home

*I'm glad that I'm still able
To walk the hills of home
They bring me back full circle
Makes me feel less alone*

I hope to have the song finished by the time the next deadline for *Annagh Magazine* rolls around.

In my wildest dreams, I could not have hoped for a more fulfilling year; a year that I am deeply grateful for.

It started out on a high note in January when I was presented with the Hall of Fame Award at the *Western People Sports Awards* in Breaffy House where special guest Ronan O'Gara presented me with the trophy I will forever treasure.

All my family were there to help me celebrate and the night prompted memories of another occasion at the inaugural *Western People Sports Star Awards* all of fifty years ago, when my father and mother - Tom and Kathleen Greally - were with me in the Downhill Hotel in Ballina when I received my first big athletics award.

It was a year too when I started writing for *Irish Music* magazine and the *RTÉ Guide* - as well as features in the *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent*. There have also been lovely link-ups with many Zoom singing sessions all over the country, now that Covid-19 has deprived us of the great live sessions.

There was also great news from my brother Tom who lives in the Blue Mountains in Australia. Tom was also presented with a special Service Award from St. Gregory's College where he still works part-time. Tom has always had a giving nature and I was delighted to hear of this special recognition for him. If Covid-19 had not paid us a visit, Tom would have made a trip home this year. I only hope that his plan for another homecoming can happen in 2021. That would be really special.

It's always a joy to visit Ballyhaunis and catch up with my relations in Drimbane. Although I was born in Dublin, Ballyhaunis will always be home to me. I believe that home is wherever you start out from and I started out from Ballyhaunis back in 1970 to take up a job in the Post Office in Dublin. In the words of song called *Home*:

*My footsteps carry me away
But in my mind I'm always going home.*



At the *Western People* fiftieth anniversary Sports Star Awards. L-R: Emer Branigan, Tomás Greally, Laura Shearer (daughter), Frank Greally, Ronan O'Gara (Guest of Honour), Catherine Greally, Conor Greally, Claire Greally and Tracey Greally.

Lockdown Green House Project

Cormac Reidy

John Muldowney is one of three boys born to Julia Carney and Martin Muldowney in Coogue, Aghamore, in the parish of Knock. He attended Coogue school before going onto St. Patrick's secondary school in Ballyhaunis. From a young age he has had a keen interest in the GAA, is a passionate Mayo fan and a former footballer himself, winning many trophies from his junior days. However, he left Ireland and went abroad like many more before him. He is a well-travelled and knowledgeable man having first gone to Glasgow and from there to Manchester, onto Scunthorpe and then to Leeds and then Birmingham. In his time abroad he worked hard: labouring and steel-fixing. He learned many other trades as he went on his way throughout the country. He came home as often as he could to visit family and friends. On one of those trips, at Christmas 1972, he met his wife Bernadette Logan in McGarry's Hall, Ballyhaunis, and they recently celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary.

In 1993 they decided to return to Ballyhaunis and John worked with Mike Nolan and Pat Culliney. In 1995 he began to work in Dublin from Monday to Friday while his wife and children lived in Ballyhaunis. John and Bernadette have three children: Claire, who is married to Douglas in Edinburgh; Adrian, who is married to Cara in New Jersey with a lovely little daughter called Maya. Karen, their youngest, is living in Dublin, where John now stays while he works there. He works a forty-three hour week: nine hours Monday to Thursday and a seven hour day on Friday.

However, since the Corona virus hit Ireland John has once again been residing in Ballyhaunis. He came home and decided that it was best not to return to Dublin as the virus continued to spread throughout the country. Alongside this he had a lot of jobs 'on the long finger' that needed tending to, around his own place. Lockdown has given him the opportunity to do this work. One such job that he really wanted to get going on was his greenhouse, which he has had for the last ten years, but which, unfortunately, had fallen into disrepair. In the past he couldn't sow anything in it as he worked in Dublin. He decided to spend the first week repairing it as, at the time, he believed it would be a short lockdown, three weeks or so. First on the cards was to move the greenhouse into position. Although it did seem like an impossible task, he managed to do so without breaking any glass. Then he started cleaning out the shed and put in a ...non-alcohol bar! He had not attempted anything



Greenhouse fully restored and put to good use.
Photographs by Sylwia Buczak



John and Bernadette
Muldowney with
Busby, the dog.

like this before. As he was reared on a farm he had the knowledge that helped him sow potatoes, carrots, parsnips and cabbage. At the moment he has over thirty varieties of vegetable and sixteen varieties of flowers. He cleaned the greenhouse up as if it were brand new and installed a new floor. Then he bought pots, compost, seeds and some plants. The onions, lettuce, fenugreek, mustard leaves and salad vegetables are particularly delightful. Bernadette uses them to make delicious meals. The lettuce is the easiest to grow and every evening he has to water them to keep them growing strong. Almost every day they are able to have a salad from the produce of the greenhouse.

I decided to ask John for advice on starting a greenhouse after viewing his, as it appears to be a great

project for these uncertain times. It helps reduce the need to visit shops as they are able to go to their garden for vegetables as was done many years ago in victory gardens (during war-time). John told me it was a lovely interest and the important thing is to keep the plants watered and enjoy the foods that you grow. Different plants are harvested at different times - some things come out before others.

He left me by saying, if he was to start again, he wouldn't change a thing! It was an adventure and an interest for him during the lockdown. He also found it very beneficial as he had something to get up to do in the morning. When you're working all your life you need to have something to get up to do in the morning. He would often plan out the day ahead and delegate certain jobs to be done at certain times. At the end of the day, this lockdown has had its positive effects. John has reacquainted himself with the neighbours and tidied up around the house. Also, Bernadette and John have come to appreciate the lovely walks on their doorstep with their dog, Busby.



Cormac Reidy, John Muldowney and Merrilyn Finn, enjoying the produce of John's greenhouse on a summer's evening.
Photograph by Sylwia Buczak

AA Meetings (Alcoholics Anonymous)
Sunday 8.30pm
and Friday 8.30pm

Venue: School Iosa Primary School.
Abbeyquarter, Ballyhaunis.

www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
Connaught Telephone Service: 091-767777
Tel: 085 2793345
www.al-anon-ireland.org

Cloonfad Men's Shed

Sean Brennan (Secretary)

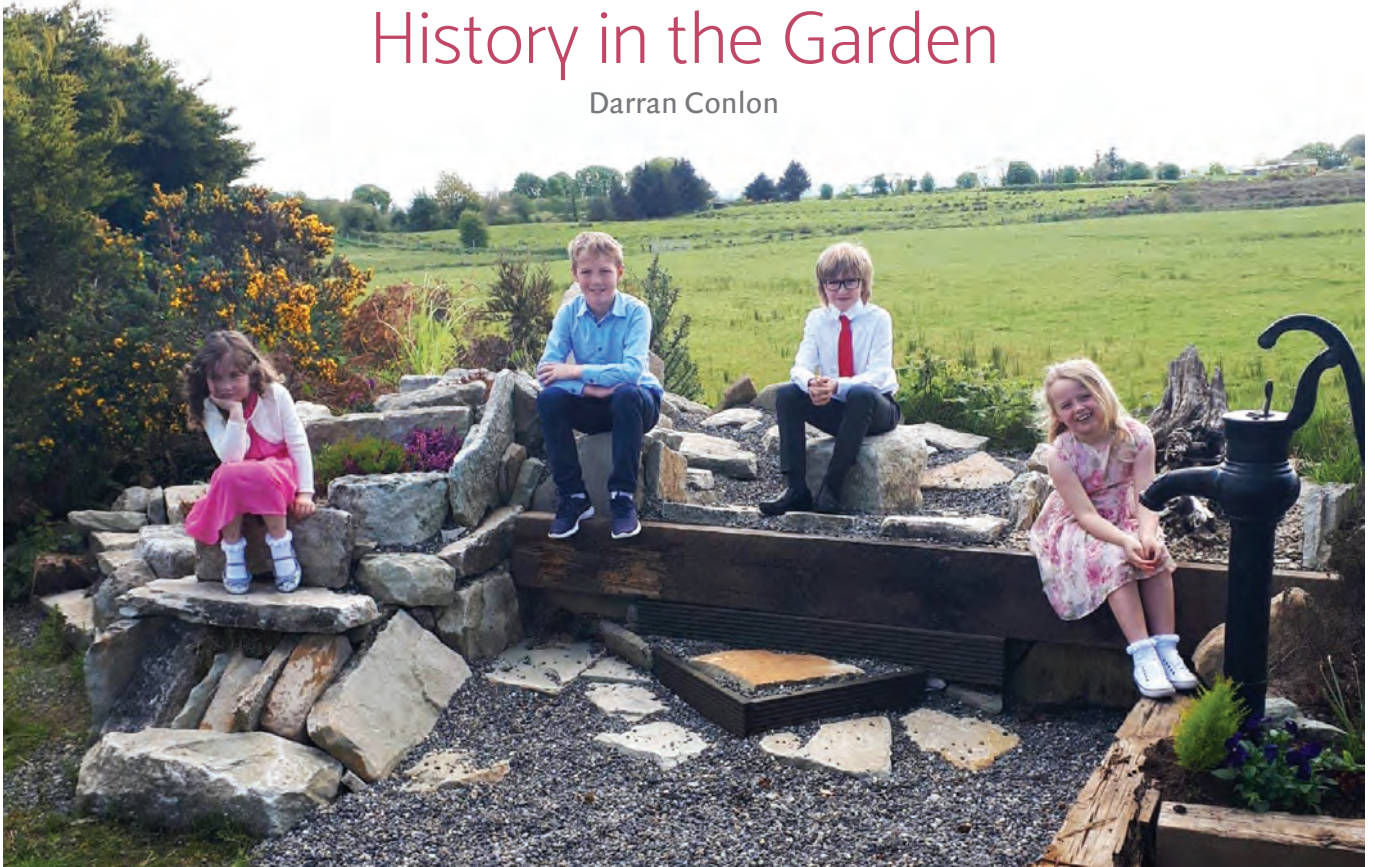
After being talked about for a while it was decided to set up a 'Mens Shed' in Cloonfad. The inaugural meeting was held 3rd Apr. 2019. The following officers were elected. President: Tony Mullin; Chairman: Tom Shannon; Secretary: Sean Brennan; Joint Treasurers: Johnnie Moran and Seamus McDonnell; Committee: Willie Lowery, Gerry Haverty, Francis Greene, Michael Flatley Snr., Michael Brennan, Eugene Burke, Eddie Bermingham, Louis Prendergast, Paddy Joe Greene.

Our next job was to find a venue for our shed. After much soul-searching and thanks to the Community Centre it was agreed our new shed would be constructed beside the centre. Our next jobs were to apply for planning permission and to raise some funds to cover the costs. We applied to Roscommon County Council for a grant to cover some of the cost of erecting the shed. We were delighted when we received word our grant application was successful. This was not enough to cover the cost so we had to organise some fundraising. We set up a patronage scheme where one can become a patron for €50 which people can still join. We also had a social in the Griffin Inn and a sponsored walk which were both very successful. Our next job, once planning had been granted, was to go about preparing the site and deciding on the type of shed. It was decided to give the contract to Alan Murray. With a few hitches along the way our shed is now complete. This would not be possible were it not for the terrific voluntary contributions to help getting the site ready, then when the shed was erected, the people who wired it, did the timber work, provided our beautiful kitchen, all the local business people who donated timber and insulation, also our committee who put in some long shifts to get it completed. We had our opening planned for the end of May but due to the arrival of Covid-19 that has been put on hold. At the moment our shed is closed because of Covid-19 which is very disappointing after all the hard work, but the health of our members is of utmost importance. When all the restrictions are lifted we hope to see all our old and new members back. The shed is open to everyone. Feel free to join us when we resume.

Again, I would like to sincerely thank everybody who in any way made this dream a reality. The spirit of Cloonfad and surrounding areas never ceases to amaze me. They are never found wanting.

History in the Garden

Darran Conlon



I have always been interested in history. Over the past ten years I have researched my family tree, discovering many interesting stories. In relation to the Conlons, I know that my great-great-grandfather Thady (1827-1877) arrived in the village of Derrycashel, just outside Kilkelly, Co. Mayo, around 1860. Everyone calls it Derrycastle, but the correct name is Derrycashel. The name derives from Doire Caiseal, a 1,500 year old cashel or stone fort on the hill behind the house.

I have been unable to establish where Thady originated from, but he married Margaret Regan who already lived there with her parents. Around 1869 Thady and Margaret got their own small plot of land where they reared four children, the eldest being Patrick born in 1863. The Conlons have been there ever since. The first house was a little shack, but by 1910 they had an impressive two-storey house and four years later added a large granary. These were built by the Conlons themselves, who were known as stonemasons, and all the stone was sourced locally, literally dug out of the ground and broken up by hand. My grandfather John was born in 1900 so I have no doubt he helped his brother, father, uncles and cousins to build these structures. My uncle Paddy still lives on the original family land and a few years ago the granary building, which stood for approximately 105 years, began to list and had to be demolished. A century of Conlon history came crashing down into a pile of rubble.

I was keen to ensure this beautifully cut stone did not go to waste and over the past two years I used it to

In this photograph, taken at the time of Cathal's First Holy Communion in 2019, Niamh, Katie, Cathal and Fionn sit on the rockery I made from the granary stone. They are almost identical in age to their great-grandfather and granduncles and aunts as listed in the 1911 census 108 years earlier.

enhance our garden on Knock Road, Ballyhaunis. First of all I constructed a rockery. Then, using two corner stones and a lintel, I built a stone bench. I also erected a replica standing stone and dolmen. Lifting and moving the stones gave me some idea of the hard work involved, and I can't imagine how my predecessors got some of them into such positions of height in the tall granary. There literally is history in the stones and when my children play around them or I sit on them I know that these very stones were handled by my direct ancestors. I feel I have brought a bit of Conlon legacy to my own home. Working with the stone I developed an even greater interest in the people who handled it before me and what became of them.

Memento

The 1911 census shows my grandfather John as a ten year old boy. Next up is his brother Patrick who was twelve. Like all his older siblings, Patrick emigrated to the East coast of America. That journey started at the railway station in Ballyhaunis, a stone's throw from my own family home in Abbey Street. In America, Patrick joined his brothers and cousins working on the electricity network as a linesman. Unfortunately, on the 10th October 1923, as a twenty-five year old man just

starting out on his life in America, he was electrocuted. He was buried in Calvary Cemetery, New York. As a young, single man with no children and with his siblings long gone, I knew Patrick did not get many visitors over the years.

My wife Siobhan and I were going to New York for the Mayo game in May 2019 and I thought we should use the occasion to pay our respects to my late granduncle. Siobhan suggested that we bring a piece of the granary stone with us to leave as a memento. We used the occasion to meet up with some of our distant cousins and attached the stone to the headstone. Apart from the Mayo win on a wet day in Gaelic Park, this was the highlight of the trip.

When I look out my window in Ballyhaunis I appreciate the beauty and history of the area. In summer my rockery, and the wooden cart handcrafted by my father, are in full bloom adding colour to the grey and sandy stone. The replica dolmen and standing stones show what a rich historical legacy exists throughout our locality. It's great to touch a piece of oak that stood majestic 3,000 years ago, or to watch our children play on the rockery stones which were dug up, handcrafted and lifted into place by their great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather over 100 years previously, and be thankful that they will never know the hardship involved in the heavy manual labour of the time.

My grandfather John stayed behind on the farm where my father Michael was reared. All John's older siblings departed from the train station in Ballyhaunis to begin their journey towards new lives on the East coast of America. I think it's a strange historical twist that, sixty years after he departed from Abbey Street, my parents set up home there in 1980 and, at the time of writing, my own children Niamh (6), Katie (8), Cathal (10) and Fionn (12) are the exact same ages as Kate, Maggie, John (their great-grandfather) and Patrick were at the time of the census, 109 years earlier.

(Below) A wooden barrow in our garden, which was hand crafted by my father Michael at his workshop in Abbey Street.



Built in 1914 by the Conlons, this impressive granary stood on the family farm in Derrycashel for 104 years. My grandfather John and granduncle Patrick would have helped build this structure and worked and played around it as they grew up. While John stayed to work on the farm, Patrick emigrated, was electrocuted and buried in Calvary Cemetery New York.



(Left) L-R: Uncle Paddy Conlon, sons Fionn and Cathal, and father Michael, sit on the Conlon stone bench. This was constructed from the stones of the granary built by my great-grandfather Patrick in 1914. Paddy and Michael's father and uncle would have been my boys age at that time, so, this seat connects four generations of Conlons.



(Below left) My wife Siobhán and I visited Calvary Cemetery, New York, during our trip there for the Mayo match in 2019 – just 100 years after my great-uncle Patrick arrived there. He died tragically in the prime of his life. Calvary is the largest cemetery in the world and it took a while to find the grave. The impressive headstone was erected by his siblings in America. We affixed an inscribed flagstone, taken from the Derrycashel granary – which Patrick would have helped build in 1914 – onto the headstone. It reads: 'Darran & Siobhan Conlon. May 2019 Visit. Derrycastle, Kilkelly. Conlon Family. Mayo.'

Scoil Íosa

Kenneth Dennedy (Principal)

Ar son chuile duine i Scoil Íosa ba mhaith liom Beannachtaí Na Féile a bhronnadh chuig gach duine i bParóiste Béal Átha hAmhnais agus thar lear. Ní foláir a admháil ach go raibh an bhliain seo thart aisteach go leor faoi thionchar an Covid-19 agus de thoradh ní raibh an scoilbhliain cosúil le bhliain eile I gcumhneas againn. Mar an gcéanna le gach uile áit ghnó, na tithe tairbhne, na séipéil agus do na háiseanna spóirt bhí deachrachaí faoi leith againne chomh maith. Dá bhrisín caithfidh mé buíochas a gabháil dár tuismitheoirí, ár bord bainistíochta agus ár sár foireann scoile ar son na hiarrachtaí a rinneadar agus an tacaíochta a bhronntar orainn ar feadh na thréimhse thart. Tá súil again go mbeidh 2021 an bhliain ina filltear ár saol ar ais go dtí mar a bhí sé. Arís, go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir ar son an méid tacaíochta a bhronntar ar ár scoil i mbliana.

In normal circumstances I sit down to compose the annual Annagh article from Scoil Íosa and the challenge is always to try and omit some of the school events, given that in an ordinary year our calendar would be full of occasions, celebrations and projects. However, as we know too well 2020 was anything but ordinary. The shock announcement from An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar on 12th March decreeing that schools would close with immediate effect for a period of three weeks as part of the nationwide lockdown to stem the tide of Coronavirus, set in motion a year like no other. From planning for sports days, First Holy Communion, football and hurling tournaments, the whole focus of school changed immeasurably. The concept of 'Online' learning was foisted upon us with little or no preparation and, from dealing face-to-face with one another as a staff, we were now entering into the realm of Zoom meetings and conference calls. Terms such as 'Seesaw' and 'Google Classroom' became commonplace and suddenly the school website, under the stewardship of Michelle Flatley, became our point of contact with our school community, and our Covid folder, managed by Dónall O'Brien, becoming the conduit by which schoolwork was given to our pupils. From being a stop-gap and a short-term solution, weeks stretched into months and the new methods became our mainstay. Of course the protracted closure curtailed our showcase events as the May and then June bank holidays came and went and we were left staring at the stark possibility that maybe, just maybe, we wouldn't be allowed to open for the new school year.

Planning

Despite our planning for a return and assurances from media, government and a plethora of documents from the Department of Education, there was always the



Junior Infants on their first day in school, Scoil Íosa, 2020.

lingering doubt as to whether or not we could reopen as scheduled. Despite this the summer 'break' was taken up with planning for the reopening. The school Covid-19 response committee of Principal Kenneth Dennedy, Deputy Principal Kevin Henry and Assistant Principal Dónall O'Brien put together a comprehensive plan guided by the DES directives by which we could reopen our school as safely as possible. *Social distancing, Bubbles, Pods and Zones* were added to our school management vocabulary and after days and weeks spent calculating, sourcing, measuring, drilling, and installing, the building was made Covid safe and we were finally able to look at reopening the school with some degree of certainty. It was with a sense of considerable relief that the staff returned to work in a face-to-face environment in mid-August to undertake the necessary training and preparations for a safe return to school. The sense of relief was palpable from parents, teachers and children on 25th August when our Junior Infants came to school for their first day, and more so on the following day



Children who received their First Holy Communion in Knock Basilica on September 19th, 2020.



(Inset: Their teachers who helped them to prepare for the sacrament:
Left: Ms Sharlene Ruane, Right: Ms Ciara Richardson)



when the remaining pupils returned.

Despite some considerable restrictions around access to the school and curtailed contact among the children we have been very fortunate to be able to return to some semblance of normality, albeit a new normal. Good handwashing, coughing and sneezing etiquette and hand sanitising became an integral part of the curriculum and a strict regime around dealing with symptoms of Covid-19 has become the norm. Parent Teacher conferences normally held in early November have been postponed indefinitely and nobody is allowed into the school building without wearing masks or visors and signing the contact tracing register, should they enter the reception area. Nevertheless, life goes on and while to a certain extent we live from day to day wondering if we will be locked down again, we are always keeping ahead with online learning platforms. Studying the daily trends detailing the spread and upsurge in the Virus now forms an integral facet of all school planning. Unfortunately, the annual Christmas concerts, always a high point of the year, will not happen this year. Our school choir has been put on ice and sporting occasions normally held during the first term, such as the cross country athletics and the mini sevens competitions, have been shelved. We live in hope that at least some of these competitions can take place in the New Year.

First Communion 2020

One of the events that did go ahead during the latter part of 2020 was our First Holy Communion. Originally scheduled for 16th May, it quickly became apparent that this would not happen as scheduled, and with a return to school prior to the summer break looking increasingly

unlikely it was decided to reschedule in mid-September, based on the assumption that we would return for the new school year. Preparations were hampered by the numbers permitted in the church which were set at fifty. Given that we had thirty-five children scheduled to receive First Holy Communion, this posed a considerable logistical challenge. We considered holding two ceremonies, but in the end decided to approach the authorities at Knock Shrine seeking permission to use Our Lady's Basilica. With an enhanced capacity of 200 we could facilitate all of our children. On Saturday, 19th September, our ceremony finally went ahead after a period of intense and at times difficult planning. The ceremony was certainly different to the norm with restricted movement and social distancing prevalent. However, despite this, it was a wonderful happy occasion and one which, despite the delay and the restrictions, will go down as one of our finest. Our sincere thanks to Fr. Stephen Farragher PP, To Sharlene Ruane, Ciara Richardson, Miriam Judge, Diane Marigliano, James Cullinane and Marina Coyne for their input to the ceremony, and especially to Fr. Richard Gibbons PP Knock and to Sinéad Mallee and her team for their efforts to facilitate our ceremony. The children receiving their first Holy Communion were: Aideen Burke, Karina Bilinskaite, Jamie Doyle, Zara Waldron, James Ó Laighin, Damir Plesa, Denis Ryan, Aibhe Donnellan, Kevin Dunkhurs, Roisín Murphy, Andrea Ward, Oisín Finnegan, Simon McDonagh, Lena Kowalska, Connor Bann, Anabelle McGowan, Ben Gallagher, Viktor Gabriel Lima, Charlie Finn, Julia Chmielewska, Noah Maughan, Kate Monaghan, Michaela Kavanagh, Evan Feeney, Emilis Ziziunas, Alexia Medesan, Cara Walsh,



Mary Dillon receiving a presentation on her retirement from the staff of Scoil Íosa. Pictured with her husband Frankie, daughter Martina, work colleagues, neighbours and friends.

Scoil Íosa Staff Team 2020-2021

Kenneth Dennedy (Principal), Kevin Henry (Deputy Principal), Dónall O'Brien (Assistant Principal), Olivia Burke, Elaine Brady, Emily Worden, Annie Kelly, Marian Byrne, Diane Marigliano, Anne Durkan, Miriam Judge, Maria Coyne, Sheena Flanagan, Tara Cusack, Samantha Cleary, Aishling Toal, Sharlene Ruane, Ciara Richardson, Caroline Campbell, Joanne Forde, Lisa Watchorn, Geraldine Fahey, Michelle Flatley, Ciara Byrne, Karen Nolan, Josh Ronayne, Edel Flatley Marissa Brett, Labhaoise Cunnane, Dervla Phillips, Oisín Henry, Marian Nally (SNA), Roisín Prendergast (SNA), Marina Coyne (SNA), James Cullinane (SNA), Carmel Cassidy (Secretary).

Katie Conlon, Cian Murphy, Estela Romao, Nikita Webb, Shane Nolan, Henzio Neves, Andras Penzes, Neo Vasiljevic.

Retirement

September 2020 signalled the end of an era in Scoil Íosa with the retirement of Mary Dillon after many years on our staff. Mary was the welcoming face in the school reception, the friendly voice on the end of the telephone and a loyal friend and confidante to all on the staff. Mary took a measured stance on all issues and always was the source of good advice and guidance wherever it was needed. Mary's calm demeanour, good humour and sense of realism will be missed by all. We can only wish her all the very best on her retirement. She will be missed.

Scoil Íosa Board of Management 2019-2023

James Reidy (Chairperson/Patron's Nominee), Kenneth Dennedy (Secretary/Principal), Eddie Murphy Jr. (Treasurer/Community Nominee), Eileen Donnellan (Community Nominee), Samantha Cleary (Teacher Nominee), Darran Conlon (Parent Nominee), Marian Feeney (Parent Nominee).

Scoil Iosa Ballyhaunis
Ní neart go cur le chéile

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 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. There is also a donation link on this website through paypal, giving anyone an opportunity to donate directly to help maintain the cemetery: just select 'Ballyhaunis Cemetery' and click on 'Donate Directly to Ballyhaunis Cemetery'.



Due to Covid-19 we were unable to carry out this year's annual collection, but anyone wishing to donate can do so through the paypal link on the Ballyhaunis Cemetery page of the Irishgraveyards website, or give it directly to any of the committee members. *Committee:* Edward Mulhern, Tom Finn, Walter Cleary, Seamus O'Boyle, Martin Gavin, Martina Gavin and Enda Caulfield.

No-one there

Martin Fitzmaurice, 19 Sept. 2020

Last night I had a dream, I was in an old folks' home
In a tiny bedroom, I was all alone
My seven kids were not allowed to see me like before
My husband permitted to stand beside the door
I once had a life of joy, with friends and family around
When laughter filled each waking hour, a great array of sound
Now, every day seems so long, while at the wall I stare
I need to talk to someone, but there is no-one there

Our team was in the final, it was in the County Cup
We had spent months preparing, our form was on the up
We were favourites going in, and lived up to the tag
We couldn't go home losing, the neighbours they would slag
Just before the time was up, I scored the winning goal
For that, I would go to hell, let the devil take my soul
When the whistle it did blow, I jumped up in the air
And waited for the winning cheer, but there was no one there

For some folks, social media is a mighty, mighty thing
And in the troubled times we live in, 'tis the only place to sing
We did a show the other night, a session good and true
Many songs were originals that no one even knew
We finished with some covers from the greats like Elton John,
Rocket Man and *Crocodile Rock*, so all could sing along
We were on a high with *American Pie* and *I Saw Her Standing There*
But, when I turned around to see the crowd, there was no one there

Covid will effect the world from now to God knows when
Folk who thought they'd seen it all, won't see the likes again
We live in hope of better times, to live without a care
And be grateful for the friendship, for there is always someone there.



Birthday Celebrations

Happy Birthday to Vona Walsh (Johnstown) and her daughter-in-law Michelle Walsh (Curries), who both celebrated special birthdays on 20th May 2020: Vona 80 and Michelle 40.

Here they are during their socially-distanced celebrations.

A Night on the Tables

Mark Godfrey

At six the floor is swept and the tables are moving, six green backs wheeled into position on the shining wooden floor of the hall. Six o'clock and the factory shift is done and Marek from Poland, toggled out in the club's red and black strip, reaches into his sports bag for a bat. It's a September night at Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club and there's a broken queue at a small table where players sign in. Migrant workers from Serbia, Croatia and Poland, they move in pairs around the green rectangular tables with players from the town and from places like Logboy, Aghamore and Tooreen.



Some members of the Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club.
L-R: Bartłamiej Ilczuk, Shay O'Reilly, Voytech Sulys,
Mark O'Reilly, Elemir Sarwas.

Table tennis requires no language. Merely nods between players in line waiting for a table to come free. Some wear shirts from soccer clubs in Eastern Europe. There are also a few shirts from the local soccer club which has had an injection of Slavic talent. The middle-aged man in the shalwar trousers looks at his phone between games and leaves his bat on a window sill. He's a courier and a call has come in. By eight o'clock there's a rhythmic 'rat-a-tat' of ball on racket, ball on table. As the games peter out, players reach for a towel to wipe away sweat. "It's a game almost as physical as going to the gym or playing lawn tennis", he explains, as coach Marc O'Reilly collects the little white plastic balls.

The club was set up in 2018 as a venue for local youths to train. Some, from the local direct provision centre, had no way of getting to the hall in Kilkelly where coach Shay O'Reilly had set up. There was time and space in the Parochial Hall in Ballyhaunis. Three times a week, the table tennis sessions have become a social outlet that isn't easy to replicate in any other form in a place where

migration is often transitory. The table tennis club is an anchor of sorts in that transience. With lessons on footwork and technique at the table from coach Shay O'Reilly, who moved from north Dublin in retirement to Kilkelly, and then to a house he has renovated near Ballyhaunis. Tuesday nights are for coaching but the young players stopped coming before the Easter holidays this year and Shay doesn't think they will be coming back until after Covid, whenever that may be.

Sunday afternoons before Covid were busier. From Wroclaw, Lodz, Kaunas, Pilsen, Karachi and Quetta they come to play at Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club. There's the tall, rangy Serb who likes to drink a can walking from work to a terraced house he shares with four others. Table tennis eases the boredom two evenings a week, especially on long winter evenings. Migrants frequently say they worry about their level of English so they don't mix with Irish people. By offering an outlet for sport and socialising the club is supported by local funding body Mayo Sports Partnership. Integration, reaching and enabling minority groups is a priority of the local government funding body that also sees sport as a way to improve mental and physical health. "Like Irish youths flooding to London in the 1980s", suggests Franck from Bratislava, before explaining that while the Irish wages are better, there's been an economic boom in Slovakia, and Poland, so there's work back home. Lots of people have gone back.

While the club operates under restricted Covid mode, three of the club's six German-made tables have been parked in the corner of the hall because the club is limited to six people playing at any one time. The club's popularity with local men will hopefully soon be replicated next year with a coaching programme for women. Three months of free weekly coaching should make decent players – enough to start a regular league or playing well enough for competitive enjoyment.

The door has shut for now, it's mid-October and Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club is closed for six weeks. The tables have been wheeled to a corner of the hall and the floor swept. Some members have taken the flight back to Warsaw from Shannon, or the bus from Dublin. But new members are always welcome.

Adult players pay €3 per two hour session. We don't charge juniors. Follow us on Facebook at 'Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club'.

Chairperson - Mark Godfrey; **Coaches** - Shay O'Reilly, Mark O'Reilly; **Child Protection Officer** - Paul Ryan; **Covid Officer** - Bartłamiej Ilczuk.



Bert Doyle (Derrylea), at left, and Paddy Lyons (Gurrane).
Taken in Derrylea Bog, 1966.



Eurovision winner Dana (left) with
Celia Lyons, Gurrane.
Taken in Swinford in the 1990s.



At the fireside in the Gurrane Cottage - Paddy and Celia Lyons.



Three renowned local musicians are included in this photograph taken at a wedding reception in the Beaten Path, Claremorris, in the 1980s: Paddy Lyons (fiddle), Johnny McGarry (fiddle, accordion, singer) and Paddy Hunt (saxophone). L-R: Paddy and Celia Lyons (Gurrane), Bridie Hunt (Larganboy), John McGarry (Drimbane) and Paddy Hunt (Larganboy).

*All photos courtesy
Celia Lyons.*

Patrick Gildea (Johnstown),
at left, and Bert Doyle (Derrylea).
Taken in the 1960s.



Ballyhaunis Reunion in a Denver Elevator

Anne M. McCarthy

How did a Thanksgiving visit to America lead to an Impromptu Ballyhaunis reunion in an elevator 6,900 kilometers from Cloonbullig and Agloragh?

Almost a year ago, Margaret Mulkeen Rafferty spent a remarkable four weeks in America. After a five-year travel hiatus due to family commitments in Dublin, Margaret enjoyed a trip to visit family members and create new bonds. Her first stop was from Dublin to Boston, where she visited her son (Barry Rafferty) and his wife (Erin Murphy Rafferty) and their three children. This would be Margaret's first meeting with her one-year old, twin granddaughters (Hannah and Katie) and a much-anticipated reconnection with her first granddaughter, Julia (3-years old and known by family members as a 'mini-Margaret').

The second stop was a two-week visit her first cousin (Catherine Mulkeen McCarthy) and members of the McCarthy Clan in Denver, Colorado (Mary McCarthy, Margaret and Bob Froehlke, Anne McCarthy, Patrick and Chris McCarthy), as well as a first-time meeting with her first cousin Ed Mulkeen (Catherine's baby brother from Smithtown, New York), second cousin Genevieve Mulkeen Proietto (Jerome Mulkeen's youngest daughter from East Northport, New York) and second cousins Steve and Laurie Schram (Joan Mulkeen Schram's son and daughter-in-law from South Lyon, Michigan).

Margaret hadn't seen her ninety-three year old cousin and mother of twelve children since they reconnected at the Rafferty-Murphy wedding in Cape Cod, Massachusetts during the Summer of 2013, and later that Fall when the McCarthy and Schram cousins met with the Raffertys in Dublin as part of *The Gathering*. The Raffertys, Schrams and McCarthys had made a habit of visiting Ireland or the US since 1974.

Lots of planning went into Margaret's Fall 2019 trip – on both sides of the pond. From the logistics of getting Margaret to the plane on time in Dublin to sorting out Thanksgiving dinner in Denver – where the guest of honor revealed she didn't eat turkey or any poultry! During her stay, Margaret attended "*Come From Away*", a new musical at the Opera House in Boston and enjoyed the *Claude Monet Exhibition* at the Denver Art Museum.

The trans-Atlantic trip included countless family dinners, late-night conversations, too many bottles of wine to count and numerous shopping excursions at outlets from *Neiman-Marcus* to *Costco*. No question about it, Margaret's trip to America was truly a dream come true. However, one of the most remarkable memories of Margaret's big adventure was a chance meeting during a visit to a US Passport Agency in suburban Denver.

Passport

A dual-citizen of Ireland and the USA, Margaret's US passport needed to be renewed. Knowing the passport renewal process would likely be tedious and time-consuming, Margaret and her second cousin Anne McCarthy scheduled an appointment at the Passport Agency on Black Friday, the Friday after Thanksgiving. The duo decided they would spend Black Friday sorting out the passport situation rather than fighting with the multitude of American shoppers storming the

shopping malls for amazing, pre-Christmas deals! That tedious, boring, uneventful Black Friday turned out to be one of the most magical days of Margaret's four-week adventure. After spending the morning answering an assortment of questions, providing the authorities with a multitude of documents, submitting the requisite photos and signing affidavits that confirmed her identity, date and place of birth and other trivia, it was time to pick up the new passport.

Four adults entered a non-descript elevator in an innocuous federal building where the passport office was located. Believe it or not, this chance meeting was a reunion of two families with deep roots and long-standing connections to Ballyhaunis, County Mayo, IRELAND! Upon entering the elevator, Margaret Rafferty and Anne McCarthy exchanged pleasantries with a gentleman and his MBA-candidate daughter, Sadie, who were heading up the lift to collect their expedited passports. Sadie was heading to Israel as part of her Northwestern University curriculum and needed an updated passport.

By the end of a short ride, several amazing connections were revealed. All four people in the elevator were dual US-Irish citizens with good Irish



Margaret Mulkeen Rafferty and Kevin Barry Howes, who met by chance in an elevator at the Passport Office in Denver, Colorado, November 2019.



Some members of the extended Mulkeen clan – McCarthys, Schrams and Shilsons – visiting Ireland for 'The Gathering' in summer 2013. Back, L-R: Tyler Bjerke, Maisie McCarthy Bjerke, Steve Schram, Laurie Schram, Joanne Schram Mealia, Carol McCarthy Shilson, Jason Shilson with Connor Shilson on shoulders. Front, L-R: Theresa McCarthy, Anne McCarthy, Catherine Mulkeen McCarthy, Mary McCarthy.

surnames like Rafferty, McCarthy, Judge and Howes. But who would have guessed the common denominator for this foursome? Both families had native Irish roots in the small farming town of Ballyhaunis, Ireland.

It was soon revealed that Kevin Barry Howes' mother, Brigid Judge (known as Bridie) and her twin sister, Mary Teresa Judge, and four other siblings grew up in Agloragh, Ballyhaunis. Bridie emigrated to the US (Washington, DC area) in 1948. She and her American husband, Roland (Buddy) Howes, raised two sons one of whom is Kevin!

Bridie Judge Howes and the three Mulkeen girls – Margaret, Catherine and Breda (daughters of Patrick and Delia Mulkeen who raised their family in Cloonbullig) were neighbours in Ballyhaunis. The Mulkeen family home, Reisk, was where Patrick, Thomas, John and seven Mulkeen sisters were born and raised (including

Catherine's father Thomas who emigrated to New York and raised seven children with his wife Catherine Monaghan Mulkeen from County Westmeath). The Mulkeen and Judge families attended the same schools, were baptised at the same parish and both families were part of the Ballyhaunis community for many generations. Both Bridie Judge Howes and her twin sister Mary Teresa King will turn ninety-three on 5th Nov. 2020. Their younger sister, Brenda Forkin is enjoying life and their other sister, Eileen Harrington, passed away a few months ago.

That chance connection in the elevator of the passport office has formed a lasting bond between the Mulkeen Rafferty Clan and the Judge Howes family. The moral of the story? It pays to talk to people on an elevator!



Mulkeen first cousins, Catherine McCarthy (left) and Margaret Rafferty, Dublin 2013.



Celebrating twenty-five years of secondary school teaching in Ballyhaunis, back in 1996 were, from left: Fr. Des Walsh, John Cleary and Terry Coleman.

‘Mugs of Tae’

Murt Hunt

I just realised the other day that it is fifty years now (1970) since I commenced work at Irish Ale Breweries in Ballyhaunis depot, and forty years (1980) since the untimely passing of a good friend Seamus Ruane (RIP) who also worked at the depot and had started before me there. The years just seemed to fly, but only for the late Seamus Ruane I may never have started there. I had my name down for a job there for a while and did an interview. I came home from the bog at 1 o'clock to my dinner to find I had an interview at 2 o'clock. Such racing to get scrubbed up and try and make it before the time! The interview with Mr. Jack Kelly from Guinness went OK, I thought, but when he asked me about the various types of lorries - rigid and articulated - I had not a clue. I just blathered my way through to answering his questions. I heard nothing back after the interview and gave up hope of getting employment there.

I was working at home with a tractor and trailer digging out an area for a cattle yard with a shovel, when a car pulled up and Seamus Ruane got out. He informed me that the sales of beer was gone 'through the roof' with the hot weather we were having and that the boss, Tom Freeley, was looking for a man immediately to help out. He had a few men in mind but Seamus had recommended me. "I'll finish up here first and have my dinner and call in then", I said. Seamus nearly went ballistic and said, "You will come in now straight away, you flamer, or Tom will have someone else in and you will be left out altogether!" So, the trailer-loading was left and my dinner was forgotten about and off I went, got provided with gloves and safety footwear, and started my first day's employment at Irish Ale Breweries at the depot at Abbeyquarter. My first experience of loading lorries with kegs for distribution came the next morning as I loaded lorries going to various locations around the west. So I really was grateful to Seamus for getting me the start in one of the best firms in Ireland, and after a while I got to work with him many times as a helper on a lorry. My first trip on a lorry as a helper came, however, with Ambrose Johnston (RIP) who actually was a cousin of mine, and who died as a young man in 1971.

Seamus was a non-drinker but enjoyed the craic and could converse with anyone, be they drunk or sober. He was an awful man for the tea and was never happy going on a run without the cuppa or cuppas. He was often heard to say, "I could drive to Connemara now if I had a mug of tae". He got the nickname 'Mugs of tae' as a result of his fondness for the brew. I had known about his fondness for tea because he had been to my house many years before mowing a meadow and did not have to be asked twice when my mother offered him a cup; on that occasion he was the cause of demolishing a full apple tart



Seamus Ruane (Johnstown), on the left, receiving a presentation from Mick Roughneen (Kiltimagh) on behalf of Irish Ales Breweries Ltd., on his retirement.

that was meant for my tea!

One day I was with him as a helper on a lorry in Westport. The weather was absolutely roasting hot and the pubs were sold out of beer, and our load was gone in a few stops. A publican on the quays in Westport was very disappointed when he heard we were out and he said, "Have ye any at all?" to which Seamus replied, "Christ, not as much as would baptise a fairy". That was Seamus, always ready with a witty answer.

We finished up in Munnelly's pub in Geesala at 12 o'clock one lovely summer's Saturday night after selling two lorry loads of beer on the north coast run, so I was treated to a pint on the house and Seamus got his mug of tea and sandwiches. He was as happy as Larry as there was a band playing and he was enjoying the craic: there was not a hurry in the world on him, although we were hours and miles away from home.

Seamus had a farm of land and kept some cattle and, during the busy times at work, he often had to check and sometimes feed cattle after coming home from the depot. However, he always seemed to make time for a game of cards at his house and I think it was Thursday night was the fixed night he would have a few neighbours in, as well as local curate Fr. Diskin who was a very keen player. Of course the trickery and reneging went on as it did at many 25 games, and Fr. Diskin was as good as Seamus at the carry on!

To cap it all, one night Seamus had to leave the table to attend to a cow, and when he returned he asked Fr. Diskin to pull off his wellington as there was something hurting him. On doing so, lo-and-behold, a twenty-pound note fell out, and Seamus said, "Where the hell did that come out of?" As I said, Seamus was always good for a laugh and the card players, especially Fr. Diskin, really enjoyed his antics.

He enjoyed telling the tale of a young fellow he had employed for a few days to drive the tractor and tidy up around the farm. The young fellow was not used to driving that particular type of tractor, a David Brown, and when it came to refuelling he put the diesel in where the water should go, and vice versa, and had a big story for Seamus that the tractor would not start. But Seamus made sure that he would not make that mistake ever again.

Seamus ran into bad health in the late 1970s and one night at a work function in the Central Hotel he shed a few tears and we realised there was something wrong when he said: "It's alright for ye lads." He passed away to his heavenly home in 1980 and there was a massive turnout of workmates, neighbours and people he had befriended through the years at his funeral.

My mother was in 'The Gem' in town to buy a bon voyage card for a granddaughter who was going to the USA, and an 'in memoriam' card for the late Seamus. She borrowed a pen from the shopkeeper Mrs. Casserly and wrote the cards there and posted them in the Post Office next door. The granddaughter told her afterwards that she had received the sympathy card, and the bon voyage card must have arrived to Seamus's widow Bridie. How

Seamus would have enjoyed that mix up!

He must be so proud now looking down from his new heavenly home to see his family still occupying the homeplace and with three houses of Ruane based there.

I write this piece about Seamus on the fortieth anniversary of his passing because, as I said before, he was the cause of me getting my depot job. There are many more characters too numerous to mention who worked for Irish Ale Breweries who have now sadly passed away, many before their time. In fact there are more people dead than alive now from those busy days of the early seventies. My own wife Anne (RIP) died in 1994 at a very young age. I took retirement from my new yard job as checker/storeman in 2001 after thirty-one enjoyable years, and I would like to thank management and staff who were so kind to me after Anne's demise covering for me and giving me time off work.

Unfortunately, the busy seven-days-a-week deliveries of beer - Smithwicks, Carlsberg, Harp, and Budweiser - are a thing of the past. The depot yard is long closed and the reduced trade is now accommodated by CIE from a yard in Roscommon.

So now, Seamus, I will close and have a 'mug of tae' in your memory.

Pat Doyle Remembers...

One pleasant evening in the month of June my phone rang and on the other end was Noreen Ruane from the Annagh Magazine Society. Noreen is daughter of the late Seamus Ruane, a man who left us long before his time. After a brief conversation I had agreed to write a short piece about my life and times at Irish Ale Breweries, later to become Guinness Ireland.

The Irish Ale Breweries Depot relocated from the railway station to Abbeyquarter in the summer of 1969. It was not until 1977 that I presented myself at interview for a position before the then regional manager Joe Coonerty. I was then working for NCF Marts, opening and closing a gate 500 or more times a day. Mr. Coonerty explained to me that the position would be temporary and warned that I would be foolish to leave my job at the mart.

On the last weekend of May 1977, Padraig Regan, Seamus Maguire and myself started working in the yard of the depot and so began the happiest years of my life. During a recent visit to the same yard, now occupied by Smith Engineering, to have a chainsaw sharpened, I was reminded of the many happy years I spent there. As I walked around the yard, I could hear Mary Burke's voice over the intercom: "Would all staff please go to the

canteen." There we would get feedback from the previous day's union meeting.

My early years at the depot were spent loading and unloading kegs from trailers. As time went by and older employees retired, I started on the lorries delivering to different towns around the province. In those distant days there were summer festivals in many towns. I recall one day on the lorry doing the Ballina run with Jimmy Flanagan (RIP) and Frank McTigue. It was *Coillte Come Home Week* in Kiltimagh and the town was thronged with people. Jimmy suggested, in the immortal words of Brian Friel, that we "go in for the one." Who was it that said you should not mix work with pleasure? Joe Dolan was loading up his gear from the Diamond Ballroom as we set sail for Ballyhaunis! Michael O'Connor had the pan on with rashers and sausages. An early breakfast or a late supper? But it would only be a few hours before it was time to start again. Crazy times indeed!

Time passes quickly as we age. I am reminded of the many great men I had the pleasure of working with, playing cards with and laughing with. So many have gone to their eternal reward. I will borrow a line from Bob Hope and say to one and all of these great friends, "Thanks for the memories." May they rest in peace.

Remembering the Depot

– Irish Ale Breweries Ltd. Abbeyquarter, Ballyhaunis



Above: The fleet of delivery lorries operating out of Ballyhaunis Irish Ale Breweries Ltd. depot in Abbeyquarter, in the 1970s, with their drivers. L-R: John Forde (Kiltimagh), Flann Moroney (Abbeyquarter), Thomas Lyons (Clare St.), John Ivers (Kiltimagh), Jimmy Flanagan (Ballindrehid), Eugene Collum (Devlis), Willie Coyne (Ballyveale), John Conlon (Kiltimagh), Mick Roughneen (Kiltimagh). *Courtesy Delia Flanagan.*

Below: An aerial photograph of the Irish Ale Breweries Ltd. depot in Abbeyquarter, Ballyhaunis, 1973.





L-R: Pat Doyle, Tony Gibbons, Marguerite Doyle, Mary Burke, Padraic Morley. *Courtesy Margaret Tarpey.*



Pictured, from left: Jimmy Flanagan, Padraic Prendergast, Willie Coyne. Taken on the road in the 1970s. *Courtesy Delia Flanagan.*



Tony Gibbons (Irish Ales Breweries Ltd.) making a presentation to Dan Tarpey (right) on his retirement; while Marguerite Doyle (left) makes a presentation to Margaret Tarpey. *Courtesy Margaret Tarpey.*



Tom Freeley (left) receiving a presentation from Jimmy Flanagan on behalf of the staff of Irish Ales Brewery Ltd., on his retirement. Tom was the driving force behind the establishment of the depot in Abbeyquarter, and was its manager for many years. *Courtesy Delia Flanagan.*

Right: Some of the staff at the Depot, 1980s. Back, L-R: John Bowe (Dublin), Michael Finnegan (Lissaniskea), Eddie Wall (Galway), John Regan, John O'Neill. Front: Dan Tarpey, Jimmy Flanagan, Dominick Kinsella, Jimmy Cope (Dublin). *Glynn's Photography.*



Tullynally Trees Tell a Tale

Margie Phillips



Some of the Ballyhaunis group with Thomas Pakenham, from left: Darragh Brogan, Dr. Mick Brogan, Joan Rogers (Co. Meath), Thomas Pakenham (Tullynally), Jarlath Cunnane, Nollaig, Ó Muraile, Halyna Wasylec, Ann Phillips, Mary Fitzgerald (Shrule), Orla Phillips, Tommy Caulfield, Margaret Monaghan.

On a fascinating expedition to Sikkim, India, in 2013, organised by Seamus O'Brien, I first met Thomas Pakenham – a remarkable man. I was smitten by his enthusiasm, knowledge, and great love of Trees. Seamus was in Sikkim treading on the adventures of Joseph D. Hooker for his book, *In the Footsteps of Joseph Dalton Hooker: a Sikkim adventure*. Hooker was a botanist and explorer of the nineteenth century, and later Director of Kew Botanic Gardens. On returning to Ireland I couldn't wait to visit Tullynally (Co. Westmeath) and meet with Thomas and his collection of trees (including some of Hooker's introductions). I wanted to share this experience with a group of friends ('Trees Friends'). So, on Thursday, 6th of August, a small group from Ballyhaunis headed for Tullynally, where we meet with Thomas Pakenham.

Thomas inherited Tullynally estate and castle (once known as Pakenham Hall) from his uncle, Edward Pakenham (7th Earl of Longford) in 1961 – a legacy Thomas continues to protect, preserving its natural landscape. The Pakenham family have lived there for over 350 years.

An accomplished writer and gardener, Thomas, has written several prize-winning books, such as *The Year of Liberty*, on the history of the great Irish Rebellion of 1798, *The Boer War*, and *The Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent From 1876 to*

1912. After moving to Tullynally, his focus on writing changed! He started writing books on trees, such as *Meetings with Remarkable Trees*, *Remarkable Trees of the World*, and *The Company of Trees*, to name but a few.

The garden consists of twelve acres, surrounded by parkland and woodlands. In the nineteenth century the walled garden and ornamental lakes were created, while the 21st century brought the addition of the Chinese garden complete with pagoda, and the Tibetan garden including waterfalls and streams designed and planted by Thomas himself.

Thomas, after spending the morning weeding the pond, met with us in the courtyard. Here he briefed us and issued us with a list of trees. What makes these gardens special is not just the wonderful collection of trees found here, but that each tree has its own story, a story which Thomas relayed to us with such wit, accuracy and humour. All trees were grown from seed collected by Thomas on plant-hunting expeditions in China and Tibet.

Our tour was brought to life by the stories of Greek philosophers, symbolised here in the garden dedicated to Homer's *Odyssey* by the planting of ten apple trees, thirteen pear trees, and a fig tree. Then we had an account of the changing architecture of both the house and the garden, with each generation making their contributions. From the front of the house there was a fabulous vista of cattle grazing – what a wonderful sight! In the early

seventeenth century this vista would have been formal – a manifestation of Baroque taste (French). French cultural dominance of the early eighteenth century led to the almost universal adoption of Versailles. These vistas are long since gone, and the influence of Capability Brown and William Robinson (Irish born), adopting a natural landscape style, is still found here today.

The Arboretum was our first stop. It contained many fine native and introduced trees such as walnuts, oak, pines and maples for some autumnal colour. Every morning Thomas has breakfast here with his faithful friend ‘Buddha’, in the company of trees overlooking the beautiful rolling countryside of Westmeath.

The beautiful mature woodland was brought alive by its inhabitants, the ‘Green Men’ – a magical place, a place where children’s imagination would be inspired to wonder! Here we could see the sense of fun and adventure Thomas has brought to the garden.

The woodland opens up to the Tibetan garden, where the *Primula sikkimensis* have naturalised. The Tibetan house (complete with dragon), a place of shelter, was designed by Thomas himself. Through a clearing, we moved to the Chinese garden, where the amazing *Cardocrinum giganteum* grow, plants that are evocative of the Himalayas (reaching up to 3.5 meters tall), along with *Hydrangea aspera* with its velvet textured leaves thriving in dappled shade. Thomas has built a beautiful Chinese house and bridge, a design based on the willow pattern.

Continuing on by the pond, we encountered the wonderful dawn redwoods. Nature plays a major part of Thomas’ life; he takes time out every day to feed the swans and ducks that populate his pond.

Our last stop was the mound, designed by Thomas, that gives a marvellous view back to the house, and a pine tree in the other direction which he calls ‘Harry Potter spire’. I just love the fun and playfulness Thomas brings to his garden.

There are many wonderful Trees at Tullyally; a few we visited I feel are well worth a mention, such as the magnificent *Magnolia campbellii* ‘alba’, a tree that can take twenty years to flower, with flowers reaching up to 30 cm across, the Dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glytostroboides*), a living fossil, fast growing and listed in the world-endangered deciduous conifer list, and a native of Hubei province China.

But the demesne contains many other amazing veteran trees such as oak and beech which, because of their stature, are much sought after by Coillte. Thomas, in his book *Meeting with Remarkable Trees*, mentions but one, a common oak (*Quercus robur*), the tallest (120 feet) and straightest oak in Ireland, that he refers to as ‘The squire’s walking stick’. It was planted in 1745 by Thomas’s great-great-great-grandfather and namesake.



‘Green Man’ at Tullyally.

Where had the time gone? We spent five wonderful hours being transported around five continents (continents these trees once called home, but now thriving at Tullyally). It is just wonderful to meet such a man with a passion for life, trees and nature. This year ‘The Irish Tree Society’, founded by Thomas, celebrates thirty years – a society that has done much to preserve some of our ancient trees, and to record our champion trees. I would like to thank Thomas for all he has achieved in preserving our ancient woodlands, a legacy for generations to come. And for being so generous with his time and knowledge to our group.

Three of our group give their own accounts of this special day.

Nollaig Ó Muraíle

Our visit to Tullyally Castle, Co. Westmeath, ancestral home of the Earls of Longford, on 6th August last was a truly memorable one. I will not easily forget ‘the master of Tullyally’, Thomas Pakenham, giving us a delightful guided tour of his estate, showing us his favourite trees and in each case, with astonishing powers of recall, telling us the tree’s name (including its official Latin designation) and exactly where it had come from – often from a faraway, exotic land he had visited himself. He

generously spent the whole afternoon showing us around the grounds of the castle, never lost for the appropriate word, and sharing his encyclopaedic knowledge, not alone of trees and all kinds of plants, but also of history, geography, architecture, etc. His indefatigable vigour and unflagging enthusiasm were remarkable – having walked and talked for several hours, he was still as fresh as a daisy when some of us (all much younger than he) were beginning to wilt.

Perhaps the most striking memory I will retain of that afternoon is when, for some reason, he mentioned Homer's *Odyssey* and proceeded to give us a resumé of one of the two most famous works of Classical Greek literature. Recalling the close of Homer's great work, he gave a deft summary of how the hero, Odysseus (or Ulysses), after the fall of Troy, made his way home to Ithaca where his wife, the faithful Penelope, had patiently awaited his return for seven years. With great gusto, Thomas recounted how Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, approached his home and was insulted by some of the host of suitors who were harassing Penelope. Eventually, by a feat of arms he revealed his identity to his faithful wife and then, aided by his son, Telemachus, and some still-loyal servants, he proceeded to slaughter the suitors, thus bringing the great story to a famously brutal dénouement.

A noted historian – half a century ago, he published a fine history of the Rising of 1798, *The Year of Liberty* – Thomas in more recent times has been the acclaimed author of several books on trees, and he is of course a member of a famous literary family. That afternoon our small group was truly privileged to get a delightful demonstration of his great gifts as a storyteller.

Michael Brogan

The old beech tree at the south-west corner of our garden has witnessed the comings and goings of Doctor's Road for the last two-hundred years. A survey by tree surgeons in 1983 suggested that 'taking into account the tree's life expectancy, replanting in this area should be carried out so that continuity can be achieved'. Alas, thirty-seven years later, my huge beech tree is about to be felled to allow Mayo County Council finally complete the much needed footpath on our road.

On a fine day in early August, together with a group of like-minded friends from Ballyhaunis, we had the pleasure of a guided tour of the grounds of Tullyally Demense, hosted by 'that indefatigable champion of trees' Thomas Pakenham. I have always had an interest in trees, especially since 1980 when I purchased my home, Windsor Villa (name given by the Catholic unionist family for whom it was built!), an eighteenth century property with an array of mature specimens, mostly beech, horse-chestnut and sycamore. The grounds

also contain London plane, oak, walnut, yew and pine, etc. Our two Dutch elms were lost to Dutch elm disease in 1994.

Aware that Thomas Pakenham has a chapter in his most recent book (*The Company of Trees*), titled 'Murdering your Friends', I tentatively asked his advice regarding my 200 year old beech. On balance, because of the age and fragility of the tree and the increasing frequency and severity of storms in recent years, it would be best to take it down safely. As I write, Mayo County Council have moved in the heavy machinery required to start the sad but inevitable task of felling this old sentry of Doctor's Road. At Margie Phillips' suggestion, I hope to harvest some timber for garden furniture or maybe even a new table for my Galway Hooker, to give another life to our ancient beech.

Thomas' inspiring tour, has rekindled and further enlightened my interest in trees.

Denis Hannan

Tullyally Castle is a time capsule, a real journey back in the past. Thanks to my cousin Margie I had the opportunity to visit there. The ancestral home of the Pakenham family holds memories that should not be forgotten. A daughter of the house, Kitty, was the wife of the Duke of Wellington. Kitty's brother Ned was a general in Wellington's army of the Peninsular wars where he served with distinction. He was later killed in the famous battle of New Orleans. (Ned's body was brought back to Strokestown House in a barrel of rum and laid out in the main hall at the front door).

The house is a treasure chest of memorabilia from those times, portraits of officers and their ladies, original furniture of the period and military medals and decorations. There were ties through marriage also between the house and Strokestown House, King House in Boyle and the Stafford King Harman estate at Newcastle House, Ballymahon (part of this original estate is now the site of Centre Parcs). The daughter of the head gardener in Newcastle, a lovely lady called Adi Bredin, since deceased, told me that when the family left there it was taken over by nuns. In the garden was a particular tree whose only match in Europe was in Kew Gardens. The new owners cut it down to make a vegetable patch. How sad.

That day in August I couldn't help but be envious of the locals in Castlepollard having this wonderful garden at their disposal and being able to walk with the trees every day. However, Tullyally is just over an hour from our doorstep and has a lovely friendly-run coffee shop in the courtyard. What a lovely way to spend a day; a day spent in nature is a day well spent. 'Make friends with nature and you've made an unconditional friend for life!'

Think Like a Tree

Soak up the sun
Affirm life's magic
Be graceful in the wind
Stand tall after a storm
Feel refreshed after it rains
Grow strong without notice
Be prepared for each season
Prove shelter to strangers
Hang tough through a cold spell
Emerge renewed at the first signs of spring
Stay deeply rooted while reaching for the sky
Be still long enough to
Hear your own leave rustling.

- Karen I. Shragg

Will our Ash be reduced to ashes?

Fraxinus excelsior is the universal or botanical name given to ash. The humble ash has long been part of our heritage. Ash ('the clash of ash') is the preferred timber used in the making of hurleys, the making of troughs and in construction, as the branches are pliable when steamed. A deadly fungus, *Chalara fraxinea*, better known as 'Ash Dieback', is currently attacking our trees. The first sign of 'dieback' was noticed in 2012 and it is frightening to think that in 2020 all ash trees are showing evidence of this terrible disease.

On a day in early October I visited our mighty ash in the grounds of Augustinian Friary. I wanted to get an idea of its age, so with the help of Edward Mulhern and Peter Feeney, we set about establishing its girth, which measured 17 feet 3 inches (207 inches) or 5.25 metres. If we accept the guideline that an inch around the circumference equates to approximately one year's growth, then this tree must be about 207 years old - and part of the Ballyhaunis landscape since Robert Emmett's time.

The only way the real age can be determined is by felling it and counting the growth rings. Because our ash has a hollow trunk (this happens to old ash trees), the true age of this veteran landmark will never be known. "If this tree could talk!"

- Margie Phillips



Left:
Peter Feeney and Edward Mulhern (right) measuring the circumference of the historic ash tree, familiar to generations of Ballyhaunis people, on the bank of the River Dalgan in the Friary Grounds.

Right:
Edward Mulhern remembers playing in the hollowed-out trunk as a child. Photographs by Margie Phillips.



Sentry of Doctor's Road

Tommy Caulfield

In order to facilitate road widening and the construction of a footpath on the Doctor's Road, a venerable beech tree that has been around since before the time of the Famine had to be felled in October. The decision to remove the 200 hundred year old tree that stood at the head of Doctor's Road and watched the comings and goings of Ballyhaunis people for so many years, was not taken lightly. Doctor Michael Brogan consulted with no less an authority on all matters arboreal than Thomas Pakenham of Tullynally Castle, before commencing the sad but inevitable task. The tree had reached the end of its life span and, on balance, because of its age and fragility and the increasing frequency and severity of storms in recent years, it was deemed best to take it down safely.

On Monday, 12th October 2020 a group of Upper Main Street natives gathered to say farewell to this giant that had been such a focal point of childhood on the street over many generations.



A group who gathered to say farewell to an old friend. L-R: Eamonn Murren, Rory O'Connor, Anne Hopkins Lavin, Emma Brogan, Mike Grogan, Patricia Grogan, Tommy Grogan, Oliver Jordan, Tommy Glynn, Tommy Caulfield, Vinnie Caulfield.



The doctor and the 'three' surgeons!
Back, L-R: James Staunton, Dr. Mick Brogan.
Front, L-R: Laurence Staunton and P.J. McDonagh.



Sermon on the Mount!
Fr. Benny McHale, C.C. Ballyhaunis 2008-2011.
Courtesy Mike Byrne.

Upper Main Street Library

Attracta Jordan

Earlier this year Sean Cribbin, formerly of Knockbrack and now living in Co. Kildare, came across a library card among his late mother Kathleen's belongings. The library card was for use at the Star Library Service at Hopkins' Library in Upper Main Street. I was contacted by Annagh Magazine and asked to shed some light on Sean's discovery.

In the early 1950s, newly married couple Tom and Noreen set up their shop in Upper Main Street. Noreen had previously worked in Flatley's Newsagents in Main Street and she identified a niche in the market to satisfy the needs of avid readers in the community. And so, a corner of the shop was set aside for a library lending service. I think the library was also known for a time as Argus Library.

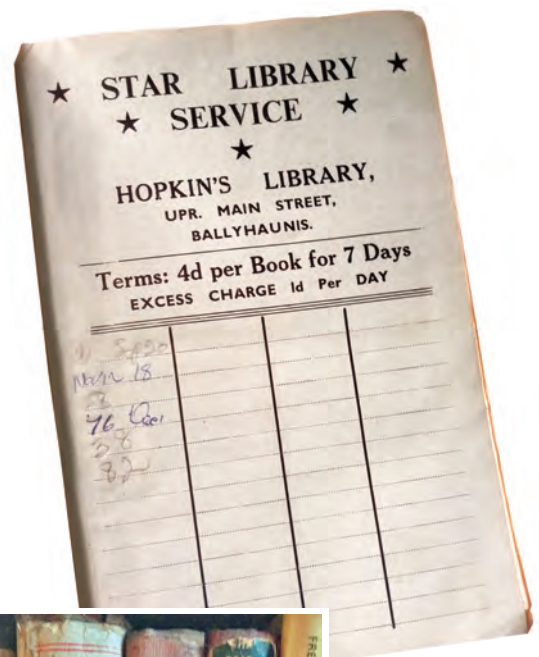
As youngsters we were very excited by this development as we were very limited in our sources of entertainment at that time. According to Anne Hopkins (Lavin), Tom used to get a lift to Dublin in the lorry with Durkan's of Abbey Street and buy the books for the library. Anne also recalls her dad returning from one such trip to Dublin with a bale of material for summer dresses for his six daughters.

Children's books by authors like Enid Blyton were very popular at the time, and I would like to thank Noreen and Tom for nurturing an appreciation of literature which has stood us in good stead to this day.

Another memory from Anne Hopkins tells us that the mother of our late Archbishop Joseph Cunnane had a book from the library on her bedside table when she passed away. The future archbishop was given permission to keep this book in memory of his mother. The story is told of another priest, Fr. Tom Heraty CC, who lived in the presbytery directly across from Hopkins' and demanded the removal of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* from the library's lending stock!

We recall Tom and Noreen fondly and we thank you both for the memories.

Noreen and Tom Hopkins outside their shop on Upper Main St., Ballyhaunis taken in 1951.



Hopkins' Library card. Courtesy Sean Cribbin.



A selection of books held by Hopkins' Library. Courtesy Anne Lavin.



Cottiers in a Corner of Mayo

Parishes of Annagh and Began - 1854

Paul Waldron

Those interested in the history of their own place will have heard of the Tenement Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland, better known as *Griffith's Valuation*, a detailed listing of every property in Ireland in the 1850s. It gives the size and rateable valuation of every holding of land in every townland in the country, details of the buildings on it, along with the names of the occupying tenant and landlord. With the disastrous loss of pre-1901 census records, it's the nearest thing to a complete list of heads-of-household in the country for the mid-nineteenth century. The nearest thing... but not quite complete: the names of those heads-of-household living in the many 'cottages' throughout the country were never published – but they were recorded and can be found in valuation office records that still survive.

What follows is a list of those cottiers' names recorded in 1854 in the Tenement Valuation Tenure Books for all townlands in the civil parishes of Annagh and Began (i.e. the old parishes before the boundaries were redrawn in 1893), plus the townland of Annagh which was transferred from Aghamore to Annagh parish during that same revision of boundaries. Under each townland the name of the cottier is here given, followed by that of the person on whose land their cottage was situated (in brackets). In a small number of cases cottages and their occupants were recorded in these Tenure Books but were not even mentioned in the published *Griffith's Valuation*: these are indicated here by an asterisk* after the cottier's name. All spellings are left as they were originally written.

This list is a useful supplement to the information given in *Griffith's Valuation*, now viewable on-line at <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/> and will, hopefully, be of help to anyone tracing family or local history in this area.

Cottiers

The information for *Griffith's Valuation* in the Ballyhaunis area was collected in 1854 and published in 1856. The source material is held in the National Archives where it continues to be catalogued, conserved and made available for research. In *Griffith's Valuation*, the description of most rural holdings in this part of the country is 'Land and House', or 'Land, House and Office(s)' - an office being any type of farm building. Many townlands, however, contained one or more 'cottages' whose valuation fell below the threshold for liability to pay rates. In valuation records they were 'bracketed-in' with the holding on which they stood, their occupants being sub-tenants of the landholder, not direct tenants of the landlord. Those who lived in the

cottages, referred to as 'cottiers', were usually labourers, trades-people, or dependent relatives of the landholder.

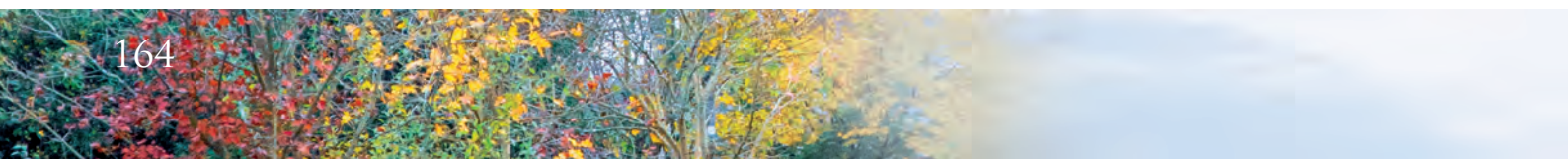
Cottages were generally smaller than the houses of the subsistence farmer population and other rural dwellers, usually comprising just one room. Often there was only one opening – the doorway – occasionally, a proper chimney and in some cases a window or possibly even two. As with other rural houses in this area, they varied from fairly sturdy stone buildings to cabins built of *scráths* (sods cut from a grassy or heathy surface). All were roofed with straw, or sometimes with rushes or reeds. While most rural dwellings around Ballyhaunis in the 1850s had a rateable valuation of between five and ten shillings, those of cottages was generally less than five shillings.

Occasionally, qualifying remarks were added to listings in the Tenure Books, such as that referring to Pat Connor's cottage in Devlis, built on land held jointly by Thomas Nyland and Patrick Molloy: "The house that Pat Connor has on [parcel no.] 8 is not worth 2 shillings." In Cossalough, a cottage built on land held jointly by three other tenants of the townland was deemed worthless: "The cabin that Fanny Mulkeen has on [parcel no.] 1 is of no value", and there were plenty more like it in the parishes of Annagh and Began at the time.

Other remarks and observations give an insight into the arrangements by which these cottages were held. The great majority of them were 'rent free', particularly where the occupier appears to have been a retired or dependent relative of the landholder. Others paid rent annually, varying from 2s to more than £2 in cases where a garden went with the cottage. In Bargarriff, Bryan Kelly had a cottage on land held by John Hoaster; the word 'work' added into this listing implies that he paid his rent in labour; while Mary Gavin, a cottier on Martin Murray's land in Derrynamuck (Derryhog) had her 'rent paid in work.' Some cottiers had land, usually held in conacre from the landholder, and often just enough to grow potatoes for a year's supply.

Other buildings

Some buildings listed as cottages served more than one purpose. At least three 'cottages' in the combined parishes of Annagh and Began were school-houses as well as dwellings. John Higgins had a school in the cottage he held rent-free from Owen Doyle in Carrowbeg; in Began townland James Waldron operated the National School in a building with a valuation less than 3s, held directly from Viscount Dillon; while in Larganboy East Thomas Tarpey's National School was in a building on land held jointly by



Patrick Fahy and Patrick Hopkins.

In Killunagher (Killinaugher) Patrick Raftery had his forge (also described as a cabin) valued at 2s, on the land of Patrick Grogan (*Anthony*), about which the valuator noted that, “[Raftery] lives in front part of the house.” The return for that same townland shows how meticulous the officials could sometimes be in noting details. Of Mary Grailey’s cottage on the land of Patrick Grailey it was noted: “Said also to pay 3s for the house and a plot. Pat Grailey to pay the rates.” Of a cabin on Edmund Grogan’s land in Scregg, which must have been a temporary residence, it was recorded: ‘when occupied, held rent free.’

Another category of building whose occupiers are not named in the published *Griffith’s Valuation* are herd’s houses, occupied by those employed by landlords or strong farmers to look after the livestock on their grazing farms. Unfortunately, they are not named either in the preliminary valuation records – only the name of the landholder. A list of herd’s houses in the two parishes is given at the end, with the name of the landholder.

Survivors

The list given below, as with *Griffith’s Valuation* itself, reflects just one brief moment in time – sometime in 1854. The country was only just recovering after the Great Famine (1845-9) during which the cottier class was virtually wiped out throughout the country. This list represents, in some ways, the few survivors of this group of people. Many of the cottages listed are ‘vacant’, and one could speculate that they were the abodes of Famine victims. As their occupants died those stone-built cottages either fell into ruin or were converted into outbuildings, while those made of *scráths* would quickly melt away once their roofs disintegrated, leaving very little trace after a few years.

This list and the records from which it is drawn, predate the founding of the Land League by more than twenty years; the various Land Acts through which the tenant farming population became owner-occupiers wouldn’t reach full effect for another fifty years. People had a very tenuous hold on the land: very few had leases or security of tenure and were liable to eviction at the landlord’s whim.

The names of these cottiers may still be remembered in their own locality. In some cases the location of their homes might still be known. Some can be followed up in church and civil records up to the end of the nineteenth century, and some survived long enough to be enumerated in the 1901 census. Few of them left any written record after them, though an odd one left their mark in other ways. Mary Kelly of Barheen was probably a member of the family that gave its name to ‘Kelly’s Hill’, a slight incline on the Loughglynn road just the town side of the junction with the Barheen/Forthill road.

Hopefully, this list will rescue from obscurity the names of many people previously thought absent from the written record, and may encourage people to document the forgotten past residents of their own place.

Annagh Civil Parish

Abbeyquarter

Patrick Phillips (Patk. Forde)
Vacant (Luke Mannion)
John Caulfield (John Heraghty)

Aderg

John Tyack (Visc. Dillon)
Patrick O’Gara (Visc. Dillon)

Agloragh

Bridget Fitzmaurice (Ml. Delany)

Ballybaun

John McHale (Winifred Waldron)
Bernard Molloy (Jas. Molloy)

Ballybeg

John Mullarky (Ml. Comer)

Ballykilleen

Catherine Regan (Thos. Regan)
Vacant (Andw. Mahon & Ml. Mongan)

Ballynastockagh

Denis Finigan (Patk. & John Finigan)
Vacant (Patk. & John Finigan)
Honorina Finigan (Patk. & John Finigan)
Cecily Finigan* (Ml. Lyons)

Bargarrieff

Winifred Crosbie (Philip Cribbin)
Bridget Owens (Philip Cribbin)
Ferdinand Gallagher (Philip Cribbin)
Nicholas Joyce (Bridget Morley)
Patrick/Mary Cribbin (Bridget Morley)
John Meehan (Ml. Caul)
Bryan Kelly (John Hoaster)

Barheen

Mary Kelly* (Visc. Dillon)

Bunduff

Margaret Devany* (John L. Treston)

Carrickacat

Stephen Hasty (Luke Maguire)

Carrickmacantire

Vacant (Martin & Patk. Lyons)

Carrowbeg

John Higgins* (Owen Doyle)

Carrowkeel East

William Quinn (John Beasty)
Vacant (John Beasty)
Augustine Connolly (John Beasty)
Mary Coyne* (Philip Taaffe)
Thomas Greal (Philip Taaffe)
Bridget Coyne (Philip Taaffe)

Carrowmore

Thomas Naghten (Owen Naghten)
Widow Naghten (Owen Naghten)

Carrowmore West

Honorina Mulkeen (Thos. Brennan)
Martin McDonagh (Owen Sweeney)
Bridget Cooney (Patk. Kelly)
Edmond O'Brien (Thos. Morley)
Patrick Kelly Snr. (Ml. Mulkeen)
James Molloy (Jas. Mulkeen)
Mary O'Neill* (Jas. and Laur. Mulkeen Snr.)
*Vacant** (Wm. Kelly)

Carrownedan

Mary Prendergast (John Treston)
Catherine McHale (John Treston)
Mary Sweeny (Thos. Molloy)

Cloontumper

Margaret Grealy* (John Kilkenny)
John Parson* (Ml. Cunnane)
Thomas Lyons (Jas. Caulfield)
John McCue (Jas. Caulfield)
William Doogan (F. R. O'Grady)
Timothy Duffy* (Patk. Duffy)
Thomas Kilkenny* (John Forde)

Cornacarta

Mary Grealy (Luke Dillon)
Owen McDonnell (Patk. Mullowny)
Catherine McDonnell (Patk. Tully Senr.)
Mary Concannon (Patk. Tully Junr.)

Corraun

Patrick L. Moore (Ml. Kearns)
Honorina Moran (Ml. Kearns)
Michael Griffin Senr. (John Griffin, *Martin*)
Peter Quinn (Ml. Connell)

Cossallagh

Fanny Mulkeen* (Jas. Cleary, John McGee & John Burke)

Culnacleha

Mary Collins* (Mark Kealy)
Francis Treston (Thos. Rush)
Michael Caulfield, *Betty* (Jas. Caulfield, *Betty*)
Mary Caulfield (Mary Hester)
Michael Flaherty (Ml. O'Hara)
Edmond Doogan & Cath. Dillon* (Thos. Rush)

Curries

Thomas Haigney (Ml. Haigney)
Bridget Meehan (Ml. Meehan)

Derrylea

Honor Loftus (Thos. Sullivan)
Margaret Kinealy (Ml. Feeny)
Bridget Kilfoyle* (Ml. Feeny)

Derrynacong

Mary Groark* (Patk. Fitzmaurice, *Widow*)

Derrynamuck

Mary Gavin (Martin Murray)

Farnaun

Thomas Burke (Patk. Mulkeen)
Austin Byrne (Jas. Mannion)
Mary Burke (Patk. Parsons)

Feamore

Timothy Fitzgerald (Thos. Crawley)
Michael McDonagh (John P. Treston)
Thomas Cooney (John P. Treston)
Edward Dillon (Francis Treston)
James Glynn (Francis Treston)
Edmond Glynn (Francis Treston)
John Hasty (John Higgins)

Friarsground

Michael Finn (Rev. David O'Hara)
Catherine Grogan (Rev. David O'Hara)

Gorteen

Vacant (John Lynskey)

Gortnageeragh

Honor Feeny (John Feeny)
James Lyons* (John Feeny)
Mary Waldron* (Francis Waldron)

Grallagh

Patrick Waldron (Ml. Waldron)
Judith Loftus (Ml. Loftus)
Mary Groarke* (John Ruane)
Two *vacant* (John Ruane)
James Allen* (Patk. Cruise)

Hazelhill

Thomas Grailey
Catherine Davitt
Thady Sullivan
Dan Feely
Four *vacant* cottages
Richard Jennings
Thomas Waldron
(All cottiers of F.R. O'Grady)
James Gilligan (John Grailey)
James Grailey or Ganly (Edward Lyons)
Judith Grogan (John Grogan)
Bartley Fitzmaurice (Jas. Cooney)
James Quinn
John Parsons
Owen Sullivan
Timothy Brennan
Francis Maguire
(All cottiers of Patk. Cosgrave)
Mark Morley [herd](F. R. O'Grady)

Holywell Upper

Bridget Waldron* (John Burke)

Kildarra

Margaret Fitzpatrick (Jas. Conway)
Vacant (Wm. Herbert)

Killunagher

Sibby Freeman Grogan* (Visc. Dillon)
 Patrick Raftery* (Patk. Grogan, *Anthony*)
 Anthony Grogan (Patk. Grogan, *Anthony*)
 Thomas Regan (Ml. Regan)
 Mary Grailey* (Patk. Grailey)
 Sibby Grogan (John Grogan, *Sibby*)

Knockanarra

Patrick Waldron (John Waldron & Patk. Duffy)

Knockroe

Michael Coll (Patk. Caulfield)
*Vacant** (John Waldron)
 Margaret Grogan* (Philip Taaffe)
 John Naughton* (Cecily Sullivan)
 Cecily Flatley* (Thos. Caulfield, Jas. Caulfield & Patk. Walsh)

Largan

Michael Moran (John Moran)

Lecarrow

Margaret Haigney (Jas. Caulfield)

Levallyroe

Eleanor Jennings (Ml. Loftus)
 Bridget Coghlin (Ml. Cunnally)
 Mary Cunnally (Edw. Moore O'Farrell)
 Michael Waldron (Edw. Moore O'Farrell)

Lisduff

Andrew Jennings (Thos. W. Galway)
 Patrick Waldron [forge] (Thos W. Galway)

Pullacappul

Thomas Gilligan (John Nolan Ferrall)
 Anne Ruane (John Nolan Ferrall)

Redhill

Vacant (John Cribbin)
 Patrick Brennan Junr. (Patk. Brennan Senr.)
 John Murphy (Thos. McCue)

Scregg

Patrick Frehely (Margt. Narry)
Vacant (Edm. Grogan)
 Thady Mally* (Ellen Mally)

Spaddagh

John Grogan (Wm. Grogan)

Tonregee

Walter Farraher (Thaddeus Malley)

Tullaghaun

Thomas Finnegan* (Patk. Gildea)

Tulrohaun

Austin Morley (Edm. Curran)

KNOCKROE. (Ord. S. 92 & 93.)									
1		John Brennan, .	Philip Taaffe, .	Land,	1 1 3	0 5 0	—	0 5 0	
2	{ a	James Caulfield, .	Same, . . .	Land, house, & office, }	26 1 18	{ 3 2 0	0 5 0	3 7 0	
	{ b	John Caulfield, .	Same, . . .	Land and house, }		{ 3 2 0	0 5 0	3 7 0	
—	c	Thomas Gormley, .	James Caulfield and John Caulfield, .	House,	—	—	0 5 0	0 5 0	
3	a {	Patrick Caulfield, .	Philip Taaffe, .	Land, house, and offices, }	25 1 23	6 5 0	0 10 0	7 0 0	
—	b {			One cottage,	—	—	0 5 0		
4	a	James Grogan, . .	Same, . . .	Land, house, and offices, .	14 1 23	5 0 0	0 8 0	5 8 0	
—	b	John Waldron, . .	Same, . . .	Garden and office, . .	0 1 7	0 3 0	0 3 0	0 6 0	
5		John Waldron, . .	Same, . . .	Land,	1 3 20	0 4 0	—		
6		John Waldron, . .	Same, . . .	Land,	5 2 33	2 12 0	—	2 16 0	
7	a	Patrick Grogan, .	Same, . . .	Land, house, and offices, .	8 0 26	3 8 0	0 5 0		
8		Patrick Grogan, .	Same, . . .	Land,	1 3 0	0 3 0	—	3 17 0	
9		Patrick Grogan, .	Same, . . .	Land,	1 0 20	0 1 0	—		
10	a	Bridget Grogan, .	Same, . . .	Land, house, and office, .	10 3 22	3 7 0	0 5 0	3 17 0	
11		Bridget Grogan, .	Same, . . .	Land,	1 3 16	0 5 0	—		
12	a	Thos. Naughten (<i>of 15</i>),	Same, . . .	Land and house, . . .	4 0 3	1 17 0	0 4 0	2 1 0	
13	a	Pat. Naughten (<i>of 15</i>),	Same, . . .	Land and house, . . .	4 0 13	1 17 0	0 4 0	2 1 0	
14	a	Cecelia Sullivan (<i>of 15</i>),	Same, . . .	Land, house, and office, .	3 3 33	2 1 0	0 5 0	2 6 0	
15		Thos. Naughten & others	Same, . . .	Land,	6 3 1	0 1 0	—	0 1 0	
16	{ a	Thomas Walsh, . .	Same, . . .	Land and house, . . .	11 3 36	{ 2 17 0	0 5 0	3 2 0	
	{ b	James Caulfield, jun.,	Same, . . .	Land and house, . . .		{ 2 17 0	0 5 0	3 2 0	
17		Patrick Walsh (<i>of 18</i>),	Same, . . .	Land, house, and office, .	13 1 30	5 12 0	0 6 0	5 18 0	
18		Patrick Walsh & others,	Same, . . .	Land,	3 1 20	0 1 0	—	0 1 0	
Total, . . .					146 2 27	45 0 0	4 0 0	49 0 0	

The entry published in *Griffith's Valuation* for Knockroe townland, parish of Annagh. The occupier of the cottage on the land of Patrick Caulfield is not named here, but the 'Tenement Valuation Tenure Book' manuscript identifies him as Michael Coll. The same source indicates there were then (1854) four other cottages in that townland, not indicated at all in the published Griffith's Valuation: one vacant, and the other three occupied by Margaret Grogan, John Naughton and Cecily Flatley, respectively (see Knockroe listing above).

Townlands in Annagh civil parish with no cottiers

listed: Arderry, Ballyglass Lower, Ballyglass Middle, Bellaveel, Carrowhawny, Carrowkeel West, Cartron, Churchpark, Classaghroe, Cloonbullig, Coolnafarna, Cottage, Derreens, Derrintogher, Drumaderry, Drumbaun, Garraun, Holywell Lower, Kiltybo, Knockbrack, Leo, Lugboy Demesne, Lurgan, Moat, Moneymore, Pattenspark, Woodpark.

Herd's Houses in Annagh parish (landowner's name in brackets): Carrowkeel West (Bridget Keogh), Carrownedan (John Kelly), Churchpark (Austin McManus), Cloonbullig (John Lyons), Cloontumper (Francis R. O'Grady), Leo (Bernard McDermott), Levallyroe (Edward Moore O'Farrell), Lisduff (John Lyons).

Part of Aghamore parish transferred to Annagh parish, 1893

Annagh townland

Bryan Snee (Thos. R. Tyrle)



An artist's impression of a one-roomed thatched cottage from *Cassells Illustrated History of England*.

Bekan Civil Parish

Bekan townland

Mary Walsh (John F. Bourke)
Helen Kelly (John F. Bourke)
Margaret Hunt (John F. Bourke)
Honorina Morley (John F. Bourke)
Mary Bourke (John F. Bourke)
Margaret Tarpy (Edm. Tarpy)
Mary O'Brien (Edm. Tarpy)
John Grogan (Edm. Tarpy)
Thomas Rován (John McCue)
Patrick McHugh (John McCue)
James Waldron* National School House (Visc. Dillon)
Catherine Morley* (Ml. Cunnane)
Myles Fitzmaurice* (Jas. Fitzmaurice)

Belesker

Michael Waldron/*vacant** (Jas. Brennan)

Bracklaghboy

John Haddican (John Judge)
Rose Molloy (Luke Hansboro)

Brackloon North

Honorina Cox (John Waldron)
Catherine Dyer (Patk. Dyer [*Flanigan*])
Henry Smyth (Bridget McNamara [*John*])

Brackloon South

Michael Fitzmaurice (Myles Waldron)

Brackloon West

Bridget Mulkeen* (Ferdinand Kelly)

Brickeens

Mary Mullin (Patk. McGagh & Wm. Mullin)
Mary Meade (Patk. Meade)

Bunnadober

Eleanor Morley (Thos. Morley)
Bridget Moran (Thos. Morley)
Margaret Lyons (Ml. Frehely)
Catherine Waldron* (Richd. & Jas. Waldron)

Carrowreagh

Bridget Conlon (Edw. Judge)
Patrick Gilligan (Edw. Judge)
Edmond Gilligan (Edw. Judge)
Vacant (John Frain)
Timothy Frehely* (Mary Frehely)

Cherryfield

Patrick Grogan (Owen Grogan)
Anne Lyons* (Owen Grogan)
Vacant (Jas. Waldron)

Clagnagh

Austin Frehely (Thos. Frehely)
Thomas Frehely Jnr. (Ml. Frehely)
*Vacant** (Patk. Morley)

Cloonacurry

Rose Grogan* (Martin Dignan)
Bryan Griffin* (John Lyons)
*Vacant** (Ml. Cunnane)

Cloonbookeighter

James Duffy (Owen Meehan)
Bridget Mulkeen (Jas. Mulkeen)
Catherine Mulkeen (Jas. Mulkeen)

Cloonbookoughter

Bridget Cribbin (Luke Mulkeen)
John Cribbin (Jas. Cribbin)

Cloonbulban

Bridget Morley (Edm. Morley)
 Thomas Carey (Thos. Connolly)
 Mary Moony* (Jas. Molony)

Cullentragh

Thomas Waldron (Visc. Dillon)
 Bridget Cunnane (Visc. Dillon)
*Vacant** (John Lyons)

Derrymore

James Holian (Patk. Holian)
 Margaret Groark*, struck out (Andw. Henry)
 Bridget Waldron* (Thos. Fahy)

Devlis

John Waldron (Honorio Waldron)
 Pat Connor* (Thos. Nyland & Patk. Molloy)

Erriff

Catherine Flatley (Thos. Waldron)
*Vacant** (Patk. Lyons [*Tim.*] of Reask)

Kilknock

Mary Jordan (Ml. Kenny)
 Anthony Grogan (Peter Healy)
 Bridget McManus (Patk. Doherty)

Killylea

Dennis Healy* (John Healy)

Larganboy East

Bridget Hunt (Michl. Moloney)
 Anne Mulkeen* (Patk. Fahy & Patk. Hopkins)
 Thomas Tarpey [teacher]* – National School (Patk. Fahy & Patk. Hopkins)
 Thomas Hunt* (Philip Taaffe)

Larganboy West

Mary Bones (Augustine Comer)
 Bridget Lyons (Patk. Lyons [*Augustine*])
 Patrick Judge (Tim. Kenny)
 Catherine Finn (Patk. Finn)
 Martin Judge (Ml. Forde)
 Margaret Grogan* (Tim. Lyons)
 Bridget Finn* (David Mulkeen)

Lassanny

Thomas Fahy (Thos. Flatley)
 William Flatley [*Thomas*]* (Thos. Flatley)

Lisbaun East

Margaret Moghan (Mary Moghan)
 Catherine Kenny (Ml. O'Connell)

Lisbaun West

Bridget Finn* (John Fannon)

Lisluman

Mary Mullowney* (John Burke)
 John Caulfield* (Bridget Smyth)

Lissaniska

John Morley (Richd. Morley Sen.)
 Nappy Tighe (Richd. Morley Sen.)
 Richard Morley Jnr.* (Danl. Murray)
 John Brennan (Ml. Kirrane)
 Francis Waldron (John Morley)
 John McCue* (Patk. Egan)
 Catherine Murray (Thos. Morley [*Ned*])
 Mary Morley (Thos. Morley [*Matthias*])
 John Doogan (Thos. Morley [*Matthias*])
 Edmond Molloy (Patk. Kirrane)

Lurgan

Mary Merrick (Martin Griffin)
 Patrick Sloyan (Martin Griffin)
 Honorio Brady (John Brady & John Lyons)

Reask

Patrick Lyons (Alex. Doyle)
 Catherine Doyle (Alex. Doyle)

Skeaghard

James Hunt (Patk. Hunt)

Tawnagh

Patrick Byrne (Mary Byrne)
 John Murphy (Jas. & Tim. Delany)

Togher

Catherine Graham* (Visc. Dillon)

Tooraree

Thomas Healy* struck out (Bryan Healy)
 Mary Lyons* struck out (Patk. Lyons)
 John McGreal (Thos. Crawley)
 Stephen Dyer (Thos. Crawley)
 Bridget McDermott (Thos. Crawley)
 John Rider (Thos. Lyons)
 Patrick Delany (Thos. Lyons)
Vacant (Thos. Lyons)
 John Swift (Thos. Lyons)
Treanrevagh
 Owen Needham* (David Tighe)

Turlough

Bryan Lyons (Martin Lyons)

Townlands in Began civil parish with no cottiers listed:

Ballinphuill, Ballinvilla Demesne, Brackloon East, Carrownluggaun, Cave, Cloonlara, Coolloughra, Cuilbeg, Cuiltycreaghan, Derrylahan, Drum, Forthill, Gorteenbeg, Gorteenmore, Grallaghgarden, Greenwood, Keebagh, Kilmannin, Knockaunacat, Lenamore, Loughanboy, Mountain, Pollnacraoghy, Tawnaghmore.

Herd's Houses in Began civil parish (landowner's name in brackets): Began (Martin Harley), Bohogerawer (Thos. Beasty), Bracklagh (Edward Rush), Brackloon West (Francis R. O'Grady), Island (John E. Evans), Island (Robert Fair), Tooraree (Thos. Moran).

Donelan Foudy Family Photos



Mollie Donelan (née Donelan),
circa 1900.



Patrick Donelan
(d. 1915).

Patrick Donelan, his wife Molly and their young daughter Mai, came to Ballyhaunis from Milltown, Co. Galway around 1899. He was a native of Kilnalappa, Dunmore, while Molly (who was Donelan before marriage also) was born near Headford, though her family moved to Kilgevrin, Milltown when she was young.

They had a shop and public house on Clare St., later owned by Byrne's - present day Gill's. Occupying the upper level of a large store on their property was 'Donelan's Hall' which was used for dances, meetings, boxing matches and other events. It was here the first moving pictures in town were shown in the early 1910s. St. Patrick's G.A.A. Club was founded here in 1910, while the local force of the Irish National Volunteers was established at a meeting here in June 1914.

Patrick Donelan suffered serious injuries after being thrown from a horse and died in 1915 aged 44. The business was continued by Molly who was a very capable business-woman by all accounts. Family lore recounts that she was a member of Cumann na mBan, and played no small part in local efforts during the War of Independence.

Patrick and Molly's only son Martin died in 1918, while a student in St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, a victim of the Spanish Flu. Their only daughter Mai went on to marry Denis Foudy in 1923, and they continued the business on Clare Street. The hall, with store underneath, was sold to James Waldron of Main Street and continued to be an important venue for social and cultural events through the 1930s.

Mai and Denis had seven in family - Oliver, Denis, Patrick, Cyril, Thomas, Mary and Rita. Molly Donelan died in 1949 aged 75, and five years later, in 1954, the Foudy family emigrated to Manchester.

Thanks to Katie Adamson of Bolton for making this selection of family photographs available. She is granddaughter of Mary Foudy Long. Thanks also to her cousin Patrick Donelan for background family information.



The Foudy family of Clare Street, Ballyhaunis.
Standing, L-R: Dennis, Cyril, Thomas, Mary, Oliver, Paddy.
Seated: Rita, Denis and Mai.



Above left: Mollie Donelan (née Donelan) is seated at centre. Her daughter Mai is at the back, and son Martin is the boy in front. The others are unidentified.

Above right: Mai Foudy (née Donelan).

Centre: Mai Donelan and Denis Foudy, who married in 1923.

Below left: Mary Foudy and Stuart Long on their wedding day. Mary's parents Mai (nee Donelan) and Denis Foudy are on the right, while Stuart's mother is on the extreme left.

Below right: Martin and Mai Donnellan, circa 1905. Martin died in 1918, a victim of the Spanish Flu.



Our Virtual 'Walk to New York'

Alma Gallagher



On 19th of September 2020 over 150 proud Ballyhaunis people set out on a virtual 'Walk to New York' to raise funds for renovation works for Ballyhaunis Community Hall (Parochial Hall). It is 4,940km from there to Times Square in New York and over a two week period we called on all Ballyhaunis families, individuals, walkers, joggers and runners to join forces and collectively clock up 4,940km from 19th Sept. – 3rd October 2020. Ballyhaunis people living in New York, Boston, Melbourne, Dubai, San Diego, Kuala Lumpur and all over the world answered our call and took up the challenge to walk virtually to New York. Participants submitted their distances daily to a WhatsApp group along with photographs and stories. Siobhan Conlon and Lisa McConn recorded a tally each evening after 9pm. Over a two-week period our 'Virtual Walk to New York' became much more than a fundraiser. Distance is not an obstacle in this all too familiar virtual world as families and friends were connected, and new friendships were created. However, all journeys have bumps on the road and our virtual 'Walk to New York' became a round-trip of 9,880km back to Ballyhaunis Community Hall. The following are some of our diary entries over the two weeks documenting the places we visited and experiences we shared.

'The Homecoming' – the first group of participants to return to Ballyhaunis Community Hall, taken on 3rd Oct. 2020.

Date 19th September 2020 – And we are off!

New York! New York! Start spreading the news we are leaving today! From Bayonne to Staten Island, Melbourne to Dublin, from Errit Lake, Mayfield Lake and the Lakes of Clonbur, from the shores of Rathmullan in Donegal to the sandy beaches of Enniscrone in Sligo, from Merlin Woods in Galway, shady Annagh in Ballyhaunis to the by-roads of Cloonfad, we jogged, walked and Nordic-poled our way 720km closer to Times Square. Thank you for starting our virtual 'Walk to New York' with us today.

22nd September 2020 – Autumn Equinox

Today is the Autumn Equinox when light and darkness are equal. We had an early start from the timeless streets of Melbourne to the city that never sleeps in New York. At daybreak we watched the sun rise in Cloonbook. We took time out to appreciate the nature of Annagh, the scenic walks of Cloonfad and views of Sandymount. We escaped the pressures of time and walked the pier of Salthill up to Mountcharles Pier in Donegal. We walked

together on the track of Mayo University Hospital where many pray for more time, to Coogue School where time could not go fast enough for some. Whatever route you took today, thank you for taking the 'time' and joining us on our virtual journey today.

23rd September 2020 – Rubbing shoulders with giants

From the little steps of our Playgroup to the giant steps of our Ramblers we passed the River Dalgan and made our way to Charles River in Boston. We watched the sun rise in Upper Main Street and Gurteen, had lunch time strolls in the Friary, the greens of the Golf Course, said a prayer in Churchfield and walked the roads of Letterkenny. We rubbed shoulders with a giant - Dermot Early - and paid our respects to a legend, Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RIP). Our virtual journey has opened a world to discover and people to meet. It may be some time before we meet physically again but, as Helen Keller once said, "The best and most beautiful things cannot be seen or even touched; they must be felt by the heart." Thank you for joining us on our virtual journey today.

24th September 2020 - Inspiration

Our feet are tired, and the road is long. Today we looked for inspiration and set off from St. Patrick's Church in Ballyhaunis to Shanvaghera Church, praying for strength along the way. We hit the dance floor in Rattigan's Ballroom. Some found romance and took the scenic route via Coogue bog road... but what goes on tour stays on tour! The pacifists among us drew strength in Eden while others found solace fishing on Erritt Lake. We played ball in the Dome of the Centre of Excellence, listened to the laughter of pupils of Cloonfad National School and went onwards towards Ballykillkeen. We walked the banks of the glorious River Moy and ventured to rustic Malin Head. We crossed the water and stood in awe of the World Trade Centre, walked over Verrazano Bridge towards Bayside, Queens, lured by the lights of the city. From the Hares and The Hounds to Saint and Sinners... wherever you drew your inspiration from today... thank you for staying strong and joining us on our virtual journey today.

25th September 2020 – Important Announcement SOS!

Good Evening all! At 14.00hrs Mary Donnelly received a call from the White House in Ballyhaunis Community Hall... yes, from the main man himself. He is not happy! Intelligence informed him over 150 Ballyhaunis people from all over the globe are encroaching on New York. Mary said, "Fake News", but he didn't buy it. Our instructions are as follows:

1. Make our way ASAP to New York.

2. Have refreshments in Rosie O'Grady's Bar.
3. Return to Ballyhaunis Community Hall clocking up an additional 4,940km

Every journey has bumps on the road, but we will have the tail wind at our back, and we are made of great stuff. Fly your Ballyhaunis flags as high as they will go. They thought the Green and Red looked well last year in Times Square but they ain't seen nothing yet!

26th September 2020 – Ballyhaunis conquers Times Square

Shoulder to shoulder we conquered Times Square with the Red and Black flying high and flying proud. The atmosphere was electric. We greeted Lady Liberty, took a horse-drawn carriage around Central Park, Bennie got lost in Macy's, others touched the Mayo stones of The Famine Memorial remembering all the Ballyhaunis people who had travelled to New York before us. Sight-seeing is hard work! We stopped off at Rosie O'Grady's. Mary Donnelly said not to lose the run of ourselves. We still have another 4,940km home. We only have one hour! Several hours later spirits were high. As someone said somewhere, "A bird never flew on one wing", so we had one for the road and two for the ditch!

Reality hit when the sun rose over New York city. Joe O'Gara said there's cattle to be tended-to in Ballyglass. With heavy hearts we gave Maggie the parcel from Bill and Kathleen, Louise her purple snacks and George a bottle of something. Fr. Stephen blessed us and we prayed that the road would rise before us. Marilyn... put the kettle on! We are on the road home. Thank you for all these beautiful memories and joining us on an unforgettable 'Walk to New York.'

30th September 2020 – Byroads, highways, and bog roads

We clocked early kms from Cloonfad Scenic Walk and advanced to Coogue, up Peadar's Hill and Mollymore. From the splendor of Belvedere Castle to our humble Friary House, we trekked the bog roads of Holywell and Scragh. From sunny Dennis Beach, Cape Cod, to the greenways of The Wild Atlantic Way we advance closer to Ballyhaunis - 3007km as the crow flies. With tired feet and worn shoes we march on... hopefully, Tom Finn will have a flash sale on ECCOS on our return... he was always a great supporter of the Hall. Whatever byroads, highways, and bog roads you travelled today, don't worry about the potholes, embrace the detours, this journey is yours. Thank you for joining us on our virtual journey with us today.

1st of October – A trip on Memory Lane

Today we took a nostalgic journey sharing memories and stories of Ballyhaunis Community Hall (Parochial Hall)

and travelled down memory lane. We move closer to home as we clocked up kilometers from Kuala Lumpur, San Diego, Camp Ramaquois, from the Hudson River in New York to the Hudson Bay in Athlone. It's been some journey. We have seen places we have only ever dreamed of, reacquainted with old friends, and met some new ones along the way. We will have some tales to tell when we arrive home and, as Michael Sloyan reminds us, "Never let the truth get in the way of a good story."

We can see the home fires burning in the distance. An onlooker asks, "Are ye walking to Knock?" "No" we reply, "we are walking back from New York", and we move defiantly on. Excitement builds and we wonder what tomorrow will bring. Who knows? Let's just enjoy the moment, Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift... that's why it's called the 'present'. Thank you for sharing this gift and joining us on our journey today.

3rd of October– Are we there yet?

Calling out to New York, Dubai, San Diego, Melbourne, Kuala Lumpur, Boston and Ballyhaunis people all over the world... we see the spire of St. Patrick's Church in the distance, blue lights reflecting off the night's sky and we move forward one kilometer at a time. Mike Griffin is tasked with traffic management at The Square. You would think we had Sam Maguire in our pocket! Midwest Radio has been parked outside Ballyhaunis Community Hall since last Saturday believing our 150 Ballyhaunis walkers would take the first Aer Lingus flight back home... but they were wrong... no half measures with us. It's good to be home!

Every good story must come to an end and now it's time for me to sign off. We sincerely thank each one of you for taking the time out of your day over the last two weeks for clocking up the kilometers, posting beautiful pictures and donating to Ballyhaunis Community Hall. We are overwhelmed. Without your support and goodwill, our journey would not be possible.

At the end, the journey finishes but the memories remain. A new journey will start shortly as our Ballyhaunis Community Hall (Parochial Hall) renovation project begins.



Fr. Stephen leads a group of walkers through the town of Ballyhaunis from New York with Thomas Curran flying the Ballyhaunis flag.
L-R: Stella O'Neill, Martha Gallagher, Fr. Stephen Farragher, Mary Donnelly, Elaine Hunt, Thomas Curran, Agatha Higgins, Susan Hoban, Eileen Lynch, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Kay Curley.



Margaret (née Frayne), Daithí Coyne and family, pictured outside Rosie O'Grady's Bar, New York, supporting our Virtual Walk to New York.



He is not happy 😞!
🕵️ Intelligence informed him over 125 Ballyhaunis people from all over the globe are encroaching on New York 🇺🇸



Representatives of 'Mothers & Others' supporting our Virtual Walk to New York.



East Mayo Ramblers Walking Group supporting our Virtual Walk to New York.
L-R: Ann Burke, Marian Moloney, Mary Judge, Marie Cribbin, Mary Forde, Michael Sloyan, Margaret Cunniffe.



The O'Connor sisters, Louise Delaney and Siobhán Herr, pictured in New York supporting our Virtual Walk.

Ballyhaunis Library

Like everybody else during these Covid-19 times, we at Mayo County Library have had to make many changes to the services we provide. It's been a bit of a roller-coaster – first we had to close, then we opened with a Call and Collect service (phone, email or message us on social media, order a bag of books or DVDs and arrange a collection time), and then we had to close again!

Throughout it all, our online services – including ebooks, audiobooks, newspapers, magazines and learning courses – have been open 24/7. All you need is a library card and PIN to access any of those services – and everything is free.

We've also had regular on-line story times for children on our Facebook page, and some Healthy Ireland talks on how to manage your wellbeing during this stressful time.

Local Link have been working with the library to deliver books to those who are cocooning during lockdown, and we continue to offer this service.

Memberships due to expire in the coming weeks have been extended, all items due back have been renewed and there are no fines!

We are looking forward to returning to normal opening hours in the near future but in the meantime why not check out our online services? You can join the library online and membership is free.

Any enquiries: Phone 094 9630161 / 094 9047940 or email efreyne@mayococo.ie. Follow the library on Facebook (@mayocountylibrary), Twitter (@mayolib) and Instagram (@mayocountylibrary).

Ballyhaunis Parish Choir

Monday nights were usually choir practice nights. Those winter nights when we tried to think up excuses to stay in by the cosy fire, instead of making our way to the gallery of the Parish Church. Those cold nights when we rehearsed hymns, both old and new, so that we would sing at our best the following Sunday. Little did we think, this time last year, that we would be wishing for those cold nights again!

2020 has indeed been a sad and strange year. In early February we had the honour of joining together with Gracenotes and Cois Cladaigh to sing at the funeral of our dear friend Laura Brogan. Laura was no stranger to the gallery in the Parish Church and she regularly sang at funerals in the parish. While Laura could not commit to singing with us full time, she always seemed to know when we would need an extra voice, and we appreciate the time she gave so generously.

Five weeks after Laura's funeral we found ourselves in lockdown, and as we know, gatherings for any reason, even Mass, were not allowed. Funerals were a family only affair. We were heartbroken when our good friend Fr. Cooney died, and we could not sing for him one final time. Little did we know back in March that this would be the case for the remainder of the year. We have missed being a part of so many 'final farewells.'

Happily, at the time of writing, we have begun to reintroduce music and singing at Mass on Sundays, albeit in a socially distanced manner, with five people in the gallery, three masked musicians and two singers. It is both a strange and a lonely experience. Our choir could have had up to twenty people singing on any given Sunday, and as you can imagine, it is a lot easier to fill the church with the sound of a full choir than it is with two singers. We hope and pray that we will be able to make a full return in the new year once it is safe for everyone to do so.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our musical director Moira Delaney. Moira has been busy over the past weeks organising singers for every Sunday, and also playing the part of one of the 'masked musicians' together with Ludmila Berkowska and Ita Fahey. We look forward to hearing more of your instrumental pieces, whether it is in the church or over the airwaves.

Members of Ballyhaunis Parish Choir presenting a donation to Mayo Roscommon Hospice, in memory of Laura Brogan.
L-R: Mary Patterson, Angelina Nugent (Mayo Roscommon Hospice), Mary Hannah O'Connor and Maureen Thornton.



Celebrating their birthdays in Scoil Íosa 1995 L-R: Fergal Walsh, Simon McDonagh, Brian Mulrennan. *Courtesy Mike Byrne.*



Johnny Biesty and Marian Cribben. *Courtesy Mike Byrne.*

Ballyhaunis Senior Infants Class 1984



St. Joseph's Convent Primary School – Senior Infants, 1984.

Back, L-R: Patrick Regan, Gerald Lyons, Conor McManus, Patrick Moore, John Nolan, Mark Neenan, Terry Maughan, Paul Morris, Seamas London. **Centre, L-R:** James McGarry, Sandra Walsh, Pauline Madden, Geraldine Maughan, Elaine Webb, Clodagh Lyons, Laura Lyons, Katherine Rabbitte, Simon McCafferty. **Front, L-R:** Paul Lyons, Brendan Moran, Rosemary Keaveney, Veronica Regan, Ian Webb, Aileen Nestor, Sinead Nevin, Miriam Lily, Mary Teresa Kelly, Patrick O'Dwyer, Brian Forde. *Courtesy Cáit Webb.*

Mission Circles

Murt Hunt

Learning of the disturbances this past year following the killing of black men in the USA, it made me think back to when I saw my first black man in my native town. He was a vet and came to Ballyhaunis many years ago to help out a local practice with the TB testing of cattle. The first time I saw him I stood in amazement as it was my first time to meet a black man face to face.

Of course I had seen pictures of black people in papers and magazines like *The Far East* and *The Messenger*, etc. Indeed, in later years I contributed many, many times to charities supporting black children in need in Africa, victims of famine, river blindness and other adversities, and to support Irish missionaries.

Whilst very young, in high infants, the nuns had cards with all our names and fifty little circles on them. Every time we brought in a penny we could stick a pin in a circle until all were completed. Then we could put a

name on a child in Africa and he or she would become our brother or sister. It was not easy for a country boy like myself to get a penny and the children of the doctors, shopkeepers, teachers and lawyers would have the cards filled first, but I personally tortured my poor parents and eventually got my card filled and got a brother in Africa whom I called John.

The Irish Missions to Africa have now gone full circle and, partly thanks to them we now have black priests administering in so many Irish parishes due to the scarcity of vocations in this country. But I will never forget my black brother John and hope he had a good life, and my dream is that maybe one of his descendants is one of the priests now helping out in one of our dioceses in Ireland.

This is one of a selection of letters Murt Hunt has contributed to The Sunday Independent.

Ballyhaunis Community Council

Mark Godfrey

As 2020 winds to a close the word processors at the Ballyhaunis Community Council have never been busier. Several of our core members are busy every week completing funding applications to regional and national bodies to pay for the renovation of Ballyhaunis Community Hall, known fondly as The Parochial Hall.

The approximately €10,000 raised this September by the 'Walk to New York' has been a giant contribution to the fundraising requirements for the hall and stands alongside another similar sum raised by our 'Ten for Ten' team of fundraisers this summer from generous private patrons nationwide with goodwill towards Ballyhaunis.

Funds are needed to match the €250,000 grant from the EU-funded LEADER Programme with an additional €135,000 being raised locally by the Community Council which has taken over the Ballyhaunis Community Hall on a 35-year lease.

The work is being carried out by Kilvine-based builder Cummins & Cummins and will see the extension of the building, widening of the stage, as well as a major overhaul of bathroom and kitchen facilities. New national regulations on low carbon heating and energy efficiency means the oil-fired boiler will be replaced by an air-to-water heat pump.

The generosity of the people of Ballyhaunis at home and abroad gives us great hope and satisfaction. We look forward to inviting you all to the unveiling of a refurbished Community Hall in 2021. Also giving us



Members of the Community Council in consultation with various contractors on the Hall project. Clockwise, from left: Gabriel Cummins (Cummins & Cummins Construction), Michael Kelly, Pat Lavin (Ecosmart energy consultant), Mary Donnelly, Kay Curley, Marie Cribbin, Mark Godfrey, James Donnelly (Donnelly Plumbing), Alma Gallagher.

much cause for optimism are the many calls from groups wanting to use the hall, alongside current users like sports and cultural groups as well as a full-time youth service funded by Foróige Ireland.

With our new website and logo now live and our largest project to date coming to fruition other members are busy trying to keep our other projects going. We'd like to extend the routes offered by the LocalLink rural transport service, which the Community Council promotes locally, while we look to our programme of activity for 2021. A major part of that will be establishing a group to oversee the running of the hall for the community.

While Covid-19 has limited our large-scale monthly meetings smaller groups continue to meet with contractors and work on funding as well as regulatory applications. An extended paperwork project, which has continued through the year, was our application for charitable status which we soon hope to secure from the Charities Regulator. The application process was very useful as it enabled us to set strategies and goals for our organisation.

Set up in 2001 as an umbrella body for community groups and engagement with local authorities, the Community Council is keen to get back to our public monthly meetings which offer a friendly exchange of news and views. We welcome everyone who wants to join. Contact us at:

ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com



The signing of the contract between the Community Council and Cummins & Cummins Construction for the Hall works. Standing, L-R: Kay Curley, Tom Finn, Michael Kelly, John Cribbin MCC, Eugene Waldron, Alma Gallagher, Mike Griffin. Seated, L-R: Mary Donnelly, Mark Godfrey, Gabriel Cummins. Photograph by Sylvia Buczak.

Friary Paintings – A Postscript

Last year's *Annagh* (2019) included an article called 'Father Foran's Friary Paintings'. A newspaper item has since been found that sheds further light on these works of art.

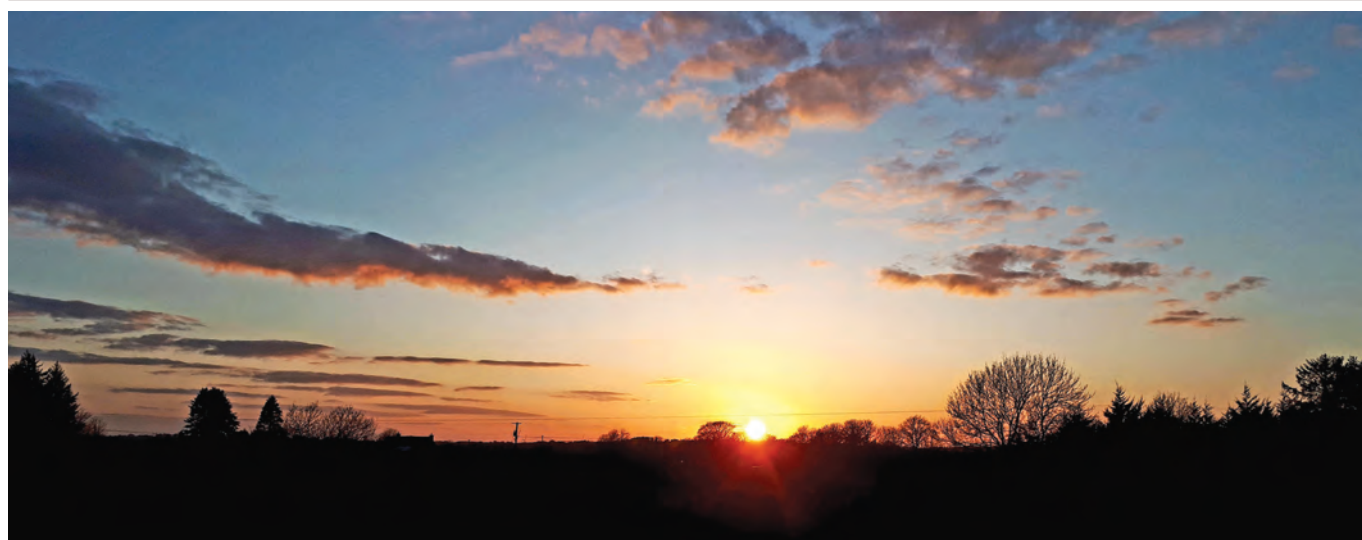
It states that the Friary church was re-opened on Sunday, 7th May 1911, after Fr. Foran's extensive renovations over the previous three years. High Mass was celebrated on that day and an article in the *Connaught Telegraph* of the following Saturday (13th May), dwells largely on the sermon delivered by Very Rev. P.F. Coakley, D.D., O.S.A. of Dungarvan on that occasion. Before Mass, however, the Stations of the Cross were blessed, and here the writer (unidentified, but almost certainly Dr. Michael F. Waldron of Knox St.) states that they were painted on copper, and that the beautiful carved oak frames – designed by Fr. Foran himself – were made by local carpenter James Infant.

James Infant was a remarkably gifted craftsman who lived in Abbey Street, Ballyhaunis and came from a long line of carpenters. The family lived in Clagnagh before that (inside the late Jim Morley's now unoccupied house) where his father Michael had his carpentry and wheelwright's workshop. His grandfather Johnny lived in Devlis (where Clarke's house is today). The late Gerry Dillon of Abbeyquarter, writing in an early *Annagh* magazine (1979), stated that, as well as being a carpenter, Johnny Infant used to pull teeth when required. This was in the days when dentists were few and far between.

James Infant's craftsmanship can be seen too in the Parish church, in the construction of which he was also involved in the early 1900s. He died in 1918 at the age of forty-seven and was an uncle of the late Jack Halpin, Main Street.



The seventh, eighth and ninth stations in the Stations of the Cross painted by Fr. E.A. Foran, with carved, oak frames made by James Infant of Abbey Street.



Gracenotes

Our choral year, which usually coincides with the beginning of the school year, has been like no other we have experienced thus far. The year began as normal in September 2019 when we gathered together on our usual Thursday night in the Parochial Hall and chatted and planned for the choral season stretching out before us. We welcomed some new members and were excited to be back. We were looking forward to tackling new music and pieces with gusto and revising some older familiar and favourite pieces. However, our year took on a trajectory which none of us expected or were prepared for. We had plans to take part in many choral events such as the Limerick Sacred Music Festival and Castlebar Choral Festival, and had also entered the Derry International Choral festival. However, it transpired that the only event we took part in was the hosting of our annual Christmas Concert in the Friary where we were joined by our friends from the Abbey Male Choir and Ballyhaunis Parish Choir, both directed by Moira Delaney. In truth, we were sailing our ship without our captain as Laura Brogan, our director and leader, was unable to be with us due to illness.

In February of 2020 Laura passed away. We were devastated to say the least and it is heart-breaking to think that we are now talking about her in the past tense. Laura was a founder member and choral director of our choir and she also sang in the past with *Cantóirí Béal Átha hAmhnais*. Music was her passion, her pastime and it played a huge part in her life. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis.*



Laura Brogan

Gracenotes have only met a handful of times since then. Like many other organisations and groups, any hopes we had of getting together were curtailed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Group singing in particular is considered challenging in terms of the transmission of the disease. When lockdown ended, it was not possible to engage in group singing while respecting social distancing guidelines. We do not know when we will get to sing collectively again but when we do, we know it will be difficult to sing certain pieces.

Always a firm believer and supporter of local charities, we wanted to honour Laura's passing by inviting members to donate to Mayo Roscommon

Hospice and collected €1,000 which was presented to Angelina Nugent of Mayo Roscommon Hospice in September 2020 by some long-standing members of Gracenotes.

In October, the Parochial Hall embarked on a fundraising campaign which included a virtual walk to New York which many of our members engaged in with considerable enthusiasm. In fact, some of us even walked back from New York (virtually of course)! We were happy to be associated with this experience and it gave us a chance to gather in the fresh air when we met outside the Parochial Hall to have our photograph taken to record our participation in the event. Not a note was sung but we all agreed that we dearly miss the weekly gatherings and the wonderful friends we have made through music and through Gracenotes.

As we approach another period of uncertainty in life as we know it, nobody knows where the future of singing collectively is heading. We remain hopeful that we will be allowed to participate in this activity which is highly beneficial for good mental health, good physical health, but most of all is good for the soul.



A deserted Knox Street, on a summer's evening 2020, at the height of the first Covid-19 Lockdown.



An Award for Tom Greally.

Tom Greally, who grew up in Drimbane and Devlis, and has for many years now lived in The Blue Mountains near Sydney, Australia, was this year presented at St. Gregory's College, NSW, with 'The Champagnat Award', named after the founder of the Marist Brothers, Marcellin Champagnat. Marcellin Champagnat started the order in Lyon around the time of the French Revolution. At St. Gregory's, the award has been presented annually for the past eleven years. The Award says that it has been awarded to Tom Greally in recognition of his 'strong mind and gentle heart demonstrated by his interaction with teachers and peers.' We are delighted to be able to include a photo of Tom with his Award in this year's Annagh Magazine.



Cian Curley, grandson of Rosaleen and the late Hugh Curley, Main Street and Derrymore, with his cousin Ailey Swann, granddaughter of Kay and Pat Curley of Hazelhill, are all excited with their copy of Annagh Magazine in London.



Martin Brennan (right) with Santa Claus and some of his elves, on a flying visit to Phillips' Bar, Christmas 2019.



Pictured at Ballyhaunis GAA grounds in the 1980s. L-R: Willie O'Boyle (Carrowkeel) and Mide Freeley (Central Hotel).



Greetings from Sydney!
Robert Grogan (Knockbrack), Laura Mullins Grogan (Dunmore) and Leah (aged 2).



Fr. John O'Connor O.S.A., Michael Waldron and Joe Hosty.

Who Do We Think We Are?

Ballyhaunis and The War of Independence

John Durkan

Introduction

In 2015, during a once-in-a-century spring cleaning of the Durkan household in Abbey Street (beside Londis), a letter turned up dated 1940. The three-page letter, written by my grandfather John Durkan (a Foxford native) mentioned how he had offered his support to the Old IRA. The period that he referred to was the War of Independence (1919-1921). In the letter he states that he had recently started a business in a rented premises, along with his newly-wed wife who was active in Cumann na mBan. He specifically recalled that in 1920 he was given instructions to have food ready for a group of men on the move from Ballinrobe to Ballaghaderreen via Ballyhaunis. The railway line passes behind the houses in Abbey Street and with easy access the men would jump off the train, on to the embankment, the engine driver having slowed down (police at station), come to the back window of his premises and give a pre-arranged tap on the window for admittance. On the night all was ready, but at the last minute the route was changed – the ‘Tans’ were active in the town.

By way of establishing his credentials my grandfather mentions that his premises were searched on various occasions and that he knew Michael Kilroy then (1920) the Commanding Officer in the West Mayo IRA. Kilroy was chairman of Mayo County Council (1934 -45) at the time of writing the letter. He finishes the letter by admitting that he had no proof of actually making (approximately) seventy sandwiches and that after twenty years of a gap his chances of getting paid were slim! He signed off with a reminder that he never looked for a military pension but that others (not named) did and got one for less activity. Having typed the letter, he never signed it and it was never posted. It was put away in an envelope unopened for seventy-five years.

The republican activities of John Durkan Snr. came as a great surprise to the younger generation of my family, but when the older members of the extended family were questioned the answer was, “I thought everyone knew about that.” This got me thinking: If I didn’t know this, what else is not known locally about that tumultuous period leading to the foundation of the state in 1922? Are there other local stories out there that need to be told? What was Ballyhaunis society like in the final years of British rule?

Annie Durkan (*née* Doyle), a native of Portarlinton and a milliner by trade, was a founder member of Cumann na mBan in Ballyhaunis and, upon her death in 1939, she made the national and local papers for her contribution to our path to independence. Ordinary men and women

doing extraordinary things. I wanted to find out more. What follows are my findings to date.

Methodology, Scope and Limitations

Before proceeding with the Literature Review – that is, what is already published on the topic – it is important to acknowledge the limitations of what could be a very extensive piece of research. Time is, as always, the enemy: Annagh Magazine, must be on the shelves by early December. Contributions from individuals/families and communities in the Ballyhaunis area to accompany this article are important otherwise this piece is nothing more than a rehash of material. None of us are getting any younger.

The timeframe is clear. This article mainly focuses on the events following the Easter Rising 1916 and leading up to the signing of the agreement in London in December 1921. Many local units of national and international organisations are mentioned in this piece. This, as the title states, is about the ordinary people of the Ballyhaunis area and how they coped with extraordinary events. Reilly (2014) chronicles events covering 1880- 1923 in the Ballina area. This piece starts at 1879 and finishes with Anglo Irish Agreement 1921.

Apart from visits to local libraries, most of this article is classified as ‘desk research’. Thanks to the internet a search with “Ballyhaunis and [topic]” invariably threw up an interesting match. A small number of publications will be quoted extensively and these will be cited under references below. Where possible, events will be described chronologically.

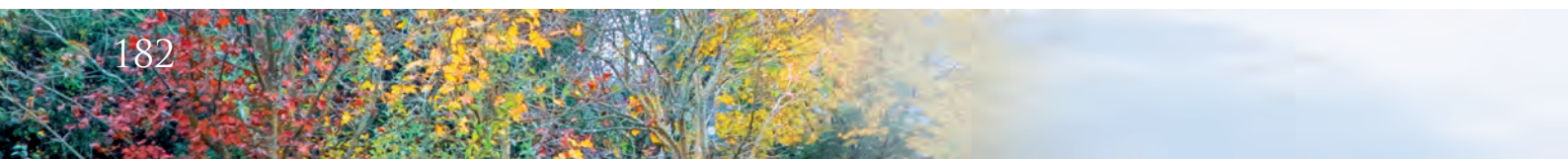
The aim of this article is to encourage the reader to submit their stories and those of their families and neighbours from this period.

The objective is to publish all relevant material in one volume in time for the 100-year anniversary of the founding of a brand-new state.

Literature review

Preview 1879 -1915

To set the scene for a review of the period leading up to independence a short description of County Mayo is useful. In 1879 the Land League held the first of its ‘monster meetings’ in nearby Irishtown, signifying the start of a major shift in land ownership, and in tandem, a push for Home Rule appeared on the political stage. That same year there was a very bad harvest and hunger stalked the land. Our Lady appeared in Knock. The oldest witness, Bridget Trench, spoke no English and the youngest, John Curry, spoke no Irish. This is significant



as in the late 1800s no Irish was taught in national schools and not until the turn of the century was it given some recognition (Bilingual Program 1904).

Many of the adults engaged in the War of Independence grew up in an environment where the essence of what it means to be Irish was almost extinguished. Thankfully, far-seeing people recognised the danger and the Gaelic Revival began. John Durkan Snr. died in 1970 without knowing a word of Irish. The GAA was founded in 1884 and soon every parish, Ballyhaunis included, had a team. Indeed, it's worth noting that because of the 'parish rule' exact boundaries had to be fixed for the first time. Ballyhaunis was to the fore on all fronts. The first ever Mayo County Feis was held in Ballyhaunis in 1903 (Annagh Magazine 2003/Paul Waldron). The attendees included Douglas Hyde and Padraig Pearse. The Land Purchase Acts of 1903 and 1909 finally allowed people to own farms and property. All across Ireland people saw themselves as having a future; a growing sense of personal and national identity emerged, and Ballyhaunis was no different. Communications with the wider world were opening up. The railways were largely all built and a post and telegraph system installed in all towns. Every national and international event of the next twenty years would influence Ballyhaunis in some way. *The Connacht Telegraph* (Saturday, 20th April 1912) reported on the sinking of the Titanic: "From every district in Mayo emigrants were drowned, large numbers of them being from the Castlebar and Ballyhaunis Districts." Similarly, the sinking of the Lusitania (7th May 1915) records that Delia Kilkenny and her cousin Hannah Cunliffe, both from Aghamore, Ballyhaunis were on board. Delia was saved but Hannah drowned.

1916- 1921

This short period defines Irish history like no other. It is bookended by the events of Easter Week, Monday, 24th April 1916, mainly in Dublin, and ends with the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty on the 6th December 1921. The events of 100 years ago sparked a raft of publications at national level on the events of this period. More significantly publications relating to events in each county emerged and it is from these that much of what follows is based.

Works based on the interviews of Ernie O'Malley (*The Men will Talk to Me*), Dominic Price's *The Flame and the Candle* and Bureau of Military History records all mentioned Ballyhaunis. Terry Reilly's *One Town, Three Wars & More* also contains references to Ballyhaunis mainly through the activities of Patrick Moylett. Finally, and crucially, it's worth noting that many contributors to *Annagh Magazine* in its early years were growing up during the War of Independence years and provide valuable insights into life in Ballyhaunis in the period under review.

Review of key publications

Reilly (2014) *One Town, Three Wars & More* provides an insight into the social and economic conditions of Ballina and Mayo over the period 1880-1923. Reilly sums up the scene: "On the one hand you had 'strong characters' emerging. People involved in the GAA, Gaelic League, national school teachers, others establishing units of the Volunteers and Cumann na mBan, all fostering the green shoots of nationalism. The country was marching to a more strident tune. The first wedges were being driven into the 'mighty plank' of the Empire. Alongside this emigration continued, terrible poverty existed, and in all the cut and thrust a new layer of social history had to be negotiated."

The Old Age Pensions Act 1908 (UK and Ireland) for the over 70s put money into people's pockets like never before. Emigrants' remittances in post famine Ireland were also having an effect. The war in Europe created a market for agricultural produce to feed the masses in England. Merchants with their legions of shop assistants serving their time were prospering. Ballyhaunis Parish Church was completed in 1909 thanks to extra money in circulation.

Reilly (p. 13) gives some background to the relationship between the Irish and crown forces. He reminds us that, starting in 1793, with some relaxation of the Penal Laws, Mayo men joined the ranks of the new militia. Their reward was a small wage, a family allowance and an opportunity to get around the country. Each county had to provide 300 (battalion strength), largely Catholic, young men. The officers were drawn from the landlord class. The 1798 rising was put down by 'red coats' many of them Irish sent to different parts of the country from which they themselves were born. Reilly quotes the legendary Tom Barry: "I wanted to see what war was like, to get a gun, to see new countries and feel like a grown man." The Crown got soldiers; the Irish served their 'apprenticeship'. By 1914 and the Great War, a complex relationship between the Irish and the Crown forces had developed. John Redmond's call to arms to further the advance of Home Rule added another dimension, a call not heeded by all. *The Western People* (Reilly 2014, p.105) complained that large numbers of men from families of means were buying passage to the USA from shipping agents in Mayo including Ballyhaunis – the threat of conscription was never far away.

Files from the Bureau of Military History provide a fascinating insight into the events of 1913-21. Ballyhaunis is mentioned in a number of files. A ninety-three page file detailing the activities of Patrick Moylett mentions Ballyhaunis frequently over the first twenty pages or so before describing events in County Galway. I am giving this file the label 'Patrick Moylett (1952)' for reference purposes.

How did Patrick Moylett, a Ballina native, come to

play such an important part in Ballyhaunis life? Reilly (2014, p.42) explains that he initially set up John and Ellie (his sister) Nixon in a shop in Ballyhaunis but later bought them out and ran it himself.

The file starts with (p.1), “In July 1914, the day after the landing of guns at Howth, and the shootings at Bachelors Walk, I sent a letter to Michael Delaney asking him to call a meeting of the Volunteers that night in Ballyhaunis in Donnellan’s Hall (over Gills Bar). Maloney, a chemist, was appointed secretary”. He goes on to say that for a while the organisation flourished but then the split came and almost the whole membership went over to the Redmond side. He remarks that following the declaration of war, “only myself and Paddy Waldron, the coach builder, remained. Within a week we got three more recruits, the two Waldron brothers, blacksmiths, and George Delaney, who was working with Michael Delaney, no relation of his” (p.2). The Redmondites sent men (outsiders) to intimidate Moylett and his customers. Maloney got him in contact with The O’Rahilly to purchase guns for Ballyhaunis. Emmet Dalton arrived into the shop with guns but no ammunition. An Orangeman in Belfast supplied the ammunition. He was now coming to the notice of the authorities. A visit by British Admiralty/Atlantic Fleet, who were customers of his, prompted the reply: “I had a country before I had a business. That is all of my business I shall discuss with you”, and a lucrative contract lost. This was not a very auspicious start but this was to change after 1916. Post 1916 and the release of volunteers from prison in 1917, support began to grow in Ballyhaunis. A large poster appeared in the shop window “Recruits taken here for the IRA”. A van painted green white and yellow toured the country (p.6). Moylett got in trouble for selling Griffiths’ “Nationalist” newspaper (nobody else would). A meeting in Moylett’s Hall in Ballyhaunis (p.10) to organise Sinn Féin saw a huge swing to the nationalist cause, and the Redmondite Party ceased to exist. The hall became a centre for many activities. The Volunteers and the Gaelic League used it for fund-raising dances – with the RIC watching and questioning as usual... and so it went on. The file finishes (p.92) with Moylett recounting how he was in Portobello Barracks, Dublin, to get a permit for 1,000 gallons of petrol. He met Collins who informed him that he was going to Cork to reason with ‘the lads’. He was dead three days later. Moylett, recognising that new people were taking over with a different perspective, never got involved in post-Independence activities. He moved to Dublin and set up a successful fruit wholesaling business post-Independence. Jack Halpin (*Annagh 1989*) helpfully refers to Moylett’s Hall as ‘Moylett/McGarry’.

The above extracts are from a government file and written in a certain style. Ernie O’Malley’s (2014) *The Men Will Talk to Me* is much gives more graphic account

of ‘everyday’ events in Mayo and Ballyhaunis. O’Malley had the foresight to interview key activists from the period and put on record their experiences. The publication opens with a table of events around Mayo from 1918 onwards. Below are the entries concerning Ballyhaunis.

1918	
Dec.14	All four Mayo constituencies return Sinn Féin TDs in General Election. East: E. de Valera; North: Dr. J Crowley; South [Ballyhaunis]: W.Sears; West: J.McBride.
1919	
May.17	First of the Dáil Courts set up in Ballinrobe [same constituency as Ballyhaunis]
June.19	Dáil Courts officially approved for rest of country
July.4	Sinn Féin, the Irish Volunteers, Cumann na mBan and the Gaelic League were declared illegal in County Tipperary – whole country soon afterwards (including Ballyhaunis)
1920	
Apr.4	Ballyhaunis: IRA attack RIC patrol, two wounded, while in the process of raiding the Excise office.
Apr.20	Two RIC wounded while leaving a dance at Aughamore near Ballyhaunis
Aug.1	Near Ballyhaunis, IRA attack lorry of soldiers, three wounded. Train hijacked/steel shutters dumped in a bog at Began station.
Aug.2	Holywell ambush. Five soldiers and Cmdt. Patrick Kenny wounded.
Aug.22	Sean Corcoran, East Mayo IRA, seizes weapons from Ballyvary RIC barracks.
Sept.15	Michael Glavey killed in attempt to burn down Ballinlough RIC barracks. Funeral from Gorthaganny Church to Ballyhaunis Cemetery for burial in family plot.
1921	
Mar.29	IRA man James Mulrennan wounded at Kilmovee. Constable William H. Stephens killed in Ballyhaunis.
Apr.1	IRA man Sean Corcoran killed at Crossard, Ballyhaunis, and Maurice Mullins arrested. IRA man Michael Coen killed at Lecarrow, Ballyhaunis.

1921	<i>continued</i>
May. 24	General Election results. South Mayo/Roscommon: T. Maguire, H.Boland, W.Sears, D.O'Rourke.
May.27	Captain Paddy Boland O/C Crossard Coy, Ballyhaunis, killed.
June.16	Ballyhaunis RIC Barracks attacked by the IRA.
July.11	Truce between IRA and British forces comes into effect.
Dec.6	Anglo Irish Treaty signed in London

Tom Maguire (p.218) recalls that Dr. Dalton (of Ballyhaunis) wrote to him enquiring after his health. He also recalls (p.210) the following: "In Crossard off Ballyhaunis they were preparing for a meeting and they had left a house in Crossard. The men [were] ready to move on when they ran into a lorry of British soldiers who called on them to halt; and they fought. Maurice Mullins, Larganboy, was wounded and taken prisoner. Sean [Mullins] was killed. This was a big loss (Paddy Mullins was his brother) to County Mayo". John 'Johnny' Greally and Tom Carney are the main witnesses for East Mayo. John Greally (1894-1979) gives his address as: Cloongawnah, Shanwalla, Tooreen, Aughamore. He joined the Volunteers in 1914 and later the IRB. Dismissed from the Dept. of Agriculture in 1919 while he was part of the Crossard Company, 4th Battalion of the East Mayo Brigade, he went on the run and participated in many local actions in East Mayo during the Tan War.

He recalls an incident (p.218): "Sean Corcoran the O/C of the Brigade was laying an ambush with me. Maurice Mullins came to see me, to alert us that the RIC had rushed the sheds in Ballyhaunis where the lads were drilling and they arrested fifteen of the men. Sean Corcoran wanted the peeler shot, "if you can't get Slattery get Stephens. We got the Tan [in Knox Street] but then heard that Curley's house was to be burnt (p. 284). Sean Corcoran and Maurice Mullins were supposed to defend it but they ran into a patrol of Tans. His revolver jammed and he was shot dead. Mullins, who was unarmed, was almost beaten to death. He was thrown on top of the dead Sean Corcoran in the turf house in the barracks [in Ballyhaunis]. The house was burnt by the Scottish Borderers (p. 287). Two girls were taken out of the house first and all in the village rounded up. They had information (spies) that myself, Paddy Boland, Padraig Forkan, a Gaelic Teacher, Austin Kenny and Jim Kilkelly, were in hiding. They got a warning from a young boy but it was too late – Paddy Boland was killed with bayonets."

He goes on to describe the horrible death of Michael Coen and gives the [Loughnane] brothers in Galway a

mention who also got a similar terrible death. Greally mentions a 'peeler' by the name of Flynn who said he would give information if his pension was guaranteed safe by Michael Collins as he was near retirement. He goes on to recount various events in Ballyhaunis concerning the RIC. Moylett's Hall was taken over by RIC at weekends for instance. In the middle of this mayhem Greally got Sundays off and went home but trouble was never far away. The RIC also drank in the pubs of Kilkelly, Aghamore and Ballyhaunis. He mentions events at Cloonbook (p.286) and the holding up of a train with steel shutters at Began station [for sealing windows and doors against attack] bound for Westport [RIC Barracks]. The steel was buried in a bog.

Gradually, the RIC [and Tans] closed rural barracks and operated out of towns. Crossard, Ballyhaunis, Logboy, Aghamore, Coolgarra, Kilkelly, Brickeens [sic] are listed as RIC Barracks. Following the deaths of Sean Corcoran, Micheal Coen, Paddy Boland and the burning of Curley's house, local people stiffened their resistance. Priests including Fr. Garvey, Fr. Hugh Curley and Canon McHugh cautioned against loose talk (p.289). Greally goes on: "Republican Courts were held in my own parents' house in Aghamore, and we would enforce the decrees of the Sinn Féin Courts held in Ballyhaunis."

In contrast to O'Malley's very personal interviews with the men doing the fighting *The Flame and the Candle* (2012) gives a political perspective on the events of the period as well as recognising the activities of the IRA engaged in armed conflict with crown forces. A breakdown (p.292) of the structure of the East Mayo Brigade is given. There is no mention of Sean Corcoran (RIP). East Mayo Brigade staff: Officer Commanding Patrick Mullins. 1st Battalion [Swinford] OC Patrick Finn. 2nd [Ballaghaderreen] OC Patrick Cassidy. 3rd [Bohola and Kiltimagh] OC Sean Walsh. 4th [Ballyhaunis] OC Paddy Kenny, Vice OC Dominic Byrne, Adjutant Austin Kenny, Quartermaster Patrick McNieve. The source is cited as: Grothier, Noelle & Kinsella, Anthony (eds.), 'IRA Officers and Units, 11 July 1921: the Bureau of Military History', *The Irish Sword* (Winter 2010). Reilly (2014, p.262) mentions that Captain Micheál Ó Cleirigh, a native of Cussalough, near Ballyhaunis was transferred from Athleague (where he was active) to Ballina to help with a necessary reorganisation of the North Mayo Brigade. He mentions that he was a senior figure in both the IRA and Sinn Féin.

As mentioned, Mayo elected four TDs in 1918. By the time the Dáil (p.16) sat only Dr. Crowley from North Mayo was present. Eamon De Valera, Mayo East, Joseph MacBride, Mayo West and William Sears, Mayo South [including Ballyhaunis] were all recorded as '*Fe ghlais ag Gallaibh*' (under lock and key of the British).

Reports

The RIC Inspectors' reports noted that there was little activity in Mayo in the first half of 1919 beyond training and collecting arms (p.16) but notes (p.17) that there were Sinn Féin meetings in Ballyhaunis, Crossmolina, Westport, Foxford and Keellogues to demand the release of prisoners. Mayo South included Ballinrobe, Claremorris and Ballyhaunis. East Mayo comprised the rest of the towns and villages. The 'IRA East Mayo' did not include Knock (South Mayo/IRA). Eamon De Valera stood for East Mayo and was elected but did not represent Ballyhaunis (South Mayo/MP). Ballyhaunis and Aghamore areas were reclassified 5th Battalion South Mayo IRA between 11th July 1921 and 1st July 1922.

The RIC County Inspectors report on political organisations in County Mayo January 1919 (p. 17) is inserted here as it will be useful for making comparisons with branches in Ballyhaunis. This will be dealt with in a section of its own below.

No	Name of Organisation	No. of Branches	Membership
1	Irish Volunteers	19	2,280
2	National Volunteers	47	3,692
3	United Irish League	53	3,966
4	Gaelic League	16	649
5	A.O.H	32	1,661
6	I.A.A	5	302
7	G.A.A	15	819
8	Irish National Foresters	3	412
9	Sinn Féin Clubs	68	6,613
10	Gaelic Club	1	30
11	Town Tenants	4	182
12	Cumann na mBan	10	346
13	I.R.B	1	10
14	I.T.G.W Union	12	2,741

This list is probably not accurate as regards numbers as the information was gathered covertly. Neither is it complete: The Irish White Cross (see below), set up in 1921, distributed millions of dollars, collected in America. It was a lifeline to destitute people and all sides were helped post-Independence. Also, we know that Ballyhaunis and other Mayo towns had a branch of the Irish Drapers' Assistants' Association (IDAA). John and Annie Durkan were presented with a clock (still working) on the occasion of their marriage. Reilly (2014, p.111) gives this organisation a mention in relation to the recently introduced Thursday 'half-holiday'. The shop owners resisted and the shop boys appealed directly to customers not to buy drapery on Thursday afternoons. Normal life goes on.

The following passage (Reilly 2014, p.186) conveys the mood in the final weeks before the treaty is signed in London 6th December 1921: "On 20th November 1921, almost a year after Bloody Sunday, a republican celebration was held in the Fair Green, Ballyhaunis in East Mayo. The meeting was chaired by William Coyne, local solicitor, and now Chairman of Mayo County Council. Conor McGuire had resigned from the post as he was on the run and working for Dáil Éireann elsewhere. In attendance were General Sean Mc Eoin TD, Commandant General Tom Maguire, William Sears TD, Tom Derrig TD and Dr Michael Waldron, President of the South Mayo Courts".

All of the speakers spoke with feeling about the events of the last few years and reminded the crowd of the brutal deaths of Paddy Boland and Michael Coen. All the speakers were of the one mind – an Irish Republic was the way forward (p.187). Christmas 1921 (p.197) saw the welcome return of more than fifty IRA prisoners to Ballyhaunis, Claremorris, Castlebar and Westport. In many places they were welcomed with torchlight parades and accompanied by marching bands from the railway station.

All of the above sources are written by men about men. McCarthy (2007) in *Cumann na mBan and the Irish Revolution* adds a valuable contribution to a neglected part of our history, namely the role of women. Founded as a support group for the Irish volunteers in 1914 its aims centred on arming Irishmen, generating propaganda and presenting a united Irish opposition to British rule. At national level (and local) their role and individual stories have all but disappeared with time. Because the organisation was linked to the Volunteers its participation in the 1916 Rising was limited. It only came into its own post 1916. Many of the women already had male members of the family in the Volunteers and possibly younger brothers in Na Fianna. The bonds of trust were strong. Mayo with ten (rising to eleven) branches and 346 members was one of the strongest counties. Donegal with nineteen branches and over 600 members stands out. It's possible that Ballyhaunis had in the region of twenty members. By November 1918 the organisation was declared illegal and had to go underground (p.160). The organisation, nationally, worked closely with the Irish White Cross (see below) as did Ballyhaunis.

The Flame and the Candle finishes with the arrival of the Civic Guards in Mayo towns and villages. In Ballyhaunis Sergeant O'Leary and Guards Foley, Murphy, Duggan, Piggot and McMahon settled into the old RIC barracks. The Guards quickly provided the presence of authority that was missing during the war years (p.271). They could also resort to brute force when all else failed: "Rigorous baton charges were called for during rioting in Ballyhaunis after an athletic and cycling event on 13th July 1924". Society was adjusting to the

'new normal' now that the British were gone. It was up to us to make a go of it. We had to change from being a colony and begin the long journey to becoming a modern country.

The Clubs and Societies of Ballyhaunis

In the middle of all of the military activity and political machinations people had to get on with life as best they could. People like to feel part of a bigger group and many joined societies that reflected their views on Ireland and the wider world at the time. As mentioned above the RIC report 1919 is a good guide as to activity in Mayo and Ballyhaunis.

Irish Volunteers: From Patrick Moylett's account of Ballyhaunis post 1914 we know that the Volunteers were active in Ballyhaunis. Sinn Féin also had its own club.

Gaelic League: An account of the 1903 Feis (above) gives us an indication that Ballyhaunis was strongly involved.

G.A.A.: Somehow in the middle of all this upheaval the Ballyhaunis GAA club were having what might be described as a 'good war.' Throughout the period covering World War 1 and the War of Independence Ballyhaunis contested the county final against the Ballina Stephenites in 1914, 1915, 1918 (played in Swinford in June 1919) – losing them all. Later in 1919 Ballyhaunis met the Stephenites and finally had their day. Interestingly Ballina Stephenites were crowned County Champions in 1920 but it appears to have been uncontested. There was no championship in 1921/22/23. This possibly indicates that society was in turmoil. Ballyhaunis won the last contested county final prior to independence. As noted above the county had fifteen clubs in 1919. It's worth noting that, post-independence, Castlebar Mitchells took over our mantle of challengers before, finally, in 1958 Ballyhaunis triumphed over the Stephenites again.

A.O.H. (Ancient Order of Hibernians): Gerry Dillon (Annagh Magazine 1979) mentions that while the Boy Scouts were route marching to Holywell, the Hibernians were training in the convent grounds. One of the lesser known groups was the Hibernian Rifles with links to the A.O.H. They had no uniform and no guns (initially) so were not as popular as the volunteers, for instance.

Cumann na mBan: McCarthy (2007) admits that it is very difficult to give accurate numbers regarding membership. Formed in Wynn's Hotel, Dublin on the same night as the Volunteers this organisation was entirely run by women (unique in Europe at the time). Their brief was to act as backup to the volunteers in the areas of first aid and messengers. Mayo with ten branches and 346 members was considered active. No numbers are given for individual branches, but Ballyhaunis was to the fore. Cumann na mBan gave assistance to the wounded men in the Holywell ambush. Nationally many women carried

out work so secretly, they could not be associated with any organisation. That caused problems when it came to awarding military pensions later as they had no one to vouch for them. Telephonists, for example, could listen in on telephone conversations and pass on information to possibly one other person who then had to protect their sources. In many communities (McCarthy 2014, p.154) the women worked with parish councils to distribute Irish White Cross funds (see below). The Quakers, with their non-violent approach, could never *explicitly* thank Cumann na mBan! A strange but successful partnership.

I.T.G.W.U.: With twelve branches and almost 3,000 members in Mayo it can be assumed that Ballyhaunis, with its shop boys and various trades, had a union presence. The railway station (Midland and Great Western Railway) and its staff were members of the National Union of Railwaymen, so union activity was guaranteed. We know they co-operated with the IRA from the John Durkan Snr. letter. Helene O'Keeffe (2020) in *The 1920 Munitions Strike: "An unusual kind of strike"*, on RTÉ 1 describes a facet of the struggle for independence.

<https://www.rte.ie/history/munitions-strike/2020/0415/1130693-the-1920-munitions-strike-an-unusual-kind-of-strike/>. The train drivers, taking their lead from ITGWU in Dublin docks, refused to handle munitions. They got no support from their (British based) NUR and had to rely on goodwill and fundraising at local level. Over 1,000 were fired. All lines into and out of Claremorris were 'goods only'. The webpage recounts this: "Countrywide branches of the ITGWU supported the rail workers and money came in from unions of porters, printers, bootmakers, tailors, silk weavers and even the National League of the Blind. A chapel gate collection at Clonbroney, Co. Longford, yielded £7 and the proceeds of a raffle and dance at Ballyhaunis amounted to £23". The hated Sir Hamar Greenwood admitted the strike made a real difference. This from a man who, for a while, brought a new word into everyday language: 'to tell a Hamar/lie.' Yet again Ballyhaunis makes the headlines.

The practice of serving of serving one's time was the route to eventually setting up one's own business. Ballyhaunis had a branch of the IDAA as already mentioned.

Na Fianna Éireann (The Fianna of Ireland) was an Irish nationalist youth organisation founded by Bulmer Hobson and Constance Markievicz in 1909. Na Fianna members were involved in the setting up of the armed nationalist body the Irish Volunteers, and had their own circle in the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). They took part in the 1914 Howth gun-running and (as Volunteer members) in the 1916 Easter Rising. They were active in the War of Independence. Reilly (2014) mentions that they were often used as lookouts while the Volunteers were training.

In Ballyhaunis Gerry Dillon (Annagh Magazine 1979)

recalls all the local boys joining the Boy Scouts (almost definitely **Na Fianna**) and marching out to Agloragh, through Holywell and back to town by the Clare Road. He mentions Felix Murray, who lived over today's Curley's jewellery shop, as the man in charge. Felix Murray was killed in Mount Devlin (age 34) later. Upon reaching the age of seventeen a boy could voluntarily transfer to the Volunteers.

The **Irish White Cross** was established on 1st Feb. 1921 as a mechanism for distributing funds raised by the American Committee for Relief in Ireland. It was managed by the Quaker businessman, and later Irish Free State senator, James G. Douglas. The White Cross continued to operate until its books were officially closed in 1928. Wealthy Irish Americans contributed millions of dollars. Westminster wanted it stopped but Washington warned of political repercussions and USA involvement in Europe. From 1922 its activities were essentially wound down and remaining funds divested to subsidiary organisations. The longest running of these aid committees was the Children's Relief Association which distributed aid to child victims of this troubled period, north and south of the border, until 1947.

World War I participants and survivors. Finally, it would be remiss of me not to give a mention to a cohort of people that had to exist 'under the radar' during this period: that is the participants in World War I. The website 'On a street near you' lists over twenty men with Ballyhaunis addresses who lost their lives in that conflict. With the exception of one grave in the Abbey and one in the New Cemetery all are buried in various war graves in Europe. Many heeded John Redmond's call to fight for Home Rule, some went out of sheer economic necessity. Very few fought 'for' the British. Ballyhaunis was initially very pro the Redmond path but all that changed as noted above. As to the survivors, they came home to a different Ireland and had to suffer in silence. *The Mayo News* (8th Nov. 2018) quotes Michael Feeney, the driving force behind the initiative to remember this group: "They say that generally eight to ten people served for every one that died." The Mayo Peace Park in Castlebar lists almost 1200 from the county with more being added all the time.

Another great international military event of the period was the mutiny of the Connacht Rangers in India (1919). Ballyhaunis seems to have very little direct links with this regiment but at least three soldiers involved are listed as Claremorris men. This event hardly went unnoticed in Ballyhaunis.

The other significant international event of the period was the arrival of the **Spanish Flu** in Mayo - probably from the trenches of World War I. Tom Shields (*Connaught Telegraph*, 1st Apr. 2020) writes about this pandemic and notes the first cases of the disease were reported on the small island of Achill Beg (now deserted) off Achill Island.

<https://www.con-telegraph.ie/2020/04/01/recalling-another-pandemic-spanish-flu-and-its-impact-in-mayo/>. In July 1918 *The Mayo News* reported that, 'an influenza epidemic is raging on the island' and that there were three fatalities. Later in November 1918 the same paper reported that forty people required medical assistance in the Ballyhaunis area. Unfortunately, the desired treatment was not available due to a shortage of skilled personnel and public resources. Nationally, schools were closed throughout the outbreak as authorities embarked on flu containment measures. Dances were also cancelled (Reilly 2014, p.278) and musicians complained about loss of income. Sounds familiar. An estimated 21,000 people died in Ireland from the flu.

I started this piece outlining the reasons for prompting me to look further. I also came across this:

MRS. A. J. DURKAN Mrs. Annie J. Durkan, wife of Mr. John Durkan, merchant, who died at her residence in Abbey Street, Ballyhaunis, yesterday, gave distinguished national service. Early in 1917 she founded the Ballyhaunis and District branch of Cumann na mBan, and as divisional leader she displayed great ability and courage through the most trying period until the Truce of 1921. She took a leading part in the anti-conscription campaign in 1918 and controlled over 200 members of Cumann na mBan in first-aid work. In 1918 she led 600 members of her association in a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock, organised under the joint auspices of Sinn Féin and Cumann na mBan. In 1920 she was presented with the Tara Brooch by the Irish White Cross and an accompanying letter signed by the late Countess Markievicz, T.D., and Mr. William Sears, T.D. A member of the Doyle family of Portarlinton, *The Irish Press*, Mon. 30th Oct 1939, p. 2.

This is the story of Ballyhaunis and of my grandparents one hundred years ago. I would like to hear other stories from this period. The Bureau of Military Archives is releasing new material at the time of writing. In the late 1930s the new state began to ask former officers for names of people involved for pension proposes. It seems that almost every family had some involvement. More work needs to be done to collect all relevant information relating to Ballyhaunis and the War of Independence into one publication.

Conclusion

As is invariably the case when writing a piece like this perception and reality turn out to be different. My own perception was that Ballyhaunis and East Mayo was something of a backwater in the struggle for Independence and that, apart from a few well-known incidents, nothing much happened. This is far from the

case. Ballyhaunis was no backwater.

We always had a rebellious streak it seems. Thomas Keneally (1998, p.32) *The Great Shame: And the Triumph of the Irish in the English-Speaking World*, noted that following news reaching Ireland detailing the harsh treatment that the Young Irelanders were receiving in the penal colony in Tasmania: "Meetings of protest and support were held in London, Cork, Limerick, Dublin, Ballyhaunis and Kerry. A group of a thousand met in New York with newspaperman Horace Greeley in the chair."

That our ancestors faced enormous challenges 100 years ago is an understatement. It's uncanny that we are once again dealing with a pandemic (Covid-19) and yet another change in our relationship with the U.K (Brexit). Let's take heart from the struggles of 100 years ago and get through this together.

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Tom Mullen, Cloonbulban, Began: the last working Blacksmith in the locality, pictured in 1999. He died in 2002 aged 86.

Tom was a third generation blacksmith, he took over from his father Mike, whose father Thomas came to Cloonbulban from Irishtown.

Original image courtesy Mike Byrne, colourised by Sinead Mallee.

Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce committee, 1983.

Standing, L-R: Barry Butler, Pat Martin, Donal Ahern.
Seated: Kathleen Caulfield, John Dillon-Leetch, Mary Kelly.





John O'Brien (Main St.), left, and Joe Conway (Clare St). *Courtesy Eamon Murren.*



Broddie Conway (left), late of Bridge St. (father of Mary, Heather, John and Brian), with Maud Donegan (née Conway), late of Mannin, Aghamore and Dublin, and Jim Mulligan, late of Hazelhill and Canada (right). The child is Noreen Byrne Golden, late of Bridge St. and Cambridge, England. Photograph taken at Conway's farm, Mannin, circa 1941. *Courtesy Rita Byrne.*



Above: Kevin Barry, Main Street. **Right:** Tom Buckley (Abbeyquarter) pictured on Abbey Street in the early 1990s. *Courtesy Eamon Murren.*

Below: Molly O'Dwyer and Mary Dillon-Leetch at the Ballyhaunis Seniors Citizens party, Christmas 1979 in the Parochial Hall. *Courtesy Rita Byrne.*



Bottom right: From left, Annie Donoghue, Molly O'Dwyer, Molly Murray, unidentified, Florrie Morris listen to Jimmy Noone, in typical pose, singing 'My Genevieve' at the Ballyhaunis Seniors Citizens party, Christmas 1979 in the Parochial Hall. *Courtesy Rita Byrne.*



1984 G.A.A. Centennial Flight

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Gerry Lyons
SEc Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club

Knockbrack
Ballyhaunis
Co Mayo, IRELAND.

Dear Gerry,

On behalf of the club members and myself our grateful thanks to you and your club members for the generosity and kindness to all of us during our recent visit.

Game in your clubs playing facility and the delicious dinner at the Central Hotel, followed by the evening at Val Rattigans was indeed one of the many highlights of our memorable tour

To you and all of your hospitable friends a sincere Thank You from all.

Gratefully

John J. Fitzgerald
John J. Fitzgerald

{ Tour Chairman }.



Maisin Meath, Clare Street, at St. Patrick's Church, while the construction of the Millennium Spire was in progress, 1999. Courtesy Mike Byrne.

Above: A letter of acknowledgement from the Mayo Football Club of New York following their visit to Ballyhaunis during the GAA Centenary year, 1984. Courtesy Gerry Lyons.



Attending a Ballyhaunis GAA function in the 1960s. Clockwise from left: Bertie Curley, Mick Tarmey, Mick O'Connell, Pat Rattigan, Bob Fox, Joe Webb.



Annie Fleming (Pollnacraoghy), left, and Annie Simms (Tooraree). Photograph taken on Knox Street in 1989. Courtesy Eamon Murren.



Ballyhaunis GAA – At the Heart of Our Community

It is true to say that every area of society was impacted by the Pandemic of 2020. At Ballyhaunis GAA Club we are proud to have played our part in helping to make life more manageable for the most vulnerable in our community and for those worst affected by Covid-19. Ballyhaunis GAA Club was quick to respond to the crisis and encouraged people to look out for one another and urged everybody to support local shops and businesses. Members made themselves available to anyone in the community in need of assistance during these difficult times and invited people to contact the club, in confidence, on any of our designated phone numbers. Club members volunteered to help anyone in need of assistance with collection and delivery of items such as groceries, prescriptions or fuel.



Breda Caulfield of Ballindrehid (right) winner of the Ballyhaunis GAA Trolley Dash, pictured with Mary Nolan of SuperValu (sponsors).

people of Mayo for the past fifty years. Teresa Ward, of Western Care, thanked Ballyhaunis GAA for playing a vital role in helping the organisation and making a real difference to the lives of the people they support.

Ballyhaunis GAA Club was happy to nominate the local branch of St. Vincent de Paul as the recipient of a large trolley of groceries as part of our fundraising Trolley Dash run in conjunction with Nolan's SuperValu on 1st August. The event was won by Breda Caulfield of Ballindrehid who was

joined in the dash by finalists John Jordan of Tully and Maura Murphy of Ballindrehid. Ballyhaunis GAA would like to thank new owners Mary and Jeff Nolan of Nolan's SuperValu for their generous sponsorship of this event.

Underage Football

Despite a very bleak start to the sporting year due to lockdown and the belief that our young players wouldn't get much ball time this year, 2020 finished up better than expected! Training for our U6, U8, U10, U12 and U13 players recommenced in late June. Our U12 team did very well in the Autumn League with sterling performances against Aghamore, Kiltimagh, Swinford and Davitts. Unfortunately, there were no fixtures for our U8 and U10 players but the huge progress that they continue to make was very evident in the many challenge matches organised by their coaches and the future of our club looks bright.

Great credit is due to our underage players for their dedication at training, at matches and the home practice which was so important this year. Bord na n-Óg would like to sincerely thank Pete Higgins and the groundsmen who always ensure that our playing pitches are in pristine condition. We are very fortunate to have some of the best facilities in Mayo at our disposal.

Sincere thanks to all the parents and coaches who give so generously of their time. Without them it simply wouldn't be possible to continue with our club activities.



Pictured at the Western Care presentation of PPE were, from left: Maureen McMahon, Keith Higgins, Tomás Murphy, Eimear Dooley, Gerry Lyons and Tommy Caulfield and Teresa Ward. Photograph by Robbie Herr.

Members of the Ballyhaunis GAA Club also visited the local Western Care Association in Clare Street early in May and delivered the first donation of Personal Protective Equipment to help in the fight against Covid-19. During the month of May, all proceeds from our weekly 50/50 draw were used to purchase PPE for Western Care Ballyhaunis. The staff at the centre, which works to empower people with a wide range of learning and associated disabilities in Co. Mayo to live full and satisfied lives as equal citizens, were very grateful for the generous and much needed donation from Ballyhaunis GAA.

Ballyhaunis GAA Chairman Gerry Lyons said that the club was happy to be able to help out and paid tribute to the wonderful work done by Western Care for the

Junior Football

The old adage that a silver lining can be found with every cloud is the very essence of how Ballyhaunis GAA Club formed and fielded a Junior team in 2020. Whilst repatriated at home in Upper Main Street from his teaching career in the deserts of Dubai, Liam 'Bomber' Lyons seized an opportunity to encourage adult men from eighteen to the northern end of forty years of age to return to playing Gaelic Football after we emerged from initial lockdown. Bomber had identified that as we headed into the summer months there were many local lads who had, like himself, returned home from various places around the country and beyond with ample time on their hands and an appetite for exercise. It began like a juggernaut. A training session was called in late June and almost thirty lads turned up. A mixture of men who hadn't played football in twenty years, guys who were trying to break into our Intermediate team and, for the most part, lads who just wanted to play football. It was a new lease of life for many at a time when outlets for sustaining positive mental health were minimal. Bomber insisted that football was to be made available to everyone. Game time in challenge matches for everyone was the main aim of the project - regardless of age, skill level or fitness. From July up until the end of September, Ballyhaunis Juniors played a match almost every week amounting to a tally in the double digits.

A challenge match with Charlestown was organised to give players a chance to blow away the cobwebs before we took on Aghamore in an exclusive East Mayo Junior competition. It was a memorable Sunday morning for the team and management. A superb second half comeback earned us an unlikely one-point victory over our local rivals on a final scoreline of 0-15 to 3-05. Suddenly, what had started out as a bit of fun and craic gained even further momentum. More players joined our ranks and we then realised that fielding a team on a regular basis would not be a problem so commonly experienced by other junior teams. In fact, this year we could have easily fielded a third competitive team as in excess of thirty men toggled out for most games. We followed the Aghamore win with a draw in a challenge against a strong Cortoon Shamrocks outfit on a rocky field between Dunmore and Tuam. Expectation was high going into our second group game of the East Mayo tournament against Kiltimagh, a game which was to be ultimately Bomber's final game at the helm before he flew back to his adopted home in Dubai. Played in Gilmartin Park, we needed to win or lose by no more than two points in order to progress to the knockout



Shane Healy, Conor Keane, Declan Doyle and Jarlath Carney of Ballyhaunis Junior Football team in action against Aghamore. Photograph by Ciara Buckley (*Memories thru a lens*)

stage. It was a match with all the elements you would expect between two clubs who know one another a very long time with intensity, physicality, hunger and passion all on show that night. Sadly, we came up short on this occasion losing by four points. Despite the loss of our manager and a sore defeat, the group was determined to push forward, continuing to train and improve. The baton was handed over to John Prenty Snr., Eamon Monaghan and William Nestor in Bomber's absence. We were also truly grateful to Kevin Gallagher for coming on board at this time to take training sessions which proved very beneficial to all players. We rattled off a series of challenge matches with wins against Eastern Gaels and Aghamore and a rematch with Cortoon in which we were overpowered. By this time we felt well equipped heading into the Canon Henry Cup opener against Kilmovee Shamrocks at the Centre of Excellence. It was a one-sided affair and advancing to the semi-final of the competition was not a major test. Prior to taking on Eastern Gaels in that semi-final we paid a visit to our near neighbours Michael Glavey's in Ballinlough where we won but made very hard work of doing so. Little did we know that the Canon Henry Cup semi-final would be our final fixture of the year as we had eagerly looked forward to competing in the Junior 'C' championship. We blitzed the Gaels inside the first ten minutes of the game, racking up 1-04 unanswered. However, the Began club settled into the game with youth and legs on their side. It went down to the wire but unluckily we fell short by two points. Since then we haven't been able to train or play due to Covid-19 restrictions. It was and has been a whirlwind experience and journey for all involved. It became more about being part of something positive and

energetic, rather than training incessantly without any joy. Yep, that's what Bomber achieved - he brought joy back into football for us.

The following is an attempt at naming all who participated in the Ballyhaunis Junior Football team 2020. Apologies for any omissions. Rob McCormack, Daniel Murray, Diarmuid Phillips, Enda Griffin, Declan Doyle, Piarais Caulfield, Brian Mulrennan, Jack McGoldrick, Darren Nolan, Adrian Phillips, John Gallagher, James Cribbin, James Lyons, Jarlath Carney, Mark Phillips, Shane Healy, Brian Gallagher, John Prenty Jnr., Gerry Burke, Ciarán Griffin, Conor Keane, Patrick Caulfield, Liam Herr, Niall Richardson, Eamon Monaghan, Padraig Cribbin, Sean Gildea, William Nestor, Dara Healy, Tayyab Idrees, Thaigh Morley, Ethan Keane, Zouhir Rahmani, Fergal Walsh, Gearoid Keane, David McNamara, Niall Prenty, Ryan Kilbane, Kevin Gallagher, Andy Cunnane, Jason McGoldrick, David Cunnane, Kurt Reinhardt, Oisín Henry, Ryan Worden, Tomas Murphy, Kieran McDermott, Sean Herr, Damien Egan, Barry Cribbin, Luke Walsh, James McDonagh, Michael Jordan and Kevin Kilbride.

WILLIAM NESTOR

Minor Football

In what proved to be a very stop-start year, our Minor Footballers commenced training at the end of February in anticipation of the start of the Minor league which commenced under lights out in the COE in Began on the 11th March in a game played in very poor weather conditions against Shrule-Glencorrib. On the night our lads adapted much better to the conditions and ran out comfortable winners. The following day the GAA ceased all training and playing activities which unfortunately for us meant the cancellation of the league.

The season then recommenced on 26th July with a

very competitive challenge game against a strong Michael Glavey's team at home in Ballyhaunis. From there it was straight into the championship where the team had two big wins, home and away, against Shrule and two narrow defeats to a strong Hollymount-Carramore side. After being declared East Mayo divisional champions the journey continued with a memorable county semi-final played on Friday, 4th September in ideal conditions against Crossmolina in Parke. And what a game it proved to be! Entering the final quarter and trailing by two points, a few tweaks were made to the team during the water break. Our lads then came out and proceeded to play like men possessed to come out on the right side of a 4-13 to 3-12 scoreline.

A week later on Friday, 11th September it was back to the COE in Began where it had all first began to play Hollymount-Carramore in what proved to be a very exciting County Final. Each and every one of our lads left everything on the field that evening, but came up just short against a highly fancied Hollymount-Carramore team.

This team, given the shortage of playing numbers, can feel immensely proud of what they achieved this year. From the first training session to the county final they gave everything in pursuit of bettering themselves as footballers. The future of Ballyhaunis football, judging on what we witnessed this year, is very bright and the management team of Kurt Reinhardt, Jason McGoldrick, John Prenty and John Higgins look forward to seeing these players representing the club at senior level in the not too distant future.

Minor panel: Dara Rattigan, Daniel Murray, Oisín Kelly, Jason Reinhardt, Clayton Nolan, Danny Hill, Martin McDonagh, Cian Walsh, Josh Webb, Shaun Morley, Diarmuid Phillips, Simon McDonagh, Kian Burke, Aidan Sloyan, Kevin Durkan.

JOHN HIGGINS



Ballyhaunis Minor Football team. L-R: Danny Hill, Kevin Durkan, Josh Webb, Cian Walsh, Daniel Murray, Dara Rattigan, Clayton Nolan, Aidan Sloyan, Kian Burke, Martin McDonagh, Oisín Kelly, Shaun Morley, Simon McDonagh, Jason Reinhardt, Diarmuid Phillips.



Ballyhaunis Intermediate Football team, 2020. *Back, L-R:* Daniel Murray, Diarmuid Phillips, Morgan Lyons, Gearoid Keane, Enda Griffin, Patrick Caulfield, Adrian Phillips, Kevin Byrne, Cormac Phillips, Kieran Kiely, Jason Coyne. *Front, L-R:* James Lyons, Brian Hunt, Conor Freeley, Liam Herr, Jack Coyne, Kevin Gallagher, Joe Sutton, Eoghan Collins, Callum Gardiner, David Cunnane, Keith Higgins.

Intermediate Football

2020 was one of the most difficult and challenging years in the history of the GAA. When I was appointed Senior Football Team Manager back in late January and met the players along with trainer/selector Seamus Curry on that winter's night in the clubhouse, little did we know what lay ahead. Former Ballyhaunis player Billy Lyons joined us on the management team in late February.

We started collective training in early February and with numbers very small we decided that we needed to buddy up with another club to get quality training with higher numbers. I made some enquiries locally and struck up a good arrangement with Michael Glavey's GAA in Ballinlough. We trained every second Tuesday night in Ballinlough and they came to Ballyhaunis every other week. This worked well for both clubs, with so many players away at work, college and involvement with intercounty football and hurling panels. It certainly is an arrangement that should be considered in the future.

We played the opening rounds of the Centenary Cup in late February with a win against Swinford, and a draw against Aghamore on a Friday night in March when we had some dual players back with us for the first time. With the Covid-19 pandemic starting to take hold there was a government decision to lockdown the country and the GAA shut down all activities until early July. When we returned, there were still restrictions and some new protocols to be observed such as players using the Covid app to log every training session for their own health and well-being and bringing their own water bottles. All footballs and equipment had to be sterilised before and after use and dressing rooms and clubhouses were out

of bounds for the year.

Teams toggled out by a wall or in the dugout. On our return to play in July, it was decided that there would be no county league football in 2020, so the only competitions were the Michael Walsh League, championship football and the completion of the Centenary Cup. In the Intermediate Championship we lost narrowly to Crossmolina by two points in our opening game. Ballinrobe beat us by a late goal and we suffered defeat again to a late, late goal from Lahardane. All these were lost at the death and as a result we found ourselves in a relegation semi-final against Islandeady. The lads played their best football of the year and we won this vital game by thirteen points.

This closed out the year for 2020 on the field of play. Unfortunately, this year luck was not on our side with the number of injuries we incurred over the overloaded season for such a strong dual club. Injuries to key personnel such as Keith Higgins, Morgan Lyons, Eamon Phillips, Brian O'Neill and Johnny Cunnane came at a critical point in the season. The one pleasing thing from the year was that the dual players got their hands on the T.J. Tyrell Cup, and hopefully in 2021 both teams can bring back both T.J. Tyrell and Sweeney Cups to the club and parish which, in itself, will not be an easy task!

Thanks to club officers for their support during the year and to Pete Higgins for having the grounds in top shape all year. All that is left for me is to wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas and continued good health and happiness in 2021. Stay safe, wash your hands and keep your distance.

JARLATH JENNINGS
(TEAM MANAGER)

Senior Hurling

2020 brought a new management team to Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling. Tadhg Buckley and Pierce Higgins were joint managers with a support group of J.P. Coen, Paul McConn, John Joe Hoban, Frank Browne, Kevin Morley, Trevor Kelly, Gary Conway and Peter Higgins. After a tough few years without winning a Senior County title, players and management were fully committed and determined to end that drought and bring back the T.J. Tyrell Cup back to Ballyhaunis soil.



Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling team joint captains, Adrian Brennan and Kieran Kiely, holding aloft the Tyrell Cup.

Thanks to Curley's Pharmacy for sponsoring a First Aid kit to the Senior hurlers.

Sat. 25th July: Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling team play Westport in Round 1 of the Championship in Westport. A fine performance from the lads with a winning score line of 2-15 -0-7pts.

Sat. 15th Aug.: Ballyhaunis defeat Castlebar in Round 2 of the Championship at home on an impressive score line of 0-21 to 1-09.

Sat. 12th Sept.: Ballyhaunis played Tooreen in the County Final in Tooreen on a wet and windy day. Despite the weather conditions the lads had the right attitude, work rate, discipline and desire to win which paid off when Ballyhaunis were crowned County Champions with a score line of 1-15 to 1-12. Well done to Damien Keadin who was named 'Man of the Match' on the day.

Unfortunately, due to Covid the season started very late in the year. The County Board decided at the start of the championship not to run the Connaught Championship for this reason.

Hurling Senior Panel: Adrian Brennan, Adrian Phillips, Austin Lyons, Calum Gardiner, Conor Keane, Cormac Phillips, Damien Keadin, Danny Hill, Brian

Hunt, Diarmuid Phillips, Donal O'Brien, Eamon Phillips, Eoghan Collins, Eoghan Roe, Fergal Lyons, Fergal Walsh, Gearoid Keane, Jack Coyne, James Lyons, Jason Coyne, Jason Powers, Keith Higgins, Kieran Kiely, Kieran McDermott, Luke Cribbin, Mark Phillips, Morgan Lyons, Sean Gildea, Sean Griffin, Sean Herr, Shane Healy, Stephen Hoban.

Genfitt League

The Genfitt league consisted of Ballyhaunis, Tooreen, Castlebar, Westport and Caiseal Gaels. Round 1 was against Tooreen on 26th Sept when Ballyhaunis won on a score line of 0-14 to 0-06. At the time of writing this report all club games have been called off due to the country going into Covid-19 Level 3 restrictions.

Genfitt League Panel: Adrian Brennan, Austin Lyons, Conor Keane, Damien Keadin, Danny Hill, Diarmuid Phillips, Donal O'Brien, Eoghan Roe, Fergal Lyons, Fergal Walsh, Gearoid Keane, Hannan Hasseb, James Lyons, Jason Powers, Kieran Kiely, Kieran McDermott, Luke Cribbin, Morgan Lyons, Ryan Keadin, Sean Gildea, Sean Griffin, Sean Herr, Shane Healy, Stephen Hoban.

A special acknowledgement to Danny Hill, Diarmuid Phillips, Ryan Keadin and Conor Keane on their debut opening match against Tooreen in the Genfitt Cup. Congratulation to Kieran Kiely on winning Player of the Year award.

From the managers: We would like to sincerely thank the players and management for the huge effort and commitment that was put in this year. Hard work was never easy, but it paid off at the end! Many thanks to sponsors Gurteen Kitchens and EPS Group for their continued support and to the club for all their help during the year.

Juvenile Hurling

The 2020 season got off to a great start with training under lights once a week for the U11 and U13 panels. This continued every week until mid-March and the sudden stop brought about by Covid restrictions. When the dust settled there was only time to run an U12 Championship amongst the eight competing teams. Ballyhaunis was seeded in the top group alongside Westport, Castlebar and Claremorris. After great displays in the group games, Ballyhaunis qualified for the B Final which was held on Saturday, 26th September. In front of a supportive home crowd the Ballyhaunis youngsters put in a great team performance, claiming the County title on an impressive score line of 8-2 to 3-1. There was a tremendous cheer when team captain Adam Kelly raised the Plate, as it was a long time since an underage hurling team had savoured a triumph at this level. The victorious panel members were Adam Kelly, captain Alex Byrne, Tom Donnellan, Cillian Caulfield,



Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling team: Back, L-R: Pierce Higgins, Tadhg Buckley, Luke Cribbin, Eamon Phillips, J.P. Coen, Diarmuid Phillips, Eoghan Roe, Sean Herr, Stephen Hoban, Jason Powers, Danny Hill, Sean Griffin, Adrian Phillips, Eoghan Collins, Fergal Lyons, Cormac Philips, Kieran Kiely, Kevin Morley, Gary Conway, J.J. Hoban. Front, L-R: Sean Gildea, Paul McConn, Conor Keane, Adrian Brennan, Morgan Lyons, Fergal Walsh, Mark Phillips, Keith Higgins, Brian Hunt, Damien Kedian, Jason Coyne, Kieran McDermott, Calum Gardiner, James Lyons, Jack Coyne, Gearoid Keane, Shane Healy, Donal O'Brien, Austin Lyons.

Tadhg Kelly, Fionn Conlon, Eamon Óg Monaghan, Liam Hill, Mike Kayange, John William Burke, Jack Nolan, Jamie Nolan, Jason Powers, Thomas Curran, Tomás Lyons, Zack Smith, Joshua Maughan, Liam Nolan, Jack Buckley, Sean Donnellan, Alex Tighe, Cathal Conlon and Bobby Gallagher. The management team were Trevor Kelly and Darran Conlon with David McConn and John Burke coaches.

While they had no competitive games, the U13 players, Kyle Burke, Adnan Kahn, Wayne Maughan, Mark Feeney, Ethan Kilbane, Reliance Arku, Josh Kavanagh and Jake Powers continued to train. Their efforts were rewarded somewhat when this group were featured as part of the AIB 'Toughest Summer.' This one hour documentary was produced by award winning film maker Ross Whitaker. It captured the impact local GAA clubs have in their communities and how they came through the lockdown. It aired on RTÉ 1 television on Tuesday, 25th August to rave reviews and is still available to view on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/aib>

As Ballyhaunis couldn't field teams from U14 to Minor level, some Ballyhaunis players are developing their skills to great success with Tooreen on permission to play basis. At Minor level Eoin Ryan, Michael Finn Richardson and Danny Hill played pivotal roles in Tooreen's County Final win against Castlebar. At U16 level Tooreen won all their matches to earn a place in the County final which is still on hold due to Covid. Again, Eoin Ryan and Michael Finn Richardson were involved alongside Clayton Nolan and Evan McNamara. At U14 level Tooreen also had a County final success and Evan McNamara, Ethan Kilbane and Jake Powers played a big role in that.

Air Dome at GAA Centre of Excellence

The wait is over for GAA players, officials and supporters in Connacht as work on the much anticipated Air Dome at the Connacht GAA Centre has



Ballyhaunis Under-12 Hurling team, winners of the County B Championship, 2020

finally been completed and it is ready for competitive action. The indoor dome is the latest addition to come on stream at the Mayo facility, with five grass and one astro full-size pitches already in place, three of them with floodlights.

The construction of the Air Dome means that the Connacht Centre of Excellence now has six regulation sized pitches – including two artificial surfaces – a gym, changing room facilities, lecture theatre and meeting rooms. The inflation of the Air Dome took place in early August. Taking just a few hours to complete, the structure soon took its place on the horizon of Began and the scale of the project became evident for everyone. When fully inflated the dome is 150m long, 100m wide and 26m high. A 30 metre running track is also housed inside the Air Dome.

The playing surface, a full sized 4G pitch, was laid during the months of June and July, and is expected to see action all year round, which will ease the pressure on the playing fields of the West as the weather deteriorates during the winter. The dome will contain 600 seats but



An aerial photograph of the new Air Dome at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence, Cloonacurry, Beken.

will also carry a safety certificate that could see the venue cater for up to 10,000 supporters if further seating was installed.

But the air dome will be able to host a variety of events when it is completed and, while the primary aim will be to provide an indoor facility for matches and training, it will also be capable of holding exhibitions and concerts in the future. The dome will remain inflated at a cost of about €400 per month.

The completion of this marvellous indoor playing facility at the Connacht GAA Centre will provide an invaluable opportunity for the development of Gaelic games in Mayo and throughout the entire province.

Comhbhrón

Ballyhaunis GAA Club would like to extend our condolences to the families of our following former players who passed away during 2020: Very Rev. J.J. Cribbin, Very Rev. Peter Waldron, both of Main Street, Retired Garda John Byrne (Partry) and Brendan Toolan of Knockanarra. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.*



Jack Coyne pictured with his family after captaining Mayo Under-20s to victory over Louth in the Leo Murphy Cup Final played in Carrick-on-Shannon in January 2020. From left: Noreen Coyne, Jack Coyne, Marguerite Moran, Danielle Coyne, Paul Coyne and Brendan Toolan. Sadly, Brendan passed away in June (RIP).

Left: Fr. J.J. Cribbin in action for Mayo against Kerry, April 1970.

Right: Vicky Fitzgerald McNamara, formerly of Upper Main St., and her children Shane and Niamh, at the new Air Dome during a visit home from Middleton, Co. Cork. Vicky is daughter of Marie and the late Edward Fitzgerald, Upper Main St., and is niece of Tom Fitzgerald, former Ballyhaunis and Mayo star footballer of the 60s and 70s.





Members of the organising committee of the Ballyhaunis Senior Citizens' Christmas Party, 2019.

L-R: Teresa Healy (Johnstown), Helen Biesty (Hazelhill), Eileen Rattigan (Lecarrow), Irene Healy (Ballindrehid), Maureen Hunt (Cartron South).

Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher.



A hedgehog in Friarsground.

Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek.

Requirements for submitting pictures to *Annagh*

Sinead Mallee (Graphic Designer)

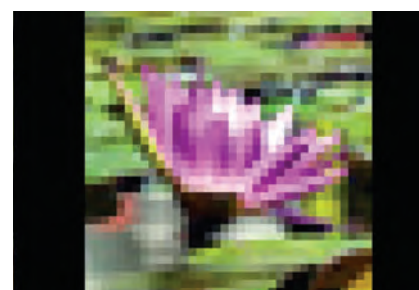
Annagh Magazine Society require all digital photographs in high resolution (large file size), where possible. **What is high-res?** It can determine whether your photograph looks fuzzy vs. clear and sharp. Hi-res stands for high resolution, or denser image quality. Images are made of pixels or small squares of color. You usually don't notice individual pixels because they all blend together to form the picture that you recognise. But they're there. You can see pixels when you zoom in really closely to a picture, or if you try to enlarge an image beyond what it can handle. A low-res image looks fine at its normal size e.g. on a monitor or facebook page but when we zoom in, it looks choppy or pixellated and it will end up blurry when printed. Low-res images have around 72-pixels, or squares of color, per inch. This makes them great for the web, because that's all your computer screen will display, anyhow. Hi-res images are at least 300 pixels per inch (ppi). This resolution makes clear, sharp photographs and is the industry standard for printing.

Is my image high- or low-res? Just because it looks good on your computer screen doesn't mean it's high-res. The best way is to open up the picture in an image programme and view the file properties. The higher the file properties, usually the better the resolution.

Photographs are best sent via email, attached directly from the source, i.e. your smartphone or SD card in a camera. After attaching, you will see a drop-down menu 'Image size'. Choose 'Actual Size' here rather than *Medium* or *Large*. That way it will come through at it's maximim. If emailing more than three or four large files, either split them over a few emails or upload them to info@annaghmag.ie via a file sharing website such as www.wetransfer.com which is a free file sharing portal. For Wedding photographs, ask your photographer for a high resolution image for magazine publication.



**High-resolution
image,
printed at
300ppi**



**Low-resolution
image,
printed at
72 ppi**

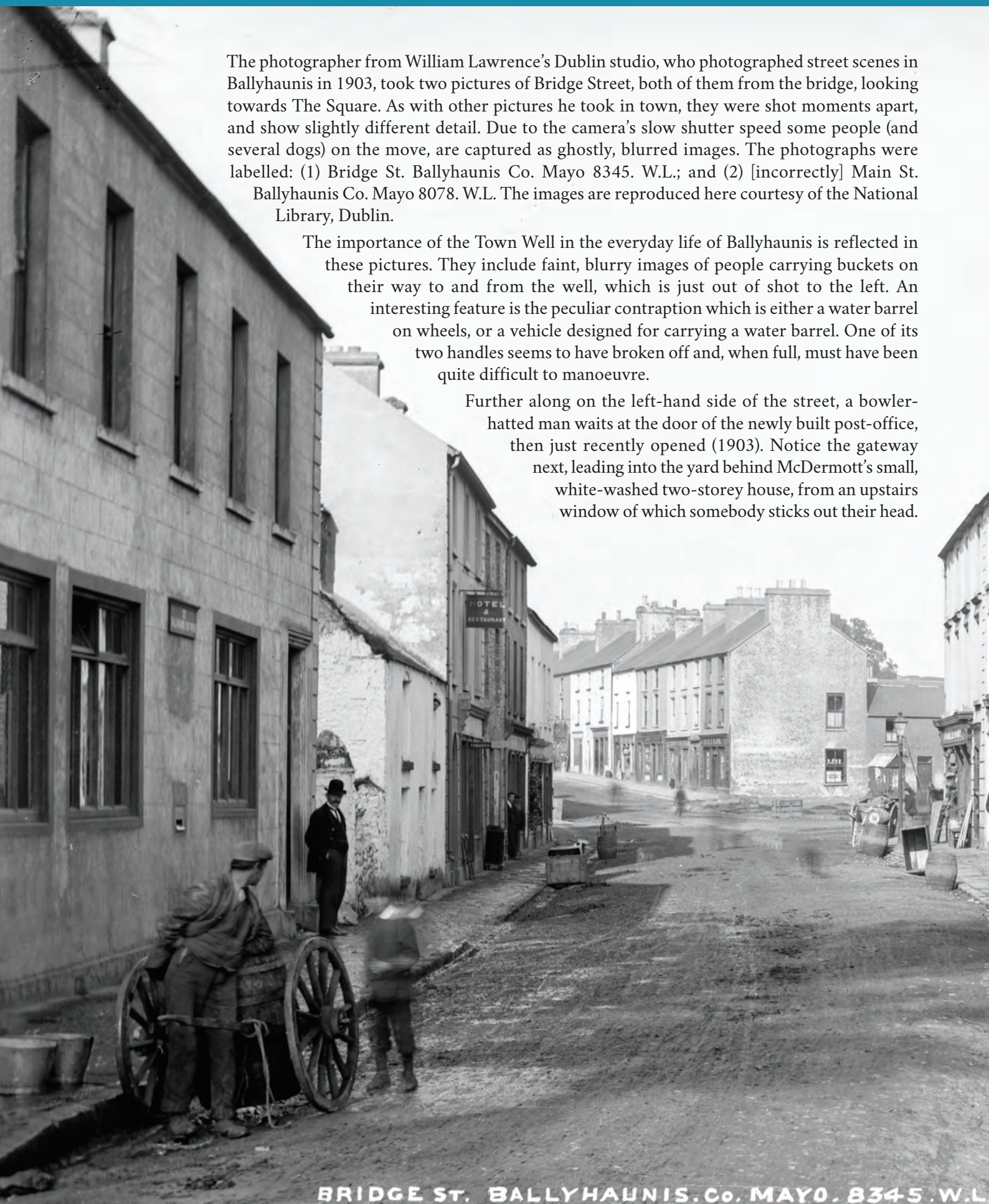
Bridge Street, Ballyhaunis, 1903

The photographer from William Lawrence's Dublin studio, who photographed street scenes in Ballyhaunis in 1903, took two pictures of Bridge Street, both of them from the bridge, looking towards The Square. As with other pictures he took in town, they were shot moments apart, and show slightly different detail. Due to the camera's slow shutter speed some people (and several dogs) on the move, are captured as ghostly, blurred images. The photographs were labelled: (1) Bridge St. Ballyhaunis Co. Mayo 8345. W.L.; and (2) [incorrectly] Main St.

Ballyhaunis Co. Mayo 8078. W.L. The images are reproduced here courtesy of the National Library, Dublin.

The importance of the Town Well in the everyday life of Ballyhaunis is reflected in these pictures. They include faint, blurry images of people carrying buckets on their way to and from the well, which is just out of shot to the left. An interesting feature is the peculiar contraption which is either a water barrel on wheels, or a vehicle designed for carrying a water barrel. One of its two handles seems to have broken off and, when full, must have been quite difficult to manoeuvre.

Further along on the left-hand side of the street, a bowler-hatted man waits at the door of the newly built post-office, then just recently opened (1903). Notice the gateway next, leading into the yard behind McDermott's small, white-washed two-storey house, from an upstairs window of which somebody sticks out their head.



BRIDGE ST. BALLYHAUNIS.CO. MAYO. 8345.W.L.

from the Lawrence Collection



Bridge Street, Ballyhaunis, 1903 from the Lawrence Collection



An extract from the other photograph of Bridge Street showing John Farragher again outside his premises (Delaney's today), but this time there's a young man sitting on the parapet of the bridge.



An extract from the other photograph of Bridge Street, showing the pillar at the entrance to the town well, where a young lad waits with his can. Images courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

McDermott's was the last of those old houses on this street. Today's Gem is built on the site of both house and gateway.

The next three three-storey houses were all built during the 1890s on the sites of earlier, smaller houses: John Charles Fitzmaurice's Hotel (later Hannan's); Denis Forde's as yet unplastered building (now Eagney's); and Patrick Byrne's public house (today's Nicholson's). Packaging boxes and barrels are left along the street, and, interestingly, what looks like a racing bike in the distance. The blurred image of at least one man carrying two buckets can be made out crossing The Square up to Main Street.

The north side of Bridge Street (along the right) was developed only in the 1870s: there were no buildings here before then. John Farragher stands at the door of his 'Dudley Arms Hotel', while in one of the two photographs, a young man sits nearby on the parapet of the bridge. 'Ulster Bank Limited' stands out in raised lettering over the door of their first premises in town, occupying part of Farragher's property. After they moved to the well-known former Ulster Bank building around 1906, the Inland Revenue had an office here.

Notice the 'jostle stone' on the corner of Dan Feely's premises next-door (later The Oak Bar and now Álainn café and bar). These were large stones, sometimes

worked into a cylindrical shape, placed at building corners to safely deflect turning cartwheels, thus preventing damage to their projecting hubs. Once found at the entrance to all archways and narrow alleyways, most of them have now been removed, though there are still examples on Main St. and Knox St. Note also the stones left proud of the plastered gable here, so they could tie-in with any subsequent building work. That might well be Dan Feely himself standing at the door, with a small dog at his feet. Born in Upper Main Street, he was leader of the Ballyhaunis Brass Band more than twenty-years earlier, in the late 1870s. He sold this place in 1904 for £450 and moved to his other premises, in Clare Street - the present-day Curley's Bar. Another ghostly water-carrier walks along the footpath here. There's a couple standing outside Loftus's shop (recently Tommy Webb's Butcher shop), and several other people at doorways further along. The man in the distance standing with horse and cart can be seen clearly in Lawrence's photograph of the Square (see pages 187 and 188 of Annagh 2019).

Since this series began in Annagh 2017, high resolution scans of the entire Lawrence collection of photographs have become available for viewing on the National Library website via their online catalogue. Check it out. www.nli.ie/en/collections-digital.



On the eve of the Millennium 1999-2000, Knock Road neighbours.
Back, L-R: Séamas Lundo, Liam Rochford, Mike Byrne, Billy Rochford.
Front, L-R: Rita Lundo, Riona Rochford, Sinead Lundo, Maria Rochford,
Nell Rochford. Courtesy Mike Byrne.



Joe Keane and Canon Joe Cooney, P.P.
 Millennium Eve, 1999-2000.
Courtesy Mike Byrne.



Millennium Walk 2000, Tom Grogan (Holywell) and Jim Lundo
 (Knock road) outside St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.



L-R: Mary Cosgrove (Bohogue), Kate Moran (Bracklaghboy)
 and Mae Fitzmaurice (Gurteenbeg) at the
 Senior Citizens Christmas Party 1989.

Mary Rudden Retires

Many tributes have been paid to Mary Rudden since she retired from First Choice Credit Union, Ballyhaunis, on 17th June 2020, after twenty-one years' service. She is pictured here (second from right) with her work colleagues, from left, Katherine Kilbride, Mark O'Brien and Linda Cox.



Natural Beauty all around us

Photography by Anne McNamara (Brackloon North)

This year, during lockdown, I found myself with an abundance of time on my hands for the first time in years. I started walking every day, and these walks became a sort of ritual for me. We are incredibly lucky to live in a place where social distancing is easy. There is a beautiful, quiet road that leads into the bog right beside us. On my walks, I began to notice flowers, plants and mosses I had never seen before. Each day, I could not

wait to see what new flowers I would find, to photograph and identify them. We had glorious weather during the lockdown and, experiencing the changing lights of the sunsets each evening was simply divine.

It's important to stop and remember that: in spite of everything that happens in the world, the sun will always rise and set; the flowers will always bloom; the wind will always blow; and the rain will always fall.





Buttercup



Marsh Orchid



cow parsley



spaghnum moss



Fern



Heath spotted orchid



Common Vetchling



Alpine Milkworth



Herb Robert

PATRONS

4-D's Carryout Off-Licence, The Square (Best Value Selection of Wines, Spirits, Beers). www.fordes.ie	
Agri-Spread International, Coolnaha, Ballyhaunis	9631808
AK Photography akphoto@gmail.com	083 0460755
AIB Claremorris Branch, James St., Claremorris	9371155
Álainn Cafe & Bar, Bridge St.	9630099
Aleppo Authentic Foods, Main St.	9631533 / 086 2174969
All About You, Beauty Salon, 7A River Park Centre. clare.higgins@live.ie	9632605
Alma's Ladies & Gents Hair Salon, Clare St.	9630354
Annagh Medical Centre, Doctor's Road. Dr Donal Delaney	9632232 / 9632322
Aoife's Beauty Bliss, Clare St.	087 9888316
APP Kirrane Auctioneering, Main St./Galway. www.daft.ie/kirraneauctioneering	9630240 / 091705555
Araby Restaurant, Main St.– Araby at the Dalgan	9632030
Avondale B&B and Holiday Homes, Clare St. (Prop. Bridie Levins)	9630345
Ballyhaunis Bouncy Castles	086 2772156
Ballyhaunis Chamber, Enterprise Centre, Clare Road. www.ballyhaunischamber.ie	9630311
Ballyhaunis Family & Community Resource Centre, The Friary House, St. Mary's Abbey	9630031
Ballyhaunis Life. www.ballyhaunislife.com	
Ballyhaunis Plant & Tool Hire, Abbeyquarter	9630979 / Mob: 087 2548355
Ballyhaunis Rugby Football Club	
Ballyhaunis Sports Injury Clinic	Mob: 086 874 1107
Ballyhaunis Transport Services (to and from Dublin)	9630477 / Mob: 087 2549077 / 086 3898535
Ballyhaunis Veterinary Clinic, Main St. Pdraig Hennigan, MVB.	Mob: 087 3781643 / 9630113
Bank of Ireland, The Square	9630073
Beauty For You, Bridge St. (Prop. Anita Duffy)	9631424
BK Engineering Design, Abbey St.	Mob: 087 7743327
Brackloon School & District Reunion Group	
Bridge Club, Clare Court. Thursdays at 8.00pm	
Brookvale Manor Nursing Home, Hazelhill. www.brindleyhealthcare.ie	Tel: 9631555, Fax: 9631655
Buczak, Sylwia, Hazelhill	
Burke, John, Heating & Plumbing Ltd., Devlis	086 6035126
Byrne, J.J. Craft Shop, Knock. jjbyrne@eircom.net www.knockreligiousgoods.ie	9388184
Byrne, Mike. Local Correspondent, Connaught Telegraph	9631381
Carroll's Bus Hire (Cathal and Cathy)	Mob: 087 2042653
Caulfield Enda, Tiling	Mob: 087 8238788
Caulfield, Kathleen, Upper Main St.	
Caulfield, Seamus & Aisling, Ballindrehid	
Caulfield, Tommy & Eavan, Annagh, Ballyhaunis	
Claire Fontayne, Womens Fashion Clothing, Bridge St. info@clairefontayne.ie	
Coffey, Gerry, Auctioneer/Valuer. www.gerrycoffey.ie	9643600
Colleran's Pharmacy, Bridge St.	9630028
Community School, Knock Rd. www.ballyhauniscs.ie	9630238
Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence, Bekan. www.connachtgaa.ie	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. curleys@totalhealth.ie , www.totalhealth.ie	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
Durkan family, Devlis & Abbey St.	
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. www.epswater.ie info@epswater.ie	9633500. Fax: 9630761
Erika Louise Beauty Specialist, Clare St. 086 8826793	
Express Scaffolding, Tully, Carrowbehy, Castlereagh. kevinwebb@gmail.com	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	Mob: 087 3134446 / 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
Forde's Ltd., The Square (The House for All the Family). Embroidery & printing specialists.	9630013
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 (Castlerea)
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 Johnston, Agri Services Ltd. (Agri sales & repair), Knock Rd.	9633383 / Mob: 087 9175856
Kieran Whelton Motors, Knock. www.kieranwheltonmotors.ie	9388371
Kilduff, John, Derry-nacong	
Kirrane Bros., Seamless Gutters, Fascia, Soffitt. Ballyglass, Ballyhaunis.	9646079, Mob: 086 3858922
Knock Laundrette	086 6082005
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
Lundon, Séamas www.sketchesbylundy.com	
Lyons, Anne & Gerry, Knockbrack	
Lyons, Michael G., Agricultural Contractor, Cloonfaughna, Knock	9880249
Lyons, Michael, Coach & Minibus Hire, Lecarrow. lyonsbushire@eircom.net	9630347, Mob: 086 2338419
Lyons, Michelle, Knockbrack	
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
McGuire, John, Kittredge St., Roslindale, MA, USA	
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, Bekan	9380315, Mob: 087 6116372
Morley, Tony. Exterior and Interior Decorators, Pollnacraoghy	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, Ardpatrik. 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 Íosa Primary School, Abbeyquarter. iosaballyhaunis@gmail.com	9630310
Seven Oaks B&B, Knock Rd. Contact Martina Gallagher. sevenoaksguesthouse@gmail.com	9630605
Sparkey's Discount Store, Main St.	Mob: 086 8106276
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, Sean, Devlis & Dublin	
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, or visit our website www.annaghmag.ie

Deadline: The deadline for contributions to Annagh 2021 is Friday, 8th October 2021. 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

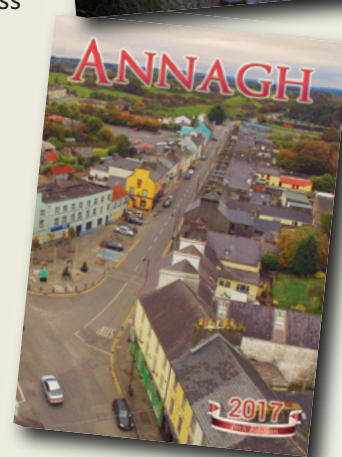
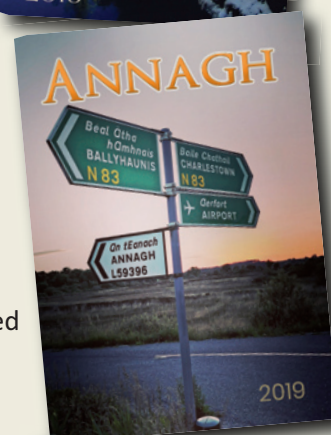
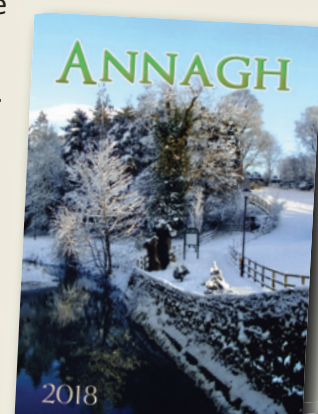
All photographs should be fully named and dated, if possible, and the owner's name included on the back, if it's an original photo. The contributor's name will be published only if this is requested. Photographs sent digitally should be in jpeg format, and scanned at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi. 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 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.

Cover Photographs

Front Cover: A view of St. Patrick's church, Ballyhaunis, taken from Beech Park.

Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek.

Back Cover: A view of Abbey Street and Bridge Street showing the 1916 Garden of Remembrance (opened 11th Nov. 2016) with Tricolour. *Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek.*



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